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**A Virtual Menagerie Fit for a Ruler
Johan Maurits van Nassau-Siegen's Brazilian Images and Their Role in
Dutch Colonial Propaganda**

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This article discusses materials brought by Count Johan Maurits van Nassau-Siegen from Dutch Brazil and their role in the West India Company's (WIC) colonial propaganda as well as in the count's self-promotion. During his governorship (1637-1644), Maurits employed several painters and encouraged artistic observations of Dutch Brazil's inhabitants and nature, as well as scientific expeditions. Researchers and artists created numerous maps, landscapes, portraits, still lifes and depictions of flora and fauna. In this article, two sets of botanical and zoological illustrations, currently held in the Jagiellonian Library in Cracow (Poland) are described in details: Albert Eckhout's *Theatrum Rerum Naturalium Brasiliae* and Georg Marggraf's *Handbooks* (BJ, Libri Picturati A32-35 and A36-37, respectively). Both albums were created in Brazil with different purposes: Eckhout's oil sketches were the artist's model book while Marggraf's watercolours are a typical example of the 17th-century "virtual menagerie" that Maurits showed to his guests. Although WIC lost Dutch Brazil in 1654, these images were used as proof of Dutchmen's success in conquering the new land. The WIC financed publishing the history of the colonisation and a compendium of natural history that presented Maurits as a successful administrator who ensured not only economic prosperity but also scientific research that would help maximise profits. Johan Maurits used these materials to further his political career.

Keywords: Dutch Brazil, Johan Maurits van Nassau Siegen, *Libri Principis*, *Theatrum Rerum Naturalium Brasiliae*, 17th-century colonial propaganda, Dutch colonial propaganda, 17th-century zoological illustration, 17th-century scientific illustration

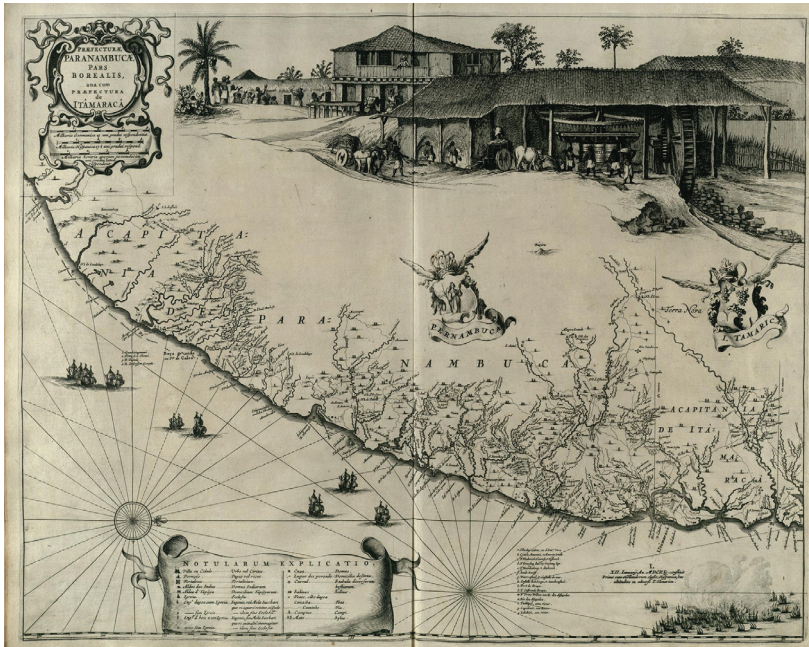
Among the treasures kept in the Jagiellonian Library in Cracow (Poland) there is a brilliant collection of 16th-18th-century albums of illustrations called *Libri Picturati*. Botanical and zoological images are probably the best-known part of

this set (Whitehead, Vliet, and Stearn, 1989). In this article, 17th-century depictions of Brazilian plants and animals from the *Libri Picturati* are presented as well as their role in Dutch colonial propaganda.

The Dutch in South America

In 1630 a Dutch fleet led by admiral Hendrick Corneliszoon Lonck conquered Olinda and Recife – two major towns in Pernambuco. The Portuguese captaincy was then famous for its sugar production. The Dutch took control over the whole territory during the following seven years (fig. 1). This new colony was promptly named Nieuw-Holland or Nederlands-Brazilië.¹ In 1637 count Johan Maurits van Nassau-Siegen (fig. 2) became its governor on behalf of the West India Company (WIC) (see e.g. Whitehead and Boeseman, 1989; more recently Mello, 2006). With some luck, he tried to keep control of Pernambuco and profit from the colony's farming. However, it required an increasing military presence, and by 1644 the WIC officials deemed it cost-ineffective. Johan Maurits was summoned back to the Netherlands. In 1654 the Portuguese were again in complete control of Pernambuco.

These twenty-five years of Dutch governorship of this colony would have probably been forgotten like many other failed projects if not for the propaganda actions both by the WIC and Johan Maurits himself (Sutton, 2013). In the 17th century, the Dutch usually possessed factories and Dutch Brazil was one of their few colonies. Therefore, they wanted to prove they could profit from the production of goods. Moreover, it was also a place of exploration and research. That was in line with the concept that colonisation should improve life both for the indigenous people (by implementing European innovations) and for the settlers (by fully utilising what the new land could offer). Johan Maurits brought a group of researchers to Brazil to explore Brazilian nature and culture. He employed physicians, pharmacists, natural historians, geographers and ethnographers to study and document the land, its inhabitants and history, as well as local flora and fauna. As the Dutch of the 17th century believed that descriptions of the world weren't sufficient information, depictions were an essential part of research. Thus, Johan Maurits's entourage included professional painters, illustrators and cartographers.



1 Georg Marggraf (del.), Salomon Savery (sc.), *Map of the Northern part of Pernambuco*, 1647



2 Frans Post (pinx.), Theodoor Matham (sc.), *Portrait of Johan Maurits van Nassau-Siegen*, 1647

Painters Albert Eckhout and Frans Post, their workshop assistants, cartographer and miniaturist Georg Marggraf, writer and amateur illustrator Zacharias Wägener created maps, panoramas, portraits of indigenous people and descendants of Portuguese settlers, images of customs, and botanical and zoological illustrations. Eckhout, Post and Marggraf documented Brazilian fauna. They made excursions to the interior but mainly worked in a menagerie Johan Maurits established in the gardens of the gubernatorial palace in Vrijburg (Almeida, Oliveira, and Meunier, 2011). They observed captured animals, as well as recently deceased and preserved specimens, and made numerous sketches.

Brazilian Images in the Netherlands, Prussia, and Poland

Their work is currently in Jagiellonian Library in Cracow and Haarlem's Noord Hollands Archief (Inv. Nos 53004648-53004672; Bruin, 2016). The Haarlem's set of 34 drawings extracted from a larger album is currently attributed to Frans Post, who prepared two images (linear and coloured) of each specimen. The Cracow collection is far larger with over 800 images of Brazilian animals and plants in six volumes. Four volumes make up one set (A32-35, *Theatrum Rerum Naturalium Brasiliae*, figs. 3-4) and two make up another (A36-37, *Handbooks* or *Libri Principis*, figs. 5-6).² An additional 32 images are in another *Libri Picturati* album dated ca. 1750 (A38, *Miscellanea Cleyeri*).

These volumes were brought to Johan Maurits's house in The Hague in 1644. They left the town after 1647 when the count moved to Cleve. Later, in 1652 he sold them for 50000 talers to his sovereign and friend, Elector Frederic William of Brandenburg (Ehrenpreis, 2015, 85). In Berlin, they were bound (A32-35) and re-bound (A36-37). The elector's physician Christian Mentzel catalogued them in 1662 and included them in the Elector's special collection known as *Libri Picturati*. He also gave these volumes titles that we know and use today. For the next 279 years, they were in the Elector's library and later in the State Library in Berlin. They were well-known and studied by German scholars (Wegener, 1938). Their fate changed during the bombardment of Berlin in 1940. As a result, in 1941, the Nazis evacuated their most valuable works of art and books. *Libri Picturati* were hidden in Silesia – then part of Germany – at first in Schloss Fürstenstein (Książ)

and from 1943 in a Benedictine monastery in Grüssau (Krzeszów). After the war, in 1946, they were transported to Cracow. They were first held in the monasteries of Missionaries and Dominicans to be moved around 1947 to the Jagiellonian Library. However, the circumstances of this relocation were somewhat clandestine. Therefore, the Polish United Workers' Party's (PZPR) representatives decided to keep these books hidden and forbade their new custodians from mentioning them. Thus, the last information on these materials came from pre-1939 articles and catalogues. Historians generally believed these materials perished in Berlin. Only thirty years later, several western scholars found traces of their journey from Berlin to Cracow. As they started pursuing information, the PZPR's Committee decided to "discover" these materials in the Jagiellonian Library. In 1977 the first researchers saw them. Polish acknowledgement of this deposit sparked the discussion of whether these materials should return to Berlin. It is ongoing, and for the time being, they remain in the Jagiellonian Library (Pietrzyk, 2005). Since the 1970s, they have been catalogued, partially renovated, and digitised. Currently, they are available to researchers.

Zoological Images and Their Authors

The Brazilian albums were one of the first described (Whitehead, 1976; 1979a; Whitehead and Boeseman, 1989; Teixeira, Soares, and Soares, 1995). *Theatrum Rerum Naturalium Brasiliae* (A32-35) were only bound in 1662, when already in Berlin. At that time, Mentzel glued 418 oil sketches on new pages and added a dedication describing these images to the first volume.

These images are generally attributed to Albert Eckhout (ca. 1607-1665). Most of our knowledge about his career and personal life is guesswork based on limited archival information (Brienen, 2006). He most likely was born in Groningen and probably studied in his uncle's Gheert Roeloffs workshop and later in Amersfoort, where he might have been in Jacob van Campen's circle. Thanks to this acquaintance, Eckhout could have met with Johan Maurits, as van Campen was one of the leading decorators of Mauritshuis in the Hague (Brienen, 2006, 30-31). However, Eckhout and Johan Maurits could have met *via* one of the prefects of the WIC, Johannes de Laet. De Laet published a description of the New World (Laet, 1625)



3 Albert Eckhout, Guara (scarlet ibis, *Eudocimus ruber*), from *Theatrum Rerum Naturalium Brasiliae*, f. 85



4 Albert Eckhout, Coati (ring-tailed coati, *Nasua nasua*), from *Theatrum Rerum Naturalium Brasiliae*, f. 87



5 Georg Marggraf (?), Coati (ring-tailed coati, *Nasua nasua*), from *Handbooks*, vol. 1, p. 38



6 Georg Marggraf (?), İbijau (potoo, *Nyctibius*), from *Handbooks*, vol. 2, p. 97

and later edited the compendium of the natural history of Dutch Brazil (Piso and Marggraf, 1648; fig. 7).

No matter how Eckhout made acquaintance with Johan Maurits, he and Post arrived with the new governor to Dutch Brazil in January 1637. Unfortunately, there is no contract, account, or correspondence regarding in what capacity he employed them. Based on their remaining artwork, we can assume that Post worked mainly as a landscapist, and Eckhout was responsible for documenting Brazil's inhabitants, animals, and plants. In fact, he is best remembered as the portraitist of indigenous people (Whitehead and Boeseman, 1989, 168-177; Brienen, 2006, 228-231). However, as we can see in the Cracovian albums, he was well skilled in creating natural history images as well.

Eckhout stayed in Brazil until the end of Johan Maurits's term. After their return, he no longer worked as the count's court painter. However, he continued to monetise his Brazilian experience. Although practically none of his works are signed, it seems he kept creating various versions of his ethnographical genre scenes and portraits, as well as still lifes with fruits and vegetables.³ Moreover, Eckhout never entirely cut ties with the count. He created (or, at least, designed) frescoes and tapestries for Mauritshuis. Johan Maurits also recommended him to the Elector Frederic Wilhelm of Brandenburg and Elector Johann Georg II of Saxony. Although Eckhout seems to have been a very active painter, we don't have much evidence of his work. Besides an indisputably attributed series of ethnographic paintings from Vrijburg (currently in Copenhagen), portraits of European officials, native Brazilians and Africans, his most significant works are natural history oil sketches that make up *Theatrum Rerum Naturalium Brasiliae*.

Up until 1662, Eckhout's Brazilian sketches remained on loose sheets, so they should be described as one set. There are over 170 images of various plants and over 220 zoological paintings. Birds must have been particularly interesting to Eckhout as he painted over a hundred of them. It is partially due to the abundance of Brazilian avifauna and a relative effortlessness in their capture and care. Besides them in *Theatrum* there are over sixty water creatures (fish, crustaceans and cephalopods). Paradoxically, quadrupeds (both vertebrates and invertebrates) are the least represented group. There were definitely more images in this set. However, they weren't identified in other collections (Whitehead, 1979a, 455-457).

In four volumes of *Theatrum Rerum Naturalium Brasiliae* animals are depicted against a painted, empty background, without even an outline of the ground. In the headlines, there are local names of animals.⁴ However, these images cannot be considered scientific, either by current or by the 17th-century standards. For that, the images are too lively. Animals were clearly drawn *ad vivum* during the observations in the Vrijburg menagerie or the count's cabinet of curiosities in the official governor's residence Boa Vista. They seem to be caught in certain pose, ready to interact. While this provides entertaining imagery for casual viewers, scientific study is nearly impossible. Natural historians of that time claimed that reliable illustrations must fulfil several criteria to ensure they could be analysed and compared. In order to achieve the expected scientific objectiveness, the animals needed to be posed unmoving, preferably seen from a profile, in even light and against a neutral background. Otherwise, proper observation was impossible. The animals in *Theatrum* are in a variety of poses, in a different light, sometimes, they are partially hidden in shadows. It suggests that these oil paintings weren't prepared for a natural historian but were a sort of model book, Eckhout's reference work created in Brazil and later, in the Netherlands, used for further purposes (Brienen, 2007). They were probably used separately and exchanged among Johan Maurits's artists. Images from *Theatrum* appear on Eckhout's own paintings. There are similar motifs in Jacob van Campen's paintings and supposedly in wall decorations in Mauritshuis. Unfortunately, the fire that damaged the palace in 1704 destroyed these frescoes.

Theatrum has never been the only collection of Brazilian zoological images in Johan Maurits's possession. Even to this day, it is accompanied by the second set. *Handbooks* (A36-37) are two albums of ca. 350 watercolour sketches. They are folio volumes of 485 and 487 numbered pages. *Handbooks* were most likely made and already bound in Brazil. Each specimen is depicted on a separate leaf or sporadically on a separate page. Above most images, local names of animals are noted. Most are contemporary to the images and written in Marggraf's hand, but some were added later. The depictions take up only a third of the page, leaving plenty of space for notes. The majority of images are annotated with animals' size or specific characteristics. They are in Johan Maurits's hand, so we know he actively used these albums.

Handbooks are an extraordinarily well-organised and well-planned set of images. The first volume (A36) is purely zoological. Depicted animals can be divided into four groups. The album begins with thirty seven mammals. Although *Handbooks* are said to show Brazilian fauna, there are also four non-American animals: the African civet, two horses from Johan Maurits's stables and a bull. Most animals are native to Brazil and probably lived in a menagerie in Vrijburg. Typically, animals are shown in profile, although horses and the bull are seen in three-quarters from the rear. Most of them stand on the ground. There are few juvenile specimens, like a jaguar. Several animals, like coati (fig. 5) or anteater, are eating. In a few cases, depicted animals were definitely held in captivity, e.g. Diana monkey is collared and chained. However, others are shown in semi-natural habitat – monkeys and sloths are on or near trees, one anteater stands near an anthill. The second part of the first *Handbook* is devoted to birds. They are shown either from profile or in three-quarters. Some stand on the ground, others sit on branches or decorative rods. Unlike mammals, birds are often depicted in pairs, so there are eighty four animals on sixty six pages. Most of the birds are Brazilian (fig. 6), but there is also a bird of paradise and an African grey parrot. The third part is devoted to water animals: forty two fish, crustaceans, molluscs, and three water turtles. Most of them are in profile, some from above, showing their most distinctive traits. The final section of the first volume is devoted to insects, arachnids and reptiles. Although in contemporary zoology this classification seems odd, in the 17th c. all three groups were still one as per Aristotelian classification. There are eighteen insects in various stages (larvae, pupae and imagines), three spiders, four lizards and two snakes. Unlike miniaturised mammals, birds and fish, many animals in this section are in life-size. Most of them are drawn in three-quarters from above so as to see both their profiles and backs.

The second *Handbook* (A37) is equally well-organised, although clearly unfinished. It begins with thirty four botanical images. While the tradition of plant illustration demanded depicting the whole plant, including roots and often simultaneously various moments of the vegetation cycle, here we can see only a short branch with leaves and flowers, occasionally a fruit or a nut are shown separately. These are American plants used in medicine and the kitchen. The second section is devoted to birds. Fifteen images show sixteen birds. Unlike in the A36, there

are only American animals in the A37. They usually stand on a piece of land, but some birds are depicted against a neutral background. All of the animals are in profile. The largest and most finished section is the water creatures. There are forty seven fish and a crustacean. They are depicted similarly to animals in A36: on one side, clearly caught and lying on a flat surface. Most of them are on a blank page, although under some there is a shadow that gives the illusion of depth. Interestingly, they are usually either reduced or life-size. Some of the smallest specimens must have been drawn with the aid of a magnifying glass. The final part of this volume is dedicated to insects, amphibians and reptiles. Fifty-three animals are shown much like in the previous volume. However, this is the only part of these two albums where we can occasionally find more than two animals on the page. Insects are sometimes in groups of fours, like specimens in glass cases. They are drawn with a similar level of precision, and clearly after observation through some lens, as are the smallest water creatures. There is a "West Indian swine" (probably a peccary) and a civet on the last two pages. It is also possible that this volume included a treatise on horse medicine (Brienen, 2001, 126).

Both these albums are unfinished. There are empty pages that cannot be explained by leaving the planned space for notes. Many illustrations are only pen or pencil sketches. In a few cases, we have partially coloured drawings. The first volume seems to be more finished, and there are hardly any extra empty pages. The second volume is much less polished. The botanical part is not (under) signed and is bereft of notes. There are numerous blank pages, both at the end of the sections and often in the middle. The ichthyological part is the only one that appears to be complete. It seems that the albums were a work in progress that was interrupted. This may be explained by the future fate of their presumed author. Traditionally, these two albums were attributed to Georg Marggraf (1610-1644).⁵ Currently, four other hands are distinguished in A37, but he is still considered their primary author (Brienen, 2001, 106-107). Born in Saxony, he studied astronomy, geography, natural history, mathematics and medicine at various universities. However, it is not certain where (and if ever) he graduated. In ca. 1636, he moved to Leiden, where he met both Piso and de Laet. As the prefect of the WIC, the latter hired Marggraf as the Company's astronomer and used his connections to introduce Marggraf to Johan Maurits. In January 1638, Marggraf arrived in Bra-

zil. At first, he worked under Willem Piso (chief physician in Dutch Brazil) and from 1640 independently (Meijer, 1972, 68-69). He was employed as a cartographer who drew maps and panoramas. Marggraf was also a skilled miniaturist, and in 1639 or 1640, he replaced recently deceased Heinrich Cralitz, Piso's assistant responsible for compiling zoological information (Brienen, 2001, 93). He joined several military expeditions to the interior, which allowed him to observe various animals in the wild. He also worked in Vrijburg menagerie. It is possible that in this role, he began preparing *Handbooks*. Unfortunately, Marggraf's stay in Dutch Brazil was cut short before he finished his work. In 1643 or 1644,⁶ he was sent to Angola. In Luanda, he was supposed to create a map of Dutch territories in Africa. Unfortunately, he died in 1644, mere weeks after his arrival. Marggraf left his zoological observations and images in Brazil. They were brought back to the Netherlands in 1644 along with the rest of the colony's archival and research material (Brienen, 2001, 91, notes 25-26).

Johan Maurits van Nassau-Siegen – The Ideal Governor, According to His Propaganda

Johan Maurits passed the majority of the archives brought from Brazil (including Marggraf's personal notes and drawings) to the WIC so that they could be published.⁷ Still, numerous illustrations remained in his possession until 1652, when he sold them. Eckhout's images were used by the count's court painters who adapted them for frescoes, paintings and tapestries (Whitehead and Boeseman, 1989, 90-140; on the tapestries, see Schmidt-Loske, Klatter, and Prüssmann-Zemper, 2016). *Handbooks* however were part of the count's personal library. While we don't know whether Johan Maurits commissioned them or if they were Marggraf's idea, it is evident that they were created with the count in mind. It seems they primarily documented the Vrijburg menagerie and the count's natural history collection. Depicted animals and plants are mainly examples of local fauna and flora, but there are a few animals imported from Africa and the Pacific Islands, as well as two horses and a bull that Johan Maurits sent from Brazil for Stadtholder Frederic Henry, Prince of Orange and his son, William (Brienen, 2001, 105).

Johan Maurits's enterprise in Brazil was abruptly cut short in 1644. He left behind palaces and the majority of his collections. Transporting plants, animals,

and various *naturalia* across the Atlantic would have been highly impractical, if not – given their size – almost impossible. The animals were set free, and the menageries and gardens were eventually destroyed (Costa, 1952, 150-157).

However, Johan Maurits was only forty and nowhere near the end of his career. He mainly served in the army but also aspired to a governmental position. He brought to Mauritshuis various Brazilian memorabilia to show his organisational and administrative skills. As he intended to prove he brought order to the prosperous country, he needed visual documentation to illustrate his stories. Mauritshuis was decorated with views of Brazil and portraits of Brazilians. Frescoes, tapestries and paintings were full of depictions of lush plants and exotic animals. Two volumes of *Libri Principis* were most handy to prove how he studied the nature of the colony for which he was responsible.

Johan Maurits also supported the publication of two treatises about Dutch Brazil (Dams, 2012). Thanks to the WIC's encouragement and financial support, three years after they returned to the Netherlands, in 1647, Caspar Barlaeus issued the history of the colony (Baerle, 1647; for the English version, see Baerle, 2011). Barlaeus, who was an historian and poet, earlier translated into Latin *Descripción de las Indias Occidentales* (Herrera y Tordesillas, 1622). He heard stories brought by Johan Maurits and his entourage from Brazil. Inspired by them, he wrote a treatise that ostensibly described the circumstances of the Dutch takeover of the Portuguese colony and the WIC's activity in this new territory. However, the actual function of *Rerum per Octennium in Brasilia* wasn't educational. It is full of factual information, but the narrative isn't objective. It is a blatant commendation to the governor and the WIC. Barlaeus quoted various texts from the archives brought by Johan Maurits as well as earlier descriptions of Brazil (Dams, 2012, 335-339). It is also richly illustrated with the governor's portrait, numerous maps by Marggraf, and town views and landscapes adapted from Post's paintings (figs. 1-2). Just as the text is based mainly on primary sources from Brazil, engravings are reproductions of images created *in situ*. While it is uncertain whether Johan Maurits financed this publication, he evidently helped with its creation. At the very least, he gave Barlaeus access to his archives and visual documentation.

He was also involved in the second publication on Dutch Brazil, *Historia naturalis Brasiliae* that was published in 1648 (Piso and Marggraf, 1648; fig. 7). This



7 Willem Piso and Georg Marggraf, *Historia Naturalis Brasiliae*, 1648, frontispiece

compendium of natural history consists of treatises by two authors. Piso edited his Brazilian notes in four, multi-chaptered parts concerning the medicinal properties of plants and animals.⁸ Johan Maurits gave Marggraf's notes to the WIC. De Laet deciphered them and adapted them into eight parts about plants, animals and inhabitants of Dutch Brazil. The compendium is richly illustrated. The publishers chose source images from Johan Maurits's archives. There are portraits of Brazilians, depictions of their occupations (e.g. sugar production) and, most notably, images of local plants and animals (figs. 8-9). The zoological and botanical illustrations are very similar to Marggraf's drawings in *Handbooks*.



8 *İbijaú* (potoo, *Nyctibius*), bottom illustration, from *Piso and Marggraf, Historia Naturalis Brasiliae*, 1648, p. 195



9 Coati (ring-tailed coati, *Nasua nasua*), bottom illustration, from *Piso and Marggraf, Historia Naturalis Brasiliae*, 1648, p. 228

It would be tempting to assume one was a source for another. *Handbooks* came from Brazil, so it would be possible to treat them as the originals later reproduced in *Historia naturalis Brasiliae*. However, the comparison of these two sets proves that *Handbooks* cannot be model books for the woodcuts. The images are similar, but not identical. What's more, there are more illustrations in *Historia naturalis Brasiliae* than in *Handbooks*. It suggests the existence of the another set of images, an actual model book, perhaps the already mentioned lost sketchbook of Marggraf (Bruin, 2016, 343-349). Johan Maurits probably wasn't directly involved in the publication of this treatise either. Nevertheless, he made all his resources available and probably added some comments. Dedication and commendatory remarks scattered throughout *Historia naturalis Brasiliae* describe him as a governor who brought order to both the inhabitants and nature of Dutch Brazil. The very existence of this publication was proof of his scientific interests extending beyond financing research.

By the time these texts were in print, Johan Maurits had already left The Hague. His collection remained for the time being in Mauritshuis, where the court and visiting diplomats could see Brazilian memorabilia in his absence (Whitehead and Boeseman, 1989, 94-96; Van Groesen 2017, 159-160). In the meantime, Johan Maurits, as a leader of the Dutch cavalry, participated in several campaigns of the Thirty Years War. Despite this military career, he aspired to a governmental position. In 1647, he left the Netherlands as Frederick William of Brandenburg appointed him as a stadholder (governor) of Cleve, Mark and Ravensburg. Johan Maurits soon moved to Castle Schwanenburg. He remained in this position until 1664, when he was appointed commander-in-chief of the Dutch army. He retired in 1675 and spent the remaining four years of his life in Cleve. During his term as a stadholder, he hoped to prove himself as an effective administrator who encouraged economic and scientific progress.

Still, he hasn't forgotten about the renown he owed to his work in Dutch Brazil. His manuscripts, albums of illustrations, and some paintings from Brazil were most likely transferred from The Hague to Schwanenburg. Johan Maurits used them to promote himself further. He showed and discussed his Brazilian memorabilia, including *Handbooks*, to his visitors. What's more, in the 1650s, he initiated a gift-giving campaign (Van Groesen, 2017, 158-160). Naturally, Frederick William was his most important and most lucrative patron. Eckhout's oil sketches

and Marggraf's watercolours ended in the Elector's library in Berlin. But he wasn't Johan Maurits's only benefactor. In 1654 the count offered several ethnographical paintings and still lives to Frederick III of Denmark (Whitehead and Boeseman, 1989, 65-85). This gift was clearly intended as a provision in case of falling out of the Elector's favour. Shortly before his death, he gave Louis XIV of France over 40 paintings that were later adapted into several series of tapestries (Whitehead and Boeseman, 1989, 109-140).

Due to these actions, as well as to how much of Johan Maurits's Brazilian memorabilia is still preserved, it seems the scientific research conducted in Dutch Brazil was far more important than the economic profit from the colony. Johan Maurits was not only an avid collector (in Vrijburg, he kept a menagerie and in Boa Vista had a cabinet of curiosities and a natural history museum) but also an educated one. He imported African animals to Brazil (that explains how the image of the civet ended in *Handbooks*). His collections weren't meant to show a macrocosm but reflected both his and WIC's primary interests: Brazil and West Africa. He knew what animals, objects and depictions he had, and he could easily discuss them. The notes in *Handbooks* prove that besides hiring scientists, he also made his own observations and personally wrote them down on these pages. It seems safe to assume that Johan Maurits used his Brazilian collection and documentation as a topic of discussion with his visitors. As he didn't bring his menagerie nor botanical garden, *Handbooks* served as the perfect means to comfortably show and describe animals and plants he had in Brazil. They were specimens he had in captivity and ones he personally observed. The images confirm it further. Mammals wear chains or leashes, most birds are stuffed, and the fish are dried.

The watercolours in *Handbooks* show a very particular part of the world, namely Dutch Brazil. In the 1630s and 1640s, WIC focused on this colony. Johan Maurits, who was there on the Company's behalf, clearly intended to prove that his governorship was fruitful. Unlike most of the aristocratic collections of the 16th and 17th centuries, he must have seen his collection of zoological and botanical images as something more than just a fashionable paper museum created under his patronage. He was involved in their creation and used them in Brazil and the Netherlands. They were proof of his knowledge and organisational skills. Therefore, these images were intended as means to further his political standing.

Endnotes

- 1 The colony was officially called Nieuw Holland, however, generally is referred to as Nederlands-Brazilië. In this article the anglicised form 'Dutch Brazil' is used.
- 2 A36-37 are available online: jbc.bj.uj.edu.pl/publication/193889. I wish to thank Ms Izabela Korczyńska, the Head of Jagiellonian Library's Special Collections Department, for showing me partially digitised A32-35.
- 3 Despite the fact that most of them are dated "1641", it has been disputed that this date may refer to the original drawings instead of the finished paintings (e.g. Egmond and Mason, 2004, 121). Brienens believes these painting were created already in Brazil (Brienens, 2006, 36-37)
- 4 They're often repeated by Mentzel above cut-outs. Sometimes, he also added further information, e.g., citations in *Historia naturalis Brasiliae*.
- 5 Primary source on Marggraf's life – if extremely biased – is a biography written by his brother (Marggraf, 1685). His life and work have been studied since the early 20th c. (Gudger, 1912). More recently it was analysed by Brienens (Brienens, 2001). It's also worth noting that Whitehead contested the attribution of *Handbooks* to Marggraf (Whitehead and Boeseman, 1989, 40–42, 194). There are several versions of Marggraf's surname, e.g. Marggraf, Markgraf, Marcgraf, Marcgrave; in this text the form used by the German National Biography is used (Lindgren, 1990).
- 6 Dates of Marggraf's departure from Brazil, arrival in Angola, and his death are uncertain (Whitehead, 1979b, 303).
- 7 Other observations were given to Adolf Vorstius – Leiden botanist and Johan Maurits's friend, mathematician Jacob Gool and others (Brienens, 2001, 90–91).
- 8 In 1658 Piso republished the treatise, attributing the whole text to himself (Piso, 1658).

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Illustrations

- Fig. 1 Georg Marggraf (del.), Salomon Savery (sc.), Map of the Northern part of Pernambuco, from Caspar van Baerle, *Rerum per Octennium in Brasilia et Alibi Nuper Gestarum*, Amsterdam, 1647, Rijksmuseum, BI-1892-3415-5, public domain.
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- Fig. 9 Coati (ring-tailed coati, *Nasua nasua*), bottom illustration, from Willem Piso and Georg Marggraf, *Historia Naturalis Brasiliae*, Leiden-Amsterdam, 1648, p. 228, Missouri Botanical Garden, QH117.P57 1648, public domain.