Serving the chain?

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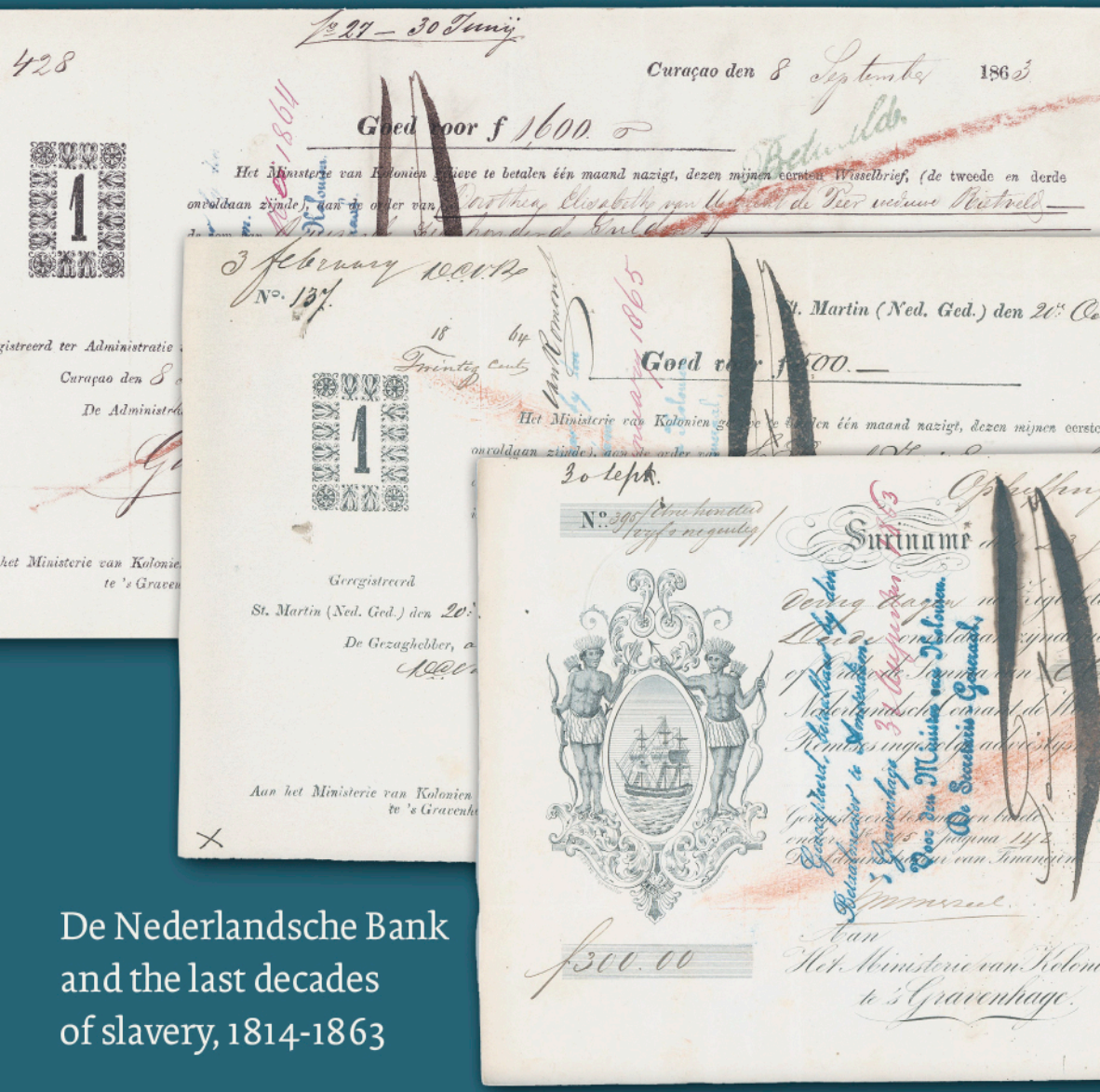

De Nederlandsche Bank and the last decades of slavery, 1814-1863

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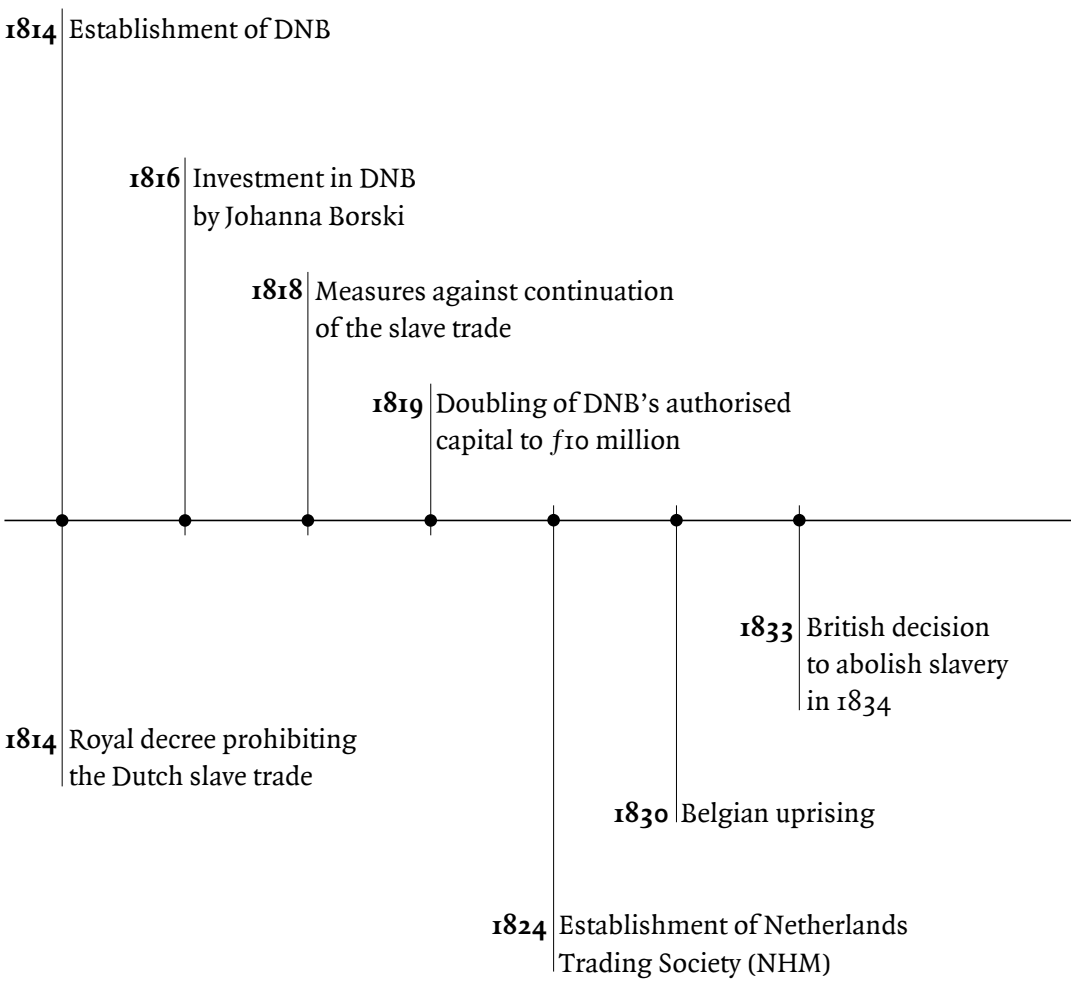
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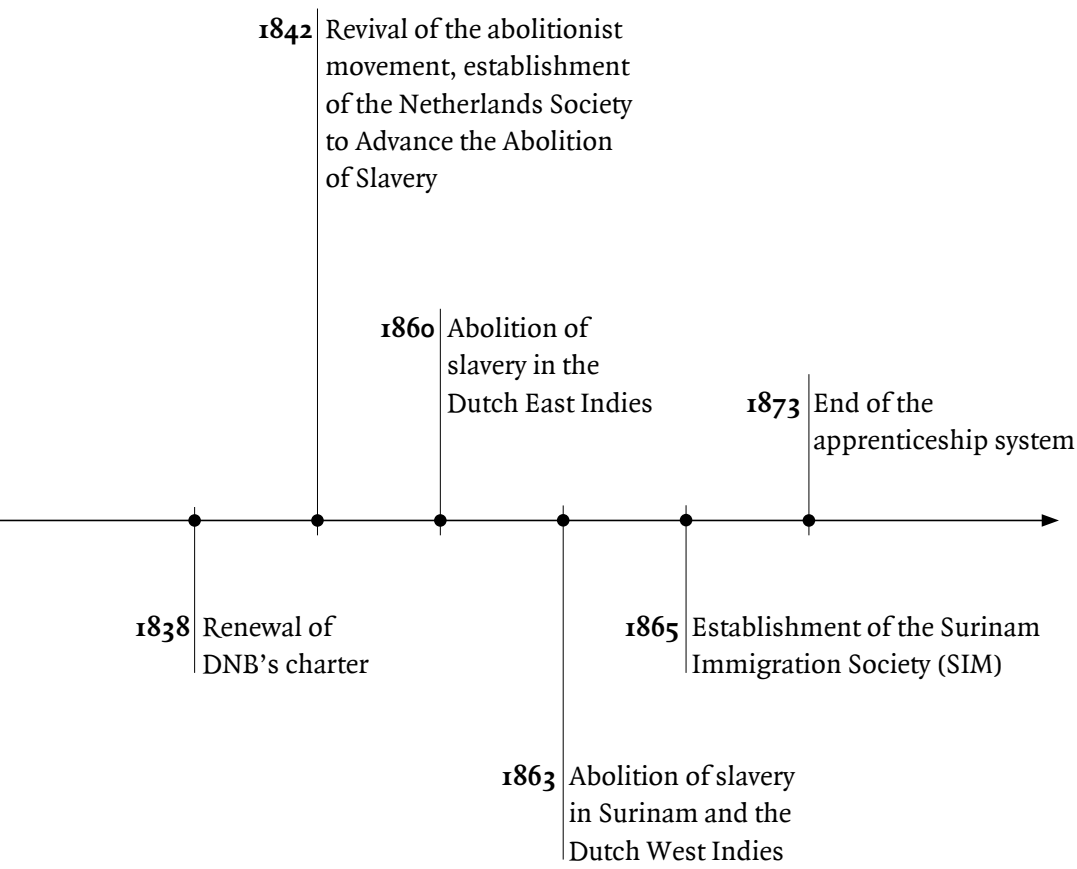
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Introduction

For hundreds of years slave labour was a link in the global chains of production, distribution, and consumption. In the nineteenth century, when the principal cultural, political, and financial institutions of the Netherlands were established, slavery was still very much part of the nation's global imperial structures. Dutch families, institutions, and governments are increasingly interested in the role their predecessors played in this history of colonialism and enslavement. And yet, little research has been conducted on the involvement in slavery of the country's central bank, De Nederlandsche Bank (DNB). In 2020, DNB indicated that it was "aware of the current debate about the Dutch history of slavery" and that, "partly as a result of the investigation at the Bank of England, it has decided to conduct a historical study into the relationship between DNB and slavery."[1] We have undertaken that study, commissioned by DNB and with the full co-operation of its archives, and in full academic freedom.

This book is a history of De Nederlandsche Bank in which we pay particular attention to its links with slavery, both as a factor in the economy and as a subject of political debate. The desire to investigate connections between the history of financial institutions and the history of slavery is also felt by insurers such as Lloyd's of London and by commercial banks.[2] In the United States, conducting such research is a legal requirement in some states. However, investigations of this kind are often limited to direct legal complicity and liability. For this study, DNB asked us to apply a broader understanding of historical involvement with slavery.[3] Our investigation focuses not only upon DNB's own formal involvement, but also on the private involvement of its highest ranking officials.[4] In addition, we examined whether the bank and its directors played any role in the abolition of slavery.

Earlier studies of DNB paid little attention to the history of slavery, although the last few years have seen studies mentioning connections between slavery and officials at DNB. In the six volume classic study by

A. M. de Jong, we found no mention of slavery.[5] The extensive biography of bank president Willem Cornelis Mees makes no mention of his role in the movement to abolish slavery.[6] Nor is the subject discussed by Joost Jonker in his 1996 contribution about the part played by trading houses and bankers in the establishment of DNB.[7] It was simply not considered a topic in need of specific attention in order to understand the bank's history. The closer we come to the present day, however, the more often it is discussed. In 2004, for instance, Jonker discussed at length the role of the Surinamese plantations in the activities of Insinger & Co – a non-executive director of DNB – and thus made an important contribution to our knowledge of the relationship between slavery and banking in Amsterdam in the nineteenth century.[8] In her 2007 study of the Dutch antislavery movement, Maartje Janse points out the later president of DNB, W.C. Mees' pioneering role as an abolitionist.[9] In a biography of Alexander Gogel (described by De Jong as the "spiritual father" of DNB), published in 2017, Jan Postma repeatedly mentions the fact that he had interests in the plantation economy but does not discuss whether this may have affected his vision for a national bank.

It is hardly surprising such questions were not raised; in all the studies mentioned, the history of slavery and that of DNB were treated separately. But things have now changed. In 2018, Pepijn Brandon and Karin Lurvink examined the role played by Insinger & Co in influencing Dutch politics to make the abolition work in favour of the slaveholders.[10] In 2020, Marcel Boumans explored former DNB president Nicolaas Gerard Pierson's complex relationship with slavery and its abolition.[11] The silence surrounding the subject has gradually been broken, and in this study we explicitly tackle the relationship between DNB and slavery, in financial, political as well as social terms.

After examining the available literature and conducting in-depth research in various private and notarial archives as well as those of the Ministry of Colonies and of DNB itself, we have reached the following conclusions.

1. DNB's starting capital came partly from business owners with direct interests in plantation slavery.
   — The small circle of the first main investors, lawyers, and executive directors of the bank consisted in large part of Amsterdam financiers, merchants, ship owners, and bookkeepers who directed

the transatlantic slavery-based complex of colonisation, plantation agriculture, shipping, processing, and trade. Of the sixteen main investors from whom the bank's founding non-executive directors (commissarissen) were drawn, and who nominated its first executive directors, we could find only five with no obvious direct and intensive association with slavery. Illustrative of this group's involvement is the fact that two of the sixteen were born in Surinam as the the children of plantation directors.

— The wealthy investor Johanna Borski was not one of the sixteen, as she only later acquired her major stake in DNB, which represented 40 per cent of the bank's starting capital. Borski had many slavery-related investments; her holding in DNB was funded in part by the labour of some 565 enslaved people on the *Anna Catharina*, *Blankenburg*, and *Sage Pond* plantations in Demerara. And in Surinam she owned two-thirds of the shares in the large plantation *Zeezigt*. By the time DNB was founded, though, direct interests in the plantation economy formed only a small part of Borski's outstanding capital. She did not participate in the public debate on slavery and its abolition.

2. After its establishment, DNB was involved indirectly in slavery both in the Dutch colonies and in non-Dutch territories.
   — When providing its services, DNB made no distinction between clients who were or were not involved in slavery. There was neither a legal basis for such a distinction at the time, nor was it made in DNB's policies.
   — Given its role, DNB provided its services, not only to many other companies, but also to trading houses involved in slavery. Such slavery-based enterprises made use of DNB's services, which consisted primarily of securing loans by pledging goods that were produced using slave labour.
      • For the sample years examined for this study (every fifth year between 1817 and 1863), in total almost 30 per cent (29.61 per cent) of goods pledged to DNB were produced using slave labour.
      • It is unlikely that the securities pledged as collateral to DNB were securities based on plantations. It is very likely, though, that loans were issued against securities from the southern

slave states of the United States. During the American Civil War, DNB extended credit with North American government bonds as collateral.

— For a long time, DNB refused to open any branches outside Amsterdam. One of the consequences of this was the establishment of separate, autonomous institutions in the colonies, such as *De Curaçaose Bank*, *De Javasche Bank* and *De Particuliere West-Indische Bank* (Private West Indies Bank). Because of their existence, DNB played no part in day-to-day slavery-related financial transactions in the Dutch overseas territories.
— DNB did support the Ministry of Colonies in its day-to-day financial traffic, which was important for Dutch colonial and trading activities. This also meant that DNB played a key role in paying compensation to slave owners following abolition in 1863.

3. Slavery affected the prominent officials of DNB. More than most of their contemporaries, they were personally, commercially, and politically involved in colonial slavery. At a comparable institution, the Amsterdamsche Wisselbank (Exchange Bank of Amsterdam), this entanglement with slavery was much less.
— By inheriting shares or taking over executive functions from elderly or deceased relatives, many DNB officials played a direct part in slavery-related businesses.
— Some DNB directors not only held shares, but were also directly involved in the management of slave plantations. Joan Huydecoper, for instance, hosted meetings to decide which of the enslaved should be manumitted. And Jan Hodshon signed a deed itemising the monetary value of enslaved individuals on his plantation.
— In addition to their activities for the bank, a number of prominent DNB officials organised themselves to represent the interests of slave owners in the political arena. As such, they were involved in drafting the legislation abolishing slavery – which, due in part to their efforts, proved beneficial for the owners.
— Of DNB's six executive directors in 1863 (four executive directors, one secretary and the president), three (Johannes Hermanus Insinger, Ferdinand Rendorp and Johannes Hermanus Molkenboer)

received compensation when Dutch slavery was abolished. After Britain abolished slavery, compensation was paid to Johannes Luden and Joan Huydecoper.

— Only a few DNB officials were active in organisations working to end slavery. Bank president Mees played a significant role in reviving the abolitionist movement in the Netherlands prior to his professional career at DNB.

These conclusions reveal that the history of slavery was not just an overseas affair, but one touching upon a wide range of activities in the Netherlands itself. Slavery is part of Dutch history, and therefore also part of the history of DNB. A part that was long shrouded in silence, but is now finally attracting more attention.

In light of today's public interest in historical slavery, one complex question immediately arises: how do we interpret DNB's involvement in a phenomenon that had existed for centuries but was ended in the first decades of DNB's existence? In order to answer this, we need to realise that some of our twenty-first century conceptions of institutions and society differ from those prevalent in the nineteenth century: DNB was not yet a pre-eminent central bank, slavery was not yet prohibited and the relationship between the States General and the monarch as head of state was not yet as it is today. Views concerning inappropriate forms of conflict of interest were also quite unlike those we are used to nowadays. Because of these differences between then and now, including the changes which occurred during the period covered by this book, it is necessary to accurately account for the chronology of developments.

We have structured our account chronologically as far as possible so that the changes over time become clear. We first discuss the almost simultaneous abolition of the slave trade and the establishment of DNB in 1814. In the next chapter, we take a slight step back and examine how many of the bank's officials and shareholders were involved in colonial slavery through their parents or grandparents. Ending slavery was already an important international issue by the time DNB was founded, and it gained urgency in the Netherlands with its abolition in the British Empire in 1834. The response by DNB officials with interests in slavery to that British decision is the subject of the third chapter. We also look at the resurrection of the antislavery movement in the Netherlands and at the political debate around reform and abolition. The fourth chapter offers an

insight into the services provided by DNB, and where such services were related to colonial slavery. The process culminating in abolition and its aftermath is the subject of the final chapter. When discussing prominent DNB officials, we indicate in parentheses the years in which they served as its company secretary (s.), non-executive director (n.), director (d.) and/or president (p.). Appendix 2 contains an overview of all the individuals investigated.

In order to put the links between the history of slavery and that of DNB into perspective, we distinguish several levels of involvement. For that we build on the description used in the research project *Slaves, Commodities and Logistics* for activities undertaken in the Netherlands.[12] Organising, administering or financing vessels used in the slave trade, owning plantations (and hence enslaved people), managing a plantation fund, buying, shipping and processing plantation goods, operating ships to and from plantation colonies and issuing mortgages for plantations all count as direct involvement.[13] Other activities indicate a connection with slavery, but are regarded as indirect involvement; for example, being a partner in a company concerned in part with the resale of colonial produce or owning a small stake in a fund that invested in plantations. This is a matter of gradations, whereby we consider case by case whether an activity constitutes direct or indirect involvement. In this way, as far as possible we state the extent to which each of the individuals examined were associated with slavery. It should be noted, though, that the bank officials and entrepreneurs we are dealing with here often had a diverse portfolio and so cannot always be categorised easily in that respect.

The slavery we focus on in this book is the racialised production slavery in the societies around the Atlantic Ocean. We explain this scope in more detail under the heading 'How we define slavery' (page 187) at the end of this book, but it is important to note here that enslavement was certainly not confined to that region. In the Dutch Atlantic colonies, 45,275 people were manumitted in 1863. As we show in this book, however, activities by Dutch entrepreneurs and investors can also be linked to slavery in British colonies, the southern United States, and Brazil, where the number of enslaved people ran into the millions. In the Dutch East Indies, the extent and significance of slavery cannot yet be properly reconstructed. When it was abolished there in 1860, about 5,000 people were freed, half of them on the nutmeg plantations of Banda and the other half from domestic servitude. Where the Netherlands had only indirect control, we have to make

do with estimates. On Java, slavery virtually disappeared in the nineteenth century, but on the other islands the number of enslaved people could have been anywhere between 567,000 and 806,000.[14] Colonial policy during the nineteenth century was to gradually replace outright enslavement with other forms of – often unfree – labour mobilisation.

1. *The establishment of De Nederlandsche Bank and the abolition of the slave trade in 1814*

After the collapse of Napoleon's empire, William Frederick, Prince of Orange-Nassau, came to power in the Netherlands in 1813. It would take until 1815 before he was formally invested as King William I, but as soon as he took office, he began to shape the future state and its colonial empire. The establishment of DNB formed part of a larger plan with financial, cultural, administrative, and colonial aspects. By banning the Dutch slave trade during negotiations in Vienna in 1814, the future monarch tried to appease the British and bring the colonies back under Dutch control. In a sense, that served the same purpose as the creation of DNB: William hoped that prohibiting the Dutch slave trade would bring the colonies back under Dutch control and thus strengthen the Netherlands' role as a mercantile power, whilst the creation of DNB was also intended to promote economic activity, especially commerce.

In the two decades preceding the establishment of DNB and the prohibition of the slave trade, the Netherlands had lost all its overseas colonies to the British. Plagued by massive debts, the large chartered maritime trading companies had floundered ignominiously. The committees which then took over the administration of the colonies soon lost control to the advancing British Empire. The alliance between the Batavian Republic, established in 1795, and revolutionary France had led to a series of attacks and takeovers by the British with the political backing of stadtholder William V, father of William Frederick, who had fled to the United Kingdom. From exile, he had called upon the colonies to side with the British rather than the pro-French Batavians. In short, by 1814 the overseas empire was not in good shape administratively. Nevertheless, European demand for sugar, coffee, and cotton remained high and technical innovations on the plantations were making higher yields possible. Between

the economic opportunities and the bleak governance situation, William Frederick saw room for innovation and modernisation.

Once installed as King William I, he believed that his new kingdom, which included the present-day Belgium and Luxembourg as well as the Netherlands, should become a leading mercantile and industrial nation. Not only was he enterprising as a monarch, but he also had an entrepreneurial drive and realised the importance of modernising the economy. And he did not shy away from taking initiatives of his own in this area. In order to give the capital and commodities markets the boost they needed to help achieve his ambitious agenda, William turned to an extensive network of financial institutions.[15] The establishment of De Nederlandsche Bank has to be seen in this historical context, happening as it did during a time characterised by uncertainty about the future of the nation and in the context of an international policy dedicated to ending the wars, revolutions, and national independence movements which had engulfed Europe and the colonies for two decades.

Talks with the British

At first sight, it may look like a historical coincidence that the establishment of DNB coincided with the Dutch ban on the transatlantic slave trade. In the eyes of William I, however, building his newly formed kingdom required not only a reliable financial institution but also international recognition. As early as April 1813, he had sought talks with the British about the return of the colonies and over the course of that year it became clear that they were sympathetic to the idea. But they were still worried that the new Netherlands would not be strong enough to govern its overseas territories.[16] William therefore tried to accommodate their wishes and did not even resist their use of former Dutch possessions as bargaining chips in their negotiations with other powers.[17] The Dutch had little to offer the British anyway, so the dialogue between them could hardly be called negotiations. Rather, they were conversations about the future of the Netherlands and its colonies, with Britain firmly in control of the outcome.

It was as part of this process towards the formation of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the talks about the restoration of its colonial rule that the decision to abolish the slave trade was made. Ever since the British had done this in 1808, they saw it as their task to induce other countries

to follow suit. This was out of a combination of humanitarian conviction and pragmatism, rooted in a desire to limit competition from countries still engaged in this form of human trafficking.[18] To appease the British, on 15 June, 1814 William I issued a decree putting an end to the Dutch transatlantic slave trade. From the subsequent course of the discussions about the return of the colonies, there is no evidence that this had any effect upon British decision-making, but once issued the ruling was never reversed. The treaty concluded between the British and the Netherlands in August of that year refers to William having "spontaneously issued a decree" ending the trade in slaves.

That treaty was not a resounding success for the Netherlands, but William I was able to console his Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Van Nagell, that at least the economically valuable and stable colonies in Asia were largely back in Dutch hands. Of course the monarch regretted that flourishing slave colonies like Berbice and Demerara, located just west of Surinam, remained in British hands, but he felt that the new liberal principles concerning the slave trade and the treatment of the enslaved were likely to give rise to a host of difficulties.[19] Van Nagell, however, had correctly assumed that a colony such as Berbice still had a lot to yield, and the Amsterdam financial elite also expected it to grow. Demerara remained in Dutch hands until 1814 but, along with the neighbouring settlements along the Berbice and Essequibo rivers, had been under British administration since 1796. In 1831, these three colonies were merged to form British Guiana, now independent Guyana.

Van Nagell's regret at the loss of Berbice was not without reason. Historian Dale Tomich has described nineteenth century enslavement as "the second slavery": a modified form characterised by a restricted trade in human beings but also by a growing demand for plantation commodities and new agricultural opportunities thanks to technical innovations. After 1815, the productivity of the "old" sugar regions grew rapidly and new centres of production emerged. Not even the destruction of the sugar plantations during the 1791 slave revolt in Saint-Domingue, at that point the world's largest producer, could prevent cultivation for the global market growing by 38 per cent after the Napoleonic Wars.[20] And it was in British Guiana, in particular, that output of sugar, coffee, and cotton grew enormously. In the first decades of the nineteenth century, yields there actually tripled. By 1830, almost all its plantations were equipped with steam power. In the last five years before the end of slavery in the

British Empire, in 1833, average sugar production was 57,197 tonnes.[21] After the end of the British transatlantic slave trade in 1808, trafficking between colonies continued and smuggling also brought new people to sugar-producing areas. Between 1813 and 1832, the number of those enslaved in British Guiana fell by more than 10 per cent. During the same period, the proportion of the colony's enslaved population working on its sugar plantations grew from 32.6 to 78.5 per cent.[22] This dynamism and growth represented an opportunity for wealthy inhabitants of Amsterdam prepared to risk investing in these colonies despite "the uncertainty of the West." One of them was Alexander Gogel, mortgagee of a loan worth *f* 240,000 for the slave plantations *Nooitgedacht*, *Vrede*, and *Vriendschap*, plus half of *De Goudmijn*, all in Berbice.[23]

DNB's spiritual father and his involvement in the plantation economy

In the same months that The Hague was negotiating with the British about the return of the colonies to Dutch rule, De Nederlandsche Bank was beginning to take shape in Amsterdam. Its establishment was an explicit wish of merchants in that city who had previously, at the end of the eighteenth century, petitioned for the revival of the Amsterdamsche Wisselbank.[24] Declining international commerce in the 1790s, combined with a balance of trade deficit and large-scale capital flight, had reduced the amount of available specie and credit, causing problems in many sectors of the economy. During the "French period", the politically committed banker Gogel worked on a series of plans to improve the banking system in the Netherlands. In the wake of the Batavian Revolution of 1795 and the coup d'état of 1798, for example, he drew up a scheme for a National General Lending, Discount and Deposit Bank (Algemeene Nationale Beleen-, Disconto- and Deposito-Bank).[25] On several occasions, such an institution came close to being founded. In 1802, the State Council submitted a proposal to set up a national bank with the aim of restoring the battered economy by reviving trade, industrial production, and agriculture.[26] Between 1802 and 1805, Gogel again worked on a plan for a national bank. This would serve as the basis for DNB after William I came to the throne.

The similarity between Gogel's plans for a national bank and the first charter of DNB have earned him the title of the bank's spiritual father. At that time, the charter had a status comparable with that of the modern Bank Act (Bankwet), which governs DNB's activities today. Gogel formed his ideas through an intensive correspondence with Johannes Goldberg, who seems to have had no involvement with the colonial world at that time but would later become Director-General of Colonies. In 1791, Gogel had founded his own trading house in Amsterdam, which was in contact with various counterparts across Europe. He also provided financial services, such as issuing a large mortgage for four plantations in Berbice. Gogel's choice is remarkable in the context of the prevailing political thinking about slavery at the time. The Patriot movement to which both he and Goldberg belonged was generally in favour of its ending slavery. That sentiment was widely supported, at least until the end of the eighteenth century, and the general expectation was that abolition would not be long in coming. After all, at the time the French empire had ended slavery in all its colonies in 1794.[27] Yet this did not stop Gogel from investing in the expansion of the plantation economy. And he knew well what that entailed. The plantation owner to whom the mortgage was issued wrote to him to say that his business partner had "had a Negro beaten to death and mistreated others to such an extent that they could not work!"[28] In commercial terms, the Berbice mortgage failed; within a few years the plantations had to be disposed of in a foreclosure sale. Because this occurred during the temporary British administration of the colony, it took a long time before Gogel was able to recover a portion of the money invested.[29]

So, the "uncertainty of the West", as William I would later call it, was very concrete in Gogel's case. It is quite possible that this royal characterisation of the slave colonies referred not only to the threat of rebellion but also to the regularly recurring problems with credit granted against plantations. There are no references to slavery or the slave trade in either Gogel's plans or the charter. However, Article 25 of the latter does state explicitly that the bank will not lend against securities guaranteed by foreign powers or businesses, or against "shares or stocks in banks, East or West Indies trading companies, insurance companies, manufacturing or agricultural companies established abroad, of whatever kind or nature they may be."[30] This was in line with Gogel's abstract principle that the national bank should first and foremost (and preferably exclusively) serve

the national interest. When the charter was renewed in 1838, the text of this article was amended to broaden DNB's area of operations. The prohibition now applied only to enterprises "established outside the Kingdom or its overseas possessions."[31]

The first shares and their buyers

DNB had a difficult start and the circle of people who had any confidence in the new bank, or who tried to win royal favour by investing in the project, was small. Amsterdam entrepreneurs certainly wanted an institution that provided the services it offered, but were outraged at the way the king went about creating it. Upon its foundation in March 1814, 5,000 shares were issued at *f* 1,000 each. For the bank to start operating, this offering would have to rise to at least *f* 2 million. By the summer of 1814, that target had still not been reached. Only 800 shares had been bought, by a total of 116 people, and William I and his government had to step in to bring the bank's capital up to the required *f* 2 million.[32] According to historian Joost Jonker, wounded local pride played a big part in this poor take-up: people in Amsterdam were offended that their own long-standing Wisselbank was being allowed to fail, apparently to be replaced by an initiative from The Hague for a national bank.[33] The large purchase of shares in DNB by Johanna Borski, about which more later, finally made it obvious to the inhabitants of Amsterdam that their attempts to stifle the new institution had failed. They, too, then went ahead and bought stock – some of it from Borski.

Those who did invest early on would come to play an important role in the further development of the bank. Its sixteen largest shareholders formed an exclusive group from whom the non-executive directors were selected by drawing lots, and they also nominated members of the executive board to the king.[34] He and his government were major early investors, too, but we do not include them in this study. We focus instead upon the "group of sixteen", and the profiles we have compiled of them reveal clearly just how much slavery-based economic activities were part of the portfolios of DNB's initial investors and non-executive directors.[35] The fact that two of the sixteen were actually born in Surinam, into planter families, perhaps says it all.

One of the first and also the largest original purchasers of shares was the partnership D. Couderc & M. P. Brants (n. 1814-1830). This firm originated in the 1770s as a collaboration between Jean Samuel Couderc and Jan Brants. It had suffered losses in property transactions at the end of the eighteenth century, but maintained a prominent place in Amsterdam's business community by providing financial services. Some members of the Couderc family were by then already actively involved in plantation ownership and management in Surinam.[36] Couderc and Brants were also active traders; between 1793 and 1804 they formed a partnership with Daniel Changuion, and in 1796 were joined by Willem Six. The business was eventually taken over by the next generation: David Couderc and Mattheus Pieter Brants worked together from 1803 until 1829.[37] For a long time, they enjoyed considerable success, with the partners sharing annual profits of *f* 200,000 between 1804 and 1810.[38] The firm invested a part of its accumulated capital in the founding of DNB, thus making it one of the bank's largest initial subscribers. Couderc and Brants acted as brokers for French investments, amongst other things, and were certainly not averse to slavery-related activities. As mortgagees of the large plantations *The Morning Star* and *La Retraite* in Demerara, and of the smaller *Plaisance* on its east coast, their involvement was direct.[39] Besides his activities with Couderc & Brants, Changuion also played an independent role in financing plantations in Demerara.[40] As well as acting as mortgagees, Couderc & Brants sold commodities shipped over from the colonies of Demerara and St Eustatius on behalf of other businesses.[41] Amongst these we find coffee, sugar, and indigo, in addition to European wares such as wool and wine.[42] Through its intermediary on Curaçao, the firm received hides, cotton, sugar, and tobacco from various Caribbean ports and brazilwood (used to make dye) from Rio de la Hacha.[43] Like other entrepreneurs active in the colonies and in providing financial services, Couderc & Brants was also involved in shipping; for example, it was the bookkeeper for the *Maria*, which sailed to and from Surinam.[44] The partnership remained active in trade and as a non-executive director of DNB until the death of Daniel Couderc in 1829.[45]

Another of the first major buyers of DNB shares was Faesch & Co, again a firm with substantial interests in Atlantic slavery. The company was probably a joint venture between Jan Jacob Faesch and two entrepreneurs named Kluppel and Braunsberg. Faesch's father, also called Jan Jacob, had moved from Switzerland to Surinam and made his fortune there. His son

expanded the family's plantation holdings and, like many other successful colonists, eventually left for the Netherlands.[46] There a wealthy family could then make new investments, such as in DNB. Faesch junior was co-owner with J.F. de Frederici of the *Voorburg* plantation, as well as sole owner of *Hooyland*, which had come into the family's possession through his mother.[47] He also had stakes in the plantations *Marienburg*, *Waterland*, *Palmeneribo*, *Surmombo*, *Egmont*, *Rhijnbeek* and *Montresor* in Surinam, and on the island of Tobago he owned shares in the *Vriendschap* plantation.[48] In fact, Faesch had interests in the whole chain of activities from plantation labour to shipping and selling the produce, as well as managing plantation loans. In the 1790s, he owned a ship called *Zeevaart* that was involved in direct trade between Amsterdam and Surinam.[49] This activity only increased in subsequent years: by 1816 Faesch & Co owned the *Planter* and the *Argyle*, both of which carried goods to and from Surinam.[50] A year later the fleet was expanded with the *Pauline*. And in 1820, the *Henriette Elizabeth*, the *Colonist*, the *Strever*, and the *Argyle* all sailed to Surinam for the company.[51] Names like *Colonist* and *Planter* indicate that these vessels were intended expressly for colonial service. Faesch & Co's entire shipping business was devoted to the Surinam route.[52] The capital it invested in DNB inevitably came in part from slavery-based activities.

Besides Faesch, another of the bank's major initial investors was also Surinam-born. Abraham Vereul came into the world in Paramaribo, moved to the Netherlands at a young age and went on to enjoy great fame as a lawyer, colonial administrator, and man of letters. Prior to his involvement with DNB, he had been a director and then the last president of the Surinam Company (Sociëteit van Suriname), the chartered company which owned the colony and managed it from the Netherlands.[53] Over three generations, the Vereul family had built up a considerable plantation portfolio. The firm Wed. Vereul & Zn ("Widow Vereul & Son"), controlled by Abraham's aunt, Maria Sara Benelle, managed a number of plantations, several ships engaged in the Surinam trade, and an investment fund for plantations.[54] Whether Abraham himself had a stake in this business is not known. With the establishment of the Batavian Republic, colonies and trading posts in private Dutch hands were brought under state control. The Society of Surinam was abolished to make way for a nationally organised committee, with Vereul as its president. His roaring speech at the first meeting of this new body avoided the subject of slavery and spoke only of the need to guard

against "the exaggeration of principles".[55] Listeners at the time will have understood from this that it was not his intention to acknowledge human rights, as enshrined in the French Constitution of 1791, for everyone, but instead uphold the institution of slavery.[56] During the revolutionary years, Vereul did not shy away from administrative responsibility and in 1811 was appointed mayor of Amsterdam. After William I's return to the Netherlands, however, Vereul remained an ordinary citizen with no formal political position. At the time of his death in 1817, he owned the Surinam coffee plantations *De Nieuwe Eendracht* and *Welgelegen*.[57]

The last plantation owner in the list of major investors is Dirk Jan Voomberg. With his brother Abraham, he shared ownership of *Büse's Lust*, *La Fraternité*, and *Nieuwe Hoop*, plus *De Eduard* in Berbice jointly with Louise Schumacher and Dirk Wernard van Vloten.[58] Voomberg was also coproprietor of the company Ketwich & Voomberg, which managed numerous plantations in Demerara on behalf of their shareholders, amongst them *The Covent Garden* and *La Repentir*, as well as others, including *La Penitence*, for a fund in plantation mortgages (negotiatie) run by Van Vloten. It was mortgagee of *Nieuw Beehive*, too, and also played a role in the management of *Nouvelle Vlanders*.[59] Voomberg was thus very active in the management of slave plantations, both privately and ex officio.[60]

Not all investors combined interests in colonial trade with direct investments in plantations. Charles Antonin Ramperti (1774-1823), an Italian by birth, was a wealthy merchant based in Amsterdam at the time of DNB's establishment. The two ships operated by Ramperti & Co plied the Atlantic world, calling at ports including Paramaribo, Rio de Janeiro, Port-au-Prince, and Bahia – all destinations where enslaved people produced the principal export commodities.[61] Ramperti himself died at Bahia in 1823. Merely trading in colonial wares, without investing in plantations or ships, could also yield significant sums. Early investor Josua Jacob van Winter (1788-1840) was the son of a prosperous indigo and brazilwood merchant, and upon his father's death inherited not only *f* 126,500 in cash but also the family firm, Muhl & Van Winter, and a share in an exceptional art collection, which his sister bought him out of. It will come as no surprise, then, that Van Winter was one of Amsterdam's biggest taxpayers during the French period.[62] Later, too, Muhl & Van Winter continued to trade in tropical dyestuffs such as brazilwood, annatto, cochineal, and indigo.[63]

Amongst the first large investors, we also find a number of persons and companies trading in other goods besides the produce of Atlantic slave plantations. The trading house Gebroeders Planta, headed by the brothers J. Planta, J.P. Planta and E.A. Planta, owned the ship *Aurora* between 1803 and 1820; it called at Berbice as well as Liverpool, Bordeaux, and Marseilles.[64] The Plantas traded mainly in wine and European wares, and also actively lobbied over trade policy through addresses and petitions. Given the scope of their European activities, they seem to have been involved only indirectly in colonial trade.

So far, we have discussed a substantial number of entrepeneurs who made their money from slavery-related activities prior to their investment in DNB. Jacob Jan Waszink (1750?-1836, n. 1814-1830) and Goll & Co followed the opposite route. Waszink only really started trading after he had stepped down as a non-executive director of DNB. He dealt in various goods, some European – such as almonds, sultanas, wheat and rye from Trieste or Marseilles – but from the 1830s onwards also supplied Amsterdam with products such as sugar, cocoa, rum, various dyestuffs, gum, tobacco, and allspice from St Thomas, and his ship the *Jonge Jacob* sailed to Puerto Rico and Surinam in the West Indies.[65] Goll & Co's path was similar. Joan Goll van Franckenstein (n. 1815-1821) had founded the firm in 1777, and after his death in 1821 it was taken over by his son and grandson. In the first half of the nineteenth century, it was one of the leading merchant banking houses in Amsterdam.[66] Prior to the founding of DNB, however, it seems not to have been involved in slavery-related activities. Nor did these form a substantial portion of its activities in later years, except during the 1830s.[67] During that decade, the firm acquired a share in the mortgage fund of the plantation *Nieuw Klarenbeek*, which it retained until at least 1856.[68] Its involvement with slavery, both mercantile and political, thus came about only after the death of founder Goll van Franckenstein.

"Nieuw Clarenbeek Plantation on the River Cottica in Surinam" by J. L. Brockman, 1860.
Source: [1138-13], Tropenmuseum, Amsterdam.

On the other hand, a few individual investors had no such association with slavery either before the establishment of the DNB or later in the century. Cornelis Johannes Kneppelhout, for instance, was a well-liked scientist, art lover, and traveller, but seems to have had no links at all with the colonial world, let alone with slavery. The same was true of Henry Fizeau and the major early investor Gerlach Cornelis Joannes van Reenen (1752-1822, n. 1814-1815), his son Jacobus Henricus van Reenen (1783-1845, n. 1817-1845) and the non-executive director Severijn & Haesebroeck (n. 1814-1817), represented by Abraham Johannes Severijn. It should be noted here that we have not been able to ascertain whether any of these individuals personally owned shares in plantations. Nor has it been possible to establish whether their lack of involvement in slavery was a matter of principle. None of them expressed themselves publicly on the subject.

The sixteen main investors were an important group for DNB. A considerable number of them were involved in slavery-related activities, more so than their counterparts at comparable institutions like the Amsterdamsche Wisselbank.[69] This interest in DNB on the part of a group of businessmen so directly and intensively involved in slavery raises various questions. Several explanations are possible for their remarkable

Table 1. *The sixteen main investors in DNB and how they were involved with slavery.*

Name	Involvement with slavery
D. Couderc & M.P. Brants	Yes: involved in plantation mortgages, trade and bookkeeping for ships sailing to Surinam.
Determeyer Weslingh & Son	Yes: trade in goods, shipowner in Surinam and owner of shares in the *Geertruidenberg* plantation.
Faesch & Co	Yes: plantation ownership, some mortgages and several ships calling into Surinam.
Henry Fizeau	No: involved with Hope & Co in the financing of foreign sovereign debt.
Johan Goll van Franckenstein	No: the firm Goll & Co later became involved in the trade in goods, and became co-owner of Surinam's *Nieuw Clarenbeek* plantation.
Joan Huydecoper van Maarsseveen	Yes: see below.
C.J. Kneppelhout	No.
Gebroeders Planta	Indirect: trade in goods.
Ch. Ramperti	Yes: trade in goods.
G.C.J. van Reenen	No.
Severijn & Haesebroeck & Co	No.
Abraham Vereul	Yes.
D.J. Voomberg	Yes.
J.J. Waszink	Indirect: trade in goods after serving as non-executive director.
A.L. Weddik	No: broker of ships and houses.
J.J. van Winter	Yes: trade in goods.

prominence in the bank's first cohort of investors. It is quite possible, for example, that they were counting on DNB to play an important role in the colonial cash cycle. After all, the overseas possessions were widely regarded as forming an integral part of the Dutch economy. Only later did DNB's executive board explicitly refuse to open branches in Surinam and Curaçao. Another possibility is a connection with the abolition of the slave trade. Purchasing enslaved people represented a substantial cost for the plantations and their financiers, so its elimination may well have freed up capital that would previously have been spent on the purchase of human beings. Yet another scenario is that, in the wake of the slave trade's abolition, this group perceived a need to strengthen its ties with William I – by investing in projects he had initiated, for instance. Within the scope of this study, however, we have been unable to test any of these three hypotheses. That would require further research into this branch of the economy and the prominent entrepeneurs active in it. We therefore confine ourselves here to the conclusion that the list of sixteen reveals a remarkable involvement with slavery.

The last two thousand shares

Although investments were made in DNB from March 1814 onwards, there was no immediate rush of subscribers for the 5,000 shares and some 2,000 remained unsold. These were finally purchased in 1816 by Johanna Borski, for almost *f* 2 million. Born Johanna van de Velde, she married Willem Borski in 1790. Her own family had made a respectable fortune in the textile trade, and at the time of the marriage Willem was a novice broker in grain and rice. In the mid-1790s, he gradually began to style himself a merchant, adding indigo and musk to the portfolio of commodities he traded in. In economic terms, the marriage was a productive one: the couple were active participants in several firms, amongst them Hope & Co and Ketwich & Voomberg. When Willem was abroad, Johanna took care of their business interests. After Willem Borski died suddenly in 1814 as one of the richest millionaires in Amsterdam, Johanna took over the firm and renamed it Wed. W. Borski.[70]

As one of its major shareholders, Johanna "the widow" Borski is an important figure in the history of DNB. She subsequently sold part of her original holding, but always retained shares with a face value of *f* 16,000 and in October 1840 again increased her stake in the bank by 50 per cent.[71] For this study, it is important to know the extent to which both the assets of the firm Wed. W. Borski and Johanna's personal capital were accrued through enslavement-based economic activities. Although the company's financial records no longer exist, her private ones did survive and there are also several other sources providing information about the Borskis' links with slavery-based economic activities.

Their earliest direct connection to plantations is to be found in Demerara in 1804, when Willem Borski issued a combined mortgage for the three plantations *Anna Catharina*, *Blankenburg*, and *Sage Pond*. These were 1,000 fields of coffee, 1,000 fields of sugar and coffee, and 275 fields of coffee, respectively.[72] Although no exact numers exist of their enslaved populations for this specific year, estimates can be made based upon information about other years. About 65 people were enslaved on *Anna Catharina*, approximately 400 on *Blankenburg* and roughly 100 on *Sage Pond*.[73] In total, then, around 565 human beings formed part of the collateral of the mortgage issued by the Borskis and they were forced to carry out the work needed to pay off the interest. As such, DNB's starting capital was in part generated by slave labour. As will be shown later in this book, Johanna Borski remained involved in slavery-based investments until the end of her life.

The power of William I and the independence of DNB

Although William I took the initiative to establish DNB and, more than in Gogel's plans, wanted the bank to be able to act in the service of the public finances, the board managed to keep political interference at bay.[74] Given the monarch's authoritarian style of government, it is important to note DNB succeeded in operating autonomously. To run the bank, William appointed six prominent inhabitants of Amsterdam as its founding executive directors; they included the president, who was named for life. Later members of the board were chosen by the king from pairs of shareholders nominated by the executive directors and non-executive directors; to qualify, a nominee had to have held ten shares in DNB for at

least six months. Nonetheless, even though the king certainly had some say in the composition of its board, he had only limited influence over the bank's policy.

Accepting a directorship was more a favour to the monarch than taking on a busy job.[75] The first board consisted of president Paul Iwan Hogguer (p. 1814-1816) and the five directors Jan Hodshon (d. 1814-1816; p. 1816-1827), Jan van de Poll (d. 1814-1822), Jacques Teysset (d. 18141827; p. 1827-1828), Jacob Fock I (d. 1814-1828; p. 1828-1835), and Willem Ferdinand Mogge Muilman (d. 1814-1835; p. 1835-1844).[76] All were prominent merchants, whilst Hogguer, Hodshon, and Mogge Muilman combined their mercantile activities with banking during their active years.[77] Hogguer was also one of the four mayors of Amsterdam at the time of his appointment. William I's stamp on the composition of the board was expressed mainly through his appointment of three Orangist directors. Known to be supporters of the House of Orange, the Hogguer, Mogge Muilman, and Van de Poll families had been out of favour in Amsterdam for a considerable time. The Anglican Hodshon, Baptist Fock, and Walloon Reformed Teysset families had only been allowed to hold public office since the Batavian Revolution of 1795.[78] In these years of national reconstruction, the king needed a loyal circle of men he could trust. In 1815, he elevated Hogguer and Van de Poll to the nobility in recognition of their service to the House of Orange during the Batavian and French periods.

In its early years, DNB operated exclusively in Amsterdam and within that city kept itself at a distance from other bankers, commercial businesses, and even the stock exchange.[79] For example, it never traded on the exchange and its charter did not allow private accounts. This limited the bank's contact with the Amsterdam trading houses. To keep up with the latest commercial developments, it was dependent upon what the directors knew through other positions they held. At this time, sitting on the board of DNB was neither a full-time job nor the main source of income for its members. The outside world was familiar with the likes of Mogge Muilman and Teysset as leading Amsterdam merchants who *also* happened to be directors of DNB, and Hogguer continued to serve as mayor of Amsterdam. To discharge their day-to-day duties on behalf of the bank, the directors came in pairs for consultations or meetings with Hogguer and the company's secretary. They also manually signed every banknote issued by DNB. This task kept them busy from noon until about three in the afternoon.[80]

William I felt that DNB should be more energetic in its activities. When its charter was renewed in 1838, the king's headstrong behaviour riled the board.[81] Without its knowledge, William had prepared far-reaching amendments to the bank's charter even though the directors had indicated that they saw no reason for them. In future, DNB would have to discount paper other than bills of exchange, allow private individuals to open current accounts and set up a branch in Rotterdam. Many of the board's objections to these relaxations of the charter's restrictions had been addressed during negotiations on its renewal, but dissatisfaction with the king's high-handedness remained. Even after the document had been approved, the directors were irritated by the increased influence it gave William over the presidency of the bank. Up to then, DNB's most senior official had been appointed for life, and the custom had developed that when the president died, he was always succeeded by the oldest sitting director. This is why all the members of the first board, with the exception of Van de Poll, went on to serve as president.

Under the new arrangement the king was granted the power to replace the president early. This meant that the bank's highest office was now treated in the same way as the ordinary directorships, with its holder facing non-automatic reappointment at regular intervals. This touched a raw nerve with the then president, Mogge Muilman, who felt his honour personally impugned by the idea that written regulations should prevail over personal suitability when making appointments to the position of president. A month after the new charter was adopted, Mogge Muilman therefore submitted his resignation to the king. He was followed by the directors Johannes Carp and Ananias Willink. The two least experienced members of the board, Johannes Luden and Abraham Fock – who had taken over his father's seat – stayed on. The other remaining director, Jan van Eeghen, was on his deathbed. Jan Bondt, the bank's legal consultant, mediated in the dispute and eventually managed to bring Mogge Muilman and his allies back on board. Bondt had been appointed by royal decree to advise DNB on legal matters at the time of its establishment and also served as a state councillor extraordinary, which enabled him to act as an intermediary in this matter between the bank and William I.[82] Bondt received royal authorisation to make any necessary commitment to the resigned board members, as he saw fit. As a result, personal suitability was reinstated as the criterion for appointments. This solution defused the immediate crisis, but the whole episode is a good illustration of the

strained relationship between the king and the bank. As already mentioned, a DNB directorship was not a full-time job but a position held alongside other functions. In fact, a good network beyond the bank was the reason why a person was invited to join the board. Nor was political engagement any bar; several members in the early years combined their directorship with political office.

Jan Bondt.
Source: [200618], RKD Netherlands Institute for Art History.

One of the first political achievements of the new state was the drafting and adoption of its constitution. To consider and vote on this document, an Assembly of Notables (Vergadering van Notabelen) convened at Amsterdam's Nieuwe Kerk on 29 and 30 March, 1814. Jan Bondt acted as its secretary. Upon completion of this task, Bondt commenced his appointment as DNB's legal consultant. Amongst the 474 "notables" present were also newly appointed DNB president Hogguer, future president Mogge Muilman, and current or future directors Jan Hodshon, Jan van de Poll, and Joan Huydecoper van Maarsseveen. The non-executive directors Johan Goll van Franckenstein (n. 1815-1821) and Marcus Broen Mzn (n. 1823-1850) also cast their votes.[83]

Provincial assemblies played an important role in the Dutch political system in the first half of the nineteenth century. At the head of the provincial administration stood the governor, who regularly delivered confidential reports to the king about the situation in his region. It was in this way, for example, that William II received information about unease amongst the Amsterdam trading houses caused by a governor-general of Surinam in the mid-1840s.[84] The provincial assemblies elected the members of the Dutch House of Representatives under an indirect voting system from 1817 until 1848. Mogge Muilman, Van de Poll, and Huydecoper van Maarsseveen were all members of the Provincial assembly during their tenure at DNB, as was non-executive director Goll van Franckenstein. In 1819, Mogge Muilman was elected by that body to parliament, but declined to take up his seat. He did have a number of in-laws there. He was a nephew by marriage of Jan van de Poll, whose brother Willem Gerrit and father-in-law, Archibald Hope, were both members of the House. Finally, three of the abovementioned DNB officials were members of the Amsterdam City Council: Mogge Muilman, Huydecoper van Maarsseveen, and Broen Mzn. All in all, then, in the bank's early days it was not uncommon for the men running it to be politically active at the local, provincial, and national levels.

Jan Bondt's legal advice

Jan Bondt and his firm Determeyer Weslingh & Son were amongst the first sixteen major private shareholders, but in addition to this financial contribution he also played a key administrative role in De Nederlandsche Bank from its early years until his death in 1845.[85] Letters from its first board

reveal its gratitude to Bondt for establishing the bank in 1814. William I decided to add him to the board as a legal consultant so that the bank could continue to benefit from his advice, confirming the appointment in a royal decree issued on 15 April, 1814. When renewing the charter in 1838, William also maintained Bondt in that position.[86] Unquestionable proof of the board's appreciation of his role during the founding phase came in the form of a gift: Bondt was offered a share in the bank worth *f* 1,000. This was one of the 5,000 shares originally issued to found the institution. Bondt himself regarded DNB as one of his children.[87] During the early years, he was more than just its legal consultant; he attended board meetings even when there were no legal issues on the agenda.[88]

DNB, meanwhile, benefitted from Bondt's status in the Amsterdam mercantile community, based in part upon his involvement with Determeyer Weslingh & Son. One of the city's most prominent trading houses in the nineteenth-century, Bondt had been at its helm since 1806. Joost Jonker classifies this business in the category between maritime and foreign traders, with a capital of between 800,000 and 1 million guilders.[89] Bondt's eldest brother was also a partner. Formally, management of the firm rested with two of their fellow partners, Joannes Stijger and Bondt's brother-in-law, the DNB director and later president Jacob Fock I (d. 1814-1828; p. 1828-1835). For what follows it is important to note that – according to the memoirs of Maurits Cornelis van Hall – Bondt remained "until his death the all-inspiring spirit, who planned all the activities and engagements undertaken and entered into by [the bank], observed them with the closest attention and managed them prudently to the best and often pleasing results".[90]

The records of Determeyer Weslingh & Son in the archive of Jan Bondt show that the firm repeatedly did business with slavery-related companies. Amongst its debtors in 1816, for example, were "interested parties in the plantation *Geertruidenberg* in Surinam" for the amount of *f* 1,016.77.[91] By the 1838 balance sheet, their debt had increased to *f* 11,030.81 and the firm also held shares in *Geertruidenberg* worth *f* 6,000. In terms of revenue, the plantation yielded the company *f* 1,264 in that year. The 1838 accounts also reveal speculation in slavery-related goods: "coffee" to the value of *f* 4,062.26, "Porto Rico tobacco" of *f* 3,905.51, "Varinas tobacco" of *f* 3,339.35, "St Domingo coffee" of *f* 8,196.40 and "cotton" of *f* 5,194.40. In the last year from which a balance sheet has survived, 1844, *Geertruidenberg* was valued at *f* 10,000.[92] Bondt's confidential journal is very detailed but

mostly unrelated to slavery. It does show, however, that as of 25 March, 1835 he was administering eleven coupons in the W.G. Deutz plantation fund on behalf of his son-in-law, Floris Adriaan van Hall. They yielded 165 guilders in that year.[93] Van Hall, an Amsterdam lawyer, had married Bondt's eldest daughter in 1815. In his professional capacity he was involved in a dispute over a mortgage fund operated by the firm Insinger & Co, for the *Zeezigt* plantation. He would later rise to prominence in national politics, serving as minister of Justice and of Finance.[94]

Bondt, too, rose through the ranks. In August 1827 he was made a state councillor extraordinary, a position in which he acted as an adviser to the king and his government. No emolument was attached to this title; its value lay in the fact that the holder had the monarch's ear. Maurits Cornelis van Hall, who attended several of Bondt's meetings with William I, gives us probably a somewhat too rosy a description of one of their conversations.

> It was then almost as if I saw in the former [William] nothing more than a client soliciting advice and grateful for it, and in the latter [Bondt] but an ordinary scholar in his own home; and thus sometimes I forgot, during that conversation stripped of all formalities, that I found myself in a Royal Palace and in the presence of the Esteemed Head of the State.[95]

We find a more realistic picture of the relationship between the two men in a study on the king's borrowings by Harm van Riel. William I regularly needed more cash for his money-guzzling Amortisation Syndicate, a private fund kept afloat by loans, subventions from the national treasury, and proceeds from the sale of crown domains. From it he could spend at will, unhindered by parliamentary scrutiny. But in 1836 his creditors came calling and he was once again in urgent need of more funds – on this occasion ƒ 14 million. It had been suggested from The Hague that DNB might be able to lend a helping hand. Bondt believed, however, that the amount should be borrowed on the Amsterdam capital market, with DNB playing no part whatsoever in any arrangements.[96] He was also heavily involved in the decision to pledge the nation's possessions in the East Indies as collateral to make government bonds more attractive to Dutch investors.[97] As Minister of Finance, Floris Adriaan van Hall only managed to ward off national bankruptcy in 1844 through the issuance of "voluntary" bonds, with the threat of a tax hike if they were not taken up.

In the run-up to this conversion of the national debt, Bondt wrote several letters to Van Hall; the minister, he explained in one of these, should interpret his comments on the matter "as casual hints from a loving father concerning such a grand design by his son-in-law".[98] Finally, on behalf of Determeyer Weslingh & Son, Bondt looked after the financial affairs of the Kingdom of Denmark in the Netherlands. Upon his death in 1845, the newly appointed president of DNB, Jacob Fock II (d. 1837-1844, p. 1844-1858), travelled to Copenhagen to ensure that the firm would retain that commission.[99]

Muted resistance to abolition of the slave trade

The abolition of the slave trade by the Netherlands in 1814 came about as a result of international pressure, but nonetheless met with remarkably little public opposition. Nor was there any overt protest from the close-knit circle of founders and early directors of DNB. For those who owned plantations, it was self-evident that procuring human beings through the transatlantic trade was part of the business. DNB director and later president Jacques Teysset (d. 1814-1827, p. 1827-1828) was very likely familiar with the trade, too, since his father had taken part in it with the ship *L' Aimable Sophie*.[100] The traffic itself had declined sharply following the Fourth Anglo-Dutch War (1781-1784), and the provinces of Zeeland and Holland had different views about how best to revive it: the former wanted tax benefits for what it called the "national" slave trade, whilst the latter – dominated by Amsterdam – saw more advantages in opening up the Dutch colonies to British slavers to maintain the supply of people to the plantations and so safeguard their productivity.[101] This difference in approach is quite logical since the shipping side of the trade was primarily a Zeeland business, whereas inhabitants of Amsterdam tended to own or invest in the plantations. In the end, the States General did pass a resolution intended to support the Dutch slave trade.

Now, several decades later, the group which had acted to revive that trade under stadtholder William V was confronted by the decision of his son, king William I, to ban it completely. The personal papers of the distinguished regent Van Lynden van Blitterswijk – who in 1788 and 1789 had participated in the discussion about measures to support the slave trade – reveal dissatisfaction at the abolition of 1814.[102] Despite their earlier

differences, Van Lynden's opinion will not have been greatly at variance with that of the Amsterdam entrepreneurs with interests in the Atlantic slave colonies. His line of reasoning can also be seen in their anti-abolition lobbying, in which prominent DNB officials played a part. Having served as a confidant of the stadtholder prior to 1795, Van Lynden was a member of the Constitutional Commission of 1814 and in August of that year drafted a paper containing some remarks about the slave trade.[103] With regard to Holland in particular, he reiterated two points he made during the debates of 1788, namely "that the trade to the West Indies is of the utmost importance" and "that this cannot be undertaken successfully without an annual supply of negroes, who must be collected in our own ships from our establishments on the coast of Africa."[104] To reinforce this second point, he quoted the eighteenth-century axiom upon which the policy for those regions rested: "with regard to the negro trade on the coast of Guinea", the States General and the Committeemen of Holland had agreed "that the prosperity of the colonies relies beyond all doubt upon the abundant supply of negroes."[105] The credit crisis following the loss of a substantial part of the merchant fleet during the war with the British had reduced the scale of the Dutch slave trade. Despite government support, the shipping of enslaved Africans to the Dutch colonies had in many cases been taken over by the British and Americans.[106] Furthermore, with regard to Essequibo and Demerara, "not only the colonists, but also the money lenders and other interested parties in Europe, were [living] in constant fear" due to rebellious or fleeing slaves.[107] Van Lynden noted that the situation in that respect had not improved, in part as a result of the British ban on the slave trade.

> According to reports recently received, in our remaining West Indian establishments the number of negroes has been so much reduced by prolonged lack of supply and enormous purchase prices ... that cultivation, especially of sugar, has had to be greatly curtailed and there is the dismal prospect of the total destruction of all agriculture in the restituted American colonies if there cannot be some extenuation or condonement with regard to the importation of slaves.[108]

Van Lynden was not deaf to the humanitarian aspect of the issue, though: "In itself, and considered separately from the interests of Europeans, it is undeniably out of keeping with the nature of Christianity to buy people in Africa and to convey them far from their homeland to undertake hard labour."[109] He put forward two counterarguments against this objection. Firstly, that the coast of West Africa was populated by "savage peoples, who fight each other almost incessantly with a view to enslaving their enemies" – a point also much heard in British pro-slavery circles.[110] But Van Lynden found his decisive justification in a statement by Pierre-Victor Malouet, a planter on Saint-Domingue: "The abolition of slavery is impossible and the continuation of the slave trade indispensable."[111] In August 1814 – two months after the royal decree banning it – this prominent regent was still convinced of the benefits and importance of supplying fresh slaves to the Dutch colonies in the West Indies.

Van Lynden's convictions found a willing listener in the minister directly responsible for maintaining the ban on the slave trade: the Minister of the Navy. To this effect, Van Lynden had ensured that his paper was read by the wealthy Amsterdam regent Joan Cornelis van der Hoop, who had begun his career as secretary of the Society of Surinam, a position in which he oversaw that Dutch colony's day-to-day administration. In that capacity, he corresponded with the governor of Surinam, and he had also developed diplomatic skills in negotiations with the British. Between 1781 and 1795 he served as director of the Society. He was thus very well informed about colonial matters. Even after the revolution of 1795, he continued to apply his administrative expertise in this field.[112] Until September 1814 he was Secretary-General for Trade and the Colonies, and from 1815 until his death in 1825 he would serve as Minister of the Navy.

Van der Hoop returned Van Lynden's paper with thanks, "because the reading of that document has been most agreeable to me and has strengthened me in my principles."[113] Amongst other things, he believed that "Africans ... cannot be governed other than through the power of property."[114] Van der Hoop wrote these words on 13 February, 1815, by which time the royal decree banning the slave trade had been in place for months. He also discussed the "philanthropy of the English."[115] He was convinced that this "should have been directed towards the manner of care and treatment, and not against the care itself and against the government through ownership."[116] In other words, both men agreed that, despite the prohibition of human imports, slavery itself should continue

to exist in the West Indies. Based upon this exchange of views on slave trade and property between a member of parliament and Minister of the Navy, it is hardly surprising that the official abolition failed to put an end to the traffic. Once William I had issued his decree, no concrete measures followed to actually enforce the Dutch ban.

For the slave owners and planters, this prohibition came as no great shock. De facto, the slave trade in the colonies had already ended under British rule and the decree of 1814 only confirmed a situation that already existed in the colonies. Moreover, the plantation owners knew very well that enforcing the ban would be virtually impossible and that they could continue to buy and sell human beings even without the transatlantic supply. This is clearly shown in the minutes of an 1816 meeting of the shareholders in the Berbice plantations *Nieuw Berenstein* and *Zorg & Vlijt*, found in the archives of Insinger & Co (n. 1817-1823). The gathering tried to reach agreement on the sale of the estates and their enslaved populations, but the administrators, Spangenberg and Helder, estimated their value at only about two-thirds of what the shareholders wanted. Instead of a combined sale, the meeting then considered disposing of the land and labourers separately, "the slaves on six, twelve and eighteen months' credit, as long as this is provided against solid bills of exchange" and "in such a manner as will be most convenient for the concerns of the interested parties [the shareholders]."[117] The sale eventually went through successfully, because at the next meeting the first item of incoming correspondence to be discussed was a letter from the administrators enclosing a list showing how "the slaves were sold as families."[118] Furthermore, the administrators reported that the manager of one of the plantations "had had the misfortune to hurt the negro boy Michel with a knife", and that the victim had died of his injuries.[119] These examples from the Insinger & Co records show that transactions in human beings continued after 1814, despite the ban on new imports of people from Africa to the Americas. Since it clearly sought to circumvent the restrictions as far as it could, we can conclude that this DNB-affiliated firm was also involved in slave transactions after 1814.[120]

It did not take long for British annoyance at the lax Dutch attitude to emerge. In 1818, the two countries signed a treaty intended to make the Netherlands enforce the law more actively, and in 1821 the trade in slaves between its colonies was forbidden as well. This tightening of the Dutch legislation should be viewed as part of wider British efforts to suppress the

trade effectively.[121] Meanwhile, colonial entrepreneurs and other parties with interests in slavery continued, albeit only slowly and gradually, to look for alternatives and to exert political pressure.

Not until 1828 did the supply of enslaved people to Surinam seem to have ended once and for all. DNB had no remit in this area and therefore no policy in respect of the slave trade, neither with regard to the intercolonial traffic between 1814 and 1821 nor the illicit smuggling which continued until 1828. As an institution, DNB was not engaged directly with this issue and it also played no part in the bank's statutory responsibilities in a policy sense. Given their personal involvement in slavery-related activities and their dependency upon the transatlantic trade in enslaved people, however, a number of its officials most likely have been dissatisfied with the measures introduced to prohibit that traffic in the Dutch colonial empire.

2. The first directors, their parents, and grandparents

For De Nederlandsche Bank to be successful in its early years, it was essential that its directors be established members of Amsterdam's financial elite.[122] It is understandable, therefore, that prominent merchant bankers and members of regent families obtained key roles at the bank. The reputations of its directors upheld that of the institution. The fact that Willem Röell (d. 1828-1829) was "a Röell", for example, ensured access to the political elite; his father, Willem Frederik Röell (1767-1835), was a confidant of King William I and a member of the Senate. Because much of the elite at the time had slavery-related investments, many of DNB's founding directors owned capital that had been accrued during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries through plantation ownership and colonial administration.

Until the presidency of Willem Cornelis Mees (p. 1863-1884), all the directors came from the same close-knit Amsterdam circles. Many of their surnames spoke of past glories: these were scions of prominent families able to boast still of their contribution to the "Golden Age" of the Dutch Republic. Joan Huydecooper van Maarsseveen (d. 1817-1836) is perhaps the most telling example. He inherited not only the family name but also his first name from forefathers who had been mayors of Amsterdam on several occasions, had led diplomatic missions, had been leading city merchants, and had always carefully safeguarded their capital and social status.[123] Being part of Amsterdam's financial elite almost automatically meant being part of the Dutch history of enslavement. The first Joan Huydecooper van Maarsseveen (1625-1704), for instance, worked for the firm Coymans, a holder of the Spanish *Asiento de Negros* (a licence to trade in slaves).[124]

The previous chapter referred briefly to the slave-trading activities of the father of DNB director and later president Jacques Teysset. This family

was relatively new to Amsterdam's financial elite; father Jacques David Teysset (1729-1803) had been born in Rotterdam.[125] He engaged in various businesses, but one of the principal ones was his collaboration with George Clifford in the firm Clifford & Teysset. Its activities extended along the European coast, as well as the Baltic Sea area and the Mediterranean, but also included colonial trade. For example, it owned the *Jacobus*, which sailed between Amsterdam, St Eustatius, and Surinam, with colonial goods and soldiers under the command of Captain Eldert Kraaij.[126] The Cliffords were a prominent Amsterdam banking family, several of whom were named George and who could trace their line back to the first of their forefathers who had settled in Amsterdam as immigrants from England between 1634 and 1640. George Clifford II was involved in financing plantations in the eighteenth century and was a member of the board of the Society of Surinam.[127] In 1781, Clifford & Teysset corresponded with Benjamin Franklin, amongst others, about how the prestige of the young American Republic would be dented if the firm had to protest (refuse to pay) bills of exchange backed by the United States government.[128] Franklin wrote back in haste to say that this was not the intention, then arranged for someone else to advance the money.[129]

In addition to the transatlantic movement of American money and commerce in international goods, the firm was also involved in the slave trade. The vessel *L'Aimable Sophie*, owned by Teysset senior, transported hundreds of people enslaved in West Africa to Léogâne in Saint-Domingue – modern Haiti. The ship's records show 387 enslaved Africans embarking on its first voyage, 352 of whom survived the crossing. *L'Aimable Sophie* made the journey from the West-African coast to Haiti four more times. The total number of people transported on this ship alone stood at 2,285, of whom 2,095 survived.[130] Those who survived were sold for a total of almost 2.3 million *livres*.[131] How much these transactions yielded for Teysset himself remains somewhat unclear, but the proceeds of a sale at Léogâne in 1770 were pledged as collateral for a loan of *f* 8,000 that Teysset sr. arranged with Berthon & Co in Lisbon.[132] Moreover, the Atlantic enslavement system led to the creation of innovative new forms of credit. Financiers of slave voyages often found themselves entangled in a labyrinth of loans, as well as having to accept payments in the form of traded goods such as sugar. In this way, one slavery-related activity in the portfolios of eighteenth-century entrepeneurs and bankers often gave rise to many other forms of involvement.

In the Dutch colonial empire, financing of the slave trade was from its inception arranged by the chartered West India Company (West-Indische Compagnie, WIC). As a result, plantation owners collectively ended up with many millions of guilders in outstanding debts to that firm. They could only pay when the goods produced by their enslaved workforce generated sufficient income, which brought about endless arrears. As the WIC gradually withdrew from the trade in people in the 1730s, allowing private companies to take it over, a shortage of credit arose; the private companies were in no position to wait for payment for the human cargoes they delivered. This situation was only exacerbated once it had been discovered that coffee could be grown successfully in the Caribbean, especially in Surinam. Under the leadership of prominent banker Willem Deutz and with the help of the governor-general of Surinam, Joan Jacob Mauricius, new means of financing plantations were devised. By setting up a negotiatie, a fund that took on the debts of multiple estates, investors gained an easy way to invest in the expansion of plantation agriculture. This was especially the case for coffee production. This led to a boom in plantation loans and a concomitant increase in the importation of enslaved labour and plantation agriculture. Between 1753 and 1775, a total of *f* 62,799,675 was invested in plantations in both Dutch and non-Dutch colonies.[133] Joost Jonker calls this new system of plantation mortgage funds a brilliant innovation from a banking point of view.[134] Some of the plantation holdings of prominent DNB officials, and also Johanna Borski, were a result of this wave of investment. Although many of the funds were not particularly successful, they remained the preferred means for the wealthy class in the Netherlands to invest in the colonial economy, with holdings in them via inheritance often staying in the same family over several generations.

Because of the importance of family status and the inheritance of stakes in plantations, we summarise the slavery-related activities of the forefathers of DNB's founding directors in this chapter. The grandmother of the bank's first president, Paul Iwan Hogguer (p. 1814-1816), was Sara Chevallier, who was born in Paramaribo and descended from a community of colonists of French origin who had settled in Surinam in the final decades of the seventeenth century, some as managers of slave estates. The plantation assets acquired during this period remained in the family, even when the family returned to Europe. Chevallier's son Daniel, Baron Hogguer (1722-1793), thus acquired a role in the administration of *Accaribo* and the more than cynically named estate *La Liberté*.[135] Although his mother

left for Europe, married, and had children there, the plantations remained part of the family's business activities.[136] Daniel Hogguer, for example, was responsible for appointing their European personnel. In 1761, he instructed George Chifelli, manager of *La Liberté*, to go to *Accaribo* to "make an inventory of the condition of the sugar and other grounds, as well as the buildings and with regard to the slaves."[137] Furthermore, if Chifelli found any "misconduct by employees or servants" he was to dismiss them, remove them from the plantation and appoint replacements.[138] These "servants" were the so-called *blankofficieren*, i.e., the white overseers, notorious figures, often former sailors or soldiers, who were expected to control the enslaved workforce with a heavy hand. In case of a threat of slave resistance, the blankofficieren could be easily replaced, leaving the plantation manager and owner with clean hands. Chifelli was further instructed to buy enslaved workers "to the greatest possible benefit and advantage" of the business.[139] As a result of his inspection, the following year Hogguer dismissed the administrator of *Accaribo* and not long afterwards appointed the son of a friend, Pierre Jean Calis, as his replacement. Closer to the day-to-day operations were the supervisors he sent to his plantations.[140] Their task consisted mainly of checking on the enslaved labourers and, at the end of the day, reporting on the work they had done. Despite living in the Netherlands, Hogguer senior was thus directly involved with the estates owned by the Chevallier-Hogguer family in Surinam.

After 1770, Daniel Hogguer changed his investment strategy. In June that year, he sold the plantations for *f* 460,000 and switched to government bonds.[141] A few months later, for example, he negotiated an issue worth *f* 1 million with the Swedish king, Adolf Frederick, at 5 per cent interest.[142] And in 1772, he traded 2 million French *livres* in annuities.[143] The Hogguer family seems thus to have turned its back on direct earnings from slavery. Nevertheless, in both 1755 and 1835, *La Liberté* was listed as enslaving 132 people.[144] These enslaved workers earned money for Daniel Hogguer. Likewise, *Accaribo* employed 132 enslaved people in 1835.[145] This suggests that the sale price of *f* 460,000 for the two plantations included about 250 human beings, and it was with that money that Hogguer was able to move into Swedish government bonds. Hogguer's subsequent investments were thus built upon the capital that his family's slavery-based activities had generated.

Jan Hodshon, like Huydecoper, was a director who shared his given names with his forebears. In this case with his father, Joan Hodshon (1717-1793), who was the archetype of an early modern Dutch merchant with a broad portfolio of colonial investments – a so-called portfolio capitalist. Hodshon senior was a free agent unhindered by the boundaries of colonial empires drawn on the map.[146] He invested in plantations in the Dutch colonies of Surinam, Demerara and Berbice, on British-held Tobago and on Danish St Croix and St Vincent, shipped goods between French colonial islands and ports in France, had debtors on St Eustatius and lent money to Hope & Co with shares in the English East India Company as collateral.[147] He also intervened in the management and administration of the plantation *Het Huys te Coevorden* in Demerara, appointing a surgeon to work there in 1778.[148] The other plantations with which Joan Hodshon had links included *Liverpool* and *Friendship* in the British colonies and *Glynn*, *Mount Pleasant*, and *Bon Esperance* on the Danish island St Croix.[149]

Jan Hodshon.
Source: [29697], RKD Netherlands Institute for Art History.

In the case of the plantations in the British colonies, the chronologically closest available data shows that they respectively enslaved 95, 98, and 81 people. As for the Danish estate *Glynn*, it is only possible to establish that 89 people were working there in 1865.[150] From the Danish burial registers and police reports, however, we can say with certainty that it used enslaved labour prior to abolition. In 1828, for instance, one Patrick was arrested and subsequently confessed to having run away from *Glynn* three weeks earlier.[151] In other words, when Joan Hodshon sold this plantation "with all its buildings, slaves and appurtenances" to Lever & De Bruijne in 1768 for *f* 80,268 and sixteen stivers, he also sold dozens of people.[152] It is quite possible that one of them was Samuel, born into enslavement, who died of leprosy on *Glynn* at the age of 74 on 21 July, 1842.[153] The status and reputation of the Hodshon family thus also stemmed in part from slavery; Joan invested in – and sold – hundreds of human beings in all.

Jan Hodshon's father-in-law, Pieter van den Broek, was also implicated in slavery.[154] On behalf of two firms, Abraham ter Borch & Sons and Gabriël Bourcourd & Zn & Co, he acted as a non-executive director of plantation mortgage funds for the Danish islands of St Croix, St Thomas, and St John. In total, these were worth *f* 7,623,214.[155]

The Fock family was well represented on the board of DNB from the outset, starting with founding director Jacob Fock I (d. 1814-1828; p. 1828-1835). His father, Abraham Fock senior (1732-1796), was a partner in the firm Weduwe Jacob de Clercq. In the 1777 deed of distribution of the estate of Jacob de Clercq, his investments and securities were not itemised on an individual basis and so it is impossible to determine whether they included plantation loans. The total value of the estate, *f* 140,000, was divided neatly into four parts, giving Abraham Fock senior and his wife, Cornelia de Clercq, *f* 35,000. The ships it included were specified by name and captain, but none of these can be found in the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database. From the names of some of them (such as *Rigasche Post*) and from the firm's contracts of affreightment, it is clear that its money was earned mainly from the Baltic trade in goods such as tar. Jacob Fock I married Cornelia Johanna Bondt in 1792; she was a daughter of Nicolaas Bondt and the sister of Jan Bondt, the legal consultant to DNB and a partner at Determeyer Weslingh & Son. As for the other members of the Fock family with ties to the bank – Abraham (d. 1837-1844, p. 1844-1858) and Jacob II (d. 1865-1890) – no evidence has been found that they were involved with slavery.

Willem Ferdinand Mogge Muilman's father, Henric Muilman (1748-1812), was a typical Amsterdam merchant-regent whose family had accumulated some wealth and then acquired an aristocratic title through marriage. For merchants such a title brought extra cachet and prestige, and also opened doors, whilst for noble families a marriage with a wealthy Amsterdam inhabitant was a way to secure the family's future.[156] The marital union of 1776 between Henric Muilman and Susanna Cornelia Mogge van Haemsteede gave him Haemsteede Castle near Zierikzee and elevated him to the junior nobility as a banneret ("baanderheer"). For both it was their second marriage: Henric was a widower and Susanna Cornelia had also outlived her first spouse, Ferdinand van Collen, a director of the WIC and the son of a director of the Society of Surinam.[157]

Henric Muilman's brother Pieter married Anna Maria van de Poll and they, amongst others, had a daughter, Magdalena Antonia Muilman, who wed Willem Ferdinand in 1810. Their daughter went on to marry Archibald Jan van de Poll, whose father, Jacobus Salomon van de Poll, was a brother of Anna Maria. In other words, Archibald Jan's grandfather was also his wife's great-grandfather.[158] At DNB, then, Willem Ferdinand Mogge Muilman (d. 1814-1835, p. 1835-1844), sat on the board alongside his mother-in-law's brother, Jan van de Poll (d. 1814-1822). In other words, Willem Ferdinand Mogge Muilman also brought the prestige of the Van de Poll family name to the bank through his own wife/cousin.

Henric Muilman traded on his account through the firm Muilman & Sons. Although the firm left few traces in the archives, the historian Johan Elias described it as "very prominent".[159] What is certain is that it was wealthy, since the firm Muilman & Sons arranged insurance policies in conjunction with, amongst others, Clifford & Sons (see also Teysset).[160] Furthermore, its name appears alongside that of slavery financiers including Hope & Co and Jan & Theodor van Marselis in a 1798 petition concerning trade on the Wild Coast (Essequibo and Demerara) – an indication that it traded there and was thus directly involved in slavery-related economic activities.[161]

The Van de Polls have probably the most complicated family tree in our entire study. Not only did they bear numerous children, they also had a tradition of using the same forenames down the generations. Moreover, they regularly married into the same few families or even intermarried with their own cousins. The Jan van de Poll who served on the founding board of DNB (d. 1814-1822) was the son of another Jan (1721-1801) and Anna Maria

Dedel (1729-1779). Jan senior is listed in 1769 as non-executive director of a mortgage fund with a value of *f* 2 million covering nine plantations in Surinam: *Munnikendam*, *Potribo*, *Beerenrust*, *Nieuw Roeland*, *Boxel*, *Rouxgift*, *Badenstein*, *Johanna's Hoop*, and *Bethlehem*.[162] There is no inventory for any of these for that year, but the closest available figures give us a total of at least 1,174 enslaved people who served as collateral for the fund's loans.[163]

Jan senior's brother Harman (1728-1751) founded the trading house Harman van de Poll & Co, in which his son, another Harman (1750-1807), was also active. Jan senior also represented that firm's interests for some time. When Clifford & Sons was declared bankrupt in 1773, he took on joint responsibility for liquidating its remaining assets along with Jacques Teysset and others. Amongst these were a plantation mortgage fund operated by Harman van de Poll & Co. The loans totalling *f* 2.4 million on 21 plantations in Surinam, which were collectively worth more than *f* 4 million, yielded *f* 100,285 in 1774 in the form of products such as coffee, cotton, sugar, and cocoa. The *Montauban* and *Montpellier* plantations, amongst others, were overvalued in the mortgage because runaway slaves from maroon communities had plundered and partly destroyed them.[164]

Through his marriage in 1784 to Anna Catharina Valckenier (1766-1842), Jan junior also added her patrician family to the Van de Poll network and reputation. The Valckeniers were Amsterdam regents who had held positions of power and influence since the middle of the seventeenth century, not only in Amsterdam's city government, but also as directors of the Dutch East India Company (Vereenigde Oost Indische Compagnie, VOC) and as governor-general of the Dutch East Indies. As such, they had built up a solid reputation.[165] In 1792, the name Valckenier was so prestigious that Jan junior included it in the name of his son, Jan Jacobus Valckenier van de Poll (d. 1827-1837).

The Van Lennep family, too, played a prominent role in the government and economy of the Netherlands and had close associations with similar dynasties. The sister of Willem Röell (d. 1828-1829) married the writer Jacob van Lennep (1802-1868), while the mother-in-law of Ferdinand Rendorp (d. 1845-1865) was Elisabeth van Lennep (1753-1810). The very extensive Van de Poll family also established more than one relationship with a Van Lennep.[166] Cornelus Sylvius (s. 1814-1821) was the son of Cornelis van Lennep (1751-1813) and Cornelia Henrietta van de Poll (1753-1827).[167] Cornelus Sylvius' brother David Jacob (1774-1853) had a son, Jacob, with banker's daughter Cornelia Christina van Orsoy (1778-1816) and after her

death he married a Van de Poll: Anna Catharina (1791-1860). Cornelus Sylvius himself married Sophia Elisabeth Backer (1776-1826), daughter of the Amsterdam regent and VOC director Willem Cornelis Backer. The Van Lenneps were landowners and Cornelus Sylvius' generation was no longer engaged in trade; his brother was a professor of Latin and Greek, whilst other relatives made their name primarily as politicians. Some links between Cornelus Sylvius and slavery might have existed via his grandfather, Jacobus van de Poll (1724-1807), but no evidence has been found that he inherited any shares in plantations through this line. The Van Lenneps were at least as important in the political and economic development of the Netherlands as the other families from which the DNB drew its directors. However, Cornelus Sylvius – along with Jacob Fock I – was an exception among the founding board members appointed in 1814 as those with a family history of involvement with slavery were in a sizeable majority. When the president, directors and secretary would have a meeting, only secretary Van Lennep and director Fock had nothing to do with slavery. It is not hard to imagine, then, that the group also discussed West Indian matters aside from their formal business on behalf of DNB.

The Amsterdam economic lobby

In the nineteenth century, the Dutch financial and trading elite faced a major paradox. Even as the first steps towards abolition were being taken, the economic significance of those sectors reliant upon enslaved labour was growing. Public opinion was turning against slavery, but consumption of the goods it produced – cotton, indigo, sugar, coffee and so on – was increasing. During this period, the Netherlands was one of the smaller slaveholding nations in the world. When the British abolished slavery in their empire in 1834, some 800,000 people were manumitted. In the United States, almost four million people were freed during the American Civil War (1861-1865). In the Dutch colonial empire, by contrast, the numbers were approximately 5,000 in Asia (1860) and about 45,000 in Surinam and West Indies (1863) – although it should be noted that the figure for Asia refers to slavery as per the definition used at the time. Places including Bali continued the practice of slavery much longer. The last place where slavery was abolished in the Dutch Kingdom was probably the island of Samosir

in 1914. The number of people exploited under threat of violence in the East Indies in fact ran into the hundreds of thousands. The relatively small scale of enslavement by the Dutch was a result of the Republic's inability to expand plantation agriculture during the late eighteenth century, as the British and French had done. The differences which arose between the various European empires in the eighteenth century left their mark on the nineteenth.

Overall, the Dutch slave colonies and slavery-related industries recovered quickly from the interruptions they had suffered during the revolutionary years and the Napoleonic wars. This was not the case for all branches of the plantation economy, though; sugar production and refining performed considerably better than cotton and coffee. In the first decades of the nineteenth century, sugar refining was the first industry to grow rapidly and thus became a forerunner of the more widespread industrialisation of the Netherlands. Sugar production in Surinam grew considerably during this period, but cotton output collapsed after making a late start. The southern Netherlands, part of the Kingdom under William I from 1815 until the Belgian secession in 1830, had a cotton processing industry which had to source its raw cotton from outside the Dutch empire. Unlike in Surinam, coffee production grew substantially in the Dutch East Indies thanks to the so-called cultivation system (*cultuurstelsel*). This gave the Netherlands a formidable position in the global coffee market – one based upon unfree labour, but not upon enslavement in the strict sense. For other products from Asia, however, such as nutmeg and pepper, slavery did remain an important source of labour.

Yet, the status of the Netherlands as one of the smaller slaveholding powers says little about the economic importance the slaveholding plantages represented and the activities of Dutch entrepeneurs in slave economies of non-Dutch colonies or in slavery-related trade outside the Dutch empire. The modernisation of production processes increased profit margins for the plantation owners. For example, the arrival of steam engines enabled the more efficient grinding of sugar cane and increased output on ever larger plantations. Cotton transformed the world, bringing comfort and prosperity as well as an unprecedented growth in unfree labour. The abolition of slavery in the mid-nineteenth century, despite its growing returns, has been called "econocide" by the historian Seymore Drescher: the sacrifice of the economy to an idealistic belief.[168] Even its most principled opponents could not deny that forced labour generated

huge yields thanks to technical innovations. Despite his aversion to slavery, the economist Adam Smith had to admit that the sugar producers of the West Indies were remarkably rich. During the modernisation of the Dutch colonial empire under William I, the slave trade was banned but slavery itself was retained. As his reign progressed, however, slavery in the Dutch East Indies slowly gave way to other forms of labour mobilisation such as the cultivation system. In the background, one underlying factor was the realisation that abolition would free up capital to invest in emerging industries.

The introduction of steam engines required larger plantations in order to be able to use the new technology efficiently. Buying and installing the new equipment was an expensive business. The purchase and installation of a 10-horsepower machine would cost *f* 25,000 in 1830.[169] Although the costs involved were high, Surinam was nonetheless one of most innovative sugar colonies in the Caribbean. In 1815 the first steam mills were installed and two thirds of the sugar plantations had such machinery by the time of abolition in 1863.[170] So despite the end of the slave trade, the need for capital on the modern plantations remained high.

The Dutch colonies with few or no slave plantations also needed financial services. The absence of a local bank undermined Curacao's position as a transit port, and the government too needed an institution that could arrange payment transactions.[171] DNB, however, refused to open overseas branches in Surinam and Curaçao. In 1827, William I sent Johannes van den Bosch to the Dutch West Indies to address a number of administrative issues, including the lack of payment methods and banking institutions. After his advise, De Curaçaose Bank started operating in 1828.[172] Modelled on DNB, it became the central banking institution of Curaçao as well as its two dependent islands, Aruba and Bonaire. With 40 per cent of the total population being enslaved, this institution was was clearly connected to slavery with slavery. Commercial activity on Curaçao depended directly on local slavery, with enslaved people supplying ships with fresh water and labour in the port. Slave labour on the other Dutch Caribbean islands, St Eustatius, Saba, and St Maarten, was used to some extent in their small-scale sugar production, but mainly for the extraction of salt. Sugar output on St Eustatius was far more modest than for example in Surinam, declining from 500 tonnes in 1816 to less than half that amount throughout the remainder of the nineteenth century. Salt and sugar production using slave labour without steam engines required little

investment, especially after the end of the slave trade. The islands were relevant for the trade in goods, but hardly ever appear in the portfolios of Amsterdam investors.

Expansion of the credit system and restoring international trade, particularly at sea, were key pillars in William I's policy of modernisation, but his government also looked for more tax revenue to increase its income.[173] From 1816 onwards, taxation failed to cover the nation's annual budget expenditure of some *f* 80 million. On the king's orders, therefore, and despite opposition from the Amsterdam trading houses affiliated with DNB, various tax reforms and fiscal innovations were initiated. In 1816, for example, the government introduced the entrepôt system – an ideal instrument to stimulate the transit trade. Imported goods destined for re-export could be kept in bonded warehouses, where they were exempt from excise duties. The port of Rotterdam would particularly benefit from this system, as its favourable location allowed construction of a dedicated dock and facilities. However, the entrepôts threatened the position of the established trading houses as brokers. The tradinghouses lost the income from storage fees and the role in financial transactions that had been linked to this trade.

In February 1816, a group of Amsterdam merchants submitted a petition to the king opposing the entrepôt system. A flowering of national commerce, this petition declared, was:

> impossible and not to be expected unless this kingdom once again becomes the general market and depot between all the trading nations; and that general market and depot is not imaginable other than under enjoyment of that freedom of trade, with the dismissal of all those objections to trade our neighbours have already seen to be unjust and pernicious, which they profess to provide in a liberal manner.[174]

This plea for a restoration of the staple market without constraining levies was signed by, amongst others, DNB founding director Hodshon (d. 1814-1816; p. 1816-1827), Bondt's firm Determeyer Weslingh & Son and several serving or future non-executive directors: Severijn & Haesebrouck (n. 1814-1817), D. Couderc & M. P. Brants (n. 1814-1830), Goll & Co (n. 1815-1821), and Insinger & Co (n. 1817-1823). DNB itself is not mentioned in the petition, but it is an important document in that it shows that the

Amsterdam merchants – including DNB officials – knew how to find their way to the king when they realised new legislation might harm their commercial interests. Their objections to the entrepôt system did not make William I change his mind, though.

The king also ordered a shake-up of import, export, and excise duties. In 1819, again much to the chagrin of the Amsterdam merchants, the government tabled plans to increase the duty on coffee and sugar. Sugar manufacturer and later DNB director Hendrik Croockewit (s. 1828-1849; d. 1849-1854; p. 1854-1863) protested against this bill in a series of letters to member of parliament Joan Melchior Kemper.[175] This correspondence provides a good insight into the kind of pressure exerted by the Amsterdam merchants when faced with measures likely to affect their trade in colonial goods. The coffee business, especially, was an important source of income for many merchants in Amsterdam and other cities, as also shown by the volume of this commodity pledged to DNB as collateral for loans.[176] But when reading these letters, we also need to bear in mind that at this time the possible abolition of slavery was not a political issue in The Hague.

On 19 December, 1818, Croockewit wrote to Kemper to say several persons of distinction had already tried to stop minister Jean Henry Appelius and William I from tabling the bill in the House of Representatives. For, he said, it was better to "smother that project at its birth than to have to do this by petitions to the Houses."[177] Croockewit wrote this letter because parliament was meeting in Brussels at the time. "Had the Assembly of the States [parliament] now been in The Hague," he continued, "I should gallop away from all my concerns to elucidate matters by word of mouth."[178] Instead, though, he was forced to entrust his request to Kemper to paper. He urged:

> your intervention, be it with the King himself or in those places you consider most fitting, in order to avert, if possible, the danger to a branch of industry so highly regarded by all forms of government. Why, if coffee and sugar must be taxed, not beforehand solicit the thoughts of the chambers of commerce and some of the manufacturers? Perhaps the interests of both would have been reconcilable, such that a project could have been devised which would not only have been less burdensome for both, but even useful for one side.[179]

This letter makes it clear that, in 1819, the Amsterdam merchants would rather not use a petition as their preferred instrument to make their objections known to the government. Instead, they sought to block an unwelcome bill before it was submitted to the House of Representatives. But it would be even better if the government were to design the legislation in consultation with interested parties.

Appelius eventually did table his excise bill in the House. Croockewit predicted to Kemper that it would "rain petitions", causing the government to forfeit "all the good will that the mercantile public harbours for it."[180] Early in May, the House did indeed receive a petition from Amsterdam bearing no fewer than 920 signatures. This requested that parliament reject the excise duties on coffee and sugar, and guarantee free trade. In the run-up to the debate on the bill, the Amsterdam merchants also lobbied individual MPs in an effort to influence their vote. "Wickevoort Crommelin has been worked upon," Croockewit wrote to Kemper, "but without much confidence of success. Van der Pol declares roundly that, in his position, he cannot vote to the detriment of the government. Boetzelaar, as mayor of Amsterdam, will have to oppose the law."[181] After receiving these letters, Kemper argued at length against the duties in the House. Petitions and direct lobbying were common ways of trying to influence a parliamentary vote in the nineteenth century.

Despite all their efforts, however, the Amsterdam merchants suffered a painful defeat. The new duties on both coffee and sugar were adopted, to great public indignation. One Amsterdam bookseller and printer published the results of the parliamentary vote on the coffee duty for traders to see which MPs had failed to uphold their interests. The capital's merchants also turned their attention to Holland's provincial assembly. This was the place where the merchants could strengthen their representation in The Hague since the Provincial Estates elected MPs. It proved a successful tactic: at the next parliamentary election, the "faction of the Amsterdam merchants" trounced its opponents – an outcome the government considered "extremely vexatious."[182]

Colonial banking and the West Indies Company

De Nederlandsche Bank refused to accept the role it was envisioned to play in the reformed credit system and the restoration of international maritime

trade under William I's policy of modernisation. In 1826, the bank invoked the terms of its charter to prevent opening branches in Surinam and Curaçao. On behalf of the board, legal consultant Bondt drafted a letter to the Minister of the Colonies, Cornelis Theodorus Elout, stating that the charter "ruled out any notion of a power to undertake monetary operations overseas."[183] The king, however, subsequently issued a royal decree making DNB's coins and banknotes legal tender in Surinam with effect from 1827. Then, in 1828, the government decided to set up the separate Curaçaose Bank and Particuliere West-Indische Bank (Private West-Indies Bank). Once again, DNB was asked for support; first to finance the *f* 3 million needed to set up the West-Indische Bank in Surinam and then a request to act as an agency for that institution. In its response to Elout, the board reiterated its charter prohibited DNB from granting credit other than by discounting bills of exchange or against collateral in the form of securities, goods, wares, and merchandise. Moreover, it could not act as an agency because the bank's terms of credit did not allow the circulation of paper – with a signature – that could only be exchanged for specie with some delay; according to the Minister of Finance, the West-Indische Bank would be allowed to issue long-dated bills of exchange. During a personal conversation with the minister, Arnold Willem Nicolaas van Tets van Goudriaan, failed to bring the government any solace. In fact, the board took the opportunity to put forward yet another, more substantive, objection unrelated to the charter. DNB, they asserted, saw no possibility "to give good advice of any form to the Surinamese institution in respect of its operations, which would require much more local knowledge than the members of the board can claim to possess."[184] The fact that any activities in the colony were bound to be closely linked to slavery was not used as an argument by any of the members of the board, at the time president Jacob Fock I and directors Mogge Muilman, Huydecoper van Maarsseveen, Carp, and Valckenier van de Poll.

In its early years, DNB thus refused repeated requests from the government to expand its activities into the overseas territories. Formally, it relied constantly upon the restrictive provisions of its charter to parry those approaches, and in 1829 the directors backed up that defence by citing their poor knowledge of the local situation in Surinam. Their attitude can be explained in part by the fact that DNB consistently sought to limit government influence over its activities until well into the 1830s. Nevertheless, it was willing to maintain the account the West-Indische Bank held with

the Ministry of the Colonies.[185] But setting up or supporting a business in the West Indies, where the board felt itself unable to properly assess the risks involved, was not part of the strategy. Having evaded that possibility, the bank displayed a sense of relief in its annual report for 1827-1828: its reputation with the Dutch public "as a helpless instrument for mysterious machinations has been largely erased".[186]

Despite this, the establishment and activities of a new West Indies Company (West-Indische Maatschappij, WIM; not to be confused with the chartered West-Indische Compagnie dissolved in 1792), also founded in 1828, reveal a continuing involvement with slavery on the part of some prominent DNB officials. As mentioned earlier, William I was keen to revive Curaçao's eighteenth-century position as a centre of regional trade.[187] To that end he founded the WIM and personally designed its basic outline. In his capacity as a state councillor extraordinary Jan Bondt helped the king implement this plan. William had wanted to call his project the Curaçao Company (Curaçaose Maatschappij), because his aim was to position that island as a central gathering point "in the Mexican Gulf" for merchandise suitable for the American markets, but Bondt managed to convince him West-Indische Maatschappij was a better name. Whilst the king's proposal did encapsulate the primary focus of the new company, a wider scope would increase the appeal for the Amsterdam merchants Bondt pointed out.[188]

Although most historians of Dutch slavery concentrate on the large plantation enterprises in colonies on the mainland of South America, it should not be forgotten that large-scale slavery also existed in the Dutch Caribbean. The island of Curaçao had a population of 14,724 in 1827, some 40 per cent of whom lived in slavery. They were put to work primarily in local food production, in salt extraction or at the port in the capital, Willemstad. Curaçao never developed as a centre of plantation agriculture. Instead, it had traditionally focused on trade by taking full advantage of Willemstad's excellent natural harbour. In the nineteenth century, the island was primarily a bridgehead for commerce with Latin America. William I founded the West Indies Company because he saw it as an important hub close to the new nation of Gran Colombia, led by Simon Bolivar.[189]

Amongst the non-executive directors of the WIM were three later members of the DNB board: Claude Daniël Crommelin (1838-1849), Jacobus Hermanus Insinger (1844-1871), and Ananias Willink (1835-1845).

Another was Daniël Borski, son of Johanna, was also non-executive director of WIM.[190] A sister company of the Netherlands Trading Society (Nederlandsche Handel-Maatschappij, NHM), its primary focus was not slavery-related activities but trade between Amsterdam, South America, Mexico, and the Caribbean. Most of the Latin American countries had already abolished slavery and their diplomats urged others to follow suit. Curaçao was intended by the WIM to become the principal hub in regional trade, bolstered by its opening up as a free-trade zone. Slave labour remained part of the island's economy, though, through activities such as processing tobacco and manufacturing goods destined for the United States. Governor Reinier Frederik van Raders was made frantic efforts to develop various forms of agriculture on the island, using government-owned enslaved people. Personally, however, Van Raders believed it would be better to replace this enslaved workforce with the more flexible wage labour.[191]

Table 2. *DNB-affiliated investors in the West Indies Company, 1828.*

Name	Investment in the West Indies Company, in guilders
J. Borski	1,000
W. Borski	500
M. Broen Mzn	1,000
J. Carp	500
Determeyer Weslingh & Son	500
Van Eeghen & Co	1,000
J. Fock	500
A. Fock	200
J. Huydecoper van Maarsseveen	2,000
W.F. Mogge Muilman	1,000
W. Röell	1,000
J. Teysset	1,200
H. Croockewit	600
G.L. Walkart	400

Although Bondt undertook advisory work for the WIM formally in his official role as a state councillor extraordinary, he remained DNB's legal consultant as well. Several of the new company's non-executive directors also had ties with the bank. And as an institution, too, DNB had a relationship with the WIM because it handled the placement of the first shares in the company. A review of the 267 receipts covering the first payment of 10 per cent on these stocks, shows that Bondt had persuaded a substantial number of Amsterdam merchants to invest.[192] Another investor was Rudolf Adriaan Mees of Rotterdam, father of later DNB president Willem Cornelis. Rumour had it that the subscribers were people who "for two or three shares want to buy or keep the favour of His Majesty."[193]

The West Indies Company failed in its aim to make Curaçao an indispensable link in trade on the American continent. Up until 1834, the shareholders received a fixed annual dividend of 4 per cent of their investment. The Royal Household Archives in The Hague contain several letters from Jan Bondt to King William II notifying him of payments on his shares or explaining their amount, or stating why no dividend was being paid.[194] We cannot rule out the WIM trading in goods manufactured using slave labour; its annual accounts include, for example, produce from the Brazilian province of Bahia, the centre of that country's sugar industry (in 1850 to the value of *f* 2,067.70, plus goods from Rio de Janeiro worth *f* 15,965.26).[195] Other financial reports mention cotton.[196] These records also reveal that the company had a current account at De Nederlandsche Bank, the balance of which varied greatly. In 1841 it contained *f* 18,037.37, but in 1850 had dropped to *f* 2,671.99 and in 1861 was just *f* 1,884.23. In 1863 – the year the WIM was liquidated – its closing balance was *f* 46,884.23. The shareholders received a letter on 30 April, 1863 from Daniël Borski, chairman of the board of the West Indies Company, informing them about the payment of dividends on their cancelled shares.[197]

The fate of the WIM illustrates the unequal balance of government income and expenditure with regard to the colonies in the nineteenth century. The Dutch possessions in Asia were profitable, whereas those in the Americas mainly cost money. The *f* 93 million in direct revenue the government received from Asia between 1831 and 1840 is in sharp contrast with, for example, a number of royal decrees exempting Surinam from certain payment obligations. Between 1837 and 1842, government outlays on Surinam exceeded the returns, meaning that in practice the colony was

being subsidised from The Hague. In 1844, Surinam received a subvention originally set at *f* 150,000, but in the end that amount was exceeded by almost a quarter.[198] The deficit in "the West" was effectively being paid off using the surplus from Asia. The islands, meanwhile, remained consistently in the red due to the slow recovery of international trade through Curaçao. William I's plan to establish intensive trading relations with Gran Colombia (present-day Ecuador, Colombia, and Venezuela) faded into the background during the Belgian secession crisis and Curaçao even lost its shipping link with the Netherlands. To illustrate: between 1836 and 1839, not a single Dutch ship called at the island.[199]

Business involvement with slavery

Involvement of DNB officials with slavery, colonialism, and Dutch imperial ambitions was not confined solely to investments in the WIM or a family legacy. By the 1820s, a share in a plantation was usually inherited and not traded. The low market value and the chance a dividend payment might still be made in a year or so, meant most shareholders in the nineteenth century kept the certificates in a drawer and on set dates checked a newspaper like the *Algemeen Handelsblad* to see if any dividends had been announced. Once it became increasingly clear financial compensation for slave owners was on the way, their inclination to sell must have decreased further. Those DNB directors who received compensation in 1834 and 1863 are discussed separately later.

Following in his father's Joan's footsteps, Jan Hodshon (d. 1814-1816, p. 1816-1827) continued to participate in the slavery-based economy. On 1 July, 1782, he joined the trading house Hodshon & Son, owned by his father, for an annual stipend of *f* 1,500.[200] Initially this was primarily to learn the business, but from 1790 he gained a greater say in the company. He was not yet allowed to negotiate transactions without Joan's knowledge, though.[201] In 1793, his father died and Jan took charge of the firm.

During his time as a partner, the firm Hodshon & Son administered several loans for a fund with mortgages on *Mount Pleasant* and *Bon Esperance* on the island of St Croix.[202] Most of the deeds in the Amsterdam notarial archives dealing with plantation loans contain very little or no information about the collateral, but in this case, because the financial product involved was more complicated, details of the enslaved are included.

Copied from an underlying English-language mortgage, the list consists of 28 "negroe men", 23 women and five boys and girls, worth between £20 for "Jasper" and £600 for "King's Ale". Collectively, they are valued at £16,990.[203] Following the death of his father, Jan Hodshon became director of this fund. Between 1784 and 1788, moreover, a mortgage on the *Friendship* plantation on Tobago was repaid.[204] And in 1789, Hodshon & Son granted a loan of *f* 28,613.65 to Richard Downing Jennings on the island of St Eustatius. As collateral, Jennings pledged two mortgages in Essequibo, one on the account of Eduard Bischop and one on the plantation *Insh Hall*.[205]

When Joan Hodshon died in 1793, his estate was divided equally between his children and Jan received one sixth of *f* 137,730. This included shares – now worthless – in the slave-trading Dutch West India Company and English South Sea Company,[206] plus stakes in the *Friendship*, *Mount Pleasant*, and *Bon Esperance* plantations mentioned above, as well as *Schoonoord* and *Welgelegen* in Surinam.[207] The latter was mortgaged through the Luden & Speciaal fund, administered by the grandfather and father of Johannes Luden (d. 1836-1864). Finally, in 1825 Jan Hodshon held a three-eighths stake in the sugar plantation *Rac à Rac* in Surinam.[208] No details are available of those enslaved there in that year, but in 1834 – after Hodshon's death and under new ownership – they numbered 98 men, women, and children.[209] In that same year, the figures are 131 for *Schoonoord* and 134 for *Welgelegen*.[210]

All in all, it is clear that Jan Hodshon, by virtue of his position at Hodshon & Son, extended credit using enslaved people as collateral. He not only knew their value, but was even familiar with some of their names. His company also owned shares in businesses that had in the past procured enslaved people on the West African coast and shipped them across the Atlantic Ocean, and in various plantations in Surinam, Tobago, and St Croix.

Another DNB director who joined his father's business was Johannes Carp (d. 1822-1837), born in 1761 to Georg Johann Wilhelm Carp and Johanna Catharina Jacoba Coox. From at least 1785, Jan Willem Carp & Son was active as a buyer of slave goods, such as six barrels of Demerara coffee from Pieter Willem van den Heuvel.[211] Moreover, the firm did business with Marcellus Broen & Son and thus became involved with a plantation loan; along with two others, Johannes Carp acted as non-executive director of a mortgage worth *f* 300,000, with *Livonia* in Surinam as collateral.[212]

This was a coffee plantation at which 195 enslaved people were counted in 1834.[213]

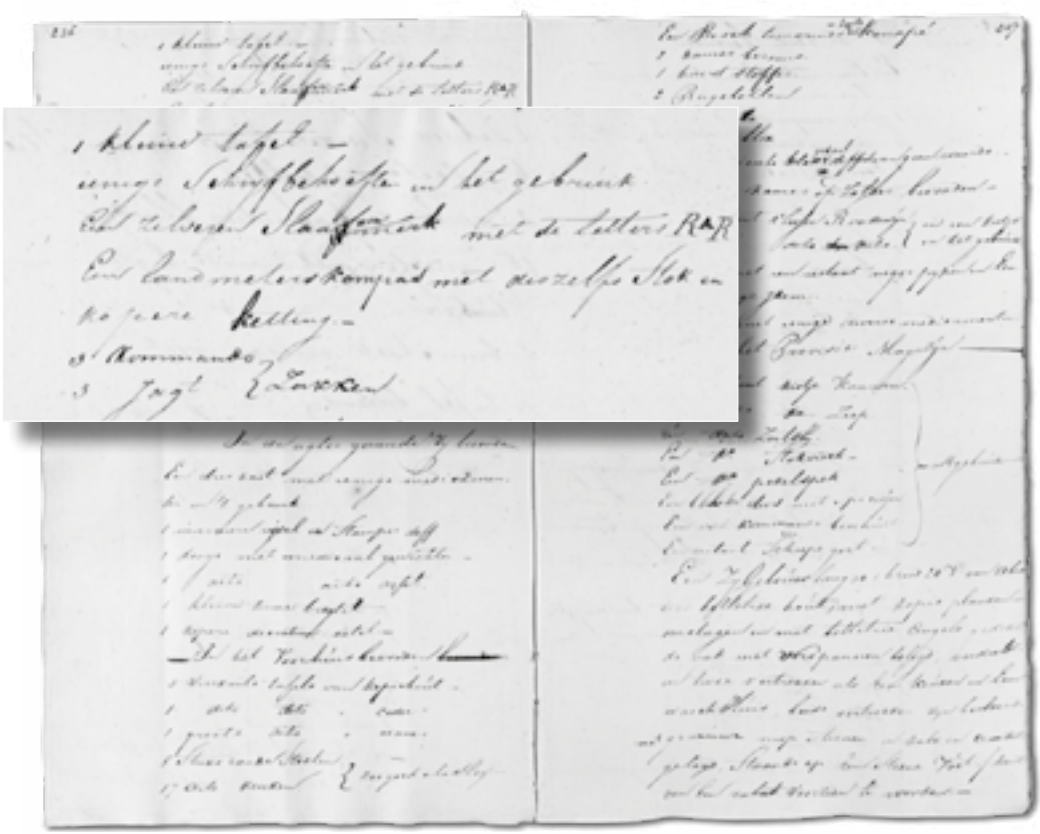
Many of the directors of DNB who took office after 1814 came from distinguished families. Jan van Eeghen (d. 1829-1838) and Claude Daniël Crommelin (d. 1838-1849) are good examples. Catharina Fock, wife of Christiaan van Eeghen, gave birth to Jan van Eeghen in 1789. During much of his term as a director of the bank (d. 1829-1838), his uncle Jacob Fock I (p. 1828-1835) – a brother of his mother – was president of DNB. His father, Christiaan, died at a fairly early age in 1798, leaving his mother as heir to assets including a sugar refinery called De Blauwe Engel (The Blue Angel) on the Rozenstraat in Amsterdam, three coupons from the W.G. Deutz fund, a share in the Dutch East India Company, and shares in a piece of land in America.[214] When the Dutch government compensated shareholders in the Deutz fund for the abolition of slavery in 1863, Jan van Eeghen's son, Jan junior, acted as commissioner.[215]

The Van Eeghens could trace their family line in Amsterdam back to the seventeenth century, when their ancestor Jacob founded the trading house which Jan would join in the early 1800s. When his uncle Pieter van Eeghen retired from the firm P. & C. van Eeghen & Co, Jan and two of his brothers took over the business and changed the name to Van Eeghen & Co. After the death of their brother Abraham in 1818, Jan and Pieter van Eeghen were left in joint charge of the firm.

Its financial records show that Jan van Eeghen received a couple of hundred guilders per month for his household and expenses. Of the firm's slavery-related activities, perhaps the most striking is the second mortgage granted to Daniel Changuion for *La Bonne Intention* in Demerara in 1819.[216] Two years earlier, 313 enslaved people had been recorded on this cotton estate. In 1826, the figure was 281. Furthermore, the firm traded actively in slavery-related goods and kept a "loan book" in which it noted what goods it had used as collateral for third parties with DNB.[217] Coffee was by far the most common. Van Eeghen & Co also acted as insurer of several ships, for premiums totalling several tens of thousands of guilders each year. These were not solely vessels used to carry slavery-related cargoes, but they did include several from Curaçao.[218]

The Crommelin family could trace its ancestry back to at least 1651, when forefather Daniel Crommelin emigrated to New Amsterdam (modern New York). His grandson returned to Amsterdam in the early eighteenth century and founded the firm Daniel Crommelin and Sons. Both Claude

Daniel (1795-1859) and his half-brother Gulian Cornelis became partners in this business. At the end of the eighteenth century, it traded on St Eustatius – at the time an important hub in the slave trade to various European colonies – and played an important role in financing the export of slavery-related goods to Europe.[219]



Description of a branding iron in the office of the plantation Rac à Rac, three-eighths owned by Jan Hodshon. Property belonging to the estate was branded with the letters RaR.
The branding of the enslaved was regulated by law and performed when children reached the age of 12. In this estate inventory, we see that the branding iron was kept in the office of the plantation house.

Source: NL-HaNA, 1.05.11.15, Surinaamse Notarissen (Surinam Notaries), 1827-1846, inv. No. 108, scan 120.

ACTE VAN AANDEEL,

Voor *Een Drihonderd Twee-en-zestigste Part* in den Eigendom van de Plantagie LIVONIA, gelegen in de Colonie Suriname, aan de Kleine Marappica Creeck, aan de Linkerhand in 't Opvaren, tusschen de Plantagiën *Adriehem* en *Boudt-Lust*.

De bovengemelde Plantagie is afkomstig en heeft behoord tot het Fonds der Negotiatie, ten Comptoire en onder directie van den Heer MARCELLUS BOERN in den Jaare 1768 geopend, en gesloten in den Jaare 1783; en vermits het door tijds en andere omstandigheden, de Eigenaaresse onderstijk was, niet alleen, om de Interessen der capitaale Schulden te voldoen, maar dat zelfs door noodzakelijke behoeftens de Schuld van tijd tot tijd is vermeerderd geworden, zo hebben de gezamentlijke Geinteresseerdens reeds in den Jaare 1800 den Heere MARCELLUS BOERN, als Directeur der Negotiatie, en voor het grootste gedeelte Geinteresseerden in de daarop gevestigde Schuld, gemachtigd, om, waare het mogelijk, de geheele Plantagie, voor de daarop gevestigde Schuld, bij vriendelijke schikking overtenemen; welke Transactie thans, na veele misluckte pogingen, eindelijk is tot stand gekomen, en waardoor alzo de Effect het Eigendom van de gezamentlijke Geinteresseerdens is geworden; waarvan de bewijzen van Eigendom onder Directeuren zijn berustende; zullende de Maniaatie en Directie, over deeze gemeenschappelijke Eigendom, voortaan worden gehouden op de navolgende wijze, te weten:

ART. 1.

De Houder van ieder Acte van Aandeel word erkend Eigenaar te zijn, van *Een Drihonderd Twee en Zestigste Part* in de bovengemelde Plantagie.

2.

Dezelve zal worden gedirigeerd door de Heeren M. BOERN en ZOON als Directeuren, onder toezigt van de Heeren Mr. HENDRIK VAN STRALEN, JOHANNES CARP, en JOHANNES VAN REEM, als Gecommitteerdens van de respective Deelhebbers, wordende de gemelde Heeren Directeuren en Gecommitteerdens te samen bij deezen gemachtigd, om al dat geene, wat tot nut en voordeel van dit Fonds kan verstrekken, te refolveeren en met er daad te effectueeren.

3.

De voorschreevene Directie zal door gemelde Heeren M. BOERN en ZOON en hunne Successeuren in hetzelve Huis van Negotie worden gevoerd, zo lang hetzelve of dezelfs Successeuren zullen Existeeren, doch bij de behanking of ontbreeking van dit tijdelijke Directeuren, zullen door de gemeende Gecommitteerden der Geinteresseerdens andere Directeuren benoemd worden, zo als mede in cas van overlijden of vrijwilligen afstand van één der Gecommitteerdens, door de overblijvende van hun met en benevens de Directeuren in der tijd, een ander tot Gecommitteerden in de plaats van den ontbreekenden zal worden verkooren en aangesteld; en zal deeze Cijnsfere alzoo stand houden, zo lang deeze Societeit zal subsisteeren.

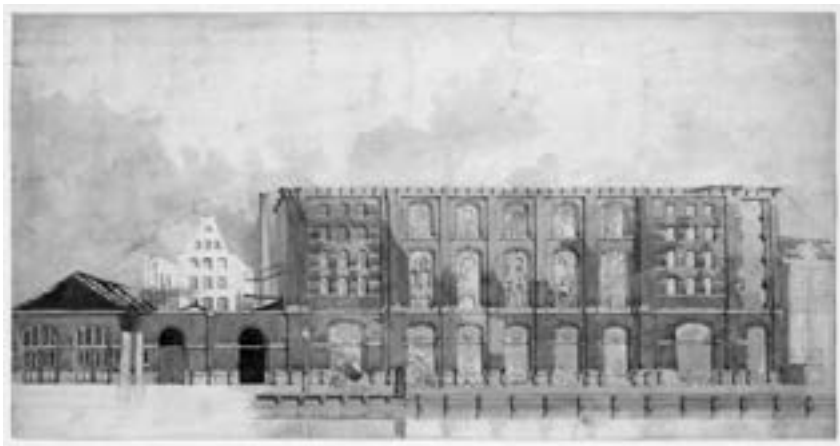
4.

Share in the Livonia plantation, for which Johannes Carp was non-executive director.

Source: Securities and Lotteries Collection, ARCH03766, International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam.

In 1836, Claude Daniël married Alida Maria Wolterbeek (1802-1862). She was the sister of Robert Daniël Wolterbeek (d. 1858-1865), who was also a partner in the firm Daniel Crommelin and Soonen.[220] As far as we can ascertain, Robert was involved in slavery-related activities only as part of that business. It is clear, though, that the firm was still active in the trade of goods made using enslaved labour in the nineteenth century.[221]

Following the death of Claude Daniël Crommelin in 1859, his personal financial assets were valued at *f* 528,187. The only item related to a plantation is a 1/230th share in *Marienburg*, Surinam, which at that time was worth nothing and generated no income. Other holdings that can be linked to slavery are *f* 800 in bonds from the city of Mobile, Alabama, *f* 10,750 from the state of Virginia, and three different US government bonds totalling *f* 12,390. Amongst his debtors, some colonial connections are apparent: Isaac Newton on St Croix had owed *f* 4,254.72 since 1796, W. Parkinson and G. Greene in Demerara *f* 438.65 since the same year, and J. Charnocx in Surinam *f* 10 since 1828. This latter debt was less than that owed by fellow banker Croockewit, who was still in hock to Crommelin's estate for *f* 12.50.[222]



The Beuker & Hulshoff sugar refinery.
Source: [010094001675], Amsterdam City Archives.

For someone who spent a considerable part of his professional career working at DNB (s. 1828-1849, d. 1849-1854, p. 1854-1863), Hendrik Croockewit has left surprisingly little archive material. He described

himself on his marriage certificate as a "sugar refiner". Together with his brother Zacharias he took over their father's sugar refining and brokerage business under the name Croockewit & Co and later became a partner in Beuker & Hulshoff, also a sugar refinery.[223] In the previous chapter we saw how Croockewit fought against the proposed excise duty on sugar. Given his close association with this commodity, he is strongly implicated in slavery-related economic activities. However, he had no direct links with the plantation economy.

Herman Hendrik Beels (d. 1864-1889) was born in 1827 to Marten Adriaan Beels (1790-1859) and Charlotte Christina Gildemeester (1793-1839). His father was a son of Leonard Beels (1756-1793) and a grandson of Marten Adriaan Beels (1728-1789). The latter had been a member of Amsterdam's city government and in 1780 became a non-executive director of the W.G. Deutz fund.[224] Herman Hendrik's father was a wealthy man with a varied portfolio of investments, ranging from Russian, Austrian, Dutch, American, and Danish government bonds to loans for the construction of a house of prayer for the Jewish community in Haarlem and 100 guilders lent to a baker in the same city. He also invested personally in a number of plantation loans and in 1839 inherited several assorted shares in sometimes overlapping plantation funds from his aunt Maria Beels, widow of Everard de Burlett. In the case of the Th. Chr. Van Nes and Nicolaas Brant funds, the estates concerned are unspecified. Others are named, however: *Hoop*, *Nieuw Amsterdam*, and *Eendragt Maakt Magt* in Surinam and *Windberg* and *L'Esperance* on St John. The latter were administered by Insinger & Co. In his accounts, Marten Beels noted that these investments had yielded him a total of *f* 5,329 since 1814. That included the full redemption of *Eendragt Maakt Magt* in 1824, generating *f* 1,122. When Beels drew up a balance sheet of his portfolio on 1 March 1840, the plantation funds accounted for *f* 1,312.50 out of a total worth of just over *f* 445,885 – about 0.3 per cent.[225]

Herman Hendrik Beels probably inherited some of his father's plantation shares, but he himself was involved mainly in the colonial trade in the Dutch East Indies. In his personal records we find a letter to the inspector of taxes, dated 1915, in which he outlines his income and, in part, his expenses. He was non-executive board member in several firms with the Javasche Cultuur Maatschappij (Java Cultivation Company) having the most obvious colonial connection. His account usually held between *f* 30,000 and *f* 50,000 and his fundholding activities were, as he put it,

"ruinous". All his funds were foreign and came from Mexico, Missouri, and Associated Merchants. In April 1908, he had stepped down "in the most honourable fashion" from his position as non-executive director of the Amsterdam branch of De Javasche Bank. Beels' business records, which date back to 1864, show no connection with the slavery-related economy.[226]

Table 3. *The directors of DNB and how they were involved in slavery.*

Name	**Involvement in slavery**
Hogguer, Paul Iwan (p. 1814-1816)	No, only indirectly: his father had already switched from plantation financing to government bonds with Hope & Co, Grand and Fizeaux.
Hodshon, Jan (p. 1816-1827) (d. 1814-1816)	Yes: provided various plantation loans through the trading house Hodshon & Son; inherited shares in the former slave-trading WIC and South Sea Company.
Teysset, Jacques (p. 1827-1828) (d. 1814-1827)	Yes: through the firm of Clifford & Teysset; his father earned income from trading and the transatlantic transportation of enslaved Africans.
Fock, Jacob I (p. 1828-1835) (d. 1814-1828)	No: was probably a shareholder in plantation mortgage funds through his father's inheritance.
Mogge Muilman, Willem Ferdinand (p. 1835-1844) (d. 1814-1835)	No: was probably a shareholder in plantation mortgage funds through the firm Muilman & Sons.
Fock, Abraham (p. 1844-1858) (d. 1837-1844)	No: no evidence of involvement found.
Croockewit, Hendrik (p. 1854-1863) (d. 1849-1854) (s. 1828-1849)	Yes: traded in slave goods and was active in sugar refining, personally and with Beuker & Hulshoff.

Mees, Willem Cornelis (p. 1863-1884) (s. 1849-1863)	No: outspoken opponent of slavery.
Pierson, Nicolaas Gerard (p. 1885-1891) (d. 1868-1885)	Yes: traded in slave goods (cotton) and supported slavery in the southern United States.
Poll, Jan van de (d. 1814-1822)	Yes: through Harman van de Poll & Co.
Huydecoper van Maarsseveen, Joan (d. 1817-1836)	Yes: actively intervened in plantation-related policymaking and received British compensation after abolition in the 1830s.
Carp, Johannes (d. 1822-1837)	Yes: through Marcellus Broen & Son; was trustee of a plantation loan and traded in slave goods.
Valckenier van de Poll, Jan Jacobus (d. 1827-1837)	No: it is unclear whether he inherited anything from his father.
Röell, Willem (d. 1828-1829) (s. 1821-1828)	No: possibly held some shares; a Röell (surname only) is listed as owning ten shares in the Dedel plantation mortgage fund.
Eeghen, Jan van (d. 1829-1838)	Yes: both personally and through the W.G. Deutz fund and the firm Van Eeghen & Co; also a sugar refiner.
Willink, Ananias (d. 1835-1845)	Yes: was involved in the West Indies Company.
Luden, Johannes (d. 1836-1864)	Yes: received British compensation after abolition in the 1830s.
Crommelin, Claude Daniël (d. 1838-1849)	Yes: personal debtors in colonies, and through the firm Daniel Crommelin & Soonen.
Melvil, John (d. 1838-1851)	No: no evidence of involvement found.
Insinger, Jacobus Hermanus (d. 1844-1871)	Yes: involved through Insinger & Co in almost all possible ways; received compensation in 1863.

Rendorp, Ferdinand (d. 1845-1865)	Yes: through various funds; received compensation in 1863.
Heukelom, Jan van (d. 1851-1879)	No: no evidence of involvement found.
Wolterbeek, Robert Daniël (d. 1858-1865)	Yes: through Daniel Crommelin & Sons.
Beels, Herman Hendrik (d. 1864-1889)	No: may have inherited plantation shares.
Fock, Jacob II (d. 1865-1890)	No: no evidence of involvement found.
Lennep, Cornelus Sylvius van (s. 1814-1821)	No: more a politician than a merchant.
Molkenboer, Johannes Hermanus (s. 1863-1871)	Yes: received compensation through his wife in 1863.
Gleichman, Johan George (s. 1871-1877)	No: more a politician than a merchant.

Other

Borski, Johanna	Yes: through the firm Wed. W. Borski and in other ways.

These cases of DNB directors who were involved with slavery in some way or another would seem to suggest all were implicated to a greater or lesser extent. That is (probably) not the case. Though of course there is always a chance that certain individuals with no links revealed by our research may in later studies be found to have some after all. Two examples of DNB leadership with no ties to slavery are Melvil and Gleichman.

John Melvil (d. 1838-1851), the son of Robert Melvil and Elizabeth Skurray, was baptised at the English Presbyterian Church in Amsterdam in 1804.[227] His father was an agent for the firm Hope & Co in Russia[228] and John himself was married to Maria Arnoldina Willink (1812-1875). When he died in 1893, his cousin, the senator Robert Melvil, baron of Lynden,

placed a death notice in the press on behalf of the family.[229] Apart from his father's involvement with Hope & Co, there is no known link between Melvil and slavery.

The family of Johan George Gleichman (s. 1871-1877) was relatively new to the Dutch mercantile community. Originally from Germany, the first Gleichmans settled in Rotterdam in about 1760 and established themselves as merchants. By the generation of Thomas Theodore Gleichman (1805-1865), however, the family was focused more upon public administration than trade. Himself the son of a city councillor in Rotterdam, Johan George (1834-1909) stepped down from DNB in 1877 to become Minister of Finance in the government led by Jan Kappeyne van de Coppello. He then continued his political career as member of parliament and later Speaker of the House of Representatives.[230] His brother Jan Jacob (1838-1905) was a coffee broker, but given the year of his birth would have had little opportunity to trade in the produce of slave labour.[231] In 1859, Johan George Gleichman married Johanna Justina van Hall (1837-1884), a niece of Floris Adriaan van Hall, the son-in-law of Jan Bondt. After her death, Gleichman married again in 1893. His second wife was Adriana Wilhelmina Petronella Cort van der Linden, the sister of Pieter Cort van der Linden, who became Prime Minister in 1913. Like his own career, both marriages placed him firmly in political rather than merchant banking circles.

3. Inspiration after British abolition in 1833

Anyone with financial interests in slavery or involved in the administration of the colonial empire was well aware that abolition could lead to unrest and even the collapse of imperial power. During the French Revolution a major uprising broke out in the Caribbean colony of Saint-Domingue, ending slavery there in 1793 and subsequently (albeit only temporarily) throughout the French overseas empire. Barely ten years later, that upheaval resulted in the territory declaring its independence. This was obviously a blow for the slave owners, who would henceforth emphasise any and every step towards abolition had to be taken slowly. Especially in the Netherlands, gradualism and caution became constant watchwords in the public discourse around this issue. For precisely that reason, the sudden passing of the British Slavery Abolition Act in 1833 came as a shock to Dutch plantation owners.

The turning point in the debate in the United Kingdom came after a large-scale rebellion broke out in Demerara in August 1823. Up until then, such uprisings had wiped the subject of abolition off the political agenda; its opponents invariably argued that the very mention of the topic only fuelled unrest and violence, and that these uprisings proved enslaved people were incapable of coping with freedom.[232] The events in Demerara unfolded in such a way those arguments were no longer tenable. Rather than turning against the British authority as such, the rebels in Demerara had made reasonable demands. For example, they wanted to attend church on Sundays and asked for clarification regarding rumours claiming their release was imminent. Moreover, the owners and overseers taken captive by the rebels, wrote a letter stating that they were treated well. Nevertheless, British troops opened fire on the mutineers and put down their uprising with force. This violence would not have gone unnoticed amongst those in the Netherlands with interests in the colony. One Louis, enslaved on the

plantation *Vriendschap*, who was mortgaged by Alexander Gogel, helped lead the revolt and was hanged.[233] And Van Eeghen & Co had a stake in loans for *La Bonne Intention* in Demarara. The rebel Lindor was accused of having ordered the burning of that estate and was beheaded by the British, his severed head put on display on a roadside stake.[234]

The fate suffered by Lindor had been part of the repertoire of repression in the slave colonies since the seventeenth century, but the British public of the 1820s found it hard to stomach. At least as shocking from their point of view was the death of an Anglican missionary named John Smith who had been sentenced to death by the colonial authorities for stoking the uprising. When he died in his cell, he became a martyr for the abolitionist cause.[235] After a long period in the doldrums, the British abolitionist movement experienced a sudden revival. The revitalised movement exerted an unprecedented appeal throughout Britain and many hundreds of petitions were started calling for the immediate, not gradual, abolition of slavery. The subject remained high on the political agenda for the next ten years until finally, in 1833, the Westminster parliament voted for complete abolition. The developments in the Netherlands proved very different in response to the rising of 1823 and the abolition of 1833.

Even given the renewed pressure from an active abolitionist movement, the British decision to end slavery throughout their empire and to compensate owners came rather abruptly. The pace of these developments on the other side of the North Sea also put the issue firmly back on the Dutch political agenda after a long period during which it had not been discussed. Abolition by the British made it inevitable that the Netherlands would have to follow suit sooner or later.[236] DNB directors Joan Huydecoper van Maarsseveen (d. 1817-1836) and Johannes Luden (d. 1836-1864), for example, both owners of people enslaved in British colonies, drew upon what happened to help shape their ideas about Dutch abolition. That they had holdings in those territories was a direct consequence of the wrangling about the return to the Netherlands of colonies occupied by the British during the Napoleonic wars; in 1814 they had refused to relinquish the most economically promising of these – including Demerara, Essequibo and Berbice – leaving a number of plantations founded with Dutch capital under British rule. The Dutch history of these colonies would later fade from memory, but in the early nineteenth century its legacy was still very real.[237] Not everything about the process of abolition was positive in the

eyes of the plantation owners, though. Its catalyst in particular, a general slave rebellion in Demerara unleashing an almost uncontrollable popular movement in the United Kingdom itself and so precipitating an end to enslavement within just a few years, was viewed with disquiet. For the Dutch political policymakers and slave owners alike, retaining control of the entire process was paramount.

On 1 August 1834, the Slavery Abolition Act came into force and contained four key provisions. First, everyone living in slavery in the British Empire was declared free with immediate effect. For the time being, however, all former slaves were to continue working for their former owners for part of the week as apprentices. And the owners were to be compensated with 40 per cent of the nominal value of their slaves. Finally, sugar from British colonies would be protected on the home market. The act did not end the political campaigning, though, which now turned its attention to the apprenticeship system. In 1838 a successful campaign was launched to end the apprenticeship in that same year, two years earlier than planned and the former slave owners had hoped.[238] This idea of a transitional period between slavery and full emancipation would become a major topic of debate in the Netherlands during its own run-up to abolition.

British abolition at a Dutch conference table

How British abolition and its aftermath were viewed in the Netherlands can be reconstructed with the help of unique personal papers left by DNB director Huydecoper van Maarsseveen. Amongst these are the minutes of a meeting of directors and commissioners of the plantations *Hermitage*, *Jardin de Provence*, and *Herstelling* in Demerara. On 11 February, 1836, they gathered at Huydecoper's home. This record of their deliberations provides a detailed insight into the way plantation owners were thinking in the wake of the Slavery Abolition Act of 1833, and now also faced with the emergence of new production methods. Although far removed from their estates, the owners kept close eye on proceedings by way of their supervisors on the ground. The dynamics of the plantation economy entailed the movement of enslaved people on a large scale – no longer across the Atlantic, but mainly within territories. In the United States, for instance, there was forced domestic migration into the so-called "Cotton South". And in Brazil, labour was involuntarily relocated to centres of sugar production.

In Surinam, too, during this period 15 per cent of the enslaved population were moved from cotton and coffee plantations to sugar estates.[239]

The supervisor of *Hermitage* in Demerara had reported to the owners in the Netherlands he was forced to move its 100 enslaved people to *Herstelling*. The quality of the soil on *Hermitage* was "incomprehensibly poor", he wrote, and the abandonment of an adjacent plantation was causing major problems with the water supply.[240] But the knife cut both ways. On the one hand, the transfer of the enslaved labour had the advantage that they would be "infinitely more useful" at *Herstelling* and "save the costs of the managers" at *Hermitage*, but on the other "that displacement should also take place before the registration of the negroes as a result of the decreed emancipation, whilst additionally the steam engine, the iron kettle and everything else suitable for use and transportation" were also moved to *Herstelling*.[241]

By moving around their workforce, the plantation owners were not yet finished with the modernisation of their businesses. The labourers they had previously enslaved now demanded the construction of railways, and the purchase of "such machinery as could lighten their work."[242] These investments had become "especially necessary ... since the government's imposition of only 7½ hours of work per day, during which time it was impossible to prepare sugar in the old way, so that since emancipation truly a lot of money has been spent on hiring the negroes as workmen in their free time."[243] An earlier attempt of the commissioner to sell the holding in Hermitage at its determined value had failed, because by that time "the rumour of emancipation was gaining ground" and it appeared "all eagerness to buy [had] suddenly ... disappeared."[244] On the other hand, the owners were cheered by the fact the British government had paid out the compensation due: "For the combined holdings of this fund, a claim was made for 320 negroes amounting to £17,061."[245] The meeting now faced a decision as to how to pay out this money to the investors.

As a DNB director with wide-ranging interests in the slavery-based economy, Huydecoper had experienced with abolition in the British case and he had received compensation from the British government. Failed coffee harvests and low coffee and sugar prices, combined with the new British legislation, were seriously affecting the financial health of the plantations. As it had already done elsewhere, the transfer of their enslaved workforces from coffee and cotton fields to sugar estates, together with the installation of steam mills, promised solace.[246] The owners

gathered at Huydecoper's home thus had little reason to fear that the Slavery Abolition Act would seriously harm their interests in the British West Indies, even though there were always concerns about its demonstrative effect and thus a rise in rebellious behaviour. The minutes provide tangible evidence of the actions taken by owners like Huydecoper to prevent the people they enslaved fleeing to territories where emancipation had already taken place.[247]

Johannes Luden.
Source: [66735], RKD Netherlands Institute for Art History.

Huydecoper was not the only DNB director to receive British compensation during this period. After his death in 1836, he was succeeded by Johannes Luden (d. 1836-1864),[248] whose wife Anna Catharina Duker had inherited a 27/144th stake in the Demerara plantation *Cornelia Ida* two years earlier.[249] Behind such detached accounts of property, shares, and inheritances lie many real stories of power and powerlessness, and here we find one of them. Anna Catharina's bequest embroiled her in an unequal struggle between her mother's family, the Boodes, and the African-born Rebecca. Rebecca's story reveals how hard some owners fought to hang on to their human chattels in the last days of British slavery, and what this yielded them once abolition came. On 3 February, 1832, Rebecca made a statement in Demerara that she had been unlawfully held in slavery by the Boode family for the past 45 years.[250] She had come to the colony on the slaver *Vaderland Getrouw*, under a Captain Verschuur, and during the crossing had become his sexual partner. After arriving in Demerara, she gave birth to his child, a light-skinned boy named John. By virtue of an agreement made with Verschuur, she was freed. But the Boodes persistently claimed her and her children as their property. When Rebecca pleaded her case in 1832, it was not the first time she had approached the authorities. Twice before she had sought to have her freedom sanctioned. For the Boode family, the stakes were high. If Rebecca were to be declared free, her children would have to be freed as well, four of whom were still enslaved on *Cornelia Ida*. Apart from losing their claimed property, the owners would also miss out on any compensation for them once slavery was abolished.

In 1832, Rebecca had a stronger case than during her earlier attempts. On this occasion one Jacob Boode, a former slave of the Boode family who had known Rebecca on the *Vaderland Getrouw*, had been manumitted in 1819 and was now a retired soldier of the British West India Regiment, declared that her story was true.[251] Sweda – a former concubine in the Boode household, also now free – backed her account as well. And her supposed owners were unable to produce any deeds proving that they had purchased her. They could, however, show that Rebecca was registered as a slave in their plantation's records and also pointed to the fact that they had won previous cases she had brought to court. In the end, Rebecca and her children failed again to have their freedom recognised. The power and influence of the slave owners ensured that the abolition laws worked in their favour rather than in Rebecca's. In 1836, Duker and Luden received compensation for their share of the 207 slaves on *Cornelia Ida*, including Rebecca and her

children. The compensation amounted to *f* 24,499.72. Luden acted as agent for all the recipients, drawing up the receipt for their payments. Overall, the British compensation scheme was viewed positively by Dutch plantation owners. British abolitionists, however, would later express regret about the arrangement because elsewhere, especially in the Netherlands, it became a reason for postponing abolition on the grounds that the national treasury lacked the funds required for such a substantial disbursement.[252]

Financial ruin after the Java War and the Belgian Revolution

During the reign of William I (1815-1840) there were occasional calls for the abolition of slavery, or at least for measures that would lead to its gradual disappearance. However, the political, administrative, and financial situation in the Netherlands was deteriorating to such an extent that the subject eventually disappeared from the policymakers' agenda. William's authoritarian style of government resulted in a crisis in 1828-1829. In the south of the country, the predominantly Roman Catholic majority of the population refused to accept the king's growing hold over ecclesiastical organisations, and liberals had enough of the government's violations of civil liberties. Together, these two groups mobilised against the central authorities and organised mass petitions. This political crisis culminated in the Belgian Revolution and the disintegration of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands in 1830. The uprising also led to unrest in the economy of the West Indies; it was only three years since DNB banknotes had been introduced as legal tender in Surinam. The Particuliere West-Indische Bank (Private West Indies Bank) brought this cash into circulation and was always supposed to have bills of exchange to their full value available in the Netherlands. It soon turned out, however, that more money was being drawn on the bills than was being transferred, resulting in the bank losing its authority to discount them.[253] Meanwhile, De Nederlandsche Bank experienced a general upturn in business in the early 1830s.[254] However, the king stubbornly refused to formally accept the secession of the southern Netherlands and this led to a costly policy of perseverance (volhardingspolitiek). For example, he kept the army mobilised right up until finally recognising Belgian independence by signing the Treaty of London in 1839. In addition, William repeatedly ignored parliamentary calls for greater insight into the government's finances.

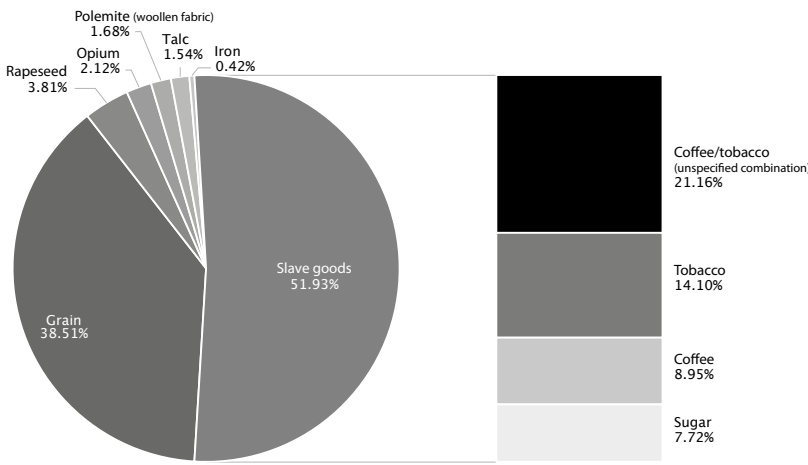
One of the big costs about which parliament was kept in the dark was the colonial budget. The Java War (1825-1830) ruined whole swathes of that island, the most populous and productive in the East Indies archipelago, in terms of both human suffering and financial damage. William entrusted Johannes van den Bosch with the task of turning Java into a profitable region once again. Like the king, the former Commissioner General of Surinam and the Dutch Caribbean had an all-embracing vision of colonial administration. During his time in the Caribbean he had designed the statutes of government for Surinam and reformed the banking system in all the colonies.[255] Van den Bosch feared the flight of capital that he observed in both Asia and "the West". In both regions, profitable companies needed to invest in steam engines in order to increase agricultural production and retain international investors. In his view, producers should preferably grow profitable crops like sugar and indigo for the world market. Colonial companies in the Dutch East Indies faced a shortage of labour, making it relatively expensive in those areas where enslaved workers could not be used.

Van den Bosch introduced the so-called cultivation system (c. 1830-1870) to boost the supply of colonial goods to the Netherlands. This forced rural villagers on Java to use one-fifth of their farmland for sugar, indigo, and coffee production in order to meet an imposed quota for sale to the government at fixed low prices. The Netherlands Trading Society (*Nederlandsche Handel-Maatschappij*, NHM) then disposed of this produce on the world market, much to the chagrin of trading houses and ship owners in Rotterdam and Amsterdam.[256] Just one year after the introduction of the new system, the East Indies recorded a modest budget surplus of *f* 200,000. As the amount increased year by year, the Dutch state came to rely more and more upon these revenues.[257] The supply of colonial goods increased as a result of the cultivation system, and some were pledged to DNB as collateral for loans. As shown in Figure 1, the bank accepted consignments of ten different commodities with a total value of *f* 708,980 as security during the 1833-34 financial year. The largest single gage in this period was made on 18 March, 1834, when G. Varkevisser secured credit worth a total of *f* 150,000 against a consignment of coffee and tobacco. In all, slavery-related goods accounted for more than half of the gages pledged that year.[258]

Not until after William I abdicated (1840) did the full extent of the havoc he had wreaked with the national finances become clear.[259] As a result of

the policy of perseverance and military campaigns in the Dutch East Indies, public expenditure far outstripped revenues and overdue payments. In that same year, Floris Adriaan van Hall published a *Proeve van een onderzoek over de schuld van het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden* (Report of an investigation into the national debt of the Kingdom of the Netherlands). By writing this, he had followed the advice of his father-in-law, Jan Bondt.[260] Van Hall argued that the "artificial secrecy" imposed upon the Dutch public finances in the first half of the nineteenth century was an important cause of the persistent deficit. Year after year, the king had been forced to take special measures in order to make the annual budget appear to be balanced. Since 1822 he had used the Amortisation Syndicate (Amortisatie Syndicaat) for this purpose, a personal treasury full of borrowed money that he could spend at will, beyond parliamentary scrutiny. His abdication also meant the end of this money-guzzling financial instrument. When its statement of income and expenditure was published after his death, it became clear that the government had to add another *f*4,488,523 to its budget deficit of *f*17,152,000 for the years 1841-1843. At the same time, the government initiated a fiscal consolidation, which would take years to complete. Henceforth, the Ministry of Finance would administer all debts incurred by the Kingdom of the Netherlands. By exchanging high-interest debt as far as possible for low-interest debt minister Van Hall averted national bankruptcy. The poor state of Dutch public finances put an end to the first cautious steps towards the abolition of slavery.

Figure 1. *Goods pledged against DNB loans, 1833/34 financial year.*



Borski remains financially involved, but publicly aloof

Those involved in slavery and related businesses had every reason to look after their own interests. Enslavement was far from over in the 1830s. On 1 February, 1832, a balance sheet was compiled in a near-illegible hand of the investments made by Johanna Borski in the Dutch colonies.[261] The sheet listed ten "*Akkerboom* shares", one "*Livonia* share", *f* 7,000 in "Surinam *Van de Poll*", *f* 3,000 in "Surinam *Deutz*", *f* 8,000 in "*Clifford Chevalier*" and twelve other holdings in Dutch colonial estates, sixteen in all. In this document, Borski's Dutch colonial investments were valued at a total of one guilder. With little or no active trade in shares in plantation mortgage funds at this time, that was not an unrealistic figure. Borski acquired another seven colonial shares – four in the plantation *Providence* and three in the Sobre fund – from J. Blijdesteijn in 1832, for just one guilder.[262] What these investments did yield, despite their low book value, was dividend payments. On 31 July, 1832, the "distribution" on fourteen *Changuion* bonds was *f* 700. In most years the proceeds of the colonial securities were a few hundred guilders, but in 1836 the dividend payments on the fourteen *Changuion* shares worth *f* 5,250 generated total proceeds of *f* 7,388.50. In 1839, a 3/358th stake in the plantation *De Hoop* and 5/576th of *Nieuw Amsterdam* in Surinam were the primary contributors to a total yield of *f* 3,634, thus pushing up proceeds that year. Between 1832 and 1848, "colony securities" generated *f* 18,618.38 for the widow Borski. Under a separate heading, the ledger also mentions her *Zeezigt* plantation bonds; these yielded *f* 12,000 between 1840 and 1847. The "securities taken over", those Borski had bought from J. Blijdesteijn for one guilder, produced *f* 175 in "distributions" between 1833 and 1839.[263]

Moreover, Borski did not confine herself to the Dutch colonial territories. In her portfolio, we also find "Tobacco from St Thomas". This is now one of the US Virgin Islands, but in the nineteenth century it was a Danish plantation colony where tobacco was one of various crops grown using enslaved labour. Sales of this commodity earned the widow *f* 6,726.01 between 1832 and 1834. Proceeds from loans to plantations on the Danish islands added another *f* 990. Sales of coffee in 1832 and 1833 yielded Borski *f* 32,944.13. This is many times more than her income from "Batavia goods" from the Dutch East Indies, which generated a total of *f* 2,653. The widow also owned shares in the West Indies Company, but these never yielded any profit and their value on the balance sheet only decreased each

year. Her stake in the NHM proved considerably more lucrative; it paid out *f* 31,676.38 between 1832 and 1842. The bulk of her portfolio, however, comprised loans to public authorities. Under the heading "American Funds", these include almost *f* 300,000 lent to the US federal government. But we also find loans to individual states such as Louisiana (approximately *f* 800,000) and cities like Mobile, Alabama (approximately *f* 60,000), and Pensacola, Florida (approximately *f* 50,000). Although these were not direct investments in slavery, indirectly slave labour contributed in large part to their collateral. After all, the agricultural economy in the southern US states, in particular, was very much built upon enslaved labour. The link between money and slavery was often very explicit on banknotes. A $10 banknote issued by the Central Bank of Alabama in the nineteenth century, for example, leaves no doubt as to where its value comes from: the dominant image is a somewhat idyllic depiction of an enslaved labourer harvesting cotton.

Based upon the amounts listed above, Johanna Borski earned at least *f* 38,334.39 from slave labour between 1832 and 1848. Indeed, the actual amount could be as much as *f* 70,000 if it were to be established beyond doubt that the coffee she traded in came not from the Dutch East Indies but from a slave plantation in the Atlantic region. Although this was a substantial sum of money – *f* 70,000 in 1847 had a purchasing power equivalent to about € 650,000 in 2020[264] – for Borski it represented only about 1.5 per cent of her total assets of more than *f* 4,000,000. She invested most of that capital in domestic and foreign government bonds, some of which were also financed indirectly by slave labour. It is hardly surprising that she did not speak out publicly against slavery, then, but it is striking that we do not find her name on any of the pro-slavery petitions discussed later in this chapter either.

People or property? The battle over the status of enslaved people

The difference between Britain's fairly precipitate abolition of slavery and the political culture and process in the Netherlands could hardly have been greater. In the Netherlands, aversion to abolitionism was intertwined with the conservative "anti-revolutionary" philosophy which pervaded Dutch politics. Although it was acknowledged more or less grudgingly that slavery should be abolished, it was always emphasised that this could

only happen step by step and that the enslaved populations in the colonies were not yet ready for it. The non-conformist religious movements which had fuelled the abolitionist message in the United Kingdom did not speak out in the Netherlands. Although lively previously, the debate on the issue had died down by the 1780s.[265] Nor did the uproar in Britain over a major slave revolt in a former Dutch colony give rise to any principled political discussion in 1823; there was only concern that the rebellion might have turned "Demerara into a second St Domingo [meaning Saint-Domingue]."[266] Moreover, the 1830s saw the Netherlands experience a series of national crises, leaving little room on the political agenda for a topic as sensitive as the abolition of slavery.

Despite this, Dutch slave owners and others with a stake in the system began preparing for possible abolition in the late 1820s. And not without reason. From time to time, William I and those close to him took measures which made it apparent an end to slavery was in the offing. When Johannes Van den Bosch was sent to the Atlantic colonies to implement administrative reforms, he made an important change in the status of the people enslaved there. Article 117 of Chapter 8 of his 1828 Regulation on the Policy of the Government of the Dutch West Indian Possessions (Reglement op het beleid der Regering van de Nederlandsche Westindische Bezittingen) reads as follows.

> The slaves shall, with regard to their daily treatment, in respect of their owners be considered as *underlings* of their *curators* or *guardians*, in whom shall be vested the right to exercise a paternal discipline over them, but against whose maltreatment all public authorities shall be obliged to guard and to ensure that the law designed in their interest shall be strictly enforced; the unjust principle that in law they may be regarded merely as *chattels* and not as *persons* is hereby definitively abolished.

This provision represented a watershed in the legal status of the enslaved. Under the Roman-Dutch legal code, up until then they had been classified as goods, not people. Not surprisingly, the plantation managers – and by extension their representatives and other interested parties in the Netherlands – were extremely displeased by the measure. They therefore organised principled resistance against it. Unfortunately, the original

petition they compiled has been lost and we therefore have been unable to establish whether any prominent DNB officials were among its signatories. Given what we know about later petitions, though, that would not be surprising.

The interested parties that signed the petition were successful. As a result of the lobbying, the article quoted above was dropped from the revised regulations of 1833.[267] This meant that from then on, enslaved people could again be treated as chattels. In practice, a "middle way" seems to have been found in which enslaved people were sometimes regarded as persons – for instance, when they had committed an offence for which they were fined by the government – but in other cases, such as when determining the value of a plantation, they were still considered property. In 1848, the owners wrote a lengthy memorandum to the Minister of the Colonies, Jules Constantijn Rijk, in which they stated emphatically that they considered an enslaved person to be "in law vis à vis his master, an object, a *possession* – a movable and, as one calls it in law, a self-moveable *property*."[268] The first report of the State Commission for Slave Emancipation (*Staatscommissie voor de Slavenemancipatie*) also shows that the owners used the deletion of Article 117 as an opportunity to treat the enslaved people in this way in legal proceedings. In response to the question "To what extent does the rule that the slaves are *objects*, not *persons*, still apply?", the answer was that, under all laws, "the slaves are always considered objects."[269] The fact that the enslaved were counted as goods does not mean they appear in DNB records as collateral for loans.[270] But the change to the Regulation is crucial in understanding why, for Dutch officials and those with interests in slavery, its abolition was viewed as a business transaction which had to be settled "fairly" according to the property laws of the day.

Not long after this successful opposition to the reclassification of the enslaved as people, full abolition suddenly reappeared on the political agenda. Britain's abrupt decision to end slavery displeased those stakeholders in the Surinamese plantation economy living in the Netherlands. In a joint letter to William I on 25 June, 1833, they requested that he send military reinforcements to Surinam. Amongst the signatories were the DNB non-executive directors Marcus Broen, Insinger & Co, and Jacob Hendrick Luden, the father of bank director Johannes Luden. Their concerns boiled down to this: "The measures incited by the Parliament of England in order to obtain, across the wide extent of that nation's West Indian colonies, the complete emancipation of the negro slaves on the plantations situated

there" were causing the signatories "great apprehension for their private interests as well as those of Dutch trade in general."[271] The current military presence in Surinam was far too small, because the king only had to "know the character of the negroes to a slight degree ... to be convinced how little is needed to make them pursue, in their mad and frenzied urges, that which they have learned to understand is desirable and attainable; so that if the passion to be free or to be called thus, is accompanied by the possibility of obtaining this object of desire, but a slight inducement is sufficient to bring the entire slave population of the colony to uproar within a short time."[272]

This petition shows once again just how much the British Slavery Abolition Act of 1833 vexed Dutch stakeholders in Atlantic slavery; amongst them DNB directors Huydecoper van Maarsseveen and Luden, both of whom were actively involved with the issue because of their holdings in British colonies. But the call for the military reinforcement of Surinam shows that other DNB officials also sought to exert political pressure to defend enslavement and to make potential abolition by the Netherlands work to their advantage. In the years 1834-1836, the issue of emancipation would not be raised again by the government, but those with interests in Dutch slavery made their voices heard in the 1840s.[273]

Detail from a diorama of the Zeezigt coffee and cotton plantation in Surinam, Gerrit Schouten, c. 1815-1821.

Source: [NG-1983-1], *Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.*

Stirrings in Amsterdam

As Minister of the Colonies between 1840 and 1848, Jean Chrétien Baud found himself embroiled in conflict with Amsterdam slave owners and other interested parties opposed to abolition.[274] In his view, the States General had alluded to a forthcoming emancipation in its response to the king's speech of 1841. This shift in the political mood in The Hague did not go unnoticed by the slave owners of Amsterdam, either. They first tried to make known their wishes regarding slavery policy through petitions to the minister and the new king, William II. In 1844-1845, the focus of the dispute shifted to the performance of the governor-general of Surinam, Burchard Joan Elias. Fierce attacks from the owners prompted Baud to prevent Elias amending the slave laws in 1845.[275] These petitions are particularly important to the history of DNB's involvement with slavery because they were signed by several individuals and firms with links to the bank.

We have managed to trace fifteen separate petitions and similar petitions concerning the abolition of slavery, submitted by a variety of firms and other interested parties between 1841 and 1862. These do not include a number of personal letters sent by Insinger & Co, although their contents are also discussed below. We investigated all the signatories in an effort to establish whether they had any association with DNB, either commercially or in a managerial capacity. The number of signatories per petition ranged between 30 and 48, in varying combinations; in all we counted 112 individual names, although it should be noted that on occasions people signed on behalf of others, in their absence. In total, those 112 persons placed 563 signatures on petitions against policies proposed or already being pursued with regard to slavery in the West Indies. A number of these signatories had direct links with DNB: Johannes Luden (d. 1836-1864), Marcus Broen (n. 1823-1850), Jacobus Hermanus Insinger (d. 1844-1871), Wilhem Willink junior and the firms Hodshon & Son, Determeyer Weslingh & Son, Insinger & Co (n. 1817-1823), Luden & van Geuns, Broen & Co, Goll & Co, Bunge & Co, Ketwich & Voomberg, and Gebroeders Hartsen. From 1860 onwards, Ferdinand Rendorp (d. 1845-1865) signed several petitions as representative of the shareholders in the company Weduwe J.S. van de Poll. No indications have been found that any of these parties signed in a capacity directly associated with DNB.

A.M. De Jong ranks Determeyer Weslingh & Son (founded 1765), Goll & Co (1777), and Ketwich & Voomberg (1790) amongst the leading trading houses to survive in the nineteenth century by conducting buying and selling on their own account or by elevating what had originally been a secondary activity, dealing in bills of exchange and securities, to become their core business.[276] Determeyer Weslingh & Son and Dirk Jan Voomberg were amongst the major initial investors in DNB who attended its first meeting of shareholders on 17 August, 1814.[277] The signatory Wilhem Willink junior had no formal association with DNB but, as a member of the Amsterdam City Council, had consulted its then president, Jan Hodshon, and director Jacob Fock I in 1824 about William I's desire to revive the Wisselbank.[278] The firm Gebroeders Hartsen signed one petition and would have liked a connection with DNB; in 1868 one of its partners, Pieter Hartsen, was one of the two candidates for a vacant directorship of the bank. On 19 May, however, the general meeting of shareholders elected Nicolaas Gerard Pierson (d. 1868-1885), by 391 votes to 189.[279] Both Willink junior and Gebroeders Hartsen thus had only marginal connections with DNB, but their names do appear in De Jong's classical study on the bank's history and so they should be mentioned here as signatories of pro-slavery petitions. Our inclusion of Hodshon & Son also requires explanation. Jan Hodshon (d. 1814-1816, p. 1816-1827), a prominent figure at DNB in its early years, was long dead by the time his successors at the family firm signed one of the petitions we are discussing here, but he was heavily involved in that business during his term of office and so we believe the firm's signature is relevant and worthy of mention.

We were able to ascertain which services DNB provided to some of the signatories. In the second volume of his history of DNB, *Geschiedenis van de Nederlandsche Bank*, De Jong provides extensive information on discounters in the period 1852-1864.[280] They were holders of bills of exchange who sold them to DNB after deducting interest over their residual term to maturity.[281] The banking firms Determeyer Weslingh & Son and Goll & Co were important clients for DNB; they appear in its accounts in twelve separate financial years, discounting amounts ranging between f2.1 million and f2.8 million per year. More modest in size, but still important for DNB, were Luden & Van Geuns and Bunge & Co. They were trading companies and during this period discounted more than f1 million annually with DNB.[282] Albert van Geuns, a partner in Luden & Van Geuns, became royal commissioner of DNB in 1864. This was a

position created by the 1863 Banking Act (Bankwet), which obliged Van Geuns to attend the meetings of the bank's shareholders and non-executive directors as well as the joint meetings of the board and non-executive directors.[283]

The period 1841-1862 reveals what was at stake for the government when it came to the issue of slavery and DNB's involvement with it. To gauge just how seriously the political establishment in The Hague took the petitioners from Amsterdam, we need to bear in mind the economic significance of DNB, of the capital's trading houses, and of their commerce in colonial goods during those years. The bank's revised charter of 1838 had allowed it to increase its registered capital and the bank did exactly that by issuing new shares worth *f* 5 million to existing investors in April 1840. Its consultations with the non-executive directors on this matter show that the growth of trade and industry in particular, due especially to "the favourable development of agriculture in our East Indian possessions", had increased the need for money.[284] In 1845, the year in which the conflict between Baud and the slave owners reached a climax in the States General, the total amount discounted at DNB exceeded *f* 100 million. This activity became popular after the founding of the Nederlandsche Handel-Maatschappij (NHM).[285] So what was happening in the colonies at the time certainly was relevant to DNB policy, but this primarily concerned the Dutch East Indies.

Between 1844 and 1848, DNB was involved indirectly in the reorganisation of the national debt and the switch to the silver standard. Regarding the first of these, legal consultant Jan Bondt wrote several letters to his son-in-law, Floris Adriaan van Hall, who as Minister of Finance was responsible for the debt restructuring. Through a controversial parliamentary bill, he succeeded in considerably reducing the budgetary pressure of the national debt. Amongst other things, this involved raising a "voluntary loan" to the government worth *f* 127 million at the low interest rate of 3 per cent. Private investors signed up to the tune of *f* 117 million in all, inhabitants of Amsterdam with interests in slavery prominent amongst them. Against this backdrop it is understandable why, in response to an 1845 petition to the House of Representatives from that same group, the MP Jan Karel van Goltstein referred to them as "estimable residents of the capital, heads of substantial trading houses."[286] Because of their willingness to subscribe to the loan, he considered them "conscientious dischargers of their civic duties, and disposed in times of need to be of service to the state by all

means."[287] In 1846-1847 the state budget was once again in balance, thanks mainly to revenues from the East Indies.[288]

Signature hunt and verbal fireworks: the development and content of the petitions

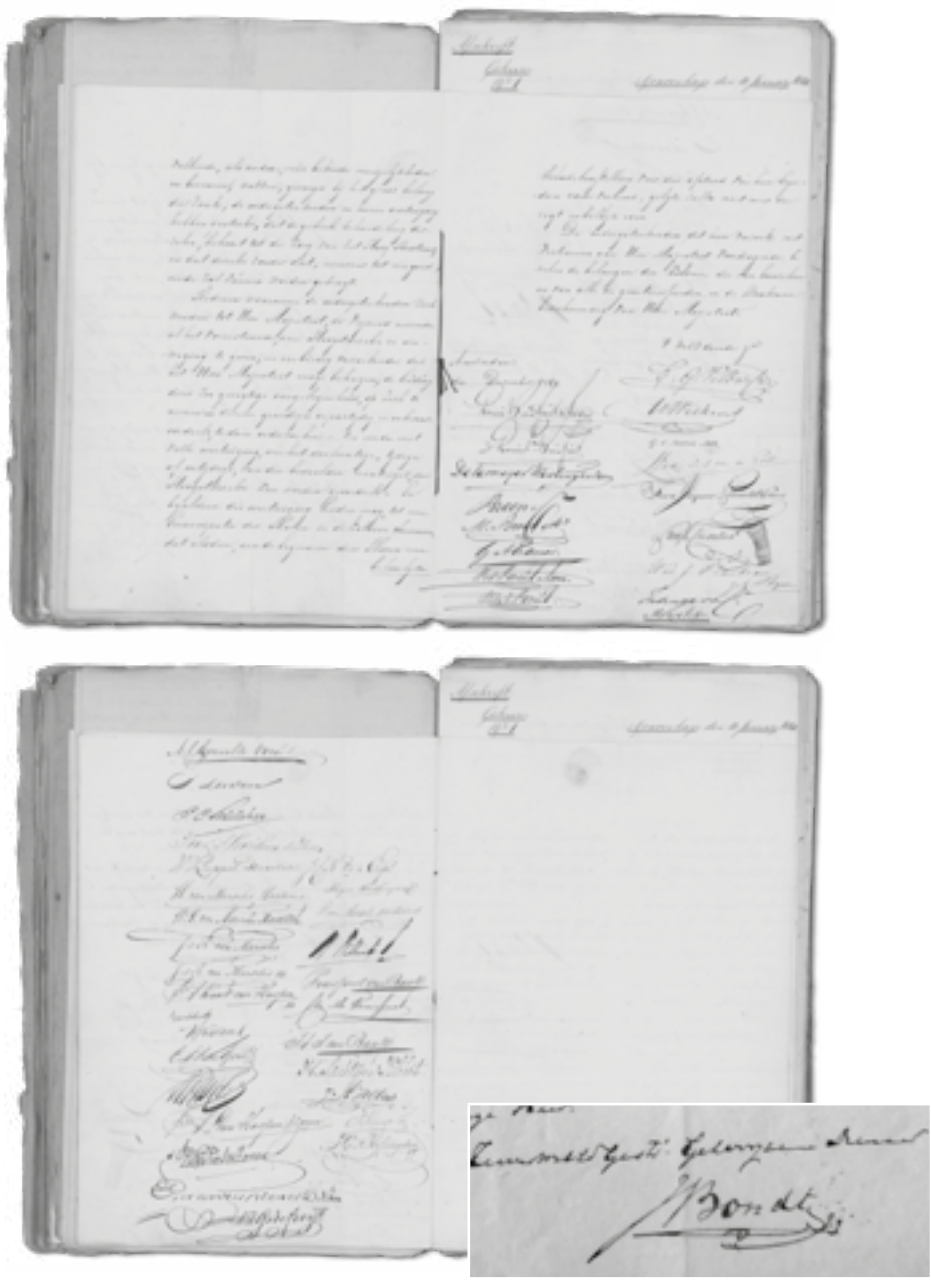
Now that we have a picture of the signatories and the broader political and economic context, the time has come to take a closer look at the immediate reasons why these petitions appeared, what arguments the authors used, and how the Dutch government reacted to them. Rumours that a society was to be founded with the aim of abolishing slavery prompted several prominent Amsterdam merchants to write to William II in December 1841. On their petition we find the signature of DNB director Luden (d. 1836-1864), whilst "J. Hodshon" is probably the son of former bank president Jan Hodshon (p. 1816-1827); both his brother and his son were already active in the firm Hodshon & Son in 1814. The other signatories associated with DNB are the firms Insinger & Co and Broen & Co, as well as Determeyer Weslingh & Son, headed by legal consultant Bondt (1814-1845). The signature in that company's name is clearly in his hand. Marcus Broen Mzn (n. 1823-1850) signed in a personal capacity, whilst someone else did so on behalf of Broen & Co. Marcus was the son of a merchant trading with Surinam and head of Broen & Co.

Compared with later petitions, this one was short and concise in its appeal to the king. As mentioned, the immediate reason for its submission was the establishment of "an association or society ... having as its aim the emancipation of the slaves" in Surinam.[289] For three reasons the petitioners asked William "to take charge of this matter of so great an importance."[290] That it was essential firstly for peace and security, secondly for the prosperity "of the entire fatherland", and thirdly because an issue coupled with such "great difficulties" should not be the responsibility of particular persons or a separate society, but "belongs to the concerns of the high administration of the nation."[291] The government should investigate whether the time was right for emancipation. And if it was, then according to the petitioners the government should devise the means "by which, in the event that the measure in question be implemented, adequate compensation will be provided to the owners of the slaves to be emancipated."[292] In this first address to William II, those with interests in

slavery thus clearly delegated responsibility for what they would consider a "just" emancipation to the Dutch government. From the outset, the key term for the owners and investors was "proper compensation".[293] The signatories did not oppose potential abolition per se, but they did remind the king of the complexity of the matter and the fact that, as legitimate owners of property in the colonies concerned, they expected to see their interests represented in the decision-making process. The petition had the desired effect, because the king accepted the arguments presented: this matter belonged in the hands of the government. His Minister of the Colonies, Baud, subsequently decided to investigate the necessity of abolition at his own pace.[294]

A new rumour in 1843 prompted a new petition. This time the catalyst was speculation that the government was deliberating about the introduction of a new Regulation governing the enslaved and their treatment in Surinam. The petition was signed by the firms Luden & Van Geuns, Hodshon & Son, Goll & Co, Insinger & Co, and Ketwich & Voomberg – all associated with DNB, as well as by Luden personally again. The petitioners desired "that the Government be pleased *beforehand* to make use of intelligence from the owners and interested parties combined, in order that a regrettable experience not prove *afterwards* that the lack of such intelligence had led to great and irreparable errors."[295] The document provided two specific reasons for such advance consultations. Firstly, it claimed, interference by the government in the management of the enslaved in Surinam constituted a violation of the right of ownership, which could not be forfeited "without adequate compensation [...] whatever the philanthropic spirit of the age may judge."[296] Secondly, any standardised measure taken by the government would fail in Surinam because of the "so very varied condition and nature of the plantations" there.[297] The signatories believed that only by acquiring prior knowledge of the local situation the authorities could draw up good new regulations for the government of the enslaved.

Baud did not respond to this submission, so at the end of October he received a second petition from Amsterdam. In this the signatories claimed that "reports being received at the present time by many of the undersigned ... testify to the unrest already prevalent in the colony and the dangers threatening that possession."[298] In particular, measures introduced by the new governor-general, Elias, "in no way respect the legitimate rights and authority of the masters over their slaves".[299] Rather, they displayed "a desire more heartless than benevolent to honour philanthropic ideas



Signatures on a petition of 1841 and (inset) Jan Bondt's signature from another letter, showing that he signed this petition on behalf of Determeyer Weslingh & Son.

Source: NL-HaNA, 2.10.01, *inv. no.* 4277, *exh.* 11 January, 1842.

at the expense of the individual owners"[300] and were intended "to perturb the colonists in their lawful ownership [and] to reduce still further the already very low value of their securities."[301] Of the 48 signatories on this occasion, Luden ex officio and the firms Insinger & Co, Determeyer Weslingh & Son, Goll & Co, Hodshon & Son, Luden & Van Geuns, and Ketwich & Voomberg all had personal or commercial links with DNB.

Because Gijsbert Christiaan Bosch Reitz's signature appeared first on the petition, he received Baud's reply with the request to distribute it further. In his response, the minister clearly passed the buck back to the discontented Amsterdam trading houses. "In the case of slavery," he wrote, "one can no longer consider as satisfactory the guarantees with which one used to be content."[302] In 1842, the government had sought to give the owners the opportunity to improve the management of their enslaved labour force themselves, so that the interested parties would not give the impression that they were only willing to make changes because of new legislation. And earlier in 1843 Baud had corresponded at some length with Bosch Reitz about another recurrent problem in Surinam: the shortage of circulating means of payment, especially paper money. According to the minister, that exchange had made it abundantly clear that Bosch Reitz was trying "to persuade the Colonial Department to increase the bank notes [in circulation] with a new issue of *f* 60,000, *entirely in his own interests*."[303] Having refused to undertake overseas activities since 1826, DNB played no part in this problem. But it recurs time and again as a banking issue in the Amsterdam-West Indies-The Hague triangle and is therefore an important factor in understanding the dynamics of the Amsterdam petition movement. How Bosch Reitz "is able now to put himself at the head of a petition in which the Colonial Department is maligned in the most extreme manner and accused of having done nothing for Surinam, and being willing to do nothing, can be explained only by the grievous disappointment which he, in making a fine speculation, experienced due to the minister's refusal."[304] So read the pithy sentence with which Baud put down Bosch Reitz's new-found role as standard-bearer for Amsterdam's trading houses to a personal grudge against him as minister.

The response from the capital, dated 25 November, 1843, was considerably longer than the first two petitions. It was the first such document to refer directly to the publication of 31 August, 1784, the legal basis for the plantation owners' "domestic jurisdiction" over their property in Surinam.[305] The writers expressed their distaste for "the system of scrutiny, which at

this moment prevails in Surinam." By this they meant "investigations into the conduct of the owners" with the possibility of "charges and prosecutions."[306] Such activities, they explained, would "create in the minds of the negroes an unrealistic expectation [...] and put not only the rights, but even the safety of the owners at risk."[307] As emancipation became a real prospect, their petitions grew in length and the compilers introduced more historical documents in support of their arguments.

Although the Amsterdam signatories were in a strong position with regard to the historical and legal basis of their rights, the outcome was far from being a foregone conclusion. Baud subsequently received a letter from Paramaribo, signed "G. N." – possibly Adriaan David van der Gon Netscher, formerly a planter in British Guiana – and reacting to the latest missive from what the writer calls "that coalition" with a perhaps surprising tenor. This correspondent advised Baud "to pay no regard to the addresses [petitions] from the gentlemen of Amsterdam."[308] They involved deception of various kinds. For example, the authors had "misled a number of the signatories, who have nothing to do with our colony." Only now, "at last", were they "better acquainting themselves with the persons to whom they have entrusted the protection of their interests in this country [Surinam]."[309] If those gentlemen really valued the growth prosperity of Surinam, G. N. mused, why did they not end their opposition "to our desire to have a free port and market here?"[310] And if they had really "donned their armour and girded their weapons for the safety and the lives of the inhabitants of Surinam, between their number of 40 or 50 why do they not raise the relatively small sum of three million Dutch guilders to save the colonial money from further depreciation?"[311] The letter ended with two remarks intended to undermine the force of the signatures. Some of the gentlemen, it was claimed, had signed only as a favour to others, whilst the author had also espied with regret the names "of people who have numerous obligations to the present government of Surinam."[312] In short, those in Amsterdam with interests in Surinam's slave economy represented anything but a consensus in their attempts to influence colonial policy in The Hague.

Baud immediately capitalised on this letter's dagger blow to the resistance he was encountering from Amsterdam. With so much of the discontent about his colonial policy concentrated in the capital, he thought it "not unlikely" that William II, too, "will be approached by the Surinam petitioners."[313] He therefore felt it appropriate to send the king a note

making two key points that he "might well use" should any interested party contact him directly.[314] The first complaint they were likely to raise, according to Baud, was that he had not given them an opportunity to consult with him prior to the adoption of the new slave regulation. This regulation governed the system of slavery and the treatment and status those who were being enslaved. But any complaint from Amsterdam on this point would be unfounded because the regulation was still being drafted. The second objection was more delicate, since it concerned "the unseemly animosity of the petitioners, [which] was not followed by the government."[315] Baud pointed out to the king that, "even as they are moving heaven and earth to pit the House of Representatives against [your royal] prerogative, their ships are being underwritten by the Colonial Department."[316] Their reliance upon government business was something "the repositories would do well to appreciate."[317] It was important for Baud that those concerned acknowledge that neither they nor parliament controlled the colonies, but the king. During his ministerial term, Baud would come to personify this old-style attitude towards colonial administration.

As Baud had predicted the petitioners set their sights on William II after their attempts to influence him had proven fruitless. In 1844, the minister received a number of letters from his secretary that offer a good insight into the background to the latest round of petitions and how the government viewed them. In August, for example, he was informed that Broen and Hodshon – both directly or indirectly associated with DNB – together with Bosch Reitz, Wilkens, Gülcher, Marselis, and Le Chevallier, were seeking an audience with the king. But with both William and his adjutant absent from The Hague, the minister's secretary "feared disappointment" in obtaining "the desired audience before the king's departure for Germany."[318] Meanwhile, the outcome of a meeting of plantation owners and administrators held on 1 July, 1844 would "keep alive the unrest that continues to exist amongst the W. I. [West Indian] owners ... and incite renewed démarches."[319] This observation proved absolutely correct, because in October and November the West Indies trading houses again submitted petitions to both the king and Baud. And again, these prompted no action on the part of the government.[320] Evidently, according to Baud's secretary, the petitioners were convinced that "their interests will be pressed all the more, and the advocacy thereof by the government will follow more quickly, when their representations are supported in writing by all those interested in the prosperity of the colony."[321]

This confidential correspondence from Baud's office about the petitions from the Amsterdam trading houses contains crucial information about the involvement of DNB directors Insinger and Luden, and DNB-related Bondt and Goll & Co. Before such a petition went to the king, it seems there was a veritable hunt for signatures. Whilst up to 48 trading companies did put their names to these documents, this number was not considered particularly high.[322] It was not primarily the number of signatories that really mattered, but rather the social standing of the individual merchants and firms appending their signatures. From a copy of a letter dated 25 January, 1845 written by Amsterdam's mayor, Pieter Huidekoper, to Minister of Finance Van Hall, we learn quite a lot about the attempts made to prevent representatives of Amsterdam's leading mercantile businesses from signing another petition. And in it we also find mention of several DNB officials. "Our mutual friend, Mr A. F. Insinger," had informed Huidekoper that a lawyer named Van den Embde was urging its signatories "to submit the new address, which also includes the constitutional question."[323]

Insinger had spoken with Rodolphe le Chevallier of the firm J.J. Poncelet & Son and with Egbert Gerrit Veldwijk, and "both had said that they would not sign the document." Moreover, Insinger "would see to it that Mr Van de Poll is also so persuaded."[324] This confirms that Insinger had good connections with others in Amsterdam with interests in Surinam and that the government made use of his authority to temper their criticism of its colonial policy. Finally, Huidekoper dropped Van Hall a hint whereby he confirmed Jan Bondt's involvement with the campaign of petitions. "The previous address" he wrote, "was signed by Determeyer Weslingh. That, I believe, can be prevented in the future by taking Mr Bondt in hand."[325] This is an important sentence for DNB's historical association with slavery, because it establishes that Bondt was indeed responsible for signing the petitions on behalf of his company. Turning the tables, the time had now come for Van Hall to advise his father-in-law – rather than the other way around, as over the national debt – on the policy the government should be following. Although it is also possible that Bondt's death on 8 January, 1845 led Determeyer Weslingh & Son to not sign any more petitions.

Despite his efforts on the minister's behalf, mayor Huidekoper also took the opportunity to explain why he could understand the dissatisfaction, even amongst moderate colonial investors, with governor-general Elias' actions in Surinam.

> It is apparent to me that the owners of the W[est] I[Indian] plantations are ill at ease about the state their possessions are in. The moderates say that the uncertainty regarding the government's intentions with regard to the emancipation of the slaves worries them; and they say that the actions of Governor Elias are the reason for this and that intriguers are now making improper use of that anxiety.[326]

We find a specific example of this broader dissatisfaction with Elias in Amsterdam in an incident recorded in the minute book for the cotton plantation *Zeezigt*. This also illustrates the direct involvement of DNB director Insinger in the management of such holdings. As directors of Zeezigt's mortgage fund, Insinger and his brother Albrecht Frederik look after the interests of its British owners, the heiresses Catherine and Johanna Cooke. In May 1843, they requested that the Insingers "apply to His Majesty by petition in order to make an attempt to obtain leave, upon the basis of all that is mentioned therein, to close *Zeezigt* and to sell the negro labour family by family".[327] Rather than following this instruction to the letter, the Insingers instead wrote to Minister of the Colonies Baud and subsequently arranged a personal interview. In a written reply, Baud said that he had read the request made by Insinger & Co, but that his department could not grant an exemption from the Surinam government regulation without having heard governor-general Elias on the matter.

> Since it is apparent from the recently conducted interview that they will be satisfied with a recommendation concerning their interests to [Elias], such a recommendation is being sent this day [and] shall certainly have the effect that the interests of the applicants will be upheld as much as is possible.[328]

In short, Baud informed Elias that he saw no objection to the Insingers' wish to liquidate *Zeezigt* and to sell off its enslaved workforce in family groups, even though this ran counter to the regulations then in force.

Baud's belief that his intervention would persuade Elias to make an exemption to the rules for the Insingers proved mistaken. The governor-general felt that "the slaves of the plantation *Zeezigt* were too numerous" to be sold by force without inciting violence. Their likely resistance, he wrote, would derive from a combination of "their familial relations with

the slave force on the nearby plantation *Dageraad*" and the detrimental effects on their health of "moving negroes from a cotton plantation on the sea coast to sugar plantations."[329] For these reasons, Elias turned down the Insinger brothers' request. Actions such as this caused consternation amongst those in Amsterdam with interests in slavery in Surinam and the Caribbean. In the words of his predecessor, Julius Constantijn Rijk, "by the recklessness of his actions with regard to the slaves" Elias brought "a hornet's nest about his ears amongst the pinch pennies of Amsterdam."[330] This insight into the Insingers' plantation management activities also helps us understand why their family firm put its name to the petition complaining about Elias in 1844. In their eyes, he had personally thwarted their interests in Surinam – far more so than Baud, who had at least indicated initially that he had no objections to the liquidation of *Zeezigt*.

Despite this disappointing result for the Insingers in their attempt to win Baud's favour, with yet another petition in the offing Albrecht Frederik made a fruitful tour of Amsterdam's leading trading houses to dissuade them from signing. This latest petition, dreaded in government circles, was sent to the House of Representatives although with a noticeably different set of signatories. No DNB directors and none of the notable trading houses had signed this time. Yet former non-executive directors Broen & Co and Goll & Co, the latter now a major discounter of financial instruments, as well as Luden & Van Geuns had all signed this petition again.[331] At the time this changed set of signatories was noticed and not entirely attributed to Insinger's influence among shareholders in slavery. "Notwithstanding all the efforts made and the fact that they had put their signatures to previous documents worded in dubious terms," Baud was informed, the signatures of Jan Hodshon and Jan Luden and of Insinger & Co, Determeyer Weslingh & Son, Wilhem Willink and other interested parties were missing.[332] One possible reason for this, he was told, was that they had been informed that the House would "declare itself incompetent in this matter" and instead refer it to the minister.[333] For a party of any stature, that was "all the more reason not to shoot his powder in vain."[334] According to the informant, moreover, there was a logical explanation as to why Goll & Co had signed: "The head of the house of Goll and Co has been lying sick in his bed for a good five weeks, so the gullible Goll has taken charge of the business. Without these circumstances, I do not believe that this house would have signed."[335]

Apart from a few leading bankers and major banking houses, the petition contained mainly lesser-known names. In a separate note, Baud received background information "provided by an Amsterdam trading house." This revealed "which signatories to the address present themselves falsely as having a great interest in Surinam."[336] Most were stockbrokers and had no private property in the colony. Amongst them were also an associate of Broen & Co and a confidential clerk at Hodshon & Son. On 1 March, 1845, Baud's contact in the capital wrote that he had heard that "many of the signatories to the address must have been carried along with the current, whilst others are dependent entirely upon the whims of their administrators in Surinam."[337] Even brokers and owners of ships, and workmen too, had had petitions put before them. Amongst these subordinates, "some démarches had already been undertaken ... at many houses verily without success, and by many subordinates they were viewed with reticence, whereby they would have refused steadfastly to sign were they not compelled to do so by their private interests."[338] This latter statement, in particular, gives us the impression that the stream of complaints set in motion by a few trading houses was not to the liking of everyone with interests in the West Indies. It is not inconceivable, for example, that Wed. W. Borski was one of the major trading houses which refused to add its name to the petition to parliament. Those individuals who did sign, moreover, might not have done so had their personal circumstances made them less dependent upon one of the firms backing the initiative.

All in all, Insinger's intervention at the government's behest helped to ensure that the first petition submitted to the House of Representatives represented a rather mixed bunch of people and businesses. "Besides the ringleaders of the opposition in this matter," Baud's informant told him, "and with the exception of a few trading houses, the majority of the signatories to the address are not the 'crème de la crème'; and there are even some *very mangy ones* (an Amsterdam expression) who, under these circumstances, are glad to fish in troubled waters."[339] Rather than the most respected trading houses, it was those with a more dubious reputation who were seeking parliamentary assistance. As for the remaining signatories, they were "all howling like money-hungry wolves" desperate to lap up "the final dregs from a treasure chest of which they feign to see the bottom."[340] This intelligence from Amsterdam was vital to Baud in honing his riposte to the petition before parliament.

When it reached the House of Representatives in February 1845, the petition sparked a fundamental debate about the balance of power between the monarch, his ministers, and the legislature. The petitioners, after all, had invoked their constitutional right as citizens to put their grievances to the government. Liberal MPs seized the opportunity to argue that parliament should be given a greater say in colonial policy; effectively, they decided that it was more important to highlight government failures by backing a petition from a few dozen disgruntled wealthy citizens in Amsterdam than to examine whether what these men were actually seeking chimed with humanitarian liberal principles. This explains why its consideration ended up as a debate about Article 59 of the Constitution, setting out the balance of power among the king, ministers, and parliament with regard to the colonies. Because of the political priorities of those MPs, the issue of emancipation was drowned out by a tug-of-war over constitutional and colonial matters.[341]

Anyone who questioned the extensive formal executive power of the Dutch administration in the colonies had a problem with Baud. In a speech of unprecedented ferocity for the time, he gave the Amsterdam trading houses a piece of his mind from the floor of the House.

> They are outraged that the government has refused to sacrifice the Governor-General summarily to a conspiracy by a few colonists, as deplorable in its purpose as its means. They want to see his recall endorsed by a vote of Honourable Members, and at the same time the system of oppression and indefinite slavery perpetuated! They scream against the autocracy exercised with the pen, in order to allow that which has the whip and the Spanish buck as its instruments to exist unhindered with the approval of Honourable Members! See, Honourable Gentlemen, what the petitioners really want but have not expressed openly in their address to you.[342]

Baud's contact in Amsterdam later informed him of the impression his speech had made in the capital. People there, he said, doubted "whether this is the way a minister should defend himself against complaints about his administration, even when they are made in less courteous terms. From the mouth of one of the honourable members, this would have caused no

sensation; but from the mouth of the minister it is not generally endorsed. A speech so vehement, moreover, will result in a reply no less vehement."[343] That came on 8 April, 1845, submitted by the Amsterdam petitioners, leading to the establishment of a parliamentary committee of inquiry. On the one hand, this delivered a scathing verdict on Elias' performance, finally leading to his dismissal that his critics so craved, but on the other it condemned the way in which the liberal minority of MPs had exploited the petition in an attempt to force a reinterpretation of Article 59. By so doing, they had "even deliberately cast a veil over the persistence of unlimited slavery, which was concealed within the opposition by the petitioners."[344] With these words, the committee aligned itself with Baud's condemnation of the true purpose of the petition from Amsterdam.

Baud's speech also hit the mark as regards the open involvement by the Insingers and others in the petition movement. They objected the coalition formed by liberal MPs and the shareholders in slavery. This was precisely why Insinger, Le Chevallier, and Veldwijk had not signed the petition to parliament: in their opinion, "it would do nothing but harm to further their interests by raising issues concerning the present constitution."[345] The Amsterdam lawyer and slave owner A. Brugmans wrote to Baud in January 1846 to say, somewhat smugly, that this conviction was gaining ground amongst the "Surinamese gentlemen" in the capital. Brugmans himself had "suffered some repudiation on their part since, from the very beginning, I disapproved of their conduct and outright called it foolishness and indecency."[346] The tactical use of the Amsterdam petition by the liberal MPs had embarrassed its signatories, "now that numerous amongst them seem to appreciate that what they thought concerned only their colonial possessions had become a rocket to [...] be fired at reform of the Constitution."[347] Brugmans believed the parties concerned had come to realise they had gone astray. And he told Baud about their eagerness to know how they could discuss their interests with the minister without being rejected out of hand. Brugmans was not the only one from Amsterdam who unofficially sought contact with the government, either. Baud's permanent secretary, George Severijn de Veer, received repeated visits from "the gentlemen of Amsterdam [...] probably for the purpose of establishing a rapprochement as an intermediary."[348] Behind these approaches, he believed to have "observed a desire to now support the measures taken by the Government."[349] A partner in Broen

& Co, for example, had "asked to be allowed to inspect the [slave] regulation, then he would hear the gentlemen of Amsterdam unofficially and endeavour to bring them to uniformity."[350]

These letters reveal a clear shift in the relationship between the government and the Amsterdam lobby. It was a thorn in the side of the leading trading houses that their interests in the West Indies had been seized upon by liberal MPs in order to press home their own desire for constitutional reform. These firms only wanted to see their property protected, an objective which had faded into the background once it was overshadowed by the political struggle for greater parliamentary control over the colonial administration at the expense of William II and Baud. Meanwhile, on the government side, important insights were emerging about the context in which they placed the issue of slavery. During this period, Baud and Rijk, the former governor-general of Surinam, conducted a fairly intensive private correspondence in which they discussed political developments in The Hague through the lens of their administrative experience gained at the two extremes of the Dutch colonial empire. Rijk wished Baud:

> patience and forbearance with that fatal Surinam, that world in a box, where the turmoil is, as you once said, *une tempête dans une verre d'eau* [a storm in a teacup]. I wish you had a good man there now, because with interests as overwhelming as the East Indies I can quite understand that you must loathe having so much entanglement with those unfortunate West Indies & *vous n'êtes pas à bout* [and you are not finished yet].[351]

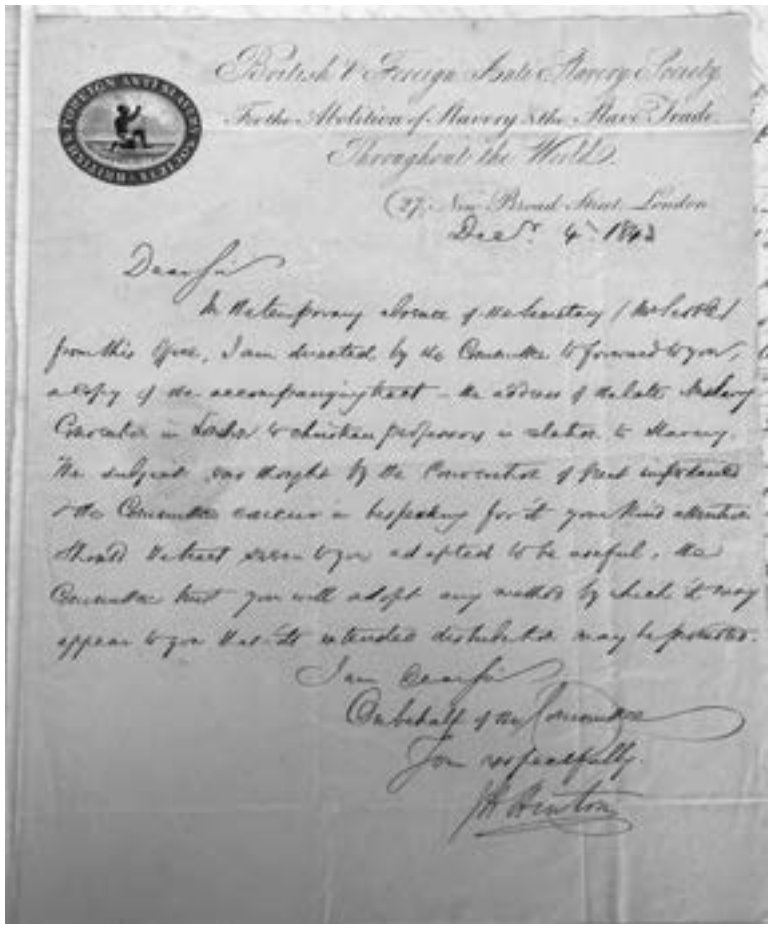
The other side of the coin: Willem Cornelis Mees

The trading elite of Amsterdam, home to DNB, was clearly less than receptive to anti-slavery voices during these years. The fact that Willem Cornelis Mees from Rotterdam was an outsider is only reiterated by his particular role in the abolitionist movement, which was conspicuously absent in the capital in the early 1840s. In 1842, he received a letter from a friend saying that he tried in vain, at Mees' behest, to find support for "the good cause" in Amsterdam; like Mees before him, he had simply been ridiculed. The plantation directors were determined to cast abolition in a bad light. "The greatest evil, however, appears to lie in the mocking

cheer of the people of Amsterdam, who simply display no inclination to join a society that is derided."[352] Mees himself corresponded regularly with those people from the 1830s onwards, about monetary matters and the history of banking he was writing, but wisely kept quiet about slavery.[353] Nonetheless, he played a significant role in the revival of the abolitionist movement in the 1840s.

Willem Cornelis Mees.
Source: [104082], RKD Netherlands Institute for Art History.

During the first decades of the nineteenth century the abolitionist movement had been in a sorry state, but was now set for a comeback thanks in part to Mees. Although there had been widespread opposition to slavery in Europe in the late eighteenth century, the years of revolution had dampened that enthusiasm. The time for social experiments had passed. Even in a major city like Rotterdam, it proved nigh on impossible to set an active campaign in motion; no-one there seemed capable of taking the lead, or willing to do so once the old abolitionist fervour had subsided. In polite society, standing up for an unfashionable cause risked damaging one's reputation. So those who did still believe in it took no action, meaning Mees was an exception. In his personal correspondence, he analysed the possibilities for the creation of an active abolitionist organisation, and in 1838 he helped draft a first petition to the king.[354] That was probably never sent, but Mees remained active. From the early 1840s onwards, he threw in his lot with various anti-slavery movements, including a fledgling Rotterdam Committee (Rotterdamsch Comité) set up in the wake of visits by abolitionists from the United Kingdom. Its core membership was drawn from the city's British community, plus a few members of the local bourgeoisie.[355] Abolitionism in those years was an international affair, with the British playing a prominent role. They had a network of contacts all over the world, who encouraged both ordinary citizens and public officials to advocate abolition in their own country or empire. Mees kept in touch with the secretary of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, at whose behest the Rotterdam Committee was established.[356]



Letter from the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society to W. C. Mees.
Source: NL-RtdSA, Mees family archive, access 39, folder 438.

Along with several others, Mees assumed responsibility for the Dutch campaign and remained in regular contact with the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society in London. No definitive membership lists or minutes from the Rotterdam Committee have survived, but it is apparent from the various addresses and petition lists found in the archives that Mees was at the heart of this group for some time.[357] Creating a unified national movement proved an uphill struggle. Maartje Janse describes how the small and ideologically diverse groups established in different cities had trouble adopting one clear standpoint and forming a united front.[358] They were more concerned with the theological and philosophical arguments

in favour of abolition and what exactly it would entail than with the tactics needed to actually achieve it in the political arena. A protracted debate between the anti-revolutionary (protestant) Réveil movement and the liberals long hampered the effectiveness of the Dutch campaign. Mees realised how problematic this situation was and most of his abolition-related letters are devoted to the discussion in 1841 and 1842. Guillaume Groen van Prinsterer of The Hague wanted to set up an exclusive society rooted in the Dutch Reformed church and opposed the dissenting principles being propounded in Utrecht by his uncle, Jan Ackersdijck, and his friends. The abolitionists in Rotterdam, Ackersdijck's cousin Mees included, sided with those in Utrecht. Ackersdijck attached great importance to this alliance and in 1843 he tried to encourage Mees to take on a leading role: "First, however, we would like to hear from Rotterdam; that being where it first began, it would be most appropriate for those gentlemen to have the honour of standing at the top. This we would greatly desire."[359] Mees was not satisfied with the stability of his own committee. His correspondence with Ackerdijck bears testimony to the committee's instability, explaining why Mees became the central contact person in Rotterdam.

The abolitionists needed to overcome a considerable ideological divide in order to create a united front against slavery. Opinions differentiated between those who stressed thorough preparations and calm proceedings, and those who found principles sufficient as base for prompt abolition. Groen van Prinsterer's faction regarded Christianisation as a precondition for abolition, whereas Mees and his Rotterdam group believed "that one should not aspire to half-measures, that religious and civilising education of the slave is wasted in vain conceit, that one should first emancipate completely and that then the education of the negroes will follow of its own accord, by missionary societies etc."[360] In other words: abolition now, without further delay. The idea that Christianisation and preparatory education were essential preconditions for manumission was rejected out of hand. The proposed society should focus only upon abolition itself and upon spreading information about slavery, the colonies, and how emancipation had taken place in the British empire. The petition to the king must also propagate these ideas.

Although there was still fundamental disagreement about the best way forward, the abolitionists eventually realised the need to cooperate. Converstations between Ackersdijck and Groen van Prinsterer resulted in a desire to set up a society on a more inclusive footing, with religious beliefs

relegated to the background. What mattered was enabling supporters to rally around "the good cause", as Ackersdijck repeatedly called it.[361] From early 1842 onwards, the liberals started to solicit as many signatories as they could find in Utrecht, Amsterdam, The Hague, Leiden, and Zwolle for their petition to the king.[362] In the end, there were 125 signatories. But when the petition was presented by the liberal MP Edmond Willem van Dam van Isselt in May 1842, the response was unsympathetic. William II was not favourably disposed towards the society and, together with Minister of Justice Cornelis Felix van Maanen and Baud in the Colonial Department, took steps to limit the abolitionists' influence. By reacting in this way, William effectively accepted the entreaty made in the rival petition submitted from Amsterdam a few months earlier, in December 1841, that abolition should not be entrusted to a "separate society."

Whilst the government in response to the petition by Mees and his allies did promise improvements to the lot of the enslaved, and accepted that slavery would end at some point in the future, it produced no actual plan or timetable. Dejected by this reversal, the anti-slavery campaign again began to lose impetus.[363] However, shortly after the lukewarm royal reception for the petition Mees penned a spirited letter showing he was not prepared to give up, unlike the rest of the committee in Rotterdam. He admitted to his uncle that to say "our committee is slumbering is only too true [...] At its last meeting, the committee decided to let the matter rest for the time being, until we might learn something more about the measures mentioned by the government."[364] The petition's lack of success made it evident that "the good cause" would have to be pursued in another way.

Ackersdijck, like Mees, was not prepared to abandon the cause, and, after consulting with his cousin, came up with the idea of publishing an anti-slavery periodical. "Matters must regularly be exposed to the light," he wrote. "There must be correspondence. Proposals must be made to the government, until there is certainty that they will do something."[365] Ten months later they were still discussing the project, but had now found more supporters. The journal would take the place of the society, which was still not up and running. Ackersdijck claimed their attempts at founding an organisation were hindered, but establishing a publication with subscribers would in fact be an organisation in all but name. He asked Mees what he thought of the plan and whether he would like to talk about it in Rotterdam.[366] Mees discussed the idea with his local associates and also

received encouraging words about the plan through his British contacts.[367] Ackersdijck appreciated Mees' opinion and kept asking him for his views regarding the journal. On its draft list of backers were 24 names from Rotterdam, including Mees' father, Rudolf Adriaan, and his brothers Adriaan and Rudolph. The others were the "hard core" of the city's abolitionists, who had also signed the earlier petition.[368] By the end of 1843, the time was ripe for a broad agreement on the publication's statutes, content and number of sponsors, so the journal – entitled *Bijdragen tot de kennis der Nederlandsche en vreemde Koloniën, bijzonder betrekkelijk de vrijlating der slaven* (Contributions towards knowledge of the Dutch and foreign Colonies, especially concerning the emancipation of the slaves) – began to take shape.[369]

Mees proved an active co-publisher, providing the editorial board (of which he was never a member) with numerous articles about the anti-slavery movement. In addition, following up his earlier efforts with the petitions he remained active in writing to new co-publishers. Drawing on his ever-expanding network to do this, his activities were not limited to Rotterdam.[370] Through his Amsterdam connections, Mees also tried to find more supporters there. He used his network to collect copy about the colonies and about emancipation that was available nowhere else in the country or was too expensive for the editors in Utrecht. He also went to the trouble of persuading his contact at the recently founded *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant* to back the abolitionist cause. In January 1845, he wrote to Ackersdijck that "the chief writer of that newspaper ... has told me that I may list him amongst the persons mentioned as publishers of our journal ... He will soon be a complete abolitionist and can then support the good cause in his newspaper."[371] Mees' activities did not go unnoticed in Amsterdam, but the colonial lobby there never suspected his involvement. "Who is writing those articles in the Nieuwe Rotterdammer Courant?," they asked themselves.[372] The answer was a conundrum, but they did know that "a lot of material was sent from here" and who its editor was.[373] "To what extent he is assisted by others" remained shrouded in mystery in the capital, though.[374] The people involved in Amsterdam thus knew some of the material being published originated in their city, but not that Mees was behind it.

Active as he was behind the scenes, Mees refrained from speaking out in public – perhaps for fear of damaging his reputation with a section of his bourgeois peers. As his biographer summarises it, he viewed the

"uncertainty of his future as a threat rather than a challenge."[375] Mees was reluctant even to collect signatures in Rotterdam: "hesitancy about playing a double role kept me from doing so," he explained.[376] In letters to his uncle he stressed that he was preoccupied with other things, and his interest in economics was his principal reason for maintaining the correspondence. "I work a lot, but I have so many things to do that I am always in a hurry and have no time for anything really."[377] His activities for *Bijdragen* coincided with his first steps in mercantile administration. In 1843, William II appointed him secretary of the Rotterdam Chamber of Commerce. But he did occasionally make the connection between his activities for that body and the large-scale slavery in the Dutch colonies. When a debate arose over which colonial produce (should) receive(d) favourable tax duties, Mees stated: "It does seem that nowadays Java sugar is considered to have been produced without slave labour, but as long as slavery exists on Java there is always a sound reason to remove the Java product from the preferential list."[378]

In late 1843 or early 1844, several members of the Rotterdam Committee travelled to London to attend a meeting about emancipation. Mees ensured that the first issue of *Bijdragen* contained a report of that visit.[379] He and Ackersdijck consulted on such invitations and proposals from London as "delegates" of their respective branches of the movement.[380] From 1844 onwards, the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society began pressing for a new petition but that idea was rejected in Utrecht. More had to be done first to arouse public opinion on the subject.[381] At the end of that year, the Rotterdam Committee was invited to an anti-slavery meeting in Paris, but both Mees and Ackersdijck were unable to attend.[382] Besides the British abolitionists, Mees also corresponded with the Africa Society (*Société d'Afrique*) in France. Almost every letter between him and his uncle referred to documents sent by those groups. Their so-called "anti-slavery reporters" were at first meant mainly for information, but from 1843 onwards they fed into the content of the journal.

In the public arena, many of the most outspoken anti-slavery activists were women. They also proved hugely important to Ackersdijck's plan to translate so-called "slave narratives" into Dutch. These were testimonies by people who had lived in slavery but escaped, often from the Southern United States to the North. For example, Mees was asked to arrange a translated edition of the life story of Frederick Douglass. Ackersdijck encouraged him in this endeavour, and together with A. S. Rueb, Ackersdijck's

right hand man in Utrecht, he was indeed able to compile and print a Dutch version of *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*.[383] Sales of this work, like those of *Bijdragen*, proved disappointing, however, and the organisation's financial problems began to break down the committees. In 1846 there was only minimal correspondence between Ackersdijck and Mees, and by the beginning of 1847 it seemed that the Rotterdam committee had once again dissolved. By contrast, the *Rotterdam Ladies' Anti-Slavery Committee* was thriving and had been supporting *Bijdragen* financially for some time. It had also been willing to pay for the printing of Douglass' memoir.[384] Mees had good contacts with these female campaigners, who proved significantly more inventive and active than the men.

Publishing a periodical remained a struggle, but Mees continued to encourage the editors.[385] When new plans to petition the king began to crystallise, he supported the initiators from the wings.[386] In one of his final letters to Ackersdijck dealing with the subject of emancipation, Mees pleaded for a public gesture in which he would again play an active organising role, albeit in the background. "When a gesture is needed and I can here show an address already bearing distinguished names from elsewhere, I shall make every effort to obtain an unimaginable number of signatures. For people here are very much in favour of reform. We lack only suitable chiefs."[387] Mees' exertions undoubtedly contributed to the fact that the next petition, in 1848, counted numerous members of his own family amongst its signatories.[388]

After a decade of steady progress, in about 1848 the abolition debate was stalled by the financial aspects of emancipation. How would compensation be arranged? How much would it be? Mees did not take part in this discussion and henceforth turned his attention to more official matters, such as the system of coinage in the Dutch East Indies. Although never in the campaigning spotlight, behind the scenes he was an active, consistent, and benevolent member of the anti-slavery movement for ten years. His ideas, put into practice by his uncle Ackersdijck, gave Mees considerable influence in the public debate. His most important contribution was the contacts and exchanges he facilitated between various individuals and groups, including the British activists in Rotterdam and London. Numerous articles, sources, pamphlets, and ideas were shared through these channels. Despite being so preoccupied and not considering his involvement in the anti-slavery movement as one of his major projects, Mees very clearly devoted considerable time and effort to the cause. He

also kept himself constantly up to date, reading widely on slavery and disseminating that literature.

In 1848, Mees was at a crossroads in his career. In his letters to his uncle, he expressed concern that he had yet to find his purpose in life and was therefore failing his family. The legal profession failed to bring him the fulfilment he sought, leaving him uncertain about his future. Earlier in the year it seems that he was interested in taking up a professorial chair at Leiden, but missed out on the appointment. Somewhat resentfully, he remarked that the position had instead gone to Johan Rudolph Thorbecke (see Chapter 4), "even though he is not an economist; but his name sounds so good that cannot be a hindrance."[389] Later in the year he was sounded out as a potential minister of Finance, but declined the opportunity.[390] "Did they not approach you?," he enquired of Ackersdijck. "I would consider that such a fine plan: you and Sloet in charge of Finance and the Colonies, me as secretary or in some such position (if well remunerated) working with you both. Sloet the excitable horse, me the placid draught animal and you the driver."[391] Plagued by indecision, yet again Mees did not dare take up the reins even though this position could have given him an opportunity to promote abolition from inside the government.

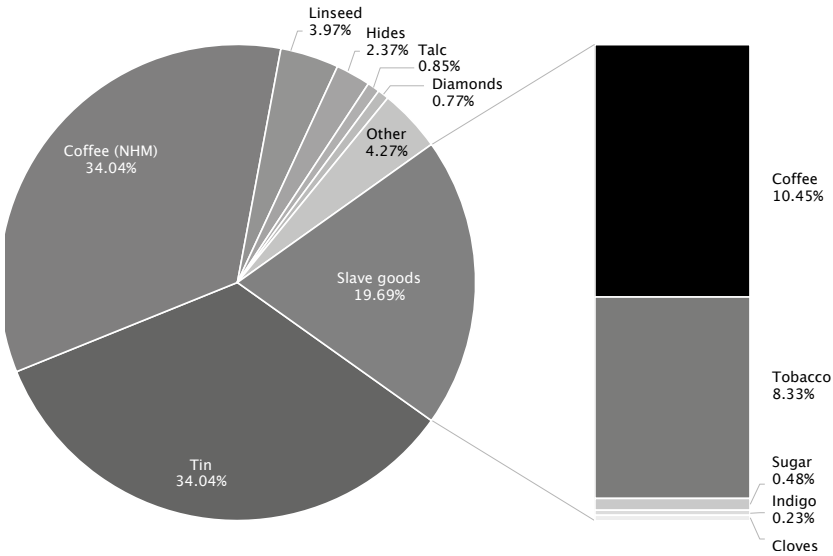
Instead he continued with his existing occupations, giving more lectures and focusing on his scientific work.[392] In March 1849, he was invited to become secretary of De Nederlandsche Bank. He again asked Ackersdijck for advice, then weighed up his options. Mees disliked Amsterdam and would rather not have to move his family there, and he found the circle of traders he would be joining far from agreeable, but the salary and the relative freedom he would enjoy in the evening hours eventually persuaded him.[393] Ackersdijck understood his decision, but pointed out that the academic route was still open to him. In the letter giving his advice, he wrote, "I consider it highly probable that you will soon become a professor."[394] During this turbulent political period, emancipation disappeared as a topic in the two men's correspondence. Their letters now were devoted solely to family matters, Ackersdijck's declining health and, from 1849 onwards, Mees' new position at DNB. The heady momentum of 1848, the year of European revolutions, would not bring about the end of slavery in the Dutch colonies, mainly because the government stumbled over the question of how to organise compensation. Willem Mees, meanwhile, remained reluctant to speak out publicly in favour of abolition and he signed no further petitions to the king during his tenure at DNB.[395]

4. Slavery-related services

When William I declared his aim to "revive commerce, as the sinew of this state, from the decline into which previous times and circumstances have brought it", he had a specific role in mind for DNB. According to its charter, the most beneficial means to promote the circulation of money "can be found [...] in the introduction of a national bank established by public authority."[396] DNB had several means at its disposal to fulfil that specific task: discounting of bills of exchange, issuing loans against domestic securities or goods, trading in bullion, and acting as state cashier. After 1852, DNB was also able to accept foreign securities as loan collateral.

This statutory remit did not distinguish between offering services to businesses or governments on the basis of their involvement in slavery, direct or otherwise. For some financial services slave traders relied on other financial institutions. For example, DNB was not a mortgage lender and therefore did not directly finance the purchase of plantations or accept enslaved people as collateral. Nevertheless, within the scope of its charter there were four ways in which DNB could become involved in colonial enslavement: discounting bills of exchange, accepting collateral in the form of securities, collateral in the form of goods, and facilitating payment transactions by the department of Colonies. In 1848, slave-based commodities accounted for about 20 per cent of all gages pledged to the bank (see Figure 2). It was not so much that fewer slave goods were pledged in that year than in any other, but rather that on 2 June the Netherlands Trading Society (Nederlandsche Handel-Maatschappij, NHM) – active primarily in the Dutch East Indies – secured credit against commodities worth a total of *f* 2.4 million: half consisted of tin, and the other half was coffee. That apart, the largest gage of 1848 came on 4 May from B. H. Schröder & Co: it was granted credit of *f* 320,000 against a consignment of coffee. Part of a European protomultinational, this firm's British arm, J. Henry Schröder, would later bring bonds of the Confederate States of America to the European capital market.[397]

Figure 2. *Goods pledged against DNB loans, 1848/49 financial year.*



Discounting bills of exchange

Until the early twentieth century, bills of exchange were the main instrument for long-distance payments. The most important innovation they brought was to enable financial transactions without having to physically ship large amounts of coinage. Once they became the standard form of payment in international trade, exporters were able to secure payment for their overseas deliveries without incurring excessive risk. Bills usually had a term of three to six months. However, holders who wanted their money earlier could discount them; sell them to a bank or banker with interest deducted to cover their residual term to maturity.

From its very beginning, DNB discounted bills of exchange. On 14 April 1814, the first of such a transaction was completed when a W.F. Hendriks received the sum of *f* 14,000.[398] A summary from one of the early cashbooks illustrates the process, as shown in Table 4. A number of bills were discounted on 27 December, 1814, and several of the parties involved are familiar firms engaged in slavery-related activities: Hope & Co, for example, and Couderc & Brants. This latter firm was also one of the bank's first non-executive directors, although there is nothing to suggest this position explains why it undertook this particular transaction. The DNB archives do not contain sufficient information to establish whether

these specific bills had any links with slavery, or to what extent. In none of the daily summaries, either the cash book or the journals, is it noted where a bill was originally drawn. And even if a place were mentioned, such records are not free of errors.[399] To arrive at more definitive answers, the only possibility would have been to count all bills linked to firms and individuals known to have been heavily involved with slavery, such as Hope & Co. Even this method would not be entirely reliable, however, and it would have been hugely labour intensive and impossible to complete within the limited time available for this study. In the specific case of the bill of exchange from Van Offen & Son to Hope & Co in Table 4, that most likely covered intra-European trade as all notarised protests (attestations that a bill has been dishonoured) involving the two firms in the eighteenth century originated in Europe.[400]

Table 4. *Example of a cashbook, 27 December, 1814.*

Bill drawn on	Discounted from	Amount in *f*
Alstorphius & Van Hemert	D'Arripe & Co	1,597.50
Hollenberg & Co	Van Offen & Son	2,500.00
Hope & Co	Van Offen & Son	4,700.00
Van Loon Wijnman & Co	Couderc D. & M.P. Brants	4,708.00
Ploos van Amstel & Ludwig	Couderc D. & M.P. Brants	10,750.00
B.P. & J.J. Hooft	Seeman & Co	5,000.00
Braunsberg & Co	Seeman & Co	1,590.00
J.P. Gildemeester & Linneschmidt	J. Jorissen & Co	11,922.65
D. Couderc & M.P. Brants	J. Jorissen & Co	10,400.00
G. Bosscher & Son	J. Jorissen & Co	3,259.80
H.D. Rahusen	J. Jorissen & Co	10,000.00
F. Brederlak	J. Jorissen & Co	5,000.00
Beman & Co	B.J. de Jongh & Jr	3,000.00
Muhl van Winter & Co	B.J. de Jongh & Jr	2,499.50
Buys te Bordes & Jordan	B.J. de Jongh & Jr	5,000.00

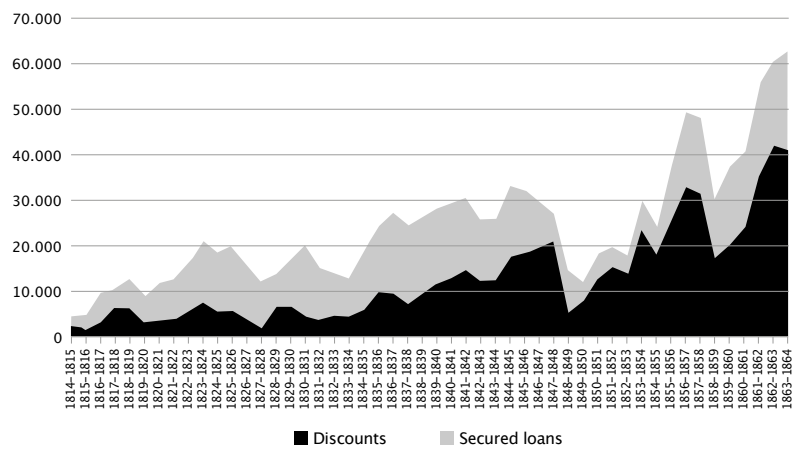
Source: NL-HaNA, 2.25.68, inv. no. 101640, "Kasboek" [Cashbook] 27 December, 1814-31 March, 1815.

A bill of European origin could still cover colonial goods, of course, but this is impossible to establish. It seems highly likely that bills of exchange linked with slavery did pass through DNB; but since the bank discounted at least *f*25 million a year, both their sheer quantity and the nature of the sources available to us make these impossible to identify on an individual basis.

Loans against securities

The second way in which DNB may have been involved in the slavery-based economy is through its acceptance of securities and commodities as collateral for loans. It could be argued that granting credit against specie was also slavery-related, but even more so with bills of exchange it is not possible to determine the exact origin of any pledged silver and gold. This does not alter the fact that enslaved labour was used to extract these metals, and that they were distributed around the world in various forms and along various routes.[401] Even well into the nineteenth century the gold mines of Minas Gerais, Brazil, for example, still had hundreds of enslaved workers.[402] There can be no doubt whatsoever that gold and silver extracted by enslaved workers was circulating in the Netherlands and must therefore have been pledged to the bank, but it is impossible to give even estimated amounts.

Figure 3. *Total operating capital of DNB, 1814-1864 (x f1,000).*



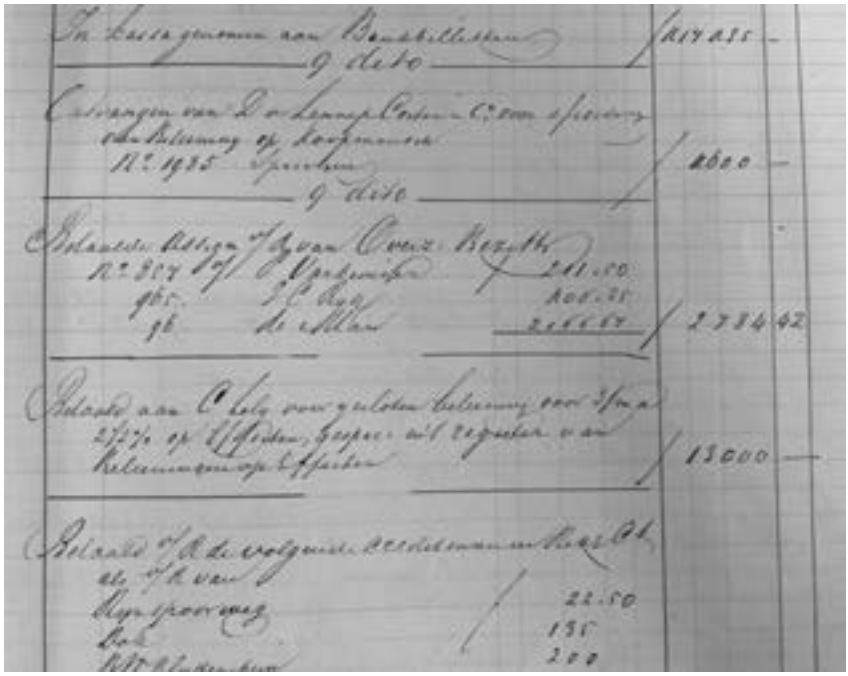
Source: De Jong, Geschiedenis van de Nederlandsche Bank, vol. 1, table 4.

Pledging securities had much the same purpose as discounting of bills of exchange: to release cash. Individuals who were temporarily (or more permanently) short of funds but owned shares could deposit them with DNB as collateral for loans. The rate of interest payable on this credit was set at 5 per cent when the bank was first founded, but varied over time. The lowest rate was 2.5 per cent between March 1850 and October 1853, and on three occasions the rate peaked at 6 per cent. The first secured loan issued by DNB went to the firm Kerkhoven & Co on 13 April, 1814, for a total of *f* 53.000.[403]

DNB's transactions were recorded daily in the daybook. This was then used to compile the journal, where the transactions were classified under a number of headings with a note as to which ledger account they should be recorded in. That ledger offers quite a lot of information about loans, but it has its limitations. On days when only one client came into the bank to pledge securities, the client's name is listed. But when several did so, that day's ledger entry states simply "Sundry". Only in the journal is it possible to see who each of them was. The ledger shows that the largest borrower against securities in the 1852 calendar year, applying for credit on a number of separate occasions, was the firm Wed. Polak & Co. These multiple visits resulted in pledges worth a total of more than *f* 260,000. On 9 October, 1852, one C. Lely came to the bank to put up securities worth *f* 13,000. The journals provide no further details about the exact nature of the collateral, stating only, "Paid to C. Lely for secured loan contracted for 3 [months], 2.5% against securities specified in the register of secured loans: *f* 13,000."[404] Unfortunately, that register has not survived the archiving process and so no further elucidation is possible.

In a more general sense, however, some light can be shed on the securities pledged during the period 1814-1863. In order to extend credit against those, DNB had to determine the value of these securities. Obviously, this would be their market value rather than their nominal worth. The bank then applied a percentage of that (65 per cent, to be exact) as their credit value. Current trading prices were published in a daily list, the *Prijscourant der effecten*, and widely reported in the newspapers. On 9 October, 1852, for instance, the day on which C. Lely put up his securities, the *Algemeen Handelsblad* stated that the 5 per cent Russian government bonds issued by Hope & Co in 1798 and 1816 were trading at 107.88 per cent of their nominal value, whilst shares in a loan to the Society of Humanitarianism

(*Maatschappij der Weldadigheid*) at 4 per cent interest were currently worth 89 per cent of their nominal value.[405]



Extract from the DNB journal from 9 October, 1852.

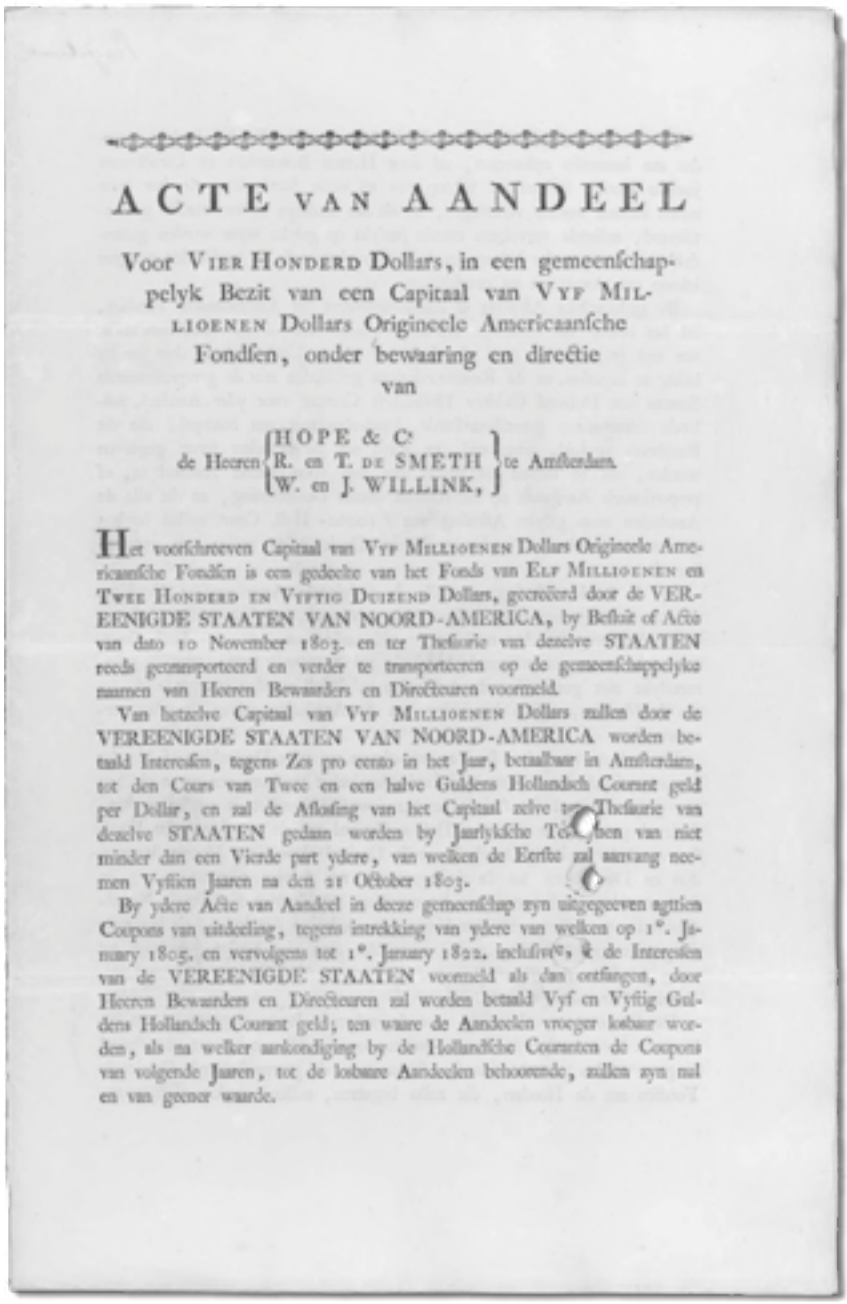
Source: NL-HaNA, 2.25.68, *inv. no.* 100497, "Journaal oktober 1852-maart 1853" [*Journal for October 1852-March 1853*], 9 October, 1852.

The securities listed in the *Prijscourant* were mainly government bonds and shares in joint-stock companies such as railways. Others were bought and sold at auction. In the *Algemeen Handelsblad* of 21 October, 1854, for example, we read that shares in the Amsterdamsche Brand Sociëteit (a fire insurance company) had been auctioned for 154 per cent of their original purchase price. But on the same day five shares in the Biesterbos plantation mortgage fund, which had once cost *f* 1,000 each, went under the hammer for a combined total of just *f* 5.[406] That was even less than their worth a few years earlier, in 1847, when *f* 70 was bid for a Biesterbos share at a securities auction.[407] Likewise, in Johanna Borski's financial records her entire portfolio of "colonial securities" is valued at a mere one guilder. Back in 1800 and 1810, by contrast, some plantation funds – such as

Berewout, with estates on the Danish islands – had still been included in a more comprehensive *Prijscourant*, which showed them trading at between 98 and 100 per cent of their nominal value.[408] Berewout was an exception even then, however, because in 1810 Biesterbos was already reduced to 15 per cent of its original value. In fact, the trade in plantation securities had virtually ground to a halt well before the establishment of DNB in 1814. And as the nineteenth century progressed, their value plummeted across the board – Berewout included.[409] Anyone who owned or inherited such assets therefore found them difficult to dispose of. Although the funds still paid out interest with some regularity, their market value was virtually nil. This also made them worthless as loan collateral, so we can safely say that none will have been pledged to DNB.

The manner in which a distribution by the Dedel fund unfolded in 1834 is perhaps telling when it comes to the way some investors viewed their slave coupons. Of 53 holders, 34 came in person to the office of Insinger & Co in February, shortly after it had advertised a dividend of *f* 51.60 per coupon. Within a year, 389 of the 395 coupons had been redeemed. However, the two in the name of Gebroeders Van Wijck were not cashed in until 12 October, 1836 – suggesting that the brothers had either missed the original advertisement or that the coupons had been lying forgotten at the bottom of a drawer.[410]

But there were other securities backed directly or indirectly by enslaved labour that were acceptable to DNB, or securities that financed the upholding of a slave-based society. Government bonds are the most obvious example. In the price lists we regularly find bonds issued by countries with economies reliant in part upon slavery, such as Brazil, Colombia, and Venezuela. In 1803, the United States had raised a loan through Hope & Co which was traded on the Amsterdam stock exchange for several decades in the form of bonds with a face value of $400 each. The loan's total amount of $5 million covered a third of the cost of the Louisiana Purchase of territory from France, one of the objectives of which was to reduce the likelihood of a slave revolt like that in Saint-Domingue (now Haiti) by spreading the enslaved population over a wider geographical area. Moreover, the colonial settlers in Louisiana had warned the US government that they would only accept its authority if slavery and the local slave trade remained legal.[411] The loan "Louisiana at *Hope*" can be found in the published price lists until at least 1864.[412]



ACTE VAN AANDEEL

Voor VIER HONDERD Dollars, in een gemeenſchappelyk Bezit van een Capitaal van VYF MILLIOENEN Dollars Origineele Americaanſche Fondſen, onder bewaaring en directie van

de Heeren { HOPE & C^o / R. en T. DE SMETH / W. en J. WILLINK, } te Amſterdam.

Het voorſchreeven Capitaal van VYF MILLIOENEN Dollars Origineele Americaanſche Fondſen is een gedeelte van het Fonds van ELF MILLIOENEN en TWEE HONDERD EN VYFTIG DUIZEND Dollars, gecreëerd door de VEREENIGDE STAATEN VAN NOORD-AMERICA, by Beſluit of Acte van dato 10 November 1803. en ter Theſaurie van denzelve STAATEN reeds getransporteerd en verder te transporteeren op de gemeenſchappelyke naamen van Heeren Bewaarders en Directeuren voormeld.

Van hetzelve Capitaal van VYF MILLIOENEN Dollars zullen door de VEREENIGDE STAATEN VAN NOORD-AMERICA worden betaald Intereſſen, tegens Zes pro cento in het Jaar, betaalbaar in Amſterdam, tot den Cours van Twee en een halve Guldens Hollandſch Courant geld per Dollar, en zal de Aflosſing van het Capitaal zelve ter Theſaurie van denzelve STAATEN gedaan worden by Jaarlykſche Termynen van niet minder dan een Vierde part ydere, van welken de Eerſte zal aanvang neemen Vyfticn Jaaren na den 21 October 1803.

By ydere Acte van Aandeel in deeze gemeenſchap zyn uitgegeeven agttien Coupons van uitdeeling, tegens intrekking van ydere van welken op 1°. January 1805. en vervolgens tot 1°. January 1822. inclusive, de Intereſſen van de VEREENIGDE STAATEN voormeld als dan ontfangen, door Heeren Bewaarders en Directeuren zal worden betaald Vyf en Vyftig Guldens Hollandſch Courant geld; ten waare de Aandeelen vroeger losbaar worden, als na welker aankondiging by de Hollandſche Couranten de Coupons van volgende Jaaren, tot de losbaare Aandeelen behoorende, zullen zyn nul en van geener waarde.

Share in the Louisiana Purchase.

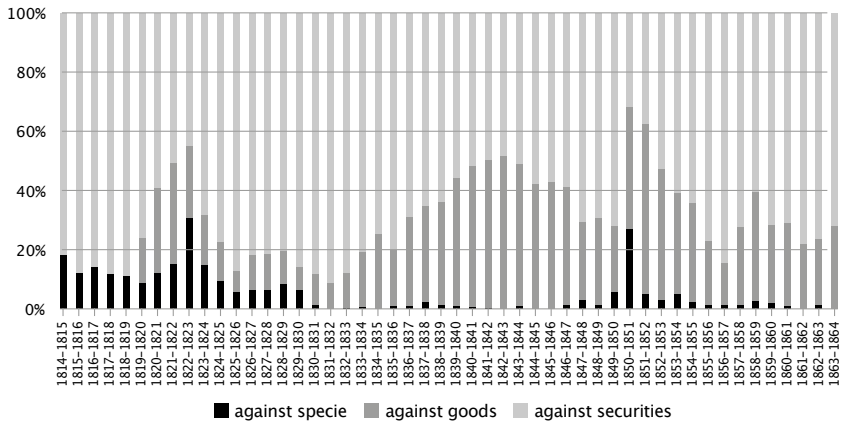
Source: NL-AsdSAA, 735, inv. no. 1913: "Aandelen van een kapitaal van $ 5.000.000 Amerikaanse fondsen" [Shares in a capital of $ 5,000,000 US funds].

Funding a war to preserve slavery is going a step further than financing the sovereign debt of an economy propped up by slavery. The American Civil War (1861-1865) was fought between a southern Confederacy desperate to retain enslavement there and a northern Union determined to abolish it. To finance its struggle, the Confederate government issued two forms of bond on the European financial markets: so-called *cotton bonds* in London and – in July 1863 – *junk bonds* in Amsterdam. Whilst the former were backed by the cotton harvest, the latter were unsecured and the Confederacy could suspend interest payments on them with impunity. The cotton bonds were placed by J. Henry Schröder & Co in London and by Emile Erlanger & Co in Paris and could be subscribed to in London, Liverpool, Paris, Frankfurt, and Amsterdam. In the Dutch capital, their issue was administered by B.H. Schröder & Co.[413] The initial offer was five times oversubscribed and the bonds then traded actively on the stock exchanges in both London and Amsterdam.[414] The cotton bonds seemed to represent a reasonable investment; their opening price in March 1863 was around £ 90 sterling, which soon fell to a stable £ 60 or so in September 1863 and even climbed to almost £ 85 in September 1864. The junk bonds, on the other hand, could only be traded in Amsterdam and never really stabilised in value. The *Amsterdams Effectenblad* listed them at £ 39 in September 1863, compared with a nominal value of £100 each. And from there they continued to fall until May 1865, during the collapse of the Confederacy, when just over £ 1 of their value remained.[415] By the time they were listed in guilders, at the end of December 1868 they had slumped to *f* 11. Up until then the *junk bonds* had been "traded almost daily", but by 1873 transactions were most exceptional.[416]

The pledging of foreign securities as collateral with DNB, which had been possible since the charter renewal and amendment of 1852, accounted for 75 per cent of all security-backed lending in 1857. Austrian government bonds made up the largest item in this portfolio and were accepted with a 20-25 per cent surplus. The equivalent figure for North American funds was 30 per cent, because the risk they entailed was considered slightly higher. It was only in the summer when the Confederate bonds first became available on the Amsterdam market, at the height of the Civil War, that North American funds appeared "in quantities of any significance amongst the securities pledged with the bank."[417] DNB's annual report for the 1863-1864 financial year puts their value at more than *f* 2.1 million, and a year later that had risen to more than *f* 2.9 million. Since *Union* bonds

were never very popular in the Netherlands, and at their low point in 1864 retained only 36 per cent of their original value on the Amsterdam stock exchange, it is likely that a substantial proportion of the North American gages accepted by DNB were Confederate cotton bonds.[418] In other words, it is very probable that the bank extended credit against collateral in the form of loans to finance a war for the preservation of slavery.

Figure 4. *Breakdown of secured loans by DNB, 1814-1864 (as a percentage of total loans).*



Source: De Jong, Geschiedenis van de Nederlandsche Bank, vol. 1, table 4.

Loans against goods

Unlike with bills of exchange and securities, it is still possible to identify the nature of gages pledged to DNB in the form of physical goods. The details are recorded in the bank's journals. Given the time needed to peruse all those documents and the limited duration of our research, however, a comprehensive survey covering the entire period under consideration has not been possible. However, based on samples we are able to say something about the commodity gages in general.

The key question here is which commodities were related to slavery? For coffee from a Surinamese plantation, the answer is obvious. But coffee also came from the Dutch East Indies, Brazil, and other sources. The same problem arises with sugar and tobacco as well. Then there are goods that are only vaguely defined, such as "spices", "sundry" or "merchandise",

terms which may or may not encompass produce harvested and processed using enslaved labour. Spices, for instance, could include slave-cultivated nutmeg and mace from the Banda islands in the Dutch East Indies. On British plantations on the Malay peninsula, pepper, sugar cane, and cloves were grown using imported enslaved Africans up until abolition there in 1834, but enslavement lasted considerably longer in the neighbouring Dutch-ruled archipelago.[419] In other words whether to count some items as slave goods or not is to some extent an arbitrary decision.

We have chosen to apply uniform interpretations across the entire period covered by this study, 1814-1863. In the case of coffee, for example, this means that it is always counted as the product of slavery except when pledged by the NHM. The coffee harvest in the Dutch East Indies did increase from 1821 onwards, but even in 1830 more was still coming to the Netherlands from Rio de Janeiro than from the Dutch East Indies.[420] Sugar, tobacco, indigo, and cotton are always classified as slave goods. It is true that there was sugar from Java which, strictly speaking, was not produced using enslaved labour, but as Willem Cornelis Mees (s. 1849-1863, p. 1863-1884) noted at the time, it is far from correct to characterise Javanese sugar as slave-free. Nutmeg and mace are treated as slave goods, too, but more general categories such as "spices" or "merchandise" are not. Mined commodities such as copper and tin are also doubtful cases. As most copper came from the British Empire and slavery was abolished there in the 1830s, it is not counted.[421] Some tin came from mines in the Dutch East Indies employing indentured workers brought from China, but by our strict definition this form of coerced labour is not considered slavery.[422] Where a gage comprised multiple goods (coffee and tobacco, coffee and tin, etc.), it was counted as slavery-related only if all the products concerned met that definition. Where "spices" formed part of such a composite gage, though, they were deemed to be slave goods.

It is also important that we take a closer look at cloves, which are particularly prominent in the graph for the 1822/23 financial year (Figure 5). Spice was produced in Asia and east Africa using enslaved labour but there is something odd about this particular entry.[423] On 31 December, 1822 and 11 February, 1823, H. Vollenhoven pledged cloves worth a total of *f* 350,000 on behalf of the "Ministry of Public Education *etc.*". But whereas loans secured in this way were usually paid out in bank notes, Vollenhoven's credit was deposited in the account of the "Department of Commerce and the Colonies". Shortly afterwards, on 24 March, 1823, "Commissioner

H. Vollenhoven" did the same with a consignment of nutmeg which he put up for *f* 200,000. In other words, it seems that the Ministry of Public Education owned colonial goods and used them as collateral for loans paid into the account of the Department of Commerce and Colonies. How and why requires further research. Since the production of cloves in this period was linked with slavery, we decided to classify them as slavery goods in Figure 5.

Figure 5. *Goods pledged against DNB loans (as a percentage of all goods pledged) per sample year, 1817-1863.*

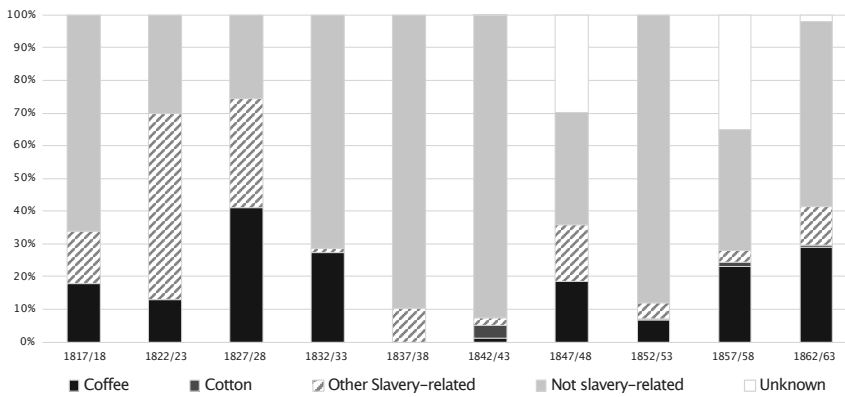


Figure 5 shows that gages of slave-based commodities to DNB fluctuated considerably over time. In the 1842/43 financial year, they represented less than 10 per cent of all collateral, whereas fifteen years earlier that figure had been almost 75 per cent. The reason for this has more to do with the borrowers than with DNB policy. For the bankers it was most important that a gage would have a reasonable value and not be too perishable. Whether it had been produced using slave labour was not a decisive factor. Because of the time it took to ship them from the plantation to the European market, by default slave goods had to have a long shelf life and were therefore particularly suitable as collateral in the event of liquidity problems. Also striking is the fact that coffee was quite clearly the product of slavery most commonly used to secure loans throughout this period. In years when little of this crop was pledged – as can be seen in 1837/38 and 1842/43 – the proportion of all slave goods in the overall total decreased. In 1862/63, coffee was the principal collateral commodity, accounting

for 28.87 per cent of the total, followed at some distance by tin (12.39 per cent) and wheat (7.50 per cent). It also topped the list in 1842/43, but since most of that coffee – 55.76 per cent of the total, valued at *f* 1.5 million – was in NHM hands, it has not been counted here as slavery-related. Notwithstanding the fact that the share of slave goods in the collateral it accepted fluctuated considerably over the years, it is clear that – as part of its statutory remit – DNB played an important role in extending credit with their backing. Across all the years examined, such goods represented 29.61 per cent of all commodity gages.[424]

Proceeds from lending

DNB charged interest on the loans it provided against goods, securities, and specie. The rate was not fixed, but varied over time and could even change during the course of a financial year. In 1862/63, it fluctuated between 4 per cent and 4.5 per cent. How exactly the bank calculated these percentages is not readily apparent from the accounts, since the repayment entries mention the number of the loan concerned but not its collateral, and also because it was possible to extend a loan. In principle, though, goods could be pledged for three months at *x* per cent interest. However, that rate was an annual one. This means that if someone put up a consignment of coffee for *f* 10,000 at 4 per cent per annum, after three months they had to pay *f* 10,100 to redeem the loan: the principal plus a quarter of 4 per cent, making the effective interest at this point 1 per cent. In this example, DNB earns *f* 100 from a product of slavery, coffee. Of course, it was not unusual for a borrower to repay a chunk of the principal – *f* 2,000 of the *f* 10,000, say – before the end of the three-month term, or to pay off the final instalment late, after the three months were up. This is well illustrated by the example of one M. Wachtels, who on 14 March, 1827 pledged a consignment of 697 bales of coffee stored in the second attic of the Drontheim warehouse to DNB for *f* 18,600. The records in a so-called "loan book" do not mention any interest he paid, but it is clear that Wachtels repaid his loan in instalments and took more than six months to clear the entire debt.

Table 5. *Example of a loan book, 1827.*

Date	Bales of Coffee	Repaid, in *f*
17 Nov. 1827	255 bales	7,500
4 Dec. 1827	42 bales	1,100
29 Dec. 1827	the remainder	10,000

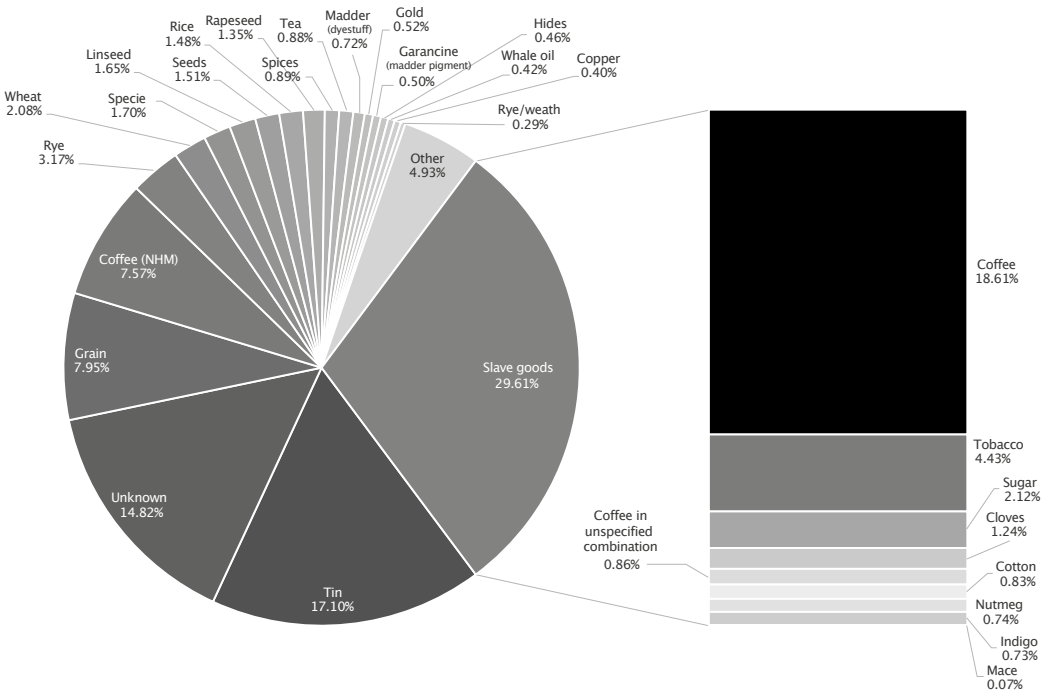
Source: NL-AsdSAA, 447, "Inventaris van het Archief van Handelshuis Van Eeghen & Co." [Inventory of the archive of Van Eeghen & Co.], inv. no. 180: "Beleningsboekje goederen" [Loan book for goods], 9.

Because a loan could be paid off earlier or extended, on the basis of the data gathered it is impossible to say how much DNB actually earned from lending against goods related to slavery. The same problem applies to credit extended against securities and specie, and in those cases is compounded by the other issues already mentioned as making it impossible to link individual gages with slavery.

The goods put up in the sample years reported in Figure 5 and in the 1833/34 and 1848/49 financial years together released credit worth a total of *f* 35,646,151.81, as shown in Figure 6. Of that collateral, 29.61 per cent is classified as slave goods. This does not mean, of course, that the contribution made by slavery-related activities to Dutch GNP had increased from 5-10 per cent in the eighteenth century to almost 30 per cent in the nineteenth; rather, it was because their long shelf lives made slave goods far more suitable as collateral than, say, barrels of herring.[425] Coffee was the commodity most commonly pledged, securing 19.47 per cent of the total amount loaned (including 0.86 per cent against coffee in combination with another product of slavery) – and that is without coffee from the NHM, which represented another 7.57 per cent. Perhaps even more than what it says about the importance of DNB to coffee traders is how crucial this reveals the crop to be for the Dutch economy as a whole. Not only was it a consumer good and a major export to the rest of Europe, it also played a central role in financing short-term credit. This factor may help explain why the merchants of Amsterdam protested so strongly in 1819 against a proposed hike in coffee excise duty (see Chapter 2). To a lesser extent, the same financing model also applied to other goods produced using slave labour.

Colonialism and slavery were thus intimately intertwined with the domestic Dutch economy. Since DNB's objective was to "stimulate commerce" by promoting the circulation of money, the bank naturally became embroiled in activities linked, albeit indirectly, with slavery. The interest it charged on loans backed by goods, securities, and specie was a source of income derived in part from human enslavement. If a loan was not repaid, moreover, the defaulter's collateral became its property and DNB would attempt to recoup its losses by selling it. This means that it is likely that DNB actually owned and traded in slavery-related goods and securities.

Figure 6. *Total of goods pledged against DNB loans based upon sample years, 1817-1863.*



Colonial payment traffic

DNB also looked after the financial affairs of the Dutch state, meaning that it handled some of the official payment traffic to and from the overseas territories. A completely random example from 21 April, 1852 illustrates

its role. In the journal, under the heading "Overseas possessions", are listed two transactions on that day "for paid dom. bills". One for "the governor of Curaçao" and one for "A. v.d. Eb in Elmina" – Anthony van der Eb, governor of Elmina in Dutch Guinea on the west coast of Africa. An official had presumably presented bills of exchange for which DNB was the drawee, and on 21 April it had honoured them: *f* 6,000 for the governor of Curaçao and *f* 140 for the governor of Elmina.[426] It goes without saying that providing a service like paying colonial governors was important to keep the Dutch empire – and its slavery-based chain of production, distribution, and consumption – going.

Other colonial payments administered by DNB included subsidies for the Dutch colonies in the Atlantic region. Surinam, Curaçao, and Dutch Guinea were all loss-making in the 1860s. In 1862, the sum of *f* 271,500 was transferred to Surinam "to reconcile the balance"; for Curaçao and its dependencies the figure was *f* 264,513.80, and for Guinea *f* 64,000. This "burden" on the national budget was paid out of revenues from the East Indies. The subsidies had been keeping the recipient territories afloat for some time, although as Johanna van Winter wrote in 1953, these colonies were "no insolvent estate because private profits were still being made, albeit not as abundantly as in the previous century."[427] In other words, the government subsidies administered by DNB flowed indirectly, in the form of interest payments, to the shareholders in plantation mortgages.

5. *Constitutional reform, abolition, and apprenticeship*

It was not until March 1848 that King William II finally conceded to liberal calls for reform of the Dutch constitution, an initiative from the House of Representatives. Public opinion had by now turned against the conservative Ministry of the Colonies, where Jean Chrétien Baud as minister had come to personify the old colonial system.[428] Pressured by his waning popularity, by the revolutionary unrest in Paris and the German principalities, and by Dutch blackmailers, William II decided to save his own skin at the expense of his cabinet. His ministers, he claimed, had kept him "in chains."[429] To the Speaker of the House, he insisted that he had personally – without consulting his ministers – come to the conclusion that constitutional reform was a matter of national interest. The liberal politicians J.R. Thorbecke and D.D. Curtius and the conservative L.A. Lightenvelt were instructed to draw up a proposal. Thanks to this manoeuvre and the appointment of a constitutional commission, William II effectively bypassed his ministers; amongst them Baud, who had previously put forward proposals for moderate constitutional reform without success. Parliament had received petitions requesting that the abolition of slavery be included in the new constitution as a matter of principle, as part of a broader emancipatory campaign; the petitioners also pleaded for freedom of religion and education. The Council of Ministers did consider adopting emancipation as a constitutional principle, but decided that it would be unwise to do so.[430]

The version of the revised constitution piloted through the States General by Donker Curtius thus made no mention of slavery. Worse still for the proponents of abolition, it actually deprived them of a key driving force in a central position of power. Baud resigned as minister as a matter of honour: in his view parliament should not have any say over the formulation and implementation of colonial policy. With his departure the

department lost the initiator and liaison who, since 1840, had been the principle point of contact for the Amsterdam lobbyists, for the colonial administrators in The Hague, and for their envoys in the Caribbean. As such, with regard to the issue of abolition, 1848 marked a turning point in the relationship between the government and those with interests in slavery.[431] And this just at a point when international politics was pushing the matter back onto the political agenda in The Hague: in that same year, France finally abolished slavery, creating free territory right on the Netherlands' doorstep on the shared island of St Maarten.

At DNB, meanwhile, the composition of the board of directors and the board of non-executive directors was also very much moving with the times, reflecting in particular the rise of industry in the second half of the nineteenth century.[432] Evidence of the bank's prestige in these years can be found in the way these officials flaunted their position on the public stage. Take for instance roman catholic trustee Johannes Emanuel Bonnike (1798-1882; n. 1863-1880), who together with his father Gerhardus (1742-1808) and son Leonardus Maria (1840-1919) ran the trading house G. Bonnike & Son. For a long time, this firm was known as a linen merchant in Amsterdam, and although it did indeed import large quantities of that cloth up until 1835, colonial goods from Surinam and elsewhere were also an important part of its business: tobacco, cotton, indigo, and other products, shipped in from both Dutch and non-Dutch ports.[433] With the capital he had accrued by the 1850s, Bonnike began to invest in new public limited liability companies such as lending bank De Rente-Cassa and the Nederlandsche Chemische Fabriek (Netherlands Chemical Works). He also owned shares in a number of banks – the Credit- en Depositobank, the Nederlandsche Hypotheekbank, and De Surinaamsche Bank[434] – and served as a non-executive director for various companies, such as insurance firm Securitas in Amsterdam, the Amsterdamsche Kanaalmaatschappij (Amsterdam Canal Company, engaged in digging the North Sea Canal), and the Amsterdamsche Scheepvaart-Maatschappij (Amsterdam Shipping Company).[435] Advertisements for these companies' shares not only mentioned Bonnike by name but also pointed out that he was a trustee of De Nederlandsche Bank. By this time, that was clearly a byword for trustworthiness. Together with Willem Cornelis Mees and others, Bonnike formed the electoral association De Grondwet (The Constitution). In the 1850s, the association dominated elections to the provincial assembly in Noord-Holland because it favoured retaining the protectionist cultivation

system in the Dutch East Indies, a popular cause with the Amsterdam business community.[436]

By playing an active role in setting up and running associations of this kind, the financial elite managed to retain its political power after 1848. Since the constitutional reform of that year, the House of Representatives had been directly elected. The country was divided into constituencies, with the electorate confined to men who paid more than a certain amount of tax. Electoral associations put forward suggestions for suitable candidates. Nicolaas Gerard Pierson (d. 1868-1885; p. 1885-1891), like fellow DNB officials Mees and Bonnike, was a prominent member of De Grondwet, the association in Amsterdam for distinguished moderate liberals. In 1866, its list of candidates included two relatives of former colleagues at DNB: Herman Albrecht Insinger and H. Luden. Pierson also tried to persuade other associations in the city to support the list; for instance, by organising a joint meeting with the electoral association Burgerpligt (Civic Duty). Liberal politician Isaäc Dignus Fransen van de Putte praised "the appointment of Mr Mees to lead the meeting [as] a masterstroke, [which] has generally made a good impression both in and outside Amsterdam".[437] Mees' authority clearly had the desired effect: during the 1860s and 1870s, Burgerpligt shifted the political balance in Amsterdam, allowing the liberals to gain the upper hand over the conservatives and anti-revolutionaries.[438]

In 1851, future DNB non-executive director Pieter Jacob Teding van Berkhout (n. 1856-1886) was one of the founders and first committee members of the anti-revolutionary electoral association Nederland en Oranje (The Netherlands and Orange) in the capital. He and his brother James John were also members of the Protestant revivalist Réveil movement led by Guillaume Groen van Prinsterer, an outspoken abolitionist sometimes known as "the Dutch Wilberforce" (after the famous British abolitionist William Wilberforce).[439] The other members of the Nederland en Oranje committee were H. van Marselis Hartsinck, H.M. Labouchere and C.F. Gülcher – all surnames that, in earlier generations, had appeared on petitions from inhabitants of Amsterdam with interests in slavery in Surinam. In appointing them, the association had actively sought men with knowledge of the West Indies.[440] With their backing, Teding van Berkhout won a seat in the provincial assembly in 1852 and held onto it uninterrupted until 1883. He was also a judge in the district court and involved in numerous philanthropic activities linked to Réveil, as initiator, committee member, or benefactor.

One of the institutions set up by Réveil was the Benevolent Fund of the Society for the Advancement of Religious Education amongst the Heathen Peoples of Surinam (Fonds der Maatschappij ter Bevordering van het Godsdienstig Onderwijs onder de Heidensche Bevolking in Suriname).[441] The colonial administration considered Christianisation of the enslaved people an essential precondition for their emancipation, so the work of The Hague Society – as the organisation was more concisely known – was an important step along the road to abolition.[442] Although we cannot say how Teding van Berkhout viewed slavery itself, he was most definitely concerned about saving the souls of the people enslaved in the West Indies.

DNB directors in the second half of the nineteenth century

Despite increasing industrialisation in the Netherlands, there were still DNB officials involved in slavery in the late nineteenth century, either economically or administratively. Such involvement could take a variety of forms. With regard to plantations, as well as owning them directly, in whole or in part, a person could be active in their administration, finance their loans, represent their shareholders in a fund, and/or personally own a stake in such a fund. As for trade, although transatlantic human trafficking had been outlawed, dealing in slave goods (as Crommelin did; see Chapter 1) was still allowed, of course, and so was processing them (as Croockewit and Van Eeghen did). Finally, after 1863 it remained possible to receive Dutch compensation for the abolition of slavery – just as it had been available from the British post-1833.

The administrative documentation of the abolition of slavery in the Dutch part of the Atlantic region on 1 July, 1863 has been well preserved and contains not only long lists of the people freed, sorted by plantation, but also an overview of the indemnified owners. Of the six directors of DNB on that date, three are found in the latter group.[443] For Jacobus Hermanus Insinger (d. 1844-1871), the payment as a partner in Insinger & Co totalled *f* 255,000.[444]

Ferdinand Rendorp (d. 1845-1865) acted as "general assignee of all the interested parties and holders of shares in the W.G. Deutz fund". This had been set up in 1753 by Willem Gideon Deutz (1697-1757) as the first of the so-called negotaties, funds allowing investors in Amsterdam to buy a share in colonial mortgages. At general meetings, they elected assignees,

agents, commissioners, and representatives nominated by the leading shareholders to look after their interests in the fund. As assignee, Rendorp was supposed to promote the interests of the shareholders of this fund.

In 1863, the fund's portfolio included several plantations in Surinam – *Vreeland*, *La Paix*, *Johannesburg*, and *D'Alyda* – for which its investors eventually received total amounts, respectively, of *f* 79,200 (for 264 enslaved persons); *f* 59,700 (199 enslaved persons); *f* 66,600 (222 enslaved persons), and *f* 24,600 (82 enslaved persons).[445] Sloppy bookkeeping caused their original application for compensation to be rejected because they were unable to prove definitively that the fund actually owned these people. A year later, the shareholders were able to provide sufficient additional documentation and their claim was upheld.

Alongside his mandate for the W.G. Deutz fund, Rendorp also represented the shareholders in the company Weduwe J.S. van de Poll. Amongst its holdings were the plantations *Zorg en Hoop*, *Purmerend*, *Beekvliet*, *Bleijendaal*, and *Potribo*,[446] where 393 people were enslaved in all. They generated indemnities totalling *f* 117,900. Finally, Rendorp was also the agent in the Netherlands for the plantations *Lust tot Rust* and *Einde Rust*, where another 114 enslaved people yielded *f* 34,200. Unfortunately, the records do not state how much Rendorp himself received from these payouts.

The third DNB director to be compensated in 1863 was Johannes Hermanus Molkenboer (s. 1863-1871). His son of the same name is far better known today than his father, due primarily to his marriage to prominent feminist pioneer Hermanna Elisabeth Trip (1851-1911) and the purchase of a steam-powered weaving mill in Oldenzaal that owed its subsequent success to her business acumen. Molkenboer senior's entitlement to compensation in 1863 was down to his spouse. In 1840, he had married Catharina Henriette Elisabeth Eijben (1818-1890), a descendant through her mother of plantation owner Pieter Kerkhoven. Her 11/144th share was the largest single holding in *Adrichem* in Surinam and yielded her and her husband *f* 2,431.08 to indemnify them for the equivalent of more than eight enslaved people.[447]

There are also two DNB officials, Jan van Heukelom (d. 1851-1879) and Ananias Willink (d. 1835-1845; n. 1846-1852), whose surnames appear in the compensation records. We therefore investigated whether either was a close relative of the actual recipient. Since trading in plantation shares had largely ceased by the 1860s, most were inherited. An indemnified brother or father may indicate that other family members also had links with slavery.

Compensation recipient Frans van Heukelom is obviously someone other than DNB director Jan, whose first wife, Anna Margareta Beetz, died in 1847. Six years later he was living on Keizersgracht in Amsterdam, at number 373, with his second wife, Emilie Cornelia. Jan's grandfather, uncle and brother were all called Frans van Heukelom.[448] However, none of these is the one who, as commissioner of the W.G. Deutz fund in 1863, signed for receipt of its indemnity. That was in fact Jan's first cousin, the son of his uncle Frans. And there is no evidence that Jan himself participated in any slavery-related activities.[449]

The Willink family was partly British, but Ananias Willink was a member of its Dutch branch; he was born in Amsterdam in 1778 to Jan Ananias Willink and Johanna van der Laan. His father's British-born cousins formed the firm Daniel & John Abraham Willink & Co, which is listed in 1837 as receiving compensation following the abolition of slavery in the British Empire. The plantation concerned was *La Bonne Intention* in British Guiana (which had been mortgaged to Van Eeghen & Co; see Chapter 3), but there is no reason to suppose that Ananias had any involvement with it.[450] While his father had always been a merchant first and foremost, Ananias Willink was primarily a company administrator and politician. As well as serving as a director and non-executive director of DNB and a non-executive director of the West Indies Company (West-Indische Maatschapij), he was a supernumerary member of the House of Representatives during the constitutional reform of 1840, and a member of the Noord-Holland Provincial Estates between 1840 and 1856.[451] By the time of his death in 1863, he had amassed a considerable fortune. As well as several pieces of land and houses in the Netherlands, he owned securities including *f*50,000 in shares in DNB, but none related to slavery.[452] The Willink indemnified in 1863, Jan Abraham Willink Willemszoon, was a relative, but only a distant one: a cousin of the British Willinks mentioned above.[453] Whilst not reimbursed as an owner of enslaved people, Ananias was involved with slavery in his capacity as a non-executive director of the West Indies Company.

Although the president of DNB on 1 July, 1863, Mees, was an outspoken opponent of slavery, he shared the boardroom with three men who would be indemnified for its abolition.

Insinger in particular was no silent partner in the plantation investments made by his family firm; as a director of Insinger & Co, he involved himself actively with the mortgage funds it administered. We have already

discussed how this also applied to Huydecoper (see Chapter 3), with meetings sometimes held at his home. One such gathering attended by both men, a meeting of the directors of the Biesterbos fund in 1836, once again reveals the extent to which they were implicated in the policies enforced on the ground in Surinam.

The Biesterbos portfolio comprised six plantation loans, one of them for *De Nieuwe Grond* in Surinam. This estate had seen better times and, amongst other things, its buildings were in need of maintenance. Many of the people enslaved there had been weakened by a bout of measles, but fortunately no one had died. Nevertheless, they decided to extend the plantation a further credit of *f* 6,000 "for the effective strengthening of the slave force."[454] A good part of that money had already been spent: *f* 4,550 as "the purchase price of five negresses and six young children" and, only recently, another *f* 700 for "a young and strong negress named Kaatje."[455] This "strengthening" brought the total number of those enslaved on *De Nieuwe Grond* to 124 – 75 men and boys, 49 women and girls. Even more hands could do no harm, though, so the directors readily agreed to a request by the head carpenter, J. Carrevelo. He asked that his seven-year-old daughter, Katrijntje, might receive "the gift of liberty" in exchange for "a healthy and strong negro girl" of adult age.[456] A good deal, the meeting reckoned, from which "*De Nieuwe Grond* can only [...] gain."[457]

From this example, it is clear just how closely some fund directors and non-executive directors monitored the day-to-day running of plantations. For the Cooke fund, also administered by Insinger, a detailed inventory of all the people it enslaved has survived. At *Resolutie*, part of this portfolio, the ages and duties of 94 men, 79 women, 42 boys, and 53 girls are noted. And alongside each individual entry is a space for comments. Magdalena, a housemaid, is listed as "mulatto" and "pregnant." Francis is "old, of little use." Jan is "crooked and cross-eyed." Finally, Jupiter has been "absent for years."[458] The enslaved were thus known in Amsterdam by name, age and sex, and decisions about which of them could and could not receive "the gift of liberty" were taken at meetings there. It is also obvious from these records that even well after the ending of the slave trade by William I in 1814, and the legal ban on the supply of new people to slavery in Surinam in 1828, the purchase of adults and children for plantations there continued. Insinger's involvement with slavery only ended when it was made illegal.

Since many of the executives of DNB had a background as bankers, several also appear as partners in firms providing plantation loans. Some of the same names also appear time and again as shareholders in mortgage funds: many of the banking families in Amsterdam invested in each other's ventures. Not all of the funds' records have survived, so we lack a complete picture of everyone who received interest payments (distributions) on these investments. Likewise, not all of the individuals concerned have left financial or probate documentation in the archives, so we have been unable to trace exactly who participated in what.

The fact that many of the examples we cite begin with Jacobus Hermanus Insinger is partly because the archive of the trading house founded by his father, Herman Albert Insinger (1757-1805), has been so well preserved. Later DNB director Jacobus Hermanus joined the firm as a partner in 1821, and in that capacity was involved with funds responsible for at least 21 plantation loans in Surinam, Berbice, St Thomas, St Croix, and St John. Due to their transnational nature, it is not possible here to provide an accurate estimate of the total number of enslaved people used as collateral for these payments. As a firm, Insinger & Co was involved with at least eight separate plantation mortgage funds. And in one case there are surviving annual records of the "slave force" included in its assets. That is the Linck fund, set up in 1830, the founding deed of which was signed not only by Insinger and his brother, but also by Johanna Borski's son and by P.C. Labouchere. It financed three plantations in Surinam, *Anna Catharina*, *Jagtlust*, and *Zoelen*, where a total of 744 people were enslaved in 1836, of whom 695 remained in 1840.[459]

Because the documentation from Insinger & Co is so well preserved, it is also possible to illustrate how the returns on a plantation fund were distributed in the Netherlands using an example from 1836. In the payments book for *Zeezigt* in Surinam, the firm kept a record of who had received proceeds from its mortgages and how they were paid out. The shares yielded 6 per cent dividend per annum, and each year a number of shares were drawn by lot and redeemed in full. But the plantation did not always generate enough to enable this distribution. In 1833 and 1834, for example, no payments were forthcoming. But in 1835 a single payout was made to cover all the three years. The example in Table 6 is from 1836, when there were still 169 outstanding shares qualifying for dividend. This year has been chosen because, unlike the previous three, it was one in which the fund worked as intended.

Table 6. *Extract from the payments book of the Zeezigt mortgage fund from 1836.*

Month	Date	Holders	Coupons	Interest in *f*	Method of payment
January	6	Baum	1	60	Ned. Bank
January	6	Van 't Vlie, Windsen, Van Limmeken	4	240	Ned. Bank
January	6	Wed. Baum	10	600	Ned. Bank
January	6	Swarth/Schellwald	1	60	Ned. Bank
January	11	Wed. W. Borski	116	6,960	Offset
January	11	The minor H.A. Insinger	7	420	Current account
January	11	A.Insinger	3	180	Current account
January	11	A.F. Insinger	5	300	Current account
January	11	Hermina Maria Jacoba Insinger	1	60	Current account
January	11	J.H. Insinger	5	300	Current account
January	11	Anna Hermina Insinger	1	60	Current account
January	11	G.A. Swebilius	1	60	Ned. Bank
January	20	Swarth/Schellwald	13	780	By S & S
March	30	C. de Veer jr	1	60	Cash
		Total	169	10,140	

Source: NL-AsdSAA, 1455, Inventaris van het Archief van de Bank Insinger & Co. [Inventory of the archives of the bank Insinger & Co.], inv. no. 1456: "Betaalboek" [Payments Book] 1821-1839.

Bearing in mind that one coupon could be redeemed per share, the first striking thing about this list is that "Wed. W. Borski" – the widow Johanna Borski – had by far the largest holding in this fund: more than two-thirds

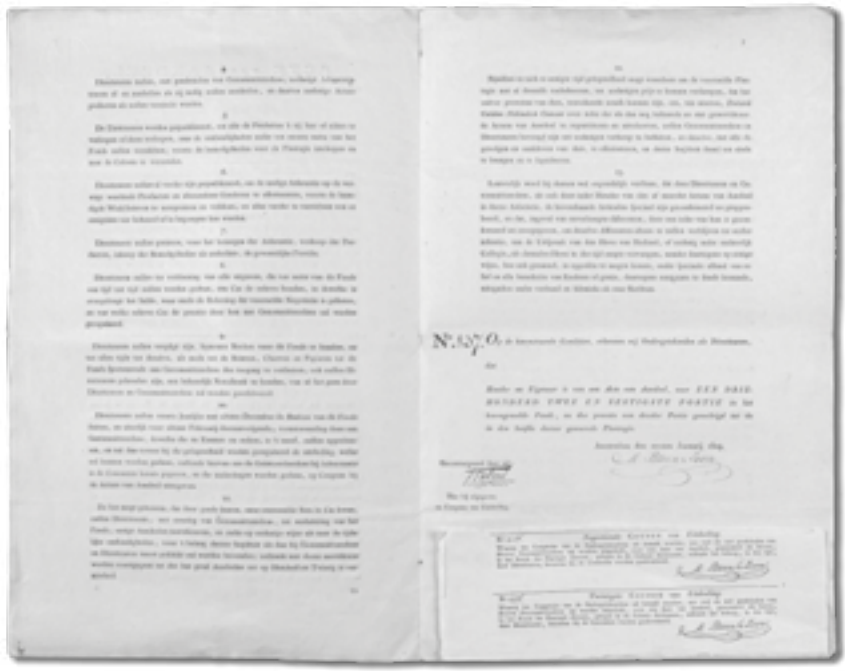
of its shares. Since each of these had a nominal value of *f* 1,000, at some point someone had paid *f* 116,000 for them. Johanna was not actually paid the 6 per cent dividend that these yielded, *f* 6,960 in cash, but instead that amount was offset against other payment traffic between the firms Insinger & Co and Wed. W. Borski. What she did receive (not shown in the above extract) was the full face-value of five shares drawn by lot, *f* 5,000, plus the dividend they had accrued in the past four and a half months. That was *f* 22.50 each, or *f* 112.50 in all. Another interesting point is that various members of the Insinger family themselves held shares, so they not only administered this fund but also owned part of it. DNB director Jacobus Hermanus Insinger, for example, redeemed five coupons that year. The *f* 300 they yielded him was credited to his current account with the firm as liquid funds. The "minor" H. A. Insinger is probably Herman Albrecht (1827-1911); even at the age of nine, he evidently benefitted from the proceeds of *Zeezigt* by cashing in seven coupons. In later life, he would become well known as a Conservative member of parliament (1866-1884). Finally, there is a clear connection with DNB in the fact that payments totalling *f* 1,020, about 10 per cent of the distribution, were made using the bank's paper notes. This says nothing about its involvement in slavery, but does show that DNB was playing a significant role in the Dutch payment system by the 1830s.

The *Surinaamsche Almanak* for 1836 lists *Zeezigt* as home to 421 enslaved people.[460] Based upon a count from 1848 in which names and years of birth are recorded, we can ascertain that in 1836 three of them – Sibilla, Trobellina, and Jansie 2e – each bore a child into slavery there, respectively the boys Alexander, Verdriet, and Jacques.[461]

Further names possibly associated with DNB are found in the payment books of other plantation funds managed by Insinger & Co. For example, a "Röell" who received a total of *f* 516 for ten Dedel coupons in 1835. Since no initial is given, it is not possible to say with certainty whether this is Willem Röell (d. 1828-1829), but that is certainly not unlikely. The same applies to a "Rendorp" – possibly Ferdinand – who redeemed 37 coupons in the same fund.[462]

As early as the turn of the nineteenth century, shares in plantations and their mortgage funds had lost all their commercial or book value. Most owners had inherited them, as Herman Hendrik Beels (d. 1864-1889) probably did from his father.[463] The lack of a market also meant that shareholders found them hard to dispose of, unless they were willing to

accept that their entire portfolio would most likely raise no more than a guilder at auction. On the other hand, the payments they yielded more than outweighed the cost of hanging onto them, so it is hardly surprising that shareholders opted for that. Finally, and especially after the British had done so in 1833, there was always the prospect that the Dutch government would compensate their owners in the event of abolition.



A share in the Livonia plantation with, bottom right, its unredeemed nineteenth and twentieth coupons.

Source: Securities and lottery ticket collection, ARCH03766, International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam.

As discussed earlier (see Chapter 3), the maximum value of Johanna Borski's slavery-related investment portfolio was *f* 70,000. The great majority of her annual earnings through the firm Wed. W. Borski, between about *f* 200,000 and *f* 400,000, came from government bonds. Only two entries in the company's ledger can be linked to industrialisation: a mortgage of just under *f* 31,000 for Verveer's Ironworks and an investment of almost *f* 29,000 in the Illinois Canal in 1848.[464] That was the Illinois and

Michigan Canal, which had just been completed to provide a link between the Mississippi River and the industrial centres to the north, and as such would play an important role in propelling US industrialisation. On the other hand, the ironworks operated by C. Verveer & Co on Roeterseiland in Amsterdam closed its doors in 1843. In short, not every investment in the Industrial Revolution of the nineteenth century automatically paid off. New and emerging industries may have been "the future" at the time, but backing them was a lot riskier for the financial élite than government bonds or holding on to a few coupons in a mortgage fund or actual shares in a plantation.

A committee of interested parties in Amsterdam

The consultation by the government, which the Amsterdam petitioners had been demanding since 1846, finally materialised shortly after the constitutional reform of 1848. The former governor-general of the Dutch West Indian possessions, Jules Constantijn Rijk, was now acting Minister of the Colonies. On 15 May, 1848 he dispatched a missive to the capital, stating bluntly "that stubborn adherence to the principle of slavery as it still exists in Surinam is extremely dangerous."[465] In view of possible desertion to British Guiana or the French colonies, where slavery had also just been abolished, Rijk called on the interested parties in Amsterdam to ease the fate of the people they enslaved.[466] This time, unlike in 1845, the reply came in the form of a confidential letter to the minister rather than a petition to parliament. Moreover, the tone was constructive and seemed to point the way to a status quo whereby slavery could be maintained in Surinam; the word "emancipation" was not mentioned once. Perhaps it was this combination which persuaded the Insingers, amongst others, to sign on behalf of their firm. Broen & Co and Bunge & Co also appended their names, but for them it does not seem to have mattered whether their case was being made in a public petition or a confidential communication.

The signatories mentioned a number of points indicating that Rijk's call for improved conditions had been passed on to the administrators of their plantations. For example, they had limited the working hours of the enslaved to nine hours a day and arranged that "our black labourers" be fed "entirely in the spirit of your instructions." Moreover, they considered it "most gratifying" that the minister's views "regarding the transfer of

the negroes from infertile to productive lands correspond entirely with ours."[467] Previous studies of plantation management by the Insingers have shown that providing an adequate diet and the relocation of enslaved labour from exhausted to fertile estates were recurring problems on their watch.[468] Finally, the signatories once again requested the minister "not to introduce any measures concerning the management of the plantations or their inhabitants, without first giving us the opportunity to share our opinions with you".[469]

The Amsterdam lobby mattered when it came to colonial policy, because the government knew that it exerted considerable authority over the plantation managers on the ground in Surinam.[470] On the same day the Amsterdam-based owners instructed the managers in Suriname to co-operate in improving conditions, Rijk sent his own emphatic orders to Reinier Frederik Van Raders, Surinam's governor-general. It was crucial, the minister insisted, that the government keep its ranks closed against the Amsterdam lobby, which began demanding compensation as soon as emancipation was even discussed. Rijk forbade Van Raders from uttering "the word *emancipation*" on behalf of the government "without it having, as it were, [undertaken] to provide the owners with any degree of compensation."[471] For as long as abolition was not arranged in law, the government had to present a united front.

Rijk now again approached the interested parties in Amsterdam, this time with an emancipation plan drawn up by his permanent secretary, George Severijn de Veer. On 21 August, 1848, the owners received a "private letter" from the minister offering them the opportunity, "entirely confidentially and unofficially", to share their views with him. The recipients did not need to be asked twice. A select group of six stakeholders immediately set about drawing up a memorandum, which would run to almost seventy pages, in which they put the revised constitution to maximum use in support of their cause.[472] Their main criticism was the lack of any form of compensation scheme in De Veer's proposal, whereas Article 14 of the Constitution stipulated that the expropriation of property was permitted only for the public benefit and with prior compensation.[473]

The document set out the arguments in support of the owners' property rights. Some of these were rooted in legal history. How could the government eliminate, with "a single stroke of the pen", a right it had protected and encouraged for so long? For the source of their entitlement to count people as property, the authors referred to the charter of 1682, by which

the West India Company (West-Indische Compagnie, WIC) was "obliged and bound to deliver a certain number of slaves annually from the coast, at determined prices."[474] The paper further contested the necessity of emancipation and the idea "that regular labour can be exacted from emancipated negroes."[475] Moreover, De Veer's plan included a proposal for a system of "patronage" under conditions so generous for the emancipated that a day labourer in the Netherlands could justifiably consider that they left him "socially disfavoured and aggrieved."[476] For the owners, on the other hand, the writers foresaw that the accumulation of mortgages and loans would create an inextricable tangle of competing property claims, making it an impossible task in practice to determine who should become patron of a particular plantation.

It had been known in government circles that the eighteenth-century financing model for the plantations had led to a mountain of claims in Amsterdam arising out of unpaid interest and commission, which brokers tried to pass on to investors. A mountain so large, indeed, that "amongst the Amsterdam trading houses so long promulgated as reputable are found diverse brokers [from whom], by whatever means, one can obtain no settlement other than an account accumulated by them with interest upon interest, which claim they bring at the expense of other shareholding owners or entitled participants in the plantations."[477] In short, the owners needed the compensation to pay off their own creditors, not the government. Rijk did read this memorandum, and indeed added some critical comments to the manuscript in pencil, but he was not persuaded by it to make any changes to his parliamentary bill. After the House of Representatives had voted that down, however, Rijk did install a committee for parties interested in the agriculture and trade of the colony of Surinam.

The lines between those parties in Amsterdam, the government in The Hague, and Surinam were short, but they came under great pressure after 1848. After complaints about him from the colony, Van Raders received a reprimand from Guillaume Louis Baud, the new Minister of the Colonies (and a nephew of the former minister). The governor-general had refused to co-operate with efforts to relocate enslaved labour from exhausted to fertile land, which the Amsterdam lobby claimed was a breach of the promise of May 1848, affirming that such transfers would receive official backing as long as the owners improved their treatment of those affected, as per the latest guidelines.[478] Van Raders riposted that he was only acting in accordance with his instructions from The Hague, which forbade the

colonial administration from using force to impose relocations against which the enslaved protested.[479] Owners in Amsterdam were also angered by handouts of shoes to "exemplary slaves" on government plantations, and deeply concerned at the persistent rumours on their holdings about impending emancipation.[480]

Van Raders' high-handed (in their view) behaviour may have been the reason why, in 1849, a group of Amsterdam owners and investors requested an audience with the newly inaugurated King William III. That resulted in the drafting of three secret reports analysing possible ways to restore the colonial prosperity of Surinam.[481] The tense relationship between the government and the Amsterdam lobbyists was caused in part by the government consistently striving to avoid public disputes like the one between Elias and the Amsterdam stakeholders. As a consequence, the government took into account the interests of the slave owners and their associates.

Revised slave regulations and establishing of State Commission

One example of effective co-operation between the government and the group of interested parties in Amsterdam is the revision of the slave regulation. At Baud's suggestion, in November 1849 his protégé Charles Ferdinand Pahud was appointed Minister of the Colonies – a choice for a conservative liberal with decades of colonial experience in the Dutch East Indies, which also pleased King William III.[482] While amending the regulation, Pahud gave the slave owners prior access to the confidential official documents upon which they were based. The new version would also include an emancipation plan. As soon as the interested parties in Amsterdam gained the impression that Pahud was bypassing them, however, they raised objections. As when the committee set up by Rijk complained that, "with regard to the emancipation of slave children", it had learned nothing more than "what had come to its attention indirectly and elliptically, but very indeterminately."[483]

In response to this the committee decided to write imploringly to the minister "that every one of them, as a human being, as a citizen, as a loyal subject of His Majesty, would consider it irresponsible to lend the slightest support to such an emancipation plan."[484] This entreaty failed to achieve the desired effect, even with the subsequent backing of two petitions sent to the House of Representatives from Paramaribo in May and June 1852. "We

know now what His Excellency proposes in this regard, and we therefore have no option other than to present our objections by means of a petition to your Assembly" rather than the "Council of Ministers."[485] From this it seems that the interested parties in Amsterdam were still not keen on the petition as a political instrument, as we have already seen in the cases of the sugar excise duty of 1819 and Insinger's dissuasive round of calls in 1844; they saw it as a last resort to raise awareness of their concerns in The Hague. But they now felt that they were left with no other choice, and on the petition submitted to the House on 5 November, 1852 we find the names of the DNB-affiliated firms Luden & Van Geuns, Insinger & Co, Broen & Co and Wed. J.S. van de Poll, as well as Gebroeders Hartsen. The petition explained their aspiration as follows.

> We most certainly do not wish the perpetuation of slavery, in whatever form. We desire only to be able to keep the grounds of the colony in cultivation for ourselves, to preserve the colony for the state. We would rather work with free men than with slaves, but agriculture cannot be undertaken without workers; yet the negro declared free in his present condition, even at birth, is not and will not become a worker. By consequence, however desirable in itself the abolition of slavery may be, all plans for emancipation will be either unreasonable for the white man or unjust and ruinous for the owners of the slaves, or disastrous for the commerce and the prosperity of the state.[486]

Even in Amsterdam, the realisation had dawned that maintaining slavery was not the way forward. The objection now was that abolition would inevitably lead to a decline in the productivity of the plantations, because their freed men would be unwilling to work as hired labourers.[487] Moreover, the draft government regulation still did not provide for compensation – a condition clearly stipulated by the owners for any possible act of emancipation back in 1841. This latest plea on their part proved effective: following receipt of the petition, the House refused to even consider the draft regulation submitted by Pahud because its members were convinced the proposed emancipation scheme would be most unreasonable for both those who were enslaved and the owners.[488]

The parliamentary debates on the issue reveal the opposing standpoints being championed in The Hague. Since his election as an MP in 1850, former minister Jean Chrétien Baud had become the leading proponent of "old-style" colonial statesmanship. On the other side of the discourse, the "colonial opposition" was led by Wolter Robert van Hoëvell, formerly a church minister in Batavia. Despite their divergent views on colonial politics, by 1853 the two men found themselves in agreement on the point that emancipation should no longer be dealt with in conjunction with new statutes for the government of the West Indies. From November 1853, a State Commission started investigating which measures the government should take regarding slavery. Baud chaired the commission, whilst two of his old acquaintances were appointed to represent the interested parties in Amsterdam: G.C. Bosch Reitz and the lawyer A. Brugmans, legal adviser to Amsterdam's plantation owners. Three members had administrative experience in the West Indies: Rijk, Van Raders, and Rutgerus Hermanus Esser. From the House of Representatives came Jan Heemskerk Bzn and Guillaume Groen van Prinsterer, the latter also serving in his capacity as president of the Society to Advance the Abolition of Slavery (Maatschappij tot Bevordering van de Afschaffing der Slavernij, MBAS). However, Groen van Prinsterer resigned from the committee in 1854 in protest at its cumbersome procedures. In the same year, Van Hoëvell published his account of "slaves and free men under Dutch law", which further convulsed a national public debate already reeling from the recent translation of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1853). Van Hoëvell dedicated his book to the State Commission, but it exerted hardly any influence over the political decision-making process.[489]

Whilst the State Commission was conducting its investigation, Minister of the Colonies Pahud continued to take the tenor of the 1852 petition fairly seriously. In the House of Representatives, the liberal faction had managed to elicit from him a statement that the question was no longer "whether emancipation will take place, but how we will achieve a careful, gradual and well-prepared emancipation."[490] For the answer to this question, Pahud again sought the collaboration the Amsterdam petitioners had requested; in his search for a solution to the alleged lack of work ethic amongst emancipated slaves, this time he would not pass them by. Importing free labourers from elsewhere appeared to be the way to overcome this problem. In a letter to Rodolphe le Chevalier, the minister expressly invited the interested parties in Amsterdam to provide him with "consideration

and advice" as to how they thought the supply of new labour could best be achieved. "Of itself," he wrote, "the ever-diminishing number of slaves in Surinam makes it humane that the losses on the plantations already be filled with free workers brought from elsewhere; should an emancipation of the slaves follow later, the lack of workers on the plantations will then be doubly felt if has not been provided for in time."[491] Le Chevalier and his colleagues in the capital did not share this view of immigration as a solution to their fear of emancipation, but Pahud was not going to let that stop him. At the end of October 1855, he notified Surinam's governor Charles Pierre Schimpf about writing to the Dutch consul in China

> to obtain information concerning the emigration of Chinese to the West Indies and the opportunities that future attempts at the shipment of Chinese farmers to Surinam might offer up. Thus far the owners and parties with interests in Surinamese plantations have shown little inclination to co-operate with the government in obtaining workers; they appear to be of the opinion that the government should provide for this, but that is asking rather a lot.[492]

It is clear, then, that the interested parties in Amsterdam were given the opportunity by the government to consider how the abolition of slavery might be achieved without excessively undermining the labour productivity of the plantations. Pahud tried to overcome one of their objections, the shrinkage of their workforce, in the run-up to his first Emancipation Bill, so that they could no longer use this as an argument to delay the legislation. But he found that they showed little interest as a group in considering his immigration plans. Through the Insingers, though, he would soon learn what their top priority was.

The State Commission reports and the first emancipation bills, 1855-1858

The Insingers adopted a proactive stance in the years of the State Commission's investigative work. The Commission's proposals would form the basis for various parliamentary bills tabled and debated between 1857 and 1861.[493] This time span in itself indicates that the legislative process had to overcome several obstacles. For their part, the Insingers had to deal with a particular trait of Dutch national politics during this period, and one especially affecting the Ministry of the Colonies: most ministers only served short terms in office. Precisely at the time when the legislation on the abolition of slavery was taking shape, executive continuity in the department primarily responsible was a weak link in the legislative process (see the list of ministers in Appendix 2). This meant that the Insingers had to present their case anew to each new minister, both orally and in writing, allowing for an exceptional reconstruction of their lobbying efforts.

Even before any abolition bill could be submitted to the parliament, Pahud received a missive from Insinger & Co in response to the first report of the State Commission. Writing on behalf of the directors of a mortgage fund with investments in the *Zeezigt* plantation on 20 November, 1855, the firm stated that it understood from the latest royal address (troonrede) that the report on Surinam had been completed and a bill was imminent.[494] It then went on to complain that less compensation was planned for people enslaved on cotton plantations than in other sectors. Whereas *f*500 per head was due to be paid to sugar estates, *f*325 for those growing coffee and cocoa and *f*240 for timber, Insinger & Co would receive a mere *f*200 for every enslaved person on his cotton plantations.[495] The directors urged that, if a distinction were to remain, cotton be placed on a par with – or at least not far below – coffee and cocoa.

The most striking thing about this plea is that, with emancipation now seemingly inevitable, it reverses the reasoning found in earlier submissions opposing the abolition of slavery. Back in December 1841, Insinger & Co had signed a petition arguing one universal arrangement would fail to do justice to the diversity of the planted lands in the colonies.[496] But now that a distinction was being drawn between different categories, apparently Surinam estates were not so diverse after all. It is not known whether Pahud replied to this missive, but – as we shall see from their

later correspondence – his impending departure from the department did nothing to help the Insingers' cause.

Pahud's successor, Pieter Mijer, did not go down well in Amsterdam at first. This is evident from remarks made by Brugmans to Baud. The core of the problem was that "Mijer, who was still roaming the ocean a year ago on his way home from the East Indies – where he had wasted 22 years – knows about as much about the colony of Surinam as I do about the Moluccas, which is a little more than a monkey knows about baking waffles."[497] A month later came another outpouring from Brugmans, who had now made enquiries about Mijer's record in the Dutch East Indies. "I do not trust Mr P. Mijer. I have been observing some of his doings – I see what he does in public and when I relate that to what he did in the East Indies in 1848, then we have to be careful with him; once free of him we must stay free."[498] Brugmans may here be referring to Mijer's work on a draft penal code for Europeans in the Dutch East Indies. He was not the first minister with experience only of colonial administration in the Asian empire to take on the issue of slavery; Baud and Pahud also were "old Indies hands", as returnees from the Dutch East Indies were known. But Mijer had actually been born in Batavia and spent a large part of his life there, making him a relative outsider in the Dutch elite of the time.

Mijer's arrival at the ministry in The Hague meant a change of course, if only because he was less under Baud's thumb than protégé Pahud had been.[499] Brugmans, as a member of the State Commission and legal adviser to the Amsterdam lobby, regarded the rapid turnover of ministers as an abiding problem of Dutch politics. In his view, "the government [is] in the hands of ephemeral ministers who did not remain in office long enough to know their departments properly"[500] and had to "dance to the tune of 68 mostly pedantic and selfish, if not scheming, dunces. The actual administration of the nation is in the hands of the principal private secretaries, who for years on end have been fabricating the ministries."[501] Clearly, it was harder for the Amsterdam lobby to gain a grip on ministers who relied upon their civil servants instead of their personal contacts in the capital.

For the likes of the Insingers, Mijer's arrival meant that they were now dealing with a minister less inclined than his predecessors to empathise with their grievances. This did not go down well with them. A request made by Baud to Brugmans speaks volumes here. Mijer had studied the report of the State Commission and had a conversation with Baud about it. According to the latter, it was important that the minister be well-prepared

for his appearance before parliament and so Baud planned to brief the minister thoroughly, down to the last detail, in order that he might "repel the attacks by the dissenters."[502] He then forwarded the written text he had prepared to Brugmans, with the request that he provide "a concise summary of some salient points, suitable to be imprinted easily in the memory of an uninitiated person who may well be assailed and canvassed by experts on a daily basis."[503]

Mijer himself knew that his lack of knowledge of the situation in Surinam was a weakness shrewd opponents and parliamentarians could exploit. For this reason, he wrote to Suriname's governor asking him urgently for a "coherent survey from your experienced pen on the condition of the colony of Surinam. I request this for use, should the need arise, in the House of Representatives."[504] Schimpf, in turn, felt that in Mijer he had found a willing ear for his wishes concerning the way the enslaved people of Surinam should be freed. "In my opinion," he wrote, "any plan for emancipation that is without fundamental flaws can be implemented if one manages to rise above the outcry from the so-called friends of the slaves – or rather, their false friends – and zealots of all colours."[505] In short, Schimpf's urgent request to Mijer was to leave him "great room for manoeuvre" in the proposal for emancipation.[506]

Mijer proved to be a fast learner from men like Baud, Brugmans, and Schimpf. In March 1856, Van Hoëvell questioned the minister on the floor of the House about the improvement and amendment of the regulation for the treatment of slaves in Surinam, as well as the current state of affairs with regard to emancipation. Brugmans was "most satisfied" with the skilful reply.[507] Mijer himself said he had been greatly assisted by an "important report" on domestic jurisdiction that governor Schimpf had sent him. Nevertheless, the intervention had made the minister realise that the patience of the House was finite now that the State Commission had produced a report: when would the minister finally present a bill? Consequently, the minister now wanted from Schimpf "the requested considerations and advice concerning the proposals of the State Commission, since it is absolutely necessary to bring the issue of emancipation to a desirable solution soon."[508] Just over a year after making this request, Mijer at last submitted his first bill to the States General on 18 July, 1857.[509]

The partners at Insinger & Co were certainly amongst the "experts", as Baud called them, who "assailed and canvassed" Mijer. In September 1857, they wrote him a letter in the company's name, from which we learn

that he had already asked them "orally" to set down their objections in more detail on paper. The firm seized this opportunity with both hands. Naturally, it requested that the amounts allocated as compensation in the bill be revised, but the letter also emphasised how difficult negotiations with The Hague had been up until now.[510] The directors feared that the letter they had sent Pahud at the end of November 1855, "never came to the notice of Your Excellency" despite Insinger having been in contact with Mijer on this matter for some time.[511] According to the writers, this must explain why the minister had "passed over with silence the objections we made" in his explanatory memorandum accompanying the bill.[512] Baud's missives of 1843-1844 about the requested liquidation of *Zeezigt* had shown by contrast that he as minister "examined and appreciated the importance of our complaints", but also "how the proposed plans foundered upon the obstinacy or cowardry of the then governor of the colonies [Elias]."[513]

In his submission Mijer had maintained the distinction between the different types of plantations as proposed by Pahud, including the low valuation of the people enslaved on cotton estates. One of the reasons for this was the misconception that they were physically less strong than those growing sugar and coffee. In Insinger's view, however, the minister should take Britain and France as examples: those countries had indemnified "the former owners per head, without any difference of classification, so that, e.g., a Demerara cotton planter received as many pounds sterling per head for his emancipated slaves as a sugar or coffee planter for his."[514] The writers therefore begged Mijer, "with respect, yet with serious urgency", that Section 3 of his bill be "amended so that those concepts of national fair play, which we see honoured on more than one page of the Explanatory Memorandum, are not set aside with regard to the cotton planters of the colony of Surinam, but that justice be done to them also."[515]

Underlying this argument was the firm's own study of several of the British and French colonies.[516] Early in 1853, Jacobus Hermanus Insinger's brother had investigated their numbers of slaves and free labourers as well as the amounts indemnified and their payment, but above all how various attempts were made to restore labour productivity after abolition. With regard to the French territories, he noted that "young people would rather become craftsmen than work in the fields or the factory" – thus threatening a shortage of hands on the plantations.[517] "The indemnity," he continued, "was *f* 430.48 per head, male or female, old or young," and

was partly paid in cash, partly in a 5 per cent subscription, and one-eighth of the compensation was retained for a lending and discount bank in each French colony."[518] The British colonies had been offered an immigration loan in 1845, "and later a parliamentary loan, part of which was used for a railway, the rest for immigration."[519]

As far as the productivity of the plantations was concerned, Insinger had read positive reports about the French territories: the 173 plantations still in operation in 1852 produced almost as much sugar as the 214 plantations in use before abolition. He was rather less impressed by the British results. "Sugar remains the only possible principal product," he observed, but immigration by the *right* free workers was essential: "Africans are always the best one could wish for. After that, coolies [Asian labourers], especially if they wish to stay."[520] He took reports of decaying plantations seriously, such as those about the remaining coffee factories and plantations in Berbice, "whose best works [today] are mere memorials to past greatness".[521] Cotton production on the west coast of Berbice had been completely abandoned due to a lack of labourers. "Even the African negroes are buying pieces of land, and all that squatting is completely and utterly ruining the colony."[522] In fact, formerly enslaved people acquiring land was a "problem" Insinger believed had spread throughout British Guiana. The cotton plantations there had been ruined by American competition and the emancipation of 1833, "whereupon their negroes melted into the neighbouring sugar workforces or remained as small farmers on small pieces of land [...] The Creoles would be the best sugar growers without all that wretched squatting."[523] As he saw it, British Guiana faced a particularly bleak future. Despite the fact that large capital sums from Europe were being invested in the immigration of new workers, a huge amount of labour potential was being lost through the sale of cheap agricultural land to what Insinger viewed as an important section of the "workable class", who now instead were excelling in "utter idleness."[524]

As the director of mortgage funds for cotton plantations in Surinam, such as *Wederzorg* and *Zeezigt*, it is understandable that Insinger paid particular attention to the future stability of this type of enterprise. He concluded his study by reflecting on the question of "what is needed on a ground like *Wederzorg* if sugar is to be produced there?"[525] Insinger had heard from his administrator, J. F. Roux, that "with 70,000 guilders he would come a very long way, but then one would also have to take so many negroes from *Zeezigt* in order to send 40 workable persons into the field or the factory

every day that less cotton could be produced."[526] Studies containing comparisons and estimates like these helped the Insingers to formulate their claims regarding a "fair" level of compensation for the Dutch slave owners.

Lobbying for compensation

Mijer's emancipation proposal was based largely upon the proposals made by the State Commission. Only the expropriation of plantations – fiercely opposed by Schimpf and the colonists in Surinam – had been made optional. One of the bill's key points was that the freed people would have to recoup the costs of their own emancipation through labour to cover the compensation paid to their former owners. The reactions from the interested parties in Amsterdam show that they particularly objected to this form of financing the process. They no longer bothered to petition the minister, but now submitted their protestations directly to parliament. Since the bill was now due to be debated there, that was only logical. On 14 November, 1857, a letter was received from Insinger & Co, and three days later a petition signed by almost forty other parties in the capital, led by the firm Poncelet & Son.

Insinger & Co, S. P. Labouchere, and G. Tomaschi wrote to the House of Representatives in their capacity as "authorised agents of the owners of the *Zeezigt* cotton plantation in Surinam", the largest such estate in the colony, "occupied by 458 negro slaves."[527] Once again, the Insingers claimed that they "could not discern" why the people enslaved there "might have only 2/5^{ths} of the value of those on a sugar plantation."[528] They would fetch "only two hundred guilders", compared with 500 guilders for those cultivating sugar. Because Mijer's proposal required that the freedmen recoup the costs of their own emancipation, low costing was disadvantageous in yet another way. The authors reasoned that "if wages are high, the cotton negro will very soon be out of debt and free of all work obligations; and if wages are low, he will immediately move to other states where better and higher wages can be paid."[529] From a management point of view, too, the Insingers felt that their surprise at the valuation was understandable.[530] "[M]ost of the negroes had to work for hire, temporarily and by turns, on the [...] plantation Wederzorg, in order to be able to provide for the upkeep of the labour force" and for their fund to again render an income for its investors.[531] In other words, the 458 people enslaved at *Zeezigt* were

demonstrably capable of working on a sugar plantation and so should be valued accordingly for the purposes of the compensation scheme.

The petition from Poncelet & Son and its cosignatories followed three days later. Without Insinger amongst them, the only name on this petition with known links to DNB is that of Bunge & Co, a medium-sized discounter at the bank. By now the petitioners were willing "to acknowledge gladly that abolition has become a necessity due to the spirit and needs of the age" – a further shift since 1848, when a previous petition had rejected the whole idea out of hand, and 1852, when the signatories had said they "certainly do not wish the perpetuation of slavery."[532] The latter was a typically cumbersome nineteenth-century way of saying that abolition was unnecessary any time soon. By contrast, its necessity was now accepted, but according to the latest petition there were still numerous shortcomings in Mijer's bill. Not least the matter of compensation.

The signatories fully agreed with what the minister's explanatory memorandum stated about Article 2 of the proposed bill, which had been inspired by the words of British MP George Canning. "Expropriation by the state without compensation would be tantamount to robbery," they wrote. "What is meant by compensation requires no explanation."[533] Nevertheless, they felt that the government had misunderstood the concept. "It is a fixed rule of all expropriations that the amount of the compensation should be higher than the ordinary market price of the property to be expropriated. It is in the nature of the matter that, in the event of a forced relinquishment, the price advantage should not fall to the buyer."[534] The petitioners had searched the report in vain for a reason why the government was valuing their possessions on the basis of their average prices during the decade 1843-1853. In other words, the government should set the amount payable per emancipated person higher than his or her market value so as not to be seen to be striking a bargain for itself.

The fact that the Insingers were now lobbying separately was not the result of any substantive disagreement between the various interest groups. Quite the contrary, in fact: like the Insingers, the other petitioners did not object so much to the plantations being divided into different categories as to the fact that "the valuation of the slaves [was] too low, relative to each other in the categories."[535] The Insingers must therefore have been delighted with the support reiterated in this submission for their complaint that the bill did not take "into account the workability of the cotton negroes, their suitability in the event of diminishing returns from cotton

cultivation to be used elsewhere for other and better branches of production."[536] Finally, the petitioners highlighted a category of interested parties the government had so far completely ignored: the owners of securitised plantation loans.

> It is known that considerable sums of money were given in the last century with West Indian property as collateral. Many of those lenders or lending associations have consequently either become enforced owners, by execution of their mortgage rights, or have remained mortgage creditors. Upon what did these loans rely? Upon what else but that upon which every private monetary loan relies, namely the prevailing civil law; in this case the civil law of the colony, which declared slave property and slaves to be legal collateral and, moreover, established that all mortgage rights were indivisible and so attached inseparately to the entire collateral.[537]

In short, the petitioners wanted higher compensation for their legitimate property, be that actual enslaved people or the loans for which they formed the collateral. To achieve a "just" expropriation, therefore, the government needed to take into account not so much the diversity of the plantations as that of this interest group. It consisted in the first instance of the land and slave owners who should be dispossessed of the former in such a way that they were left with enough capital to return the land – of which they could remain owners – to profit by investing in free labour and the necessary machinery. Secondly, though, the government was also to pay greater consideration to the mountain of debt which had accumulated since the mortgaging of the plantations at the end of the eighteenth century.

Until recently, historians have mainly focused on the parliamentary criticism of Mijers' plan from a humanitarian perspective. The House of Representatives took exception to the recognition of the right to compensation, to the fact that the freed slaves had to pay this off themselves, and to the coercive nature of the post-emancipation state supervision of the freedmen, which relegated the term "liberation" to a "sweet-sounding phrase."[538] However, historians Karin Lurvink and Pepijn Brandon have pointed out how influential Insinger's letters actually were. Add to this our knowledge of the petition from Poncelet and his cosignatories

and we can show that MPs in fact considered the two submissions in tandem when examining the issue of differential compensation by plantation type in late 1857. In its preliminary response, the House made the following comment.

> There thus appeared to be much in favour of the idea of appraising the field negroes all at the same value, or at least not allowing such a large difference between the value of one and the other. We are minded even more towards such opinions when, for example, we read in one of the addresses submitted to the House that, under certain circumstances, the slaves of the large cotton plantation *Zeezigt* have been hired out to work on a sugar plantation.[539]

From this we see just how much the Insinger letter was taken by parliamentarians as a sign of broader discontent concerning the valuation system. However, the fall of the Van der Brugghen government in March 1858 implied that Mijer was never able to work their wishes, or those of Insinger, Poncelet and the other lobbyists, into a new bill.[540]

The new Minister of the Colonies was Jan Jacob Rochussen, whose appointment also marked the start of a new phase for the Amsterdam lobby. Rochussen had a long record of service, not only in national politics but also in the capital's mercantile community, and in the colonial administration of the Dutch East Indies. He had begun his career as secretary of the Amsterdam Chamber of Commerce, but within two years gave up that position for the directorship of the Amsterdam entrepôt dock. Rochussen's strong track record and extensive network made him the right man to bring order to the public treasury in 1840, as Minister of Finance. Five years later he was made governor-general of the Dutch East Indies. In that capacity, he received Van Hoëvell's petition for the abolition of slavery in the colony in 1847, only to ignore it. Back in the Netherlands, Rochussen took a seat in parliament and there positioned himself as an anti-abolitionist with regard to slavery in the East Indies – a stance he shared with another former governor-general and Minister of the Colonies turned MP, Jean Chrétien Baud. Nevertheless, the Emancipation Act for the Asian colonies came into force on 1 January, 1860.[541] Rochussen's appointment as minister did much to restore the frayed relations between central government and the capital's trading houses of the Mijer years, whilst also maintaining the

strong departmental links with the Dutch East Indies – even though his time there, unlike the postings of Baud, Pahud and Mijer, had come after his periods in Amsterdam and The Hague.

As minister, Rochussen used his global network to pilot the emancipation legislation for the Caribbean through the States General. Freshly appointed to his new department, he reported by letter to governor Schimpf: "Who would have thought that I would again come into official contact with [you]. I always remember those [contacts] I had with you on Java; especially in the middle and later months of 1848, when I had almost daily personal conversations with you in the absence of the commander of the army and we had to prepare ourselves for all eventualities."[542] Rochussen is here referring to the harsh military policy he had pursued in the East Indies, dispatching a considerable number of punitive expeditions to bring the outer provinces under Dutch control. The new minister left no doubt as to the biggest task he wanted to complete with Schimpf. He hoped "to bring about the great measure of emancipation – however one may think of it in the abstract – in the next [parliamentary] session."[543] Until abolition had been achieved, moreover, he considered "all lasting improvement for that colony impossible."[544] In the meantime, he promised Schimpf, he would not send any more Chinese migrants to Surinam: "I have no expectations of the Chinese emigration."[545] It is evident that Rochussen intended to continue the close co-operation he and Schimpf had previously enjoyed, even though they were now separated by the Atlantic Ocean. In his first parliamentary bill, tabled on 25 October, 1858, the minister complied with the wishes of the House of Representatives.[546] Gone was the repayment requirement for the emancipated people, along with a previous proposal to organise them into guilds and communities. Added were an immigration scheme and a state bank to arrange it financially, which was given access to two-thirds of the compensation money. In its preliminary response to the bill, parliament expressed its great satisfaction with the intended changes.

In Amsterdam, by contrast, the measures triggered yet another round of missives to the House. This time Poncelet and his cosignatories were ahead of the Insingers with their rebuttal, which addressed both the bill itself and the preliminary response to it. The content of this petition is important because it was the first prelude to DNB's eventual designation as the institution to pay out the compensation. The document first refuted MPs doubts about even recognising the right to compensation and again

explained that the estimated amounts were "unfair." The government, it stated, should take as its baseline fifteen times the value of the average of yield lands on which the enslaved worked or the securities to which they were bound. This latter topic had already been discussed at length in the submission of 17 November, 1857, but its "argument has not been the subject of consideration during the deliberations" in the departmental committee meetings of the House.[547] For this reason, a copy of that address was enclosed.

One new aspect to come under fire was the proposed method of payment. Rochussen wanted to found a special colonial bank to distribute the "redress", "and that not even in hard cash, but one-third paid in bills of exchange to be drawn from the colony, payable one month after sight at the Department of Colonies, so always with loss of interest or discount, and the remainder in shares at par."[548] Moreover, those compensated would have to return part of their compensation to the bank because it was from there that the financing for migrant workers was to be collected. The former slave owners would thus become forced shareholders in the colonial bank. The Amsterdam petitioners had little faith in this dedicated new institution. "In and of itself," they wrote, "the word bank revives unhappy memories in the colony of Surinam and is therefore inappropriate to arouse great expectations for the future."[549] And what, they mused, was its true purpose?

> The main reason for the establishment of this bank must be sought in the aim of uplifting owners who have been scantily indemnified, or of preserving a colonial industry and agriculture which have been destroyed by emancipation; it is in the interest of no-one other than the state itself, which in this manner will take back again with one hand what it has distributed parsimoniously with the other, and for itself thus recover from the dispossessed the price of their dispossession, therewith to speculate for its own benefit but at their peril and risk.[550]

In other words, the amount of compensation Rochussen had calculated was too small and the rights holders would not even receive it, instead being required to hand it over to a colonial bank speculating in the interests of the state but without itself as an institution accepting the associated

risks. That was because the state was not guaranteeing any interest payments to the new bank.[551]

Insinger & Co and Willem Borski, son of Johanna, together with S.P. Labouchere and G. Tomasachi, Kerkhoven & Coutinho, and Van Halmael & Co, submitted a petition of their own to the House of Representatives on 2 December, 1858. Once again, they presented themselves as parties interested only in receiving fair compensation for the enslaved people on their cotton plantations – meaning that it should be based upon the actual value of the property in question. To underline the strength of their lobby in matters of abolition legislation, they referred to the document the House had received just a few days earlier from Poncelet and his cosignatories; this not just "so as not to descend into repetition", but to emphasise that this group also subscribed to its criticism of the principle behind the proposed compensation scheme as well as the practical and payment arrangements.[552] And in particular its denunciation of the colonial bank, which "serves no other purpose than to deprive the owners of two-thirds of the price of expropriation, or in other words to retain two-thirds for the benefit of the expropriators; [so] that there can be no doubt that this bank will not act in favour of the forced shareholders, but instead will sacrifice their interest to hazardous and hopeless attempts to retain for some further time a shadow or semblance of production in a colony at a stroke plundered through emancipation of its labourers and industry."[553]

Through these objections in their two submissions, the Amsterdam petitioners sowed the seeds for DNB's later designation as the institution responsible for paying their compensation. This demonstrates first and foremost that it was seen as a reliable organisation, and that alternative options considered by the government were rejected by the prospective beneficiaries. Also, there were fierce protests from Surinam against the deductions to be made by the colonial bank under Rochussen's plan. In fact, governor Schimpf resigned in protest at this measure. Even before that, though, he had clashed with Rochussen over the maltreatment and punishment of Chinese immigrants at *Drie Gebroeders* and of enslaved people on a number of plantations.[554]

As a senator in The Hague, Albrecht Frederik Insinger had the opportunity to challenge Rochussen publicly in the Chamber. Two of his speeches in this context merit our attention. Firstly, one from December 1858 in which he asked the minister to "lend his consideration" to "the objections recently submitted by numerous interested parties."[555] This makes it

immediately clear that Insinger used his parliamentary platform to draw *all* recent missives from Amsterdam to Rochussen's attention. In anticipation of the minister's revised bill, Insinger begged his accommodation, because

> If I were to anticipate anything, it would be that expropriation of legitimate property should not be done lightly and as if it were purely a token of goodwill. It should also be taken into consideration that the proposed distribution, in part in shares whose monetary value is so difficult to calculate, presents difficulties; and further that in the apportioning of the monies the example of England and France may be called fairer and more reasonable than the principle adopted here by [your] predecessor, namely differentiating the value of the negroes according to the crop of the plantations on which they work.[556]

It seems that Insinger then dared to recapitulate the Amsterdam lobby's wish list in a meeting room at the Binnenhof, the parliamentary complex in The Hague. To compensate the owners fairly, he said, the Netherlands should follow the example of Britain and France: they had paid hard cash and the indemnity per head did not take into account the type of plantation the former slave had worked on.

Insinger received support for his assertions in the Senate from some unexpected quarters. Edmond Willem van Dam van Isselt – a member of the House of Representatives who had presented abolitionist addresses to King William II in 1842 – now tried to strike a business deal with him. "Upon reviewing the lists of interested W.I. [West Indies] parties," the thought had occurred to Van Dam that it might be to their considerable mutual benefit if Insinger were to decide to use the varnish produced by the MP's factory at his properties in Surinam.[557] And anyone who persuaded Insinger could apparently count on more orders from the colony: "Once people in the W. I. have been convinced of the excellent qualities of the varnish, I would become the principal supplier to all the owners of permanent premises."[558] Naturally, such a bold suggestion had to come with an appropriate compliment for Insinger. Van Dam therefore decided to praise his behaviour towards Rochussen. "Our friend Rochussen is being bitterly tested," he wrote, adding that he was "not enamoured" of the minister's plans with regard to the East Indies, either.[559] "If he wishes to be wiser

than all the 'interested experts', then he is playing a rough game."[560] Van Dam, however, lacked the knowledge needed to counter Rochussen with any authority in the parliamentary arena – as Insinger had done – even though their "friendly relationship" would have entitled him to do so. So, "I must confine myself to the wish that he will listen to good advice and not allow himself to be diverted from the right path by false self-interest, or by the insinuations of the so-called 'friends of Java and the Javanese', who may encourage him in his bad ways and yet would cheer at his fall."[561] In short, Van Dam sought to enlist Insinger's help for both his business interests and his riposte to Rochussen during the forthcoming debate on the minister's plans for the East Indies.

Insinger acted on Van Dam van Isselt's request to counsel Rochussen wisely in the Senate, as is evident from the official report of the debate of 6 May, 1859 on the regulation of the abolition of slavery in the Dutch East Indies. We have studied Schimpf's copy in the archives; by then he had already resigned as governor of Surinam, but continued to follow the issue closely. The underlinings he made in pencil indicate that he had spotted the connection between Rochussen and Insinger; even though the senators were supposed to be discussing slavery in the East Indies, Insinger raised the poor state of Surinam, where the insignificant influx of Chinese labourers did not bode well for the impending abolition in that part of the empire. Now that a new governor had taken office in Paramaribo, Insinger wanted the minister to promise "that during the extended period of transition in that colony, the welfare of the black population will be looked after vigorously; but at the same time that the security and prosperity of our compatriots living in those regions, and of the interested parties in the motherland, not be neglected."[562]

Rochussen provided Insinger with a more expansive answer than we might expect for a subject which "has no direct connection with this bill."[563] The minister was determined to bring about abolition and to make sure that the capital assigned for this purpose was spent in the best possible way. "Above all else," he declared, "I must not lose sight of justice, I must also keep in mind fairness. The government has no direct interest in how the capital is spent."[564] Then the minister appears to invite Insinger to join him in thinking about what course of action could count on a majority in parliament. "If the proposed method is not good, perhaps it can be improved. I seek truth and conviction, and make this solemn declaration: that I will not cling to any proposal merely because it was originally put

forward in some way or another by me."[565] De facto, Rochussen was here providing his answer to the comments made in the petitions from Poncelet and Insinger & Co about their right to compensation, its amount, and the method of payment.

Nevertheless, the Insingers must have had mixed feelings about this episode. Rochussen was willing to listen to the Amsterdam trade lobby, but it was becoming increasingly difficult to advocate its interests in line with conservative principles. A.F. Insinger's contribution during the debate on abolition in the East Indies turned out to be the prelude to his senatorial swansong; the provincial assembly decided not to re-elect him in 1859. According to the liberal newspaper *Het Algemeen Handelsblad*, this was due to the fact that "Mr Insinger always distinguished himself in the Chamber as a proponent of the political and commercial status quo."[566] With his departure, Insinger & Co – and all those with a stake in the Surinamese plantation economy – lost an important spokesman in The Hague. He had been right, though, in foreseeing that it would take some time for a new bill on slavery in the West Indies to come before the House of Representatives.

Rochussen took his time and only submitted his second bill on 30 April, 1860. In this, the provisions concerning a colonial bank had disappeared altogether. In December of that year, the directors of the *Zeezigt* plantation mortgage fund recorded with satisfaction how, "by the force of language and emphasis upon reasons," they had agitated against the "insufficient sums usually advanced as compensation for the masters of the cotton slaves" in their petitions submitted between November 1855 and December 1858.[567] "That these remonstrances did not remain without some effect became evident when, in his second bill, minister Rochussen raised the sum to *f* 300 per head; which amount was favourable by comparison at least with the very first proposal from minister Pahud of *f* 200 per cotton negro, considering the type of plantation."[568] On the other hand, the preliminary response from the House of Representatives stated that it considered Rochussen's new plan a "step backwards". As far as MPs were concerned, he had been far too accommodating with regard to the Amsterdam petitioners and should therefore go back to the drawing board.[569] Now that A.F. Insinger no longer had a seat in the Senate from which to remind him of their arguments, he and his brother could do little more than "note with regret that minister Rochussen, in his third bill currently under consideration, has reduced the compensation to a mere *f* 260 for the cotton negroes."[570] Fortunately for Insinger & Co, however,

the House also sent that third draft back to Rochussen as unacceptable. And he never ventured a fourth version, since he tendered his resignation after parliament had rejected his budget on 14 December, 1860. His departure prompted the Insingers to conclude that "a sixth governmental bill will not be forthcoming for some time [...] whilst the question of an indemnity for negroes to be declared free appears to have become more uncertain than ever."[571]

The Amsterdam petitions did not go unnoticed in Britain, and as a result not at the Dutch court either. Compared to his father and grandfather, king William III has only played a minor role in our study. According to the latest research, his direct involvement with the issue of abolition extended little further than granting Royal Assent to the eventual act of parliament and then being presented as a paternal sovereign to the freed slaves after 1863.[572] Some years before acquiring this image as a "great emancipator", however, William received an impressively profuse missive from the British & Foreign Anti-Slavery Society in London. The British committee felt obliged to protest about the British subjects who had approached the Dutch parliament with a petition setting forth complaints about the proposed compensation payments and the method of their distribution, the establishment of government plantations, the maintenance of labour productivity by tying emancipated people to the plantation lands, and ensuring a sufficient supply of immigrants.

> Were these persons subjects of the King of the Netherlands, interference on the part of the Committee might be unbecoming and intrusive. The memorialists, however, are not only British subjects, but they address the Netherlands Government in that capacity. The committee, therefore, respectfully submit that this fact renders it incumbent upon them, as the representatives of a Society whose object is to accomplish the universal extinction of slavery, to protest in the strongest terms, in their own name, as well as in that of their constituents, against every attempt on the part of their own fellow countrymen, to perpetuate the system in a foreign colony.[573]

This letter was probably dispatched in response to a petition submitted to the House of Representatives in The Hague by six Britons with possessions in Surinam's north-western district of Nickerie, the substance of which falls outside the scope of our research.[574] However, the letter does bear some relevance to the petitions from Amsterdam discussed above. First, it is striking that the four points mentioned from the British address precisely echo some of those raised in the submission from Poncelet. Moreover, the signatories of the latter included Thomas Green.[575] Meanwhile, in November 1857 the Insingers had explained the House of Representatives they were managing *Zeezigt* on behalf of its British proprietors, the heirs of Major R. Cooke and his wife. In short, there was also British involvement in the Amsterdam lobby with links to DNB-affiliated executives and firms. Finally, it is worth pointing out a substantive point in the Dutch abolition bills which drew particular criticism from the British writers: it was, they asserted, a thorn in their side that the petitioners expected such positive results from the post-abolition apprenticeship scheme. "The picture they have drawn of the advantages the Negro would enjoy under the system of Apprenticeship advocated by them [is] purely imaginary. A similar one was painted by the opponents of Emancipation in this Country, but their anticipations of the benefits the system would confer proved utterly delusive."[576]

With this British letter perhaps in mind, the new Minister of the Colonies, Jan Pieter Cornets de Groot, decided to call in the help of experts. One of them was Adriaan David van der Gon Netscher, formerly a planter in British Guiana and thus a person capable of assessing from first-hand experience the truthfulness of references to that colony. For Surinam and Curaçao respectively, "old hands" Charles Pierre Schimpf and Isaäc Johannes Rammelman Elsevier were drafted in.[577] They would eventually present the results of their deliberations to the next minister, James Loudon, who – like Cornets de Groot – was an advocate of a liberal colonial policy. In April 1861, Loudon was able to inform parliament about the core provisions in the latest bill for Surinam. These were the immediate abolition of slavery, the indemnification of the owners, and bringing immigration by contract labourers under state direction and supervision. Van der Gon Netscher had been arguing for this latter measure for years, even publishing a pamphlet on the subject. In British Guiana he had witnessed how labour productivity declined drastically when immigration had to be organised as a private initiative.[578]

DNB and the payment of compensation

De Nederlandsche Bank became involved with the abolition of slavery and its immediate aftermath both as part of its statutory remit and through its board members. In the parliamentary bill, DNB was mentioned by name in Article 15 of the second chapter, which dealt with compensation to owners. In line with the wishes of the interested parties, these payments were to take place in "bills of exchange, guilder for guilder, to be issued by the governer against the Minister of the Colonies and payable one month after inspection at De Nederlandsche Bank in Amsterdam, or, if so desired and insofar as the colonial treasury is able so to do in the opinion of the governer, in legal tender at Paramaribo."[579]

The House of Representatives' preliminary response to the proposal was positive, but Loudon had to leave its final defence in both chambers of the States General to his successor, Gerhard Hendrik Uhlenbeck. Appointed Minister of the Colonies in February 1862, he adopted the bill in its entirety.[580] In the preliminary response, MPs had devoted only a few sentences to the method of indemnification. Unlike the prospective beneficiaries, they remained reluctant "to spend more than ten million guilders from the national treasury for the ransom of the Surinam slaves."[581] The main reason for this was a fear that, "once they have received the compensation or indemnification", the owners of coffee and cotton plantations in particular might "wind up their businesses, so that lands hitherto cultivated will soon turn into wastelands."[582] The House wondered whether there was any way to hinder this alarming prospect. A few members recalled Rochussen's plans to set up a colonial bank in Surinam, with part of the compensation to be dispensed in the form of shares in that institution, but the majority remembered "that the earlier proposal to establish such a bank was condemned by the House and that it seemed unwise to return to it."[583] Without specifically mentioning DNB as the paying agent, then, the preliminary response did comment on the government's choice to abandon the idea of a new colonial bank and instead channel the payments through DNB. Finally, the document also contains a remark concerning claims for compensation from third parties. In this regard, it states, the government had undoubtedly considered the mortgage holders, but "nothing definite is determined concerning their rights."[584] Following the series of petitions they had received from Amsterdam, the MPs were convinced that some

arrangement in that respect was desirable "partly because the number of plantations encumbered with mortgages in Surinam is so large, and partly because the claims of mortgage holders will become extremely complicated after the release of the slaves."[585]

Prior to the parliamentary debate on what was now Uhlenbeck's bill, the Amsterdam lobby made itself heard one more time. On 26 June, 1862, the House of Representatives received a petition from several "owners of, representatives of the owners of, mortgagees of, and directors of mortgage funds of plantations in the colony of Surinam."[586] DNB director Insinger was one of the signatories, who

> have observed with regret that in the preliminary response by the rapporteurs on the bill concerning the abolition of slavery in the W. I. [West Indies] colonies, notwithstanding repeated and emphatic representations in various addresses prepared by the undersigned for the House of Representatives of the States General, many members of that body of the state not only remain averse to the idea that the owners of slaves to be expropriated by means of emancipation should be entitled to full compensation, but even feel that the amount to be allowed by law as compensation will still be too high.[587]

Since the debate on the bill was imminent, the signatories kept their arguments short. In any case, this was not the first time they had made such a plea for full compensation. "After all they have put forward in this respect in earlier addresses," they wrote, "the undersigned have no need to prove again that the sum being offered as what in earlier drafts was called compensation (vergoeding) and now, according to the preliminary response, comes under the name amends (tegemoetkoming) is far too low."[588] In addition, the petitioners once again cited "the situation in the colony of Demerara" to illustrate "what one may conceive to be the results of immigration."[589] In that British possession the number of immigrants exceeded the demand for labour, showing that "without sufficient capital" even "that device to alleviate or prevent the ramifications of emancipation [is] entirely in vain."[590] By contrast, there is no mention of the fact that DNB had now been designated as the paying agent of the indemnification. In that respect, after all, the minister had complied with the petitioners' wish to be paid with paper that was as stable as possible in value rather

than potentially volatile shares in a new colonial bank. What they were still keen to press home, though, was their claim that *f*300 per "slave head can in no way be called compensation" because the value of their possessions had been reduced to such an extent "that they are unable to provide themselves by other means with the resources" needed to continue their business. As for the DNB's involvement in this particular petition, it should be noted that it was signed both by Insinger & Co as a firm and by Jacobus Hermanus Insinger personally. This suggests that the bank director wanted to attach his own name in order to give the document added weight in The Hague.

When the bill reached the floor of the House, the first speaker in the plenary debate, the Frisian MP Jacob Dirks, immediately criticised its new scheme for disbursing compensation. While Rochussen's original plan had caused a great deal of controversy in both Amsterdam and Surinam because part of the payment of emancipation monies was done in the form of bank shares in the colony, in his view the latest proposal did not represent an adequate alternative.

> This point is now being skirted rather lightly. I do know that there was this great objection to paying with *paper* and not with *money worthy of the name*. But that objection could have been overcome through guarantees and redemptions. During our examination of the previous bill, I submitted a plan which showed that this was possible without great sacrifice. In this Preliminary Response, however, the matter has been dealt with only very briefly. And the means of achieving it successfully has been overlooked. The wind was not yet fair for that plan.[591]

In his explanatory memorandum, the minister had stated that the intention of the previous plan for a colonial bank was for the compensation money to remain in Surinam as capital. Now that DNB was being brought in to dispense it, Dirks wanted to know from Uhlenbeck "whether this payment entirely in specie would not give rise to [...] abandonment of the colony, lock, stock, and barrel."[592]

Uhlenbeck only partially answered Dirks' question about the still indeterminate arrangements for the payout. Rather than commenting on the decision to compensate the owners in cash, he confined himself to the

fear this would leave plantation grounds abandoned and dilapidated. "That the absence of the owners is not in the interest of the colonies – indeed, that it is largely hostile to that interest – is incontrovertible, because it is known all too well that a great part of the benefits obtained by the labour of the slave forces does not now serve the development and improvement of the colonies themselves, but is draining away to elsewhere."[593] Emancipation would only perpetuate the absence of those with interests in the colonies, as would the transfer of colonial securities to new holders. Nevertheless, Uhlenbeck expected that the careful distribution of compensation to entitled parties would "of itself" lead to new economic life in the colonies.

None of the other questions MPs had about executing the indemnity clause concerned DNB as the institute responsible for making the payments. However, some MPs were concerned about the formalities the beneficiaries would have to go through in order to establish how much they were entitled to, before they could collect their bills from DNB or receive the specie sent to Surinam. In particular, they were anxious to ensure the numbers of enslaved people declared by owners and or mortgagees as eligible for indemnification were accurate and up to date. So, for instance, after the adoption of two amendments it was determined that owners would not receive compensation for enslaved persons who had absconded or gone missing for more than one month prior to the date on which owners had to submit their documentation. The same applied to children born of enslaved women after the promulgation of the law in Surinam. Claimants were given thirty days after promulgation to lodge the necessary papers with the Ministry of the Colonies, which then verified the information provided with its officials in the colony.[594] In this way, the government ensured that DNB could undertake the disbursement on the basis of accurate documentation.

Another major change to the bill during its passage through parliament was the abandonment of state supervised immigration, a move which would also affect DNB in the near future. Speaking in the debate on 8 July, 1862, MP Isaäc Dignus Fransen van de Putte – a good friend of later DNB official Nicolaas Gerard Pierson (d. 1868-1885; p. 1885-1891) – looked to Java for an insight into the future of Surinam: before the emancipated slaves of that colony were ready for life as free men and women, just like the Javanese before them they would first have to be "apprenticed" under state supervision so that they learnt how to work.[595]

In his response, Uhlenbeck rejected the criticism of state-supervised immigration out of hand; in fact, he believed it essential to make Surinam, in relative terms, "a second Java."[596] But to no avail: MPs Pieter van Bosse and Pieter Jacob Elout van Soeterwoude successfully tabled an amendment to make private enterprise responsible for immigration to Surinam, rather than the state.

The final passage of the bill took quite some time, since each section could first be put to a separate vote if the House so wished. However, the provision designating De Nederlandsche Bank as the institution responsible for paying compensation was adopted without further debate or division. After this section-by-section consideration, Uhlenbeck's bill for Surinam had been substantially amended by MPs and was passed in its final form with 47 votes in favour and 11 against. The equivalent bill for Curaçao and its dependencies was adopted by 45 votes to 7.[597]

In his memoirs, Loudon complained that "his" original bill had been mutilated by the House of Representatives. Uhlenbeck "was no debater" and proved unable to put up an adequate defence against the amendment. "The 'moutons de Panurge' [mindless sheep] formed the majority, the amendment was passed and the law was spoilt!"[598] When the British envoy Sir Andrew Buchanan visited him to ask what exactly the amendment entailed, Loudon was at least able to explain to him his own preference for state-supervised immigration: "After serious study of the subject and after referring to the experience gained in Demerara," the former minister "had arrived at the conviction that – in order to avoid difficulties, misdeeds and maltreatment – immigration should be a matter for government [...] The abominable trade in Chinese coolies was certainly not well-known to the amendment men!"[599] From Uhlenbeck's and Loudon's defences, it is evident once again that the methods of production and the organisation of labour on Java, along with Britain's abolition of slavery, had served as examples for the Dutch policy on this subject.

Behind the scenes, the Amsterdam interested parties did consider trying to block the bill, as amended by the House of Representatives, in the Senate or by appealing directly to the king. Brugmans thought it unwise to do so, however, because it was unlikely that the House would "reconsider its position and the minister, however wretchedly he may have behaved, will not be moved to stigmatise his own cowardly incompetence so openly."[600] Brugmans therefore considered it necessary to act "under the assumption that the amended proposition will now be enacted into

law – there is no time to lose."[601] In his view, the main question for the owners at this stage concerned "the extent to which immigration will be needed to supplement what is lacking in the labour of the freed men, but equally whether and by what means immigrants may be obtained."[602] The Senate approved the bill for Surinam by 26 votes to 6 and the one for Curaçao and dependencies by 18 to 13.[603]

Abolition and apprenticeship

The Emancipation Act (Emancipatiewet) came into force on 1 July, 1863. The second chapter of the bill adopted on 8 August 1862, dealt with compensation for slave owners. with compensation for slave owners. According to Article 14 of the act, this was to be paid in the form of bills of exchange issued by the governor against the account of the Minister of the Colonies (see Appendix 1). The holder of such a bill could apply to De Nederlandsche Bank, which would pay out the money one month after it had been presented. Slave owners in Surinam received *f* 300 per enslaved person, irrespective of their age or the type of plantation. This amount was adjusted to *f* 60 if the person concerned had acquired the right to manumission (release by the owner). On Curaçao, Bonaire, Aruba, St Eustatius, and Saba, owners received *f* 200 per person. On Sint Maarten the amount was *f* 100. This variance between the colonies was based upon the difference in the market value of the goods produced in each of them.

One year after abolition, a balance sheet of the payments made was drawn up. The total amount disbursed was *f* 9,864,360, of which the largest part (*f* 6,350,000) had been dispensed in the form of bills of exchange.[604] The rest was in cash, but as soon as that currency reached Surinam it was shipped out of the colony again. According to J.F. Zeegelaar, rather than the local merchants settling their overseas debts with bills of exchange, "the coinage itself was packed in barrels and sent to all parts of the world in tightly nailed crates."[605]

Table 7. *Numbers of emancipated people under under the Emancipation Act of 1863.*

	Compensated releases	Government ownership	Total
Surinam	32,972	649	33,621
Curaçao	6,684	67	6,751
Bonaire	151	607	758
Aruba	474	6	480
St Eustatius	1,087	-	1,087
Saba	700	-	700
Sint Maarten	1,878	-	1,878
Total	43,946	1.329	45,275

Source: Encyclopaedie van Nederlandsch West-Indië (1914), 642.

On 1 October, 1863, the system of "state supervision" was inaugurated for a period of ten years. Under the abolition statutes, it was decreed that those men and women between the ages of fifteen and sixty who worked in the fields and boiling houses of the Surinamese plantations would have to sign a contract as an apprentice with an estate of their choice. This scheme was an attempt by the colonial government to maintain agricultural production after abolition. Whilst not a continuation of slavery as such, it occupied a grey area between coercion (signing such a contract was mandatory) and the freedom to choose where to work.[606] The rules were considerably milder for artisans and people living in the city: they had only to conclude a contract for a period of at least three months and after fulfilling this obligation, which could last up to one year, they did not have to enter into a new contract. At the beginning of the apprenticeship, almost everyone who was required to do so did indeed sign a contract. Later, though, the number decreased. By the time the system came to an end, only 15,269 of the 28,744 people originally covered were still under contract. Out of these people, 12,239 worked on plantations.[607]

Amongst the owners, we can distinguish two groups: on the one hand the optimists who believed that plantation production could be maintained during apprenticeship and thanks to immigration plans, and on the other the pessimists who sold their estates as quickly as possible and left the

colony with the compensation they had received.[608] Due to the climate and the vulnerability of both the cultivated land and the machinery, the value of abandoned plantations fell rapidly. Many were sold shortly after abolition and this number continued to surge until 1866, when no fewer than 161 plantations and other landholdings changed hands in just one year.[609] Abolition was feared by the owners because they thought it would negatively affect the productivity of their estates – a fear which proved partly justified, although the end of slavery did not spell the end of plantation agriculture as such.

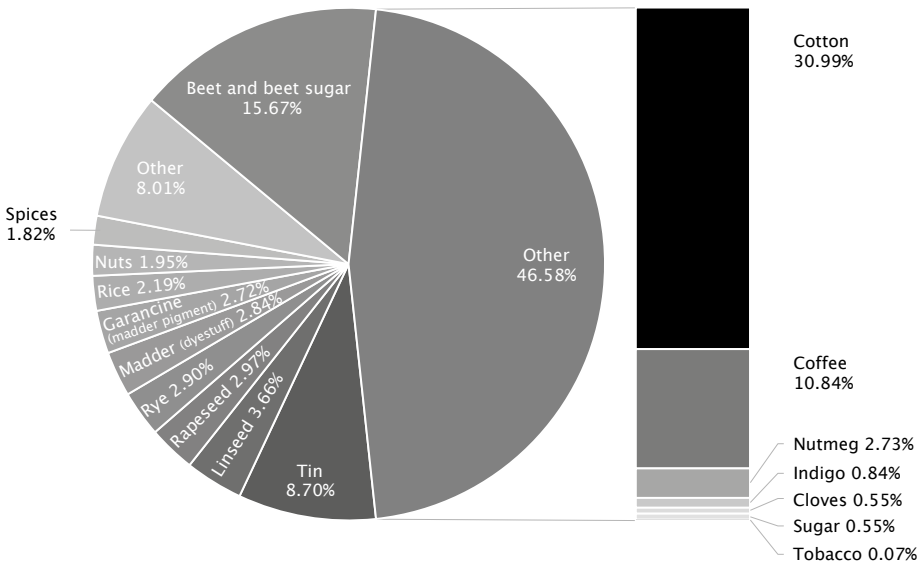
Table 8. *Exports of the plantation products sugar, coffee, cocoa and cotton to the Netherlands and North America, 1860-1874.*

	Sugar (pounds)	Coffee (pounds)	Cocoa (pounds)	Cotton (pounds)
1860	33,375,667	488,069	507,465	561,580
1861	31,723,369	139,735	504,208	478,875
1862	32,775,681	126,021	...	451,920
1863	27,365,364	281,540	615,922	374,155
1864	20,441,708	181,008	760,539	278,150
1865	15,612,805	237,484	661,849	348,353
1866	18,557,325	28,154	912,170	256,044
1867	21,164,179	18,523	1,010,659	482,585
1868	22,593,182	41,908	1,303,760	520,209
1869	19,600,220	15,441	860,422	354,870
1870	22,309,213	16,735	1,068,891	485,608
1871	23,709,797	8,190	1,093,394	222,851
1872	24,581,628	50,365	1,697,190	290,525
1873	25,193,461	71,763	1,675,457	143,835
1874	22,161,132	945	2,232,204	117,034

Source: Slootweg 1987, from colonial reports for 1860-1874. Some of this data is broken down by quarter and by destination in Sypesteyn, Afschaffing der slavernij (1866) 105-106.

What did the abolition of slavery mean for pledges of goods to DNB as collateral for loans? Using the same definition of slave goods as in Chapter 4, Figure 7 shows that these products (now not the result of enslaved labour) still accounted for almost half of all gages in the 1872/73 financial year. Cotton is particularly prominent here, and in fact now tops the list by total value: almost *f* 3 million. Several large pledges from Viervant & Co, Haupe & Wilde, and Steinbacher & Son, amongst others, contributed towards that large share. Coffee, also traditionally well represented, still accounted for more than *f* 1 million. What is most striking, however, is the large amount of Dutch beet sugar now being pledged: this crop did not appear once in our sample years between 1814 and 1863, but in 1872/73 was used to secure credit worth almost *f* 1.5 million. That is more than coffee. The abolition of slavery combined with new industrial innovations enabled the efficient extraction of sugar from Dutch beet, causing this product to appear so suddenly.

Figure 7. *Goods pledged against DNB loans, 1872/73 financial year.*



Only six borrowers pledged beet sugar to DNB in the 1872/73 financial year. Looking at them, it is obvious that a process of centralisation in production had been under way. Traditionally, sugar was processed at small artisanal refineries, but from the late 1860s and into the 1870s,

this activity increasingly became a large-scale industrial undertaking.[610] The Internationale Suikerraffinaderij (International Sugar Refinery) on the Lijnbaansgracht in Amsterdam, run by Spakler & Tetterode, and the Hollandsche Suikerraffinaderij NV (Holland Sugar Refinery Ltd), both listed as borrowers from DNB in Table 9, are two striking examples of this trend. For the bank itself, however, such shifts made little difference: it still granted credit against the colonial goods previously produced using enslaved labour. Merely the way in which the goods were produced had changed, but that distinction had never been relevant to DNB in providing its financial services.

Table 9. *Borrowers pledging beet sugar in the 1872/73 financial year.*

Borrower	Total amount loaned in guilders
De Internationale Suikerraffinaderij	811,000
De Hollandsche Suikerraffinaderij NV	535,000
Niehoff & Heybroek	78,000
Van Loon de Ram & Co	38,000
Viehoff & Hoybroek	21,000
Laane, Rogier, Daverveldt & Co	11,000
TOTAL	1,494,000

"The East is important, but so is the West – and it will be even more" – Nicolaas Pierson and the West Indies colonies after 1863

The big question facing the Dutch West Indies after the abolition of slavery was how to maintain labour productivity on the plantations. Before he became director at DNB, Nicolaas Gerard Pierson (d. 1868-1885; p. 1885-1891) had actively engaged with this issue as a banker. As an institution, DNB itself became involved through its financial services for concerned organisations and authorities. We first discuss this aspect, before then turning to Pierson's ideas and activities.

Nicolaas Gerard Pierson. Source: DNB Collection.

After 1858 in particular, the lion's share of DNB's current account balances consisted of state funds. In the wake of abolition, for example, the bank provided services to the Company for the Extraction of Salt on the Island of Sint Maarten (Maatschappij tot Zoutwinning op het Eiland Sint Maarten) through its relationship with the Ministry of the Colonies. When concluding a contract with this firm, DNB sought to ensure this encompassed "security for the repayment of all funds that the company might, in the execution of this contract, prove to owe the Department of the Colonies."[611] This service clearly arose out of DNB's core remit. Within the state funds on its books, the account held by the Netherlands Trading Society (Nederlandsche Handel-Maatschappij, NHM) was especially important. In the 1863/64 financial year, the bank administered nearly *f*70 million on behalf of this company.[612] Part of that balance was

used by the NHM to develop new activities in Surinam, at the instigation of its non-executive directors Albrecht Frederik Insinger and Charles le Chevalier. Although the Dutch government had paid them and other Amsterdam stakeholders compensation for the loss of their enslaved workforce in specie or bills of exchange, the Surinamese planters' need for capital remained; not only did they now have to pay their workers a wage, but in many cases they needed to recruit new ones from abroad. In 1866, the NHM sought to meet this demand for capital by establishing an agency in Surinam.[613] The draft legislation in the run-up to abolition had included provisions concerning the financing of labour migration to the colony. DNB's involvement in the Caribbean during the period of apprenticeship therefore extended beyond paying out compensation.

Pierson's personal involvement with the Surinamese economy offers us a good insight into the way in which people associated with DNB, then or later, attempted to steer West Indies colonial policy in The Hague. His views on slavery in the region were shaped in part by a trip to the United States in 1858-1859. Whilst Britain's example was the guiding light for abolitionists in the Netherlands, including Pierson's own parents, he felt that the situation on the other side of the ocean should give them cause for thought. Indeed, his letters to his parents contain tangible evidence that this future DNB director and president was by no means a principled opponent of slavery ten years before he joined the bank. Observing the practice in the vicinity of New Orleans, he concluded

> that the abolition of slavery in the United States would be the greatest misfortune, at least for the blacks themselves [...] In my opinion, slavery as it exists here is, given the intellectual and moral condition of the slave, the happiest condition for the negro. Whatever may be said about it, this is a fact that everyone who knows the South assures me is true, and I have observed with my own eyes and observe daily that the slaves are treated well.[614]

Pierson did moderate this positive opinion somewhat after witnessing a public sale of enslaved people in New Orleans. Even then, however, he persisted in his conviction that the enslaved, after their emancipation, could only develop into free workers under the guidance of the coloniser.[615] With regard to Pierson's involvement in immigration to Surinam, it is also

important to note his observations of the trade in Asian coolies in Cuba, for which the British were responsible. From Havana, Pierson wrote to his parents in March 1859 that

> it [was] quite a bit worse than slavery, that coolie trade; they are treated as badly as the slaves, and whipped just as hard when they do not work well [...] If England wants to remove from itself the blame of performing a comedy play and committing the greatest hypocrisy with its anti-slavery system, then let it abandon its coolie trade.[616]

After his return to the Netherlands, Pierson became embroiled in the public debate surrounding abolition. His stance on how slavery should be ended in the Dutch West Indies was significant in shaping national policy. In 1862, he reviewed a number of treatises on the issue for the periodical *De Gids*, coming down in favour of gradual abolition in exchange for fair compensation for the owners.[617] In this respect he was far from unique, since hardly anyone advocated abolition without financial redress.[618] Although no evidence has been found that his subsequent appointment at DNB was in any way a result of his public calls for compensation, that cannot be ruled out either.

On 19 January, 1865, Pierson and Charles Marc Fraissinet were named joint managing directors of De Surinaamsche Bank, a newly founded bank of circulation that was seen as an important means of tackling the economic malaise in the colony. Its success would depend upon the prosperity of Surinam, which was under threat from the prospect of a shrinking labour force, especially on the sugar plantations. The Ministry of the Colonies had been negotiating – in vain – with the United States about the transfer of former enslaved people to Surinam, "because it seems that men fit for work would be so useful there, and their transport would be less expensive than that of Chinese emigrants."[619] But De Surinaamsche Bank did consider the immigration of workers from the Far East (China, British India, Java) as a viable solution. For this reason, Pierson went on a study and business trip to Liverpool, Manchester, and London at the end of 1864. There he hoped to establish contacts with agencies able to help with the migration of Chinese workers from Hong Kong to Surinam. Back in Amsterdam, Pierson withdrew from the Beckman & Pierson trading company in order to devote himself fully to his new position.[620]

As a managing director of De Surinaamsche Bank, Pierson intervened actively in government policy towards the colony. Formally, his role was confined to overseeing the bank's operations in the Netherlands, but that did not stop him from keeping a close eye on the situation in Surinam itself. This is apparent from another review he wrote for *De Gids*, this time of an "open letter" from Van der Gon Netscher to Minister of the Colonies Fransen van de Putte. In that, the former planter from British Guiana had argued against the new government regulation planned for Surinam and Curaçao. As well as criticising the composition of the colonial administration, Van der Gon Netscher was particularly opposed to leaving the arrangement of immigration into Surinam to private initiatives. This latter point was relevant to Pierson as director of a bank with interests in the colony. "There were currently sugar plantations in Surinam," he wrote, "which, despite being organised according to the best and most modern methods, still led a languishing existence simply because of a lack of workers. Providing Surinam with labourers should therefore be the goal of everyone who wishes to contribute towards the prosperity of the colony."[621] Pierson contested Van der Gon Netscher's view that privately financed immigration into British Guiana had ended in a fiasco, sharing with his readers the lesson that he himself had learnt from the British and would soon apply to the Netherlands. The British government had indeed taken immigration out of the hands of private individuals in British Guiana, placing its own agents in India and China. The necessary capital came from loans raised in the mother country, and the planters were granted generous repayment terms. "In this way," Pierson asserted, "the matter was a most excellent success" and British Guiana was now flourishing as well as it had been before emancipation.[622]

At the initiative of Surinaamsche Bank, the private Surinam Immigration Company (Surinaamsche Immigratie Maatschappij) was founded in May 1865. Pierson's personal involvement in its establishment was significant. "It remains extremely busy, even though the matter of emigration is as good as in order", he wrote hurriedly to Samuel van Houten shortly before it was set up.[623] Plantation owners could submit requests for labourers to the company, which would then bring them in from China. Here too, we also see traces of involvement by DNB director Jacobus Hermanus Insinger. Pierson and Fraissinet, as managing directors of De Surinaamsche Bank, formed the board of the immigration company as well, but one of its six non-executive directors was Maurits Herman Insinger, a son of the DNB

director and a partner in the firm Insinger & Co. Moreover, DNB provided the business with financial services during its formative years.[624] In 1865 and 1866, the company lodged a total of 252 securities with DNB, each worth *f*1,000, as collateral against loans, and was charged commission for their custody (for example, 0.5 per cent per mille per half year). This service to the Surinaamsche Immigratie Maatschappij fell within DNB's statutory remit.

Pierson was satisfied with the company's initial trading results. "How well Netscher's prophecies are now coming true!", he wrote excitedly to Fransen van de Putte. "Private immigration was not possible. And our company has earnt 10 per cent net in its first year!"[625] On 1 January, 1866, the new government regulation came into force in Surinam, designed under Fransen van den Putte's auspices as Minister of the Colonies. By October of that year, Pierson was already very enthusiastic about the "excellent fruits" he believed it had started bearing:

> The spirit of enterprise is on the rise. Production in the first half of 1866 shows an increase of 33 per cent and we are counting on even more. This is pleasing, is it not? The East is important, but so is the West – and it will be even more.[626]

But following this promising start-up phase, both the rising trend in Surinamese labour productivity and the company's profitability soon stalled. Over just two years, its dividend fell to a mere 2.5 per cent. The financial resources it had been allocated under the abolition legislation proved insufficient. In line with the amendment pushed through by Elout and Van Bosse in 1862, the government had made *f*1 million available for a system of financial premiums to promote the supply of labour to Surinam. When immigration turned out to be slower than anticipated, Pierson decided to write to his political friends to request an extension of this scheme. The MP Menso Johannes Pijnappel was asked if "you yourself [will] table the amendment", because "it is better that the proposal to amend [Minister of the Colonies Nicolaas] Trakranen's bill not come from the side of the colonial opposition."[627] Maurits Herman Insinger was a member of parliament, too, but he was "too closely associated with Messrs Insinger and Co, who have important interests in Surinam, to be considered able to speak about it with complete impartiality."[628] On the same day Pierson wrote to Fransen van de Putte to say he wished to

take advantage "of your leave, so obligingly granted me, to be allowed to intercede in the Chamber in favour of Surinamese interests should the occasion so arise."[629] This strategy succeeded, because a few days later the House of Representatives adopted a proposal tabled by Pijnappel to extend the financial incentive scheme until 1 July, 1873, with 43 votes in favour to 17 against.[630]

Despite extending the government's subsidies, immigration remained a headache for Pierson. In January 1867, the *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant* published a story about "five Chinese accused of violently abducting coolies destined for the Dutch possessions in the West Indies."[631] This report prompted not only a concerned letter from Fransen van de Putte to Pierson, but also a parliamentary question to the minister: was it true that the convicted men had been hired by a person working for an agent in the service of the Surinam Immigration Company? Trakranen was unable to deny this, but felt that the agent in Hong Kong was not to blame for the "most improper pressure" exerted by his subcontractors.[632] In spite of such public scandals, Pierson continued to work assiduously – with the aid of his political connections in The Hague – to ensure the company's success. Separately from the affair with the subcontractors, Van de Putte contacted Pierson as he was eager to discuss "Surinamese interests."[633] The MP had "read the debates in the Colonial States with great interest – although I did not always agree – and wanted to talk with you about certain things."[634] In 1869, Pierson even penned a letter of introduction to Johan Rudolph Thorbecke on behalf of Fergus Castairs, a member of the Colonial States of Surinam. Although the former prime minister and constitutional reformer was now just a backbench MP, Pierson found this a difficult missive to write because he took the risk of being "indiscreet or arrogant" by introducing someone to an elder statesman he himself had only met once before.[635] Carstairs was a strong advocate of expanded immigration. Whether he ever actually met Thorbecke is not clear, but the colonial assembly did subsequently petition the Dutch parliament successfully to enter into a treaty with the United Kingdom to allow labourers from British India to migrate to the colony.[636]

The Surinam Immigration Company did not survive to see the end of the period of apprenticeship. In December 1870, the board put the business into liquidation. By that time, Pierson had been a director of DNB for two years. After taking up that position in 1868, the opportunity arose to exchange his directorship of De Surinaamsche Bank for a non-executive

directorship. That was brought about by the death of founding non-executive director Samuel Sarphati, with Pierson taking his place.[637]

Also at DNB, Pierson remained outspoken on abolition and the ensuing period of apprenticeship. In a personal letter to Van Houten in 1871, he summarised his views on the Emancipation Act and the practical repercussions of the apprenticeship system. This document shows his opinions regarding enslavement-based production were more or less unchanged since his visit to the southern United States in the late 1850s. Because Pierson wrote these words during his tenure at DNB, albeit in a personal capacity, they reveal clearly that a member of the bank's executive board was free to continue criticising the emancipation legislation even long after it had been passed by the States General.

> With regard to the negro question, I am still of the same opinion as before. I believe that the negro has a receptive nature, a docile nature, and that the principal means of his development must be sought in bringing him into contact with the white man. Every measure that has the effect of isolating him from the European population must be to the detriment of his civilisation. Now I very much believe that the abolition of apprenticeship will be such a measure [...] In my opinion, the Emancipation Act has always been a failure. It was based upon a false conception and was therefore a leap too far [...] I would have liked: an apprenticeship of 50 years and at the same time compulsory education; an obligation upon the planter to give his negroes some pieces of land *on* or *near* his plantation on long leases, which they would cultivate in their own time; and at the same time a supply of foreign workmen – because Surinam - even if all negroes work - still needs workmen. In this way one would: (1) have grouped the petite culture *around* the grande culture; (2) have given the contact between the negro and the white man a solid basis, which would remain also after the end of apprenticeship; [and] (3) have promoted the development of the negro. Can the wrong still be righted? Perhaps so. The duration of apprenticeship could yet be extended, *under certain conditions*.[638]

In short, Pierson explained to Van Houten that he did not consider the emancipated enslaved people of Surinam, in particular, capable of developing without the help of the white European population there. He therefore regarded the Dutch legislation a failure, since it relied upon this ability to develop being fulfilled within too short a period of apprenticeship. Under the guidance of the planters, the people who they had formerly enslaved could cultivate a piece of land for themselves alongside their labour on the commercial estates. Finally, Pierson repudiated public accusations – including those made by Van Bosse, who was now Minister of the Colonies – that the immigrants thus far brought to Surinam were treated badly. The immigration of extra workers was necessary for the productivity of the plantations, but "this supply need not be a slave trade" as long as those concerned were prepared to adopt the safeguards against that, such as those already tried and tested by the British.[639]

The story of Pierson's involvement in the supply of migrant labour to Surinam is an important part of this final chapter of our book on DNB's involvement in the history of slavery. It shows how a plantation economy based upon slavery had had to make the transition to wage labour and how this in turn had given rise to an acute problem of productivity for which the solution was found in shipping new workers from Asia to the Dutch Caribbean. In his youth, Pierson had reflected upon slavery during his trip to America and had shared his observations with his abolitionist parents. These show that he was not opposed to slavery in principle, nor did he join the abolitionist ranks in his reviews for *De Gids*. But he did disapprove of the coolie trade conducted by the British in Cuba once he had seen with his own eyes the treatment of the immigrants there. Nevertheless, as a director of both De Surinaamsche Bank and the Surinam Immigration Company he found that, in practice, he could not and would not ignore the British in securing immigration to Surinam. From Pierson's observation that the British had taught him certain guarantees could prevent the transportation of labour migrants from becoming a slave trade, the thought arises that - in a certain sense - the conversation between the Netherlands and Britain about the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade had been ongoing since 1814. This makes Pierson's personal views on slavery and his own involvement with labour migration from Asia to the Caribbean a fitting finale to our study of the transformation of the slavery-based production chain. Views on slavery were expressed by DNB officials either in a personal capacity or through the trading firms in which they were involved.

Although DNB as an institution did not shape any policy on this issue, it was involved in the financial services used by slavery-related companies and later also integral to the process whereby slavery was abolished in the Dutch colonial empire.

Conclusion and recommendations

For both De Nederlandsche Bank and slavery, the nineteenth century was a time of great change. DNB had a slow start, but between 1814 and 1863 it evolved to become the central bank of the Netherlands. The Dutch institution of slavery was reined in step by step from 1814 onwards until finally, in 1862, King William III signed the act abolishing it the following year. This two-way historical development, with slavery gradually disappearing from the stage just as DNB was slowly entering it, might give the impression that the two had little to do with one another. But even in its last decades, slavery remained a dynamic component of the Dutch economy. And since DNB served Dutch trade interests and the Ministry of the Colonies, the bank inevitably had ties to slavery.

This research project has revealed the various ways in which the histories of slavery and of the DNB are connected. The involvment of DNB in the Dutch slaving system can be considered to have mainly been indirect. DNB did not own any slave plantations itself, nor did it own any people. The transatlantic trade in people was banned in the year of its foundation, 1814, and so providing capital to Atlantic slave traders was never one of its activities. Furthermore, the board's consistent refusal to respond to invitations to open branches outside Amsterdam meant that it had no presence in the colonies. The charters of the banks set up there were often modelled on that of DNB, but they had no formal relationship with it. However, DNB was charged with handling payments on behalf of government departments including the Ministry of the Colonies. As one of its services in that respect, it became the institution designated to pay out the compensation to owners when slavery was abolished. The Dutch colonies in the Atlantic region, had either a significant enslaved population or were entirely geared to produce cash crops with enslaved labour. It was part of DNB's legal remit to grant credit against slave produced merchandise and handle the transactions of the government agency managing those colonies. Since DNB did this regardless of whether enslaved people were

involved, it thus acted in the service of entrepreneurs who were directly involved in the chain of production, distribution, and consumption reliant upon slavery.

Our research has further shown that, compared with their contemporaries, many prominent DNB officials played a particularly prominent role in slavery-based production chains in their private business dealings. In its early years, the bank's reputation rested upon that of its directors and non-executive directors, rather than those officials enhancing their own status through their position with DNB. In many cases their status was derived from experience in colonial trade and finance. Connections with slavery are therefore also evident in the starting capital invested in DNB at its inception. At the same time, though, that event reveals the limited extent of DNB's engagement with the issue; neither its charter nor its statutory remit gave rise to any official bank policy with regard to slavery.

As the nineteenth century progressed, Dutch colonial administrations were increasingly occupied with readying themselves for what was slowly but surely becoming inevitable: the complete abolition of slavery. Bankers and trading houses, too, were involved in in these preparations. The role (in a private capacity) of some prominent DNB officials, such as Jan Bondt, Johannes Luden, and Jacobus Hermanus Insinger, in influencing this process has helped make this book the first major study of the Dutch advocates of slavery and the slave owners in the nineteenth century. In the DNB archives, however, we could find no sign that the board ever urged these men to engage with this issue; those concerned about its impact upon their private interests and the economic development of the Netherlands intervened in the political process leading up to abolition on their own account. The debate on the desirability of slavery was raging in the public arena and there was much discussion about the best way to bring it to an end without incurring negative economic consequences. By petitioning the king, ministers, and parliament, a number of prominent DNB officials did try to influence policy in a personal capacity or on behalf of a business they were part of. One of the results of these lobbying efforts was the amount of compensation paid to owners in the wake of abolition. This was 50 per cent of the assessed value of their enslaved workers, rather more than the 40 per cent paid by the British. On the other side of the coin, Willem Cornelis Mees was a committed member of the anti-slavery movement who actively promoted the interests of the enslaved. But he gave up these activities before joining the DNB board.

DNB was the body designated to indemnify slave owners in the Netherlands. After abolition, they could also make use of the state supervision scheme under which those formerly enslaved were obliged to sign a contract to work on a plantation. During the transitional period from slavery to a colonial economy without slavery, some serving and future DNB officials again played an important role; for example, in the establishment of colonial banks and – in the case of Nicolaas Gerard Pierson – in organising the immigration of contracted workers. For him, these activities contributed towards the management experience he later brought to DNB. The histories of De Nederlandsche Bank and slavery, from the foundation of the bank to abolition and its immediate aftermath, are thus shared histories. DNB may not have had a policy on the issue, but from its initial capitalisation right through to the compensation scheme the institution was part of the Dutch history of transatlantic slavery.

This study provides an overview of the various ways in which slavery touched upon the activities of DNB. What remains for further research falls into two categories. On the one hand there are possibilities to delve deeper in the account books and to make the data more precise. In terms of the bank's initial capitalisation, for instance, we have confined ourselves to the sixteen main investors whose stake gave them a formal role in the governance of the new institution, plus Johanna Borski. More research could be done on the involvement with slavery of the other investors, and its exact share of their financial portfolios. It should also be possible to refine the data on the use of goods as collateral, and to draw a clearer distinction between Atlantic slavery and the cultivation system on Java. With regard to leading DNB officials, more information can probably be found concerning their shareholdings in plantations as well as the relative importance of such activities in their overall portfolios. We doubt, though, that going into such detail will produce any remarkable new insights.

The research we have conducted focuses upon colonial slavery under Dutch rule, along with other forms of forced labour. Further investigation could be directed at the specific interactions between DNB, the Netherlands Trading Society (Nederlandsche Handel-Maatschappij, NHM) in the Dutch East Indies, and the Ministry of the Colonies. After all, Mees stated that "as long as slavery exists on Java there is always a sound reason to remove the Java product from the preferential list." Moreover, the period covered by such research should be broader than in our study of slavery. Another potentially promising line of inquiry in this context is the influence of

returning colonial officials and entrepreneurs from both the East and the West Indies on politics in The Hague. The preparation of the abolition legislation was entrusted to ministers such as Jean Chrétien Baud, Charles Ferdinand Pahud, Julius Constantijn Rijk, Pieter Mijer, and Jan Jacob Rochussen, all of whom had gained administrative experience in those territories. This was decisive in the way they helped shape the political system of the Netherlands in the nineteenth century. Just as DNB's position as a central bank of circulation was becoming more firmly established, the influence of these returnees in national politics in general was increasing. The close friendship between DNB official Pierson and Isaäc Dignus Fransen van de Putte, who returned from the Dutch East Indies as a sugar magnate, lends itself well to such in-depth exploration of this dynamic.

Within the framework of this research, we have not looked into the history of the colonial plantations, of the people who lived on them or of their experiences after the abolition of slavery. Relevant new themes worthy of study in this respect are the influence of policies to improve the fate of the enslaved people prior to abolition and of the state supervision afterwards, the history of manumission, and the development of autonomous and free communities in the colonies. Improving our knowledge of these aspects of the history of slavery in the nineteenth century should contribute in a meaningful way towards a better understanding of the legacy this past has left, in a social and cultural sense. In addition, it represents an opportunity to focus upon people who have hitherto played only an indirect role in that history.

Finally, the United Nations asserts that the history of slavery continues to impact the present and is not a closed chapter. As part of the International Decade for People of African Descent, 2015-2024, it has therefore called for programmes focusing upon recognition, justice, and development. Through our research and this book, we hope to contribute towards unlocking one particular history long shrouded in silence and thereby achieving its public recognition. We hope that the story of De Nederlandsche Bank's involvement with slavery will now take its rightful place, in a natural and permanent manner, in the complete history of that institution and its illustrious founders and executives.

Afterword

Acknowledgements

Our research began while the archives were closed during the COVID-19 lockdown of 2021. At the time, all historical research projects had to compete for access to scarce seats in archive reading rooms and for priority in digitising material. We therefore gratefully acknowledge the patient support we received from the National Archives (Nationaal Archief) in The Hague, the Amsterdam City Archives (Stadsarchief Amsterdam), the Archives of the House of Orange-Nassau (Koninklijk Huisarchief), the Utrecht Archives (Utrechts Archief), and the Rotterdam City Archives (Stadsarchief Rotterdam). De Nederlandsche Bank helped us search the DNB collection at the National Archives as well as at the bank itself, and to select research material. During this process, DNB suffered a sad loss with the death of archivist Jonna Morillo, who had so ably assisted and motivated us at the beginning of our research project.

We are grateful, too, for all the goodwill shown by fellow researchers. Without hesitation, Randy Browne sent us archival documents about the plantation *Cornelia Ida* in Demerara. After a casual query about valuations of plantations in the nineteenth century, Eline Rademakers searched the inventories and found exactly what we were looking for that very same evening. Pernille Røge gave us helpful advice concerning plantation ownership islands colonised by Denmark. Studies of the history of plantation ownership have been made much easier in recent years by the hard work of enthusiastic researchers who have constructed extensive large databases. The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database and Legacies of British Slavery have become cornerstones for this kind of research. In the Netherlands, the work of Paul Koulen on Essequibo, Demerara, and Berbice proved indispensable. For Surinam, we were able to draw upon the collections built up by Philip Dikland and Okke ten Hove.

In our own research, important roles were played by Zipphora Dors, who in a short time specialised in going through plantation records; by Sakina Mouami, who ploughed her way through the political correspondence; by Leonoor Kemperman, for whom no ledger was too big; and by Camilla de Koning, who managed to dig up untraceable documents and threw herself into the letters and papers of the abolitionist movement. Their combined labour in sifting through digital and physical archives and creating extensive Excel files provided us with the facts, large and small, which have enabled us to write this new history of DNB. Many thanks to them for that. Throughout the research process we were grateful to our advisory board: Alicia Schrikker, who ably assisted us with her knowledge of slavery in Asia; Maartje Janse, who gave us important pointers on the abolitionist movement and the jumble of petitions and committees dealing with this subject in the mid-nineteenth century; Cátia Antunes, who challenged us to be ambitious in our methodology and substantive approach; and Gerhard de Kok and Pepijn Brandon, both of whom provided us with useful comments and helpful advice derived from their research project on Hope & Co and Mees & Sons. The knowledge shared by Joost Jonker and Gert Oostindie was indispensable. At the beginning of our task, they foresaw exactly where we should place our emphasis and what pitfalls we would encounter. Furthermore, at the end of the research project, they provided critical feedback. We would also like to thank Ger Bom and Jakob de Haan for their interested and helpful engagement as members of the DNB working group on the history of slavery, and Leo Balai for acting as counter-reader of the draft report.

Research questions from DNB's executive board

DNB's executive board formulated three guiding research questions concerning the bank's direct involvement with slavery, as well as any such involvement by its officials or by Johanna Borski, who was instrumental in its establishment.

— What, if any, was the involvement with slavery during the period 1814-1873 of presidents, directors, and secretaries of DNB, as well as any later holders of those offices insofar as the research shows that they received compensation for freed men? This involvement may include:

- an administrative role or financial stake in any organisation involved directly with slavery (not just plantations, but also – for example – the Amsterdam chambers of the Dutch East India Company or Dutch West India Company, or the Society of Surinam).
- participation in the public debate on slavery, as either a supporter or an opponent. Where possible, this administrative role, financial stake, or voice in the debate should be interpreted in the context of what was customary in the period concerned.

— Did Johanna Borski (1764-1846) have any such administrative role or financial stake, or participate in the public debate (1764-1846) insofar as it related to slavery? Again, this should be interpreted in the context of what was customary in the period concerned.

— What, if any, was the involvement with slavery during the period 1814-1873 of DNB as an institution? This may include specific slavery-related statements made by the bank to organisations with which it had formal contacts, or public statements on the topic in general, as well as policy it pursued. As far as possible, the extent to which any such statement or policy was consistent with DNB's statutory remit at the time, or whether it was acting beyond the scope thereof, should be indicated.

These questions formed the basic guidelines for our study. The team of researchers from Leiden University undertook this work entirely independently. DNB made its archives unconditionally available for the researchers.

How we define slavery

In this study, we focus in the first place upon slavery as a formal, legally defined institution in the form practised and recognised by the government of the time. The Netherlands had formally had no slavery since the late Middle Ages and consequently there was no legal basis for its widespread introduction in the colonies in the early seventeenth century. Where Dutch law did not suffice, as in this case, the colonies therefore fell back on Roman law.[640] As a result, slavery in the Dutch colonial empire fell under the law of property: an enslaved person was considered in law as a *res*, a chattel, and not a legal person. Local adjustments to this legal framework were made in the various colonies over the next couple of centuries, but in

many respects, there was continuity and the Roman legal basis remained recognisable. This is what the colonial government defined as slavery and what was abolished in the second half of the nineteenth century.

Although there were local variants of slavery as well as indigenous forms of servitude, bondage, and enslavement in places under Dutch control, slavery became increasingly homogeneous during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In those colonies where policies aimed to grow agricultural produce for the world market, a specific type of production slavery emerged with the distinct characteristics that it was perpetual and that enslaved people could be bought and sold. It also had one other unique feature: people regarded as European were excluded from it. In practice, slavery in the early modern Atlantic world was restricted to people of African descent – even though this was not actually enshrined in law. The racial distinction between who could be enslaved and who could not is a key trait of this phenomenon, so we refer to it as racial production slavery. The Roman legal principle *partus sequitur ventrem* (the fruit follows the womb) meant that children born to women held in slavery became slaves of the mother's owner. Slave status was thus hereditary through the female line.

In Asia, too, colonialism resulted in the commercialisation of slavery and enslaved people were tradable chattels who contributed towards the production of commodities for the world market. As in the Atlantic colonies, property rights and racialisation determined the contours of the institution. Slavery was just one of the ways in which labour was mobilised in the overseas empire, though, and nor was it the only one based upon coercion. In the Atlantic territories too, but much more so in Asia, various forms of forced labour were imposed under Dutch rule. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, in fact, the extent of slavery in the East equalled or even exceeded that in the West. However, the rise of the cultivation system and the end of the slave trade resulted in a more rapid decline in the number of people held in bondage in the Netherlands' Asian possessions than in the Atlantic part of its empire.

Developments in the Atlantic world became central to the step-by-step legal eradication of all forms of slavery. But after abolition the fight against slavery actually became a pretext for other forms of violent subjugation and forced labour in Asia. So, abolition by no means meant a farewell to colonial oppression and servitude. DNB's involvement with these diverse alternative forms of bondage has not been studied in our research, but

despite these reservations we can conclude that the abolition of slavery was an important step forward and one of the greatest achievements of the modern age.

We have taken the historical practice of slavery as a formal institution as the primary focus of our research. As such, we have deliberately chosen not to adopt the contemporary definitions of slavery and human trafficking as laid down in current legislation. The United Nations began to define slavery more broadly during the course of the twentieth century after the global prohibition of slavery as a formal institution, resulted in the permutation of slavery into a more informal practice. The definition now used by the UN would have required much broader research on our part, encompassing other forms of unfree employment such as serfdom and indentured coolie labour. We have explicitly decided not to venture into these domains. By opting for the historical legal definition, our research focuses upon the racial production slavery which was the subject of heated political debate in the nineteenth century. This is a form that has left clear traces in the historical archives and, moreover, has become the focus of a contemporary public debate. It is also the form for which the government paid compensation to the slave owners at the time of abolition. Because of this delineation, our research also dovetails well with similar work abroad.

Wording and spelling

With regard to spelling variants, the following conventions are applied in this translation. We use the historical English spelling Surinam for the former colony also sometimes known as Dutch Guiana, since 1975 officially styled the Republic of Suriname (as per the standard Dutch spelling). Likewise, we use British Guiana for the then colony which is now independent Guyana. On occasions we also use Guiana to refer to the entire region between the Amazon and Orinoco rivers. And we follow the conventional English style for the colony and the river Demerara, which the Dutch generally called Demerary or Demerarij. The same pattern is followed in other cases where placenames and the like vary over time or differ between Dutch and English: the usual contemporaneous English spelling is used. The names of plantations have not been translated.

Treating people as chattels for the purpose of exercising total control over their lives and labour always involves violence and mental terror.

Slavery gave rise to barbaric situations, even as slave owners purported to be upholding civilised values. The use of veiled and euphemistic language was one of the ways in which this dichotomy was maintained. The aim of this study is not to conceal, but to reveal what has long been ignored. In the literature on slavery, the term enslaved person (and in Dutch its equivalents slaafgemaakte and tot slaaf gemaakte) has been used widely since the 1990s to refer to those held in bondage. In the Dutch context, in his recent book on the slavery-related history of Rotterdam, *Rotterdam in Slavernij*, Professor Alex van Stipriaan explains that this usage serves "to indicate that no one is a slave, as a kind of identity, but that the person concerned is being subjected by others, even if he or she was born into slavery."[641] The Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam chose the same idiom for its 2021 exhibition, *Slavery*. In this study, we follow the prevailing practice with a certain degree of reserve. We use the term slaves when referring to the abstract legal category but prefer enslaved person in the case of specific individuals, so as to reiterate the coercion and resistance that slavery entailed.

As far as possible, we also avoid the use of racialising terms such as black and white to categorise people. We abstain from using denigrating terminology, except in quotes aimed to demonstrate a racialised way of thinking. We want to state explicitly that these terms formed part of a culture that perpetuated slavery.

Research on economic involvement

To answer the research questions, on the economic involvement with slavery of DNB-officials and the bank itself, we consulted a variety of primary source materials. In the case of DNB as an institution, they are found in the bank's own archives. The most important source with regard to its economic involvement is the general ledger; from this it is possible to ascertain fairly quickly and clearly the value of the goods and securities pledged to secure credit. The archives do not reveal exactly what securities were involved, however. There are references to a register of securities, but this document has not been found. Since such pledges had to be recorded by a notary in the first half of the nineteenth century, with the deed he drew up itemising the securities concerned, it should in theory be possible to find this information in the notarial archives. Given the huge number of

notaries active at the time and how labour-intensive the process would be, however, it was decided not to pursue this line of research but instead to prioritise other matters. It is perhaps worth mentioning, though, that none of the three deeds we did find – all in one book from one notary – had anything to do with slavery.

In DNB's first years, the ledger itself mentioned what goods constituted the collateral pledged and it was therefore fairly easy to determine whether these possibly were the product of slavery. For later years, however, it became necessary to look up the details of each transaction in the journals. And later still we had to refer to the day books. Given the time-consuming nature of this work and the limited time available, it was decided to take samples at five-year intervals between the 1817/18 and 1862/1863 financial years. In order to be able to compare these with the period after the abolition of slavery, the 1872/73 financial year was also examined. In two financial years (1833/34 and 1848/49), moreover, those pledged goods relevant to the political component of our research were studied.

In relying upon the DNB archives, there is of course a source selection bias. For example, it could be that coffee was pledged more frequently than other goods because the traders in that commodity were more likely to experience liquidity issues – due to a delayed delivery, say, because of the long supply route – and so had to gage stock in order to raise cash to pay a bill. Moreover, other goods such as fresh fish were never pledged as they were highly perishable and so totally unacceptable as collateral. Because of the time it took to ship them to Europe, on the other hand, by default slave goods had to have a long shelf life and were therefore particularly suitable as collateral in the event of liquidity problems. We were aware of these shortcomings in our source selection, but had little choice than to accept them since no better sources were available.

With regard to DNB-officials' personal involvement with slavery, we have drawn upon a huge variety of material. The first step was to draw up a biographical profile of each individual, including parents, grandparents, spouse(s), and parents-in-law, and a short curriculum vitae in order to determine to which businesses DNB-executives may be linked. Those profiles were based primarily upon baptismal records, secondary literature, and databases such as biografischportaal.nl (managed by the Huygens Institute for the History of the Netherlands) and parlement.com (of the Parliamentary Documentation Centre), as well as obituaries and business advertisements in newspapers held at the Royal Library of the

Netherlands (Koninklijke Bibliotheek) and searchable using delpher.nl. Using this biographical and professional data, attempts were then made to locate the personal records of the executives concerned in family and company archives. Since the majority of them came from Amsterdam, we also made grateful use of the digitised index of its city archives. This proved especially useful with regard to early DNB officials, since it is possible to find persons mentioned in notarial deeds dating from before 1800. Through the index, for instance, we found probate documents specifying exactly what plantation shares persons had owned at the time of their death. Despite all these efforts, it naturally remains possible that proof of individuals' involvement with slavery still exists but has yet to be found.

Appendix 1. Legal regulation of indemnification through DNB

The abolition of slavery was provided for in two separate acts, one for Surinam and one for the islands of the Dutch West Indies. Both stipulated that De Nederlandsche Bank would honour the bills of exchange drawn by the former slave owners on the Minister of the Colonies in compensation for the emancipation of enslaved persons.

Act of 8 August 1862
concerning the abolition of slavery in the colony of Surinam
Article 14
The indemnification referred to in art. 8 shall be paid to the owner or to his representative within three months after the abolition of slavery.
The payment shall be made in bills of exchange, guilder for guilder, to be issued by the Governor-General against the Minister of the Colonies and payable one month after inspection at De Nederlandsche Bank in Amsterdam, or, if so desired and insofar as the colonial treasury is able so to do in the opinion of the Governor-General, in legal tender at Paramaribo.

Act of 8 August 1862
concerning the abolition of slavery on the islands of Curaçao, Bonaire, Aruba, St Eustatius, Saba, and St Martin (Dutch part)
Article 12
The indemnification referred to in art. 6 shall be paid to the owner or to his representative on each of the islands concerned within three months after the abolition of slavery.
The payment shall be made in bills of exchange, guilder for guilder, to be issued by the Governor-General of Curaçao and Dependencies for Curaçao, Bonaire and Aruba, by the Governor of St Eustatius for that island and for

Saba and for St Martin (Dutch part) by the Governor there, and payable one month after inspection at De Nederlandsche Bank in Amsterdam, or, if so desired and insofar as the treasury is able so to do in the opinion of the aforementioned Governor-General or Governor, in legal tender on each of the islands.

Appendix 2. Persons investigated and their terms of office

The lists below contain the names of the persons and firms included in our investigation. Johanna Borski is not mentioned because she did not hold any formal position at DNB. The lists were compiled based upon the work of A. M. de Jong.

Presidents

Hogguer, Paul Iwan	28 March, 1814 - 20 November, 1816
Hodshon, Jan	1 November, 1816 - 25 February, 1827
Teysset, Jacques	15 March, 1827 - 19 April, 1828
Fock, Jacob I	1 April, 1828 - 21 November, 1835
Mogge Muilman, Willem Ferdinand	30 November, 1835 - 30 April, 1844
Fock, Abraham	1 May, 1844 - 24 September, 1858
Croockewit, Hendrik	1 April, 1854 - 12 February, 1863
Mees, Willem Cornelis	6 February, 1863 - 24 December, 1884
Pierson, Nicolaas Gerard	15 January, 1885 - 8 September, 1891

Directors

Hodshon, Jan	28 March, 1814 - 1 November, 1816
Poll, Jan van de	28 April, 1814 - 22 June, 1822
Teysset, Jacques	28 March, 1814 - 14 March, 1827

Fock, Jacob I	28 March, 1814 - 1 April, 1828
Mogge Muilman, Willem Ferdinand	28 March, 1814 - 30 November, 1835
Huydecoper van Maarsseveen, Joan	1 January, 1817 - 9 August, 1836
Carp, Johannes	1 July, 1822 - 1 October, 1837
Valckenier van de Poll, Jan Jacobus	1 April, 1827 - 5 March, 1837
Röell, Willem	1 May, 1828 - 21 March, 1829
Eeghen, Jan van	1 April, 1829 - 1 November, 1838
Willink, Ananias	1 December, 1835 - 31 March, 1845
Luden, Johannes	1 September, 1836 - 1 April, 1864
Fock, Abraham	1 April, 1837 - 30 April, 1844
Crommelin, Claude Daniël	1 December, 1838 - 31 March, 1849
Melvil, John	1 December, 1838 - 31 March, 1851
Insinger, Jacobus Hermanus	1 May, 1844 - 1 July, 1871
Rendorp, Ferdinand	1 April, 1845 - 30 June, 1865
Croockewit, Hendrik	1 April, 1849 - 31 March, 1854
Heukelom, Jan van	1 April, 1851 - 15 December, 1879
Wolterbeek, Robert Daniël	1 November, 1858 - 30 June, 1865
Beels, Herman Hendrik	1 April, 1864 - 15 October, 1889
Fock, Jacob II	1 July, 1865 - 01 July, 1890
Pierson, Nicolaas Gerard	1 July, 1868 - 15 January, 1885

Secretaries

Lennep, Cornelis Sylvius van	28 April, 1814 - 14 October, 1821
Röell, Willem	1 November, 1821 - 1 April, 1828
Croockewit, Hendrik	1 July, 1828 - 31 March, 1849
Mees, Willem Cornelis	5 April, 1849 - 26 February, 1863
Molkenboer, Johannes Hermanus	1 March, 1863 - 31 March, 1871
Gleichman, Johan George	1 April, 1871 - 31 October, 1877

Legal adviser

Jan Bondt	1814-1845

Non-executive directors

Faesch & Co	1814-1815
Reenen, Gerlach Cornelis Johannes van	1814-1815
Orange-Nassau, William Frederick of (King William I)	1814-1819
Severijn, Haesebrouck & Co (represented by Abraham Johannes Severijn)	1814-1817
D. Couderc & M.P. Brants (represented by Charles Frederic Maurice de Lepel)	1814-1830
Waszink, Jacob Jan	1814-1830
Goll van Franckenstein, Johan	1815-1821
Huydecoper van Maarsseveen, Joan	1815-1817
Insinger & Co (represented by Hans Jacob Swarth)	1817-1823
Reenen, Jacobus Hendricus van	1817-1845
Stadnitski & Van Heukelom (represented by Walrave van Heukelom)	1819-1840
Willink, Jan	1822-1826
Broen Mzn, Marcus	1823-1850
Elias, Gerbrand Faas	1827-1863
Walkart, Godvried Leonard	1830-1856
Spoon, Charles Frederic Maurice de	1830-1840
Heukelom, Walrave van	1840-1853
Loon, Willem van	1841-1847
Willink, Ananias	1846-1852
Huydecoper van Zeyst, Jan Elias	1848-1867
Crommelin, Claude Daniël	1851-1859
Melvil, John	1853-1878
Labouchere, Pierre Caesar	1854-1859
Teding van Berkhout, Pieter Jacob	1856-1886

Eeghen, Christiaan Pieter van	1859-1889
Neufville, Abraham de	1860-1864
Bonnike, Joannes Emanuel	1863-1880

Ministers of the Colonies, 1814-1873

Capellen, Godert Alexander Gerard Philip van der	6-29 April, 1814
Hoop, Joan Cornelis van der	29 July - 14 September, 1814 (acting)
Goldberg, Johannes	2 December, 1814 - 16 September, 1815 (acting) 16 September, 1815 - 19 March, 1818 (acting)
Falck, Anton Reinhard	19 March, 1818 - 30 March, 1824
Elout, Cornelis Theodorus	30 March, 1824 - 5 April, 1825 5 April, 1825 - 1 October, 1829
Quarles van Ufford, Jacques Jean	1 October, 1829 - 1 January, 1830 (acting)
Gobbelschroy, Pierre Louis Joseph Servais van	1 January, - 4 October, 1830
Clifford, Gerard George	4 October, 1830 - 1 October, 1831 (acting) 1 October, 1831 - 1 January, 1834 (acting)
Brocx, Arnoldus	1 January - 30 May, 1834 (acting)
Bosch, Johannes van	30 May, 1834 - 1 January, 1840
Baud, Jean Chrétien	1 January - 10 August, 1840 (acting) 10 August, 1840 - 1 January, 1842 1 January, 1842 - 25 March, 1848
Rijk, Julius Constantijn	25 March - 21 November, 1848 (acting)
Baud, Guillaume Louis	21 November, 1848 - 18 June, 1849
Bosch, Engelbertus Batavus	18 June - 1 November, 1849
Pahud, Charles Ferdinand	1 November, 1849 - 1 January, 1856
Mijer, Pieter	1 January, 1856 - 18 March, 1858

Rochussen, Jan Jacob	18 March, 1858 - 1 January, 1861
Lotsy, Johannes Servaas	1-9 January, 1861 (acting)
Cornets de Groot van Kraaijenburg, Jean Pierre	9 January - 14 March, 1861
Loudon, James	14 March, 1861 - 31 January, 1862
Uhlenbeck, Gerhard Hendrik	1 February, 1862 - 3 January, 1863
Betz, Gerardus Henri	3 January - 1 February, 1863 (acting)
Fransen van de Putte, Isaäc Dignus	2 February, 1863 - 30 May, 1866
Mijer, Pieter	30 May - 17 September, 1866
Trakranen, Nicolaas	17 September, 1866 - 20 July, 1867
Hasselman, Johannes Jerphaas	20 July, 1867 - 4 June, 1868
Waal, Engelbertus de	4 June, 1868 - 16 November, 1870
Brocx, Lodewijk Gerard	16 November, 1870 - 4 January, 1871 (acting)
Bosse, Pieter Philip	4 January, 1871 - 6 July, 1872
Fransen van de Putte, Isaäc Dignus	6 July, 1872 - 27 August, 1874

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P.A. Brugmans & A Brugmans, 1.10.13.
J. J. Goldberg (1763-1828), 2.21.006.51.
M.C. van Hall, F. A. van Hall & J. Bondt, 2.21.005.34.
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Tweede West-Indische Compagnie [Second West India Company], 1.05.01.02.

Koninklijk Huisarchief/Archives of the House of Orange–Nassau, the Netherlands (KHA)

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Doop- Trouw- en Begraafboeken [Registers of baptisms, weddings, and burials], 1-02.

Het Utrechts Archief/The Utrecht Archives, the Netherlands (NL-UtHUA)

Familie Huydecoper [Huydecoper family], 67.

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Notes

1 "DNB start onderzoek naar slavernijverleden" [DNB launches investigation into slavery history], 10 July, 2020, at https://www.dnb.nl/ actueel/algemeen-nieuws/ nieuwsberichten-2020/dnb-start-onderzoek-naarslavernijverleden/.

2 Completed studies include those into ABN AMRO, Bank of America and JP Morgan Chase: *Predecessors of ABN AMRO Bank N.V. and Connections to African Slavery in the United States and the Americas* (Rockville, 2006); *Report on Bank of America Predecessor Institutions Research Regarding Slavery and the Slave Trade* (Missoula, 2005). The research into Lloyd's of London and the Bank of England is ongoing.

3 For the research questions drawn up by DNB's internal working group on the history of slavery, see the afterword of this book.

4 At the beginning of our research, DNB's internal working group on the history of slavery provided an indicative list of bank presidents and directors whose involvement in slavery they wanted to see investigated. That included Johanna Borski, who bought 2,000 of the first 5,000 shares in DNB. During the course of the research, several names were added to the list in consultation with the study's advisory board (see the afterword for its composition) and by the researchers themselves. They include all DNB's non-executive directors during the period under consideration (1814-1873), the group of sixteen major initial investors who played an important institutional role in the bank's early days and legal consultant Jan Bondt.

5 A. M. de Jong, *Geschiedenis van de Nederlandsche Bank* (Haarlem, 1967).

6 H. J. M. van de Laar, *Opperbankier en Wetenschapsman Willem Cornelis Mees, 1813-1884* (The Hague, 1978) 104. In this biography, all activity in that regard is attributed solely to Jan Ackersdijck and Mees' role remains out of sight.

7 Joost Jonker, *Merchants, Bankers, Middlemen: The Amsterdam Money Market During the First Half of the 19th Century* (Amsterdam, 1996).

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9 Maartje Janse, *De afschaffers: publieke opinie, organisatie en politiek in Nederland 1840-1880* (Amsterdam, 2007).

10 Pepijn Brandon & Karin Lurvink, "'With the Power of Language and the Force of Reason': An Amsterdam Banker's Fight for Slave Owners' Compensation", in: Pepijn Brandon, Sabine Go & Wybren Verstegen, *Navigating History: Economy, Society, Knowledge and Nature* (Leiden / Boston, 2018) 228-248.

11 Marcel Boumans, *Over de betekenis van Pierson in de Geschiedenis van de Economische Discipline* (lecture to the N. G. Pierson Fund Foundation, 16 December, 2020). We are grateful to the author for making the text of the lecture available.

12 This research project, funded by the Dutch Research Council (Nederlandse Organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek, NWO) was a collaboration between Leiden University and the International Institute of Social History. It is the pre-eminent study of the economic importance of the slavery-based colonial economy.

13 Pepijn Brandon and Ulbe Bosma, "De betekenis van de Atlantische slavernij voor de Nederlandse economie in de tweede helft van de achttiende eeuw" [The significance of Atlantic slavery for the Dutch economy in the second half of the eighteenth century], *TSEG - The Low Countries Journal of Social and Economic History*, 16:2 (2019) 29-30. This definition was drawn up in order to calculate the share of slavery-based activities in GDP, but excludes part of the financial services sector. Since we are not investigating from the perspective of GDP but focus on DNB and its directors as private individuals, all forms of financial services and dividend payments should be included. Given the scope of this study, we have not been able to obtain a complete picture of the supply of goods to slave colonies.

14 Ulbe Bosma, "Commodification and slavery in the nineteenth century Indonesian Archipelago", *Journal of Social History*, 54:1 (2020) 109-124.

15 Tom Pfeil, "Schuldencrisis, kredietfinanciering en belastinghervorming onder Willem I" [Debt crisis, credit financing and tax reform under William I], in: Ido de Haan, Paul den Hoed and Henk te Velde, *Een nieuwe staat: Het begin van het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden* (Amsterdam, 2013) 210-219, specifically 214.

16 P. H. van der Kemp, "De sluiting van het Londensch tractaat van 13 augustus 1814" [The conclusion of the Treaty of London of 13 August, 1814], *Bijdrage tot taal-, land-, en volkenkunde*, 47:1 (1897) 239-280.

17 During the Napoleonic wars, Britain had transferred the French colony of Guadeloupe to Sweden. Now, however, they wanted it returned to French hands. As compensation, they offered the Swedes former Dutch colonies in Guiana.

18 Marcel van der Linden, "Zur Logik einer Nicht-Entscheidung: Der Wiener Kongress und der Sklavenhandel" [On the logic of a non-decision: the Congress of Vienna and the slave trade], in: T. Just, W. Maderthaner & H. Maimann (eds.), *Der Wiener Kongress: Die Erfindung Europas* (Vienna, 2014) 359.

19 In a letter to Van Nagell, William I wrote of "the uncertainty of the West [Indies] by virtue of the liberal principles of the trade in slaves and their treatment, and the individuals [the owners] being assured of direct trade on their plantations without the Government being burdened with the costs of always more or less precarious possessions and yet recovering the colony which has more positive Dutch plantations". See Van der Kemp, "De sluiting" 276.

20 Dale Tomich, "Commodity Frontiers, Spatial Economy and Technological Innovation in the Caribbean Sugar Industry, 1783-1878", in: A. B. Leonard & David Pretel (eds), *The Caribbean and the Atlantic World Economy: Circuits of Trade, Money and Knowledge, 1650-1914*. Cambridge Imperial and Post-Colonial Studies Series (London, 2015) 184-216, specifically 186-187.

21 Ibid., 203.

22 Ibid.

23 Jan Postma, *Alexander Gogel (1765-1821): Grondlegger van de Nederlandse staat* (Hilversum, 2017) 177; NL-HaNA, 2.21.006.51, Goldberg, inv. no. 181; Paul Koulen, *Lijst van eigenaren van plantages, en houders van hypotheken op plantages in Berbice, Demerara en Essequebo, 1818-1819*, 53.

24 Postma, *Alexander Gogel*, 66-67.

25 Ibid., 134.

26 Ibid., 185.

27 G. J. Schutte, *De Nederlandse Patriotten en de koloniën: Een onderzoek naar hun denkbeelden en optreden, 1770-1800* (Groningen, 1974) 148.

28 Postma, *Alexander Gogel*, 277.

29 Ibid., 356.

30 "Besluit van den Souvereinen Vorst van den 25sten Maart 1814" [Decree of the Sovereign Prince of 25 March, 1814], no. 105, *Staatsblad* no. 40, containing the charter and regulations of De Nederlandsche Bank.

31 Ibid.

32 De Jong, *Geschiedenis*, vol. I, 85-86; Jonker, *Merchants, Bankers, Middlemen*, 171-172.

33 Jonker, *Merchants, Bankers, Middlemen*, 168-172.

34 De Jager, *De bank van de gulden*, 20.

35 The involvement with slavery of the Dutch government and the head of state, King William I, fall outside the scope of this study.

36 Gert Oostindie, *Roosenburg en Mon Bijou: Twee Surinaamse plantages, 1720-1870* (Dordrecht, 1989) 321-322, 423, 426-427.

37 Jonker, *Merchants, Bankers, Middlemen*, 322.

38 Ibid., 190.

39 Koulen, *Lijst van eigenaren van plantages*. [List of plantation owners]

40 NL-HaNA, 1.05.01.02, WIC, inv. no. 542, scan 286 et seq.

41 NL-HaNA, 1.05.01.02, WIC, inv. no. 1033, scan 384 (Demerara); inv. no. 1135, scan 402 (from J. C. van den Heuvel in Demerara); inv. no. 637, scan 364 et seq (St Eustatius).

42 "Door Couderc, Brants & Chagouin: Wol en koffie" [By Couderc, Brants & Chagouin: Wool and coffee], *Nationaale Courant*, 26 August 1795 (Amsterdam). Wool: *Nationaale courant*, 11 September 1795. Sugar: *Nationaale courant*, 16 September 1795. Coffee: *Nationaale courant*, 22 September 1795. "Door Couderc en Brants indigo" [By Couderc & Brants, indigo]: *Amsterdamsche courant*, 26 August, 1806.

43 NL-HaNA, WIC, inv. no. 1179.

44 *Naamlijst der schepen, sailende op de kolonien Suriname, Demerary en Esseqebo, Berbice, Curacao* (Amsterdam 1816) 22. *Naamlijst der schepen sailende op de kolonien Suriname, Demerary en Esseqebo, Berbice, Curacao* (Amsterdam 1820) 48.

45 Jonker, *Merchants, Bankers, Middlemen*, 193.

46 In coffee and sugar growing, the majority of owners were absentees. Alex van Stipriaan, *Surinaams contrast: Roofbouw en overleven in een Caraïbische plantagekolonie, 1750-1863* (Leiden 1993) 199.

47 *Surinaamsche Staatkundige Almanach voor den Jaare 1818* (1817).

48 Walter Bodmer, "Schweizer Tropenkaufleute und plantagenbesitzer in NiederländischWestindien im 18. und zu Beginn des 19. Jahrhunderts" [Swiss tropical merchants and plantation owners in the Dutch West Indies in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries], *Acta Tropica* (1946); Karwan Fatah-Black, *White Lies and Black Markets: Evading Metropolitan Control in Colonial Suriname, 1650-1800* (Leiden/Boston, 2015) 36-37.

49 *Surinaamsche Staatkundige Almanach voor den Jaare 1794* (1794).

50 *Naamlijst der schepen* (Amsterdam, 1816).

51 *Naamlijst der schepen* (Amsterdam, 1820).

52 One interesting aspect of Faesch & Co's shipping activities is that all its vessels were built outside the Netherlands. The shortage of ships there made it more advantageous to procure them on the British market. Once in the company's ownership, they were renamed. Maritiem-Historische Databank, Firma Faesch & Co.: https://www.marhisdata.nl/eigenaar&id=3097.

53 S. Kalff, "Mr. Abraham Vereul", *New West Indian Guide/Nieuwe West-Indische Gids* 8:1 (1927) 378-388.

54 Maria Sara was both the sister of Abraham Vereul's mother and the wife of his father's brother. The company owned four ships, including one called *Willem I* (https://www.marhisdata.nl/eigenaar&id=25845).

55 Abraham Vereul, *Aanspraak, bij de opening van der eerste zitting van het committe tot de zaken der coloniën en bezittingen der Bataafsche Republyk, in America en ter kust van Guinea* (Amsterdam, 1795).

56 Schutte, *De Nederlandse patriotten en de koloniën*, 177, 194, 202-205.

57 *Surinaamsche Staatkundige Almanach voor den Jaare 1818* (1817).

58 *De Eduard* was referred to as a "speculation", which perhaps means that the plantation was held with the intention of reselling it. Due to the legal obligation to work plantations, however, there must have been some activity on it.

59 Koulen, *Lijst van eigenaren*.

60 In 1829 complaints were received from the enslaved women Jacuba, Julia Dorothea, Una and Effa, who "belonged" to *Le Repentir* but worked on *La Pénitence*, about their workload, treatment and confinement on the latter plantation. Emilia Viotti da Costa, *Crowns of Glory, Tears of Blood: The Demerara Slave Rebellion of 1823* (New York/Oxford, 1994) 67.

61 Maritiem-Historische Databank, Firma Ramperti & Co: https://www.marhisdata.nl/owner&id=35052.

62 Ruud Priem, "The 'Most Excellent Collection' of Lucretia Johanna Van Winter: The Years 1809-22, with a Catalogue of the Works Purchased", *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 25, no. 2/3 (1997) 103-196.

63 "Carga-lijsten" [Cargo lists], *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 19 April, 1828, 29 August, 1832, 11 May, 1833, 30 November, 1833, 18 March, 1836, 22 August, 1836, 12 October, 1837, 27 March, 1839.

64 Maritiem-Historische Databank, De Gebroeder Planta: https://www.marhisdata.nl/cor&id=11984. NL-AsdSAA, 5181, Archief van de Secretarie, Afdeling Algemene Zaken, Zeezaken/Archives of the Secretariat, Department of General Affairs, Maritime Affairs, inv. no. 7157, scan 147: https://archief.amsterdam/inventarissen/scans/5181/2.17.3.7.1.11/start/140/limit/10/highlight/7.

65 *Jonge Jacob*: Maritiem-Historische Databank – Scheep. "Carga-lijsten Amsterdam'" [Amsterdam cargo lists], *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 13 November, 1830; "Carga-lijsten, Amsterdam'" [Amsterdam cargo lists], *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 23 August, 1831. "Carga-lijsten" [Cargo lists], *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 4 June, 1832.

66 Jonker, *Merchants, Bankers, Middlemen*, 205.

67 In the 1830s, we see that sugar was supplied by Goll & Co from London, Bremen and Le Havre (*Algemeen Handelsblad*, 18 November, 1833, 30 March, 1835, 29 October, 1838). Also a cargo of tobacco (*Algemeen Handelsblad*, 30 May, 1836, *De Avondbode*, 15 June, 1836),

goods from New Orleans (*NRC*, 9 August, 1844) and cotton from Baltimore and sugar from Charleston, 1 September, 1837.

68 *Almanak voor de Nederlandsche West-Indische bezittingen, en de kust van Guinea*, 1842, 1843 and 1856 editions.

69 From the end of the French period in about 1812 until the Wisselbank closed in 1820, nine directors served on its board at various times. Six of them had no direct involvement in slavery-related activities: Willem Bruyn (d. 1795-1813), Gerardus Willebrordus te Sande (d. 1795-1817), Adriaan Teyler van Hall (d. 1796-1818), Jan Brouwer Joachiemsz (d. 1798-1814), Pieter van Lennep (d. 1814 and 1820) and Petrus Paulus Charlé (d. 1814-1820). The three who did were Daniël Changuion (d. 1801-1812), Jacob Hendrick Luden (d. 1818-1820) and Ananias Willink (d. 1818-1820).

70 Jonker, *Merchants, Bankers, Middlemen*, 201-203.

71 NL-AsdSAA, 735, Inventaris van het Archief van de Firma Hope & Co. met verwante archiefvormers [Inventory of the archives of Hope & Co. with related records], inv. no. 2879: "Journalen 1832-1848" [Journals 1832-1848] 169.

72 UK-TNA, Colonial Office, 111/28.

73 Centre for the Study of the Legacies of British Slavery (LBS), estate details, Blankenburgh, British Guiana: https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/estate/view/1128. LBS, estate details, Anna Catharina, British Guiana: https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/estate/view/990. LBS, estate details, Sage Pond, British Guiana: https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/estate/ view/966.

74 Gerarda Westerhuis & Jan Luiten van Zanden, "Four Hundred Years of Central Banking in the Netherlands, 1609-2016", in: Daniel Waldenström, Rodney Edvinsson & Tor Jacobson (eds), *Sveriges Riksbank and the History of Central Banking*. Studies in Macroeconomic History (Cambridge, 2018) 242-264.

75 F. J. E. van Lennep, *As Princes: Portraits of the 18th Century* (Haarlem, 1967) 99.

76 DNB directors were usually members of the learned Sociëteit Casino on Kloveniersburgwal, but Croockewit (s. 1828-1849; d. 1849-1854; p. 1854-1863) and A. Fock (d. 1837-1844; p. 1844-1858) were members of the rival Felix Meritis. J. L. de Jager, *De bank van de gulden: Organisatie en personeel van de Nederlandsche Bank 1814-1989* (Amsterdam, 1989) 31.

77 Jonker, *Merchants, Bankers, Middlemen*, 168-169.

78 De Jager, *De bank van de gulden*, 24.

79 Jonker, *Merchants, Bankers, Middlemen*, 170, 182.

80 De Jager, *De bank van de gulden*, 22-23, 31.

81 For a well-documented reconstruction of this episode, see P. Spigt, "Een netelige zaak: Moeilijkheden bij de benoeming van de directie van de Nederlandsche Bank in 1838" [A thorny issue: difficulties in appointing the board of De Nederlandsche Bank in 1838], *Amstelodamum* 58 (1966) 164-182.

82 Jonker, *Merchants, Bankers, Middlemen*, 171-172.

83 NL-HaNA, 2.02.01, Staatssecretarie [State Secretariat], inv. no. 6054: "Verbaal van de vergadering van aanzienlijken door Z.K.H. bij besluit d.d. 2 maart 1814, nr. 14 bijeengeroepen in de Nieuwe Kerk te Amsterdam op 29 maart daaraanvolgend, met bijlagen nrs. 1-3, 6-8, benevens lijsten der stemmingen over de Grondwet gehouden in de afdelingen" [Minutes of the meeting of dignitaries convened by His Royal Highness by decree dd. 2 March, 1814, no. 14, at the Nieuwe Kerk in Amsterdam on 29 March inst., with appendices no. 1-3 and 6-8, as well as lists of votes on the Constitution held in the sections].

84 In 1844, for example, the governor of Noord-Holland reported to William II that, "Amongst persons and houses [companies] with interests in the colony of Surinam, there are strong and urgent complaints about the government of the colony; and especially about the Governor, Mr Elias, who, according to those complaints, protects the slaves against their masters in a manner so inhumane that by doing so he gives rise to well-founded fears of a general revolt of the slaves and of the consequent destruction of a colony which still provides regular work and sustenance to some seventy merchant ships." NL-HaNA, 2.21.007.58, Baud, inv. no. 767: A.G.A. van Rappard to Baud, 19 August, 1844.

85 Jonker, *Merchants, Bankers, Middlemen*, 171-172.

86 In addition to his position as legal consultant to DNB, Bondt held many other offices in the first half of the nineteenth century. Between 1793 and 1836 he was also a consultant to the directors of the oriental trading and shipping companies, and from 1814 one of the directors of the Ledger of National Debt (Grootboek der Nationale Schuld).

87 Van Riel, "Hoe koning Willem I de uitgifte van staatsleningen financierde" [How King William I financed the issuance of government bonds], Appendix IV, 228.

88 De Jong, *Geschiedenis* I, 90-91.

89 Jonker, *Merchants, Bankers, Middlemen*, 71. Jonker also includes DNB non-executive director Goll & Co. and Wed. W. Borksi in this category.

90 Van Hall, "Herinneringen betreffende mr. Jan Bondt, en zijne vader mr. Nicolaas Bondt" [Memories concerning Jan Bondt, and his father, Nicolaas Bondt], in: *Gemengde schriften betrekkelijk tot de geschiedenis, de letterkunde en de geschiedenis der vaderlandsche regtsgeleerdheid* (Amsterdam, 1848), 391-392; Jonker, *Merchants, Bankers, Middlemen*, 206.

91 NL-AsdSAA, 199, Archief van de Familie Den Tex en Bondt [Archives of the Den Tex and De Bondt families], inv. no. 49: "Balances van de Firma Determeyer Weslingh & Zoon" [Balance sheets of the firm Determeyer Weslingh & Son].

92 NL-AsdSAA, 199, inv. no. 50: "Balances van de Firma 1818-1844" [Balance sheets of the firm, 1818-1844].

93 NL-AsdSAA, 199, inv. no. 44: "Secreet journalen van Jan Bondt, 1827-1844" [Confidential journals of Jan Bondt, 1827-1844].

94 NL-AsdSAA, 1455, Archief van de Bank Insinger en Co. [Archives of the bank Insinger and Co.], inv. no. 1445, 30 December, 1828.

95 Van Hall, "Herinneringen", 403-406.

96 Van Riel, "Hoe koning Willem I de uitgifte van staatsleningen financierde" [How King William I financed the issuance of government bonds], *Jaarboek Amstelodamum* (1956) 210-235, specifically 216.

97 Ibid., 212.

98 NL-HaNA, 2.21.005.34, Van Hall, inv. no. 68: Bondt to Van Hall, 17 December, 1843.

99 IISH, Collectie Fa. Determeyer Weslingh & Zn [Determeyer Weslingh & Zn collection], inv. No. 6: Prof. A. C. Holtius to Danish Council of State, 30 September, 1845.

100 NL-AsdSAA, 5075, inv. no. 114814/53.

101 Karwan Fatah-Black, "A Network to Encourage the Slave Trade", in: *Schiavitù e Servaggio nell'Economia Europea, secc. XI-XVIII* (Florance, 2014) 619-630.

102 Resoluties Staten-Generaal [Resolutions of the States General], 27 August 1788, 24 November, 1789.

103 NL-HaNA, 2.02.01, Staatssecretarie [State Secretariat], inv. no. 6555: "Brieven aan en consideraties en aantekeningen van W.C.H. baron van Lijnden van Blitterswijk, lid der Eerste Kamer der Staten-Generaal betreffende slavenhandel, 1787-1815" [Letters to and reflections and notes by Baron W. C. H. van Lijnden van Blitterswijk, member of the Senate of the States General, concerning the slave trade, 1787-1815], 1, cover.

104 Ibid.

105 Ibid.

106 Fatah- Black, "A Network to Encourage the Slave Trade"; Johannes Postma, *The Dutch in the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1600-1815* (Cambridge, 1990) 295.

107 NL-HaNA, 2.02.01, Staatssecretarie [State Secretariat], inv. no. 6555: "Consideratien om de slavenhandel, augustus 1814" [Reflections concerning the slave trade, August 1814], 3.

108 Ibid., 4.

109 Ibid.

110 Paula E. Dumas, *Proslavery Britain: Fighting for Slavery in an Era of Abolition* (New York, 2016), 25.

111 "D'après les principes que j'ai posés, l'affrancissement des esclaves est impossibles et la prolongation de la traite au l'alimente indispensable." NL-HaNA, 2.02.01, Staatssecretarie [State Secretariat], inv. no. 6555: "Consideratien om de slavenhandel, augustus 1814" [Reflections concerning the slave trade, August 1814].

112 Karwan Fatah-Black, *Sociëteit van Suriname, 1683-1795: Het bestuur van de kolonie in de achttiende eeuw* (Zutphen, 2019) 68.

113 Van der Linden, "Zur Logik", 370.

114 Ibid.

115 Ibid.

116 NL-HaNA, 2.02.01, Staatssecretarie [State Secretariat], inv. no. 6555: Van der Hoop to Van Lynden, 13 February, 1815.

117 NL-AsdSAA, 1455, Archief van de Bank Insinger en Co. [Archives of the bank Insinger and Co.], inv. no. 1359, 27 March, 1816.

118 NL-AsdSAA, 1455, inv. no. 1359, 15 October, 1816.

119 Ibid.

120 See also Brandon and Lurvink, "With the power of language and the force of reason", 237.

121 Van der Linden, "Zur Logik", 370-371.

122 Jaap Moes, *Onder aristocraten: Over hegemonie, welstand en aanzien van adel, patriciaat en andere notabelen in Nederland, 1848-1914* (Hilversum, 2012) 57-85; Niek van Sas, "Een Amsterdamse realist: Willem Frederik Röell 1767-1835" [An Amsterdam realist: Willem Frederik Röell 1767-1835] in: *Figuren en figuraties: Acht opstellen voor J.C. Boogman* (Groningen, 1979) 61-111, specifically 77-100.

123 Luuc Kooijmans, *Vriendschap en de kunst van het overleven in de zeventiende en achttiende eeuw* (Amsterdam, 2016) passim.

124 Cornelis Goslinga, *The Dutch in the Caribbean* (Assen, 1971) 360-362.

125 NL-RtdSA, 1-02, DTB Dopen [Register of Baptisms], inv. No. 111, 28 August, 1729.

126 Johannes Postma, *Dutch Shipping and Trade with Surinam, 1683-1795* (2009): https:// doi.org/10.17026/dans-zeh-h82t.

127 Fatah-Black, *Sociëteit van Suriname*, 80.

128 Barbara B. Oberg, *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, vol. 35 (New Haven, 1999) 112-13.

129 Oberg 35: 133-34.

130 Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database (Slavevoyages.org), voyage ID 32555, 32568, 32578, 32597 and 32625.

131 Erick Noël, "La Fortune Antillaise Des Delahaye-Lebous (Fin XVIII e- Début XIX eSiècles)' [The West Indian Fortune of the Delahaye-Lebous family (late eighteeenth and early nineteenth centuries)], *Histoire, Économie et Société* 16, no. 4 (1997) 647-70.

132 NL-AsdSAA, 5075, Notarissen ter standplaats Amsterdam [Notaries practising in Amsterdam], inv. no. 11481a/53.

133 J. P. van der Voort, *De Westindische plantages van 1720 tot 1795: Financiën en handel* (Eindhoven, 1973) 101.

134 Jonker, "Roeien tegen de stroom", 145.

135 He also traded with the firm De Wed. Hogguer & Sons.

136 In 1759, for example, in his role as owner of the plantations in Surinam the baron granted the widow of Jean Catusse power of attorney for their daily administration. NL-AsdSAA, 5075, inv. no. 10505/1523.

137 NL-AsdSAA, 5075, inv. no. 10521/487.

138 Ibid.

139 Ibid.

140 Confusingly, in their contracts the appointees were referred to as "negro officers" ("negerofficieren") – a term generally applied to men of African descent, usually still enslaved, who served as foremen on the plantations. In this case, however, they are probably European supervisors: Daniel Bonnin in 1763 and Michiel Liebert Meerkamp in 1765. Under their contracts, Bonnin and Meerkamp received *f* 200 a year and "free accommodation, victuals and drink", which they were allowed to consume "with the white servants". NL-AsdSAA, 5075, inv. nos. 10534/641, 10552/1031.

141 NL AsdSAA, 5075, inv. no. 12725/76.

142 NL-AsdSAA, 5075, inv. no. 12393/630.

143 NL-AsdSAA, 5075, inv. no. 12402/130.

144 J. E. Elias, *De Vroedschap van Amsterdam 1578-1795* (Amsterdam, 1963) vol 2, 982; *Surinaamsche Almanak voor 1835*, 69.

145 *Surinaamsche Almanak voor 1835*, 71.

146 Gert Oostindie & Jessica Roitman, *Dutch Atlantic Connections, 1680-1800* (Leiden/Boston, 2014); Catia Antunes, "From Binary Narratives to Diversified Tales", *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis* 131, no. 3 (2018) 393-407.

147 NL-AsdSAA, 5075, inv. nos. 8891/186, 8891/45, 8893/617, 10557/433, 13425/199, 11406/81, 10525/1356, 13446/229.a, 12719/102, 12719/111, 12416/281, 12424/481, 13483/218.

148 NL-AsdSAA, 5075, inv. no. 10634/391.

149 Van der Voort, *De Westindische Plantages* 191.

150 Riksarkivet, Danish West Indies, Audited Accounts, Land Register of St Croix, 1865, collection 3, series 11, folio 149.

151 Riksarkivet, Danish West Indies, Police Journal, Christiansted, St Croix, collection 3, series 53, folio 184.

152 NL-AsdSAA, 5075, inv. no. 12719/111.

153 Riksarkivet, Danish West Indies, Reports from Religious Congregations regarding Deaths, St Croix, collection 3, series 28, scan 283.

154 NL-AsdSAA, 5001, Ondertrouwregister [Register of Betrothals], inv no. 591, folio 133.

155 Van der Voort, *Westindische Plantages*, 275-76.

156 Kooijmans, *Vriendschap* 16-18.

157 Elias, *De Vroedschap* vol 2, 958-959.

158 D. de Hoop Scheffer, "Het Rijksmuseum en zijn begunstigers' [The Rijksmuseum and its benefactors], *Bulletin van Het Rijksmuseum* 6, no. 3/4 (1958) 88-89.

159 Elias, *De Vroedschap* vol. 2, 958.

160 NL-AsdSAA, 562 Archief van de Assurantiebezorgers Wed. J. van Bosse en Zoon [Archives of the insurer Wed. J. van Bosse en Zoon], inv. no. 29: "Breedvoerig en nauwkeurig verhaal" [Exhaustive and accurate account].

161 *Extract uit de Resolutien van de Heeren Staaten van Holland*, 6 May, 1768.

162 Van der Voort, *Westindische Plantages*, 310-11.

163 *Surinaamsche Almanak voor 1834*, 72, 80, 84, 85, 91, 95, 106.

164 Elias, *De Vroedschap* 755-56.

165 It should be noted, though, that not all of Anna Catharina's ancestors had a good reputation. Her father, Adriaan Isaac, was declared insane after a failed attempt to murder his wife and sentenced to house arrest in 1768. Her grandfather, Adriaan, was governor-general of Batavia (modern Jakarta, Indonesia) and oversaw what became known as the Batavian Fury, a massacre of the city's Chinese residents in October 1740. He died in prison in 1751.

166 Marita Mathijsen, *Jacob van Lennep: Een bezielde schavuit* (Amsterdam, 2018) 148-49.

167 Elias, *De Vroedschap*, Vol. 2: 969-974.

168 Seymour Drescher, *Econocide: British Slavery in the Era of Abolition* (Chapel Hill, 1977) passim.

169 Van Stipriaan, *Surinamese contrast*, 117-118. For a 30-horsepower mill, more than ƒ50,000 was paid, excluding installation.

170 Ibid., 174-175; *Koloniaal Verslag* 1862.

171 Jaap van Soest, *Trustee of the Netherlands Antilles – a history of money, banking and the economy with special reference to the Central Bank of the Netherlands Antilles* (Willemstad, 1978) 32-33.

172 Van Soest, *Trustee of the Netherlands Antilles* 45.

173 Pfeil, "Schuldencrisis" 215-216.

174 NL-HaNA, 2.21.098, Kemper/Cras, box inv. no. 38, February 1816.

175 *Gedenkstukken* vol. 8, book 3, 1815-1825, 389-390: H. Croockewit to Kemper, 12 January, 1819; W. Willink jr to Kemper, 22 February, 1819. For Willink's influence over members of the Chamber of Commerce, see *Gedenkstukken* vol. 8, book 3, 1815-1825, 394.

176 Jeroen van Zanten, *Schielijk, winzucht, zwaarhoofd en bedaard: politieke debat en oppositievorming 1813-1840* (Amsterdam, 2004) 152.

177 NL-HaNA, 2.21.098, Kemper/Cras, box inv. no. 38: "Brieven van de secretaris van de Kamer van Koophandel te Amsterdam en van verschillende handelaren aldaar, memories en andere stukken omtrent een ontwerp-wet van consumptie op koffie en thee" [Correspondence from the secretary of the Chamber of Commerce in Amsterdam and from various traders there, memoranda and other documents concerning a bill on the consumption of coffee and tea], Croockewit to Kemper, 19 December, 1818.

178 Ibid.
179 Ibid.
180 Ibid., 12 January, 1819.
181 Ibid.
182 Quoted in Lauren Lauret, *Regentenwerk. Vergaderen in de Staten-Generaal en de Tweede Kamer, 1750-1850* (Amsterdam, 2020) 198, 154.
183 De Jong, *Geschiedenis* vol. I, 186.
184 Ibid., 780.
185 Ibid., 189-190.
186 Jonker, *Merchants, Bankers, Middlemen*, 170.
187 Gert Oostindie, "De koning en de Caraïben" [The king and the Caribbean], in: Ido de Haan, Paul den Hoed & Henk te Velde (eds.), *Een nieuwe staat: Het begin van het koninkrijk der Nederlanden* (Amsterdam, 2013) 173-182, specifically 174.
188 Bas de Gaay Fortman, "De West-Indische Maatschappij" [The West Indies Company], *De West-Indische gids* 11/12 (1929-1930) 307-315, specifically 308.
189 Sijtze van der Veen, *Gre Groot-Nederland & Groot-Colombia 1815-1830: De droom van Willem I* (Hilversum, 2015).
190 *Statuten der West-Indische Maatschappij, gevestigd te Amsterdam* (Amsterdam, 1828).
191 Ibid., 69-70.
192 NL-HaNA, 2.25.68, De Nederlandsche Bank, inv. no. 16574, Afhandeling van de kwitanties op de aandeelhouders van de West-Indische Maatschappij inzake de eerste en tweede storting door aandeelhouders van 10% in de WIC 1828-1838. [Settlement of payments collected from shareholders in the West Indies Company, concerning their first and second instalments of 10 per cent, 1828-1838]. Also includes three receipts from 1838 from the West Indies Company for monies received from DNB.
193 Quoted in De Gaay Fortman, "De West-Indische Maatschappij", 311.
194 KHA A40, XX 41 West-Indische Maatschappij, 1829-1880/West Indies Company 1829-1880; KHA A40, XX 42, West-Indische Maatschappij, 1851-1875/West Indies Company 1851-1875.
195 KHA XX 42 West-Indische Maatschappij, 1851-1875/West Indies Company 1851-1875: winst- en verliesrekening 1850 [profit and loss account 1850]. In 1862 the Company reports a share in sugar refinery De Nederlandsche Suiker Raffinaderij worth *f*5,750. PDF 86.
196 KHA A40, XX 41 West-Indische Maatschappij, 1829-1880/West Indies Company 1829-1880: 30 March, 1843.
197 KHA A40, XX 41 West-Indische Maatschappij, 1829-1880/West Indies Company 1829-1880: 30 April, 1863, D. Borski to shareholders in the West Indies Company.
198 Janny de Jong, *Van batig slot naar ereschuld: Een onderzoek naar de ideeën over de financiële verhouding tussen Nederland en Indië in de negentiende eeuw* (PhD thesis, University of Groningen, 1982) 27; Juliën Wolbers, *Geschiedenis van Suriname* (Amsterdam, 1861) 704.
199 Van Soest, *Trustee of the Netherlands Antilles*, 59-61.
200 NL-AsdSAA, 5075, inv. no. 13508/326.
201 NL-AsdSAA, 5075, inv. no. 12501/273.
202 NL-AsdSAA, 5075, inv. no. 12484/494; 12491/388.
203 NL-AsdSAA, 5075, inv. no. 12484/494.

204 NL-AsdSAA, 5075, inv. no. 12466/19.

205 NL-AsdSAA, 5075, inv. nos 12494/47, 12494/48, 12494/49, 12494/450, 12494/51.

206 Helen Julia Paul, "The South Sea Company's slaving activities", *Discussion Papers in Economics and Econometrics*, School of Social Sciences, Economics Division, University of Southampton (Southampton, undated): https://www. southampton.ac.uk/economics/research/discussion_papers/author/helen_paul/0924_the_south_sea_company_slaving_activities.page.

207 NL-AsdSAA, 5075, inv. no. 12521/28.

208 *Surinaamsche Almanak voor het jaar 1825*, 46.

209 *Surinaamsche Almanak voor het jaar 1834*, 68.

210 *Surinaamsche Almanak voor het jaar 1834*, 84-85.

211 NL-AsdSAA, 5075, inv. no. 12481/18.

212 Van der Voort, *De Westindische Plantages*, 279.

213 *Surinaamsche Almanak voor het jaar 1834*, 89.

214 NL-AsdSAA, 5075, inv. no. 12521/26.

215 For the plantation *La Paix*, for example; see NL-HaNA, 2.02.09.08, inv. no. 227.

216 NL-AsdSAA, 447, Inventaris van het Archief van Handelshuis Van Eeghen en Co. [Inventory of the archives of the trading house Van Eeghen en Co.], inv. no. 6546: "Stukken betreffende de verkoop van de tweede hypotheek gevestigd op de plantage "La Bonne Intention" te Demerary, 1819-1829" [Documents pertaining to the sale of the second mortgage on the plantation *La Bonne Intention* in Demerara, 1819-1829].

217 NL-AsdSAA, 447, inv. no. 180: "Beleningsboekje" [Loan book].

218 NL-AsdSAA, 447, inv. no. 192: "Grootboek met Index, 1817-1823" [Ledger with index, 1817-1823].

219 Gert Oostindie & Jessica Vance Roitman, "Introduction", in: Oostindie & Roitman (eds), *Dutch Atlantic Connections* 16; Cathy D. Matson, *Merchants and Empire: Trading in Colonial New York* (Baltimore, 1998) 146.

220 H. van Felius & H. J. Metselaars, *Noordhollandse Statenleden, 1840-1919*, Hollands Historische Reeks 21 (The Hague, 1995) 124, 262.

221 NL-AsdSAA, 30153, Archief van de familie Crommelin [Archives of the Crommelin family], inv. no. 534: "Reflections on the situation of the Amsterdam Market for East and West India & American Produce towards the beginning of February 1817".

222 NL-AsdSAA, 30153, inv. no. 63: "Staten van inkomsten" [Statements of revenue].

223 NL-HlmNHA, BS Huwelijk Heemstede [Register of Marriages, Heemstede], 27 April, 1820; https://www.wiewaswie.nl/nl/detail/29375444.

224 NL-AsdSAA, 5075, inv. nos. 15347/656, 11237/132; Elias, *De Vroedschap* vol. 2, 951.

225 NL-HlmNHA, 3233, Familie Beels in Haarlem [Beels family of Haarlem], inv. no. 87: "Grootboek" [Ledger], letter C.

226 NL-HlmNHA, 3233, Familie Beels in Haarlem [Beels family of Haarlem], inv. no. 330: "Correspondentie van zakelijke aard" [Correspondence of a business nature].

227 NL-AsdSAA, 5001, DTB Dopen [Register of Baptisms], inv. no. 137, 186.

228 NL-AsdSAA, 735, Inventaris van het Archief van de Firma Hope & Co. [Inventory of the archives of Hope & Co.], inv. no. 90.

229 *Opregte Haarlemsche Courant*, 21 August, 1893.

230 [Gleichman], *NNWB*, 659-660.

231 *Nederland's Patriciaat* 24 (1938) 65.

232 Dumas, *Proslavery Britain*, 149-155.

233 Da Costa, *Crowns of Glory*, 190.

234 Ibid., 242-243.

235 Seymore Drescher, *Abolition: A History of Slavery and Anti-Slavery* (Cambridge, 2009) 256-265.

236 J. P. Siwpersad, *De Nederlandse regering en de afschaffing van de Surinaamse slavernij, 1833-1863* (Groningen, 1979) XVIII.

237 Eric Willem van der Oest, "The forgotten colonies of Essequibo and Demerara, 1700-1814", in: Johannes Postma & Victor Enthoven (eds), *Riches from Atlantic Commerce* (Boston/Leiden, 2003) 323-361.

238 Drescher, *Abolition*, 256-265.

239 Van Stipriaan, *Surinaams contrast*, 113.

240 NL-UtHUA, "Familie Huydecoper" [Huydecoper family], 67, inv. no. 686: "Notulen van een vergadering van directeuren en commissarissen" [Minutes of a meeting of directors and commissioners].

241 NL-UtHUA, "Familie Huydecoper" [Huydecoper family], 67, inv. no. 686: "Notulen van een vergadering van directeuren en commissarissen" [Minutes of a meeting of directors and commissioners].

242 Ibid.

243 Ibid.

244 Ibid.

245 Ibid.

246 Siwpersad, *De afschaffing*, 130 & 145.

247 Jessica V. Roitman, "Land of Hope and Dreams: Slavery and Abolition in the Dutch Leeward Islands, 1825-1865", *Slavery and Abolition* 37:2 (2016), 377-390.

248 De Jong, *Geschiedenis*, 198.

249 NL-AsdSAA, "Familie Luden en aanverwante families" [Luden and related families], 922, inv. no. 299: "Rekening van ontvangst van compensatiegelden over de slaven van de plantage, met bijlage" [Account of compensation received for the slaves of the plantation, with appendix] 1836; inv. no. 300: "Lijst van akten betreffende de vererving van de plantage en stamboom van de erfgenamen van Anna Catharina Boode, met bijlage" [List of deeds concerning the inheritance of the plantation and lineage of the heirs of Anna Catharina Boode, with appendix].

250 This and the next paragraph are based mainly upon the recent study by Randy M. Browne, Lisa A. Lindsay & John Wood Sweet, "Rebecca's Ordeal, from Africa to the Caribbean: Sexual Exploitation, Freedom Struggles and Black Atlantic Biography", *Slavery & Abolition* (online, 2021); DOI: 10.1080/0144039X.2021.1938399.

251 Jacob Boode's statement courtesy of Randy Browne. The National Archive, Colonial Office, 116/159, 202: "Jacob Boode, Pensioner, late a private of the West India regiment. Is an African, came from the Gold Coast in the Ship with the Complainant [Rebecca]. Remembers that she cohabited with the Captain "Verscheur" and that on the arrival of the ship at Demerary the late Frederick Boode bought about fifty-five of the Negroes amongst whom was himself [Jacob]. Is positive that Mr Boode did not buy the woman Rebecca because she was the Captain's Wife. When the Captain left the Colony finally, some months afterward, witness remembers that Rebecca was large with child. That

child (born after the Captain left this Colony) was the Complainant John. Witness further states that the Captain left a Negro Boy named Amber to attend upon his expected child. This Boy is since dead. Sworn to before me this 3rd Feby 1832 [Signed] Charles Elliot Protector of Slaves [Signed] Jacob Boode X his Mark."

252 Maartje Janse, "Holland as Little England? British anti-slavery missionaries and continental abolitionist movements in the mid-nineteenth century", *Past & Present* 229/Nov. (2015) 123-160, specifically 148-150.

253 By publication dd. 3 May, 1831; Angelie Sens, *De kolonieman: Johannes van den Bosch (1780-1844), volksverheffer in naam van de koning* (Amsterdam, 2019) 242-243.

254 De Jong, *Geschiedenis*, vol. 1, 191.

255 Sens, *De kolonieman*, 222-226, 237, 241-245.

256 Ibid., 272-280.

257 De Jong, *Van batig slot naar ereschuld*, 39-45.

258 For a detailed overview of what we do and do not consider "slave goods", see Chapter 4.

259 Hugo Landheer, "Afrekenen met het verleden: De vereffening van de achterstallige schulden van het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden in het begin van de negentiende eeuw' [Settling with the past: clearing the overdue debts of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in the early nineteenth century], in: Henk Boels, *Overheidsfinanciën tijdens de Republiek en het Koninkrijk, 1600-1850* (Hilversum, 2012) 189-230, specifically 226-227; Marjolein 't Hart, *A Financial History of the Netherlands*, 69-77.

260 Jeroen van Zanten, *Koning Willem II: 1792-1849* (Amsterdam, 2014) 464.

261 Borski kept a ledger of her assets and investments going back to 1832. One of the headings is "Colonie Effecten" (colonial securities). NL-AsdSAA, 735, inv. no. 2878: "Grootboek" [Ledger] 1832-1848.

262 NL-AsdSAA, 735, inv. no. 2879: "Grootboek" [Ledger] 1832-1848: 22, 26.

263 NL-AsdSAA, 735, inv. no. 2878: 28.

264 Jan Luiten van Zanden et al., *Value of the Guilder versus Euro*: https://iisg.amsterdam/ en/research/projects/hpw/calculate.php.

265 Schutte, *De Nederlandse patriotten*, 199.

266 *Rotterdamsche Courant*, 18 October, 1823.

267 Siwpersad, *De afschaffing*, 200; Wolbers, *Geschiedenis van Suriname*, 661 & 664.

268 NL-HaNA, Koloniën [Colonies] 1814-1849, 2.10.01, inv. no. 4349, no. 467: "Geheim bijlage" [Confidential appendix], 15-17.

269 *Eerste rapport der Staatscommissie, benoemd bij Koninklijk Besluit van 29 November 1853, no. 66 tot het voorstellen van maatregelen ten aanzien van de slaven in de nederlandse koloniën: Suriname* (The Hague 1855) 262.

270 DNB did extend credit against some other remarkable goods, though. For example, S. Paleologo pledged opium worth tens of thousands of guilders on several occasions and G. Meer & Son put up a consignment of tortoises for *f*18,000 on 8 October, 1857.

271 NL-HaNA, Baud, 2.21.007.58, inv. no. 509: "Copie-Verzoekschrift aan den Koning van G.C. Bosch, Reitz en andere kooplieden en belanghebbenden bij plantages in Suriname om versterking van de troepen aldaar met het oog op de gevreesde uitwerking van de Engelsche emancipatiemaatregelen op de slavenbevolking van Suriname. Met copie-rapport hierover van den minister Clifford aan den Koning, 1833 Juni 25-1833 Juli 12" [Copy of petition to the King from G. C. Bosch, Reitz and other merchants and parties

interested in plantations in Surinam, for reinforcement of the troops there in view of the feared effects of the British emancipation measures upon the slave population of Surinam; with copy of report on this matter from minister Clifford to the King, 25 June-12 July, 1833], 1 (cover).

272 NL-HaNA, Baud, 2.21.007.58, inv. no. 509.

273 Siwpersad, *De afschaffing*, 12.

274 Ibid., 120-123.

275 Siwpersad, *De afschaffing*, 123; Elias to Baud, 16 June 1845. NL-HaNA, Koloniën [Colonies] 1814-1849, 2.10.01, inv. no. 4317: exh. 4 August 1845, no. 267, confidential.

276 De Jong, *Geschiedenis*, vol. II, 127-129.

277 Ibid., 87, note 3.

278 Ibid., 182-184.

279 De Jong, *Geschiedenis*, vol. III, 425-426.

280 Ibid., 503-506.

281 See Chapter 4 for a further explanation of bills of exchange in the context of slavery-related services.

282 De Jong, *Geschiedenis*, vol. III, 503-506. Luden & Van Geuns opened a mortgage fund for the *Annasburg* and *Kweeklust* plantations in 1772. NL-AsdSAA, "Archief van de firma Ketwich & Voomberg en Wed. W. Borski" [Archives of the firm Ketwich & Voomberg and of Wed. W. Borski], 600, inv. no. 733.

283 De Jong, *Geschiedenis*, vol. II, 111-112.

284 De Jong, *Geschiedenis*, vol. I, 266-267.

285 De Jager, *De bank van de gulden*, 37.

286 Siwpersad, *De afschaffing*, 121-122; *Collection*, II, 42.

287 Ibid.

288 De Jong, *Van batig slot naar ereschuld*, 39.

289 NL-HaNA, Koloniën [Colonies] 1814-1849, 2.10.01, inv. no. 4277: exh. 11 January, 1842, drawer F1, confidential appendix. PDF 283.

290 Ibid.

291 Ibid.

292 Ibid.

293 Ibid.

294 Siwpersad, *De afschaffing*, 73-77.

295 *Verzameling van stukken aangaande de Surinaamsche aangelegenheden, thans aanhangig bij de Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal*, two volumes (The Hague, 1845/1846), part I, 90-92.

296 Ibid.

297 Ibid.

298 Ibid., 100-102.

299 Ibid.

300 Ibid.

301 Ibid.

302 NL-HaNA, Baud, 2.21.007.58, inv. no. 767: 8 November, 1843, Baud to Bosch Reitz et al.

303 NL-HaNA, Baud, 2.21.007.58, inv. no. 767, package 7: "Correspondentie in 1843 gehouden met den G. C. Bosch Reitz, te Amsterdam" [Correspondence conducted in

1843 with G. C. Bosch Reitz of Amsterdam].

304 Ibid.

305 Through local legislation, the colonial government provided a framework for the relationship between owners and slaves. In Surinam, new regulations were issued in 1686, 1695, 1725, 1749, 1760, 1761, 1784, 1799, 1817, and 1851. During the eighteenth century, in particular, the administration began to play a growing role in regulating slavery. Cruel mistreatment by temporary overseers was identified as a source of problems, so by tempering their behaviour the administration hoped to prevent revolts. In 1784, a number of restrictions were placed on the "domestic jurisdiction" of owners and overseers. Under pressure from the abolitionist discourse, the most drastic revision took place in 1851: a substantial limitation of domestic jurisdiction, with extensive regulation. Karwan Fatah-Black, "The usurpation of legal roles by Surinam's Governing Council, 1669-1816", *Comparative Legal History*, 5:2 (2017) 243-261.

306 *Verzameling van stukken*, part I, 110. Amongst the signatories were Insinger & Co., Broen & Co., Determeyer Weslingh & Son, J. Luden, Goll & Co., Luden & Van Geuns, Hodshon & Son and Ketwich & Voomberg.

307 Ibid.

308 NL-HaNA, Baud, 2.21.007.58, inv. no. 767: 19 February, 1844, G. N. to Baud.

309 Ibid.

310 Ibid.

311 Ibid.

312 Ibid.

313 NL-HaNA, Baud, 2.21.007.58, inv. no. 767: undated note.

314 Ibid.

315 Ibid.

316 Ibid.

317 Ibid.

318 NL-HaNA, Baud, 2.21.007.58, inv. no. 767: 19 August 1844.

319 Ibid., 16 September, 1844.

320 *Verzameling van stukken*, I, 123-129 (undated October 1844; reminder dd. 2 October, 1844; reply from Baud dd. 11 November, 1844; petition to Baud dd. 27 November, 1844).

321 NL-HaNA, Baud, 2.21.007.58, inv. No. 767: 30 September, 1844, Boyen to Baud.

322 NL-HaNA 2.21.005.34, Van Hall, inv. no. 68: "Kopie brief over rekest Carp, Ketwich & Voomberg, Broen & Co, J.J. Poncelet, 18 januari, 1843" [Copy of letter concerning petition from Carp, Ketwich & Voomberg, Broen & Co., J. J. Poncelet, 18 January, 1843]. This states, "Mr [J. J.] Carp told me this morning that there were *fifty* signatures on it … His Honour was therefore now again anxious to fortify the same with more signatures."

323 NL-HaNA, Baud, 2.21.007.58, inv. no. 767: 25 January, 1845, Huidekoper to Van Hall – handwritten copy by Baud.

324 Ibid.

325 Ibid.

326 Ibid.

327 NL-AsdSAA, 1455, "Inventaris van het Archief van de Bank Insinger & Co." [Inventory of the Archives of the Bank Insinger & Co.], inv. no. 1445: 12 May, 1843, scan 52.

328 Ibid.

329 Ibid., copy of note by Baud dd. 18 March, 1844.
330 NL-HaNA, Baud, 2.21.007.58, inv. no. 767: 19 October, 1844, Rijk to Baud.
331 *Verzameling van stukken*, part II, 15.
332 NL-HaNA, Baud, 2.21.007.58, inv. no. 767: "Dinsdag" [Tuesday 8 March, 1845].
333 Ibid.
334 Ibid.
335 Ibid.
336 NL-HaNA, Baud, 2.21.007.58, inv. no. 767: memo dd. 26 February, 1845.
337 NL-HaNA, Baud, 2.21.007.58, inv. no. 767: 1 March, 1845, Rauzow to Baud.
338 NL-HaNA, Baud, 2.21.007.58, inv. No. 767: 30 September, 1844, Boyen to Baud.
339 NL-HaNA, Baud, 2.21.007.58, inv. no. 767: note dd. "Maandag 7" [Monday 7 March, 1845].
340 NL-HaNA, Baud, 2.21.007.58, inv. no. 767: "Dinsdag" [Tuesday].
341 A keen observation by Siwpersad (*De afschaffing*, 152).
342 Quoted in Siwpersad, *De afschaffing*, 118. HTK 1844-1845: 14 March, 1845, 256.
343 NL-HaNA, Baud, 2.21.007.58, inv. no. 767: 29 March, 1845, Rauzow to Baud.
344 Quoted in Siwpersad, *De afschaffing*, 122; *Bijdragen*, 307.
345 NL-HaNA, Baud, 2.21.007.58, inv. no. 767: 25 January, 1845, Huidekoper to Van Hall.
346 NL-HaNA, Baud, 2.21.007.58, inv. no. 767: 26 January, 1846, Brugmans to Baud.
347 Ibid.
348 Ibid.
349 NL-HaNA, "Koloniën" [Colonies] 1814-1849, 2.10.01, inv. no. 4356, no. 361 confidential: 3 September, 1846, De Veer to Baud.
350 Ibid.
351 NL-HaNA, Baud, 2.21.007.58, inv. no. 767: 19 October, 1844, Rijk to Baud.
352 NL-RtdSA, "Archief van de familie Mees" [Mees family archive], 39, folder 353: 19 March, 1842, Trabius to Mees.
353 Van der Laar, *Opperbankier en wetenschapsman*, 103.
354 NL-RtdSA, Archives of the Mees Family, 39, folder 438: "Adres aan de Koning" [Petition to the King], 1838.
355 Janse, *De afschaffers*, 56; Alex van Stipriaan, *Rotterdam in slavernij* (Amsterdam, 2020) passim.
356 NL-RtdSA, Mees Family Archives, 39, folder 438: 4 December, 1843, Mr Alexander on behalf of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society to Mees.
357 Apart from Mees, recurring names in this respect are A. Bogaers, Van Reesema, J. Thooft, D. Twiss, E. Miller, W. Mark, William Jay, S. Dunlop Jr, G. Levington, J. M. Brown and M. Beaton; "Adres aan de Koning" [Petition to the King] 1838.
358 Janse, *De afschaffers*, 58-67.
359 NL-RtdSA, "Archief van de familie Mees" [Mees family archive], 39, folder 353: 11 December, 1843, Ackersdijck to Mees.
360 NL-RtdSA, "Archief van de familie Mees" [Mees family archive], 39, folder 453: undated (probably 1843), Mees to an "Amicissime".
361 NL-RtdSA, "Archief van de familie Mees" [Mees family archive], 39, folder 353: 11 December, 1843.

362 NL-RtdSA, "Archief van de familie Mees" [Mees family archive], 39, folder 353: 20 February, 1842, Ackersdijck to Mees.

363 Janse, *De afschaffers*, 65-69.

364 NL-RtdSA, "Archief van de familie Mees" [Mees family archive], 39, folder 1587: 12 November, 1842, Mees to Ackersdijck.

365 NL-RtdSA, "Archief van de familie Mees" [Mees family archive], 39, folder 353: 15 January, 1843, Ackersdijck to Mees.

366 NL-RtdSA, "Archief van de familie Mees" [Mees family archive], 39, folder 353: 1 October, 1843, JA-Wc.

367 "The Antislavery Committee is very much in favour of your plan to publish a kind of journal and promises its enthusiastic co-operation." NL-RtdSA, "Archief van de familie Mees" [Mees family archive], 39, folder 1587: 30 October, 1843, Mees to Ackersdijck.

368 NL-RtdSA, "Archief van de familie Mees" [Mees family archive], 39, folder 438: loose membership list, inscribed front and back.

369 NL-RtdSA, "Archief van de familie Mees" [Mees family archive], 39, folder 353: 21 November, 1843, Ackersdijck to Mees.

370 NL-RtdSA, "Archief van de familie Mees" [Mees family archive], 39, folder 1587: 28 December, 1843, Mees to Ackersdijck.

371 "Mr [U. U. Fels], a lawyer here, a good Jew, is the chief writer of that newspaper. He has told me that I may list him amongst the persons mentioned as publishers of our journal. I believe that this will be useful to us. He will soon be a complete abolitionist and can then support the good cause in his newspaper. He is diligent, of good faith and not incompetent, and his newspaper is widely read here. Henceforth, he will always provide us with issues in which the colonies are discussed." NL-RtdSA, "Archief van de familie Mees" [Mees family archive], 39, folder 1587: 5 January, 1845, Mees to Ackersdijck.

372 NL-HaNA, Baud, 2.21.007.58, inv. no. 767: 29 March, 1845, Rauzow to Baud.

373 Ibid.

374 Ibid.

375 Van der Laar, *Opperbankier en wetenschapsman*, 99.

376 NL-RtdSA, "Archief van de familie Mees" [Mees family archive], 39, folder 1587: 27 December, 1841, Mees to Ackersdijck.

377 NL-RtdSA, "Archief van de familie Mees" [Mees family archive], 39, folder 1587: 13 October, 1843, Mees to Ackersdijck.

378 NL-RtdSA, "Archief van de familie Mees" [Mees family archive], 39, folder 1587: 1 June, 1844, Mees to Ackersdijck.

379 NL-RtdSA, "Archief van de familie Mees" [Mees family archive], 39, folder 1587: 17 February, 1844, Mees to Ackersdijck.

380 NL-RtdSA, "Archief van de familie Mees" [Mees family archive], 39, folder 1587: 26 March, 1844, Mees to Ackersdijck.

381 NL-RtdSA, "Archief van de familie Mees" [Mees family archive], 39, folder 353: 10 April, 1846, Ackersdijck to Mees.

382 NL-RtdSA, "Archief van de familie Mees" [Mees family archive], 39, folder 1587: 24 December, 1844, Mees to Ackersdijck.

383 NL-RtdSA, "Archief van de familie Mees" [Mees family archive], 39, folder 353: 26 April, 1846, Ackersdijck to Mees; NL-RtdSA, Archive of the Mees Family, 39, folder 353: 19 July, 1846, Rueb to Mees.

384 NL-RtdSA, "Archief van de familie Mees" [Mees family archive], 39, folder 1587: 2 March, 1847, Mees to Ackersdijck.

385 A letter from Rueb indicates that Mees encouraged them and urged them to keep going: "I received with gratitude your exhortation to continue with the journal. The great difficulty is to find a capable person here in Utrecht, who has the time, the ability and the inclination to supply the foundation with articles from time to time. With even the best of will and the greatest of diligence, this is difficult for members not residing in Utrecht because it requires time-consuming correspondence." NL-RtdSA, "Archief van de familie Mees" [Mees family archive], 39, folder 353: 10 September, 1847, Rueb to Mees.

386 NL-RtdSA, "Archief van de familie Mees" [Mees family archive], 39, folder 353: 27 October, 1847, Ackersdijck to Mees.

387 NL-RtdSA, "Archief van de familie Mees" [Mees family archive], 39, folder 1587: 16 March, 1848, Mees to Ackersdijck.

388 His father – and plantation owner – Rudolf Adriaan, plus G. Mees, A. Mees ("Raz"), C. Mees and R. Mees. On the women's petition of 1842 are his grandmother Catherina Elisa van Oordt, his sister Cornelia Mees, I. W. C. Vogel (neé Mees) and the more distantly related A. M. Mees van der Wallen, wife of Johan Gregorius Mees, son of Willem Cornelis' grandfather's uncle.

389 Van de Laar, *Opperbankier en wetenschapsman*, 115. In December 1849, he was indeed offered the opportunity to succeed Thorbecke at Leiden, again putting him into doubt (letter dd. 9 December, 1849, inv. no. 1587; Van de Laar 151/152).

390 Van de Laar, *Opperbankier en wetenschapsman*, 112-114.

391 NL-RtdSA, "Archief van de familie Mees" [Mees family archive], 39, folder 1587: 30 March, 1848, Mees to Ackersdijck.

392 NL-RtdSA, "Archief van de familie Mees" [Mees family archive], 39, folder 1587: 25 March, 1849, Mees to Ackersdijck.

393 NL-RtdSA, "Archief van de familie Mees" [Mees family archive], 39, folder 1587: 25 March, 1849, Mees to Ackersdijck.

394 NL-RtdSA, "Archief van de familie Mees" [Mees family archive], 39, folder 353: 26 March, 1849, Ackersdijck to Mees.

395 R. Reinsma, *Een merkwaardige episode uit de geschiedenis van de slavenemancipatie* (The Hague 1963) 67; Janse, *De afschaffers*, 92.

396 "Besluit van den Souvereinen Vorst van den 25sten Maart 1814" [Decree of the Sovereign Prince of 25 March, 1814], no. 105, *Staatsblad* no. 40, containing the charter and regulations of De Nederlandsche Bank.

397 Richard Roberts, *Schroders: Merchants & Bankers* (London, 1992) 66.

398 De Jong, *Geschiedenis* vol. 1, 81.

399 This is evident from the appendix to the annual report for 1863-1864, for instance, which briefly discusses an error in the books of the Java steam weaving mill. NL-HaNA, 2.25.68, inv. no. 1050.

400 The most recent "protest" involving Van Offen and Hope had occurred in Hamburg on 16 November, 1789; see NL-AsdSAA, 5075, inv. no. 15457/1282. Earlier examples came from Cadiz and Copenhagen, amongst others.

401 Herbert S. Klein & Ben Vinson, *African Slavery in Latin America and the Caribbean* (New York, 2007) passim.

402 Matt D. Childs, "A Case of 'Great Unstableness': A British Slaveholder and Brazilian Abolition", *The Historian* 60:4 (1998) 717-740.

403 De Jong, *Geschiedenis* vol. 1, 81.

404 NL-HaNA, 2.25.68, inv. no. 100497: "Journaal" [Journal] October 1852-March 1853, 9 October, 1852.

405 *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 9 October, 1852.

406 *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 21 October, 1854.

407 *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 28 May, 1847.

408 *Binnenlandse Bataafse Courant*, 3 May, 1800.

409 Jonker, "Roeien tegen de stroom" [Rowing against the current] 141-143.

410 NL-AsdSAA, 1455, "Inventaris van het Archief van de Bank Insinger & Co." [Inventory of the Archives of the Bank Insinger & Co.], inv. no. 1456: "Betaalboek 1821-1839" [Payment book 1821-1839], Dedel.

411 George Herring, *From Colony to Superpower: U.S. Foreign Relations Since 1776* (Oxford 2008) 103-6.

412 *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 27 March 1843; *Veendammer Courant*, 20 October, 1864.

413 Richard Roberts, *Schroders: Merchants and Bankers* (London, 2016) 66.

414 Judith F. Gentry, "A Confederate Success in Europe: The Erlanger Loan", *The Journal of Southern History* 36:2 (1970) 157-188.

415 Marc D. Weidenmier, "The Market for Confederate Cotton Bonds", *Explorations in Economic History* 37:1 (2000) 76-97.

416 Kornelis Douwe Bosch, *De Nederlandse Beleggingen in de Verenigde Staten* (Amsterdam, 1948) 132-135.

417 De Jong, *Geschiedenis*, vol. 1, 400-401.

418 Bosch, *De Nederlandse Beleggingen*, 129-131.

419 Ulbe Bosma, *The Making of a Periphery: How Island Southeast Asia Became a Mass Exporter of Labor* (New York, 2019) 64.

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486 Ibid. Baud also kept a copy of the petition; NL-HaNA, Baud, 2.21.007.58, inv. no. 923: "Ontwerp-Reglement op het beleid der regeering in de Westindische bezittingen. Met contra ontwerp van uit Suriname aan de Tweede Kamer toegezonden. Verzoekschrift belanghebbenden, 5 november 1852" [Draft regulation on the policy of the government in the West Indian possessions, with counterdraft submitted to the House of Representative from Surinam; petition from interested parties, 5 November, 1852], 9-10.

487 Cf. Dumas, *Proslavery Britain*, 158-162.

488 Kuitenbrouwer, "De Nederlandse afschaffing", 78.

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494 NL-AsdSAA, 1455, "Inventaris van het Archief van de Bank Insinger & Co." [Inventory of the archives of the bank Insinger & Co.], inv. No. 1445: copy of letter to minister dd. 20 November, 1855.

495 Ibid., copy of letter to minister dd. 20 November, 1855. See also *Eerste rapport der Staatscommissie*, 121. Amounts include land. For enslaved persons without land, an amount of *f* 260 was estimated.

496 See p. 145 of this book.

497 NL-HaNA, Baud, 2.21.007.58, inv. no. 930: 2 October, 1856, Brugmans to Baud. See also Siwpersad, *De afschaffing*, 227.

498 NL-HaNA, Baud, 2.21.007.58, inv. no. 930: 2 November, 1856, Brugmans to Baud. Between June 1848 and January 1852, Mijer was charged with drafting a penal code for Europeans in the Dutch East Indies. He was also an ardent supporter of the colonial system of forced cultivation.

499 Kuitenbrouwer, "De Nederlandse afschaffing", 79-80; HTK 1855-1856, 12 December, 1855, 402.

500 NL-HaNA, Baud, 2.21.007.58, inv. no. 930: 15 April, 1855, Brugmans to Baud.

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509 *Bijlagen Handelingen* 1856-1857, 1218-1239.

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511 This in itself is not so strange, since Mijer had been appointed on 5 December, 1855 and so it may well be that the letter from a few days earlier had been overlooked during the handover.

512 Ibid.

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514 Ibid.

515 Ibid.

516 Brandon, "With the power of language", 237.

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518 Ibid.

519 Ibid., f. 6.

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521 Ibid., f. 9.

522 Ibid.

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525 Ibid., f. 28.

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527 NL-HaNA, 2.10.02, inv. no. 5895, subfolder 120-129, document 127; HTK 1857-1858, 16 February, 1858, 341.

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529 Ibid.

530 Brandon, "With the power of language", 233-236.

531 NL-HaNA, 2.10.02, inv. no. 5895, subfolder 120-129, document 127.

532 Ibid.

533 NL-HaNA, 2.02.22, inv. no. 1075, subfolder 130-139, document 138; Dumas, *Proslavery Britain*, 30-31.

534 NL-HaNA, 2.02.22, inv. no. 1075, subfolder 130-139, document 138, 2.

535 NL-HaNA, 2.02.22, inv. no. 1075, subfolder 130-139, document 138, 7.

536 NL-HaNA, 2.02.22, inv. no. 1075, subfolder 130-139, document 138, 9.

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538 Kuitenbrouwer, "De Nederlandse afschaffing", 84.

539 NL-HaNA, Brugmans, 1.10.13, inv. no. 136: "Voorloopig Verslag van de Commissie van Rapporteurs uit de Tweede Kamer over de op de 17 juli 1857 ingedended wetsontwerp tot afschaffen der slavernij in Nederlandsch West-Indië, 1858 januari 31" [Preliminary response by the Committee of Rapporteurs of the House of Representatives to the draft bill of 17 July, 1857 concerning the abolition of slavery in the Dutch West Indies, 31 January, 1858] 15; Brandon, "With the power of language", 241.

540 Kuitenbrouwer, "De Nederlandse afschaffing", 84.

541 Reggie Baay, "De stille afschaffing van de slavernij in Nederlands-Indië" [The quiet abolition of slavery in the Dutch East Indies], in: Pepijn Brandon et al. (eds), *De slavernij in Oost en West. Het Amsterdam onderzoek* (Amsterdam, 2020) 326-334, specifically 329-332.

542 KHA, G12, "Verzameling stukken, afkomstig van C.P. Schimpf" [Collection of documents from C. P. Schimpf], inv. No. 2: "Correspondentie van Schimpf met de Ministers van Koloniën C.F. Pahud, P. Mijer en J.J. Rochussen, 1855-1858" [Correspondence between Schimpf and the ministers of the Colonies, C. F. Pahud, P. Mijer and J. J. Rochussen, 1855-1858], 14 June, 1858, Rochussen to Schimpf. See also R. Reinsma, "De autobiografie van Jan Jacob Rochussen (1797-1871)" [The autobiography of Jan Jacob Rochussen, 1797-1871], *Bijdragen en Mededelingen van het Historisch Genootschap* 73 (1959) 54-138, specifically 107-110.

543 Ibid.

544 Ibid.

545 Ibid.

546 Kuitenbrouwer, "De Nederlandse afschaffing", 84.

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550 Ibid., 30.

551 Van Winter, "De openbare mening", 84.

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559 Ibid.

560 Ibid.

561 Ibid.
562 HEK 1858-1859, 6 May 1859, 188.
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564 Ibid.
565 Ibid., 189-190.
566 *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 16 July 1859; Felius, *Noordhollandse Staten*, 30.
567 NL-AsdSAA, 1455, "Inventaris van het Archief van de Bank Insinger & Co." [Inventory of the archives of the bank Insinger & Co.], inv. no. 1445, 18 December, 1860.
568 Ibid.
569 Siwpersad, *De afschaffing*, 252-253; Kuitenbrouwer, "De Nederlandse afschaffing", 85.
570 NL-AsdSAA, 1455, "Inventaris van het Archief van de Bank Insinger & Co." [Inventory of the archives of the bank Insinger & Co.], inv. no. 1445, 18 December, 1860.
571 Ibid.
572 Van Winter, "De openbare mening", 88-89.
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601 Ibid.

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