

CHAPTER V

The Role of the State and the Plantation Owners after Emancipation

Introduction

Many studies have considered emancipation as simply an end to coerced labour. Under slavery the discipline of the enslaved was left to the discretion of their masters. With emancipation, this legal authority to control the activities, and even lives, of people was effectively removed. Former slaves became subject to State regulations, with the protection this afforded – they were now ‘equal’ citizens within society. Consequently, the responsibility for punishment, in the event of a breach of the law, passed into the hands of State appointed authorities.

However, the real nature of freedom is obscured if we see it solely in terms of legality and fail to examine it as a process involving a series of complex interactions between former slaves, former masters and several other institutions (Scott 1987:565). Freedom has indeed necessitated the alteration of many existing rules to accommodate this change in social positions. This, in reality, was more complicated than just introducing laws and regulations for a society with wide social inequalities. The perceptions and actions of individuals do not automatically change overnight solely due to the introduction of new laws.

As the economic historian Stanley L. Engerman (1992:53) states, in the Caribbean the abolition of slavery entailed dramatic legal effects. Nevertheless, aspects such as policy and the locus of political, social and economic power in society continued in place. The higher class remained predominantly white and continued to lead the economic, political and cultural spheres in society, while most blacks remained subjected – even though no longer enslaved. In addition to this race factor, when former slaves joined the lower classes, the perception the upper and middle classes held of this group influenced the way emancipation evolved socially (Engerman 1992:53). In the Caribbean, the abolition of slavery thus basically redefined the legal parameters within which social interaction between people of unequal status, based on racial differences, could take place. The State played a prominent and instrumental role in shaping the legal framework of social relations. In most cases State intervention served to maintain the extant socio-racial hierarchy. In this Chapter I will focus on the manner in which this occurred within Curaçaoan society.

In the entire Caribbean, the State introduced laws aimed at ordering the lives of those acquiring citizenship. This group joined the previously manumitted. Plantation owners feared a scarcity of labour following emancipation. They believed that as a consequence of these changes, workers would leave the plantations in search of better prospects. Due to this expectation, in the British Caribbean as well as in the Dutch colony of Suriname, a

period of apprenticeship was introduced and in many cases contract labourers were employed from as far afield as British India, Java and China.

On Curaçao, where the economy was not based on plantation revenue, concerns regarding labour following emancipation were of a different nature. Curaçao's labour surplus, coupled with a limited amount of fertile land and the general perception of blacks being undisciplined, induced the State to become a prime instrument in maintaining work discipline. The new laws were dominated by the racist ideas of the time, which assumed that former slaves would be unable to cope with their new status. As I will demonstrate, this group had to constantly struggle against these preconceptions in developing their own identity.

Another factor complicating integration was the composition of the Curaçaoan elite: this was not a homogeneous group but encompassed different interest groups, including many from the field of commerce. This was largely due to fact that the plantations contributed little to the island economy (Rupert 1999:128, 213). Consequently, post-emancipation politics on the island were not solely concerned with the interests of the plantation owners, but were to a greater extent shaped by those of the other elite groups. This was contrary to the norm in the Caribbean. I will also examine how this has affected the introduction and implementation of rules and laws pertaining to those emancipated.

The purpose of this Chapter is to study the role the State played in determining the life pattern of the freed Afro-Curaçaoans. I will give an overview of how the State used laws, regulations and policies to control aspects of their lives in terms of economy, relationships, religion and recreation. Finally, I will examine the way in which State and people interacted, and I will analyse how Afro-Curaçaoans responded to these specific forms of control.

Law and Order on Curaçao: A New Phase

In the year of emancipation, governmental responsibility lay in the hands of a governor, who held legislative, executive and juridical powers. He was assisted by a Colonial Council comprised of plantation owners and merchants. In the months leading up to emancipation, the State introduced four laws aimed at giving structure to the lives of those to be freed. They came into effect on 1 July 1863. Similar laws were already in existence and dealt with the group previously manumitted. Now, with impending freedom, these laws were expanded to encompass the new situation.

With the ending of the traditional forms of social control exercised by the plantation owners, members of the upper class were convinced that Afro-Curaçaoans would not know how to behave with the newly acquired freedom and feared a deterioration of their behaviour. Those living in the outer districts in particular, expressed their concerns on this issue and were generally more resistant to emancipation.

Thus, with slavery at an end, responsibility for maintaining order among the Afro-Curaçaoans lay in the hands of the colonial State. The content of the new laws expressed the concerns of the upper class. Government expenditure dramatically increased as a result of the implementation of new laws. In addition to the State having to compensate the

slave-owners for the loss of their property, much of the colonial budget was swallowed up by policing and juridical matters. Part of the budget also went to improving the social conditions of the district masters, whose responsibilities were broadened. Within the new structure they were paid a salary and given a house; for this purpose the government purchased plantation houses. The expenses incurred, particularly on Curaçao, led to heated discussions in the House of Commons on whether Dutch involvement with the islands should continue at all (Renkema 1976).

The main areas of State intervention were in labour, public order and security. One of the new laws dealt with the island's division into five districts.¹ Another law which directly influenced the lives of Afro-Curaçaoans pertained to the transportation of animals, wood, charcoal and agricultural products on the public roads and was aimed at preventing the theft of these products.² The law which dealt with hiring domestic servants, workers and labourers was enforced in order to safeguard the availability of certain groups of workers when needed.³ A law preventing idleness and vagrancy was instituted as well.⁴

The Vagrancy Law and its Effect on Labour Discipline

Oostindie (1997:67) concludes that from a colonial perspective, the principal problem at emancipation was how to secure work for the newly freed. Indeed, the State Commission preparing for emancipation had foreseen that unemployment would become a problem, particularly in the countryside. As agriculture was rarely profitable, emancipation presented the prospect of immediate impoverishment. Slaves in the countryside mainly did seasonal work: on average slaves spent six months of the year working on the plantation, while during quiet times a variety of jobs outside the plantation were undertaken. As most labour opportunities were in the sector of commerce in town, some would be hired out to work there as bricklayers, carpenters, blacksmiths, stevedores, servants, seamstresses and washerwomen. Or they were employed in the craft related industries in town, or as sailors on vessels which plied the region. Some of the slaves manumitted before 1863 continued to work in the fields, or they undertook activities on the plantations relating to export, such as collecting seeds from the dividivi trees and keeping livestock (Rupert 1999:128, 213). It is also recorded that a large number became destitute.

It was highly unlikely that after emancipation, plantation owners would hire workers just for the sake of keeping them busy. They were more likely to hire labour as and when needed (Staatscommissie 1856:228). In preparation for emancipation, the State made some attempts to provide employment for the soon to be freed by creating work on the government plantations.⁵ However, the Dutch colonial government did not consider it its duty to provide the former slaves with work. This was openly stated in a letter by the governor to the administrator of the island of St. Eustatius, who had requested the sum of 800 guilders in order to create work for former slaves on the island.⁶

As projected, the availability of work remained limited and scarce after emancipation. A major problem facing the government was thus how to enforce labour discipline within a system with a large surplus of workers, coupled with the fact that when labour opportunities did present themselves, they were only on a short-term basis. Despite there being few

job opportunities, planters still needed a disciplined and dependable work force, as was the case in other plantation societies (Foner 1983:10).

This anxiety was only increased by the notion that blacks lacked a good work ethic and self-discipline. The question 'will the free Afro-Curaçaoan be willing to work after the abolition of slavery?' was a persistent one. A high ranking military officer interviewed by the Commission preparing for freedom emphasized this concern as he described his views on the lack of discipline amongst blacks. He stated that he had 'commanded the last reserve of soldiers, in which there are many freed blacks. It takes great effort to instill discipline in these men.' According to him, this attitude was based on 'the notion of the Negro that (...) I must become free, not where will I work and how will I take care of myself' (Staatscommissie 1856:243). The belief that blacks were lazy and unambitious would persist after emancipation. In 1868 A.D. van der Gon Netscher, a board member of the 'Koninklijk Instituut voor de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Indië' (KITLV), even suggested that convicts from the Netherlands should, as a way of serving their time, be sent to Curaçao and be put to the heavy and more arduous work formerly done by slaves, such as working on the salt-pans, burning chalk, baking tiles and stones, and chopping wood (1868:466). According to him, the knife would cut both ways: the motherland would be free of its criminals, while the newly emancipated in particular would be taught and given an example of European knowledge, will-power and diligence. In making this suggestion, van der Gon Netscher ignored the fact that often this kind of work was not available on the island. Indolence and idleness were seen as consequences of the lack of discipline among the black population and were cited as a reason for criminal activity such as theft. This rapidly became an issue of great concern for both the elite and the State, as they sought ways to control and eradicate the problem (van der Lee 1998:6). Three years after emancipation, a district master wrote in a letter to the governor that 'the best way of inducing civil behaviour among the working class is to suppress laziness and theft with all force'.⁷

The white elite feared that once the enslaved became free, they would leave the plantations, go wandering from place to place and steal as they went. Criminalizing vagrancy was then considered the best way of enforcing a work discipline.⁸ In this way the State tried to establish an element of control over the former slaves who, it was considered, would misinterpret freedom as unlimited liberty and independence. In addition, it was thought that these measures would help to regulate the labour supply in a fluctuating economy.

The new law defined a vagrant as someone lacking permanent accommodation and sufficient means of support.⁹ Those falling foul of the vagrancy law were usually poor, able-bodied and unemployed; they tended to wander, and thus were prone to stealing in order to keep themselves alive. Beggars, except those requiring special care, such as the old and the handicapped, were not exempt. Every year the district commissioners had to report to the Procurator of the King the names of those who were blind, crippled, paralyzed or old and therefore unable to support themselves. The term 'vagrant' included those encountered wandering at night in gardens, corrals, galleries, vessels and public places without permission.

The application of the law against idleness also being applied to nightly activities was intended to control theft. Plantation owners took practical measures and asked for permission to fence their land.¹⁰ It was known for them to buy a piece of public land from the

government in order to keep members of the working class at a distance.¹¹ From emancipation into the twentieth century, planters would continually accuse the black population of theft and refer to their neighbourhoods as ‘thieves’ dens’.¹²

Vagrants were sentenced to hard labour by the government in the form of building and maintaining public property or infrastructure which was contracted out to private companies.¹³ The money earned by these prisoners went towards their subsistence and the payment of their fines (Onrust 1998). Simple imprisonment, it was thought, would not be experienced as a punishment by blacks as they were considered lazy by nature – therefore forced labour would be a fitting punishment (Bossers 2000:250). Not only were the vagrants themselves punished, but also family and friends who aided them.

The vagrancy law made no distinction between the sexes. However, the State, in its attempt to instill a labour discipline, made a distinction between minors and adults. Vagrants yet to reach the age of sixteen could be placed at the disposal of the Curaçaoan police. They could also be incarcerated for up to eight days, after which they would be returned to their parents or guardians; measures were introduced to provide training, education and support.¹⁴ Some parents utilized the vagrancy law in order to discipline their children. Such was the case of Maria Louiza Hart, who did not know what to do with her 18 year old son, as he was a thief and a vagrant. She therefore petitioned the district master to place him in permanent service. She was successful and as a result her son was sent to work on a plantation, where he received food, clothing and accommodation and was above all controlled.¹⁵

The vagrancy law required the newly freed to carry an emancipation letter, otherwise they faced prosecution. The people who lived on the infertile plots called the *sabana* were particularly likely to be prosecuted. They were believed to set a bad example to their own children, thus inducing them to become idle and therefore vagrants. Their population increase troubled the white elite, who voiced dissatisfaction concerning the large number of animals they kept and the damage this caused to their lands. The elite complained that these blacks were lazy and shifty and that they chose to live on infertile land, making survival possible only by stealing from the plantations. The plantation owners viewed them as a menace.¹⁶

In the course of time, the word ‘vagabond’ – in Papiamentu ‘bagamundu’ – was used as a term of abuse directed at both men and women. People used the term to signify worthlessness and disorderliness. A male who was called a ‘bagamundu’ was a troublemaker, someone not conforming to the social norms. However, people generally considered a female vagrant to be the most despicable and immoral of all creatures. Women accused of being a ‘bagamundu’ considered this very offensive and sometimes took the accuser to court. For example, a 48 year old straw hat maker named Philip was taken to court by a woman named Maximiliana after he had verbally insulted her in public. He had called her a stinking ‘negress, a whore and a vagrant’ who had roamed about and had had so many men that her ‘lower part had become rotten’.¹⁷ In another case a 25 year old washerwoman was called ‘the biggest whore and vagrant who has ever existed, and a thief who has even stolen a golden earring from the ear of a child’.¹⁸

Working with Contracts

The plantation owners made contracts with some labourers. These could be made orally in the presence of a district master, who recorded the duration, the amount and the payment deadline. In the case of a dispute arising, the word of the district master was given precedence. Should the labourer under contract be absent from work without a legitimate reason, according to the district master he would forfeit his wages and any other benefit he may have been entitled to. But the contracts also protected the interests of the employed. If the plantation owner decided to terminate the contract he was obliged to compensate him for the time worked.¹⁹

However, these contracts proved largely ineffective. The former slaves either did not show any willingness to enter into contracts or, if they did, were more disposed to breaking them rather than keeping them. The itinerant nature of the labour force remained problematic. A clear example of this is shown in the following case brought against a shepherd named Telly. The district master complained that this shepherd did not meet his obligations and that he left the herd unattended. He accused him of not wanting to work, even though the work was light. In addition, the shepherd was cared for, clothed and treated well. In his letter to the Attorney General, the district master addressed the issue of curbing idleness and wanted the shepherd to be made 'an example of'.²⁰ The family also suffered the consequences: in the following year the shepherd's mother was removed from the government land, being accused of allowing her son to become idle and unruly.²¹

Former slaves would leave the plantations as soon as they became aware of better opportunities in town. Their possibility of moving to town became a test of the reality of freedom. In a letter dated 6 January 1864, the owner of the plantation San Sebastiaan stated that many former slaves had left for town and that they no longer wanted to work on his plantation. This type of complaint was common.²² The district masters continuously complained that the law of 16 January 1863 (PB 1863/116), regarding the employment of servants, was inadequate and left them powerless to deal with those who were not diligent in their duties.²³

After emancipation it took some time to find viable methods of labour control and to re-establish a pattern in the working relationship. An example of this is the case of Martis Ignacio. He was detained temporarily after having been accused by the planter of stealing coals from his plantation. Ignacio was acquitted by the court, which considered his felony a breach of contract rather than a criminal act. The discussion revolved around whether a worker living on the plantation who sold the charcoal burned from plantation-wood, had stolen or had broken his contract. The plantation owner considered it theft, but the judge saw it as a breach of contract and even stated that the owner had the right of possession of the wood and had to pay the workers a salary to burn the wood.²⁴

Soon after emancipation some plantations owners made new petitions to make breaking a contract a criminal offence; this would force labourers to complete the terms of their contract.²⁵ They demanded punishment ranging from fines to imprisonment for those who broke their work agreements. These complaints were heeded and the law was extended in 1865.²⁶

This law clearly laid down the penalties should a contract be broken (PB 1865/12). A fisherman named Martijn Dammers, aged 38, was penalized under this law for not complying with his agreement.²⁷ The law was also used to prosecute Andries Doran, who had

broken his contract with the plantation owner. Along with his family he left to live with his father Jose Doran on a savanna. In order to set a precedence the father was also punished for employing his son and allowing him to live with him.²⁸

There was close co-operation between the State and the plantation owners on this issue of land use. The regulation of 23 August 1864/554 stated that individuals who already possessed a piece of land on a plantation and who could provide a living for themselves and for their family, would not be able to rent a piece of government land. When people requested a piece of land from the government, outside the plantation where they lived and worked, the plantation owners in question would sometimes, through various means, block the departure of the worker – this would usually occur if the individual was a particularly valued worker. These people were also refused a piece of land by applying the same regulation. Those who asked for permission were deemed wanting to ‘act on one’s own’ or ‘trying to become independent’. Of those who did not fall into this category, and who had requested a piece of land from the district master, the latter inquired whether the plantation owners in the surrounding area had any objections. This also applied to those who asked for a piece of land to keep animals on. Any objection on the part of the plantation owners would result in the petitioner failing to receive the piece of land. They were hence forced to remain on the plantations.

A piece of land could also be refused if situated too close to a plantation. Through the distribution of land the government tried to eradicate what it considered improper behaviour. Land could be refused if the conduct of the applicant was in doubt. When individuals requested a piece of land, the district master would gather information on their character and would then advise the governor of their suitability. As the plantation owners were consulted on this matter, they continued to have influence on whether a person would receive a piece of land in the neighbourhood of their plantation. The district master, in making his assessment, considered a number of factors: was the applicant industrious, hard-working, motivated and respectful of authority? Idleness was a criterion for being refused land.²⁹ Impertinence was another criterion. A person could have been refused a piece of land for merely answering back to a planter on one occasion. People who worked in town were automatically refused a piece, simply because they lived in town and their behaviour was often unknown to the district master, making it difficult for him to assess the person’s suitability.³⁰

Within the contract of those who did receive government land were detailed conditions which they had to adhere to. As blacks were believed to be of an explosive character and easily disposed to violence, it was stated that they were not allowed to sell liquor or hold a tambú feast on their land.³¹ People would be evicted from government land when they broke the contract.

Policing in Post-Emancipation Society

In order to exercise social control, the island was decentralized into five districts instead of three, as was the case before emancipation. These comprised four rural districts and one urban district. It is not surprising that the rural areas saw a greater increase in policing

than the urban district. It is here that the greater part of enslaved were freed, and where the traditional forms of social control no longer existed. In the rural areas the free black population doubled at emancipation.

A master, or 'commissioner', was placed at the head of each district, and was responsible for its control and administration. The rural commissioners had broader responsibilities than their urban counterpart. It was expected that the commissioners in the outer districts would exercise stricter control over the people. They had to patrol their district weekly and the outlying parts once a month.

One aspect of this was to communicate with those people wishing to discuss issues or settle disagreements. The district master would also determine who was in need of social aid. However, given the distance to these outlying districts and the state of the roads, the fulfillment of these tasks proved arduous, as was evident in their reports. Furthermore, the commissioner was also responsible for the implementation of regulations relating to agriculture, gardening, forestry, animal husbandry and water supply. For example, he was required to police the harvest celebrations. As stated before, the harvesting of maize was sometimes celebrated in the form of *seú* – which could become a public activity, with many participants and onlookers.

In the outer districts the commissioners organized the maintenance of the public infrastructure and properties, and supervised the public roads (PB 1863/19). Specific to the rural districts was the role of assistant officer in the registration office. The commissioner registered the births and deaths within his district and legalized marriages. Every year he had to report on and evaluate the affairs of his district. Aside from these administrative matters, he was involved with police and juridical matters. He was responsible for maintaining law and order and could administer punishment in minor civil and criminal cases. The responsibilities of the district masters were thus complex and wide ranging. They were crime fighters, bureaucrats, intelligence officers and social workers all at the same time.

In addition to descent and rank, another requisite for becoming a commissioner in the outer districts was to be familiar with both Dutch and Papiamentu. The commissioner should be someone who 'knew the inhabitants of the districts and talked their language'. Those in the outer districts functioned as a communication channel between the government, the land owners and the populace. In court cases they would collect information and evidence regarding places and people in order to assess the validity of a case (Fliet 1969:15).

Most of the time these district commissioners were plantation owners themselves or were either friends or related by blood or marriage to the owners in their districts. The State was fully aware of these relationships and in order to avoid conflict of interest it was stated that commissioners should not own a plantation or any other business in their district. However, some could not ignore the strong ties they had with other plantation owners and in disputes regarding work and land, they were often biased (Renkema 1981a:332; PB 1863/19).

An example of this is illustrated in the following case, which occurred soon after emancipation. The Church and State opposed each other on the issue of work: should people be permitted to work on Sundays and holidays? In a confidential letter dated 16 July 1866 to all district masters on the island the governor had asked whether the Catholic priests were

preaching in a way that could hamper the relationship between the former masters and their servants.³² It was then that the commissioner in the western part of the island at San Sebastiaan put forward the case of Federica. She had been imprisoned for three days due to her refusal to work on Sundays, the day of worship; she had also refused to apologize. When confronted by the commissioner, the priest had declared that 'he would continue to preach that labourers and servants should not work for the planters on Sundays'. Instructed by the governor, the commissioner expressed his conviction that working on Sundays was indispensable for the planters, as they had to take their products to town on Sunday evenings. He also feared 'the loss of labour control if the black population accepted these ideas as the planters would then be without workers'.³³

Conflicts between commissioners and the people within their districts were exacerbated by the dictates of the law which stipulated the fining of trespassers for small offences (Sjiem Fat 1986:97). A more liberal approach was deemed beneficial by P. Sassen, the Procurator General who in 1870 recommended in a circular letter to deal with minor infringements of the law through verbal reprimand.

There were some district masters who sided with the black population. This was evident in the case of the master who openly wrote in 1867 that the two plantation owners who requested to buy a piece of land from the government in order to keep blacks away from their area, were exaggerating the 'bad' behaviour of the inhabitants in that neighbourhood.³⁴ Another example comes from the district commissioner J.P. Eskildsen, who refuted the criticisms of the popular class made by the plantation owners.³⁵ Eskildsen gave a detailed view of how the planters behaved towards the people on their plantations. In a letter he protested against their recurring accusation that the neighbourhoods of the working class were thieves' nests (Renkema 1981a:157).

The district commissioners had to exercise control during a period when authority was believed to be subjective, based on colour and race, and when laws generally reinforced this belief. In most cases, the commissioners could assert their status due to their colour or class. In interviews, informants born at the end of the nineteenth century respectfully referred to them as *mener*. An informant would say 'M'a pidi mener un pida tera', meaning: I requested the mister a piece of land. In the following *tambù* song this is evident.

*Mi ta bai puntra shon Meneer
Ku por ta hustu esei
Pa mi tin mi kappa
Anto mi no tin derechi
Pa mi busk'é
Telele telela³⁶*

*I went to ask mister
If this is justified
For me to have my billy goat (sterilized)
And I don't have the right
To go and look for it
Telele telela*

Successive district commissioners complained about their limited powers, budgetary constraints and legal limitations. They would also constantly express anxiety about their low pay, the heavy administrative workload, the lack of working material and vague and insufficient instructions.³⁷ In an evaluation of the position of the masters in the outer districts, the historian Hamelberg compared them to the *bomba*. According to Hamelberg, they were given the role of police superintendent, paid a subsistence salary, and above all were overworked.³⁸

The former enslaved expressed their hostility towards such district masters in what Scott calls the hidden transcripts. There are cases where the offensive behaviour of the district commissioners became the topic of the day for the popular class. The following story comes from an interview Juliana conducted with people from Banda Riba, in which the name Janchi Benta was often mentioned. Janchi played an instrument called the *benta*³⁹ and during gatherings he sang songs relating to topical issues. Because of his ability to function as a mouthpiece for the community by using the *benta*, he was given the nickname Janchi Benta. The following song recalled by an informant of Juliana, was one he played. The lyrics concern a district master who sent policemen to search for stolen goats, while he himself sent people out to steal for him. Janchi Benta saw this and made a song, highlighting the irony of the situation.

*Mener de Riter di Jansofat
Mener de Riter ta ladron
Mener de Riter di Jansofat
Ata Mener ta kome bestia
Mener de Riter di Jansofat
Mener de Riter ta ladron*⁴⁰

*Mister de Riter of Jansofat
Mister de Riter is a thief
Mister de Riter of Jansofat
Look at how the mister eats animals
Mister de Riter of Jansofat
Mister de Riter is a thief*

Janchi Benta was sent to prison. According to written documents he was accused of organizing gatherings and illegally selling alcohol in the neighbourhood, whereas people claimed it was because of this song that he was imprisoned.⁴¹

In the beginning of the twentieth century the authority of the district masters became questioned more openly by the general public. People resisted their power by making use of the legal system now open to them. For example, in 1902 Lambertus Koeiman and Alexander Nijs went directly to the Procurator General, complaining that they had politely requested the district master several times for a piece of land, but each time they had been sent home empty-handed.⁴² The aforementioned Eduardo Tokaai proudly narrated how he had been able to receive his piece of land in the 1920s, despite the obstacles placed in his path by the district master who had close ties with the plantation owners.

E hòmber ku bo ta bai pidi un pida tera, nan(shonnan) ta stòp e. No no no. Mi ta bai kontabo kon mi a haña e pida tera aki. Mi tabata traha kas na Skalo.

The man to whom you have to go for a piece of land, they (the plantation owners) are going to stop him. No, no, no. I will tell you how I got this piece of land: I was building houses at Scharloo.

Kas grandi, bai te Pietermaai. Mi tabata traha komo peon pa un hende di Banda Bou. Un sier-to hende, e persona ku nos tabata traha p'e, a bini sinta interim pa 4 luna na lugá di e districtmeester, ku a bai.

Big house, going all the way to Pietermaai. Well, I worked as an unskilled labourer for someone from Banda Bou. A certain person, the man we were working for, came to sit interim for some four months in place of the district commissioner, who had left.

Interim ta nifiká te ora e mener bini bèk. Anto m'a kont'é kuantu problema nos tin pa haña un

'Interim' means until the gentleman came back. And I told him how much trouble we had

pida di tera. E interim a bisa nos: Ahan si, bo no ta haña tera, paso shonnan ta manda koko leplap pa mener, i e ta bebe awa di leplap i ultrahá boso.

E ora ei el a puntrami: 'Kuantu di boso ta buska tera? Buska nòmber di kuater òf sinku amigu di boso, trese e nòmbernan p'ami i bo ta haña tera.'

Mi a trese e papel. Nos a haña e tera (informante ta klap den su man). E mesun dia. Nos tur a haña tera. Ta e interim a duna nos e. No e mener ku ta bebe awa di koko leplap ku e doñonan di kunuku. Ora bo bai buska tera, shon ta bisa: No dun'é tera.

Naturalmente mener no ta bisabo ku ta shon a bis'é esei. Despues ku nos tur a haña nos tera, shon a keda nanishi largu. (Tokaai ta traha nanishi largu ku su dedenan).⁴³

to get a piece of land. The interim district master said to me: 'Oh yes, you all don't get any land because the land owners send young coconuts for the gentleman; they drink coconut water and oppress you.

Then he asked me: 'How many of you are looking for land? Find the names of at least four or five friends of yours, bring them to me and you will get land.'

I brought the paper. We got land (the informant claps his hands). The same day. We all got land. It was the interim district master who gave it to us. Not the gentleman who drinks coconut water together with the land owners. When you go and ask for a piece of land, the land owner would say: 'Don't give him land.'

Of course, the district master would not say that the land owner said that. After we got our land, the land owner's nose remained long (the informant makes a long nose with his fingers).

In complying with the demands of the planter class, civil police was expanded at the time of emancipation.⁴⁴ Policing in post-emancipation Curaçaoan society was conducted in a similar way to other Caribbean societies, with more emphasis on the prevention of civil disturbance than on the prevention of crime (Richards 1993:1). Plantation owners complained to the district masters and they in turn complained to the governor that the police force was too small. This argument was often used to restrict large formations of 'negro huts' in a district. It was argued that the existing number of policemen was insufficient to adequately fight the problems relating to the illegal trade in liquor, stolen goods and other forms of disorderly behaviour.⁴⁵

The local population called the military police *mareshosé*.⁴⁶ They had a lower social status than the white planter class. Some did not know the local language and would keep their distance, rarely forming relations with the local population. However, over time members of the corps would become more connected with the black lower class and affairs and marriages were not unknown.⁴⁷ This pattern already existed before emancipation (van Dissel 1857:114). This presented a problem for the colonial government. Van der Gon Netscher vilified these military policemen for such actions. One reason for this was that most of these policemen were already at an old age when they started a family, so that when they died, their young widows became impoverished and had to appeal for government aid (1868:466). Indirectly, this type of relationship between whites and blacks also meant a break-down in the system ideally characterized by separation between the sexes.

Below the military police were the police patrol men, with less authority. Most of them belonged to the black lower class. From the start of emancipation attempts were made to recruit policemen from the districts. In a note to the commissioner of the third district, the governor requested that:

In the interest of law and order, it is desirable to select capable persons who live in the negro villages and in the inhabited part of the outer districts, who will be given the responsibility to maintain peace and order.⁴⁸

This was an attempt to create ties between the police system and the people in the communities. But many were opposed to this idea, based on the racial stereotype that ‘blacks could not exercise authority over their own people’ (Koloniale Verslagen 1870). In his response to the governor the district commissioner stated: ‘There is a propensity among blacks for violence and a lack of respect for authority.’⁴⁹ Others thought that their being part of the black population hindered them from behaving impartially. One district master dismissed his black watchman as he ‘behaved as though a family member of the people he dealt with’: they should be integrated but remain impartial. The colonial reports often complained that it was very difficult to find suitable patrol officers (Koloniale Verslagen 1875). Those appointed found themselves constantly fighting against the prejudices of the district commissioner, who often claimed that they were unsuited for the job.

The conditions of employment were generally unfavourable. For example, they had to be at the disposal of the service at all times. They also had to own a means of transport. On top of that, they were in temporary service and did not have the position of civil servants; they could not claim a pension and could be dismissed at any time.⁵⁰

The lack of integration of the military police into the communities created problems. There is evidence that they asserted their power in an aggressive way when dealing with the lower class. In some cases people would react to this by resisting arrest, but this would often lead to further maltreatment. As people used songs to express resistance, the military police also became the subject of songs, like the one recorded below: ‘Ai bin dal mi, ku bo por!’ (Come and hit me if you dare).

Bin dal mi, ku bo por
Bin dal mi
Pa mi bolbe dal bo
Bin dal mi mareshosé
Bin dal mi⁵¹

Come and hit me if you dare
Come and hit me
I will hit you back
Come and hit me, military police
Come and hit me

The authority of the military police was undermined by the fact that they did not always set a good example themselves. Some drank excessively.⁵² For example, Pieterella and Constantien Lourens complained about Billiet, a military policeman who under the influence of alcohol had pulled up the dress of their seventeen year old daughter Melanie, and who had also given her a cuff on the ear. He was subsequently sent to jail.⁵³ In another case, the district master was called in frequently during the disputes between Petroneeltje and her husband: a police sergeant who, while drunk, would maltreat his wife and children.⁵⁴ Others were reported to the district masters for drinking in public places while on duty. Their punishment was likely to be dismissal or reduction in rank.⁵⁵

In order to improve its functioning and image in the community, in 1872 the military force was reorganized. The colonial report of the following year already concluded that an improvement in conduct by policemen was apparent. They attributed this to the increase

in salary, by which they could attract men more suited to the profession (Koloniale Verslagen 1873). In the course of time, the government would interfere in the private lives of the policemen in order to increase their respectability within the community and improve their image. For example, married policemen who were caught having an affair were transferred to another station on the island.⁵⁶ This effort was acknowledged by the Roman Catholic Church. In an article in *La Cruz* of 14 August 1918, concerning the reorganization of the police force, the author wrote:

Luckily they have reorganized the police force. Military police are to be replaced by civilians. There is the prospect of great change and improvement if they choose competent people to become policemen, decent people, and respectable people from good families. One of the requirements for becoming a good policeman is abstinence from alcohol. The government should introduce a law punishing those who sell alcohol to policemen, as this is done in the United States.

The Church on Curaçao expected the State to judge people using the same criteria it did. As will be clear from Chapter VI, the clergy mainly emphasized respectability. This referred both to actual behaviour and to family roots. Thus individuals coming from a 'good family', that is not born out of wedlock, were deemed to be more trustworthy. One month later the issue of respectability was once again mentioned in the same newspaper.

Now we have a civilian police force, which everybody prefers to the military police. People say that the civilian force is less rough and that they know how to behave in Curaçao. Let us see how things will develop now. If the police will conduct themselves well, they will give a good example of order and discipline, if they will not talk too loud, use foul language, will not drink and laugh with suspicious women, then Curaçao will develop through this change.⁵⁷

The following lyrics were sung when the police wanted to stop a tambú gathering. It demonstrates that such high expectations were not always met and that it was necessary for the government to introduce this measure.

*Brigadir de Ruyter ta mi mari
Mi tin derecho di balia barf⁵⁸*

*Bregadir de Ruyter is my boyfriend
I have the right to dance the drum*

The notion of respectability was manifest in the policemen's appearance, with special attention being paid to their dress code. They would be remembered by most people due to their uniform. An interviewee born in 1910 recalled her father, who was a policeman before working for the mining company.

*E tabata un hòmbler hóben ora e tabata traha
komo polis. Ei na Roi Canario, tabata hopi
mondí ku palu di mangel. Ora un hende hoga
aya na Roi Canario, hopi biaha hende ta hoga*

*He was young when he was a policeman. There
at Roi Canario, there were woods with very
many mangrove bushes. When someone
drowned there in Roi Canario, people would*

den e awa den e mondinan ei, e mester a bai den pa saka e kurpa sin bida for di awa. No ta manera awor aki. Semper e mester ta limpi i bon bistí. Tambe ora e mester saka un kadaver for di awa. Mi mama ta rabia i e ta bisa: di kon mi mester laba i guma bo pañanan djis pa bo dreña awa i saka un kurpa sin bida.⁵⁹

often drown in the water in those bushes, he had to go in and take the corpse from the water. It is not like now. He always had to go very clean and decently dressed. Even when he had to take a corpse out of the water. My mother used to get very angry about it and she would say: why should I wash and starch your clothes just for you to go inside the water and take out a corpse.'

Brenneker notes that until the 1940s Afro-Curaçaoan men were not eager to join the police force, based on the assumption that one 'had to use violence against your own people' (1986:249). In this connection, Sythoff's observation still holds true. He wrote that 'policemen were despised by the people', to the extent that 'blacks who stand close to them were repudiated by their own families' (1857:114).

Land Resources

Jeanne Besson has stated that planters in the Caribbean were generally against the freed population owning land, and preferred them to remain living on the plantations, thus creating dependency (2001:13). On Curaçao a similar pattern was visible. After 1863 land remained an index of influence and the plinth on which power was erected. Although it may have been very difficult to make a plantation profitable, planters would still buy plantations and those who suffered severe losses, would still hold onto them. Both Renkema (1981a:248-52) and Hoetink (1987:152-3) agree that factors such as status played a major role in this.

After emancipation, land became an increasingly problematic issue for the Afro-Curaçaoans, exacerbated by the limited amount of fertile land available. Under the system called *paga tera* – literally: paying for the land you live on – some former slaves would remain living on the plantation, occupying the provision grounds as well as the house they had had access to during slavery. In return, they were obliged to work for free for the land owners during certain periods of the year. In many interviews this was indicated by the following: 'Ora yega tempu di aña, bo mester a traha pornada pa shon', meaning: 'When the time came, you had to work for nothing for the shon.'

Van der Gon Netscher defined the *paga tera* system as one in which 'negroes and coloured, among whom also the recently emancipated, lived on small plots they received from the land owners, in return for which they were obliged to work about twelve days per year without pay' (1868:489). He defined the system as a favour by the plantation owners to the former slaves.

In 1899 the former finance administrator J.R.G. de Veer defined *paga tera* as a system in which some former slaves remained on the plantation, receiving a piece of land and other small facilities, in return for which they would work on the plantation a few days per year (de Veer 1899:329). An informant who had lived on plantation Savaneta told Brenneker that they had to work twelve days per year without being paid, as compensation for

the land on which their house was built. These days were called the 'dia di paga ple' (days to pay your duty) and were divided into six dry days, when they had to make repairs, and six wet days when they had to plant. Only after having worked on the land of the plantation owner they could work their own land.

The paga tera system made a distinction between the way women and men would be paid for their work.

Nos hendenan tabata traha kunuku pa shon. Hende muhé tabata gana 15 sèn, miéntras hende hòmbler tabata gana 30 sèn. Nan tabata yama esei 'paga tera'. Nos tabata koba buraku dos pa tres dia, despues no tin kobamentu mas. Tabatin hopi hende ta planta, pasó kunuku di shon tabata hopi grandi.⁶⁰

We would work the land for the shon. Women would get 15 cents, while men would get 30 cents. That was called paga tera (to pay for the land). We would dig holes for two to three days, and afterwards there would be no more digging. There were many people for planting as the kunuku of the shon was an enormous piece of land.

There were different variants of the paga tera system on the island. Some people remained living and working on the plantations. They were totally dependent on the will of the plantation owners to provide a piece of land for building their home and for producing their food. Some had made arrangements with the owner to have a plot to grow crops on while living elsewhere. They were less dependent on the plantation owners than the first group. There were also fishermen with a piece of land on the plantation. They had to turn in part of their catch to the owners. Sometimes the boat they fished in also belonged to the plantation owner.⁶¹

In his analysis of post-emancipation society, the sociologist Römer saw this system as a working relationship in which both parties benefited. Workers were available to the land owners when required, while the workers would have a plot to live and plant on, alongside other benefits, such as access to water and firewood. At first the paga tera system appeared to be a way for former slaves to receive a piece of land despite its scarcity, and for the planters to solve the problem of labour. In practice it remained an economic system in which the former slaves continued to be oppressed one way or the other.

The mutually dependent relationship was obviously not always as harmonious. The following dispute, three years after emancipation, occurred between a plantation owner and a 65 year old former slave named Catalina. It is also an example of the uncertainty in the relationship between planters and former slaves.⁶² In this conflict it is becoming apparent that both parties needed to adapt their attitudes to one another. Catalina had continued living on the plantation land according to the paga tera system. One day she sent her grandson to chase the birds from her own maize garden, instead of sending him to milk the land owner's sheep. When the latter questioned her about this action she was asked whether she had forgotten that according to existing custom, children living on the plantation had to help with milking the sheeps, after which they could help their family. Catalina replied with her hands on her hips, which was considered a sign of disrespect. For this, the planter gave her a cuff on the ear and demanded she leave the land before midday. While Catalina fled through the woods to Pannekoek, where some of her relatives lived, the

owner reported her act of aggression to the district master.⁶³ For her act of impudence Catalina received correctional punishment of three days imprisonment.⁶⁴ She was thus penalized in the interest of the planter.

The *paga tera* system principally benefited the land owners. The workers had access to a plot of land, as was the case during slavery, but now they had to pay for it through their labour. It also provided the plantation owners with a cheap and steady supply of workers when required. The plantation owners did not make permanent rent agreements with field workers, as it was more convenient to keep them as day labourers and to employ them only as and when needed. This was also visible in the instability of their income. Field workers would earn fifty to sixty cents when they had work. This could increase to seventy five cents or one guilder in the rainy season, with domestic servants earning eight to ten guilders a month.⁶⁵

When six months after emancipation several district commissioners related the state of affairs regarding work in their respective districts, their experiences varied. In districts with more plantations, such as the fifth, field workers were more in demand. There the commissioner complained about field workers and also about domestic servants. Both groups were accused of negligence and failing to comply with their duties.⁶⁶ In the second district, with relatively few plantations, there were no complaints about the field workers. The district master mostly complained about animal keepers and domestic servants in permanent employment. They were also considered slow and negligent.⁶⁷ The labour of animal keepers and domestic servants was constantly needed on the plantations, where they were employed permanently. Most plantations combined agriculture with animal husbandry. The milk and the meat were sold in town, while the animal hides were transported to Europe and the United States. The sheep and goat manure was exported to Barbados (Zwijnsen 1910:62).

Seferina Valks, whose father worked as an animal keeper on plantation Knip, related the following:

Mi tata tabata wak kabritu pa shon.

My father used to look after the goats of the shon.

Tur djaluna e tabata haña 6 kana di ariña di funchi.

Every Monday he would get 6 kilo's of corn meal.

E tabata gana tres yotin tambe pa siman.

In addition he earned one guilder fifty per week. Afterwards it became three fifty.

Despues esaki a bira tres sinkuenta.

With that money he raised us.

Ku e plaka ei el a kria nos.

With that money, the flour and the harvest of his own piece of land.

Ku e plaka ei, ariña di funchi i kosecha di nos mes kunuku.⁶⁸

Elderly people preferred to continue living on the plantations. For them starting a new life outside the plantation was not easy. Some had served for a very long time on the plantations. There they had their homes, their pieces of land. Sometimes they had been living on the plantation for generations. Members of their families were buried on the plantation ground, since several plantations had their own slave cemeteries. An informant told Juliana

in 1960 that she remembered how her mother used to keep up the graves on the plantation where her ancestors had been buried. They were thus accustomed to the way of life on the plantations, had their social relations there and did not welcome the prospect of moving elsewhere.

However, due to the unstable economic situation in some cases plantations changed hands regularly.⁶⁹ The death of a plantation owner or the merging of two plantations, or a plantation's acquisition by the government (due to financial problems of a planter) were likely to jeopardise the status quo. The proverb: 'shon nobo, lei nobo' (new owners, new laws) may be indicative of this.

In most cases the plantation owners determined the pattern of daily life for those living on their land. They were thus bound hand and foot. When some would request a piece of land outside the plantation where they lived and worked, the owners in question sometimes resisted their departure and did their utmost to make sure that they stayed on their plantation. By acting in this way they could depend on having a labour force at all times.⁷⁰ Leaving the plantation was seen as a way of withdrawing oneself from regular work and displaying an act of independence and autonomy.⁷¹ These people were hence refused a piece of land on the grounds of Regulation GB 23 August 1864/554, stating that individuals who already had a piece of land on a plantation and could provide a living for themselves and their family through manual labour, would be unable to rent a piece of government land.⁷² The paga tera system was clearly a way to continue exercising control over the life and labour of workers. This was confirmed in the following interview.

Mi tabata biba na kunuku, anto ora yega tempu di aña, shon di kunuku grandi ta yama hende pa bin koba buraku. Hòmbènan ta koba buraku i muhénan ta planta. Nan ta tira pipi-ta di maishi den buraku i tapa e buraku ku tera, ku nan pia. Un dia shon Janchi a manda un karta manda bisami, tal dia ta bai koba planta, anto pa mi bai kushiná pa e hendenan. Mata kabritu kosnan ei, kushiná pa hende ku ta traha. M'a skibié manda bis'é mi no por bai, e por buska un otro hende pa manda. El a bolbe skibimi manda bisami si ta pa buska hende manda, anto t'e lo sa ku e ta buska hende manda. Awe t'ami el a manda bisa pa bai.⁷³

I was living in the kunuku and when it was the right time of the year, the shon, owner of the large kunuku, would call on the people to come and dig holes and plant. The men would dig the holes, while the women would plant. They had to throw the maize into the holes and cover them with dirt, with their feet. One day, shon Janchi wrote me a letter to tell me that on such and such a day, people would go planting and that I had to cook for the people. A goat would be slaughtered and I would have to cook for the people. I wrote him back a letter and told him that I was not able to go and that he could look for someone else to do the job. He wrote back and told me that he was the person who can decide who to send for. Today it is me he sent for.

Another informant states:

Mi tata tabata biaha bordo di Flambechi, bordo di Zulia, Caracas, Maracaibo. E ta hasi biaha pa Maracaibo, pa Caracas, pa Merka. E ta haña un riá pa ora. P'e tempu ei ta hopi.

My father used to travel on board the 'Flambechi', the 'Zulia', the 'Caracas' and the 'Maracaibo'. He travelled to Maracaibo, Caracas and the United States. He earned one riá (fifteen

Anto ku yega tempu di aña, e shon ta bisami: 'Bo tata, e n' t'aki.' Mi tin ocho aña (a nase na 1898). Mi ta bai skol. Mi mama ta bisa: 'Mi yu, bo mester bai Punda, bai mira ku bo ta haña Pachi.' Mi ta sali, mi ta bai, mi n' por bai skol. Mi tabata bai Punda. M'a yega, nan ta bisami: 'Bo tata a sali basta ora kaba, el a laga kos na Chinè den hanchi di Punda ei.' Chinè ta bende kos ei. Mi ta bai serka Chinè i e ta bisa: 'Bo tata a laga e bònder akí pa bo.' El a laga tres plaka pa mi. Mi ta yega kas. Su manisé mi ta bai. Shon ta bisa: 'O, Adòl n' bin?' 'Nò, el a bai laman.' Tur aña e (mi tata) tin ku t'ei, no. Tur aña e t'ei traha. Dia k'e shon ei ke, e dia ei, e tin ku keda sin bai Punda p'e keda. E ku mi wela ta traha huntú. Mi wela ta pega kandela, traha kòfi, pa kada hende trahadó ku bini. Riba e dia ei hopi hende ta traha pa shon. Dia di koba, di planta, bo ta haña hendenan ta koba, planta.⁷⁴

cents) per hour. In those days it was much. When the time of year arrived, the planter would tell me: your father is not here. I was eight years old then (I was born in 1898) and was going to school. My mother would tell me, son, you have to go to town, and see if you find Pachi. I would go then and could not go to school. I wanted to go to school, but could not. When I reached town, the people would tell me: 'Your father left hours ago and left some things for you at Chinè...' Chinè was a vendor in one of the alleys in town. I would go there and Chinè would tell me. Your father left this bag for you. He left fifteen cents. I go home. The next day, the planter would ask me 'Oh! Adòl is not coming, is he?' 'No, he went sailing.' Every year my father had to be ready. He had to work for the planter. When the owner wanted him to be there he could not go to the town, but had to stay back. He and my grandmother would work together. My grandmother would light the fire and make coffee for all the workers. On that day many people worked for the land owner. On the day of digging holes and planting, you will find the people digging and planting.

The power of plantation owners was often exercised in an arbitrary way. There is evidence of conflict in the relationship between land owners and workers. The reality of the paga tera system varied according to the personality of the owner. For instance, on certain plantations the workers were not allowed to dance the tambú while on others this was not considered a problem. In 1870 on plantation Porto Mari people held a celebration with drumming after they had finished building their home⁷⁵, while in 1874 on plantation Santa Cruz, the fitó was caught in a fight with a tambú player when he wanted to stop the feast.⁷⁶

When individuals failed to abide by the rules of the plantation they were given 'ora di porta': an order to leave the plantation within 24 hours.⁷⁷ Plantation owners feared that such people would incite others and be a 'bad example' (*siña mal ehèmpel*). Such was the case, for instance, with Saxen, the slave of N. Rojer. After emancipation he remained on the plantation of Wacao, where he was in charge of the horses. In his request to the district master for a piece of land Saxen claimed that he was forced to leave the plantation.

During the usual investigations for the request, the district master found out that Saxen had complained to the owner that some of his animals had destroyed his maize garden. Due to this complaint the owner had given him two days to leave the plantation.⁷⁸

Someone who had been chased from the land and was thought impudent, would not easily find a piece of land to live on.⁷⁹ In 1892, thirty years after the end of slavery, the finance administrator described the ora di porta rule to the governor as a relic of the slavery period. According to him, the plantation owners still saw blacks as the descendants of

those who had once been their property and demanded unconditional subordination from them. ‘They would allow them to live on their land on their conditions. When they saw fit, they could ban an entire family from their land without prior warning, leaving the family unemployed and homeless.’⁸⁰

The *ora di porta* rule was described by an informant as follows:

*Ora shon bisabo traha bo tin ku traha. Un dia, mi ta spera yu, un anochi mi mester a bai traha den saliña pa koba salu. E dia siguiente, e doño a manda un karta i a eksigí pa mi bin bua salu den dia tambe. Mi a manda bis'é ku mi no por bini. El a dunami 24 ora, 'ora di porta'. Mi a keda sin bai, anto mi no a bua salu mas.*⁸¹

If the shon orders you to do work, you have to work. One night, when I was pregnant, I had to work on the salt-pans and dig salt. The following day, the owner wrote me a letter and demanded me to come and dig salt during the day as well. I sent to tell him that I could not go. They gave me 24 hours' notice. I didn't go and did not dig salt anymore.

Or, as Carlos Koeiman pointed out:

(Pasó mi tata no tabat'ei tempu di aña) shon a lanta ku mi tata. Ma, e shon ta (bata riba) ku mi tanta, ruman di mi mama, ma e n' tene konsiderashon ku nos. El a saka nos fo'i su kunuku.

(Because my father was not there in time for planting) the shon went against him. Even though the planter lived together with my aunt, the sister of my mother, he was not considerate towards us. He chased us from his kunuku.

Some plantations continued to apply the same labour routines as during slavery. On one plantation in the western part of the island, they continued to ring the bell to announce the work.

S.V.: *Nan ta bati klòk 6 or di mainta. Tur mainta. Bo mester ta trempan. Si bo hera yega lat, shon ta birabo, mandabo bèk. No ta pèrmitíbo traha mas.*

S.V.: *They used to ring the bell at six o'clock in the morning. Every morning. You had to be there in time. If you happened to be late, the shon would send you back. You would not be allowed to work anymore.*

R.A.: *Kuantu aña señora tabatin?*

R.A.: *How old were you at that time?*

S.V.: *Un 17 pa 18 aña*

S.V.: *About 17 or 18 years old*

R.A.: *Orashon manda un hende bèk, e por keda riba plantashi?*

R.A.: *When the shon sends a person back, is he allowed to stay on the plantation?*

S.V.: *Nò, nò, nò. E ta kore ku nan, saka nan for di su kurá. Anto tin hende ta hui, despues bini bèk. Ku shon haña sa, pasó tin hasidó di redu, ku e haña sa e ta bolbe manda e hende ei bèk. Esei ta e tempunan ayá. Awor akí no. Aworakí no tin e kosnan ei.*⁸³

S.V.: *No, no no. He will chase them from the plantation. Sometimes the person would run away and return. But when the shon gets to know that, because there are gossipers, if he gets to know, he would chase him out again. Those were different days. Now that cannot happen anymore. Nowadays these things don't happen.*

Up until the early twentieth century the paga tera system continued to exist in the western part of the island. In the eastern part it had all but disappeared due to a large distribution of government land. In addition, the town was close by, and the mining industry was also found there, offering employment prospects to the manumitted former slaves. The paga tera system was attacked by the Dutch socialist van Kol, particularly on account of the working conditions (van Kol 1904:304). Whereas van der Gon Netscher in 1869 considered the system a favour to the black population, van Kol, who visited the island at the beginning of the twentieth century, saw it as a legacy of slavery. He gave a detailed description of the system in that period, which had not changed over the years. He noted that:

On some plantations pieces of land were given out on which the black population built their huts and planted maize. Sometimes they had to work 10 to 12 days a year without payment from the land owner or three days a week with a compensation of 15 cents per day. The salary would also be paid in maize. In addition, the farmer had to give all the maize stalks to the land owner, which often meant handing over the entire harvest as in drought years no maize would ripen on these stalks (van Kol 1904:308).

The land owners' commitment to rigid control over the farmers' time and mobility generated deep hostility among the people, who had expected independence after freedom. The following statement shows that some did not see any difference between the pre- and post-slavery period. It also reveals that former slaves, both men and women, saw field labour as something degrading.

Bo ta hende grandi, bo ta traha pa fitó. Fitó ta mucha. Bo por ta su tata. Awor akí nos no tin e kosnan ei mas na Kòrsou pasó Shell a bini.

You are an adult and you are working for the fitó (overseer). The fitó is young. You could be his father. Now we don't have that kind of things in Curaçao any longer, because of the Shell (oil-refinery).

Shell a bini, para tur e sufrimentunan ei, para sklabbitu na Kòrsou. Bo por kere un hende ta piki su chapi seis or di mainta, banda di ocho or e ta kome un poko funchi, banda di dos or i sinku or di atardi tambe, traha, chapi te seis or... Esei ta traha manera katibu.⁸⁴

The Shell came and stopped all this suffering, stopped slavery on Curaçao. Can you believe that someone will pick up a hoe from six o'clock in the morning to work and about eight o'clock he will eat some funchi, about two o'clock in afternoon and five o'clock again and work with the hoe till six o'clock... That is slavery.

Often they criticized the land owners controlling the system, because they paid them no respect.

E shonnan, bosa nan ta tratabo ku menospresio, pasó bo ta pover. No e manera ku Dios tabata ke pa ta, pero ta asina nan ta tratabo. Kastigábo, abusá di bo, bo mester keda sumiso, bo tata mester keda sumiso, bo mama mester keda sumiso. Bo mester dominá bo mes, pasó asina e shonnan ta.⁸⁵

The land owners, you know, they treat you with disdain, because you are poor. That is not the way God meant it to be, but that's the way they treat us. Punish you, abuse you, you have to be subservient, your father must be subservient, your mother must be subservient. You must control your temper. That is how the land owners were.

The power of the plantation owners extended to the workers' children. Many were held back due to this, as an informant (born 1908) interviewed in 1992 recalls.

E.Q.: *Mi a nase na plantashi Siberie. Mi tata tabata wak baka pa shon. Mi a nase bou dominio di shon. Nan tabata hende ku hopi poder. Nos a bai skol na Wilibròdu. Bida tabata duru. Mi tambe tabata wak baka den kunuku huntu ku mi tata. Shon tabatin hopi poder. Nan a eksigí pa mi kita skol promé ku mi tempu pa mi traha na nan lugá na Otrobanda.*

E.Q.: *I was born on the plantation Siberie. My father used to look after the cattle for the shon. I grew up under the control of the shon. These were people with a lot of power. We went to school in Willibrordus. Life was very hard. I also used to look after the cattle together with my father in the kunuku. The shon had a lot of power. They demanded that I left school before time so that I could work at their place in town (Otrobanda).*

R.A.: *Traha komo kiko?*

R.A.: *To work as what?*

E.Q.: *Traha komo nan kriá. Mi a kere ku si mi bai Punda(stat), nan ta mandami skol. Despues mi a kuminsá yora i mi no tabata ker a keda serka e shon. E shon a bisami, nò, bo tin ku keda. Mi a bai, bai traha serka un bas di karpinté. Despues mi a bai for di e isla.⁸⁶*

E.Q.: *To work as a servant. I thought when I went to work in town, that they would send me to school. Afterwards I started to cry and did not want to stay with the shon. The shon told me no, I had to stay. I left and went to work in the workshop of a carpenter. Afterwards I left the island.*

One recurrent theme on plantation life was the relationship between the shons and the women living on their plantations. According to oral history the shons sought young women on their plantations. If the parents refused they would be sent away from the plantations. It was often a topic of gossip. Some Afro-Curaçaoan women preferred to gain from being a white man's concubine rather than being a black men's wife, as the offspring would reap the benefit of having a lighter skin colour.

I.S.: *Shon Manchi e no a kasa anto, e tabatin yu afó. E ta kuenan, ma famia no ta kuenan komo famia. Ta afó e tin nan.*

I.S.: *Shon Manchi never married, but he had children out of wedlock. He recognized them, but his family did not recognize them as family members. They were born out of wedlock.*

R.A.: *Yu ku muhé pretu*

R.A.: *He had a child with a black woman?*

I.S.: *Pasó un shon ta haña un yu ku un negru, e no ta presentá komo tata. Abo muhé ta sa, ku tal hende ta tata di e yu. Pero e no ta presentá manera nos negru por presentá, anke nos no ta kria yu, ma nos ta presentá.⁸⁷*

I.S.: *The shon gets a child with a black person, he does not come out as the father. You being the woman will know that such and such a person is the father of the child. But he will not come out as the father as we blacks would do. Even though we don't take care of the child, we will come out as its father.*

The following informant also gave an example of such a relationship between a plantation owner and a worker.

S.V.: *Na kunuku di shon tabatin diferente hende muhé. Bo tabatin Petra, Anna, bo tabatin Eva, ku tabatin yu ku shon (informante ta hari). Shon tabata gusta muhé. El a rekonosé e muchanan. E tabatin yu ku un muhé ku yama Mercelina. Despues el a bai biba na un otro kunuku ku un otro muhé. El a haña nuebe yu kuné. El a lubidá Mercelina. Nan a kant'é den un kantika:*

*Shon a planta bonchi
Pa Mercelin bin kue bonchi
Ma Terecilia kabes di buriku
A bin kue bonchi mata rama.⁸⁸*

S.V.: *On the plantation you had several women. You had Petra, Ann, you had Eve, who had children with the owner. (The informant laughs). This is shon Harry (laughter). Shon was good for himself. He did recognize those children. He also had children by a lady named Merceline. Then he went to live on another plantation together with another woman. He got nine children by her. The other woman Merceline was forgotten. They sang this 'story' in a song:
The shon has planted beans
For Merceline to come and pick beans⁸⁹
But Terecila, she with the donkey head⁹⁰
Came to pick the beans and killed the bush.⁹¹*

One of the advantages of living on the plantations under the paga tera system was that people would have better access to water, sometimes very difficult to attain, as there were often periods of drought on the island. In 1868, people living in town were dying of dehydration as even the 'donkeys and mules were too weak to bring water to the town' (Brenneker 1986:120-1). In 1883 a priest wrote that sometimes people would pay 20 to 30 cents – a daily wage – for a small tub of water.⁹² A similar phenomenon is also described in the beginning of the twentieth century. In the dry season the price of rainwater – in an ordinary year five to ten cents for a tub of 18 litres – rose to 25/30 cents for the same quantity (Blink 1907:56). Priests would ask the government and others for help, as those in the countryside in particular would suffer from the lack of water.⁹³ Even into the twentieth century pure drinking water was difficult to attain and expensive in Curaçao. The lack of which was one of the major causes for the high infant mortality rate (Dekker 1982:217).

One of the major complaints made of the paga tera system concerned the lack of drinking water. The daily struggle by Afro-Curaçaoans centered as much on water as it did on land and food. The search for water was a major preoccupation and took a great deal of time and energy. Many stories were told about the hardships of collecting water. People, especially young children, would often have to walk several kilometres to collect water. This could be a dangerous task, especially for children; drownings were not unknown.⁹⁴

The following informant, born in 1900 on plantation Kenepa, stressed that even though he lived under the paga tera system, he was unable to find drinking water easily. The plantation owner allowed his cattle to pollute the water and it was sometimes full of cow dung and urine.

Ora mi ta bai skol bini, mi mama ta mandami bai saka awa na tanki di awa. Mama ta bisami: 'Bai saka poko awa, anto mi ta tota dos maishi warda pa bo.' Kontentu mi ta bai, pasó mi kier men, mi tin chèn di haña maishi. Den e tankinan di awa, e bakanan di shon tabata bai bebe awa. E bakanan sa bai kana bai te meimei di

When I came back from school in the afternoon, my mother would send me to fetch water from the tank. Mother would say: 'Go and fetch water and I will toast some maize for you.' I would be very glad to go, because I would get some maize in return. But... the cows of the landlord would go into the tank where we took

awa, anto bai para pishi. Ora mi saka e awa, mi ta mira mitar di e awa, kasi bèrdè, puru pishi. Duele. Un kos asina ei no ta pasa awor. Mi ta bisa nan na kas, anto defuntu mi tata ta siñami kòrta kadushi, anto pone den awa, bir'é, bir'é, bir'é. E ta kria lèbèlèbè, traga ta sali un tiki ku nos por beb'é. Ta esei t'awa. N' ta'tin otro kaminda. I tòg tabatin pos den kurá di shon. Tur loke t'eiden ta di shon. Bo n' por papia nada, tampoko. Bon, despues ku kos a bira di remate, anto a bai pidi shon pa bai kue poko awa. Nos a bin traha un baki parti pafó di tranké, ku hende por a bai kue. Ma tin biaha bientu n' ta supla i bo ta haña 10 hende ei. Un mester para warda riba otro. Mir'akí!!! Si bo n' ta pasa den malu, bo n' ta sa kon malu ta. Awor mi ta rekonosé e kos, m'a e dia nos ta den e kos nos mes n' ta ripará.⁹⁵

our water and urinate inside. When we would fetch the water, it would be green..., pure piss. Very pitiful. Something like that could not happen nowadays. When I arrived home, I would tell them and my father, may God rest his soul, would teach us to cut a cactus, put it in the water, turn and turn and turn it. It would become like a slimy matter, the dirt would go into the slime and the water would remain clean, so that we could drink it. That was the water we had. There was no other place. And still on the land of the shon, there were a lot of wells. But everything belonged to the shon. Well it became unbearable. We went to ask the shon permission to fetch water in his yard. They built a water reservoir outside the yard where people could fetch water. But sometimes there would be no wind and ten people would be waiting for their turn to fetch water. Look here. If you haven't experienced bad life, you don't know what a bad life is. Now we do recognize this life, but when we were in the middle of it, we ourselves did not recognize it.

Conclusion

With the end of slavery, so ended the legal slave status of Afro-Curaçaoans. The colonial State now had jurisdiction over these freedpeople. Officially the State played a more pronounced and instrumental role in shaping the legal framework for social relationships. The social reality of emancipation was more complicated than merely recognizing the legal freedom of people. The change of perception within the white population which this also implied was long in coming.

The laws and regulations put in place were concerned with far more than simply regulating the social life of people. Plantation owners continued to assert control over the lives of people both in a direct and an indirect way. For many years they had direct domination over the lives of those who continued in the paga tera system, whereby the latter worked and lived on the plantation ground. In addition, as most of these planters had executive functions in governmental institutions as well, they could indirectly control the lives of a large part of the Afro-Curaçaoan population.

In the area of work, their interests were important considerations in the implementation of laws. The State then became a prime instrument in maintaining labour discipline. The rules enforced were dominated by the racist ideas prevalent at the time, which assumed that Afro-Curaçaoans were unable to deal with freedom and to be successful, free citizens.

The power of the plantation owners also affected the land distribution among Afro-Curaçaoans. The different regulations regarding land and land distribution were aimed at instilling a labour discipline and orderly behaviour among Afro-Curaçaoans. In the distribution of land the plantation owners' power was also felt, as the application for a piece of land could be refused based on their judgement of the applicant's character. In this way control over the distribution of land was used as a disciplinary device.

As the twentieth century approached, the power of the plantation owners began to diminish. However, the State did not succeed in de-institutionalizing the existing social inequality based on ethnic and racial differences – if it indeed attempted to do so in the first place.

Notes

- 1 NatAr, Publicatie Blad A 1863, no. 11.
- 2 NatAr, Publicatie Blad A 1863, no. 23.
- 3 NatAr, Publicatie Blad A 1863, no. 17.
- 4 NatAr, Publicatie Blad A 1863, no. 18.
- 5 NatAr, Archief van het Gouvernement, Brievenboeken 5e district, 1863-1904, inv. no. 125, 17-5-1863.
- 6 NA, Ministerie van Koloniën, 1850-1900, inv. no. 6739, 20-1-1864.
- 7 NatAr, Archief van het Gouvernement, Brievenboeken 2e district, 1863-1905, inv. no. 140, 5 -3-1866/9.
- 8 NatAr, Publicatie Blad 1862/15, Article 21; 'Wet houdende opheffing der slavernij op de eilanden Curaçao, Bonaire, Aruba, Sint Eustatius, Saba en Sint Maarten (Nederlands gedeelte)'.
- 9 NatAr, Publicatie Blad 1863/18; 'Wet tot wering van lediggang en zwerverij'.
- 10 NA, Ministerie van Koloniën, 1850-1900, inv. no. 6734, 31-12-1862/906.
- 11 NatAr, Archief van het Gouvernement, Brievenboeken 5e district, 1863-1904, inv. no. 127, 1-10-1867/143.
- 12 NatAr, Archief van het Gouvernement, Brievenboeken 2e district, 1863-1905, inv. no. 140, 5 -3-1866/9. See minutes of meeting 24-11-1909 of the Commission appointed by the government (30-7-1909/489) to investigate the situation of large-scale farming in the colony of Curaçao (*Koloniaal Verslag* 1910).
- 13 NatAr, Archief van het Gouvernement, Brievenboeken 5e district, 1863-1904, inv. no. 126, 13-5-1866/83. See also NatAr, Archief van het Gouvernement, Brievenboeken 3e district, 1863-1906, inv. no. 139, 22-5-1864/54).
- 14 NatAr, Publicatie Blad 1863/18, Article 4.
- 15 NatAr, Archief van het Gouvernement, Brievenboeken 3e district, 1863-1906, inv. no. 139, 28-5-1864/58.
- 16 NatAr, Archief van het Gouvernement, Administratie van Financiën, 1892, inv. no. 37, 18-5-1892/215 and 14-5-1892/212.
- 17 NatAr, Archief van het Gouvernement, Rol van Strafzaken 1873, Procesverbaal no. 31.
- 18 NatAr, Archief van het Gouvernement, Rol van Strafzaken 1872, Procesverbaal no. 32.
- 19 NatAr, Publicatie Blad 1863/17.
- 20 NatAr, Archief van het Gouvernement, Brievenboeken 5e district, 1863-1904, inv. no. 126, 6-2-1865/8.
- 21 Idem. The district master said to have taken this action after having received a letter from the government dated 11-5-1866/190, stating that all those not behaving properly on Pannekoek and

- Dokterstuin (plantation grounds which had recently been purchased by the government), would be removed.
- 22 NatAr, Archief van het Gouvernement, Brievenboeken 4e district, 1863-1906, inv. no. 147, 6-1-1864/2, 14-1-1864/ 4, 17-3-1864/22, 13-4-1864/26 and 27-5-1864/34.
 - 23 NatAr, Archief van het Gouvernement, Brievenboeken 3e district, 1863-1906, inv. no. 139, 9-1-1864/3.
 - 24 NatAr, Archief van het Gouvernement, Brievenboeken 4e district, 1863-1906, inv. no. 3698, 19-9-1863.
 - 25 NA, Ministerie van Koloniën, 1850-1900, inv. no. 6784, 22-6-1886/386.
 - 26 NatAr, Publicatie Blad 1865/12 ('Wet houdende strafbepaling tegen niet naleving der verplichtingen bij huur van dienst').
 - 27 NatAr, Archief van het Gouvernement, Brievenboeken 2e district, 1863-1905, inv. no. 133, 26-5-1865.
 - 28 NatAr, Archief van het Gouvernement, Brievenboeken 5e district, 1863-1904, inv. no. 126, 26-5-1866/45 and 28-5-1866/47.
 - 29 NatAr, Archief van het Gouvernement, Brievenboeken 5e district, 1863-1904, inv. no. 126, 16-6-1866/87. See also NA, Ministerie van Koloniën, 1850-1900, inv. no. 6787, 18-1-1889/42.
 - 30 NatAr, Archief van het Gouvernement, Administratie van Financiën, 1892, inv. no. 36, 11-12-1894/16.
 - 31 Even plantations owners were suspected of selling illicit alcohol on their plantations, as a way of making an additional income. NatAr, Archief van het Gouvernement, Administratie van Financiën, 1892, inv. no. 37, 16-9-1893/381.
 - 32 NatAr, Archief van het Gouvernement, Geheime stukken, 1861-1880, inv. no. 3659, 17-7-1866/4, 19-7-1866/no number, 19-7-1877/55 and 20-7-1866/18.
 - 33 NatAr, Archief van het Gouvernement, Geheime stukken, 1861-1880, inv. no. 3659, 19-7-1866/55.
 - 34 NatAr, Archief van het Gouvernement, Brievenboeken 5e district, 1863-1904, inv. no. 127, 1-10-1867/143.
 - 35 Renkema 1981a:157. In 1883 Eskildsen was district master of the fourth district and from 1884-1892 the fifth district also became his responsibility.
 - 36 Brenneker 1970:1836. Many people complained that their animals had been stolen. As the animals of land owners had a mark in each ear, and theirs in only one ear, their animals could easily be taken by the land owners.
 - 37 For example, it was only in 1868, when the civil code came into force, that the commissioners were given better guidelines on civil matters (see Burgerlijk Wetboek voor Curaçao, KB, 4-9-1868/18; NatAr, Publicatie Blad 1868/76.)
 - 38 *Amigoe*, 10-9-1904.
 - 39 The *benta* is a musical instrument in the form of a bow. The player uses his mouth as a sound box, while constantly changing the position of a knife on the string.
 - 40 'Jansofat' is the name of a plantation.
 - 41 NatAr, Parket van den Procureur-generaal, inv. no. 484, 28-5-1911.
 - 42 NatAr, Archief van het Gouvernement, Ingekomen stukken 3e district, 1860-1905, inv. no. 53, 4-2-1902.
 - 43 Interview Eduardo Tokaai (born 1899), Allen, 12-9-1984 (NatAr).
 - 44 This also led to discussions in the Dutch House of Commons revolving around the possible sale of Curaçao, as a result of which the Colonial Council became very alarmed. Renkema 1976.
 - 45 NatAr, Archief van het Gouvernement, Brievenboeken 2e district, 1863-1905, inv. no. 132, 26-3-1873/48.
 - 46 This is derived from the Dutch word 'marechaussee'.
 - 47 NatAr, Archief van het Gouvernement, Brievenboeken 5e district, 1863-1904, inv. no. 126, 19-1-1866/1.

- 48 NatAr, Archief van het Gouvernement, Ingekomen stukken 3e district, 1860-1905, inv. no. 36, 27-11-1866/442.
- 49 NatAr, Archief van het Gouvernement, Brievenboeken 3e district, 1863-1906, inv. no. 140, 29-11-1866/97.
- 50 NA, Ministerie van Koloniën, 1850-1900, inv. no. 6747, 16-5-1872/220.
- 51 Interview Henriette Cooks (born 1877), Brenneker/Juliana, 1958 (Zikinzá-collection, T 766, NatAr).
- 52 NatAr, Archief van het Gouvernement, Brievenboeken 5e district, 1863-1904, inv. no. 126, 2 -5-1865/61; see the case of the marechaussee who was so drunk that he stripped off his clothes (NatAr, Archief van het Gouvernement, Brievenboeken 5e district, 1863-1904, inv. no. 126, 7-5-1866/54 and 15-5-1866/58).
- 53 NatAr, Archief van het Gouvernement, Brievenboeken 5e district, 1863-1904, inv. no. 127, 26-10-1866/162.
- 54 NatAr, Archief van het Gouvernement, Brievenboeken 2e district, 1863-1905, inv. no. 131, 29-7-1864/76.
- 55 NatAr, Archief van het Gouvernement, Brievenboeken 3e district, 1863-1906, inv. no. 140, 27-12-1866.
- 56 NatAr, Archief van het Gouvernement, Brievenboeken 2e en 3e district, inv. no. 164, 14-9-1908/294; NatAr, Archief van het Gouvernement, Brievenboeken 2e en 3e district, inv. no. 164, 24-9-1908/299.
- 57 *La Cruz*, 4-9-1918.
- 58 De Pool 1935:81.
- 59 Interview Virginia (Ina) Servinia (born 1-10-1910), Allen, 27-11-1986 (NatAr).
- 60 Interview Seferina Valks (born 1903), Allen, 8-9-1983 (NatAr).
- 61 Van Dissel 1868:443-4. For example, part of the work force on plantation Koraal Tabak (at the bay of Sint Joris in the eastern part of the island) focused on fishing.
- 62 NatAr, Archief van het Gouvernement, Brievenboeken 5e district, 1863-1904, inv. no. 126, 29 -1-1866/9. This manifested itself in several ways. For example, the owner of the plantation of Ascension complained to the district master that she felt insulted as she had been answered back in a disrespectful way by a woman called Margaritha living in Dokterstuin, after her cart had collided on a narrow road with her when she was taking products to town. Margaritha lost large part of her produce and was punished for her verbal insult. NatAr, Archief van het Gouvernement, Brievenboeken 5e district, 1863-1904, inv. no. 126, 7-3-1866/23.
- 63 NatAr, Archief van het Gouvernement, Brievenboeken 5e district, 1863-1904, inv. no. 126, 29-1-1866/9 and 31-1-1866/11.
- 64 NatAr, Archief van het Gouvernement, Brievenboeken 5e district, 1863-1904, inv. no. 126, 2-2-1866/14.
- 65 NatAr, Archief van het Gouvernement, Brievenboeken 2e district, 1863-1905, inv. no. 131, 25-5-1864/27.
- 66 NatAr, Archief van het Gouvernement, Brievenboeken 5e district, 1863-1904, inv. no. 125, 12-1-1864/2 and 13-5-1864/21.
- 67 NatAr, Archief van het Gouvernement, Brievenboeken 2e district, 1863-1905, inv. no. 131, 13-5-1864/21.
- 68 Interview Seferina Valks (born 1903 in Kenepa), Allen, 8-9-1983 (NatAr).
- 69 After 1863 several plantations were sold in an auction by the 'Weeskamer' or by the Curaçaoan mortgage bank: Klein Kwartier (in 1868), Groot Davelaar (in 1870), Stenen Koraal (in 1882), Daniel and Grote Berg (in 1886) and Engelenberg (in 1898). In the same period Wacao, Lelienberg, Sint Hieronimus and Paradera (in 1878) and Valentijn (in 1894) were auctioned by a private loan holder (Renkema 1981a:186).
- 70 NatAr, Archief van het Gouvernement, Brievenboeken 2e district, 1863-1905, inv. no. 132, 16-5-1867/1.

- 71 NatAr, Archief van het Gouvernement, Brievenboeken 5e district, 1863-1904, inv. no. 126, 6-8-1864/83.
- 72 NA, Ministerie van Koloniën, 1850-1900, inv. no. 6739, 23-8-1864/554. This land was owned by the government to be distributed among the popular class. The State began to buy pieces of land from plantation owners in anticipation of emancipation.
- 73 Interview N. Simmons (born 1888), Allen, 15-1-1980 (NatAr).
- 74 Interview Carlos Koeiman (born 1898), Allen, 6-5-1986 (NatAr).
- 75 NatAr, Hof van Justitie, PV 1870.
- 76 NatAr, Hof van Justitie, PV 1874.
- 77 Sometimes people would go and live on a different plantation after having been chased away from their homes. For example, Leontina was chased away from San Juan and went to live on Groot Santa Marta. As she and her son continued to misbehave, they were again chased away from that plantation. NatAr, Archief van het Gouvernement, Brievenboeken 5e district, 1863-1904, inv. no. 126, 16-6-1865/87.
- 78 NatAr, Archief van het Gouvernement, Brievenboeken 5e district, 1863-1904, inv. no. 126, 9-6-1865/76.
- 79 NatAr, Archief van het Gouvernement, Brievenboeken 5e district, 1863-1904, inv. no. 125, 15-7-1864/70. Angelista Pieter was sent away from a plantation, but was also denied a piece of land because she was impudent. See also the case of the couple Johannes and Balentina Schoop, who in the beginning of the twentieth century (1903) were denied a piece of government land, after having been chased away from the plantation, based on the same criterion. NatAr, Archief van het Gouvernement, Brievenboeken 5e district 1863-1904, inv. no. 145, 12-3-1903/31.
- 80 NatAr, Archief van het Gouvernement, Administratie van Financiën, 1892, inv. no. 37, 18-5-1892/215 and 14-5-1892/212.
- 81 Interview N. Simmons (born 1888), Allen, 15-1-1980 (NatAr).
- 82 Interview Carlos Koeiman (born 1898), Allen, 25-5-1986 (NatAr).
- 83 Interview Seferina Valks (born 1903), Allen, 8-5-1984 (NatAr).
- 84 Interview Felix Martina (born 21-2-1894), Brenneker/Juliana, 28-3-1978 (T 62, Fundashon Biblioteka Públiko Kòrsou).
- 85 Interview Eduardo Tokaai (born 1899), Allen, August 1985 (NatAr).
- 86 Interview E. Quirindongo (born 14-10-1908), Allen, 1992 (NatAr).
- 87 Interview Inie Sirvanie (born 1-4-1910), Allen, 27-11-1989 (NatAr).
- 88 Interview Seferina Valks (born 1903), Allen, 8-5-1984 (NatAr).
- 89 The shon had children with Merceline.
- 90 She was called *kabes di buriku*, donkey head, due to her big head. Despite this feature the shon was willing to form a couple with her.
- 91 The former woman disappeared from his memory.
- 92 Kerstgeschenk 1883:215.
- 93 *La Union*, 12-6-1889 and 29-5-1889. See also NatAr, Archief van het Gouvernement, Ingekomen stukken 3e district, 1860-1905, inv. no. 42, 8-5-1889/268.
- 94 NatAr, Archief van het Gouvernement, Brievenboeken 5e district, 1863-1904, inv. no. 127, 1-4-1867/53.
- 95 Interview Didi Sluis (born 1904), Allen/Ernest Gaari, 14-4-1984 (NatAr).

