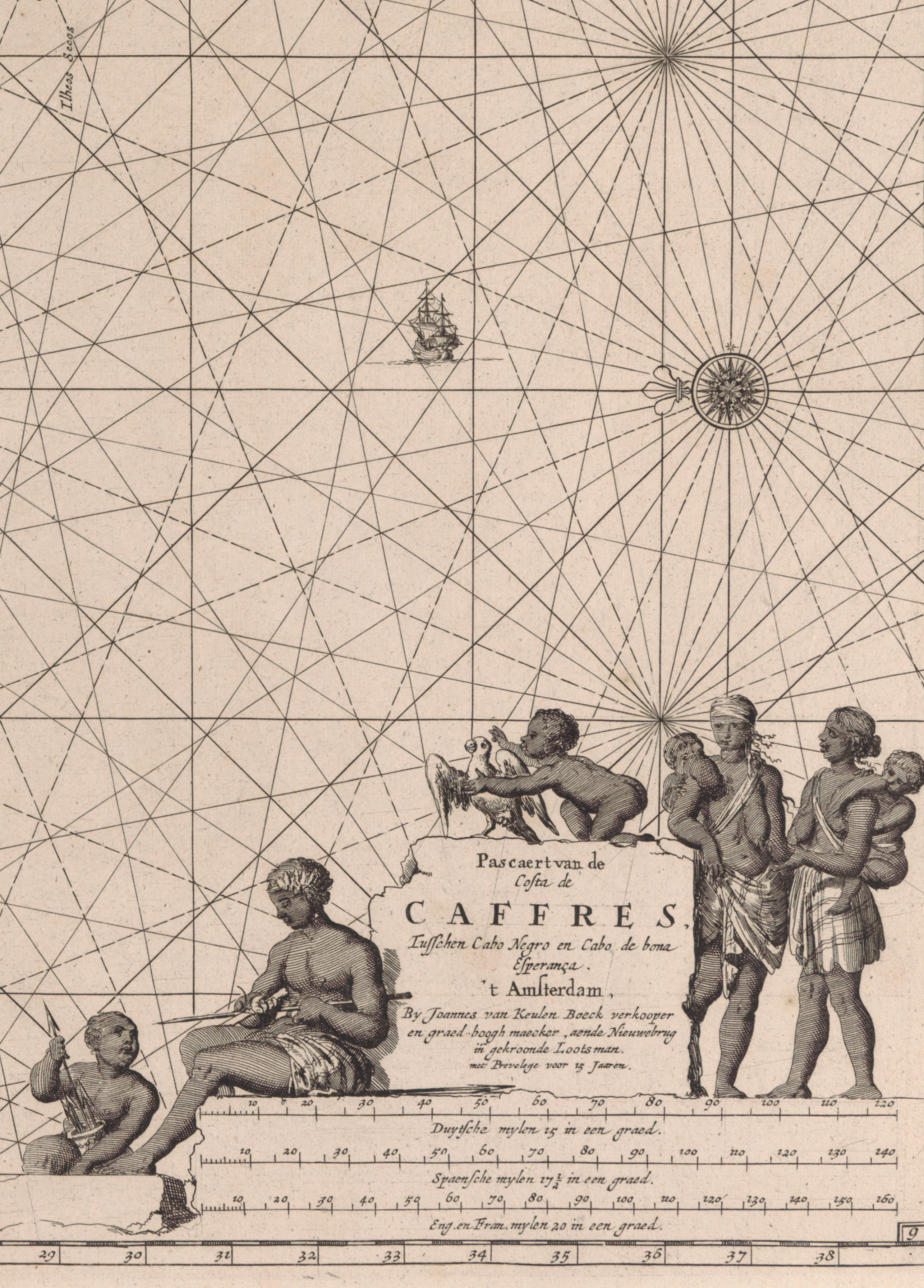
Ilheos Secos
Pascaert van de
Coſta de
CAFFRES,
Tuſſchen Cabo Negro en Cabo de bona
Eſperança.
't Amſterdam,
By Joannes van Keulen Boeck verkooper
en graed-boogh maecker, aende Nieuwebrug
in̄ gekroonde Lootsman.
met Prevelege voor 15 Jaaren.
10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100 110 120
Duytſche mylen 15 in een graed.
10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100 110 120 130 140
Spaenſche mylen 17½ in een graed.
10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100 110 120 130 140 150 160
Eng. en Fran. mylen 20 in een graed.
9
29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38

Editorial

The Rijksmuseum collection holds a wide array of objects that facilitate the telling of imperial histories. Travelling to faraway places typically driven by economic motives, multiple generations of Dutch people came into contact with 'others' whose existence was very different from their own. For peoples living on other continents, these encounters often had negative repercussions. Exploitation, enslavement and the spread of illnesses were the immediate consequences. In the long term, there emerged an unequal balance of power, with the peoples inhabiting such places subjected to biased misrepresentation. In recent years, such biases and their consequences have become more visible, with several colonial relationships now solidly embedded in research projects featured in a variety of publications, including *The Rijksmuseum Bulletin*, and in the stories illustrated in the museum galleries. Nevertheless, three contributions in the present Bulletin, each with its own approach, address existing lacunae in this perspective.

Some peoples are ostensibly absent from the museum's presentation. Few objects in the collection reflect, for example, the contact between Dutch colonists and North American Indigenous nations, including Munsee, Lenape, Mahican and Haudenosaunee peoples during the seventeenth century. Although relatively short in duration, lasting from 1609 to 1664, the Dutch claim to 'New Netherland' – encompassing parts of present-day Pennsylvania, Delaware, New Jersey, New York and Connecticut – was an important development in the histories of both North America and the Netherlands. Marian Leech's research in the Rijksmuseum collection revealed traces of several exchanges, most evident in the many broad-brimmed felt hats, commonly made from beaver fur obtained through trade with Indigenous people, worn by prominent men in seventeenth-century Dutch paintings. The North American fur trade was marked by a complex political economy embedded within Indigenous diplomatic and cultural traditions. Some sources report that people from these nations were at times brought to the Low Countries under conditions of duress, where they were exposed to the eye of paying spectators ogling 'others' from across the Atlantic.

By the seventeenth century, the populations of cities in the Dutch Republic actually represented a mix of European immigrants and newcomers from outside the continent. Some of these foreigners succeeded in thoroughly integrating with their surroundings. Stephanie Archangel and Cynthia Kok centre their research on a gunmaker in Utrecht who signed his locks with 'Eduardt Abrahamsz de Moor', while archival records show he also went by the surname 'van Angola'. Whether born in the Netherlands or having arrived in Europe travelling from the African continent, possibly as an enslaved person or employed by the Dutch East India Company, certain is that after enrolling in the smiths' guild, Eduardt proceeded to become a gunmaker, assembling and decorating highly esteemed pieces for the European elite. This rare individual history nuances the long-held belief that Black people did nothing other than subservient work in private households or on plantations.

Such beliefs are part of a tradition misrepresenting Black people. Illustrated travelogues from the sixteenth century provided a distorted view, serving above all to reinforce Europeans' ill-conceived notions of these men and women as being indecent, immoral and cruel. An example of this denegrating treatment concerns the Khoikhoi people in South Africa, called 'Hottentots' by the first Dutchmen to encounter them in 1647, of whom many descriptions and illustrations, repeated over and over, ensured this imaging became firmly entrenched in the ensuing centuries. Steff Nellis points out that one work formed an exception: *Cérémonies et coutumes religieuses de tous les peuples du monde* (1728), a multi-volume illustrated account of the religions and customs of peoples from around the world. In a collaborative endeavour of author and illustrator, the book's section on Africa introduced a nuance to contemporary imaging, accomplished through the selective inclusion of certain aspects of Khoikhoi society, presented as comparable to those of other communities, with behaviours perceived by some as aberrant characterized merely as an anomaly. *Cérémonies* was unique in the way it humanized the Khoikhoi, as opposed to demonizing a people simply for their 'otherness'.

detail of fig. 20, p. 164