

A Note on the History of the Jews of St. Eustatius

I. S. EMMANUEL

The *American Jewish Archives*, April, 1967, pp. 60-77, carried an article by Dr. John Hartog: "The Honen Daliem [Dalim] Congregation of St. Eustatius." For this work Hartog made use of important manuscript notes given to him by the late Jossy M. L. Maduro of Curaçao, who had devoted forty years of his life to gathering archival material on the Jews of the Netherlands Antilles. Hartog also made use of two important studies by Holland's foremost scholar — Professor L. Knappert. These studies are:

1. "Een Heksen-proces op St. Martin, A. D. 1711" (*West Indische Gids* [= *WIG*], Amsterdam, 10th year, 1928-29), pp. 241-64 — about the Jews, pp. 255-56.
2. "Geschiedenis van de Nederlandsche Bovenwindsche eilanden in de 18e eeuw" (*WIG*, Amsterdam, 11th year, 1929-30), pp. 353-86, 421-36, 513-41, 559-74 — about the Jews, pp. 518, 536-38.

Hartog made full use of Professor Knappert's footnotes — not always correctly — and neglected to cite either Knappert or Maduro.

COMPARISON OF THE HARTOG FOOTNOTES WITH THOSE OF PROFESSOR KNAPPERT, AND MY CORRECTIONS OF THE HARTOG NOTES

HARTOG

Footnote [=Fn.] 2, p. 61. Prof. Knappert gave the archive as "*ibid.*" Apparently not realizing what the *ibid.* was, Hartog failed to give the archive number.

Fn. 3, p. 61. Hartog copied the Knappert footnote incorrectly and omitted the pagination.

KNAPPERT

"Een Heksen-proces . . . 1711" (*WIG*, 1928-29, p. 255) mentions the Juda Obediente and Salomon Nunes Netto visit to St. Eustatius in 1711. Knappert's footnote 1, p. 256, reads as follows: "Testimony of two of the Jewish nation, Curaçao, January 24, 1714, *ibid.*, fol. 414." [N.B. — The *ibid.* stands for West Indische Comp. Archive, Brieven en Papieren van St. Eustatius, portfolio no. 2, fol. 414.] Hartog omitted the second part of this note: "A similar declaration was made by Pieter Heyliger and others in St. Eust. on Feb. 17, 1714, *ibid.*, folio 444."

"Geschiedenis . . . 18e eeuw" (*WIG*, 1929-30, pp. 537-38, note 1 of p. 538: "[Letter of the] Chamber of Amsterdam

Dr. I. S. Emmanuel is the author of *Precious Stones of the Jews of Curaçao*, *Curaçao Jewry*, 1656-1957 and *Masavot Saloniki*. His history of Curaçao Jewry is soon to appear.

HARTOG

Fn. 5, p. 62. Hartog mistook the pagination for the archive number. He omitted giving the archive of the Governor Faesch letter to the W.I.C. Council.

Fn. 8, p. 63, *Journal of a Lady of Quality*. Hartog omitted the pagination.

Fn. 9, p. 63. Hartog mistook the pagination for the archive number.

Fn. 13, p. 65. Hartog omitted the volume number and pagination of the Teenstra book.

KNAPPERT

to [Everard] Raecx, Sept. 18, 1730, [folio] 340, W[est]. I[ndische]. C[ompany]. [Archive] 473."

Ibid., p. 538, note 3, reads as follows: "Chamber of Amsterdam to [Governor Isaac] Faesch, Feb. 23, 1737 and Nov. 21, 1739, [folio] 341, W.I.C. [Archive] 474. Up to July 9, 1738, the synagogue was not yet [built]. [Letter of] Faesch to the [Council of] Ten of this date, port[folio] no. 5, fol. 141r." It was Knappert who stated, on the basis of the archives he consulted, that the synagogue plot was so situated that Jewish religious services would not disturb those of the Christians.

WIG, *ibid.*, p. 538, note 6, edition of 1923, p. 136; edition of 1921, pp. 135-36, according to the Maduro notes.

WIG, *ibid.*, note 4: "[Letter of the] Chamber of Amsterdam to [Governor] De Windt, Dec. 19, 1760, [folio] 342, W.I.C. [Archive] 475."

Teenstra, vol. 2, p. 252, reads as follows: "Van de vroeger bestaan hebbende Synagoge, op het Oosteinde der Achterstraat, aan de Zuidzijde, is niets meer overig dan eenige puinhopen, die boven het hooge onkruid uitsteken."

COMPARISON OF HARTOG FOOTNOTES WITH MATERIAL GIVEN HIM
BY THE LATE JOSSY M. L. MADURO

HARTOG

Fn. 6, p. 62. Hartog cites the "Memorias Curiel" in the archives of Mikvé Israel, Curaçao. As a former rabbi of that congregation, I know they were not there.

MADURO

Information given by Maduro, exactly: "Memorias Curiel," 18 Tebet, 5498; "Memorias Senior," 18 Tebet, 5498. As I stated in my *Precious Stones of the Jews of Curaçao* (1957, p. 566), these important records never formed part of the Mikvé Israel Archives. They are the property of the estate of the late S. A. L. (Mongui) Maduro, of Curaçao.

HARTOG

MADURO

Fn. 7, p. 62; fn. 12, p. 65. These letters were for many years in the possession of the late Jossy Maduro who passed them on to me. There is no copy of them extant. Where did Hartog examine them?

Information given by Maduro.

Fn. 8, p. 63.

Part of this note was given by Maduro. Hartog omitted the pagination; it is pp. 135-36.

Fn. 10, p. 64. Hartog omitted the pamphlet number as given by Maduro.

Hendrik Gartman, *Engelsche Tieranny* (Amsteldam, MDCCLXXXI), kept at the Royal Library, The Hague, pamphlet no. 19729.

RE EARLY SETTLERS ON ST. EUSTATIUS

At p. 60, footnote 1, Hartog cites my "New Light on Early American Jewry," *AJA*, VII, 1955, without giving pagination, as source that an Amsterdam Jew, Jacob Loew, had relatives in St. Eustatius about 1656. I do not know of any such person.

At p. 61, Hartog incorrectly gives the Jewish population as twenty-two souls — among them, five women. According to the archives consulted by Professor Knappert, there were twenty-one Jews, including four women ("Geschiedenis . . . 18e eeuw," pp. 518, 537).

IN RE THE EPITAPHS IN THE JEWISH CEMETERY OF ST. EUSTATIUS

(*AJA*, APRIL, 1967, PP. 67-77)

The Reverend Mr. R. J. Willingham, a Methodist clergyman on St. Eustatius, copied for Hartog seventeen epitaphs from the Jewish Cemetery of St. Eustatius (ms., American Jewish Archives). Hartog published them. Jossy Maduro sent me seventeen epitaphs from St. Eustatius, English and Portuguese texts, with several photos of the inscriptions. All these epitaphs appear in the second volume (appendix 24 D) of my forthcoming book, "History of the Jews of the Netherlands Antilles" (at the printer's since November, 1966). I compared the Maduro copy with the Rev. Willingham epitaphs, with the Florence (Mrs. Robert) Abraham notes copied for Dr. Jacob R. Marcus, and with photos taken by Mr. Samuel Strouse (all the material, save the Maduro notes, at the American Jewish Archives).

With all due respect for Rev. Willingham, these epitaphs published by Hartog should be *re-published*, inasmuch as both he and Dr. Hartog are non-Jews and are not expert Hebraists, and as a consequence, there were many errors in the Hebrew epitaphs. In two instances whole lines were omitted. In another instance the deceased's name was omitted. In two other instances there is a discrepancy between the Hebrew and secular dates. In still another instance the deceased's name was changed. The emendations made in the Hebrew texts are not always accurate. Even the English and Portuguese texts often are rendered incorrectly.

As to the epitaph of Mrs. "Nnah [Hannah] Mears wife of Mr. Samson Mears" (d. 1768), I should like to make an observation. The Rev. Willingham specifically stated that this inscription probably does not belong to the Jewish Cemetery of St. Eustatius (p. 67). Hartog did not notice that Samson Mears (p. 62) was the husband of this very "Nnah Mears," and that in 1772 he served as treasurer of the St. Eustatius Jewish community (according to Maduro's notes).

In conclusion, the Honen Dalim Synagogue of St. Eustatius was not a two-storied building as Hartog states (p. 62). The stairs led to the women's gallery on the style of Curaçao's Mikvé Israel Synagogue.

THE ARCHIVES SEEKS MATERIAL ON ARAB-ISRAELI WAR

A sizeable file of material documenting the Western Hemisphere's reaction to the Six-Day War of June, 1967, between Israel and the Arabs is in the process of being amassed at the American Jewish Archives. Readers are alerted that contributions to this file will be very welcome here.

The Archives wishes to acquire unpublished material like letters from Americans abroad during the crisis as well as published items like editorials and letters to the editors of Western Hemisphere newspapers and periodicals. Organizational statements and releases would also be most useful, as would photographs of Americans in Israel and of demonstrations relating to the crisis.

Should any of our readers have received letters or clippings from abroad in regard to the involvement of Western Hemisphere individuals, communities, and governments, the Archives would be glad to have them, or copies of them, for its files.