Forgotten Stories Silenced Past

Anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters in primary education in the European Netherlands and the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

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Foreword

Tula, Janey Tetary, Nyi Ageng Serang en Martha Christina Tiahahu

According to former member of parliament Sylvana Simons (BIJ1), anti-colonial freedom fighters and resistance heroes from the era of Dutch colonial slavery are absent from or insufficiently addressed in education in the Netherlands. In 2022 she and several colleagues tabled a parliamentary motion calling for examples of anti-colonial resistance to be included in school history textbooks[1]. The motion argued that every pupil should learn about what we as a society have endured, where we come from and how history colours our present. Simons and her colleagues also called on the government to conduct research to uncover and archive stories about anti-colonial freedom fighters and resistance heroes from Dutch history, so that these stories can be included in the Canon of the Netherlands.

This report is a first step in the implementation of that motion. This research takes stock of the stories of anti-colonial freedom fighters and resistance heroes from Dutch colonial and slavery history currently being taught in primary, secondary and special education, both in the European Netherlands and on the islands of Aruba, Curaçao, Bonaire, Sint Maarten, Saba and Sint Eustatius (henceforth referred to as the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands). As well as revealing which stories are discussed, it also examines how they are treated.

To this end, we have formulated the following research questions.

1. Are stories about anti-colonial freedom fighters and resistance heroes included in the curricula of primary and secondary schools? And if so, how are these stories treated and what narrative is central to them?
2. Are stories about anti-colonial freedom fighters and resistance heroes included in the teaching materials published by the major commercial educational publishers in the European Netherlands? And if so, how are these stories treated and what narrative is central to them?
3. Do education professionals include stories about anti-colonial freedom fighters and resistance heroes in their classroom teaching? And if so, how are these stories treated and what narrative is central to them? What teaching materials (and other resources) do education professionals use in support of this activity?
4. Do the stories presented about anti-colonial freedom fighters and resistance heroes (in the curriculum, in teaching materials and by education professionals) take into account pupils' world view? And if so, how do they experience those stories?
5. Within what broader social context are stories about anti-colonial freedom fighters and resistance heroes (in the curriculum, in teaching materials and presented by education professionals) placed? For example, what was the background to the resistance, when and in what circumstances did it take place and which community or communities were involved?

European-Caribbean co-operation

The research presented in this report has been funded by the Netherlands Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW), and more specifically by the OCW Programme against Discrimination and Racism. At the ministry's request, a consortium was formed to conduct the necessary research on the inclusion of stories about anti-colonial freedom fighters and resistance heroes in education. The partners in this consortium are the Verwey-Jonker Institute, Movisie and, on behalf of the Council for Higher Education in the Caribbean Part of the Kingdom (CHECK), the University of Aruba.

The Verwey-Jonker Institute was designated lead partner with ultimate responsibility for the research in the European Netherlands. CHECK appointed the University of Aruba as its principal contractor for the research covering the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. This report is the product of an equal collaboration between both parties.

In the European Netherlands, the research group consisted of a lead researcher from the Verwey-Jonker Institute and a team of researchers from the Verwey-Jonker Institute and Movisie, working in collaboration with the Global Citizenship Community, IZI Solutions and the Intersectional Network for Co-Creation (INC).

In the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the research team consisted of a lead researcher from the University of Aruba, a mid-level researcher from Radboud University Nijmegen who was also responsible for data management and a fieldwork team comprising seven local island-specific researchers. Local experts were also called upon to act as critical readers and, where necessary, as co-authors

1 Vaststelling van de begrotingsstaten van het Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap (VIII) voor het jaar 2023 [Netherlands House of Representatives: Adoption of the budget estimates of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (VIII) for the year 2023].

One fascinating but complicating factor in our assignment is that this research covers the entire post-colonial Kingdom of the Netherlands: both the European Netherlands and the Caribbean Netherlands, consisting of the public entities of Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba, which have formed an integral part of the Netherlands since 2010, and the three autonomous Caribbean countries of Aruba (autonomous since 1986), Curaçao and Sint Maarten (both autonomous since 2010). This fact forced us to adopt a different approach to our research in each part of the Kingdom.

During our research, it became clear that education with regard to anti-colonial resistance shares similar shortcomings in all parts of the Kingdom: core learning objectives are formulated only in general terms and in no way guarantee the inclusion in the teaching method of stories about resistance heroes and heroines; existing teaching methods focus primarily on historical Dutch colonialism and pay more attention to the former colonies of Indonesia and Suriname than they do to the current Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands; teachers do not feel that they receive sufficient support to fill these historical gaps; and pupils' curiosity regarding stories of resistance remains unsatisfied.

However, the best pathways for the education sector to resolve these issues differ between the European Netherlands on the one hand and the fragmented Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands on the other. Part 1 of this report therefore presents our findings and the resulting recommendations for the former, and Part 2 those for the latter.

Document structure

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Summary

In response to a parliamentary motion tabled by the party BIJ1[2] in 2022 concerning the discovery, archiving and investigation of stories about anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters and their subsequent incorporation into the Dutch educational canon, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science decided first to investigate the extent to which these stories are already taught in schools in the European Netherlands and the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. So the principal question addressed in this report, the result of that study, is: what stories about anti-colonial freedom fighters and resistance heroes from Dutch colonial and slavery history are or are not covered in primary, secondary and special education in the Kingdom of the Netherlands in 2025, and what narratives do they reflect? The research in the European Netherlands was carried out by the Verwey-Jonker Institute in collaboration with Movisie, the Global Citizenship Community, IZI Solutions and the intersectional co-creation network INC.

In order to answer this principal question as effectively as possible, it was decided to use a variety of research methods. These included an analysis of teaching materials, interviews with education professionals and educators and reflection sessions with young people.

This research in the **European Netherlands** shows that anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters are included in the teaching of history, but are dealt with only in a limited and fragmentary manner. In the teaching materials studied, figures such as Sukarno, Mohammed Hatta, Boni, Tula and Anton de Kom are usually mentioned only briefly. Their backgrounds, motives and specific acts of resistance remain largely undiscussed. The descriptions provided are often limited to general descriptions, whereas white European figures from the era of Dutch colonial slavery, such as Eduard Douwes Dekker (Multatuli) and John Stedman, are presented with more context and detail.

Moreover, stories about anti-colonial resistance are told mainly from a Dutch or European perspective. As a result, the experiences, voices and agency of oppressed groups are given little space. A multi-perspective approach occurs only sporadically and to a limited extent. It is striking that even Anton de Kom, who is explicitly included in the Canon of the Netherlands, does not consistently feature prominently in teaching materials for schools. In addition, outdated colonial terminology is still regularly used. This can influence pupils' perception of marginalised groups and their resistance, although more language-conscious choices are beginning to appear in more recent materials.

In educational practice, too, the amount of attention paid to anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters appears to be limited and inconsistent. This is related to the fact that these themes are not explicitly included in learning outcomes and curricula. The extent to which they are covered therefore depends heavily on the personal motivation, knowledge and expertise of individual teachers. Many education professionals indicate that they lack sufficient knowledge of the subject matter and encounter a lack of accessible and reliable teaching materials. Teachers who do pay attention to this subject often do so on their own initiative, making use of supplementary audiovisual materials, current events and class discussions about injustice and human rights.

Although teachers are aware of the importance of connecting with their pupils' own world view, their approach often remains tentative and incidental. In some cases the decision to cover this particular subject is based on the composition of the pupil population – which is problematic, as an inclusive historical narrative is relevant to all pupils. Overall, our research shows that anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters still do not feature sufficiently, in a contextualised, perspective-rich and structural manner, in the teaching of history in the European Netherlands.

In the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, too, stories about anti-colonial freedom fighters and resistance heroes do not reach pupils in primary, secondary and special education to an adequate extent. In teaching methods imported from the European Netherlands, anti-colonial resistance heroes from present-day Indonesia overshadow those from Suriname and Haiti. Tula (from Curaçao) does feature as the most prominent resistance fighter in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, but other resistance heroes from the islands are absent from the materials and their coverage of heroines and freedom fighters is minimal.

Stories of local anti-colonial resistance are underrepresented in the core learning objectives formulated for the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. There is a lack of up-to-date local teaching methods that focus on the Caribbean context and incorporate such stories. And teachers feel that they do not have sufficient subject-specific and pedagogical support to fill this gap. As a result, pupils' curiosity about stories of anti-colonial resistance in their immediate surroundings (and their own family histories) remains unsatisfied.

2 https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerstukken/moties/detail?id=2022Z23444&did=2022D50514

This historical silence is reinforced by the fragmentation of the Dutch Caribbean educational landscape and the increasing recognition of international examining bodies such as the Caribbean Examinations Council.

Explanation

Due to the lack of local teaching methods that relate core learning objectives to the experiences of Dutch Caribbean pupils, schools instead use methods from the European Netherlands and the English-speaking Caribbean islands. Dutch educational publishers do not sufficiently focus on anti-colonial resistance in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The Verwey-Jonker Institute (in this report), Van de Geugten[3] and Alofs et al. [4]have all shown that Dutch methods focus primarily on Dutch colonialism in Indonesia and Suriname. The one exception is their coverage of the 1795 uprising on Curaçao led by Tula. Moreover, local resistance to colonialism and slavery is overshadowed by the role of abolitionist movements in North America and Europe. This is a Eurocentric perspective and an outdated academic insight. Also, the terminology used in Dutch-language history teaching methods needs to be updated.

English-language Caribbean teaching methods, which are widely used on Sint Maarten, Sint Eustatius and Saba, cover slavery, colonialism and resistance in the British, French, Spanish and Dutch Caribbean from a regional perspective, but logically concentrate on the most significant events such as large-scale plantation slavery, marronage and stories of resistance such as the Haitian Revolution. There is no particular focus on the Dutch Caribbean islands (other than Curaçao).

To compensate for this shortcoming, supplementary local teaching methods have been developed over the years (see Chapter 3). Teachers consider these valuable, but also limited in scope. Although they do address slavery and anti-colonial resistance (especially the Curaçao uprising of 1795) in the Dutch Caribbean, their coverage of the individual islands remains limited. And hardly any local supplementary materials are available for non-Dutch-medium schools. Teachers receive insufficient support and are given insufficient scope beyond the compulsory curriculum to investigate stories of resistance and present them to their pupils.

Teachers are aware of the gap between core learning objectives and teaching materials on the one hand and their pupils' own world view on the other. Despite limitations in terms of available time, knowledge, support and timetable space, the most dedicated teachers seek opportunities to bridge this gap. To this end they use teaching methods such as project-based learning and place-based learning. Stories of local resistance heroes and freedom fighters, commemorative days and memorial sites (such as monuments), as well as local experts and institutions, all contribute to these efforts. Discussions with pupils reveal that they have an unsatisfied curiosity about stories of resistance to colonial slavery by local and international heroes and freedom fighters. Our recommendations therefore focus on joint research, development, education and professionalisation of slavery education in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

3 T. van der Geugten (2023) Het slavernijverleden in het Nederlandse onderwijs [The history of slavery in Dutch education]. In: R. M. Allen, E. Captain, M. Van Rossum & U. Vyent (eds) Staat en Slavernij, het Nederlandse koloniale slavernijverleden en zijn doorwerkingen [State and Slavery: Dutch colonial slavery history and its repercussions], pp. 53-62. https://open.overheid.nl/

4 L. Alofs, E. Dumasy, K. Meyers & E. Sandie (2023). In: Staat en Slavernij. pp. 65-71.

Part 1:
European Netherlands

Methodology

This study took the form of a qualitative inventory using a variety of interrelated research methodologies. In this chapter we explain what research activities were undertaken, our approach and its possible implications.

Literature study and development of an analytical framework

The first step in the research process was a concise literature study. This examined the available academic and grey[5] literature concerning the treatment of the Netherlands' colonial and slavery history. We expected to find little or no existing literature on specific anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters for use in education (which proved to be the case), and so then broadened our scope to include educational publications dealing more generally with the colonial and slavery history of the Netherlands. Although this expansion did yield some valuable results, the amount of available literature remains limited. We have briefly summarised the publications relevant to us, which we also used to compile an analytical framework to study the written curriculum.

Analysis of the written curriculum

In order to gain the best possible picture within the available timeframe of how anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters are treated in teaching materials for primary and secondary schools, we decided to analyse those produced by the three largest Dutch educational publishers. Together, these have an estimated market share of 80 per cent (Paul, 2024).That would enable us to obtain a good overview of the current situation regarding the written curriculum on our theme. The three publishers are:

- Malmberg
- Noordhoff
- Thieme Meulenhoff

5 Publications that are not distributed through traditional commercial publishing channels and are often not formally peer reviewed.

Recruitment and further scope

None of the materials in question are freely available. For the purposes of this study, we chose not to purchase them but instead to contact the three publishers with a request to view them. On the one hand this was a decision driven by sustainability (so that we did not have to buy dozens of textbooks for one-time use), and on the other a means to actively involve the publishers in the conduct of this study. Our researchers held one or more discussions with representatives from each of the publishers, during which they explained the purpose of the study and our working method. They also reached agreements about the selection of materials and their use. As a result we were able to analyse a total of 108 publications for the school subjects History, Citizenship and Global Orientation. Appendix 1 contains a complete list of these resources, including those that were ultimately omitted from our study because they contain no passages about the history of colonialism and slavery or anti-colonial resistance. In the end, we were able to include the following teaching methods.

- Memo - Malmberg
- Argus Clou - Malmberg
- Brandaan - Malmberg
- Feniks - Thieme Meulenhoff
- Geschiedeniswerkplaats - Noordhoff
- Plein Junior - Noordhoff
- Wijzer! Geschiedenis - Noordhoff

Materials used

In all, we were given access to 108 publications. They included textbooks, workbooks, thematic studies and teacher's guides. The table below shows how many items we analysed from each publisher.

Publisher	Number of Publications
Malmberg	28 (12 Brandaan, 8 Argus Clou, 36 Memo)
Noordhoff	58 (4 Wijzer! Geschiedenis, 24 Plein Junior, 30 Geschiedeniswerkplaats)
Thieme Meulenhoff	22 (Feniks)

Method

The books were distributed to four researchers from the Verwey-Jonker Institute and Movisie so that they could conduct their analyses simultaneously. Each of the researchers read through every book in its entirety in search of chapters, paragraphs and passages about Dutch colonial and slavery history.

After this initial scan, some material was discarded because it contained no material on that theme. This exercise reduced the total number of works to be analysed in more detail to 77, including both physical and online publications. The table below shows how many books from each publisher remained in the process after this selection phase.

Publisher	Number of publications included
Malmberg	28
Noordhoff	33
Thieme Meulenhoff	16

The relevant texts were then analysed using the framework we had developed. This resulted in us noting, amongst other things:

- how many pages are devoted to Dutch colonial and slavery history and how many to anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters;
- whether specific names are mentioned and, if so, which ones;
- what acts of resistance are mentioned;
- to what extent personal characteristics of resistance heroes and freedom fighters are mentioned (for example, their gender, age and ethnic background);
- how the actions of the resistance hero or freedom fighter are framed and from what perspective they are recounted (their own or another).

If a work contained illustrations of a resistance hero, freedom fighter or act of resistance, we also included a description of those images in our analysis.

Second analysis_

After a plenary discussion of the results with the analytical team, it became apparent that some aspects of the content found were problematic with regard to their interpretation for the analysis. Questions that arose included the following.

- What specific acts of resistance do we include and which do we exclude? How do we deal with resistance heroes and freedom fighters outside the Dutch context?
- How do we deal with texts that discuss Europe's colonial and slavery history without specifically mentioning the Netherlands?

To answer questions of this kind, a number of agreements were made. For example, it was decided that all acts of resistance (large and small) would be included, that we would only include resistance heroes and freedom fighters who had a connection with the Netherlands and that only those pages discussing Dutch colonial and slavery history would be included in the count of pages devoted to the theme. The materials were then reanalysed with these points in mind so as to ensure that our approach was uniform.

Interviews with education professionals

Recruitment

In April 2025 we started recruiting education professionals for interview. Our aim was to speak to a total of 30 people, distributed proportionally across the primary, secondary, special (at both primary and secondary levels) and practical (secondary level) education sectors. To recruit them, we focused on connecting with existing networks. We first approached the Primary Education Council, the Secondary Education Council, the Special Education Council and the Sector Council for Practical Education with a request to share a call for potential interviewees with their networks. None of these bodies, however, was willing to do so. Reasons given included that they do not co-operate with research projects or requests if they are not conducting the research themselves or otherwise involved in it. They also indicated that they receive many such requests and cannot accept all of them. But some did state that they would 'like' our call on social media (LinkedIn) so that it would be visible to their followers. We also approached VGN Kleio (a national association of history teachers) and the teachers' trade union AOb with the same request. Both did share our appeal with their members – indeed, VGN Kleio did so twice. In addition, we issued our call via the LinkedIn accounts of both the Verwey-Jonker Institute and Movisie. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science shared the call too, both within its own organisation and in a number of external newsletters for education professionals. The call included a link through which interested parties could use to register as respondents for the study. Initially, recruitment seemed to be going well. As a result of the above efforts, we received a total of 23 applications. In order to achieve a good distribution of interviewees by sector of employment (primary, secondary, special or practical), teaching cycle (lower or upper secondary), geographical distribution and ethnic background, 14 of the original 23 applicants were selected for interview. In the end, however, only three of those 14 were actually interviewed. There were several reasons for this.

- Some of the applicants did not actually count as education professionals because, for example, they only give guest lessons.
- Some of the applicants did not respond to our invitation for an interview, even after being sent two reminders.
- Some of the applicants failed to appear for a scheduled interview and we were subsequently unable to contact them to arrange a new appointment. and we were subsequently unable to contact them to arrange a new appointment.
- We were unable to schedule appointments with some of the applicants within the allotted timeframe (May-June 2025).

Due to the limited number of interviews conducted so far, a new recruitment round was launched after the summer holidays. In consultation with the client, it was decided to abandon the aim of achieving proportional distribution by sector. The new recruitment round involved:

- reapproaching the nine people who had initially applied but were not selected for an interview;
- reapproaching applicants who had failed to appear for a scheduled interview;
- reapproaching applicants who had indicated that they would be unavailable for interview in the period May–June 2025.

In addition, the following recruitment activities were carried out.

Lists of all primary and secondary schools in the Netherlands were collected via the Education Executive Agency (DUO) website. From these, up to 20 schools per province were selected. They were then approached with a request to share our call with their staff. The table below shows how many schools in each sector were approached. Fewer schools providing special education (at primary and secondary levels) were approached, first and foremost because there are fewer such schools overall but also because they are not evenly distributed across all the Dutch provinces. In the secondary sector, we decided to focus in particular on schools providing preparatory secondary vocational education (VMBO, at all levels) because they had so far been underrepresented in terms of responses received.

Sector	Total number of schools approached
PO	240
SO	38
VO (vmbo)	72
VSO	27

On the recommendation of our partner CHECK, education programmes for history teachers – nine in all – were also approached for an interview. These programmes were not originally included in the research design, and the decision to add them now was informed by both pragmatic and substantive considerations. Due to the disappointing number of applications from education professionals active in schools, action was needed to ensure that sufficient input from professionals could still be obtained. In addition, we were interested to find out how much coverage the education programmes devoted to colonial and slavery history, and specifically to resistance heroes and freedom fighters. Ultimately, this resulted in a qualitative picture of how that theme is addressed both during teacher education and in the classroom.

In all, our recruitment activities eventually resulted in a total of 19 interviews. Fifteen of these were with education professionals working in schools and four with representatives of an education programme for history teachers. The table below lists the sectors in which the interviewees work.

Onderwijssoort	Totaal aantal benaderde scholen
Onderwijssoort	Aantal gesproken professionals
PO	1
VO	13
(V)SO	1
Opleiders geschiedenisdocent	4

Interviews

All interviews were conducted via MS Teams and lasted approximately one hour. Prior to their interview, respondents were asked to sign a consent form allowing us to process all the results anonymously. The interviews were recorded and then sent to an external agency, Interview Uitgetypt, for transcription. All recordings were deleted after completion of this research. The interviews were semi-structured, using a list of topics. This was compiled on the basis of the previous literature study and the analytical framework for the teaching materials. Themes explored in depth were:

- whether and how education professionals treat anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters in the classroom;
- how they try to connect with pupils' own world view when discussing resistance heroes and freedom fighters;
- what materials and/or resources they use for this purpose.

- what they need in order to be able to treat anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters better or differently in the classroom.

Analysis
The interview transcripts were analysed using the qualitative analysis software Atlas Ti. For this purpose, code groups and codes were created based on the topic list. The reports were coded by two researchers from the Verwey-Jonker Institute and then reviewed by the project leader.

Reflection sessions with young people
In order to gain a better understanding of young people's experiences and their needs regarding the treatment of anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters in the classroom, three separate focus groups were held with a total of 19 participants. They were between 16 and 24 years old.

Prior to the discussions, we compiled a list of topics divided into four main themes:
- memories of teaching materials about the history of slavery and colonialism;
- stories not taught in the classroom;
- stories about resistance heroes and resistance fighters;
- this topic's impact on pupils.

Participants were recruited through the Movisie and IZI Solutions networks. Movisie organised two online reflection sessions with five young people in each, while IZI Solutions conducted one physical session with nine young people. Eleven of the participants identified themselves as people of colour/Black and seven as white. Their level of schooling ranged from primary (PO) to pre-university education (VWO). Participants received a gift voucher worth 20 euros for taking part in the sessions.

Each session lasted approximately 90 minutes and was led by a researcher from Movisie or IZI Solutions (one discussion leader per focus group). With the participants' permission, Movisie recorded its discussions and transcribed them for analysis. IZI Solutions provided only a discussion report; as there is no transcript, we do not have any quotes from the third reflection session.

The analysis was carried out using a predefined analytical framework, which retained the four main themes from the topic list. Based on the transcripts, these themes were supplemented with new ones that emerged during the discussions. The findings from the three sessions were then brought together to identify overarching patterns ('common threads'). Where differences between the groups were apparent, these are explicitly mentioned in the results.

All the participants completed a consent form in advance. The resulting data was processed confidentially and pseudonyms are used when reporting the findings.

Expert meeting
On 26 November the results of the study were presented at a 90-minute expert meeting held via MS Teams. A total of five experts attended. They were:
- Joandi Hartendorp, researcher, lecturer and educational consultant, holder of a PhD on slavery and Holocaust education;
- Esther Captain, Professor of the Intergenerational Impact of Colonialism and Slavery at Utrecht University;
- Zawdie Zandvliet, founder of and lecturer in the Afro-Dutch Studies course at Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences (HvA);
- Eduard Drescher, teacher trainer at Windesheim University of Applied Sciences;
- Maria Karg, anthropologist, lecturer, founder of the Silent Past Foundation (Stichting Stil Verleden) and publicist concerning Dutch slavery history.

During the expert meeting, the results were assessed for recognisability and verification and the experts were asked to provide input for recommendations based upon them. The input from this meeting has been used to refine and supplement our recommendations.

Ongoing collaboration with Global Citizenship Community, IZI Solutions and INC
Collaboration was also sought in the design of the reflection sessions with young people, as described above. The input solicited from each organisation can be summarised as follows.

Global Citizenship Community (Miguel Heilbron)
- Feedback on the literature study.
- Reflection on the results concerning the written curriculum.
- Feedback on the list of topics for the interviews with education professionals.
- Feedback on the draft report.

IZI Solutions and INC
- Feedback on the literature study.
- Feedback on the draft report.
- Organisation, conduct and reporting of the reflection sessions with young people.

Implications and limitations

The original design of the study and the choices while it was under way resulted in certain implications and limitations. In this section we explain what they are and what they mean for the results of the study for and their interpretation.

Analysis of teaching materials

For pragmatic reasons, we decided to study only books published by the three largest Dutch educational publishers. This means that there are also teaching materials that we have not included in this study. Given the combined market share of the three publishers in question, however, we believe that we have been able to present a good picture the current state of affairs regarding the coverage of resistance heroes and freedom fighters in classroom teaching materials. Since we were reliant on the three publishers themselves to supply us with those materials, it also possible that relevant items from them may not have been included in this study. In this respect we have had to trust the publishers to provide us with all relevant material.

Interviews with education professionals

Due to a disappointing response from education professionals, we have been unable to paint a comprehensive picture of classroom practices across the primary and secondary education sectors. Given the overrepresentation in the study of professionals working in mainstream secondary education, we can state with some confidence that it accurately reports the situation in that specific form of schooling, but not necessarily in other types. Unfortunately, this also makes it impossible to identify differences between, for example, primary and secondary education. In general, there is also an inherent bias within the study. Due to the open recruitment process, it is to be expected that those education professionals who came forward are ones with an above-average affinity with the subject. Although some of the professionals interviewed did bring a different perspective to the table, when reading our results it should be borne in mind that most of the respondents are probably people who, by comparison with their colleagues, pay more than average attention to anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters.

1 Background

In this first chapter we outline the background to teaching about anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters in Dutch primary and secondary education. We discuss the core learning objectives that schools and education professionals (and also educational publishers) must take into account when designing their curriculum. We also describe what we know from current literature about the discussion of anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters in the classroom, and more broadly about how schools teach colonial and slavery history.

1.1. Core learning objectives in primary and secondary education

At the time of our research (2025), primary schools were still using the core learning objectives laid down in 2006. In this section we describe those objectives that, in our opinion, create opportunities to discuss anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters.

What are core learning objectives?

A core learning objective is a nationally defined target for the minimum knowledge and skills that pupils should possess at the end of a defined phase in their education. In the European Netherlands, these objectives are developed by SLO, the Netherlands institute for curriculum development, on behalf of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW). They have legal force insofar as they describe what knowledge pupils in primary and lower secondary education should be exposed to, what effort is expected of them in order to gain relevant experiences and what skills they should ultimately master. As such, core learning objectives guide schools and lay a solid foundation for the education every pupil is entitled to receive. They are formulated in broad terms, however, in order to allow schools the freedom to decide for themselves how the objectives are achieved. As of 2025, SLO is updating all its core learning objectives and implementing the new versions in phases[6]. All schools must be working with these by 2031 at the latest.

Primary education

Primary education

Within the theme *Oriëntatie op jezelf en op de wereld, tijd* (Personal and Global Orientation: Time), core learning objective 53 in particular provides scope to discuss anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters – although it is rather broadly worded. The text reads as follows.

> **Core learning objective 53***: Pupils learn about important historical figures and events from Dutch history and are able to relate these to world history using examples.*

Within the same theme, core learning objective 52 also creates scope for the discussion of anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters, with the amendment added in 2010 (underlined below) making this even more specific. Since Anton de Kom's work has been included in the Canon of the Netherlands, it makes a logical topic for discussion.

> **Core learning objective 52:** *Pupils learn about characteristic aspects of the following periods: hunters and farmers; Greeks and Romans; monks and knights; cities and states; explorers and reformers; regents and monarchs; wigs and revolutions; citizens and steam engines; world wars and the Holocaust; television and computers. <u>The windows of the Canon of the Netherlands serve as a starting point to illustrate these periods.</u>*

Finally, core learning objective 38 within the theme *Oriëntatie op jezelf en op de wereld, Mens en Samenleving (*Personal and Global Orientation: People and Society) potentially creates an opportunity to address the impact of colonial and slavery history – and particularly so since its amendment in 2012 (underlined below). Here again, though, the wording is broad.

> **Core learning objective 38:** *Pupils learn the main aspects of those spiritual movements that play an important role in Dutch multicultural society, and they learn to treat sexuality and diversity within society, including sexual diversity, with respect (SLO, 2020).*

Special education

Within primary special education, no specific core learning objectives have been formulated that provide starting points to address anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters or colonial and slavery history and its impact (SLO, 2024).

6 Actualisatie kerndoelen | SLO [SLO: Update of the core learning objectives].

Lower secondary education
Looking at the core learning objectives defined for the initial years of secondary education, there appear to be few explicit starting points for the discussion of anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters. But there are certainly opportunities. The three objectives for History are formulated in general terms.

Core Learning Objective 67. *Pupils learn to use simple historical sources, such as those present in our cultural heritage, and they learn to use designations of time and historical periods.*

Core Learning Objective 68. *Pupils learn about characteristic aspects of the following periods: hunters and farmers; Greeks and Romans; monks and knights; cities and states; explorers and reformers; regents and monarchs; wigs and revolutions; citizens and steam engines; world wars and the Holocaust; television and computers. The windows of the Canon of the Netherlands serve as a starting point to illustrate these periods.*

Core Learning Objective 69. *Pupils learn about important historical figures and events from Dutch history and are able to relate these to world history using examples.*

Core learning objective 53. *from the theme People & Society also offers opportunities to address the legacy of slavery and colonialism, although they are not specifically mentioned.*

Core learning objective 53: *Pupils learn about similarities, differences and changes in culture and philosophies of life in the Netherlands, they learn to relate their own and other people's ways of life to these factors, they learn to see the importance for society of respecting each other's views and ways of life and they learn to treat sexuality and diversity within society, including sexual diversity, with respect.*

1.2. Existing literature

Past research into the teaching of Dutch colonial and slavery history has already considered how anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters are treated in primary and secondary education.

Both Sijpenhof (2018) and Hartendorp (2023) note that the main focus in the Canon and in teaching materials alike is on (white) European abolitionists, whilst resistance by people bonded in slavery is structurally ignored and remains undiscussed. The narrative is usually as follows: the French and British are described as progressive because they were among the first to abolish slavery within an Enlightenment frame. The abolition of slavery by the Netherlands is portrayed as an act resulting from European abolitionism, without mentioning or describing the influence of enslaved people as a contributing factor (Fick, 1990; Hartendorp, 2023). In addition, Hartendorp warns that this narrative, in which both the introduction and the abolition of slavery were determined by white people, implies European superiority.

From the interviews Hartendorp conducted with education professionals for her thesis, it emerged that only a small proportion of them pay any attention to non-European resistance to slavery in their teaching. Members of this minority indicated that, for example, they talk about Maroon communities and/or how Boni defeated Dutch troops. A few also explicitly discuss the impact of a rebellion by enslaved people in Haiti.

Barriers to teaching about anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters in primary and secondary education
Hartendorp (2023), amongst others, attributes the absence from the classroom of local anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters to the way in which teaching about colonialism is provided more generally. In this section we describe the issues that past researchers have identified.

For a long time, Dutch slavery history was not part of the curriculum.
Prior to 1990, the history of slavery (Dutch or otherwise) was not discussed at all in primary school textbooks (Hogervorst, 2006). The broader context here is that the history and impact of enslavement by the Dutch were not part of our national cultural memory before 1990 (see, for example, Horton & Kardux, 2004, 2005) and therefore had no place in the teaching of history education. Journalist Meindert van der Kaaij (2015) argued that many Dutch people do not see their country's history of enslavement as part of their own past, a belief fuelled by the idea that slavery occurred elsewhere in the world and that the Netherlands did not play an active role in it. Mok et al. (2011) claim that the focus in school textbooks on the American history of slavery also contributed to the idea that this phenomenon occurred somewhere else. This perspective only changed in the 1990s when Black activists began to speak out publicly about the need for explicit and public recognition of the Netherlands' colonial and slavery history and its legacy (see, for example, Horton & Kardux, 2004, 2005). Van Stipriaan (2016) states that during this period slavery also became an important historical theme for the Ministry of Education, Culture and

Science. As described above, however, that shift was not directly reflected in the core learning objectives established for schools in 2006. The teaching of Dutch colonial and slavery history is still developing, so to speak, which may be one reason why anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters remain largely absent from the classroom.

Dominant Eurocentric perspective

Looking at both the Canon of the Netherlands and the teaching materials used in schools, a number of researchers argue that there is a one-sided Dutch perspective (Jonker, 2006ab, 2007; Sijpenhof, 2018; Hartendorp, 2023). Van Stipriaan stated in 2007 that, until the developments in the 1990s, the people actually held in slavery were not part of the historical discourse. In 2011 he observed a cautious decolonisation of the Canon, but noted that much remains dependent on individual education professionals.

Othering of enslaved people

In line with the dominant Eurocentric perspective, the use of colonial language and the stereotyping of enslaved (Black) people remain prevalent. Hartendorp (2023) concludes that the people held in slavery are reduced in the Canon to products and numbers in the activities of a successful trading enterprise. Stereotypical linguistic imagery also persists, such as reducing enslaved people to the status of mere livestock (bestialisation: treating people as animals). As a rule, persons held captive in slavery are portrayed in teaching materials not as complex individuals but as 'the other': as cargo, as victims or as animals. In her work, Sijpenhof (2018) argues that these materials depict enslaved people as non-human and less intelligent, which could well also be why they are presumed to have played only a limited role in the abolition of slavery.

A great deal of freedom for individual education professionals

Hartendorp (2023) describes individual education professionals as "gatekeepers" because of the high degree of freedom they are given to decide for themselves what aspects of history to cover in their teaching, and how. This also means that colonialism and slavery might not be discussed at all in their history lessons, let alone resistance heroes and freedom fighters. Van Stipriaan (2011, 2013) states that the attitude of the individual education professional is the most decisive factor in determining whether or not colonial and slavery history are addressed in their classroom.

The importance of including anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters in education

As described earlier, the teaching of history is a reflection of cultural memory and also plays an important role in shaping that memory through an intergenerational transfer of knowledge and awareness. According to the literature, the way in which people who were enslaved, Black people, are taught about in the European Netherlands focuses on victimhood and ascribes them negative characteristics. This also influences the image of Black people that is passed on to current and future generations. This also influences the image of Black people that is passed on to current and future generations.

Hartendorp (2023) argues that it is essential that emancipation narratives, such as the stories of anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters, be taught in schools in order to transcend the victim narrative and to debunk or, better still, forestall the stereotyping of Black people as unintelligent and limited in their ability to exercise control over their own lives.

2 Analysis of teaching materials

In this chapter we present our findings about the extent to which anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters are covered in teaching materials used in Dutch primary and secondary education. We describe whether resistance is covered, what acts of resistance are mentioned, whether specific resistance heroes and freedom fighters are discussed and how they are portrayed.

2.1. Coverage of colonial and slavery history and resistance

Of the 108 books we were able to analyse for this study, 77 cover Dutch colonial and slavery history (71 per cent). The other 31 either do not discuss this topic at all or do so only outside the Dutch context – with regard to the United States and/or other European countries, for example. Of the 77 books that do deal with the colonial and slavery history of the Netherlands, 47 include mentions of anti-colonial resistance (61 per cent). On average, approximately a quarter of the pages in these works are devoted to specific examples of resistance.

2.2. Types of resistance

The passages about resistance discuss various forms it took. These are summarised in the table below.

Category	Form of resistance	Explanation
Active/open resistance with violence	Armed uprisings and raids on plantations	Physical and direct resistance against colonial power, such as raids on plantations to free other people held in slavery.
Active/open resistance, non-violent	Strikes	Open refusal to work and obey colonial authority.
Active/open resistance, non-violent	Escape/marronage	Running away from plantations and setting up communities 'Maroons'[7]
Passive/covert resistance	'Disobedience'	Subtle forms of resistance, such as pretending to be ill, deliberately working more slowly or hindering production.
Symbolic/cultural resistance	Preservation of culture	Singing clandestine songs that voiced both resistance and cultural identity.
Political resistance	Resistance from leaders (political leaders, guerrilla leaders, local rulers)	Rise of nationalism in Indonesia; local rulers who joined the resistance; establishment of communist parties; nationalist writers; guerrilla leaders.
Literary and written resistance	Influencing opinion	Writing books and/or letters about abuses within the colonial system.

7 The term 'Maroon' derives from the Spanish word for 'feral animal' and has colonial and negative connotations. Although some communities have now embraced the term as a badge of honour, it is not an accepted and widely used term within all Maroon communities

2.3. Specific individuals associated with resistance

A total of 46 books mention specific individuals in the context of anti-colonial resistance activities. Only one does not do so: it writes about Maroons, but without mentioning any names. The table below lists those individuals and summarises the differences between publishers in this regard. A decision was made to only include the names of individuals who are mentioned at least five times in the material. It is important to note that the table includes individuals who, according to the teaching materials themselves, qualify as having participated in the resistance.

Name	Frequency	Malmberg	Noordhoff	ThiemeMeulenhoff
Sukarno	27	9	9	9
Mohammed Hatta	12	3	1	8
Boni	6	3	0	3
Tula	10	5	1	4
Anton de Kom	5	0	2	3
John Stedman	7	0	0	7
Eduard Douwes Dekker	14	2	8	4

What is striking about the above table is that most of the individuals listed are associated with the colonial history of the Netherlands in Indonesia (**Sukarno**, **Hatta** en **Dekker**). They are followed by people associated with the colonial and slavery history of Suriname **Anton de Kom, Boni** en **John Stedman**). It is also striking that Stedman (a white Dutch soldier and author) is mentioned more often than individuals who were enslaved or their descendants (Boni and Anton de Kom). From the Caribbean region, only Tula is mentioned with any frequency.

Other names also mentioned, albeit less frequently, are: **Henk Sneevliet**, Jan Glissenaar, **Soewardi Soerjaningrat**, **Tjoet Nja Dinh**, **Prins Diponegoro**, **Raden Adipati**, (all Indonesia), **Coffy** (Guyana) en **Rahman Khan** (Suriname).

With regard to the background characteristics of the individuals mentioned, it is striking that little emphasis is placed on this in the material. Features such as gender, age, country of origin and ethnicity are barely mentioned, if at all. In most cases there is no detailed profile of the individuals concerned. The reader is only informed about the location of their resistance and their gender through contextual clues in the text. All in all, it can be said that little to no background information is provided (see also 1.4). In addition, there is a clear difference between those individuals who were oppressed within the colonial and slavery system and those who initially supported and defended it. No details are given about the age, gender and ethnicity of either John Stedman or Eduard Douwes Dekker, but information is provided about their place of birth, educational background and further career, for example. Finally, it is striking that the individuals mentioned are almost exclusively men. Cut Nyak Dhien is the only woman to feature in the material.

2.4. Resistance heroes and freedom fighters?

We also examined how the individuals associated with resistance are portrayed in the teaching materials. In this section we describe how each person is presented, as well as the perspective from which their story is written.

Sukarno
In general, Sukarno is described as a nationalist, a nationalist leader and/or a political leader who fought for the independence of his country. He was the person who declared Indonesia's independence and subsequently became the new nation's first president. A single source calls him "a young freedom fighter". Various others describe him less factually than noted above, emphasising negative aspects of his actions before and during the Indonesian War of Independence. For example, he is said to have been a traitor because he collaborated with Japan during the Second World War. One source adds some nuance to this: "In the eyes of the Dutch he was a traitor because he collaborated with Japan." Sukarno is also described using the colonial term 'inlander' (native), with his actions having extremely violent consequences. For example, one source states, "Plunder was a more important motivation than independence." And one describes Sukarno as a "dictator". What is striking is that no explanations, examples or clarifications are provided to justify any of these negative characterisations. It is also important to note that the texts in all the sources, without exception, are written from a Dutch perspective. Sukarno is portrayed as an opponent of the Netherlands, and his motivations and beliefs are virtually ignored.

Mohammed Hatta
Compared with Sukarno, Mohammed Hatta is portrayed less negatively in the sources. Some describe him as "a nationalist political leader who fought for the independence of his country" and "the most important leader of Indonesian students and the first prime minister of Indonesia". The majority call him an 'inlander' (native) with a violent following. One states, "Hatta gave the Dutch a choice: leave peacefully or be thrown out of the country." Like Sukarno, Hatta is consistently described from a Dutch perspective.

Eduard Douwes Dekker (Multatuli)
Dekker is generally described as a civil servant in Indonesia (then the Dutch East Indies) who participated in the colonial system but became increasingly critical of how it was being implemented. He felt that Indonesians were not being treated well and wanted to stand up for their interests. This led him to write the novel Max Havelaar under the pen name Multatuli. Other sources are more nuanced and argue that Dekker was not necessarily critical of the colonial system in general, but rather of its implementation. Dekker's story is most often told from his own personal perspective, and this is also reflected in the information provided about his way of thinking. He is discussed less often from the perspective of the Netherlands as the colonial power.

Tula
Tula receives only very limited coverage in the material. He is described as a person who was enslaved and led a rebellion of other enslaved people. A single source provides some moral context: "It was therefore not surprising that Tula and his friends rebelled" (given the harsh conditions in which they had to live). We regularly encounter problematic language, too. Tula is referred to as a "slave" and his followers as "rebellious slaves". A reference to "friends of Tula" is also questionable: is it appropriate to label other enslaved persons who participated in the resistance in this way? People did not necessarily have to be friends to resist the colonial system together. Moreover, this informal wording gives the impression that the complexity of the situation and the choices people made are being trivialised.

Boni
Descriptions of Boni vary greatly. One source describes him as a "freedom fighter" and "a prominent figure in the history of slavery in Suriname", whilst several others focus primarily on his acts of violence. One source describes him as an aggressor, a murderer and someone who grew up

with a deep hatred of white people. It is striking that his story is told from a Dutch perspective and from that of John Stedman, who fought against him (see below).

John Stedman
All the sources are very straightforward in their description of Stedman: he was a soldier who had to fight people who had fled enslavement, but then later he turned against slavery. According to the sources, he subsequently wrote an important book in the campaign against slavery. Stedman's story is most often told from his own perspective.

Anton de Kom
De Kom is described only very briefly. He is portrayed as a nationalist, a writer and someone who was banished from Suriname because he called Maroons heroes. He is usually described from a Dutch perspective, but in one case through his own eyes because that source includes a passage from his book *We Slaves of Suriname* in its entirety.

Nameless Maroons
Some of the sources refer to Maroons as a collective, without mentioning any names. On the one hand they are described as brave because they fled enslavement at the risk of their own lives and also tried to free others, but the other hand they are portrayed as aggressors who raided plantations and 'stole women'. The perspective here varies: sometimes it their own and sometime that of the Dutch, or more specifically Dutch plantation owners.

2.5. Other findings: terminology

Although this aspect was not within the scope of our research, we encountered a number outdated and racist terms in the texts about Dutch colonial and slavery history. Although these have not been systematically recorded and counted, it is relevant that they be mentioned in the context of the perspectives from which the stories of resistance heroes and freedom fighters are presented. Below we list problematic terms found in various sources from different publishers. Note that these include words that can be characterised as colonial, offensive and racist.

The terms we have come across are the following:
- 'Slaaf' and 'slaven' (slave and slaves)
- 'Blank' rather than 'wit' (white)
- 'Inlander' (native)
- 'Inheemsen' ('natives')
- The N-word
- 'Creool' (Creole)
- 'Indo's' (people of mixed Indonesian and European descent)
- 'Mulatten' (mulattos)
- 'Koelies' (coolies)
- 'Vrije Zwarten' (free Blacks)

Finally, we noted a few instances in which racist source texts are included in the books without further explanation or moral interpretation. One example is a quote by a slave trader who states that "theft seems to be an innate skill amongst these peoples".

3 Interviews with education professionals (teachers and trainers)

In this chapter we describe our findings from the interviews with education professionals. Amongst other things, with them we discussed their own knowledge of colonial and slavery history and resistance, how this topic is presented in the classroom and their needs when it comes to improving and/or changing coverage of anti-colonial resistance and specific resistance heroes and freedom fighters in primary and secondary education.

3.1. Personal knowledge

The education professionals were asked what they already know about specific resistance within the history of slavery and/or colonialism. Almost all the interviewees (including teacher trainers) stated that they had acquired their knowledge of this subject themselves, inspired by their own motivation and interest in learning more about it. Some mentioned the time they had to invest outside work and the limited availability of original resources as barriers to improving their knowledge.

> *“But that’s not always easy, because stories like Tula’s and Boni’s are not necessarily very well documented. So it takes time to research them, it takes time to be able to accurately represent that other perspective.”* **Participant 4**

The professionals were also asked how much attention was paid to colonial and slavery history during their education as history teachers. Almost all stated that that amounted to little or none. At most it made up a single learning module or only part of one. Some added that their education was mainly from a Western/European perspective.

> *“From what I can remember, actually very little attention was paid to colonial and slavery history and the perspective of enslaved people. The history teacher education programme is fundamentally quite Western European in orientation.”* **Participant 2**

Only one interviewee indicated that substantial attention was paid to the Dutch history of slavery during their education. Another two had taken a Master’s degree or graduation specialisation on the subject, which had taught them more about it.

Current teacher trainers indicated that they had been taught little or nothing about colonial and slavery history in broad terms during their own education, either at school or when themselves training as teachers. All the knowledge they now have on this subject is based on their own research and investigation. The education programmes on which they currently work do cover the topic, but in most cases that is on their own initiative. but in most cases that is on their own initiative.

Finally, we asked the education professionals what they knew about learning outcomes or core learning objectives related to slavery and colonialism. The answers to this questions varied. Some interviewees stated that learning outcomes and objectives touch upon the subject only minimally. Others said that whilst it does not have its own outcome or objective, it is covered in various parts of the curriculum. And a few indicated that there is indeed a specific outcome or objective. One interviewee declared that it is an optional component of the VMBO-T pathway (preparatory secondary vocational education, theoretical), but compulsory at the HAVO (senior general secondary education) and VWO (pre-university education) levels. It is also striking that many of the education professionals pointed out that the colonial and slavery history of the British Empire features relatively prominently in the learning outcomes.

> *“For the first time, I now have a compulsory component on slavery in the New World in the curricula.”* **Participant 1**

3.2. Teaching materials used

When asked about their teaching methods and materials, most of the education professionals stated that they use *Memo* by Malmberg. *Geschiedeniswerkplaats* (History workshop) from Noordhoff is used almost as often, and Feniks slightly less so. Supplementary materials – both printed and non-printed – are also used, mainly because the regular ones are limited in their coverage of colonial and slavery history (see also 3.8). The table below lists those mentioned by interviewees.

Printed	Description	Non-printed	Description
National Archives	Archive	School TV	Informative children's TV programme
Anton de Kom – Wij slaven van Suriname	Book	Moeder Suriname - Ma Sranan	Documentary
Harriet Beecher Stowe -Uncle Tom's Cabin	Book	Indonesia Roept!	Documentary
Multatuli – Max Havelaar	Book	Klokhuis	Informative children's TV programme
News articles	News articles	VGN Kleio	History education magazine and website
Learnbeat	Teaching materials	Explainer videos	-
Angie Thomas – The Hate U Give	Book	History podcasts	-
Historisch Nieuwsblad	Historical magazine	Kerwin	Documentary
Sjoerd Kuyper – De Duik			
Tien keer meer geschiedenis	Teaching materials		
Philomena Essed – Alledaags racisme	Book		

3.3. Colonial and slavery history in the classroom

The education professionals were asked how much time they spend on average teaching about colonial and slavery history. Due to the overrepresentation of interviewees in secondary education, the pattern is clearest in that sector. Almost all of them indicated that some attention is paid to this theme, in broad terms, from the second year of secondary school onwards. This includes not only Dutch colonial and slavery history, but also that of Europe more generally. As for the number of teaching hours devoted to the subject, that varies widely: from one to several dozen.

The professionals were also asked about the geographical distribution of Dutch colonial and slavery history in their classroom teaching, in part to check whether this corresponded with what we found in the published materials. Their answers revealed that, in line with the publications we analysed, greater attention is paid to resistance heroes and freedom fighters in Indonesia than in other territories. According to the interviewees, the reasons for this include the fact that colonial history in Indonesia is more recent, but also because that theme is specifically included in the curriculum.

> *"I have been in education for more than forty years and Indonesia has been a final examination topic several times, but Suriname never has."* **Participant 5**

Two other points stand out with regard to the treatment of Dutch colonial and slavery history. Several interviewees noted that the teaching materials they use deal mainly with slavery in the British Empire and do not address Dutch involvement in slavery and colonialism. They also stated that they do cover the 'triangular trade' (the transatlantic slave trade), but only from an economic perspective. The Caribbean islands and Suriname are mentioned in this context, but with no further elucidation. Moreover, the perspective of this coverage is predominantly Eurocentric. We discuss this point in more detail below.

> *For example, we talk about Chinese history but that starts with: when did the first European arrive there? You see that that's the main focus. So what you learn about the VOC and WIC [the Dutch East India and West India companies] is that it was important for the Netherlands to establish these companies in the context of competition. That's the frame."* **Participant 4**

3.4. Anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters covered

With only a few exceptions, all the education professionals indicated that they pay limited attention to specific resistance heroes and freedom fighters. A small proportion also indicated that in their case no attention at all is paid to anti-colonial resistance, and hence none to its heroes. A few consciously choose not to teach about resistance heroes, based on their own convictions.

> *I don't find it interesting. I think it's much more important to teach young people what motivated people to enslave others. In my view it's logical that there was resistance to this ... In a broad sense, I dislike the word 'hero' ... Often it's men who have this hero status, and women are seen as passive in that whole picture, but I think that women also played a very clear role in the resistance … In addition, I think that hero status often borders on bad behaviour. A hero usually has good intentions, but that often ends up as something that's not good, namely murder and manslaughter. And then you get a conflict of conscience within your own group.*

I think that it's actually more important to clarify that as a phenomenon. Because when someone rebels and persuades a group to follow them, that often leads to misconduct." **Participant 5**

Our analysis of the teaching materials revealed that Sukarno, Hatta and Eduard Douwes Dekker (all figures from Indonesia's colonial past) are mentioned most often. From the responses given by the education professionals, however, it seems that Tula and Anton de Kom are the names most often mentioned in the classroom as leading resistance heroes and freedom fighters. Other names also emerged from these conversations, which are listed in the table below in no particular order.

Name	Locatie
Boni	Suriname
Baron	Suriname
Jolicoeur	Suriname
Soetan Sjahrir	Indonesia

Many of the professionals cited Anton de Kom's inclusion in the Canon of the Netherlands, which serves as a guideline for history education in our country, as the reason for teaching about him.

The teacher trainers primarily mentioned Tula, Boni, Anton de Kom, Hatta and Sukarno as anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters they include (albeit to a limited extent) in their teaching. They also admitted that Boni and Tula in particular are treated as 'subordinate' figures: people mentioned only in passing when, for example, telling a story about colonial or slavery history. Most do not consciously assign them this role – that has more to do with other obstacles (see also 3.8). A few, however, stated that this is a conscious choice.

> *The interesting thing is that in our research we often do not necessarily look at the well-known heroes of resistance, but are mainly looking for lesser-known ones. These are often not necessarily famous names, but simply people we've forgotten about and are now bringing back into the spotlight. They are also often people who performed one small act of resistance and then disappeared from the archives. So they often don't really even have a name … It's more about food dragging, small acts such as petitions, strikes, tax evasion, smuggling: things that may not even have been seen as resistance by those involved, but simply as a way of maintaining their own livelihood or finding a way to sideline or evade the colonial state. So evasion, resistance – but also collaboration and the use of colonial institutions – all play a major role. But in that context the real resistance heroes, with names and all, play a rather small role, I think."* **Participant 16**

Other names mentioned by the teacher trainers were Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo (Indonesia), Diponegoro (Indonesia) and Jolicoeur (Suriname).

3.5. Teacher trainer reflections on the treatment of different colonies

The teacher trainers were also asked to reflect on the balance of coverage devoted to the principal (former) Dutch colonies: Suriname, the Caribbean islands and Indonesia. Looking at the teaching materials, we found that they focus more on the Netherlands' colonial history in Indonesia and far less on the other colonies. The trainers indicated that this is probably due to the length of that history. Indonesia was a colony of the Netherlands for longer than Suriname, for example, and logically there would therefore be more history to tell. At the same time, they agreed that the curriculum is simply based on existing data and research. They also believe that not much knowledge is available, but that in their perception more research is being conducted into Dutch colonial and slavery history in Indonesia than in the Caribbean and Suriname. In addition, they pointed out that the division of the curriculum into distinct historical periods creates more points of reference for 'modern history', which in their view includes the occupation of Indonesia and its war of independence. A few mentioned that, historically, Indonesia evokes more positive associations in the Netherlands than either the Caribbean or Suriname does.

> *History has determined that Indonesia was an important colony of ours [the Netherlands], and many people felt a connection with it. That was also where people went. The link with Indonesia was part of the Dutch identity. That has never been the case with Suriname. It was also said – very often said – that that [Suriname] was a financial burden, although of course an awful lot people also made an awful lot of money there, private individuals in particular. But I think that that perhaps plays a role. And when Suriname is discussed, then it's about the story of independence, briefly, and then the war that followed, Bouterse and so on. But very often that's problematised, negative."* **Participant 17**

3.6. Narrative and perspective

The education professionals indicated that when discussing anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters, they adhere as much as they can to the line set out in the teaching materials

they use. Within that framework, however, they do also look for opportunities to provide more context about those heroes and freedom fighters. In their opinion, the textbooks provide insufficient input to tell the stories of anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters from multiple perspectives. Several interviewees described the material as (too) Eurocentric. According to the professionals, the focus when it comes to resistance is often on white European abolitionists, and they are also credited (solely) with ending slavery.

> *Of course, we're still dealing with division into historical periods and their characteristics, and when it comes down to it that's a very Western European story: the wealthy white men we're constantly teaching about, and their choices that have influenced human history. Within that you really do sometimes try to find room, based on your own knowledge, based on the stories you've come across, to expand things ... I really try to cover it from both sides. But the Dutch and British perspective is pretty clear in the methods, and in them I read very little about the stories of the people themselves. They do talk about British abolitionists, they really do come to the fore, but I read little about the voices and stories of the enslaved people themselves. Yes, that's just such a great pity."* **Participant 4**

They picture here is clear: how anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters are covered in the classroom depends on the individual teacher, and education professionals who want do to draw attention to them have to search for additional material themselves. And as well as having to find the time and space to do their own research, they also mentioned another obstacle. In history, at least, there is an important focus on the use of primary sources and our interviewees said that these are scarce at best, or completely unavailable, when it comes to anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters.

> *The first real resistance hero with usable material is actually Tula. That's not because those people weren't there, but because nothing was written down."* **Participant 10**

Those education professionals who do pay attention to the heroes and freedom fighters do so from multiple perspectives, drawing links with the present and in interaction with their pupils.

> *I always try to apply multiple perspectives to a lot of topics, including this one. Why does one group or person react in a certain way, and how would another react to the same thing? And why do they do that? From what context? People can never be viewed separately from their time, their context and their position. So always look at things from multiple positions and point that out. Or let pupils imagine: what would you think if you were in that position? What would happen then? ... And as for the apologies for the Dutch history of slavery, I have a class discussion about that: are apologies enough, or should there be real consequences?"* **Participant 7**

One of the interviewees stated that framing the perspective of anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters is necessary in order to understand the concept of resistance.

> *The situation on the plantations and the crossing as part of the transatlantic slave trade, that whole context really is outlined. That's also necessary to understand why you would flee to freedom and try to survive in the jungle. It also makes pupils understand where the resistance came from, or at least the guerrilla actions by the Maroons against the plantations. What I always try to emphasise is that Africans did not meekly allow themselves to be victimised, but in fact put up resistance – quite the opposite picture. Slavery is actually something very unnatural. People strive for freedom and don't want to be owned by someone else. That's the broader context we try to emphasise."* **Participant 12**

Those interviewees who pay little or no attention to anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters instead mainly discuss European abolitionists and the broader theme of 'inequality' to further explain the history of slavery and resistance to it.

> *When I ask teenagers 'Would you take action if you were treated unjustly?', they all say 'Yes'. Okay, and if someone else is treated unjustly, would you take action then? Then they wouldn't. So it's a question of conscience."* **Participant 5**

The teacher trainers confirmed the picture of a Eurocentric perspective with little room for multiple perspectives.

> *I believe that something like 80 per cent of all the perspectives were ultimately, at the bottom line, still white, male, elitist perspectives of history."* **Participant 16**

That interviewee went on to point out a possible consequence of this prevailing perspective based on their own development of the theme.

> *I believe that as a child and young adult I had a very traditional, orientalist view of sailors as adventurers, as explorers. And that view wasn't necessarily corrected by what was written in those books. When slavery was discussed, it was always presented in very economic terms: really just as a transaction and much less as a dark stain in our history. I don't think I felt much about it, because there wasn't much to feel. Because even an image of a ship crammed full of people is of course very abstract, because it's a drawing. It's not a photograph, it's not visual material, it's not testimony. It's a drawing, and most of those drawings come from white abolitionists in the eighteenth century."* **Participant 16**

Another trainer pointed out that in this respect the perspective of Black people only appears in the context of American colonial and slavery history, not in relation to the Dutch situation.

> *The Black perspective is very American-coloured. There you have a film like 12 Years a Slave, which is great material for telling a personal story. But you don't have anything like that from Suriname or the other countries where the Netherlands was involved in slavery."* **Participant 17**

Despite the predominantly Eurocentric perspective, the trainers we interviewed do see some initial signs of improvement in terms of a multi-perspective approach. This is also a theme that they themselves want to introduce more widely into the education programmes they are involved in. They see this as an opportunity to give more prominence to anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters.

> *The resistance is that you tell that story: that it wasn't just passive, that it didn't end only when the Europeans saw fit, but that it was also initiated by people there. That they were a movement. But also – and then you're talking about individuals ... – you can use an individual person to illustrate a very nice historical story: what it meant. Not only their specific role, but also how they lived, how their parents lived and their background – what influence that had. So personally I think it's very nice to tell the story through individuals … I think it can be done very well through individuals, and that that's a good starting point. Because you want to give students a little bit of inspiration, and an individual often works very well at school, especially with younger children."* **Participant 17**

3.7. Connecting with the world of young people

Most of the interviewees indicated that young people are inherently difficult to interest in history, especially as a school subject. For young white people without a migrant background in particular, indifference towards active resistance as part of colonial and slavery history (for example, "Why should we apologise when it was such a long time ago?") and general disinterest ("Why do we need to know this now?") also play a role. When dealing with slavery and the colonial past, including resistance heroes and freedom fighters, education professionals therefore take alternative approaches. Both in terms of content and so as to find a suitable working method. As far as content is concerned, they usually choose to make explicit references to the ways in which that past still impacts the present, including Black Lives Matter[8], institutional racism, official apologies for the Dutch slave trade, Zwarte Piet and how the current population composition of the Netherlands came about.

> *I now link the Black Lives Matter movement to modern imperialism. And then you see that when you use the phrase 'I can't breathe[9]', pupils are able to make the connection. From there you can also start conversations about institutional racism."* **Participant 4**

> *As I said, I have a fairly 'white' school. The reactions are not emotional: no-one feels that way themselves, because these are not pupils with that background [pupils of colour]. But I think it does open their eyes. They gain more insight and understanding. Personally, I always link it to the Zwarte Piet discussion because that's very topical at the moment and pupils often have strong opinions about it. I notice that when you explain what's racist about that and the history behind it, they're open to a different point of view ... But it's also very simple: when you talk about which groups of people with what origins live in the Netherlands and you make it clear that there's a colonial past attached to that. That's the translation, in fact the explanation for the emergence of the multicultural society."* **Participant 12**

8 An international movement against anti-Black racism that originated in the United States in response to police violence against Black people.

9 The last words of the American George Floyd when a police officer pinned him down by kneeling on his neck for ten minutes, resulting in his death. The words "I can't breathe" were subsequently used in protests against police violence and racial inequality in the United States

One interviewee prefers to highlight overarching themes such as exclusion.

> *I often try to link it to their own lives. For example, we have a lot of pupils with disabilities who are also excluded, but in a different way. So we say, 'You don't like that, do you? Well, others don't like it either.'"* **Participant 9**

Several interviewees indicated that they tailor the content of their lessons to the ethnic composition of the class, or would like to.

> *Last year I had a girl from the Antilles for the first time. So we focused a bit more on the Antilles. So that for her too, well... then you have more of a connection with someone in your own class, someone who comes from there. That gives you a bit more to play with."* **Participant 9**

> *We have quite a few people of Hindustani [Surinamese Indian] descent here at school, but you can hardly connect their story with the teaching methods at all. It's not explained at all. If you're lucky, it says somewhere: '1863, abolition of slavery by the Dutch, full stop.' It doesn't really go into the fact that, in practical terms, little changed for another ten years and that people were brought in from India. We don't really know enough about that story."* **Participant 4**

We have also encountered examples of education professionals encouraging the descendants of enslaved people to delve into colonial and slavery history for, say, an elective assignment. The researchers involved in this study question whether this is always done in a manner that is agreeable for the pupils concerned. However, the study itself provides to further insight into this matter. It is conceivable, though, that it could be confrontational for these pupils to be made aware of their own history by an education professional, or that in so doing they are being treated differently from non-descendants.

In general terms, it seems from the above examples that education professionals make an implicit assumption that colonial and slavery history is a subject specifically for Black people and people of colour, whereas in fact – as found by previous research – it is hugely important for Dutch society as a whole that this theme be addressed.

Finally, the professionals indicated that personal stories and greater insight into one individual and their background help to connect with the world view of children and young people.

> *If you really show what conditions were like for those people, they all agree that it was terrible. And when it comes to resistance, they also understand that people fled, revolted or resisted colonial power. They can empathise with that. Especially if you describe the circumstances well, they understand. We often ask the question, 'What would you have done in such a situation?' Almost everyone says that they would have resisted too. But if you try to put it in a historical context, it's actually remarkable that people did resist. Pupils often don't take that step. They take it for granted that people rebelled, and then I try to explain: if you resisted it could have serious consequences — for yourself, your family, your children. That helps them understand it better."* **Participant 6**

Methodologically, the education professionals make extensive use of film, video and news articles to address the subject, but they use class discussions most often of all. These sessions focus primarily on the following questions: What was it like for this person to be captured and enslaved? Was resistance justified? And would you also resist if you found yourself in a similar situation? At same time, our interviewees indicated that they also find these discussions stressful. There is always a fear that the conversation will become too heated and exacerbate polarisation in the class. The professionals also expressed a desire to do more outside the classroom, for example by visiting the Suriname Museum or The Black Archives.

Teacher trainers gave varying accounts of how colonial and slavery history is received by their students (at university and college level). Some said that they are surprised by the amount of knowledge the students have, which is much greater than a few years ago. Others, by contrast, notice more resistance to the topic and link this to the current political climate. Finally, a few indicated that discussing it invariably leads to polarisation, which makes it challenging for them to teach this aspect of Dutch history.

When asked how they establish a link with the present (to make the subject more interesting for students), the trainers' answers were much the same as those given by the teachers working in primary and secondary education. These mainly centred on prejudice, (institutional) racism and intergenerational trauma. In addition, several of the trainers drew a link with contemporary forms of slavery in other parts of the world and unconnected with Dutch society.

3.8. Barriers and needs

When asked about barriers they encounter in deciding whether or not to teach about anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters, the education professionals mentioned several examples.

Barriers

- Too much ground to cover in the time available. Most of our interviewees stated that they have to cover many different topics within a short period of time, and feel that if they were to devote (more) attention to anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters, that would be at the expense of other material that also needs to be addressed. Others, by contrast, pointed out that as a teacher you have a lot of freedom to choose what you focus on, so you do have plenty of scope to look at anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters. That said, these interviewees also noted that the extent to which school management considers the theme important also determines how much coverage is given to colonial and slavery history and, more specifically, to anti-colonial resistance.
- Learning outcomes and curricula take precedence. Many education professionals stated that their teaching is guided primarily by learning outcomes and curricula. Whilst they would like to highlight anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters, they are deterred from doing so because this topic is not explicitly included in the learning outcomes and they are more concerned about preparing pupils for their examinations.
- Insufficient personal knowledge/lack of education. Several education professionals told us that they themselves lack sufficient knowledge of colonial and slavery history in general, and of anti-colonial resistance specifically, at least in part because this theme was barely covered, if at all, in their own education.
- Insufficient material. Almost all our interviewees stated that the coverage of colonial and slavery history and anti-colonial resistance in current teaching materials is inadequate. It is minimal in scope, lacks context and is too superficial. Access to appropriate materials is crucial for them, however, because they cannot rely on the basic knowledge they acquired during their own education. There is also a lack of concrete working methods to apply to this or other sensitive themes.
- Insufficient time and space to develop and/or search for materials themselves. Following on from the previous point, some motivated professionals indicated that they do search for materials themselves but that this is a time-consuming task. They also wonder whether the materials they find are didactically and pedagogically suitable for their pupils.

Needs

Education professionals' needs when it comes to teaching about anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters largely reflect the barriers outlined above, in that they centre mainly on facilitation and support. Our research reveals a picture of professionals struggling to provide good teaching on this subject, which currently relies heavily on personal knowledge, commitment and involvement. In general terms, interviewees expressed the following needs.

- Better integration into the history curriculum. In this respect, factors mentioned include the learning outcomes and curricula. Some interviewees also argued for abolition of the curriculum's division into distinct historical periods, since these are structured from a very Western perspective and colonial and slavery history does not really 'fit' into that classification, with the result that that history is fragmented across the various periods studied.
- More context, multiple perspectives and personal stories in the teaching materials. Several interviewees indicated that they consider it a great loss that there is still insufficient scope for study of the colonial and slavery system from the perspective of those people oppressed within it. In addition to the general importance of adopting multiple perspectives, education professionals also mentioned that personal stories are more relevant to young people's own world view and are therefore more likely to stick in their minds. Several said that it would be helpful if a separate series of lessons were developed around this theme. They indicated that material is available, but that they need resources designed specifically for schools that is pedagogically and didactically sound.
- More concrete methodological tools. As well as pointing out that they usually have to seek out information about anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters themselves, interviewees also mentioned that they would like to have more concrete tools to help them deal with sensitive topics. At present they mainly use audiovisual material or, if distance permits, excursions, but they also need more guidance on how best to approach these subjects in the classroom.
- Inclusive language in teaching materials. In addition to their disquiet about the prevailing Western perspective and the absence of voices of people of colour, several education professionals also stated that they are concerned about the (colonial) language used in much of the teaching material (as we also noted in our analysis of that material, see above).

4 Reflection sessions with young people

Using focus groups, we asked a cohort of young people about their experience of education concerning colonial and slavery history, including resistance heroes and freedom fighters, and their needs in this regard. This chapter describes the results.

4.1. Memories of education about colonial and slavery history

The extent to which pupils remember their lessons and teaching materials on the history of slavery and colonialism varies. Most said that the subject was covered during their school years, but not in depth. This was mainly during their secondary education, and mostly in History lessons but to a lesser extent in Social Studies, Dutch, English or occasionally Geography.

Some former pupils remember that Indonesia and its history were discussed in detail, while for one Suriname was the focus. A number indicated that the subject was presented from a strongly Dutch/Eurocentric perspective, with an emphasis on the economic benefits and the so-called glory of the Golden Age. The suffering endured by enslaved people was almost completely absent from the lessons. One pupil described them as follows.

> *"We were told that there was a transatlantic slave trade, but not really in very great detail: who were its victims? Or rather, the focus was mainly on the Dutch side and more on the Golden Age."* **Young person 1**

Lessons on colonial and slavery history were usually taught using school textbooks. In some cases, films or documentaries were also shown – about the slave trade, for example, or from the perspective of enslaved people. One former pupil said that the book Max Havelaar was read in a Dutch lesson. Others stated that the history of slavery was also discussed in art or culture classes, but often in a superficial way. On a visit to the Rijksmuseum, for example, paintings depicting enslaved people in the background were pointed out, but with no further context.

These discussions also revealed that the extent to which colonial and slavery history was covered in lessons depended largely on the individual teacher's affinity with the subject. For example, former pupils said that teachers with a migrant background or descended from enslaved people paid more attention to this subject than white staff. In some cases, teachers even skipped the subject altogether. The young people indicated that they had the impression that teachers did this out of fear that the subject would be too sensitive or uncomfortable, especially for white pupils.

4.2. Memories of anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters in education

The former pupils stated almost unanimously that resistance heroes and freedom fighters in colonial and slavery history received very little attention during their schooling. When resistance was mentioned, it was often briefly, superficially and without names or context. And usually in general terms, for example as individual Maroons who rebelled against enslavement or abolitionists who opposed slavery. The subject was approached in a factual rather than a sensitive manner. In some cases, resistance was also framed negatively: freedom fighters who set fire to plantations were portrayed as 'bad people'.

It is striking that pupils often remembered that Dutch so-called 'heroes' were mentioned: colonial leaders who were in fact responsible for oppression and violence. They were presented in the teaching materials as national heroes, whilst the names of resistance fighters in the colonies remained unmentioned. One former pupil said that Sukarno was mentioned briefly, but without any explanation of his role or significance, and that he did not appear in tests or any other teaching material.

When former pupils looked back on their school days, they said that they were introduced primarily to international freedom fighters like Martin Luther King, Nelson Mandela, Harriet Tubman and Mahatma Gandhi. These figures were often presented as universal symbols of peace and freedom, but their stories were rarely linked to the Dutch colonial context. Dutch or Caribbean resistance heroes, such as Tula, Boni and Anton de Kom, were hardly mentioned at all. Most only heard about them later, and usually outside school.

4.3. Presence of historical knowledge, language use and 'economic' perspective

Former pupils also described situations in which teachers dealt with the subject incorrectly or awkwardly. In one history lesson, a Black pupil even had to correct the teacher and provide the class with accurate information. For many of the young people, this underlines how much good education on this subject relies on the knowledge and sensitivity of individual teachers — and how often that knowledge is still lacking.

As described earlier, young people said that little attention was paid to anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters. But the same also applied to colonial and slavery history in general. When this theme was discussed, that was often in a problematic way. For example, teaching materials and teachers consistently referred to "slaves" rather than "enslaved people". According to the former pupils, this inadequate treatment of this theme created distance and in some cases simplified reality.

Some teachers also expressed pride in the Dutch East India Company whilst the violent and oppressive aspects of colonisation were hardly discussed, if at all. In some lessons, colonisation was even presented as a form of progress that supposedly 'advanced' colonised peoples. Such descriptions caused feelings of discomfort and confusion amongst pupils.

Personal sources of knowledge

Some young people stated that colonial and slavery history was sometimes also discussed when they asked about it themselves. For example, in response to personal family ties (for example, because they themselves were descendants of enslaved people). One former pupil told us that the 1977 train hijacking by Moluccan activists was discussed in a lesson as a consequence of the past, but only after she brought it up herself.

Most of the young people we spoke with, however, indicated that they learnt much more about colonial and slavery history outside school than in the classroom, mainly through family, friends, museums and cultural activities. This was particularly true for persons of colour, who often heard stories about Maroons or family histories from Suriname, for example.

> *I heard more from my grandmother, who told stories about how it was with Maroons and their fleeing plantations to start their own village. I mainly learnt about that from other people, and sometimes in a museum, and then you see how it was."* **Young person 2**

> *I do think that you encountered most of the stories there [outside school] and not at school, because I can't remember any story at school about anti-colonial resistance leaders in Dutch history."* **Young person 3**

Pupils also studied independently – by reading books, for example, by or attending events such as Keti Koti (marking the abolition of slavery), Maroon Day or Indonesian commemorations.

4.4. Needs and wishes

More context and depth.
According to former pupils, colonial and slavery history is often treated superficially at school, without depth or context. And they say that this has direct consequences for the general level of knowledge.

> *"I've spoken to people who don't even know what Moluccans are, even though they are a very important part of Dutch history. There's just an incredible number of people who don't know this, because it simply isn't taught at school."* **Young person 3**

The way in which the abolition of slavery was presented is also seen as problematic. Former pupils said that their textbooks suggested that abolition was an end point after which "everyone was happy again", without paying any attention to what happened afterwards. According to them, this reinforced the frame that history was a closed book rather than a living past that still exerts influence.

The young people said that the past's impact on the present continues to be neglected. They indicated that it is important to understand where contemporary racism and inequality come from. As one pupil emphasised:

> *You don't hear much about it [the history of slavery] in History lessons anyway, but it's very important because slavery has such a huge legacy and is still causing a lot of problems, such as racism. Yes, I do think that's missing from education."* **Young person 4**

Greater focus on Dutch colonial and slavery history
Former pupils found it striking that their lessons at school often focused more on the colonial history of other European countries or the United States than on the role of the Netherlands itself. When the Dutch were mentioned, they feel that their role was often trivialised.

> *Yes, we didn't really look at what happened in the Netherlands itself. Every time we discussed something like that, it was like, 'Yes, but the Portuguese, the Spanish and the British did much worse things.' ... But the Dutch did them too, so I found it a bit strange how that was presented."* **Young person 5**

In this context, the young people referred in particular to the imbalance in attention paid during their schooling to Indonesia by comparison with, for example, Suriname and the Caribbean islands. They would like to see more coverage devoted to the history of the Caribbean, to the context surrounding the Moluccans and their situation and to the links between the colonial and slavery history of Suriname and the composition of the modern Dutch population.

4.5. More coverage of resistance heroes and freedom fighters?

The young people's stories give the impression that there are still many unmet needs in respect of general education about colonial and slavery history. Not even the basics seem to be in order. Young people certainly recognise the importance of teaching about anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters, but do not seem entirely confident that this is being done properly – meaning comprehensively and honestly. At the same time, they argued that the absence of these stories from the curriculum means that important perspectives are lost. They believe that school should be a place where pupils learn about courage, solidarity and resistance to oppression – lessons that, in their view, are important in understanding where the Netherlands has come from and where it needs to go. Moreover, they emphasised that stories about resistance heroes can be inspiring. They hope that more attention will to be paid to people who have resisted injustice, not just in the past but also in the present. For some, recent role models such as Muhammad Ali, Denzel Washington or local activists and artists are also important examples of resistance and resilience.

5 Conclusions and recommendations

In this final chapter we present the conclusions and recommendations of our study in the European Netherlands. We provide answers to the research questions posed in the Introduction.

5.1. Conclusions

1. Are stories about anti-colonial freedom fighters and resistance heroes included in the curricula of primary and secondary schools? And if so, how are these stories treated and what narrative is central to them?
2. Are stories about anti-colonial freedom fighters and resistance heroes included in the teaching materials published by the major commercial educational publishers in the European Netherlands? And if so, how are these stories treated and what narrative is central to them?

The teaching materials studied do mention some anti-colonial freedom fighters and resistance heroes. They are Sukarno, Mohammed Hatta, Boni, Tula, Anton de Kom, John Stedman and Eduard Douwes Dekker. It is important to note that, particularly in the cases of Sukarno, Mohammed Hatta, Boni, Tula and Anton de Kom, their stories and acts of resistance are given only minimal attention. Their names are mentioned along with a general description of what they were resisting, without much background information about them as individuals (where they came from, how they grew up, etc.) or how and why they came to resist colonial rule. And their specific acts of resistance are described only in very general terms: Tula, for example, is "leader of an uprising" and Sukarno "leader of the independence movement in Indonesia". By contrast, the stories of white resistance heroes such as Dekker and Stedman are fleshed out in more detail. Education professionals from the European Netherlands indicate that this imbalance may be due to the fact that the stories of freedom fighters and resistance heroes from oppressed groups are less well documented. It is also striking that only in a few books are the above-mentioned individuals from marginalised groups literally described as "freedom fighters" or "resistance heroes". In fact, they are not necessarily described in a very positive light at all. In the case of Boni in particular, it is noticeable that he is framed primarily as an aggressive person and a murderer, without his actions being put into context.

In addition, the 'stories' of the anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters are described predominantly from the perspective of the Netherlands and/or Europe. Only a few books make slightly more use of multiple perspectives, but still only to a minimal extent. These cautious attempts at a multi-perspective approach are seen in the cases of Tula and Anton de Kom in particular. It is also striking that De Kom is not given significantly more attention, given that he is explicitly included in the Canon of the Netherlands, the guideline for history education in the Netherlands.

As a side note, we observe that the texts about anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters systematically use colonial terminology. This is particularly the case when they refer to marginalised groups, and is an important point because the use of (offensive) colonial terminology influences the way in which resistance heroes and freedom fighters are portrayed. It should also be mentioned that there have been some tentative improvements in this area. For example, some of the material does now refer to "enslaved people" rather than "slaves".

3. Do education professionals include stories about anti-colonial freedom fighters and resistance heroes in their classroom teaching? And if so, how are these stories treated and what narrative is central to them? What teaching materials (and other resources) do education professionals use in support of this activity?
    a. Anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters are also mentioned by education professionals in the classroom, but only to a limited and minimal extent. On the one hand this is a logical consequence of the content of the available teaching materials, but on the other it has a lot to do with the frameworks to which education professionals must adhere and with their own level of knowledge and professional skills. No specific anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters appear in either in the official learning outcomes or in curricula, so there is no obligation to cover them in the classroom. Teachers who do raise this topic do so on their own initiative and motivation. But the majority of education professionals indicate that they have little knowledge of anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters. And those who do possess that knowledge say that they have to make a considerable effort to find reliable and good material on the topic. In general, though, education professionals are interested in finding good ways to introduce heroes and freedom fighters (not to mention colonial and slavery history in general) into the classroom, in terms of teaching materials and methodology. They state explicitly that their teaching benefits from personal stories about such figures because they recognise that those stories resonate with young people's own world view. But, they say, that type of material is not yet available.

When discussing colonial and slavery history, education professionals make extensive use of audiovisual material (films, documentaries) and – if distance permits – excursions to museums. When it comes to the continuing impact of that history, current events and/or news articles are often used. Some examples mentioned in this regard are the Dutch government's apologies for past slavery, the Black Lives Matter movement, Zwarte Piet and Keti Koti. Specific resistance is framed as standing up against injustice, with pupils being asked what they would do if they were confronted with similar injustice or unfairness. A class discussion is the most commonly chosen method for this.

With regard to the narrative adopted, a small proportion of the education professionals we interviewed follow the line taken in the teaching materials (predominantly Eurocentric, reasoned from a Dutch perspective), but the majority try to approach the subject from the perspective of the resistance heroes and freedom fighters themselves (albeit subject to the limitations discussed earlier).

b. Do the stories presented about anti-colonial freedom fighters and resistance heroes (in the curriculum, in teaching materials and by education professionals) take into account pupils' world view? And if so, how do they experience those stories?

c. Given the limited coverage of anti-colonial freedom fighters and resistance heroes in the teaching materials, we have to say that their reflection of pupils' own world view in this respect is minimal. However, the education professionals we interviewed are consciously working on this and trying to design lessons in a way that appeals to young people, for example by using supplementary topical or audiovisual material or by allowing their pupils to put themselves in the position of a resistance hero or freedom fighter. Nevertheless, they also indicate that they are still searching for the right approach. Several professionals said that they use the composition of the pupil population in their class as a starting point to determine what topics are covered, and how. We regard this as a problematic development, because in fact all pupils benefit from hearing this side of history – not least, as Hartendorp (2023) emphasises, in order to combat the stereotyping of Black people.

Teachers also mentioned various obstacles that hinder them in providing good education about slavery and its continuing impact. These are rooted in the lack of teaching methods that both substantiate the core learning objectives and connect with local experience and the ongoing impact of slavery and colonialism. Teacher education programmes do not provide prospective educators with sufficient knowledge of the subject, so they enter the profession with gaps in their knowledge and a lack of pedagogical support.

Within what broader social context are stories about anti-colonial freedom fighters and resistance heroes (in the curriculum, in teaching materials and presented by education professionals) placed? For example, what was the background to the resistance, when and in what circumstances did it take place and which community or communities were involved?

In the teaching materials currently available, anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters are rarely, if ever, placed in a broader social context. In general, the frame is as follows: for economic reasons, the Netherlands had colonies and participated in enslavement and the trade in enslaved people, and the anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters stood up against this situation.

In the classroom, those individuals are presented mainly in the broader context of injustice, unfairness and human rights violations. The central questions here are: how can people treat other people in such a degrading way and how would you yourself react if you experienced injustice and/or unfairness or witnessed it happening to someone else?

5.2. Recommendations

Based on the above conclusions, we have formulated a number of recommendations for the government, educational publishers and schools/education professionals. In addition, we make recommendations for further implementation of the parliamentary motion and for further follow-up research.

For the government

- Explicitly include resistance heroes in core learning objectives and learning outcomes. Provide explicit guidance to (1) achieve more balanced coverage in the classroom of anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters from the various countries and continents with which the Netherlands has colonial ties and (2) highlight the commonalities shared by different resistance heroes and freedom fighters, particularly in order to show that there was resistance to slavery and the colonial system all over the world.
- Facilitate and support didactically and pedagogically sound teaching materials about anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters, and ensure that these are easily accessible for education professionals. They should include both substantive teaching materials and accessible short lesson templates with guidance and tools for teachers on how to safely address this topic in the classroom, thereby reducing uncertainty about how to proceed.
- Facilitate the development of expertise on this theme for current education professionals.

- Support teacher education programmes (possibly starting with history teacher education) in paying more attention to this theme in their curriculum.
- Advise and encourage educational publishers, schools and teacher education programmes to make greater use of secondary sources and oral history as well as primary sources. In our view, this will increase the scope to do greater justice to the stories of anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters when primary sources are not available.

For educational publishers

Involve stakeholders and experts in the field of colonial and slavery history in an evaluation of those individuals mentioned in the teaching materials as having been involved in anti-colonial resistance and the struggle for freedom. Critically examine whether the individuals currently included are in fact widely regarded as resistance heroes or freedom fighters. Ideally, it would also be good to consider greater diversity, including with regard to gender.

- Revise the texts currently contained in the teaching materials. In doing so, pay attention to the following points.
  - 1. Provide more background information on the resistance heroes and freedom fighters and how they came to resist colonial oppression.
  - 2. As an extension to the previous point, pay more attention to these individuals' own perspectives and avoid adopting a Eurocentric perspective;
  - 3. Devote equal attention to anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters from the various Dutch colonial territories.
- Update the vocabulary and remove colonial terminology.
- Involve young people in the development of new teaching materials in order to optimise the connection with their own world view. One example of this approach could be to focus on current movements that have been inspired by resistance heroes and freedom fighters of the past. Moreover, both education professionals themselves and experts indicate that young people generally find stories of resistance interesting. One good option, therefore, might be to focus on one or more resistance heroes and to use their story as a starting point to talk about the broader history of Dutch slavery and colonialism.

For schools and education professionals

- Critically review your existing teaching materials, stop using any that are inadequate in scope and also look for additional resources. Advise teachers as to what materials they can and cannot use, and offer alternatives.
- If necessary, enter into a dialogue with publishers to jointly consider possible revisions to future editions of their teaching materials.
- Facilitate and support the development of education professionals' expertise in terms of the subject matter and methodology.
- If possible, ensure that newly developed materials are shared. Other stakeholders, such as the government, may be able to provide support in this regard.

For further research

- We as the researchers responsible are convinced that this study provides a good overview of the current state of affairs in the education sector, particularly due to the research methods used. Nevertheless, we still lack sufficient insight into aspects including the differences between secondary and primary education and between mainstream, special and practical education. Additional research is needed to explore these differences in greater depth.
- Set up a study to analyse all teaching materials, or at least those related to colonial and slavery history, in terms of decolonisation and inclusion. This was not an issue addressed specifically in our study, but we have noticed various signs (such as use of language) indicating possible areas for improvement.

With regard to the motion by BIJ1

This study provides an insight into the current coverage of anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters in Dutch primary and secondary education (in the core learning objectives, in teaching materials and in the classroom). This can be regarded as a starting point for further implementation of the parliamentary motion tabled by BIJ1. Our recommendations in this regard are as follows.

- Together with stakeholders and experts in the field of colonial and slavery history, explore which anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters should be covered in primary and secondary education and why. In so doing, ensure a balanced distribution in terms of gender, geography and so on. Ideally, Dutch colonial and slavery history should be taught from the perspective of the anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters.
- Collect all available material (primary sources, secondary sources and oral history) on the selected resistance heroes and freedom fighters and, in co-operation with experts, stakeholders and education professionals working in the field, make this material applicable in practice (and for different forms of education, etc.).

- Have the above research carried out, in accordance with the motion, by specialist organisations and/or researchers with specific knowledge of this theme[10]. This could include involving a research bureau, possibly in a supporting role.
- Ensure that, as is already the case with Anton de Kom, the selected resistance heroes and freedom fighters are included in the Canon of the Netherlands.
- Explore possible ways to integrate the resistance heroes and freedom fighters in the Canon of the Netherlands more explicitly into:
- core learning objectives, learning outcomes and curricula;
    - teaching materials;
    - teaching practice.

Our research shows, for example, that Anton de Kom, although already part of the Canon of the Netherlands, still receives only limited coverage in the classroom. This indicates that additional effort is needed to integrate the Canon into teaching materials and practice.

10 For example, the Black Archives, IZI Solutions, Fawaka, the Global Citizenship Community and individual researchers such as Dr Joandi Hartendorp.

Part 2.
Results –Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

By Luc Alofs and Jan Bant

with contributions from Régine Croes, Eduard Dresscher, Kenny Meyers and Jessica Besselink

Methodology and approach

Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands research team

The research questions that formed the basis for this study are listed in the general Introduction above. To answer those questions for the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, a team was assembled consisting of a principal researcher (University of Aruba, education specialist and chairholder in the History and Intergenerational Impact of Slavery), a mid-level researcher who was also responsible for data management (University of Aruba and PhD student at Radboud University Nijmegen) and seven island-specific contributors who, as researchers or teachers, are familiar with the local social and historical context of our theme. Other local experts were also called upon to act as critical readers and, where our knowledge was lacking, as co-authors. The latter applied in particular to the section on the various education systems in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Approach and document structure

The six islands of the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands have education systems that vary greatly in terms of provision and scope, and also have different statutory core learning objectives. There are also differences in locally produced teaching materials, and the composition of the pupil and teacher populations on the Caribbean islands varies greatly as well.

For this reason, in Chapter 1 we first describe the various education systems in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Then, in Chapter 2, we discuss their statutory core learning objectives for history education and how teaching about colonialism, slavery and resistance is guaranteed in their schools. Chapter 3 looks the formal Dutch and Caribbean teaching methods, as well as supplementary materials on anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters on the islands. Teachers' experiences with the available materials and the stories they tell about resistance and the struggle for freedom are the focus of Chapter 4. And Caribbean pupils have their say in Chapter 5: what stories about heroes and heroines resisting slavery and colonialism actually reach them, and do such stories arouse their curiosity? Chapter 6 then summarises acts of resistance, events and movements that already do or could play a role in teaching about the history of slavery education in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Finally, we answer the research questions and present our recommendations for the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in our concluding seventh chapter.

Strengths and weaknesses

The strength of this part of study lies in the collaboration between researchers and educators during its preparation, and in their contacts with teachers in the complex educational landscape of the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. We were able to form a good picture of all different types of school on the islands, the teaching methods they use there and the stories they tell about anti-colonial resistance. Where necessary, we were able to call upon an extensive informal network of local experts on education and the history of slavery.

One limitation is that we did not reach every type of school, individual school or pupil type on each of the islands. This was due to their workloads and to the fact that our data collection efforts coincided in part with reporting and holiday periods. There were also schools that wanted us obtain permission from their minister before they would co-operate with us. Our timeline did not allow us to pursue this route, so we approached other respondents instead.

6 Educational landscape in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

With the co-operation of Régine Croes (Instituto Pedagogico Arubano, Tilburg University)

Education is one of the policy areas devolved to the autonomous parts of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Although the Kingdom's various education systems are closely intertwined, there are also significant differences as well as historically rooted similarities. This divergence began in Aruba with its separation from the then Netherlands Antilles in 1986 and has been further reinforced since the complete dissolution of the Netherlands Antilles in 2010. This has resulted in a complex and fragmented Caribbean education sector.

The autonomous Caribbean countries of Aruba, Curaçao and Sint Maarten each pursue their own policies. Aruba's education policy since 1986 has focused on contextualising the national vision of education and curriculum targets, based on a contemporary pedagogical-didactic approach and a language policy that reflects both local multilingualism and global developments.[11] The existing education system has been reformed and new types of school and classroom subjects have been created. Since 2010 Curaçao[12] and Sint Maarten[13] have been building on the educational reforms that were already taking shape along similar lines in the Netherlands Antilles. All three countries have introduced local and regional characteristics and now offer scope for the creation of schools aligned with regional and global education systems, such as the Caribbean Examinations Council and the International Baccalaureate.

In the public entities of Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba, radical changes occurred after 2010. The Caribbean Netherlands Education Acts[14] came into force there in 2011. Since then, education has been funded directly from The Hague and all schools are supervised by the Dutch Inspectorate of Education. For children requiring extra support, there are special needs expertise centres and social opportunity pathways on all three islands. These programmes guide premature school leavers towards a basic qualification or help them enter the labour market.[15] Education agendas containing policy proposals to improve the quality of education are published regularly.[16]

Although education in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands is rooted in the Dutch system, in practice the islands' own systems are all hybrid because they incorporate local, Caribbean and North American elements alongside the Dutch basis. On Sint Maarten, Sint Eustatius and Saba, for example, the predominance of English has created opportunities – which have been seized – to align with the English-language education system overseen by the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC).[17] In addition, alternative subsidised forms of education have emerged, such as the International Baccalaureate system with its associated teaching methods and examinations.[18]

This divergent development in an already diverse educational landscape has consequences for learning outcomes, core learning objectives, curricula, examinations and qualifications. And that in turn has direct consequences for teaching about slavery and resistance to it. Below we summarise the main similarities and differences between the islands' primary and secondary education systems insofar as they are relevant to this study.

11 http://www.ea.aw/pages/wp-content/uploads/p/PEN-NOA-Nationaal-Onderwijsbeleid-Aruba-2030- v201906.pdf [National education policy of Aruba, 2030] Dienst Inspectie van het Onderwijs (Aruba) & Inspectie van het Onderwijs, Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap (2022) Doorlichting van het Arubaanse onderwijsbestel, eindrapportage van plan naar aanpak [Aruba Inspectorate of Education & Inspectorate of Education, Ministry of Education, Culture & Science: Review of the Aruban education system, final report on plan of action], October 2022.

12 https://gobiernu.cw/nl/ministries/onderwijs-wetenschap-cultuur-sport/ [Curaçao Ministry of Education, Science, Culture & Sport]. Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur, Wetenschap en Sport, Inspectie Onderwijs en Ministerie Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap, Inspectie van Onderwijs (2024) Nulmeting van het Curaçaose Onderwijsbestel, Eindrapport: Uitdagingen, krachten en oplossingsrichtingen [Curaçao Inspectorate of Education & Curaçao Ministry of Education, Science, Culture & Sport: Baseline assessment of the Curaçao education system, final report – challenges, strengths and possible solutions].

13 https://lokaleregelgeving.overheid.nl/CVDR142635 [National ordinance governing secondary education]. St Maarten Ministry of OCJS, Division of Inspection/Education Inspectorate Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (2022) Sint Maarten Education, Obstacles and Avenues to Improve Education, 15-03-2022.

14 https://www.rijksdienstcn.com/onderwijs-cultuur-wetenschap/onderwijspersoneel/wetgeving-online.

15 Wet Sociale Kansen Jongeren [Youth Social Opportunities Act]: http://wetten.overheid.nl/jci1.3:c:BWBR0028506&z=2015-08-01&g=2015-08-01

16 https://www.rijksdienstcn.com/onderwijs-cultuur-wetenschap/veranderingen-onderwijs-sinds-2011 and https://www.rijksdienstcn.com/onderwijs-cultuur-wetenschap/onderwijsagenda.

17 https://www.rijksdienstcn.com/onderwijs-cultuur-wetenschap/ouders-leerlingen/cxc-onderwijssysteem and https://www.cxc.org/

18 https://www.ibo.org/

6.1. Primary education, autonomous Caribbean countries

On Aruba the term 'primary education' (Primair Onderwijs Aruba, PO) is applied to the schooling of pupils aged 4-12. Special schools provide education for pupils with special needs. The main languages of instruction are Papiamento and Dutch. In addition, there is room for Spanish and English, especially in government-subsidised schools participating in the Scol Multilingual (multilingual school) innovation project.[19]

Since 2000 Curaçao and Sint Maarten have referred to primary schooling as 'foundation-based education' (Enseñansa di Fundeshi or Funderend Onderwijs, FO). FO schools operate two 'cycles': cycle 1 for children aged 4-8 and cycle 2 for 9-12 year-olds.[20] The 1979 legislation on special education still applies on Curaçao, although in practice only a limited number of FO schools provide it. On Sint Maarten, only the Prins Willem-Alexander School provides special education for pupils with additional learning needs.[21] The most common languages of instruction in government-subsidised primary education are Papiamento and Dutch on Curaçao and English and (to a lesser extent) Dutch on Sint Maarten. Private schools, such as the International School, have their own language policy.

6.2. Primary education, Caribbean Netherlands

Since October 2010, primary education in the Caribbean Netherlands has been subject to Dutch legislation and so is referred to as 'basisonderwijs' (basic education).[22] Bonaire has eight primary schools. Formally speaking, there is no special education in the Caribbean Netherlands. However, two schools do offer extra help for pupils with specific support needs. On Bonaire, instruction is provided in Dutch and Papiamento. Sint Eustatius has four primary schools and Saba has one, and th e language of instruction in all five is English. Dutch has the status of a 'strong foreign language' offered as a school subject.[23]

19 https://www.ea.aw/pages/nationaal-strategisch-beleid-primair-onderwijs-doc/

20 LANDSVERORDENING van de 14de november 2008 houdende de regeling met betrekking tot funderend onderwijs [National ordinance of 14 November 2008 governing the regulations pertaining to primary and secondary education]. Also https://lokaleregelgeving.overheid.nl/CVDR142611/1.

21 https://www.sintmaartengov.org/Audience/Students/Pages/School-Directory.aspx

22 Wet primair onderwijs BES [BES Primary Education Act]: http://wetten.overheid.nl/jci1.3:c:BWBR0030280&z=2018-02-01&g=2018-02-01.

23 https://www.slo.nl/thema/meer/caribisch-nederland/

6.3. Secondary education, autonomous Caribbean countries

Secondary schooling in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands has traditionally been divided into general secondary education (AVO) and vocational education, the latter being further subdivided into lower vocational education (LBO, 12-16 years) and intermediate vocational education (MBO, from approximately 16 years onwards). The new preparatory secondary vocational education (VMBO) system introduced in the Netherlands in 1999 was not universally adopted on the islands. On Aruba, the various types of school providing LBO have been merged to create a new form of lower vocational education called *Educacion Profesional Basico* (EPB), but there has been no integration with lower general secondary education (MAVO). Aruba therefore still has around ten MAVO schools (including one evening school). In addition, four schools offer senior general secondary education (HAVO) and pre-university education (VWO).

On Curaçao, LBO schooling has consolidated to create secondary vocational education (VSBO, comparable to VMBO in the Netherlands). This offers a practical basic learning pathway (PBL), a practical managerial pathway (PKL) and a theoretical managerial pathway (TKL). Secondary-level special education is offered in the form of work-oriented education (AGO) and is also incorporated into the VSBO. HAVO and VWO programmes are offered at six schools on Curaçao. Most of the subjects taught are similar to those offered in the Netherlands, with the exception of Cultural & Artistic Studies, Papiamento and People & Society. These have their own core learning objectives and examinations, which we discuss later.[24]

Nowhere is diversity in secondary education greater than on Sint Maarten. Its largest schools group is SVOBE (Foundation for the Advancement of Secondary Education Windward Islands), which oversees several schools. These include one offering VSBO-PKL and VSBO-TKL pathways.[25] It also runs Milton Peters College, which provides both Dutch-medium HAVO and VWO programmes and English-medium curricula leading to CXC examinations. The CXC's Certificate of Secondary

24 Ministerie van Onderwijs en Wetenschap, Cultuur en Sport, Inspectie Onderwijs Curaçao & Inspectie van het Onderwijs Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap, Nederland (2022) Nulmeting van het Curaçaose onderwijsbestel - Tussenrapportage: Knelpunten, Kansen en Oplossingsrichtingen [Inspectorate of Education, Curaçao Ministry of Education, Science, Culture & Sport & Inspectorate of Education, Netherlands Ministry of Education, Science, Culture & Sport: Baseline assessment of the Curaçao education system, interim report – challenges, strengths and possible solutions], p. 29.

25 https://svobe.org/tkl-csec-home/

Level Competence (CCSLC) and Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) have been assessed by Nuffic as equivalent in level to the Dutch HAVO qualification.[26]

Four English-medium secondary schools on Sint Maarten prepare pupils for CXC examination-sincluding the supplementary Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE), which is recognised by Nuffic as equivalent to a Dutch VWO.[27] Nevertheless, the learning outcomes and teaching methods associated with the CCSLC, CSEC and CAPE differ from those of HAVO and VWO subjects and also deviate from the national core learning objectives. Finally, one school on Sint Maarten (Dominique High School) offers an International Baccalaureate (IB).[28]

6.4. Secondary education, Caribbean Netherlands

Secondary education in the Caribbean Netherlands is governed by the Secondary Education Act 2020.[29] Bonaire's sole provider of secondary education, SGB, runs four schools, all of which operate in line with the Dutch model. At the VMBO level, the basic (VMBO-B) and managerial (VMBO-K) pathways are available.[30] The SGB's Liseo Boneriano school provides VMBO theoretical (VMBO-T, formerly MAVO), HAVO and VWO education. For pupils with special needs, the Special Teaching Unit (SLP) offers both practical education (PrO) and secondary-level special education (clusters 3 and 4). The Rebound programme in this unit focuses on pupils with behavioural problems. The SGB's MBO College is for pupils who have passed their VMBO or MAVO and want to continue their education on a secondary vocational education (MBO) programme. The language of instruction at SGB schools is Dutch.

Sint Eustatius and Saba each have one public secondary school, the Gwendoline van Putten School (Sint Eustatius) and Saba Comprehensive School. The language of instruction at both is English and they use CXC curricula. They offer four interrelated programmes: practical education, the CCSLC, the Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ) and the CSEC. [31]After obtaining one of these qualifications, students wishing to continue their education must do so elsewhere: either on one of the other Caribbean islands of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, somewhere else in the region or in the European Netherlands. The language of instruction in these schools is English.

6.5. Summary: a fragmented educational landscape

Divergent educational policies, the growth of private education and the recognition – including by Nuffic – of international education systems and examination organisations have resulted in a fragmented educational landscape in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. This has two main consequences.

Firstly, different core learning objectives for history education have been set in each of the autonomous Caribbean countries (Aruba, Curaçao, Sint Maarten) and in the Dutch Netherlands (Bonaire, Saba and Sint Eustatius). As a result, resistance to slavery and colonialism and the stories of resistance heroes and freedom fighters play different roles in each curriculum. Secondly, statutory core learning objectives set by the Dutch or island governments are not reflected in courses leading to qualifications awarded by examination organisations outside the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

26 Nuffic is the Dutch organisation for internationalisation in education: https://www.nuffic.nl/en/education-systems/curacao-st-maarten-and-the-bes-islands

27 https://svobe.org/tkl-csec-home/. Sint Maarten Ministry of OCJS, Division of Inspection & Education Inspectorate, Ministry of Education, Culture & Science (the Netherlands) (2022) Sint Maarten Education Review – Obstacles and Avenues to Improve Education, p. 19.

28 https://skos-sxm.org/school/st-dominic-highschool/

29 Wet voortgezet onderwijs: 2020: https://wetten.overheid.nl/BWBR0044212/2025-01-01

30 Wet Educatie en Beroepsonderwijs BES: http://wetten.overheid.nl/jci1.3:c:BWBR0028395&z=2018-02-01&g=2018-02-01

31 https://www.gvpschool.com/ and https://learningsaba.com/scs/

7 Core learning objectives and curricula

With thanks to Eduard Dresscher (Windesheim University of Applied Sciences)

In order to elucidate school history curricula in the fragmented Caribbean educational landscape, this chapter summarises the core learning objectives for history on the six islands. These objectives are established in law and organised into domains. The history of slavery could therefore also be covered in subjects other than History, such as Cultural & Artistic Studies or Citizenship. This report, however, confines itself to the core learning objectives for History as a subject in its own right and for other classroom subjects with a history component, such as General Human Development, Global Orientation, General Social Sciences and People & Society, as well as equivalents in other languages like Hende i Comunidad (in Papiamento) or Social Studies (in English). We did not necessarily expect to find core learning objectives (or curricula) that specify exactly which stories of resistance to slavery and colonialism should be told, but rather hoped to identify what guidelines or tools they offer to connect with those – previously often silenced – stories.

7.1. Primary education, autonomous Caribbean countries

The core learning objectives for the primary education subject People & Society on **Aruba** date from 2017. They give equal weight to indigenous and transatlantic colonial history: pupils should be able "to interpret events in local, regional and global history in order to demonstrate an understanding of developments in the world".

Primary cycle 1 (years 3-5) elaborates on this as follows: *"the pupil learns to recognise aspects of the history of the indigenous population, enslaved population and colonists within the Caribbean region and North and South America".* Pupils should be able to retell and act out children's stories from the indigenous population and colonists from the Caribbean region and North and South America.

Cycle 2 (years 6-8) teaches pupils to recognise colonialism and slavery in the Caribbean and in North and South America. They acquire the ability to identify the causes and consequences of colonisation and the slave trade in the Caribbean and in North and South America.

Curaçao and **Sint Maarten** apply core learning objectives that were established in 2009, prior to the dissolution of the Netherlands Antilles, and which often also involve the then already autonomous island of Aruba.[32]Domain H of the subject area People & Society is called *Tijd, Continuïteit en Verandering* (Time, Continuity and Change). Core learning objective 22 reads: *"The pupil has a broad understanding of the most important historical and contemporary developments on our islands."* No intermediate objectives are set for cycle 1, but cycle 2 does define some that are appealing and broadly interpretable (shown in italics below).

- The pupil understands that certain decisions and events have had a significant influence on the past and present. Intermediate objective: *the pupil can give examples of past events that have influenced the present.*
- The pupil understands that certain personalities have played a major role in the history of these islands and beyond. Intermediate objective: *the pupil can give examples of important people in the Netherlands Antilles and indicate what their role was.*
- The pupil understands that certain ideas in the past and present are of great significance to the history of these islands and beyond. Intermediate objective: *the pupil can give examples of important ideas for the history of humanity.*

7.2. Primary education, Caribbean Netherlands

The BES (Bonaire, St Eustatius and Saba) Primary Education Act has been in force in the Caribbean Netherlands since 2010. Its core learning objectives for the domain *Tijd* (Time) are as follows.

- 56. Pupils learn to use simple historical sources, such as those present in the cultural heritage of the Caribbean region, and they learn to use indicators of time periods and their divisions.
- 57. Pupils learn about characteristic aspects of the following periods: pre-Columbian cultures; colonisation and the division of the Caribbean; Dutch colonies and African slavery; the rise of the oil industry and increased migration within the Caribbean; modernisation, autonomy and the dissolution of the Netherlands Antilles.
- 58. Pupils learn about important historical figures and events from the history of the Caribbean Netherlands and are able to relate them to world history using examples.

The core learning objectives for the Caribbean Netherlands are currently being revised, based on the updated curriculum for the European Netherlands. In each subject area, consideration is being

32 LANDSBESLUIT, HOUDENDE ALGEMENE MAATREGELEN, van de 21ste januari 2009, ter uitvoering van artikel 11, derde lid, van de Landsverordening funderend onderwijs [National decree of 21 January 2009 containing measures for the implementation of Article 11, paragraph 3, of the National Ordinance on Primary and Secondary Education].

given to whether additional adjustments are necessary for the Caribbean Netherlands. In April 2024, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science commissioned *SLO, the Netherlands institute for curriculum development*, to update the core learning objectives for language teaching in primary and secondary schools in the Caribbean Netherlands, with the objectives for Mathematics being added in autumn 2025. The Ministry and SLO are currently discussing when the other subject areas also need to be addressed.[33]

7.3. Secondary education, autonomous Caribbean countries

In 2019 **Curaçao** and **Sint Maarten** adopted joint revised learning outcomes for HAVO and VWO history teaching.[34] Strikingly, slavery and its impact on Curaçao are central in this document but are not mentioned at all in respect of Sint Maarten. The only secondary school on Sint Maarten to offer History at HAVO and VWO level follows the Curaçao curriculum, which focuses on Curaçao-specific content. The examination papers are also supplied by Curaçao.

Domain A, *Vaardigheden en benaderingswijzen* (Skills and approaches), of the HAVO and VWO curricula immediately sets the tone by emphasising important Curaçao-specific themes such as the establishment of the Shell oil refinery in 1915 and the uprising of 30 May 1969 on that island. Examinees must be able to "reason and draw conclusions"

- in local history, regarding the pre-Columbian era, the era of slavery, the period following the abolition of slavery, the period of Shell's arrival, the period after 30 May 1969 and the period after '10/10/10',

and are required to

- - be aware of the evolution of ideas and opinions in place and time, for example as in the cases of slavery, Zwarte Piet, the roles of men and women, segregation, ideologies, the exercise of power or citizenship.

Subdomain B2, *Periode van de Slavernij* (The era of slavery), goes on to stipulate that the examinee can:

- Explain what circumstances and processes influenced the development of Dutch colonial policy on Curaçao from the sixteenth century;
  - describe and explain the presence and interests of the European powers (particularly the Netherlands);
  - recognise the economic, cultural and ideological background to colonialism;
  - explain changes in the objectives, means of exercising power and scope of Dutch government policy towards the colonies.
- Explain the influence of the slave trade and slavery on the development of Curaçao society;
- understand what influence forced African migration to Curaçao had in shaping the image of the inhabitants of Curaçao;
  - identify the most important actors, institutions and structures within the triangular trade that played a role on Curaçao, such as 'Asiento', the Eighty Years' War, the Dutch West India Company, Peter Stuyvesant, the rise of the plantation economy, slave auctions and so on;
  - describe the various forms of resistance to slavery – passive, active and so on – in the 'Antillean' context;
  - describe how Enlightenment ideals and the struggle for freedom in, for example, the US, Haiti and South America influenced the situation on Curaçao;
  - Explain Tula's rebellion in 1795 in terms of the spread of the above ideas and the contrast with the living conditions of the slaves.
  - The influence of the three major religious movements on Curaçaoan society during this period;
  - Christianity, including the political dominance of the Protestant Church and the social dominance of the Roman Catholic Church;
  - Judaism and its socio-economic influence;
  - traditional African beliefs, which remained influential despite repression;
  - the effect of the emancipation of all faiths in 1824.

33 https://www.slo.nl/thema/meer/actualisatie-kerndoelen-examenprogramma/ and https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerstukken/wetsvoorstellen/detail?cfg=wetsvoorsteldetails&qry=wetsvoorstel%3A36699.

34 https://gobiernu.cw/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/128.-Reg.-eind.-exam.-prog.-aardr.-gesch.-h.a.v.o.-v.w.o..docx.

The HAVO curriculum also covers events after 1863. Subdomain B3, *De periode na afschaffing van de slavernij (emancipatie)* (The period following the abolition of slavery (emancipation)), states that examinees must be able to:

- Explain the living conditions and mutual relationships of former slaves and other population groups within Curaçao society during this period;
  - describe the reaction of former slave owners to the abolition of slavery;
  - describe the continuity and discontinuity in the relationships between former slaves and former slave owners;
  - explain the role of the phosphate industry in the emancipation process;
  - explain economic migration from Curaçao to other parts of the region;
  - describe the continuing repression of Afro-Curaçaoan cultural expression;
  - describe the socio-economic and cultural dominance of the Protestant and Jewish population groups within Curaçaoan society.

The VWO curriculum builds on the HAVO version. The VWO curriculum builds on the HAVO version. But it adds subdomains C8, *Het Caribisch Gebied: de erfenis van vier koloniale mogendheden* (The Caribbean: the legacy of four colonial powers), and C9, *West-Afrika: pre koloniale samenlevingen* (West Africa: pre-colonial societies), to Domain C, *Internationale onderwerpen* (International topics). C8 focuses on comparing the colonial history and decolonisation of Cuba, Jamaica, Guadeloupe and Curaçao, whilst C9 establishes links with the history of West Africa and with colonialism and slavery there.

On **Aruba**, the distinction between MAVO, HAVO and VWO curricula has been maintained. However, they have all been split into two 'cycles': a two-year common basic cycle (*Ciclo Basico*, years 1-2) and an advanced cycle that varies in length (*Ciclo Avansa*, MAVO years 3-4, HAVO years 3-5, VWO years 3-6). In the basic cycle, History as a classroom subject is combined with Geography and Economics under the title *Algemene Sociale wetenschappen* (General Social Sciences). The curricula for the contributing subjects formed the basis for the content and thematic structure of General Social Sciences, but none of its six themes explicitly requires discussion of the history of slavery or its impact.[35]

35 http://www.ea.aw/pages/wp-content/uploads/pdf/doc-pub/e/eindtermen/vakleerplan-CB/Vakleerplan-ASW.pdf

The advanced cycle learning outcomes for History issued in 2007 describe the examination requirements for MAVO, HAVO and VWO in similar but very general terms. Slavery is included only indirectly in the curriculum.

C3.5 The pupil can organise historical events in chronological order and according to the division of history into periods, using timelines. In so doing, the pupil can present a timeline of world history, Latin American history and Aruban history.

Colonial rule is not a compulsory topic, but when creating timelines (C3.5) pupils must be able to include characteristics of the period of the Dutch West India Company and traditional (colonial) society. ([36]) These learning outcomes now only apply the MAVO curriculum;

New learning outcomes for HAVO and VWO were introduced in 2022.[37] With regard to the period 1500-1750, before the arrival of transatlantic slavery on Aruba, these pupils must now be able to:

- explain the influence of colonisation and slavery on Aruba and in the Caribbean in general (D2-11-a);
- compare social relations within Aruban society with those elsewhere the Caribbean (D2-11-b);
- explain the role and influence of creolisation in Aruba and in the Caribbean (D2-11-c).

For the period from 1750 to the present day, the pupil must be able to:

- explain the circumstances under which freedom and emancipation movements and national consciousness arose in the Caribbean (D3-12-a).

7.4. Secondary education, Caribbean Netherlands

As already mentioned, in April 2024 the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science commissioned SLO to update the core learning objectives for language teaching in primary and secondary schools in the Caribbean Netherlands. In autumn 2025 this exercise was extended to include Numeracy and Mathematics as well. But it is not yet clear when other subjects, including History, will be addressed. One complicating factor here is that, due to their schools' language policy, the teaching materials used in secondary education on Saba and Sint Eustatius do not align with the Dutch or local core learning objectives but instead with the curricula of the Caribbean Examinations Council.

36 http://www.ea.aw/pages/wp-content/uploads/e/eindtermen/mavo/11.-Geschiedenis-mavo.pdf and http://www.ea.aw/pages/wp-content/uploads/pdf/doc-pub/e/eindtermen/eindtermen-havo-vwo/11.-Geschiedenis-Havo-2007.pdf

37 https://www.ea.aw/pages/wp-content/uploads/e/eindtermen/havo-vwo/Geschiedenis-eindtermen-en-examenprogramma-havo-vwo-april-2022.pdf

7.5. Summary: resistance and freedom fighters in the core learning objectives

The core learning objectives and curricula used in history teaching in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands are diverse, not always up to date and often not tailored to the local context. The core objectives for **primary education** in all the autonomous countries and on the islands of the Caribbean Netherlands are formulated in general terms and do not provide sufficient guidance to guarantee that stories of acts of resistance against slavery and colonialism by resistance heroes and freedom fighters are taught.

The shared core learning objectives for **secondary education** on **Curaçao** and **Sint Maarten** do not address the history of slavery in Sint Maarten. The 1795 Curaçao uprising led by Tula is compulsory subject matter, as is the role of the Dutch West India Company and Peter Stuyvesant. And although Tula's resistance is taught, no other stories of resistance by specific heroes or heroines are mandated. On the other hand, resistance to the racist stereotype Zwart Piet is addressed. **Aruba**'s secondary education system does examine indigenous history, colonisation and slavery, and also freedom and emancipation movements, but does not make stories of resistance heroes and freedom fighters a compulsory topic.

SLO is currently considering whether the new core learning objectives for primary and lower secondary education in the **European Netherlands** should also apply to the three islands of the Caribbean Netherlands, or whether adjustments may be necessary. It is important that the local education sector continue to be involved in this process and that it take into account the specific experiences and repercussions of slavery on each of the islands.

8 Teaching methods and materials

Part 1 of this report discussed in detail the teaching methods available from Dutch educational publishers, their content, approach and narratives. In this chapter we focus on how these Dutch teaching methods and supplementary local materials are used in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, as well as on the English-language methods used to prepare pupils for examinations set by the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC).

Throughout the Dutch-Caribbean, the production of local island-centred or multi-island teaching methods (and examinations) aligned with the relevant core learning objectives is stagnating. Due to their language policies, Aruba, Curaçao and Bonaire make extensive use of methods published in the Netherlands. But because their market is too small and too fragmented, commercial educational publishers from the Netherlands are reluctant to invest in methods tailored to it. The governments of Aruba and Curaçao have sought to remedy this shortcoming in the past by developing their own methods or adaptions of existing ones, specifically the Curaçao edition of Donk (2010) and the Aruban supplement to Bahul (2011). On Sint Maarten, Sint Eustatius and Saba (where English is widely spoken), English-language Caribbean teaching materials (predominantly from former British colonies) are used alongside resources from the Netherlands and Curaçao. We therefore do not expect this overview of methods and materials to reveal a uniform narrative in teaching about slavery, resistance, resistance heroes and freedom fighters in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, but rather a patchwork derived from Dutch teaching methods, local packages and ad-hoc initiatives by school administrators, schools and individual teachers.

The following table lists relevant teaching materials in use in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Tabel 1 Teaching methods in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

Author(s)/publisher, date	Title	School type and location
Dutch-language		
Irene Gould & Wilma Böhm (2014)	Wereldwijzer	Primary and special education, Bonaire (as a supplement to local method)
Eduard Dresscher et al. (2011)	Bahul	MAVO, Aruba
Ronald Donk (2010)	Trans-Atlantische Slavenhandel	HAVO/VWO Curaçao and Sint Maarten
Joost Latiers (date unknown)	Geschiedenis van de Antillen	Secondary education, Bonaire
Eilandgebied Curaçao, (1982)	Nos Pasado	HAVO/VWO, Curaçao
Vigdis Jonckheer Mensing College (date unknown)	People & Society [NB: copies]	Primary education, Curaçao
Author and date unknown	People & Society [photocopies]	VSBO Curaçao
[photocopies]	VSBO, Curaçao	Engelstalige scholen Voortgezet onderwijs Bovenwindse eilanden
English-language		
Hilary Beckles & Verene Shepherd (2004)	Liberties Lost: The Indigenous Caribbean and Slave Systems	English-medium secondary education, Sint Maarten, Sint Eustatius and Saba
Brian Dyde, Robert Greenwood & Shirley Hamber (2008)	Emancipation to Emigration	English-medium secondary education, Sint Maarten, Sint Eustatius and Saba
Dutch publishers		
Malmberg	Brandaan	Primary education, Curaçao
Malmberg	Memo	HAVO/VWO, Aruba, Curaçao and Sint Maarten
Noordhoff	Geschiedeniswerkplaats	HAVO/VWO, Aruba; Mavo-Havo-Vwo Bonaire
Thieme Meulenhoff	Feniks	HAVO/VWO, Aruba

8.1. Primary education, autonomous Caribbean countries

One Protestant primary school we visited in Curaçao uses the Brandaan method from Dutch publisher Malmberg, which was discussed in the first part of this report.[38] It makes no mention at all of slavery or of stories of resistance in the Caribbean islands of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Although some schools on Curaçao use Dutch methods, most use materials they have compiled themselves, such as the People & Society teaching package. This does cover slavery and resistance on Curaçao, in particular paying considerable attention to the 1795 uprising led by Tula, Louis Mercier and Bastiaan Carpata. As the text relates, that began on the Knip plantation and spread to the Santa Cruz and Porto Marie plantations, where the white owner Johanna Lesire offered the rebels shelter and encouraged them in their struggle for freedom. This makes her a unique heroine in the history of slavery in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.[39] This past is also connected with to the present day. For example, a short section describes how the revolt led by Tula brought about important changes such as the establishment of Freedom Struggle Day (Dia di Lucha pa Libertat) on 17 August – the anniversary of the start of the uprising – the Freedom Struggle Park (Parke di Lucha pa Libertat) and the creation of the Tula Museum on the Knip plantation.

Reviewing primary education in Aruba, Meyers (2023) notes that since the adoption of new core learning objectives in 2017, no actual teaching methods that put them into practice have been produced. The now severely outdated *Tijdvonkje/Chispa di Tempo* (1998) method deals solely with the pre-colonial past. We do not have sufficient data regarding primary education on Sint Maarten to be able to present a reliable picture of the current situation.

8.2. Primary education, Caribbean Netherlands

In the wake of the constitutional reforms of 10 October 2010, Gould and Böhm wrote the *Wereldwijzer* method to bring a Caribbean context to the subject Global Orientation. But this devotes only limited attention to the history of slavery.[40] Tula, Pedro Wacao and Bastiaan Carpata are mentioned as leaders of the 1795 uprising, and the method discusses country houses and monuments, but does not make any connection between slavery and its impact on the present day.

Another way of compensating for the lack of adequate teaching methods is found on Saba. There, project-based learning has been developed based on internet sources and guest lessons by local experts in the field of slavery and resistance. These topics are also addressed through poems, songs and role-playing exercises. Particular attention is paid to the Maroons, to enslaved people from who fled to Puerto Rico and to the importance of Toussaint L'Ouverture in the Caribbean struggle against colonialism and slavery. The continuing impact of the history of slavery is discussed through cultural expressions and in lessons on citizenship. We do not yet have sufficient data on Sint Eustatius to be able to present a reliable description of the situation there.

8.3. Secondary education, autonomous Caribbean countries

To prepare for their final examinations, pupils obviously need adequate teaching methods and mock exams. If no local resources that meet the national core learning objectives are available, however, Dutch-medium schools in the Caribbean tend to opt for the commercial Dutch methods *Memo* (published by Malmberg), *Feniks* (Thieme Meulenhoff) and *Geschiedeniswerkplaats* (Noordhoff) – although there is more diversity at the lower-school level. An analysis of these publications can be found in the first part of this report.

VSBO history teaching on Curaçao is incorporated into the classroom subject People & Society, which also includes social studies and geography. The readers used for this subject were originally compiled several years ago by a former teacher and have since been expanded from time to time by other educators, but without making any fundamental changes. As a result there is currently no standard local method for People & Society, only compilations of materials sourced from the Netherlands that may (or may not) be supplemented on the teacher's own initiative.

HAVO and VWO schools are required to use multiple resources to achieve their learning outcomes. Of the Dutch methods, *Memo* is the most widely used, especially for lessons on the transatlantic slave trade. However, teachers describe this as Eurocentric and lacking a Caribbean perspective. For this reason, *Nos Pasado* (Our History), published by the island's government in 1982, is still in use.Another resource developed locally is *De Trans-Atlantische Slavenhandel* (The Transatlantic Slave Trade), textbook and workbook for HAVO years 4 and 5 by Ronald Donk. Although the core learning objectives were updated in 2019, both *Donk* (last revised in 2010) and *Nos Pasado* (1982) are still is use, in many cases alongside *Memo*. They cover both the history of slavery in

38 https://malmberg.nl/basisonderwijs/methodes/wereldorientatie/naut-meander-brandaan

39 https://vpco.org/site/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Groep-7-Curaçaose-slavenopstand-1795-1.pdf

40 https://english.rijksdienstcn.com/binaries/rijksdienstcn-english/documenten/leaflets/education-and-culture/schoolmagazine/whats-new-4/index/RCN_what%27snew4_ENG_dig.pdf. Also https://dimensies.nu/uitgeprobeerd-1-december-2024/.

the wider Caribbean region and the historical reality of the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, and more than other teaching packages also mention stories from the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands' slavery history that are not discussed elsewhere. Donk, for example, describes the background to the uprising on the Santa Maria plantation on Curaçao in 1716 and the uprising of 1750 on the Hato plantation, also in Curaçao. The protest of 1688 on Sint Eustatius is also discussed. Some subject teachers enrich the curriculum with their own materials, YouTube videos, excursions and graphic novels like *Quaco, leven in slavernij/Quaco: My Life in Slavery[*, set in eighteenth-century Suriname.[41]

While the Dutch-medium HAVO/VWO school on Sint Maarten uses *Memo* and Donk's work in its teaching of history, schools working towards the English-language CSEC examinations use teaching materials from the CXC (see 1.2) – specifically, the method *Emancipation to Emigration*.[42] This provides a broad, comparative perspective on slavery in the Caribbean and focuses on the all-embracing nature of colonialism and slavery as well as covering marronage and other forms of resistance in the region. The Haitian Revolution and the post-emancipation Morant Bay Rebellion (Jamaica, 1865) are both discussed in detail. These Caribbean methods are more aligned with broader regional reality and its connection to the history of slavery than methods from the Netherlands are, but they do so without focusing on the specific pupil in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and their own island environment. Teachers therefore need to supplement these methods with material relevant to their own islands.

The Bahul method for secondary schools on Aruba was published between 2009 and 2012 in order to meet their core learning objectives for history. It is divided into four modules: Governmment & Politics, Culture & Community, Society & Economy and State & Nation. Because Aruba's HAVO/VWO schools have opted to use Dutch methods, Bahul is only used in MAVO teaching.

Bahul deals in general terms with the plantation economy, the slave trade and resistance to slavery. For example, it discusses the origins of slavery in the Americas, the causes of the American Civil War and the concept of abolitionism. Resistance to slavery in the southern United States is discussed using Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel Uncle Tom's Cabin. Slavery and resistance on Aruba itself are not covered. The Governmment & Politics module devotes just one paragraph to slavery on Aruba, and again no mention is made of resistance heroes, freedom fighters or their stories. One source does refer to Tula and Carpata, but no other resistance fighters are mentioned by name. The uprising in Haiti and its relationship to the ideals of the French Revolution are discussed using another source.

Because there are no local HAVO and VWO examination methods for Aruba and because none of the Dutch ones fully covers its learning outcomes for history, the island's three HAVO/VWO schools use different combinations of the *Memo*, *Feniks* and *Geschiedeniswerkplaats* packages. Of these, *Memo* is the most prominent. As discussed in chapter 2 of Part 1 of this report, it focuses on the Curaçaoan struggle for freedom in 1795, the Haitian Revolution, Simon Bolívar's struggle for decolonisation in Latin America and protests from the Black diaspora after emancipation. One HAVO/VWO school also covers the uprising of 30 May 1969 on Curaçao, whilst another discusses Malcolm X and the contemporary situation of African Americans and people from Latin America in the United States. Yet another school engages its pupils with the Zwarte Piet debate. Coverage of local slavery history and resistance to it by Aruban heroes is stagnating at both MAVO and schools and HAVO/VWO schools.

8.4. Secondary education, Caribbean Netherlands

As well as the Dutch *Geschiedeniswerkplaats* methods, HAVO/VWO pupils on Bonaire also study *Geschiedenis van de Antillen* (History of the Netherlands Antilles) by former teacher Joost Latiers. Part 1 of this book discusses slavery and resistance on the Caribbean islands of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The background and consequences of the 1795 Curaçao freedom struggle led by Tula receive substantial attention. It also addresses passive resistance, flight and marronage in Suriname and, to a lesser extent, on Curaçao.

The two English-medium secondary schools on Sint Eustatius and Saba prepare students for CXC examinations using the Emancipation to Emigration method mentioned above. On Sint Eustatius, the English-language Caribbean textbook Liberties Lost by Beckles and Shepherd (2004) is also used. This covers indigenous and colonial slavery with references to Spanish, British, French and Dutch colonial history.

Saba has adopted a project-based solution to the shortage of local teaching materials. History teaching there focuses on Emancipation Day on 1 July. Without following a specific method, pupils make models of the triangular trade involving ports, human cargo and colonial products. Using replicas, they also learn about many aspects of slavery and the resistance heroes and freedom

41 I. Mok & E. Heuvel (2019) Quaco, leven in slavernij. De Walburg Pers/NiNsee; (2022) Quaco: My Life in Slavery. De Walburg Pers/NiNsee.

42 S. Greenwood, R. Hamber & B. Dyde (2008) Emancipation to Emigration. (https://macmillan-caribbean.com/our-titles/history-for-csecr-examinations-3rd-edition/products-resources)

fighters who struggled against it: the Surinamese Maroons, the Jamaican Maroon leader Cuffee, Toussaint L'Ouverture, Tula and the African youth Louis Asa-Asa, who escaped on numerous occasions.[43] Uprisings in Jamaica, Haiti, Berbice and Guyana are discussed, as is the role of women in the resistance against slavery and oppression. Pupils use information obtained from the internet. There is also close contact with the Saba Heritage Centre. Schools organise closing song and dance performances as part of the Emancipation Day celebrations.

8.5. Summary: resistance, heroes and heroines in methods and supplementary teaching materials

None of the islands have adequate teaching materials to meet their local core learning objectives, for either primary and secondary education. Schools therefore use combinations of Dutch, English-language Caribbean and local methods, supplemented with teaching packages they have put together themselves. The Dutch methods are discussed in the Part 1, Chapter 2 of this report.

In addition to their sometimes problematic content and narratives as described in that chapter, methods compiled in the European Netherlands lack a Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands' perspective. With the exception of the 1795 uprising on Curaçao, they make little or no mention of local acts of resistance or of stories of resistance by local freedom fighters in the Caribbean. As a result they underplay and fail to connect young people with the nature, extent and proximity of the history of slavery on their own islands. The same applies to the English-language Caribbean methods that prepare pupils for the CESC examinations. Some local methods have been developed to meet the need for contextualised content, but these are insufficiently supported and updated. Some teachers have gone to extra lengths to develop their own packages or projects, but they are generally not rewarded for these efforts and so they are reliant on personal motivation. Moreover, the results are often not structurally embedded in the school curriculum.

The lack of contextualised and updated history teaching comes at a cost for the coverage of resistance against slavery and colonialism on the individual islands. Furthermore, male freedom fighters still play the leading roles in stories of Caribbean acts of resistance. Heroines like One-Tété Lohkay have yet to find their way into the standard curriculum.

Teachers themselves would like to see more material that delves deeper into regional slavery history or, closer to home, stories from their own islands related to local monuments, museums and memorial sites. Strikingly, though, they rarely mention resources – either Caribbean or Dutch – like the Canon of Curaçao. So there are clearly still untapped sources of teaching material that the education sector has insufficient knowledge of or access to.

43 https://www.oxfordreference.com/abstract/10.1093/acref/9780192804396.001.0001/acref-9780192804396-e-31 and https://ecda.northeastern.edu/drstk_item_extension/asa-asa-louisnarrativeoflouisasa-asa-1831/

9 Teachers and their stories

With thanks to Kenny Meyers (Avondhavo, Aruba)

As part of our research, we spoke with primary and secondary school teachers across the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Three of the researchers who contributed to this report are themselves history teachers working in secondary education. Below they recount their experiences teaching about slavery and resistance, and the stories they share. We hear first from primary school teachers, then from history teachers at secondary schools.

9.1. Primary education, autonomous Caribbean countries

We spoke with two primary school teachers on Curaçao, working at a Protestant and a Roman Catholic school respectively, about their experiences teaching about slavery. Both qualified on Curaçao, but acknowledged that this topic did not receive much attention during their education.[44] But both also said that they feel comfortable teaching it as a subject. They want to approach slavery and resistance from a more Curaçao-based perspective and so emphasised the need for appealing and contextualised teaching materials that reflect the world view of children in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. There is currently no official method that does this. The *Nos Patria*[45] (Our Nation) teaching method from 1960 has fallen into disuse without a replacement being provided. The teachers also expressed a need for materials that address the continuing impact of the history of slavery on contemporary Curaçao. In their view, pupils are generally very interested in the topic. For some it is a difficult subject to confront personally, for others less so. Children often empathise with Tula's story.

In the cases of Aruba and Sint Maarten, we were unable to reach enough primary school teachers to be able to paint a clear picture of the situation on those two islands. Based on previous experiences and conversations, we assume that they do not differ greatly from the other islands in this respect.

44 As already stated under 'Methodology', we were unable to gain access to primary schooling on Sint Maarten in time. On Aruba we held discussions with teacher trainers.

45 C. A. J. van Koppen, C. C Goslinga & A. C. H. J. van Noort (1960) Nos Patria, Wolters uitgeverij.

9.2. Primary education, Caribbean Netherlands

We spoke with several primary school teachers working on Bonaire, Saba and Sint Eustatius about their views on and experiences with slavery-related education on those islands and the anti-colonial stories they tell. They qualified in a variety of places – the Netherlands, Curaçao, Trinidad and Aruba – but all agreed that little attention was paid to colonialism, slavery and resistance during their education. And their engagement with the topic varied greatly. Few are very familiar with stories of anti-colonial resistance on the islands they work on.

Two teachers from Saba and Sint Eustatius respectively indicate that slavery as a topic and stories of heroes and resistance generally appeal to their pupils, although their personal connection with the theme plays a role in the extent of the interest. Due to the lack of relevant teaching materials, pupils develop an incomplete and fragmented picture of slavery and resistance even though this history continues to resonate strongly in the present, in their environment, culture and identity. These teachers summarise their educational objective as "wanting to make a positive contribution to agency, resilience and solidarity".

This experience is shared on Bonaire, where the Wereldwijzer method (see above) is used to teach the classroom subject Global Orientation in both mainstream primary and special education – but not to everyone's satisfaction, since it pays little or no attention is the continuing impact of colonial slavery. One teacher emphasises that local themes – subject matter that is 'close to home' – are more relevant to the everyday world than abstract ones, for both teachers and pupils. The past is not related to the present and relevant current events such as the apologies by the Dutch state and local commemorations are not explained to pupils in a historical context.

Due to the lack of suitable ready-made methods, one teacher on Saba has developed her own teaching materials for the classroom subject Social Studies with the help of the internet and local experts. Over 24 weeks each school year, British and Dutch Caribbean and US slavery history are discussed along with stories of the resistance heroes associated with it, including local Maroons. Time is also devoted to cultural resistance in the form of calypso music, carnival and Afro-Caribbean hairstyles, for example, as well as to Zwarte Piet as a racist colonial tradition. The impact of slavery in the present day is reflected in the questions teachers ask their pupils, like "What does independence mean and how do you handle it?" The curriculum choices, pedagogical vision and activating teaching methods involved – the use of song, poetry and role-playing and the creation of scale models of slave ships and slave huts – give the learning a project-based character. According to the teacher responsible, students are very open to this approach. Stories

of resistance are particularly popular. Pupils learn about their own history and discover that they are descended from strong people.

All of this explains why most teachers incorporate few concrete anti-colonial stories into their teaching and why there is a widely expressed need for professional development in this area. The most urgent need is for appealing and contextualised classroom materials that reflect the world view of children living in the Caribbean Netherlands. Many teachers believe that local resistance heroes and freedom fighters who opposed slavery deserve a place in those materials.

9.3. Secondary history education, autonomous Caribbean countries and Caribbean Netherlands

We interviewed eleven history teachers working in secondary education on the autonomous islands and in the Caribbean Netherlands. Four of them hold a Bachelor's degree and a Level 2 (VMBO all years and HAVO/VWO lower school) teaching qualification, the other seven a Master's degree and Level 1 (HAVO/VWO all years) qualification or equivalent. There are no specific education programmes for secondary-school history teachers in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Those working on Aruba, Curaçao, Bonaire and Sint Maarten all qualified in the Netherlands, whilst those on Sint Eustatius and Saba qualified at the University of the West Indies or in the United Kingdom. They have between one and 40 years of teaching experience, six have spent longer or shorter periods in the European Netherlands and another two worked on Jamaica for several years. Only on Curaçao and Aruba are most history teachers local people. In the Caribbean Netherlands and on Sint Maarten, the subject is taught by staff originally from the Netherlands or other parts of the Caribbean region. This partly explains the high staff turnover on those islands.

The teachers had few positive recollections of the coverage devoted to slavery and colonialism in their (very diverse) teacher education programmes. The most positive seem to be those who trained at the University of the West Indies or in the United Kingdom – although there, of course, Dutch slavery history was not a priority. The majority have familiarised themselves to a greater or lesser extent with the theme of slavery on their own initiative, and say feel comfortable teaching it despite sensitivities in the classroom and in wider society.

9.4. Secondary education, autonomous Caribbean countries

Schools are required to adhere to an annual curriculum and assessment schedule, which limits the flexibility available to history teachers and departments. The history of slavery is addressed within the constraints imposed by the curriculum, but the extent to which this is done varies from school to school. During the basic cycle on Aruba, for example, the total number of lessons devoted to the subject is seven. Slavery is also covered in the final pre-examination year of the advanced cycle, that is HAVO year 4 and VWO year 5. At both HAVO and VWO schools, seven or eight lessons are devoted more or less equally to colonialism and slavery. At one of the MAVO schools we visited, the theme is absent from the formal curriculum.

History teachers struggle with the lack of appealing teaching materials and a narrative that is oriented towards local experiences of colonialism, slavery and resistance. One Curaçaoan teacher believes that recent versions of the *Memo* method focus too much on European education, and so they still use the local Nos Pasado method from 1982 and older versions of *Memo*. This teacher's school has deliberately chosen to focus on Curaçao in its history lessons, covering the island's own freedom fighters like Tula and Manuel Piar and placing the uprising of 30 May 1969 in a historical perspective. The school also uses YouTube videos, film material and the graphic novel Quaco (Mok & Heuvel, 2019, 2022) about slavery in Suriname. And it organises excursions to island's Tula Museum and the colonial Kurá Hulanda district.

Teachers at the Dutch-medium HAVO/VWO school on Sint Maarten confirmed this point of view: they agree that Dutch teaching method should discuss slavery and resistance with a more Caribbean perspective and narrative. They, too, strive to offer an island-centred perspective by focusing on local resistance heroes and freedom fighters. This means covering not only white abolitionism in Europe, but also the role of Black resistance in bringing about the abolition of slavery. Links with the present are drawn by addressing modern slavery – for example, at the World Cup in Qatar. The continuing impact of the colonial past is addressed by discussing the island's ongoing dependence on the Netherlands.

Local heroes and heroines in the struggle against slavery are also discussed. One well-known heroine is One-Tété Lohkay. She acquired her nickname because, after repeatedly fleeing enslavement, one of her breasts was cut off. The Freedom Runners are also covered: enslaved people from Sint Maarten who escaped to the French part of the island, where slavery had been abolished in 1814. Emilio Wilson is a descendant of enslaved people. He has converted a former plantation

into a place of remembrance.[46]On Aruba, the coverage devoted to slavery varies from school to school, but the picture that emerges is one of inadequate teaching about slavery and resistance. Schools do refer to Caribbean and Latin American pioneers, and to Tula and his fellow fighters, but little attention is paid to local slavery, resistance and historical figures such as Thico (1795) and Virginia Dementricia Gaai (1842-after 1867) or to the continuing impact of slavery on Aruba.[47]

History teachers in all the autonomous Caribbean countries need modernised and contextualised teaching materials about the transatlantic slave trade, the treatment of enslaved people and their resistance and the international political and religious backgrounds to abolitionism. More attention needs to be paid to the ongoing mental impact of slavery, too, including racism and Black consciousness. Referring to the N-word, one teacher from Curaçao mentioned the need to use contemporary terminology and narratives in slavery education. Teachers on Sint Maarten confirmed that there is a need for more knowledge and research into resistance on the islands themselves. They emphasised that local historians have a role to play here. Teachers on Aruba also called for more coverage of the subject and suggest developing a joint Caribbean final examination in History for HAVO/VWO pupils, paying ample attention to Caribbean and Latin American history. In the same vein, other teachers pointed to the need for a digital database of teaching materials and tests. One said that governments should invest more in education: its current funding is insufficient and there is too great a reliance on the goodwill of individual teachers.

Teachers on all three autonomous islands emphasised that many of their pupils are direct descendants of enslaved people. This makes it important that they address slavery, colonialism and its lasting effects in the classroom. Pupils find these topics useful and interesting, but in some cases also uncomfortable or confrontational because of racial inequality and racism in their own society. The subject becomes even more personal due to the multicultural and multiracial composition of classes. Engagement with it depends heavily on pupils' personal background and the extent to which teachers succeed in relating the material to their experiences.

One history teacher on Curaçao said that pupils today are more attentive and interested in slavery and resistance than their predecessors. However, some still see the subject as obligatory fare. History lessons about stories of resistance heroes and freedom fighters are generally well received because they are often exciting and thus invite empathy and deeper understanding. Aruban teachers noted that pupils with Afro-Caribbean roots in particular are fascinated by stories about resistance to slavery.

9.5. Secondary education, Caribbean Netherlands

Education in the Caribbean Netherlands is – to put it somewhat bluntly – the responsibility of the European Netherlands. This is reason enough to take another look at the experiences of history teachers there. We have seen already that the historical experience of slavery, colonialism and resistance is unique to each of the islands, that teachers on Saba and Sint Eustatius more often have a background in other parts of the English-speaking Caribbean and that history teachers on Bonaire rarely come from the island. Due to the local language policy, schools on Bonaire use Dutch teaching methods that are discussed in section 2.2 of the Part 1 of this report. Meanwhile, the English-medium secondary schools on Saba and Sint Eustatius work with the CSEC examinations set by the Caribbean Examinations Council.

History teachers throughout the Caribbean Netherlands, whether they hail originally from the Netherlands or Jamaica, are interested in the history of slavery but – like their colleagues in the autonomous Caribbean countries – complain about a lack of suitable teaching materials. The uprising led by Tula is mentioned in the methods they use, but other stories of resistance are absent. Moreover, the time needed to develop local methods and to integrate them into the classroom curriculum is often simply not available. Teachers therefore need an accessible and reliable database on the history of slavery, resistance to it and its impact on their own islands, in the rest of the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, in the European Netherlands and also in the former colonies of Suriname and Berbice (in present-day Guyana).

When discussing acts of resistance and freedom fighters, historical sources and facts are examined in order to place them in a Caribbean perspective rather than (or in addition to) a colonial one. Pupils learn how people thought and acted in the past. Teachers on Saba and Sint Eustatius also mentioned the omission from the current curriculum of the role of women in the resistance to slavery and in the historical experience ('lived realities') of Black communities after the abolition of slavery. These aspects are important in broadening students' perspectives and in providing them with a deeper understanding of local and regional history. Including them would help make the curriculum and the narrative used in it less Eurocentric and viricentric (male-centred).

According to some teachers, tackling the ongoing repercussions of slavery is "downright difficult". In this respect, colonialism and decolonisation in Indonesia and Suriname are somewhat further

46 https://www.vacationstmaarten.com/listing/emilio-wilson-park/33/

47 https://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Virginia_Demetricia

removed from their pupils' own experiences and so easier to deal with than more immediate themes such as Papiamento or Afro-Caribbean cultural heritage in dance, music or spirituality. Institutional racism is also part of the legacy of slavery and colonialism on the islands themselves, but this issue is barely addressed in the classroom. One teacher declared to us that "colonial institutions and mindsets are part of everyday life in the Caribbean". The curriculum should therefore not only address the colonial past but also the present, so that it "becomes a space where students learn both history and how to question the systems they live in". so that it "becomes a space where students learn both history and how to question the systems they live in". Depending on their own professional and personal backgrounds, in this regard some teachers referred to the pedagogical ideas of Paolo Freire or John Dewey and to the role of citizenship education.

Teachers said that many pupils in the Caribbean Netherlands – and their parents – are interested in the theme of slavery and resistance. However, pupils' actual engagement with it varies. Some are very enthusiastic and sometimes emotionally involved with the theme. They find stories of resistance heroes and heroines particularly fascinating, because these are people who rose up against injustice and demanded their rights. Many pupils want to know more about groups that resisted colonial oppression and slavery, such as the Maroons in Suriname. Evidently, such stories appeal to their imagination. One history teacher who is also a descendent of enslaved people pointed out that it is important to address this topic from the past, even though doing so can still be uncomfortable for some. Even after the Dutch state's apologies, slavery remains a sensitive subject and must not only be *gedoceerd* (taught) but also *gedoseerd* (dosed).

9.6. Summary: teachers and their stories

Primary and secondary school teachers in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands tell few stories of colonial resistance that are not already included in the teaching methods they have to hand. But they are aware of the curriculum content (core learning objectives) regarding the history of slavery and are mindful of the imbalance in the attention devoted to male and female resistance heroes.

They all agree on the underlying explanation for this: the lack of teaching methods that emphasise local experiences with slavery and colonialism, as well as its subsequent impact. Teachers lack pedagogical support, a shared educational vision and a central role for Caribbean pupils. Their education programmes do not impart sufficient knowledge about the history of slavery and stories of resistance by local heroes and freedom fighters. They therefore enter the classroom with gaps in their knowledge. Nevertheless, they generally feel competent and comfortable when teaching the subject.

10 Pupils and their heroes

With thanks to Jessica Besselink (Saba Comprehensive School, Hope Foundation Aruba)

In this section pupils talk about their experiences with anti-colonial resistance stories, including the names of local resistance heroes and freedom fighters. Due to holiday and reporting periods, it was not possible to interview pupils on all the islands. Nevertheless, we discovered patterns in their responses that closely match our analysis of the available teaching methods and the experiences of teachers in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Like their teachers, students in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands have diverse backgrounds. Many are descendants of enslaved people or their owners, and often both. Others have a family history of slavery elsewhere in the Caribbean region. Pupils with a European Dutch background may feel uncomfortable when they are identified with their country of birth's role in the history of slavery. And others still come originally from countries and continents where slavery took very different forms.

10.1. Primary education, Sint Maarten and Caribbean Netherlands

After the 2025 holiday period, first-year secondary school pupils who had come from five different primary schools on Sint Maarten talked about what they had learnt there about the history of slavery. They mentioned the transatlantic slave trade, the triangular trade and the inhumane labour regime under colonial rule. Two local heroes, the runaway One-Tété Lohkay and her companion One-Eyed Jack, were discussed at length. The pupils also referred to the monument on the island commemorating the Salt Pickers – the symbol of the local slave economy – as well as the Freedom Fighter Monument in Philipsburg and the similar statue of Lady Liberty in the French part of the island, and told the stories associated with them. And they mentioned Martin Luther King Jr and Harriet Tubman as international fighters against slavery and racism.

We also spoke with pupils from two primary schools on Bonaire and one on Sint Eustatius. At the beginning of the school year on Sint Maarten, we spoke with two first-year classes at a public secondary school about their experiences of history education at their five different primary schools. Due to the holidays, we were unable to speak with primary school pupils on Aruba and Curaçao.

The coverage in textbooks of the history of slavery is reflected in pupils' knowledge about the topic. Although Bonairean pupils do not find history uninteresting, they were unable to say much about slavery and resistance to it on their island or elsewhere. They mentioned the island's slave huts, a well-known tourist attraction, and the characteristic mooring points at its salt pans as local places of remembrance of slavery. Pupils on Sint Eustatius also acquired much of their knowledge from teaching about slavery-related heritage in their immediate environment and storytelling: "We went by a historical place and they said that they had a bell to ring and some slave got shot nearby the library."

10.2. Secondary education, autonomous Caribbean countries

The experiences and opinions of pupils on Sint Maarten indicate that they generally find the subject of history interesting and lessons on slavery and resistance important. Their knowledge of local acts of resistance and the men and women responsible centres on Tula and One-Tété Lohkay. Pupils also mentioned the story of the Diamond Estate, where 26 enslaved people fled across the border to freedom after the abolition of slavery on the French side in 1848. In general, pupils wanted to know more about slavery and resistance on their island. When asked if they could name a place on Sint Maarten where slavery and resistance took place, a number of them mentioned the Freedom Fighter Monument. This is not necessarily a place where slavery and resistance actually occurred, but it is one that symbolises slavery for many people on the island: a well-known statue in Philipsburg commemorating all those who fought for emancipation and freedom during the period of slavery.

We end on Aruba. Like their Bonairean peers (see below), secondary school pupils from four schools we visited there were unable to name any local acts, places or heroes of resistance. Most Aruban students consider the history of slavery important, but feel that its coverage at school is too general. Specific names or events related to slavery and resistance on Aruba itself are hardly ever discussed, which they consider to be a shortcoming in their education. Due to the relative obscurity of the island's slavery history, moreover, little information about this topic is passed on to young people outside the school environment either. Our island-specific researcher observes that pupils know very little about slavery and resistance on Aruba, but express a clear desire to learn more about it.

10.3. Secondary education, Caribbean Netherlands

In most cases – but not always – pupils in upper secondary education who are taking History as part of their final examination package value this subject and are interested in the themes colonialism, slavery and resistance to it. VWO pupils mentioned the Curaçao uprising of 1795 led by Tula and (vaguely) the conversations with Pastor Schink in which he expressed his ideals of freedom. These pupils also linked Tula's ideas to Enlightenment thinking.

Knowledge about the history of slavery is limited to names and events, without mentioning broader connections to the underlying historical and social context. Secondary school pupils on Bonaire and Aruba (four schools) were unable to give any examples of local acts of resistance. Most Aruban students consider the history of slavery important, but feel that its coverage at school is too general. Specific names or events related to slavery and resistance on Aruba itself are hardly ever discussed, which they consider to be a shortcoming in their education.

The VWO pupils at the school we visited on Bonaire were the best informed. Their knowledge focuses on salt extraction by enslaved workers on that island. They talked about the long and arduous journey from the village of Rincon to the salt pans in the northwest, about the suffering of the enslaved people working in the salt pans and at the moorings (now marked by restored, brightly-coloured obelisk-shaped mooring posts where ships came to collect the salt). They also mentioned logging on the island and the emergence of the Papiamento language during the period of slavery. However, they were unable to cite any local examples of uprisings and resistance. They also feel that the subject of slavery has already been covered sufficiently and that the same information is repeated throughout their school career. They would like to learn about Bonairean history in general. HAVO and MAVO pupils gave similar answers.

Pupils on Sint Eustatius are familiar with Caribbean resistance heroes from school textbooks – people like Toussaint L'Ouverture, the Jamaican resistance leader Sam Sharpe (1831) and the Surinamese Maroon leader Boni – but they are less familiar with the local history of slavery and resistance against it, although they did mention Black Harry and the Slave Path. There is a strong desire amongst these young people to learn more about slavery and resistance on their own island. It is striking, though, that the slave trade on Sint Eustatius in the eighteenth century – the so-called Golden Rock period – was not mentioned.

10.4. Summary: pupils and their stories

One history teacher on Sint Eustatius believes that secondary school pupils there have a meaningful but fragmented knowledge of the nature, extent and impact of colonialism, slavery and resistance on the islands. They know about the history of slavery in general terms, but little about that history and acts of resistance on their own island and in their own family background. And that knowledge often comes more from excursions and storytelling in the classroom than from school textbooks. They are aware of places of remembrance, but know little about the events and people associated with them. It is striking, though, that they are curious about precisely that topic. This indicates that there is still plenty of scope to pay greater attention to those stories and perspectives at school.

Overall, pupils' reactions to being taught about slavery range from curiosity to discomfort and rejection of the subject. Both their own background and that of their teachers plays a role in this response, which tends to different between descendants of enslaved people and pupils with a different family history.

We believe that this observation applies to all the islands, all school types and all age groups. Our discussions with pupils revealed an unsatisfied curiosity about stories of resistance to the colonial slavery by local and international heroes and freedom fighters.

11 Untold stories, a Caribbean archive of silence

We have found that pupils in primary and secondary education in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands learn little or nothing about stories of resistance to colonialism and slavery in their school history lessons. One exception is the 1795 uprising in Curaçao led by Tula and his comrades. This historical event and its (male) protagonists are discussed everywhere, but coverage of resistance and other heroes and freedom fighters beyond Curaçao is fragmented and depends very much on commitment to address the topic on the part of individual teachers and their schools. Even more specifically, there is a lack of stories about local female anti-colonial resistance heroes from the islands.

As shown in Part 1 of this report, the teaching methods from the Netherlands that are frequently used in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands devote little attention to stories of Caribbean resistance to slavery or the individuals involved in it. Only seven anti-colonial resistance figures are mentioned more than five times in the Dutch methods, and three of them are associated with the colonial past of Indonesia (Sukarno, Mohammed Hatta and Eduard Douwes Dekker), whilst another three are part of Surinamese history (Maroon leader Boni, army officer John G. Stedman and Anton de Kom). From the current Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, only Tula is named repeatedly.

Of the teaching methods for secondary schools produced on the islands themselves, Donk's Trans-Atlantische Slavenhandel (2010), Latiers' Geschiedenis van de Antillen and the Aruban method Bahul (2009-2012) are the most important. Donk covers local resistance the most extensively, discussing uprisings on Sint Eustatius (1688) and on Curaçao's Santa Maria plantation (1716) and Hato plantation (1750). English-language Caribbean teaching methods feature the Surinamese Maroons, the Jamaican Maroon leader Cuffee, Toussaint L'Ouverture, Tula, the African escapee Louis Asa-Asa and uprisings in Jamaica, Haiti, Berbice and British Guiana.

During our Caribbean tour of teaching materials, teachers and pupils, however, we came across a host of other important acts of resistance and resistance fighters. In the table below we list those events and individuals we encountered at least once in teaching materials, supplementary classroom methods or conversations with teachers and pupils. This is in no way an exhaustive overview of resistance to slavery[48], but it does present examples of anti-colonial resistance that deserve a place in Caribbean curricula.

Aruba

Verzetsmoment	Helden/Heldinnen	M/V
None reported	n/a	-

Bonaire

Verzetsmoment	Helden/Heldinnen	M/V
1834 – Uprising against conditions in the Bonaire salt pans.	Martis di Katalina Janga	Male
c. 1834 – Manumissioned lay priest improves the living conditions of enslaved people on Bonaire.	Cornelis Marten, 1749-1852	Male

Curaçao

Verzetsmoment	Helden/Heldinnen	M/V
1717 – Uprising on the West India Company's Santa Maria plantation led by the enslaved woman Maria.	Maria	Female
1750 – Organised uprising on the Hato plantation.	Enslaved people and 'free Blacks'	-
1795 – Uprising against slavery on Curaçao initiated at the Knip plantation.	Tula, Bastiaan Carpata, Pedro Wacao, Louis Mercier,	Male/male/ male/male
1795 – Owner of the Porto Marie plantation supports the rebels of 1795.	Johanna Lesire	Female
1929 – Writer and activist publishes a pamphlet criticising the Catholic Church and Dutch colonial rule.	Medardo de Marchena, 1905-1980	Male
1922 – Trade union leader involved in a major strike at the port of Curaçao.	Felix Chacuto, 1891-1967	Male
Champion of autonomy and democracy for the Colony of Curaçao, and from 1949 first head of government of what would later become the Netherlands Antilles.	Moises F. da Costa Gomez, 1907-1966	Male
1969 – Main players in the Curaçao uprising on 30 May 1969.	Stanley Brown, 1938-2022; Wilson Godett, 1932-1995	Male

48 Cf. D. Geggus (2011) Slave rebellions during the Age of Revolution. In: W. Klooster & G. Oostindie (eds), Curaçao in the Age of Revolutions, 1795-1800, Leiden, KITLV Press.

Saba

Verzetsmoment	Helden/Heldinnen	M/V
1656 – 'Maritime marronage': attempted escape of 14 enslaved people from Saba to Puerto Rico.	Unknown	-

Sint Eustatius

Verzetsmoment	Helden/Heldinnen	M/V
1688 – Suppressed slave uprising on Sint Eustatius.	Unknown	-
1780-1788 – Introduces Methodism to Sint Eustatius and is banished for it.	Black Harry Hosier, c. 1750-1806	Male

Sint Maarten

Verzetsmoment	Helden/Heldinnen	M/V
19th century – Flees plantation on Sint Maarten and as punishment has one of her breasts cut off.	One-Tété Lohkay	Female
Before 1848 – Marronage: 'freedom runners' flee to French St Martin or elsewhere.	-	-
1848 – Emancipation, commemorated by the Freedom Fighter Monument	-	
Present – Emilio Wilson, a descendant of enslaved people, turns an old plantation into a museum and memorial site.	Emilio Wilson	Male

Koninkrijk der Nederlanden

Verzetsmoment	Helden/Heldinnen	M/V
17th-21st centuries – Marronage and Maroons in Suriname.	Boni and Kofi, Marron leaders	Male
1763 – Uprising in the Dutch colony of Berbice (now in Guyana).	-	-
18th-century – Slavery in Guinea, Suriname and the Dutch East Indies.	Quaco, 1762-after 1795	Male
19th century – Abolitionism in the Netherlands.	Various abolitionists	-
1934 – Publication of Wij slaven van Suriname (We Slaves of Suriname).	Anton de Kom, 1898-1945	Male
20th century – Trade union leader in Suriname.	Louis Doedel,1905-1980	Male
2010-2025 – Kick-Out Zwarte Piet movement in the Netherlands.	Quincy Gario, born 1984	Male

Het Caribisch gebied en Latijns-Amerika

Verzetsmoment	Helden/Heldinnen	M/V
17th and 18th centuries – Marronage on Jamaica.	Nanny of the Maroons, 1686-c. 1760	Female
18th and 19th centuries – Marronage on Jamaica.	Cuffee	Male
1791-1801 – Haitian Revolution.	Toussaint L'Ouverture, 1743-1803	Male
1795-1830 – Struggle for independence in South America: Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Panama and Bolivia.	Simón Bolívar, 1783-1830	Male
1816 – Bussa's Rebellion, uprising of enslaved people on Barbados.	Bussa, ?- 1816	Male
1823 – Demerara Rebellion, uprising of enslaved people in British Guiana led by Jack Gladstone.	Jack Gladstone c. 1793-	Male
1831-1832 – Baptist War, uprising of enslaved people on Jamaica led by Samuel Sharpe.	Samuel Sharpe, 1801-1832	Male
1831 – Publication about repeated escapee from slavery Louis Asa-Asa.	Louis Asa-Asa	Male
1865 – Morant Bay Rebellion, Jamaica	Paul Bogle	Male

Mondiale geschiedenis, i.h.b. Verenigde Staten

Verzetsmoment	Helden/Heldinnen	M/V
19th century – Abolitionism in the United States	Quakers and Methodists; Harriet Beecher-Stowe, 1811-1896; Frederick Douglass, 1818-1895; Harriet Tubman, 1822-1913	-/female/ male /female
20th century – Civil rights move-ment in the United States	Rosa Parks, 1913-2005; Malcolm X, 1925-1965; Martin Luther King, Jr, 1929-1968; John Lewis, 1940-2020	Female/male/ male/male
20th century – Anti-Apartheid move-ment in South Africa.	Nelson Mandela, 1918-2013	Male

Narrative and perspective, forgotten stories and a silenced past

History teaching in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands focuses very much on events that and individuals who played a decisive role in the rise, perpetuation and dismantling of colonialism and slavery in the Dutch historical context. This approach stems from a traditional European narrative and the use of outdated teaching methods. More attention is paid to the former Dutch East Indies (Indonesia) and Suriname as scenes of colonialism and slavery than to the six

islands themselves. This results in an education system that silences local stories and events that challenged the injustice and inhumanity of colonialism and slavery from the inside.

Moreover, there is little awareness of or interest in anti-colonial resistance heroes outside the transatlantic sphere. Freedom fighters such as Nyai Ageng Serang from Indonesia and Martha Christina Tiahaho from the Moluccas (mentioned in our Introduction) did not feature our Caribbean conversations.

In the above list, seventeen individuals and events are situated in the current Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, seven in the European Netherlands or elsewhere in the former Dutch colonial empire, nine in other parts of the Caribbean and Latin America and finally three in the United States or South Africa. None of these are associated with indigenous resistance to colonial slavery or other forms of forced labour, such as post-slavery 'contract labour' migration from Indonesia and India to Suriname, as personified by the Surinamese resistance heroine Janey Tetary (see foreword). This distribution shows that there is awareness of and interest in local resistance heroes, but that stories of indigenous and Asian resistance heroes are missing from Caribbean history education.

We count thirty male and seven female resistance figures listed by name. Of these, three women and twelve men are resistance heroes from the islands of the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. This unequal representation has historical reasons behind it, but also points to the need to achieve a better gender balance in educational materials.

12 Caribbean conclusions and recommendations

Joint research, development, education and professionalisation

12.1. Conclusions

1. Are stories about anti-colonial freedom fighters and resistance heroes included in the curricula of primary and secondary schools? And if so, how are these stories treated and what narrative is central to them?
2. Are stories about anti-colonial freedom fighters and resistance heroes included in the teaching materials published by the major commercial educational publishers in the European Netherlands? And if so, how are these stories treated and what narrative is central to them?

The choice of the stories taught about anti-colonial resistance in school history lessons in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands still stems primarily from a traditional European narrative and the from the use of European Dutch teaching methods supplemented by local methods dating from the twentieth century. These focus very much on events that and individuals who played a decisive role in the rise, perpetuation and dismantling of colonialism and slavery in the Dutch historical context. More attention is paid to the former Dutch East Indies (Indonesia, three men) and Suriname (three men) as scenes of colonialism and slavery than to the six islands themselves (one man).

Locally produced teaching methods and materials do provide some counterbalance by occasionally addressing island-based and broader anti-colonial resistance from a Caribbean perspective. Teachers find these valuable to some extent, but also limited in scope. Although they pay some attention to anti-colonial resistance to slavery in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands (especially the Curaçao uprising of 1795), coverage of the individual islands remains inadequate. Moreover, the local methods are not updated regularly enough in response to new historical insights.

English-language Caribbean teaching methods, which are widely used on Sint Maarten, Sint Eustatius and Saba due to their language policies, do address slavery, colonialism and resistance in the British, French, Spanish and Dutch Caribbean from a regional perspective. But, logically, they focus on the most significant events such as large-scale plantation slavery, marronage and stories of resistance such as the Haitian Revolution. There is no particular focus on the islands of the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands (other than Curaçao). So acts of resistance on pupils' home islands and the stories of heroines like One-Tété Lohkay from Sint Maarten are not embedded in their curriculum.

3. Do education professionals include stories about anti-colonial freedom fighters and resistance heroes in their classroom teaching? And if so, how are these stories treated and what narrative is central to them? What teaching materials (and other resources) do education professionals use in support of this activity?
4. Do the stories presented about anti-colonial freedom fighters and resistance heroes (in the curriculum, in teaching materials and by education professionals) take into account pupils' world view? And if so, how do they experience those stories?

The lack of contextualised history education undermines coverage in the islands' schools of resistance to slavery and colonialism. Stories of local resistance heroes and freedom fighters with whom pupils can identify thus remain untold.

Teachers are aware of the gap between core learning objectives and teaching materials on the one hand and their pupils' own world view on the other. Despite limitations in terms of time, knowledge, support, timetable space and preparation in their own education, the most committed educators are looking for ways to bridge this gap by contextualising their history teaching. To this end they use teaching methods such as project-based learning and place-based learning. Stories of local resistance heroes and freedom fighters, commemorative days and memorial sites (such as monuments), as well as local experts and institutions, all contribute to these efforts. Teachers are also aware of the imbalance in the attention paid to male and female resistance heroes and would like to redress this as well.

Teachers also mentioned various obstacles that hinder them in providing good education about slavery and its continuing impact. These lie primarily in the lack of teaching methods that substantiate the core learning objectives and connect with the local experience and impact of colonialism and slavery. Education programmes do not provide prospective teachers with a sufficient grounding in this area. They therefore enter the profession in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands with gaps in their knowledge and a lack of pedagogical support. The composition of the teacher population also plays a role here. Particularly on Bonaire, Saba, Sint Eustatius

and Sint Maarten, many come from the European Netherlands or from English-speaking parts of the Caribbean (Jamaica, Trinidad) and so have limited familiarity with the history of slavery in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

5. Within what broader social context are stories about anti-colonial freedom fighters and resistance heroes (in the curriculum, in teaching materials and presented by education professionals) placed? For example, what was the background to the resistance, when and in what circumstances did it take place and which community or communities were involved?

From our observations, it is apparent that classroom coverage of anti-colonial resistance is unevenly distributed between events and individuals in (a) the current Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, (b) the European Netherlands and its the former colonial empire, (c) other parts of the Caribbean and Latin America and (d) other parts of the world, in particular the United States.

In the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, there is little interest in anti-colonial resistance heroes outside the transatlantic sphere. Education there focuses mainly on local and regional figures and events. Of those mentioned in our conversations, seventeen were or are situated in the current Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, seven in the European Netherlands or elsewhere in the former Dutch colonial empire, nine in other parts of the Caribbean and Latin America and finally three in the United States or South Africa. And none were associated with indigenous resistance to colonial slavery or other forms of forced labour, which range from the enslavement of indigenous people to post-slavery 'contract labour' migration from Indonesia, China and India to Suriname.

We have counted thirty male and seven female resistance figures mentioned by name. Of these, three women and twelve men are resistance heroes from the islands of the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

12.2. Recommendations

The uprising led by Tula on Curaçao in 1795 is the main recurring story of colonial resistance to slavery within the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Stories of resistance heroes and freedom fighters can play a stimulating role here.

1. The curricula – investigating together

The uprising led by Tula on Curaçao in 1795 is the main recurring story of colonial resistance to slavery within the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. There is insufficient knowledge and available teaching material about other anti-colonial resistance heroes and acts of resistance against slavery on the six islands.

Recommendations for governments and researchers

a. Conduct or facilitate dedicated research led by Caribbean investigators into stories of anti-colonial freedom fighters and resistance heroes in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, with a particular focus on:
b. Resistance in its various forms, resistance by women and memorial sites in the island environments; Indigenous slavery and Asian contract labour.
c. Link this work with that of the joint chair in the History and Intergenerational Impact of Slavery under the auspices of the Council for Higher Education in the Caribbean Part of the Kingdom (CHECK), and also explicitly involve education professionals (primary school teachers and secondary-level history teachers) in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.
d. In accordance with the 2025-2035 national knowledge agenda for Dutch colonial slavery history and its repercussions, make use of archive research, oral history, storytelling, critical fabulation, embodied knowledge, heritage studies and transformative justice.[49]

2. Caribbean education landscape – developing together 1

Finding

Due to the fragmentation of the educational landscape in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, relevant regional expertise, educational support and other resources are scattered throughout the region.

Recommendation for governments

a. Mitigate the fragmentation of the educational landscape in the region and its consequences by investing in a knowledge network for the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands for education, slavery and Its intergenerational impact, with a remit

49 R. M. Allen, E. Captain, M. van Rossum & U. Vyent (2023) Het Nederlandse koloniale slavernijverleden en zijn doorwerkingen, kennisagenda 2025-2035. Immler (2023) Een perspectief op herstel en transformative justice [A perspective on restorative and transformative justice]. In: Staat en Slavernij. 95-105.

covering both the Caribbean Netherlands and the autonomous countries.[50] As well as the relevant authorities in all these polities, involve school managements, teacher education programmes and teachers in this network.

b. Task the network with developing a coherent set of core learning objectives (see recommendation 3), teaching materials for primary, special and secondary schools (recommendation 4), guidelines for teacher education and teacher support facilities (recommendation 5) and joint professionalisation activities for both primary school teachers and secondary-level history teachers (recommendation 6).

c. Link up with existing partnerships and ongoing educational projects such as Kibrahacha and Caribbean Teacher of the 21st Century. *Where Caribbean expertise and other resources are lacking, other agencies in the Kingdom and in the wider Caribbean region can be called in.*

3. Core learning objectives – developing together 2

Finding

Due the fragmentation in the Caribbean educational landscape, different core learning objectives with regard to anti-colonial resistance heroes and freedom fighters still apply on the various islands despite their shared colonial experience of slavery and resistance. National core learning objectives have not been revised regularly enough in the past.

Recommendation for governments

a. Initiate and facilitate a process whereby all the autonomous Caribbean countries as well as the public entities review their various core learning objectives concerning slavery on the basis of both their distinct and their shared past.

b. Ensure the inclusion in the various core learning objectives of stories about acts of anti-colonial resistance by local male and female heroes and freedom fighters, as well as reference to places of remembrance on each of the islands.

c. Also incorporate the ongoing impact of the history of slavery in the core learning objectives, including the apologies by the Dutch state, the royal family, the Dutch central bank and other institutions for their role in that history.

d. d. Ensure that core learning objectives are regularly updated as part of jointly agreed policy cycles.

4. Teaching materials in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands – developing together 3

Finding

None of the autonomous countries or public entities have been able to develop teaching materials that match their core learning objectives to the world view of local pupils. European Dutch educational publishers design their methods based on core objectives applicable in the European Netherlands. Because of this, they have gaps when it comes to teaching Caribbean pupils about slavery. Schools are therefore forced to use combinations of Dutch, Caribbean regional and local methods and packages.

Likewise, none of the polities have has been able to develop, evaluate and revise school curricula and final examinations aligned with the specific core learning objectives for the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. As a result, teachers have to fall back on very outdated classroom materials.

Recommendations for governments, educational institutions and publishers

a. Based on updated core learning objectives, develop teaching methods, curricula and examinations for the various forms of education that reflect the Dutch Caribbean context as the scene of colonialism, slavery and their repercussions. Draw inspiration from the current Caribbean collaboration to develop a joint Geography curriculum for HAVO and VWO upper schools.[51]

b. Balance the coverage devoted to female and male resistance heroes and to local, regional and global acts of anti-colonial and anti-racist resistance.

5. Classroom stories, supporting materials and the resources from major Netherlands-based educational publishers – educating and professionalising together 1

Finding

Classroom teachers are agreed on the obstacles they face in delivering good education about slavery and its repercussions. These lie primarily in the lack of teaching methods that substantiate the core learning objectives and connect with the local experience and impact of colonialism and

50 https://www.usm.sx/news/caribbean-institutions-sign-mous-for-higher-education-95, https://www.rijksdienstcn.com/onderwijs-cultuur-wetenschap/hoger-onderwijs-en-wetenschap/kibrahacha and https://english.rijksdienstcn.com/education-culture-science/higher-education-and-science/caribbean-teacher-of-the-21st-century

51 See https://maken.wikiwijs.nl/201158/Leermateriaal_AK_2e_fase_havo_vwo_Cariben..

slavery, as well as in the lack of a shared educational vision that not only focuses on the Caribbean experience of slavery but also takes into account the world view of Caribbean pupils. Teacher education programmes do not impart enough stories of anti-colonial resistance. Teachers also struggle with inadequate pedagogical support, for example in the form of knowledge databases and common tests. They are aware of the imbalance in the attention paid to male and female resistance heroes, but lack the knowledge and space in the teaching and examination timetable to internalise the necessary stories and pass them on to their pupils.

Recommendations for teacher education and educational publishers

When it comes to providing slavery-related education, teachers need support in terms of curriculum content, didactic methodology and pedagogical approach.

a. a. Strengthen initial teacher education and professional development opportunities with regard to the history of slavery.
b. b. Develop a digital database in which currently underutilised teaching materials on the history of colonialism and slavery, stories of anti-colonial resistance in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and stories of resistance fighters can be consulted.
c. c. Make room in this database for guidelines for and examples of non-traditional teaching methods such as project-based learning, place-based learning and heritage didactics, which can be used to elucidate the Caribbean experience of colonialism and slavery in ways that resonate with pupils' own world view.
d. d. Through the database, support teachers in creating a pedagogical climate and using didactic methods that facilitate the discussion of uncomfortable past events and their controversial legacy, for themselves as well as for pupils and parents. Link this to the open learning materials at Impuls Open Leermateriaal and the Dutch Caribbean database at Herens/cia | Heritage | Heritage.[52]
e. e. Take into account the language p*olicies on the various islands.*

6. Narrative approach and reflection of pupils' world view – professionalising together 2
Finding

Members of the teaching profession in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands have different views on the history of slavery and present different narratives. In both primary schools and secondary-level history education, there is a high turnover of teachers from outside the islands. Education professionals do not all agree on the nature and extent of the impact of slavery and colonialism, but they do agree that more attention should be paid to local resistance stories and places of remembrance on the individual islands. Discussions with pupils reveal unsatisfied curiosity about stories of anti-colonial resistance, heroes and freedom fighters.

Recommendations to teacher trainers and school managements

a. Invest in continuous professional development (lifelong learning) for teachers in primary, special and secondary education.
b. In professional development programmes for education professionals in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, state explicitly that resistance – local, regional and global – to colonialism and slavery constituted opposition to crimes against humanity, and also explain the extent to which that resistance actually contributed towards the abolition of slavery and the dismantling of colonialism.
c. Explain conceptions and examples of the continuing impact of slavery in respect of, for example, socio-economic inequality, cultural heritage, institutional racism, public health, post-emancipation (1863-1954) and post-colonial (1954-present) migration and other phenomena.
d. Including personal stories in the curriculum provides a powerful didactic stimulus for teaching about slavery and its impact as an 'unfinished past', so create space in the teaching arena for stories from pupils and their families.
e. Use contemporary ('decolonial') terminology and concepts and promote debate about them in teacher education a*nd in teaching* method*s.*

The curiosity shown by Caribbean pupils regarding anti-colonial resistance by heroes and heroines in their immediate environment and lived experience provides fertile ground for contemporary, critical and enlightening education on the subject of slavery. The historical message passed down by resistance heroes and heroines about colonialism and slavery is still relevant and appealing today. So their role is not yet over.

52 See https://www.openleermateriaal.nl/ and https://dutchcaribbeanheritage.org/

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Appendix 1

Noordhoff	Wijzer! Geschiedenis 5	
Noordhoff	Wijzer! Geschiedenis 6	
Noordhoff	Wijzer! Geschiedenis 7	
Noordhoff	Wijzer! Geschiedenis 8	Omitted
Noordhoff	Plein Junior 5 thema 1-2 handleiding	Omitted
Noordhoff	Plein Junior 5 thema 3-4 handleiding	Omitted
Noordhoff	Plein Junior 5 thema 5-6 handleiding	
Noordhoff	Plein Junior 6 thema 1-2 handleiding	
Noordhoff	Plein Junior 6 thema 3-4 handleiding	Omitted
Noordhoff	Plein Junior 6 thema 5-6 handleiding	Omitted
Noordhoff	Plein Junior 7 thema 1-2 handleiding	
Noordhoff	Plein Junior 7 thema 3-4 handleiding	
Noordhoff	Plein Junior 7 thema 5-6 handleiding	Omitted
Noordhoff	Plein Junior 8 thema 1-2 handleiding	Omitted
Noordhoff	Plein Junior 8 thema 3-4 handleiding	Omitted
Noordhoff	Plein Junior 8 thema 5-6 handleiding	Omitted
Noordhoff	Plein Junior 5 thema 1-2 leerwerkboek	Omitted
Noordhoff	Plein Junior 5 thema 3-4 leerwerkboek	Omitted
Noordhoff	Plein Junior 5 thema 5-6 leerwerkboek	Omitted
Noordhoff	Plein Junior 6 thema 1-2 leerwerkboek	
Noordhoff	Plein Junior 6 thema 3-4 leerwerkboek	Omitted
Noordhoff	Plein Junior 6 thema 5-6 leerwerkboek	Omitted
Noordhoff	Plein Junior 7 thema 1-2 leerwerkboek	
Noordhoff	Plein Junior 7 thema 3-4 leerwerkboek	
Noordhoff	Plein Junior 7 thema 5-6 leerwerkboek	Omitted
Noordhoff	Plein Junior 8 thema 1-2 leerwerkboek	Omitted
Noordhoff	Plein Junior 8 thema 3-4 leerwerkboek	Omitted
Noordhoff	Plein Junior 8 thema 5-6 leerwerkboek	Omitted
Noordhoff	Geschiedeniswerkplaats 1 vmbo-bk leerwerkboek A	
Noordhoff	Geschiedeniswerkplaats 1 vmbo-bk leerwerkboek B	
Noordhoff	Geschiedeniswerkplaats 1 vmbo-kgt	
Noordhoff	Geschiedeniswerkplaats 1 vmbo-t/havo	Omitted
Noordhoff	Geschiedeniswerkplaats 1 havo/vwo	Omitted
Noordhoff	Geschiedeniswerkplaats 1 vwo	Omitted
Noordhoff	Geschiedeniswerkplaats 2 vmbo bk A	
Noordhoff	Geschiedeniswerkplaats 2 vmbo bk B	
Noordhoff	Geschiedeniswerkplaats 2 vmbo kgt | leerboek	
Noordhoff	Geschiedeniswerkplaats 2 vmbo kgt | werkboek	
Noordhoff	Geschiedeniswerkplaats 2 vmbo t/havo | leerboek	
Noordhoff	Geschiedeniswerkplaats 2 vmbo t/havo | werkboek	
Noordhoff	Geschiedeniswerkplaats 2 havo/vwo | leerboek	
Noordhoff	Geschiedeniswerkplaats 2 havo/vwo | werkboek	
Noordhoff	Geschiedeniswerkplaats 2 vwo | leerboek	
Noordhoff	Geschiedeniswerkplaats 2 vwo | werkboek	
Noordhoff	Geschiedeniswerklplaats 3/4 vmbo kgt	
Noordhoff	Geschiedeniswerklplaats 3 havo | Leerboek	
Noordhoff	Geschiedeniswerkplaats 3 havo | Werkboek	
Noordhoff	Geschiedeniswerkplaats 3 vwo	Omitted
Noordhoff	Geschiedeniswerkplaats 4 vmbo kgt	Omitted
Noordhoff	Geschiedeniswerkplaats 4/5 havo Historische contexten	
Noordhoff	Geschiedeniswerkplaats 4/5 havo Historisch overzicht	
Noordhoff	Geschiedeniswerkplaats 4/5 havo Midden-Oosten en Noord-Afrika	Omitted
Noordhoff	Geschiedeniswerkplaats 4/5 havo Rechtstaat en Democratie	
Noordhoff	Geschiedeniswerkplaats 4/5/6 vwo Historische contexten	
Noordhoff	Geschiedeniswerkplaats 4/5/6 vwo Midden-Oosten en Noord-Afrika	Omitted
Noordhoff	Geschiedeniswerkplaats 4/5/6 vwo Geloof en Verstand	
Noordhoff	Geschiedeniswerkplaats 4/5/6 vwo Historisch overzicht	Omitted
Noordhoff	Geschiedeniswerkplaats 4/5/6 vwo Rechtstaat en Democratie	Omitted
ThiemeMeulenhoff	Feniks 3-4 vmbo-bkgt	Omitted
ThiemeMeulenhoff	Feniks 1 vmbo-bk	Omitted
ThiemeMeulenhoff	Feniks 1 vmbo-kgt	Omitted

ThiemeMeulenhoff	Feniks 1 vmbo-gt/havo	Omitted
ThiemeMeulenhoff	Feniks 1 havo/vwo	Omitted
ThiemeMeulenhoff	Feniks 1 vwo	Omitted
ThiemeMeulenhoff	Feniks 2 vmbo-bk leerboek	
ThiemeMeulenhoff	Feniks 3 vmbo-bk werkboek	
ThiemeMeulenhoff	Feniks 2 vmbo-kgt leerboek	
ThiemeMeulenhoff	Feniks 2 vmbo-kgt werkboek	
ThiemeMeulenhoff	Feniks 2 vmbo-gt/(havo) Leerboek	Omitted
ThiemeMeulenhoff	Feniks 2 havo/(vwo)	Omitted
ThiemeMeulenhoff	Feniks 2 vwo leerboek	
ThiemeMeulenhoff	Feniks 2 vwo werkboek	
ThiemeMeulenhoff	Feniks 3/4 vmbo bk	Omitted
ThiemeMeulenhoff	Feniks 3/4 vmbo kgt	
ThiemeMeulenhoff	Feniks 3 havo leerboek	
ThiemeMeulenhoff	Feniks 3 havo werkboek	
ThiemeMeulenhoff	Feniks 3 vwo leerboek	
ThiemeMeulenhoff	Feniks 3 vwo werkboek	
ThiemeMeulenhoff	Feniks 4/5 havo	
ThiemeMeulenhoff	Feniks 4/5/6 vwo	
Malmberg	Uitleg en vragen 2a VMBO-KGT	
Malmberg	Uitleg en vragen 2b VMBO-KGT	Omitted
Malmberg	Uitleg en vragen 1a VWO/Gymnasium	Omitted
Malmberg	Uitleg en vragen 1b VWO/Gymnasium	
Malmberg	Leerboek: uitleg en vragen VMBO-KGT	Omitted
Malmberg	Oefenboek: plaatjes en vragen VMBO-KGT	
Malmberg	Uitleg en vragen 3b VWO/Gymnasium	Omitted
Malmberg	Examenkatern: uitleg en vragen 4/5 HAVO	
Malmberg	Memo 2a VWO/Gymnasium Geschiedenis	
Malmberg	Memo 2b VWO/Gymnasium Geschiedenis	
Malmberg	Memo Examenkatern Geschiedenis 4/5/6 VWO	
Malmberg	Memo 3a VWO/Gymnasium Geschiedenis	
Malmberg	Memo 3b VMBO-KGT Geschiedenis	Omitted
Malmberg	Memo 1a VMBO-KGT Geschiedenis	
Malmberg	Memo 3a VMBO-KGT Geschiedenis	
Malmberg	Memo 1b VMBO-KGT Geschiedenis	
Malmberg	Memo Leeropdrachtenboek Geschiedenis 4/5/6 VWO	
Malmberg	Memo Leeropdrachtenboek Geschiedenis 4/5 HAVO	
Malmberg	ArgusClou geschiedenis groep 6 lesboek	
Malmberg	ArgusClou geschiedenis groep 8 lesboek	
Malmberg	ArgusClou geschiedenis groep 6 handleiding	
Malmberg	ArgusClou geschiedenis groep 8 handleiding	
Malmberg	Brandaan geschiedenis groep 6 thema 6 handleiding	
Malmberg	Brandaan geschiedenis groep 6 thema 6 leerwerkboek	
Malmberg	Brandaan geschiedenis groep 6 thema 7 handleiding	
Malmberg	Brandaan geschiedenis groep 6 thema 7 leerwerkboek	
Malmberg	Brandaan geschiedenis groep 8 thema 10 handleiding	
Malmberg	Brandaan geschiedenis groep 8 thema 10 leerwerkboek	

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