

**Constructing a Dutch gaze:
imaging (post)colonial Aruba and Bonaire,
1910-2000**



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Cover illustration:

“De toeristenweg van Bonaire voert langs pittoreske plekjes.” Friars of Tilburg. Bonaire, October 1964.

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Foreword

The thesis before you is a research about Aruba and Bonaire: former Dutch colonies, part of the former Netherlands Antilles along with Curaçao, Sint Maarten, Sint Eustatius and Saba, and to this day part of the Dutch kingdom as autonomous country and ‘special municipality’, respectively. The history and current situation of the Antilles in relation to the Netherlands is largely unknown to the majority in the Netherlands, myself included before I started with this research. In December 2018, while I was deeply immersed in finishing this thesis, I played a knowledge game with friends, one of whom failed to describe or locate ‘the Netherlands Antilles’. I realised then, as I did many other times when I explained my general thesis topic to someone, how selective historical knowledge can be.

In academic research, the centuries of Dutch-Antillean relations have only in the last few decades been given increasing attention. As such, I am proud to contribute to this important and growing historical research, by shining a light on this history from another angle, i.e. through visual sources. For the past year, I have investigated the question of how the two islands were represented in Dutch photographic archives in the twentieth century. A daunting project, it seemed, but made possible by my supervisor prof. dr. Alex van Stipriaan Luïscius, whom I would like to thank first and foremost. This research would not have been the research it has become without his ideas, wise words and never-ending encouragements. Introducing me to this topic was only the first of his many contributions; my limited starting knowledge of Dutch-Antillean history was never a problem. His enthusiasm about the project and patience in me has helped me a lot in finding the right angle and words for this thesis.

As fellow researchers of the representation of the Dutch Caribbean islands in their own ways, I would also like to thank Madeleine Brozek and Juliska Wijsman. I think we could all relate to each other’s process and the immensity of the project, so the support was always very welcome to me. Many thanks as well to Rien Vissers, archivist of the Friars of Tilburg, and Ingeborg Eggink, administrator of the photo collection at the National Museum of World Cultures, for taking the time to provide useful context to the photographs, makers and respective archives.

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List of abbreviations

Anefo	General Dutch Photo Bureau (<i>Algemeen Nederlandsch Fotobureau</i>)
ANP	General Dutch news agency (<i>Algemeen Nederlands Persbureau</i>)
AP	Associated Press
KITLV	Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies (<i>Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde</i>)
NA	National Archives (<i>Nationaal Archief</i>)
NPM	National Photo Museum (<i>Nederlands Fotomuseum</i>)
NMWC	National Museum of World Cultures (<i>Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen</i>)
RVD	Netherlands Government Information Service (<i>Rijksvoorlichtingsdienst</i>)

Introduction

From the seventeenth until the first half of the twentieth century, with the exception of a couple of periods under foreign occupation, the Caribbean islands Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao, Sint Maarten, Sint Eustatius and Saba have been connected to the Netherlands in various forms. After Spanish rule – when the islands were called useless: *islas inútiles* – the islands became Dutch colonies known as the West Indies, together with Suriname, on the northern coast of South America. Plantations did not play a big role on the islands, but they were involved – mainly Curaçao and Sint Eustatius – in slave trade.¹ Because of the abolishment of slavery, their small size and lack of major export products or economies, the Dutch Caribbean islands became half-forgotten colonies, ruled by an “absent-minded coloniser”.²

It is striking then, that the six islands are still part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to this day, rather than having full independence. The Dutch Caribbean was ‘decolonised’ in 1954: in an unusual construction, Suriname and the Netherlands Antilles, a newly formed federation of the six islands, remained within the Dutch kingdom as two autonomous countries.³ Suriname became independent in 1975.⁴ Aruba achieved a *status aparte* in 1986, leaving the Antilles and continuing as a separate autonomous country, a position also granted to Curaçao and St. Maarten in 2010.⁵ Since then, the Dutch kingdom consists of four autonomous countries – the Netherlands, Aruba, Curaçao and St. Maarten – while the remaining so-called ‘BES-islands’ continued as special municipalities.⁶

This thesis will be part of a four-year scientific research project called ‘Traveling Caribbean Heritage’ in which questions of Aruban, Bonairean and Curaçaoan identity are central. The long relationship with the Netherlands resulted in the question how to define their own identity. Moreover, the rise of tourism and large migrations to the islands since the second half of the twentieth century caused significant changes to the population and culture. ‘Traveling Caribbean Heritage’ focuses on these issues, and places it into a broader

¹ Gert Oostindie and Inge Klinkers, *Decolonising the Caribbean: Dutch Policies in a Comparative Perspective* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2003), 58.

² Gert Oostindie, *Paradise Overseas: The Dutch Caribbean: Colonialism and its Transatlantic Legacies* (Oxford: Macmillan, 2005), 164.

³ Oostindie and Klinkers, *Decolonising*, 84.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 112.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 128.

⁶ Cameron Wathey, “The Dismantlement of the Netherlands Antilles: How Autonomy is More Viable than Independence,” *Caribbean Quilt* 3 (2013): 142.

perspective of defining, preserving and presenting Aruban, Bonairean and Curaçaoan identity in cultural heritage sites.⁷

Historical research about the Antilles certainly is not in any way completed – as the existence and scope of the scientific project shows – but the aim of this thesis is not to expand on political, economic or cultural history of the islands. Rather, it combines existing knowledge with another field: visual research. Extensive research about imagery of the Netherlands Antilles has never been done. In the centuries the islands fell under Dutch rule since the seventeenth century many maps, images and photographs have been taken back to, or were even produced in, the Netherlands. Nowadays, several Dutch institutions – which will be further discussed below – have visual collections in their archives, with images dating as far back to the colonial seventeenth century until the turn to the third millennium. These collections served as a starting point for this research. As the images were made by Dutch photographers or commissioned by Dutch institutions, the islands were viewed at from a Dutch standpoint, a certain ‘Dutch gaze’. With this outsider view in mind, it is interesting to see whether this position constituted distinct ways of representing or looking at the Antilles.

I will focus on a Dutch gaze in relation to Aruba and Bonaire only. The first reason for that is, as the six islands differ considerably in terms of culture, demography and economy, I can take a more in-depth view by limiting myself to two islands. Secondly, by choosing to focus on a couple of the islands, I also needed to make sure enough sources were available. The three smallest ‘SSS-islands’ – Sint Maarten, Sint Eustatius and Saba – are underrepresented in the visual collections compared to the ABC-islands, which made Aruba and Bonaire more suitable.⁸ Lastly, Aruba and Bonaire hold different positions in the Dutch kingdom since 1986 and differ in terms of colonial history, population and culture, which could be an interesting comparison.

Within Caribbean studies, the Netherlands Antilles haven’t played a significant role as important region.⁹ Mirroring their small value as colonies in the Dutch kingdom, the amount of research of the six Caribbean islands pales in comparison to the other former Dutch colonies. Conversely, the Dutch East Indies (now Indonesia) form a much greater part of Dutch colonial and postcolonial historical research, similar to the greater value the Netherlands attributed to the East than to the West. When zooming in on the Dutch colonies

⁷ “Traveling Caribbean Heritage,” Nederlandse Organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek, accessed on 12 January 2018, <https://www.nwo.nl/onderzoek-en-resultaten/onderzoeksprojecten/i/58/27858.html>.

⁸ Many images of Curaçao are also available for research, but are part of another student’s thesis.

⁹ Eva Martha Eckkramer, “Papiamentu, Cultural Resistance, and Socio-cultural Challenges: The ABC Islands in a Nutshell,” *Journal of Caribbean Literatures* 5, no. 1 (2007): 73.

in the West, it is Suriname that overshadowed the Caribbean islands in postcolonial research. This is odd, as Indonesia and Suriname have been fully independent since 1945/1949 and 1975 respectively, while the Antillean islands still form a part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Nevertheless, some important research must be mentioned. Works of local historian Johan Hartog give a general context of Aruba and Bonaire. Though the books are published four or more decades ago, they provide a clear description of a wide variety of political, economic and cultural topics and developments of the islands, since the precolonial era. This not only gives an insight into the history of the islands, but also shows how the islands and their relationship with the Netherlands were described and captured in photographs at that time.¹⁰ A bit more recent is research by René Römer. He has also published several works about the Antilles, Curaçao in particular.¹¹ Relevant here is his book *Cultureel mozaïek van de Nederlandse Antillen*. This gives an understanding of the cultural aspects of Antillean society, such as religion, language, music and food.¹²

Over the last few decades, Gert Oostindie has contributed significantly to research of the Netherlands Antilles, with an emphasis on political and socio-economic history. *Paradise Overseas* analyses the (post)colonial relationship between the Netherlands and the Antillean islands and Suriname, and lays bare the contradicting relationship that continues to this day. He also focuses on the relation between the islands and the Netherlands on a cultural level, arguing that there is a relative lack of ‘Dutchness’ on the Caribbean islands, even though they are the only former colony still part of the Dutch Kingdom. This paradox, and the difficult cultural heritage is also explained in his edited book *Dutch Colonialism, Migration and Cultural Heritage*.¹³

The historical ties between the Netherlands and the Antilles, especially the process of the latter’s unique ‘decolonisation’ and the period afterwards, have been discussed by Oostindie and Inge Klinkers in *Decolonising the Caribbean*. They thoroughly analysed the decolonisation process from a Dutch, as well as Antillean, political perspective.¹⁴ The Dutch-

¹⁰ Johannes Hartog, *Aruba: zoals het was, zoals het werd: van de tijd der indianen tot op heden* (Aruba: Gebroeders De Wit, 1953); Johannes Hartog, *Bonaire: van indianen tot toeristen* (Aruba: Gebroeders De Wit, 1957); Johannes Hartog, *A Short History of Bonaire* (Aruba: Gebroeders De Wit, 1975).

¹¹ See for instance: René A. Römer, “The Dutch Colonial History in the Netherlands Antilles,” *Halve Maen* 59, no. 1 (1984): 11; René A. Römer, *Een volk op weg = un pueblo na kaminda: een sociologisch historische studie van de Curaçaose samenleving* (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 1979).

¹² René A. Römer et al., *Cultureel mozaïek van de Nederlandse Antillen* (Zutphen: De Walburg Pers, 1977).

¹³ Gert Oostindie, *Paradise Overseas*; Gert Oostindie, ed., *Dutch Colonialism, Migration and Cultural Heritage* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2008), 84-86.

¹⁴ Oostindie and Klinkers, *Decolonising*.

Antillean political relationship has been a focal point within research about the Dutch Caribbean, even from an international law perspective.¹⁵ Even within the group of islands, the amount of research is uneven. Some islands have been given significantly more attention, most notably Curaçao and Aruba.¹⁶ Research about Bonaire is harder to find, even more so for the SSS-islands.

Though these works are a valuable and relevant historical context of Dutch-Antillean history, central in this research are photographs of Aruba and Bonaire from the twentieth century. This kind of visual research about Aruba and Bonaire has never been done before, and will also focus more on history from a Dutch perspective, rather than the (post)colonial ties with the islands or the history of Aruba and Bonaire individually.

The photographs are collected in several Dutch institutions that were selected prior to this research. The collections of the National Museum of World Cultures (*Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen*), Friars of Tilburg (*Fraters van Tilburg*) and the National Archives (*Nationaal Archief*) hold the largest collections of images, adding up to circa 2,600 photographs. Together with these, there are about 150 photographs from the smaller collections of the Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies (*Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*), the Rijksmuseum, and Netherlands Photo Museum (*Nederlands Fotomuseum*).¹⁷ All of the collections can be found online, digitised and open to the public.

This research focuses on the period from 1910 until 2000, with the year 1954 as a possible turning point in the middle. Within this time frame, several time periods will be of importance. The last period of colonization will be addressed with the transition of Aruba after the oil refinery was built in the 1920s, and the march towards this economic change. Including pictures until the year 2000 means the transition of Aruba from one of the Antilles to their *status aparte* within the Dutch kingdom can be taken into account.

¹⁵ See for instance: Allison Blakely, "Historical Ties among Suriname, the Netherlands Antilles, Aruba, and the Netherlands," *Callaloo* 21, no. 3 (1998): 472-478; Eckkramer, "Papiamentu," 73-93; Rosemarijn Hoefte, "Thrust Together: The Netherlands Relationship with its Caribbean Partners," *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* 38, no. 4 (1996): 35-54; Gert Oostindie and Rosemarijn Hoefte, "The Netherlands and the Dutch Caribbean: Dilemmas of Decolonisation," in *Europe and the Caribbean*, ed. Paul Sutton (London: Macmillan, 1991), 71-98; Frans A. Nelissen, and Arjen J.P. Tillema, "The Netherlands Antilles and Aruba, An Embarrassing Legacy of the Dutch Colonial Era? Dutch Duties Revisited," *Leiden Journal of International Law* 2, no. 1 (1989): 167-193.

¹⁶ See for instance: Michael Angrosino, "Personal Narratives and Cultural Complexity: An Oral Anthropology of Aruba, Netherlands Antilles," *The Oral History Review* 10 (1982): 93-118; Sam Cole and Victoria Razak, "How Far, and How Fast? Population, Culture, and Carrying Capacity in Aruba," *Future* 41 (2009): 414-425; Victoria Razak, "Culture under Construction: The Future of Native Aruban Identity," *Futures* 27, no. 4 (1995): 447-459.

¹⁷ The indicated numbers only include photographs of Aruba and Bonaire – the full collections of the islands of the former Netherlands Antilles at large comprise of many more images.

When looking at the twentieth century, the year 1954 stands out for two reasons. Firstly, a long period of negotiations between the Netherlands and its Caribbean colonies was finalised with the Charter of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in 1954. When it came into effect on the 15th of December, the Dutch Caribbean islands took up a different but specific position within the Kingdom of the Netherlands.¹⁸ In contrast to the Dutch East Indies and its subsequent Indonesian independence in 1945/1949, the Dutch West Indies were only semi-decolonised. Along with Suriname and the Netherlands itself, the federation of the Netherlands Antilles became an autonomous, formally equal country within the Dutch Kingdom. Its government was seated in Willemstad, the capital city of Curaçao and the Antilles at large, as Curaçao was the largest island with the largest population. The Antilles were given the right of self-government. At the same time, problems of the supposed equal relationship became clear after Dutch military intervention on Curaçao in 1969, due to the breakout of riots. The Dutch influence from The Hague was still there, either directly in terms of political interventions, or indirectly, through development aid.¹⁹

Thus, after 1954, a change took place concerning the relation between the Dutch Caribbean islands and the Netherlands. It could no longer be described as coloniser-metropole, but from the Dutch perspective, a balance was sought between Antillean autonomy and the experienced Dutch responsibility as former coloniser and partner-country within the same kingdom. The latter became increasingly thought of as a burden.²⁰ In the last decades of the twentieth century, the Netherlands preferred the dismantlement of the Caribbean part of the Kingdom.²¹ For the Antilles, autonomy meant keeping the benefits of self-governance as well as the benefits of maintaining ties with the Netherlands.²² From both 'sides' then, the relationship and interests were redefined with the implementation of the Charter. It is interesting to see if these political changes also brought about a change in the way the islands were seen through the eyes of the Dutch. How were the Antilles represented before the Charter and did this change in the decades that followed? In other words, what was the role of the (changing) relationship between the Netherlands and the Antilles in the Dutch gaze?

Secondly, the twentieth century was a period of change for the islands individually as well. The beginning of the century saw the development of the economies of the islands, most

¹⁸ Oostindie and Klinkers, *Decolonising*, 84.

¹⁹ Wathey, "The Dismantlement," 145-148.

²⁰ Wathey, "The Dismantlement," 146; Oostindie and Klinkers, *Decolonising*, 228.

²¹ Oostindie and Klinkers, *Decolonising*, 99.

²² Wathey, "The Dismantlement," 144.

notably with the arrival of an oil refinery on Aruba.²³ Bonaire had its salt industry, but also experienced labour migration to Aruba to work in the refinery. However, during the second half of the twentieth century, their focus shifted towards the growth of tourism. Not only were these developments accompanied by labour migration to the islands and therefore a lasting demographic and cultural change, it also influenced the way these islands developed individually and branded themselves to the outside.²⁴ This is most significant for Aruba, which is more populous than Bonaire, but which also broke away from the Netherlands Antilles in 1986. Aruba has moved in a semi-independent direction for a longer period of time, whereas Bonaire to this day upholds tighter relations with the Netherlands.²⁵ With Aruban and Bonairean individual developments and the change from industrial economies largely before 1954 to tourism-oriented islands largely in the second half of the century in mind, the question rises whether and how these changes were represented in the Dutch photographs.

The periodisation begins in 1910 and ends in 2000 as the amount of pictures taken before and afterwards is very limited in the collections. Furthermore, these dates serve a more pragmatic reason: the periods before and after the implementation of the Charter are evenly represented in the research, when taking 1954 as a possible turning point. This allows for a better comparison to see if a Dutch gaze in relation to the Antilles significantly changed over a long period of time.

Taking all this together, this research questions the following: what constituted a Dutch gaze in relation to Aruba and Bonaire on photographs from 1910 until 2000, collected in Dutch archives, and what was the influence of the Charter of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in 1954 on this way of looking at the islands? Underlying this is, firstly, the image itself: what can be seen on the picture (and what is omitted, or over-emphasised), and why? Secondly, the domain of production will be taken into account, as well as the archives the photographs are now collected in, though to a lesser extent. The makers and institutions that hold the images or commissioned their production are very versatile and cannot be researched in detail within the scope of this research. However, by no means can they carry out the same representation of Aruba and Bonaire. For instance, the collection of photographs taken during missionary trips of the Friars of Tilburg would probably involve a different agenda and focus than pictures made for the Netherlands Government Information Service

²³ Razak, "Culture under Construction," 449; Hartog, *A Short History*, 95-96.

²⁴ Eckkramer, "Papiamentu," 76; Razak, "Culture under Construction," 449.

²⁵ Wathey, "The Dismantlement," 151.

Rijksvoorlichtingsdienst (RVD). No photograph can be made without agenda by the photographer – either conscious or unaware.

Theory and methods

Dealing with imagery of Aruba and Bonaire produced by the Dutch means dealing with the representation of those islands by outsiders. Stuart Hall has theorised this concept in his edited work *Representation*. At the most basic level, representation both means to stand in the place of (to replace) and to stand in for (to symbolise). Hall defines representation as “the process by which members of a culture use language (...) to produce meaning.”²⁶ He gives two aspects that are important in the construction of meaning. The first is the system of concepts we use to even begin to make sense of the world. They are mental representations; concepts that are similar to, that represent, things in the world. However, language, the second component of representation, is needed to convey these ideas. Language carries meaning and it can do so in various ways: texts, words and, important here, images.²⁷ Representation is not a process which signifies a fixed meaning, but an always changing one, as the people that create meaning always change.

Language as conveyor of meaning has been theorised in different ways. Of importance in the context of this thesis is the discursive approach by Michel Foucault. For him, representation deals with the wider social context in which meaning is produced. While representation produces meaning through language, it is also embedded in the production of knowledge, and therefore power.²⁸ Foucault argued not only that knowledge comes with power, but that power could make knowledge seem true. Thus, by knowledge he did not mean a strict truth, but a regime of truth that, through discourse, *appears* ‘true’.²⁹

Furthermore, Foucault argued that knowledge is produced through discourse rather than language, which he defines as “a group of statements which provide a language for talking about – a way of representing the knowledge about – a particular topic at a particular historical moment.”³⁰ What we know about the world is a system of representation; a discourse is the whole that delineates what we can and can’t talk about.³¹ Thus, representation

²⁶ Stuart Hall, “The Work of Representation,” in *Representation*, eds. Stuart Hall, Jessica Evans and Sean Nixon (2nd ed. Milton Keynes: Open University, 2013), 45.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 1-4.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 27-29.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 34.

³⁰ Stuart Hall, “The West and the Rest: Discourse and Power,” in *Formations of Modernity*, eds. Stuart Hall and Bram Gieben (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992), 291.

³¹ Hall, “The Work,” 29.

does not signify a discourse, but is part of a discursive formation that produces knowledge and power.

Within representation, the portrayal or symbolisation of another culture has played a significant role and is closely tied to discourse. Representing the 'Other' means differentiating it from the 'Self', the unknown from the known, the abnormal from the normal. This practice of 'Othering' involves constructing an opposite culture, often represented with stereotypes. Certain characteristics of the Other are exaggerated or excluded, creating a simplistic representation that are normalised and appear as true.³² Stuart Hall names three aspects of stereotyping: 1) it "reduces, essentializes, naturalizes and fixes 'difference,'" 2) it creates boundaries of exclusion and inclusion, and 3) it "tends to occur where there are gross inequalities of power."³³ As stereotyping the Other involves what you are not, it thus also entails defining the Self.³⁴

Someone who elaborated on both Foucault's notion of discourse and Othering through stereotyping was Edward Said. In his work *Orientalism*, he defined Orientalism as a discourse in which the 'West' defined the Orient through its difference.³⁵ Stereotyping was prevalent in this discourse. Moreover, it is a discourse in which the Orient is 'managed', not just through Western colonial repression, but also through symbolic representation that gives power to the one doing the representing over the one who is represented.³⁶ Thus, deeply imbedded in power relations, Orientalism can act as a regime of truth. The Orient is not fixed but a construction, it is knowledge that is produced through a certain discourse, in a colonial context.³⁷

While Orientalism is difficult to define precisely and relates to one particular region and colonial context, its general idea has inspired more research about the encounters, descriptions and representations of one culture or individual by another.³⁸ In *Wildheid en beschaving* (wildness and civilisation), for instance, Raymond Corbey analysed the way Africans from French colonies were represented on postcards that were sent home to France from 1900 to 1925. He was interested in the image that was constructed of colonised African peoples by Europeans. Within a colonial discourse, the African Other was created and

³² Peter Burke, *Eyewitnessing: The Uses of Images as Historical Evidence* (London: Reaktion Books, 2007), 125; Stuart Hall, "The Spectacle of the 'Other'," in *Representation*, eds. Stuart Hall, Jessica Evans and Sean Nixon (2nd ed. Milton Keynes: Open University, 2013), 247.

³³ Hall, "The Spectacle," 247-248.

³⁴ Burke, *Eyewitnessing*, 126.

³⁵ Ibid., 129.

³⁶ Edward Said, *Orientalism* (1978, reprint, London: Penguin, 2003), 3.

³⁷ Hall, "The Work," 250.

³⁸ Burke, *Eyewitnessing*, 131.

represented and therefore power was exerted over them.³⁹ He concluded that the postcards – all depicting nudes – were part of a European, male discourse of wildness and uncivilisation, conveyed through the same pattern of binary oppositions, syntagmatic structure and metaphors. More importantly, he showed the use of ‘difference’ in these representations and therefore the construction of the European Self, which was superior and civilised. Representation of the African Other showed colonial power relations, gave power to the Europeans as they were in charge of representing, and acted as a way to justify that power.⁴⁰

The visual representation of a part of the colonial Caribbean – and therefore a valuable example for this research – is explored in Patricia Mohammed’s work *Imaging the Caribbean: Culture and Visual Translation*. With drawings, maps, paintings and photographs from the last five hundred years, she unveiled presupposed ideas about the Caribbean people and landscapes of primarily Haiti, Jamaica, Trinidad and Barbados. Constant throughout the images is what she calls the ‘European gaze’, a reproduced Eurocentric way of looking at the Caribbean region, from a supposed position of political and racial superiority, influenced by religious ideology.⁴¹

Another important aspect that Mohammed lays bare in her book is the ‘picturesque’. This notion originated in English landscape art, as a way to paint nature. Though the term was used before, William Gilpin is seen as the founder of the correct way to paint the picturesque. For him, the picturesque consisted of four parts: a prominent background with two ‘side screens’, and darkly lit components in the front of the scene, which “framed the image like a stage set”.⁴² The picturesque extends beyond the mere beautiful, as it also includes untouched, rugged nature. By adhering to the rules of the picturesque, the wildness of the landscape would appear as pure and natural.

The aesthetically pleasing conventions of the picturesque makes the pictured nature familiar: “translating terrain into an established compositional type transformed land into landscape”.⁴³ Moreover, the construction of the picturesque becomes hidden behind the photograph’s supposed objectivity, which makes the picturesque landscape a very powerful image. For Patricia Mohammed, the picturesque in the Caribbean region revolves around two

³⁹ Raymond Corbey, *Wildheid en beschaving* (Baarn: Ambo, 1989), 10.

⁴⁰ Corbey, *Wildheid*, 156-157.

⁴¹ Patricia Mohammed, *Imaging the Caribbean: Culture and Visual Translation* (Oxford: Macmillan, 2009), 191.

⁴² William Gilpin, *Observations on de River Wye, and Several Parts of South Wales ... Made in the Summer of the Year 1770* (London: R. Blamire in the Strand, 1792), 8; Krista A. Thompson, *An Eye for the Tropics: Tourism, Photography, and Framing the Caribbean Picturesque* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 35.

⁴³ Jill H. Casid, *Sowing Empire: Landscape and Colonisation* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), 45.

kinds of power. Firstly, the maker is in the position to capture, and therefore has the power over what is visualised. Secondly, outsiders were in the position to decide what was deemed striking, and therefore able to define the Caribbean picturesque.⁴⁴ Thus, through visualisation, the picturesque has the power to include and exclude, and to define the objects and subjects portrayed, whether painted, drawn or photographed. Moreover, since photography was ascribed the role of portraying ‘the real’, without the intervention of a painter’s imagination, the picturesque becomes “an “accurate” description mode, despite its highly mediated nature”.⁴⁵ Only the surface is of relevance with the picturesque, not the context.⁴⁶

The picturesque does not only apply to landscapes. Often, local and indigenous populations are represented through traits that make them appear more civilised, such as working men. For Mohammed, repetition and similarities of images with aspects of nostalgia, paradise, beauty and the native establish the picturesque Caribbean ‘Other’.⁴⁷

Other valuable useful research, though not solely about the Caribbean region, is collected in *Colonialist Photography: Imag(in)ing Race and Place*. Each work focuses on different locations and time periods, but generally they show the influence of colonial ideologies in photography, particularly notions of (racial) superiority.⁴⁸ Interesting in this regard is Gary D. Sampson’s research of the work of British photographer Samuel Bourne. This approach differs from Mohammed’s wide range of images, but nevertheless shows the prevalence of a constructed picturesque India.⁴⁹

The primary sources used to research a Dutch gaze in relation to Aruba and Bonaire are all photographs. More realistic, precise and without intervention of an artist’s hand, photos were seen as authentic images of reality, even though photos remained black and white – not to mention grainy – for a long time.⁵⁰ However, even if the photographer’s goal is to picture the real, there are always conscious or hidden assumptions and choices that influence the way the world is represented in these images.⁵¹ Taking a picture gives power to the photographer, as they control what and who is seen in a certain way. Susan Sontag describes this as follows: “To photograph is to appropriate the thing photographed. It means putting oneself into a

⁴⁴ Mohammed, *Imaging*, 290.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 293.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 323.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 289-335.

⁴⁸ Eleanor Hight and Gary D. Sampson, eds., *Colonialist Photography: Imag(in)ing Race and Place* (London/New York: Routledge, 2002), 16.

⁴⁹ Gary D. Sampson, “Unmasking the colonial picturesque: Samuel Bourne’s photographs of Barrackpore Park,” in *Colonialist Photography: Imag(in)ing Race and Place*, eds. Eleanor Hight and Gary D. Sampson (London/New York: Routledge, 2002), 85, 102.

⁵⁰ Paul Long and Tim Wall, *Media Studies: Texts, Production, Contexts* (2nd ed. Harlow: Pearson, 2012), 135.

⁵¹ Burke, *Eyewitnessing*, 19.

certain relation to the world that feels like knowledge – and therefore, like power.”⁵² As Gillian Rose notes: “Some historians of photography have argued, for example, that the ‘realism’ of the photographic image was produced not by new photographic technology, but by the use of photographs in a specific regime of truth.”⁵³ Thus, we cannot assume the portrayed world on photographs as *the* reality, but merely as a part of discourse, in which the represented world appears as truthful.⁵⁴

It is this take on photography that is of importance here. In relation to the sources used in this research, it is important to note that the image is not the only way to represent truthfulness. Some of the commissioners of the source material are government-related, such as Anefo (a Dutch photography press agency) or the RVD. This might influence the representation of the islands but also strengthen the claim of these representations as truthful, coming from these prominent institutions. It is therefore all the more important that the pictures should not be treated as evidence but put in context.⁵⁵

In colonial context, representations of the colonised in works of art were often problematic, influenced by colonial ideologies of superiority of the colonizer and backwardness of the colonised. If photography does not represent reality, twentieth century colonial representations in photographs must be dealt with critically as well.⁵⁶ This leads to the question whether these colonial representations of Aruba and Bonaire and Dutch ideologies changed at all in the pictures made after the semi-decolonisation in 1954: did a change in politics mean a change in the ways of seeing the islands?

At the same time, if we can’t establish one true meaning to an image or set of images, visual research will involve a high level of interpretation. This is inevitable, as it is hard to translate what was meant or being said through an image. It is important to be critical of the sources that are used and the pitfalls of subjectivity.⁵⁷

Having established the role of subjectivity and power relations in representation in photography, it stands to reason that a qualitative research method was obvious. However, with the amount of photographs of Aruba and Bonaire available in the archives in mind, a realistic approach was necessary. To tackle large number of images, quantitative content analysis is appropriate. Gillian Rose describes the systematic steps that underlie content

⁵² Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (New York: Picador, 2011), 3-4.

⁵³ Gillian Rose, *Visual Methodologies: An Introduction to Researching with Visual Materials* (Los Angeles: SAGE, 2007), 144.

⁵⁴ Long and Wall, *Media Studies*, 135.

⁵⁵ Burke, *Eyewitnessing*, 13.

⁵⁶ Hight and Sampson, *Colonialist Photography*, 8.

⁵⁷ Burke, *Eyewitnessing*, 14.

analysis. The method is rooted in making clear hidden empirical data through the emphasis on replicability and validity. By systematically ordering the photographs, notable details become clear that will otherwise remain invisible due to the amount of images.

First, the sources were gathered from the preselected archives. Rose notes it is important to include all images, to avoid the risk of dealing with an unrepresentative set of primary sources.⁵⁸ However, due to the large amount of images, I did make a selection, which will be discussed further below. Second, the photographs were allocated under valid categories for analysis, covering all the images without overlap.⁵⁹ The third step was coding the photographs accordingly. It is here that replicability comes into play, as different researchers should be able to codify the same pictures in the same way. Lastly, the results were analysed.⁶⁰ For this research, the focus was both on which depicted topics stood out in terms of quantity, as well as the connection with the year the photographs were made.

Aside from enabling the researcher to process large amounts of images, the added benefit of content analysis is that it can be combined with qualitative approaches as well.⁶¹ Though content analysis provides a good first step to see what type of photographs or themes occur frequently (or not), it is necessary to not only analyse these numbers, but also to interpret what those outcomes mean. The occurrence or rareness of certain aspects of photographs can tell us a lot about what seemed or was deemed important, but must also be placed in a broader historical context. Therefore, a qualitative discourse analysis is required to fill these gaps.

While the content analysis is mostly concerned with *what* is represented in the collections, a discourse analysis deals more with the question *how* meaning is constructed through these representations and *why* that is. Referring back to the discursive approach of representation by Michel Foucault, the photographs are seen as producing knowledge about Aruba and Bonaire, within a certain discursive framework. “In particular, discourse analysis explores how those specific views or accounts are constructed as real or truthful or natural through particular regimes of truth.”⁶² Thus, discourse analysis does not only try to define discourse, but to analyse the way it is constructed. Discourse analysis requires a critical reading of the images to lay bare power relations and presupposed assumptions, reflecting on what, how and why things were omitted, or pictured in a certain way.

⁵⁸ Rose, *Visual Methodologies*, 62.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 65.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 68-69.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 60.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 146-147.

Discourse analysis is also relevant to analyse the production of the images and their place in the archives, as they are embedded in institutional power relations. It focuses on the place of the makers and archives in discourse and how this influences production and reception.⁶³ The contexts of the photographs vary greatly, and within the time and scope of this research the exact origins of the photographs could not be obtained. Though the different archives and known photographers are certainly taken into account, the emphasis of this research is more on what is actually depicted.

Research dealing with photographs might be challenged by the medium itself. The development of photography during the twentieth century can have consequences for the way these images are interpreted later. The change from black and white to colour photographs is well-known, though this often deals with a change in reception by the audience, a domain not dealt with in this research. More relevant is the development in which photographs become more wide-spread and available. The production and reproduction of photos become easier. For the content analysis this change is important because increasing numbers of pictures with a certain characteristic over time might also be influenced by the availability of photography, rather than a seemingly high level of importance alone. Moreover, it is important to keep in mind that this development allows for the reproduction of the same kind of images, which might therefore become ‘fixed’.⁶⁴

The sources: archives and limitations

I have collected photographs made of Aruba and Bonaire between 1910 and 2000 from six different online collections. The largest archive is from the Friars of Tilburg, a Roman-Catholic congregation based in Tilburg.⁶⁵ Aside from healthcare, they have been influential in Catholic education and founded several schools in the area. They were also very much involved in educational mission work in the Netherlands Antilles, as well as in Suriname. Their photo collection consists of images that were taken during these long periods of missionary activities, and were therefore an important addition to Dutch Caribbean heritage. It mainly consists of private collections of the friars during their missionary work and thus gives

⁶³ Rose, *Visual Methodologies*, 193-195.

⁶⁴ Burke, *Eyewitnessing*, 17.

⁶⁵ While doing this research, the digitised photographs were taken off the website of the Regional Archive of Tilburg. The reason for doing were are not clear. For gathering the source material of this thesis it had no effect: the selection of photos were already downloaded for the purposes of the research. As of October 25, 2018, the digital collection was made available again on provincial archive *Brabants Erfgoed*. See: <https://www.brabantserfgoed.nl/>.

an overview of their life on and view of the islands.⁶⁶ Starting in 2010, around 12.500 of the 30.000 photographs were digitised and made available in the online archive of the Regional Archive of Tilburg (*Regionaal Archief Tilburg*), as a collaboration between a Dutch Caribbean heritage oriented foundation called *Stichting Cultureel Erfgoed Caribisch gebied & Nederland* and City Museum Tilburg (*Stadsmuseum Tilburg*).⁶⁷ As the photographs have only recently been made available in the online archive, in contrast to other archives, the significance of the photographs in a long-term construction of a Dutch gaze in the Netherlands is minimal. However, the photos were made during a long time span: the photographs in the selection for this research are taken between 1919 and 1995. The representation of the islands by the photographers – as outsiders – is therefore of importance.

Another collection comes from the Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies in Leiden, hereafter called by the Dutch abbreviation KITLV.⁶⁸ Photographs were taken and assembled by the KITLV, starting at the end of the nineteenth century, “for the purpose of documenting the image of the Dutch East and West Indies in all their facets, such as landscapes, town views, architecture, and life under indigenous and Dutch rule and so forth.”⁶⁹ The archive stops after 1945, as well as my own selection of Aruba and Bonaire. More photographs are still added to the archive, which is available at the Leiden University Library, though only a small portion is available online.

The second biggest archive with photographs from the Netherlands Antilles, after the Friars, is the National Archives (NA) based in The Hague.⁷⁰ It serves as a ‘national memory’, including a large amount of files and different kinds of images from government organisations, social institutes and individuals of national importance.⁷¹ Within the selection of sources from the National Archives, there are five different collections, each with several known and unknown photographers. Photographer Willem van de Poll has made a book of his travels in the Dutch Caribbean, called *The Dutch Antilles: A photo reportage of land and people*, and served as the royal court photographer, resulting in a large portion of his

⁶⁶ “Fraters van Tilburg,” Caribisch Erfgoed accessed 31 October 2018, <http://www.caribischerfgoed.nl/fraters-van-tilburg.html>.

⁶⁷ “Achtergrondinformatie,” Caribisch Erfgoed, accessed on 31 October 2018, <http://www.caribischerfgoed.nl/achtergrondinformatie.html>.

⁶⁸ “Digital Collections,” Leiden University Libraries, accessed on 20 March 2018, <https://digitalcollections.universiteitleiden.nl/>.

⁶⁹ “Nederlands-Indië in foto’s, 1860-1940 > KITLV,” Geheugen van Nederland, accessed on 31 October 2018, <https://www.geheugenvannederland.nl/nl/geheugen/pages/collectie/Nederlands-Indië+in+foto%27s%2C+1860-1940/KITLV>.

⁷⁰ “Collectie,” Nationaal Archief, accessed on 23 May 2018, <http://www.gahetna.nl/>.

⁷¹ “Ons verhaal,” Nationaal Archief, accessed on 31 October 2018, <https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/over-het-na/ons-verhaal>.

photographs in the archive. Photos made by the government information service RVD, that also reports on the doings of the royal family, forms another significant part of the source material. The last three collections consist of documentation and journalistic press agencies *Spaarnestad*, *Elsevier* and *Anefo*.

The archive of the Netherlands Photo Museum (NPM) combines more than 5,5 million photographs of 166 photographers, and this collection still grows through donations and acquisitions.⁷² They focus on artistic as well as historic and documentary photographs, in which the photographer takes a more central position than in the other archives. Only a small portion of their online collection concerns pictures taken of Aruba and Bonaire, of which, interestingly, the dates and photographers are mostly unknown. The only exception is photographer N. Morris, but further background information could not be found. It is possible that (some of) the pictures were a donation, which might have played a role in the lack of information. However, it is significant that not much is known about photographs of this particular part of the Dutch Kingdom.

The national art and history museum Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam conserves, researches and displays the most important items of Dutch, European and Asian art, in which the Dutch colonial history forms an significant part.⁷³ For this research, only photographs of Willem Diepraam were applicable and available on the museum's online archive *Rijksstudio*.⁷⁴ Diepraam is an influential Dutch photographer, whose journalistic photos were published in the Dutch journalistic magazine *Vrij Nederland*. Between 1973 and 1978 he travelled to the Netherlands Antilles and Suriname multiple times. His photo book *The Dutch Caribbean* was published in 1978, which signalled a turn from his more journalistic and documentary approach to an artistic direction. The truthfulness of the photographs is therefore, according to him, what the maker and viewers make of it.⁷⁵ Diepraam donated 800 photographs of his full collection to the Rijksmuseum in 2011, of which twenty Aruban and five Bonairean pictures were included in the source material of this research.⁷⁶

⁷² "Collectie," Nederlands Fotomuseum, accessed on 20 March 2018, <http://collectie.nederlandsfotomuseum.nl/>; "Over het museum," Nederlands Fotomuseum, accessed on 31 October 2018, <https://www.nederlandsfotomuseum.nl/over-het-museum/>.

⁷³ "Visie en missie," Rijksmuseum, accessed on 31 October 2018, <https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/nl/organisatie/visie-en-missie>.

⁷⁴ "Rijksstudio" Rijksmuseum, accessed on 22 January 2018, <https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/en/rijksstudio>.

⁷⁵ "Biography," Willem Diepraam, accessed on 31 October 2018, <http://www.willemdiepraam.nl/willem-diepraam/biography/english>.

⁷⁶ Sandra Smalenburg, "Willem Diepraam schenkt zijn foto's aan het Rijksmuseum," *NRC*, 9 December 2011, <https://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2011/12/09/willem-diepraam-schenkt-zijn-fotos-aan-het-rijksmuseum-12127767-a818531>.

The National Museum of World Cultures (NMWC) has an immense collection of photographic material of the Dutch Antillean islands in their online archive.⁷⁷ NMWC is an overarching organisation, which includes the Africa Museum (*Afrika Museum*, Berg en Dal), National Museum of Ethnology (*Museum Volkenkunde*, Leiden), World Museum (*Wereldmuseum*, Rotterdam) and the Museum of the Tropics (*Tropenmuseum*, Amsterdam). Their collections are combined online but most photos relevant for this research were originally from the Museum of the Tropics. This museum started in 1871 as Colonial Museum (*Koloniaal Museum*) in Haarlem.⁷⁸ The motive was to collect and assemble as much as possible of the Dutch Caribbean and other Dutch colonies, and therefore consists for a large part of donations for their media library. As a result, the photographers are often unknown: the metadata were not assembled coherently from the start. The collection curator estimated that a third of the 450.000 photographs has been digitised, but not everything will become available online. Because photography became cheaper, easier and more widely available, there are many more newer photographs in their physical collection. Therefore, they have made a selection, based on the quality of the physical images and the variety of the photographed objects. This means that, relatively, more older pictures – because more varied – can be found in the online archive.⁷⁹

There is one photographer that stood out in the selection I used: Boy Lawson. Twenty-nine out of sixty-six photographs from the NMWC archive are taken by him. He was head of the Photo Bureau at the Royal Tropical Institute (*Koninklijk Instituut voor de Tropen*), which is linked to the Museum of the Tropics. In that position, he travelled to many countries to photograph “daily life”. Some of his photographs have been used in publications and exhibitions, although it is not clear which photographs and in what context.⁸⁰ This is also the case for other photographs in this archive.

With regards to gathering my source material, aside from the time frame, I have limited the group of photographs on different levels. Firstly, I have made a selection of the pictures in the three biggest archives. While gathering the photographs from the archives, it became apparent that the amount of images was too large for this research. Though the physical collections are generally much bigger, around 2.500 pictures of Aruba and Bonaire

⁷⁷ “Collectie,” Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen, accessed on 22 March 2018, <https://collectie.wereldculturen.nl/>.

⁷⁸ “Geschiedenis Tropenmuseum,” Tropenmuseum, accessed on 31 October 2018, <https://www.tropenmuseum.nl/nl/themas/geschiedenis-tropenmuseum>.

⁷⁹ Stated by Ingeborg Eggink, curator photo collection National Museum of World Cultures, Amsterdam, 17 April 2018.

⁸⁰ “Nieuwsbrief/71,” Wikimedia, accessed on 31 October 2018, <https://nl.wikimedia.org/wiki/Nieuwsbrief/71>.

are currently available online. I made a random selection of photographs in the larger collections to make the sources workable. This means that for the Friars of Tilburg, National Archives, and Museum of World Cultures, I collected every tenth picture as presented on the websites. For the Friars, the collection could not be sorted by date. I did not use any other prerequisites for this selection, to make it as random as possible and minimise my personal bias. From the smaller archives – KITLV, Photography Museum and Rijksmuseum – I selected every picture, which was never more than thirty-one photographs per island per archive. As a result, the total amount of sources was brought down to 421 pictures, as shown per archive in table 1.

Secondly, this research is only concerned with photographic material. This means that one archive that was selected at the beginning of this research, Atlas van Stolk, was redundant, as the collection only includes political cartoons, drawings and postcards. Along with these thirteen images, another four could be disregarded from other archives. Lastly, the sources that are dealt with in this research are only photographs from the online archives of the institutions. Though they contained many more physical photographs, what was online proved big enough for the scope of this research. Using the online photographs was also a more practical and faster way of processing the sources, as the physical archives are spread across the Netherlands.

Obviously, working with a selection also means I cannot make a definite conclusion – as far as that is possible with visual research in the first place. I did not make a conscious

	Aruba	Bonaire	Total
Friars of Tilburg	46	100	146
KITLV	31	31	62
National Archives	79	28	107
Netherlands Photography Museum	9	6	15
Rijksmuseum	20	5	25
National Museum of World Cultures	30	36	66
	215	206	421

Table 1: Amount of photographic material per archive, per island.

decision to include, for instance, photographs from every year of origin available, or sort out the selection in another ‘fair’ way. It is possible that some topics or years of origin would have been differently represented had all the photographs been included in this research. Therefore, it is important to keep in mind the level of interpretation involved with both content and discourse analysis and that there cannot be any ‘hard truths’ derived from images. Nevertheless, no conclusion has been made without conscious argumentation.

When the selection of photographs as primary sources was finalised, I divided them into three broad themes, based on what was photographed: cities and buildings, landscapes, and people. I have categorised the following chapters by these themes as well, though, as will be made clear, the broader meaning of the different themes and photographs show overlap. The number of photographs per theme is shown in table 2.

Because these themes are quite broad, I used different categories within these themes to specify what kind of urban aspect, nature or person was photographed. In chapter 3, I integrated these subcategories into subchapters, to achieve a better understanding of what or who were pictured and what this means for the representation of the islands. In table 3, the amount of pictures in chapter 3 is illustrated according to the subchapters ‘The Dutch’, ‘locals’ and ‘tourists’.

	Aruba	Bonaire	Total
1. Cities and buildings	81	46	127
2. Landscapes	32	47	79
3. People	102	113	215
	215	206	421

Table 2: Amount of photographs per theme, per island

	Aruba	Bonaire	Total
3.1 Dutch	33	53	86
3.2 Tourists	12	4	16
3.3 Locals	57	56	113
	102	113	215

Table 3: Amount of photographs in 'People' per subchapter, per island

Just as I divided every picture under one of the three main themes, I divided the photographs into only one subcategory, so as to avoid overlap and complicated constructions. For most of the images, this was not a problem, as they clearly showed only, say, a tree, a friar or a church. In cases where a distinction was not immediately clear, I have looked at accompanied descriptions and tried to decide what the photographer would have wanted to show with the picture. For instance, some photographs show friars next to children they educated. I have chosen to code these as ‘Dutch’ (instead of ‘locals’) as the pictures were shot by the friars themselves, who ultimately only focused on their missionary work and daily life on the islands.⁸¹ It must be noted that this situation did not occur often; the majority of the photographs were clear in theme and thus were easily coded. Ultimately, the codification of the photos was done as strictly and coherently as possible, offering a good overview of the themes, dates and amounts of the photographs, which could then be further analysed.

In short, I will analyse a random selection of 421 photographs of Aruba and Bonaire taken between 1910-2000, kept in several Dutch archives. Central will be the representation of the islands in the photographs from a Dutch perspective: what constituted a certain Dutch gaze in the twentieth century? Following this, several other issues will be a focal point. Firstly, did the change from a colony to an autonomous country in 1954 also bring about change in the ways of looking at the islands? Secondly, did the development of the islands, of mainly oil and tourism industries, lead to a different way of representing the islands, and if so, how? Lastly, given that Aruba and Bonaire differ significantly from each other, how is this represented in the photographs? Dedicating each chapter to each of these questions has proved to be difficult. However, where possible, the year 1954 as a turning point, the industrial and touristic developments and individual differences of the islands will be part of the analysis, to make clear comparisons and possible changes in the islands’ visual representations.

To analyse these groups of photos, there are a few key concepts. Following the trains of thought by Edward Said and Stuart Hall, the concept of ‘Othering’ will be of importance to analyse the visual representation of (a) certain culture(s) by another, laying bare the underpinning colonial and postcolonial discourses of the Dutch-Antillean relationship. Originally formulated by William Gilpin as pictorial principle, the construct of the ‘picturesque’, will guide in the analysis of the visualisation of mainly landscapes and local populations. Moreover, the power of the representation of the islands through photography underlies this research.

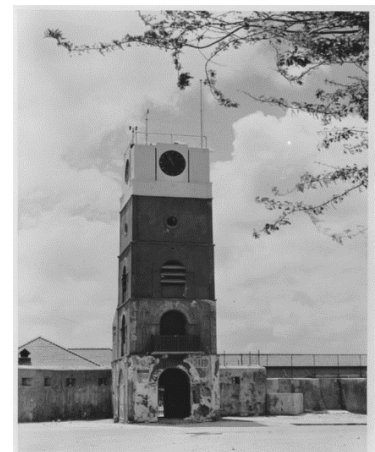
⁸¹ Ton de Jong and Jeroen Ketelaars, “De Caraïbische fotocollectie van de Fraters van Tilburg,” *OSO, Tijdschrift voor Surinamistiek en het Caraïbische gebied* 1 (2011): 137.

In chapter 1, photographs of cities and buildings will be the main focus, revealing the frequent portrayal of Dutch heritage and development, representing the closeness and usefulness of the islands. The picturesque representation of Aruba and Bonaire will be the focal point of chapter 2, in which the emphasis on the Otherness through picturesque and classifying approaches is shown. These two different representations are repeated in the portrayal of people, discussed in chapter 3. The distinction between the Dutch, tourists and local populations of Aruba and Bonaire lays bare the contrast between a seemingly close relationship of the islands with the Netherlands and their development, versus the distant, exotic, picturesque Other. Following these chapters, I will conclude that this ultimately disguises the distant and uninterested way the islands are represented throughout the twentieth century, as it is embedded within an ongoing discourse of a contradicting relationship and reluctant responsibility.

1. Cities and Buildings

While categorising the source material, it quickly became apparent that built environments were very commonly portrayed. Included are pictures that show (parts of) the cities and villages on Aruba and Bonaire, as well as individual buildings, such as churches, houses and schools, or the oil refinery on Aruba. This left 127 photographs in this theme, ranging from the year 1910 until the 1980s (the only indication is “before 1990”), and 35 undated pictures. Three out of five pictures are taken on Aruba in this category. This disparity can be explained by the oil industry on Aruba, and the inclusion of the airport on the island. Furthermore, Bonaire has seen less of an urbanising development than Aruba. This island is therefore more prominent in the ‘landscape’ theme, which will be discussed in the following chapter. Here, two ways of representing the islands will become clear: the pervasive idea of Aruba and Bonaire as islands with a likeness and closeness to the Netherlands, and the notion of development and progress of the islands. They appear as though they were a close, important connection to the Netherlands. However, by visualising the islands in these ways, it also becomes clear what is not shown: facets of Aruban and Bonairean aesthetic and culture. Empty streets, Dutch-made constructions, and industrial developments therefore hide the distant and uninterested way the islands were looked at.

Remnants of early Dutch colonisation are depicted on a few photographs: Fort Oranje on Bonaire and Fort Zoutman on Aruba. Now situated in Kralendijk and Oranjestad respectively, these settlements were built in the seventeenth and eighteenth century as military fortifications. Since then they have functioned in other aspects, such as hosting the Historical Museum of Aruba. Towers were added to both forts, which were used as lighthouses and turned into landmarks.⁸² As the islands were hardly urbanised at the time, Fort Zoutman and Fort Oranje were prominent buildings in the early twentieth century, which could be seen from sea. Nowadays, the forts and towers are touristic markers of the cities.⁸³



1.1 “De Willem III-toren, tevens vuurtoren, bij Fort Zoutman in Oranjestad. het fort is in gebruik als gevangenis.” Anefo, NA. 1940-1945.

⁸² Römer, *Cultureel mozaïek*, 210; Hartog, *Bonaire*, 235.

⁸³ “Fort Zoutman Historical Museum,” Aruba, accessed on 14 December 2018, <https://www.aruba.com/us/explore/fort-zoutman-historical-museum>; “Historische gebouwen op Bonaire,” Beautiful Bonaire, accessed on 14 December 2018, <https://www.beautiful-bonaire.nl/bezienswaardigheden/historische-gebouwen.php>.

Another remnant of Dutch colonisation is the presence of the Dutch royal family, who are frequently referenced in the photographs. Like many things, Fort Oranje bears the name of the royal family; the tower of Fort Zoutman is the Willem III Tower, named after the Dutch

king in the nineteenth century (illus. 1.1). Festivities in honour of Queen Juliana in the 1930s are also depicted. The royal visit of her and Prince Bernhard in 1955 is featured many times, mostly in the National Archives. The plaque commemorating the Queen's visit to the Aruban Technical School is pictured, as well as general decorations to celebrate the visit (illus. 1.2 and 1.3). The Dutch flag forms a prominent feature in these photographs. At the time of the royal visit, the islands were 'decolonised' since a year. While the flag of the Antilles only came into use five years after the Charter was implemented, the repeated red-white-blue mainly signifies the unity of the countries, or rather, that the islands were still a part of the Netherlands, not their own country within the kingdom. Like others, this royal visit was a symbolic one: to highlight the ties between the Netherlands and the Antilles.⁸⁴ The use of Dutch heritage emphasises the history and relationship between the Netherlands and Aruba and Bonaire. However, it also reveals one-sidedness: what is photographed are many remnants of Dutch influence on the islands, but there are hardly any pictures that stand out as typical Aruban or Bonairean buildings.

A more problematic part of Dutch colonial history in the Antilles is slavery. While Curaçao was mainly used as a hub for slave transport, a relatively



1.2 "Gedenkplaat ter ere van het bezoek van koningin Juliana aan de Arubaanse Technische School in Oranjestad op Aruba." W. van de Poll, NA. 24 October 1955.



1.3 "Versiering op Bonaire." W. van de Poll, NA. 23 October 1955.



1.4 "Kralendijk. Huisjes." Friars of Tilburg. Date unknown.



1.5 "Zeven slavenhuisjes op Bonaire." W. Diepraam, Rijksmuseum. 1973.

⁸⁴ Gert Oostindie, *De parels en de kroon: het koningshuis en de koloniën* (Amsterdam: De Bezige Bij, 2006), 102.

small number of enslaved worked in the salt pans on Bonaire.⁸⁵ The enslaved people stayed in huts on the salt pans, which still stand there to this day and can be visited. The friars went there to visit and photographed the small houses (illus. 1.4). Their photographs were probably taken in the first half of the twentieth century. In the 1970s, Willem Diepraam, whose photographs are archived at the Rijksmuseum, photographed the slave huts as well (illus. 1.5). The friars barely make mention of the slave history, saying they are slave huts for salt extraction, or describing them as “little houses”, or simply “salt lakes”. Their descriptions thus focus on their function as part of the salt business, rather than their part in a notorious history. A few decades later however, Willem Diepraam described the size of the huts (“two by two meters”), which brings forward the inhumanity of the situation. The inclusion of the slave huts is the only nod to a relationship between the Netherlands and the Antilles in which the former has caused affliction. But even then, it is an indirect nod, provided only by a picture’s description. An NMWC photograph of the slave huts is the only one with real historical context, but this may have been added after digitisation of the photographs. Thus, the portrayal of the huts in the photographic archives as part of the long history does show another way in which the Netherlands was involved with Bonaire, but the way this is done does not necessarily foreground an problematic history, as much as it highlights a matter-of-fact and touristic appeal. The slave huts represent a connection between Bonaire and the Netherlands, but this depiction does not call attention to the unequal relation.

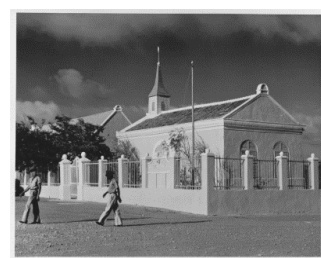
The residence of the Friars of Tilburg on Bonaire is photographed several times by the friars, both the old mansion and the new construction. Not surprisingly, their archive also features photographs of churches on both islands. This includes the Catholic churches and their own presbyteries, as well as different Protestant ones. Other archives, such as KITLV and NA only feature the Protestant churches on Aruba and Bonaire in the source selection (illus. 1.6-1.8). Most descriptions of the pictures include the name and location of the



1.6 “School, fraterhuis, pastorie, kerk v. Oranjestad.” Friars of Tilburg. 1935.



1.7 “Protestantse kerk in Rincon op Bonaire, gebouwd onder leiding van dominee A. van Essen.” KITLV. 1935.



1.8 “Bonaire. Protestantse kerk aan het Wilhelminaplein te Kralendijk, de hoofdstad van het eiland.” Anefo, NA. 1940-1945.

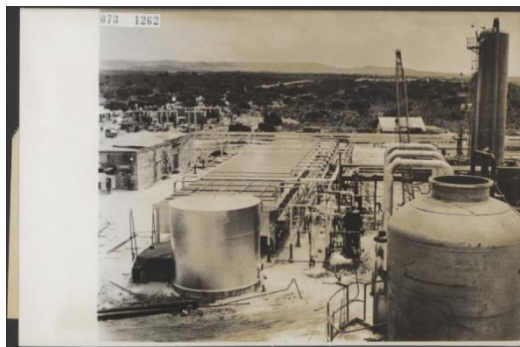
⁸⁵ Gary C. Fouse, “Slavery and the Development of Papiamentu,” *Journal of Caribbean Literatures* 5, no. 1 (2007): 64.

particular church, as well as the year in which the photograph was taken. Since the eighteenth century, Dutch missionaries were very active in the colonies, and many congregations travelled to the Antilles.⁸⁶ The majority of the pictures were taken in the first half of the twentieth century. The detailed inclusion of the churches in the archives is therefore not surprising, but still significant, as it signifies the Dutch preoccupation with religion in the overseas territories. It was a factor of life, that was evenly important for the colonies.

The link between the islands and the Netherlands in the (early) colonial period is very prominent in a large amount of the photographs: almost a third of the total amount in this theme. Reminders of early Dutch colonisation such as forts and former slave huts have been turned into places to visit, offering a more positive attitude towards the long-lasting connection rather than the historical weight. The frequent portrayal of the churches on the islands highlights not just the missionary work of many Dutch congregations, but also the preoccupation with (the) religion (of Antilleans). Throughout the twentieth century, the



1.9 "Morris Aruba refinery of Lago oil & transport 0 8947 General view of refinery at sunset." N. Morris, NPM. Date unknown.



1.10 "fabrieken, chemie, antilles chemical company, barcadera". ANP Foto, Elsevier, NA. 20 November 1962.



1.11 "De Lago-olieraffinaderij in San Nicolas op Aruba." W. van de Poll, NA. 1947.



1.12 "Raffinaderij Soyo Oil op Aruba." KITLV. 1930.

⁸⁶ P.J. Rietbergen, "Aan de vooravond van 'het groote missie-uur': een onderzoek naar de Nederlandse missiebeweging gedurende de eerste helft van de negentiende eeuw en de rol van 'missietijdschriften' daarin," *Nederlands Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis* 70 (1990): 108.

photos depict aspects that bind the islands to the Netherlands, emphasising their likeness with and closeness to the European country.

Another way in which the urbanised parts of the islands are represented in the archives is through their focus on development and progress. The construction and development of Aruba's oil industry since the 1920s provided a pivotal period for the island's wealth.⁸⁷ The Lago oil refinery was a major part of the island's development and the grandness of the industry on a small island is put forward in the photographs. Repeatedly, in different archives, the large pipes and chimneys are photographed both up close and from afar (illus. 1.9 and 1.10). The large storage tanks are photographed in close-ups, which emphasises their size, as well as from a distance, showing the large dimensions of the tank parks (illus. 1.11 and 1.12). The construction of the refinery turned the surroundings into a steel landscape: all that can be seen is the industrial environment.

The salt industry of Bonaire is also depicted, though far less than the refinery on Aruba. The export of salt was a lucrative business since the seventeenth century. It industrialised in the 1830s, but has since then diminished to a very small source of income.⁸⁸ In the twentieth century, this industry had shrunk and did not provide as much income as it once did. It did not change or influence the islands as much as the oil industry on Aruba, but it nevertheless brought a level of industrialisation and income to Bonaire, as well as a location for tourism to the slave huts.⁸⁹ Photographs depict the boats and mills used for the salt extraction and transport, amidst workers and the resulting salt piles (illus. 1.13 and 1.14). The modernisation and industry were small scale compared to Aruba's oil industry, as can be seen in the photographs, but both have been important for the island and have profited the Netherlands for a long time.



1.13 "Zoutwinning en verscheping." Friars of Tilburg. Date unknown.



1.14 "Zouthopen en zoutmolens bij Witte Pan." NMWC. 15 April 1950.

⁸⁷ Hartog, *Aruba*, 316; Razak, "Culture under Construction," 449.

⁸⁸ Hartog, *Bonaire*, 80, 201, 278.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 280.

The modernisation of the islands was also visible in other regards. For instance, the buildings of Aruba's open air cinema and Theater Oranje on Bonaire show the presence of modern entertainment. In different archives, the availability or construction of drinking water supplies is photographed (illus. 1.15-1.18). Bonaire's water works at the natural spring at Goeroeboeroe is included in the KITLV archive with a picture from 1910. The water distillery of Aruba is photographed during its construction and later as working factory in the 1960s. Taken by Willem van de Poll, the water tower on the island is captured from below, highlighting the vast size of the concrete building. For a long time, Aruba and Bonaire got their water supply from rain or well water. This only changed with the distillery and the construction of water pipes to the cities.⁹⁰ The drinking water supply was a change that came relatively late, but it was a huge improvement to the availability of a basic need.



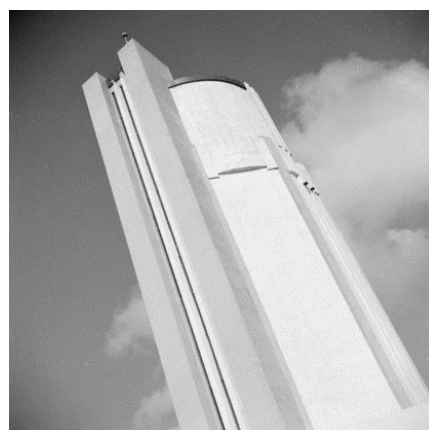
1.15 "Waterwerken van Goeroeboeroe op Bonaire, aangelegd door het gouvernement, met op de voorgrond dividivibomen." KITLV. 1910.



1.16 "Aruba. Waterdistillatiefabriek in aanbouw." Elsevier, NA. Date unknown.



1.17 "Het waterdstellerbedrijf van 's Lands Watervoorziening." B. Lawson, NMWC. Aruba, 1964.



1.18 "De watertoren in Oranjestad op Aruba." W. van de Poll, NA. 1947.

⁹⁰ Hartog, *Aruba*, 343; Hartog, *Bonaire*, 246; Landswatervoorzieningsdienst, *Landswatervoorziening in de Nederlandse Antillen* (Haarlem: Verenigde Drukkerijen Planeta, 1952), 16.

The first friars from Tilburg arrived on the Antilles in the late nineteenth century by boat, but the rapid invention of the airplane changed that.⁹¹ They captured the arrival of waterplanes on Aruba, which was the first sight of an airplane on the island (illus. 1.19). The island's airport was constructed in the 1930s and named after Princess – later Queen – Beatrix during the 1955 royal visit of Queen Juliana.⁹² Royal visits were made easier with the Flying Dutchman (illus. 1.20), and it spurred the growth of the tourism industry. Antillean Airlines



1.19 "Bezoek watervliegtuigen." Friars of Tilburg. Aruba, 18 August 1923.



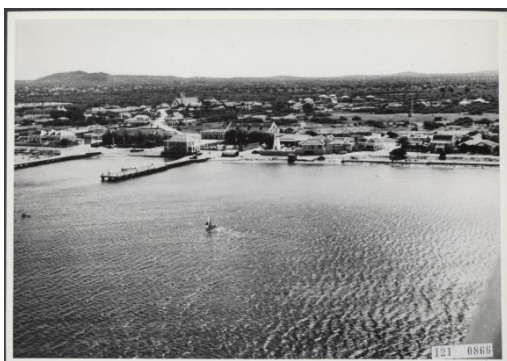
1.20 "Het vliegveld op Aruba." W. van de Poll, NA. 1947.



1.21 "nederlandse antillen, aruba." RVD, NA. Date unknown.



1.22 "Vliegveld op Aruba." KITLV. 1930.



1.23 "nederlandse antillen, bonaire." RVD, NA. Date unknown.



1.24 "Gezicht op de Paardenbaai en Oranjestad." Friars of Tilburg. Date unknown.

⁹¹ De Jong and Ketelaars, "De Caraïbische fotocollectie," 7.

⁹² "Airport History," Airport Aruba, accessed on 14 December 2018, <https://www.airportaruba.com/airport-history>.

(ALM), part of the Royal Dutch Airlines (KLM), was formed in 1964 and operated between Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao (illus. 121). Aviation significantly improved the accessibility of the islands and formed a great part of its development.⁹³

The first Aruban runway was also photographed – from the air (illus. 1.22). Several archives have photographs taken from above, on which the size of Oranjestad and Kralendijk and the development of its harbours are depicted (illus. 1.23 and 1.24). It opened up the visibility of Aruba and Bonaire, not only because of a new perspective, but also because of the larger pieces of landscape that could now be captured in one photograph. These aerial photographs are in itself already a sign of progress, as the development of airplanes and photography allowed the islands to be captured from such an angle.

All these photographs highlight changes of the islands in the twentieth century. The oil industry, water works and aviation were important developments towards modernisation, and influential changes for the islands. The inclusion of those developments in the source material therefore seems quite logical. However, they also reflect the interests of people in the Netherlands. While profits made in the American owned refinery were maybe not directly beneficial for instance, industrialisation and modernisation of the islands did reflect well on the Netherlands: being part of the Dutch kingdom, overall development of the islands was favourable for the general image of the Netherlands.

Thus, the representation of the cities and buildings is twofold. On the one hand, the relationship between the Netherlands and the islands is emphasised, through frequent portrayal of old forts and former slave huts, and nods to the Dutch royal family, who served as a link between the Netherlands and the Antillean territories. Furthermore, the church, religion and missionary work are the topics of many pictures, also from archives other than the Friars of Tilburg. Religion was important for the Dutch and the preoccupation with the religion of the Antillean population is visualised in the photographs. These are all topics that are familiar to Dutch eyes and Dutch ways, making the islands appear figuratively close to the Netherlands. On the other hand is the underlining of progress and development on Aruba and Bonaire. Industry, transport, water supply – the inventions and changes that were involved, from the steel refinery



1.25 "topografie, landen op naam, West-Indië, Nederlands." Spaarnestad, NA. Aruba, date unknown.

⁹³ Hartog, *Aruba*, 342; Hartog, *Bonaire*, 238.



1.26 "Oranjestad. Kerk, Playa." Friars of Tilburg. 1936.



1.27 "Auto's op straat. Kerk." Friars of Tilburg. Bonaire, date unknown..



1.28 "Gezicht op Kralendijk." Friars of Tilburg. Date unknown.



1.29 "Straatgezicht bij de oude en de nieuwe Protestantse kerk." NMWC. Aruba, 1950-1957.

constructions to the asphalted airplane runways, changed the appearance and economy of the islands, but also got much attention in photography. Its progress was visualised in the photographs. The frequent portrayal signifies the importance of the developments for the Netherlands, that, as coloniser and partner-country, could benefit with prospering islands.

Yet, however strongly the relationship with the Netherlands and the islands' progress is foregrounded and suggested, the islands are still approached in a distant manner. With only a handful of exceptions out of the 127 pictures in this theme, the photographs never show the interior of a building. While there are some houses and other singular constructions photographed up close, the perspective is always from outside: friar residencies, the airport, shops and other buildings. The viewer might see what the urban areas look like, but always remains at a distance. This is magnified by the fact that the photographs of cities and buildings are mostly 'empty': the churches, houses, forts, refinery are all constantly portrayed from a literal distance, and omit people from the frame. The streets of the cities further exemplify this. A street or square is often placed in the foreground, leading the eye to a shopping street, houses or a church in the distance (illus. 1.25-1.27). It is a repeated still life scene, leaving out traces of liveliness. If people are included in the frame, they are small far-

away figures that fade away into the background of more prominent buildings. Without the ‘intervention’ of local population, the picture loses Aruban or Bonairean specificity, making it easier to appropriate the image to one’s own ideas.⁹⁴ Taken at a higher perspective, parts of neighbourhoods are captured, which places even more emphasis on the buildings, rather than local characteristics (illus. 1.28 and 1.29). Furthermore, the descriptions of the photographs do not particularly point out the islandic characteristics other than the locale, which makes the representation of the urban areas appear even more neutral – to foreign Western eyes. Thus, the photographs seem rather descriptive, showing their development and connection with the Netherlands, but – in doing so – disguise the actual distant way of looking at the islands.

Furthermore, what is photographed is not a wide variety of aspects of urban Aruba and Bonaire, but a repetition of the same few topics. The photographs of the built environments are a collection of aspects of the islands that were seen as relevant, resulting in a fragmented representation. Moreover, the much smaller number of pictures after the 1950s shows a decreasing preoccupation with the islands; the amount of post-1954 photographs reduces to about a third of the colonial pictures. Though the most recent picture is taken in the 1980s, there are only two from 1973, and eight taken in 1964, as part of the series by Willem Diepraam and Boy Lawson, respectively. Of the undated pictures, the large majority is probably from the first half of the twentieth century, considering their black-and-white or sepia appearance. After the royal visit in 1955, the amount of photographs becomes rather sporadic. From these pictures alone it seems therefore that the change of political status of the islands brought about a change in the appeal of and curiosity towards the islands. This is remarkable as the tourism industry grew in the second half of the twentieth century and the availability of photography became more widespread. Though there are some touristic photos in the source material (which will be discussed in chapter 3.2) they hardly show this development. The photos in the public archives then, outside the sphere of tourism, reflect a selective interest in the islands, and decrease in amount after 1955.

Analysing the photographs of Aruban and Bonairean built environments revealed two ways in which the islands were represented. On the one hand, the connection with the Netherlands and its heritage is foregrounded by the inclusion of early settlements and politically significant buildings, as well as references to slave trade, the royal family and religion. On the other hand, elements of modernisation and progress are featured significantly in the sources, with the inclusion of the development of cities, the Aruban oil industry, and

⁹⁴ Sayandeb Chowdhury, “The Indiscreet Charms of Spatial Ugliness: An Inquiry into a (Post)colonial City,” in *On the Politics of Ugliness* eds. Sara Rodrigues and Ela Przybylo (Toronto: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018): 181.

constructions such as the airport and water distillery on Aruba. These were things that could be familiarised with from an outsider view and catered to a desirable image of the islands; rather than constructing a (post)colonial Other, the photos represent the islands as compatible with the Netherlands. The ‘Dutchness’ and modernity – and therefore their closeness to and usefulness to the Netherlands – are emphasised, but this disguises the empty, fragmented, and distant way the built environments are photographed. While the photographs show different facets of the islands, the majority is of topics that cater to the Netherlands, without coming too close to Antillean culture. Thus, even though the photos appear to describe and take an interest in the islands, they are reflective of the rather lukewarm and uninterested way the Netherlands has been involved in the Antillean region.

2. Landscapes

Not only the urban areas of the islands are photographed, but also its nature. Almost one in five (79 out of 421) photographs in the source material portray different facets of the Aruban and Bonairean landscape: wide views, sandy beaches, flora and fauna. The photographs were made between 1927 and 2000, a period beginning almost two decades later than photographs depicting cities or people, but the reason behind this is not clear. There are 26 undated photographs as well, that are probably made during colonial times or shortly after, judging by their black-and-white appearance. The majority of the photographs in the source material is taken outside and so naturally, some part of nature is depicted. What then, does the 'landscape' category entail?

Logically, nature must be the focus of the photograph. A mountain or fields in the background of a picture of a church or house is not categorised as 'landscape', as it features a building. Roads are not featured either, except those that do not visibly lead to a building, village or city. The boundaries of this theme lie on minimal interference of human constructed objects; only landscapes are central. Categorising the images resulted in almost equal groups of landscape photographs from five different archives: Friars of Tilburg (total of 18), KITLV (18), National Archives (22), Rijksmuseum (1) and National Museum of World Cultures (19), indicating a general interest in the local nature.

Bonairean photographs of landscapes are featured a little bit more in the sources than Aruban nature, in contrast to the urban scenes discussed above. Of 79 pictures, 47 are taken on Bonaire. With the arrival of the oil refinery on Aruba, industrialisation and the growth of the population in urban areas was set in motion. Though Bonairean industries and population also changed during the twentieth century, it did not develop as significantly as on Aruba. A larger portion of Aruban land is urbanised. It is therefore not so surprising Bonaire is featured more often in the 'landscape' category.

In this chapter, the manner and significance of the representation of these landscapes will be discussed. The construction of the Aruban and Bonairean



2.1 "De toeristenweg van Bonaire voert langs pittoreske plekjes." 10-1964" Friars of Tilburg.



2.2 "nederlandse antillen, bonaire." RVD, NA. Date unknown.

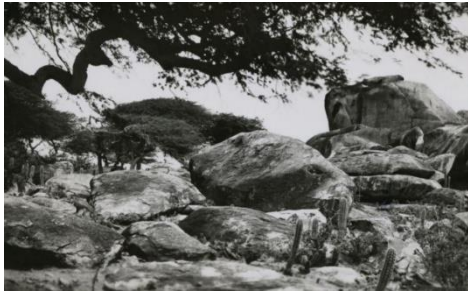


2.3 "Boot op Palm Beach op Aruba." W. van de Poll, NA. 1947.

landscapes as picturesque islands is key, as well as the categorisation of flora and fauna within the archives. Several striking aspects have become determining markers throughout the twentieth century, emphasising the Otherness of the islands. Appropriating the islands by constructing the picturesque Other and the categorisation of its nature through the power of (post)colonial photography emphasises difference and establishes the visual hold over the islands.

The beaches of Aruba and Bonaire form a prevalent part of the landscape photographs. One of the images of the shores of the islands bears the title 'The tourist road of Bonaire leads past picturesque places', and is taken by one of the friars from Tilburg (illus. 2.1). Taken in October, 1964, the photograph depicts a coastal road, with hills on one side and in the background, the sea on the other side. A tree in the sunshine in the front of the frame casts a shadow over the ground and different plants and cactuses grow on the side of the road. It is a charming and peaceful scene, which, according to the description, can be found in more places on Bonaire. The friar seemingly thought the island was scenic and captured this in a photograph. The aesthetically pleasing composition of 'The tourist road' can be found on images from other photographers as well. On illustration 2.2 and 2.3, beaches of Aruba and Bonaire are positioned perfectly within the frame, with the sea and coastlines stretching out into the distance. Overhanging trees, white sand and lush seas give a sense of serenity and quiet, and stresses the exoticness of the islands.

The aesthetic of the photographs is reminiscent of the four-part structure of the picturesque by William Gilpin, one of the originators of the picturesque. The sea or clouds form the background, which are enclosed by the road or coastal lines on either side, leading the eye through the landscape into the distance. The darkened trees in the foreground



2.4 "Rotsen en waibomen." Friars. Aruba, date unknown.



2.5 "Het Gotomeer op Bonaire" W. van de Poll, NA. 1947.



2.6 "nederlandse antillen, aruba" RVD, NA. Date unknown.

complete the composition. The interior landscape of the islands is photographed similarly (illus. 2.4-2.6). The sea has changed to hills, a lake, or rocks, but the placement of a tree or cactus in the foreground remains and the shade of overhanging trees emphasizing the warm weather and the prominence of tropical vegetation is unmistakable. The elegance of the composition constructs the picturesque image of both Aruba and Bonaire.

In almost all of these pictures, the viewer's eyes are led to the distance, over the different aspects of the landscape. This was important in the creation of the picturesque and, according to Gilpin, "a winding path" is an excellent way to achieve that.⁹⁵ In the photographs of Aruba and Bonaire the paths are roads, but both the coastal and inland ones lead into the far distance. They are the only sign of human intervention, but this modern addition to a landscape served a purpose for the picturesque (illus. 2.1 and 2.7). It is used as a guide through the landscape; it passes, and therefore points out, the different facets of the landscapes. But the road in itself also symbolises travelling through land, enabling experience with its unfamiliarity. The unknown character of the landscapes is heightened with vague descriptions, such as "Nature. In the mountains." Sometimes names of places are mentioned in the caption of the image, but no sign of those towns is visible in the photographs. The unfamiliarity of the islands is thus explored, but at the same time disguised through its picturesque appearance. The prettiness of the land remains at the foreground.

Though the picturesque is often only associated with the attractive, it is not merely a synonym for 'beauty'. A pristine, wild landscape enhances the idea of the



2.7 "Newly constructed scenic road along the coast of Bonaire." Friars of Tilburg. 1971.

⁹⁵ Thompson, *An Eye*, 35; Gilpin, *Observations*, 8.



2.8 "Verm.: 'Playa Lechi, een zeer geschikte zwemgelegenheid op Bonaire.'" Friars. Bonaire, 1964.



2.9 "De kustlijn." B. Lawson, NMWC. Bonaire, 1964.

picturesque, for it gives the idea of an unimpaired, original state of nature.⁹⁶ The wildness and ruggedness of rocks for instance, contributes to the beauty of the landscape.⁹⁷ Where the beaches are represented as an elegant paradise, other photographs in the archives show a rougher side of the islands. Aruba and Bonaire's rocky coastlines and cliffs are depicted several times, but from a different perspective. Illustration 2.8 and 2.9 even show the exact same beach on Bonaire, presumably taken in the same year, but by different photographers. The calm and sunny beaches from other photographs have made way here for a view from and upon a cliff. The high and distant vantage point of these photographs allows for an exhaustive view, creating an illusionary sense of immensity of the islands.

The ability to photograph from a higher vantage point, whether with aerial photography or just because of the development of lighter cameras, also increases the visibility of the landscapes. The frame could include a wider perspective, opening up the landscape to the photographer and, indirectly, the viewer, with an overwhelming view. Broad and high views of natural scenery and vegetation look far ahead unto the terrain of Aruba and Bonaire, giving the impression of a sizable island. Often, linear perspective is created through the placement of trees, rocks or cactuses in the foreground, emphasising the quaintness and diversity of the islands' nature, as well as creating depth with the mountains or grasslands in the background (illus. 2.10 and 2.11). Even the road is included in the photographs, pulling the viewer through the landscape (illus.12). The construction of the picturesque permeates through different types of Aruban and Bonairean landscapes throughout the twentieth century.

⁹⁶ Thompson, *An Eye*, 35.

⁹⁷ Gilpin, *Observations*, 12-13.



2.10 "Landschap op Aruba." W. van de Poll, NA. 1947.



2.11 "Gezicht vanaf Canashito richting het westen" B. Lawson, NMWC. Aruba, 1964.



2.12 "Uitzicht over landschap met een autoweg en op de achtergrond de zee" B. Lawson, NMWC, Bonaire, 1964.

The focus on the awing features and foreignness of the landscapes – its difference – guides the spectator in a pleasant way, but also creates distance. Repeatedly, the landscapes are ‘empty spaces’ without human interaction. The very few people that are featured in the distance are often outsiders, such as Dutch friars, which further increases the contrast with the foreignness of the islands. The lack of personal interference makes the photograph rather factual. The Aruban and Bonairean landscapes are appropriated by a few recurring features and certain pictorial devices: accenting foreign plants such as cactuses and palm trees, rock formations and hills, as well as well-formed compositions and wide views. This constructs the picturesque image. It emphasises the difference of the (colonial) islands in their beauty and quaintness, but at the same time, presents the images themselves with a certain objectivity. By visually exploring and capturing the islands, they are merely looked at through the lens of the camera. The picturesque is used to describe the islands, thereby distancing the viewer with its seemingly objective appearance.

Moreover, the medium itself ‘fixed’ the representation of that which is photographed, capturing the islands through the ‘objective’ lens of the camera. According to Mohammed, the repetition of certain elements that construct the picturesque make it so pervasive.⁹⁸ Photography amplified this power, because it can visualise in more direct and precise ways than earlier art forms could, but moreover, it makes reproduction of the same images possible. Through the reiteration of similar aspects, such as the sunny beaches with overhanging trees, the photographed scene becomes self-validating. It does not matter whether the photographed scene is truthful: only what is visually represented matters.⁹⁹

⁹⁸ Mohammed, *Imaging*, 302.

⁹⁹ Mohammed, *Imaging*, 323.



2.13 "'De 'Peperkoekenberg' zeggen de fraters.'" Friars. Aruba, date unknown.



2.14 "Cereus-landschap aan de zee op Bonaire" KITLV. 1930.

Dominating both Aruban and Bonairean landscapes, the cactus appears rather frequently in the source material. The way it is depicted varies: as attributes in photos that actually focus on something else (illus. 2.5 and 2.13), in full fields viewed from above (illus. 2.14), or as vegetation on the side of roads and hills (2.15 and 2.16). The direct and indirect ways in which the cactus appears in the photographs makes them appear as a characteristic of the islands. Moreover, as a plant that can endure the most difficult weather, the cactus also emphasises the tropical climate of the islands. They live in dry and hot circumstances, thereby inherently signifying the difference of the Aruban and Bonairean climate. Furthermore, this is heightened by the characteristic longevity of the plant. Its duration throughout time emphasises the untouched, pristine features of the landscape as a whole. The cactus makes the Aruban and Bonairean nature appear as untouched and timeless, signifying the truthfulness of the scene.

As well as functioning as a characteristic feature of the picturesque Antillean landscape, the cactus is also part of the indexing way the islands' nature is captured in a substantial part of the landscape photographs. While much of the source material in this theme



2.15 "Rotsachtig landschap met cactussen nabij Ajo op het eiland Aruba" A. Curiel & C.H. de Goeje, NMWC. 1927.



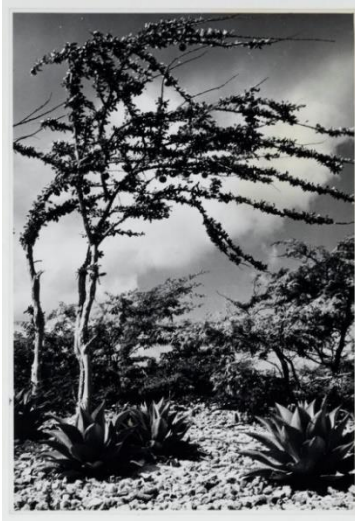
2.16 "Dolomieten met cactus" B. Lawson, NMWC. Aruba, 1964.



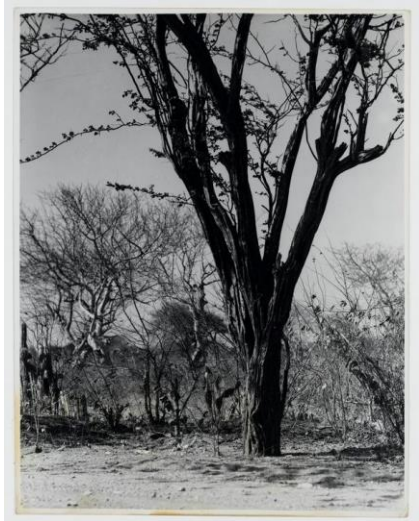
2.17 "Cactus (cadushi) op Bonaire" KITLV. 1930.



2.18 "Agaveplanten, Bonaire." KITLV. 1930.



2.19 "Kalebasboom en pilaplanten op Bonaire." KITLV. 1930



2.20 "Verfhoutboom (ook wel stokvishout- of Brazielhoutboom) op Bonaire." KITLV. 1930.



2.21 "Vegetatie op Bonaire." KITLV. 1930



2.22 "Kalabarie-boom in het calcareous plateau op Bonaire." KITLV. 1930



2.23 "Guajacum-boom op Bonaire." KITLV. 1930



2.24 "Verfhoutboom (ook wel stokvishout- of Brazielhoutboom) op Bonaire." KITLV. 1930



2.25 "Geiten onder een divi-divi-boom op Bonaire." KITLV. 1930

features full landscapes, flora and fauna are also included individually. Illustration 2.17 features a giant 'cadushi' in its entirety. The placement of two individuals next to the plant shows the extreme size of the plant, which is then underscored by the former looking upwards. While the photo is a rare picture of Antillean nature which includes people, it contributes to the contrast between the islands and the outsider and the emphasis on the islandic difference. The *cadushi* photograph is archived in the KITLV collection. The objective of the research institute was to photograph the many aspects of the Dutch colonies,

including landscapes and nature.¹⁰⁰ Their photographs were all probably made in 1930, during which Aruba and Bonaire were still a Dutch colony. The set of photographs of a variety of Bonairean trees, all photographed in a similar way with the tree in the middle and its name mentioned in the photo description, creates a catalogue-like compilation of the exotic species of the island (illus. 2.18-2.25). In four pictures, different men can be seen next to the plant. They might have been guides, though their names or functions are not mentioned. They have become an attribute in the picture “for graphic charm and scale rather than as individuals in their own right”.¹⁰¹ The very styled and factual way they are presented and described is reminiscent of early colonial scientific classifications of foreign encounters, in which flora, fauna and even humans were classified.¹⁰² The archives serve as a record of nature that was fairly unknown.

While most of the photographs of the individual plants are taken before 1954, the inclusion of plant types in the archives did continue into the second half of the twentieth century, when the islands were no longer a colony. The NMWC archive features several close-ups of aloe, palm tree leaves and a thorn bush, taken before 2000 (illus. 2.26). Furthermore, several animals appear in the archives: mostly flamingos, but also goats and a bird (illus. 2.27 and 2.28). The factual ways in which the flora and fauna of the islands are included, creates an inventory-like function of the archives in which the photos are kept. The constructed image of the islands therefore relies on its difference, for the very act of categorising the facets of nature was not just a way of making sense of Otherness, but also imposed Otherness.¹⁰³ Again in this categorical part of the landscape photographs, the ‘realness’ of photography constructs an ‘objective’ image of the islands, in which facets of nature were introduced, but at the same time distances the islands through its difference.



2.26 "Doornstruik met gele bloemen" NMWC. Bonaire, before 2000.



2.27 "Jonge flamingo's." Friars. Bonaire, date unknown.



2.28 "Fauna. Vogels." Friars. Bonaire, 1982.

¹⁰⁰ Geheugen van Nederland, "Nederlands-Indie in foto's, 1860-1940 > KITLV."

¹⁰¹ James R. Ryan, *Picturing Empire: Photography and the Visualization of the British Empire* (London: Reaktion Books, 1997), 51

¹⁰² Mohammed, *Imaging*, 148.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 145.

Moreover, whereas most scientific categorisations of colonial nature were part of the initial discovery, these photographs also serve as a certain uncovering of the islands. The photos are an extensive and early visualisation of the local nature and landscapes.¹⁰⁴ For the Dutch gaze, this becomes especially important when taken into account that the islands were not well-known.¹⁰⁵ A certain representation therefore influences how they will be known. With the availability of photography, the photos provided a certain view of the islands, expanding the representation from maps and drawings of harbours and coastal cities to landscapes and vegetation. Photography enabled the unknown lands of Aruba and Bonaire to be familiarised with, visually (re)discovering the islands.

Power relations that are at play here are important: as the islands were relatively unknown in Dutch eyes, the representation in photos influences the way they are seen. The power of the Netherlands over the islands is a fact, but the (mostly) Dutch photographers were also in the powerful position of capturing the islands. With this combination, photography then becomes what James Ryan describes as an “instrument of visual colonisation”.¹⁰⁶ The power of the outsider to visualise Aruba and Bonaire in photography, enables them to appropriate and define them.

What was photographed hardly changed throughout the twentieth century. Though some of the photographs are undated, the general period of production can be derived from their appearance. Every photographed topic is included in the source material from both before and after 1954. From these nature pictures therefore, it seems that the way the islands were looked at and appropriated in photography did not change significantly. During the twentieth century, the recurring picturesque representation and factual inclusion of flora and fauna continued. Differences between Aruba and Bonaire individually are also negligible, and if present, often self-explanatory: Aruba is more urbanised. As mentioned before, Bonaire is featured a little more in the ‘nature’ theme than Aruba, but aside from amounts of photographs, it is hard to distinguish differences visually. Of course, landmarks such as Aruba’s Hooiberg are characteristic, but the way the islands are pictured is very similar.

The twentieth century brought about political and economic changes, which not only affected Aruba and Bonaire, but also the Netherlands. The Charter of 1954 drew attention to the islands, at least briefly. It is striking then, that the way the nature of the islands is represented hardly changed. Though the photographs were a visual way to familiarise with the

¹⁰⁴ Older sources material from the different archives of this research did not include many images of landscapes, flora or fauna.

¹⁰⁵ Oostindie, *Paradise*, 164.

¹⁰⁶ Ryan, *Picturing Empire*, 72.

islands, they were one-sided, representing them in a stylised, distant manner. Rather than its portrayal of the islands, the photographs are therefore reflective of the Netherlands. The photographs parallel the rather unattached role the Netherlands played in the relationship with the Antilles: a connection that spans centuries, but one that is unwanted rather than amiable.

In short, the 79 nature photographs in the source material represent Aruba and Bonaire in two ways. Firstly, largely in line with pictorial conventions by William Gilpin, the picturesque image of Aruban and Bonairean landscapes is constructed through the repetition of natural elements and certain compositions that highlight the untouched and tropical features of nature. Secondly, the photographs of flora and fauna are represented in a way that provides an inventory of the foreign nature. Landscape photography of Aruba and Bonaire largely functioned as a way to uncover and describe the islands, but its seeming truthfulness by using a factual approach and picturesque devices disguised the way in which it also differentiates the islands as Other. This is what differentiates these pictures from common landscape photography: they cannot be seen without their (post)colonial context. The photos do not just portray nature, but landscapes that were colonised, taken largely from the perspective of the (former) coloniser. Not only does this reaffirm the power of (post)colonial photography and the visual hold over the islands, but the rather factual and tropicalised depiction of Aruba and Bonaire then becomes reflective of the semi-interested way the Dutch have been involved with the Antilles.

3. People

In this last chapter the category of photographs picturing people will be discussed. About half of the source material prominently features one or more person(s). In this category, they form the focal point of attention, by being named or shown prominently in the photograph. As previously mentioned, this theme is divided into three subcategories: ‘Dutch’, ‘tourists’, and ‘locals’.¹⁰⁷ Just as the Dutch represent the (post)colonial ties to the Netherlands, the tourists represent the upcoming industry. The people themselves are often not really part of Aruba and Bonaire: most are (Dutch) passers-by. Sometimes this distinction is not quite clear. The Dutch Friars of Tilburg for instance, often lived on the islands for a large amount of time. However, it will become clear below that their way of looking at the islands and depiction of themselves remained from a Dutch perspective, rather than an Antillean one. Thus, keeping in mind the aim of this research – looking at the representation of Aruba and Bonaire on the photographs – it made sense to make this distinction.

There are many more pictures showing people than built environments or landscapes: 215 versus 127 and 79, respectively. At first sight, therefore, it seems as though the local population was more important and interesting to photograph for the Dutch photographers and archives. However, after sorting the photos this is a bit more nuanced. By dividing the photographs under the three subcategories, it became clear that the local populations of Aruba and Bonaire are actually underrepresented in the archives. Only half of the 215 photographs in this theme have islanders as their main focus. The photographs that picture people who are not part of the local population include mostly pictures of the Friars of Tilburg themselves, but also include other non-locals. From this initial categorisation of the source material it therefore seems that the local population and way of life was not the primary interest of those who visited Aruba and Bonaire and took photographs.

In this chapter I will take a more in-depth view on how these groups of people are represented in the photographic material. The Dutch, the tourists and the local population will be discussed consecutively. I will show that the ‘outsiders’ are treated with much interest, whereas the local population remains unfamiliar through the anonymous and distant

¹⁰⁷ I realise this division is more complicated: the inhabitants of the Netherlands Antilles have a Dutch nationality and therefore are Dutch as well as Antillean. However, with regards to the topic of this research, I wanted to make a distinction between those who are the inhabitants of the islands and those who are not – especially since the presence of ‘both’ on the photographs is significant. To avoid long, complicated terms throughout the research and with a lack of better terminology, the former will be named ‘locals’, or ‘local population’, the latter will be called ‘Dutch’ and ‘tourists’.

representation of their professions and daily life. The ‘people’ photographs show the tension between the picturesque Other and the interest towards the ‘closeness’ of the islands with the Netherlands. The photos therefore fit into the trend throughout this research in which there is a tension between the similarity and difference, ‘Dutchness’ and foreignness, closeness and distance of Aruba and Bonaire.

3.1 *The Dutch*

While photographs of Dutch people might seem irrelevant when looking at the representation of Aruba and Bonaire, it is too easy to assume that the photographs of Dutch people on the islands are less important for this research. The significant amount alone, 86 out of 215 photographs, shows that it is worth including these images. Furthermore, not only what is shown of the islands but also what is *not* shown contributes to the way Aruba and Bonaire were seen from a Dutch point of view. Moreover, it is almost strange to not find any images of Aruba and Bonaire featuring Dutch people, after being part of the Netherlands for centuries. As will become clear below, the royal family, religious missionaries and the military are the most prominent groups of Dutch people in the archives.

Quite a significant amount of photographs features the Dutch royal family. Most of the pictures (20 out of 23) were found in the National Archives. Not surprisingly: since its foundation it has served as archive of the national government and institutions or people linked to that.¹⁰⁸ Part of the photographs are from the RVD, taken by press agencies such as Associated Press (AP) and *Algemeen Nederlands Persbureau* (ANP). Other photographic institutions such as *Spaarnestad* and *Algemeen Nederlandsch Fotobureau* (Anefo) have also contributed to the photos of the royals, with images taken by several known and unknown photographers. Pictures of press agencies used by news magazine *Elsevier* are included in the National Archives, as well as the large collection of photographer Willem van de Poll, who was both journalist-photographer and in-house photographer of the royal family. Three pictures are from the collection of KITLV, taken by an unknown photographer in 1944.

As head of the Kingdom, the ruling monarchs of the House of Orange (*Huis van Oranje*) were the head of the East and West Indies as well as the Netherlands, but the role they played was first and foremost a symbolic one. Because of the great distances and cultural differences, the Netherlands and its colonies were never regarded as one community. Colonial policies by the Dutch made little effort to change this. Over time however, the ‘*Oranjes*’ were

¹⁰⁸ Nationaal Archief, “Ons verhaal.”

used as an instrument to improve these ties and provide a connection between the colonies and the motherland – or at least insinuate one.¹⁰⁹ Under the rule of Queen Wilhelmina (1898-1948) education became an important tool to create a sense of community, in which Dutch history and the royal family took prominent places.¹¹⁰ Furthermore, photography and radio made it possible to come closer to the colonial population, changing the direct communication with the colonies.¹¹¹ During Wilhelmina's reign, royal birthdays and anniversaries – 'Oranjevieringen' – became regular celebrations in the colonies. Queen's Day, her birthday, eventually developed into an annual day of festivities in the colonies, but also marriages, births, deaths and engagements within the royal family became reasons to celebrate.¹¹² There are some photographs in the source material that show these celebrations, which will be discussed below.

Only in the mid-twentieth century, did the symbolic connection between the West Indies and the Netherlands become a little more tangible, when queens and princesses started to visit the islands (and, before its independence in 1975, also Suriname) on a fairly regular basis. Queen Wilhelmina paid little attention to the Caribbean part of the kingdom and never visited; her priorities lay with the Dutch East Indies – though the long trip might also have played a role.¹¹³ Wilhelmina's son-in-law, Prince Bernhard, was the first royal to set foot in the West in the twentieth century in 1942, more than a hundred years after Prince Hendrik first visited in 1835, and he returned to the islands on his own in 1950 as well.¹¹⁴ However, not these visits, but Princess Juliana and Prince Bernhard's visit in 1944 is the first one included in the sources. Other photographs were made during their visit eleven years later – the first ever visit from a reigning monarch. Their daughter, Princess Beatrix, set foot on Aruba and Bonaire in 1958, in 1965 and again in 1966, introducing her new husband Prince Claus. Beatrix has been to the Antilles many times since then, as well as her children after her.

¹⁰⁹ Oostindie, *De parels*, 47.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 43, 64.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 52.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 73-4, 78, 82.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 105.

¹¹⁴ Johannes Hartog, *De banden tussen Oranje, de Nederlandse Antillen en Aruba* (Zutphen: De Walburg Pers, 1988), 22.

The state visits were important to encourage the bond between the Antilles and the Netherlands and affirm the ties they had – especially around the time the Charter of 1954 was implemented, as the relation was of a more political nature.¹¹⁵ The royal visits shortly after the semi-decolonisation appear in the source material most frequently. Though it might seem strange that the royals visited more often after 1954, the royal family was one of the few remaining connections to the Netherlands after the dissolution of the Caribbean islands as colonies. The new place of the Antilles in the Dutch kingdom meant a continuation of the relationship.¹¹⁶ Even though Beatrix, both as princess and as queen, frequently visited the islands as part of this relationship, royal visits after 1966 are not included in the sources. Possibly, the visits had lost their appeal and significance because they became more common occurrences. Moreover, the islands were becoming politically less important for the Netherlands during that time, as the original goal of the Charter was full independence. This trend of increasing interest in the islands in the 1940s and 50s and reversal from the 1970s onwards, is thus reflected in the amount of pictures in the source material.

The early state visits were treated with much splendour: the photos in the archives show a wide variety of events that were organised for the members of the royal family. Ribbons were cut and new buildings were revealed by the princess or queen, such as the opening of a new nursery school (illus. 3.1). They visited the Boy Scouts or the Lago oil



3.1 "Koninklijk bezoek aan Aruba, koningin Juliana knipt lintj door van de nieuwe kleuterschool te Sta Cruz op Aruba" *De Vries, Anefo, NA. 3 October 1965.*



3.2 "Prinses Beatrix bezoekt op Aruba de Caribe club." *Spaarnestad, NA. 17 februari 1958.*



3.3 "Tijdens het bezoek van prinses Juliana aan Bonaire wordt mevrouw A. van Essen-Vuurmans aan haar voorgesteld." *KITLV. 1944.*

¹¹⁵ Oostindie, *De parels*, 102.

¹¹⁶ Oostindie, *De parels*, 108.



3.4 "Koninklijk bezoek aan de West. Het koninklijk paar bezoekt het "Imeldahof" een tehuis voor wezen op Aruba." AP, RVD, NA. 1955.



3.5 "Begroeting van koningin Juliana op Bonaire." W. van de Poll, NA. 1955.



3.6 "Onthulling monument voor Koningin Wilhelmina in Oranjestad op Aruba door koningin Juliana." Elsevier, NA. 22 October 1955.

refinery on Aruba (Prince Bernhard), or a hospital in Oranjestad (Queen Juliana). The events were formal: people stood in line to shake hands at their arrival, dinner parties or receptions – often from an appropriate distance (illus. 3.2 and 3.3).

Moreover, the majority of the photographs show a crowd of local Arubans or Bonaireans in the background, for instance while the royals drove by in an open car (illus. 3.4). It was a joyous occasion when members of the royal family visited the islands. For the visit in 1955, a carriage and horses were transported to Curaçao for a procession through Willemstad.¹¹⁷ On Bonaire, the arrival of Queen Juliana and Prince Bernhard was celebrated with a large group of children in formation, performing an "aubade" dressed in nice outfits. Interestingly, in one picture, no less than eight Dutch flags can be seen and not a single flag of the Netherlands Antilles (illus. 3.5). The grandeur with which these visits were treated were seemingly supposed to honour the Dutch Queen rather than celebrate a newly formed country and their inclusion in the kingdom. The royal visits after 1954 were more a confirmation of the status quo of the close relationship between the royal house and the islands, than a break with the past.

This is also exemplified with the unveiling of a statue of Wilhelmina in Oranjestad, Aruba. Queen Juliana can be seen in front of the statue on a photograph taken in 1955, while a large crowd around her watches along (illus. 3.6). During their visit, the name of the Aruban airport was changed

¹¹⁷ Hartog, *De banden*, 51.

to “Princess Beatrix Airport”, just as many other buildings, streets, and squares were named after one of the royals. The monarch remained the head of the kingdom after the Charter came into effect, and political autonomy did not seem to diminish that connection. Generally, the royals were beloved in the Caribbean part of the Dutch kingdom, more so than in the East Indies. This largely has to do with the popular belief that King Willem III was responsible for the abolition of slavery in Suriname and the Dutch Antillean. Though his direct involvement has long since been questioned, it has influenced the popularity of the royal family.¹¹⁸ Royal visits further encouraged this relationship. The royals were not only a useful middleman from a Dutch perspective: the Antilles also saw them as an intermediary between themselves and the unpopular meddling of politicians from The Hague – a view that hasn’t changed to this day.¹¹⁹

Even though they were far more powerful in policies regarding the kingdom’s colonies or countries than the royal family, Dutch politicians cannot be found on the photographs. Important meetings that resulted in the Charter or independence of Suriname and Aruba were held in the Netherlands. As a colony, the islands did not have their own government; important decisions were all made in The Hague. After 1954, the Netherlands Antilles formed an autonomous country and as such, political visits from the Netherlands did not often occur. When they did, there was significantly less splendour. Furthermore, both before and after the Charter came into effect, the royal family were the instrument to connect the islands and ‘The Hague’.¹²⁰

Most of the photos depicting the royal family were taken at a time when the relationship between the Netherlands and the Antilles was changing: the call for decolonisation after the Second World War increased – the independence of Indonesia was still ongoing – and when that was ‘finalised’, the new relationship needed to be re-evaluated. As usual, the royal family functioned as linking party. At the same time, they also affirmed the hierarchy of the roles the two parties played: the Netherlands and her kingdom, and the Antilles as only a minor part of that. The heavily orchestrated royal visits depicted on the photographs were strongly oriented towards the Netherlands, symbolising the commonality of the islands with the Netherlands. It was about the Dutch royals, and about the unity of the islands with the Netherlands. At the same time, these photos were most likely to reach the Dutch public, as the photos were mostly made by journalist agencies and government services; the royal visits were news-worthy. The photos of the royal visits then, did not so

¹¹⁸ Oostindie, *De parels*, 51.

¹¹⁹ Meindert van der Kaaij, “De Oranjes zijn nogal populair op de Antillen,” *Trouw*, 11 September 2017, <https://www.trouw.nl/home/de-oranjes-zijn-nogal-populair-op-de-antillen~a0dbf73c/>.

¹²⁰ Oostindie, *De parels*, 113.



3.7 "Kralendijk, convent. fr. Bernardinus Lemans (?), fr. Julianus van Gijzel, fr. Ferentius van de Voort, fr. Arnoldo Broeders, fr. Benedicto van Hoek, fr. Desiderius Coopmans." *Friars of Tilburg*. 1961.



3.8 "Convent. Fr. Joannes de Deo Verbunt, fr. Benedicto van Hoek, fr. Priscus (?) de Wilde, fr. Ladislaus v. Bladel, fr. Ewaldus v. Hoof, fr. Bernardinus." *Friars of Tilburg*. 1930.

much show the inclusion of the Antillean islands, as reinscribe their small role into a kingdom that was first and foremost Dutch.

Another prominent group of photographs in the sources are from the Friars of Tilburg. Other than the royal family, whose pictures were mostly taken on Aruba, most of these photographs are taken on Bonaire. As will become clear, many pictures feature friars themselves and their educational missionary work. While this was extended from Curaçao to Aruba and Bonaire from 1914 onwards, the mission on Aruba was gradually taken over by the brotherhood *Broeders van de Christelijke Scholen* since 1937.¹²¹ Indeed, with the exception of three pictures and not taking into account the undated pictures, the Aruban collection stops after 1937. The friars' missionary work continued on Bonaire and by 1950, the friars ran three schools on the islands.¹²² The collection of photographs by the friars in Bonaire is therefore more than twice the size of the Aruban pictures.

The friars are featured significantly in this category – literally. Though their archive includes pictures of local Arubans or Bonaireans, a third of the total amount of pictures from their collection focuses on themselves. These are often portraits or group photos, almost always accompanied by a precise description with everyone's names and the occasion. Many pictures show a convent, where the group of friars is photographed in a static pose and formation (illus. 3.7 and 3.8). Similar are the group pictures taken during visitations by other

¹²¹ "Broeders van de Christelijke Scholen," Repertorium van Nederlandse zendings- en missie-archieven 1800-1960, Huygens ING, accessed on 3 May 2018, <http://resources.huygens.knaw.nl/zendingoverzeeskerken/RepertoriumVanNederlandseZendings-EnMissie-archieven1800-1960/gids/organisatie/1871249001>.

¹²² De Jong and Ketelaar, "De Caraïbische fotocollectie," 139.

friars (illus. 3.9). For the friars, these were important events that, as the collection shows, were eagerly documented.¹²³

The archive is compiled of private collections from different friars. The large number of personal photographs is therefore not so surprising. They did not only capture official moments, but also excursions and the friars during their free time (illus. 3.10 and 3.11). It gives the archive the appearance of a family photo album: both leisure and official events were captured on the photographs. Whether or not they had the intention of showing what they were doing during their mission to the people back in the Netherlands is hard to establish. Though a small number of pictures was sent to the Netherlands and used for publicity purposes, the sheer size of the collection could indicate that they did not have any goal for these photographs, other than simply documenting their time on the islands.¹²⁴

The personal nature of the archive, especially when the photographs concern people, also emphasises what the photographs do not show: the locals and their culture. The friars spent many years on the islands, and were preoccupied with their mission: educate the population so that they would become devoted and exemplary citizens. There was hardly any interest in local language and tradition, simply because it was not what they were there for.¹²⁵ Moreover, European ways of living and religious ideas were seen as the standard. Any other



3.9 "Visitatie fr. Prudentius, 1946/47. Aankomst fraterhuis. Fr. Julianus v. Gijzel, fr. Benedicto v. Hoek, fr. Prudentius v. Grootel, fr. Walfried v. Etten, fr. Arnoldo Broeders." *Friars of Tilburg. Bonaire, 1946.*



3.10 "Frater die kippen voert." *Friars of Tilburg. Aruba, 1931.*



3.11 "Kralendijk. Bij de Oranje Pan (zuidpunt eiland). Vuurtorenwachter met fr. Cypriano Klemans, fr. Realino Janssen en mhr. V.d. Kuip." *Friars of Tilburg. Bonaire, 1950.*

¹²³ De Jong and Ketelaars, "De Caraïbische fotocollectie," 155.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 137.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 150.

meaningful way of living life was not even thought of, and therefore not explored.¹²⁶ Thus, while the appearance of personal photos makes sense, it is also telling: the interest of the friars was not with the local culture, but with imposing the Dutch ways and religion on the Aruban and Bonairean children. The superiority of the Dutch culture was self-evident.

This is not to say that the friars did not include local Arubans or Bonaireans in their pictures at all, but the number of photographs that include them is relatively small. Unsurprisingly, children are most often seen next to friars in the pictures, given the friars' extensive missionary work in education. Again, important events were documented by the friars, such as visitations to schools where the children were lined up to welcome their visitor. The boy scouts are featured as well – the friars also included the organization of useful leisure activities in their missions.¹²⁷ At first glance it is not a very notable part of the collection. However, when looking at the descriptions, it becomes clear that – unlike the friars – the children are never identified. They are only defined as 'children', or '1st grade'. Sometimes, the locals pictured with the friars are not even mentioned at all. Illustration 3.12 appears to be a photo of a visit to a local family with three named friars. The location is not described, nor are the other five people in the picture. The friars apparently ventured outside their own schools and friar house, but it is not entirely clear with what intention. "Visitation" indicates a visit from another friar, who, considering the sometimes remote locations, were taken on a tour of the island. Thus, while their mission was a devout aspiration to do good for the local population, the photographs suggest that this interest did not extend much beyond educational or leisure purposes.



3.12 "Visitatie fr. Tharcisio. Op Bonaire. Fr. Tharcisio Horsten, fr. Maxentius Baijens, fr. Conradus de Jong." *Friars of Tilburg. Bonaire, 1935.*



3.13 "Fr. Candidus, fr. Cypriano en fr. Desiderius met enkele gasten voor de "visafslag". *Friars of Tilburg. Bonaire, 1995.*

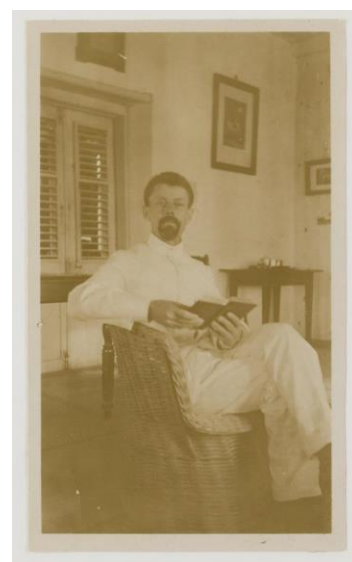
¹²⁶ Stated by Rien Vlssers, archivist of the Friars of Tilburg, Tilburg, 26 April 2018.

¹²⁷ De Jong and Ketelaar, "De Caraïbische fotocollectie," 147.

Throughout the collection, developments and changes can be seen. From 1968 onwards, the friars' distinctive white robes and cross around their neck made way for a more everyday attire, in the form of a button-up shirt and tie. This was not just a change on the Caribbean islands, but a development that was set in motion in the Netherlands as well. Times were changing: the authority of the church, both in the Netherlands and on the islands, was declining. The informal attire made the friars more approachable. Two pictures from 1995 – the most recent images – show that the decent shirt and tie already disappeared: by then, the friars dressed in everyday clothes, making them even less distinctive as friars (illus. 3.13).

Furthermore, the amount of pictures over time mirror the developments of the friars' missionary work on the islands. As mentioned before, the Aruban collection more or less ends in the 1930s. The Bonairean part slims down significantly after the 1960s: aside from the pictures from 1995 there is just one more from 1974 in the source material. The group of friars is only decreasing: the pictured men are the same as a couple of decades before, only older with grey hair. Even though they were still on Bonaire until 2011, the role they played on the islands was minimised over the last few decades. Religion did not disappear, but it became less influential in the areas in which the friars were active: education and leisure. Moreover, as their status as colony disappeared in December 1954 with the Charter, so did the colonial ideologies, which partly underpinned the friars' missionary work.¹²⁸ Since the late nineteenth century, education in the colonies served as a way to emphasise the ties to the Netherlands, through teaching Dutch history and values.¹²⁹ The reluctant responsibility that the Netherlands had as coloniser also played a role in the perceived importance of mission work. When the islands formed the Netherlands Antilles after the Charter, the responsibility of education fell into their own hands, as they now were an autonomous country.¹³⁰ Dutch involvement with its Caribbean partners only became smaller. Thus, the presence of the friars on the islands became less relevant as it could no longer be justified through colonial relations.

There are twelve pictures of men and women that neither feature members of the royal family, nor friars of the congregation in Tilburg, but whose descriptions indicate that



3.14 "Predikant A. van Essen op Aruba." KITLV. 1923.

¹²⁸ De Jong and Ketelaar, "De Caraïbische fotocollectie," 147.

¹²⁹ Oostindie, *De Parels*, 64.

¹³⁰ Oostindie and Klinkers, *Decolonising*, 85.

they are Dutch. Interestingly, the people that are portrayed do thematically correlate with the royals or Tilburg missionaries.

While many Catholic congregations found their way to the Antilles in the nineteenth and twentieth century, the Protestant church formed the second religion on both islands.¹³¹ Within the sources, prominent figure of the Protestant church Aaldert van Essen is featured multiple times (illus. 3.14). He worked as a missionary-teacher on the Maluku islands, before he was sent to Aruba and Bonaire in 1919. He was a preacher and vicar for the Utrecht mission association of the Protestant church, working on both Aruba (until 1930) and Bonaire (until 1945).¹³² Photographs of him were all found in the collection of KITLV, where his sermons, notes, and other works are also kept.

During the royal visits, photographer Willem van de Poll did not only photograph the members of the royal family, but also the events surrounding their visit. He photographed a press centre on Aruba (illus. 3.15) and people dancing at an event where Queen Juliana was invited. The Dutch military was also an important part of these visits and the islands in colonial times in general: the photographs show a lieutenant on a marine boat, festivities in the military camp in Savaneta, Aruba, and the guard of honour during the reveal of a statue of Queen Wilhelmina. The NMWC archive also featured a photograph of several military men, placing a beacon as part of what is described as scientific research on Bonaire (illus. 3.16).

Religion, the royal family, and the military are all aspects that are important from a Dutch point of view, especially in the early twentieth century. The large amount of photos of Dutch



3.15 "Perscentrum op Aruba." W. van de Poll, NA. 24 October 1955.



3.16 "Militairen plaatsen een baken tijdens een wetenschappelijk onderzoek op Bonaire." NMWC. 1921-40.

¹³¹ Hartog, *Aruba*, 388; Hartog, *Bonaire*, 354.

¹³² "Essen, Aaldert van," Repertorium van Nederlandse zendings- en missie-archieven 1800-1960, Huygens ING, accessed on 8 October 2018, <http://resources.huygens.knaw.nl/zendingoverzeesekerken/RepertoriumVanNederlandseZendings-EnMissie-archieven1800-1960/gids/persoon/3982692503>; Hartog, *Aruba*, 295, 383.

people is significant; even though they were not directly part of the islands, they were seemingly important to capture. The photographs visualise the constant relationship between the islands and the Netherlands but portray distance at the same time: what is photographed does not show the presence of foreigners on the Antilles, but rather the presence of Dutch people on foreign islands. The Dutch heritage is emphasised, instead of Antillean culture explored.

This trend changes at the end of the century. The photos are almost all made at a time when Aruba and Bonaire were still a Dutch colony, or shortly after. The number of pictures of Dutch people significantly decreases after the semi-decolonisation. Although issues such as the royal house and religion were once important to a colonising country, the interest in these things declined when the Antillean islands became autonomous. Continuing responsibilities such as political cooperation and military support were increasingly perceived as a burden.

3.2 *The tourists*

Of some of the photographs, sixteen in total, it was clear that the pictured people were neither certainly Dutch, nor Arubans or Bonaireans. The photographs were, without exception, made on the beaches of the islands, without any descriptions of the people that were captured. Several beach clubs are featured, as well as Palm Beach on Aruba and other unnamed beaches. The people are seen lying on sunbeds, the palm trees are prevalent. These photos clearly show the tourism industry on the islands.

Of the two islands, tourism has had a longer history on Aruba than on Bonaire. Though the island was dependent on its oil industry, the tourism industry gained a more prominent role since the 1950s and gradually became an important source of income for the Arubans. Together with its natural appeal to tourists through “sun, sand and sea,” this growth was set in motion by passenger cruise ships stopping at Aruba since the first arrival of the *Tradewind* in 1957, and the development of air travel.¹³³ Though it was later reopened, the shut-down of the oil refinery in the 1980s propelled the investment into the tourism industry even more. Efforts were made to accommodate guests in new hotels, nice looking beaches and newly constructed roads. The influence of North American tourists and investments became noticeable: American hotel branch Holiday Inn, for instance, is captured by Willem Diepraam in 1975. In other words, Aruba was shaped into a tourism paradise.¹³⁴

¹³³ Cole and Razak, “How Far,” 415; Jefferson Dilman, *Colonizing Paradise: Landscape and Empire in the British West Indies* (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 2015), 181; Hartog, *Aruba*, 342.

¹³⁴ Razak, “Culture under Construction,” 449.



3.17 "nederlandse antillen, bonaire," RVD, NA. Date unknown.



3.18 "Terras met parasollen." Friars of Tilburg. 1942.

It was when independence negotiations with the Netherlands started in 1981, that a government plan for the tourism industry, called "First Aruba Tourism Plan," was made.¹³⁵ Presumably all of the photos in the sources are made before this period, when the tourist industry was arguably of greater significance and more important for Aruba than for Bonaire, but still relatively small compared to the greater Caribbean islands and tourism on Aruba today. The small amount of photographs of tourists and the industry – sixteen out of four hundred – account for this, but the image of Aruba as the vacation paradise as it is known today cannot be compared to Aruba in the mid-twentieth century.

Though tourists certainly have found their way to Bonaire as well, the size of the industry is still relatively small.¹³⁶ Without a great industry such as the Aruban and Curaçaoan oil refineries and the related labour migrants, the island's development lagged behind. It is not surprising then, that Aruban tourism is featured more in the source material than Bonaire. Of the sixteen photographs that specifically feature the tourism industry, twelve are made on Aruba.

The majority of the photographs is made between 1942 and 1977. Many are taken in the 1970s by Willem Diepraam during his travels. Why the remaining pictures are not more recent, especially since the development of photography and the tourist industry at that time, is unclear. There are five undated photographs, but their black-and-white appearance and pictured clothing styles indicates they are likely from the same period.

The touristic appeal of the islands is shown on the group of pictures through leisure and vacation activities on the one hand, and its natural beauty on the other. On photographs of both Aruba and Bonaire, aquatic activities are pictured or described. Water cycling, water skiing, swimming, sailing – all is available on the islands. The beach clubs are pictured with

¹³⁵ Cole and Razak, "How Far," 415.

¹³⁶ Hartog, *Bonaire*, 236.

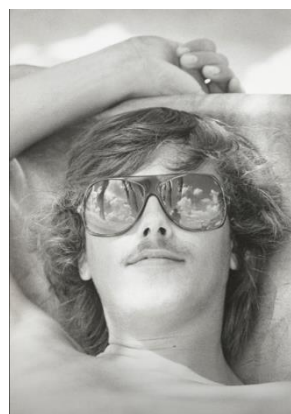
sunbeds and the many parasols, the tourists often lying on the sunbeds or swimming in the sea (illus. 3.17 and 3.18). It creates an atmosphere of ultimate luxury and relaxation. Illustrative are the photographs of Willem Diepraam. His photos show families and elderly on the beach and in the sea – an ultimate vacation feeling (illus. 3.19). In illustration 3.20, a rare close-up portrait, man is lying on a sunbed, the palm trees and clouds reflecting in his sunglasses. Aruba and Bonaire are represented as paradises, where one can relax and enjoy vacation in the sun.

Moreover, the touristic photos also emphasize the beautiful nature of the islands. The beaches and ocean play an obvious role in this, as well as the numerous palm trees. They add a tropical appearance to tourism, the landscape, and the photograph. Similar to the beach views described in chapter two, the combination of palm trees and beaches are used in an aesthetically pleasing way: the contrast between light and dark, and objects close and in the distance leads the viewer's eye to the different facets of the islands (illus. 3.21 and 3.22). While the view lures the view to the beach or sea stretching out into the distance, palm trees are positioned in the left or right side of the frame. This highlights the tropical appearance of the islands, and – just as the parasols – also stresses the shade given by the palm trees versus the heat of the sun. Not only are the Aruba and Bonaire portrayed as the ultimate vacation destinations, the contrasting composition contributes to the construction of the islands as picturesque.¹³⁷

In none of the photographs, the people are described or named. In only one caption the word “tourists” is mentioned, in the other photographs they remain completely anonymous. For this aspect of the Antilles, it is not about the people, the tourists, but about tourism itself. The combination of leisure and sun, represented in the photographs through the beaches,



3.19 "Aruba, Palm Beach. 1977." W. Diepraam, Rijksmuseum.



3.20 "Aruba, 1977." W. Diepraam, Rijksmuseum.

aquatics and palm trees, is commodified, made for the tourist.¹³⁸ Picturing the islands as alluring places where, evidently, these luxuries exist and are available for

¹³⁷ Dilman, *Colonizing Paradise*, 137.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 181.



3.21 "Bonaire. Boot Zingara "Famingo Beach Club"." Elsevier, NA. Date unknown.



3.22 "Bonaire. 1977." W. Diepraam, Rijksmuseum.

everyone, makes the unknown, far-away islands more familiar and friendly.

The majority of the tourism photographs are taken by influential people or institutions. The touristic snapshots of the National Archives are made by – or at the very least commissioned by – the RVD and journalist magazine *Elsevier*. These two collections have a certain journalistic function, which makes the representation of the islands even more important. Though they might not have had a wide circulation, the photos of the RVD are official state photographs. This calls into question whether the attractive way the islands are represented in their collection was done purposefully; showing the positive sides of the ‘Dutch’ islands certainly benefits publicity. Similarly, the pictures of Elsevier were taken for, and sometimes published in, the journalistic magazine. As prominent institutes they are known for truthfulness and accuracy, and the way they portray Aruba and Bonaire therefore has significant power. As mentioned before, the source material from the Rijksmuseum only features photographs by photographer Willem Diepraam. His photographs taken on the Antillean islands were later published in his book *The Dutch Caribbean* and he also gained fame with his photographs for the influential magazine *Vrij Nederland*.¹³⁹ His work is therefore not just artistic, but it has journalistic value as well. The power of the way Aruba and Bonaire (along with Suriname and the other four islands) were captured through his eyes can therefore not be underestimated.

The tourism industry on the islands is a world made for and catered to outsiders. It is a part that is largely created, one that involves beautiful beaches and weather, as well as leisure opportunities – in other words, a world different from ‘home’. This is often promoted by islands themselves to attract tourists, but it is also a representation that is maintained through outsiders – whether tourists or not – and their way of looking at the islands. These pervading

¹³⁹ See: Willem Diepraam, *The Dutch Caribbean : Foto's uit Suriname en de Nederlandse Antillen* (Amsterdam: De Arbeiderspers, 1978).

images become characteristic of the islands, “despite the specificities of, and changes in, local geopolitical environments.”¹⁴⁰ The exotic picturesque is therefore not only captured with what was naturally there, but also with what was selectively made to look picturesque.

In doing so, the photos not only reinforce the representation of the islands as picturesque, but also reveal that the locals do not play a part in this. Though picturesqueness is a factor in their representation (which will be discussed in chapter 3.3), it is striking that within the *tourist* picturesque, the local is hardly included. It seems that from a tourist perspective the general leisure and exoticness a tropical island has to offer was preferred over local specificity. From the photographs alone, it is hard to define the islands as Aruba and Bonaire, only as a touristic paradise.

3.3 The locals

The remainder of the photographs in this theme feature Arubans or Bonaireans. Only 113 out of the 216 photographs solely focus on the local populations, which is only a quarter of the total source material. When photographing the islands, or more specifically the people they encountered, the local peoples seemingly weren't of great importance.

Below, I will discuss different aspects of this theme: children and families, people on donkeys, politicians and workers. The ways the Arubans and Bonaireans are represented in the different archives are similar to the representation of the city- and landscapes described above. Without much of a grey area, Arubans and Bonaireans are either represented according to their nostalgic, simple or beautiful features, or rated and represented accordingly to their usefulness or status.

Striking about the pictures is the frequent portrayal of children: in



3.23 "'Voetbal.'" Friars of Tilburg. Aruba, 1923.



3.24 "'Kralendijk. GLO. St. Dominicus. Uitstapje 7e klas.'" Friars of Tilburg. 27-07-1960.



3.25 "'Kralendijk. Verkeners.'" Friars of Tilburg. Date unknown.

¹⁴⁰ Thompson, *An Eye*, 5.

twenty-five photos Aruban and Bonairean children are central. Together with eight pictures of families, they apparently were of interest to the photographers. Logically, many of these pictures are taken by the Friars of Tilburg, as they were missionaries dedicated to the education of Bonairean and, for a brief period, Aruban children. Often, the children are pictured during several afterschool activities. While the friars made trips on their own, they organised excursions and other activities for the children they educated as well, to strengthen the relationship between the missionaries and the children.¹⁴¹ Several group pictures during those trips are included in the archive, such as a school class from the St. Dominicus school (illus. 3.23), and a group of Curaçaoan children during an excursion to Aruba. Football and boy scouts, two of the many sports and clubs related activities organised by the friars, are also pictured (illus. 3.24 and 3.25). The numerous afterschool ventures were an important way to make sure the children were spending their free time in the right and useful way.¹⁴² The friars captured these events on camera for themselves, but the frequent portrayal of the afterschool activities as part of their missionary work constructs an image of exemplary children.

The representation of the exemplary children is also prominent in other archives. Different from most pictures discussed in this chapter, is that the children are often pictured in a close-up portrait. This includes photographs by the friars, but also pictures of NMWC and NPM (illus. 3.26-3.29). It is unclear whether these pictures are made as part of a series, because the photographers are unknown. It is significant however, that children seem to be treated with much attention. The photographs are composed and well-lit, the children are posing and smiling in the frame. Their pretty clothes and – for the girls – nice hair suggests distinction. These children come across as perfect and exemplary, through their pretty, cute



3.26 "Jongen. N.N." Friars of Tilburg. Bonaire, date unknown.

3.27 "Meisje." NPM. Aruba, date unknown.

3.28 "Menig kind op Bonaire komt nog met een kalasji of "Nonenkap" op school." NPM. Bonaire, date unknown.

3.29 Untitled. NMWC. Aruba, date unknown.

¹⁴¹ De Jong and Ketelaar, "De Caraïbische fotocollectie," 147.

¹⁴² Ibid., 148.

and groomed appearance on well-composed photographs. Moreover, there is nothing that suggests that the children have encountered, or will encounter any hardship. They will be the flourishing next generation for Aruba and



3.30 "topografie , landen op naam, West-Indië, Nederlands" Spaarnestad, NA. Aruba, date unknown.



3.31 "'Grotwoningen van Slagbaai.'" Friars of Tilburg. Bonaire, date unknown.

Bonaire. As exemplary children, they therefore not only embody the prosperity of the present, but also represent a bright future for the islands.

When children are pictured from a bigger distance however, the distance in the figurative sense also increases. No longer are the children solely represented as perfect, but an aspect of primitivity comes to the fore. More context is provided through the visible background and surroundings – which are often the aspects on the picture that are described in the captions, rather than the people themselves. The surroundings usually include their homes, consisting of small buildings with thatched roofs near sand roads (illus. 3.30 and 3.31). While these pictures are mostly taken during colonial times, Willem Diepraam also captured a rougher side of Aruba in 1975: a dark, empty street where a boy falls down from his bike – a sombre sight totally opposite to the close-up portraits (illus. 3.32). As elaborate as the close-up portraits are – composition, lighting, perfect appearance – the more empty and scarce the surrounding and possessions of the children in the distant photographs appear. Capturing the children with their homes, highlights not their childlike innocence but their simple way of life, which is not only a whole other facet of the islands, but also a total opposite of Dutch ways. Representing the children through the primitive way they live, distances them according to their difference.

Several photographs of families as a whole focus on the difference of the local populations as well, through literal and figurative distance. In the same dark and woeful style as the falling boy, Diepraam also captured a father and daughter amidst their ramshackle house (illus. 3.33). It is clear that their living standards are quite poor, which is emphasised by placing the sandy floor and old wash tub with clothing on the line in the middle of the frame, rather than the father and child. The friars show the same primitive surroundings in the beginning of the twentieth century. Families – called “group” – posed in front of their home,



3.32 "Aruba, Sannicolas. 1975" W. Diepraam, Rijksmuseum



3.33 "Aruba, Sannicolas. 1977" W. Diepraam, Rijksmuseum

but the friars make no mention of who they are. Sometimes, they are not even mentioned at all, but seem to appear in a photograph that was meant to show only the houses and church in the background, reducing them to a small detail in the distance. As only 'richer' families could afford to send their children to the friars' boarding schools, these photographed children were likely not educated by the friars.¹⁴³ Though a characterless, stiff pose was more common in early photography, the anonymity of the photographed people and the literal distance from which they were often photographed isolates them from the photographer or viewer: they were looked at and Othered, not familiarised with.

Two tendencies are visible within these photographs. On the one hand, there is a focus on trouble-free and exemplary children, who may not always be identified, but are pictured in the photographs with detail and significance, showing their educational activities and good appearance, indicating that the Aruban and Bonairean children are doing well. These photographs are therefore rooted in the overarching idea of progress and development of the islands, which makes the islands more familiar from a Dutch perspective. On the other hand, a primitive lifestyle of children and families is emphasised by picturing their homes and surroundings. They are represented through their difference – poor, simple, unsophisticated – which distances them from the spectator.

Some pictures of the Friars, NA and NMWC feature locals using a donkey as a mode of transportation (illus. 3.34-3.37). The pictures are made between 1919 and 1965. The use of donkeys declined after this period, which is likely why the photos are not more recent. They include only one colour photo – which is the only image in which the donkeys do not carry people, but pull a cart of coconuts. The nature of the rest of the pictures is very similar every time: one or two people on or next to a donkey, sometimes with additional baggage attached to the donkey or carried on their head. In addition to personal transportation, donkeys were

¹⁴³ Stated by Rien Vlssers, archivist of the Friars of Tilburg, Tilburg, 26 April 2018.

often used to transport drinking water, for private use or intended for sale. Before the first waterworks with distillery and pipe lines were installed on Aruba in the 1930s, many Arubans were dependent on wells.¹⁴⁴ Bonaireans had to wait until 1949 until tap water was available to them, though private connections to the water network only slowly increased.¹⁴⁵ Indeed, Boy Lawson captured the use of a water well as late as 1964. The distances between homes and wells were often large, which made the use of donkeys very practical.



3.34 "Waterdraagsters." Friars of Tilburg. Aruba, 1922.



3.35 "Een meisje doet boodschappen op haar ezel." Friars of Tilburg. Bonaire, 1919.



3.36 "Vrouw en kind op ezel met watertonnen op Bonaire." W. van de Poll, NA. 1947.



3.37 "Watervervoer per ezel, bereden door een man met kind." NMWC. Bonaire, 1947.

On the photographs, the tins and barrels in which the water was transported is seen attached to the donkeys several times. Though collecting water from wells and rainwater barrels used to be standard for the Dutch, by then it was already something of the past. At the time the pictures were taken, the expansion of drinking water supply for Dutch households in the Netherlands was developing at full speed.¹⁴⁶ The use of barrels for water supply, and especially the use of donkeys, was therefore very unusual and a likely drive to capture it on camera: the primitive, slow-paced way of life was nostalgic.¹⁴⁷

Moreover, a sense of peculiarity comes about as the donkeys keep appearing throughout several decades. The surroundings are dry and overloaded with cactuses, the roads often unpaved and sandy. The people on the pictures, dressed in simple clothes, often seemed to pose for the photo, which highlights their distinctiveness: the same occasion was found

¹⁴⁴ Landswatervoorzieningsdienst, *Landswatervoorziening*, 67; Hartog, *Aruba*, 238.

¹⁴⁵ Landswatervoorzieningsdienst, *Landswatervoorziening*, 87; Hartog, *Bonaire*, 246.

¹⁴⁶ E.J.J. Cals Vewin, "De Drinkwatervoorziening in Nederland. Structuur en Organisatie," *H2O* 29, no. 7 (1996): 189.

¹⁴⁷ Mohammed, *Imaging*, 292.

interesting enough for different photographers at different times. Constructed here, is the local's picturesque, "for its very difference was constructed from the primitive versus developed, holding the binary opposition strongly in its place."¹⁴⁸

Not only is the appearance of the photographed people with their donkey and the use of the animal in general adding to the idea of primitivity, but the donkey itself also indicates lower standings. In contrast to the horse, which indicates wealth. Throughout several decades, the (use of) the donkey on the islands is repeatedly photographed, becoming a symbol of oddness, picturesqueness and primitivity on the islands.¹⁴⁹ This applies more so to Bonaire, as only two pictures were taken on Aruba. The image of Bonaireans with their donkeys reappears throughout several more decades, establishing a same slow-paced, primitive image of the island.

The actual construction of the water pipe network on Bonaire is also included in the archives (illus. 3.38). In one photo labourers are pictured working on road and water pipe construction in 1947, almost two years before the latter is completed. Workers form a significant part in the source material of the islanders: more than a quarter (30 pictures) features pictures of workers, from every archive but the Rijksmuseum. Many different professions are included in the photos. Men are pictured while fishing or working in the shipbuilding industry. Farmers and merchant are captured, as well as workers in the salt pans on Bonaire or oil refinery on Aruba (illus. 3.39-3.44). Though most workers are men, three photographs show women working in a sewing workshop.

The photos are taken between the 1930s and 1980s, showing a development on the islands: gradually, industry work becomes more prevalent. This is most notable on pictures of Aruba, where the oil industry grew significantly after the Second World War. The industrial development of Aruba is thus reflected in the archives. Photographs taken during the same time on Bonaire still picture people doing craft and trade work. The frequent appearance of the oil industry, not just in this theme but also as part of the cities and buildings in chapter 1, signifies a big preoccupation with the industrialisation of Aruba. It caused big changes for the island – employment, more income, immigration – which meant



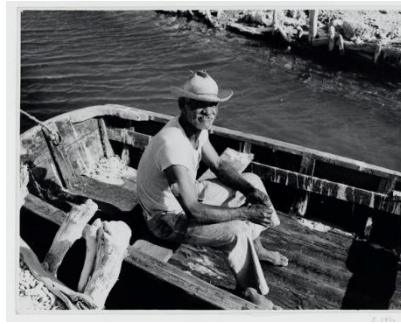
3.38 "Wegenbouw en aanleg van waterleiding op Bonaire" W. van de Poll, National Archives, 1947

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., 301.

¹⁴⁹ Mohammed, *Imaging*, 302.



3.39 "Vissters." Friars of Tilburg. Bonaire, date unknown.



3.40 "Visser op Bonaire." KITLV. 1930.



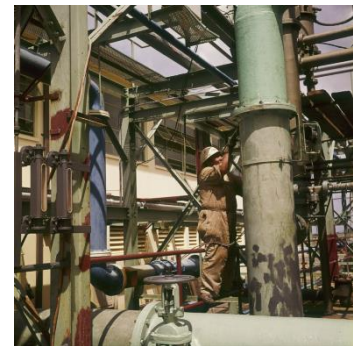
3.41 "Arbeiders aan het werk in de zoutpannen van Bonaire." W. van de Poll, NA. 1947.



3.42 "Man, langs het strand bezig met het afhakken van een boot." NPM. Bonaire, date unknown.



3.43 "Landarbeiders bewerken de grond op Plantage Aruba." B. Lawson, NMWC. Bonaire, 1964.



3.44 "Arbeider aan het werk in Lago olieraffinaderij." B. Lawson, NMWC. 1964.

that the island was significantly developing. This was a welcome change for the Netherlands, who experienced the Netherlands Antilles predominantly as a burden.¹⁵⁰ The islands were still part of the Dutch kingdom however, and an industrialising Aruba was therefore something that was worth showing for the Netherlands.

The local population is thus often photographed in an important context. This included work, but also the portrayal of churchgoers at the Aruban Roman-Catholic church (Friars of Tilburg) and aforementioned Van Essen's Protestant church in Rincon, Bonaire (KITLV). The prominence of religion on the islands is once again underlined, as well as the Dutch relevance the photographs often have: both churches were either important to or led by Dutch missionaries. Also pictured are Arubans celebrating royal festivities or demonstrating during independence negotiations in 1978, the latter of which was directly important to Dutch politics. Photographs of celebrations during the harvest festival on Bonaire are rare depictions of the island's specific customs. Willem Diepraam made a photo series during a funeral on Aruba. Within the source material, these are rare personal pictures, taken without clear context or motivation.

¹⁵⁰ Oostindie and Klinkers, *Decolonising*, 199.

Overall, one characteristic that was found in the photographs of Dutch people in chapter 3.1 continues here: Arubans and Bonaireans are, with only a handful of exceptions out of the 113 photographs, not mentioned by name. Families are called “group”, children form a “class”, people at work are simply called “workers” or, for instance, “fishers”. Moreover, sometimes the people on the pictures are not mentioned at all, with only the location or activities in the descriptions, such as “football”, “Kralendijk” or “the lenses of the Willemtower”. One picture by the Friars of Tilburg, shows “cook Dora and her niece Aurora,” a seldom photograph of which the friars apparently knew the people on the picture. However, it is likely that Dora was their own cook, someone that was close to them in a professional manner. While it may seem not out of the ordinary to not identify people on pictures – how often do we know the names of people we photograph in other countries? – many of the people on the pictures are people the photographers have educated or lived next to (Friars of Tilburg), or are often captured with the intention to describe the islands (KITLV, National Archives). It is therefore striking that the Arubans and Bonaireans on the photographs largely remain anonymous. They are only looked at, through the lens of the camera of an outsider. The distance between the photographer and the photographed stays intact.

Moreover, regardless of the motivation or context behind the picture, the nameless and distant people on the images – whether children, fishermen or mothers – makes the photograph appear more ‘real’ and ‘accurate’. As Paul Landau describes: “The more “remote” from Western experience a photographed person appeared to be, the “truer,” because more “authentic,” he was [...]”¹⁵¹ Authenticity defines the photographed people as ‘the’ local, generalizing and constructing a timeless idea about what the local entails. Paradoxically, anonymity serves as a more truthful picture; closeness and individuality only destroys the ‘real’ depiction of the local.

It is only when people with a certain rank or status are photographed that the distance and anonymity fades, without diminishing its truthfulness. Here, it is not about a general ‘authentic’ image of people, but about a specific individual.



3.45 "Nicky Ecurie bij het graf van zijn broer Boy die stierf voor de vrijheid van Nederland. Verzetsstrijder Boy Ecurie werd op 6 november 1944 door een Duits executiepeloton op de Waalsdorpervlakte in Den Haag doodgeschoten." Spaarnestad, NA. Aruba, 1986.

¹⁵¹ Paul S. Landau, “Empires of the Visual: Photography and Colonial Administration in Africa,” in *Images and Empires: Visuality in Colonial and Postcolonial Africa*, eds. Paul S. Landau and Deborah D. Kaspin (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 154. 137-168

This is especially clear when the photographs involve people that are of direct relevance to the Netherlands. A photograph from 1986 of Nicky Ecurie is one such example of this.

Ecurie is photographed next to his brother's grave (illus. 3.45).

During the Second World War, Aruban-born Boy Ecurie was part of the Dutch resistance.

Forty years after his death in 1944, he received a Resistance Heroes Commemorative Cross, with which his brother is seen in the photograph.¹⁵²

Moreover, Antillean politicians are notable exceptions of the level of anonymity in the pictures as well.

Naturally, as the islands formed their own local governments after 1954, Antillean

politicians became relevant for the Netherlands, which is reflected in the photographs.

Pictures of local politicians are all made in the thirty years after the Charter came into effect.

The Island council of Bonaire is featured in the archives, but also some important individuals.

Curaçaoan representative of the island's executive board (*bestuurscollege*) E.O. Petronia

(illus. 3.46) and Netherlands Antilles-minister W.F.M. Lampe are pictured on Aruba,

Bonairean governor A.J. van Hesteren can be seen during a ceremony on Bonaire (illus. 3.47).

Aside from his supporters, Betico Croes himself is also pictured by Willem Diepraam (illus.

3.48). The Aruban political activist was an pivotal figure in the island's path to independence from the Netherlands Antilles.¹⁵³ All these people were important and therefore treated with



3.46 "hotels, bouwnijverheid, plechtigheden, Hesteren A.J.v., Debrot Ch., Semmelink mr." ANP, Elsevier, NA. Bonaire, 16 December 1961.



3.47 "Gedeputeerde E.O. Petronia houdt een toespraak bij de opening van de Arubaanse Technische School in Oranjestad op Aruba." W. van de Poll, NA. Aruba, 24 October 1955.



1.48 "Aruba, Betico Croes' aanhangers. 1977." W. Diepraam. 1977.

¹⁵² Janny Groen, "Arubaan Boy bestreed in Oisterwijk de Duitsers," *De Volkskrant*, 20 April 2001, <https://www.volkskrant.nl/nieuws-achtergrond/arubaan-boy-bestreed-in-oisterwijk-de-duitsers~b3cb0bc1/>; "Verzetsstrijder," Verzetmuseum, accessed on 1 November 2018, https://www.verzetmuseum.org/museum/nl/tweede-wereldoorlog/koninkrijkdernederlanden/suriname_antillen_aruba/suriname_antillen_aruba-nederland/verzet.

¹⁵³ Oostindie and Klinkers, *Decolonising*, 123.

more attention and greater detail in the different collections. The status of the person photographed and their proximity to the Dutch government influence the way they were looked at, and how they were captured and saved in the archives.

A small part of the photographs of local Arubans and Bonaireans thus features more detailed photos of people with importance or relevance: industry workers, politicians, historical figures. It emphasises the islands' development and relationship with the Netherlands. Mostly however, the local population is represented through their difference: use of donkeys, poor housing, small crafts or trade. The Otherness of the local population is not necessarily uncivilised or lagging behind, as much as it is nostalgic or picturesque. However, this conceals the anonymous, distant approach in which this is done as a natural way of looking.

Over the course of the twentieth century, the representation of the people pictured on photographs taken on Aruba and Bonaire has not changed much, but there are some minor differences noticeable. Firstly, the amount of pictures in this theme is presumably a little bigger taken after 1954. Even though this is a selection of photographs, and could therefore slightly differ in the archives as a whole, the change is striking. The collection of photographs of cities and buildings for instance, features more pictures taken before 1954, which could signify a change of interest by the photographers and institutions after the Charter was implemented, from urban photography to the population. Secondly, there are also more recent pictures of people in the source material, in contrast to the built environments and landscapes; photos of the last three decades of the century mostly feature locals.

Thirdly, three photo series within the second half of the century partly caused the increase of photos: Willem van de Poll (1955), Boy Lawson (1964) and Willem Diepraam (1975-78). The royal visit of Queen Juliana and Prince Bernhard meant the islands were in the spotlight and the many pictures of royal photographer Van de Poll in the National Archives are therefore influencing the visualisation of the islands. Lawson photographed the islands as part of his work for the Royal Tropical Institute. His pictures of people admittedly feature local Arubans or Bonaireans, but they are almost always pictured at work. Aside from his touristic snapshots, Willem Diepraam's photo series is the only collection that clearly invests in showing the locals and their daily life. His pictures – that are also relatively recent – are more personal and stylised compared to the visualisation of locals in other pictures, and do not feature anything other than locals or tourists. His photographs therefore fit into the apparent growing interest into the local population at the end of the century.

The different people and settings on the photographs also changed, though often quite logically. Aruban and Bonairean politicians are only pictured in photos after 1954, as they did not rule themselves as colony. Furthermore, the pictures of members of the Dutch royal family increased significantly in the 1950s and 1960s, a change which was quickly reversed afterwards. The many pictures of workers later also included industry workers from the refinery.

However, these changes are not set in stone, nor can they be overestimated. The photographs are a selection of the archives, of which many are undated, so these are not absolute numbers. While the amount of pictures apparently grows, it is rather sporadic in the second half of the century, mostly because of the photo series by the three photographers. In between those peaks are also large gaps. Moreover, the amount of pictures of the Dutch and tourists remains comparable to the locals, so while there may be a change as opposed to the first half of the century, outsiders on the islands were still captured as well. It is likely that the development of photography also changed what could be photographed. Newer cameras could more easily photograph in different settings, making it easier to capture people without having to pose and stand still.

As opposed to what is photographed and how much, *how* the people are represented has not changed greatly throughout the century. Willem Diepraam poses as an exception: his work can be regarded as art photography, attributed to his artistic style. But he was also a photojournalist during the time the photos of Aruba and Bonaire were taken and his photos thus carry weight as ‘truthful’ depictions. Furthermore, his photographs might stand out in terms of style, but they also contribute to a visualisation of the islands as tropical, poor, or in any other way different.

The representation of people on Aruba and Bonaire is ambivalent, showing a tension between outsider versus islander, individual versus type, and importance versus distance. Evidently, it is a continuation of the ways the cities, buildings and landscapes are visualised in the photographs. The idea of modernisation and the ties to the Netherlands that permeate through the photos of the built environments, and the picturesque difference of the nature, are reflected in the ways that people on the islands are photographed. While the photos of Dutch people and tourists emphasise progress, Dutch heritage and overall importance, the local population is largely ‘Othered’ by their professions, different appearance and houses, poorness, or lagging – but nostalgic – development. The photographs do not show the locals as individuals, such as the Dutch, but rather picture them as ‘the’ local. Differences are ignored, or nevertheless serve the visualisation of the typical Aruban or Bonairean, which is

only neglected when a specific person is of direct interest to the Netherlands – such as a politician – or can be seen as part of progress – such as schoolchildren and industry workers. While closeness with the Netherlands is emphasised by the importance or relevance of certain people, others are distanced through their difference.

In the end, the way the people were represented in the photographs from the Dutch archives, says less about the islands than the Netherlands itself. The royals, missionaries and tourists are represented in ways in which the islands are closely connected with or important to the Netherlands, but not the other way around. The apparent closeness therefore hides the distance. Similarly, the Othering of landscapes and peoples reveals the ways they were thought of as different, whether striking, strange or pretty, and therefore constructs the Netherlands or the Dutch as opposite.

Conclusion

Photography has been a major contributor to the visualisation of foreign lands and peoples. The precision with which unfamiliar territory could be recorded was a huge development from drawings and paintings, ascribing it the ability to show ‘the real’. The accuracy of photography was at the same time what propelled its use. As James Ryan notes: “[...] it was also this belief in the exactitude of the camera that shapes its uses in the exploration and survey of the peoples and landscapes of distant lands.”¹⁵⁴

The history of the Netherlands with the six Caribbean islands spans over centuries, but the way the Dutch visualised the islands – whether in paintings, maps or photographs – has not been given much attention. I have looked at the ways in which Aruba and Bonaire are represented in the photographs. Regardless of the eventual circulation of the photographs, the representation reveals much about how they were looked at from an outsider perspective, and thus carries its own meaning. But how are we to understand that complex meaning of these photographs? In the words of Patricia Mohammed: “How does the image work as a device for the imagination that position truth as slippery and the image as having both a concrete existence and one that can be imagined?”¹⁵⁵

The power of photographic visualisation of foreign lands and peoples transcends its claimed veracity. Though it provides a depiction of a certain place and time, every maker and viewer in relation to the photos is influenced by historical context and imbedded in social conventions and ideologies.¹⁵⁶ Within the context of colonial and postcolonial relations this is even more urgent, for the very reason territories were colonised was motivated politically, economically and ideologically. Photographic sources of the six Dutch-Caribbean islands Aruba and Bonaire (as well as Curaçao, Sint-Maarten, Sint-Eustatius and Saba) therefore can’t be simply regarded as truthful visualisations.

My main question was: what constituted a Dutch gaze in relation to Aruba and Bonaire in Dutch-made photographs from 1910 until 2000, collected in Dutch archives, and what was the influence of the Charter of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in 1954 on this way of looking at the islands? With both a content analysis and discursive approach, I have laid bare the ambivalent way Aruba and Bonaire are represented in the photographs. Through different themes and pictorial approaches, the islands are represented either by their ties with

¹⁵⁴ Ryan, *Picturing Empire*, 17.

¹⁵⁵ Mohammed, *Imaging*, 14.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 19.

the Netherlands and overall development, drawing the islands figuratively closer, or by their difference, essentially distancing them through Othering.

The focus on the difference of the islands is based for a large part on their tropical features. Palm trees, beaches, cactuses and the sea form an ideal image of a sunny paradise, often in a well-formed composition, echoing William Gilpin's first ideas about the construction of a picturesque painting. But the emphasis on difference extends beyond the beautiful. The marvel of the wide views and unfamiliar variety of plants and animals that are highlighted show the wonderment of the landscapes. Emphasising the picturesque beauty and tropical features hides the way Aruba and Bonaire are actually Othered. Figurative and literal distance remains, enabling the spectator to appropriate what is depicted: the landscapes and local populations are defined by their difference.

While colonial discourse often included 'positive' versus 'negative' traits – civilised/uncivilised, developed/backward – the trend in the photographic sources mainly revolves around the ways in which the islands are positively different: tropical, beautiful, nostalgic. As colonial territories, the islands were quite insignificant. The unknown lands did not only need to be made familiar, but also appealing. As Mohammed notes: "To be desired, the other needed to be transformed into the picturesque."¹⁵⁷ This becomes especially poignant as the islands were not regarded as necessary or necessarily wanted. The constructed picturesque images therefore serves as admiration as well; the overseas territories were 'Dutch' and a nice image would justify the unwanted islands.

At the same time, this is contradicted with how other facets of the islands are represented. The built environments and visitors coming to the islands are part of the construction of the image of islands in development, represented through various themes and devices. The portrayal of the oil industry of Aruba and to a lesser extent the salt industry and its workers on Bonaire have been a crucial factor in this, both before and after 1954, as well as their tourism sectors. It demonstrates the significance of their individual growth, for the islands themselves as well as the Netherlands. The frequent inclusion of Oranjestad and Kralendijk, among other urbanised areas, also proved to be a major preoccupation of the photographers: the actual development of the cities as seen from aerial photography, repeated street views and architecture. Moreover, Dutch religion was important; both Protestant and Catholic churches and missionaries are featured in the photos, which was especially in the

¹⁵⁷ Mohammed, *Imaging*, 294.

first half of the twentieth century regarded as important for the development of the islands by the Netherlands.

Direct and indirect links to the history with the Netherlands are given much attention in the photographs as well. Obviously, the Dutch royal family plays a big role in this, but also images of the former slave huts on Bonaire, the Dutch flag, royal celebrations and memorial plaques, as well as first Dutch settlements Fort Zoutman and Fort Kralendijk. They refer to prosperous colonial times and the ongoing ties as a result. The cities, buildings and outsiders are represented in the photos through their 'importance' for the Dutch. They are treated in a less distant manner, and foreground the closeness between the Netherlands and the islands. While Othering dominates the representation of landscapes and local populations, the representation of Aruba and Bonaire also revolves around a focus on relevance, by showing progress and the connection with the Netherlands.

To find Dutch-Antillean connections in colonial and postcolonial photographs is at first sight not that surprising, as the Dutch-Antillean relationship has lasted several centuries. What is interesting here, however, is that what makes the Antilles relevant to the Netherlands is actively portrayed in photographs, even though the islands as a whole never had a prominent place in Dutch colonial history. Interest in the region mostly revolved around the developments to decolonise, rather than efforts to tighten the relationship; ongoing ties are the result of a lack of better options, not a genuine commitment.¹⁵⁸ As such, Aruba and Bonaire are represented in the photographic sources in a way that puts forward their importance, and therefore relevance, serving as a symbolic justification of the Dutch-Antillean relations.

Several other issues have been of importance here. Firstly, having established the way the islands are represented in the photographs, the importance of the Charter of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in 1954 as possible turning point was questioned. Did the change from a colony to an autonomous country in 1954 also bring about change in the ways of looking at the islands? Insofar conclusions can be drawn from the amount of photographs over time, as I worked with a selection, some things are worth mentioning. Though many photos are undated, of a significant portion it can be decided whether they are taken before or after 1954 judging by their appearance. Then it became clear that more pictures were taken before the semi-decolonisation. At the end of the Second World War, the relationship with the colonies was at the top of the agenda, and the increased political attention until the Charter came into effect corresponds with the high amount of photographs taken during that time. After that, the

¹⁵⁸ Oostindie, *Paradise*, 176.

amount of pictures per decade decreases and becomes rather sporadic. Royal visits (1955 and 1965) and political developments such as Aruba's struggle for autonomy (1985), as well as several photo series by single photographers, are the cause of occasional increases. Photos taken in between these years are minimal. As such, it seems that the preoccupation of the Netherlands with the Antilles largely focused on Dutch(-Antillean) events, while generally interest decreased.

With regards to *what* is photographed, a shift is noticeable. Whereas the cities and buildings formed a large focus in the photographs taken before the semi-decolonisation, the amounts become negligible afterwards, especially after the 1960s. Simultaneously, the quantity of pictures made of people grows after 1954. More specifically, the photographs of the local population increases. The way they are represented however, does not entail a huge change: the people are still often unidentified, and being looked at from a distance. Similarly, the picturesque depiction of the landscapes in the photographs continues throughout the century. Whether the usage of photography of that time – as opposed to widespread photography in the digital age – plays a role in this was not part of this thesis, but it is interesting to look at.

Secondly, the question was raised if the development of the islands, from industrial to tourism economies, led to a different way of representing the islands. Bonaire was less industrialised and less catered to tourism in the twentieth century, which also was clear in the photographs. While the oil industry was influential and present on Aruba – as the photos also show – the social changes that came with it due to labour migration are not in any way reflected in the images. It is possible that the photographers did not know of societal changes and developments – delving into that question would require further research. However, the photographs do not show an elaborate or thorough representation of Aruba and Bonaire. Its depiction was largely of the refinery and the workers themselves, focussing more on the economic boost than the effects on the island. Similarly, the islands' tourism industry does form a part of the photographs, but they merely show the outsider on a paradise-like island.

Thirdly, the comparison between Aruba and Bonaire was important, as the islands differ from each other. The representation of these differences do not extend beyond the obvious: Aruba's more urbanised appearance is reflected in the source material, as well as Bonaire's prevalent nature. The oil industry on Aruba remained an important aspect, which Bonaire simply did not have. Strikingly, demographic differences between Arubans and Bonaireans are negligible in the photographs, let alone differences on the islands themselves. The differences between the islands that become clear in the photographs are aspects which

had already been laid out before the research. Any other major political, demographic or cultural differences between the islands do not appear; they are mostly lumped together as Antillean islands, not Aruban or Bonairean.

So, though the amounts of pictures are varying and decreasing throughout time, the representation of the cities, landscapes and people have not undergone a major change. A clear divide remains between, on the one side, an image of the picturesque, exotic other, and on the other side a focus on relevance, through progress and closeness with the Netherlands.

However, this two-sided representation is nuanced. While the photographs seem to depict Aruba and Bonaire – however contradictory – its objectiveness clouds the distant manner in which this is done. Ultimately, the photographs are embedded in the negligent way the islands have been treated by the Netherlands, by posing them as special, pretty and valuable (“part of the Dutch kingdom!”), but really keeping a literal and figurative distance, because they are islands that the Netherlands never really have invested in, much less been genuinely interested in. This is what really lies at the heart of the Dutch gaze in photographs from the twentieth century.

Though this research is a cautious and preliminary attempt to shine a light on the visual history of Aruba and Bonaire, it is by no means complete. The relationship between the Dutch Caribbean islands, all six of them, and the Netherlands is a long one, of which relatively little research is done. As is the case with colonial rule and postcolonial ties, it involves complex power relations that not only extend to the current day on a political and economic level, but also extend to the Netherlands itself on a socio-cultural level as a result of migrations. A comparison or extension of this research to include images made prior or after this time period could expand the knowledge of the development of the Dutch gaze. The connection of the Netherlands and the Antillean islands is not yet history, which makes it all the more important to look at the different stories that are told.

It would be valuable to look at the Antillean perspectives that were not dealt with here and possibly compare it with Dutch ways of looking. That would possibly entail a more elaborate representation of the local populations and customs – a part that was relatively small in the source material of this research but which is much more familiar to Antillean photographers. The Dutch-Antillean relationship has for centuries been one that included (racial) inequalities which nowadays makes it imperative that Antillean perspectives should be part of further research. Though it would require a larger research, the six islands are individually different and their inclusion of all of them could highlight this.

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121-0888. “Nederlandse Antillen, Aruba.” KITLV, Fotocollectie Rijksvoorlichtingsdienst Eigen. Date unknown.
252-3304. “Plantage met palmen op Aruba.” Willem van de Poll. 1 October 1955.
252-3397. “De Hooiberg op Zuid-Aruba.” Willem van de Poll. 1955.
252-3408. “De Hooiberg op Aruba.” Willem van de Poll. 1 October 1955.
252-3434. “Wasgoed hangt te drogen op de cactussen.” Willem van de Poll. 1 October 1955.
252-7938. “De Hooiberg op Aruba.” Willem van de Poll. 1947.
252-7948. “Droogrekken op een aloekwekerij op Aruba.” Willem van de Poll. 1947.
252-7958. “Boot op Palm Beach op Aruba.” Willem van de Poll. 1947.
252-7968. “Landschap op Aruba.” Willem van de Poll. 1947.
252-7978. “Steengroeve op Aruba.” Willem van de Poll. 1947.
252-8068. “De jachthaven van San Nicolas op Aruba.” Willem van de Poll. 1947.

National Archive – Bonaire

- 121-0846. “nederlandse antillen, bonaire.” Rijksvoorlichtingsdienst (RVD), Fotocollectie
Rijksvoorlichtingsdienst Eigen. Date unknown.
- 121-0899. “nederlandse antillen, bonaire.” Fotocollectie Rijksvoorlichtingsdienst Eigen. Date unknown.
- 121-0909. “nederlandse antillen, bonaire.” Rijksvoorlichtingsdienst (RVD), Fotocollectie
Rijksvoorlichtingsdienst Eigen. Date unknown.
- 141-0137. “Bonaire.” Fotocollectie Elsevier. Date unknown.
- 252-8360. “Het Gotomeer op Bonaire.” Willem van de Poll. 1947.
- 252-8381. “Druipsteengrot Boca Spelonk op Bonaire.” Willem van de Poll. 1947.
- 516031_014. “topografie , landen op naam, West-Indië, Nederlands.” Fotocollectie Spaarnestad Onderwerpen.
Date unknown.

Rijksmuseum – Bonaire

- RP-F-2016-47-98. “Bonaire ± 1977.” Willem Diepraam. 1977.

National Museum of World Cultures – Aruba

- RV-A115-2-10. “Rotsachtig landschap met cactussen nabij Ajo op het eiland Aruba.” Augusta Curiel, prof. dr.
C.H. de Goeje. 1927.
- TM-10021430. “Grot van Fontein.” 1930.
- TM-10028899. “Een vak met Aloë planten op Aruba.” 1930.
- TM-20029511. “Dolomieten met cactus.” Boy Lawson. 1964.
- TM-20029521. “Gezicht vanaf Canashito richting het westen.” Boy Lawson. 1964.
- TM-20029562. “Landschap met dolomieten en cactussen.” Boy Lawson. 1964.
- TM-20029574. “Landschap met dividiviboom en cactussen.” Boy Lawson. 1964.
- TM-20029617. “Kustgezicht.” Boy Lawson. 1964.
- TM-20029627. “Bladeren en vruchten van de strandduif.” Boy Lawson. 1964.

National Museum of World Cultures – Bonaire

- TM-10028945. “Divi-divibomen met daaronder aloëplanten en geiten.” 1947.
- TM-20029141. “Mais aanplant op plantage Onima.” Boy Lawson. 1964.
- TM-20029688. “Zoutpannen bij Rode Pan, Pekelmeer.” Boy Lawson. 1964.
- TM-20029738. “Koe op Plantage Bolivia, met op de achtergrond een grote cactus en een dividiviboom.” Boy
Lawson. 1964.
- TM-20029748. “Uitzicht over landschap met een autoweg en op de achtergrond de zee.” Boy Lawson. 1964.
- TM-20029758. “De kustlijn.” Boy Lawson. 1964.
- TM-20034665. “Indiaanse rotstekeningen.” Before 2000.
- TM-20034675. “Rotsen in de branding aan de westkust.” Before 2000.
- TM-20034707. “Bloeiende aloë.” Before 2000.
- TM-20034727. “Doornstruik met gele bloemen.” Before 2000.

People

Friars of Tilburg – Aruba

403127. "Waterdraagster." July 1922.
403421. "Kalenderblad. Bougainvillea trinitaria." Date unknown.
403425. "Kalenderblad. Markt aan de haven." Date unknown.
404303. "Convent. Fr. Joannes de Deo Verbunt, fr. Benedicto van Hoek, fr. Priscus (?) de Wilde, fr. Ladislaus v. Bladel, fr. Ewaldus v. Hoof, fr. Bernardinus." 1930.
404307. "Convent. Fr. Benedicto, Joan. de Deo, Franc. de P., Ewaldus, Theodorus L." August 1929.
404355. "In de tuin van Fontein. Fr. Gustavo ?, fr. Pancraas, fr. Bernardinus." Date unknown.
404403. "Voetbal." 1923.
404410. "Ranchoe. Vissershutten." Date unknown.
404449. "Vertrek van de fraters." 1937.
404463. "Ranchoe. Huisjes van Oranjestad. Op de achtergrond de RK Kerk." 1924.
404475. "Zusters dominicanessen, met ps. Hagenaars." 1922.
404489. "Oranjestad. Bierhuis." 1924.
404555. "Oranjestad. Koninginnefeest. Kinderaubade." Date unknown.
404557. "Oranjestad. Koninginnefeest. Ringsteken te paard (achter de Hooiberg)." Date unknown.
404542. "Oranjestad. Kerk, Playa." 1936.
406606. "Radulphus College. Studenten op excursie naar Aruba." Date unknown.
408079. "Familiefoto's en fotoalbum." Date unknown.
408083. "Frater die kippen voert." 1931.
408149. "Kinderen op ezel." Date unknown.
408472. "Vijf fraters bij waterplas. Vml. 'San Nicolas.'" 1926.
408495. "Kinderhulde bij gezaghebber." Date unknown.
408496. "Kinderhulde bij gezaghebber." Date unknown.
409202. "Terras met parasollen." 1942.
412256. "Frs. Bernardinus, Benedicto, Vincentianus, Walfried, Radulphus, fr. superior, Beatus." Date unknown.

Friars of Tilburg – Bonaire

402802. "Visitatie. Fr. Maxentius Baijens, fr. Joannes Nepom. Jacobs, fr. Pancratijs van Beers, fr. Tharcisio Horsten, fr. Conradus de Jong, fr. Lucius Elbers." 1928.
402835. "Visitatie fr. Tharcisio. Op Bonaire. Fr. Tharcisio Horsten, fr. Maxentius Baijens, fr. Conradus de Jong." 1935.
402859. "Visitatie fr. Prudentius, 1946/47. Aankomst fraterhuis. Fr. Julianus v. Gijzel, fr. Benedicto v. Hoek, fr. Prudentius v. Grootel, fr. Walfried v. Etten, fr. Arnoldo Broeders." 1946.
402861. "Visitatie fr. Prudentius, 1946/47. Aankomst Bonaire. Fr. Benedicto van Hoek, fr. Prudentius van Grootel." 1946.

402870. ““Visitatie fr. Petrus Canisius, 1954. Met de 1e klas van fr. Benedicto van Hoek.”” 1954.
402946. ““Visitatie fr. Novatus. Excursie Bonaire.”” 1969.
404470. ““Opening eilandraad.”” Date unknown.
405365. “Kokosnootverkoper.” 1965.
405373. ““Flamingo beach club, bungalow resort hotel at the beach, 10 minute walk from the center of Kralendijk. Watersport facilities available.”” 1963.
405374. ““Salt pans. Slave huts in the background.’ Zoutpannen. Op de achtergrond slavenhutten.” 1963.
405378. ““Na een beroerde nacht op de bark. Fr. Odulfinus Smetsers, fr. Martien v.d. Bosch.”” Date unknown.
405428. “Kralendijk, convent. fr.Franciscus de Paula van Dieten (gast). fr.Odulfinus Smetsers, fr.Bernardinus Lemans. fr.Desiderius Coopmans, fr.Benedicto van Hoek, fr.Gustaaf van de Sande.” 1958.
405439. “Kralendijk, convent. fr.Bernardinus Lemans (?), fr.Julianus van Gijzel, fr.Ferentius van de Voort, fr.Arnoldo Broeders, fr.Benedicto van Hoek, fr.Desiderius Coopmans.” 1961.
405440. “Kralendijk, convent.” 1962.
405445. “Kralendijk, communiteit. fr.Arnoldo Broeders, fr.Cypriano Klemans, fr.Ferentius v.d. Voort, fr.Desiderius Coopmans, fr.Julianus van Gijzel.” 1962.
405451. “Kralendijk, convent. Met fr.sup. Novatus Vinckx.” 1967.
405459. “Kralendijk, convent. fr.Aurelio Verbunt, fr.Candidus v.d.Linden, fr.Cypriano Klemans, fr. Manuël de Bok, fr.Benedicto van Hoek, fr.Novatus Vinckx, fr.Ananias v.d. Wouw, fr.Ulrich Raaijmakers, fr.Adelbrecht van Nieuwland, fr.Lambrecht Verheyden, fr.Fabius Snelders, fr.Desiderius Coopmans.” 1974.
405496. “Kralendijk. Dominicusschool. Speelplaats, met logé pater Smits.”” Date unknown.
405497. ““Kralendijk. GLO. St. Dominicus. Uitstapje 7e klas.”” 1960.
405507. “Kralendijk. St. Dominicusschool. Officieel bezoek.”” Date unknown.
405722. “Kokkin Dora met nichtje Aurora.” 1959.
405759. “Fr. Candidus, fr. Cypriano en fr. Desiderius met enkele gasten voor de "visafslag".” 1995.
405768. “Fr. Candidus v.d. Linden, fr. Cypriano Klemans, fr. Desiderius Coopmans. In de tuin van het fraterhuis.” 1995.
405795. “Sr. Novata O.P., fr. Julianus v. Gijzel, fr. Pancraas Roosen, fr. Gustaaf v.d. Sande, consul en mevr. Rincon Boscan, mgr. Holtermans.” 13 November 1960.
405805. “Oude kerk Kralendijk. Pastoor Kurten.”” Date unknown.
405814. “Kralendijk, kinderen. Oranjefeesten. Fr. Germanus v.d. Krabben.” 1948.
405824. “Kralendijk, kinderen. Minister van Onderwijs in zijn jeugd.” Date unknown.
405840. ““De “Nova” te water gelaten. Fr. Odulfinus Smetsers, fr. Gustavo Aben.”” 1958.
405895. ““Kralendijk. Lourdes Mulo, ingebruikname "Raadsrots". Fr. Thomas van Riel van Scherpenheuvel, pastoor M.C. Weijers O.P., fr. Odulfinus Smetsers, mevr. Hellmund Boom (?), fr. Franciscus de Paula v. Dieten, gezaghebber Van Hesteren, mevr. Olberts (van Confectiefabriek Bonaire), Herrera, inspecteur Stappershoef, moeder van een der leerlingen, onderw. Guda (?), St. Jago (?).”” Date unknown.
405930. “Kralendijk. Tropische regenbui bij de school.” Date unknown.
405972. “Kralendijk. Visitatie. Fr. Petrus Canisius Leijgraaf.” 1946.

405973. "Verm. Kralendijk. Visitatie. Fr. Prudentius van Grootel." 1946.
405983. "Visitatie. Fr. Gustaaf, fr. Novatus, fr. Franc de Paula. 'Hier sliepen vroeger de gouvernementsslaven die in de zoutpannen werkten.'" 1959.
405987. "Visitatie. Fr. Gustaaf v.d. Sande, fr. Novatus Vinckx, fr. Franciscus de Paula van Dieten." 1958.
405988. "Kralendijk, visitatie. Jongetje." 1954.
406002. "Vissers." Date unknown.
406008. "Kralendijk. Vuurtoren bij flamingo's." Date unknown.
406010. "Kralendijk. Bij de Oranje Pan (zuidpunt eiland). Vuurtorenwachter met fr. Cypriano Klemans, fr. Realino Janssen en mhr. V.d. Kuip." 1950.
406036. "Aankomst mgr. Zeppenfeldt." July 1949.
406038. "Welpen." 1948.
406039. "Kralendijk. Verkenners." Date unknown.
406045. "Kralendijk. Verkennerskamp Bronswinkel." Date unknown.
406054. "Kralendijk. Zoutwinning." Date unknown.
408489. "Candidus, Andreas." Date unknown.
409044. "Vier fraters op een berg (?)." 1965.
409072. "Fr. Gijsbert Hamers." 1968.
409073. "Fr. Benno Essers." 1968.
409227. "Op de knoek 'Fontein'." 1942.
409504. "Ignatius (dir.) ontvangt na ziekte missieoverste Odulfinus." Date unknown.
409537. "Fr. Basilius met hond." Date unknown.
409545. "Op apostolische tocht. In de omstreken van Coeroe Boeroe (?)." Date unknown.
409570. "Grotwoningen van Slagbaai." Date unknown.
409604. "Oogstfeest op Rincon. Papa Beloetsjie en Robertina." Date unknown.
409609. "Jongen. N.N." Date unknown.
409624. "Jongen op ezel." Date unknown.
409625. "Groep bij woning." Date unknown.
409629. "Groepje bij woning." Date unknown.
409641. "De familie 'Statie' in de mais." Date unknown.
409651. "Lagoen." 1933.
409659. "Jongen en vrouw met ezel." Date unknown.
412489. "Een meisje doet boodschappen op haar ezel." 1919.

KITLV – Aruba

1406541. "Aruba, Netherl. Antilles. Club Basiruti." Date unknown.
17877. "Visser aan het roer van zijn boot bij Aruba." 1930.
17899. "A.F. Dussenbroek, huisarts op Aruba." 1929.
26127. "Lago olieraffinaderij, Aruba." N. Morris. 1944.
26128. "Lago olieraffinaderij, Aruba." N. Morris. 1944.
26129. "Lago olieraffinaderij, Aruba." N. Morris. 1944.

42404. "Kerkgangers bij de protestantse kerk in Oranjestad op Aruba tijdens een feestdag." 1935.
42510. "Prinses Juliana tijdens haar bezoek aan Aruba met naast zich gouverneur dr P.A. Kasteel." 1944.
42515. "Predikant A. van Essen op Aruba." 1923.
42516. "Predikant A. van Essen op Aruba." 1923.

KITLV – Bonaire

42399. "Kerkgangers van de protestantse kerk in Rincon op Bonaire met in hun midden dominee A. van Essen." 1935.
42400. "Dominee A. van Essen met kerkgangers van de protestantse kerk in Rincon op Bonaire." 1935.
42401. "Kerkgangers bij de feestelijke inwijdingsdienst van de protestantse kerk in Rincon op Bonaire." 1934.
42508. "Tijdens het bezoek van prinses Juliana aan Bonaire wordt dominee A. van Essen aan haar voorgesteld." 1944.
42509. "Tijdens het bezoek van prinses Juliana aan Bonaire wordt mevrouw A. van Essen-Vuurmans aan haar voorgesteld." 1944.
42523. "Dominee Aaldert van Essen (rechts) op Bonaire." 1934.
42721. "Dominee A. van Essen op Bonaire." 1940.
52594. "Kerkgangers bij de feestelijke inwijdingsdienst van de protestantse kerk in Rincon op Bonaire." 1934.
52595. "Dominee Aaldert van Essen op de preekstoel van de protestantse kerk te Kralendijk op Bonaire." 1935.
9964. "Bokken op Bonaire." 1930.
9966. "Visser op Bonaire." 1930.
9967. "Visser op Bonaire." 1930.
9971. "Simadan (oogstfeest) te Nihiboko op Bonaire." 1945.
9972. "Simadan (oogstfeest) te Nihiboko op Bonaire." 1945.

National Archive – Aruba

- [unknown]. "Aruba demonstraties. Overzicht van de demonstratie bij het Bestuurskantoor op Aruba, toen minister van der Stee daar dezer dagen aan moest komen voor het voeren van besprekingen 16 april 1978." Spaarnestad. 16 April 1978.
- [unknown]. "Betico Croes. Het wrak van de auto van Betico Croes na zijn fatale ongeluk. Op 31 december 1985, één dag voor het ingaan van 'z'ijn' status aparte, raakte Croes op tragische wijze betrokken bij een zwaar verkeersongeluk. Hij belandde hierdoor in een coma, waaruit hij niet meer zou ontwaken. Bijna elf maanden later stierf hij. Aruba, 31-12-1985." Spaarnestad. 31 December 1985.
- [unknown]. "Prinses Beatrix bezoekt op Aruba de Caribe club. 17 februari 1958." Spaarnestad. 17 February 1958.
- 007-0644. "Koninklijk bezoek aan de West. Prins Bernhard bezoekt padvinderskamp in Coconut Grove at the Palm Beach." Associated Press, Fotocollectie RVD / Koninklijk Huis. 1955.
- 007-0654. "Koninklijk bezoek aan de West. Het koninklijk paar bezoekt het "Imeldahof" een tehuis voor wezen op Aruba." Associated Press, Fotocollectie RVD / Koninklijk Huis. 1955.

- 020-0089. "reeks 020-0068 t/m 020-0104: bezoek Juliana en Bernhard aan de West 15-10 t/m 6-11-1955."
United Press International (UPI), Fotocollectie Elsevier. 1955.
- 020-0100. "reeks 020-0068 t/m 020-0104: bezoek Juliana en Bernhard aan de West 15-10 t/m 6-11-1955."
United Press International (UPI), Fotocollectie Elsevier. 1955.
- 021-0266. "Onthulling monument voor Koningin Wilhelmina in Oranjestad op Aruba door koningin Juliana."
Fotocollectie Elsevier. 1955.
- 121-0793. "nederlandse antillen, aruba." Rijksvoorlichtingsdienst (RVD). Date unknown.
- 121-0805. "nederlandse antillen, aruba." Rijksvoorlichtingsdienst (RVD). Date unknown.
- 121-0815. "nederlandse antillen, aruba." Rijksvoorlichtingsdienst (RVD). Date unknown.
- 150-1270. "Frederik Meinhardt Lampe, oud-wnd gouverneur van de Nederlandse Antillen en oud-gevolmachtigd minister van de Antillen in Den Haag. Foto gepubliceerd n.a.v. zijn overlijden (februari 1968)." ANP Foto, Fotocollectie Rijksvoorlichtingsdienst Eigen. Date unknown.
- 252-3868. "Optreden van een zanger tijdens de ontvangst van het koninklijk paar in het Wilhelminastadion op Aruba." Willem van de Poll. 24 October 1955.
- 252-3878. "Erewacht bij de onthulling van het Wilhemina-beeld in het Wilheminapark in Oranjestad, Aruba." Willem van de Poll. 24 October 1955.
- 252-3888. "Gedeputeerde E.O. Petronia houdt een toespraak bij de opening van de Arubaanse Technische School in Oranjestad op Aruba." Willem van de Poll. 24 October 1955.
- 252-3898. "Prins Bernhard op bezoek bij de Arubaanse padvindsters op Palm Beach." Willem van de Poll. 24 October 1955.
- 252-3918. "Bezoek van koningin Juliana aan het San Pedro Ziekenhuis in Oranjestad op Aruba." Willem van de Poll. 24 October 1955.
- 252-3914. "Perscentrum op Aruba." Willem van de Poll. 24 October 1955.
- 252-3972. "Prins Bernhard in een auto bij de Lago-olieraffinaderij in St. Nicolaas." Willem van de Poll. 24 October 1955.
- 252-3992. "Dansende paren bij de koninklijke ontvangst in Club Caribe in Oranjestad op Aruba." Willem van de Poll. 24 October 1955.
- 252-7868. "Fiets met opschrift Adios Mi Amor op de markt in de haven van Oranjestad op Aruba." Willem van de Poll. 1947.
- 252-7908. "Bouwwerkzaamheden in de haven van Oranjestad op Aruba." Willem van de Poll. 1947.
- 252-7988. "Luitenant Tulp op de patrouilleboot op Aruba." Willem van de Poll. 1947.
- 252-7998. "Feest in een militair kamp in Savaneta op Aruba." Willem van de Poll. 1947.
- 252-8058. "Twee opzichters op de Lago-olieraffinaderij in San Nicolas op Aruba. Willem van de Poll. 1947.
- 31017_059. "Nicky Ecurie bij het graf van zijn broer Boy die stierf voor de vrijheid van Nederland.
Verzetssrijder Boy Ecurie werd op 6 november 1944 door een Duits executiepeloton op de
Waalddorpervlakte in Den Haag doodgeschoten." Fotocollectie Spaarnestad Onderwerpen. 1986.
- 516030_020. "topografie , landen op naam, West-Indië, Nederlands." Fotocollectie Spaarnestad Onderwerpen.
Date unknown.
- 909-3295. "Bezoek van Prinses Beatrix aan Aruba (Wilhelminastadion)." Jan Bonke, Fotocollectie Anefo. 12 February 1958.

- 909-3487. "Prinses Beatrix op bezoek op Aruba. Een meisje biedt bloemen aan te Santa Cruz." Jan Bonke, Fotocollectie Anefo. 17 February 1958.
- 917-4916. "Prinses Beatrix op Aruba. Prinses Beatrix bij Jeugdcentrum Tanki Leendert bloemen aangeboden." [...] Keijzer, Fotocollectie Anefo. 2 March 1965.
- 918-2632. "Koninklijk bezoek aan Aruba, koningin Juliana knipt lintj door van de nieuwe kleuterschool te Sta Cruz op Aruba." [...] de Vries, Fotocollectie Anefo. 3 October 1965.
- 918-2642. "Koninklijk bezoek aan Aruba, bij kleuterschool Paradera, Aruba-Noord." [...] de Vries, Fotocollectie Anefo. 3 October 1965.
- 918-2721. "Koninklijk bezoek aan Nederlandse Antillen, Hare Majeste verricht onthulling wijkgebouw op Aruba." [...] de Vries, Fotocollectie Anefo. 4 October 1965.
- 919-4039. "Prinses Beatrix en prins Claus bezoeken Nederlandse Antillen, het paar op Aruba, paar bij ruine." [...] Retina, Fotocollectie Anefo. 28 July 1966.

National Archive – Bonaire

- 007-0634. "Koninklijk bezoek aan de West. Bezoek aan de eilanden Bonaire en Aruba. In de tuin van de gezaghebber te Kralendijk wordt het koninklijk paar een aubade gebracht." Associated Press, Fotocollectie RVD / Koninklijk Huis. 1955.
- 093-0628. "hotels, bouwnijverheid, plechtigheden, Hesteren A.J.v., Debrot Ch., Semmelink mr." ANP Foto, Fotocollectie Elsevier. 16 December 1961.
- 121- 0856. "nederlandse antillen, bonaire." Rijksvoorlichtingsdienst (RVD), Fotocollectie Rijksvoorlichtingsdienst Eigen. Date unknown.
- 141-0185. "Bonaire. Boot Zingara "Flamingo Beach Club"." Fotocollectie Elsevier. Date unknown.
- 252-3821. "Begroeting van koningin Juliana op Bonaire." Willem van de Poll. 1955.
- 252-3831. "Het koninklijk paar na aankomst op het vliegveld Flamingo op Bonaire." Willem van de Poll. 1955.
- 252-3857. "Koningin Juliana tijdens de barbecue op het landgoed Fontein op Bonaire." Willem van de Poll. 23 October 1955.
- 252-8350. "Wegenbouw en aanleg van waterleiding op Bonaire." Willem van de Poll. 1947.
- 252-8370. "Vrouw en kind op ezel met watertonnen op Bonaire." Willem van de Poll. 1947.
- 252-8401. "Arbeiders aan het werk in de zoutpannen van Bonaire." Willem van de Poll. 1947.
- 252-8412. "Een naaiatelier voor bedrijfskleding op Bonaire." Willem van de Poll. 1947.
- 935-1538. "Bezoek van prinses Juliana aan West-Indië (februari-maart 1944). [Bonaire] Repronegatief. Meisje biedt tijdens een ontvangst bloemen aan. Naast de prinses gouverneur Kasteel." Fotocollectie Anefo. 1944.

Netherlands Photography Museum – Aruba

- WM-900361. "De visvangst." Date unknown.
- WM-900362. "Oudje, dat veel kan vertellen in pittige papiaments." Date unknown.
- WM-900363. "Venezolaanse visverkoper." Date unknown.
- WM-900364. "2 maal foto hetzelfde meisjeskopje." Date unknown.
- WM-900366. "Meisje." Date unknown.

WM-900368. "Jongen met boodschapzak onder de arm." Date unknown.

Netherlands Photography Museum – Bonaire

WM-900368. "Vrouw met 2 kinderen. De vrouw heeft kroezend haar, het meisje ernaast lang sluik haar. Het jongetje op haar arm krulhaar." Date unknown.

WM-900369. "Maisveld. Aanplant van 'mainsji chiquito' (kleine mais - een soort gierst).2 kinderen in het maisveld." Date unknown.

WM-900372. "Man, langs het strand bezig met het afhakken van een boot." Date unknown.

WM-900374. "Feest t.g.v. een nieuwe waterput. o.a. Zingende vrouw en man met triangel." Date unknown.

WM-900376. "Meing kind op Bonaire komt nog met een kalasji of "Nonenkap" op school. Vroeger was dit gebruik ook algemeen in zwang op Curacau." Date unknown.

Rijksmuseum – Aruba

RP-F-2011-75-82. "Palm Beach Aruba." Willem Diepraam. 1977.

RP-F-2011-75-89. "Begravenis Funeral, Santa Cruz Aruba." Willem Diepraam. 1978.

RP-F-2011-75-90. "Aruba, begravenis in Santa Cruz. 1978." Willem Diepraam. 1978.

RP-F-2011-75-91. "Begravenis Funeral, Santa Cruz, Aruba." Willem Diepraam. 1978.

RP-F-2016-47-48. "Aruba, Holiday Inn. 1975." Willem Diepraam. 1975.

RP-F-2016-47-49. "Aruba, Palm Beach. 1977." Willem Diepraam. 1977.

RP-F-2016-47-51. "Aruba, Palm Beach. 1977." Willem Diepraam. 1977.

RP-F-2016-47-53. "Aruba, Palm Beach. 1975." Willem Diepraam. 1975.

RP-F-2016-47-54. "Aruba, Palm Beach. 1975." Willem Diepraam. 1975.

RP-F-2016-47-55. "Aruba, Palm Beach. 1975." Willem Diepraam. 1975.

RP-F-2016-47-57. "Aruba, Sannicolas. 1978." Willem Diepraam. 1978.

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