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**A view of Antwerp alongside a manuscript map of Brazil.
Building narratives with maps of Brazil in the decoration of Amsterdam
residences (17th century)**

The city of Amsterdam grew dramatically in the seventeenth century. The massive investment in overseas trade, the flourishing of publishing houses and a prolific cartographic production, allied to the sharp development of the art market, made the city an important economic and cultural center of northern Europe. The growth of the city was closely associated with the rise of wealthy and literate citizens who distinguished themselves through their overt engagement in the debate of the Dutch Republic's political and commercial affairs, the cultivation of the arts and the maintenance of luxurious residences. Usually, those sophisticated residences showed a decoration that testified the prosperity and symbolized the interests of its owners.

At the time, a theme that divided opinions was the possibility of extending the Dutch Republic's struggle against the Spanish Empire to the New World. This would occur with the conquest of northeastern Brazil. The theme reflected in the daily life of the elite that, throughout the century, consumed and collected maps of Brazil, besides paintings and books with descriptions of tropical lands. At least twelve important citizens of Amsterdam, most of them merchants involved in overseas trading, decorated their residences with maritime charts, battle plans, and paintings representing Brazilian nature, people, and geographic aspects. Some of them collected and exhibited maps of the regions disputed by the Dutch and the Portuguese alongside objects produced by Brazilian natives, such as bows, arrows and maracas. The joint exhibition of Brazilian maps, art works and ethnographic objects conjured narratives about the commercial interests, political aspirations and individual achievements of the Dutch elite. It was no wonder that these objects gained prominence in the decoration of the houses' rooms most accessible to visitors, being absent from the spaces restricted to family use.

This paper aims to analyze how the incorporation, the spatial distribution and the uses of maps and objects representative of Brazil occurred in the Amsterdam houses. It seeks to reveal how the arrangement of these objects in the different spaces of the residences constituted emblems of their owners' relations with the overseas world, building biographical narratives, representing political positions and signaling a wide range of interests. To this end, the investigation focuses on the study of maps exhibited in four Amsterdam residences, whose owners were associated in different ways with Brazil: the dwellings of two directors of the West Indies Company and the houses of two Portuguese-Brazilian immigrants.

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