

Propositions

- 1) Essequibo, Demerara and Berbice witnessed many regime changes ending with the 1814 transfer of sovereignty to Britain. These changes marginally affected colonial political institutions, laws of the colonies, or trade and credit relationships. Continuity of political culture, laws, institutions, and relationships with Dutch creditors therefore deserve more historiographic study rather than short-term effects of regime changes. (This thesis).
- 2) Registered mortgage deeds in colonial Guyana are a reliable source of information for metropolitan credit with data for mortgagors, mortgagees, and plantations. Registered deeds include few British creditors and do not support contentions suggesting significant British credit during the Dutch era. (This thesis).
- 3) Preserved and registered colonial mortgage deeds indicate Dutch rather than British credit was primarily responsible for the explosive growth of production and slavery in Essequibo, Demerara and Berbice at the end of the eighteenth century and in the early nineteenth century. (This thesis).
- 4) Pre-Independence (1966) history of Guyana is mostly written by white men describing conduct of white men. The late eighteenth century demographic explosion, trades such as huckstering, and maroon raids, suggest the importance of women, yet to be equitably included in the historiography. (This thesis).
- 5) Digitalisation of colonial records and classification is essential for the study of Dutch slavery. Much archival material for the Dutch colonial era of Guyana is preserved in London. It requires systematic research and classification. Enhanced cooperation between Guyanese, British, and Dutch historians and archival specialists is required to achieve this end. (This thesis).
- 6) Legacy of Dutch slavery in the Western hemisphere and associated financing comprise more nations than Guyana, Suriname and the former Dutch Antilles. Financing of slavery knew no national borders. Studies of Dutch slavery should therefore not be constrained by present-day political boundaries.
- 7) Textbook economics distinguishing factors of production, such as land, capital and labour, are relatively unhelpful for the study of slavery when capital was labour, and humans were commodities.
- 8) In a book *Iets over den laatsten Engelschen oorlog met de Republiek, en over Nederlands koophandel* [Something about the last English war with the Republic and about Dutch trade] (Amsterdam, 1794, 44), Adriaan Kluit (1735-1807) quotes a source suggesting Dutch merchants would sail via hell if they could make profits. [*Als zij winst kunnen doen, zouden zij met hunne zeilen wel langs de hel varen*]. This metaphorical proposition is beyond empirical testing or falsification. This study has not tested its veracity.
- 9) Economic indicators, such as GDP, convey magnitude of national economies, but do not reflect income or wealth distribution, and general well-being. Indicators currently in use also do not comprise global equity, responsible use, or responsible non-use, of limited resources for the benefit of all nations. Proposals for alternative indicators exist that hold promise to capture equity issues. Mandatory use of alternative indicators requires more political will in OECD countries, as current pro-growth policies and indicators are incompatible with inter-generational and global equity.
- 10) International tax evasion and the laundering of criminal money use similar financial and “creative” book-keeping techniques. Curtailing economic misconduct requires international cooperation to monitor activities and clients of accounting firms, legal consulting firms, and public notaries. Fraud-inducing registration of multiple phantom companies at single addresses, for example, should be investigated. Deliberate absence of transparency should suffice to suspect plausible presence of misconduct.
- 11) Dutch road crossings and junctions show considerable density of traffic signs, suggesting belief in positive correlation, or causality, between sign density and traffic safety. A point may exist when increased sign density exceeds drivers’ capacities to comprehend overall sign significance, thus reducing traffic safety. Density and comprehension of signs require more empirical research.