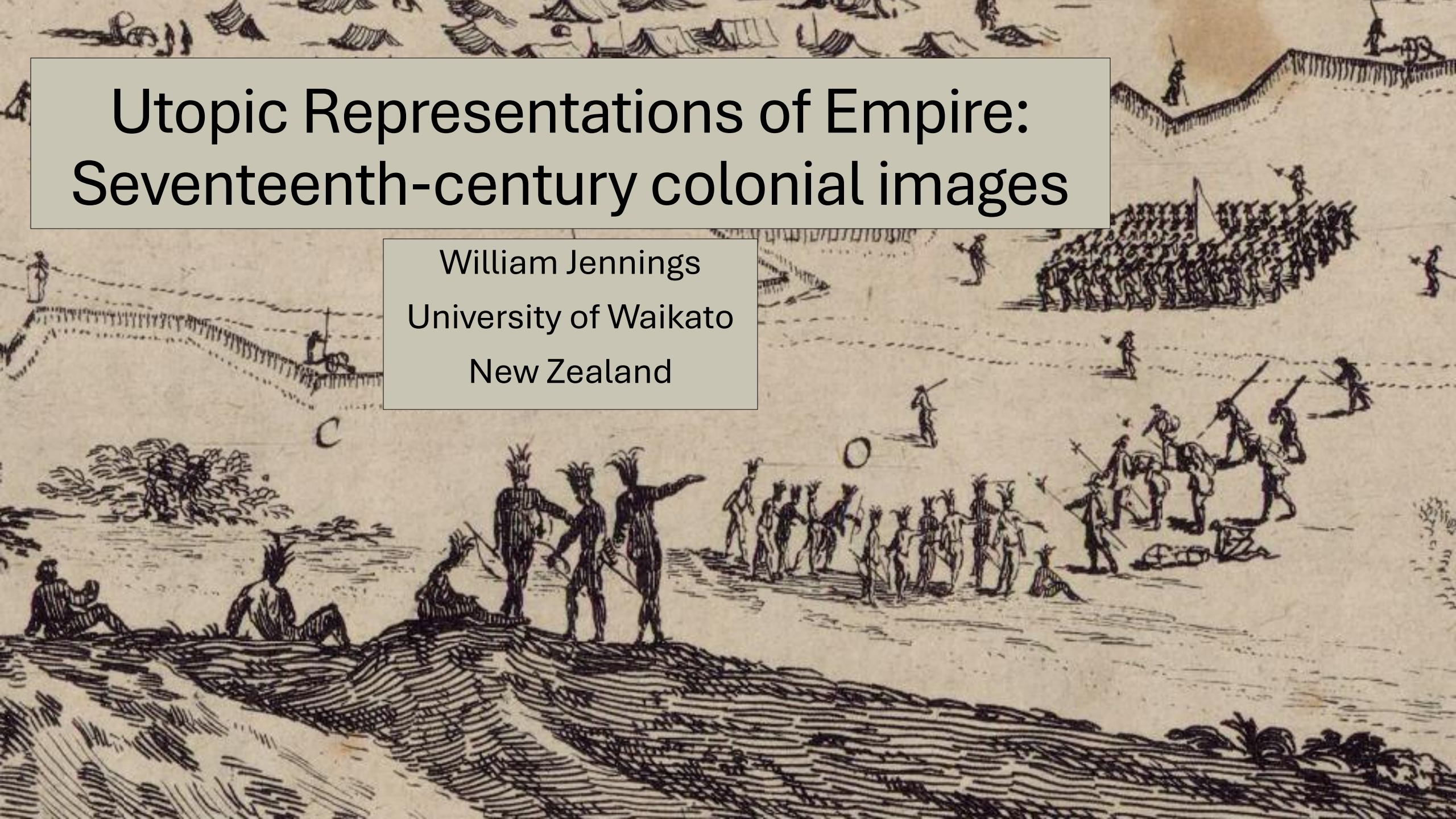


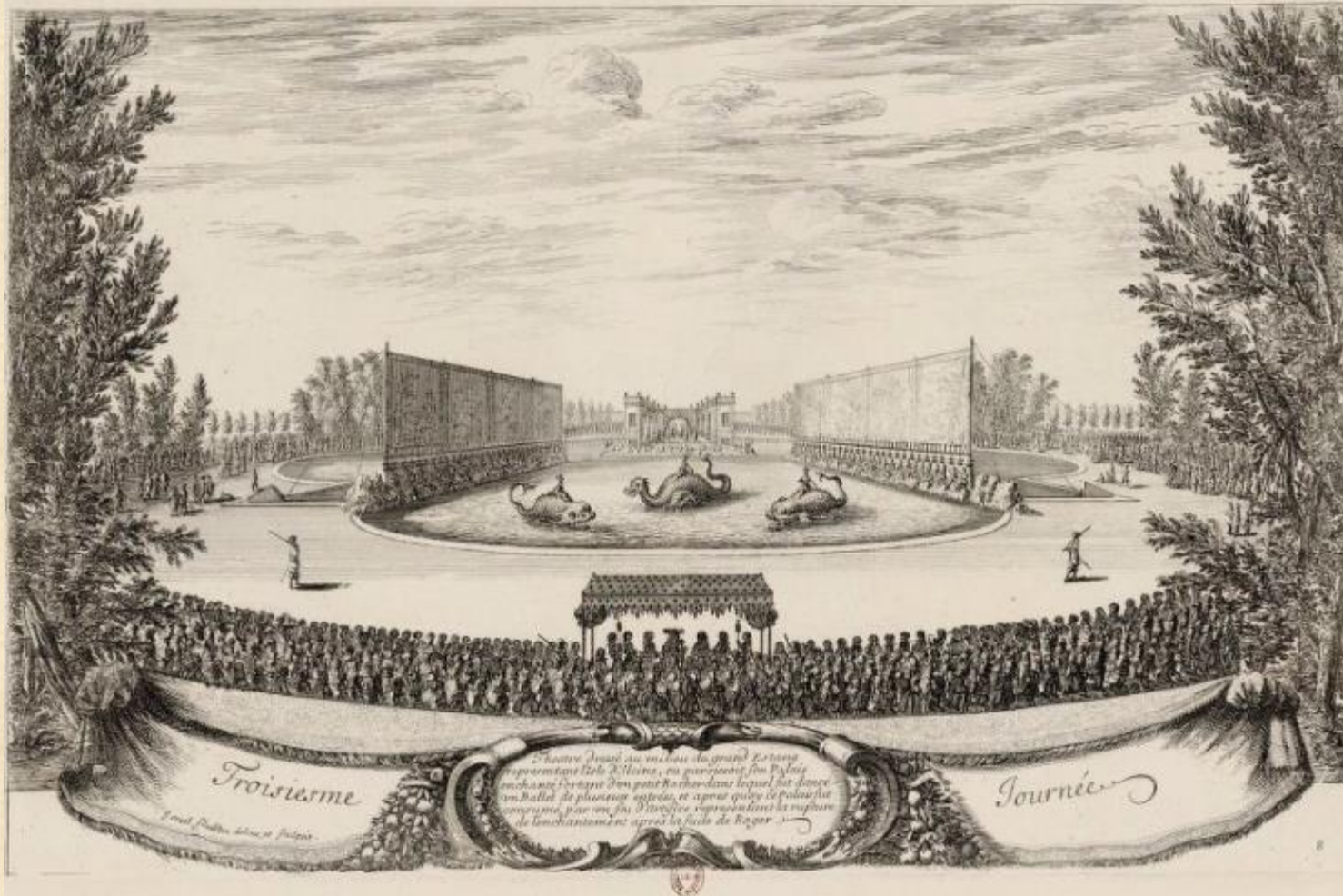
Utopic Representations of Empire: Seventeenth-century colonial images

William Jennings
University of Waikato
New Zealand



Israël Silvestre

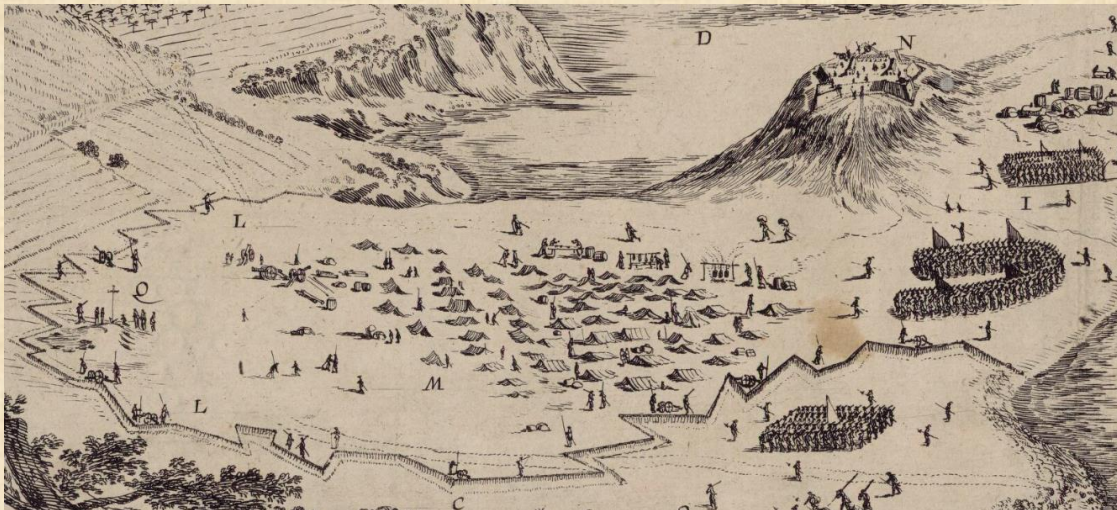
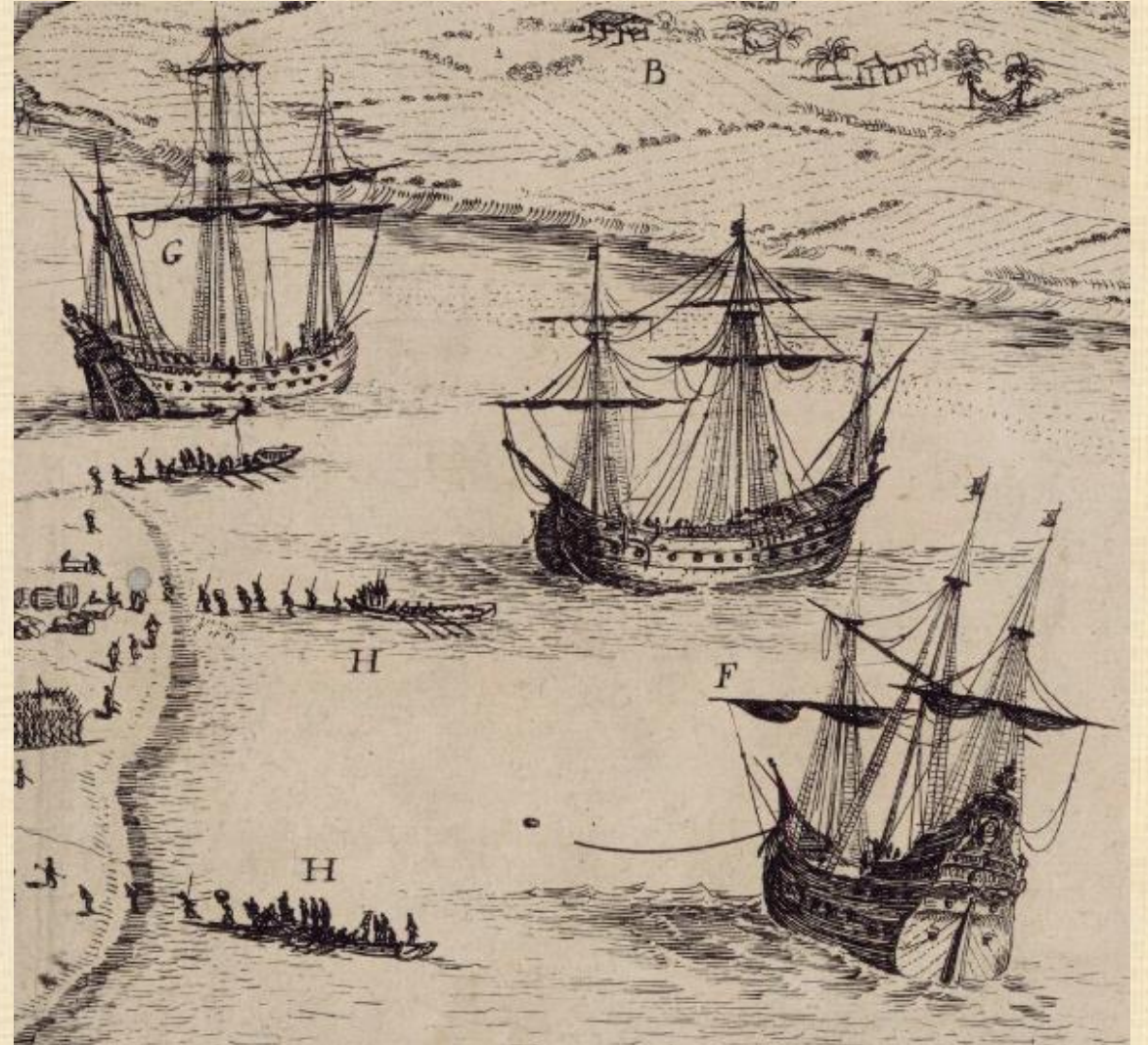
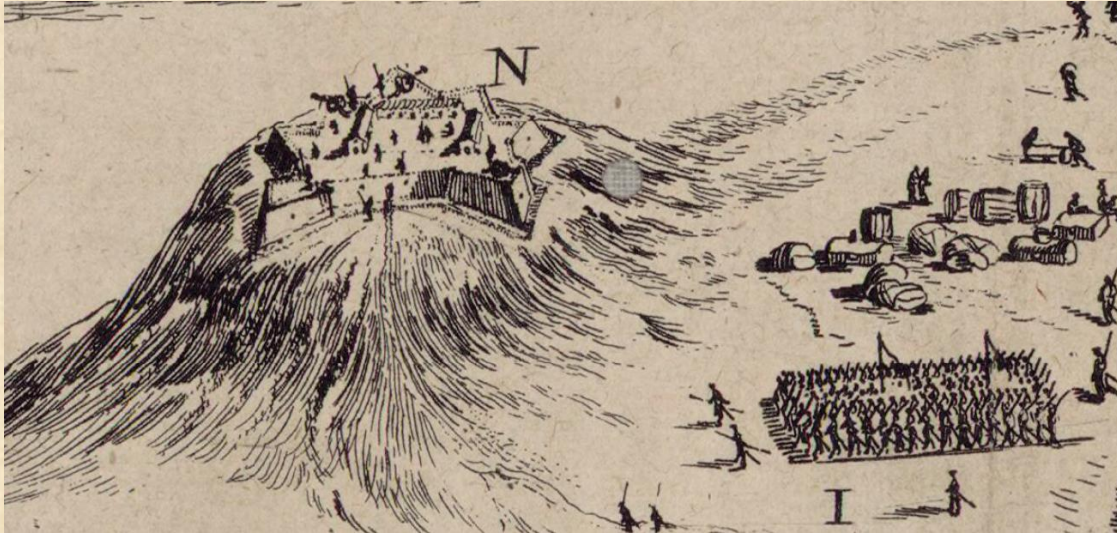
Silvestre fecit



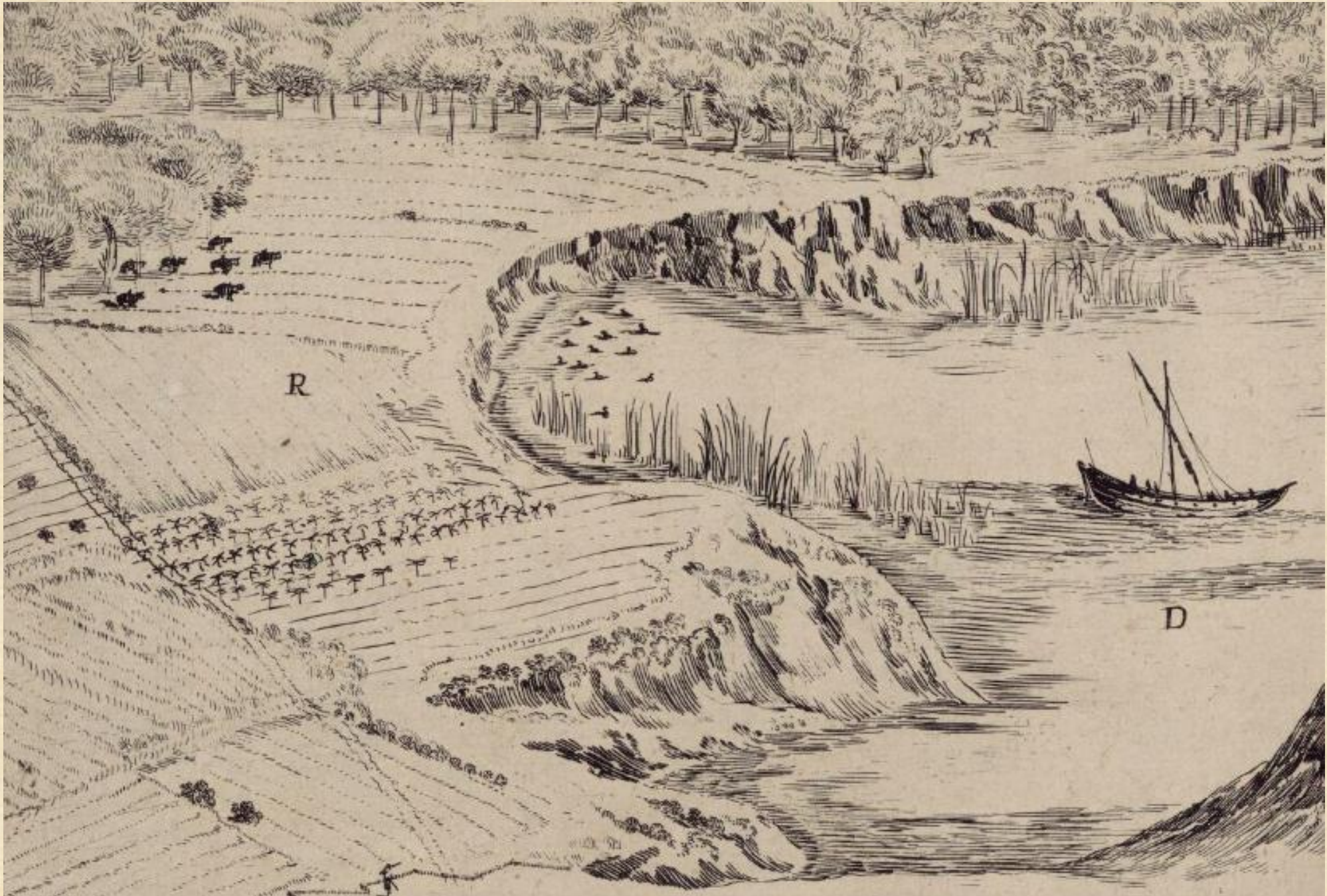
Israël Silvestre, *Troisième journée* [des Plaisirs de l'île enchantée de mai 1664], 1664. BNF, Estampes et photographie, Réserve FOL-QB-201 (46)



Military security



Food security



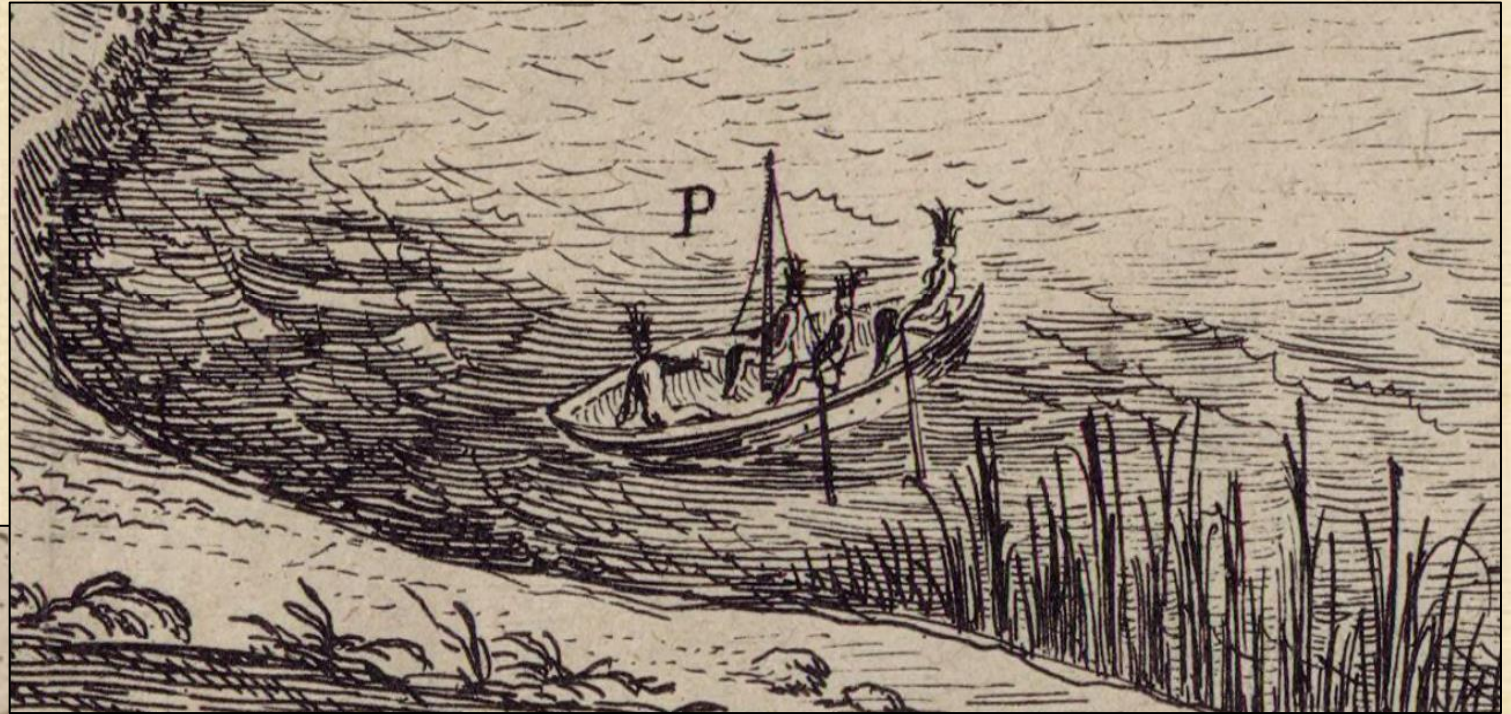
Trade



Native Americans



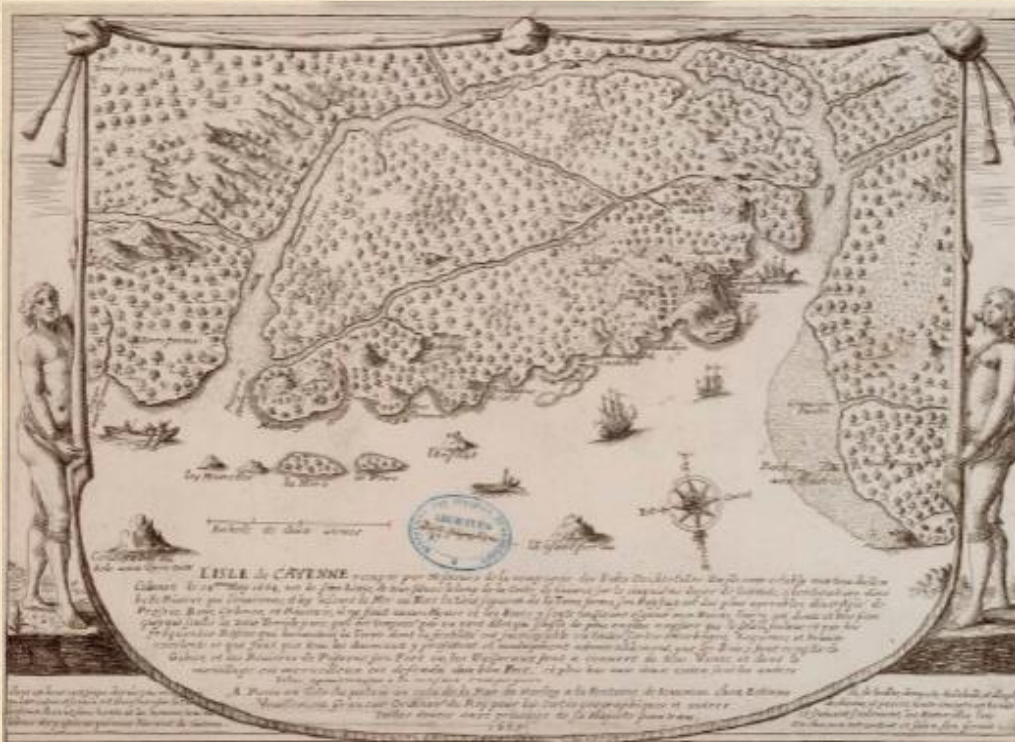
Native Americans



Religion



*L'Isle de Cayenne occupée par
Messieurs de la compagnie
des Indes Occidentales
(Etienne Vouillemont, 1667)*



Caribbean possessions

Industrial slavery

Battle of Saint-Christophe

Security



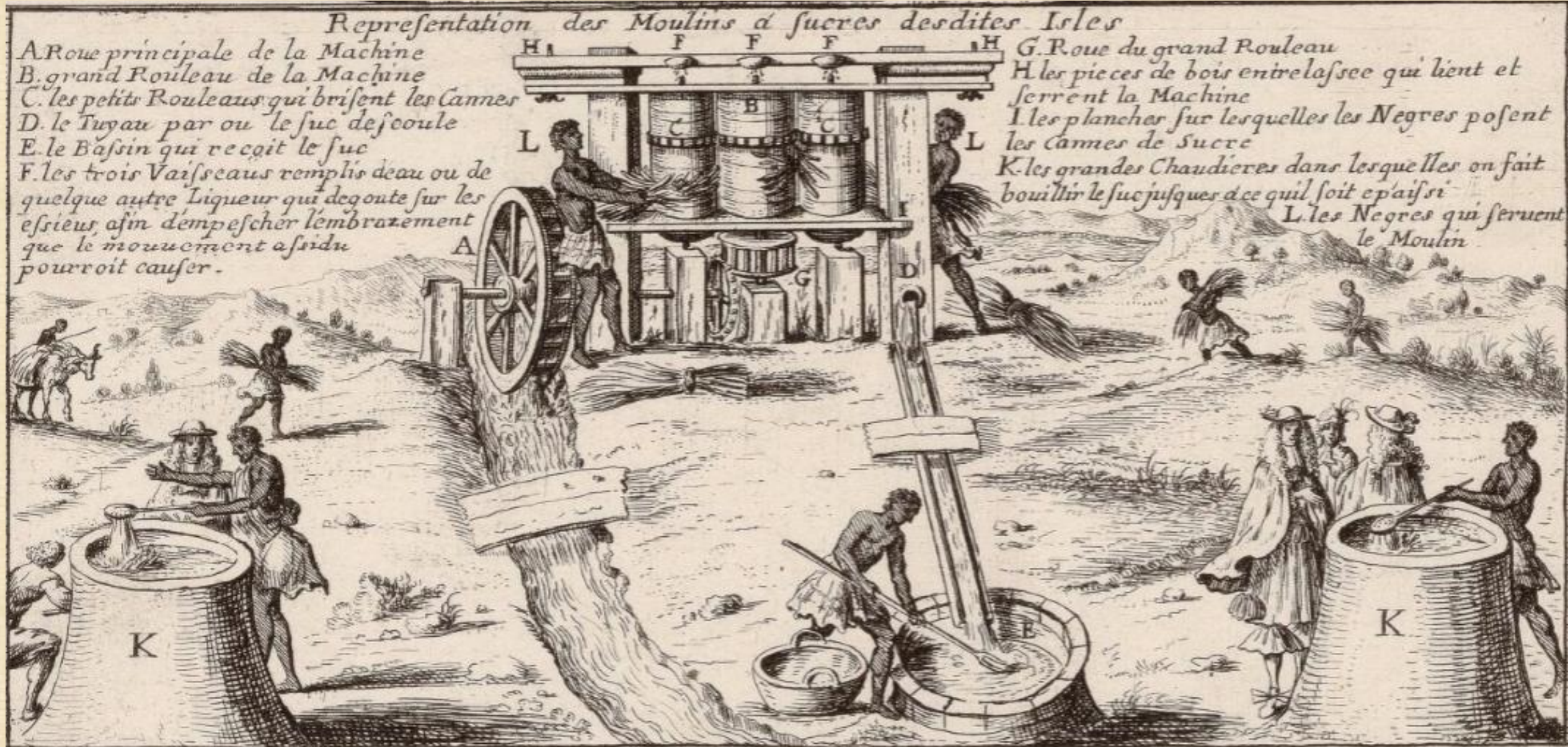
Imperial security



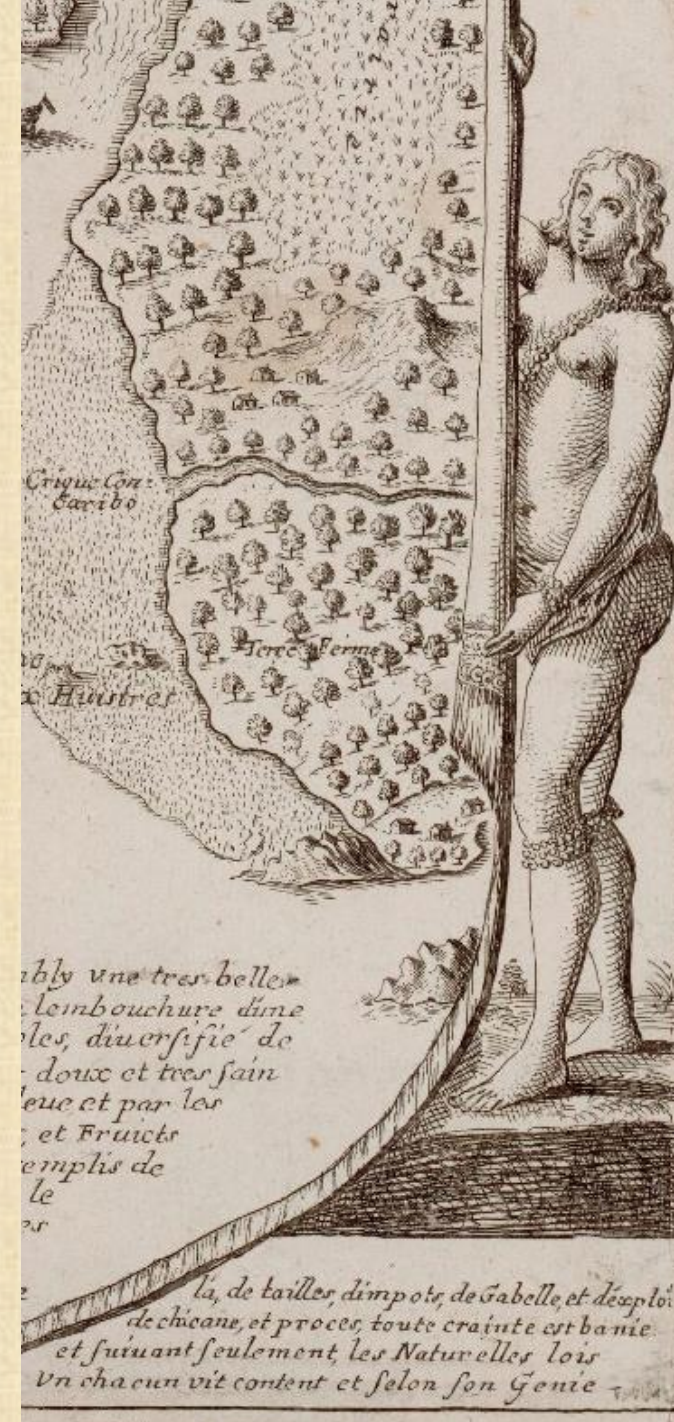
Expansion



Industrial slavery



Native Americans



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Abstract / résumé

Early French colonies used enslavement to provide most of their labor, but they also needed to recruit landowners and artisans to build a settler society. This paper investigates how two colonial companies used maps and illustrations to represent new colonies as safe and prosperous sites that would appeal to potential recruits. The companies produced books and pamphlets promoting their colonies, but it was often possible to read between the lines and conclude that the colony was not as utopic as the company claimed. The images they produced, however, were utopic and had the advantage of allowing the viewer the freedom to interpret them regardless of literacy skills. The American Mainland Company, which in 1652 sent France's biggest colonial expedition to date, showed it understood the importance of imagery when the following year it commissioned an illustration from France's most prominent engraver, Israël Silvestre. A decade later, the French West India Company adapted a hydrographic map to present a more favorable view of a colony. This paper shows how the companies' images deceived the viewer and created false impressions of easy life in the tropics.