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Suriname and the Atlantic World, 1650-1800

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Citation

Fatah-Black, K. J. (2013, October 1). *Suriname and the Atlantic World, 1650-1800*. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/21912>

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Author: Fatah-Black, Karwan Jalal

Title: Suriname and the Atlantic World, 1650-1800

Issue Date: 2013-10-01

Suriname and the Atlantic World, 1650-1800

Proefschrift

Ter verkrijging van
de graad van Doctor aan de Universiteit Leiden,
op gezag van Rector Magnificus Prof. mr. C.J.J.M.
Stolker
volgens besluit van het College voor Promoties
te verdedigen op dinsdag, 1 oktober 2013
klokke 16.15

door
Karwan Jalal Fatah-Black
geboren te Amsterdam
in 1981

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List of abbreviations

Abbreviated names of companies and institutions used in the text

MCC	Middelburg Trading Company, <i>Middelburgse Commercie Compagnie</i>
SC	Suriname Company, <i>Sociëteit van Suriname</i>
VOC	Dutch East India Company, <i>Vereenigde Oost- Indische Compagnie</i>
WIC	Dutch West India Company, <i>West-Indische Compagnie</i>

Abbreviated names of archives and datasets used in footnotes

HCA	Kew, The National Archive, High Court of Admiralty
MCC	Middelburg, Zeeuws Archief, Middelburgse Commercie Compagnie
NL-HaNA	Den Haag, Nationaal Archief
OAS	Den Haag, Nationaal Archief, Oud Archief
Suriname	
OBP	Overgekomen brieven en papieren (written material sent to the SC) in the SvS
PSDC	Postma Suriname Data Collection
PSNADC	Postma Suriname North America Data Collection
SAA	Amsterdam, Stadsarchief Amsterdam
TASTD	Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database
TNA	Kew, The National Archive
ZA	Middelburg, Zeeuws Archief
SvS	Den Haag, Nationaal Archief, Sociëteit van Suriname

Introduction

When sailing into the Suriname River from the Atlantic Ocean in the eighteenth century one would see plantations along the river and defence works protecting the river mouth. There were sugar plantations inland, but close to the coast one would find predominantly “coffee plantations, lying on both sides of the river.” After passing the first defences and plantations, the “very advantageous and strong fortress *Zeelandia*” would come into view “just north of Paramaribo.”¹ The city itself was a sight to behold with its white houses and fragrant trees lining the streets. Between 1650 and 1800 present-day Paramaribo was founded on the remnants of an indigenous village and developed into a bustling colonial city. The centre of Paramaribo, as the indigenous village before it, is situated along the Suriname River on shell ridges several kilometres from the Atlantic coast, not far from where the Commewijne and Suriname River merge before they flow into the ocean. Both rivers have a low gradient and are rich in sediment. Over millennia they have left a thick and fertile layer of clay, which makes much of Suriname’s northern seaboard very suitable for agriculture once irrigational systems deal with both the incoming tide and excess rain water. Developing plantation agriculture was the main motive for European colonisation along the Suriname River. The shell ridges that form Paramaribo’s foundation are slightly higher than much of the surrounding swamp-like area. These ridges and the robust build of the fort ensured that “the violent current that streams along the fort wastes its force in vain.”² The fort and the ridge made Paramaribo the first good location to make landfall when coming in from the Ocean. To this day the ridges determine the stretched-out gridiron street pattern of the city.

Paramaribo transformed from a fort with some houses and inns into a lively city with its waterfront, markets, theatres, scientific and literary societies and houses of worship.³ A European visitor described Paramaribo

¹ “een meenigte Coffy-Plantagien, die aan weerzyde gelegen zyn, maar ook de zeer voordeelige en sterke Fortresse Zeelandia leggende in het Noord-oosten, een uur van de Schans, even boven Paramaribo” Thomas Pistorius, *Korte en zakelijke beschrijvinge van de Colonie van Suriname* (Amsterdam: Theodorus Craijenschot, 1763), 2.

² “Het geweld der Stroom, die zelfs deeze Vesting bespoelt, verspilt haare kragten te vergeefs” *ibid.*, 3.

³ Many visitors left descriptions of the town. The most important ones are summed up here in chronological order. Lengthier citations from these can be found throughout the book. George Warren, *An Impartial Description of Surinam Upon the Continent of Guiana in America. With a History of Several Strange Beasts, Birds, Fishes, Serpents, Insects and*

in 1718 as “the meeting place where planters come together, where the Lords of the Government give their orders, and where the populace receives them. Here the ships sail hither and thither.”⁴ Practically all connections to the outside world were across water, making the *Waterkant* (waterfront) buzzing with activity. On the river in front of the city one could see the large ocean-crossing vessels of the Dutch, sometimes carrying enslaved Africans, and somewhat further upstream the ships of the non-Dutch intra-American trade. Barges and tent boats moved back and forth between the ships, the waterfront and the inland plantations. The population of Paramaribo grew from a few hundred in 1700 to ten thousand at the end of that century. In the second half of the eighteenth century Paramaribo expanded beyond its original core near the fort. Outside the centre the neighbourhoods of the manumitted and their offspring came to be situated between broad, sandy streets. The city not only grew in size, but certainly became a city in terms of the social, economic and governmental activities that took place there.⁵

Customs of That Colony, &c. (London: Printed by W. Godbid for N. Brooke, 1667), 1–2; J. D. Herlein, *Beschryvinge van de volk-plantinge Zuriname: vertonende de opkomst dier zelve colonie, de aanbouw en bewerkinge der zuiker-plantagien. Neffens den aard der eigene natuurlijke inwoonders of Indianen; als ook de slaafsche Afrikaansche Mooren; deze beide natien haar levens-manieren, afgoden-dienst, regering, zeden* (Leeuwarden: Meindert Injema, 1718), 46–50; Pistorius, *Korte en zakelijke beschrijvinge*, 3–4; Jan Jacob Hartsinck, *Beschryving van Guiana, of de Wildekust in Zuid-America*, vol. 2 (Amsterdam: Gerrit Tielenburg, 1770), 567–571; David de Isaac Cohen Nassy et al., *Essai historique sur la colonie de Surinam: sa fondation, ses révolutions, ses progrès, depuis son origine jusqu'à nos jours, ainsi que les causes qui depuis quelques années ont arrêté le cours de sa prospérité ...: avec l'histoire de la nation juive portugaise & allemande y établie, leurs privilèges, immunités & franchises, leur état politique & moral, tant ancien que moderne, la part qu'ils ont eu dans la défense & dans les progrès de la Colonie* (Paramaribo, 1788), 43; John Gabriel Stedman, *Narrative of a Five Years' Expedition Against the Revolted Negroes of Surinam, in Guiana, on the Wild Coast of South America, from the Year 1772 to 1777* (London: J. Johnson & J. Edwards, 1796); Albert Sack, *A Narrative of a Voyage to Surinam: Of a Residence There During 1805, 1806, and 1807, and of the Author's Return to Europe by the Way of North America* (Printed for G. and W. Nicol by W. Bulmer, 1810), 44; John Augustine Waller, *A Voyage in the West Indies: Containing Various Observations Made During a Residence in Barbadoes, and Several of the Leeward Islands: With Some Notices and Illustrations Relative to the City of Paramaribo, in Surinam* (Richard Phillips and Company, 1820), 64.

⁴ “Dit is de vergader-plaats van Parimaribo alwaar de Planters t' zamen komen, daar de Heeren van de Regeringe hun bevelen uitgeven, en het gehele Volk dezelve ontfangt; hier varen de Schepen af en an.” Herlein, *Beschryvinge*, 48.

⁵ This was nicely put by Philip Curtin when he wrote that a city is a place “where people do different things, and the more different things they do, the more the place is a city.” Philip D. Curtin, “Preface,” in *Atlantic Port Cities. Economy, Culture, and Society in the Atlantic World, 1650-1850*, ed. Franklin W. Knight and Peggy K. Liss (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1991).

The city's growth in size and function should not come as a surprise; the eighteenth century saw cities booming all along the American Atlantic coast, including the Caribbean. In Paramaribo's hinterland the number of enslaved Africans increased to almost 60,000 after the middle decades of the eighteenth century.⁶ Paramaribo has always been understood as an extension of the colonisation process in Suriname and the growth of the plantation economy.⁷ This study seeks to provide depth and detail to this history by adding to it an understanding of Paramaribo's role as an Atlantic nodal point. An Atlantic nodal point is a city that facilitates connections between different regions in the Atlantic world. These connections can be purely economic, for example the trading and shipping of plantation produce for sale on European markets. But the movement of goods almost always also meant the movement of people. They in turn took with them the latest news, their cultural traits and ideas about the world. The Atlantic nodal points did not just develop in relation to their hinterland, but existed within a network of cities. These networks were not just trans-Oceanic, but often regional in character.⁸

⁶ Alex van Stipriaan, *Surinaams contrast: rooibouw en overleven in een Caraïbische plantagekolonie, 1750-1863* (Leiden: KITLV Uitgeverij, 1993), 33–35.

⁷ G. A. de Bruijne, *Paramaribo: stadsgeografische studies van een ontwikkelingsland* (Romen, 1976), 15; De Bruijne does stress the importance for intercolonial connections, but only for Spanish America and cities like Shanghai with large non-European empires as their hinterland. G.A. de Bruijne, "The Colonial City and the Post-colonial World," in *Colonial Cities. Essays on Urbanism in a Colonial Context*, ed. Robert Ross and Gerard J. Telkamp, Comparative Studies in Overseas History (Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhoff, 1985), 233.

⁸ While Price stresses the importance of production in the hinterland, the variations within networks of cities help to explain why some cities were more successful than others. Jacob M. Price, "Economic Function and Growth of American Port Towns in the Eighteenth Century," *Perspectives in American History* 8 (1974): 123–186; Max Savelle, *Empires to Nations: Expansion in America, 1713-1824*, vol. V, Europe and the World in the Age of Expansion (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1974), 143–145; A very early example of this would be Havana where a regional system of connections sprung up beyond the connections made by the return fleet. Alejandro de la Fuente, César García del Pino, and Bernardo Iglesias Delgado, "Havana and the Fleet System: Trade and Growth in the Periphery of the Spanish Empire, 1550–1610," *Colonial Latin American Review* 5, no. 1 (1996): 95–115; The North American coast was no different. There "coastal trade served two basic functions: one was to carry out the distribution of colonial products destined for domestic consumption; and the second was to collect commodities for export to overseas markets from the larger ports like Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Charleston, and to distribute imports from such commercial centers as these." James F. Shepherd and Samuel H. Williamson, "The Coastal Trade of the British North American Colonies, 1768-1772," *The Journal of Economic History* 32, no. 4 (December 1972): 783–810, doi:10.2307/2117255; What is true for the cities on the Atlantic's western coasts seems to accord with global

The same applies to Paramaribo; its network of economic relationships was more extensive than its role in the connections between the plantations and the cities in the Dutch Republic. Facilitating and regulating these connections added to the urban functions of city. As the authors of the *Essai Historique* (1788) argued: “To facilitate the movement of goods, prodigious shops were founded, located mostly on the river side. The shops for edibles and many other things for the Negroes on the plantations were carried there by the Americans.”⁹ Paramaribo’s role in connecting different parts of the Atlantic world changed over the eighteenth century. When it was just a fort and some houses, Paramaribo was functioning as a gatekeeper between the plantations and the Atlantic. During the eighteenth century it turned into a colonial city. A multitude of people had settled there running their businesses and maintaining relationships to places around the Atlantic world. In the late eighteenth century the local Surinamese wanted to be increasingly free to organise their own trade and shipping unhindered by metropolitan regulations. The authors of the *Essai Historique* argued for making “Suriname a free port” where the colonists “had the permission to sell their products themselves.”¹⁰

patterns. Peter J. Taylor, *World City Network: a Global Urban Analysis* (London New York: Routledge, 2004), 7–27.

⁹ See next footnote for full citation of this passage.

¹⁰ “Pour le débit de cela, ils s’est formé une quantité prodigieuse de boutique, la plupart situé au bord de la riviere; des magasins pour les comestibles & la plupart des choses, apporté par les Américains pour l’approvisionnement des Negres des Plantations: & ils les intérêts de la République permettre, de faire de Surinam, un port libre, & que les colons eussent le permission de vendre eux mêmes leur produits, la colonie sentiroit sans doute un changement heureux, sans pourtant causer à la métropole aucun dommage.” Nassy et al.,

Essai historique, 42–44.

[Figure 2]

Figure 1 View of Paramaribo's waterfront in the early eighteenth century
Reinier Ottens, *Accurate en Origineele Afbeeldinge, van Paramaribo, of Nieuw Middelburg, gelegen in de Colonie Suriname*, n.d., UBM: Kaartenz: 104.01.02

This dynamism in the eighteenth century strongly diverges from the stagnation and decline of Amsterdam and Middelburg, Paramaribo's trans-Oceanic connected cities in the Dutch part of its network.¹¹ Not only did Amsterdam and Middelburg fail to grow during the eighteenth century, but in Amsterdam there was also marked shift from a situation in which there was a strong combination of production management and staple trade towards one in which financial services became an important aspect of the city's role in its urban network. Paramaribo fared differently, its population increased. In Paramaribo's hinterland production expanded rapidly, while in the Dutch Republic the industries that were not connected to the Atlantic world contracted or even disappeared.¹² Much of the Paramaribo's growth can be attributed to the expanding production by enslaved Africans in its plantation hinterland. In addition, the changes in the economic functions of the nodal point appear to be related to the connecting function the city had, not just between the production on the plantations and the consumption in the metropolis, but also in trading with other places around the Atlantic world, predominantly the North American East Coast.

¹¹ Suriname managed to grow in terms of production, shipping and population, therewith strongly diverging from the trend in the Republic. In Holland and Zeeland most central cities either stagnated or shrunk in the period between 1688 and 1795. Jonathan Israel, *The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness and Fall, 1477-1806* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 1107.

¹² Jan de Vries and A. M. van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy: Success, Failure, and Perseverance of the Dutch Economy, 1500-1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

This book covers Suriname's history from roughly the onset of English colonisation in 1650 until the collapse of Dutch overseas power at the end of the eighteenth century. The mainstay of the book deals with the period that the Dutch chartered Suriname Company (*Sociëteit van Suriname*, SC) ruled the colony (1683-1795). The Dutch conquered Suriname from the English in 1667. The conquest of Suriname had taken place under the auspices of the States of Zeeland at a time when Suriname was a sugar colony under English rule. Zeeland found it difficult to manage the colony after conquest because of inland wars with several indigenous groups, lack of supplies and departing colonists. In 1682 the States of Zeeland sold Suriname to the Dutch West-India Company (WIC). For the WIC Suriname was a means to acquire tropical products for the Dutch market, to create a new market for finished goods from Europe, and to expand its shipping industry.¹³ The WIC could however not afford to buy the colony from Zeeland directly, and the WIC directors decided that their company should not carry the full burden of colonial management on its own. They found the city of Amsterdam and the rich family Aerssen van Sommelsdyck willing to participate and fund part of the project. In 1683 these three parties formed the SC through which they would share in the colony's profits, costs and general management. The Aerssen family withdrew from the SC in 1770. In 1771 the SC continued operating as a two-party arrangement but was disbanded in 1795 when the Patriot movement assumed power in the Netherlands with the help of the French revolutionary army. The new rulers quickly pushed to bring all colonial domains under a central governmental body. The colony itself fell (temporarily) into British hands in 1799.

For the SC, securing the feasibility and profitability of the colony was a complicated balancing act. They could not over-tax plantation owners, but simultaneously had to bring in tax money exceeding the defence and maintenance cost if they wanted to accumulate a handsome profit for

¹³ The charter under which the Dutch West-India Company would come to rule Suriname was explicit about how the Dutch Republic would profit from Suriname's colonisation: "through the growth of commerce and shipping, the debit of the many manufactures and fruits, through the producing of raw materials, which will come from there in return-shipments which will be adapted and debited and traded to other countries, through the continuous building and repairing of ships sailing there and being eaten by the worm, through the training of seamen and capable sailors, and in other ways, all the inhabitants, and the state itself [will profit]." Octroy ofte fundamenteele Conditien, onder dewelke haar Hoog: Mog: ten besten ende voordeele van de Ingesetenen deser Landen, de Colonie van Suriname hebben doen vallen in handen ende onder directie van de Bewinhebberen van de Generaale Nederlantsche Geoctroyeerde West-Indische Compagnie (1682) in: Hartsinck, *Beschryving*, 1770, 2:623–624.

themselves.¹⁴ To control the enslaved Africans, the European plantation owners, a small group of freemen as well as the indigenous and Maroons in the hinterland, the Suriname Company mainly relied on the Governor. The position of Governor, as well as all the other appointments of SC-personnel, including doctors, preachers, teachers and secretaries were made by the directors of the SC in Amsterdam. The second in command, in case the Governor was absent or had died, was the commander of the armed forces. To support the Governor in ruling the colony there were two councils of civilians: the political council, which also presided over criminal cases, and the court for small and civic cases. The members of these were elected from among the free Protestant European planters, who nominated two candidates per available seat. From these nominees the Governor chose his councillors. While the Governor and the councils wielded considerable power, they were held to follow the charters of the colony and directives from the directors of the SC. In cases where the charters were open to interpretation, or conflicts arose, the Dutch States General had a final say in the matter.¹⁵

Given that the Governor, the commander, and the courts were all situated in Paramaribo, governmental activities were a central part of the city's function. During the eighteenth century Paramaribo also became more important relative to its hinterland in terms of religious, cultural and scientific activities and increasingly as a market for local produce. The desire to safeguard and control the non-Dutch connections further increased the social, economic and administrative functions of the city. In the Atlantic world power and productivity were gravitating towards the British and North American Atlantic cities. This change in the Atlantic city-network has not been sufficiently considered as a part of Paramaribo's development and as part of the historical scholarship on Suriname. Historians have treated Paramaribo primarily as a by-product of the plantation economy and its connection to the Dutch Republic. In this book I argue that a considerable part this dynamism in the eighteenth century can be attributed to Paramaribo's role in facilitating and controlling the connections between the plantation economy and a non-Dutch network of connected cities. The directors of the SC were faced with the dilemma of either closing off the colony to the interests and connections to other empires, or allowing such connections to supplement the limited economic capabilities of the Dutch. Part of the eighteenth-century transformation of Paramaribo can be explained by incorporating its Atlantic connections. This book describes the

¹⁴ G. W. van der Meiden, *Betwist Bestuur: een eeuw strijd om de macht in Suriname, 1651-1753* (Amsterdam: Bataafsche Leeuw, 2008), 36–39.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 12–13.

changes in Paramaribo's urban network, what caused these changes and what they meant for the city's function in the Atlantic world.

[Figure 3]

Figure 2 View of Paramaribo's waterfront, 1831
P.J. Benoît, Voyage à Surinam (1839).

* * *

The notion that there was an Atlantic world in the early modern period plays an important role in this book. Inspired by the field of Atlantic history and research into historical globalisation, this study takes into account the geographic openness of the Atlantic region as an important factor in the colonisation of Suriname and the development of Paramaribo from functioning as a gatekeeper with a landing place and a fort into a colonial city.¹⁶ It was relatively easy to reach colonies across the Atlantic Ocean from Europe, even in smaller vessels. In the absence of indigenous maritime powers in the Americas, the European ships only faced metropolitan restrictions when they tried to connect across imperial boundaries. The Atlantic world became an area that was difficult to police by state or semi-state institutions such as the Dutch States General, the WIC or the SC.¹⁷ This

¹⁶ There are a growing number of historians who emphasise the interimperial connections in the Atlantic world. The primary overviews and reflections on the field are to be found in: David Armitage, "Three Concepts of Atlantic History," in *The British Atlantic World, 1500-1800*, ed. David Armitage and Michael J. Braddick (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 11–30; Bernard Bailyn, *Atlantic History: Concept and Contours* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005); Jack P. Greene and Philip D. Morgan, eds., *Atlantic History: A Critical Appraisal* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009); Bernard Bailyn and Patricia L. Denault, eds., *Soundings in Atlantic History: Latent Structures and Intellectual Currents, 1500-1830* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009); Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra and Erik R. Seeman, *The Atlantic in Global History, 1500-2000* (Pearson Prentice Hall, 2007); Thomas Benjamin, *The Atlantic World: Europeans, Africans, Indians and Their Shared History, 1400-1900* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), xxiii–xxiv.

¹⁷ Henk den Heijer and Victor Enthoven, "Nederland en de Atlantische wereld, 1600-1800. Een historiografisch overzicht," *Tijdschrift voor Zeegeschiedenis* 24, no. 2 (2005): 147–166; Rudolf Paesie, *Lorrendrayen op Africa: de illegale goederen- en slavenhandel op West-Afrika tijdens het achttiende-eeuwse handelsmonopolie van de West-Indische Compagnie, 1700-1734* (Amsterdam: De Bataafsche Leeuw, 2008); Christian J. Koot, *Empire at the Periphery: British Colonists, Anglo-Dutch Trade, and the Development of the British Atlantic, 1621-1713* (New York University Press, 2011); Wim Klooster, *Illicit Riches: The Dutch Trade in the Caribbean, 1648-1795*, 1995; Cornelis Ch. Goslinga, *The Dutch in the Caribbean and in the Guianas, 1680-1791*, Anjerpublikaties 19 (Assen, Netherlands: Van Gorcum, 1985); Gert Oostindie, "'British Capital, Industry and Perseverance' Versus Dutch 'Old School'?: The

relatively open geography created possibilities for circumventing monopolies and imperial boundaries by using shipping lanes between Atlantic ports, factories and fortresses.

This study seeks to add to the knowledge about the Dutch connections of Paramaribo an understanding of the linkages that existed throughout the Atlantic world. Johannes Postma has done the ground-breaking work for this by examining the size of the network around Suriname looking at its demand for local provisions and tracing the connections through which they arrived.¹⁸ The SC was founded on the basis of the exclusive right for the Dutch to profit from all the trade and production of the colony,¹⁹ but in line with the general pattern seen in the Atlantic world, the directors of the SC were unable to create such a walled garden. They had to allow non-Dutch traders to their colony to supply it with the necessary provisions in exchange for wood and molasses.²⁰ The inter-colonial trade caused friction between colony and motherland; the schemes created by merchants around the Atlantic to evade trade restrictions were often creative and played a crucial role in the integration of the Atlantic world. For Suriname, molasses was the most important export product in the inter-colonial trade. In many decades of the eighteenth century, regional non-Dutch ships carrying molasses outnumbered their Dutch counterparts. Molasses, used for the production of rum, was crucial to the North Americans, prompting signer of the declaration of independence and second president of the United States John Adams to remark that “molasses was an essential ingredient in American independence.”²¹

This book deals with the economic connections between Suriname’s plantation economy, through Paramaribo, to the Atlantic world from its

Dutch Atlantic and the Takeover of Berbice, Demerara and Essequibo, 1750-1815,” *BMGN - Low Countries Historical Review* 127, no. 4 (December 18, 2012): 28–55.

¹⁸ Johannes Postma, “Breaching the Mercantile Barriers of the Dutch Colonial Empire: North American Trade with Surinam During the Eighteenth Century,” in *Merchant Organization and Maritime Trade in the North Atlantic, 1660-1815*, ed. Olaf Uwe Janzen, vol. 15, Research in Maritime History (St. John’s, New Foundland: International Maritime Economic History Association, 1998), 107–131; Johannes Postma, “Suriname and Its Atlantic Connections, 1667 - 1795,” in *Riches from Atlantic Commerce: Dutch Transatlantic Trade and Shipping, 1585 - 1817*, ed. Johannes Postma and Victor Enthoven, vol. 1, The Atlantic World (Leiden Boston: Brill Academic Publishers, 2003), 287–322. The quantitative part of this study will present data that was gathered by Johannes Postma, and which he made into an invaluable database. Johannes Postma, Suriname North American Data Collection (PSNADC) (2009).

¹⁹ Hartsinck, *Beschryving*, 1770, 2:630.

²⁰ Postma, “Breaching the Mercantile Barriers.”

²¹ Frederick Bernays Wiener, “The Rhode Island Merchants and the Sugar Act,” *The New England Quarterly* 3, no. 3 (July 1930): 464–500, doi:10.2307/359398.

founding as a European settlement around 1650 until the collapse of Dutch overseas power around 1800. Some historians have been sceptical of the importance of an Atlantic world. Piet Emmer has argued that there was not enough interconnection between the various Atlantic regions to speak of an integrated world, and that the connections were only of cultural significance, but had no economic importance.²² There is an important point to be taken from such scepticism about early modern globalization. It is absolutely clear that even plantation colonies, despite their integration into geographically spread-out commodity chains, could not survive without production for local or regional consumption. Detailed studies of the Barbadian plantation system have shown that several aspects of its economy were not dependent on transoceanic connections, and that a great part of the workforce did not produce for European markets.²³ While the importance of trans-Oceanic links should not be overstated, it goes almost without saying that for the colonies in the Americas the trans-Atlantic connections were not merely a cultural affair without significant economic impact, but formed indispensable lifelines for the colonial project. In addition, also in the case of Europe, historians are increasingly finding that trans-Oceanic exchanges were of greater importance than they had hitherto thought.²⁴

²² P.C. Emmer, "The Myth of Early Globalization: The Atlantic Economy, 1500-1800," *European Review* 11, no. 1 (2003): 37-47; P.C. Emmer, "In Search of a System: The Atlantic Economy, 1500-1800," in *Atlantic History. History of the Atlantic System, 1580-1830*, ed. Horst Pietschmann (Göttingen, 2002), 169-178.

²³ David Eltis, "The Slave Economies of the Caribbean: Structure, Performance, Evolution and Significance," in *The Slave Societies of the Caribbean*, ed. Franklin W. Knight, vol. III, VI vols., General History of the Caribbean (London: UNESCO Publishing, 1997), 105-137; David Eltis, "The Total Product of Barbados, 1664-1701," *The Journal of Economic History* 55, no. 2 (June 1995): 321-338.

²⁴ Of course there is a basic validity to the observation that transoceanic shipping was dwarfed by the size of trade and migration on the respective continents. However, this line of reasoning does not take into account the qualitative shift that occurred after the onset of the Columbian Exchange or the institutional transformation in European nations connected to the Atlantic world. See for example: Alfred W. Crosby, *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2003); Daron Acemoglu, Simon Johnson, and James Robinson, "The Rise of Europe: Atlantic Trade, Institutional Change, and Economic Growth," *The American Economic Review* 95, no. 3 (June 2005): 546-579; But also the direct economic impact was far from insignificant. To use the example of the Netherlands, the Atlantic trades and their connected industries were the most dynamic sector of the Dutch Republic in the eighteenth century. De Vries and Van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, 467-477; See especially the introductory chapter to Johannes Postma and Victor Enthoven, eds., *Riches from Atlantic Commerce: Dutch Transatlantic Trade and Shipping, 1585-1817*, vol. 1, The Atlantic World (Leiden Boston: Brill Academic Publishers, 2003); Even a minor trade circuit like the slave trade resulted in

The connections that are studied in this work are the durable routes that people, goods and ideas travelled to and from Paramaribo. Material constraints forced early modern Suriname to rely heavily on local resources. The carrying capacity of ships and the lengths of their voyages across the ocean did not yet allow for the great compression of space and time seen in later days. This forced colonial projects to rely on their own devices and not count too much on any metropolitan input. The colony heavily depended on short distance circuits of exchange through networks of interconnected colonial cities. National borders did not limit these connections between cities. Although the early modern period saw the rise of the idea that political borders enclose territories, those ideas rarely reflected reality. The contrast between town and country as well as between cities was still the dominant scale of political relationships.²⁵ Most of the colonial urban centres were tied together into networks that easily crossed political borders. If one would plot the interconnections between cities around Atlantic Ocean on a map, the famous ‘triangle’ of the triangular trade would just be one of the many circuits that existed amidst a world of connections. That is not to say that the power imbalance between the metropolis and the colonies was unimportant, but rather emphasises that power can be measured by the ability to include and exclude actors from a network.²⁶

The connected nodal points all had their own circuits connecting their hinterlands to the wider Atlantic world. When documents on the ownership of cargoes and letters to far-off family members are read, a wider network appears that can be traced into the hinterlands of Europe, Africa and North America. Operations by merchants and companies organized from cities in the Dutch Republic were shaped by the networked structure of the Atlantic world as a whole.²⁷ In the triangular model, Paramaribo sits at the American end where enslaved Africans were disembarked and tropical produce loaded on Europe-bound ships. A networked conception of Paramaribo’s place in the Atlantic world does not replace the triangular

considerable economic activity on all three sides of the triangle, not in the least in Europe. Matthias van Rossum and Karwan Fatah-Black, “Wat is winst? De economische impact van de Nederlandse trans-Atlantische slavenhandel,” *Tijdschrift voor Sociale en Economische Geschiedenis* 9, no. 1 (2012): 3–29.

²⁵ David Held, *Global Transformations: Politics, Economics and Culture* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1999), 418–421.

²⁶ Jürgen Osterhammel and Niels P. Petersson, *Globalization: a Short History* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2003), 9.

²⁷ Gert Oostindie and Jessica Vance Roitman, “Repositioning the Dutch in the Atlantic, 1680–1800,” *Itinerario* 36, no. 2 (2012): 129–160, doi:10.1017/S0165115312000605.

model, but is a necessary way to decentre its history and highlights its autonomous development.

In contrast to the sceptical view on the importance of Atlantic interconnections it is increasingly being argued that the concept of Atlantic world is actually too limited as an analytic framework because it downplays a global sphere of interaction.²⁸ Commodities like rice, tobacco and tea, as well as textiles and silver were transported between the Atlantic and Indian Ocean worlds. Peter Coclanis argued that the concept of articulation of modes of production can be borrowed from Marxist historiography to discuss how different systems of production, trade and consumption were interrelated. For example, by connecting the rise of the second serfdom in Europe to the industrious revolution on the Caribbean plantations using enslaved labour.²⁹ When distinguishing hard from soft globalization, a debate can be had to what extent places such as eighteenth-century Suriname were integrated in a global system of cultural and economic exchange, but that it was interconnected is beyond doubt. Within this globally interconnected world, the Atlantic circuits take precedence, warranting the use of the concept of Atlantic world. Throughout the book this concept is used to refer to the web of economic, cultural and social interactions between societies on the four continents bordering the Atlantic Ocean. The apprehensions about the impact of the Atlantic circuits on the connected regions as well as the point about global interactions serve as a clear warning to take seriously both the local self-sufficiency of any of the Atlantic regions and sub-systems, or global connections that helped to shape its history.

* * *

Suriname and the Atlantic World takes as its primary unit of analysis the shipping routes to and from Paramaribo between 1650 and 1800 to measure Suriname's economic integration in the Atlantic world. The data on shipping has been gathered from tax records, most of which have been digitised by Johannes Postma and are available through the website of the Data Archiving and Networked Services of the Royal Dutch Academy of Science (www.dans.knaw.nl). The ships and their cargo have been counted and I have turned these into data per year. The result of this counting can be found in the graphs (See pages 233 to 238). These figures provide clarity: for any given year one can see how many ships sailed in, how many enslaved

²⁸ Peter A. Coclanis, "Beyond Atlantic History," in *Atlantic History: A Critical Appraisal*, ed. Jack P. Greene and Philip D. Morgan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 337–356.

²⁹ Ibid.; Richard Drayton, "The Collaboration of Labour: Slaves, Empire, and Globalizations in the Atlantic World, c. 1600–1850," in *Globalization in World History*, ed. A.G. Hopkins (London: Pimlico, 2003), 98–114; C. A. Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World, 1780–1914: Global Connections and Comparisons* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004).

Africans arrived, how long ships waited before they sailed out again, and how much cargo they loaded. What is not found in the appendix is the exact origin and destination of the ships. Such information can be found in tables throughout the text, but predominantly in the chapters that deal with the shifts in the network throughout the eighteenth century. To gain a sharper picture of what is going on in Paramaribo's Atlantic connection it has been necessary to look "below deck" at the shipping papers, letters, goods and people carried on board the many ships. Together the data of ship movements, cargo loads, letters and shipping papers form the basic fabric of this research.

Shipping routes are also at the centre of the triangular model of Atlantic trade, but that is a model that is not followed in the present study. As a level of analysis the triangle is well-known and illustrates an important circuit to which Paramaribo's history is connected. That trade circuit, sometimes known as the South Atlantic System, created the early modern Atlantic world by tying together the regions bordering the Atlantic Ocean. On the first leg of the triangle textiles, arms, metals and alcohol were shipped from Europe to Africa where they were exchanged for enslaved Africans.³⁰ The second leg was the transport of Africans to the Americas. That voyage could increase the monetary value of enslaved Africans up to four times their price on the West African coast.³¹ The third arm of the triangle was the shipment of plantation products to Europe. The triangular model highlights that at the core of the Atlantic integration were Africans who were transported for their labour to the plantation colonies in the Americas to produce the ingredients for the increasingly popular European breakfast.³² But, as mentioned earlier, the triangular system does gloss over the many smaller circuits and connections that were part of the Atlantic world. To give just one of the many possible examples, the commodity chain connected to the making of a slave stretched far beyond the European and African corners of that triangle, and can be traced into European hinterland and the Indian Ocean.³³ The present study tries to go beyond the circuit of the "big wheel" that was determined by the Canary Current from Eurafrica to the Americas and from the Americas by the Gulf Stream to Europe, and

³⁰ Philip D. Curtin, *The Atlantic Slave Trade; a Census*, (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), 3.

³¹ Johannes Postma, *The Dutch in the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1600-1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990) appendix 24 and 25.

³² Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World, 1780-1914*, 52.

³³ Herbert S. Klein, *The Atlantic Slave Trade* (Cambridge University Press, 2010), 87, 113–116; Postma, *The Dutch*, 103–105.

include the entire web of durable shipping connections to and from Paramaribo.

Shipping routes provide a tool to measure the extent of economic inter-city integration more carefully and note the shifts in Paramaribo's network of connected cities in a way that nationally oriented historians, or those primarily interested in the triangular trade, have been unable to do. Historically, cities have been shaped by their network of economic relations to other cities, rather than only the relation between a singular core and a periphery.³⁴ Ship movements are in the last instance the most concrete unit of analysis to measure the movement of goods and people. The interconnected economies foreshadowed modern globalization in which production processes of a single commodity can be stretched across continents. One glance at the many activities taking place in eighteenth-century Paramaribo reveals that the triangular model is able to explain only part of the activities taking place in the city, and that many of the circuits by which goods, people and ideas passed through its star shaped network of connections are missed.³⁵ Despite its immense explanatory power, the triangular model of the South Atlantic System leaves little room to explore the colonisation and exploitation process beyond the relationships of a colony to the metropolitan core. Instead Paramaribo's shipping routes show the city to be the centre of a star-shaped network connecting multiple Atlantic regions.

³⁴ Taylor discusses the broad trends in urban network research from Braudel to the more recent emphasis on "spaces of flows" by Castells. Taylor, *World City Network*, 7–27, 55–70.

³⁵ Pieter Emmer integrated the development of Suriname into a larger comparative study of the Atlantic, using the divergence in Atlantic activities as a way to deepen the understanding of the differences between the British and Dutch economies as discussed above. P.C. Emmer, "The Dutch and the Atlantic Challenge," in *A Deus Ex Machina Revisited. Atlantic Colonial Trade and European Economic Development*, vol. 8, The Atlantic World. Europe, Africa and the Americas, 1500-1830 (Leiden Boston: Brill, 2006), 151–177; There were also other, more comparative questions, such as Wim Klooster's investigation of the Dutch Atlantic as one cultural-juridical space, making a survey of how the States General and WIC dealt with the problem of overseas metropolitan control. Wim Klooster, "Other Netherlands Beyond the Sea; Dutch America Between Metropolitan Control and Divergence, 1600-1795," in *Negotiated Empires: Centers and Peripheries in the Americas, 1500-1820*, ed. Christine Daniels and Michael V. Kennedy (London New York: Routledge, 2002), 171–192; Some works have discussed Suriname and its connections beyond the ones to the Dutch republic. Most notably: Richard Pares, *Yankees and Creoles. The Trade Between North America and the West Indies before the American Revolution* (London, New York, Toronto: Longmans, Green and Co, 1956); Postma, "Suriname and Its Atlantic Connections"; Claudia Schnurmann, "Atlantic Commerce and Nieuw Amsterdam/New York Merchants," in *Jacob Leisler's Atlantic World in the Later Seventeenth Century*, ed. Hermann Wellenreuther (Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2009).

This study seeks to demonstrate how Paramaribo's development was connected to the grander scheme of Atlantic developments, as well as the Dutch operations in the Atlantic. The five main connected regions of Paramaribo are the immediate hinterland, the Caribbean, North America, Africa and Europa. On a state level Paramaribo's shipping routes can be divided into roughly two types of connections: the direct connections to places under the sovereignty of the Dutch States General, and a wider network connecting the colony to non-Dutch regions.³⁶ Dutch Atlantic connections can be defined as ones where (cities, companies, admiralties, or provinces united under) the States General sanctioned the military protection of its furthest outlying points. Paramaribo's Dutch Atlantic connections were with the cities in the Dutch Republic, mainly Amsterdam, Middelburg, Rotterdam and Vlissingen, the African fortress Elmina, the Caribbean islands Curaçao, St. Eustatius, and the nearby colonies Berbice, Demerara and Essequibo. The Dutch Atlantic network also encompassed the connections where only one side was under the protection of the States General. For Suriname this was the regional network of connections in the Caribbean and North America with places such as Barbados, New York, Boston and Rhode Island. The Dutch connections and the wider network linked Suriname to these five broadly defined regions with Paramaribo as its nexus. The connections to these areas were the colony's lifelines.³⁷

Departing from an Atlantic perspective this book shows how non-Dutch connections bundled in the city of Paramaribo were essential to the colonisation of Suriname. The economic function and the growth of port cities in American colonies has been determined by the role they played as centres of administration, the importation and distribution of enslaved Africans and consumer goods and the exportation of plantation crops and raw materials.³⁸ Not every Atlantic connection was of equal importance at any time. A substantial amount of Atlantic trade and production did not depend on trans-Atlantic connections and some hinterlands were relatively independent of their (Atlantic) hubs, bypassing them completely in these exchanges.³⁹ David Eltis pointed out that even in the Caribbean plantation colonies a great part of production was for reproducing the colony itself and

³⁶ Beyond those connections there were also Dutch Atlantic merchants and companies based in the Republic which catered to connections between places that were non-Dutch, but these are beyond the scope of this research.

³⁷ Postma, "Suriname and Its Atlantic Connections."

³⁸ Price, "Economic Function and Growth."

³⁹ B. W. Higman, "Jamaican Port Towns in the Early Nineteenth Century," in *Atlantic Port Cities. Economy, Culture, and Society in the Atlantic World, 1650-1850*, ed. Franklin W. Knight and Peggy K. Liss (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1991), 117-148.

was not exported.⁴⁰ Part of the cash crops regarded as export products would be consumed locally.⁴¹ This separation of local production and consumption from the Atlantic trade system increased during the eighteenth century. This side of the colonial economy is often neglected, and the demand for goods in colonies may therefore be labelled the “great unexplored frontier” of port city research.⁴²

There are further limits to the “Atlantic” integration that need to be taken into account. In some respects Suriname was really dependent on the Dutch Republic. Suriname relied on expensive military defences on the seaside and inland. The financing of this coercive apparatus greatly determined the relationship between plantation owners, the directors of the SC, the States General and the main belligerents of the colony, being primarily the Saamaca, Okanisi, and Boni Maroons and to a lesser extent the rival European states.⁴³ Suriname’s importance to the Dutch Republic was considerable during the eighteenth century, as can be seen in the value of Surinamese products on the market of Amsterdam, as well as the share Suriname took in of the Dutch Atlantic slave trade (see Table 1). But while

⁴⁰ Eltis, “The Slave Economies of the Caribbean”; In a Caribbean plantation colony like Barbados less than half of the freemen were employed in the export sector (even if services facilitating the export trade are included). For slaves this was more, but out of the 313.000 slaves on the island still only less than two thirds, 199.205, worked for export production. Eltis, “The Total Product of Barbados, 1664-1701.”

⁴¹ Sugar consumption on Barbados in 1740 21 per cent, in 1760 it was a staggering 30 per cent. John J. McCusker, *Rum and the American Revolution. The Rum Trade and the Balance of Payments of the Thirteen Continental Colonies*, vol. 1 (New York, London: Garland Publishing, 1989), 215.

⁴² Linda K. Salvucci, “Supply, Demand, and the Making of a Market: Philadelphia and Havana at the Beginning of the Nineteenth Century,” in *Atlantic Port Cities. Economy, Culture, and Society in the Atlantic World, 1650-1850*, ed. Franklin W. Knight and Peggy K. Liss (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1991), 40–47.

⁴³ The European attacks on the colony were minor. Their destructive force, frequency and threat was dwarfed by that of the Maroons. Also the defence works against European assaults (primarily the fort Zeelandia, and later the fort Nieuw Amsterdam together with the smaller outposts near the rivermouth) were not as extensive as the inland system of the “cordon” border. Frank Dragtenstein, *“De ondraaglijke stoutheid der wegloopers”: marronage en koloniaal beleid in Suriname, 1667-1768* / Frank Dragtenstein (Utrecht, 2002); H. Thoden van Velzen and Wim Hoogbergen, *Een zwarte vrijstaat in Suriname: de Okaanse samenleving in de achttiende eeuw* (Leiden: KITLV Uitgeverij, 2011); Stedman, *Narrative*; For detailed maps of the defences see: Karwan Fatah-Black, “Suriname, 1650-1816 / Surinam, 1650-1816,” in *Grote Atlas van de West-Indische Compagnie / Comprehensive Atlas of the Dutch West India Company*, ed. P.C. Emmer and H.J. den Heijer (Asia Maior, 2012); Detailed descriptions of the fortifications, including the inland forts Sommelsdijck and Para can be found in Hartsinck, *Beschryving*, 1770.

Suriname became the single most important destination in the Dutch slave trade, its tropical products competed heavily with imports from other Dutch colonies as well as sugar imported from a range of European ports (see Table 2). Amsterdam, Paramaribo's most important connected city, did not solely rely on the triangular system and production in Dutch colonies to acquire tropical produce. The Dutch trade in Atlantic commodities tied Amsterdam to a host of other ports and regions. These connections impacted the market price of goods shipped from Paramaribo. Table 2 gives figures for the sugar imports into the Dutch Republic. Sugar was one of the key export crops of Suriname, but the price and demand of the product in the Netherlands were directly formed in relation with a host of other places, many of these similar plantation colonies in the Caribbean, formally under the sovereignty of other empires, but others even in Asia. During the second half of the eighteenth century Surinamese sugar was produced in competition with the rise of the EDB-colonies (Essequibo, Demerara and Berbice), and enormous imports through European ports, mainly in France.

Table 1 The Dutch Guianas and Dutch Caribbean islands as a share of the Dutch slave trade

	Dutch Caribbean	Dutch Guianas
1651-1675	44.4 per cent	10.2 per cent
1676-1700	60.6	33.3
1701-1725	47.0	38.7
1726-1750	14.0	85.3
1751-1775	12.8	85.9
1776-1800	11.2	80.6

Source: TASTD 12-Nov-2012

Table 2 Sources of sugar on the Dutch market in pounds, 1753-1790

	1753	1775	1780	1790
	Sugar	Sugar	Sugar	Sugar
Suriname	11,461,600	17,782,696	8,296,816	20,429,640
EDB	unknown	2,350,000	4,350,000	4,501,200
St. Eustatius	unknown	4,802,400	30,433,600	unknown
Curaçao	unknown	400,000	400,000	unknown
East Indies	997,877	340,657	422,648	369,976
Europe	21,831,000	34,400,000	256,000	38,730,340

Source: Van der Voort, *Westindische Plantages*, 260-263. The data for Suriname is from the PSDC. Sugars imported from tropical destinations through European ports outside the Dutch Republic. The European ports are primarily French.

* * *

The Atlanticist literature regards Dutch expansion in the Atlantic as a commercial affair rather than a territorial one, and the import figures for sugar cited above justify that approach. In the historiography the emphasis has understandably been on the Republic's role in trade rather than in production.⁴⁴ Historically, however, there has always been an understanding by the Dutch that they needed territories in tropical regions to further their trade and not solely rely on shipping, and the decision to develop Suriname after the loss of Brazil is testimony to this. Furthermore, their reputation as middlemen might be overstated. This book will show that despite their reputation as middlemen, the Dutch were not able to organise competitive shipping on the regional circuits connected to Paramaribo. Instead, and again contrary to their middlemen reputation, they were interested in conquering, occupying and maintaining territories on the Guiana Coast and in developing plantation production.

The Dutch were not a singular exception in the Atlantic world. Other Atlantic powers also used both strategies of trading and territorial expansion when developing their Atlantic reach. Taken together, there appears to have been a European-Atlantic dynamism first towards integration followed by a disintegration of the Atlantic world. This trajectory has been summed up by Bernard Bailyn in a threefold periodization of marchland, production, and

⁴⁴ See for example Ralph Davis, *The Rise of the Atlantic Economies*, World Economic History (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1973), 176–193.

independence.⁴⁵ The term marchland was used by Bailyn to describe the period of barbarous invasion, conquest, and reconquest. It was a time of brutal occupations in which lands, territories and colonies changed hands between the different European states or individual cities and companies until the end of the War of the Spanish Succession (1713). The following phase was characterised by growing production in the Atlantic colonies, and the rapid expansion of the plantation system. This production phase lasted roughly until 1776, when, following the struggle for independence of the North American states and the Haitian Revolution, the relation between the metropolis and the colonies changed drastically. The Age of Revolution heralded the terminal phase for the Atlantic world as an integrated whole. The end of the slave trade disconnected the entire African continent, and the remaining connections between the continents became parallel and separated along national borders, more than they had been.⁴⁶

For the Dutch case the trajectory is seen to have been very similar. When the Dutch Republic was formed and rose to prominence during the struggle for independence against the Habsburgs (1568-1648), the Dutch States General executed plans to hinder the Atlantic power of its adversary and even to take over part of Iberian overseas domains. Dutch trade along the entire European coast had grown so substantially that it could now venture into the Atlantic.⁴⁷ Jan de Vries distinguished four different phases of Dutch economic activities in the Atlantic (of which three are situated in the early modern period).⁴⁸ Before the founding of the WIC the Dutch trade in the Atlantic was driven by small private shipping companies. During the first Dutch Atlantic economy (1621-1654) the WIC conquered north-east Brazil and several Portuguese trading posts in West Africa as part of a grand design. The loss of Brazil also meant the abandonment of this grand plan, and instead they turned to shipping and supplying the other colonial powers in what De Vries sees as the second Dutch Atlantic economy (1654-1713). A blow to the 'middleman' position came with the loss of the Spanish *asiento*, the large contracts for the trading of enslaved Africans between the Spanish King and Dutch traders. The third Dutch Atlantic economy (1713-1776) – which lasted until the American War for Independence and the closely related Fourth Anglo-Dutch War – was the period in which the Dutch

⁴⁵ Bailyn, *Atlantic History*, 62–111.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 108–110; The problem of deciding when this integrated Atlantic world ended is treated more extensively in Benjamin, *The Atlantic World*.

⁴⁷ Henk den Heijer, *De geschiedenis van de WIC* (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 2002), 13–20.

⁴⁸ Jan de Vries, "The Dutch Atlantic Economies," in *The Atlantic Economy During the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries: Organization, Operation, Practice, and Personnel*, ed. Peter A. Coclanis (Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 2005), 1–29.

strongly developed their own plantations in the Guiana region. According to De Vries the fourth phase started at the end of the eighteenth century and lasts until today, consisting of a shift from trade and shipping to finance.

Suriname diverges slightly from the periodization of Jan de Vries, as has been observed for the entire Dutch Atlantic.⁴⁹ I argue that the conquest of Suriname (1667) not long after the loss of Brazil (1654) indicates that the attempts to make territorial advances show the continuity between the first, second and third period. While the assault on Iberian-Atlantic power was initially successful, the loss of Brazil (1654) forced the Dutch to tone down their plans; expanding their Atlantic reach in a less confrontational manner. The revival of the idea to create colonies in the Guianas – an area largely untouched by the Iberians – was one of the results.⁵⁰ Already in the Second Anglo-Dutch War (1665-1667) efforts were made to capture and set up plantation colonies, with the capture of Suriname being the greatest territorial gain of the Dutch in the Atlantic. This makes the years between the beginning of that war and the end of the War of the Spanish Succession in 1713 an overlap of the two strategies. On the one hand the Dutch were middlemen, with the *asiento* trade from Curaçao, while they simultaneously captured and investing in plantation colonies.

When looking at the grand sweep of Suriname's history, the period between 1650 and 1800 built upon a previous phase in which traders from Europe were working on the Guiana Coast, sometimes founding a trading post or temporary trading stations. The transition into an Atlantic world came when sugar production was introduced and made successful along the Suriname River by colonists from English Barbados. They founded a colony there after 1651 and their colonisation efforts determined Suriname's strong connection to Barbados, as well as its integration into Jewish Atlantic networks. By this time the network of shipping started to have a more direct connection to production. Key people in Suriname were overseeing slave-based plantation production, settlement, state formation, shipping and trade. A striking case is that of Samuel Cohen Nassy, who owned plantations, settled Jodensavanne, was jurator and whose ships sailed between Amsterdam, West Africa, Paramaribo and the North American coast to provide the colony with enslaved Africans and provisions. His ships crossed several imperial borders, but stayed neatly within the city-network that would determine much of the colony's future. Inter-colonial exchange was at the heart of the colonial project on the Wild Coast. And so wood from

⁴⁹ Oostindie and Roitman, "Repositioning the Dutch."

⁵⁰ The argument that the Dutch need colonies in warm climates to compensate for the loss of Brazil is explicitly made in: Otto Keye, *Het waere onderscheyt tusschen koude en warme landen* ('s Gravenhage: Henricus Hondius, 1659).

Suriname was brought to Barbados, and horses from New York found their way to Suriname. Interimperial connection did not only provide a source for goods, but also a way to acquire experienced colonists. Refugees from failed or failing projects provided the basis of health and experience needed to survive in the deadly disease environment of the humid tropics. The scattered survivors of failed colonies were highly sought after by the expanding French, Dutch and English, and also shared mutual contacts that could help supply one colony with what was lacking in another.

The tension in the Dutch colonisation between mercantilist control and Atlantic cross-imperial connections of Paramaribo's economic function came to light as a process of permanent transcending of "artificial imperial geographies."⁵¹ The city of Paramaribo was a nodal point in a city network. Merchant activities are traditionally understood as the central actors creating inter-city connections. Given the specificity of the Surinamese plantation system, this understanding of connections does not hold. Most plantation products were *shipped* without an active role for merchants connecting production in the colony to markets in the Dutch Republic. Only small amounts of plantation products were actually *traded* between Paramaribo and cities in the Dutch Republic. Merchants did play a role in the other circuits; this study used shipping routes as a basic unit of analysis that encompasses not only Paramaribo's merchant network, but also the control over the freight route to and from the Dutch Republic. The shipping routes provide an important lead to study not only the economic arrangements but also the development of institutions and especially the attempts to either include or exclude actors from the city network that helped to shape the city.⁵²

* * *

The field of Atlantic history provides the opportunity to overcome national perspectives on history. Both in Suriname and in the Netherlands historians cling to national interpretations of history, and that has created distorted understandings of the past. There are of course Dutch historians who have studied colonial projects overseas, but they often limited their scope to a Dutch empire.⁵³ In Suriname the situation has not been much better. Historians working in Suriname have only slowly adopted an autonomous

⁵¹ Oostindie and Roitman, "Repositioning the Dutch."

⁵² Price, "Economic Function and Growth."

⁵³ There are countless examples, but a recent one would be the special issue of the Low Countries Historical Review dedicated to the application of New Imperial History to the case of the Dutch Empire. Remco Raben, "A New Dutch Imperial History?: Perambulations in a Prospective Field," *BMGN - Low Countries Historical Review* 128, no. 1 (March 19, 2013): 5–30.

position in historical research. To this day knowledge production on the former colony takes place primarily in the Netherlands. This book is an attempt to take a different approach. Inspired by the notion that nation states are of fairly recent vintage, and that human societies through the ages have always been interconnected through migration, trade and war, the history of Suriname deserves to be treated in its global context.

Nineteenth century Dutch historians – inspired by the Abolitionist movement and the rise of national and empire-centred research – chose to emphasise the importance of the Dutch and their state in shaping every aspect of Suriname's history. Once an Atlantic perspective is taken, it becomes obvious how single-mindedly historians have understood Suriname's history as an appendix of Dutch national history. Through their publications Postma, Zemon Davis, Mann and Carney (all four neither Dutch nor Surinamese) have recently emphasised the place of Suriname within the Atlantic world, and their approach highlights the alternatives on offer to the Dutch-Surinamese debate.⁵⁴ By treating issues that concern the entirety of the Atlantic world, Suriname is given a place within a context that is less plagued by national or ethnocentric narratives on either side of the ocean.

The Dutch perspective on the colonisation of Suriname turned around completely between the seventeenth century and the late eighteenth century. Initially the Dutch were overly optimistic. In the last quarter of the eighteenth century this optimism had given way to a very pessimistic view of the opportunities provided by the colony. Both these views seem to have been exaggerated. Seventeenth-century proponents of Dutch colonisation in the Guianas – some without any personal experience in the tropics – highlighted the boons of warm climates, as opposed to colonisation of colder areas of the Americas.⁵⁵ The actual colonisation of the Guianas was more difficult than many were first led to believe. George Warren had experienced life in Suriname first hand during English rule and wrote that “the delights of Warm Countries are mingled with sharp Sawces [sic].”⁵⁶ In the last quarter

⁵⁴ Postma, “Suriname and Its Atlantic Connections”; Natalie Zemon Davis, “Decentering History: Local Stories and Cultural Crossings in a Global World,” *History and Theory* 50, no. 2 (2011): 188–202, doi:10.1111/j.1468-2303.2011.00576.x; Charles C. Mann, 1493: *Uncovering the New World Columbus Created* (New York: Knopf, 2011); J. Carney, “Rice and Memory in the Age of Enslavement: Atlantic Passages to Suriname,” *Slavery & Abolition* 26, no. 3 (2005): 325–348; Judith Ann Carney and Richard Nicholas Rosomoff, *In the Shadow of Slavery: Africa's Botanical Legacy in the Atlantic World* (University of California Press, 2011).

⁵⁵ G. van Alphen, *Jan Reeps en zijn onbekende kolonisatiepoging in Zuid-Amerika, 1692* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1960); Otto Keye, *Beschryvinge van het heerlijcke ende gezegende landt Guajana, waer inne gelegen is de seer voorname lantstreke genaemt Serrenamme* ('s Gravenhage: Henricus Hondius boekverkooper in de Hofstraet, 1667).

⁵⁶ Warren, *An Impartial Description*, 1.

of the eighteenth century the Dutch were trying to come to terms with the long drawn-out decline of their republic after the so-called Gilded Age had ended. The pessimism was echoed in their assessments of Suriname, especially after the stock market crash in 1773 which exposed the inability of the plantation owners in Suriname to repay their debts.⁵⁷

In the late seventeenth and much of the eighteenth century, colonial authors were optimistic about the possibilities in the colony. Many of them were French, German or English, and described Suriname's colonial production and local government, as well as the wondrous facts about the flora, fauna and ethnography of this faraway place. At the time the colony was far from only a Dutch concern. Many books were written either in German, French or English, and most of those written in Dutch were translated into those languages, and vice versa. In the two centuries of writing on the colony that preceded the shift to an empire-centred view; the Europeans who played a central part in the colonisation of Suriname left their mark in libraries and book collections.⁵⁸ The contrast with the books

⁵⁷ Nassy et al., *Essai historique*.

⁵⁸ In the period between 1683 and 1795 most books that gave detailed descriptions of different aspects of the colony were either written in, or translated to, languages other than Dutch. Adriaan van Berkel, *Amerikaansche voyagien, behelzende een reis na Rio de Berbice, gelegen op het vaste land van Guiana aande wilde-kust van America, mitsgaders een andere na de colonie van Suriname, gelegen in het noorder deel van het gemelde landschap Guiana : ondermengd met alle de byzonderheden noopende de zeden, gewoonten en levenswijs der inboorlingen, boom- en aardgewassen, waaren en koopmanschappen, en andere aanmerkelijke zaaken* (Amsterdam: Johan ten Hoorn, 1695) was translated to German in 1789. Philip Fermin was German-born of French origin, the book was originally French, and translated to German, English and Dutch. Philippe Fermin, *Nieuwe algemeene beschryving van de colonie van Suriname* (Harlingen, 1770); He later also published Philippe Fermin, *Tableau historique et politique de l'état ancien et actuel de la Colonie de Surinam et des causes de sa décadence* (Maestricht: Chez Jean-Edme Dufour of Philippe, 1778); was published in German that same year, and in Dutch in 1794. The physician discussed the Dutch Guianas since they were the only ones accessible to him. Despite the title he also included a discussion of plantations and political history. Edward Bancroft, *An Essay on the Natural History of Guiana in South America Containing a Description of Many Curious Productions in the Animal and Vegetable Systems of That Country: Together with an Account of the Religion, Manners, and Customs of Several Tribes of Its Indian Inhabitants : Interspersed with a Variety of Literary and Medical Observations* (London: Printed for T. Becket and P.A. DeHondt, 1769); Hartsinck, *Beschryving*, 1770 was published in German in 1784. Johann Friedrich Ludwig, *Neueste Nachrichten von Surinam. Als Handbuch für Reisende und Beytrag zur Länderkunde herausgegeben*, ed. Philipp Friedrich Binder (Jena: in der akademischen Buchhandlung, 1789) Ludwig was a German physician who lived in the colony for twenty years. His book was never translated to Dutch. Stedman, *Narrative* was translated into many languages including Dutch, French, Italian and Swedish. The book written by David Nassy traces the origin and contribution of the Jewish community of the colony, and comments on the way to continue

written on the colony during the rule of the Suriname Company (1683-1795) and the nineteenth century is striking. The empire-centred approach to Suriname's history can be traced to the nineteenth century and the transformation of the Dutch Republic into a unified nation state, first under King Louis Napoleon. The interest in the question of abolition in the late 1840s (and connected to this, the concerns about the question of the christening of black inhabitants of the colony) was shaped by the increasingly national-oriented societies in the Dutch Republic who chose to emphasise their Dutchness.⁵⁹ The abolitionists linked the image of decline and corruption to the use of enslaved labour and absenteeism, suggesting that the combination of unfree labour and irresponsible owners were to blame for the bad state of the colony. The abolitionists framed Suriname as a Dutch responsibility which deserved compassion.⁶⁰ They also framed their cause as Dutch, and emphasised their Dutchness to forgo association with the more radical British abolitionists.⁶¹ These two sides of their strategy inadvertently contributed to making the history of Suriname appear to be more exclusively Dutch than it had been in the eighteenth century. Suriname's past of connections to the entire Atlantic world beyond the Dutch Republic faded into the background. The main work on Suriname from this period is Julius Wolbers' *Geschiedenis van Suriname*.⁶² Wolbers'

Suriname successfully. Nassy was the foremost intellectual of the colony in the eighteenth century. Nassy et al., *Essai historique*; After the SC had been dissolved, non-Dutch publication continued: Christlieb Quandt, *Nachricht von Suriname und seinen Einwohnern sonderlich den Arawacken, Warauen und Karaiben, von den nützlichsten Gewächsen und Thieren des Landes, den Geschäften der dortigen Missionarien der Brüderunität und der Sprache der Arawacken* (Goerlitz: J.G. Burghart, 1807); J. D. Kunitz, *Surinam und seine Bewohner oder, Nachrichten über die geographischen, physischen, statistischen, moralischen und politischen Verhältnisse dieser Insel während eines zwanzigjährigen Aufenthalts daselbst* (Beyer und Maring, 1805); P Benoit, *Voyage à Surinam description des possessions néerlandaises dans la Guyane* (Bruxelles: Société des beaux-arts (De Wasme et Laurent), 1839); The three eighteenth century descriptions of the colony which remained untranslated were: Herlein, *Beschryvinge*; The earliest book by a born Surinamese: Pistorius, *Korte en zakelijke beschrijvinge*; Anthony Blom, *Verhandeling van den landbouw in de Colonie Suriname* (Amsterdam, 1787) also remained untranslated in the eighteenth century.

⁵⁹ Maartje Janse, *De afschaffers: publieke opinie, organisatie en politiek in Nederland 1840-1880* (Amsterdam: Wereldbibliotheek, 2007), 295.

⁶⁰ Julien Wolbers, *Geschiedenis van Suriname* (Amsterdam: Emmering, 1970); Julien Wolbers, *De slavernij in Suriname of dezelfde gruwelen der slavernij, die in de "Negerhut" geschetst zijn, bestaan ook in onze West-Indische koloniën!* (Amsterdam: H. de Hoogh, 1853), http://www.dbnl.org/tekst/wolb002slav01_01/.

⁶¹ Janse, *De afschaffers*, 295.

⁶² The book did not get an international readership. It is mainly concerned with the formal political changes in the colony, the governing of the colony, questions of credit and

stated motivation for his work was to popularize the history of Suriname, in order to raise interest for the suffering slaves. He also stressed that the Netherlands owned Suriname, which morally obligated the Dutch to be aware of their plight. Looking back at this body of work since the eighteenth century one can see first, a substantial increase in the number of publications and second, a shift towards Dutch publications from the 1840s onwards. In the eighteenth century English, French and German physicians took a considerable share of the publications, translations and reprints, making the colony a topic for a European wide public.

After the British interregnum that lasted until 1815, books on the colony were written more and more in Dutch, by Dutch authors conceptualising the colony as a Dutch responsibility. The academic literature on Suriname that followed also focused on the colony's relationship with the Dutch Republic and local dynamics of slave-based plantation production, rather than integrating the multiple Atlantic circuits and connections into the development of the colony.⁶³ After the large Surinamese migration to the Netherlands in the last quarter of the twentieth century, the focus remained primarily on the direct relations between Suriname and the Netherlands. The incorporation on the multiple circuits that were connected to Suriname will result in a more complete history of the colonisation process.

This book was not only written to decentre the history of an episode of early modern global history, but should also be seen against the backdrop of an on-going Dutch-Surinamese debate on the decolonization of historical knowledge.⁶⁴ A recurring issue for Atlantic historians in general has been to

production, and for the late eighteenth century the ascendancy of civil societies. Wolbers, *Geschiedenis van Suriname*.

⁶³ The colony is treated as a world in itself, or as a Dutch province overseas. Suriname's history mostly saw different foreign academic approaches being applied to it. Post World War II this can be summed up as frontier, dependency, Caribbean, post-colonial and now Atlantic. The historiography on Suriname has historically been very open to international academic trends. History writing on Suriname's early-modern period has not engendered new academic schools or approaches; the exception to that rule is the study of Maroon societies. R.A.J. van Lier, *Frontier Society: a Social Analysis of the History of Surinam* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1971); was originally published in 1949, and served as a standard text-book up until the publication of various plantation centered monographs, most notably Stipriaan, *Surinaams contrast*.

⁶⁴ Gert Oostindie, "De onvoltooide dekolonisatie en de geschiedschrijving van Suriname," *Leidschrift* 6 (1990): 5–26; Sandew Hira, "An Alternative Framework for the Study of Slavery and the Colonial Society in Suriname," ed. Stephen Small and J. Marten W. Schalkwijk, *New Perspectives on Slavery and Colonialism in the Caribbean* (2012): 246–261; Armand Zunder, *Herstelbetalingen : de "Wiedergutmachung" voor de schade die Suriname en haar bevolking hebben geleden onder het Nederlands kolonialisme* (Den Haag: Amrit, 2010); Maurits S.

write the histories of an integrated world while the institutional and archival context they work in is based on that of the former Atlantic empires.⁶⁵ This is especially pertinent in a *cis*-Atlantic account of Paramaribo's Atlantic connections based on Dutch and British colonial primary source material. The mainstay of the debate on decolonisation of history starts explicitly from the present-day legacy of slavery and centres on demands put forward by claimants of the (moral) debt owed to those who were wronged by transatlantic enslavement. It has on occasion been argued that the legacy of slavery, colonialism and decolonization has resulted in an epistemological rift between "colonial" and "black" discourses.⁶⁶

Because the recognition and reparations are thought to be owed by present-day nation states, the attention has focussed explicitly on historical lineage from present-day actors back into the past.⁶⁷ This has resulted in two basic claims about the direction historical research should take. One is the claim that African slavery was not an incidental aspect of the Atlantic world but a foundational element, and that the Atlantic world shaped European state formation with the Peace of Westphalia as a key moment.⁶⁸ The second has been that historians should amend past injustices by "breaking silences" or give a voice to those who lack one in historical accounts, museums and the like.⁶⁹ What is troubling about both claims is that those actors who are not recognised as having left obvious present-day heirs are excluded from the historical interest. The Dutch book on *herstelbetalingen* (reparations) is a good case in point.⁷⁰ In its historical account, which centres on the Dutch state, it fails to include thousands of slaves transported by the Dutch into the Spanish territories, or the enslaved Africans who produced sugar shipped to the Netherlands from other destinations (see Table 2), to name but a few omissions caused by the teleological account keeping. On the Surinamese side of the history the thousands of enslaved Africans forced to Suriname by the North Americans and British captains in the 1790s have also gone missing in the account. In the debate on Dutch slavery and the

Hassankhan, "Historiography in Suriname: a Difficult Path to Decolonization" (presented at the Symposium Geschiedschrijving Suriname, Paramaribo, 2012).

⁶⁵ Oostindie and Roitman, "Repositioning the Dutch."

⁶⁶ See for example Hira, "An Alternative Framework for the Study of Slavery and the Colonial Society in Suriname."

⁶⁷ Zunder, *Herstelbetalingen*.

⁶⁸ Kwame Nimako and Glenn Willemsen, *The Dutch Atlantic: Slavery, Abolition and Emancipation* (London; New York: Pluto Press, 2011).

⁶⁹ Alex van Stipriaan et al., *Op zoek naar de stilte: sporen van het slavernijverleden in Nederland* (KITLV Uitgeverij, 2007).

⁷⁰ Zunder, *Herstelbetalingen*.

decolonisation of historical knowledge the heavy handed emphasis on epistemological differences has become a fig leaf argument to avoid heuristic challenges and empirical research.⁷¹ A basic tenant of colonial thought – that the Dutch were the begin all and end all of Surinamese history – has largely been left untouched.

To approach histories from an Atlantic perspective has proven to be a way to overcome the national biases that have crept into many historical narratives since the nineteenth century. Paul Gilroy's *Black Atlantic* deconstructs various forms of "ethnic absolutism" and emphasises that the Atlantic history of enslavement has left a cultural legacy that was a hybrid of both African and European origin.⁷² On an economic level, that same dynamic applies. Rather than a European expansion into the Americas, the ventures in the Atlantic created a world that was neither European, African nor American. The emergence of the field of Atlantic history has provided a framework to reconstruct this Atlantic world by reintegrating the multiple Atlantic connections that existed in the seventeenth and eighteenth century into one narrative. An Atlantic approach does not gloss over the fact that the main connections of a colony were with its 'motherland', but includes the entire transnational system of connected ports and hinterlands in this history.⁷³

* * *

The three parts of this book seek to integrate the development of Suriname back into the Atlantic context that shaped it in the seventeenth and eighteenth century. The highly developed historiographies on Suriname's economic history in the era of slavery, and the maturity of the discussions on the Atlantic world and globalization are the basis for research into the Atlantic connections beyond the common nationally oriented approach in the historiography on Suriname's early modern period. The historiography of globalization – of which the history of Atlantic integration is an integral part – shifts its focus to the multiple origins of globalization. The experiment carried out here is to assess the multiple origins of Atlantic integration for

⁷¹ Gert Oostindie, "History Brought Home: Postcolonial Migrations and the Dutch Rediscovery of Slavery," in *Migration, Trade, and Slavery in an Expanding World: Essays in Honor of Pieter Emmer* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 305–328.

⁷² Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*, 2nd ed. (London: Verso, 2002), 2–4.

⁷³ The edited volume *Atlantic Port Cities* is entirely dedicated to studying these ports and the relation to their respective American hinterlands. Franklin W. Knight and Peggy K. Liss, eds., *Atlantic Port Cities: Economy, Culture and Society in the Atlantic World, 1650-1850* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1991); Bailyn tried to explain the massive German migration to the Americas from socio-political tensions in the German hinterland. Bailyn, *Atlantic History*, 36–37.

the development of Suriname. Every chapter deals with the balance between metropolitan interests, local development and interaction with the rest of the Atlantic world.

Part one examines the initial colonisation and the transition to plantation production. The chronologically ordered chapters deal with the foundation of the colonial project in Suriname. Firstly, the way in which the colonising efforts have been embedded in pre-existing regional connections of exchange and migration. Secondly, how the mercantilist vision of the directors of the Suriname Company clashed with the local dynamics of setting up plantation production based on enslaved labour.

The second part of the book deals with three specific circuits of connections: First the migration of Europeans and secondly that of locally consumed provision and a third chapter on the slave trade. The chapters lay bare a pattern of interconnections that stretch deep into the Atlantic hinterlands and cross imperial boundaries and the nodal functions of Paramaribo.

Part three describes the collapse of the Dutch power in the Atlantic and the economic shift towards the British and North American cities on the Atlantic Coast. After the independence of the Thirteen Colonies in North America and the defeat of the Dutch navy in the Fourth Anglo-Dutch War (1780-1784), the Atlantic connections changed drastically. But far from collapsing, Suriname remained a productive colony, and Paramaribo did not wither away. Rather, its non-Dutch connections became more pronounced than they had been as economic power shifted towards North America. The chapter in this part emphasizes the impact of the rise of North American Atlantic and global reach on Suriname and Paramaribo. Lastly the conclusion presents an overview of the findings and reflects upon the development of Paramaribo's city network and the Atlantic world.

Part I: Integration, 1650-1738

The first part of this book demonstrates how the movement of experienced colonists across imperial boundaries provided the colonial project in Suriname with the networks that saved it from being overrun by indigenous assailants or starved due to lack of supplies. The first three chapters are chronologically ordered, and focus primarily on the importance of intercolonial connections during the founding of the colony. It argues that during this period Suriname increasingly integrated in the Atlantic world and that its economic ties to the Dutch Republic became stronger as well.

As discussed in the introduction, shipping is an important measure used in this study. The shipping between Suriname and the Dutch Republic changed from a Zeelandic to an Amsterdam affair. The increasing availability of cargo in Paramaribo ensured that sugar planters had to compete on the quality of their wares for captains to be willing to load their produce on board. Despite the unfavourable results of the War of the Spanish Succession for the Dutch, and especially for Suriname, the increased production in the colony made the Surinamese plantation owners become an influential group that self-consciously started to negotiate the terms and conditions under which the colony was governed. In this period the slave trade became more stable, and planters could increasingly count on regular deliveries of enslaved Africans to the colony.

Even though the slave trade is intertwined with the integration period, it is discussed in greater detail in chapter 6. The change from a centrally organised slave trade under the five chambers of the WIC to a situation in which private companies started to supply enslaved Africans to the colony after 1738 is taken as this part's end. The liberalization of the slave trade contributed much to the changing of the relationship between Paramaribo and the Dutch Republic. Because Paramaribo became more intensively connected to Africa, Europe and North America, the period until the late 1730s is one of increased Atlantic integration.

1. The Wild Coast as marchland: Suriname before 1683

This chapter will show that from the very beginning the colonisation of Suriname was relying on intercolonial connections that helped to supply it with experienced colonists and provisions. The economy that developed there transitioned from one based on exchange with the Amerindians to one based on plantation production. This plantation economy relied in part on regional supply lines, in turn wood and later molasses were supplied by Suriname to merchants in both Caribbean and North American colonies. This incipient economic integration of Suriname into the Atlantic beyond the metropolitan connection was not unique to the colony, but – as this chapter will show – tied in with an integrating Atlantic world.

Bernard Bailyn characterised the initial phase of Atlantic history as the creation of a “vast new marchland of European civilization.” This space was “an ill-defined, irregular, outer borderland, thrust into the world of indigenous peoples in the Western Hemisphere.” This marchland was contested, and life within it was “literally, barbarous.”⁷⁴ This barbarism was not indigenous to the Americas, but was a result of the arrival of Europeans from overseas. On the Wild Coast European powers fought amongst each other. They did not hesitate to use the conflicts amongst the inland Caribs and Arowaks to attack competing European settlements. Also without inter-European competition there was a reason to instigate violence. If peace arose the “Caribs, who are used to be at war with the Arowaks, could convene with the other and agree to attack our people.”⁷⁵ Who belonged to which side in these conflicts was not always clear, making fear and suspicion universal. Because so many places changed hands so frequently, the Guianas have a special place in Bailyn’s concept of Atlantic marchland: “It was a scene of devastation: squalid settlements, abandoned shelters, burnt-out forts, and ragged survivors of jungle raids and small battles seeking some kind of security.”⁷⁶ But once the dust settled over this contested borderland a new society had been created. This new society was hardly connected to the indigenous people; those who had been settled along the Suriname River, the Commewijne River and their tributaries had retreated inland. Instead, slave-based plantation production had become the single most important economic activity.

⁷⁴ Bailyn, *Atlantic History*, 62–63.

⁷⁵ “*dat de Caribisen, die gewent zijn althijts tegens d' Arrowacken t' oorloghen, metten anderen soudē beraetslaeght hebben om ons volck op 't lijf te vallen.*” Letter from Governor Johan Heinsius, 28-Dec-1678. *Zeeuwse archivalia uit Suriname en omliggende kwartieren, 1667 - 1683* (Paramaribo: Surinaams Museum 2003).

⁷⁶ Bailyn, *Atlantic History*, 69.

A periodization in which the contested borderland is chronologically followed by a production phase does not fit Suriname's history neatly, although the trend can be distinguished. In the second half of the seventeenth century the colony moved back and forth between being a contested borderland and becoming a stable plantation colony. The English period of the colony (1651-1667) was characterised by growing numbers of enslaved Africans, sugar mills and the arrival of experienced colonists from Barbados and several other colonies, until a large-scale epidemic broke out in 1665. The relations with the Amerindians were mostly peaceful, and the colonists only relied on them for locally oriented trade in provisions or enslaved people. The colony's capital was the poorly defended inland town of Torarica. After the Zeelanders took over the colony in 1667 its success continued until about 1672. After that year the number of enslaved Africans disembarked in the colony declined. Experienced planters started leaving, and migrants to the colony were mostly inexperienced Europeans. There was no clear decision on where the seat of government would be. It changed several times back and forth between Torarica and Paramaribo. The connection with nearby colonies, particularly Barbados, faltered in the Zeelandic period. This isolation came despite efforts by Jewish colonists who tried to continue the exchange with the islands from which they had arrived in Suriname. The Zeelanders chose to ignore the monopoly on the slave trade, undercutting the business of the WIC. Within a few years the relations with the Amerindians became decidedly worse, culminating in a guerrilla war between 1676 and 1686 which destroyed many plantations, mostly along the Para creek, but also upstream the Suriname River. Shipping to Zeeland became increasingly unsuccessful, with ships having ever more trouble to fill their hold.

The transition of the colony into the hands of the Suriname Company in 1683 reversed this trend. Peace was made with the Amerindians by banning their enslavement and stopping commodity trade by Europeans. Because of the founding of the Suriname Company in 1683 the WIC regained confidence to invest in the colony. The directors of the WIC were motivated to pick up slave-trading again, which in turn resulted in the growth of the number of plantations in Suriname. The founding of the SC also meant that the regional trade from Suriname to nearby colonies was made illegal, although it continued in a rather stable way. The colony's defences were strengthened, both inland and on the coast, and groups of migrants started to arrive from all over Europe. The return to plantation production under the rule of the Suriname Company depended largely on planters who had been in the colony before. This illustrates the continuity in Suriname's colonisation that stretches back to the English period, or even further to Dutch Brazil.

The initial Dutch colonisation in Guiana was motivated by the idea that the creation of sugar plantation colonies modelled after Brazil and the expansion of inland trade with the Amerindians would be profitable. The Brazilian experience was central to the plans to create permanent settlements on the Guiana Coast and can be found in the propaganda material published by the proponents of colonisation in the Guianas.⁷⁷ For much of the seventeenth century the Suriname River was just one of many on the Guiana Coast. These rivers were like flypaper with plantations stuck to the sides. In the seventeenth century the rivers on the Guiana Coast provided routes inland to trade with Amerindians. On their banks *factorijen* (trading posts), or attempts at *volkplanting* (settlement) could be found. The rivers that saw successful European settlement on their banks named the colonies, while the rivers where settlement failed or had not yet been attempted became borders between those colonies. The shift from Suriname as a river where Europeans came to trade, to Suriname as a settlement and plantation colony took place somewhere during the English rule between 1651 and 1667. After the Zeelandic take-over of the colony between 1667 and 1682, trading with the indigenous returned as an important activity. After the colony became the property of the Suriname Company (1683), and the inland war ended (1686), the trade with the indigenous inhabitants – which had never been very voluminous – completely disappeared and was replaced by an exclusive orientation on production as had been the case in the English period.

1.1. Two tracks of the Dutch in the Atlantic

The Dutch vision of colonizing and building plantations rather than trading on the Wild Coast can be traced back to the foundation of the Dutch West-India Company (WIC). Willem Usselinx (1567-1647), an Antwerp-born merchant who settled in Middelburg (the capital of Zeeland), tried to influence the charter that was being drawn up for the WIC by the States General of the Dutch Republic. In his vision of Atlantic colonisation, the Calvinist states would provide many willing colonists who would create colonies to furnish the motherland with raw materials. In perfect symbiosis these colonies would in turn be a new market for products from the Republic. Overseas production would infringe on the power of the Spanish King who at the time still dominated the West Indian trade. Usselinx reasoned that

⁷⁷ Keye, *Beschryvinge*; Alphen, *Jan Reeps*; On the attempts by Johannes Apricius see Kim Isolde Muller, ed., *Elisabeth van der Woude, Memorije van 't geen bij mijn tijt is voorgevallen: met het opzienbarende verslag van haar reis naar de Wilde Kust, 1676-1677* (Amsterdam: Terra Incognita, 2001).

“if we plant in the West Indies the vine, oil and orange trees with sugar cane etc. we shall not only supply our beloved Netherlands, but also other provinces and empires with the beautiful blessings and the divine fruits of that West Indian Canaan, to the great disruption of the Spanish traffics, out of which shall follow the dark eclipse of the King’s treasures.”⁷⁸

The Guianas were according to Usselinx an excellent area for such a venture since they were largely untouched by the Iberians, and also a good place to build a power base. Despite his many efforts, Usselinx’ lobby from Zeeland to support a colonising vision for the WIC, rather than the single-minded focus on trade failed. Merchants from Holland had a different idea about what could be done in the Atlantic, and they were better positioned to convince the States General. In the States General cities of Holland supported a plan that did not focus on agricultural colonisation, but rather emphasized the need for trade and shipping. The plan from Holland came to form the basis of the WIC charter. Usselinx left the Republic in disappointment and tried to found a West-India Company in Sweden, which also failed to come to fruition.⁷⁹

Given this history it is somewhat ironic that by the end of the seventeenth century merchants from Holland had created the most successful sugar producing colony on the Wild Coast while the Zeelandic efforts to do so had failed. During the seventeenth century it was actually the merchants from Zeeland who were the most active on the Wild Coast, trading with the Amerindians in the region, rather than founding plantation colonies. After the founding of the West India Company the Atlantic was formally under the charter of the WIC. The federated nature of the Dutch Republic was carried over into the organisational structure of the WIC, which was divided in five chambers. These chambers continued the regional specialisations of the different cities or provinces. Zeelandic interest in the Wild Coast dated from the late sixteenth century and was carried over into the Zeelandic chamber of the WIC. The Amsterdam chamber of the WIC on the other hand specialized in the connection to New Netherlands on the North American east coast.

This customary division between the chambers was not made official but carried a lot of weight. When in 1635 an Amsterdam colonization expedition was sent to the Wild Coast it was seen as an infringement on Zeelandic consuetude, and the Zeelanders rejoiced in the colony’s early demise.⁸⁰ In 1667 the States of Zeeland claimed Suriname for

⁷⁸ Willem Usselinx, *Anderde discours. By forma van messieve. Daer in kortelijck ende grondich verthoondt wort, de nootwendicheyt der Oost ende West Indische navigatie*, 1622.

⁷⁹ Heijer, *De geschiedenis van de WIC*, 22–28.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 88–92.

themselves when they took it from the English. While it clearly lay inside the area of the world chartered to the WIC, the states argued that it was their fleet which had captured the colony, and that they could therefore control it. During Zeeland's rule of Suriname, the rivalry with Amsterdam continued. When Zeeland appeared to be unable to maintain the colony at a profitable rate, the city of Amsterdam and the family Aerssen van Sommelsdyck were willing to found the Suriname Company to share the costs and benefits of the colony together with the WIC.

Dutch colonisation of the Wild Coast was heavily marked by the demise of Dutch Brazil. The founding of Brazil was part of a grand design to hit the Iberians, begin plantation production in the tropics and simultaneously gain access to the slave trade. In Brazil the Dutch learned the skill of enslaving Africans, growing sugar and dealing with colonial populations. That last lesson was learned the hard way. The uprising by the Portuguese against the Dutch colonial government started in 1645 and ended with the defeat of the Dutch in 1654. The argument that the Dutch should once again hold colonies in tropical climates reverberated in many discussions on Atlantic expansion, and was a returning theme in pamphlets in the second half of the seventeenth century.⁸¹

The fallout of the loss of Brazil to the Wild Coast was twofold. The first effect of the loss of Brazil was that it set the Dutch off on two tracks into the Atlantic world. One being the slave trade, carried out mainly through Curaçao and supplying the Spanish colonies in the Americas. The second, which is of more importance here, was the onset of the search for new areas where they could found plantation colonies and create a "new Brazil." While there were some Zeelandic lobbyists arguing for the reconquest of Brazil, the idea that the Dutch needed to lay their hands on a colony elsewhere in a tropical climate where they could grow sugar, gained force. In total fifteen expeditions were fitted out to settle on the Wild Coast to attempt colonisation. Most of these attempts were only short-lived.⁸² The tropical climate, combined with French and English rivalry made it difficult to settle permanently. When the French took Cayenne (1664) and the English Essequibo (1666), the Zeeland chamber of the admiralty responded by outfitting an expeditionary force that was to destroy the power of the English from the Wild Coast to Virginia. Retaking Cayenne after 1664 was impossible since the French had become allies against the English. Admiral Abraham Crijnssen was ordered to take Suriname, an English colony at the time. While he was ordered to destroy the other places, Suriname was to

⁸¹ Keye, *Het waere onderscheyt*.

⁸² Henk den Heijer, "'Over warme en koude landen': Mislukte Nederlandse volksplantingen op de Wilde Kust in de zeventiende eeuw," *De Zeventiende Eeuw* 21, no. 1 (2005): 79–90.

befall him unscathed. The colony was becoming a promising sugar plantation in English hands.⁸³ While starting a colony had proved to be difficult, taking one by force might have been considered a way to skip the difficult early build-up phase.

The second effect of the loss of Brazil in 1654 was that it created a network of people who carried the Brazilian experience into the Atlantic. The Portuguese were exercising their heavy handed anti-Semitism in areas conquered from the Dutch, motivating Jewish planters to quickly move out of the colony. Many of them went to non-Iberian colonies on the Wild Coast and in the Caribbean, sometimes indirectly. The Navarro family is an example of this. Wim Klooster traced the scions of this family from their flight from the inquisition in Portugal in the sixteenth century. From Portugal they moved to Amsterdam, from there to Dutch Brazil. After the fall of Brazil they moved back to Amsterdam, and from there to Curaçao, English Suriname, and again, onward to Barbados. Such and similar routes were not uncommon, making many Wild Coast colonisers veterans from Brazil.⁸⁴ The English colonisation of Suriname (1651-1667) also caused the influx of a sizeable group of Portuguese (or rather post-Brazilian) Jews from Barbados. On Barbados Jews were restricted in the amount of slaves they could own, and had to live in the city.⁸⁵ In Suriname however, they were free to settle in their own village upstream the Suriname River and brought sugar planting technologies with them.⁸⁶

This group of Jews cannot have been very large. David Cohen Nassy, a veteran from Brazil had in that same period been allotted some land in Cayenne, but quickly ran into trouble with the local leader of the Dutch settlement there. Their colonisation of Cayenne did not survive the French invasion of 1664, which moved them to Suriname and partly to Essequibo only to be replaced again by the English invasion of that colony in 1666. Together with Jews settled at the Pomeroon River they moved to join their co-religionists in their settlement upstream the Suriname River in 1666.

⁸³ J. C. M. Warnsinck and Abraham Westhuysen, *Abraham Crijnsen, de verovering van Suriname en zijn aanslag op Virginië in 1667*, (Amsterdam: N.v. Noord-hollandse uitgeversmaatschappij, 1936).

⁸⁴ Wim Klooster, "Networks of Colonial Entrepreneurs: The Founders of the Jewish Settlements in Dutch America, 1650s and 1660s," in *Atlantic Diasporas: Jews, Conversos, and Crypto-Jews in the Age of Mercantilism*, ed. Richard L. Kagan and Philip D. Morgan (Baltimore, Maryland: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), 33–49.

⁸⁵ Koot, *Empire at the Periphery*, 142.

⁸⁶ Robert Cohen, *Jews in Another Environment, Surinam in the Second Half of the Eighteenth Century*, Brill's Series in Jewish Studies (Leiden: Brill, 1991).

Together these groups formed a population of approximately 200 Jewish colonists at the time.⁸⁷

These colonists first settled in Torarica, but soon Suriname was also attacked and invaded, this time by the fleet of Abraham Crijnsen, prompting many, among whom Jews, to leave for English islands in the Caribbean. Swept from the various colonies over a period of more than thirty years, groups of Jews from Brazil had arrived, left and returned to Suriname. In 1682 Samuel Nassy received the grant to found a Synagogue in what would be called Jodensavanne.⁸⁸ This synagogue became the centre of a village close to which many Jews successfully built numerous sugar plantations, strongly based on the Brazilian example.⁸⁹

⁸⁷ Rens estimates “1. Up to 1664.5 maximally 30 persons. 2. In 1665 or 1666 an addition of maximally 100 from Cayenne. 3. A hypothetical further addition of maximally 50 from Essequibo and Pomeroon.” L. L. E. Rens, “Analysis of Annals Relating to Early Jewish Settlement in Surinam,” in *The Jewish Nation in Surinam*, ed. R. Cohen (Emmering, 1982), 29–45.

⁸⁸ Wieke Vink, “Creole Jews. Negotiating Community in Colonial Suriname” (Phd thesis, Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam, 2008), 24–25.

⁸⁹ R.A.J. van Lier, “The Jewish Community in Surinam: a Historical Survey,” in *The Jewish Nation in Surinam*, ed. R. Cohen (Amsterdam: Emmering, 1982), 19–28.

1.2. Sugar plantations and trade

The main push for plantation activities in Suriname was initiated by the English colonisation from Barbados by Lord Willoughby of Parham in 1651. In 1650 Willoughby was the new Governor of Barbados and was looking to extend his and his King's power. Some have argued that the colony of Suriname was found to alleviate internal disputes in the mother colony.⁹⁰

When Willoughby had to defend his actions in 1656 he argued:

“That Serranam may be considered as a place which by its scituation and other advantages may bee more searviceable to your Highnesse by being preserved and forborne then by being drayned & displanted at this time, it being a groweing plantation and soe happily scituated, that from thence a strength may bee easily conveyed into the bowells of the Spaniard at Peru.”

It was a line of reasoning very similar to that of Usselinx: successful plantations and a stronghold against the Spanish crown. But for Willoughby it was also a project of personal prestige overseas, the expansion of which was to be left a possibility. The borders of the colony were never defined by Willoughby, who argued that “Hee is at Libertie to begin another Settlement, continues to the bounds of the former”, but stressing at the same time that it is naturally “bounded by the two Rivers of Marrawine and Sarramica.”⁹¹ While this literally made the colony “an ill-defined borderland”, to quote Bailyn again, the activities of the colonists were more akin to the production phase of Atlantic expansion because of the many sugar plantations that the colonists started.

There seems to have been little orientation on inland trade or conflict by the English planters, but rather an attempt to follow up on the success of Barbados. The lack of orientation on the relation to the Amerindians is clearly illustrated by the fact that the fortress that the colonists built was Fort Willoughby at the mouth of the Suriname River, while the colony's main town Torarica was deep inland without any special defences. George Warren saw plantations as the centre of activity in the colony: “of *sugar* very considerable quantities are made ... *Specklewood* is also plentiful.”⁹² For both these products Warren cites the plantations as their source. Inland trade

⁹⁰ Sarah Barber, “Power in the English Caribbean: The Proprietorship of Lord Willoughby of Parham,” in *Constructing Early Modern Empires*, ed. L. H. Roper and Bertrand van Ruymbeke, The Atlantic World (Leiden Boston: Brill Academic Publishers, 2007), 189–212.

⁹¹ Lord Willoughby, “Reasons offered by Lord Willoughbie why hee ought not to be confined in his settlement upon Serranam”, in Vincent T. Harlow, ed., *Colonising Expeditions to the West Indies and Guiana, 1623-1667*, vol. 56, Works Issued by the Hakluyt Society (London: Printed for the Hakluyt Society, 1925).

⁹² Warren, *An Impartial Description*.

with the Amerindians is mentioned in passing, and only in the sense of trading provisions or enslaved people. There is no mention of export products for European markets. The English map of Suriname at the time shows the colony's rivers and the plantations with sugar mills. The indigenous settlements are scarcely mentioned. There are a few indicated on the Commewijne, but none at all on the Suriname and its tributaries.⁹³ Warren writes that the Amerindians “smarted for their folly [of attacking the colony]: now the Coloney is grown potent and they dare not but be humble.”⁹⁴

[Figure 4]

Figure 3 English manuscript map of Suriname, 1667.

A Discription of the Coleny of Surranam, John Carter Brown Archive of Early American Images.

When the Zeelanders took over Suriname in 1667 there was a return to inland trade for more than just daily necessities. According to Lodewijk

⁹³ “A Discription of the Coleny of Surranam in Guiana Drawne in the Yeare 1667”, 1667, JCB Archive of Early American Images, Cabinet Gm667 Di Ms.

⁹⁴ Warren, *An Impartial Description*, 26.

Hulsman trade with the indigenous people, mainly in hardwoods, remained central to the activities of the colonists in Suriname until the 1680s.⁹⁵ At the time planting and trading were not completely separate endeavours. A company of four men which started in Amsterdam in 1674 made the plan to sail to the Wild Coast where they would buy numerous goods from plantations as well as from Amerindians. All goods were then collected by the correspondents of the participants in Suriname, before being sent across to Europe.⁹⁶ This mid-way between inland trade and trade in plantation products was not uncommon at the time. During his travels to Berbice, a colony initially run from Zeeland, Adriaan van Berkel witnessed the trade with the indigenous people first hand, but was also trading goods at the plantations. In Suriname the so-called *bokkenruylers* were independent travelling merchants going into the hinterland to trade goods with the Amerindians. *Bokken* (like buck in English) was a generic and negative term for all Amerindians, regardless of tribe. According to Hulsman the use of this generic term, instead of the previously more common way to call people by their tribe, signified a growing polarization between the colonists and the Amerindians.⁹⁷

Governor Heinsius blamed the outbreak of the inland war in the late 1670s on these *bokkenruylers*. Heinsius stressed in his letters how starting plantations could turn the colony around, and he thought of inland trade as a troublesome activity. That view was shared by the later Governor van Sommelsdyck who ended the war with the Amerindians. During his reign the Amerindians were appeased, amongst other things by Sommelsdyck marrying one of the daughters of an Amerindian leader. He also forbade whites to go to “the Amerindian villages to trade.”⁹⁸ The trade returned in the eighteenth century, but never again as an important activity for the colony. The *bokkenruylers* were not the only ones to blame for the hostilities. The English knew that Amerindian attacks could drive the colony off the map, and might have consciously tried to poison inland relations when they lost the colony. When a large group of the English left for Jamaica in 1675, they took some Indians with them, and allegedly spread the

⁹⁵ L.A.H.C. Hulsman, “Nederlands Amazonia: handel met indianen tussen 1580 en 1680” (Universiteit van Amsterdam, 2009), 235, <http://dare.uva.nl/record/316229>.

⁹⁶ The contacts were either the correspondent of Abraham Drago or in case of his absence either Josua or Jacob Nassy. Stadsarchief Amsterdam, Notarial Archive, Notary P. Padthuijsen, entry 2908B act 1438, 30-Oct- 1674. Abraham Drago, Jacob Pruijs, Barent van der Linden en Otto van Halmael, merchants from Amsterdam, start a company to trade on the Wilde Coast.

⁹⁷ Hulsman, “Nederlands Amazonia,” 205.

⁹⁸ Bylaw 127, 15-May-1685 *Plakaatboek*, 156–166.

rumour that these had been sold to them by the Zeelanders. The panicked Governor Pieter Versterre requested the States of Zeeland to plead with the English Majesty “to return the deported Indians back to this coast, or else it will be impossible for our nation to live, and we run the risk of being massacred.”⁹⁹

Another successful strategy on the part of the English to sabotage the colony and drain it of its resources, was by organizing an exodus of colonists.¹⁰⁰ This departure of colonists was slowed down by Zeelandic rules that forced emigrants to pay off their debts and sell their slaves before they could leave.¹⁰¹ Despite the limitation that the Zeelandic proprietors placed on the departure of the colonists and their possessions, many did leave and the population figures as well as the acres of cultivated land declined during the Zeelandic rule of the colony.

Governor Pieter Versterre wrote in 1676 that the ships in the colony “are making slow progress because of the lack of sugar to load. There is not much sugar any more, it is hard to believe how much this colony has been weakened by the departure of the English.”¹⁰² In that same year there was a concerted effort by several Amerindian groups to attack the Zeelandic colony that came to signal the end of the inland trade. While at first the attackers killed white and black alike, later they tried to convince the Africans to desert the white colonists and join the guerrilla. The rollback operations by the Amerindians were successful in destroying all the plantations along the Para creek, and the planters retreated towards fort Zeelandia, on the site of former fort Willoughby. The combined attacks by the marooned slaves and the Amerindians especially near Torarica caused food shortages on the plantations there, which in turn lead to more resistance by those still enslaved.¹⁰³

⁹⁹ “*Sijne Majt. te versoecken, dat de affgevoerde indiaenen weeder aen de kust mogen geleverd worden, off anders sal het onmogelijck weesenom voor onse natie alhier langer te kunnen leven, off wij loopen perijckel van alle gemassacreert te worden.*” Letter by Pieter Versterre, 16-Dec-1675 *Zeeuwse archivalia uit Suriname en omliggende kwartieren, 1667 – 1683*.

¹⁰⁰ Most notably with the Clifford family who organised a sizable exodus, and whose property was confiscated by the Governor. Hartsinck, *Beschryving*, 2:859.

¹⁰¹ Bylaw 30, The rights of the English and the regulations to prevent them from leaving the colony, 15-Nov-1669, *Plakaatboek*, 53-54.

¹⁰² Letter Pieter Versterre, 10-Apr-1676 from *Zeeuwse archivalia uit Suriname en omliggende kwartieren, 1667 - 1683*.

¹⁰³ R. Buve, “Gouverneur Johannes Heinsius, de rol van Van Aerssens voorganger tijdens de Surinaams-Indische Oorlog, 1678-1680,” *Nieuwe West-Indische Gids* 45 (1966): 14–26.

[Figure 5]

**Figure 4 Detail of the map by Thornton showing both the fort and Torarica, 1667.
A New Draught of Surranam upon the Coast of Guianna, John Carter Brown Library
Cabinet Gm67 ThJ.**

The States of Zeeland became eager to get rid of their colony because of all the trouble they had maintaining it. They did want to keep access to its market, but without the burden of its upkeep. They came to an agreement with the WIC that from 7 May 1682 the colony would be in the hands of the WIC, and all costs and income would befall the company. Zeeland's fear of being denied access to the colony by intervention from the States of Holland was considerable. The States of Zeeland demanded to be guaranteed unlimited, free and unimpeded shipping, trade, navigation, and settlement rights in the colony for the "inhabitants, merchants, captains or passengers" from Zeeland. They demanded that they would never be taxed

more than any “inhabitant of Holland or any of the other provinces.” This was of such importance to the States of Zeeland that it was also carried over into the charter for the colony made by the States General in 1682, as well as the contract of the Suriname Company of 1683.

1.3. Surinamburgh

Not only production declined during the rule by the States of Zeeland (1667-1682), the defences were in an equal dire state: “of the forty cannons at the fort, only nine or ten can be used.” The number of soldiers dropped steadily, simply because many were sick and died, but also because they hid themselves as stowaway on outgoing ships. Versterre recounts an incident that when the troops requested to look for soldiers on the outgoing ships they were hindered by the captains to do so. In fact, “when the sergeant tried to look a bit longer, the captain ordered him to make haste, or he would adjust his sails and take him away as well.”¹⁰⁴ The pressure from the attacking Amerindians drove the inhabitants to the recently established hamlet of Paramaribo, and to settle along the Commewijne. The fortress on the shell ridges became the core of the European colony. Governor Heinsius, a new Governor sent to Suriname who was a veteran from Brazil and a proponent of plantation production rather than trade, wrote on his arrival:

“I assure you that it does not look like much at the moment.

However, the land can be brought to great perfection, and could be – according to some of the prominent planters – more profitable than your highnesses have ever been told. They speak of great things, and Paramaribo can be turned into a beautiful city, quite better than Middelburg. However, today it is but a hamlet with some scattered houses. I was unable to find a place to sleep there myself except in some sort of barn” ... “The dwellings people live in are just some palisades covered with hay or leaves.”¹⁰⁵

It was not much better, or arguably worse than the place George Warren had seen in the English period, but at that time the colony had a different capital. Warren saw the fort on the place where Paramaribo would be found, and mentioned “a small Village, call’d the *Fort*.” Upstream however there was “the Metropolis or chief Town of the Colony, called *Toorarica*, consisting of about One hundred Dweling Houses, and a Chappel” (see map). At the time Torarica also functioned as the colony’s

¹⁰⁴ Letter Pieter Versterre, 10-Apr-1676 from *Zeeuwse archivalia uit Suriname en omliggende kwartieren, 1667 - 1683*.

¹⁰⁵ Letter from Governor Heinsius to the States of Zeeland, 28-Dec-1678 *Zeeuwse archivalia uit Suriname en omliggende kwartieren, 1667 - 1683*.

harbour, and vessels “of 300 Tons” were able to sail there. The natural bay in front of the town was “large enough to contain a Hundred Sail of Ships.”¹⁰⁶ The place was also referred to as Sande Poynt.¹⁰⁷ When the Zeelanders took over the colony from the English, they alternated the seat of government between Torarica and Paramaribo several times. The war with the Amerindians decidedly drove them to the fort.

There is an echo of Heinsius’ experience in besieged Recife in Brazil when he envisions how the city should be built: “a *borstweringe* with palisades in the shape of a half moon, would completely protect this place against all attacks by the Indians.” Heinsius introduced the name Surinamburgh (also spelled Zerrenamburgh) for the town. This name refers to the word burg or burcht for castle or stronghold, as well as to the name of the Zeelandic city of Middelburg, the capital of the States of Zeeland (the owner of the colony). Paramaribo would always remain an open and unwallled city, although palisades were put up around 1680. Without a wall around the city, the panicked colonists had brought their goods and families either into the fortress, or even aboard ships. But Heinsius remained an optimist, and when the place would be “made into a city with a wall, it would certainly be a strong burght, and a refuge for the entire colony.”¹⁰⁸

That Surinamburgh, despite its name, was a safe stronghold was more wishful thinking than anything else. This is well illustrated by the report made by Heinsius of an incident in 1680:

“At night around eight o’clock the Indians have come to the outer houses of the Princestreet, of which the last two are abandoned. In the third there was a wife and her child, the maid of secretary van Gheluwe. There they stormed in. A Negro named Ganmidt, as well as some others said: ‘you are the reason that Mr. Perduijn has cut my ear, therefor you must die’, after which she received several hits with axes and swords, and was left for dead. In the same house there was another citizen, a shoemaker named Cruithoff, who they found in his hammock. They beat him on his head and stuck an arrow in his chest, the injuries of which killed him an hour later. After this everyone came to arms, and the enemy left without causing further harm.”¹⁰⁹

Abandoned houses, cutting ears, attacking Amerindians and a marooned African, and a village up in arms to drive off the assailants. Clearly not the

¹⁰⁶ Warren, *An Impartial Description*, 1–2.

¹⁰⁷ Letter to Sir Robert Harley from the stewards of his plantation in Surinam (1663-1664) in: Harlow, *Colonising Expeditions to the West Indies and Guiana, 1623-1667*.

¹⁰⁸ Letter from Heinsius, 1680, *Zeeuwse Archivalia uit Suriname en omliggende kwartieren, 1667 – 1683*.

¹⁰⁹ Idem.

safe haven envisioned by Heinsius, but a vulnerable outpost in contested borderland.

When Adriaan van Berkel went to the colony to work as a plantation manager later in the 1680s, after the end of the inland war, much had changed. He wrote that the colonists:

“have built a stone fortress called Paramaribo, as well as a village of about fifty to sixty houses. Higher up on a tributary of that same river there is a fortification, built during the reign of Governor Sommeldyck. Further upstream on the same river we find *Zandpunt*, a village of Christians, which consists of maybe twenty to thirty houses and a church. Above this village one finds a village called Jewish Quarters, so called because many Jews live there. Here there are the best plantations of the entire colony.”¹¹⁰

The colony van Berkel saw was one rapidly transitioning into one geared towards plantation production.

1.4. Regional connections

Because the States of Zeeland ruled the colony, they did not have to abide by the rules of the WIC for governing the colony. However, they did have to abide by the WIC rules of the slave trade, since this was a WIC monopoly in the Atlantic. This gave the colonists some space to manoeuvre with respect to the regional trade. Nevertheless, when the issue came up shortly after the Zeelanders had taken over the colony, the instinctive reaction by Crijnssen was to block non-Dutch shipping to and from Suriname. Lack of resources made successive Governors more benevolent when it came to non-Dutch shipping with merchants and Governors in the English colonies. The Third Anglo-Dutch War (1672-1674) cut the connections short, but these were resumed quickly after hostilities ceased and the Surinamese colonists were in great need of provisions. The networks of the colony’s Jews appear to have been instrumental in making and continuing this regional inter-connection across imperial boundaries. But with the end of Zeelandic rule, the SC tried to ban the non-Dutch trade to and from Suriname again.

When in 1668 the English planters that had remained in Suriname requested from the Zeelanders the right to continue trading with Barbados, Crijnssen balanced between appeasing the English, and limiting the trade. For Barbados the supplies of Surinamese wood were of great necessity because years of sugar cultivation had rid the land of wood. After a fire caused the “total ruin and destruction of the town in Barbados” the colonists requested to be allowed to ship “*timmerhoudt* for the rebuilding of the

¹¹⁰ Berkel, *Amerikaansche voyagien*, 109–110.

city.”¹¹¹ Crijnssen wanted to showcase the Dutch as good “allies and neighbours”, and allowed for the wood shipping to take place in exchange for Barbadian sugar, but only on Dutch vessels. About further trade he wrote that he “could not allow the trading from Barbados.”¹¹² On the other side Dutch vessels also blocked. Ships from Zeeland refused to take cargo to Barbados after two of them – with the consent of Crijnssen – went to Barbados and were confiscated there for breaking English navigation laws.¹¹³

The migration of Jews to Suriname from Barbados, and after Zeeland’s take-over in the 1660s from Suriname to Barbados, created ties between the two colonies that were outside of the control of the Zeelanders. While the Zeelanders were uneasy with this network, they saw its potential use. In February 1670 Lichtenberg wrote that Louis Dias from Barbados told Isack de Mesa (his brother in law) that “furnishing a ship to bring planters from Suriname to Barbados was only a pretext to get a ship to Suriname, to see if they could trade in wood between Suriname and Barbados.” The captain indeed found no one to leave the colony, and asked to export some wood, which Lichtenberg allowed him. This bold move by Dias worked, and Lichtenberg asked Isack de Mesa to write Dias “if those from Barbados would bring sugar or similar wares here, and those from Barbados would allow the Dutch ships and their cargo, that there would be no objections from this side to establish a regular.”¹¹⁴ The Governor argued that this “would be good for Suriname, and time will soon tell if it will work out”¹¹⁵ The Jews who previously resided on Barbados went on to tell Lichtenberg that he should “create a trade between New England and this colony, and bring horses, flour, and fish in exchange for *Kilduijvel* [an inferior type of rum] and [sugar cane] syrup.” Lichtenberg was tempted by the idea and asked Henrico de Casseres to contact his correspondents in his name, to see

¹¹¹ Request by Major Bannister and the English inhabitants to Commander Crijnssen, Jul-1668, *Plakaatboek*, 13–15.

¹¹² “conne ‘t nogotieren van Barbados niet toestaan.” Answer by Commander Crijnssen to the request by major Bannister Ibid., 15–17.

¹¹³ The case of the captains Simon Aertsen and Jacob de Kleijne, 1668-1669 *Zeeuwse archivalia uit Suriname en omliggende kwartieren, 1667 - 1683*, ZA entry 2035 inv.nr. 140–146.

¹¹⁴ “als die van de Barbados suijker of eenige soodanige waren hier brachten, en die van de Barbados wilden toelaten, dat de duijtse schepen ende met laddingh daer komen mochten, dat van dese kant geen swarigheijt soude gemaect worden om alsdan een vaste negotie te stabiliseren.” Ibidem.

¹¹⁵ “een brave saeck voor Surinam soude sijn ende den tijt ons in korte, of het lucken sal, sal leeren.” Ibidem.

if such could be organised because that “would be very important for the sugar mills in Suriname and greatly increase the exchange of goods between both places.”¹¹⁶

Whatever the success of the establishment of the regional trade was, the outbreak of hostilities with England in 1672 during the so-called Dutch Year of Disaster, necessarily hampered trade between Suriname and Barbados or any other English ports for that matter. The lack of inter-colonial and inter-imperial contacts in the Zeelandic period of the colony might partly explain the lack of success the Zeelandic colonists had in developing Suriname. The hostilities in Europe also caused the trans-Atlantic connections to be hampered. The threatening of the long-distance supply lines and warefare with the combined Amerindian and Maroon enemy strengthened the need of the colonists to re-establish a regional connection.

The return of contact with Barbados was made in 1677 by Surinamese Governor Abel Thisso requesting supplies for the sustenance of his armed forces from his British counterpart on Barbados, Governor Jonathan Atkin.¹¹⁷ After the initial re-establishing of contact, Barbados “became Suriname’s most important colonial provider for provisions of all kind”, with private merchants joining in the trade.¹¹⁸ In this regional trade, the colony’s Jews took a prominent place. When in March 1678 the ship *Morgenstarre* with captain Jan van der Spijck was sent to Barbados, David de Fonseca was aboard as factor.¹¹⁹ A year later Samuel Cohen Nassy and Governor Heinsius sent Jan van der Spijck out to Cayenne to bring in supplies.¹²⁰ In 1680 Samuel Nassy wrote in a letter to Governor Heinsius that, while Maroons had to be executed when caught by the whites, this was of course not very profitable. In turn he suggested selling the recaptured Africans to Barbados. The Barbados connection had become a regular one, as seen in the table below.

The intensity of the inter-colonial connections is well illustrated by a two-month sample of ship movements in and out of Suriname in 1680. Noteworthy is also that the Dutch ships failed to fully load with return

¹¹⁶ 8-Feb-1670, *Zeeuwse Archivalia*, ZA, entry 2035 inv.nr. 204–206.

¹¹⁷ Claudia Schnurmann, *Atlantische Welten: Engländer und Niederländer im amerikanisch-atlantischen Raum, 1648 - 1713* (Köln: Böhlau, 1998), 22.

¹¹⁸ Hermann Wellenreuther and Jaap Jacobs, eds., *Jacob Leisler’s Atlantic World in the Later Seventeenth Century* (LIT Verlag Münster, 2009), 46.

¹¹⁹ Letter to John Atkins on Barbados, Mar-1678, *Zeeuwse Archivalia*, ZA, entry 2035 inv.nr. 302–304.

¹²⁰ Declaration by captain Jan van der Spijck, 22-Dec-1679, *Zeeuwse Archivalia*, ZA, entry 2035 inv.nr. 376.

shipments. The ships that came in from New England and Barbados shipped horses and provisions to the colony and sailed out again loaded with timber. Judging by the names of the captains, they do not seem to have been of Portuguese origin themselves, but they did ship for Luso-Hebrew merchants and planters in the Caribbean, the Guianas and the North American East Coast.

Table 3 Ship movements for January and February 1680

Date	Itinerary	Ship's name	Captain's name	Note on cargo
1 Jan.	To the Republic	<i>De Surinaemse Coopman</i>	<i>Tobias Adriaense</i>	Not fully loaded
1 Jan	To the Republic	<i>De Jonge Vogel Fenix</i>	<i>Jan de Bonte</i>	Not fully loaded
2 Jan	From New York,	<i>The Hunter</i>	<i>Paul Crean</i>	9 horses, some food
7-Jan	From Barbados	<i>Kitch Dextford</i>	<i>James Aire</i>	Picking up a planter and his enslaved workers
18 Jan	From Barbados	<i>Bloessem</i>	<i>Richard Martin</i>	Empty, to get timber
20 Jan	From New England	<i>The Trent</i>	<i>George Munjoy</i>	Left Suriname for Barbados in August. Brings 8 horse and food. Entire cargo is for Samuel Nassy
24 Jan	To unknown	<i>Kitch Dextford</i>	<i>James Aire</i>	Out with planter and enslaved workers
26 Jan	To Barbados	<i>The Hunter</i>	<i>Paul Crean</i>	Timber. Failed to sell his horses. Intends to return with food soon
9 Feb	To Barbados	<i>The Trent</i>	<i>Josias Monjoy</i>	Timber, owned by Samuel Nassy, who sent it to bring food back
17 Feb	To the Republic		<i>Gabriel Bisschop</i>	
20 Feb	From Barbados	<i>Hopewell</i>	<i>Francois Gibbon</i>	Empty, consigned by Jews to load timber
20 Feb	From New York	<i>Batty</i>	<i>William Dunscombe</i>	Thirty horses and food
21 Feb	To Barbados	<i>Bloessem</i>	<i>Richard Martin</i>	Timber
26 Feb and leaves 7 Mar	From Fijale, but originates from the Isle of Wight	<i>The George</i>	<i>Wm: Liege</i>	Loaded with wine, failed to sell, and left again.
29 Feb	To Barbados	<i>Anna Maria</i>	<i>George Monjoy</i>	Bought by Samuel Nassy, loaded with timber to return with food

Source: ZA, “extract der daghelijckse gebeurtenisse”, entry 2035 inv.nr. 404-405

Jewish settlers such as Luis Dias and Samuel Nassy played a prominent role in maintaining this connection, Nassy on the Surinamese side, Dias on the Barbadian side.¹²¹ After the capturing of Suriname the Zeelanders had attempted to choke the regional connection with Barbados, which had existed since the founding of the colony by the English, but the connection never disappeared completely. A new possible break-up of the connection could have resulted from the transfer of the colony into the hands of the WIC in 1682 and the SC in 1683, but again the regional connection proved stronger than restrictive measures from the metropolis.

The transition from European activities based on trade with the Amerindians into a stable production system occurred unevenly on an Atlantic scale. For Suriname the marchland period overlapped with attempts to establish slave-based plantation production. A delineation between a Dutch Atlantic economy based on trade, followed by one based on of plantation production as suggested by Jan de Vries that was discussed in the introduction roughly matches Suriname’s colonisation process.¹²² However, it does seem artificial to categorize what happened along the Suriname River as “Dutch”, much of what was going on at the time did not yet depend on Dutch action, rather on networks of colonists who served under different, sometimes even competing Empires. There is much continuity between the English, Zeelandic and Suriname Company periods. And within the Dutch Atlantic the two tracks of expansion, trade and colonisation existed parallel to each other, and the change between trade and production-oriented colonisation was not clear-cut. The main change that was coming was that the pioneering marchland phase resulted in a potentially successful colony, than needed to consolidate its connection through which it received its credit, labour, military protection and provisions.

¹²¹Schnurmann, ‘Atlantic Commerce and Nieuw Amsterdam/New York Merchants’ cites NL-HaNA, Tweede West-Indische Compagnie, entry 1.05.10.02 inv.nr. 210; SAA, Notary Hendrik Outgers 9 November 1680, entry 3250, fol. 40; NL-HaNA, Tweede West-Indische Compagnie, 3 October 1679, entry 1.05.01.02 inv.nr. 344.

¹²²Vries, “The Dutch Atlantic Economies.”

2. Consolidating connections, 1684-1713

This chapter covers the period in which the Atlantic trade routes became more dependable and investigates the transformation of networks, relationships and institutions of the colony. It argues that besides the formal SC-led aspect of the expansion of plantation production in the Atlantic, the transition of Suriname depended heavily on informal and unofficial initiatives by colonists who had been part of colonial societies for decades. The adaptations of rules and regulations, and the importance of informal contacts are a recurring theme in the history of the expansion of plantation production, intercolonial relationships, homeward shipping of tropical products and the organization of the slave trade.

Despite major naval conflicts in the period between 1684 and 1713, Paramaribo was increasingly successful as a nodal point tying together plantation production and slave trade. Between those years the export of tropical products grew from roughly 4.2 million pounds to 15.9 million pounds a year. The average load of tropical products per ship destined to the Republic shot up from two hundred thousand pounds to seven hundred thousand pounds per ship.¹²³ Ships arriving in Paramaribo from regional ports increased from four non-Dutch ships in 1684 to 35 in 1713.¹²⁴ The number of enslaved workers in the country grew from four thousand to eleven thousand. This increase of roughly seven thousand came about at a tremendous cost: in that period 29,901 captives were embarked in Africa to be sent to Suriname, 26,104 of them were disembarked alive.¹²⁵ The size of the plantations also increased. The number of colonists who owned more than 30 enslaved labourers grew from 47 to 148 between 1684 and 1713. While there had only been two slave owners who had more than 100 slaves in 1684, there were 12 of them in 1713.¹²⁶

How was this increase in the productive capacity of the colony coming about? An understanding of the organisation of the connections between Paramaribo and the rest of the Atlantic world is crucial to formulation of an answer. In the regional trade the persistence of colonists in trading and lobbying for their regional supply-line was instrumental in getting their connection legalized and stable. One might assume that sugar was the main commodity traded in Paramaribo. However, given the nature of the relationship between planters and the Republic, cargo space was actually

¹²³ See Appendix 1 Shipping data, 1683-1795.

¹²⁴ Idem.

¹²⁵ *Slavevoyages.org: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database* (Atlanta, Georgia 2008) <http://www.slavevoyages.org/> (seen September 2010).

¹²⁶ SvS, entry 1.05.03, inv.nr. 213, 227, 232, 241.

the crucial service traded in the port. And the change of the cargo market from a buyers' to a sellers' market increased the quality of sugar and ensured the continuation of the connection. As regards the slave trade, the WIC was at times eager to give up the trade, but contracts between the WIC and planters were important to ensure the continuation of the trade were instrumental in carrying the colony from a phase of irregular trade, to one in which deliveries of captive Africans to the colony became dependable.

To realise this transition colonists mobilised a mixture of both formal and informal networks, and both imperial and cross-imperial connections. Bailyn argued about the transition to a period in which production was central that the "growth of stability and development was aided by the fact that nowhere was imperial governance [...] absolute."¹²⁷ Colonists changed overseas rulings to fit their needs, while at the same time their new society demanded more intense connections to the metropolis. In Suriname expansion of plantation production meant that colonists needed larger amounts of capital, more labour, a standardization of units of measure, stricter executive hierarchies and more dependable defences. Through trial and error colonists were finding out how to make their operation profitable, and for the time being, succeeded.

In his role as freighter, notary public and lobbyist, as well as merchant and planter Samuel Cohen Nassy was at the centre of a process that changed Suriname from a contested settlement into a stable plantation colony. He was the son of Brazilian born David Nassy, and was part of a network that stretched far into the Atlantic World.¹²⁸ Through these connections he pioneered the regional trade between Suriname, Barbados and New York.¹²⁹ As notary public (the first Jew to hold that position in the Americas) he was an important link between business interest in the colony and the Dutch Republic.¹³⁰ Nassy had an interventionist approach. He did not shy away from personally chasing after escaped workers to retrieve them. When there were not enough captives being brought to the colony from Africa, he offered to go against the WIC monopoly and use his own ship for a voyage. When, in the 1690s, the WIC directors considered stopping the shipping of enslaved Africans to Suriname entirely, Nassy contracted to buy 500 slaves to force the continuation of the trade. Despite his heroism as Captain of the Jewish militia in defeating the 1688 soldier

¹²⁷ Bailyn, *Atlantic History*, 84.

¹²⁸ Klooster, "Networks of Colonial Entrepreneurs," 33–49.

¹²⁹ Schnurmann, *Atlantische Welten*.

¹³⁰ J. A. Schiltkamp, *De geschiedenis van het notariaat in het octrooigebied van de West-Indische Compagnie: voor Suriname en de Nederlandse Antillen tot het jaar 1964* (Amsterdam, 1964).

mutiny and his role in the founding of Jodensavanne, as a Jew he was unable to become Governor. Despite the many freedoms granted to the Jews in the colony, this remained impossible and the position of Governor went to the other major planter of the colony Johan van Scharpenhuijsen.¹³¹ Defeated and angered, Nassy went to the Republic in 1694 where he continued to manage his business in the colony, and successfully fuelled a corruption scandal against Van Scharpenhuijsen. The direct result of the scandal was a tighter control on the private interests of Governors in Suriname. These and many other activities made Nassy directly and indirectly part of the transition of the colony from tentative beginnings to a stable dependency with a growing plantation sector. His many exploits form a theme running through this chapter, although as an overview of his activities it is far from complete.

2.1. Persistent regional networks

The protectionist approach to shipping taken by the directors of the Suriname Company had been laid down in the charter regulating the governance of the colony in 1682. Article twelve of the charter reads:

“That the trade and navigation on the aforementioned colony [Surinam] shall only take place directly from this country [the Republic]. Fruits, wares and produce are not allowed to go anywhere else than to this country. The same goes for the provisions needed by said colony. They can only come from this country, and from nowhere else.”

This policy of the SC was successfully restricting the sale of Surinamese produce to the home markets of the other (competing) powers. However, given the nature of expansion into the Atlantic, the Suriname Company was unable to stop the Surinamese from creating connections with non-Dutch colonies. It is surprising that the SC attempted to restrict regional shipping. It could be considered ‘out of character’ if compared to the policies of the WIC. They generally allowed interimperial intercolonial shipping from their other Caribbean domains, especially from Curaçao. The intended restriction on this trade by the Suriname Company was very likely caused by the different function that the Company had in mind for the colony. Instead of a trading post, or staple market, the colony of Suriname was set up to be a plantation colony. In 1704 the situation on the ground forced the Company to change their policy by allowing the regional and non-Dutch connections to Suriname. The SC reasoned like mercantilists, stressing the exclusive right to *dese Landen* (literally “these lands”). However, to survive as a plantation colony they had to rely in part on regional imports and thus needed to allow for regional exports as well.

¹³¹ Wolbers, *Geschiedenis van Suriname*, 82.

Samuel Nassy in Suriname and Louis Dias in Barbados had organised intercolonial shipments in 1677 when the colony was in bad shape, and desperately needed supplies. Dias provided Suriname with limestone in exchange for wood.¹³² Besides the Barbadian connection, Nassy also connected Suriname to Curaçao and New England, a connection already proposed to the Zeelanders by Surinamese Jews in the early days of their rule. Nassy picked up this thread in 1680 with a ship such as *The Trent* sailing the triangle New York – Suriname – Barbados. After the takeover of the colony by the SC, Nassy continued this trade and outfitted *The Betty* with captain Marshall Cobie who sailed for Nassy from New York to Paramaribo and from there onward to Barbados in 1686.¹³³ Based on the precedent of his role in other intercolonial shipments, Nassy made a bolder move. In February 1683 he requested to be allowed to bring horses from New England to Suriname and to continue the voyage onwards with that same ship to bring “sugar to Holland or Zeeland.” According to Nassy the ship would bring about 100 to 150 horses, which could only be transported “in English ships.” The sugar to be shipped to Holland or Zeeland was the payment for those horses. The Suriname Company agreed on the condition that those loaded sugars would be brought directly to Holland or Zeeland.¹³⁴

Samuel Nassy continued to argue for the opening up of trade. He managed to convince the local council to allow individual shipments. When Aerssen van Sommelsdyck assumed the post of Governor, the English ships kept arriving, and Sommelsdyck commented that “he did not find it reasonable, desirable, nor in agreement with the interest of the colony to send the ship away.”¹³⁵ But van Sommelsdyck realised that the laws of the Company needed to be upheld, and an English ship that arrived from Barbados was told “not to come here anymore”,¹³⁶ and to warn the others “that this trade and shipping was forbidden and closed to them.”¹³⁷ After Sommelsdyck assured the directors of the SC that he was doing his part in closing off the English trade, he went on to stress how important it would be to import horses, because “more than ten mills are standing still because of

¹³² Schnurmann, “Atlantic Commerce.”

¹³³ PSNADC.

¹³⁴ SvS, *Overgekomen Brieven en Papieren, 16-Nov-1683 – 20-Nov-1684*, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 212.

¹³⁵ “niet hebbende redelijck, billijck, noch met de interesse van de colonie geoordeelt over een te komen het selvige terugge te senden.” SvS, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 212.

¹³⁶ “hier niet meer te coome.” SvS, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 212.

¹³⁷ “dat haer dese negotie ende vaert verboden ende gelsoten was.” SvS, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 212.

the lack of horses.”¹³⁸ This was “to the noticeable detriment of both the private and company trade of the freighters”, which were indeed sailing back with less sugar than they could load.¹³⁹

The ships in the horse trade came from a smaller range of places than the horses themselves. In 1683 12 ships brought in horses: 51 on English ships, 226 on Dutch ships. None of these horses came directly from the Dutch Republic, but their origins were Norway, Scotland, Ireland, New England, Curaçao, St. Jago and Northern Brazil. For the next year there were some Dutch horses, and the others were Irish, New English and some from St. Jago. 87 horses had come with English captains, the other 187 with Dutch captains.¹⁴⁰

After the mutiny of 1688 in which Governor Van Sommelsdyck was killed by rebellious soldiers who were disgruntled over low rations, the governing council became strongly in favour of regional supplies. The mutiny mainly took place due to the lack of rations provided to the soldiers. One of the officers wrote to the directors of the Suriname Company in Amsterdam that the troops would have rebelled again if goods were not imported from the New England colonies to Suriname.¹⁴¹ When Nassy made another request to the Council in August 1689, they granted him the right to bring goods from English ships to shore. This, according to the council, should prevent them sailing away to other destinations. It was of great importance because the members of the council thought that the future of the colony depended on the goods brought from New England.¹⁴²

Table 4 Routes of non-Dutch ships, 1682-1692

Origin	Voyages	Destination	Voyages
Barbados	11	Barbados	28
Boston	11	unknown	13
unknown	6	Boston	3

¹³⁸ “*dat hier meer dan tien meulens bij gebrek van paerden ende beesten gants stil saen.*”

SvS, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 212.

¹³⁹ “*tot merckelijcke schade van de particuliere als van de Societeyt en de commercie wegens de retourschepen.*” SvS, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 212.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Postma, “Breaching the Mercantile Barriers,” 114.

¹⁴² NL-HaNA, Oud Archief Suriname: Raad van Politie, *Minuut-notulen van de ordinarij en extra-ordinarij vergaderingen van het Hof van Politie en Criminele Justitie, 1689 march 12 - 1692 January 10* meeting of the 4-August-1689, entry 1.05.10.02 inv.nr. 1.

New York	5	Amsterdam	2
Rhode Island	4	New York	1
New England	3		
Brazil	1		
Curaçao	1		
Dublin	1		
London	1		
New London	1		

Source: PSNADC. For the comparison with the Dutch shipping in the period see Graph 1 on page 233.

2.2. Uneasy and ad-hoc policing

The non-Dutch trade in the period was in content comparable to coastal trade: mostly provisions, foodstuffs, building material and no luxuries. It connected North America and Barbados with Suriname and formed a web of connections between different regions on the Atlantic's western coast (see Table 4). Many skippers sailing to Paramaribo came there more than once, and often from the ports of Boston and New York. Especially on the import side the English North American colonies were important. They supplied the goods as requested by Nassy: food, provisions and horses.¹⁴³

Because Suriname had not yet become a fully-fledged sugar plantation colony, the ships that arrived from North America with provisions had hardly anything they could legally load to take back. In 1678 no molasses of Dutch origins entered the Boston harbour.¹⁴⁴ However, the lack of wood on Barbados and the abundance of it upstream the Suriname River made the triangle New England > Suriname > Barbados viable. The destination for the non-Dutch ships was Barbados. Returning to New England was another option, but not a route that was often taken. For example, ships did arrive from Rhode Island, but none of the ships that left Paramaribo in the early period declared it as their destination.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Gilman M. Ostrander, "The Colonial Molasses Trade," *Agricultural History* 30, no. 2 (April 1956): 77–84, doi:10.2307/3739927.

¹⁴⁵ PSNADC

Sometimes the directors of the SC would allow sales to be made. While generally lenient when it came to horses, they would be stricter in cases that involved sugar. When an Englishman arrived in the colony of Suriname in 1701 to ship sugar he was refused his shipment. According to the Governor he was using an old permit which was not even in his name. The captain was looking to transport sugar, a “high good” according to the Governor and forbade the captain to load the hold.¹⁴⁶ The board of the Suriname Company agreed. The decision was primarily based on the goods that the Englishman was trying to trade. In 1701 the company directors allowed horses to be brought on shore. If anything else was unloaded, however, all goods and the ship that brought them had to be confiscated.¹⁴⁷

The most common route in the first decade of the Suriname Company rule was between Barbados and Paramaribo. An example of this is John Rule. He sailed with his ships the *Margaret* and the *Maria* between Paramaribo and Barbados. From Suriname’s mother colony Barbados he brought speck, tobacco, fat, flour, meat, cheese, tar and mackerel. The mate brought with him several hammocks and lime stone.¹⁴⁸ There were some Jews and their children as passengers and some slaves. None of the goods on board were likely to have been produced on Barbados. They had come from the North American colonies or the British Isles and could therefore also be regarded as originating from there. There is a clear pattern of export to Barbados, and the import of North American and British goods, either from North America directly or through Barbados.

The regional connection was efficient in supplying food and provisions. Captains had the option to sell their goods elsewhere and move on to other ports when there were problems on the Paramaribo market. The ships were also notably smaller than the large ocean-going vessels of the Dutch. This resulted in a very quick turnaround of English ships in Suriname, as illustrated by the comparative waiting times (see Graph 2 on page 234). The War of the Spanish Succession had no negative influence on the regional shipping, which increased even tremendously during the final war years when the total number of ships well exceeded that of Amsterdam’s ships. Despite the increase in ships (and therefore the availability of tonnage) the regional ships achieved waiting times of less than two months in port, which was rather short by comparison with transoceanic ships. While vessels

¹⁴⁶SvS, *Overgekomen Brieven en Papieren, Report of ships in Paramaribo*, 5-Dec-1701, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 229.

¹⁴⁷“bij oogluijckingen” NA, *Minutes board meeting of the Suriname Company*, 19-Aug-1701, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 21.

¹⁴⁸SvS, *Overgekomen Brieven en Papieren*, 15-April-1688 to 11-Sep-1688, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 218.

were indeed much smaller in the regional trade, their average waiting time in the colony also suggests that they were able to deal with local market conditions efficiently.

2.3. Legalizing the trade

The increase of non-Dutch regional shipping triggered a response from the directors of the Suriname Company. From their perspective it was undercutting their business, while on the other hand they understood that the connection was fundamental to the survival of their colony. The issue of the regional trade had first come up during the drafting of the colony's charter in the 1680s. From time to time requests regarding the freeing of the regional trade were sent to the directors, and the Governor pleaded for permission to allow English ships to sell their goods. The Suriname Company continued to discuss the issue of the regional trade in their meetings. In 1702 the company directors wrote an ordinance based on the advice of a commission they had instated. The plan was to only allow horse sales, and confiscate the entire ship and its cargo of any one who tried to trade other goods. Such a strict order would probably have killed off the trade entirely if it had been implemented. Governor Van Der Veen wrote that he was disappointed by the fact that the Suriname Company had only allowed the import of horses, but had disallowed the buying of general provisions and food. He was disappointed because this trade was "one of the two legs that the colony has to walk on." He also made clear to the board-members that it was causing many political conflicts between himself and the local governing council.¹⁴⁹

The laws governing non-Dutch shipping in Suriname were not formulated by the board of the SC or the Surinamese Governor alone; they also consulted the governing council in Suriname before making a decision. The governing council strongly rejected the order of the Company to levy a tax on imported English horses, and to confiscate all other goods they brought to the colony. Confiscation was deemed to be especially unreasonable by the councillors. In their letters to the board of the SC the councillors used an exclusive focus on the import of horses to argue their case. All and any arguments were mustered against the director's decision. The council argued that since provisions and flour were transported together with the horses, they would be spoiled and worthless. Therefore the board "did not have to worry" about the competition from New England.¹⁵⁰ The

¹⁴⁹SvS, *Response to the order of the Suriname Company to ban English imports*, 28-Jan-1702, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 229.

¹⁵⁰Many years later Nepveu argued the opposite, namely that the flour from the Netherlands arrived in a bad state due to the Atlantic crossing, which is why he preferred the

horses, their hay and water were said to take so much space on board the “small and hellish” ships that there was no space to carry any other merchandise.¹⁵¹ It is very likely that the SC directors knew that those arguments did not make much sense. However, they must have realized that if the colonists would not co-operate they could just let the ships enter Suriname illicitly and the Company would be powerless to resist.

The issue of liberalizing the regional trade continued to be investigated by special commissions and remained a point of discussion in the boardroom of the Suriname Company. When planters asked that they be allowed to organise coastal trade along the coast of Spanish America the idea was completely buried by the company directors, and blocked until 1783.¹⁵² In 1703 it was decided that there could be imports from North America, provided that they kept to strict regulations.¹⁵³ The metropolis was not strong enough to enforce its monopoly. In a similar case between the WIC and the colonists in New Netherland half a century earlier, the metropolis had completely dominated the colonists. The New Netherlanders had wanted to trade with New England, but the WIC and their local Governor were strong enough to block such contacts.¹⁵⁴ The directors of the SC were unhappy with the situation in Suriname, but they were realistic enough to make a rule allowing the trade. The compromise between the colonists and the SC that came out of this remained in place for about eighty years. At the same time a similar issue arose in Essequibo, a colony directly under the Zeeland chamber of the WIC. The Chamber strictly ordered the colony not to trade with New York and Barbados, except in case of great need. They added that this pretext was being used far too lightly.¹⁵⁵ The size of the plantation production, the history of the regional connections, and

North American imports. SvS, *Overgekomen Brieven en Papieren uit Suriname*, 1774, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 353 fo 236.

¹⁵¹ SvS, *Response to the order of the Suriname Company to ban English imports*, 19-Jul-1702, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 229.

¹⁵² SvS, *Minutes board meeting of the Suriname Company*, 25-Sep-1700, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 21

¹⁵³ SvS, entry, *Minutes of the meeting of the board of the Surinam Company*, Jan-1703, entry 1.05.03 inv. nr. 22.

¹⁵⁴ Morton Wagman, “Civil Law and Colonial Liberty in New Netherland,” in *Local Government in Overseas Empires, 1450-1800. II*, ed. A.J.R. Russel-Wood, vol. 23, An Expanding World. The European Impact on World History, 1450-1800 (Aldershot: Variorum, 1999), 495–500.

¹⁵⁵ NL-HaNA, Tweede West-Indische Compagnie, *Letter from the WIC chamber Zeeland to Commander Beekman of Essequibo*, Middelburg 12-Mar-1704, entry 1.05.01.02 inv.nr. 812.

maybe also the inclination of directors from Amsterdam towards unhampered trade broke the initial mercantilism of the charter of 1682.

In the final published version of the law on English shipping to Suriname in 1704, the concern with maintaining control over who shipped what is clearly shown in the level of detail with which the directors described what could and could not be shipped. It stated that the inhabitants of Suriname were allowed to trade with skippers from New England, New Netherland (sic) as well as neighbouring islands. The final order read that “The alien ships shall not be allowed to bring European manufactures of gold, silver, copper, steel, wool, silk or linen, nor wheat, rye, barley and oats nor meat, or East Indian goods or spices” or “slaves.” Ships sailing from the colony for North America could not carry any sugar, but they were allowed to have “molasses, dram [rum], timber and any and all wares shipped to Suriname from the Republic.” With this regulation the directors sought to prevent European and East Indian wares from being shipped to the colony via non-Dutch intermediaries and to bar them from taking on direct shipping between Europe and Surinam. As further discouragement, the Company levied a 5 per cent tax on both imports and exports—double the amount of tax on goods shipped to the Republic. For cattle, horses and sheep an extra fee was levied.¹⁵⁶

Even though the main problem seemed to be resolved, there was still the issue of having Surinamese ships trade regionally. Around 1716 a pamphlet was published by a “group of interested parties”, led by former principal accountant of the colony Jan van der Marsche. The petitioners were concerned about the supply of captive Africans, military defence, and free trade from the colony. In their pamphlet they complained that all the other Caribbean colonies (they used Barbados as example) prospered thanks to the freedom granted to them by their motherland. They claimed that the Surinamese planters and traders had to watch how their *syroop* (molasses) was rotting away because they were restricted in their trade within the Caribbean and with North America.¹⁵⁷ These protests turned out to be in vain. The regulation that had been issued in 1703 and adopted in Suriname in 1704 proved to be the balance between the interests of the colonists and the extent to which the Company was willing to compromise. In the years after the trade had been legalized in 1704, on average 15 non-Dutch ships sailed to Suriname every year. Although the years 1706 to 1709 saw a decline in non-Dutch shipping, but in the last years of the War of the Spanish

¹⁵⁶Bylaw 221, 25-Apr-1704, *Plakaatboek*, 253-255.

¹⁵⁷*SvS, Request of J. van der Marsche and other interested parties to regulate the supply of slaves to, the defence of, and the free trade on the colony of Suriname*, 1-Apr-1716, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 125.

Succession the numbers of non-Dutch ships visiting Paramaribo increased to as much as 35 ships in 1713 (see Graph 1 on page 233).

2.4. From competing for goods to competing for space

To get a ship fully loaded, and not lose valuable time waiting for cargo, there had to be good transatlantic co-ordination. The shipping of sugar was a problem in the early years of SC rule. This changed in the period between 1683 and 1713. Suriname changed from a shipping market where there was too little cargo for too much cargo space, to one where the planters were getting desperate to find free space on board ship to such an extent that captains were forming cartels and artificially driving up prices. Throughout the 1680s and 1690s Zeeland was completely pushed out of the colony's shipping. In contrast, Samuel Cohen Nassy in his role as freighter was successfully filling the hold of his ships both to and from the colony. The graphs below use pounds per ship on outward voyages, and waiting time in Paramaribo as a measure of the nodal point's success. The reduced waiting time indicates that a situation of excess cargo space was turning into a situation with a lack of cargo space. Loading time and cargo load can only be used as measures of the success of a nodal point when they are combined. A full ship that took a long time to load would incur considerable labour costs, as well as damages to the ship due to its stay in tropical waters. Since ships would sometimes sail back with either a token cargo or no cargo, speedy turnarounds did not necessarily mean that the nodal point was efficiently facilitating the connection between the plantations and the European markets (see Graph 2 on page 234 and Graph 3 on page 234).

When Van Sommelsdyck arrived as Governor in Suriname in 1684, captains were desperately looking for cargo to ship to the Republic. Governor van Sommelsdyck blamed captains themselves for not being able to find return shipments. In the months after his arrival acquiring a return shipment was done through the help of the *Suijckerboer* (an unnamed broker), without whom some ships would have "stayed in the river to rot away." The general lack of sugar (or the surplus of cargo space) created problems for the shipping companies because of low quality sugar that they loaded, as well as problems with payment that were the result of this. Van Sommelsdyck wrote that "due to their hurry to acquire a shipment and to cut each other off"¹⁵⁸ the captains did not give the planters time to cure the sugar. Curing sugar was a procedure that took several weeks, and came

¹⁵⁸ "metter haest haere ladinge te becomen ende malcander de loeff willende affsteken." SvS, *Overgekomen Brieven en Papieren*, 16-Nov-1683 – 20-Nov-1684, Letter by Governor Aerssen van Sommelsdijck from Suriname to the directors of the SC, 24-Aug-1684, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 212.

down to letting excess fluids leak out of the barrels before they were loaded on board. Van Sommelsdyck complained that the captains would take any hogshead to be 710 pounds without weighing it. Whatever the difference at the end of the voyage, it would be blamed on “*leckagie*”, leakage of the barrels. The better cured sugar that they had on board would be shipped by the captains on their private accounts.¹⁵⁹ The pounds per ship in the year of his arrival were extremely low, but nevertheless apparently overstated since the data is based on hogsheads registered by the tax office which were likely to have carried less sugar than the common 710 pounds. Over the course of the period under examination, the average amount of cargo loaded on board returning ships more than doubled. Van Sommelsdyck blamed the so-called *Suijckerboer* for the malpractices in the organization of the return shipments, and instituted several ways to organize and regulate sugar shipping.¹⁶⁰

In the years between 1684 and 1687 a number of laws were passed by Van Sommelsdyck to raise the quality of shipments. Standards were introduced to calibrate the weights used by planters. Under Van Sommelsdyck the official time sugar needed to be cured for was set at six weeks. This was double the time that was ordered as the official curing time in 1669. This curing was done to raise the quality of the sugar that would arrive in the Republic. The standardization of barrel sizes, and the branding of the barrel’s tare weight¹⁶¹ were part of this attempt to raise the standards in shipping. While barrel sizes fluctuated throughout the eighteenth century, the initial steps ensured that the barrels were strong enough to be rolled and transported.¹⁶²

Amsterdam was the foremost location for sugar trade in the Dutch Republic. During the transition from a Zeelandic colony to one run mainly by Amsterdam, the colony’s shipping not only became more efficient. It also became completely focussed on Amsterdam. In the period between 1682 and 1713 there were eleven ships that came from Zeeland and left for Amsterdam, but there were none that had arrived from Amsterdam and

¹⁵⁹ SvS, *Overgekomen Brieven en Papieren, 16-Nov-1683 – 20-Nov-1684*, Letter by Governor Aerssen van Sommelsdijck from Suriname to the directors of the SC, 24-Aug-1684, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 212.

¹⁶⁰ SvS, *Overgekomen Brieven en Papieren, 16-Nov-1683 – 20-Nov-1684*, Letter by Governor Aerssen van Sommelsdijck from Suriname to the directors of the SC, 24-Aug-1684, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 212.

¹⁶¹ Here *tara* means the weight of the packaging material, in this case the hogshead. The *tara* had to be put on the barrel before the sugar was loaded.

¹⁶² Gert Oostindie, *Roosenburg en Mon Bijou: twee Surinaamse plantages, 1720-1870*, Caribbean series / Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde, 11 (Dordrecht, 1989), 434.

decided to sail back to Zeeland. The defeat of Zeeland during this period is made painfully clear by the phenomenon of ships sailing to the Republic with ballast. Ships continued to be outfitted in Zeeland with supplies and cargoes for the colony. To return with nothing in the hold except for salt water barrels, old iron or rocks was a bitter defeat for any captain leaving Suriname, except maybe for slave ship captains who were simply interested in getting their ship back to Europe for another voyage on the African coast. The listed ships leaving the colony in ballast are mostly Zeelandic ships. The phenomenon stops in the mid-1690s, but as we will see in coming chapters, returns in later decades of the eighteenth century.

Table 5 Ships sailing to the Dutch Republic in ballast, 1683-1713

Ship's name	Captain's name	Started voyage in	Departed from Surinam
Nicolaas Johan	Adriaansen, Simon	Zeeland	16-Jan-1684
Sara	Tijld, Daniel van der	Zeeland	30-May-1684
Klocke	Hatten, Pieter van	Zeeland	11-Sep-1684
Den Harder	Tack, Jan	Zeeland	21-Oct-1684
Vogel Phoenix	Booms, Jan	Zeeland	26-Oct-1685
Keurvorst Brandenburg (slaver)	Smidt, Hendrik	Amsterdam	24-Dec-1685
Gouden Tijger (slaver)	Turner, Ephraim	Zeeland	10-Jan-1686
Geelvink		Amsterdam	Arrived 1686
Marya	Boogaart, Gilles	Zeeland	Arrived 1691
Wilde Swijn	Wilde, Anthony de	Zeeland	Arrived 1691
Levina	Marckse, Daniel	Zeeland	Arrived 1692
Sara	Boogaart, Gilles	Zeeland	01-Jul-1694
Abigael	Claver, Pieter	Amsterdam	22-Sep-1695
Willem Frederick		Rotterdam	Arrived 1695
Postillion	Veldens, Daniel	Zeeland	Arrived 1695
Meerman	Evertse, Claes	Amsterdam	Arrived 1695

Source: PSDTD and TASTD. After 1695 no more ships were leaving in ballast. When departure date was unknown year of arrival in Surinam is given.

Zeeland and Rotterdam were completely phased out as destinations for Dutch ships sailing to and from the colony. While during the 1690s ships might still arrive from there, ever fewer numbers were stating Rotterdam, Vlissingen or Middelburg as their return destination. As illustrated by the table above, not all ships sailing back to the Republic in ballast were Zeelandic ships. The imbalance between available cargo and available cargo space also had an impact on Amsterdam's ships, but overall, the disappearance of the non-Amsterdam ships kept pace with the rising levels of pounds per shipment.

A way to circumvent the problems on the local shipping market in Suriname was to make deals beforehand. Captain Jan Pranger went to the meeting of the directors of the SC to personally offer “his services to transport the needed victuals and materials for the colony of *Zuriname*, and requesting from the directors to give a contract for transporting sugars for the account of the Suriname Company as they may have in stock.”¹⁶³ The directors accepted the offer and wrote to Governor Van der Veen that as much as three to four hundred hogsheads could be loaded on board Pranger’s ship, a tremendous amount, immediately solving any possible problems for Pranger regarding the loading of his ship for a return-voyage.¹⁶⁴ The position of the SC in Amsterdam benefited both Amsterdam’s merchants and captains.

Part of the colony’s produce was transported by ships owned by the West India Company. Under the charter they were banned from sailing directly to the colony, but they were allowed to load sugar on board returning slave ships. This was mostly sugar serving as payment for slaves, but also private sugar could be loaded when there was space left on board. Instead of local merchants the WIC used commissioners to safeguard its interests. The commissioners stationed in the colony by the WIC were ordered to speed the selling of captive Africans, as well as the sending of sugar to the Republic. The commissioners had to take care that they sent the sugar to the chamber who had delivered the human cargo for which the sugar was payment.¹⁶⁵ They had to stock up enough sugar so as to fill the arriving slavers. If they could not fill the ship, they could use the WIC as transporter for ‘private’ sugar that did not belong to the Company.¹⁶⁶ The WIC was fairly successful in organising return shipments, both with regards to waiting time as well as cargo, although they were forced to send some ships back in ballast.

Nassy took very firm control of shipping in and out of the colony in an early phase. He organized several voyages himself, and personally deposed captains who had failed on their voyage. Nassy’s involvement in the handling of ships sailing between Suriname and Amsterdam (*De Profeet Samuel*, *Sara* and *Goede Hoop*) generally reduced the time the ship spent in

¹⁶³ “presenterende zijn dienst tot het overvoeren van de nodige behoeften en materialen voor de colonie van *Zuriname*, ende verzoekende met de heeren dezer Tafel te contracteren het te doene transport van daar herwaarts van zodanige partije zuikeren en andere waaren als voor reek. van de Sociëteit in voorraad zouden mogen zijn.”

¹⁶⁴ SvS, *Resoluties directeuren, 1696-1701*, Meeting of 10-Jun-1698, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 21.

¹⁶⁵ NL-HaNA, Tweede West-Indische Compagnie, *Instructions for the commissioners of the WIC in Suriname, 23-Dec-1687*, entry 1.05.01.02 inv.nr. 68.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

the colony by two months compared to the other ships sailing to Amsterdam. In 1683 the *De Profeet Samuel*, of 96 last, loaded three hundred thousand pounds, while the average ship was loading less than two hundred thousand pounds. The following year the ship did even better compared to the competition, loading 368,842 pounds of sugar, 71,134 pounds of snakewood, and a lot of lemon juice. This meant it reached or exceeded its carrying capacity on its way back to the Republic.¹⁶⁷

Nassy's ships were quicker than average, but they did not beat the waiting time of WIC slave ships.¹⁶⁸ On its 1683 voyage it had taken the ship *De Profeet Samuel* 134 days to load the cargo in Suriname, while the average was at about two hundred days. Their 1684 voyage was successful in terms of cargo, but not in terms of loading time. They had to stay 277 days in Suriname before they left with their hogsheads of sugar and a load of lemons. On the third voyage to Suriname the crew¹⁶⁹ of *De Profeet Samuel* faced pirates and the ship was taken. The crew continued their voyage on a ship that they baptised Good Hope (*De Goede Hoop*) for the remainder of the trip.¹⁷⁰ It was considerably smaller (only 47 last), and when they arrived Nassy deposed captain De Vos. The hold of the small ship was loaded in 105 days with 165.5 hogsheads of sugar and an impressive 365 *anker* of lemon(juice)¹⁷¹, but was likely not at its full carrying capacity.¹⁷²

The efficiency of *De Profeet Samuel* was not only on the Surinamese side, but the cargo shipped to the colony was also entirely planned. The ship was loaded with goods from many different Amsterdam suppliers for a range of people in the colony. When in 1684 the ship sailed out from Texel to Suriname it had on board 47 consignments from 26 suppliers for at least 37 people in Suriname. The ship did not load trade goods to sell overseas, but limited itself to shipping cargo for others. What

¹⁶⁷PSDC.

¹⁶⁸For the 23 slave ships between 1683 and 1690, the data of 19 of them was complete. Slave ships averaged 153.7 waiting days, Nassy did on bilateral voyages (excluding the small ship *De Goede Hoop* and the regional voyages) 156 days. The overall average was 204.2 days.

¹⁶⁹Hendrick Jacobsz, from Vlissingen, ships's mate, 30 years of age; Gerrit Kulcken, from Bremen, chief mate, 53 years of age, Jan Rijssop, from Stralsund, cook, 24 years; Andries Jahn, from Hamburg, sailor 26 years of age; Mathiasz Cornelisen, van Haderslev, sailor, 23 years old.

¹⁷⁰SAA, Notarieel Archief, 5497 akte 153, Notary C. van Wallendal, 19-09-1686.

¹⁷¹The lemon juice was 365 *anker*, at 38.8 liters per *anker* it took about 5 *last* of space.

¹⁷²This cargo was destined for George Spinosa, a Portuguese merchant in Amsterdam. SAA, Notarieel Archief, 5497 akte 153, Notary C. van Wallendal, 19-09-1686. Other Amsterdam merchants, such as Abraham de Pina also used the ship to bring goods to their contacts in the colony. SAA, Notarieel Archief, 4110 akte 293, Notary D. v.d. Groe, 19-6-1684.

was to be shipped was organised between Suriname and the Dutch Republic directly. The two largest consignments on board the ship were sent to Nassy himself and Scharpenhuijsen, the two planters who also owned the largest number of enslaved Africans in the colony. Goods on board ranged from muskets to meat, fish, building materials, books, parts for sugar mills, distilling equipment, medical supplies and alcoholic drinks.¹⁷³ On its return voyage the *Propheet Samuel* was also loading for a range of planters, and both Nassy's private sugar, as well as sugar he shipped for others. This was a world away from the practice of traders sailing to the Guiana Coast to find good deals on their cargo and organise trade goods for a successful return. Nassy with his good connections in Amsterdam was a successful Surinamese freighter beating the competition from Zeelandic ships.

The market turned drastically around from one in which there was too much shipping space, to one in which planters fiercely competed to get their sugar to Europe. Indicative of the new situation on the market was a conflict between Nassy and Scharpenhuijsen around shipping space. In 1697 Nassy blamed Johan van Scharpenhuijsen for foul play on the shipping market. Scharpenhuijsen and Nassy were at that time the largest planters in the colony, but Scharpenhuijsen had the upper hand by being Governor. Scharpenhuijsen was accused of numerous instances where he blocked planters from loading sugar, so he could load his own.¹⁷⁴

While the change in the shipping market was rather gradual; the change in the balance between supply and demand had its effect on the waterfront of Paramaribo. The high point of the increased confidence of freighters was undoubtedly the moment that they were able to fix shipping prices at outrageous levels. In 1710 the Governor and Councillors of Suriname publicly announced that there had been complaints about monopolies created by the Dutch skippers.¹⁷⁵ The captains had organised a meeting on board of one of the ships of a captain they called the "commandeur." During the meeting the price was set a "10 *duyten* per pound", (there are 160 *duyten* in one guilder). Captains claimed that much of their cargo space for the return voyage had been contracted in Holland. After

¹⁷³ SvS, *Overgekomen Brieven en Papieren*, 16-Nov-1683 – 20-Nov-1684, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 212.

¹⁷⁴ SvS, *Resoluties directeuren*, 1696-1701, meeting of 4-Feb-1697, entry 1.05.03, inv.nr. 21.

¹⁷⁵ "aen ons door verschydene notable personen en ingestenen swaare klagten zijn gedaen en dat wij self genoegsaem hebben ondervonden dat de Hollandsche schippers op dese colonie varende een geruyme tijd herwaarts door verschyde quade practyquen de vragten der suykeren soodanig hebben doen stijgeren, dat het selve sodanig continuerende niet anders kan strecken als tot een volcome ruine van deese colonie ende alle ingesetenen van deselve."

investigation by the Governor and Council, it appeared that this was not true, but that less than a quarter of the cargo had been pre-contracted in Holland. The Governor and Council decided that such “*pernicieuse monopolien*” should be stopped, and that from then on, all shipping contracts should be closed before the colony’s secretariat.¹⁷⁶ This turnaround in demand for cargo space was a result of increased production in the colony, and also of the elimination of competition from ships from Zeeland and Rotterdam. While under the reign of Sommeldyck planters had been able to send unweighed hogsheads with bad sugar on board ships, it had now come to fierce competition between planters for access to any available cargo space.

¹⁷⁶Bylaw 238, Order to only close shipping contracts before the colony’s secretary, 31-Oct-1710, *Plakaatboek*, 274–276.

3. The ascent of the Surinamer, 1713-1738

The term *Surinamers* (people who are Surinamese) appeared in print for the first time in 1716 and was used by a group of lobbyists to refer to the colony's planters as a group with common interests.¹⁷⁷ The relationship between the planters and the SC has been described by historians as troublesome and rife with conflict, prompting Van der Meiden to title his political history of early modern Suriname *Bestwist Bestuur* (Contested government).¹⁷⁸ The small number of European colonists, their isolation, and their single-mindedness about making a quick fortune in the colony was said to have caused much of the bickering described by Van der Meiden. However, in many respects the planters, directors and local government were in agreement on how Suriname was to be governed, and there was much more to the local elite than just incessant infighting. What changed in the decades after the war was that the planters and interested parties outside the *Sociëteit van Suriname* (Suriname Company) were becoming more vocal about their interests. The SC ruled the colony according to its charters and where the charters were unclear, or their meaning disputed, the States General had a final say in their interpretation. In the period after its founding in 1683 the SC functioned as the formal representative of the Suriname interests to the Dutch States General. The fact that the interested parties both in the Republic and in Suriname were increasingly voicing their opinion on how the colony should be governed reflects the ascent of the Surinamers and Atlantic interests in the Republic more generally.

After the War of the Spanish Succession (1703-1713) the Dutch position in the Atlantic declined compared to that of the French and the English, while at the same time the importance of the Atlantic trades to the Dutch economy increased.¹⁷⁹ In Suriname the period of consolidation of the colony was followed by a period of growth of Paramaribo, a strengthening of the sea-side defences and the introduction of coffee as a successful export crop. Regional shipping intensified, and connected the colony firmly to North American traders who were evading British restrictions to have access to Suriname's molasses production. The shipping connection to the Dutch Republic remained a mix between trade and consigned shipments, but after the period of consolidation there was an increasing emphasis on freight shipping for planters and investors rather than goods trading in the hand of captains and their companies.

¹⁷⁷ SvS, *Request van J. van der Marsche en andere belanghebbenden om een regeling te treffen voor de aanvoer van slaven naar, de defensie van en de vrije handel op de kolonie Suriname* (1 april 1716) entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 125.

¹⁷⁸ Meiden, *Betwist Bestuur*, 7–8.

¹⁷⁹ Vries and Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, 19.

Because of the intricate route and long voyage, the slave trade was more fragile and prone to disruption than the other connections. The slave trade to the colony had been under pressure from French attacks during the 1690s; it was unstable during the war years, and only became more dependable in the post-war decades. Only after the War of the Spanish Succession the number of years without slave disembarkations declined. Interested parties in the Republic attempted to break open the monopoly of the WIC over the slave trade. They succeeded in 1730, even though the Suriname slave trade remained in WIC hands until 1738, when the WIC voluntarily gave up its privilege. In all the various connections there was growing group of planters, freighters and investors who operated Suriname's Atlantic connections outside the formal channels established by the West India Company and the Suriname Company.

In the years after the French attacks on the colony of 1712 the States General were frequently mediating between the Suriname Company and vocal groups of planters and interested parties in the Republic. These *Surinamers* became a separate group who were, for example, formally included in a treaty on the defences of the colony. The treaty on the defences was ratified by the States General in 1733 and had the "most distinguished inhabitants and those interested in the colony", as a party to the treaty, together with the representatives of the colonial governing council and the directors of the Suriname Company.¹⁸⁰ In that way the SC and the Surinamese governing council were no longer seen as the only partners of the States General in Suriname, but the planters themselves had received recognition.

Besides the intensification of the slave trade, both the planters and the directors of the SC considered the diversification of production, the expansion of defences and the curtailing of the growing number of Maroons to be the central challenges for the colony. In the case of the diversification of production the directors seemed to rely on their networks in the European hinterland and their knowledge of Asia. Many SC directors had close relations to, or were sitting on the board of the Amsterdam chamber of the VOC, giving them some knowledge of what products and techniques were being tried in Asia. The planters in turn relied on the opening of the regional connections to attract a greater number of diverse skills. The starting up of most of the newly attempted products failed, except for coffee which became

¹⁸⁰ *Conventie tusschen de directeuren van de geoctroyeerde societeyt van Suriname ter eenre en gemagtigde van raaden van policie der voorschreeve colonie, mitsgaders van veel voornaame en meest gedistingueerde ingeseetenen en geïnteresseerden in deselve colonie, ter andere zyde: By haar Hoog Mog. geapprobeert den 19 December 1733 ('S Gravenhage: J. Scheltus, 1734).*

a tremendous success. Did the vision of the SC-directors on the colonisation of the colony clash with the propositions made by the planters in the period after the War of the Spanish Succession, as would be suggested by the claim of Van der Meiden about the quarrelsome nature of the Surinamese planters? While there were several areas where they clearly did – most notably the regional trade and the payment for the defences – there were large areas where the planters and the SC-directors had overlapping ideas about how the colony should be developed.

3.1. After the War of the Spanish Succession

There was an Atlantic context to the ascent of the *Surinamers*. The war years had given Suriname a strategic edge in the Atlantic because the “blockade of the French Caribbean colonies (...) had encouraged a rapid spurt of output” from colonies that could still be reached from Amsterdam.¹⁸¹ In addition the firmly established regional connections allowed the colony to benefit from the growing demand for molasses in the North American Atlantic market. The increase of English power after 1713 firmly determined the geographical limits of Dutch success in the Atlantic. The slave trade on St. Eustatius was an attempt by the WIC to increase its market share after the *asiento* had been lost. The strength of the English slave trade in the area around the island however hampered the development of *Statia* into a successful regional slave entrepôt, prompting the WIC-directors to focus more of their resources into supplying the Surinamese planters,¹⁸² directly providing Suriname with the labour it needed on its slave-devouring plantations.

In the decades after the war there was no explosive growth in the production of sugar. The yearly export averaged at 17 million pounds. During the 1710s production stood at 14.2 million pounds per year, going up to an average of 19.7 in the 1720s, and falling back to 17.1 million pounds per year during the 1730s. Given the sugar price, the 1730s resulted in the lowest turnover for Surinamese sugar in the eighteenth century. For the planters however, it was an exciting time. The introduction of coffee would come to shake up the colony profoundly. The first coffee seeds most likely germinated in Suriname around 1713. From then on every 3 to 5 years tensions rose in anticipation of a next generation of trees starting to bear fruit and new seeds were planted. A growing number of anxious planters were

¹⁸¹ Jonathan Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade, 1585-1740* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 393.

¹⁸² Leo Balai, *Het slavenschip “Leusden”: slavenschepen en de West Indische Compagnie, 1720-1738* (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 2011), 139.

waiting for the results until in 1723 the first (small) shipments of coffee left the colony, and ever greater plots of land were cleared for the new crop. It would take until the 1750s for the coffee turnover to surpass that of sugar. Due to high coffee prices in the 1730s the yearly sales of coffee in Amsterdam were worth on average fl. 11.2 million, with sugar bringing in fl. 18.9 million.¹⁸³

In the years after the War of the Spanish Succession many sectors of the Dutch economy were either in decline, or their growth was stagnating. Compared to this, Suriname's output was impressive. Amsterdam's position as entrepôt declined due to the closing of markets in a period of growing mercantilism.¹⁸⁴ Jan de Vries and Ad van der Woude identify the Atlantic as one of the few areas where there was the prospect of growth. Sugar trade and sugar refining in Amsterdam were among the very few sectors quickly recovering after the war. This did not prevent other European ports like Hamburg from taking a share of what had previously been Amsterdam's market.¹⁸⁵ The hinterland to which Amsterdam's sugar refiners were selling their sugar became "largely confined to the Low Countries themselves, the Rhineland and some other areas in Germany."

By 1720 the possibilities of growth in the Atlantic were creating a feverish atmosphere in England, France and the Dutch Republic. Speculation on future returns of companies, for example through the production of tropical goods in Louisiana by the Mississippi Company, created an exuberance amongst speculators across Europe, resulting in a speculative bubble, or *windhandel*, also known as the South Sea Bubble (referring to the manic trade in the shares of the South Sea Company). Even though the impact of the short-lived bubble on international trade was minor,¹⁸⁶ a feverish atmosphere surrounded the introduction of coffee into Suriname around 1720. The suggestion that one could get rich quickly by engaging in Atlantic trade or joining a new fad at the right moment was not lost on those interested in the colonisation of Suriname. Planters and SC-directors alike were experimenting with a range of new products to introduce in the colony.

¹⁸³ Total export of Surinamese coffee times the average price of coffee on the Amsterdam market that year. PSDC and N. W Posthumus, *Nederlandsche prijsgeschiedenis*. (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1943).

¹⁸⁴ Israel, *Dutch Primacy*, 386.

¹⁸⁵ J. Reesse, *De suikerhandel van Amsterdam: een bijdrage tot de handelsgeschiedenis des vaderlands, hoofdzakelijk uit de archieven verzameld* (Haarlem, 1908), 46–47.

¹⁸⁶ Frederikus Philippus Groeneveld, *De economische crisis van het jaar 1720* (Groningen: P. Noordhoff, 1940), 82.

3.2. Growth of Paramaribo

Two maps, one by Ottens and the other by De Lavaux, clearly illustrate the change that took place. The map by Ottens was published in 1718, shortly after the end of the War of the Spanish Succession and the attack by Cassard. The other map was published in 1737, shortly before the liberalisation of the slave trade. On the older map by Ottens there are several settlements visible, both of the colonists as well as those of the indigenous population along the various rivers and on the coast. On the map by De Lavaux, Paramaribo and Jodensavanne are the only two settlements of the colonists in Suriname. Torarica was still a one-street settlement on Ottens' map, but on De Lavaux' map it has disappeared and is replaced by a plantation. Of the indigenous villages only a few are still visible on the map of De Lavaux; a new addition on that map are the burning *Wegloopers Dorpen van Rebelle Slaaven* (villages of rebellious slaves).¹⁸⁷ De Lavaux' map fuses both a war report with outlines of scenes of battles together with a detailed layout of the colony's plantations. The result is a map that has the well-ordered outline of plantations on the left, with on the right, inland, images of burning villages and marching regiments trampling bodies and routing enemy forces.

During this period Paramaribo had clearly left its days as a frontier settlement behind. Herlein's book from roughly the same period as the map by Ottens depicts the houses as being situated between the house of the Governor, the main church and the river front. There is also the beginning of the *Nieuwe Uitleg* (new expansion) which is an extension of the Gravenstraat, and on De Lavaux' map a new grid pattern fills the space between the two old streets and the *Waterkant*.¹⁸⁸ Around the town there was still savannah, open land surrounded by forest. There are only two plantations, one belonging to the SC, the other managed by Eduard Jordan.¹⁸⁹ During the 1720s this land becomes more heavily cultivated as breeding ground for the first coffee trees and as kitchen grounds for those living in town. On De Lavaux's map from 1737, the land surrounding Paramaribo is completely parcelled out, and the town has grown considerably. The church and the square in front of the church, first on the

¹⁸⁷ Alexander de Lavaux, "Generale Caart Van De Provintie Suriname: Rivieren & Districten Met Alle d Ondekkingen Van Militaire Togten Mitsgaders De Groote Der Gemeetene Plantagien Gecarteert Op De Naauwkeurigste Waarnemingen, 1737, UBM (UvA): Kaartenzl: 105.20.04; Joshua Ottens, "Nieuwe Kaart Van Suriname: Vertonende De Stromen En Landstrecken Van Suriname, Comowini, Cottica, En Marawini, Gelegen in Zuid America Op De Kusten Van Caribana, 1718, UBM: Kaartenzl: 33.24.69.

¹⁸⁸ Herlein, *Beschryvinge*, 46–49.

¹⁸⁹ Ottens "Nieuwe Kaart".

edge of town, are now at its centre. The Gravenstraat and Heerenstraat have been stretched further inland, forming a gridded street pattern. At a 45 degree angle from the Heerenstraat new streets have been added, making a second grid expansion of the city follow the course of the river.

[Figure 6]

Figure 5 Detail of a map showing Paramaribo and Torarica, 1713

Josua Ottens, *Nieuwe Kaart van Suriname: vertonende de stromen en land-streken van Suriname, Comowini, Cottica, en Marawini*. UBM: Kaartenzl: 33.24.69. Paramaribo is on this map also named 'Nieu Middelburg', or New Middelburg. Torarica can be found in the south of this map along the Suriname River.

[Figure 7]

Figure 6 Detail of a map showing layout of new coffee plantations near Paramaribo, 1737
Alexander de Lavaux, *Algemeene Kaart van de Colonie of Provintie Van Suriname*, 1737.
UBM: Kaartenzl: 105.20.03. The De Lavaux map has an inverted North-South projection, with the Atlantic Ocean as the lower part of the map.

3.3. The civilian militia

The 1712 attacks by the French privateer Jacques Cassard were amongst the most momentous events of Suriname's eighteenth-century history. The attacks also opened a period in which planters tried to have a say over how the colony was defended. The attacks by Cassard had certainly hurt the colony, but it had not been lost. While abandoning the colony had been an option for the States of Zeeland in the 1680s, or was used as a threat by the WIC in the 1690s, the idea no longer surfaced in the period after the War of the Spanish Succession. Instead, with the (perceived) growing importance of the Atlantic colonies, the number of people in the Republic attached to the colony grew. The vocal group of planters in the colony initially crystallized around the officers of the civilian militia and the role the militia played in the colony. The militias were geographically partitioned across various districts, and there was a segregated Jewish division located around

Jodensavanne. The militiamen were all the able-bodied free white men of the colony and received their orders from their district officers. These officers were also organising the yearly head-count in their districts to determine the poll-tax per household.

These militias directly connected the colonists to the defence system, giving them a feeling of entitlement in issues regarding the colony. These same militias had also played a pivotal role in the defending of the colony during the 1688 mutiny and the attacks by the French in the 1690s. After the attacks by Cassard the colonists were clearly shaken by the bad state of their defences, and the officers came out against the local government and the SC directors, complaining about how the defence had been neglected. But besides complaining, they also addressed the States General to mediate for a solution. When the planters felt unrepresented in the board of the Suriname Company, they suggested a tax strike.¹⁹⁰

In a report on the first attack by Cassard compiled by Adriaen de Graeff for the directors of the SC the impatience of the militia to mobilize and defend the colony was emphasized and contrasted by the indecisive attitude of the Governor and the Commander. De Graeff recounted that during the attack by Cassard, civilians had requested several times to be allowed to come to arms. Despite not receiving the order, the companies of the civilian militia started to mobilise. A free corporal with eight or ten other civilians rushed to the defence of the *Waterkant* saying: “order or no order, who cares for me, follow me.”¹⁹¹ Reports mainly emphasised the heroism of the civilians under arms, portraying the garrison made up of European hirelings as incapable by recounting how none of the cannons on the fort were manned properly, and an officer had to use his wig to load a cannon. After Cassard’s troops had been chased away, the approach of barges from the Commewijne caused a sudden scare. Immediately the civilians remobilized: “they obeyed with an outstanding courage the orders of the civilian officer, who gave orders indiscriminate of Company.” There was a “mutual trust shining on their faces, arriving so diligently from all sides (despite the rough weather) that the captains who had boarded ships to prepare said to one another: ‘It is truly as if those people are going to a wedding celebration’”, emphasizing the diligence of the civilian militiamen in defending the colony.¹⁹²

¹⁹⁰ SvS, *Overgekomen Brieven en Papieren*, 1713, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 240.

¹⁹¹ “De Gevryde Corporaal Hendrik van Eyk, met nog acht of tien andere Burgers, langs den Waterkant over de Brug in den nieuwen Uitleg gerukt, zeggende, order of geen order, *die my lief heeft volgt my na.*” Ibidem.

¹⁹² “zy gehoorzaamden met een byzondere volvaardigheid aan den eersten Burger-Officier die maar sprak, zonder onderscheid van Compagnie te maaken; men zag een onderling

The Suriname River, although it is very wide, is not easily attacked by surprise. The *brandwacht* on the coast and the ebbs and flows of the tide prevent enemy ships from a swift attack. The hours before the attack by Cassard had been rather chaotic and were described by a witness as a tumultuous scene of slaves making a fuss while looking for vessels and organizing the European women and their belongings to flee upstream. The civilians, clearly shaken by the attacks, were angry with the Governor and the bad state of the defences. After the first attack by Cassard, the Governor decided to convene the civilians on the central square between the fort and the town. Several civilians wanted to stop paying for local taxes and the poll tax until the colony was brought into a better state of defence; and suggested to announce this at the public assembly on the central square. They said they saw the arrival of Cassard “as a blow given them by the well-meaning hand of God, to wake us from our careless sleep of imagined security.”¹⁹³ The officers argued that there should not be “a general shouting bearing arms” during the assembly since that would certainly be seen as a mutiny.¹⁹⁴ The officers also pointed out that there was no-one in the colony authorised to suspend the poll tax.

While the meeting at the central square proceeded peacefully, the officers of the companies of the civilian militia met that night to discuss the possible improvements to the colony’s defences. The stream of requests and propositions that were sent in the following months resulted in an announcement by the Governor that he would admit no more letters.¹⁹⁵ The Governor protested when the officers of the civilian militia offered their suggestions for the defences to him and the council and informed them of their intention to take this to the States General to complain about the state in which the SC had left the colony.¹⁹⁶ The States General was nevertheless approached by the officers, thus bypassing the SC and local government. The States General was naturally rather surprised by this and refused to take action in support of the *Surinamers*. The SC, whose main income was the poll tax, was able to prevent a tax strike through an order of the States General that payment should continue. The States General was chosen by the

vertrouwen op hun Gelaat uitblinken, en zy schooten van alle kanten, (niettegenstaande het ruuw Weer,) zo vaardig toe, dat de Schippers, die zich aan boord vervoegd hadden om in gereedheid te zyn, daar na tegen malkander zeiden: *Het was waarlyk of dat Volk naar een Bruiloft liep.*” Ibidem.

¹⁹³ “*als een stoot haar door de goetdierene hand Gods toegebracht om haer uijt dien sorgelose slaep van ingebeelde securiteijt op te wecken.*” Ibidem.

¹⁹⁴ “*algemeen geroep onder de wapenen.*” Ibidem.

¹⁹⁵ SvS, *Overgekomen Brieven en Papieren*, 1713, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 240.

¹⁹⁶ Hartsinck, *Beschryving*, 1770, 2:723–727.

colonists themselves as the mediator, and held enough sway to convince the colonists not to continue their opposition.¹⁹⁷

The second attempt to petition for change in how the colony was governed followed in 1716 under the leadership of the colony's former bookkeeper Jan van der Marsche.¹⁹⁸ Van der Marsche drew up a pamphlet that was signed by twenty prominent plantation owners such as Anna Verboom, Willem Bedloo, the Greenwoods, and also several Sephardic colonists such as da Silva, de la Para, Henriques and de Pardo. Throughout the text, at every point the planters demand strong and respectable leadership for the colony, and one that understands that the population needs to be protected and internal disputes need to be dealt with firmly. The planters feared new wars, and suggested to strengthen the colony's defences and an expansion of the armed forces with both enslaved Africans and Amerindians. They had no doubt about who would have to pay for this; the SC was obliged under the charter to pay for the colony's defences.¹⁹⁹

The Surinamese governing council attempted to strengthen its lobbying position to the directors of the Suriname Company directors. Ordinarily communication went through letters, or SC servants could be called back to Europe to report to the SC directors. But the representation of the colony's planters was turned into a permanent endeavour by hiring an agent in Amsterdam with the money of the *modique lasten* (Surinamese local taxes) which was approved by the Governor. The directors claimed that this was "contrary to the respect for the directors,"²⁰⁰ and they argued that this was against the charters' stipulations on the use of money from local taxes. The resolution of the States General mentioned a *commissioner* and not an agent, and especially not one paid for by the local taxes.²⁰¹ The admission of such a representative however did indicate that the directors chose to offer some form of representation of the planters in the colony. There were some restrictions to this, since only the most "*aanzienlijkste planters*" (distinguished planters) could be consulted in the questions regarding the colony's defences.²⁰² When a final agreement was made with the planters

¹⁹⁷ Bylaw 254, 25-Nov-1713, *Plakaatboek*, 294.

¹⁹⁸ SvS, *Request van der Marsche*, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 125.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰⁰ "*strijdig is aan t respect van de Heeren deeser Tafel*"

²⁰¹ SvS, *Resoluties directeuren, 1717-1721* (1720), entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 25 The resolution of the States General of 1713 mentioned a "gemagtigde" and not an "agent".

²⁰² SvS, *Resoluties directeuren, 1717-1721* (1717), entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 25.

about the payment and organisation of the defences, these “most distinguished” planters were included as a separate party to the treaty.²⁰³

3.4. Diversification and expansion

In their pamphlet the planters outlined to the directors how the colony needed to be improved on the issues of the slave trade, the defence and the regional trade: the three pillars of prosperity from the viewpoint of the planters. They wanted a protective state that would provide maximum freedom for them to mobilize labour and sell their goods, while at the same time guaranteeing ample military force to protect the colonial investments through the building of forts. Marsche’s pamphleteers hoped that an opening of the trade to Suriname would attract more “*nieuw bekeerden*” (converted Jews) who had knowledge of the production of “*Indigo, Tabak, Catoen en Rocou of Orlean.*” They also proposed other avenues. Those without the means to start up sugar works could start breeding cattle, or producing cotton, cacao, orlean, and rice, or grapes, copying the wine making in Cayenne (sic). Coffee and olives had been planted, but the results were not there yet. They furthermore proposed the cultivation of saffron, flax, hemp, and mulberry for silk, as well as different kinds of woodworking, shipbuilding, pottery and brick making.²⁰⁴ This was all a world away from the single-minded focus on the production of sugar in the previous period.

The directors of the SC were also looking to diversify the range of products produced in the colony. The Governor was the key node of communication for the directors, eager to expand the colony’s production. Especially Governor Mahony (1716-1717) played an active role in the experiments. The directors demanded fruits and cacao for personal use, as well as seeds for the *hortus* in Amsterdam,²⁰⁵ and were pleased by samples of the dyestuff and gum.²⁰⁶ They most likely also sent over the first coffee

²⁰³ *Conventie tusschen de directeuren van de geotcroyeerde societeyt van Suriname ter eenre en gemagtigde van raaden van policie der voorschreeve colonie, mitsgaders van veel voorname en meest gedistingueerde ingeseeten en geinteresseerdens in deselve colonie, ter andere zyde: By haar Hoog Mog. geapprobeert den 19 December 1733.*

²⁰⁴ SvS, *Request van der Marsche*, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 125.

²⁰⁵ “indachtig te zijn omme met alle scheepen een wijgig Cacao van de boomen op de grond van de Heeren deeser Tafel, ofte in derselver soogenaamde Gouverneurs Thuijn staande, mitsgaders eenige vaaten met orangie Chinaas Appelen, limoenen, limoensap & limmetjes aan de heeren deeser tafel tot derselver gebruik toe te laten komen.” *Resoluties directeuren, 1717-1721*, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 9.

²⁰⁶ About the dye they suggest to the Governor to produce several pounds and send it to them. About the gomme they complain that it is not even close to the regular quality of real barnstone which comes from the *Oostzee*, and would only be worth six *stuyvers* per pound,

seeds and supplied the Governor with a manual on how to plant them. For the most part the directors were rather clueless about the precise way in which the cultivation should be organised.²⁰⁷ The directors were very strongly engaged with trying out new techniques and products, especially by making suggestions to the Governor and colonists. The connection to the Amerindians was of no interest to them at all, on the contrary: they needed peaceful relations, instead of the disruption caused by trade. In 1717 they decided to prologue the ban on trade with the Amerindians, and simultaneously order the loading of so-called “*Indiaanse Cargasoenen*” to serve as a form of tribute to the Indigenous.²⁰⁸

The only non-agricultural experiments supported by the directors were attempts to begin mining. The haphazard expedition sent by Governor Aerssen van Sommelsdyck to find the mythical gold lake of Parima was part of a larger dream to find precious metals in the South American hinterland. The directors of the Suriname Company remained eager to experiment with mining, sending out several expeditions from 1717 until the founding of a chartered mining company in 1743. In 1719 the Governor was ordered to find out if there were any minerals in the colony, and the directors tried to send over someone who could assess the dug up ore.²⁰⁹ Attracting expertise from the wider Atlantic played a major part in the search for gold and other mineral resources in the colony. When in 1716 Salomon Herman Sanders from the German town of Kassel in Hesse offered to lead mining expeditions in the interior of Suriname, he was sent out with enslaved Africans and some German mountaineers to try his luck. Sanders undertook several expeditions until 1723. The efforts were halted that year, to be recommenced in 1729. The restart of the mining again involved Germans. The nephew of Francois van Aerssen van Sommelsdyck, Jacob Alexander Henry De Cheusse (incidentally also the brother of the Governor De Cheusse) was a German military Captain. Through him two German mountaineers were hired to explore the possibilities of mining in the colony. The Germans quickly commenced their work when they arrived in Suriname in 1729, but fell ill before the year was over. One of them lost his life while the other was plagued by fevers. De Cheusse in Germany sent over two other mountaineers, but to no avail. The SC continued sending over researchers throughout the thirties, the last were again two Germans moving to the

and they ask him only to send large quantities and take note that the hardest and biggest pieces are worth most.

²⁰⁷ SvS, *Brieven van de Sociëteit aan de Gouverneur*, 1719, entry 1.05.03, inv.nr. 95.

²⁰⁸ SvS, *Brieven van de Sociëteit aan de Gouverneur*, 1717.; Bylaw 273, 20-Feb-1717, *Plakaatboek*, 312.

²⁰⁹ SvS, *Resoluties directeuren*, 1717-1721, 1719, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 25.

colony in 1739, who continued working until 1741. The director of the SC, Philip Hack restarted mining activities in 1743 when he founded the Chartered Suriname Mining Company together with his brother Wilhelm Hack, but despite the presence of precious metals in the ground, the mining expeditions failed.²¹⁰

Coffee would turn out to be the only success of the drive for diversification. The drink was becoming increasingly popular in the Dutch Republic around the turn of the eighteenth century.²¹¹ Drinking coffee in specialized coffee houses was not only a social activity, but also became closely connected to doing business. In the famous play by Langendijk on the investment bubble of 1720 several scenes are situated in an Amsterdam coffee house doubling for a stock exchange with actors holding on to their cups and demanding refills while trading their papers.²¹² The first mentioning of a *coffyhuyz* in Suriname in a legal document dates from 1705 and regards the banning of the playing of a host of card games from inns, pubs and coffee houses.²¹³ The coffee consumed in those houses was most likely imported from Amsterdam through the Dutch-Levant trade. From 1711 onwards the volume of coffee shipments from Java to Amsterdam was growing quickly, and soon the coffee plant would be introduced in Suriname. The years before the export of coffee from Suriname took off in 1723, planters in the colony were fighting their neighbours for seedlings and pieces of land perceived as good for coffee production.²¹⁴

The introduction of coffee anywhere is generally surrounded by myths. The transfer of coffee to Martinique was allegedly made possible by a Dutchman who shared his water rations during a trans-Atlantic voyage with his seedlings. The introduction of coffee in Brazil is said to have taken place through Guiana when a Brazilian officer mediating a border dispute between Suriname and French Guiana charmed his way to the heart of the wife of the Governor of French Guiana, and on his departure received a few berries hidden in a bouquet of flowers from her. In Suriname the first coffee

²¹⁰ R. Bijlsma, "Het mijnwerk der societeit van Suriname op den van-den-Bempdenberg 1729-1741," *New West Indian Guide/Nieuwe West-Indische Gids* 1, no. 2 (1919): 335–338.

²¹¹ Pim Reinders and Thera Wijsenbeek-Olthuis, *Koffie in Nederland: vier eeuwen cultuurgeschiedenis* (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 1994), 42–43.

²¹² Pieter Langendijk, *Quincampoix, of de windhandelaars: blyspél* (De erven van J. Lescaillje en Dirk Rank, 1720).

²¹³ Bylaw 222, 15-Apr-1704, *Plakaatboek*, 256.

²¹⁴ SvS, *Resoluties directeuren, 1717-1721*, Minutes of October 1721, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 25.

most likely arrived via the *hortus medicus* in Amsterdam, and was spread by the gardener of Governor de Veer, a German silversmith called Hansbach.²¹⁵

Acquiring the seeds is however only half the story. The production of coffee is not difficult technically, but demands great care. At every step of the production process the coffee can be spoiled if it is not handled correctly. The seedlings are also rather fragile, the transfer therefore had to be accompanied by a transfer of knowledge on how the seeds had to be treated. Coffee made its way to Suriname around 1712 or 1714, making it one of the first colonies in the Caribbean to adopt coffee growing.²¹⁶ To instruct the Governor about coffee cultivation, the directors of the Suriname Company decided to send him a recently published book about a voyage to Mocha and a note by the gardener of the *Hortus Medicus*.²¹⁷ The book that the directors sent was most likely the travel account by Jean de la Roque in which the author described the coffee cultivation in Yemen, published for the first time in Amsterdam in 1716.²¹⁸

²¹⁵ Stipriaan, *Surinaams contrast*, 149.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 34.

²¹⁷ SvS, *Brieven van de Sociëteit aan de Gouverneur*, 18-Jun-1717, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 95.

²¹⁸ Jean de La Roque and Thomassin, *Voyage de l'Arabie heureuse par l'Océan oriental et le détroit de la mer Rouge: fait par les Français pour la première fois, dans les années 1708, 1709 et 1710* (Amsterdam: Steenhouwer & Uytwerf, 1716).

[Figure 8]

Figure 7 First page of the book that introduced coffee growing techniques to Suriname, 1716
Jean de la Rocque, *Voyage de l' Arabie heureuse* (Amsterdam: André Cailleau, 1716).

In October 1721 Suriname's coffee fever hit the boardroom table of the directors in the form of a torrent of requests regarding land grants and disputes around Paramaribo, all to cultivate coffee. Johannes Bley had seen "the growth and success that will come from the cultivation of coffee." He feared that his neighbour would infringe on his property. A similar request to reaffirm a land grant came from Magdalena Outhuijs (widow of D. Egidius de Hoij). She acquired the piece of land with the goal to build a house and a coffee plantation. However, she now understood that Christiaan Hansbach was trying to do the same and expand his land to the area behind the hospital, which would hinder her to enlarge her *Coffyplantinge*, on what she perceived as the best land for the cultivating of coffee located directly behind her grounds. That same day the directors read a letter by Gerrit Pater and Carel de Hoij "in Suriname on Paramaribo in the new part of town at the end of the Northern side of the Graavestraat." The land Gerrit Pater bought from the deceased Governor Coetier was partly planted with *Coffy boomen*. Also Carel de Hoij obtained some land from the late Governor with the intention to put a house on it and make a *Coffythuijn*. The men tried to annul

a land grant given to Jan Haterman, who they claimed only cultivated four or five per cent of his land, while hindering their own expansion.²¹⁹ All of these and many more conflicts preceded the first sizeable coffee exports, resulting in a quick parcelling out of the commons around Paramaribo, clearly visible on the Lavaux map.

The directors of the SC were themselves also engaged in the early experiments with coffee and the representatives of the city of Amsterdam on the board had proposed to begin a *Coffij plantagie* for the account and to the profit of the directors.²²⁰ Later Governor Temmick gave himself no less than 1500 *akkers* in 1722 to plant coffee, food, sugar cane, coffee, cacao, indigo, tobacco, as well as for the production timber, and the following years he expanded his plantation several times.²²¹ Most of the attempts at the diversification of the colony's production stemmed from the period after the connections had been consolidated, and both planters and directors were enthusiastic about the possibilities the production of different crops could yield. In the end only coffee became a success, next to sugar and to a much lesser extent cotton.

3.5. Tax evasion: Dutch and British

Planters in Suriname demanded more freedoms for the regional trade than were granted in the bylaw of 1704; the central issue being that the planters wanted to be able to trade locally themselves instead of having to wait for the English to come and collect the molasses. The planters argued that the regional trade would also increase the number of local ships and able-bodied seamen in port to strengthen the colony's defences in case of an attack. The planters suggested setting up a symbiotic relation with Curaçao to get "Salt, Flint, and Limestone", although this never materialized. In case the English supply of horses would cease, the colonists would be able to get their horses from Portuguese Brazil, Essequibo, or from the *Orinoques*. The import duties would still befall the SC, and the growth of the colony would increase shipping, production and consumption in the colony for the benefit of the Republic.²²²

The pamphlet by Marsche argued that the ban on Suriname-based regional trade was hampering the economy of the colony. The plantation owners referred to Barbados where regional trade was not banned, and argue

²¹⁹ SvS, *Resoluties directeuren, 1717-1721*, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 25.

²²⁰ SvS, *Resoluties directeuren, 1717-1721*, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 25.

²²¹ R. Bijlsma, "Gouverneur temming's plantage Berg-en-Daal bij den parnassusberg in Suriname," *New West Indian Guide/Nieuwe West-Indische Gids* 3, no. 1 (1922): 31-34.

²²² SvS, *Request van der Marsche*, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 125.

that they should have similar freedoms. In 1704 only the English trade had been legalized, while any requests by the planters to get the right to set up their own regional trade had been blocked by the directors. The pamphleteers wrote that “it is hard for those from Suriname, to have to see that other Nations enjoy greater freedom, while they are barred from selling their *Koorn*, *Syroopen* and *Dram* even to people on Curaçao, fellow subjects of the state.” Since those goods were never sent to Holland, the produce would have to be wasted or rot away if not enough English captains sailed to the colony.²²³ In this sense their suggestions had much in common with the position taken by the North American colonists in the 1770s who were demanding freedom in trade between their colonies and the other colonies in the Americas.

The shipping in the regional trade was based on the exchange of provisions from North America for molasses from the sugar colonies. Stephen Grand sailed his bark *Abigael* from Boston to Suriname in 1738. He shipped farm products, as well as fish and candles. His cargo was a typical collection of goods traded in the harbour of Boston. The goods had arrived there either from the hinterland or from fish banks off the coast. The inwards cargo for Suriname consisted of four small barrels of butter, ten small barrels of flour, sixteen sheep, a hogshead of ale, and two horses. Fish products were six hogsheads of cod, five half hogsheads of cod, thirty barrels of alewives (a fish close to mackerel), five barrels filled with mackerel, and two tons of whale oil. From a candle factory came four boxes of candles.²²⁴

Samuel Gallop, from Rhode Island not far from Boston, sailed to Suriname with his barkantine *Phanix* that same year. On board he had fifty barrels of flour, twenty barrels of salt, five cases of cheese. Again fish was an important part of the shipment: Twenty-five barrels of pickled fish (likely cured herring), and five barrels filled with mackerel, three barrels of whale oil, and three barrels of cod. In building material and non-food there arrived eight barrels of tar, 2000 planks, 17000 shingles and 7000 stones.²²⁵ Again, mostly daily foodstuffs. The horses, the pretext for the trade, and the centre of attention in Postma’s study of the connection,²²⁶ were hardly present.

Benjamin Appelbij came at around the same time from a harbour further south, New York. His bark *Catharina* brought in fifty barrels of

²²³ Idem.

²²⁴ SvS, *Inkoomende Carga van de bark Abigael schip Steph Grant koomende van Boston alhier arriveert op den 5 oct 1738*, 19-Feb-1739, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 266 fo. 276.

²²⁵ SvS, *Inkoomende Carga van de barkentijn Phanix Schip. Sam. Gallop komende van rood ijlant en alhier gearriveert op den 4 oktober 1738*, 23-Feb-1739, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 266 fo. 278.

²²⁶ Postma, *The Dutch*, 287–322.

flour, sixty barrels of salt, eighty one (barrels) of alewives, twenty boxes of bread, ten boxes of butter, and 10000 stones.²²⁷ No horses, mostly flour and fish and building materials.

When comparing this with the inward shipments of John Rule around 1688 we see essentially the same kind of products. However, now they came directly from North America, and not through Barbados. The content of the return shipments did change drastically. The ships were loaded with molasses and the local sugar based moonshine called *dram*.²²⁸ In the early period of the Suriname Company the colony had been re-connected to its former coloniser Barbados. This Caribbean connection fell apart completely when the non-Dutch trade from Paramaribo settled into its direct and bilateral North American focus. There was a simple economic reason for this. The British West Indies wanted to sell their molasses to the North American distillers; the distillers wished to import cheaper molasses from French and Dutch plantation colonies as well. Wood production in Suriname had become less important at the same time that the sugar production for the Dutch market increased.²²⁹ On top of that the North American colonies began to develop their own wood exporting industry. The connection with North America was an easier way of getting daily provisions than selling wood to Barbados and buying their provisions which the Barbadians themselves had imported. The fact that they were becoming competitors on the North American molasses market likely increased this further.

The return shipments from colonies like Suriname were supposed to be discouraged by the Molasses Act which levied a tax on non-British molasses, and was supposed to fill the coffers of the British state at the same time. The revenue reaped from the Molasses Act by the British was extremely low.²³⁰ This was the result of large scale tax evasion, which happened in a fairly organised fashion as we can see from the Surinamese tax sources. The ships sailing to Paramaribo mentioned earlier are a good example. The *Phanix* declared to return to Rhode Island, where she had

²²⁷ SvS, *Inkoomende Carga van de Bark Catharina Schip. Benjamin Appelbij van Nieuw Jork alhier gearriveert op den 12 Xber 1738*, 24-Feb-1739, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 266 fo. 280.

²²⁸ SvS, *Uijtgaende Carga van de barkentijn Phanix Schip. Sam. Gallop van hier vertrocken naer rood ijland op den feb 1739*, 23 februari 1739, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 266 fo. 277.; *Uijtgaende Carga van den baerk Abigael Schipper Stephen Grand van hier vertrokken naa madera op den feb 1739*, 19-Feb-1739, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 266 fo. 275.; *Uijtgeande Carga van de Bark Catharina Schip. Benjamin Appelbij van hier vertrocken naa Madeera op den 25 feb 1739*, 24-Feb-1739, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 266 fo. 279.

²²⁹ Nassy et al., *Essai historique table of exports*.

²³⁰ Albert B. Southwick, "The Molasses Act: Source of Precedents," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 8, no. 3, Third Series (July 1951): 389–405, doi:10.2307/1917421.

come from. The other two stated their destination to be Madeira, a very surprising destination for a British ship loaded with molasses sailing out of a Dutch colony. Around the year 1736 many ships reported their outward destination to be Madeira. It was so much that we can say that the last two, the *Abigaël* and *Catharina* sailing to Madeira were the rule. The *Phanix* which was sailing back the way she came was the exception.

When studying the ship movements out of Paramaribo we see a sudden change. The proportion of ships sailing from North American ports to Paramaribo and back to North America declined from around fifteen to around five ships annually. The ships declaring they arrived from Bristol Massachusetts and left for Madeira increased from nil to more than ten a year. In 1734, twenty bilateral ships sailed between Paramaribo and Bristol Massachusetts. There were no ships that arrived from Bristol Massachusetts that left for Madeira. By the year 1739 no ships that arrived from Bristol Massachusetts announced they would sail back the same way. All twenty of them stated Madeira as their destination.²³¹ Did all these merchants really divert their course all of a sudden? Had the Madeiran molasses industry grown explosively, while the distillers on the North American East Coast had all closed their businesses at a similar pace? Not at all.

The North Americans at the time were faced by the Molasses-act which attempted to curtail Dutch and French molasses supply to the North American colonies, to support molasses sales from the English colonies such as Barbados and Jamaica. International trade was eased after the Peace of Utrecht (1713) when England and France agreed that “there shall be a reciprocal and entirely perfect liberty of navigation and commerce between the subjects on each part ... concerning all and singular kinds of goods’ and that they should be ‘secure, and free from all trouble and molestation.” This ended hostilities between the key nations in the Atlantic, and re-opened the ports of the French and the English to shipping.²³² This openness was however not long lasting. From within the British empire opposition rose from West Indian planters who wished to have sole access to the North American molasses market. The prices paid by the North American colonists for the molasses and rum from the non-British West Indies were sixty to seventy per cent of what they paid in their own West Indian colonies. One year after the Peace of Utrecht the sugar planters already voiced their

²³¹ A less frequently used, but similarly unlikely a destination for ships sailing out of the Surinam River was Fayal, an island in the Azores archipelago, not too far North West of Madeira.

²³² ‘The treaty between France and Great Britain, Navigation and Commerce signed in Utrecht in 1713’, in: George Chalmers (ed.), *A collection of treaties between Great Britain and other powers* 2 (London 1790) <<http://www.heraldica.org/topics/france/utrecht.htm>>.

complaints to parliament about the intensified inter-imperial trade and unfair competition. The West Indian opposition remained constant and culminated in a bill that completely banned the trade between North America and non-British colonies. It passed parliament in 1731, but did not make it through the House of Lords. A second bill was milder, it chose not to ban but to levy a higher tax on non-British imports of molasses, sugar and rum. This was passed in 1733 and came to be known as the Molasses Act.²³³

Suriname served as a connection where skippers and merchants discussed strategies to evade imperial taxes. One can understand how skippers who spent months organizing return shipments of molasses discussed how to fool the British custom office. Within a relatively short period all the merchants skippers had aligned their strategy, and the Governor of Suriname complied. By signing the destination to be Madeira the skippers would not have to pay tax when they arrived in North America. They would claim to be in transit on their way to Madeira and therefore not bringing the molasses into the British Empire. If the molasses was not being brought in destined for the British colonies they would not have to pay tax. Of course, once the ships had passed the patrolling navy vessels the molasses would be unloaded and distilled all the same. The Surinamese Governor signed every single false statement made by captains declaring their destination to be Madeira. Approximately nine hundred of them. That is why Madeira seems the single most important destination of non-Dutch ships sailing out of Suriname in the whole period if the tax data is taken at face value.²³⁴ If we would include Dutch shipping into it, it would be second only to Amsterdam. The North American skippers and merchants very successfully evaded a trade restriction that the metropolis tried to impose. In the table below (Table 6 Shipping data of Madeira and the corrupt data from Suriname compared, 1735-1740) the increase of ships allegedly sailing from Suriname to Madeira are compared to the actual shipping figures of Madeira itself. It shows that Madeira's shipping actually declined in the period when an increase should have been expected based on the large numbers of Surinamese ships arriving there.

Table 6 Shipping data of Madeira and the corrupt data from Suriname compared, 1735-1740

	Ships departing Suriname to Madeira	allegedly from	Total ships departing from Madeira
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²³³ Southwick, "The Molasses Act."

²³⁴ See PSNADC and Appendix 1.

1735	0	180
1736	15	161
1737	28	152
1738	38	156
1739	37	96
1740	36	118

Source: PSNADC and Livros dos Entradas (1727-1807) e saídas (1779-1807), Provedoria e Junta da Real Fazenda, Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo, Lisbon, Portugal cited in: David Hancock, “‘A revolution in the trade’: wine distribution and the development of the infrastructure of the Atlantic market economy, 1703-1807” in: John J. McCusker and Kenneth Morgan, *The Early Modern Atlantic Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2000) 105- 153

The network of regional trade went through a major transformation during the first phase of the expansion of sugar production in the first decade of the eighteenth century. The contact between Suriname and its former colonizer Barbados with which it had maintained a symbiotic relation for many decades was fading away and was being replaced by trade more fitting to the changing nature of the colony. The Molasses Act was the result of lobbying by the English West Indian planters, like those operating from Barbados. The initial mutual exchange between the two colonies came under pressure now that there was a competition between the two, both with regard to the sales of molasses, as well as the buying up of North American provisions. The falling apart of this connection coincided with the converging of the markets the two colonies were operating in. A fissure grew between the North American and British West Indian colonies.

The connection between Barbados and Suriname dried up completely. Research on the export wood production of Suriname shows that this came to a standstill at around the same time. The increasingly bilateral nature of the connection shows that the image of adventurer captains sailing to various Caribbean harbours looking for the best price²³⁵ should be replaced by an image of steady and durable connections between colonies and across imperial boundaries. The planters suggested the encouraging of, and reliance on circuits of exchange outside the control of the Suriname Company. When these freedoms were not granted, the colonists did not hesitate to take them, and local officials such as the Surinamese Governor

²³⁵ Pares, *Yankees and Creoles*, 67.

appeared to have been facilitating the evasion of both the Dutch and English orders in this regard.

3.6. Dutch connection

A good illustration of the difference between the preceding period of consolidation, and the one in which the colony had stabilized are the careers of Samuel Cohen Nassy – discussed in the previous chapter – and coffee pioneer Stephanus Laurentius Neale in the years after the war. Neale had been born in the colony in 1688 on a plantation along the Commewijne River, and received his education in The Hague. His father, previously an ordinary sailor who owned 21 enslaved Africans²³⁶ died when Neale was still an infant. His mother Anna Verboom²³⁷ remarried a Frenchman from Rouen, Paul Amsinck. After his return to the colony in 1710 Neale played a key role in the start-up of coffee production. Neale, his brother-in-law Nicolaas van Sandick and his mother Anna Amsinck - Verboom were among the first to send coffee to the Republic in 1723.²³⁸ When Neale had amassed enough wealth he emigrated to Europe and bought himself into the Prussian nobility, received several freedoms, and became a well-known figure at the Prussian court where he was nicknamed “*Le Roi de Surinam*.”²³⁹

Neale left the colony for Europe by the time he had acquired enough wealth, just as Nassy had done, who moved to Amsterdam. Before they left the colony their success as planters had made both men important middlemen for merchants or merchant companies who sought a trustworthy representative in the colony. Neale was recommended to the Middelburgsche Commercie Compagnie as a good contact in Suriname, and fulfilled the role of correspondent for that company for several years.²⁴⁰ By the time he went to Europe to enjoy his fortune he consequently had the Governors Gerard van de Schepper, Johan Jacob Mauricius, and Wigbold Crommelin working for him to administer his property while they were simultaneously occupying the colony’s most important executive position.²⁴¹ Although Nassy had been excluded from formal governing positions in the colony because of his religious background, he had been an important representative of the Jewish

²³⁶ SvS, *Hoofdgeld en akkergeld 1684*, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 213.

²³⁷ Sister of the Commander Verboom. The commander died from his injuries during the mutiny against Aerssen van Sommelsdijck.

²³⁸ C.F Gülcher, “Een Surinaamsche koffieplanter uit de 18de eeuw (SL Neale),” *West-Indische Gids* 25, no. 1 (1943): 41–59.

²³⁹ Ibid.

²⁴⁰ MCC, *Minutes of the board of MCC directors 1720 - 1723*, entry 20 inv.nr. 13.

²⁴¹ Gülcher, “Een Surinaamsche koffieplanter.”

community as well as a notary public. Neale was nominated by the planters of Suriname for the position of councillor in the Political and Criminal Council. He was elected to this position in 1725, and held it until 1731.²⁴² When he moved to the Republic, Neale – like Nassy before him – engaged in actively lobbying for the planters' interests to the directors of the Suriname Company.

Despite the similarities there were several marked differences between Nassy and Neale. Nassy's business had stretched out into many different aspects of colonisation: founding regional networks, sustaining the slave trade, shipping goods between the Republic and the colony, as well as managing plantations. Neale did not engage in all branches of business in Suriname. He appears to have had no dealings in the regional trade, and he also did not own or partake in ships sailing to and from the colony. Rather than owning ships like Nassy, he was a correspondent for a specialised shipping company, playing the role of middleman. The differences between Neale and Nassy are telling for the shift from a period in which colonists were trying to consolidate their precarious settlement, to one in which more and more companies and merchants trusted the stability of the colony and were starting to offer specialized services to the colony, like regional trade, shipping to the Republic and private slave trade. This was no longer concentrated in the hands of a few well-connected people on both sides of the Atlantic. Neale was among the first who had been born in the colony and risen to riches and can be counted among the first creole planters of the colony.

Proponents of the colonisation of Suriname rarely missed a chance to emphasize how not only colonial production, but shipping itself was beneficial to the Dutch Republic. The argument was that the shipping industry created trained sailors and provided business for shipping companies. The poor conditions in Suriname's tropical waters would demand a permanent repairing and rebuilding of ships returning from there. The rhetoric in support of colonisation clearly distinguished between shipping and trading. A note on the benefits of Suriname for the city of Amsterdam from 1738 calculated that the income generated from shipping tropical produce was three hundred thousand guilders per year.²⁴³ With the present-day knowledge on the amount of produce shipped from the colony to the Republic, that estimate appears to be rather low. When calculating 5 *duyten* per pound of cargo the actual money spent on shipping was much

²⁴² OAS, *List of nominated and elected councillors to the various councils, 1684 - 1795*, entry 1.05.10.02 inv.nr. 235.

²⁴³ SAA, *Archief van de familie Bicker en aanverwante families, Voordeelen die de Stad van Amsterdam treckt van de Colonie van Suriname*, entry 195, inv.nr. 1025A9.

more; for the period under investigation an average of five hundred and fifty-five thousand guilders per year was charged by shipping companies for carrying of the sugar and coffee to the Republic.

During the consolidation of the connection between Suriname and the Dutch Republic a merchant-planter-shipowner like Nassy controlled all aspects of colonisation, both the bringing in of enslaved Africans, the overseeing of sugar production, the hauling in of supplies, and the shipping of sugar to the Republic. This was a common pattern in the consolidation phase of such trade connections. In the period of the colony's build-up and the consolidation of the connections between the Republic and the colony, the methods by which sugar ended up in the Republic were mixed, both traders buying up goods in the colony, and sending them to the Republic, direct consignment by planters, as well as captains buying up sugar directly. The WIC had chosen separate shipownership from its trading activities in an early stage. The company began to rent ships both for their bilateral African trade as well as their slave trade in the period after 1674 until the end of the War of the Spanish Succession in 1713.²⁴⁴ More generally there was an increased separation between the ship owners and the company owning the cargo after the War of the Spanish Succession. That way the plantation owners only risked losing the cargo, rather than both the cargo and the ship.

In the period during which the connection between the colony and the metropolis consolidated, the market for shipping services changed from one in which there was far too much shipping space available for the amount of cargo that needed to be shipped, to one in which there was a balance between the two. This drove down waiting time in port, as well as increasing the number of pounds loaded per ship on its way to the Republic. In the following period between the end of the War of the Spanish Succession (1713) and the end of the WIC monopoly on Suriname's slave trade (1738) the average waiting time per ship went down, while the average load per ship doubled. After the 1690s ships were no longer returning to the Republic carrying only ballast. This indicates that the shipping connection between the colony and the Dutch Republic had stabilized. A dependable number of ships was coming to port, and the relation between the amount of sugar produced and the shipping space available was in balance. The number of ships in Paramaribo increased to an average of 27.4 ships per year, and never less than 15. The average load of tropical produce on outward sailing Dutch ships had grown to seven hundred thousand pounds at the end of the War. This remained the common weight loaded on board ships sailing to the Republic. This centennial highpoint in terms of load per ship declined with

²⁴⁴ Henk den Heijer, *Goud, ivoor en slaven. Scheepvaart en handel van de Tweede Westindische Compagnie op Afrika, 1674-1740* (Leiden: Walburg Pers, 1997), 391–404.

the upsurge in ships sailing to the colony in the late 1730s. This decline in the load per ship should partly be attributed to the comparative weight of coffee taking more space per pound than sugar, as well as to an increased arrival of ships.²⁴⁵ For slave ships it was more common to sail back to Europe carrying between one and seven hundred thousand pounds, while most of the bilateral ships loaded between seven and nine hundred thousand pounds. After the War of the Spanish Succession the number of waiting days decreased steadily, while the load per ship dropped below war-time levels for several years. The 1720s and 1730s see consistent high loads per ship, the longest period in which ships load above the 1680-1795 average. The period was a golden age for shipping companies servicing the route directly between Suriname and Amsterdam.

The separation of shipping and trading fits a period of intensification of the stable connection after the war. The *Juffrouw Margarita* under the command of captain Jan Neyman intending to sail to Suriname before it stranded on Texel is a good example of the separation between loaders and ship owners. The ship had a group of *reeders*, and on the other hand a group of so-called *inladers*. The *St. Jan* under captain Jan Carstens returned from Suriname in 1719 had 17 *reeders*, the *Juffrouw Cornelia* under captain Claas Backer returning from Suriname had 13. On these ships tasks had become separated through the introduction of the commission trade, or, due to the large debts of planters with merchants in Amsterdam resulting in an arrangement in which goods were loaded and consigned between the indebted planters and their creditors in the Republic. The change to a consignment system coincided with the increasing debts of the planters trying to pay for the WIC's enslaved Africans. The MCC in contrast was trying to get a foothold in the colony in the 1720s. To be able to enter the shipping market they had to combine the shipping of consigned freight, as well as trading their own goods to buy tropical products for their own accounts in the colony.²⁴⁶

3.7. Infringement on Amsterdam's position

The directors of the SC not only dealt with North American interloping, they also had to combat two Dutch circuits of interlopers to their colony, one was through Ireland, and specifically Cork, where meat and horses were loaded as provisions for the colony. The other route was through Madeira, where captains loaded Madeira wine. This was infringing upon the protectionist

²⁴⁵ See PSDC and Graph 3 in Appendix 1.

²⁴⁶ Corrie Reinders Folmer - Van Prooijen, *Van goederenhandel naar slavenhandel: de Middelburgse Commercie Compagnie 1720-1755* (Leiden, 2000), 210–211.

XIIth article in the charter. The colonists had already managed to dent this article in the previous period, and now Dutch shipping companies were actively trying to undermine the rule that traffic had to take place directly from the Republic by buying up goods in ports on the way to the colony. Ships without a commission of the directors of the SC were prohibited from being admitted to the colony.²⁴⁷ But still captains and shipping companies tried to get permissions to sail to Ireland and Madeira before crossing over to Suriname. The requests to open the shipping through Madeira came from both planters as well as freighters, but was refused based on the charter.²⁴⁸

Despite the reiteration of the ban in the years after the War, ships kept visiting non-Dutch Atlantic ports. The *Elisabeth Galije* was an interloper, which used its permission to sail for the West Indies, to sail past Ireland, and then adjusted its course to go to Suriname to sell its Irish horses there. The *Elisabeth Galije* was a regular Atlantic crosser, both to Suriname as well as other West Indian destinations such as Curaçao to load cacao.²⁴⁹ The directors were unhappy with this form of interloping, but they also appeared rather powerless to stop it. In July 1719 the directors scolded the Governor for the smuggling of the Irish horses, and reminded him of his duty, both in the charter, as well as his instruction.²⁵⁰ But both the demand of the colonists and the geographic openness of the Atlantic prevented efficient policing. Captains increasingly came to the SC directors to lobby for the opening of the connection, as can be seen in the requests that are made to the directors by captains and representatives of shipping companies. On the sailing through Madeira there were increasingly conflicts between the SC and ship captains, and in 1720 the order was given that ships stopping over in other ports were held to pay double the *lastgeld*, which can be seen as a fine, rather than an outright ban.²⁵¹

As seen in the previous chapter, Zeeland's ports were initially disconnected from Suriname despite the many guarantees in the Charter that specifically allowed the Zeelanders unhindered access to the colony. The years after the War of the Spanish Succession saw a dramatic increase of Zeelandic interloper activities in the Atlantic trade, including the slave trade.

²⁴⁷ SvS, *Resoluties directeuren, 1711-1716*, 1714, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 24; *Resoluties directeuren, 1711-1716*, 1715, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 24.

²⁴⁸ SvS, *Resoluties directeuren, 1717-1721* Meeting 3-Nov-1717, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 25.

²⁴⁹ Sailing in Nov 1716 to Curaçao, and from Curaçao in 1717 to Amsterdam. In 1718 the ship claims to make a voyage from the Dutch Republic to the Spanish West Indies, but arrives in Suriname sailing via Ireland. After that voyage it never returned to Suriname, but did ship cacao out from Curaçao to the Republic three times (Postma & Klooster database).

²⁵⁰ SvS, *Resoluties directeuren, 1717-1721*, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 25.

²⁵¹ SvS, *Resoluties directeuren, 1726-1729*, Resolution 9-Aug-1726, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 27.

The idea was “to repair the damage done by the last war and let trade return to the city.”²⁵² Paesie notes that the above citation of Cornelis Versluys in 1720 skips over a period of seven years in which the merchants of Middelburg had invested their capital in interloping. According to Paesie Versluys argument is mistaken, the war had been over for quite some time, but the founding of the MCC was directly aimed at attacking the dominant position of Holland in (Atlantic) trade. Several directors of the newly found MCC had been involved in evading the monopoly of the WIC in the years before.²⁵³ The interlopers in the slave trade had ignored Suriname as a destination. The only Zeelandic ships sailing to Suriname before the founding of the MCC were the WIC slave traders of the Zeeland chamber, most notably the *Adrichem* on three voyages and the *Emmenes* on two. For the Zeeland chamber of the WIC the connections to Suriname became of secondary importance, compared to Essequibo, which was under their command.

The MCC attempted to pry open the Suriname market of colonial products, and re-establish the connection between Zeeland and Suriname. Since the slave trade was still the monopoly of the WIC, they first tried to get involved in the goods trade. While the MCC initially had the plan to sail to the Spanish Caribbean colonies, they also went to Suriname.²⁵⁴ To get access to Suriname, the directors of the MCC contacted their Amsterdam agent Arnold Cloeting.²⁵⁵ The contacts to Suriname went through him, and Cloeting made the contact between the MCC and their Surinamese correspondent J.S. Neale. The connection between Zeeland and Suriname was such an uncharted territory for the MCC directors that the early MCC ships loaded their Suriname consignments in Amsterdam rather than Middelburg. Cloeting was the one who was to decide what the flute *Cornelia* was to load on board.²⁵⁶ In all this the directors were mostly active in bringing together the capital for the ship and the shipments, leaving details of the goods to be loaded for Suriname to the discretion of their representative in Amsterdam.²⁵⁷

On both the voyage to the colony as well as back to the Republic, the MCC combined their own trade with shipping consigned goods. The MCC ship *Nieuwerwerf* sailed to Suriname, where it was received by Neale.

²⁵² Reinders Folmer - Van Prooijen, *Van goederenhandel naar slavenhandel*, 17.

²⁵³ Paesie, *Lorrendrayen op Africa*, 72–73.

²⁵⁴ Reinders Folmer - Van Prooijen, *Van goederenhandel naar slavenhandel*, 210.

²⁵⁵ MCC, *Letters from the MCC to its correspondents 1720 – 1723*, entry 20 inv.nr. 85.

²⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁷ MCC, *Minutes of the board of MCC directors 1720 - 1723*, entry 20 inv.nr. 13.

The return cargo was to be a mix of both MCC goods, as well as freight for others. Neale wrote to the MCC directors that he loaded 743 hogsheads of sugar, 238 of these were on the account of the MCC, the others as cargo.²⁵⁸ Once in Suriname captain Reynolds van Overwijk of the *Cornelia* was to deliver the orders of the loaders, advertise that they had arrived, and make sure that the goods that had been taken in in Amsterdam on consignment were picked up. The captain was to emphasize to those people that his ship's services would be available to friends to carry goods to Zeeland shortly. The directors on several plantations were expected to load a good amount of sugar for Middelburg. The captain was pushed to take sugar as old as possible, so it would not cure too much on the way. If planters insisted that they wanted their sugar to be brought to Amsterdam, the *inladers* could agree to send the sugar to Amsterdam after it had been brought to Middelburg and shipped from there to Amsterdam.²⁵⁹

Part of the problem for the captains of the MCC ships was the perishable nature of the goods they tried to ship to Suriname. A captain complained that the beer started smelling strange, and adding some sugar to it did not help getting it sold. Instead of a consignment system, the MCC's reliance on trading the goods slowed them down. Only on half of the cargoes sent to the colony was there a profit made, and this does not include the cost of equipping the ships, which diminished any chance to have a successful conclusion to a voyage.²⁶⁰ The MCC realised that they needed to speed up the voyage, and both in Suriname as in Zeeland the waiting time should be reduced. Plans were made to ensure that a bilaterally sailing ship, such as the *Nieuwerwerf* could return to Suriname from Zeeland within five or six weeks.²⁶¹ The long waiting times were to be shortened, in part, by the use of a correspondent who could use his knowledge of the local markets to smoothen the loading and unloading of the ships. The correspondent also had a task in increasing the trustworthiness of the MCC by reporting on successful sales of loaded sugars in Middelburg.

To get a correspondent, the directors of the MCC managed to get into contact with Laurentius Stephanus Neale, who was at that time still residing in the colony, and as a major plantation owner and businessman, was a good candidate for representing the MCC. The correspondent was used to spread good news about the way the MCC handled return-goods. So they told Neale the amount of sugar that arrived, and the good condition it

²⁵⁸ MCC, *Letters from Neale to the MCC*, 7-Sep-1722, entry 20 inv.nr. 54.

²⁵⁹ MCC, *Lias van de Fluit Cornelia, reis Suriname, 1721-1722*, entry 20 inv.nr. 311.

²⁶⁰ Reinders Folmer - Van Prooijen, *Van goederenhandel naar slavenhandel*, 210–211.

²⁶¹ ZA, MCC, *Letters from the MCC to its correspondents 1720 – 1723*, entry 20 inv.nr. 85.

arrived in. He had to try to make the voyages profitable and beat the competition by selling the goods on board and helping to organise the return.²⁶² Neale also gave advice on how the MCC directors could advance their operations in Suriname by making special deals with planters, therewith turning to a consignment system. In return for his help Neale could profit from preferential treatment by the MCC. When Neale filled up an MCC ship with 59 hogsheads because it had not been fully loaded, the cost (with expenses) of *fl* 3,158 were paid to him by the captain “pr. Quite.”²⁶³ He did not have to wait for the sugar to be sold in the metropolis as would be the case if anyone else had loaded the barrels, an exceptionally lucrative deal for him. On top of the lucrative deals in the beginning of the contact, the MCC directors adopted a friendly tone in their letters by the time Neale had organised the first return shipments. They asked him to organise the same for the other ships that they sent and they provided Neale with goods for which he did not have to pay any shipping costs.²⁶⁴ Despite the requests by the MCC to discuss the organisation of the return shipment with the captain; Neal “refuses to discuss such matters with a ship’s captain.” He said he did so because he hoped that the trade of the Commerce Company would be a stable one, something he wanted because he had “a very good heart for the Zeelanders”, and as he said himself, a financial interest in their success.²⁶⁵ Neale had considerable trouble convincing the Surinamese planters to load their sugar because they did not trust the new company. The mistrust partly stemmed from the founding of the company during the hey-day of a speculative bubble. Plantation owners thought that ships had been insured for too high a price, and were destined to be captured by a pirate that had been ordered by the MCC.²⁶⁶

Also in the consignment and freighting system the competition was tough. The correspondent of the MCC was thanked if he managed to reach the price of 5 *duyten* per pound.²⁶⁷ From the 1680s until the 1720s the WIC had the practice of lowering their shipping price down to 4 *duyten* per pound.²⁶⁸ Commissioners were allowed to drop the price of shipping with one *duyt* below the ordinary price to make sure they could load quickly and

²⁶² Ibid. 2-Jan-1722.

²⁶³ Ibid. 3-Dec-1722.

²⁶⁴ Ibid. 26-Aug-1722.

²⁶⁵ MCC, *Letters from Neale*, 23-Apr-1723, entry 20 inv.nr. 54.

²⁶⁶ Reinders Folmer - Van Prooijen, *Van goederenhandel naar slavenhandel*, 13.

²⁶⁷ MCC, *Letters from the MCC to its correspondents 1720 – 1723*, 26-Aug-1722, entry 20 inv.nr. 85.

²⁶⁸ MCC, *Letters from Neale*, 22-Mar-1722, entry 20 inv.nr. 54.

fully.²⁶⁹ Neale reported how a returning WIC slaver would sound drums on the waterfront to inform the planters that he shipped for as little as 3 *duyten*.²⁷⁰ The SC also shipped for as little as 3 *duyten*.²⁷¹

In these competitive conditions new bilateral connections were not easily set up. In the early period of the MCC activity in Suriname (1720s) only the *Maria Elisabeth* undertook a successful voyage. The shipping by the MCC to Suriname and Essequibo between 1721 and 1727 resulted in a net loss of *fl* 11,010 for the MCC. This result was not only caused by the loss of three of the twelve ships. If the lost ships and the ship that sailed to Essequibo are not included, the shipping to Suriname resulted in a net loss of *fl* 5,254 for the MCC. Of this unfortunate trade the most successful part was the selling of the return shipment. The ships that did not make it back to Middelburg understandably failed to make a profit selling the goods that they had bought up in the West Indies. The return shipments would sell at at least double and sometimes almost ten times the price they were bought. The great losses at the selling of goods in the colony and the equipping of the ships made the connection unprofitable.²⁷²

As mentioned, only the *Maria Elisabeth* managed to make money, albeit only the insignificant sum of *fl* 174. The regular price to be had for a shipment was 5 *duyten* per pound, and could rise to 12 *duyten* in war time.²⁷³ Under Neale the MCC ships had an average waiting time of 198 days, as compared to 167 days for the ships sailing back to Amsterdam, a difference of 31 days. When the MCC was engaged in freight-shipping to Suriname (1721-1726), the average difference was 44 days. So while the MCC did relatively better in Neale's days, they did worse than the general Amsterdam shipping.²⁷⁴ Despite having one of the formidable planters of the era as their representative in Suriname, the MCC was unable to compete with the ships sailing to Amsterdam, or with the slave ships which were also mostly sailing to Amsterdam. The connection between Suriname and Amsterdam was in its

²⁶⁹ NL-HaNA, Tweede West-Indische Compagnie, *Letter from the WIC to Gideon Bourse and Pieter Sanderus in Suriname* 20-Dec-1691, entry 1.05.01.02 inv.nr. 69.

²⁷⁰ MCC, *Letters Neale*, 9-Apr-1722, entry 20 inv.nr. 54.

²⁷¹ On 19-Aug-1733 the directors discuss the case of commies La Vernhe afgeladen 6 oxhoofden suiker tegens vier duijten, dog niet hoger standgrijpen als volgens afspraak met de schipper tot 3 duijten. The directors order that in case La Vernhe "sigh gefundeert vind tot repetitie van d'eene duijt hij dieswegen op bij Retour van deselve schipper in Suriname zijn actie aldaar sal moten institueeren." SvS, *Resoluties directeuren, 1733-1735*.

²⁷² Reinders Folmer - Van Prooijen, *Van goederenhandel naar slavenhandel*, 210–211.

²⁷³ SAA, Archief van de familie Bicker en aanverwante families, *Voordeelen die de Stad van Amsterdam treckt van de Colonie van Suriname*, entry 195 inv.nr. 1025A9.

²⁷⁴ Reinders Folmer - Van Prooijen, *Van goederenhandel naar slavenhandel*, 210; PSDC.

most successful period in the 1720s in terms of loading time and load average. Two basic elements of the Dutch connection between Suriname and the Republic were playing against the MCC. First, that they were trying to not sail to Amsterdam, which had a large concentration of sugar refiners. It is unclear why Zeeland did not manage to develop this industry sufficiently to compete with Amsterdam. Secondly, that they did not sell enslaved Africans in the colony. The exchange of enslaved Africans for sugar would have sped up the organisation of return-shipments considerably, and might have given them a chance against the dominance of Amsterdam.

Part II: Connections

Paramaribo's place in the connections between the plantations and the rest of the Atlantic world was not solely that of gatekeeper. Over time it developed many other functions in the colony, not in the least because of the geography of town, located close where Suriname's main rivers merge and flow to sea. The plantations used the waterways to connect to other plantations, with enslaved Africans bringing supplies, tools or news back and forth. Paths between plantations existed, but real roads were only found along a few canals in the northern part of the colony in the late eighteenth century. All those who arrived in Suriname travelled on the rivers. Recently arrived captives from Africa were transported to their prospective plantations, and captains and brokers went upstream to barter for the price of return shipments. During the era of slave-based plantation production the rivers, creeks and the occasional canal formed Suriname's vascular system which was not only transporting transatlantic commodities, but was just as important for the local circulation of goods. The rivers also provided space for illicit exchanges, and people traded or smuggled goods and exchanged news.

Part II deals primarily with Paramaribo and its development as a local centre with its markets and services. The chapter shows not only how the city functioned as a place from where local distribution was organised, but also what the limits were when it came to the development of local docking and distilling industry. The Atlantic world not only connected cities, but as the chapter on migration will show it also included connections deep into the European hinterland. Lastly the slave trade is examined, with an emphasis on the changes in the slave trade in terms of overseas representation and the organisation of debt and payment between the plantation owners and the slave traders.

4. Nodal point and hinterland

This chapter shows the drivers behind the increasing centrality of the city in to the colony, and highlights some of the limits to its growth.²⁷⁵ The chain of production, distribution and consumption of drink and timber are followed by a discussion of river work and how local government changed Paramaribo's relationship with its hinterland. In this relationship the presence of markets in the town added more mercantile activity to the city, making it more than just a shipping point. However, given the nature of dock work in the colony where there is an abundance of both enslaved labour and sailors, the *Waterkant* did not develop into a fully functional port area. The driving forces behind the centrality of the city were both the attempts by local government to regulate trade, the change of plantation management into the hands of administrators (see chapter 7), the growing ability of the enslaved and formerly enslaved to peddle their wares in town and the growing number of free town dwellers in Paramaribo's new neighbourhoods. The dynamics of the colonial economy and government were such that they boosted Paramaribo's centrality in the colony. The limit to the city's growth was primarily that Paramaribo did not develop a large industrial (productive) sector. The paragraph on dock and river work illustrates how the presence of slaves and sailors as a flexible labour force hindered the development of port services. The paragraph on the peddling of goods shows that the city's markets were very attractive, but mainly to exchange agricultural produce. The role of Paramaribo as an administrative centre, both on the government and plantation level were the main drivers of its growth. The development of production (rather than services or hinterland agriculture) would have enabled further growth.

The centrality of Paramaribo was not predetermined by its geography. While the shell ridges were the first good place to land when coming from the Ocean, the river's muddy banks and strong tide prevented the building of docks for the arriving ships. They had to swing at anchor, making the loading and unloading of products a dangerous and troublesome activity. It would have been much better for the ships to sail straight to the plantations, which was possible both on the Suriname and Commewijne, but government regulations forced products to pass by the weighing house and barges departing to the interior to get a permission from the fort. The local government tried to regulate the movement on the rivers as well as centralise

²⁷⁵ Part of the data in this chapter was first published in Karwan Fatah-Black, "Slaves and Sailors on Suriname's Rivers," *Itinerario* 36, no. 03 (2012): 61–82, doi:10.1017/S0165115313000053; Karwan Fatah-Black, "Paramaribo en het achterland in de achttiende eeuw," *OSO: Tijdschrift voor Surinamistiek en het Caraïbisch Gebied* 30, no. 2 (2011): 298–315.

market transactions in the town around designated market places. The local system of exchange that was created to service consumers in the city and on the plantations was mostly concerned with local produce. Wood production, food markets and the consumption of distilled drinks are taken as examples to highlight the relation between the urban nodal point, local production, transatlantic shipping and regional trade. The need for taxation forced many products to pass by the weighing house on Paramaribo's waterfront since the late seventeenth century. Despite the predominance of local production and the many direct connections between individual plantations, Paramaribo became the beating heart of a water transport network that touched all areas of the colony. When it came to local trading systems the 'unsupervised' movement of the enslaved were a special concern for the colonial government that was trying to combine the disciplining of enslaved Africans while simultaneously giving them just enough freedom to let the local transport system working smoothly.

4.1. Wood production and distribution

The marketing of locally logged wood was not restricted by the charter of Suriname Company or the West India Company, which made it a fairly unregulated market. Several ordinances concerning the wood market were issued. The unloading of wood damaged Paramaribo's waterfront and clogged up the docks so much that in 1755 a special wood market was founded to regulate the wood that was brought to the market in town.²⁷⁶ Timber was an export product, as well as the main building material and fuel used in the colony. The tropical forest with a seemingly endless supply of various hardwoods compensated the lack of stone. Most buildings in the colony were therefore made of wood. Roofing material was initially predominantly straw (which was regarded as a great fire hazard) and the government tried to enforce the use of shingles, small wooden planks.²⁷⁷ Due

²⁷⁶ Bylaw 517, 26-Aug-1755, *Plakaatboek*, 624-626. Due to a conflict around 1770 Governor Jan Nepveu decided, with the consent of the Directors of the Suriname Company, to revert to the old (1759) regulations on the wood market instead of the amended version of 1763. See Bylaw 830, Regulation for the wood market, 25-Sep-1770, *Plakaatboek*, 994-995. The issuing of an ammendment to the regulation of the wood market in March 1781. Bylaw 843, *Plakaatboek*, 1012-1014; Amendment to the regulation of the wood market, 23-Mar-1781. The bylaw only changed the height of taxes for various kinds of wood compared to the older rules.

²⁷⁷ They were later replaces by panes and flint. The early law on this was issued by the Zeelandic Governor and captain Lichtebergh in April 1669, and prohibited the use of 'Indian Roof' because of the perceived fire hazard in Torarica and enforced to use shingles. This ordinance was later repeated in combination with several others, including that the price of a thousand shingles was set at 250 pounds of sugar.

to the muddy grounds and the tidal changes in the water level, waterfronts needed wooden protection. The government regularly issued bylaws on the enclosing of grounds, both in the city and on plantations.²⁷⁸ On plantations not only the buildings, but also the sluices, a wide range of local transport barges, and mills were made of wood. In the city most of the houses were wood, built on stone foundations. Wood was also used to make small repairs to ships that arrived in front of the town. Besides its use as a building material wood was used as fuel for cooking food, processing sugar, and distilling drink. Wooden barrels were also used for transporting sugar,²⁷⁹ molasses as well as other plantation products. The wood offloaded in Paramaribo was predominantly building material of various qualities. There were also other types of wood, like purple, yellow, green and brown hardwoods as well as locust. From Holland came *Hollandsche deelen*, and from North America came pinewood. The Dutch wood was valued fairly little, just like mangrove, pine and the more general category of firewood. A break-down of the kinds of wood brought to the wood market in Paramaribo in 1784 shows that luxury woods made up 4 per cent, and high quality building material 9 per cent of the total wood brought to market. The bulk of the tax was paid for regular building material, at 67 per cent, with lower quality building material at 16 per cent. Firewood amounted to only 2 per cent, leaving another 2 per cent unknown. In Surinamese guilders the total yield of the wood market tax that year stood at fS. 4,218.²⁸⁰

The development of the local production and consumption of wood products illustrates the growing centrality of Paramaribo within the local economy. Not all wood was destined for the local market, *Letterhout*²⁸¹ was an exception in this respect since it was a luxury wood shipped to the Netherlands for making furniture or valuable wooden objects. The other woods served as building material and its production and trade was not restricted by the metropolis. There seems to have been little technological innovation over the course of the century. According to Blom most wood had to be cut into shape by enslaved Africans. This was either done on site

²⁷⁸ Bylaw 17 and 22, 6-Apr-1669 and 13-Jun-1669, *Plakaatboek*, 39 and 44-46.

²⁷⁹ Bylaw 205, Ordering sugar to be packed in barrels when shipped, 13-Jan-1700, *Plakaatboek*, 238-239'.

²⁸⁰ Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, Administratie van Financiën in Suriname, 'Register van opgave van te Paramaribo geloste houtwaren', entry 1.05.10.07 inv.nr. 347.

²⁸¹ J.Ph. Pfeiffer, *De Houtsoorten van Suriname*, vol. 1, Koninklijke Vereeniging Koloniaal Instituut (Amsterdam: De Bussy, 1925), 148 Letterhout is also known as letterwood, snakewood and leopardwood and is a name used for various kinds of *Piratinera*. The enslaved most likely called it letri or kappeweri letri. .

with manpower, or mechanically in lumber mills.²⁸² The trees were cut just above the ground and then turned into planks, beams or shingles. The pathways in the forest were often too wet for carts, so women would carry the timber to the carts.²⁸³ From the plantation buildings it was shipped by barge to Paramaribo. The logging firms and plantations were also centres for collecting wood cut by Amerindians and Maroons.²⁸⁴ Logging firms used forced labour in a different way than agricultural plantations did. To find hardwoods groups of enslaved Africans went unsupervised into the jungle, which gave them more freedom than on a plantation. It was also common for the transports of wood to the city or between a *houtgrond* (timberland) and plantations to be unsupervised by whites.²⁸⁵

There had been a proto-colonial timber trade between the Guiana Coast and the Dutch Republic as early as 1619. This wood trade was tapping into Amerindian logging activities and was not part of European colonisation efforts. An example of this trade is the case of David Pietersz de Vries who arrived on the coast in 1634 and collected about 30 tons of *letterhout* logged by Amerindians.²⁸⁶ On the early maps from the English period we can see that the inland areas in the south east of Suriname are called "Speckle Wood Countrey." Speckle Wood is nowadays called snakewood or *letterhout* in Dutch. These names refer to the dark spots in the wood making it ideal to make into decorative objects. The transatlantic export of *letterhout* came to a standstill in the mid-eighteenth century.²⁸⁷ Rather than from rainforest covered Suriname, the Dutch Republic's supplyline for West Indian wood in 1778 ran through St. Eustatius, St. Thomas and Curaçao.²⁸⁸ The *letterhout* trade was separate from local consumption and played an important role in the start-up phase of the colony. The government was actively intervening in the export of both *letterhout* as well as regular planks to force plantation owners to change from logging to sugar planting. Heavy taxes were levied in the early years of the Dutch take-over of the colony: six hundred pounds of

²⁸² Bylaw 71, 19-Oct-1677, *Plakaatboek*, 90-91.

²⁸³ Blom, *Verhandeling*, 311–312.

²⁸⁴ Bylaw 821 14-Aug-1780, *Plakaatboek*, 985. Victoria is both the name of a military post and a company owned sawmill.

²⁸⁵ Bylaw 665, 5-Feb-1765, Regulation on the transport of goods, *Plakaatboek*, 790.

²⁸⁶ Peter Boomgaard, "The Tropical Rain Forests of Suriname: Exploitation and Management, 1600-1975," *New West Indian Guide / Nieuwe West-Indische Gids* 66, no. 3/4 (1992): 207–235.

²⁸⁷ PSDC.

²⁸⁸ J.P. van de Voort, *De Westindische plantages van 1720 tot 1795. Financiën en handel* (Eindhoven, 1973), 131.

sugar for a thousand *hiddingh*,²⁸⁹ and a pound of sugar for every *voet* (length) and *duim* (breadth) wood.²⁹⁰

Philip Fermin and Antony Blom made an effort in describing the various kinds of wood and their uses and much of our knowledge therefore comes from their descriptions.²⁹¹ *Letterhout* had played a significant role especially in the early years of the colony, from the late sixties of the seventeenth century to the twenties of the eighteenth century. A price was set for *letterhout* in the cases when it was used to repay debts. To “cut short the disputes between creditors and their debtors” it was ordained that when one owes two pounds of sugar one can repay it with three pounds of *letterhout*.²⁹² According to ad-interim Governor Pieter Versterre (1671-1677) the *letterhout* production was harming the interests of the colony. He probably meant the interests of the Zeeland chamber of the West India Company. According to the “Prohibition to cut *letterhout*”, the wood production was preventing the planters from cultivating sugar and the price of *letterhout* was falling quickly according to the Governor due to the overproduction. To counter this it is prohibited to cut or ship *letterhout* for nine months.²⁹³ After the nine month period the Governor decreed that since *letterhout* mostly grows on commons and the five year period of tax freedom was over, he would levy a tax of 30 (pounds sugar) per 100 (pounds *letterhout*).²⁹⁴ Compared with *letterhout* the rules and regulations on the other woods were very few. *Letterhout* was clearly a different category from the less luxurious kinds of wood. The market for *letterhout*, and its relation to the colonial nodal point was therefore similar to the other colonial export products like coffee, sugar, lime juice and the other commodities destined for the European market.

Table 7 Annual average letterhout export to the Dutch Republic, 1690-1794

	Letterhout in lbs.
1690s	8,637.80
1700s	52,255.40
1710s	25,923.80

²⁸⁹ Most likely poles to make fences around slots of land.

²⁹⁰ Bylaw 32, 12-March-1670, *Plakaatboek*, 56-58.

²⁹¹ Fermin, *Nieuwe algemeene beschryving*; Blom, *Verhandeling*.

²⁹² Bylaw 39, 11-Dec-1670, *Plakaatboek*, 63-64.

²⁹³ Bylaw 45, 8-Apr-1672, *Plakaatboek*, 68-69.

²⁹⁴ Bylaw 52, 8-Jun-1673, *Plakaatboek*, 72-73.

1720s	41,528.10
1730s	2,573.00
1740s	32,153.90
1750s	6,825.90
1760s	479.40
1770s	450.00
1780s	0.00
1790s	140.00

Source: PSDC. These figures are higher than those provided by the *Essai Historique*. For the period 1700-1792 the PSDC has registered 1,622,595 lbs. and the *Essai Historique* 875,876 lbs. *letterhout* shipped from Suriname to the republic.

The difference between the production of *letterhout* and most of the other export products was that the start-up costs for logging were low. One needed only a few workers and not the intricate machinery of a sugar or coffee plantation. It could also be acquired by bartering with Amerindians. This made it a way for newcomers without much capital to carve out a position for themselves in the colony. Despite lack of enough solid data there are some indications for the importance of Surinamese wood regionally, especially in the early period of the colony.²⁹⁵ In the early colonial phase of the seventeenth century, wood was exported to Barbados to supplement the lack of wood on that island after the expansion of the sugar plantation there. The forests on Barbados had not only been cut to clear the land, but also served as fuel to boil the juice from the sugar cane after harvest. There was a long legacy of the Portuguese Jewish trading wood, going as far back as the family De La Parra settling on the upper Suriname river, and the activities of David Nassy in that same business. De La Parra owned a timberland that was already in operation in the English period and was still owned by that family at the end of the eighteenth century.

The abundance of wood in Paramaribo did not mean that no wood was shipped to the colony from overseas. In 1784 537,414 *voet* of wood in various forms and 406,000 shingles were registered and taxed by the market's administrator in Paramaribo. Fifteen different captains and individuals delivered around 80,714 *voet* "*Hollandse deelen*." These captains also delivered 3,000 staves for making barrels, 1,800 peddles, and 2,400 *voet* planks. The taxed value of the Dutch imports was very little, since *hollandse deelen* were only taxed very lightly per *voet*, but it did make up a considerable share of the wood brought to market in Paramaribo. The

²⁹⁵SvS, *Overgekomen Brieven en Papieren, 15-Apr-1688 – 11-Sep-1688*, 1688, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 218.

bulk of the locally produced wood was so-called *copie* wood.²⁹⁶ This local product was always measured in the length of the planks, from 12 up to 25 *voet* and its breadth in *duim* between 1 and 3. As mentioned before, Maroons and Amerindians also sold wood to the colonists. In 1780 continuous problems with the payment of Maroons supplying wood to plantations, motivated the Surinamese government to issue a notification that ordered Maroon wood to be delivered to the military outpost and company sawmill *Victoria*. In 1784 the tax value of this wood was a meagre 148.5 Surinamese guilders, delivered to Paramaribo in seven portions, comprising of 18,884 *voet*.²⁹⁷

Much of the wood used by plantations was logged on privately owned grounds that do not show up in the tax record. These grounds were used to provide food and wood to main plantations of the same owner. Along the Suriname River timberlands belonging to distant plantations are found. Especially in the 1760s there was an increase in the number of such plantations. A plantation like *Remoncourt* is an example of this. It falls outside the wood tax, despite its wood production. It was exclusively used to supply wood to its 'mother plantation' *Rust en Werk*, and expanded several times when its grounds turned out to be devoid of useable timber. The government also operated in a similar fashion. If we compare the account of the Suriname Company managed sawmill *Weltevreden* with the tax record, we see some wood delivered by *Weltevreden*, but this was a fraction of the tax they should have paid if all they produced and shipped was taxed.²⁹⁸ The same goes for the Company Sawmill *Victoria* which produced considerable amounts of wood but did not appear on the tax of that same year.²⁹⁹

The presence of timberlands upstream the big rivers provided an economic opportunity to those who were unsuccessful in other areas of production. Logging could be an economic escape route for colonists who were unsuccessful in setting up plantation production and switched to the less capital-intensive production of wood. Many of the small-scale firewood mongers also belong in this category. Some of the major suppliers, like Nanette Samson, or the widow of Elie Pennard fell from riches but still owned timberlands, which they controlled from Paramaribo. Their fall from

²⁹⁶ Pfeiffer, *De Houtsoorten van Suriname*, 1:377. The scientific name is *Goupia glabra* Aubl..

²⁹⁷ Bylaw 821, 14-Aug-1780, *Plakaatboek*, 985.

²⁹⁸ HCA, The Illustrious President, captain Butler, *Account of the Lumbermill Weltevreden*, 1794, entry 30/377.

²⁹⁹ HCA, The Illustrious President, captain Butler, *Account of Lumbermill Victoria*, 1794, entry 30/377.; Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, Administratie van Financiën in Suriname, Boekhouder-kassier van de Gemene Weide, *Register van opgave van te Paramaribo geloste houtwaren*, entry 1.05.10.07 inv.nr. 347.

riches did not prevent them from maintaining expensive town houses on the prestigious streets of the city.³⁰⁰ The heirs of Daniel Scheuneman are in a similar situation. They continued to send wood to the city from the Scheuneman plantations on the Suriname River and Para Creek. Many important timber lands were depleted sugar plantations: *De Vier Kinderen* turned from sugar to wood around 1768.³⁰¹ *Onoribo* did the same around 1752.³⁰² *La Diligence* was owned by Jews who arrived in the colony in the seventeenth century. It was a hybrid timberland and sugar plantation that turned exclusively to wood in the eighties after it had been badly neglected in the 1760s. However prominent these were as sources of wood in the 1780s and 1790s, the main suppliers were plantations expressly created for commercial logging.

Especially Portuguese Jews took refuge in wood production after they had to give up sugar production in the 1770s.³⁰³ The Jews who had their businesses upstream the Suriname River were especially hard hit by the credit crunch of 1773 and the depletion of their plantations. They therefore resorted to activities that were less capital-intensive such as logging, or, as happened in Jodensavanne, families turned from producing for the European market to supplying the military outposts of the cordon.³⁰⁴ In Paramaribo the Portuguese Jews became major players on the wood market. The association between wood trading and Jewry became so strong that the Surinamese historian Van Lier claimed that the complaints about the wood that lay in the city were a covert form of anti-Semitism.³⁰⁵ Of course, wood production was not exclusively Jewish, and was not just an escape route for impoverished planters, but for many it functioned as such.³⁰⁶ The switch to wood logging

³⁰⁰ Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, College van Houtvesters en de Gemeene Weiden, *Housing tax*, 1781, entry 1.05.10.06 inv.nr. 2. E. Pennard lived in the Keijzerstraat and paid 2400 FLS. housing tax. Nannette Samson had two houses in the Wagewegstraat for 2280 FLS. in tax.

³⁰¹ The notarial archives mentioned sugar fields in the 1763 inventory, but no longer do so in the 1768 one.

(<http://nationaalarchief.sr/geschiedenis/plantages/parakreek/vierkinderen/index.html>).

³⁰² Boedel J.C. Welvaart en Nicolaas de Kruijff

(<http://nationaalarchief.sr/geschiedenis/plantages/parakreek/onoribo/index.html>).

³⁰³ Cohen, *Another Environment*, 70–82.

³⁰⁴ Nassy et al., *Essai historique*, 55.

³⁰⁵ Lier, “The Jewish Community in Surinam,” 19–28.

³⁰⁶ In the database on the wood tax the Jews make up more than half of the top fifteen wood suppliers. The largest individual contributor to the wood tax is Joseph Haim del Castillo. He operates from the area around the Marshall creek and the Suriname River, an area known for its timberlands. Also J.A. de Vries, Jacob Juda, and his son and I. Emanuels are major suppliers of wood.

could be quite successful, as was noted in the *Essai Historique*, although it was not as profitable as trading North American wares.³⁰⁷

Depletion of the ground was not the sole reason to switch from sugar or coffee to timber. A great advantage of wood production was that it required a relatively small number of enslaved Africans. In periods when African captives were not readily available for plantation owners because they lacked credit or supplies, a limited number of labourers was more easily mobilized for logging, rather than trying to produce sugar, which had relatively high start-up cost due to the number of slaves and the intricate machinery necessary. In some cases the enslaved themselves had a say in it, by refusing to move off a depleted sugar plantation. A well-known example is the unsuccessful attempt to relocate the enslaved from *Onoribo* to *Halle en Saxen*. The owner then decided to leave the slaves on *Onoribo* but started producing wood, after which it turned into one of the most productive timberlands of the colony.³⁰⁸

Lower on the ladder than the planters trying to sell the wood from their plantations were the firewood peddlers. Firewood was seen irregularly on the Paramaribo wood market, and it was mostly supplied in small quantities by individuals, instead of plantations. Firewood is an interesting commodity here. It rose sharply as a share of the total of taxed wood, together with low quality woods. The urban trading of low quality wood declined more slowly than the trading of other kinds of wood, and between the early and mid-1790s the amount of firewood unloaded in Paramaribo doubled, back to the level of the mid-1780s. Behind these numbers are real people making a living in the colony. Firewood (*brandhout* in Dutch) was brought to the market by individuals. Hardly ever did plantations or big suppliers bother to bring it in. Those supplying firewood were generally only bringing in this one product, measured per *vaam*.³⁰⁹ The growth of

³⁰⁷ "Nous ne disconvenons pas qu'il y a parmi les Juifs des gens très riches: chez les Portugais, il y a des personnes & des familles qui possèdent encore depuis 50 juis. Ques meme 400 mille florins de capital; remassé en grande partie par leur capacité dans le négoce & le trafic du commerce Anglois &c. & d'autres qui auront encore depuis 20 jusqu'à 50 mille florins de capital, employés aux travaux de bois, qui rend un revenue annuel très avantageux." Nassy et al., *Essai historique*, 186.

³⁰⁸ Something similar happened during the slave rising in 1757 when slaves along the Tempati River refused to be moved from a timberland to a sugar plantation. The rebels could not be subdued and formed the Auckaner maroon community. Ironically a community that later sold wood to the colonists under European rule.

³⁰⁹ A *vaam* wood was taxed for 5 *stuyvers*, or 0.25 Surinamese guilders. The *vaam* is a Dutch measurement, also called *vadem* with great regional variation. It was approximately the length between the left and right hand when arms were spread. The Amsterdam *vaam* was

Paramaribo likely turned the collecting of firewood into a specialized profession, albeit not a very lucrative one. The main firewood monger Fleijschman was not a big economic player in the city. The growing firewood market might indicate that those living in the city no longer collected their own wood at all.

The government was a great consumer of wood, both as building material as well as fuel, often relying in part on wood mongers in the city. During the building of the fortress Zeelandia in 1771 the government spent quite some money on buying shingles and planks. Del Castillo and especially Raphael Fernandes were major wood suppliers then. However, neither Raphael, Isak nor any other member of the Fernandes family owned a plantation. Another wood supplier for the building of fortifications, Hallek, was not an administrator or plantation owner. Whether Del Castillo managed a plantation was unclear, but he did supply wood to the government. The government did not only rely on middlemen during big building projects, and these same men were still delivering wood to the government in 1774. There was a strict division between wood suppliers and those who sold the many other provisions required by the state apparatus. Only imported wood was supplied by middlemen who were also active in the trading of other products. The company Stolting and Oehlers (both also plantation managers) dealt in provisions as well as English planks.

Wood trade was a start-up trade. If a plantation area had some valuable wood, this could be sold. In this we should include the planters who in the late seventeenth century did not start sugar production and preferred searching the forest for *letterhout* instead.³¹⁰ Samuel Nassy received a model of a saw mill from a Hans Simons in the seventeenth century, just after the SC had been founded.³¹¹ The Parra and Nassy businesses might have functioned as an example to the others, since the place where they operated from became surrounded by timberlands in the eighteenth century. Another Jew in the wood business at the time operated from *Coermotibo*, in the outer North Eastern corner of the colony. From the wood logging business money could be made that could later be used to expand into other areas of production. Some plantations were exclusively founded to produce wood for the local market. *Bigrav* as well as *Berlijn* fall in this category. They were not in Jewish hands and had not initially produced sugar or some other colonial cash crop. *Berlijn* had been developed for the sole purpose of

1.69 meters, the Rhinland *vaam* 1.88 meters. A *vaam* wood would generally be understood to be a pile of 6 *voet*.

³¹⁰ Bylaw 45, 8-Apr-1672, Prohibition to log *letterhout*, *Plakaatboek*, 68.

³¹¹ P. Knappert, "De labadisten in Suriname," *New West Indian Guide/Nieuwe West-Indische Gids* 8, no. 1 (1927): 193–218.

producing wood. Money was invested to do this: mill maker Jan Schot was brought in from Philadelphia in the late sixties to provide the plantation with a water-powered sawmill. Twenty years later *Berlijn* was still among the greatest wood suppliers in the colony. From that position small scale sugar and coffee cultivation was added to the plantation's operations a few years later.

Between 1781 and 1795 73 different plantations were offloading wood at the Paramaribo wood market. For that same period 320 different individuals, including skippers, inspectors, plantation administrators, curators and barge skippers (*pontevaarders*) did the same. The two categories overlap somewhat, but nevertheless it is clear that over a space of 14 years between three hundred and three hundred fifty people have been taxed for unloading wood at the Paramaribo waterfront. The figure also shows that many Surinamese entrepreneurs added to their income by selling wood. The number of people involved in the wood trade through the city was large when taking into consideration that there were at most double that number in plantations. These suppliers got their wood either from a plantation they owned or administered, bought it from planters as middlemen, collected it from commons, or imported it either regionally or transatlantically. The major wood suppliers owned timberlands, except for the fire wood suppliers or transporters. Many wood producing plantations paired logging with the production of coffee, sugar, cotton indigo or other products.

4.2. Imports and local production of drink

This paragraph argues that imported drink made out a substantial share of the available alcohol in the colony. By comparing local production of alcohol with imported drink it becomes clear that local production was sizeable, but imports made out more than 40 per cent of the available drink in the colony. While such high imports could be expected to contribute greatly to the nodal function by adding to the number of active middlemen, this paragraph shows that this was not the case, primarily because many of the incoming ships delivered to the plantation without the interference of middlemen.

What types of alcoholic drinks were consumed in the colony? The higher orders of colonial society and those emulating them imported exclusive drinks from across the Atlantic. Like in the British Atlantic, Madeira wine had touched the hearts of Suriname's elite,³¹² and they also

³¹² David Hancock, "Commerce and Conversation in the Eighteenth-Century Atlantic: The Invention of Madeira Wine," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 29, no. 2 (October 1, 1998): 58–59.

took a liking to *jenever*, French or Spanish wines and beer imported from Holland.³¹³ Soldiers, enslaved Africans and craftsmen drank the local moonshine, called *dram* or *killdevil*. The drinking of dram was regarded by contemporaries as something for the lower orders. It was distilled either directly from fermented sugar cane juice, or fermented molasses (the fluid by-product left after extracting sugar from cane juice).³¹⁴ The distilling was done locally and the crude rum was not aged in barrels. It resembled many of the home-made rough drinks typical of agricultural societies. Its name might have derived from the Scottish word for a drink, which is dram as well. The name *killdevil* is very likely also a remnant from the English period and is a name regularly used in the British Caribbean. The French equivalent for the term, *guildive*, referred to upper-class liquors instead of the poorer quality *tafia*.³¹⁵ The Dutch version of the name is *duivelsdoot* or *kilduyvel*, but is rarely found in contemporary literature and source material.³¹⁶ *Dram* was not the only local drink; some would also drink so-called sugar beer. An Amerindian drink was cassava beer, which was made by having “the oldest Women, and snotty Nose Children chaw [cassava bread] in their Mouths, and with as much Spittle as they can, throw into a Jar of Water” ... “which becomes fit to drink in a few days.”³¹⁷

Dram “has such a harmful effect, that even the least taken by someone will make them love that stinking drink so much that they will drink themselves senseless and make themselves unfit for any task” complained the *Raad Fiscaal* (public prosecutor) in 1739.³¹⁸ Despite such drawbacks *dram* (‘sopi’ in Sranan) was an essential ingredient in the worker and soldier diet and was brought to fortresses, plantations, ships and outposts on a regular basis from different sugar plantations. Pouring a worker or soldier a drink could cause all kinds of trouble, not doing so even more. It was not only an important addition of calories to the diet of those who had to perform heavy physical tasks in a warm climate, but also served as anodyne in a harsh environment. Drink could be an important motivator for soldiers or workers on plantations and ships to rebel, but if they could count on a regular supply *dram* could be a great motivator to work. Drink was part of many social rituals such as drinking to someone’s health. Rebellious slaves

³¹³ *Jenever* or *genever* is a juniper berry flavoured drink that originates from the Netherlands, and from which gin has evolved.

³¹⁴ Oostindie, *Roosenburg*, 53.

³¹⁵ McCusker, *Rum and the American Revolution 1*, 1:57.

³¹⁶ Berkel, *Amerikaansche voyagien*.

³¹⁷ Warren, *An Impartial Description*, 7.

³¹⁸ SvS, *Missieve van de Raad Fiscaal*, 12-Nov-1739, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 266.

would ritually drink to strengthen their bond.³¹⁹ Free men did the same, and also drank to seal business transactions or squash hostilities.³²⁰

Workers and soldiers did not just get by their drink through their owners or superiors. There are many references to enslaved Africans, European sailors and soldiers buying drink on credit or with money they acquired in some other way. To the innkeepers it probably did not matter who their customers were, although some innkeepers got into trouble when the sailors left the colony before paying their tab. The selling of drink to enslaved workers was prohibited early on in the colony. To avert trouble the government standardized the prices of drink, and enforced the hours at which drinking was allowed. The government was struggling to force innkeepers to take a licence, and pay for it as well. A licence would cost *fl* 200 for a regular license. The grand licence could be obtained for *fl* 300 a year. The landlords would pay for this in parts, sometimes per three months, sometimes per half year instead of a full year at once. In the first two months of 1773, 11 people bought a license, 5 of which bought a grand license. On a monthly base the government made about as much, if not more, from the license fees, than from the “wet wares” tax itself.³²¹

The selling of dram and molasses gave sugar-oriented plantations an advantage over those that only produced coffee, for they had an exportable by-product that could serve as extra income to buy local and regional goods. According to van Stipriaan and Oostindie dram and molasses could make up one fifth of the total income of a plantation.³²² In plantation administrations a separate *dram rekening* (dram account) was kept. Molasses and dram were often regarded to fall within the same category by the planters. Molasses and dram consumed on plantations that did not produce sugar were passing through middlemen in the city or were directly traded between plantations. *Waterland*, since it produced sugar, also produced dram, more than it could use. Therefore the plantation functioned as a distributor of dram. On the molasses and dram account of the year 1794 we get an impression of the level of inter-plantation deliveries, and amounts going to the city. For the period February through to November, the plantation itself consumes 130

³¹⁹ Examples of this can be found in the Haitian revolution, as well as the Curaçao slave revolt of 1795.

³²⁰ SvS, *Verklaring over het bijleggen van de ruzie tussen de Officier en de Engelse Capitein*, 27-Oct-1739, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 266. An impending brawl between Dutch soldiers and a British captain and his friends was squashed by shaking hands and having a drink with the public prosecutor.

³²¹ OAS, Administratie van Financiën in Suriname, *Journal van ontvang en uitgaaf, 1772-1787*, entry 1.05.10.07 inv.nr 239.

³²² Stipriaan, *Surinaams contrast*, 167; Oostindie, *Roosenburg*, 281.

pul dram. It sends to the plantation *Adrichem* 72 *pul*. To Plantation *Hanovere* 62 *pul*. To *L'Inquietude* 45 *pul*. The amount of dram send to Paramaribo is 475 *pul*.³²³ All the mentioned plantations are simply close by: *Adrichem* is a neighbouring plantation, *Hanovere* is up the Para, and the timberland *L'Inquietude* is on the Carolina Creek further up the Para.

For the wholesale and retail market in Paramaribo the two sources for drink were the sugar plantations and the incoming ships. Alcohol, both its intake and sale were regulated by the local government. The places to buy alcohol in the city were wholesalers and the (sometimes illegal) pubs where innkeepers sold drink to anyone willing to buy. There was also a substantial amount of drink that by-passed the city. Every fortress and outpost had its own supplier of dram which they were free to commission themselves. The drink for the plantation owners would come straight from the Netherlands and, except for its taxation, largely bypassed Paramaribo. The *dram* that was not sold in the hinterland, was moved to the city. Not all of the imported drink that was taxed when ships arrived in Paramaribo was paid for by the skipper. Firstly, there was the category of *rabbattere*, which meant loss or reduction. This was the drink that had leaked, got spoiled, was destined to go somewhere else or drunk during the voyage. With the English captains we sometimes find that a part of their drink was reserved to be off-loaded at another port. Since skippers were ordered to sell their goods at a good price,³²⁴ this might have meant that Paramaribo's prices were low compared to what skippers thought they could get for their drink. Another form, booked under exemption as well, was the drink that was directly bought from the skippers. This is an interesting category, since it reveals urban middlemen who functioned as resellers in the colony. Examples of such brokers are F. Gomarius and the widow Lemmers (formerly Kuhlenkamp) and her son.³²⁵

Military personnel above the rank of common soldier, and the members of the various governing councils got their drink less from skippers, and more from companies such as Dippold & Wirth. Military personnel, the members of the Council of Policy as well as vicars were registered in the exceptions account. They bought part of the consignments brought in from overseas, over which no tax was paid. In a six year period around 200 people in the colony used the possibility of being exempted from the wet wares tax because of their position in the state apparatus. Out of the

³²³ HCA, The Illustrious President, Capt. Butler, 1795, *Account of the Plantation Waterland*, entry 30 inv.nr. 377.

³²⁴ Pares, *Yankees and Creoles*.

³²⁵ OAS, Administratie van Financiën in Suriname, *Grootboek van de ontvangst van impost natte waren: Schepen 1771-1774*, entry 1.05.10.07, inv.nr. 257.

35 consignments in 1775 for which the tax exemption was used, only ten were skippers. The rest was bought from resellers in town.³²⁶

The English captains' drink was sold in Paramaribo, rather than going straight to the plantations. Non-Dutch drink arrived from Martinique, Barbados and Rhode Island. Of the people who sold spirits to plantations in 1771, none were English. This is remarkable, since there were a lot of English ships in Paramaribo that year. The regional trade most certainly did add to the (nodal) function of Paramaribo, since they did not deliver their goods directly to planters and plantations, but sold to middlemen in town.³²⁷ They carried wine and rum to the colony, always as part of a bigger consignment of various provisions. It was only little compared to the Dutch supply.³²⁸ Luxuries, such as imported spirits, did not have regional trade as their main supply line. That trade connection was used for daily provisions, livestock and especially food (as we will see in the piece on victuals). Richard Pares mentioned merchants travelling on board the English ships to sell goods. From there it might have been sold to the pubs and inns in the city. These pubs had, according to Governor van Sommelsdyck, been one of the first buildings in the city.

The overwhelming majority of wine, beer and *jenever* deliveries to plantations were done by skippers. In 1771 34 different Dutch captains sent 125 taxed consignments to plantations. That same year, a total of 22 non-captains were taxed sending 49 consignments of drink.³²⁹ Despite some unknowns, it is clear that the captains sent two and a half times the amount of barge loads of drink to the plantations.³³⁰ Practically all the Dutch drink-hauling skippers arrived from Amsterdam, and occasionally Rotterdam.³³¹ In 1771, a total of 35 skippers are mentioned in the tax records on wet wares from ships (almost the same amount that sold drink to plantations).³³² This

³²⁶ OAS, Administratie van Financiën in Suriname, Ontvanger der Modique Lasten, *Grootboek van exemptien van impost natte waaren. 1775-1789*, entry 1.05.10.07 inv.nr. 258.

³²⁷ OAS, Administratie van Financiën in Suriname, *Grootboek van de ontvangst van impost natte waaren: Plantages, 1766 – 1782*, entry 1.05.10.07 inv.nr. 256.

³²⁸ OAS, Administratie van Financiën in Suriname, *Grootboek van de ontvangst van impost natte waaren: Schepen 1771-1774*, entry 1.05.10.07 inv.nr. 257.

³²⁹ These figures are not wholly accurate. A group of four individuals (most likely captains) sent 17 consignments. However, we cannot be sure at this point that they were Dutch captains. In six cases the sender of the drink was not mentioned by name.

³³⁰ OAS, Administratie van Financiën in Suriname, *Grootboek van de ontvangst van impost natte waaren: Plantages, 1766 – 1782*, entry 1.05.10.07 inv.nr. 256.

³³¹ John H. de Bye, *Database on passengers to and from Suriname* (Paramaribo, 2003).

³³² OAS, Administratie van Financiën in Suriname, *Grootboek van de ontvangst van impost natte waaren: Schepen 1771-1774*, entry 1.05.10.07 inv.nr. 257.

means that maybe half the ships arriving from the Netherlands carried alcohol on their arrival in Suriname. For an idea of the contents of those shipments we look at the cargo of 12 random ships that carried drinks inwards that year.³³³ These twelve ships carried 238 hogsheads of beer,³³⁴ 76.6 hogsheads of wine,³³⁵ 5.6 hogsheads of *jenever*,³³⁶ and two thirds of a hogshead Madeira wine.³³⁷ In the category *drank* (probably *brandewijn*, brandy) almost 28 hogsheads were imported.³³⁸ The rum declared at customs was such a small amount that it would not be worth mentioning the quantity here. Totalling it for all the ships the entire year would mean that the import of alcoholic beverages surmounted to a total of 1,140 hogsheads³³⁹ or 262,200 litres.

By comparing local production to imports their relative importance can be assessed. Estimating local production is difficult, but not impossible. The molasses used to produce *dram* contained far more sugar than today's molasses. Because of more primitive materials, techniques and sugar plants, the syrup left after crystallising sugar cane juice was still very sweet. The total yield of sugar can be used as a rough indicator of the total possible yield of molasses, and in turn an estimate of the likely production of dram from this. Another measure would be the ration per slave. *Dram* was clearly very rich in calories, which is a good reason to hand it out to labourers.³⁴⁰ The ration per slave times the total number of adult labourers in the colony

³³³ The total tax paid for drink imports was f\$ 7,568. The twelve ships under study brought f\$ 2,314. The sample was 0.34 of the ships, which brought in 0.3 of the tax paid by ships that year.

³³⁴ They brought f\$ 714 worth of beer tax. at f\$ 3 per hogshead this would be 238 hogsheads.

³³⁵ Wine income was f\$ 920, at a level of f\$. 12 per hogshead.

³³⁶ Jenever was at f\$ 336 taxgilders worth that year (of which f\$ 296 was carried by the Marria Galley). The tax per unit is not given by the laws and ordinances, but was likely to be f\$ 60 per hogshead.

³³⁷ The record notes f\$ 8 Madeira wine, which is the price of 1 *aam*, or 4 *anker*, or 2/3 hogshead.

³³⁸ *Drank* for those twelve ships was f\$ 334 in tax. Tax levied per unit of *drank* was f\$ 2 per kelder. A *kelder* is an *anker* which is 1/6 hogshead, so f\$ 12 was levied per hogshead drank.

³³⁹ The total of hogshead was 348.5 for the 12 ships. The total tax was 3.27 times what the 12 ships had carried. So very likely 1139.6 hogsheads of alcoholic drink legally entered Suriname through the Paramaribo customs.

³⁴⁰ It likely that this was one of the reasons for the British Navy to hand out rum instead of whiskey. Anthony P. Maingot, "Rum, Revolution and Globalization. Past, Present and Future of a Caribbean Product" (presented at the The Cuba Lecture Series, The Cuban Research Institute Florida International University, 2004), http://lacc.fiu.edu/centers_institutes/cr/rum.pdf.

could give an indication of the minimal production of dram needed by the plantations. The total production was most likely between the maximum total production and the minimum hand-out based on prevailing rations. One caveat is that *dram* was often part of outward cargoes together with molasses, either as bunker or as a trade good. A special export tax on *dram* was levied to support the defence works in the 1750s.³⁴¹ It was part of the regional trade and on ships to Middleburg, Rotterdam and Amsterdam.³⁴²

The maximum dram production based on the sugar production in the 1770s was fairly large. According to Alex van Stipriaan four kg. sugar would yield around one litre of molasses. Of this molasses around 70 per cent was exported.³⁴³ For the year 1771 the production was 1,9420,312 lbs. or 9,515,952.88 kilograms (lbs. at 0.49 kg) of sugar (see PSDC). This weight of sugar according to the calculation of van Stipriaan would result in the maximum of 2,378,988.22 litres of molasses. The amount not leaving the colony for the North American trade (30 per cent according to van Stipriaan) would be 713,696.46 litres. Molasses was also fed to cattle and used for local consumption. If we assume that half the molasses was made into dram the planters could have produced 356,848.23 litres. When looking at this question from the demand side, Anthony Blom calculated that it was customary to give the enslaved Africans a glass of dram twice a week. According to his guide to plantation agriculture the slave-ration was 2 *pul dram* per 3 slaves annually (7.2 litres per slave per year).³⁴⁴ At the time there were about 59,923 people enslaved in the colony, of whom 49,359 were of *dram* drinking age (adulthood starting at 12).³⁴⁵ The 1,950 soldiers should be added to the dram consumers, as well as the sailors. The 3175 sailors that visited Suriname can be counted as 1,102 inhabitants.³⁴⁶ There were 2671

³⁴¹ Bylaw 520 and 541 mention a tax of 15 and later 12 stuyvers a gallon.

³⁴² Bye, *Database on passengers to and from Suriname* mentions dram as part of a ships cargo. If this was really intended for the Netherlands, or to drink onboard is not completely clear. Also in McCusker figures are given about both exports of dram.

³⁴³ Stipriaan, *Surinaams contrast*, 167.

³⁴⁴ Herman Daniël Benjamins and Joh. F. Snelleman, eds., *Encyclopaedie van Nederlandsch West-Indië* (Den Haag / Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff / E.J. Brill, 1914) a pul is calculated as 3 gallons, which is 10.8 liter.

³⁴⁵ Stipriaan, *Surinaams contrast*, 311; Ruud Beeldsnijder, "Om werk van jullie te hebben" *Plantage slaven in Suriname, 1730-1750*, vol. 16, Bronnen voor de studie van Afro-Suriname (Utrecht, 1994), 265 gives both the figure for adult and child slaves for 1754 when there were 5890 enslaved children and 27533 enslaved adults. It is assumed that the ratio of children per adult was the same in 1770.

³⁴⁶ In total there were 3157 different crewmembers visiting Paramaribo. Taking into account the time their ships stayed in port this would mean that 1102.74 people can be added to the

free people in the colony at the time, of which maybe 2,000 were *dram* drinkers. All added up there were an estimated 54,411 people in the colony that drank *dram* around 1771. If these people drank a ration similar to the ration of the enslaved in Blom's account they would consume 391,759 litres of *dram*. This is more than the production of sugar would supposedly allow for, but not too far off to assume that the real consumption was somewhere between 391,759 and 356,848.23 litres.

The locally produced distillates contained far more alcohol per litre than the imported beers and wines aboard the Dutch ships sailing to Suriname. When judging the drinks irrespective of its alcohol content, the volume of imported drink was very high compared to the local production. Based on the figures presented above, the imports made up 41.2 per cent of the drink available in the colony at the time. Despite the assumption that much of food was produced locally, it turns out that quite a large share of the alcohol consumed in Suriname in the eighteenth century was produced overseas.³⁴⁷

4.3. Between ship and plantation

The *Waterkant* was a busy place where people were working to repair the incoming ships, unload trade goods, cooper barrels and load the return shipments. All this activity demanded a considerable amount of labour, but it did not result in a large docking sector in the city. Not only the availability of enslaved Africans, but also the presence of thousands of sailors manning the barges limited the development of a Paramaribo-based river and dock work. This paragraph details how river and dock work functioned, and how both the locally enslaved Africans and European sailors were used to varying degrees to work on the river. The shipping market largely determined if slaves or sailors did the work, but only very few professional barge skippers were active in the eighteenth century.

figure of liquor consumers carousing on Waterkant. Calculation: In 1771 the 23 slave ships had average crews of 43 people that stayed for 60 days. For bilateral freighters 1771 has unrepresentatively high waiting times, so 1772 is used, when there were 51 bilateral freighters with an average of 28 crewmembers staying for 203 days. In 1771 a total of 74 non-Dutch ships had an estimated 10 crewmembers and stayed on average for 72 days. When the total days spent by sailors in Paramaribo are divided by 365 this result in an indication of the number of people that can be added to the liquor consuming population of the town. Slave ship crewmen amounted to 162.57 people for 1771, bilateral crewmen amounted to 794.2 for 1772 and the American and regional crewmen were about 145.97 for 1771.

³⁴⁷ This figure differs from an earlier calculation. The calculation from 2011 used a higher figure for slave rations, based on rations found in a small sample of plantation administrations. However, that sample was probably too small to get an accurate view of overall consumption. Fatah-Black, "Paramaribo en het achterland in de achttiende eeuw."

Paramaribo was not a place where a lot of active trading in colonial commodities took place. During the eighteenth century plantations came to be increasingly owned by (or heavily indebted to) investors in the Republic. What was produced either served to pay for captives brought in by slave traders, or was shipped to the Republic to be sold there. While there was a lively trade in local consumption goods, there was no market for coffee and sugar to speak of. Also provisions from the Republic were either sent there by the bookkeepers of investment companies (and added to the debt of the planter at a handsome commission, or where paid out of the plantation's credit in the Republic). Some skippers bartered their goods for tropical produce on the plantation itself, or in town, but this was the exception. Ships rarely received plantation products on board through barge skippers, although this became more common during the 1760s. Some ships rented or bought a vessel³⁴⁸ in town or from other captains who were done loading goods or let a representative of their company pass the vessel to another captain.³⁴⁹ In the eighteenth century the ships mostly stayed on the Paramaribo waterfront or sometimes at *Braamspunt* at the mouth of the river.³⁵⁰ The warehouses in the city were used to store goods so as to ensure short loading times for the arriving ships.

The safe arrival in the colony was a relief for the sailors. Stedman recounted how the crews were singing and dancing and a general festive atmosphere surrounded the arrival of his ship. One of the first things he noticed on arrival was the hustle and bustle of small vessels.³⁵¹ These would come to get news, sell food and drink or offer their services. The ships themselves would also start ferrying to the fort, *Waterkant* and other ships. Sailors in that period were sturdy rowers and every ocean going ship had a *jol*, *boot* or *sloep* on board to pick up provisions or go to land. Some of these vessels were rigged with sails.³⁵² Ships used their own vessels to take in

³⁴⁸The *Philadelphia* buys a barge. Ibid.; The Standvastigheid and Vigilantie both rent a barge. MCC, *Journal van het fregat Standvastigheid, reis Guinee-Suriname, 1790-1792*, entry 20 inv.nr. 1070; *Journal van het Snauw Vigilantie, Reis Guinee-Suriname, 1778-1779*; MCC, entry 20 inv.nr. 1125.

³⁴⁹MCC, *Letters from Neale to the MCC*, entry 20 inv.nr. 54 Letter of 23-8-1722 mentions that Neale has taken a barge left by a captain; MCC, *Letters from Gootenaar to the Directors of the MCC, 25-Sep-1770*.

³⁵⁰Mentions of freighters sailing up the rivers are mostly from the seventeenth century and early eighteenth century. Getting past the fortress Sommelsdyck, where the Cottica merges with the Commewijne was hard, but doable if the ship was helped by rowing boats.

³⁵¹Stedman, *Narrative*, 14.

³⁵²They sell their sloop with all its parts including peddles, mast and sails. MCC, *Journal van het fregat Philadelphia, reis Guinee-Suriname, 1760-1761*, entry 20 inv.nr. 922.

supplies, mainly water, firewood and food. The space between the ship and the plantation overlapped and fused: sailors were working on the docks and on the rivers; slaves worked on the same rivers and might have been employed as sailors on regional ships. Governor Wigbold Crommelin wrote that sailors were weakened and died because of the rowing. As a result the ships leaving Suriname were losing crew members, and either had to leave the colony understaffed, or had to take up to five extra sailors on board when they left the Republic to make up for losses to be expected in the colony.³⁵³ Both in the hot dry seasons as well as in the rainy seasons the *pontroeijen* (barge rowing) was regarded as unbearable and deadly work. Depending on its size, between three and five men were needed on a barge.³⁵⁴ According to Teenstra the rowing by sailors was banned by Governor Van Panhuis in the nineteenth century because many sailors died of the hard labour. From then on the barges were exclusively rowed by “negroes” and managed by poor whites that had no other means of making a living.³⁵⁵ The sailors rowed between Braamspunt and Waterkant and also deep into the interior to get sugar and coffee. Some of the pickup points for provisions were close to the city, such as the plantation *Dordrecht*, but others could be quite far away. Plantation *Domburg* was 20 km up the Suriname and in a day’s range from Paramaribo. Some barges ventured off to get supplies and tropical goods up the Para Creek, 40 km from town or even *Wijkslust* at 60 km upstream the Suriname. On their way there they could also bring supplies to the plantation.

[Figure 9]

Figure 8 Detail of a drawing of plantation Leeverspoel showing European sailors punting a barge and slaves rowing a tentboat, 18th century
Gezicht op de koffieplantage Leeverspoel in Suriname. Plantage Leeverspoel Geleegen Rievier Cottica linksop vaarende. Collection Rijksmuseum, object no. RP-T-1959-119.

³⁵³ Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, entry 1.05.03, inv.nr. 318, fo 173.5 maart 1763, W. Crommelin.

³⁵⁴ Hartsinck, *Beschryving*, 1770, 2:684.

³⁵⁵ Marten Teenstra, *De Landbouw in de Kolonie Suriname, voorafgegaan door eene geschied- en natuurkundige beschouwing dier kolonie ... met kaarten en platen*. (Groningen, 1835), 242.

During the era of the monopolized slave trade the slave ships had an advantage when it came to acquiring return shipments. The WIC commissioner was assigned with the tasks of filling the company warehouse in Paramaribo with sugar so as to be ready for arriving slavers to fill their hold after they sold their captive Africans. Much of the return shipment of slavers consisted of sugar paid to them by planters who bought captives. If they still had cargo space left, they would drop the price of shipping from 5 to 4 or even 3 *duyten* per pound and take more sugar on board. From the 1680s until at least the 1720s the WIC had the practice of lowering their shipping price down to 4 *duyten* per pound.³⁵⁶ Commissioners were allowed to drop the price of shipping with one *duyt* below the ordinary price to make sure they could load quickly and fully.³⁵⁷ For bilateral shipping it was very hard to compete with them. For WIC slavers, most sugar was therefore either already in the city, or planters sent their barges with sugar to *Waterkant* to strike a good deal on the shipping cost of their sugar.

With the opening of the slave trade to private companies, middlemen in the city were bestowed the task of organising return-shipments. In the 1750s the slave ship *Het Middelburgs Welvaren* made several voyages, and while it was lying at anchor in the Suriname River the sailors were employed in getting fire wood, water and sand as ballast for the return voyage. The ship was a MCC ship, and therefore the MCC representative Pieter van der Werff sent several loads of sugar from a wide range of planters to the ship to be loaded on board. On their second voyage one low ranking mate on board the ship joined an expedition to get sugar, and once they used their own barge to get sugar, but mostly the broker in the city arranged how they received their goods.³⁵⁸

Barges that brought the bulk of tropical goods to the ships should not to be confused with tent boats. The *tentboot* was designed and equipped to be fast for bringing whites to and from the plantations. The *tentboot* (tent boat) is one of the icons of the inequality and oppression in Surinamese society in the period of slavery. In modern day fiction³⁵⁹ and contemporary travel accounts the *tentboot* is used to illustrate the sharp contrast between hardworking rowing muscular enslaved Africans, and a genteel and relaxing

³⁵⁶ MCC, *Letters Neale*, 22 March 1722.

³⁵⁷ NL-HaNA, Tweede West-Indische Compagnie, Letter from the WIC to Gideon Bourse and Pieter Sanderus in Suriname, December 20-Dec-1691, entry 1.05.01.02 inv.nr. 69.

³⁵⁸ MCC, *Journal van het fregat Middelburgs Welvaren, reis kust van Afrika-Suriname, 1754* – 1756, entry 20 inv.nr. 781.

³⁵⁹ Cynthia McLeod, *The Cost of Sugar* (Paramaribo: Waterfront Press, 2010).

whites sitting under the cover speedily rowed to their destination.³⁶⁰ The barge was much larger, slower, and most space was used for cargo. The Sranan word for such a barge is *pondo* and close to the Dutch word *pont* meaning barge or ferry. In contemporary texts several different words are used for the vessels, either referring to their function, their build, the people working on them, or the owner. Examples are *suikerpont* (sugar barge), *neegerpont* (Negro barge),³⁶¹ *matrozenpont* (sailor barge, not a sloop),³⁶² *tentpont* (tent barge, which the author differentiates from the *tentboot*),³⁶³ and *societeits-* or *compagniespont* (company barge).³⁶⁴ Local laws discriminated between the different kinds of barges based on their size. They distinguished the *scheepspont*, which was banned from the smaller channels and creeks from the *pontevaarder* (professional barge skipper) which was allowed on all the water ways (indicating that their vessels were apparently smaller).³⁶⁵

In the early eighteenth century plantation products were transported on the “large Barges” that were “rowed by negroes.” The barges came from all directions to the general waterfront of Paramaribo, where the weighing house was.³⁶⁶ It could take a barge up to fourteen days going back and forth between the ships and the plantations upstream.³⁶⁷ To protect the cargo from rain the “clumsy vessels” were covered with a reed roof, which made them unsuitable for rowing. Their carrying capacity could vary between 30 and at most 50 hogsheads.³⁶⁸ Sugar had to be loaded before other goods, since the leaking barrels would spoil the coffee and cotton on board. The barges were either sailing, pulled by a small sloop with two rowers or beamed along by

³⁶⁰ Sack, *A Narrative* In the travel account of Albert Sack (who exotified slavery to a high degree) the moment of conflict between his privileged position and the plight of the slaves takes place onboard such a tentboot.

³⁶¹ OAS, Raad van Justitie, *Attestaties en Interrogatoires voor het Hof van Civiele Justitie, voor het Hof van Politie en Criminele Justitie en voor het College van Commissarissen van Kleine Zaken*, 1774, entry 1.05.10.04 inv.nr. 1300, fo. 377.

³⁶² Teenstra, *De landbouw*, 242.

³⁶³ Blom, *Verhandeling*, 82, 89.

³⁶⁴ SAA, Notarieel Archief, Notaris S. Tzeewen, *Getuigeverklaring Omtrent Corruptie Door WIC Commies* (Amsterdam, August 26, 1716), entry 7597 inv.nr. 241.

³⁶⁵ Schiltkamp and de Smidt, *West Indisch Plakaatboek*, 949, 1.32, 1263–1264, 1276.

³⁶⁶ Herlein, *Beschryving*, 64.

³⁶⁷ OAS, Hof van Politie en Criminele Justitie in Suriname, 1669-1828, *Register Van Publicaties, Notificaties En Reglementen Betreffende Pontevaarders*, entry 1.05.10.02 inv. 953.

³⁶⁸ Hartsinck claims that as many as a hundred hogsheads could be fit onto the largest barges. But he never visited the colony himself. Hartsinck, *Beschryving*, 1770, 2:242.

people on the bow and stern of the barge. With at most three people on board and maybe two rowers in a sloop the skippers depended on people at the plantation and on the ships for loading and unloading the goods. The small crews of these barges meant that they could get into considerable trouble if they got stuck or made water. Water was detrimental to the cargo of the barges, sugar would be spoiled and coffee bales would burst open if they got wet.³⁶⁹ In such cases the cargo was lost, unless enslaved Africans from nearby plantations could be ordered to risk their lives emptying the stranded vessels.³⁷⁰

Sailors were busy with many different activities while in Suriname. The captains of slave ships were reluctant to send out their crew since they were also needed to guard the remaining slaves.³⁷¹ While lying in the river the crew could work on the *schimannen* and *calfaten* of the ship (bringing in order the rigging and the hull of the ship). Then there was the on-going work of bringing on board fresh supplies. Once tropical goods started to arrive the sailors would be busy with the *stoeijen* or *stouwen* (stowing) of these goods. Processing one barge load of goods could take the whole day. If a captain rented enslaved Africans in the colony, they mostly did some work on board the ship³⁷² or coopering barrels.³⁷³ Sailors and other crew members were not only engaged in loading goods on board their own ships. Other captains could use them to help,³⁷⁴ or use the barges of other ships to transport goods.³⁷⁵

³⁶⁹ OAS, *Raad van Justitie, Attestaties en Interrogatoiren voor het Hof van Civiele Justitie, voor het Hof van Politie en Criminele Justitie en voor het College van Commissarissen van Kleine Zaken*, 1790, entry 1.05.10.04 inv.nr. 1318, fo. 135.

³⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, fo. 131. The barge of Benjamin Jacobs, under command of a mate hit a stump and the cargo had to be salvaged by slaves from nearby plantations.

³⁷¹ MCC, *Journal van het fregat Prins Willem de Vijfde, reis Afrika-Suriname, 1753-1754*, entry 20 inv.nr. 973. The captain is reluctant to recover an anchor since he needs the crew to guard the slaves.

³⁷² HCA, Log of the Eagle, captain James Ross: Boston to Charlestown to Suriname to Boston and from Bermuda to New York, entry 32 inv.nr. 325.

³⁷³ HCA, 32/447. The Sally, captain Thomas Valentine. Account of the costs for the ship Sally, captain Thomas Valentine while being in Paramaribo (Paramaribo, December 17, 1777).

³⁷⁴ Attestaties en Interrogatoiren 1774, fo. 261. In a case of an escaped debtor Hans Jochem Stautzer, 47, a Lutheran from Hamburg, and opperstuurman for capt. Muntz had been in Suriname in 1773 with capt. Pleen, than as stuurman. He says that capt. Pleen ordered him to help carrying boxes on board of the ship of capt. Jonker.

³⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, fo. 377. Statement of unloading goods in 'Negro barge' as well as a barge of another captain. They are a sundry of goods for different plantations. While the first three loads were carried in a 'negerpont' taking a few days to navigate from the ships to the plantations, the last load is carried in the barge of capt. Hans Willem who is also lying at anchor in Suriname.

Captains made deals with planters in Paramaribo about the delivery of sugar to their ships. The captains also went around to the different rivers on business trips, and barges with goods would arrive at the ship a day after his own return. It is likely that he was being rowed around on a tent boat. And on the lists of costs incurred in the colony we find that they paid for the delivery of sugar to the ship. There is some mention of the ship's higher personnel going up stream, but they did so on rented barges, and not the ship's own vessels.³⁷⁶ In the 1740s goods were loaded on a daily basis, delivered from the city warehouses or from plantations.³⁷⁷ In the beginning of the 1750s something changed. The ship's own vessels were sent to the interior to get products on board. Even though the amounts are small, the sailors were mobilised to row upstream. In this period the first mentioning of this in official sources also appears, most notably in a letter by Governor Wigbold Crommelin. From then on slave ship logs mention the vessels being sent to the interior and returning after several days with sugar or coffee. In the 1790s the practice had not disappeared, even seeing a mixed crew of both sailors and slaves both getting supplies.³⁷⁸ Even though the vessels were relatively small, captains did send part of their crew away to plantations to pick up goods. The quantities of tropical goods that were brought per load by the ship's vessels were however smaller than those brought by the local barges. The trips that the sailors made often lasted several days, even if they just went to get provisions. When going upstream or into the city, the ship's mate would often be sent on board to manage affairs, such as the paying of taxes or other issues that could come up regarding the selling or buying of goods and to lead the crew.³⁷⁹ In cases

³⁷⁶ MCC, *Rekening van De Surinaamse Galeij, Reis Suriname, 1723-1724*, entry 20 inv.nr. 1084; *Journaal Van De Surinaamse Galeij, Reis Suriname, 1723-1724*, inv.nr. 1083; *Stukken Van De Nieuwerwerf, Reis Naar Suriname, 1723 – 1724* inv.nr. 874; *Stukken Van De Nieuwerwerf, Reis Naar Suriname, 1722*, inv.nr. 872; *Stukken Van De Maria Elisabeth, Reis Naar Suriname, 1722-1723*, inv.nr. 721; *Stukken Van De Maria Elisabeth, Reis Naar Suriname, 1721-1722*, inv.nr. 720; *Lias Van De Fluit Cornelia, Reis Suriname, 1721-1722*, inv.nr. 311; *Various Papers of Fluit Cornelia, Voyage to Suriname and Back, 1722-1723*, inv.nr. 312.

³⁷⁷ MCC, *Journaal van de Afrikaanse Galeij, reis Guinee-Suriname, 1740-1742*, entry 20 inv.nr. 185; *Ibid.*

³⁷⁸ MCC, *Journaal Van Het Fregat Standvastigheid, Reis Guinee-Suriname, 1790-1792*.

³⁷⁹ Attestaties en Interrogatoiren voor het Hof van Civiele Justitie, voor het Hof van Politie en Criminele Justitie en voor het College van Commissarissen van Kleine Zaken, 1789, Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, Oud Archief Suriname: Raad van Justitie, entry 1.05.10.04 inv.nr. 1317, fo. 59. 4-Mar-1789 M.J. Karseboom, Raad Fiscaal in the colony, caught the stuurman of Cap. M. Baudeliu and several sailors moving untaxed goods on a scheepsboot and barge in a city canal.

where the sailors did not row the barge “one hand” would be sent on board to go up the river for several days to get products from sugar plantations.³⁸⁰

The great influence of the tide on the Surinamese waterways determined the pace of river work. It was requisite to use the flow of the tide to move either down or up stream. Rowing or sailing against the tide with a heavy barge was impossible. To deal with this problem barges often had to get moving in the middle of the night when the tide turned, or make haste if they wanted to reach their destination before it turned again.³⁸¹ This came on top of the general perils of loading. Falling cargo could easily result in the sinking of the vessel and drowning of the crew.³⁸² Despite the dangers involved, water transport was the only feasible way to transport anything in the colony. With all the river traffic came problems of crime and control. The rivers were ideal for escaping the colony, either as stowaway on board ships to sea or on barges or canoes to the interior, as well as for smuggling goods to slaves, Maroons, or plantation overseers.³⁸³ The local government was naturally intent on policing the movement across water. Several different systems were introduced to organise some form of regulation. At times all barges had to pass the fortress Zeelandia to get permission to go to the interior, or they had to have notes from planters stipulating the content and direction of the vessels.³⁸⁴ Whether moving upstream or downstream into the town with taxed goods, notes had to accompany the barrels and boxes loaded on board. Sugar was not allowed to leave the plantation before it was tested and branded.³⁸⁵

Barge work (the transporting of goods, rather than the moving of people) became a specialised profession. Curiously there are never any

³⁸⁰ HCA, Egel, captain Ross, Log of the *Eagle* from Boston to Charlestown to Suriname to Boston and from Bermuda to New York, 1778, 32/325.

³⁸¹ Attestaties en Interrogatoiren 1790, fo. 63. Barge skipper mate Anthonius Klerin on the barge of Benjamin Jacobs. The forth or fith of this month, at night between Monday and Sunday around two or three, he was with the barge infront of the plantation *L'Avantuur*. He hit a stump under water after which the barge starts sinking. He went to planter J. Venendaal and slaves were called from the plantation to help to salvage the coffee in the barge.

³⁸² OAS, *Attestaties en Interrogatoiren* 1774, fo. 119. On 7-Feb-1774 a ship's crew was loading iron bars in a barge. Two bars fell which damaged the barge so badly that it sunk almost instantly. The testimony is made by Joseph Bandini (ship mate), Pieter Hagenberg, Jochem Gau, Jan Jansen, Jan Laurens, Wiebe Jacobs, Herman Sponhoff.

³⁸³ Bylaw 440, 31-Mei-1745, *Plakaatboek*, 535-536

³⁸⁴ OAS, Raad van Politie *Register Van Publicaties, Notificaties En Reglementen Betreffende Pontevaarders* (film 549).

³⁸⁵ Bylaw 152, 5-Aug-1690, *Plakaatboek*, 188.

mentions of newly arrived enslaved Africans being shipped to the plantations from the city. To protect the cargo the professional barge skippers had to swear an oath, in 1798 there were 4 official barge skippers.³⁸⁶ The barge skippers were low on the colony's European social ladder. Some barge skippers had their own slaves,³⁸⁷ or could rent enslaved Africans for fl. 0.75 a day to help them move the barges to plantations.³⁸⁸ In the 1760s the professional barge skippers had considerable competition from each other³⁸⁹ as well as from the ship's vessels. All ships had their own sloops and barges which they used to get provisions and water on board, but which could also be sent to the planters with the ship's crew.³⁹⁰ Barge skippers mates were generally despised, their income lower than the cost of renting a slave, which was in line with the general payment of unskilled free labour below that of the rent of slaves.³⁹¹

³⁸⁶ *Surinaamsche Almanach* (Paramaribo, 1789).

³⁸⁷ It was very common for small business and artisans both white and black to have a few slaves, In the archives there are different cases where barge skippers are mentioned owning slaves. One example from the literature is Wolbers, *Geschiedenis van Suriname*, 131. In 1742 the barge skipper P. Hotzz had severely punished one of his slaves, who died half an hour later.

³⁸⁸ OAS, *Attestaties en Interrogatoires* 1774, fo. 151. Juriaan Nieuwendaal, on the 26-Mar-1774 rented a slave from J.A. Lionet, called Pasop, which Nieuwendaal had serving him on a barge for 15 stuyvers (fl.0.75) per day. The price of fl. 0.75 is the standard rent for a slave throughout the eighteenth century. The price for renting a slave was steady throughout the eighteenth century. Depending on if they were to be provided with food and drink the rent per day was fl. 0.75 or fl. 0.60. Herlein, *Beschryvinge*, 48. In the 1770s on the waterfront ships could hire some extra hands to do work on board, or as coopers. The captain would pay them fl. 0.75 a day. Renting 'carpenter negroes' cost either fl. 1.20 or fl. 0.60 a day. Income for labourers 1762 entry 1.05.04.04, inv.nr. 318, fo 268 and 319. Also for the work on barges a slave could be rented for fl. 0.75 a day. Account of expences in Suriname by captain Russel of the *Dolphyn* (Suriname, 1778), The National Archive, Kew, HCA, 32/309, The Dolphyn, captain Russel. *Attestaties en Interrogatoires* 1774, f. 151. The same price as in the 1780s, when Slaves were rented as carpenters for fl. 0.75 a day. SvS, *Lijst der Huur Timmer Negers*, 1-Sep-1781 – 31-Oct-1781, entry 1.05.04.05, inv.nr. 375.

³⁸⁹ "Dikwils leggen er een meenigte ponden en Vaartuijgen gelijk die den een na den andere moeten wagten waardoor om de voorrang dikwils groote twist spruit soo dat het wonder is daaruijt geen moord en doodslag ontstaat." SvS, W. Crommelin, 5-Mar-1763, 1.05.03, inv.nr. 318, fo 173.

³⁹⁰ Hartsinck, *Beschryving*, 1770, 2:684.

³⁹¹ In the 1770s barge skippers made fl. 0.75 a day. Manual labour as carpenter, schrijnwerker, or painter was set between fl. 0.28 and fl. 0.34 a day. SvS, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 353 fo. 250; Betaalingslijst der Inspecteurs Ambagtslieden en Bediende op het Fortress Nieuw Amsterdam van t primo to ultimo junij 1774, Actum Paramaribo den 30 junij 1774 was geteekend Jan Nepveu. White overseers made fl. 0.50 a day, but a well paid

The movement of black people was a special concern for the local government. One of the earliest laws passed after the colony had been taken from the English was to oblige black slaves to carry notes from their masters because “many negroes, under the pretext of being out for their masters are on the rivers thieving.”³⁹² The free movement on the river was thought to have a bad influence on the “well intentioned negroes”, because it would bring them into contact with guides to Maroon communities.³⁹³ While it was impossible to prevent enslaved Africans from moving about in the barges, the government found it necessary to look for ways to maintain control. Special places were designated for (pacified) Maroons where they could wait for tide changes. A law was issued that forced any vessel on the river manned by blacks to land as soon as a white on the riverside called them to. If they did not comply they would be “regarded as enemies” and fire could be opened on them. The rule that every black crew had to be supervised by a white barge skipper was impractical, and the government decided that carrying a note from the master would be enough.³⁹⁴ The enslaved Africans had to stop at every military post and show their “permission note.” If they had a white on board, it had to be clearly visible from shore.³⁹⁵ Rather than restricting the movement of enslaved Africans, this actually increased the space they could cover in the colony. The river work, the collecting of goods in the warehouses on *Waterkant* and the need to tax the outgoing goods increasingly made Paramaribo a meeting place of goods and people. The availability of both enslaved labourers and sailors limited the number of people employed as professional dock or river workers in Paramaribo itself.

4.4. Peddlers and the development of Paramaribo’s street markets

The markets of the expanding town of Paramaribo became a pole of attraction for both enslaved and free. In the later part of the eighteenth century it is possible to see the beginnings of a more and more independent food production on *kostgrondjes* and the peddling of goods by enslaved Africans. This was a prelude to the change in the character of slavery in the

overseer could climb to as much as fl 0.77 a day. SvS, entry 1.05.03, inv.nr. 375, fo. 678.; In the 1780s a barge skipper would be hired for fl. 0.57 a day and the bookkeepers / overseer fl. 0.77. Monthly (labour) costs for a Salt factory at Redoute Leijden, SvS, entry 1.05.03, inv.nr. 375, fo. 554.

³⁹² Bylaw 22, 13-Jun-1669, *Plakaatboek*, 44.

³⁹³ Bylaw 236, 2-Jun-1714, *Plakaatboek*, 302.

³⁹⁴ Bylaw 85, 20-Nov-1679, *Plakaatboek*, 103.; Bylaw 378, 29-Apr-1738, *Plakaatboek*, 445.

³⁹⁵ Bylaw 581, 17-Jan-1761, *Plakaatboek*, 697.

nineteenth century,³⁹⁶ and already had its influence on the centrality of the city of Paramaribo in the late eighteenth century. War and bad harvests in Europe could negatively influence the arrival of food, be it beef from Ireland or flour and cheese from Holland. In the late seventeenth century the Governor ordered planters to have “enough cassava, jams, and potatoes in stock.”³⁹⁷ Most plantations necessarily produced food to sustain themselves; in addition to this enslaved Africans had a little piece of land at their disposal and barges were sent into town to barter the remaining crops.³⁹⁸ The town became a place to buy and sell daily provisions, not only on the markets but also in shops and by street vendors. In the early decades of the Dutch take-over of the colony the plantations were almost self-sustained units far away from Paramaribo. This changed in the course of the eighteenth century when plantations moved from far away upstream locations closer to sea.³⁹⁹

From the interior Amerindians and Maroons also came to town to trade, but this was most likely only on a limited scale considering the distance between Paramaribo and the interior. As one contemporary described “Tamarind-street, in which I live, is the widest in all Paramaribo, and by many inhabitants is considered as the most handsome of all in town. In the middle is a spacious canal, which is kept pure by the flooding tides, and capable of containing boats of considerable size: here the Indians often pass in their canoes, exhibiting many curious articles for sale; at other times negroes in large fishing boats are rowing up, having caught a manatee (sea cow) or a large number of different species of fish.”⁴⁰⁰ This same buying and selling was noted by the British soldier John Waller who included a picture of the arriving Maroons and Amerindians in his book.

“I observed here several specimens and productions of natural history collected by the officers which they had purchased from the Indians or aborigines of the colony. These last come daily to the town in large parties bringing with them whatever they can dispose of monkies, parrots, parroquets different species of animals and a variety of beautiful woods which they will often carve into swords and other weapons and afterwards polish very highly. I was much astonished at the weight and hardness of

³⁹⁶ Alex van Stipriaan, “Tussen slaaf en peasant: de rol van de kleine landbouw in het Surinaamse emancipatie proces,” in *De Erfenis van de Slavernij*, ed. Lila Gobardhan-Rambocus, Maurits S. Hassankhan, and Jerry L. Egger (Paramaribo: Anton de Kom Universiteit, 1995), 29–56.

³⁹⁷ Bylaw 198, 14-May-1699, *Plakaatboek*, 232-234.

³⁹⁸ Oostindie, *Roosenburg*, 21, 152; Stipriaan, *Surinaams contrast*, 351.

³⁹⁹ Stipriaan, *Surinaams contrast*, 48–49.

⁴⁰⁰ Sack, *A Narrative*, 44.

some of these articles as well as the beauty of the veins. Bows and arrows are sure to be objects of commerce with these Indian parties and fire arms and ammunition form the most desirable articles of exchange. An old musket or pistol was an almost irresistible temptation and the most valuable collections of natural history might be procured for these trifles.”⁴⁰¹

The goods exchanged with the people living in the interior were probably provisions that would not expire easily, such as weaponry, salt and tools like axes, fishhooks or nets.

[Figure 10]

Figure 9 A Maroon delegation visiting Paramaribo, 19th century

A chief of the Bosjesmans or Bush negroes on a visit to the Governor of Paramaribo. Arwawkas, and Charaibes or Caribbee Indians at Surinam. John A. Waller, A Voyage in the West Indies (London 1820) facing 64.

The products brought in by the Maroon and Amerindian trade were most likely limited to valuable and exotic goods, while slaves and the formerly enslaved peddled foodstuffs. Lamur noted that the produce that was not used up by the owners, was sold on the market by slaves. In most of the Caribbean the enslaved were granted some limited freedom to sell goods in the market places such as in Kingston Jamaica and Cap Francois they were exceptionally big with 15,000 and 10,000 attending respectively. Paramaribo's market was obviously much smaller given the smaller population of the colony. The enslaved made up the absolute majority of people ruled by the colonial government at any time in the eighteenth century, even though the relative amount of slaves per free inhabitant

⁴⁰¹ Waller, *A Voyage in the West Indies*, 64.

changed over time. The free, both white and black remained a tiny minority, always below 10 per cent of the population and often not even half of that. The study by Stipriaan showed that the late eighteenth century saw a great expansion in the amount of land allocated to the growing of food per slave.⁴⁰² These were not the kitchen grounds that the enslaved Africans would work on Sundays.⁴⁰³ His estimates show an increase in the amount of ground allocated to produce food. The increase continued throughout the first half of the nineteenth century and until abolition. His conclusion was that these slaves might actually be turning into proto-peasants in the run-up to abolition. For the eighteenth century it meant that an increasing number of people were trying to make money on the local market of Paramaribo. The growing freedom in food production can also be seen in the increasing supply of fishing gear and the large quantities of salt to pickle vegetables and other foodstuffs to be sold on the market. This accelerated in the fifty years prior to abolition in 1863, but was already impacting the relation between the plantation hinterland and Paramaribo in the eighteenth century.

The local production and the irregular Dutch imports were not enough to satisfy the Surinamese market, and so the imports from North America continued to play a role throughout the eighteenth century. Slaves, both men and women smoked tobacco, and according to a contemporary they were not interested in the poor quality local tobacco. A Surinamese plantation owner discussed the cultivation of local tobacco as a way to circumvent the dependence on North American imports, but the enslaved apparently only had appetite for the North American produce. He wrote that he had done some test with the local tobacco, and also with tobacco from the Dutch city of Amersfoort, “however, that strand did not grow well, and the slaves can always taste it.”⁴⁰⁴ Tobacco’s appetite-reducing quality might have played a role in the amount of food needed by enslaved Africans, but solid evidence for its effect in Suriname is hard to come by. It is nevertheless clear that importing tobacco was important to the colonists. The attempts to make Suriname into a tobacco-growing colony had failed in the seventeenth century and Surinamese climate made it more efficient to import tobacco

⁴⁰² Stipriaan, *Surinaams contrast*, 351.

⁴⁰³ In his calculation we do not see the extra land planters owned solely for the production of food and provisions, an important category, as we saw with discussing wood production in the colony. *Ibid.*, 352–353.

⁴⁰⁴ “ik heb er reets proeven van gemaakt en ook van de Amersfoortse, dog daarmee wilde het op verre na zo goed niet lukken en de slaaven kunnen het altijd proeven.” SAA, Archief van de eigenaren van het Huis Marquette etc., archief van Joachim Rendorp and Wilhelmina Hillegonda Schuyt, *Remarques over de kleine Engelsche Vaart uit Noord America* [dated between 1775 and 1783], entry 231 inv.nr. 291.

from elsewhere. It was therefore a top priority for merchants organising regional trade.⁴⁰⁵ Besides this tobacco, the plantation managers imported pickled or dried fish to distribute amongst their slaves. The amount of extra food bought varied. According to Blom on a sugar plantation an overseer would buy for fl 4 per slave per year to provide “tobacco, pipes, cod, herring etc.” which would amount to fl 928 annually.⁴⁰⁶ On top of that fl 2,100 in provisions for enslaved Africans (which would be fl 9 per slave), mostly clothing, and for the master and his servants another fl 1,000.⁴⁰⁷ The goods mentioned were, with the exception of the textiles, mostly imported from North America.

English (or later American) ships arriving from North America with a sundry of different goods on board saw small numbers of different buyers taking the goods off the skippers. A skipper was asked by his “Friends and Owners” to buy “tobacco ... flour, dry fish, pickled fish, or such other articles that you can get, & that you think may answer this market.”⁴⁰⁸ The goods on board the North American ships were very likely distributed in the colony through middlemen.⁴⁰⁹ The North American trade supplemented the lack of produce grown on the plantations from the late seventeenth century onward, and continued to do in the eighteenth century.⁴¹⁰ The number of North American ships quite accurately follows the population increase in the colony, with the exception of a short and steep drop during the early eighties caused by the American War. The British caught a staggering 1500 American ships during the conflict with the rebellious colonies, among them several *en route* to supply Suriname with victuals.⁴¹¹ Planters immediately

⁴⁰⁵ HCA, Two Brothers, captain William McBride, *Orders from owners in Suriname for William McBride to sail to North America, sell goods and return with provisions to Suriname*, entry 332/467/5. The letter was dated Paramaribo 12-Mar-1778.

⁴⁰⁶ Blom, *Verhandeling*, 85.

⁴⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 88.

⁴⁰⁸ HCA, Two Brothers, captain William McBride, *Orders from owners in Suriname for William McBride to sail to North America, sell goods and return with provisions to Suriname*, entry 332/467/5. The letter was dated Paramaribo 12-Mar-1778.

⁴⁰⁹ HCA, The Sally, captain Thomas Valentine, *Account of sales in Suriname of the ship Sally, captain Thomas Valentine*, entry 32/447. The account was dated Paramaribo, 15-Dec-1777.

⁴¹⁰ Examples from the seventeenth century until the end of the eighteenth century can be easily found, all showing similar produce in their cargoes. See chapter 2 for the early period and later for example SvS, *Inkoomende Carga van de bark Abigael schip Steph Grant koomende van Boston alhier arriveert op den 5-Oct-1738*, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 266 fo. 276. The account is dated 19-Feb-1739.; HCA, *Account of sales in Suriname of the ship Sally*, entry 32/447.

⁴¹¹ HCA, *Index to High Court of Admiralty Prize Papers 1776 to 1786*, entry 32 / 260-493.

complained about the lack of goods left due to the war. The English and later American captains arriving in Paramaribo and who were not directly sent by Surinamese traders often had independent merchants aboard, who sold the wares and bought wood and molasses for the return trip. These men occasionally stayed behind in Paramaribo when the ship left, since the value of the imports was far greater than the exported molasses and arrangements about payment had to be made.⁴¹² These middlemen used the city of Paramaribo as their base of operation. The North American connection, and the inability or disinterest of planters to grow more food, tobacco, pickle their own fish, increased the importance of the city of Paramaribo. The North American trades also created room for Surinamese middlemen who sold their goods in bulk from shops or the warehouses on the waterfront.⁴¹³

The waterfront was also a place for local peddlers to assemble. We can be sure that Paramaribo's markets were lively places judging by the stories told by contemporary travellers. Slaves did not only sell vegetables "[t]hey breed a considerable quantity of poultry, and plant a great number of vegetables, not only for their own use, but for sale at Paramaribo, where they dispose of them to advantage."⁴¹⁴ P.J. Benoit's nineteenth century description of these markets is probably meant to inspire readers by its riches and formidable produce, but even so we can safely assume that the markets played a central role in the colony's life.⁴¹⁵ Also Maroons and Amerindians would go to the city to trade.⁴¹⁶ Besides agricultural produce there was also a fish market on the waterfront. Not only enslaved Africans would sell what they had caught, but as previously mentioned, Amerindians were also known to sell Manatee (sea cow) to the colonists.⁴¹⁷ The increased independence by enslaved Africans to produce and sell for their own account was not exceptional, and many of the local by-laws were geared at regulating and sometimes banning these sales. In 1742 the Governor and council of the colony issued a bylaw discussing how enslaved Africans were sent out by their masters to sell goods. In exchange for this freedom the slave had to bring his or her owner a weekly sum. While this was initially under the

⁴¹² Pares, *Yankees and Creoles*.

⁴¹³ "il s'est formé une quantité prodigieuse de boutiques, la plupart situés au bord de la rivière; des magasins pour le comestibles & la plupart des choses, apporté par les Américains pour l'approvisionnement des Negres des Plantations." Nassy et al., *Essai historique*, 43.

⁴¹⁴ Various contemporaries are cited: Stipriaan, "Tussen slaaf en peasant", 38.

⁴¹⁵ P. J. Benoit, *Reis door Suriname; Beschrijving van de Nederlandse bezittingen in Guyana* (Zutphen: Walburg Press, 1839), 34–35.

⁴¹⁶ Stipriaan, "Tussen slaaf en peasant," 38.

⁴¹⁷ Sack, *A Narrative*, 44.

pretext of selling goods for their masters, the bylaw was passed since these people were increasingly roaming the streets of Paramaribo and especially the *Waterkant* in front of the company's warehouse where they would harass slaves arriving with vegetables and poultry from the plantations.⁴¹⁸

The sale of goods by slaves occupied the SC board immediately after the takeover of the colony when in 1670 they tried to stop the sale of stolen goods.⁴¹⁹ The laws in the early period were mainly concerned with banning street vending. The government tried to concentrate all selling of goods in the town and tried to make sure slaves could not hustle stolen wares. The peddling was curbed because it was thought to encourage slaves to steal. Nevertheless, street vending by slaves continued, and in 1684 there came a reissue of the law because trading with slaves would "train and feed their natural inclination to steel."⁴²⁰ Compared to the cumbersome voyage all the way to Paramaribo, it was far easier to sell goods when encountering others on the rivers. Although it was illegal for slaves to travel on the rivers,

⁴¹⁸ "dat wij dagelijks sien en ondervinden hoe veele ingeseetenen, niettegenstaande ons vastgestelde publicque mark in de Orangetuyn omme aldaar allerly goederen te koop te veylen, egter kunnen goedvinden met allerly soorten van goederen sonder onderscheyt daaglijks langs de straaten te loopen en deselve uyt te venten en ook eeniger hunne slaaven daertoe uyt senden, de welcke dan niet alleen daar meede langs de straatte loopen maar ook in de huysen der burgers met slaeven allerley negoties drijve, jae sommige niet gepermiteert sijn; en ook wel eenige derselve slaaven met hunne backen met goederen of sonder goederen op differente plaatsen en wel principaal aan de waaterkant voor 't edele compagnies packhuys gaan zitten, eenigen omme hunne goederen te coop te veylen en andere dewelcke door hun meester of meesteressen werden uytgesonden om overal negoties te drijve, welke alle vrijheyten genieten mits weekeleijks een tantum gelt aan haar meester off meesteres moerende opbrengen; waerdoor deselve slave sijn met allerhande negoties, jae meest ongepermiteerde negoties ophoude en uyt aankoomende boots of ander vaartuygen, van plantagies komende, de aartvrugten, pluymvee en andere gewassen op te koopen; jae selfs deselve slaeven van dusdaenige vaartuygen 't selve afdwingen en afneemen en veele insolentien pleegen en groot geweld maeken, met welcke goederen deselve door alle straeten van Paramaribo rond loopen omme te verkoopen; waardoor niet alleen eenige ingeseetenen die hun tot 't verkoopen diergeleijke en andere goederen ter neederstellen werden benadeelt, maar ook sommige ingeseetenen van hun en hunner eyge slaaven niet kennen houden of te koop kreygen, alles tot merckeleijck naedeel der goede ingeseetenen." Bylaw 405, 21-Apr-1742, *Plakaatboek*, 926-927.

⁴¹⁹ Bylaw 37, 10-Dec-1670, *Plakaatboek*, 61-62.

⁴²⁰ "waerdoor deselvige naer hare natuerlijcke inclinatie tot het steelen worden gevoet en geoeffent." Bylaw 112, 17-Jun-1684, *Plakaatboek*, 142-143.

many of them came to the market.⁴²¹ It was clear that for both black and white it was attractive to mutual exchange, trading and gambling.⁴²²

To keep some semblance of control in the late seventeenth century the government was engaged in trying to centralize markets in town. There was a market set up in 1695 and the door-to-door selling was banned.⁴²³ The enslaved Africans sold products that they received from the planters, as well as their own goods that they had grown on their kitchen grounds. Street sales and selling of goods on the market in the city remained a permanent factor in the colony. At times the Governor and councils tried to impose restrictions, but as the colony developed enslaved Africans began to barter their poultry for food and drink, but also gold and silver.⁴²⁴ Slaves sold not only for themselves in the market, they were also sent out by their owners to sell goods.⁴²⁵ This often resulted in confusion about how enslaved Africans had come around the things they had brought to market, and they could be accused of fencing.⁴²⁶

The increase of slaves and less affluent whites ensured that more people tried to sell goods on the street, or door-to-door. In the mid-1760s the government tried to handle the situation by allowing both black and white to milk and vegetables in the street.⁴²⁷ For enslaved Africans, sales of goods bound by rules, but the number of restrictions did take off in the second half of the eighteenth century. Slaves were selling pastries, milk, fruit, eggs, firewood and other unprocessed timber on the street. On the street markets the enslaved Africans mostly sold vegetables and poultry. After the great increase of slaves in the colony in the 1770s the number of markets in the city expanded. According to the legislatures this was done because the streets sellers were blocking roads in the city “the so-called wooy-wooyemans or peddlers of vegetables, birds, etc. are making small markets wherever they like, not only blocking the way, but also causing many inconveniences.”⁴²⁸

⁴²¹ Bylaw 440, 31-May-1745, *Plakaatboek*, 535-536 and Bylaw 601, 4-Feb-1761, *Plakaatboek*, 731-732

⁴²² Bylaw 184, 1-Apr-1698, *Plakaatboek*, 218-219 and Bylaw 339, 2/7-May-1731, *Plakaatboek*, 400-401.

⁴²³ Bylaw 171, 8-Jan-1695, *Plakaatboek*, 207.

⁴²⁴ Bylaw 400, 9-May-1741, *Plakaatboek*, 481-484.

⁴²⁵ Bylaw 405, 21-Apr-1742, *Plakaatboek*, 490-492.

⁴²⁶ Bylaw 462, 4-Mar-1747, *Plakaatboek*, 562-563.

⁴²⁷ Bylaw 654, 9-May-1764, *Plakaatboek*, 783.

⁴²⁸ “dat de zogenaamde wooy-wooyemans off uytventers van groentens, vogels etc. op alle plaatsen waar het hun goeddunkt kleyne markten komen op te regten, woor door niet alleen

It is difficult to imagine the wide streets of Paramaribo obstructed by street vendors, but in 1781 the council appointed four designated markets in the Oude Oranjetuin, on the intersection of the Keyserstraat, Klipsteenstraat and Domineestraat, on the Jodenbreestraat and on the Waterkant.⁴²⁹ These street markets did not provide enough opportunity to sell, or were simply difficult to police, because in 1787 the government decided that they should encourage street vending by lifting the ban on street vending for whites, or slaves out for their masters. The government reasoned that despite the bans on street vending in 1764 and 1777, it would be advantageous to “the inhabitants, both concerning the price and the ease of acquiring the goods” to lift the ban.⁴³⁰ Paramaribo was not a large town, but the markets were mainly found in the less affluent parts of town, on the square near the church and on the waterfront. Over the course of the eighteenth century the town became increasingly central to the local economy creating several marketplaces and opportunities for street vending throughout the town.

de passagie belet maar ook andere inconvenienten veroorzaakt worden.” Bylaw 838, 14-Mar-1781, *Plakaatboek*, 1006-1007.

⁴²⁹ Idem.

⁴³⁰ “wij egter bij eenige geleegendheeden aan zekere personen op hun verzoek wel hebben willen permitteeren hunne goederen in dier voegen uit te venten, waaruit gebleeken is zulks te strekken tot merkelyk gerief van onze goede ingezeetenen zo met betrekking tot de prijs dier goederen als het gemak om dezelve te bekoomen.” Bylaw 887, 14/26-May-1787, *Plakaatboek*, 1109-1110.

5. Migration circuits of European colonists

The routes that Europeans followed to and from the colony illustrate the changing structure of the Atlantic world and the place of Suriname within it.⁴³¹ The Dutch were not only a minority in the “Dutch Atlantic” compared to the slaves, also among the Europeans many came from other places than the Dutch Republic. Not only lower military personnel; also preachers, officers, planters, merchants, and governors were often non-Dutch in the Dutch West Indies. Europeans mostly came in from areas along the Rhine, Germany, and France. Also when moving out of the colony migrants did not necessarily stay within the Dutch parts of the Atlantic. Many of the colonists leaving Suriname would go to the Republic, but in periods when Suriname’s position in the Atlantic declined, migrants were also moving onward to the British Atlantic colonies to try their luck there.⁴³²

It should be noted that the Dutch colonial area was tiny, and few trans-migrants on their way to the Atlantic actually went to Dutch colonies. Of these Suriname was again quite insignificant with about ten thousand people moving to Suriname, two thirds of which moved out again. To populate its colonies on the Guiana Coast and on the islands with Europeans, the Dutch Republic could rely much less on its own populace than its Spanish, English and French competitors. The Dutch needed to recruit colonists and labourers from beyond the Republic.⁴³³ Subtracting the outward moving passengers from the inward moving passengers leaves an average of 54 staying colonists per year for the period 1745 to 1794. This figure was certainly lower for most of the years before that, when arrivals could be in bursts, with large groups of colonists arriving with Van Sommelsdyck in 1683, or in the 1730s, but generally only a few Europeans would move and stay in Suriname. Recruiting colonists in the Dutch Republic itself was not very easy, most likely because of the relatively high living standards of the Republic. Therefore people had to be found throughout Europe that would fit the profile of being willing to face an

⁴³¹ Part of the material in this chapter was first published as Karwan Fatah-Black, “A Swiss Village in the Dutch Tropics: The Limitations of Empire-Centred Approaches to the Early Modern Atlantic World,” *BMGN - Low Countries Historical Review* 128, no. 1 (March 19, 2013): 31–52.

⁴³² Examples are the English exodus from Suriname to Jamaica, see: Hartsinck, *Beschryving*, 1770, 2:587; The Palatines leaving from Suriname to Georgia in North America: R. Bijlsma, “Immigratie van Duitschers in Suriname, 1733 - 1740,” *West-Indische Gids* 1, no. 2 (1919): 413–417; And for the Jews leaving from Suriname to other Caribbean destinations see: Cohen, *Another Environment*, 34.

⁴³³ Beeldsnijder, “Om werk van jullie te hebben,” 16:364–366.

uncertain future, while not being the continent's riffraff that would threaten the colony's stability.

The white population of the colony came from a wide range of places in Europe, as well as from other Atlantic colonies. There were intercolonial arrivals of white settlers, the involuntary movement of convicts, orphans and poor people. The voluntary settlers were often fleeing from some form of religious persecution in Europe. This chapter deals with how these groups were recruited and what their migration circuits can tell us about the Atlantic network of migration that Suriname was connected to. The circuits through which the colonists arrived indicate linkages from Suriname deep into the European hinterland of the Dutch Republic. The historiographical debate in the Netherlands about the movement of people into the Atlantic has mostly been concerned with estimating the numbers of migrants leaving Europe through the Dutch Republic; movements within the Atlantic have not been mapped and analysed.⁴³⁴ When tracing the circuits through which Europeans arrived and left Suriname in the seventeenth and eighteenth century it becomes apparent that the colony was part of a wider Atlantic world of interconnections. The historiography on Suriname mentions these connections in passing, but the colony is primarily seen in terms of the Dutch and their empire, glossing over many other relations. European "foreigners" in the colony were only regarded as handmaidens of the Dutch colonization of Suriname.⁴³⁵

5.1. Inter-colonial movement

The inter-colonial movement of settlers was aided by the high demand for them, once one attempt at colonization failed, other colonies were eager to

⁴³⁴ Lucassen, Emmer, Klooster, Enthoven and Kruijtzter have debated the numbers of migrants to the Atlantic. Except for the work by Jan Lucassen there was little discussion on the origin of the migrants. Emmer, Klooster and Enthoven seem to have been concerned with deflating and inflating figures. Jan Lucassen, "The Netherlands, the Dutch, and Long Distance Migration, in the Late Sixteenth to Early Nineteenth Centuries," in *Europeans on the Move. Studies on European Migration 1500-1800* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 153–191; P.C. Emmer and W.W. Klooster, "The Dutch Atlantic, 1600–1800: Expansion Without Empire," *Itinerario* 23, no. 2 (1999): 48–69; Victor Enthoven, "A Dutch Crossing: Migration Between the Netherlands and the New World," *Atlantic Studies, Cultural and Historical Perspectives* 2, no. 2 (2005): 156–176; Gijs Kruijtzter, "European Migration in the Dutch Sphere," in *Dutch Colonialism, Migration and Cultural Heritage*, ed. Gert Oostindie (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2008), 109.

⁴³⁵ Examples of studies in which the colonising nationalities are studied, but in which the networks of these people into Europe remain unmentioned are: Wolbers, *Geschiedenis van Suriname*, 171; H. Pijtersen, *Europeesche kolonisatie in Suriname, een geschiedkundige schets*. ('s Gravenhage: W.P. Van Stockum, 1896); F. Oudeschans Dentz, "De Kolonisatie van Guyana," *West-Indische Gids* 25, no. 1 (1943): 248–254.

take the survivors in. Experienced colonists were a major asset for any colony; their inter-colonial movement often crossed imperial boundaries. Various types of diseases caused tremendous death rates amongst those arriving in American colonies directly from Europe compared to those who had survived the first years in the tropics. To give just one example of a history littered with disease and suffering; of the settlers who arrived in Suriname with the ship *Aerdenburg* only 10 per cent were still in the colony three years later, the others seem to have died or moved out again.⁴³⁶

The importance of inter-colonial movement is clearly illustrated by initial colonization of Suriname (before Dutch occupation). The arrival of the first Frenchmen and Englishmen in Suriname was similar to many privately organized colonization attempts in the Caribbean, especially in the rivers around Cayenne.⁴³⁷ Some colonists from Cayenne apparently settled on the Suriname River around 1640.⁴³⁸ During the English colonisation of the Suriname River a group of Frenchmen from Cayenne joined them, fleeing from Amerindian attacks. A new influx of French from other colonial destinations took place after the founding of the Suriname Company around the revocation of the edict of Nantes (1685), when Huguenot refugees from the French Antilles came to Suriname.⁴³⁹

The English and British colonists mainly arrived from Barbados, through the colonization attempt under the leadership of Lord Willoughby of Parham in 1650-1651.⁴⁴⁰ There had been an earlier failed attempt by Captain Maréchal who attempted to settle a tobacco colony along the Suriname River in 1630.⁴⁴¹ The English expedition of 1650 settled upstream the Suriname River, where they founded a village named Torarica and attracted Jews from

⁴³⁶ Nettie Swartz, "Emigranten of passanten? Met het fluitschip Aardenburg in 1671 naar het 'aerts paradijs' Suriname" presented at Inter-imperial encounters in the Dutch Caribbean (Amsterdam 2011).

⁴³⁷ Jan Jacob Hartsinck, *Beschryving van Guiana, of de Wildekust in Zuid-America*, vol. 1 (Amsterdam: Gerrit Tielenburg, 1770), 159.

⁴³⁸ S. Kalff, "Franschen in Suriname," *West-Indische Gids* 11, no. 1 (1930): 316-334; Someone like Nicolaas Combé is a good example of the early integration of Frenchmen into Dutch Surinamese society. He was part of the Zeelandic administration since they took over the colony in 1667. In 1669 he was the first deacon of the reformed church in Paramaribo. By the time of his death, around 1690 he had been church master and had fulfilled various administrative roles in Suriname's government. F. Oudeschans Dentz, "De Oorsprong van de naam Combe, de eerste buitenwijk van Paramaribo," *New West Indian Guide / Nieuwe West-Indische Gids* 39, no. 1 (1959): 28-34.

⁴³⁹ Kalff, "Franschen in Suriname."

⁴⁴⁰ Barber, "Power in the English Caribbean: The Proprietorship of Lord Willoughby of Parham."

⁴⁴¹ Hartsinck, *Beschryving*, 1770, 1:145.

various other colonies to settle nearby.⁴⁴² After the Dutch had been forced to leave Brazil, Jews who had settled there were granted the right to move to Cayenne, from where they moved to English Suriname.⁴⁴³ The inter-colonial peopling of the colony grounded to a halt with the occupation of Suriname by the Zeelanders (1667/8). Many of the erstwhile colonists moved from Suriname towards English Caribbean colonies such as Jamaica, starting what has called the “fifteen years of Dutch misery on the Wild Coast.”⁴⁴⁴ Whether a colonisation attempt either failed or succeeded was closely related to its ability to attract experienced colonists from across imperial borders.

Also for the settlers moving to the Atlantic from deeper inside Europe, their choice for either Dutch or English colonies was rather open. The Moravian brotherhood sent an emissary to negotiate terms and conditions with the Suriname Company while on its way to discuss the same for the Moravian migration to Georgia.⁴⁴⁵ Not much later the first of these *Moravian brothers* moved to Suriname. The choices open to the *Pfalzer* Germans seem very similar. The Palatinate in Germany sent migrants to Rotterdam from where they departed to the English American colonies. The migrants were on their way to the other side of the Atlantic; rather than specifically the Dutch domains. Palatines moved onward to Georgia once they arrived in Suriname, the majority went inland to settle. After the failure of their settlement some of them asked for permission to leave for New England. The Palatines argued that they wanted to move to the English colonies because they were used to the kind of farming practiced in temperate climates, rather than the Surinamese tropics.⁴⁴⁶ That the incidental pattern of the Palatines moving to the colony and again onwards to other Atlantic destinations was actually rather common is supported by the figures based on passenger data of the local authorities in Suriname. Besides the slave trade and the movement of military personnel, the net movement of people in the early 1730s of the eighteenth century to Suriname was about 51 per year, a figure that rose to 61 annually in the 1750s. After the 1750s the

⁴⁴² Nelly E. van Eyck-Benjamins, “Suriname van 1651 tot 1668. Een hoofdstuk uit James A. Williamson, English colonies in Guiana and on the Amazon (1604—1668),” *West-Indische Gids* 8, no. 1 (1927): 1–36; John H. de Bye, *Historische schetsen uit het Surinaamse Jodendom* (Schoorl: Conserve, 2002), 349.

⁴⁴³ Rens, “Analysis of Annals Relating to Early Jewish Settlement in Surinam.”

⁴⁴⁴ Victor Enthoven, “Suriname and Zeeland Fifteen Years of Dutch Misery on the Wild Coast, 1667-1682” (presented at the International Conference on Shipping, Factories and Colonization, Brussels, 1996).

⁴⁴⁵ SvS, *Resoluties 1733-1735*, toegang 1.05.03 inv.nr. 29.

⁴⁴⁶ Bijlsma, “Immigratie van Duitschers”; John H. de Bye, *Database on Passengers to and from Suriname* (Paramaribo, 2003).

net immigration to the colony dropped dramatically, mostly due to an increase of people leaving the colony for regional destinations. After the credit crisis of 1773, when the prospects for many planters began to worsen, there was a shift towards more inter-colonial emigration away from Suriname. In the 1770s an annual average of 36.2 people were officially registered as passengers moving out of the colony.

In the 1770s the regional emigration from Suriname impacted the migration figure of the colony negatively. While there was some growth in the number of passengers moving between Suriname and the Republic, the percentage of non-whites travelling both to and from the colony also increased. The movement of non-whites most likely indicates that more Europeans were taking their personnel with them on their trips to the Dutch Republic, as well as back. In the 1760s the Governor who administered passenger movement classified 18.61 per cent of the passengers moving to the Republic as non-white. While some of these people were free, many went together with a master, either as slave or servant. The rising number of non-white passengers suggests that those moving back and forth were rather affluent, probably planters and administrators travelling back and forth with their family and personnel.

Table 8 Annual average of civilian passengers moving to and from Paramaribo, 1729-1770s

	From Du. Rep. to Sur.	Percentage non-white	From Sur. to Du. Rep.	Percentage non-white	From region to Sur.	From Sur. to region	Net im-migration Suriname
1729-1734	115.2	3.30	59.4	13.47	3.8	8.6	51
1750s	157.3	8.52	89.8	13.70	3.4	10.1	60.8
1760s	178.3	10.43	117.7	18.61	8.1	15.6	53.1
1770s	197.1	9.08	135.5	17.64	7.4	36.2	32.8

Source: Passenger-data in the Governor's logbook, digitized by John De Bye. Soldiers and higher military personnel are not in these figures, neither are their families. The whites have been split (in so far as this was noted by the Governor) from the non-whites, regardless of their status. Non-whites in this case are everyone who received this categorization by the Governor, whether it was as Amerindian, mulatto, Maroon, black, or slave. Where it said 'servant' without an indication of skincolour or obvious slave name, they were counted as white.

The period between 1713 and 1738 was one in which the migration of European colonists was still considerably larger than the movement back to the Republic, or than regional trans-migration. This would change in later periods, but for the time being, Europeans moved to the colony to settle. The change that took place from the 1730s to the 1770s is that initially there were more people moving to the colony to settle, while later on, when production was booming, planters or administrators were traveling. These people did not just go back to Europe when they had made their fortunes, but also left Europe again to Suriname taking their personnel back with them, as indicated by the 10.43 per cent of passengers on their way from Europe to Suriname being classified as non-white.

The prevalence of migratory circuit from Suriname into the Caribbean and the Americas is well illustrated by the figures for Jewish migration in the later decades of the eighteenth century. When the economic position of the Jews in the colony deteriorated, many moved onwards to try their luck elsewhere. Between 1771 and 1795 322 Jews arrived in Suriname, and 311 departed. Half of those who left Suriname went directly to Amsterdam. The others left for the Dutch Caribbean island St. Eustatius, and North American destinations such as Rhode Island and Boston. The inflow of Jews was 85.2 per cent from Amsterdam and 14.8 per cent from the Caribbean and North America. Leaving the colony it was 50.5 per cent to Amsterdam, and the rest to the Caribbean and North America.⁴⁴⁷

⁴⁴⁷ Cohen, *Another Environment*, 27–34.

5.2. Problems finding settlers

Despite the favourable circumstances offered by the SC to new arrivals, those in charge of the colonisation of Suriname had quite some difficulties to find native Dutch to move overseas. Those who were willing to go to the colony came from all over Europe as well as other colonies, making the small group of whites religiously diverse and often personally and economically connected to other parts of the Atlantic, crossing imperial boundaries. J. Wolbers wrote in his history of Suriname that “many Germans, who saw Holland as an Eldorado, took up their walking stick, left their mountains and valleys to try their luck there.”⁴⁴⁸ This idyllic picture painted by Wolbers seems far removed from the troubles the directors had with recruiting. Soldiers often had to be recruited from beyond the Dutch Republic. Only between 20 per cent and 30 per cent of soldiers who served in Suriname during the first half of the eighteenth century were Dutch, the rest mainly came from Germany.⁴⁴⁹

Stimulating the migration of Europeans to Suriname was a central issue for those who tried to preside over its colonisation. After the exchange of Suriname between the States of Zeeland and the WIC in 1682, the States General drew up a charter with conditions under which the colony should be governed by the WIC. The charter of 1682 mainly focused on the way in which colonists could be motivated to settle and succeed in the colony. The charter contained lenient rules about the payment of taxes. All the colonists and inhabitants were freed from the need to pay taxes and other duties for a period of ten years. Duties for the weighing of goods and for the size of ships were not included in this freedom, but these most likely befell the captains of the arriving ships instead of the planters. The only payments to be done by the colonizers would be sanctioned by the Governor and the local governing council. The charter reasoned that since it was the planters themselves who formed the council, they would not object to these costs.⁴⁵⁰ The entire charter was geared towards convincing the colonists that they would not be unfairly treated, and that Suriname was a great place to start a

⁴⁴⁸ “Vele Duitschers, die Holland als een Eldorado beschouwden, namen den wandelstaf op, verlieten hunne bergen en dalen, om aldaar hun geluk te beproeven.” Wolbers, *Geschiedenis van Suriname*, 171.

⁴⁴⁹ Between 1696 and 1765 6835 soldiers were recruited for Suriname, only for the period 1696 and 1754 their origins are known. Of the 3557 recruits in that period at least 732 came from the Republic, of 605 their origin is unknown, and the others mostly came from Germany. In 1787 only 10 out of 54 officers came from the Dutch Republic, and almost half the officers were from Germany. M Lohnstein, *De militie van de sociëteit c.q. directie van Suriname in de achttiende eeuw* (Velp, 1984).

⁴⁵⁰ Hartsinck, *Beschryving*, 1770, 2:626.

business. Article five protected the colonists who could not immediately finance the slaves that they bought, by allowing them to spread their payment across three terms of a year. The charter furthermore promised to send enough slaves to the colony. It also stated explicitly that the Company would bring enough whites to the colony, and that ships could be obliged (in case the company requested) to take up to 12 passengers with them for only fl. 30.⁴⁵¹

In addition to the 1682 Charter of the West India Company, directors of the Suriname Company also drew up documents to further motivate people to move to their colony. In 1688 they made a list of 12 points titled “Means and motives serving to encourage those who want to move to the colony of Suriname.” The document envisioned Suriname as a golden opportunity. It suggested that in Suriname everything could be turned to profit, on land that was handed out for free. The settlers would be allowed to hunt, fish, cut wood, and even process this wood without restrictions. And not only on their own plot of land, but also on all the unclaimed territory. For the smaller and unbound craftsmen, Suriname was presented as the perfect place to settle. The document stated that all crafts and industries were free in the colony. They could be performed by anyone, without the need for special permissions (from the government or guilds). The twelve points suggest that there will be ample supply of servants and slaves to do the work. And that the Company would send enough women for the inhabitants and soldiers to marry.⁴⁵²

The number of free people wanting to settle in Suriname was small, and those who had come over as soldiers rarely pursued a career in the colony after their service was over. Some of these soldiers would work on the plantations, but only few of them transitioned from the position of soldier into that of colonists.⁴⁵³ Marsche and his cosignatories (see Chapter 3) argued that planters should be encouraged to take in white personnel as “overseers over the slaves, horses and animals. Or as hunters and fishermen.” These men were to come from “Saxen, Hessen, or Swabenland” to be hired at the “*West Indisch Huis* under the WIC *Articulbrief*, and transported by the SC.”⁴⁵⁴ These people would also serve as a reserve army, to be trained twice a year, and to be called in case of alarm. In such cases the planters would stay upstream and on the plantations. Their departure to

⁴⁵¹ Ibid., 2:629.

⁴⁵² SAA, Archief van Burgemeesters, Stukken betreffende verscheidene onderwerpen, *Middelen en motiven dienende tot encouragement van Luyden die sigh gaarne wilde transporteren op de Colonie van Suriname*, 1688, entry 5028 inv.nr. 543H.

⁴⁵³ Beeldsnijder, “*Om werk van jullie te hebben*,” 16:32–33.

⁴⁵⁴ SvS, OBP, “Request van J. van der Marsche”, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 125

defend Paramaribo during the 1712 attack had given many slaves the opportunity to flee,⁴⁵⁵ a situation that had to be prevented in the future. A method by which to increase the white population was to help “people of small means” to settle by letting them join those who had sugar mills but were unable to continue the upkeep, so as to create co-operatives.⁴⁵⁶ Few of these schemes worked to actually attract the right number and right kind of migrants to the colony. The consequence of this was that the SC tried to supplement the limited numbers of Europeans by actively recruiting colonists from the European hinterland.

5.3. Convicts and orphans

The SC directors also tried to solve their shortage of workers by bringing convicts and orphans to the colony. The convicts were mostly used to work on the defences of the colony. For example, Joost Roelofsz van Colverden was condemned by the criminal court of the city of Leyden on the 8th of January 1686 to be transported to Suriname and to stay there for a period of six years to work on the fortifications. The city of Leyden paid the 36 guilders transport costs for the prisoner.⁴⁵⁷ But using convicts from the Republic turned out to be more difficult than the directors had hoped. Joost and the others were causing problems. Johan van Scharpenhuijsen wrote to the directors of the SC: “the banished rogues are such a bad influence on the slaves and the other artisans that it is only causing the decay of the colony.”⁴⁵⁸ During the Sommelsdyck Mutiny of 1688 an alliance of soldiers and artisans had chosen a convict (a deserted German trumpeteer) as their leader, almost causing the fall of the colony.⁴⁵⁹ In an earlier incident the “fierce mob”, as Hartsick called them, managed to free themselves from their chains, stole several vessels and made it to the Orinoco River before they were caught.⁴⁶⁰

During his time in office (1689-1696) Van Scharpenhuijsen requested to stop sending over convicts; there had been several bad experiences with them over the years. Instead of having them work in a

⁴⁵⁵ Henk den Heijer, “To Ransack a Colony: Cassard’s Raid on Surinam in 1712 and Its Effect on Marronage” (presented at the AHC, Paramaribo, 2008).

⁴⁵⁶ SvS, OBP, “Request van J. van der Marsche”, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 125.

⁴⁵⁷ SvS, *Resoluties directeuren* (1685), entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 18.

⁴⁵⁸ “De gebannen guyten doen hier sooveel quaet onder de slaeven en andere ambaghtgasten dat het niet als een bedarf voor de Colonie is.” Jan Marinus van der Linde, *Surinaamse suikerheren en hun kerk: plantagekolonie en handelskerk ten tijde van Johannes Basseliers, predikant en planter in Suriname, 1667-1689* (H. Veenman, 1966), 57–58.

⁴⁵⁹ Hartsinck, *Beschryving*, 1770, 2:652.

⁴⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 2:650.

gang, Johan van Scharpenhuijsen divided the convicts over various privately owned sugar plantations to work there separated from each other. According to the plaintiff in a case against Scharpenhuijsen this has been to the detriment of the SC since he then went on to hire labourers for the SC to work on the fortifications.⁴⁶¹ In 1701 Governor van der Veen told the directors of the SC that he tried not to let the convicts escape, but blamed the “captains or crewmembers” for letting such people escape the colony. They “even helped a group of slaves of bailiff Glimmer escape the colony.” Van der Veen complained that the “bandits and thieves” are “useless and harmful bread eaters” for the SC, arguing that the convicts were nothing but trouble and rather costly to the colony.⁴⁶²

The orphans made up a more substantial part of the white immigration to the colony to serve as maids or on the plantations as carpenters or in other crafts. According to van der Linde there were several transports of orphans to the colony. These orphans were not to be given to “Jews or other unchristians to be used as slaves”, but rather employed by reformed Christians, either in the house or learning a trade.⁴⁶³ The governing council requested the orphans for the colony. They want children “not younger than fifteen, and twenty girls, not younger than twelve.” They were distributed among the Reformed citizens, and serve under contracts. Those of fifteen serve six years, those of eighteen and older four years. The receiving families were obliged to clothe and feed them, and pay 25 guilders or five hundred pounds sugar yearly. The boys were requested to know the crafts such as “smith, cooper, carpenter, mason, shoemaker, tailor, et cetera.” The girls were to serve in the house.⁴⁶⁴ In 1685 a group of ten orphans arrived, in 1687 30, and in 1691 a total of 90 orphans, 70 boys and twenty girls. The increase in the orphans takes on such a scale that in 1690 every district in Suriname is assigned an “overseer for the orphans.”⁴⁶⁵ Despite this sizeable influx it is rather unclear how these people fared in the colony. From research on the deaconesses’ orphanage in Amsterdam it seems that they had at least some chance of building up a life in the colony. Johannes

⁴⁶¹ SvS, *Resoluties directeuren, 1696-1701*, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 21.

⁴⁶² “schippers oft bootsgesellen”, “banditen en dieven” and “onnutte en schadelijcke brooteeters” NL-HaNA, Tweede West-Indische Compagnie, *Letter from Paramaribo to the West India Company about the state of the colony* (29 januari 1701), entry 1.05.01.02, inv.nr 1282.

⁴⁶³ Linde, *Surinaamse suikerheren*, 56.

⁴⁶⁴ OAS, Raad van Politie, *Minuut-notulen van de ordinarijs en extra-ordinarijs vergaderingen van het Hof van Politie en Criminele Justitie, 1689 march 12 - 1692 January 10*, entry 1.05.10.02 inv.nr. 1.

⁴⁶⁵ Linde, *Surinaamse suikerheren*, 56.

Elders, who left for Demerara, made it to the position of *onderdirecteur* (assistant director) on the plantation Amsterdam. Frans van Vlier was sent over to work as carpenter with the extremely wealthy planter J.S. Neale. While Frans was able to get married in the colony to Elisabeth Timmering, he passed away before he was able to buy himself out of the contract with the orphanage.⁴⁶⁶ Many of the orphaned boys will not have made it through their first years in the colony, but those who did were most likely able to work their trade or make it to the position of overseer on a plantation.

5.4. French Huguenots

More successful than the coerced or contracted migration of Europeans were the attempts by Van Sommelsdyck and directors of the Suriname Company to look beyond the Netherlands and to tap into the streams of trans-migrants passing through the Dutch Republic. These migrants not only contributed to the peopling of the colony with colonists, but also created a network of ties deeper into Europe. The European network of these migrants to the Netherlands in turn provided connections through which sugar could be sold across Europe. The first arrival of the French in the Guianas was similar to many privately organized colonization attempts in the Caribbean. They settled on the Guiana Coast in 1624 under the direction of a company from Rouen, the same town from where the 1643 colonisation attempt on the Suriname River was attempted. As with many of such attempts by European settlers, they struggled to survive.⁴⁶⁷ The colonists who settled on the Suriname River, later supplemented by French refugees from Cayenne, a neighbouring colony that had been overrun by attacking Amerindians. Under English (1651-1667) and later Zeelandic (1668-1682) rule they assimilated into the European citizenry of the colony. In contrast to the position of the Jews, the French were not granted a special status.⁴⁶⁸ Someone like Nicolaas Combe is a good example of the early integration of Frenchmen into Dutch Surinamese society. He was part of the Zeelandic administration since they took over the colony in 1667. In 1669 he was the first deacon of the reformed church in Paramaribo. By the time of his death, around 1690 he had been church master and had fulfilled various administrative roles in Suriname's government.⁴⁶⁹ The French *réfugiés* made a clear break from any

⁴⁶⁶ Many thanks to Rinke Wiegerinck for sharing her findings. Rinke Wiegerinck, 'Godts zegen en geluk op haer reijjs' Weesjongens uit het Amsterdamse Diaconieweeshuis op de vaart naar de Oost en de West, 1657 - 1797 (unpublished MA-thesis, 2010, Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam).

⁴⁶⁷ Hartsinck, *Beschryving*, 1770, 1:158–159.

⁴⁶⁸ Kalff, "Franschen in Suriname."

⁴⁶⁹ Oudeschans Dentz, "De naam Combe."

openly expressed loyalties to the French state overseas. During the two French attacks on the colony, in 1689 and 1712, the French Surinamese fought against the French assailants.⁴⁷⁰ The *réfugiés* easily assimilated into the colony and their names are found amongst many of the colony's high officials and Governors.⁴⁷¹ Commercial ties of the Huguenots did continue to bind the colony and its affairs to areas in Europe.

A second influx of Frenchmen occurred at the start of the reign of Governor Van Sommelsdyck (1683 – 1688). When he went to Suriname many French refugees came with him. According to J. Wolbers there were “many artisans, masoners, blacksmiths, carpenters and several farmers” among them.⁴⁷² Many of the French *réfugiés* came from the area around Bordeaux, Rouen as well as from La Rochelle.⁴⁷³ Already before the Edict of Nantes was revoked in 1685, French Huguenots were directed towards the colony. The number of arrivals in the Republic after 1685 motivated the Dutch to send the newcomers onwards to the East and West Indies. The director of the Suriname Company and former member of the Amsterdam city council Gilles Sautijn oversaw the sending of Huguenots to Suriname. He was commissioned by the burgomasters of Amsterdam to deal with questions relating to the French refugees in Amsterdam. S. Kalff claims that refugees also arrived from the French Antilles in Suriname.⁴⁷⁴ Although it is risky to reduce surnames to origins, the sheer number of French names suggests a sizable contribution of the *réfugiés* to the plantation economy at the time. Kalff found about twenty French plantation names with French named owners in Suriname at the end of the seventeenth century, and that the French plantations and planter were often found nearby geographical locations with French names, such as the Orleans Creek, suggesting that certain areas were predominantly colonized by Huguenots.⁴⁷⁵ Although the *Orleaan Creek* could also have been named after the export crop orleaan.

⁴⁷⁰ Kalff, “Franschen in Suriname.”

⁴⁷¹ “Francois Anthony de Rayneval, Jean Coutier, de beide broeders De Cheusses en Wigbold Crommelin, die wel is waar te Haarlem werd geboren, maar uit een familie van Fransche réfugiés. Hetzelfde was het geval met den gouverneur Jan Nepveu” *ibid*.

⁴⁷² Wolbers, *Geschiedenis van Suriname*, 56–66.

⁴⁷³ J. Sandick, *Het geslacht Van Sandick*, 1960, 30; Gülcher, “Een Surinaamsche koffieplanter.”

⁴⁷⁴ Kalff, “Franschen in Suriname.”

⁴⁷⁵ As example Kalff notes that nearby the Orleans Creek one will find “Thyronne, St. Germain, Mon Affaire, Ma Retraite, Sans Souci, Montpellier, Languedoc, Montauban, Argent-Court, Vuide-bouteille, La Campagne en La Sangsue.” Near Paramaribo one can find “Remoncourt, La Providence, La Diligence, La Confiance, La Simplicité, La Rencontre, Chatillon, Merveille, Ma Retraite, Tout-lui-faut, Peu-et-Content, Bel-a- soir, La Bonne Amitié,

The Huguenots provided the colony with connections into France as well as Switzerland. One such case is the family Van Sandick family. This plantation owning family was represented by Hudig and Bienfait in the Republic. Especially Bienfait was well connected to French markets through their Huguenot relations.⁴⁷⁶ A further example of such Huguenot networks into Europe is the legacy of the Tissot family in Suriname. When in 1692 a member of the Tissot family passed away, his plantation ended up in the hands of bill of exchange traders from Geneva, Fatio & son. In 1696 the family of Tissot and a group of others who had invested in the plantations tried to get the estates back. However, the supreme court in Bern had deemed Francois Fatio & Son the rightful owners of the two plantations. Fatio & Son – with the aid of Jean Tourton – were able to hold on to the estates.⁴⁷⁷

This involvement of Baselters in Suriname stretches back into the late seventeenth century, and is most likely connected to Huguenot migration. The full depth of the Suriname-Swiss connection is still unsure, but it is clear that it had military, commercial and migratory aspects. Not only lower military personnel; also preachers, officers, planters, merchants, and Governors from Switzerland were active in the Dutch West Indies. The recruitment of settler families could overlap with the recruitment of soldiers, but was mostly separate from it. The number of soldiers who switched careers to settle as planters in the colony was however very limited.⁴⁷⁸ A more prominent family of *Sweizer Tropenkaufleuten* was the family Faesch, members of which served throughout the Dutch army in the first half of the eighteenth century, and one made it to the position of Governor of Curaçao. Most of them retired back to Basel after their careers in the West Indies. The richest of the family was J.J. Faesch who in 1795 owned in Suriname,

“shares of the plantation Marienburg, bonds for the plantations Waterland, Palmeniribo and Surmombo in Suriname; shares in the plantations Beeke Horst, Egmont and Rhijnbeek, bonds on the plantation Montresor, as well

Gage d'Amour, L'Inquietude, La Prosperité. Mon Divertissement, La Jalousie, Bergerac, Le Mat Rouge, Mon Trésor, Bellevue, Picardie, Ponthieu, La Singularité. Mon Souci, A la bonne heure, ... Liberté.”

⁴⁷⁶ Oostindie, *Roosenburg*, 321–322.

⁴⁷⁷ SvS, *Resoluties directeuren*, 1696-1701, entry 1.05.03, inv.nr. 21. In 1699 Fatio & Son owned one quarter of a plantation on the Cassewinica, the rest was owned by the Amsterdam merchant-banker and French *refugié* Jean Tourton. Jean Tourton was also director of the SC representing the family Aerssen van Sommelsdijck from 1698 until 1706.

⁴⁷⁸ Only 12 of the 249 soldiers in 1727 who were followed by Beeldsnijder owned slaves in 1736. Beeldsnijder, “*Om werk van jullie te hebben*,” 16:32–33.

as bonds for plantations in Essequibo and Demerara, on the plantation Vriendschap on Tobago as well as the Danish isles.”⁴⁷⁹

These ties into Europe far beyond the borders of the Dutch Republic were established through several different European migrations to the colony, and they continued to form networks of ownership, migration and information between the colony and the wider world.

5.5. Recruiting for the buffer villages

The forced migration of slaves to Suriname was vital for the colony’s survival in the eighteenth century. Early modern colonization attempts on the Wild Coast by Europeans without the use of slaves all failed miserably. There was however no agreement on the use of slaves. In the 1680s a religious group, the Labadists attempted to start a colony upstream the Suriname River, but failed. Not only from a moral standpoint doubts were raised, but the colonization with only Europeans sounded appealing compared to the troublesome process of the slave trade and the associated high death rates and mass desertions. In the early eighteenth century it was already argued that migrants from Europe should replace the use of slaves in Suriname entirely.⁴⁸⁰ The use of slave labour was seen as causing moral degradation, and the colonization of Suriname using only whites remained a recurring theme.⁴⁸¹ Two attacks on the colony by the French at the end of the War of the Spanish Succession had given opportunity to slaves to flee, increasing the number of Maroons. The stabilization of the slave trade in that same period caused an influx of Africans who were more likely to escape than their conditioned and creolized fellow slaves. The decades after the Peace of Utrecht in 1713 therefore sees increased concerns from the SC directors with fighting the Maroons.⁴⁸²

The thousands of enslaved Africans who managed to break free from plantation-discipline, fled into the Suriname jungle where they settled in small villages. In the mid-18th century their number was estimated at five thousand, although such figures are unreliable. Also when they did not organize attacks on nearby plantations; the very existence of these free communities posed a threat to the power of the European colonizers.

⁴⁷⁹ Walter Bodmer, “Schweizer Tropenkaufleute und plantagenbesitzer in Niederländisch-Westindien im 18. und zu Beginn des 19. Jahrhunderts,” *Acta tropica : journal of biomedical sciences = revue des sciences biomédicales = Zeitschrift für biomedizinische Wissenschaften* (1946).

⁴⁸⁰ Beeldsnijder, “Om werk van jullie te hebben,” 16:33–34.

⁴⁸¹ Various plans to reinvigorate the colony can be found under: SvS, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 508-511.

⁴⁸² Heijer, “To Ransack a Colony.”

Governor Mauricius called them a ‘Hydra’ that had to be slain.⁴⁸³ The SC-directors employed several methods to deal with the marooned slaves and the potential threat posed to the colonists by those still enslaved. The SC encouraged planters to raise the number of white overseers on the plantations, they organized punitive expeditions against the Maroons and publically executed the ones they caught, they created a system of outposts defending the outer borders of the plantation area, attempted to settle a buffer-zone of European villages, and settled several peace treaties with the different Maroon groups. Many of the methods employed to maintain social and territorial control over the colony required white Europeans to move to Suriname. The numbers of white Europeans moving to the colony might not look very spectacular; these people did however constitute an important asset for the directors of the colony.

With the increasing attacks from the Maroons after 1712, and the growing enthusiasm about the cultivation of coffee after 1725, the SC directors saw the need to increase the number of settlers. The overall meagre response to these attempts resulted in 1727 in the appointing of a commission to investigate which Europeans, “*Paltise off Saxise*”, could be motivated to settle in Suriname.⁴⁸⁴ Commissioner Philip Hack, himself from Cologne, suggested tapping into existing German migration from the impoverished Palatinate, upstream from his birthplace. The SC commissioner Hack was not the first to suggest migration from the Palatinate. A similar plan had been suggested in 1696 when the directors had heard of people from the Palatinate who had a plan “to go to America and start a new colony there, or join one that was already populated.”⁴⁸⁵ In the 1770s director Hack personally went to Rotterdam to speak with migrants who were moving to an English colony.⁴⁸⁶ Commissioner Hack tapped into the same migration current in June or July of 1727 when he talked to several embarked Palatines in Rotterdam who had boarded a ship to an English colony on their own account. From them Hack heard that others “of their Nation” would be willing to sail to Suriname.⁴⁸⁷ This opened possibilities for the SC directors to offer more attractive conditions to the Palatines. A plan was made to let them start up small coffee plantations and provide them with

⁴⁸³ Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners, and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic* (Boston, 2000), 4.

⁴⁸⁴ SvS, *Brieven van de Sociëteit aan de Gouverneur*, (1727), entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 95.

⁴⁸⁵ SvS, *Resoluties Directeuren* (24 Aug 1696), entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 21.

⁴⁸⁶ SvS, *Resoluties van de Directeuren*, (23 Jan 1727), entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 27.

⁴⁸⁷ “om naar Amerika te gaan, ende aldaar of een nieuwen Colonie aan te leggen, off wel op de een ofte andere Colonie al bereijdt bevolkt hun verblijf te kiezen.” SvS, *Resoluties*, 1696, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 21.

various provisions to ease their settlement. Soon several groups of Palatines started to migrate to Suriname. The families mostly left the Republic “in March or April” and could be enticed if given “300 akkers” (the size of a small plantation) along the river.⁴⁸⁸

In the winter of 1734 Hack received a man from Silesia to discuss another migration of Germans, who seems to have used the demand for colonists of different colonial companies as a way to haggle on the terms and conditions of the migration. Spangenberg claimed that he was ready to get on his way to England to discuss with the Commissioners of Georgia the migration of several Protestants, although “from a very peculiar faith.” They lived in Heerenhud (Hernhut) in upper Lausnitz, the domain of Count Ludwig from Zinziendorf. The Count had given Spangenberg the commission to discuss the migration of his subjects, under which he came to the meeting of the directors to discuss with him directly.⁴⁸⁹ This mister Spangenberg was on his way to England where he was to meet the commissioners for the colony of Georgia. Spangenberg was able to discuss the terms and conditions on which these people could migrate with the SC directors, and managed to strike a good deal.⁴⁹⁰

The SC did not just except any migrant that arrived on their doorstep. In May 1730 the States General asked of the SC directors to take in co-religionists “uit de vallije van *Prangelas*” to be sent to Suriname to found a colony, or work in the service of the SC.⁴⁹¹ In January of 1731 a letter from the *Switserseprotestantse Eedgenootschap* (Swiss Confederacy) in Zurich arrived in which the States General was asked to take in *Waldensen* and other co-religionists. The SC directors wrote that they did not understand why the States General bestowed this upon them, and the demanded to know what the trades of these people were, if they could work as soldiers, and in that case, what language they speak.⁴⁹² At the same time the SC discussed further Jewish migration. They did need migrants, but were keen on attracting Protestants, and were giving Jewish migrants smaller land grants per head, and provided that they remained under the management of Amsterdam’s Jewish community. After some debate the SC and the Parnassim agreed in July 1733 on the terms and conditions for the migration of Jewish families to the colony. The SC directors promised to send over Jewish families on a regular basis. The families got a separate space between

⁴⁸⁸ SvS, *Brieven van de SvS aan de Gouverneur*, (1729), entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 95.

⁴⁸⁹ SvS, *Resoluties directeuren, 1733-1735* (1734), entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 29.

⁴⁹⁰ SvS, *Resoluties directeuren, 1733-1735*, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 29.

⁴⁹¹ SvS, *Resoluties directeuren, 1730-1732* (1730), entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 28.

⁴⁹² SvS, *Resoluties directeuren, 1730-1732* (1731), entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 28.

decks and received provisions (except meat and cheese) which they could take with them themselves. For the families a space of 25.000 *akkers* on the sea side of the Parnassusbergh was reserved, not too far from Jodensavanne so as to be protected against the Maroons. The Parnassim were to provide every family of five a piece of 250 ackers, 50 ackers less than the Protestant German families.⁴⁹³

The Governor intended the 12 Palatine families in a nearby area upstream, and assign them 300 *akkers* with the possibility to expand their property to 500.⁴⁹⁴ The son of the leading preacher arrived in 1734 with a second group of recruits from nearby Neuwied. Preacher Jan Martin Klein, who had left Suriname after religious conflicts, was recruited by the Suriname Company to move to his former residence of Neuwied to recruit more families. Klein's brother became correspondent for the Suriname Company in Neuwied in matters of migration. The Company produced a leaflet in German to convince the people from Neuwied to move to Suriname, and it was soon reported that "the people of the village think favourably of Suriname."⁴⁹⁵ The enthusiasm for the project was slightly less than expected, although in February 1733 the news came from Altwied (along the Wied, some miles before it joins the Rhine) that 6 to 8 families were willing to settle.⁴⁹⁶ The first group of Palatine migrants that sailed to Suriname on board the *Batavodurum* was made up of only two families from with ten children en two unmarried men who were to investigate the colony and report back to the others.⁴⁹⁷ Within a year after settling in the Surinamese countryside, all but one family returned to Paramaribo after their venture had failed and conflicts had broken out amongst them. They settled in Paramaribo and refused to return to work and demanded to be allowed to leave for northern English colonies.⁴⁹⁸ The last group of these Palatines arrived in Suriname in 1739. This was a group of nineteen families totalling 96 settlers.

The last attempt to recruit families from the Rhineland for Suriname was spearheaded by Louis De Bussy. In 1747 he received a commission to go to Basel and with the permission of Basel's local government recruit Protestant families. Under false pretences he managed to convince several of

⁴⁹³ SvS, *Resoluties directeuren, 1733-1735* (1733), entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 29.

⁴⁹⁴ SvS, *Brieven van de Sociëteit aan de Gouverneur* (1729), entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 95.

⁴⁹⁵ SvS, *Resoluties directeuren, 1733-1738*, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 29-30.

⁴⁹⁶ SvS, *Resoluties directeuren, 1733-1735*, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 29.

⁴⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁸ Pijttersen, *Europeesche kolonisatie*, 25–26.

them.⁴⁹⁹ Underlining the importance attached to the project of De Bussy by the company is their financial investment in it. De Bussy received fl 2,200 alone to cover travel expenses for bringing in the Swiss families.⁵⁰⁰ The families were lodged in Amsterdam until their departure and received free transport to Suriname. After their travel to the colony they were assisted by Governor Mauricius in getting some land, barges for transport, cattle, some slaves and soldiers for protection.⁵⁰¹ Soon two problems started to arise: the first was the difference between the conditions that the families had agreed to with De Bussy, and the conditions the SC had actually offered when instructing De Bussy. Second was De Bussy's character. Governor Mauricius wrote that De Bussy "is a man who is rather full of himself. He has overblown ideas about his commission, and imagines himself to be more than an Ambassador. He also thinks that the reward for his effort cannot be overpriced. He demands everything, based on his position, and if anyone opposes him, he evokes the lords in Basel as a threat."⁵⁰² It did not take long for the situation to spiral out of control, and a mutiny of the Swiss against De Bussy was the result. The ultimate result of the conflict was that De Bussy had to leave the colony. In the years that followed the Swiss village on the Para creek faltered and was overrun by Maroons in 1753.⁵⁰³

De Bussy's banishment from Suriname occurred when a Swiss soldier barred him from marrying a young woman with whom De Bussy had had a child out of wedlock. The soldier claimed that he knew De Bussy in Switzerland, and had seen his wife alive and well in Basel two years earlier. This testimony made any new marriage by De Bussy illegal. The woman De Bussy had wanted to marry was also from Basel. Their affair had started while sailing from Europe to Suriname. The young woman was part of a group of people from Basel who had been recruited by De Bussy to move to Suriname. That De Bussy encountered a soldier from that same town who knew his wife when he decided to marry the young woman was not just a coincidence. Switzerland was where many soldiers in Dutch service were recruited, and through the military many Swiss ended up in the Dutch West

⁴⁹⁹ Ibid., 25–30.

⁵⁰⁰ SvS, *Resoluties directeuren*, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 37.

⁵⁰¹ SvS, *Brief van Gouverneur Mauricius, 1747*, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 283.

⁵⁰² "DeBussy is een man, die veel noten op zijn sang heeft. Hij heeft so groten opinie van t aanzien en gezag zijner Commissie, dat hij sich verbeeldt, iets meer dan een Ambassadeur te zijn. Hij verbeeld sich ook, dat zijn moeite en beleid niet duur genoeg betaald kan worden. Hij eischt alles als magt hebbende, en als men hem de minste difficulteite maakt, dreigt hij met de Heeren van Basel." SvS, *Brief van Gouverneur Mauricius, 8-Feb-1747*, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 283.

⁵⁰³ Pijttersen, *Europeesche kolonisatie*, 30.

Indies.⁵⁰⁴ After the expedition under the leadership of Louis de Bussy failed, those who were left of the Germans and the Swiss were forced – under threat of imprisonment – to found Carolinenburg between the Suriname and Saramaca rivers. The German Baron Johann Ernst von Bülow received the position of Burgomaster of Carolinenburg, but sickness and attacks by the Maroons were overpowering the outpost.⁵⁰⁵ When Von Bülow was asked to qualify the inhabitants when taking a census, eleven heads of households were described positively as “good workmen”, nine were classified as incompetent, old, drunk or simply *schlegt* (bad) and another eleven received either a neutral or no description.⁵⁰⁶ This curious census is the last known record of the village; subsequent reports only mention it as a ruined and empty place. With the fall of Carolinenburg ended the last attempt by the Suriname Company at settling villages by recruiting settlers.

At every turn the actual recruitment of colonists required the conscious intervention of company directors, using their networks and money to persuade groups to come to the colony. Overall the migration from Europe paled in comparison to the African migration. Those who attempted to settle came from all over Europe, because the Dutch themselves were not easily motivated to move overseas. Those Europeans who tried to settle in Suriname without having enough capital to start a plantation with plenty of slaves encountered hardship in the colony.

⁵⁰⁴ From Lohnstein we also know that in 1787 only 10 out of 54 officers came from the Dutch Republic, and almost half from Germany. Lohnstein, *De militie*; The most famous Swiss officer is undoubtedly Fourgeoud, who led the main war of the colonists against the Maroons, see Stedman, *Narrative*; The two main Swiss governors both ruled Curacao, Isaac Faesch and later Johann Rudolph Lauffer. At the time of Louis de Bussy there was also a Swiss minister in Surinam. SvS Letter from Governor Mauricius to the directors of the SC, inv.nr. 283.

⁵⁰⁵ Pijttersen, *Europeesche kolonisatie*, 30–32.

⁵⁰⁶ SvS, *Generale Lijst der personen 1763*, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 318.

6. Middlemen in the slave trade

The increasing reliance of colonization efforts on enslaved African labour quickly accelerated the integration of the Atlantic world by ties of migration, shipping and finance. This chapter deals with two periods. First, the period that the slave trade was still officially the monopoly of the WIC (for Suriname until 1738). That part focusses especially on the period between the founding of the Suriname Company (1683) until the end of the War of the Spanish Succession (1713). During that specific period Suriname changed decidedly into a plantation colony and its connections to the Atlantic world stabilized. The organization of the slave trade in this early period shows how Paramaribo, with regard to the slave trade, was primarily a shipping point. The slave trade did not yet demand services beyond the supervision over the delivery of human cargo and the securing of payment by the planters. The formal organisation of the WIC in the colony was small; they were represented by one or two commissioners. As long as the shipping connection had not stabilized plantation owners tried to secure the shipping of slaves by the WIC through the making of contracts with the company. The largest contracts were made by Samuel Nassy, whose considerable contracts with the WIC served to reinvigorate the trade when the WIC seemed to be shying away from it. Other private parties were also trying to secure deliveries, although this did not take on a substantial share of the trade, and was abandoned as a strategy once the shipping became more regular.

The second part of this chapter deals with the effect of the liberalization of the slave trade on the connection between Paramaribo and the Dutch Republic. The *negotiatie* bundled capital from a broad range of investors which in turn was used as credit for one or more plantations. This system has received an undeserved bad press for having created an investment bubble and a subsequent credit crisis, which is said to have caused the downfall of many plantations. While it is certainly true that the system failed in the end, the *negotiatie* system did make the expansion of Suriname's plantation production possible. The system was closely connected to the slave trade, which could expand based on the capital available through the system. This chapter argues that the system was created as a response to the liberalization of the slave trade, and was successful in its goal of expanding the plantation economy. The *negotiatie* system increased the importance of Paramaribo for the colony. The centralization of control over plantation production into the hands of fewer and fewer administrators meant that these people often resided in Paramaribo and managed the plantation from there.

In the first decades of the eighteenth century the connection between the plantations and the market in Europe was organised through two or three

types of mediators: two in cases where there was a straightforward relation between a plantation owner in the colony and a commissioner overseas, and often three when the (affluent) owner resided in the Republic and used both a plantation director as well as an administrator to manage multiple properties. Three new actors on opposite sides of the Atlantic came to play a part in the connection between Suriname and the Dutch Republic in the middle decades of the eighteenth century: the *negotiatie* (investment fund) director in the Dutch Republic, in the colony the *agendaris* representing the investment fund (both after 1753) and thirdly a *correspondent* representing private slave trading companies (after 1738). The investment funds were an important new player, pumping a staggering 36.6 million into the plantation economy between 1753 and 1794.⁵⁰⁷ The other new players were the private slave trading companies who came to dominate the slave trade to the colony, with the WIC all but ceasing its slave trading activities to the Americas. These functions often overlapped, and the people holding these positions often chose to reside in Paramaribo to control their portfolios.

6.1. Slave trade before the SC

The inland war had abolished the indigenous slavery and slave trading in the nascent colony in 1686, but the shift to a reliance on importing captive Africans predates this abolition.⁵⁰⁸ The introduction of enslaved Africans into Suriname dates from the 1650s, at the same time when the mother-colony of Barbados made its switch from indentured European labour to African enslaved labour. The recorded transatlantic shipping of slaves to the Suriname River started in 1664 and it is unclear how many arrived before that from Barbados or on ships unregistered by the TASTD. Planters in Barbados adapted sugar technology from Brazil, and spread this to Suriname as well.⁵⁰⁹ Within a matter of decades the full switch was made on the island, pushing other forms of labour to the margins, with the same happening in Suriname.

In the early Atlantic world Amsterdam's slave traders played an important role in generalizing the Iberian practice of slave trading to the North Atlantic system. Not only the Dutch West India Company, but also

⁵⁰⁷ Voort, *De Westindische Plantages*, 265.

⁵⁰⁸ Buve, "Gouverneur Johannes Heinsius"; Goslinga, *The Dutch in the Caribbean*, 272 The ban on trading slaves with the Amerindians was issued in 1684. Bylaw 122, 16 November 1684, Plakaatboek, 151-152.

⁵⁰⁹ Russell R. Menard, *Sweet Negotiations: Sugar, Slavery, and Plantation Agriculture in Early Barbados* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2006), 32, 115.

private traders, many with Iberian roots played their part.⁵¹⁰ By the time the Zeelanders had captured Suriname in 1667 the practice had been well established over a period of forty years of WIC slave trading, and the initial moral objections had been done away with.⁵¹¹ The use of enslaved African labour had become ‘business as usual’, although there were still transitional remnants of indigenous enslavement and unfree European *servanten* in the colony.⁵¹² The number of slaves brought to Suriname in the Zeelandic period (1667-1682) was substantial. Between 1668 and 1682 there were four years when more than a thousand slaves were disembarked in the colony, and under the Zeelanders a total of 8,745 arrived in Suriname.⁵¹³ Together with the inland war the departure of the English caused a sharp decline in the number of Amerindian slaves. While there had been 500 in 1671⁵¹⁴ their number fell to 59 in 1684.⁵¹⁵

The willingness of Europeans to invest in plantation production in Suriname is shown by the large shipments of Africans. In the first few years after the Zeelanders took over, many slaves were brought to the colony. The Third Anglo-Dutch War (1672-1674) stopped this, but the shipping was soon revived. During that decade the slave trade on Suriname was primarily organised by the Zeeland chamber of the WIC.⁵¹⁶ Since Zeeland considered the colony as theirs, it is rather likely that there was a sizeable illegal trade in slaves by Zeelandic interlopers. Suze Zijlstra noted about the example of two Zeelandic slave captains, Claes Raes of the ship *Goude Poorte* and Jan Dimmese, captain of the *Seven Gebroeders*, that evading the monopoly of the WIC was common. Their arrival in Suriname was greeted by the colonists as a happy event, and the Governor was not hindering them to do

⁵¹⁰ Catia Antunes and Filipa Ribeiro da Silva, “Amsterdam Merchants in the Slave Trade and African Commerce, 1580s-1670s,” *Tijdschrift voor Sociale en Economische Geschiedenis* 9, no. 2 (2012): 3–30.

⁵¹¹ L.R. Priester, “De Nederlandse houding ten aanzien van de slavenhandel en slavernij, 1596-1863: het gedrag van de slavenhandelaren van de Commercie Compagnie van Middelburg in de 18e eeuw” (Commissie Regionale Geschiedbeoefening Zeeland, 1987).

⁵¹² Linde, *Surinaamse suikerheren*, 58.

⁵¹³ TASTD: sum of disembarked slaves under Dutch flag at the destinations Suriname and Paramaribo for period 1668-1682.

⁵¹⁴ Petition from Suriname to the States of Zeeland, 11-Mar-1671, *Zeeuwse Archivalia*.

⁵¹⁵ SvS, *Hoofdgeld en akkergeld 1684* (1684), entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 213.

⁵¹⁶ In the legal trade 6 out of 8 were from Zeeland, the others from Amsterdam and Maze (Rotterdam). There was one interloper, a ship called *Witte Valk*. Data from DANS deposited by Henk den Heijer and Ruud Paesie.

business in the colony.⁵¹⁷ The Third Anglo-Dutch War (1672-1674) cut short the slave deliveries to the colony and in 1672 only few captives arrived, and none at all in the following two years. After the bankruptcy of the first WIC in 1674, the company was relaunched that same year. There is one moment that the WIC suddenly showed great interest in Suriname, when the Dutch contractors temporarily lost their *asiento* with the *asientistas* of the Spanish crown. At that time the idea came up to turn Suriname into a Dutch nodal point for the slave trade into the Americas. However, when the *asiento* contract returned in Dutch hands the plans were abandoned and the number of slaves shipped to Suriname dropped to a low point again in the early 1680s.⁵¹⁸

After Zeeland sold Suriname to the WIC a charter was drawn up, in part to formalise how the colony and the WIC related to each other. Because the WIC had the monopoly and the colony (according to the charter) could not exist without the use of slaves, the WIC was held to deliver 'sufficient' slaves. However, at the time it was not defined how much would be sufficient. Payment for the slaves was generally expected to be done in the form of sugar and could be done in three terms. In case a planter would not be able to pay, there was no need for a court case, but the planter's possessions could be executed. A provisional suspension of payment could only be provided by the colony's Governor after a decision by the directors of the WIC. The charter of 1682 ordered that the WIC could not demand payment for previously sold slaves at once, but had to do so in three terms of 12 months, so as to provide a smooth transition between Zeeland's rule and the new situation.⁵¹⁹ In the period after the transition this was reduced to three terms of six months.⁵²⁰ What remained open for interpretation was the way in which the WIC had to sell its slaves in the colony. As will be discussed later, the WIC was held to public sales of their slaves, so as not to make it difficult for small planters to buy slaves, but at the same time, the WIC by "the sale of the aforementioned Negroes, can demand such

⁵¹⁷ Suze Zijlstra, 'Om te sien of ick een wijf kan krijge, want hebbe deselve seer nootsaeckelijck vandoen' *Migratie, kolonisatie en genderverhoudingen tijdens de Zeeuwse overheersing van Suriname (1667-1682)* (Master thesis at University of Amsterdam 2009) 92-94.

⁵¹⁸ Postma, *The Dutch*, 179.

⁵¹⁹ "maer dat tot gerustheydt van soodanige Coloniers, de welcke tot prompte betalinge onmachtigh zyn, de selve sal gedaen werden in drie termynen; yder van twaelf maenden, en waer van de eerste sal wesen verschenen twaelf maenden na dat de Compagnie in de reëele possessie van de gemelde Colonie sal wesen gekomen." Hartsinck, *Beschryving*, 1770, 2:628.

⁵²⁰ "drie termynen yder van ses maenden, gereguleert na de tydt dat de Suyckeren bequameleyst geleverd konnen werden" *ibid.*, 2:629.

securities as the company will deem necessary for their peace of mind.”⁵²¹ From 1683 onwards the colony of Suriname was ruled by the SC, of which the WIC made up one third. The document of the transition of the colony from the WIC to the SC gave the SC a role in the slave trade. For a three year period the SC was fitting out of slave ships, and was allowed to place their own *supercargo* on board of a slave ship to organise the trade in Africa.

6.2. Personal connections and influential middlemen

During the consolidation of the colony (see Chapter 2), the personal contacts of plantation owners could greatly determine the success of an individual plantation. Most owners were dependent on loans from multiple investors, often relatives or business partners. The preferred way of handling these lines of credit was by giving power of attorney to a prominent colonist. About the European planters and merchants in the early eighteenth century, J.D. Herlein wrote that plantation owners could easily make the plantations profitable, if they had people to supply them with enough credit. Those who had credit with the Company could quickly repay them, after which the planter would be free of debts.⁵²² Those who arrived in the colony without considerable amounts of credit would face great difficulty in making their plantation profitable. Herlein specifically mentions planters who received small amounts of credit from various merchants (*byzondere Koopluiden*). These planters would have to work for many years before they were able to turn a profit, since the Dutch investors had better and safer places to invest and asked high interest rates.⁵²³ At the time, slaves were by far the most costly investment for a new plantation owner. As shown by the estimate given by Herlein of the “costs for making a new plantation” in the early decades of the eighteenth century the buying of 50 slaves is priced at fl 12,500 out of a total cost of fl 23,100. An overview of the changes in slave-ownership in the period 1684-1713 clearly shows that Herlein’s estimate of 50 slaves is reasonable, and from 1704 onwards owners with in between 31 and 70 slaves were most common in the colony – only later in the eighteenth century did sugar and coffee plantations become much. It is unlikely that a planter would buy all 50 labourers at once. Plantations needed quite some preparation before production actually began, often by using a smaller group of workers.

Table 9 Development of slave ownership, 1684-1713

⁵²¹ “dat de selve Compagnie ... sal mogen bedingen sodanige sekerheyt als de selve sal oordelen tot haer gerustheydt dien-aengaende te kunnen strecken.” *ibid*.

⁵²² Herlein, *Beschryvinge*, 83.

⁵²³ *Ibid.*, 84.

	1684*	1694	1704	1713
Owners with slaves <10	95	55	68	107
11 – 30 slaves	41	62	41	66
31 – 70	34	55	86	101
71 – 100	11	5	16	36
>100	2	2	12	11
Total of owners	183	179	223	321

* The 59 enslaved indigenes are not counted.

Source: Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, Sociëteit van Suriname, toegang 1.05.03, inv.nr. 213, 227, 232, 241.

If a planter would start with about 50 slaves to work the land, he could repay his debts in less than two years. Planters who started with “6, 8, or 10 Slaves” would have to work much longer before they could profit. Warren writes about these poor whites who had “Plantations” that were “upon Sandy grounds” that they had “no more Servants than themselves.”⁵²⁴ According to Herlein, these were *Kost-Plantagien*⁵²⁵ provisioning the sugar plantations.⁵²⁶ Since starting up a plantation required slaves, and planters were not yet able to buy slaves with sugar, the WIC and the SC agreed that slaves only needed to be paid for in three terms of a year. The time that the WIC allowed for the repaying of slaves fluctuated somewhat during the period depending on their trust in the colony’s development.⁵²⁷ Despite these loans from the company, many transactions that planters were involved in demanded some sort of advance or loan. Since there was generally hardly any cash in the colony, also the provisions bought in the colony were either paid for with sugar, or through bills of exchange, to be cashed in the Republic.

While networks across the Atlantic were often personal or familial, it became very important that the person representing investors or plantation owners in Suriname was powerful and affluent. When in May 1683 Antonio Alvares Machado, an Amsterdam merchant, wanted to buy half of the “plantation or sugar mill” Roode Bank from the Adriana van Blijenborgh the

⁵²⁴ Warren, *An Impartial Description*, 22.

⁵²⁵ The word *kost* can also mean cost, but in this case means food.

⁵²⁶ Herlein, *Beschryvinge*, 85.

⁵²⁷ Postma, *The Dutch*, 272–273.

widow and heir of Daniel Fannius, he did this through a merchant in Middelburg.⁵²⁸ One third of his half was paid for by Jacob Pereira.⁵²⁹ Samuel de la Parra was the representative of Antonio Alvares Machado. He would therefore take over the half and divide it over the two interested parties.⁵³⁰ The initial middleman that was instated to manage the plantation is Moses Mendes, a man with no position in the governing of the colony, nor the owner of any land or slaves.⁵³¹ He was quickly replaced by Samuel Nassy.⁵³² It is not surprising that Nassy took over the job from Mendes. Nassy was the first Jewish notary on that side of the Atlantic, and central in the colony's production and shipping.⁵³³ Having a powerful or influential representative reduced transaction costs across the Atlantic. Some planters, such as Johan Scharpenhuijsen and Samuel Nassy moved to the Dutch Republic, and needed someone else to look after their estates. In the case of Nassy he first had a cousin looking after his business sending over goods and recovering debts, but he switched to using the Governor to assist him in recovering his debts.

6.3. Commissioners and Governors

In a situation where a colony was partly governed and policed by planters through the local governing council, there was a clear conflict of interest between taking care of their plantation and policing illicit trade. A related issue was how the slaves should be paid for, since slaves were by far the largest investment.⁵³⁴ The period between 1684 and 1713 sees a series of experiments on the side of the WIC to try out how to deal with Suriname. While the WIC was bound by rules that demanded that they deliver "sufficient" slaves to the colony and also give every plantation owner in the

⁵²⁸ Stadsarchief Amsterdam, Notarieel Archief, 106A/447, Notary D. v.d. Groe, 11-May-1683. The person in Middelburg is Isaac Semach Ferro. Machado wants to pay in terms, and it has to include the 'slaves, black children, female slaves, natives, horses, cattle, kettles, vessels'.

⁵²⁹ Stadsarchief Amsterdam, Notarieel Archief, 4106B/262, Notary D. v.d. Groe, 4-Jun-1683. Together, half the plantation is sold for fl 24,000. The two buyers agree that the third can not be separated from the third, meaning that Antonio has first right to buy the third in case Jacob wants to sell it.

⁵³⁰ Stadsarchief Amsterdam, Notarieel Archief 4107/141, Notary D. v.d. Groe, 16-Jul-1683.

⁵³¹ SvS, *Overgekomen brieven en papieren*, Hoofdgeld en akkergeld 1684, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 213

⁵³² Stadsarchief Amsterdam, Nationaal Archief 4112B/209, Notary D. v.d. Groe, 1-Dec-1684.

⁵³³ J.A Schiltkamp, "Jewish Jurators in Surinam," in *The Jewish Nation in Surinam: Historical Essays*, ed. Robert Cohen, 1982, 59.

⁵³⁴ Herlein, *Beschryvinge*, 84.

colony a fair chance to buy slaves *publyck*,⁵³⁵ it was much safer for them to sell pre-contracted slaves, and only to planters with sufficient credit. Under the rules of the charter the slave trade was so unsuccessful that in 1692 the directors of the WIC discussed completely stopping the shipping of slaves to Suriname, and discontinuing the colonial project in Suriname completely.⁵³⁶ This might have been nothing more than a threat to the plantation owners, but according to Postma the WIC responded to delayed payments by chocking the slave supplies to the colony. The irregular supplies were a great annoyance to Surinamese planters. In 1703 it was suggested by an SC official that the WIC should give up their monopoly to allow private trade. The response from the WIC was that the planters were spoiled, and should not complain since they still had fl 557,566 in debts with the WIC for unpaid slaves.⁵³⁷

As discussed in the introduction to this chapter, the methods of selling slaves in the colony were either individually, at auction or through a pre-agreed contract.⁵³⁸ Clearly, the first two methods had a downside for the WIC, mainly because payment was delayed and they lacked instruments to enforce the recovery of debts. If a planter defaulted over the course of paying back their debt the WIC suffered a great loss. To deal with the problems on the slave market several methods were tried out, both by the Company as well as the planters, to smoothen the process. The WIC tried to manage their commissioners who could retrieve debts, map out who in the colony were credit worthy, and come to some kind of regulation in the local market. The other method was to sign contracts with planters before a voyage began. These contracts were made by the directors of the WIC with the owners of plantations or their representatives in the Republic. Within the period there seem to be two pivotal years. Firstly in 1695 when there was a great crisis in the relation between the WIC and their commissioners overseas, and they closed a large contract with Samuel Cohen Nassy for the delivery of slaves, circumventing the local market. The other turnaround came in 1707 when relations between the WIC and local government, as well as their commissioners had been normalized, and only the Zeeland chamber of the WIC continued with contracted sales of slaves.

After the SC had taken over the colony, slave shipping was highly volatile. Some years in a row the colony could see the arrival of 3 to 5 ships, and all of a sudden shipping could come to a standstill. The crucial moment

⁵³⁵ Hartsinck, *Beschryving*, 1770, 2:627–628.

⁵³⁶ Postma, *The Dutch*, 182–184.

⁵³⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵³⁸ *Ibid.*, 273.

for the slave trade lied after the initial exuberance about the colony had faded. As with the Zeelandic take-over of the colony in 1667, the first few years after 1683 were characterized by substantial shipments of slaves. The SC was given a three-year period of closer involvement in the slave trade until 1686, when the WIC took full control of the trade again.⁵³⁹ What is of interest here is a period when no or few slaves arrived, and especially how the trade recovered after that. There are some Atlantic-wide reasons for fluctuations in the trans-Atlantic slave trade, such as intra-European conflicts fought out at sea, or a firm drop in slave supplies due to conflicts in Africa.⁵⁴⁰ While these certainly had their effect on Suriname, the willingness of the WIC to fit out a voyage and supply to the Surinamese planters was another important factor. Contractually the WIC was obliged to deliver 'sufficient' slaves to the colonists, but when they were faced with disappointing returns they threatened to stop the supply of slaves and suggested to abandon the colony entirely.⁵⁴¹

The greatest challenge for the WIC in Suriname was that they had to deal with a local government that was not under their control. This was different from the situation in most other Atlantic colonies. On the coast of Africa the position of *oppercommies* (first commissioner) was managing the daily affairs of the major locations under WIC control.⁵⁴² On Curaçao government was "exercised almost always by yes-men of the Company", with one commissioner responsible for the slave trade.⁵⁴³ Because of the previous control of the States of Zeeland, followed by the take-over of the colony by the Suriname Company, the *commies* of the WIC in Suriname was restricted to manage the affairs of the WIC, which were in turn restricted to the slave trade. The *commies* was to make sure that the arriving slaves were sold publicly in accordance with the charter. The success of the auction was to be guaranteed by the *commies* by spreading news in the colony of the number of slaves that would be sold. The *commies* was also responsible for keeping the administration of the sale, and the debts of the various planters. A *commies* sent over from Europe easily fell victim to the climate and

⁵³⁹ Ibid., 180.

⁵⁴⁰ Heijer, *Goud, Ivoor en Slaven*, 148–151; David Eltis and David Richardson, "Productivity in the Transatlantic Slave Trade," *Explorations in Economic History* 32 (1995): 465–484.

⁵⁴¹ Postma, *The Dutch*, 183.

⁵⁴² Heijer, *Goud, Ivoor en Slaven*, 76.

⁵⁴³ Goslinga, *The Dutch in the Caribbean*, 79.

diseases of the colony, making the recovering of the papers of the previous *commies* a recurring theme for the new appointees.⁵⁴⁴

The instructions for the newly appointed commissioners Marcus Broen and Gideon Bourse from 1687 clearly reveal that the WIC wanted them to keep a check on the local government, who they did not trust. The Governor was asked to support the *commies* in his task; the *commies* on the other hand was ordered to report it if the Governor hindered him in any way. The evasion of the monopoly of the WIC had to be combatted by the *commies* by confiscating the privately traded goods of other WIC employees, or foreign ships trying to sell slaves in the colony. In this the *Heeren X* stressed that the new commissioners had to be vigilant about the Governor, who might be inclined to connive the foreign or other illegal slave deliveries. To insulate the commissioners from the corrupting temptation of private slave trading, they were prohibited from any economic activity in the colony. For their income the first *commies* received fl 1,000 a year, and the second *commies* fl 750.⁵⁴⁵ These are rather large amounts compared to for example that of the Governor of Curaçao in the service of the WIC, which was fl 2,000.

The mistrust of the WIC for the Governors in the service of the SC seems to have been justified. With Governor Aerssen van Sommelsdyck and his successor Johan van Scharpenhuijsen, the WIC had to deal with two men who saw their position as Governor not in the least as a position that gave them extraordinary privileges when it came to the slave trade. From the slave ship *St. Jan* Sommelsdyck only released two thirds to the market, while keeping the other third himself. Sommelsdyck barely received a slap on the wrist for this infringement.⁵⁴⁶ Van Scharpenhuijsen arrived as Governor in the colony not long after the interloper *De Roode Leeuw* had come over from Africa, but Van Scharpenhuijsen remained silent about its arrival in his letters to the SC. This would eventually prove to be a strong argument in the case of the SC against him when he was ordered to come back to the Republic in 1694. By the way they dealt with the interlopers the Governors gave the WIC ample reason to be suspicious of the colony's government. It is therefore unsurprising that the WIC emphasized the need for the *commies* to be vigilant when it came to the actions of the Governor.

While the initial position of the WIC was that the *commies* was to check on the actions of the Governor, they ran into trouble with their commissioner in the following years, reversing the relation between the

⁵⁴⁴ NL-HaNA, Tweede West-Indische Compagnie, *Instructions for the commissioners of the WIC in Suriname*, 23-Dec-1687, entry 1.05.01.02 inv.nr. 68.

⁵⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁴⁶ Meiden, *Betwist Bestuur*, 51.

WIC, local government and the commissioners. Initially, all seemed to go well. The directors of the Zeeland chamber asked the *commies* to pressure to Governor not to stall return-shipments. Sugar prices were high, making it possible to solve the debts of several planters by sending over sugar as payment.⁵⁴⁷ Gideon Bourse, former commander of Berbice had been appointed second commissioner to Marcus Broen, the secretary of the SC in Suriname. Both were men of high stature, maybe too high for the subservient position of *commies*. When Broen passed away, Bourse naturally took over from him.⁵⁴⁸ Not much later, in 1691, the relation between the Zeeland chamber of the WIC and Bourse went sour. Slave ship *Poelwijck*, destined for the Zeelandic colony Essequibo made a stopover in Suriname. There, Bourse took 16 of the 150 slaves off board, selling them to his sister.⁵⁴⁹ The conflict with Bourse over the slaves, as well as having conducted private business escalated. While the Amsterdam chamber first chose to ignore the issue,⁵⁵⁰ it returned with a vengeance, and in 1692 they cut off payment to Bourse and his second *commies* Peter Sanderus. Not only the issue of private business was put on their plate, also the fact that they rented separate lodging instead of residing in the company warehouse was presented as a major issue. Costs made by the commissioners to build a larger warehouse without having sought the endorsement of the WIC were billed to their private accounts.⁵⁵¹

In the case of the *De Roode Leeuw* of captain Anthonius Tange the authorities neither in the colony, nor in the home port were eager to prosecute. On its return the interloper was let off the hook by the authorities in Vlissingen. This caused great irritation with the West India Company, whose orders were openly ignored.⁵⁵² The commissioners were charged with having to confiscate the goods from these interlopers. The commissioners, who would have to cooperate with the *fiscaal* (bailiff) in these matters,

⁵⁴⁷ NL-HaNA, Tweede West-Indische Compagnie, *Letter from the WIC chamber Zeeland to Gideon Bourse as commissioner in Suriname*, Middelburg, 16-Aug-1690, entry 1.05.01.02 inv.nr. 812.

⁵⁴⁸ NL-HaNA, Tweede West-Indische Compagnie, *The meeting of X, Letter from the WIC to their correspondent in Suriname*, 2-Jul-1689, entry 1.05.01.02 inv.nr. 68.

⁵⁴⁹ NL-HaNA, Tweede West-Indische Compagnie, *Letter from the WIC chamber Zeeland to Gideon Bourse as commissioner in Suriname*, Middelburg 8-Oct-1691, entry 1.05.01.02 inv.nr. 812.

⁵⁵⁰ NL-HaNA, Tweede West-Indische Compagnie, *Letter from the WIC to Gideon Bourse in Suriname*, 20-Dec-1691, entry 1.05.01.02 inv.nr. 69.

⁵⁵¹ NL-HaNA, Tweede West-Indische Compagnie, *Letter from the WIC to Gideon Bourse and Pieter Sanderus in Suriname*, 8-Jul-1692, entry 1.05.01.02 inv.nr. 69.

⁵⁵² Paesie, *Lorrendrayen op Africa*, 277–278; Heijer, *Goud, Ivoor en Slaven*, 277–278.

would receive a premium for a successful prosecution.⁵⁵³ When the prosecution of the *Roode Leeuw* in the Republic failed, the WIC ordered the commissioners to confiscate all the goods from the ship that had arrived in Suriname, but nothing happened.⁵⁵⁴ The entire slave trade entered troublesome waters. The WIC was angered and replaced Bourse in 1694, but his successors died off in quick succession, leaving them without a reliable representative.⁵⁵⁵ The governing council of Suriname was subsequently asked to take legal action to have Bourse send over his administration and to detain him. But nothing was done about Bourse. What is more, in 1699 he was nominated by inhabitants of the colony to take a seat in the Council for Civil Justice and Bourse served on the council until his term ended in 1703.

Both the Bourse and Van Scharpenhuijsen affairs caused a change in the relation between the WIC, SC and the colony. The newly appointed Governor, Paul van der Veen, was an outsider without any financial interests in plantations or shipping. The WIC officially received jurisdiction over the colony's Governor, who was ordered to "execute WIC orders as long as they do not infringe on the interests of the SC as a whole."⁵⁵⁶ While Governors were treated with suspicion in the first decade of Suriname Company ownership of the colony, they became the pillar of support for the WIC during the tenure of Paul van der Veen.⁵⁵⁷ The Governor was also to play a role in the retrieving of the debts of the colony's planters. Van der Veen became a central figure in supplying information about the colony to the WIC. The letters from 1700 and 1701 give general information about the ships in the area, about the size of the leaving convoys and what the WIC can expect in terms of goods arriving in the Netherlands on their account.⁵⁵⁸ The correspondence with the commissioners turned to discussions about the solvency of planters and to inform them about the pre-agreed contracts for the slaves that will arrive in the colony, continuing rather uneventfully until 1706. Thus, due to the crisis of 1694/5 with the commissioners, the WIC was

⁵⁵³ *Instructions for the commissioners of the WIC in Suriname.*

⁵⁵⁴ NL-HaNA, Tweede West-Indische Compagnie, *Letter from the WIC to Gideon Bourse and Pieter Sanderus in Suriname*, 20-Dec-1691, entry 1.05.01.02 inv.nr. 69.

⁵⁵⁵ NL-HaNA, Tweede West-Indische Compagnie, *Letter from the WIC to Governor and Council in Suriname*, 9-Sep-1694, entry 1.05.01.02 inv.nr. 69.

⁵⁵⁶ "de bevelen van de W.I.C moest opvolgen voor zover die niet strijdig waren met de belangen van de Sociëteit als geheel" Meiden, *Betwist Bestuur*, 67.

⁵⁵⁷ Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, Tweede West-Indische Compagnie, *Letter from the WIC to Governor Paul van der Veen in Suriname*, 4-Oct-1697, entry 1.05.01.02 inv.nr. 69.

⁵⁵⁸ Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, Tweede West-Indische Compagnie, *Letter from Paramaribo to the West India Company about the slave trade*, 13-Oct-1700, entry 1.05.01.02, inv.nr 1282.

able to change the governing of Suriname to a way similar to its other Atlantic outposts. Instead of only dealing through a subservient commissioner, they acquired a direct relation to the colony's Governor.

By 1707 the slave trade had continued rather steadily for quite some years, with ships arriving every year, and annual disembarkations generally between 500 and 1500 slaves. The *Heeren X* came to trust the stability of the colony, and let go of the bitterness they had voiced about the indebtedness of the planters. The *commies* was reminded that he was lower in rank than the Governor and council, and that he was not authorized to extend justice in criminal cases, but had to follow the judgement of the local council. The *commies'* payment went up to fl 1,200 and that of the second *commies* was raised to fl 1,000. Furthermore, he became allowed to have some land to build a house, and he was given the freedom to invest fl 2,000 in the building of a *Negerije* (place to keep slaves). Relations between the WIC and the colony's government normalized to an extent that the commissioner was now only there to organize auctions and tour the colony to recover debts.⁵⁵⁹

6.4. Contracted sales

One way to secure delivery, sale and payment for slaves was to establish a contract between plantation owners and the WIC. Until now very few examples of contracts between plantation owners and the West India Company for the delivery of slaves to Suriname have been discussed in the literature.⁵⁶⁰ This paragraph gives an overview of several contracts found in the archive of the Zeeland Chamber of the WIC and the Notarial Archive in Amsterdam.⁵⁶¹ After the initial enthusiasm of investors that had been caused by the founding of the SC died down, the colony started to stagnate in the 1690s. The number of slaves was declining between 1693 and 1696, and the number of Europeans in the colony was hardly growing either.

Table 10 Population figure of the colony based on the poll tax, 1693-1697

	Whites	Enslaved
1693	319	4756
1694	352	4691
1695	379	4614
1696	463	4697
1697	447	4915

Source: SvS, Overgekomen Brieven en Papieren, May to December 1699, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 227.

⁵⁵⁹ Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, Tweede West-Indische Compagnie, *Letter from the X to Commies Cornelis Denijs in Suriname*, 3-Dec-1707, entry 1.05.01.02 inv.nr. 70.

⁵⁶⁰ Postma, *The Dutch*, 272–274; Heijer, *Goud, Ivoor en Slaven*, 339; Reesse, *De suikerhandel van Amsterdam*, 210–211.

⁵⁶¹ NL-HaNA, Archief van de Tweede WIC, toegang 1.05.01.02 inv.nr. 812 and many thanks to Catia Antunes for the use of her database of notarial contracts.

The WIC was in a crisis with its commissioners: first the troubles deposing Gideon Bourse, followed by the death of several successors. The prominent planters and the political council started a lobby to motivate the WIC to start shipping slaves again. In September 1695 Herman van Hagen, member of the council in Suriname, came to the meeting of the directors of the SC to discuss the developments in the colony. Hagen delivered the message that the larger planters in the colony wanted to contract the WIC for the delivery of 20,000 slaves to be paid cash. For the less affluent planters there should also be deliveries which were to be sold, in accordance with the charter, on public auction. Hagen wanted the directors of the SC to assist in convincing the WIC to organise this,⁵⁶² but such a contract was never made. In October of that same year Nassy, however, made a contract that on four different ships a total of 500 slaves would be sent to him.⁵⁶³ The contract of the WIC directors with Nassy was a clear sign that larger planters were forcing the WIC to become more dependable in its deliveries to the colony. It was also a way out for the WIC who did not have to depend on local commissioners and poor planters, but could now outsource the reselling of the slaves to one of the richest men in the colony.⁵⁶⁴ While even Nassy could not have any use for such a great number of slaves, it saved the WIC quite some headaches over payment. This was in a period when only very few plantations had more than a hundred slaves. This changed considerably due to the imports in the period. Between 1694 and 1704 the number of plantations with over a hundred slaves rose from two (one was Nassy's), to twelve.

In 1684 Samuel Nassy was very enthusiastic about the new possibilities now that the colony was in the hands of the SC. He proposed to the directors of the Suriname Company to organize a shipment of slaves to the colony. His freight price would be fl 55 per slave and he had also offered to organise the return-shipment of the *Sara*, without the directors having to spend anything on the warehouses.⁵⁶⁵ The directors answered that they did not see how the SC could benefit from this arrangement, and above all, that the WIC would not allow for the SC to make contracts with private persons

⁵⁶² SvS, *Resoluties directeuren, 1690-1695*, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 20.

⁵⁶³ Stadsarchief Amsterdam, Notarieel Archief, 4774 act unknown, Notary S. Pelgrom, 26-Oct-1695.

⁵⁶⁴ NL-HaNA, Tweede West-Indische Compagnie, entry 1.05.01.02 inv.nr. 69, *Letter from the WIC to commissioners Gerbrand van Sandick and Nicolaas Houtcoper in Suriname* 25-Nov-1695.

⁵⁶⁵ SvS, *Overgekomen Brieven en Papieren, 16-Nov-1683 - 20-Nov-1684*, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 212.

to trade on the coast of Africa.⁵⁶⁶ In this case, Nassy had overplayed his hand. But private initiatives outside the WIC played an important role in motivating the WIC to continue the slave trade in the consolidation of the colony.

In the late 1680s the WIC started to close deals with individual planters to organise their shipments. A small portion of a shipload would be on contract, the rest could still be sold at auction.⁵⁶⁷ The first contract seems to date from 1688 and was made by the WIC with Abraham Pinto da Fonseca, Pedro Garcia and Isaac Lopes Salsedo to deliver slaves in Suriname to them from the ship *Coromantijn*.⁵⁶⁸ A later, but similar contract stated that the directors of the WIC Ferdinand van Collen and Hendrick van Baerle closed a contract with Daniel Fruijtier, Thobias Amsincq, Thobias van Hoornbeeck and Cornelis Denis en Zoon for the delivery of slaves to Suriname. The contract would mention the ship, in this case *Pijnenburg* with captain Abraham Schepmoes, and that it would be sent to the coast of Africa to buy 400 slaves to be brought to Suriname. To the contractors a total of 32 slaves would be sold for a price of fl 210 per slave.⁵⁶⁹ The size of these contracted portions of a ship remained relatively low. In 1705, ten years after the arrival of the *Pijnenburg*, the *Christina* disembarked 421 slaves: 34 were sold on contract, 110 were sold individually, and the other 273 on the auction block.⁵⁷⁰

Nassy's contract with the WIC was an important contract made with a number of representatives of the WIC.⁵⁷¹ The ordinary contracts that consigned slaves to specific people were not signed across multiple WIC chambers, but were organized by the chamber fitting out the voyage. Nassy's contract was communicated to the WIC commissioners in Suriname who needed to follow its execution strictly by seeing to it that Nassy received the

⁵⁶⁶ SvS, *Brieven van de directeuren naar Suriname, 1683-1687*, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 90.

⁵⁶⁷ NL-HaNA, Tweede West-Indische Compagnie, *Letter from the WIC to commissioners Gerbrand van Sandick and Marcus Glimmer in Suriname*, 9-Sep- 1694, entry 1.05.01.02 inv.nr. 69.

⁵⁶⁸ SAA, Notarieel Archief, 4772 act 532, Notary S. Pelgrom, 17-Sept-1688.

⁵⁶⁹ SAA, Notarieel Archief, 4773 act 530, Notary S. Pelgrom, 13-Aug-1694.

⁵⁷⁰ Postma, *The Dutch*, 274.

⁵⁷¹ In Nassy's contract 'Mr. Ferdinand van Collen en Jacob Scott, raden etc. in Amsterdam, Abraham Biscop, heer van Serooskerke etc., Hugo 's Gravesande, burgemeester van Delft, Nicolaas Wijntgis, schepen te Hoorn, Reijnt Lewe, heer van Middelstum, allen bewindhebbers der WIC' make a contract regarding the supplying of 500 slaves to Suriname. They wil outfit 4 ships which will each supply 125 slaves. The slaves will be bought in Angola, and will be sold for fl 210 each.

first 125 slaves of every *armasoen* that arrived.⁵⁷² Having first choice of a shipload of slaves was of course a major privilege, normally not even allowed to the colony's Governor. After taking the shipments of slaves, Nassy then resold the slaves to planters in the colony.⁵⁷³ This specific kind of contract was unusual, and might only have been organised once. It was more common for the WIC to make contracts with a few planters who would buy the enslaved for their own use on their estates.

J.D. Herlein discussed the method of contracting small numbers of slaves to specific planters to explain the irregular arrival of ships: Herlein wrote that "the WIC hardly ship any slaves before fl 100 is paid in advance in Holland." He blames the slow speed at which people sign up as a reason why slave ships take so long to arrive in Suriname. The contracts made before notaries in Amsterdam or those that were mentioned in the correspondence with the Zeeland Chamber of the WIC do not mention that fl 100 should be paid in advance. However, it seems likely that this had been common practice, given the nature of the problem that the WIC tried to fix with these contracts. There seems to have been some marked differences between the contracting of slaves to planters between Amsterdam and Zeeland. The WIC directors making contracts in Amsterdam did so in batches. Larger groups of people were on the same act signing up for slaves to be delivered to their colonial counterparts. The Zeelandic contracts were made up of smaller numbers of people, and generally with fewer counterparts. Only a few big players made contracts. These same names also are found in requests asking for preferential treatment when sailing their freighters to the colony to get sugar as a return shipment. Given the scattered nature of much of the source material it is unclear whether contracting stopped entirely, but no evidence of later contracts has been found. During the phase of consolidation of the colony, contracts helped the WIC gain some measure of financial security while offering plantation owners the possibility of gaining preferential treatment by the company.

⁵⁷² *Letter from the WIC to commissioners Gerbrand van Sandick and Nicolaas Houtcoper in Suriname.*

⁵⁷³ For example, he sold 50 slaves to Anna Maria van Hulten for only fl 9,000 (fl 180 per slave, well below the set price of fl 210). SAA, Notarieel Archief, 4773 act 282, Notary S. Pelgrom, 4-Dec-1692.

Table 11 WIC slave trade contracts, 1688-1712

Year	Average number of slaves consigned per planter or investor (Amsterdam)	Number of contracted owners or investors (Amsterdam)	Average number of slaves consigned per contract (Zeeland)	Number of contracts per year (Zeeland)
1688		3		
1689			6	1
1690				
1691		1		
1692	12	4		
1693				
1694	8	4	5	2
1695	13	10	9.33	3
1696	6	5	10.25	4
1697	11.05	20		
1698				
1699				
1700			18	3
1701	6.3	27	10.6	3
1702	7.3	12		
1703				
1704	8.3	30		
1705	6.8	20		
1706	8.3	46	8	3
1707	5.3	12		
1708			12	1
1709				
1710				
1711			12	1
1712				

Source: Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, Archief van de Tweede WIC, entry 1.05.01.02 inv.nr. 812 and Antunes Database of Amsterdam Notarial Contracts.

6.5. Financial innovation after 1738

In the WIC-trade period problems with payment for slaves were constant, and they continued in the free trade period. There were two main problems: either the plantations did not have credit in the Netherlands because of bad business results of that plantation, or the merchants and bankers simply did

not have the money to pay out the bills of exchange that were sent to them by the planters. There were credit crises in 1706, 1721 and in the early 1730s.⁵⁷⁴ The crisis of 1763 after the Seven Years War was felt in Suriname and also in 1768 middlemen received many bills of exchange that had been protested in the Republic. The best-known of these type of crises was in 1773 when investment funds stopped paying out bills of exchange from their plantation managers. The need to pay for the slaves brought in from Africa was a main reason for the planters to require good lines of credit in the Netherlands. The primary concern for private slave trading companies was therefore the payment for the slaves that they brought to Paramaribo. Because of the recurring problems with the bills of exchange the surest forms of payment were return-goods like sugar and coffee.

The history of innovations in the credit system can be traced to the 1730s. The end of the 1730s saw increasing political conflicts about the organisation of the bills of exchange rising to such a level that the Governor disbanded one of the governing councils. Difficulties with the solvency of planters were not new and not just restricted to the large sums they owed to the WIC. At the end of the 1730s there was a fierce debate on the 25 per cent fine placed on bills of exchange that returned protested, because the number of bills that returned was extremely high, effectively causing a 25 per cent increase on many transactions.⁵⁷⁵ In 1736 a bylaw was passed to protect planters against usurers that would lure them into mortgages or other arrangements. Such schemes were disallowed from amounting to more than 8 per cent interest.⁵⁷⁶ The other returning issue was the protesting of bills off exchange. The local government often received uncovered bills as payment by the planters for the strengthening of the defences.⁵⁷⁷ The bills of exchange were a sensitive issue, since the lack of credit in the colony pushed planters to use these bills as a method of payment within the colony as well. When the price of coffee dropped this immediately curtailed the means of the planters to repay their debts, and in 1737 the creditors and debtors convened to discuss a *surcéance* of payment, sanctioned by Suriname's local government. This was to prevent that the properties would be executed and the colony ruined. Of course, those who were then given a break in their obligations to their creditors were forced to make all of their produce available to repay "domestic and foreign."⁵⁷⁸

⁵⁷⁴ Postma, *The Dutch*, 273.

⁵⁷⁵ Bylaw 376, 10/11-Feb-1738 and was revoked on 12-Dec-1739, *Plakaatboek*, 443-444.

⁵⁷⁶ Bylaw 359, 25-Jan-1736, *Plakaatboek*, 421.

⁵⁷⁷ Bylaw 372, 5-Feb-1737, *Plakaatboek*, 439.

⁵⁷⁸ "in en uytlandsche crediteuren" Bylaw 374, 26-Jul-1737, *Plakaatboek*, 440-442.

Once the slave trade to Suriname was opened to private traders after 1738, the planters had an increased need for credit at a time when the solvency of many planters was already bad due to the low prices of plantation products. Before the liberalization of the trade the WIC would appoint in rotation one of its chambers to organise a slaving mission. When the slave trade proceeded under the strict monopoly of the WIC, the company controlled all the legal slave ships that were to be outfitted to Africa. The *Heeren X* would decide on the route, the chamber of the WIC would arrange for a ship, captain and trade goods in the period between the institution of the second WIC in 1674 until the company opened the trade in three phases in 1730, 1734 and finally for the Guianas in 1738.⁵⁷⁹ For Suriname, the great change in the supplying of slaves came in 1738. From then on the WIC only levied a “recognition fee”, a tax that served to acknowledge the WIC’s formal monopoly over the trade, and provided income to the company. Smaller companies took over the trade, and the shipping of slaves to the colony increased. The MCC was the largest private slave trader, with 114 slaving voyages of which about 70 went to Suriname. They were followed by Van Coopstad & Rochussen from Rotterdam with 50 to Suriname out of their 65 in total.⁵⁸⁰ Jan Swart and his son participated in 63 voyages, of which 46 were destined to Suriname. Adriaan Kroef was the smallest of the big free traders with 27 shipments of slaves to Suriname.⁵⁸¹

The liberalisation of the slave trade meant that planters could no longer spread payment for their slaves over an extended period of time, as had been the case with the WIC and the way payment had been organised under the *octrooy*. Rather, their debts were now with private traders who were hungry for either plantation products that they could sell in Amsterdam, or good bills of exchange drawn on people in the Republic. Planters were in need of new methods to pay for slaves, especially because the expansion of the cultivated land in those years meant that those slaves who were put to work on the plantation would work on the expansion of the plantation infrastructure and clearing new land, rather than producing goods that could be used to pay the slave traders.

To solve the planters’ credit problem that built up during the 1740s, in 1751 an Amsterdam banker set up a *negotiatie*, an investment fund for West Indian plantations. This first *negotiatie* bought up the planter’s debts and mortgaged the plantations. The *negotiatie* system developed in tandem with the expanding debts of the planters, which were then bought up by

⁵⁷⁹ Postma, *The Dutch*, 128, 134–136, 150; Heijer, *Goud, Ivoor en Slaven*, 337.

⁵⁸⁰ Ineke de Groot-Teunissen, “Herman van Coopstad en Isaac Jacobus Rochussen. Twee Rotterdamse slavenhandelaren in de achttiende eeuw,” *Rotterdams Jaarboekje* (2005): 171.

⁵⁸¹ TASTD.

Willem Gideon Deutz in the initial *negotiatie*. The *negotiaties* can be seen as the unintended consequence of a decade of liberalized slave trade. It is somewhat uncertain who were extending credit to the planters in the period before the *negotiatie*.⁵⁸² There are numerous bills of exchange in the Amsterdam notarial archives suggesting that families were extending credit, or at least accepting bills drawn by their kin overseas. It is certain that the WIC carried some of the burden, and there were some Amsterdam merchants extending loans and mortgages to planters in the colony.

According to W.W. van der Meulen there were three types of *negotiatie*. First the ones started by Deutz which freely bought up debts from planters, and extended credit. This approach was cut short by increasing problems with the mortgages, which gave rise to a second group of funds, which were more cautious, and where supervision became more direct and controlling. The funds wanted direct knowledge of the state of the property. These were mostly from before 1780. The third group identified by van der Meulen signalled the return of a mortgaging system. The colony was in a less critical state, funds managed to get some of their invested money back, and the risks for investors were spread across a wider range of plantations.⁵⁸³

Before the liberalization of the slave trade, the planters had not yet been constrained by the *negotiatie*. A good example is the MCC shipping on the colony before it engaged in the slave trade. In their attempt to enter the market for return goods, they found it difficult to get between the planters and their commissioners in Amsterdam to whom planters sent their goods.⁵⁸⁴ As shown by van Prooijen, the MCC functioned both as shipping company and as merchant in this connection. In the less chartered waters of Spanish America they only worked as merchant since they were still expanding into that trade, rather than relying on consolidated connections. To trade in Suriname, the MCC captains would bring cash to buy the sugar, rather than trading with a *cargasoen* of finished products.⁵⁸⁵ Despite their failure to do so there appears to have been at least some space for planters to decide who they wanted to ship their goods with, and to whom, even if this was not to Middelburg and the MCC. Van der Voort claims that the MCC traders were forced to accept that they were barely shipping goods between 1750 and

⁵⁸² Voort, *De Westindische Plantages*, 86 There are numerous bills of exchange in the Amsterdam notarial archives suggesting that family were extending credit, or at least accepting bills drawn by they kin overseas. .

⁵⁸³ W.W. Meulen, "Beschrijving van eenige Westindische-plantageleeningen: bijdrage tot de kennis der geldbelegging in de achttiende eeuw," *Bijdragen en mededeelingen van het Historisch Genootschap* 25 (1904): 490–580.

⁵⁸⁴ ZA, MCC, Letters from Neale to the MCC directors

⁵⁸⁵ Reinders Folmer - Van Prooijen, *Van goederenhandel naar slavenhandel*, 129, 136.

1773 as a direct effect of the *negotiatie* system.⁵⁸⁶ It can be added that they already had problems finding returns for the slave ships before the *negotiatie* system, during the first decade of the free-trade era. Slavers sailing the triangular trade had actually been loading small returns for decades, albeit on a less pronounced scale than during the liberalized trade.

In the years after the privatization of the slave trade, the number of slaves that were brought to Suriname per year increased from about six hundred slaves shipped into Suriname in 1740 to more than three and a half thousand in 1745.⁵⁸⁷ By that time so many slaves were arriving in the colony that not all of them were sold, and were shipped out again. Liberalisation of the slave trade greatly impacted trade and shipping to and from the colonies, including commodity shipping. Under the free trade, the routes of the slave ships changed. Slaving companies were free to arrange their voyage, although the high level of expertise required to organize such a voyage makes it likely that there was a close connection between the monopoly and the liberal system. WIC slavers had been accustomed to sail straight to either Elmina or outposts on the Loango coast.⁵⁸⁸ The free traders bought captive Africans all along the coast and took much longer to do so than slavers who went straight to the assembly points on the coast; in fact they spent twice as much time.⁵⁸⁹ WIC ships mostly just had one primary destination in the Americas where they would disembark slaves before commencing the return voyage.⁵⁹⁰ The free traders made up for their lost time by spending much less time in the Americas before they would sail back. Free traders were more eager to leave a colony if they found the price of slaves to be too low, in contrast to the WIC monopoly trade when they were free to set the price (which was both lower and more stable than during the liberalized trade). Postma wrote that there were 36 ships that had been reported to stop at Suriname only to sail onwards. If we also include the ships that sold 10 per cent of their cargo or less, than there were 60 out of 466 incoming ships that left Paramaribo without selling a significant portion of their human cargo in the period between 1740 and 1779 alone.

The mobility of the liberalized slave trade shortened the average waiting times in Paramaribo. The other change was the greater inability or unwillingness to assemble a return shipment for the voyage to the Republic. Also for the WIC the assembly of a return shipment was not deemed very

⁵⁸⁶ Voort, *De Westindische Plantages*, 65.

⁵⁸⁷ PSDC: 1740: 602 arrived, and 602 sold. 1745: 3997 arrived and 3602 sold.

⁵⁸⁸ Postma, *The Dutch*, 151.

⁵⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 157.

⁵⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 169.

important but they spent far more effort than for example the ships of the MCC to get cargo.⁵⁹¹ The question is if this reflected the free traders' preference, or if they were forced to except bills of exchange rather than plantation products as payment. When the MCC was struggling to gain a foothold in the slave trade in the 1740s and 1750s 83 per cent of a returning slaver's value on board was in the form of bills of exchange.⁵⁹² It seems rather unlikely that the MCC happily accepted this, but rather used this as a method to make buying slaves from them more favourable for the planters. When the directors of the MCC made a contract with "owners, interested planters, and commissioners of plantations in the colony of Surinam" for the delivery of slaves, they tried to make provisions that would encourage those with whom they made the contract to consign freight for the return voyage within six weeks after arrival. The MCC could not load the sugar and coffee as payment for the slaves, but still tried to persuade the planters to load something on board their ship. The ship would then sail back to Holland or Zeeland. If it sailed to Zeeland the MCC would even pay for the transport of the goods to Amsterdam.⁵⁹³

That the slave trade was integrated into the credit relation between the colony and the Republic was of course not new, and neither was the way in which this circuit of trade further complicated the principal-agent problem in the connection. The WIC commissioners who were overseeing the slave trade around the turn of the eighteenth century were already disallowed from having any interest in the plantation economy exactly because such a combination of interests could easily trigger fraud or market manipulation to the detriment of the slave trading company.⁵⁹⁴ With the onset of the liberalized slave trade this complication was transported to the private sector and became more directly entangled with the relation between the plantations and the Dutch companies. Despite the many discussions about the workings of the plantation-system, the change that took place following the privatisation of the slave trade is often treated somewhat peripheral, since it chronologically preceded the founding of the first *negotiatie*.

After consolidation of the colony and liberalisation of the slave trade the number of different kinds of middlemen that were active in the process of connecting the European markets and the Surinamese plantations increased. At the same time the parallel connections of the various plantations to owners and investors across the Atlantic were concentrated

⁵⁹¹ Ibid., 171–172.

⁵⁹² Reinders Folmer - Van Prooijen, *Van goederenhandel naar slavenhandel*.

⁵⁹³ MCC, Stukken betreffende de slavenhandel, inv.nr. 1567.2.

⁵⁹⁴ See chapter 3.

into the hands of fewer people. Before this change had taken place many individual planters connected to individual commissioners (often their relatives) in the Republic. The new middlemen took on a larger share of the communication than those who were active at the time when there were more individual relations and connections. The third group that came to play a role were the representatives of the private slave trading companies. The overseas representatives of the slave trading companies were often the same individuals as the administrators of the overseas owners, greatly increasing their ability to manipulate their principals in the Republic as well as the managers on the plantations. By playing a role in the slave trade they combined two seemingly opposing interests: slave-trading companies were interested in high prices for slaves, while the representatives of absentee plantation owners should safeguard low prices for plantation labour. The slave trading companies were also interested in selling to planters with good credit who were able to pay quickly, while plantation administrators might have been prone to get slaves to the plantations even if its owners were unable to secure direct payment.

6.6. Centralization of management

The onset of the *negotiatie* system resulted in the increase of production in the colony. Johannes Postma argued that the credit schemes made the rapid expansion of the number of slaves in the colony possible.⁵⁹⁵ During the era of the liberalized slave trade and the *negotiatie* system the colony's production boomed due to the large numbers of imported slaves. The enslaved population grew from about 23 thousand to around 60 thousand between the 1740s and the 1770s. Also, the number of vessels arriving in Suriname increased rapidly. In 1740 2 slavers and 42 bilateral freighters departed from Paramaribo after having sold their cargo. In 1769 this had grown to 19 slavers and 71 freighters. Especially coffee production boomed. In 1740 more than eighteen million pounds of sugar and five million pounds of coffee were shipped out. In 1769 sugar export stood at the still respectable amount of almost seventeen million pounds, while coffee production had grown so much that fourteen million pounds of coffee were exported from Suriname to the Dutch Republic that year. Despite a credit crunch and the surfacing insolvency of many plantations as well as declining slave disembarkations in the following decade, production remained high and in 1779 there were still sixteen million pounds of sugar and more than twelve million pounds of coffee exported aboard Dutch ships. The decades of steady growth, followed by the production boom, saw such an immense amount of interest from Dutch shipping companies trying to acquire return

⁵⁹⁵ Postma, *The Dutch*, 214.

shipments that the actual load per ship dropped from the 1720s to the late 1760s, only to start rising again after the credit crunch had dissuaded companies from fitting out an excessive amount of freighters to the colony.⁵⁹⁶

This great increase in productivity raised the stakes for those involved, although it seems that especially middlemen profited from the system rather than the investors and owners themselves. The way plantations were managed, especially after the beginning of the *negotiatie* system, was very lucrative for managers and middlemen, but not so much for the owners of the plantations. The administrators and *negotiatie* directors gained from an increase in turnover, rather than from efficient and profitable management. The *negotiatie* demanded planters to ship the goods to them directly, instead of using their produce as payment. The private slave traders were therefore forced to accept bills of exchange. With this came the need to have someone in the colony to assess the credit of the planters they sold the slaves to, a *correspondent*. This person had to be well connected in the colony, and so these jobs converged into the hands of a small number of well-connected people.

An important figure in the transition from a system in which the WIC advanced most payment for slaves to the liberalization of the slave trade and subsequently to the *negotiatie* system of providing credit to plantation owners was Adriaan Gootenaar. He was not only a middleman representing slave traders; he also managed a large number of plantations, and later became a lobbyist who attempted to re-start the flow of credit once it slowed down. This multiplicity of roles makes him a good vantage point to discuss the changes that took place during the rapid growth of the colony, the onset of the *negotiatie* system and its relation to the slave trade. Gootenaar's career from slave trade representative to plantation manager is exemplary of the central role of the liberalization of the slave trade in the changing relationship between the Suriname and the Dutch Republic.

Gootenaar was born in 1736 in Delft and moved to Suriname in 1757 on board the ship *Groenegijn* from Amsterdam. In the colony he married Elisabeth Petronella Dahlberg in 1769. He spent most of his career in Suriname, passing away at the age of 50 in 1786 in Paramaribo and was buried on his plantation *Nieuwe Star*. Gootenaar had seen all steps of the process of first increasing and later collapsing credit during his time in the colony. He had represented large investment funds, slave trading companies and presided over civil court cases leading to the execution of defaulting planters. He also managed plantations, and was familiar with all aspects of running them. A telling example of his detailed and wide ranging knowledge

⁵⁹⁶ See Appendix 1.

is that when the MCC wanted advice on how to retrieve slaves from particular ships in case the buyers in the colony defaulted, Gootenaar advised them on what variations of brandishing irons could be used for this. Having such intricate knowledge, he engaged several times in advising both local government and directors overseas about migration, credit and other issues concerning the colony. As a central figure in the colony he also participated in the planter's literary society.

Gootenaar was one of the early representatives for *negotiaties* but during the boom years of the system a new breed of middlemen arrived in Paramaribo. The development of the *negotiatie* system made it easier for outsiders to invest smaller as well as larger sums in the Surinamese plantations economy. The amount of available credit rose quickly, faster in fact than the plantation-economy could expand. The *agendaris* came in to represent such funds overseas by finding plantations to invest in and as a result started to extend credit in the form of mortgages to willing planters. In return the mortgaged planters were obliged to ship their products to the representative of the investment fund in the Republic, and the proceeds of bringing the goods to market would be used to pay the shareholders. When the plantations turned out to be insolvent and unable to repay their debts many were declared bankrupt, and again bought up by an ever smaller number of funds, quickly concentrating ownership of the plantations. While owners had a direct interest in the plantation and its management, the investment fund rather had an interest in both the payment of interest, the selling of the plantation products and the provisions from supplying the plantations. Oostindie summarized the change as the "connecting of loans, consignment systems and bonds."⁵⁹⁷ The smaller commissioners and traders in Amsterdam who were unable to secure a connection to a plantation through a *negotiatie* in the years after 1750 were pushed out of the connection.⁵⁹⁸

Initially those who managed the plantations had a pioneering position, they were autonomous in many of their business decisions, and investors in the Dutch Republic lagged so far behind in terms of information and understanding of what was going on that they had very little say over the daily running of the plantations. This relationship between the managers in the colony and the Republic changed drastically over the course of the eighteenth century. Due to the high credit demands of the liberalized slave trade, investors gained a large say over the businesses in the colony. During the first decades of the eighteenth century the connection was mostly one of rather straight forward representation: the planter or even merchant-planter

⁵⁹⁷ Oostindie, *Roosenburg*, 341–342.

⁵⁹⁸ Voort, *De Westindische Plantages*, 65, 80.

needed a representative in the Republic, and investors or repatriated owners wanted to be represented in the colony. All planters starting and developing a plantation would both need credit or cash to invest in their plantation and a merchant-correspondent in the Republic who would bring their sugar to market. The proceeds of those sales would be added to a *rekening* of the planter in the Republic. This account could be used to buy provisions to be shipped to the colony, to draw bills of exchange that could function as a method of payment in the colony, or the other options would be to reinvest or save it for a later date. Whatever was the case, the planter in the colony had a large say over what would happen with the account.

People such as Samuel Cohen Nassy, Stephanus Laurentius Neale, and the family Van Sandick moved back to the Dutch Republic once their business in the colony could support it.⁵⁹⁹ With the departure to the Republic came the issue of overseas representation. A rich and influential planter like Neale could use the acting Governor as his representative in the colony.⁶⁰⁰ This was no small business, in fact, Governor Mauricius stipend for his post as Governor was fl 9,000 while he made an additional fl 5,000 from the plantations he managed.⁶⁰¹ The eighteenth century saw the decline of the number of resident-planters (people who both owned and oversaw a plantation) in the colony. In a random trial by Van Stipriaan for the middle of the eighteenth century he found that between 20 and 25 per cent of the plantations did not have their owner reside in the colony. This figure rose to about two thirds absent owners in the 1790s.⁶⁰² The position of the administrator vis-à-vis the owners is well illustrated by the large share of the net incomes from a plantation that they could keep for themselves. The net proceeds from sales of plantation goods in Amsterdam were only four times larger than the income generated from administering that same plantation.⁶⁰³ The administrators made such a formidable amount by taking a 10 per cent provision of all the goods produced by a plantation, as well as from the supply of daily provisions, such as regional imports.⁶⁰⁴ The literature

⁵⁹⁹ See previous chapters. The family van Sandick is discussed in the plantation biography of Roosenburg and Mon Bijou by Oostindie who goes into great detail to disentangle this changing relationship between owners and managers of the plantations. For such families a possible first step before moving to the Republic was to let their children study there.

⁶⁰⁰ Gülcher, "Een Surinaamsche koffieplanter."

⁶⁰¹ Stipriaan, *Surinaams contrast*, 36 writes that the proceeds from the management of Neale's plantations was 10.000, but the source for this is unclear. In Van der Meiden, *Betwist bestuur*, 101, 158 it says it was fl 5.000 for all the administrations together.

⁶⁰² Stipriaan, *Surinaams contrast*, 293–294.

⁶⁰³ Oostindie, *Roosenburg*, 330–331.

⁶⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 329.

discusses how the relation changed for the worse with the onset of the *negotiatie*. The so-called *agendarissen* were a new generation of administrators. In the literature of the day there was a sense of moral panic about the sudden availability of credit through these people.⁶⁰⁵ P.F. Roos complained bitterly about the detrimental effect such managers had on the day to day practice of planters.⁶⁰⁶

What followed was the complete collapse of the autonomy of the plantation director, both with respects to their expenditure, as well as to their freedom of movement. The power of the administrators could be such that they would disallow planters to leave the plantation unless they had received formal permission from the administrator in town.⁶⁰⁷ Financially the planter, who was becoming more of an overseer than anything else, was completely dependent on the administrator in the city. Administrators became like Dukes ruling over a number of estates, trying to prevent any direct communication between the managers of those estates and the principals in the Dutch Republic. Planters in the hinterland relied greatly on contacts in the city who provided them with nearly everything they needed. From regionally imported goods to products from the Republic, much of it was distributed by people in the city. For example the plantation manager J.G. Dolre greatly depended on what was sent to him by the administrator P. Berkhoff and others in the city, who in turn depended on what arrived from overseas. If supplies were limited this immediately caused shortages. P. Berkhoff and G.V. Kermans sent him bulk goods he needed like flagstones, a barrel of tar, but also goods for personal consumption like cheese, drink and new clothes as well as food and supplies for the slaves such as mackerel and tobacco. The administrators kept Dolre up to date with the requests from the proprietors in the Republic, and demanded regular updates to the plantation accounts. They also restricted Dolre in his actions. He was reprimanded for lending tools to other plantations, or digging a ditch without their permission.⁶⁰⁸

The rather limited connections to the outside world – depending on one or two administrators in town – were typical for the Surinamese system of management from the credit boom (1765-1773) onward. The high provisions of the administrators made them benefiting partners in both

⁶⁰⁵ Nassy et al., *Essai historique*, 137–138 Describes the sudden arrival of agents in the city after the crisis of the mid-1760s: “dans chaque rue de Paramaribo on ne trouvoit que de agens munis de procurations pour offrir au premier venant de l’argent à credit’ . .

⁶⁰⁶ P.F. Roos, *Redevoering over de oorzaaken van ’t verval en middelen tot herstel der Volksplanting van Suriname* (Amsterdam: Hendrik Gartman, 1784).

⁶⁰⁷ Stipriaan, *Surinaams contrast*, 288.

⁶⁰⁸ HCA, 30/749.

production as well as consumption. Alex van Stipriaan argued that the uneasiness of the administrators with any direct communication between planters and owners was due to the strict hierarchical nature of colonial society.⁶⁰⁹ However, the suggestion by Oostindie and Beeldsnijder based on the case of the administrators Van der Meij and Gootenaar suggest that this was principally to prevent the owners from uncovering special arrangements between the investment fund director and the administrator,⁶¹⁰ or of course fraudulent operations of the administrators. Gootenaar himself argued against systems of attorneys he was involved in, writing that someone who owns one plantation, and is also administrator of another, will make more profit on the one he owns himself. This was not because he would be more careful with his own plantation, but because he knows all “lost corners” where he can do something, and experiment more freely with improvements. On top of that, added Gootenaar, the administrator’s 10 per cent is of great cost to the absent owners.⁶¹¹

It was not the first time that such a problem arose in Suriname. The paragraph on the commissioners discussed how the WIC attempted to solve the problem by introducing a second *commies*. When this did not work to their satisfaction they cultivated the relation with the Governor, balancing these two agents to prevent too much information asymmetry. In the case of the administrators and the investment funds the mistrust between the owners and the investment fund formed a complicating factor. The initial solution to the problem was to appoint more than one administrator.⁶¹² From the trade oriented nodal point Curaçao, came a letter by the MCC correspondent Pieter Kock Jansz, who made a comprehensive list about the partner he needed for his business. He needed a partner because “we should always take into account the morality of man.” This partner should be affluent, married without a prenuptial agreement, not an *assurandeur*, not an *armateur* who ships for his own account, banks or vessels.⁶¹³

But having two administrators was no definite solution, and could cause new problems, as van Stipriaan discussed in his study. Administrators would both try to pressure the plantation director to further their interests, and would on occasion replace the planter without the knowledge of the

⁶⁰⁹ Stipriaan, *Surinaams contrast*, 286.

⁶¹⁰ Oostindie, *Roosenburg*, 378–379; Beeldsnijder, “*Om werk van jullie te hebben*,” 16:96.

⁶¹¹ MCC, *Response op het Project*, entry 20 inv.nr. 1567.2.

⁶¹² Oostindie, *Roosenburg*, 323.

⁶¹³ MCC, *Pieter Kock Jansz, Letter from Pieter Kock Jansz. on Curaçao to the MCC Directors in Middelburg* (20 July 1762), entry 20 inv.nr. 56.6.

other administrator, let alone the overseas owners or investors.⁶¹⁴ The other problem was that having two administrators was far from a good way to prevent those administrators to look after their personal interest rather than those of the principals overseas. In fact, the administrators that Oostindie cites as a duo who shortly managed the Van Sandick plantations were Steenberg and Saffin, two men who managed their business in tandem in a large number of other occasions. While the administering by two different people could work for a period of time, its use declined over time, especially when the urban elite of administrators became divided into blocks. Marten Schalkwijk has argued that at the end of the eighteenth century there were “distinct groups with strong mutual business interests and not only a dispersed network of mistrust relations.”⁶¹⁵ The period in which there was more credit available through the *negotiatie* was not just a short ripple, but lasted longer and had more impact than the duration of the credit boom might suggest. During these years the colony changed, not only due to the massive influx of slaves, but also because of the way the connection between plantation and motherland acquired more levels of centralised management.

What is striking in the overview of bills of exchange for the MCC (see Appendix 3) is that the system used for the bills of exchange was much more complicated than the regular pattern in which there only was a drawer, bearer and drawee. The bills of exchange handled by the Middelburg Trading Company had several people involved in them. First there was a drawer (also referred to as payor) who wrote out the bill. This would often be a plantation manager buying slaves. This plantation manager ordered the drawee (the drawer’s business partner in the Netherlands) to give money to the company who had sold the slaves (the bearer or payee), which was represented by the *correspondent*. The bill would be taken to the directors of the MCC, or at least to a correspondent in Amsterdam where most of the drawees were stationed. In this way the plantation manager did not have to have cash, but could ensure the person he bought the slaves from that he would be paid once the bearer of the bill arrived back in the Netherlands. The drawee had a direct relation with the plantation manager. In most cases the plantation manager or drawer was obliged to send his plantation products to the drawee in the Netherlands. The profit made off the sale of these plantation products would be written down as credit out of which the bills of exchange could be paid once the representative of the Middelburg Trading Company arrived. However, it could be that the drawee would not accept the

⁶¹⁴ Stipriaan, *Surinaams contrast*, 287.

⁶¹⁵ J. Marten W. Schalkwijk, “Colonial State-Formation in Caribbean Plantation Societies. Structural Analysis and Changing Elite Networks in Suriname, 1650-1920” (Cornell University, 1994), 158–164.

bill because the drawee did not have the funds, the plantation manager did not have credit with the drawee or had failed to send over enough plantation products. If the transaction went right, the drawee would accept the bill, and be called acceptor from then on. If the bill was not accepted, the holder had to go back to the drawer. In Suriname there was a heavy fine for the drawer if his bill did not get accepted in the Netherlands. He would have to write a new bill of exchange including a 25 per cent fine on the amount on the original bill. On these transactions the *correspondent* was also accustomed to take a percentage, to be added to their account with the slave trading company in the Republic.

The bills for the trade on Suriname had an extra party involved since the bill were often drawn under *ordre* of the administrator under whom the drawer served, or someone who had received procuration from the drawee. The bills could either be drawn by private persons, or by people who were acting *in qualiteit*. This was indicated by writing *qq* behind a name, meaning that the person had procuration and was not handling his own property. This was often differentiated from those same people also managing properties *in privé*, for their own account. Most bills of exchanged used by plantation managers in 1763 (before the great leap in investments through the *negotiatie*) to pay the MCC were not drawn on investment funds but directly on the owners.⁶¹⁶ This changed quickly. Already in 1765 the investment funds have come to be an important source for credit to pay the MCC. These bills reveal the multiple connections, as well as the overlapping roles that many of the middlemen played.

Few of the names in the network of drawers and drawees will be unfamiliar to those studying the Surinamese plantation economy at the time (see Appendix 3 on page 240), either as director, administrator, owner or investment fund director. Among the drawers a figure like D. van der Meij stands out.⁶¹⁷ He can be seen in the list of bills both as a drawer on different drawees in the Republic, but also plays a role as administrator for others. Another, not uncommon occurrence was that someone would draw a bill with himself as the overseeing administrator, as can be seen in the case of D.F. Dandiran. He drew two bills in quality together with H. Overman, with himself as the administrator.

The middlemen representing the holder of the bills (the MCC) in this case were the brothers Saffin. They did many of the same jobs as Gootenaar,

⁶¹⁶ Only the Marselis brothers were drawn upon. The others were owners or relatives of the drawer's plantation. Van der Voort, *Westindische plantages*, 269-323. Bills of exchange destined to the company see appendix 5.

⁶¹⁷ He is discussed in the study by Oostindie as the administrator for the Van Sandick family. Here he can be seen as playing many roles in the system of administration and procuration.

and worked together on several occasions. The Saffins were an important node between various individuals. They also shortly served the Van Sandick family, but for some reason (according to Oostindie it was unclear why) they stopped representing the family after only a short period of time. It does not seem that they committed any blatant fraud, but their short-lived role as *correspondent* for the MCC might give a clue as to why they did not serve very long. The MCC directors wrote to Gootenaar that they wanted to switch from the Saffins to him simply because they heard from the captain of one of their ships that the Saffins were far too busy with all their jobs to properly take care of the interests of the company. Saffin & Company was expressly found to manage the business of the Middelburg Trade Company. Hans Saffin and Steenberch already had a company together, and so did Frans Saffin and Adriaan Gootenaar. The brothers Hans and Frans Saffin had however never combined their businesses before.⁶¹⁸ Once they combined their activities to serve the MCC they dealt with the selling of slaves, mostly advising the slave captains and handling the debts that planters had with the MCC. Besides handling the bills for the MCC in this case, they also were the ones acting as administrator for the slave buyers John MacNeil under the *negotiatie* Van der Poll, Paul Wentworth under the Marselis *negotiatie*, A. Nepveu under the Hamilton & Mijnders *negotiatie* and were also representing Isaak Harbanel and David Lemak Hoab for the buyer A. H. Arrias. The Saffins, Gootenaar and the other representatives of slave trading companies, absent owners, and investment funds show that while these businesses might formally have been separate enterprises in the Republic (although not always as seen in the case of Coopstad & Rochussen) the representatives in the colony often combined all the seemingly contradictory roles, including holding a position in local government.

Compared to the period before the big wave of *negotiatie* credit, production in the colony was high. Geopolitical problems and the outbreak of the wars – from the North American War for Independence to the end of the Napoleonic wars – caused considerable turmoil in the following decades. While great schemes to centralize plantation management in the hands of a large scale investment project failed, the years of the credit crunch did result in a centralization of ownership and management in the colony. The big players, such as Marselis and van der Poll got their hands on many plantations, and the number of middlemen with overlapping interests increased tremendously. An administrator like Wolff was able to have 57

⁶¹⁸ MCC, Letters from Saffin and Company to the MCC (27 January 1763), entry 20 inv.nr. 54.1.

businesses under his partial supervision in 1795.⁶¹⁹ As we shall see in Part III, the centralization of management by investment funds was not enough to guarantee the Dutch privileged access to their colony. Despite all the investments by the Dutch, the British and North Americans would come to take over the crucial trade and shipping connections, even the slave trade.

⁶¹⁹ Marten Schalkwijk, *Colonial State-Formation in Caribbean Plantation Societies. Structural Analysis and Changing Elite Networks in Suriname, 1650-1920* (dissertation Cornell University 1994) 158-159.

Part III: Dutch collapse and Atlantic shift

The end of the Atlantic world has been notoriously difficult to establish. The disintegration of the Atlantic world, by definition, did not happen before the end of the slave trade. The end of the slave trade lies beyond the scope of this book, somewhere in the early nineteenth century. The legal abolition of the Dutch trade came in 1814, but smugglers continued to carry their captive cargo to the colony. On an Atlantic scale the slave trade also continued, despite the British ban, especially by Iberian and Brazilian merchants. One argument to claim that something changed in the Atlantic world has been the independence struggles in the colony. This is rather clear change from the 1770s onwards. Many colonies broke the political dominance of the metropolis. National boundaries also appear to have been drawn up more fervently in the period after the Napoleonic wars. For Paramaribo the situation was rather different. It did not see any independence struggle, metropolitan control continued and regional shipping across imperial boundaries increased rather than diminished. What did decline was Dutch power, and North American and British shipping took over many of the important shipping connections to and from the colony.

7. Scattered connections, 1780-1795

During the Age of Revolution North American freighters and slavers came to dominate Paramaribo's shipping connections, and at the same time the number of connected ports also increased dramatically. In the first half of the 1770s (1770-1774) non-Dutch ships connected Paramaribo to 29 ports. In the years 1780 to 1784 both non-Dutch and Dutch ships came in from a total of 52 different places. In 1785-1789 this was 47 and in 1790-1794 the number had risen to 60. The increasing number of new ports and places connected to Paramaribo came at the expense of the connections to the Dutch Republic. Not only did the number of connected ports increase, also the role of non-Dutch shipping for the colony changed.

From the Fourth Anglo-Dutch War (1780-1784) onwards North American ships were taking over ever larger chunks of trade that had hitherto been the privilege of the Dutch. The decline of Dutch overseas power also resulted in legislative changes, granting non-Dutch ships ever more access to the colony. "High goods" such as sugar and coffee came to be shipped on non-Dutch ships. In 1783 the Surinamese were given the right to organise their own shipping and in 1789 the Dutch even relinquished their privileged access to the slave market of Paramaribo. This last measure prompted an increase of slave shipments to the city, largely by North American and British traders. The decision to open the slave market to non-Dutch ships was the result of a successful lobby by plantation owners. The slave traders from Zeeland did their best to prevent this measure. Their protests resulted in the granting of some token measures to protect their interests. During the First Coalition War (1793-1795) North American freighters even began to ship sugar and coffee for the Suriname Company to Amsterdam.

In the 1780-1784 war years the lobby in the Dutch Republic to organise navy convoys for ships sailing to Suriname had failed. Once the war had subsided private parties interested in the tropical Atlantic were able to push for support from the States General for the recovery of the slave trade.⁶²⁰ Due to the WIC's long running financial trouble its charter was not renewed in 1791. Meanwhile political forces were arguing for the centralisation of the state on a national level, including the management of the colonies. Private control over institutions and federal divisions came to be looked upon as archaic by sections of the Patriot Movement. When the supporters of this movement came to power with the help of the invading French army in 1795 they quickly centralised the management over the

⁶²⁰ NL-HaNA, Verspreide Westindische Stukken, *Placaat tot aanmoediging van den Negerhandel in de West-Indische Colonien* (24 November 1789), entry 1.05.06 inv.nr. 1225

colonies and disbanded the Suriname Company. The British invaded the colony in 1799, and during the years in which the Dutch had no overseas empire the British abolished the slave trade. When the newly found Kingdom of the Netherlands regained control of Suriname the slave trade had ended, ultimately removing the vital peg that had kept the Atlantic together as an integrated world.

This chapter describes how the rather steady connections of the middle decades of the eighteenth century became more haphazard at the end of the century. First it details the difficulties of the Dutch to maintain their shipping connections to Paramaribo. This is followed with a description of the rise of North American shipping and the place of the North American shipping connection in the War for Independence. The last paragraph deals with the relinquishing of the exclusive Dutch access to Paramaribo's slave market. The reason for the change in the shipping routes was both military and economic: the collapse of the Dutch navy in wartime and the rise of North American freight shipping after Independence.

7.1. Trade with the heartland of independence

The story of the *Gaspee*, a schooner in the service of His Majesty the King of England, and the *Hannah* under captain Lindsey exemplifies the importance of the economic ties between the West-Indies – including Suriname – and the heartland of independence.⁶²¹ This paragraph discusses the economic importance of these connections which helps to explain the defiance of the New-Englanders in the face of British restrictions. In the early 1770s the Royal schooner cruised Narragansett Bay, trying to catch those who did not pay their duties going to Rhode Island.⁶²² The *Gaspee*'s captain Dudingston was despised by the rich Providence merchant John Brown. Brown was the man who formed a crucial link in the chain between the Surinamese plantations and New England distillers.⁶²³ He was a notorious tax evader. Brown was the one reintroducing the tax-evasion strategy of "sailing to Madeira" after the Molasses Act had been renewed into the Sugar Act in 1767.⁶²⁴ On the 9th of June 1772 the HMS *Gaspee* chased the packet boat *Hannah* which had refused to lower its sails to be inspected. The *Hannah* was a lighter vessel. It is unclear if it was deliberate, but the ship tacked across the bay into the shallows off Namquit Point. There

⁶²¹ Robert H. Patton, *Patriot Pirates: The Privateer War for Freedom and Fortune in the American Revolution*, 1st Ed. (Pantheon, 2008), 4–6.

⁶²² Charles Rappleye, *Sons of Providence : the Brown Brothers, the Slave Trade, and the American Revolution*, 2006, 102–126.

⁶²³ Postma, "Breaching the Mercantile Barriers."

⁶²⁴ Wiener, "The Rhode Island Merchants and the Sugar Act."

it crossed a submerged sandbank. The pursuing and heavier *Gaspee* ran aground on the sandbank and had to watch how the crew of the *Hannah* mooned them.

This boyish mischief of the captain and crew is only half the story. Once John Brown heard that the *Gaspee* ran aground, he mustered a force of sixty men in the harbour. They took longboats and peddled two and a half hours to the stranded taxman. The men from Providence boarded the ship. Shots were fired and within minutes they subdued the crew. The ship was looted and (accidentally) set it alight.⁶²⁵ This incident occurred a year before the Bostonians threw their tea party. It was clear that both cities spearheaded an impending revolt against British rule.

Rhode Island and Boston also became the main destination in the period before the opposition culminated in the uniting of the American states, and their declaration of independence. The molasses trade was part of a network that centred on a coastal trade along the American East Coast and was crucial to the economic development of the coastal colonies.⁶²⁶ Exactly the heartland of the independence movement was the main customer of Surinamese and other non-British West-Indian molasses. Not all states were as eager to join the open rebellion against their motherland. As with any revolt some were willing to strike deals. Others had moved beyond reconciliation and were pledging to fight until the end, especially those with a direct interest in the regional trade.

In the early days of April 1778 the ship *Two Brothers* under the command of William McBride was captured by two British ships while sailing from Suriname to North America. The first ship that caught *Two Brothers* was non-commissioned, and simply plundered it. A second ship sailed by. It did have a commission from the King of England and took the *Two Brothers* as a lawful prize to Bristol where it was sold.⁶²⁷ The *Two Brothers* had frequented Suriname and St. Eustatius and was on its way to Boston when it was attacked. The ship was a microcosm of the Atlantic network connected to Surinam. At the time the British privateer took the ship, it belonged to at least five merchants. Two of the owners (two brothers) lived in St. Eustatius: Samuel and Jonathan Jones. They had bought the prize

⁶²⁵ Patton, *Patriot Pirates*, 4–6.

⁶²⁶ Shepherd and Williamson, "The Coastal Trade of the British North American Colonies, 1768-1772."

⁶²⁷ HCA, *Two Brothers*, captain William McBride, Inventory, account of sale, and fees for the sale of the prize The Two Brothers, captain William McBride at the High Court of Admiralty of England, 13-Jul-1778, 332/467/5.

ship *Pompey*⁶²⁸ at Antigua and renamed it *Two Brothers*. The other three owners were Surinamese of Dutch descent: Meinertshagen, Oehlers and De Vries.⁶²⁹ At least one of them had been active selling regional goods in Suriname since the early 1770s.⁶³⁰

[Figure 11]

**Figure 10 Drinking scene of North American captains in Paramaribo, 1755
John Greenwood, Sea Captains Carousing in Surinam, 1755.**

The initial voyages of the *Two Brothers* had been between Suriname and St. Eustatius.⁶³¹ It had carried a sundry of different articles which accompanied the bulk goods salt and molasses: salt toward the Suriname River to be used by slaves to pickle their food, molasses outwards for raw consumption and as the main ingredient to make North American rum. The *Two Brothers* did not just transport goods but also people who moved between the colonies. For example the Penha family, a long established name in the colony, went from Suriname to St. Eustatius on board the ship⁶³² and on the last voyage a mister Milldoff of Norwegian origin and a former officer in the army of the King of Denmark was passenger to the American colonies.

⁶²⁸ HCA, Two Brothers of captain William McBride, 332/467/5, Letter by John Ball on the ownership of a ship, St. Eustatius 30-Aug-1777.

⁶²⁹ Ibidem, Interrogation of captain William McBride of the Two Brothers taken as prize between Eustatia and Suriname and brought to Bristol by Dick William of the Barbay Pacquet, 1-Jun-1778.

⁶³⁰ SvS, OBP, (1771), entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 346.

⁶³¹ HCA, Two Brothers of captain William McBride, 332/467/5, Interrogation of Thomas Dennett of Piscataway (New Hampshire, Bristol 15-Jun-1778.

⁶³² Ibidem, Portclearance for the Penha family to leave on *Two Brothers* of captain William McBride to go from Suriname to Eustatius, 15-Oct-1777.

Captain William McBride received citizenship of St. Eustatius shortly before he went into the business of sailing between the colonies on the *Two Brothers*. He therewith became a subject of the States of Holland. The voyage of the *Two Brothers* should have been from Suriname to Boston in the ‘rebellious colonies’. It went there in order to sell goods and be repaired. The crew was recruited at different places and were themselves highly (or purposefully) confused about the origin of their colleagues and passenger. From their testimonies it is even unclear how many came aboard in Suriname before the *Two Brothers* was caught.⁶³³ In this case it might well be that those who were identified by others as Americans –and who might therefore be associated with the rebels – would identify themselves as Englishmen.⁶³⁴ The crew did not fight the British openly, but their answers during the interrogation betray a defiant attitude. The inter-colonial nature of the ship’s ownership, the noncompliance with metropolitan regulations, and its inter-imperial circuit of trade are representative for operations in the eighteenth-century Atlantic. They also reveal a high level of integration between the Atlantic regions outside the reach of Kings and Companies in Europe.

Table 12 Crew of the *Two Brothers* in hierarchical order, April 1778

William McBride	Captain from St. Eustatius is 42 years old. He was born in Lancaster County Worcester, Massachusetts Bay, North America. Subject of the States of Holland, and before that of the King of Great Britain. He was a burgher of St. Eustatius. He resided in Connecticut, from where he sailed to St. Eustatius. His wife was in Norwich, Connecticut.
Thomas	Born in Pascalway, New Hampshire and claims to be subject of King

⁶³³ The figure ranges between six and four out of the nine present at the moment of capture. According to the Thomas Dennet, second to captain McBride, six of the crew were Dutch, one American, and two English, including himself. Contrary to Thomas Dennet, Thomas White says there were five Dutch on board, and that there were two Americans in the crew. Peter Bale says he and one other man were the English on board. Peter thinks the passenger is a Dutchman on a commission to the rebel army. Peter upholds the nationality of the people was American, Dutch and English. Ibidem, Interrogation of Thomas White of Rhode Island on *Two Brothers* of captain William McBride, Bristol, 15-Jun-1778; Ibidem, Interrogation of Peter Bale of Eustatius Mariner of *Two Brothers* of captain William McBride, 15-Jun-1778.

⁶³⁴ The New Hampshire born Thomas Dennet claimed himself a loyal subject of King George III while he was sailing with goods from a competitor of the King to supply a colony in open rebellion to the King and very likely having on board an officer seeking to offer his services to the rebel army. Ibidem, Interrogation of Thomas Dennet.

Dennet	George III.
Thomas White	From Rhode Island, which he regarded as his residence. He was 20 years old.
Peter Bale	From St. Eustatius, around 22 years old. In the previous three years he lived in Manchester and Long Island, and did not remember how long he stayed in St. Eustatius, before he went to sea again. He said he was a subject of King George the III, and had not been admitted burgher or freeman in any city or town.
Abraham Sprou	Foremast man from St. Eustatius was thirty eight years. He was born in St. Eustatius, a subject of the States of Holland, and a citizen of St. Eustatius for twenty years, ever since he had been able to bear arms.
Mr. Milldoff	Norwegian who served as officer in the army of the King of Denmark, passenger.

A typical North American vessel on the Paramaribo waterfront was the *Sally* under command of captain Valentine.⁶³⁵ It was built in Boston in 1770 and was owned by two stakeholders from that same city.⁶³⁶ They outfitted a voyage with seven seamen from Boston to Suriname and back to Boston.⁶³⁷ The ship was not mounted with guns, but its hold was filled with wood, various kinds of fish, as well as hoops and staves to make into barrels to transport molasses.⁶³⁸ The goods on board were sold to a few middlemen in the city, such as the company Clemens & Scheffer, and the merchants Brandon, and Oehlers. What was not sold to middlemen was auctioned off.⁶³⁹ The skipper Thomas Valentine must have been well known in Surinam. For a period of twenty years he sailed between North America and Surinam, as well as between Suriname and St. Eustatius. He arrived on ten

⁶³⁵ There is another ship named Sally mentioned in this article. That one is commanded by Captain Harding.

⁶³⁶ HCA, *Ownership documents of the Sally built at Rhode Island in 1770, stipulating that no subject of of the King of Great Brittain has part therein* (Boston 20 augustus 1777), Boston, 32/447.

⁶³⁷ HCA, *Contracts of the seamen aboard the Sally, captain Thomas Valentine. They agree that for the mentioned wages they will stay on the ship for the travel to Suriname and back to Boston* (Boston 1777), Boston, 32/447.

⁶³⁸ HCA, *Portclearance and cargo statement of the Ship Sally, captain Thomas Valentine, sailing from Boston* (Boston: Naval Officer of Boston, State of Massachusetts Bay 20 augustus 1777), Boston, 32/447.

⁶³⁹ HCA, *Account of sales in Suriname of the ship Sally, captain Thomas Valentine* (Paramaribo 15 december 1777) 32/447.

different ships, but practically always outfitted from Boston, with sometimes a different destination on the way back to North America. We can say he was experienced in doing business in the colony by the time he wrote the accounts that are studied here. In 1777 he had been in Suriname on at least eighteen voyages spanning a period of sixteen years. Adding up the months he stayed in the colony – waiting to sell his cargo and load up for the return voyage – we see he lived in Suriname for roughly four and a half years.⁶⁴⁰ Many Governors in the colony spent less time than him before they died or left.

Valentine knew how to do business in Surinam. Even before the *Sally* had arrived and worked its way through customs the captain had already bought three gallons of rum for his crew. He would buy another three gallons only ten days later. After each voyage repairs had to be made to the ship. The waterfront of Paramaribo was not well suited for repairing bigger vessels, but small time maintenance was done. Thomas Valentine bought hardwood to fix the mast and hired ‘a negro’ to help with work on the *Sally*.⁶⁴¹ After a week and a half he started to sell the goods on board. With buying he waited almost three weeks after his arrival. In this period he spent his money on fixing the mast of the ship as well as coopering barrels to load molasses in.⁶⁴² He spent a total of fS 2,129 on blacksmiths, coopers, twine, and especially the port charges (fS 832). The Englishmen (or after independence Americans) were banned from exporting sugar. They were however allowed to get molasses and bring it to the New England colonies to make rum. These smaller ships sailed up the Suriname River, or had a sailor on board a barge to buy up molasses, or bought it from brokers in the city. Their ship and crew was simply too small to be able to send a group of sailors upstream. British captains rented slaves to assist them on board the ships with repair work or with coopering the molasses barrels.⁶⁴³

It only follows that the North American skippers and sailors were not only a regular sight in the city of Paramaribo, but that they were an integral part of it, relying on local slave owners to rent out their workers for sundry jobs to be done on the arriving vessels. The contribution to the Surinamese society was far more than relieving it of its surplus molasses.

⁶⁴⁰ PSNADC.

⁶⁴¹ HCA, *Account of the costs for the ship Sally, captain Thomas Valentine while being in Paramaribo* (Paramaribo 17 december 1777), Paramaribo, 32/447.

⁶⁴² Ibidem.

⁶⁴³ HCA, *The Sally, captain Thomas Valentine; Account of Expences in Suriname by captain Russel of the Dolphyn* (Suriname, 1778), *Account of the Costs for the Ship Sally, captain Thomas Valentine While Being in Paramaribo* (17 December 1777) 32/447.; HCA, *The Dolphyn, captain Russel*, 32/309.

They participated in city life and the hustle and bustle on the Paramaribo waterfront. Also the inhabitants -including the governing councils- were beginning to see them in that light. With the rules and regulations that were issued the Governor and his councillors started to refer to them in the same way as they referred to the Dutch captains. And they also started to expect from the same commitment regarding civil duties. Examples are that British and Dutch skippers and middlemen were obliged to keep to the same rules regarding the price of wheat. If a fire broke out both the British and Dutch crews on board of ships on the waterfront had to follow the same instructions to help to put it out (half the crew left the ship at the first alarm and again half of that when the second alarm is sounded). When extra taxes were levied to pay for the fight against the Maroons, British skippers were expected to contribute the same amount as Dutch skippers. When the tax to finance the Maroon wars were suspended because of economic difficulties, the Dutch and British were again treated equally.⁶⁴⁴

The dealings between the Surinamese and the North American English were not frictionless. The borders between insiders and outsiders were quickly drawn in moments of conflict. On such occasions clashes would be framed as between “inhabitants” and “English.” These clashes were sometimes on very crude economic issues. And sometimes they were not. An example is the incident surrounding the perceived foul play of a Dutch army officer during a game of billiard, in which a British merchant played a crucial role. The officer had bounced his ball (“as is customary in these lands” he said to his defence). A British captain who was not playing but watching the game got into an argument with the officer about the rules. The captain left, only to return with a group of sailors to back up his arguments with fists. The stand-off was solved after a few blows, but the fight was not over. To ensure that both sides – who were each mustering their supporters – would not clash later that evening, the Commander and Bailiff organized a meeting with the captain and the officer. A British merchant was invited to the meeting as an independent mediator. The opposing parties shook hands and had a drink after which peace was restored. The mediating merchant was requested to write a report of the events. His role was important. While captains and especially sailors come and go, the merchant was a more dependable part of the community functioning as a mediator between Dutch colonists and the people working the regional trade.⁶⁴⁵

⁶⁴⁴ Bylaw 636, 743,787 and 819, from the mid eighteenth century lay down the same rules for both groups. Only the import tax discriminated against British shipping.

⁶⁴⁵ SvS, *Relaes van seeker saek tusschen den officier Everhard Brouwer en een Engelse Cap. Voorgevalle* (1739), entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 266 fo. 857.; SvS, *Verklearing over het bijleggen van*

This could also work the other way around. Merchants, despite (or because of) their role as mediator, were also viewed with suspicion. British merchants were accused of striking secret deals with skippers; for example that they would buy up all horses or tobacco coming into the harbour, monopolising the market, and later selling the goods at a scandalous profit.⁶⁴⁶ The animosity between merchants and colonists was felt on both sides. Thomas Palmer, an agent of North American traders said that he despised being in Surinam. According to him the white colonists in Suriname were nothing more than “negroes with pale skins.” This was clearly not meant as a compliment. He did not only complain about the cultural peculiarity of the whites in Suriname, but also on the terrible state of the local market and how difficult it was to make a profit.⁶⁴⁷

No matter if there was more love than hate in the relationship, there was a frequent exchange and interrelation across imperial boundaries in the colonies. This is also clearly represented by the first news article in the first newspaper printed in the colony. It is both a sign of a growing urban community as well as a rooted connection to the North American colonies that the incident of forced British taxed tea imports into New England formed the opening news in Surinam’s first newspaper. The violent opposition to prevent the selling of tea was described as *vlytig*, a positive word meaning industrious.⁶⁴⁸ Paramaribo was becoming a place where there was a frequent exchange and interaction with people from colonies officially belonging to different empires, who felt a commonality when it came to tax issues with the metropolis. Surinamese merchants and planters also travelled to North America to do business, some even accompanied the barrels of molasses to Boston to ensure their sale and organise a return shipment.⁶⁴⁹

The independence struggle of the North Americans was partly fought over the right to import cheap molasses into Boston and Rhode Island from Dutch and French plantation colonies.⁶⁵⁰ By the time the thirteen states had declared their independence, the products shipped from Suriname

de ruzie tussen de Officier en de Engelse Capitein (Paramaribo 27 October 1739), entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 266.

⁶⁴⁶ Bylaw 688, 17-Feb-1767, *Plakaatboek*, 807-808.

⁶⁴⁷ HCA, *Letter from Paramaribo to the owner of the Eagle Martin Brimmer about the Carolina cargo carried by Ross captain of the Eagle and his life in the colony* (10 april 1778), 32/325.

⁶⁴⁸ ‘Noord-Amerika’, *De Weeklycksche Woensdaagsche Surinaamse Courant*, 1.1 (10 augustus 1774) 2.

⁶⁴⁹ SAA, Archief van het nieuw stedelijk bestuur, *Bijlagen bij de notulen van het comite voor zeehandel en koopvaart* (1795), entry 5053 inv.nr 1021-1022.

⁶⁵⁰ McCusker, *Rum and the American Revolution* 1.

northwards had diversified as well as the destinations they sailed to. A prime example is *The Eagle*. It sailed from Boston to Charleston in South Carolina before it continued onward to Surinam. At the first stop in Charleston the captain unloaded wood, and the crew sold apples. The hold of *The Eagle* was filled with rice before sailing for Surinam. *The Eagle* only sailed into the Suriname that one time, but its captain, James Ross might have been there before.⁶⁵¹ He sailed almost in a straight line to Suriname arriving a little bit too far east. Sailing up the Suriname River the captain went off board to the fort to organise the documents. The captain handled the goods on board *The Eagle*. His crew of five hands helped to organise the barge loads of molasses. A man of the crew would be sent to the plantations while those in Paramaribo waited for his return.⁶⁵²

In Suriname there was also a correspondent looking after the goods brought in by captain Ross. This man discussed the state of the market with one of the owners of *The Eagle*. According to this mister Palmer there were 50 casks of rice in stock at the Paramaribo market at any time. Competition from Providence had allegedly arrived two days earlier than they had.⁶⁵³ This had supposedly caused the market to be flooded– with rice.⁶⁵⁴ In his letter, Palmer (the Paramaribo agent) went out of his way to make clear that only little profits should be expected from the sale of goods in Suriname. Yet this was only a minor problem. The return cargo would “make amends.”⁶⁵⁵ That the molasses would make up for any loss made on the shipment from North America was clear, and had been the rule for the merchants in the regional trade. Molasses were however not the only product loaded aboard *The Eagle*. The origins and destinations in the trade were changing quickly compared to the earlier periods. Around twenty different kinds of products (and of some products different varieties) were taken on board in Suriname by *The Eagle*. The molasses were not the thing Ross spent most money on. He also loaded for fS 720 in ginger, fS 200 in pens, fS 419 of cordage, and

⁶⁵¹ PSNADC.

⁶⁵² HCA, *Log of the Eagle, captain James Ross: Boston to Charlestown to Suriname to Boston and from Bermuda to New York* (1778) 32/325.

⁶⁵³ Ibidem, Letter from Palmer in Paramaribo to the owner of the Eagle Martin Brimmer about the Carolina cargo carried by Ross captain of the Eagle and his life in the colony, 10-April-1778. The letter was dated April 10th 1778 and was sent from Paramaribo to the owner of the Eagle Martin Brimmer. Captain Ross was told to deliver this letter, which held ‘a most miserable Account Sales of his Carolina Cargo’.

⁶⁵⁴ Four other ships had indeed arrived in March 1778, but none of those had arrived two days before the Eagle, and none of them had come from Providence or Rhode Island generally. PSNADC.

⁶⁵⁵ HCA, Letter from Palmer, 32/325.

several hundreds in varieties of linen. Other commodities bought in Suriname for the North American market were paper, tea, handkerchiefs and food. The price of the goods loaded on board *The Eagle* by Ross on its way to Boston was almost f\$ 3,180, many times more than the value of the molasses they bought.

The North Americans kept Suriname integrated into their Atlantic network, and did so depending on Surinamese middlemen. The Dutch tried to save their position in the Atlantic by lowering taxes and restrictions on shipping to and from the colony. Simultaneously with the decline of the Dutch maritime position in the Atlantic, the North Americans rapidly increased their shipping, and the range of ports active in the Atlantic trade. The diversification in both origins and destinations also meant the sudden increase of American ships sailing on St. Eustatius, having the Americans thicken a connection between two Dutch colonies. In that same period Dutch shipping on Dutch harbours was partially taken over by Americans.

According to Nassy the colonists in Paramaribo were spending more per capita than in any city in the Americas.⁶⁵⁶ The colony's waterfront showed a lively trade in regional products, and along the river one could find 'many shops' as well as "warehouses for the foodstuffs and other products that have been shipped in by the Americans to provide for Negroes on the plantations." This lively trade was important for the colony, as it had been since its founding. David Nassy argued "if the interests of the Republic would allow for Suriname to be turned into a free port, and colonists would become free to trade their products themselves, the colony would see a happy change without causing damage to the Capital."⁶⁵⁷ Nassy and his co-authors (amongst them the Paramaribo-based regional trader Samuel Brandon) hoped to follow up on an important change that had already been introduced for the regional trade in 1783. In December of that year the directors of the SC in Amsterdam issued a new by-law allowing Dutch ships to load and ship molasses and distillates to regional destinations. In 1783 the Directors of the SC saw fit to give Dutch ships the right to operate in the trade at half the cost of British / North American ships. The 5 per cent tax was cut in half for the Dutch coming from North American or non-Dutch regional ports.⁶⁵⁸ After the directors had succumbed to the pressure from the colonists to open the trade connections in 1704, requests had continued to not only open this trade for the non-Dutch captains, but also to allow the

⁶⁵⁶ Nassy et al., *Essai historique*, 44.

⁶⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 42–44.

⁶⁵⁸ Bylaw 869 on the export of strong drinks to America and nearby ports, 6-Dec-1783. J.A. Schiltkamp and Th. de Smidt, *West Indisch Plakaatboek* (Amsterdam: Emmering, 1973) 1056–1057.

Surinamese themselves to trade with the regional ports. The ban on this Surinamese trade had however continued, and the non-Dutch, chiefly British and North-American ships and merchants had catered the connection exchanging molasses for a wide range of consumption goods.⁶⁵⁹

The Fourth Anglo-Dutch War had greatly impeded the North American trade to the Caribbean colonies. In Jamaica the break-out of famine was directly linked to the lack of North American shipping to the island.⁶⁶⁰ While such a shortage as a result of war is not mentioned in the case of Suriname, the directors of the colony emphasized the importance of rum from the newly found distilleries in Paramaribo to be exported from Suriname, and being one for the rare finished products exported from the colony in the early-modern period. In the late seventies ships also carried finished products (of Dutch origin) to North America. Overall the chief export to North America remained to be molasses. There was a growing sense in the colony that the colony should become integrated in the regional trade, and that those organising their business in the colony should have direct access to this trade and shipping. While it was clearly advantageous for merchants and plantation owners in the colony, the SC directors remained sceptical about opening up a connection that was not under their control. Johan Hodshon and son wrote that several planters had started rum distilleries in the colony and requested to be allowed to trade the rum that they produced in the neighbouring islands and districts and to that end use their own ships. They argued that they wished to follow the rules that applied according to the by-law of 1704, with one difference, namely not to see these ships as foreign. The request was placed in the hands of a commission.⁶⁶¹ The commission on the issue argued that to allow this would be advantageous to the planters, but that it might encourage planters with large mortgages to trade illegally. Therefore, the rules of 1704 were to be amended, but the new ones were to be strictly enforced.⁶⁶²

To make the leap from colony to major power the young American Republic incorporated captured ships into their fleet. To add to the fledgling navy of the recently independent British colonies privateers were going out capturing and arming any vessel they could find. But not only their makeshift navy was strengthened, captured ships were also used by

⁶⁵⁹ Bylaw 869.

⁶⁶⁰ Richard B. Sheridan, "The Crisis of Slave Subsistence in the British West Indies During and after the American Revolution," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 33, no. 4, Third Series (October 1976): 615–641.

⁶⁶¹ SvS, Resoluties Directeuren 1783, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 73, Request to trade rum, 1-Oct-1783.

⁶⁶² Ibidem, Report from the commission on regional trade, 6-Dec-1783.

merchants. The privateering of the North Americans was not simply aimed at pestering the British and taking their merchandise, but also to increase their navy and merchant fleet. Ships taken by the young republic were sometimes immediately used to cater the trade connection between Suriname and Boston.⁶⁶³

This strict enforcement of the remaining restrictions proved to be very difficult. The Dutch ambassador to the United States in Philadelphia sent a letter to the States General about the causes for this *sluickhandel* by citizens of North America. In his opinion this trade was expanding to the detriment of the Dutch Republic, trafficking “sugar, coffee, indigo & cotton” from the colonies of the Dutch Republic to “various places in North America.” The SC was unable to take any effective measures, but encouraged the enforcement of the 1704 bylaw.⁶⁶⁴ The SC installed a commission to investigate the issue, but had to conclude that despite the resolutions and letters on the issue since 1784 the export of the “products of the colony” on North American vessels had continued to grow. When the trade on Dutch vessels was opened the directors of the SC argued that “to us it seems profitable for the inhabitants of the colony that those goods are shipped by ships equipped over there.” They had blocked any such attempt for eighty years. Now they allowed all inhabitants of the colony to be free to harbour and equip small vessels and sail these to neighbouring places in America and bring back from there in return all those goods of which the import and export had until then been limited to non-Dutch ships. They further encouraged such Surinamese trade by levying only 2.5 per cent trade tariffs instead of the 5 per cent for non-Dutch ships. Despite these encouragements North American ships overtook shipping in the Atlantic in the years after the fourth Anglo-Dutch War.

With little other means at their disposal, the directors wrote a letter to the governing council in Suriname to ask them to be vigilant, and “that the useful and permitted North American trade shall not be misused” as a cover for the illegal trade.⁶⁶⁵ They reasoned that “many of those products have ended up in North America (...) by the necessity for the planters to continue their business during the War.” The lack of imports made it necessary to

⁶⁶³ HCA, The Sally of Thomas Valentine 32/447, Court of Vice Admiralty of the province of New York, Court papers and Interrogation of the Sally, captain Thomas Valentine, 30-Jan-1778.

⁶⁶⁴ SvS, Resoluties Directeuren 1784, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 74, Breaching of the 1704 regional trade law, 23-Jun-1784.

⁶⁶⁵ “dat van den nuttigen en veroorloofden Noord Americaanschen handel geen misbruik worden gemaakt.” SvS, *Resoluties directeuren* 1786, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 76, Report on the illicit trade, 1-Nov-1786.; Ibidem, Illegal trade on North America, 11-Oct-1786.

exchange goods with “*vreemde schippers*” (alien captains) and they accepted that those captains had been admitted to Suriname by the council for that reason.⁶⁶⁶ This leniency did not sit well with the other provinces, and the deputies of Holland and West Friesland as well as Utrecht supported the complaints by the ambassador in the U.S.⁶⁶⁷ In May 1787 two North American interlopers were caught, much to the delight of the directors of the SC. They hoped that this would set an example.⁶⁶⁸ However, overall it rarely happened that American ships were prosecuted for smuggling, despite the insistence of the directors of the company on the vigilance of Suriname’s government.

The shipping of high goods by North Americans seems so pervasive that one could wonder if they even knew it was not allowed. When an American shipping company introduced the Suriname-based Jewish merchant Samuel Brandon to George Washington, the parties involved were completely open about the export of sugar and coffee from the colony to North America, despite the strict ban on the export of high goods by the Suriname Company in Amsterdam. Those operating in the regional trade seem to have been in the dark about the restrictions to limit the outward shipping of high goods from the colony. In a letter by George Washington on the purchase of a she-ass he wanted to make with Samuel Brandon in Suriname he wrote that in case the purchase failed he “requested Mr Branden to send the proceeds of the sales of the flour, in Molasses & Coffee”, without hinting at the illicit nature of coffee export or special remuneration for the risk taken by Brandon. Washington sent “twenty five barrels of superfine flour ... but if it should prove inadequate, the deficiency shall be made up in the way most agreeable to yourself.” The forward nature of the request “proceeds from the good character given of you to me, by Messrs Fitzgerald & Lyles of Alexandria.” Of course, something could go wrong on the way from Suriname to North-America, and “if contrary to my wishes, a disappointment happens, I request in that case that you would be so obliging as to send me in return for the flour, two hogsheads of Molasses, & the remainder in the best Coffee of your Country.” When the ass was delivered Washington wrote a second letter to Samuel Brandon notifying

⁶⁶⁶ SvS, Resoluties Directeuren 1784, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 74, Admission of non-Dutch ships, 18-Aug-1784.

⁶⁶⁷ Ibidem, Deputies of the Provinces complain against regional exports, 1-Sep-1784.

⁶⁶⁸ SvS, Resoluties Directeuren 1787, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 77, Case of two North American ships caught smuggling, 9-May-1787 and 23-May-1787.

him of the safe arrival as well as of the molasses and coffee as stated on the bill of lading.⁶⁶⁹

So, why only coffee, why not ship sugar as well? Fitzgerald and Lyles had strong opinions on what should be shipped from the colony. They did not recommend ordering rum, which 'is high proof but badly flavoured', and also the Surinamese sugar was thought to be "extremely dark." That one of these was a legal and the other an illegal export did not deserve to be mentioned in their letter. Two other products were recommended; but also in that case they made no distinction between the legal export of molasses, and the illegal export of coffee. Both the products were, according to Lylse "superior to any we get from the West Indies." The four products were regarded as the colony's only exports, "except Cocoa which we make but little use of here." Again, cocoa cannot be exported legally from Suriname to America, but this fact is completely ignored by the representative of the shipping company, who only disregarded the product because there was no demand in the place from where they operated.⁶⁷⁰

The connection between Suriname and North America saw a mixture of both consignments to the captains, or to trusted Surinamese merchants. Someone like Samuel Brandon was a trusted figure in the colony. He supplied flour to the Suriname Company⁶⁷¹ and was also contracted to provide the company with regionally imported beef.⁶⁷² Brandon traded flour through North American shipping companies, such as Fitzgerald & Lyles, who consigned goods to their captain as well as to Brandon. George Washington trusted Brandon more than the captain despite the suggestion by Fitzgerald & Lylse to consign the goods to the captain because of the length of the voyage. Washington thought "it is more in the power of a resident at

⁶⁶⁹ Theodore J. Crackel (ed.), *The Papers of George Washington Digital Edition* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, Rotunda, 2008).
<http://rotunda.upress.virginia.edu/founders/GEWN-04-03-02-0464> (seen 30-Sep-2011).

⁶⁷⁰ Idem.

⁶⁷¹ SvS, OBP, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 386, Contract of Samuel Brandon with Governor J.G. Wichers, 18-Sep-1786. In 1786 Samuel Brandon closed a contract with Governor Wichers to supply the colony with 'zoo veel vaaten goede en witte Engelsche blom als ten behoeven van het militaire hospitaale door den boekhouder derzelve zal werden gerequieerd' for the set price of 2.5 stuyvers per pound. The contractual obligation to supply flour would end six months and a day after the declaration of war would have arrived in the colony.

⁶⁷² SvS, Resoluties Directeuren 1794, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 84, The delivery of Dutch and American meat. The SC consumed about thirty six thousand pounds of meat per month. According to a resolution of the directors in 1794 a total of 110.000 pounds of meat can be bought from the Americans per year, about a quarter of the yearly consumption. The supplier of at least part of this amount are the heirs of Samuel Brandon.

Surinam, than it can be in that of the Capt'n to procure" even though the captain, William Bartlett had sailed his sloop *Polly* to Suriname before.⁶⁷³

How Brandon became known as someone to buy asses from is curious. Mules were shipped to the colony from Rhodes Island, but were increasingly coming from North Africa as well. The animals were used for transport on the plantations as well as in Paramaribo itself. Dutch traders made inquiries with their correspondents in the colony⁶⁷⁴ and made requests to the SC to infringe on the charter and be permitted to bring mules to Suriname.⁶⁷⁵ In the case of the Wirth brothers (one in Amsterdam, the other in Suriname) the mules were to be taken on board along the way to fulfil the contract of C.H. Wirth with planters for the delivery of these animals. The ship on which this should happen was purpose-built to transport mules, but because it was built outside of the Dutch Republic, a special permission was needed. They realized that the war with England was drawing to a close, and soon the war-time flexibility to let non-Dutch ships sail to Suriname would very likely end, making a specific permission from the directors all the more important.⁶⁷⁶ The Wirth brothers and Klint & Co were not alone in the connection between Morocco and Suriname. According to an American in Tanger "Mules are exported to Suriname and to other parts of America both on the Continent and among the Islands." The Americans were at the time quickly advancing into the Mediterranean, providing American ships "Ports where our ships may rest if we shou'd be engaged in a European War, or in one with the other Barbary States." The idea was that their ships would "become the Carriers of Wheat from Morocco to Spain, Portugal and Italy, and may find Employment at times when the navigation of our own country is stop'd by the winter Season, and we shall resume our old mule trade from Barbary to Suriname and possibly to some of the West India islands."⁶⁷⁷

The shipments of mules could be sizable. There was a captain W. Cowell with a schooner *Machias* had sailed from Boston "with a load of planks and provisions, left for Suriname with 61 mules",⁶⁷⁸ he arrived in

⁶⁷³ PSNADC

⁶⁷⁴ MCC, *Letters from the directors of the MCC to Adriaan Gootenaar*, entry 20 inv.nr. 100.

⁶⁷⁵ SvS, *Resoluties Directeuren 1783*, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 73, In 1783 the directors grant permission to widow Simon Klint & Comp to have a ship (built outside the Dutch Republic) sail to the Barbary coast to buy Mules and to bring them to Suriname, 5-Nov-1783.

⁶⁷⁶ Ibidem, Neutral ship from Suriname employed in regional trade, 3-Sep-1783.

⁶⁷⁷ Barbara B. Oberg and J. Jefferson Looney (eds.), *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson Digital Edition* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, Rotunda, 2008). Letter from Thomas Barclay to the American Commissioners, Tangier, 10-Sep-1786.

⁶⁷⁸ "*avec un Chargement de Planches et autres moindres Denrées, est parti dernièrement pour Surinam avec 61. Mules.*" Ibidem.

Suriname with 44.⁶⁷⁹ There was also a captain Joseph West of the schooner *Adventure* who was there for the same reason. Both the ships were sent over by a “Mr: Codman Junior de Boston.”⁶⁸⁰ Captain Cowell returned a year later coming from Boston and Cadiz in the brigantine *Romulus* for another cargo of mules. He brought cash, iron weights and barrels of butter⁶⁸¹ and planned to take on 70 mules. With the help of Chiappe he was to “leave without delay for Surinam.”⁶⁸² Whether the voyage was a success is unsure since he does not appear in the data of the arriving ships in Suriname. The mule trade to Suriname followed the ebbs and flows through which North Americans came to overtake the Atlantic. It started off during the booming years of the colony, but quickly slumped during the War for Independence, to recover quickly after the war was over.

Table 13 Mules to Paramaribo on non-Dutch vessels, 1760-1794

1760-1764	4
1765-1769	585
1770-1774	573
1775-1779	92
1780-1784	131
1785-1789	351
1790-1794	555

Source: PSNADC

7.2. The impact of war

During the Fourth Anglo-Dutch War the entire Dutch slaving fleet had been captured. In the first year 12 slave ships were taken, and of three others the whereabouts remain uncertain, but as Postma argued, they were also likely the victim of privateering actions.⁶⁸³ The change in the shipping route was not just a replacing of Dutch actors with non-Dutch ones. Part of the change that took place can be explained by captains and traders seeking new ways to connect to the colony. The Dutch had to find creative ways to deal with the fact that they were being over-powered in wars with both the British (1780-1784) and the French (1793-1795). Meanwhile the newly independent

⁶⁷⁹ PSDC

⁶⁸⁰ Oberg and Jefferson, *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson Digital Edition*. From Giuseppe Chiappe, 27-Dec-1787.

⁶⁸¹ ‘2m:\$ Fortes Comptants, 200. quintaux de Fer poid petit, et 80. Barils de Boeur.’

⁶⁸² Ibidem, Mogador, 19-Feb-1789.

⁶⁸³ Postma, *The Dutch*, 165, 284.

United States had quickly acquired a (privateer) navy⁶⁸⁴ and an expanding merchant fleet that started to operate in the Atlantic and Pacific, as well as the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean.⁶⁸⁵ Unsurprisingly the same ports engaged in that expansion were the same ports that connected to Suriname, a fact that reaffirms that the New Englanders can be called the Dutch of the late eighteenth century. For Suriname the increased American shipping partially made up for the damage that had been done to the Dutch merchant fleet. Non-Dutch vessels were taking over a share of the colony's connection to Europe, the slave trade, as well as making connections to previously unlikely places such as North-African mule markets.⁶⁸⁶ For the trade of the Dutch Republic it was a period of contraction. By relying on its American connections, Suriname and its neighbouring Dutch colonies suffered less from the collapse of the Dutch Atlantic than might be expected based on the troublesome waters its motherland had encountered.⁶⁸⁷

The interruption of Suriname's ship-traffic due to the Fourth Anglo-Dutch War (1780-1784) did not last long, and shipping recovered before the formal peace-treaty had been signed. The ships that had been retained during the first year of the war started to sail out again in 1782, causing a large influx into Suriname that year. Ships from North America also started to come to port during the last phase of their War for Independence (1775-1783). The more intricate and risky route of the slave trade was hit harder by the war. It was interrupted completely, and it took until 1784 before a large number of slaves were brought to the colony on board Dutch ships again.⁶⁸⁸ That same year sugar export had recovered, and also coffee production had not suffered greatly. Over the following years the Dutch were able to partially rebuild their navy, and also the shipping to and from the colony was rising after 1785. This post-war recovery did not last very long, and the losses of the Dutch merchant capabilities were reflected in the increasing number of non-Dutch ships used in the connection between the colony and the motherland. The exports to the Dutch Republic started to suffer during the

⁶⁸⁴ Patton, *Patriot Pirates*.

⁶⁸⁵ The *Empress of China* from New York was the first ship flying the flag of the independent colonies that arrived in China in 1784. The ship was soon followed by ships from Boston, Salem, Providence, New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore. David M. Pletcher, *The Diplomacy of Involvement: American Economic Expansion Across the Pacific, 1784-1900* (University of Missouri Press, 2001), 9–10.

⁶⁸⁶ In 1789 the States General allowed non-Dutch ships to bring slaves to the colony. Voort, *De Westindische Plantages*, 24.

⁶⁸⁷ Oostindie, "British Capital."

⁶⁸⁸ *The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database* (Atlanta, Georgia, 2008), <http://www.slavevoyages.org/>.

early 1790s, and especially after the outbreak of yet another War. This First Coalition War (1793-1795) against revolutionary France ended in the French occupation of the Dutch Republic, and again losses of merchant ships en route from Suriname to the Netherlands.⁶⁸⁹

Exports to the Dutch Republic were only part of the colony's story. The rise of the independent North Americans as an Atlantic and even global shipping power, and as a growing market for tropical products, meant that Surinamese goods were increasingly making their way past Dutch restrictions onto North-American ships, and some of it also illicitly to North America itself. During the Fourth Anglo-Dutch War Suriname's directors had allowed non-Dutch ships to export "high goods" such as sugar and coffee from Suriname to the Netherlands, and also allowed planters to exchange such products for North American wares. What started as a war-time exception, continued in the years that followed. Unknown amounts of sugar, coffee, cotton and cacao never made it to the Dutch Republic. In exchange for both molasses and the "high goods" the American ships were providing the colony with provisions and slaves. In 1791 more than three thousand slaves were brought to the colony – a number not reached since the heydays of the slave trade in the late 1760s and early 1770s – two thirds of them on non-Dutch ships, costing about a million guilders.⁶⁹⁰

7.3. Maritime security

While the importance of the Atlantic trades increased, the Dutch appreciation for the West India Company declined. The WIC monopoly on the slave trade had already been opened up in the 1730s out of dissatisfaction with the performance of the company in the trade, failing to deliver the required amounts of slaves to the planters. The WIC never played a role in protecting shipping routes to and from Suriname as this was seen as the responsibility of the navy, although they did have cruisers on the African coast. The decline of the Dutch navy within Europe had been a continuous process from 1700 onward, and from 1740 it "was no longer a significant factor in European politics."⁶⁹¹ Only the Caribbean trade was deemed important enough to require regular escorting convoys, also because the VOC was still taking care of its own protection. This convoying had come about thanks to pressure of Amsterdam merchants. The first regular escorting service to the West Indies started in 1737, and came to include

⁶⁸⁹ PSDC.

⁶⁹⁰ See Appendix 1 Graph 4.

⁶⁹¹ J. R Bruijn, *The Dutch Navy of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1993), 147–148.

Suriname from 1748.⁶⁹² From 1750 onward these missions were no longer solitary nor yearly, but the Admiralties organised squadrons that stayed overseas for more than a year. This was done to spare the crew that would have the time to get used to the tropical disease environment and the climate, and in case many died this would not result in the immobilizing of the entire squadron.⁶⁹³ All naval protection from the States General had to be lobbied for by interested merchants or the directors of the Suriname Company, and to be financed by them as well.⁶⁹⁴

Between 1771 and 1791 Dutch opinions on the WIC further deteriorated and in governing circles people were “coming to the conclusion that the WIC had outlived the reason for its existence.”⁶⁹⁵ While the impact of the Fourth Anglo-Dutch War (1780-1784) on the finances of the WIC was less than has often been maintained, the war had undermined its legitimacy by showing that it was incapable of defending its overseas possessions.⁶⁹⁶ Different from the VOC, Suriname’s maritime connections relied to a limited extent on the admiralties of the Dutch Republic for protection of the shipping traffic. The absence of the WIC in the protection of Atlantic trades underlines again how unimportant the company had become for the Atlantic trade.

The American-Dutch arms trade via St. Eustatius was one of the important reasons for the start of the Fourth Anglo-Dutch War. Angered by the ‘insolence’ of the Dutch who traded freely with the rebellious North American colonies the British decided to go to war in December 1780. Jonathan Israel claims that the British did so not only because they were trying to stop this trade, but also because they “could expect to capture Dutch colonies, as well as large quantities of Dutch shipping.”⁶⁹⁷ The British attacks understandably focussed on St. Eustatius. But they also had their privateers hawkishly cruising the Guiana Coast, which makes sense considering the importance of these colonies to the trade network of the rebellious colonies. The end of the long period of neutrality since 1688

⁶⁹² Jaap R. Bruijn, “Protection of Dutch Shipping: The Beginning of Dutch Naval Presence in the Caribbean, 1737-c. 1775,” in *Global Crossroads and the American Seas*, ed. Clark G. Reynolds (Missoula: Pictorial Histories Publishing, 1988).

⁶⁹³ NL-HaNA, Stadhoudelijke secretarie, inv.nr. 1257, Memorie van Schrijver, 1-May-1750. A.M.C. van Dissel and P.M.H. Groen, *In de West: de Nederlandse krijgsmacht in het Caribisch gebied* (Franeker: Van Wijnen, 2010), 20.

⁶⁹⁴ Lohnstein, *De militie*, 12, 192.

⁶⁹⁵ Goslinga, *The Dutch in the Caribbean*, 573.

⁶⁹⁶ Henk den Heijer, *De geëtrooieerde compagnie. De VOC en de WIC als voorlopers van de naamloze vennootschap* (Deventer, 2005), 192, 194.

⁶⁹⁷ Israel, *Dutch Primacy*, 402–403.

meant the Dutch had to organise a stronger defence of their maritime routes and overseas possessions. They were unable to make this transition and many ships and colonies fell victim to the British attacks.

Having colonies was expected to have a beneficial effect on the strength of the Dutch defences. Time and again the need for overseas colonies had been supported, in part, by the argument that the Dutch needed a large merchant fleet and the able bodied sailors that would come with it. These ships and sailors would form a reserve army in case the country was attacked.⁶⁹⁸ With the outbreak of the Fourth Anglo-Dutch War a long period of relative peace came to an end, and Dutch sailors and ships were indeed mobilized to fight the British. The Dutch still had a large merchant fleet, but no longer a military force to protect it. All that was left was a “second-rate navy” of twenty ships of the line and forty frigates. By concentrating much of the naval force around the North Sea all convoying to the Atlantic from the Republic was completely stopped.⁶⁹⁹ The wartime mobilization closed off the European shipping connections to Suriname, preventing exports of colonial products as well as the import of supplies.

Disruption caused by the start of the Fourth Anglo-Dutch War in December of 1780 was most strongly felt in Suriname in 1781. That year only one ship was registered as having arrived in Texel from Suriname.⁷⁰⁰ Despite the investments by the Dutch admiralties the British navy and privateers were able to capture a substantial amount of Dutch merchant ships. The remaining Dutch ships around the world did not sail out for fear of capture. Colonies were also attacked. Suriname’s neighbouring Dutch colonies Berbice, Demerara and Essequibo (BDE-colonies) fell victim to a British attack and were occupied, although the French were able to take the colonies soon after and return the colonies to the Dutch. The temporary British take-over of the BDE-colonies jumpstarted the arrival of British planters there.⁷⁰¹ Also Suriname’s regional connected node St. Eustatius was ransacked under the leadership of Sir George Rodney. That attack was retribution for the arms trade between the island and the rebellious colonies, symbolized by the ‘first salute’ that the colonists had given to the *Andrew*

⁶⁹⁸ “door het aenqueecken van Zee-varent Volck en bequame Matrosen” Hartsinck, *Beschryving*, 1770, 2:625.

⁶⁹⁹ J. R. Bruijn, *The Dutch Navy of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1993), 156–159.

⁷⁰⁰ *Oprechte Haerlemsche Courant*, 3-Jan-1781.

⁷⁰¹ Oostindie, “British Capital.”

Dorea.⁷⁰² In 1781 only 16 ships sailed into Suriname, half of these were Dutch, the other half non-Dutch.⁷⁰³

It took some time before the declaration of war by the British reached the ports and ships involved. One ship on its way to Suriname was lucky; captain Pieter Jurgens of the *Vrouw Wynanda Lybertus* had a visit from a British privateer near Madeira, but was left alone. The privateer had not yet heard that hostilities had broken out, and even took the letter in which Jurgens described the incident for him to Lisbon.⁷⁰⁴ Many others were not so lucky. The *Snelle Zeiler* of Pieter Hans de Leeuw, and the *Vier Goede Vrienden* of Jan Gysbert had sailed out from Suriname unknowing of the impending conflict in October of 1780. When they were caught they were brought up to England.⁷⁰⁵ Also captain C. Kosro on its way to St. Christopher was caught before it could make it to its stop-over Suriname.⁷⁰⁶ The British had been a nuisance on the Wild Coast for several years already. From the outbreak of the American War for Independence, British privateers were active trying to capture American ships on the Wild Coast. In 1777 a Dutch squadron of eight ships sailed out to the West Indies, two of which were sent to the Wild Coast to attack the privateers. At the outbreak of the War the States General ordered the frigate *Eendragt* of the West Indian squadron to sail to Suriname.⁷⁰⁷ The ship and its captain P.G. Udemans had to fight off three British privateers at the Marrowijne River before it could safely sail up the Suriname.⁷⁰⁸

British privateers were cruising near the mouth of the Suriname River, especially keen on capturing ships leaving the colony. Those who wanted to leave the colony would try to sail in convoy, and an argosy of five left Suriname on the 20th of February. This was not enough protection against the British. On the 6th of March 1781 the *Jonge Theodoor*, captain Jan Reygers, the *Maasstroom* of captain Christiaan Eeg and *Anne Maria*

⁷⁰² Barbara W. Tuchman, *The First Salute: a View of the American Revolution* (New York: Knopf, 1988).

⁷⁰³ See appendix for aggregate data from the PSDC and the PSNADC.

⁷⁰⁴ *Amsterdamsche Courant*, 17-Feb-1781.

⁷⁰⁵ *Amsterdamsche Courant*, 25-Jan-1781 and *Noordhollandsche Courant*, 14-03-1781 and PSDC.

⁷⁰⁶ *Hollandsche Historische Courant*, 19-Jun-1781.

⁷⁰⁷ J. C. de Jonge, *Geschiedenis van het Nederlandsche zeewezen*, vol. 4, 2nd ed. (Haarlem: A.C. Kruseman, 1861), 452–463.

⁷⁰⁸ Letter from G.P. Benelle, 18-Mar-1781 cited in: Gerhard de Kok, *Het Surinaamse brievenboek van Johann Jakob Faesch. 23 zakelijke brieven uit 1780 en 1781* (unpublished source publication, 2012). NA, entry 1.11.01.01 inv.nr. 1872, Kopieboek van brieven van en aan een (niet nader aangeduid) handelshuis in Suriname 1781-1784.

Elisabeth, of captain Christiaan Koos with a load of coffee and were brought up in Barbados.⁷⁰⁹ There were some other ships from Demerara as well as to Suriname with them there.⁷¹⁰ The other ships of the convoy were taken as well. The ship of Wijs was retaken and brought to Martinique, and the *Hooyland* to Portsmouth.⁷¹¹ The loss of the convoy (excluding the retaken ship of Captain Wijs) came down to a total of 1,337,648 pounds of sugar, 1,547,687 pounds of coffee, 109,155 pounds of cacao, and 23,061 pounds of cotton, which all befell the British.⁷¹²

While the Dutch were being over-powered in this war, Suriname was able to withstand an attack on the colony, and even managed to capture two of the assailant's ships. A vessel had left Lisbon on the 15th of February to bring the message that war had broken out. Once near the Suriname River it was chased to the Marrowijne River by an British privateer.⁷¹³ Captain A. de Roock arrived too late to save Berbice from the British attack, but was able to rout the three British privateers at the mouth of the Suriname River.⁷¹⁴ The defence of the colony was made up of the navy vessels *Valk* with 24 pieces under captain Willem Silvester, *Thetis*, 24 pieces under captain Laurens Spengler,⁷¹⁵ and nine merchant ships were also employed for the defence. In addition an army of about a hundred "both Maroons and soldiers" had been placed in the fortress.⁷¹⁶

Once the hostilities had started there was a lobby that tried to ensure the military defence of the trans-Atlantic connections. A request was made to the States General by the merchants, planters and inhabitants of Suriname concerning military protection for the ships sailing to the colony. The Stadtholder Willem V had opposed the conflict with England, and rather feared a French attack. Once conflict had become unavoidable, he as well as his officer corps in the navy were adamant that the European waters needed all the protection they could get. One of the main lobbyists for the protection of the Atlantic connections was Guillelmus Titsingh. Titsingh had taken the

⁷⁰⁹ *Amsterdamsche Courant*, 19-Jun-178.

⁷¹⁰ Letter from C. Eeg in the *Noordhollandsche Courant*, 18-Jun-1781, and PSDC.

⁷¹¹ Letter from captain J.F. Salmer in Portsmouth, 30-Jun-1781, cited in: Gerhard de Kok, *Het Surinaamse brievenboek van Johann Jakob Faesch* 23 zakelijke brieven uit 1780 en 1781 (unpublished source publication, 2012). NA, entry 1.11.01.01 inv.nr. 1872, Kopieboek van brieven van en aan een (niet nader aangeduid) handelshuis in Suriname 1781-1784.

⁷¹² PSNADC

⁷¹³ *Amsterdamsche Courant*, 12-Jul-1781.

⁷¹⁴ *Hollandsche Historische Courant*, 30-Jul-1781.

⁷¹⁵ *Noordhollandsche Courant*, 4-May-1781.

⁷¹⁶ "zoo Samarakken als Auxader Negers als Soldaten", *Middelburgse Courant*, 1-Jan-1781.

private initiative to send out the ship *Grand Estafette* to notify Suriname of the impending danger of the war that had broken out with the British. The ship arrived only ten days after captain Roock, who himself had been too late to prevent an British attack on the Guiana colonies.⁷¹⁷

After the devastation of the war was becoming clear to the merchants and investors in the Dutch Republic, “all those who had any interest concerning the trade on Suriname, Berbice and Curaçao” were requested to meet at tavern *De Munt* in Amsterdam.⁷¹⁸ Topic of the meeting was the provisional report, likely concerning plans to recover the trade with the colonies. The lobbyists boasted that after two months they had managed to assemble 17 ships, with 1200 men and a total of 400 cannons.⁷¹⁹ Now they wanted navy vessels of the admiralty to protect them to the West, or compensation in case this fleet would have to stay the winter at Texel. The States General refused, but on the insistence of the Stadtholder Willem V a convoy was formally granted. It was an empty gesture since opposition from the naval officers as well as the States of Friesland prevented them from actually sailing out. It took until April 1782 for the convoy to sail out. After guiding the thirteen ships of the convoy for ten days the escort returned to Texel, and the merchants arrived in Suriname in June.⁷²⁰ The year saw a recovery of shipping, in July a smaller convoy of armed⁷²¹ merchants sailed out again to Suriname from Texel⁷²² and arrived safely in the end of August,⁷²³ with their convoying *kotter* sailing onwards to Curaçao.

The recovery of the shipping to Suriname went surprisingly fast, helped by the use of non-Dutch ships of various nationalities. To be protected from assaults by the British, ships sailed out from Suriname under neutral flags. This was not always enough to fool the British. The ships *Arent Jan* of C.C. Heyden and the ship of J.F. Selouw sailed under Danish and Prussian flag, but were caught by the British when they sailed out of the Suriname River. Although they were released, the lading had to be left behind.⁷²⁴ The unloading of the goods was strongly protested against by the

⁷¹⁷ N.D.B. Habermehl, “Guillelmus Titsingh: een invloedrijk Amsterdams koopman uit de tweede helft van de achttiende eeuw (1733-1805),” *Amstelodamum* 79 (1987): 81–124.

⁷¹⁸ *Amsterdamsche Courant*, 12-Jun-1781.

⁷¹⁹ *Groninger Courant*, 19-Oct-1781.

⁷²⁰ Habermehl, “Guillelmus Titsingh.”

⁷²¹ *Amsterdamsche Courant*, 24-Dec-1782.

⁷²² In the convoy were the ships of Jochem Tiede, Pieter Juriaans, and Juriaan van der Meer protected by a *kotter*. *Middelburgse Courant*, 28-12-1782.

⁷²³ *Oprechte Haerlemsche Courant*, 31-Dec-1782.

⁷²⁴ *Hollandsche Historische Courant*, 26-Dec-1782.

Danish and Prussian ministers in the Dutch Republic.⁷²⁵ These representatives in the various port cities played a role in keeping the system working.⁷²⁶ Not only the flags were non-Dutch, also the names were to convince the British of the non-Dutch origins of the ships. Johannes Fahrdus received permission to equip *Aartshertogin Marria Anna* under captain Rasmus Prahl for Suriname and back. Due to the uncertainty of the outcome of the peace negotiations, as well as the small amount of ships going to the colony, the directors allowed this ships to sail out. Also widow Arnoldus Ameshoff & Zonen, merchants in Amsterdam received permission for F. Brouwers in Oostende to sail *D'Oostenrijker* of captain Adriaan Maaze under the Imperial flag of Austria to Suriname.⁷²⁷

After the Fourth Anglo-Dutch War, ships continued to be fitted out from the Southern Netherlands, as well as the German coast. The conflict had also caused the routes to change. Some captains tried to make a run to North America, and sail to Suriname from there. When tensions had started to arise between the States General and the Austrian Emperor, a Dutch ship on its way to Suriname raised an American flag while in Boston. Even though it was loaded with American goods for the Surinamese market, the ship's bookkeepers were able to be granted a tax break by the Directors of the SC.⁷²⁸ The neutral shipping did not sit well with Amsterdam merchants, bookkeepers, *Reeders*, and captains trading and navigating on Suriname. They asked if the directors could stop issuing papers to neutral vessels, and only give papers to "inhabitants of this state, sailing under Hollandic flag,

⁷²⁵ *Diemer of Watergraafmeersche Courant*, 25-Dec-1782.

⁷²⁶ To make the connection between Dutch colonies, the Dutch Republic and Prussia smoother, the King of Prussia grants a license to Van Teijlingen to be Prussian Consul for Suriname, Curaçao and other colonies. Nationaal Archief Den Haag, Sociëteit van Suriname, Resoluties directeuren, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 73, Prussian Consul for Suriname, Curaçao and other colonies of the State, 5-Nov-1783.

⁷²⁷ *Ibidem*, Request to sail out under neutral flag, 6-Aug-1783.

⁷²⁸ The ship *America*, captain Marten de Vries had the Amsterdam merchants Wilhelm and Jan Willink as shareholders. As the ships accountants they managed to receive permission for their ship, despite its change of colours, and loss of papers, to be taxed as a Dutch ship by the time it had arrived in Suriname. The ship was held up in Boston because of the tensions with the Austrian Empire and loaded with various American goods to sail to Suriname. The captain gave his *Turkschen Pas*, which allowed him access to the colony to the Dutch ambassador in the U.S. P.J. van Berckel. He also destroyed his other papers and raised an American flag to be able to proceed on his voyage and stay clear of possible danger. Since no foreigners (*'Vreemdeling van wat Natie'*) had any part in the ship or its cargo, but all were subjects of Holland and citizens of Amsterdam, they received permission to sail from Suriname to the Dutch Republic and not to be treated as an American or stranger. *Ibidem*, 15-Jun-1785.

and built within these lands.”⁷²⁹ The request was made in vain. Even once the hostilities had ceased, non-Dutch ships and foreign built ships continued to be used to sail to Suriname.⁷³⁰

During the war with revolutionary France (1793-1795) non-Dutch ships were increasingly allowed to sail to the Dutch colonies, and Rudolph Valtravers reported in 1793 that “Nicholas Foster of Baltimore, captain of the frigate *Anne*, built in North America and flying American colours, is the first to sail from Amsterdam.” The ship was carrying “Dutch cargo for Berbice” and was set to return “with cotton, sugar, coffee, and indigo. Another countryman of his will reportedly do the same.”⁷³¹ There was a sudden increase of American ships sailing from Suriname to Amsterdam in 1793, which amounts to a total of seven ships that year, and an increase the next year to eleven non-Dutch ships sailing to Amsterdam. One of them, the frigate *President Richmond (Illustrious)*, or *The Illustrious President of Richmond*, or more simply in legal papers of the British Admiralty referred to as *The Illustrious President* was intercepted by the British Navy on a voyage from Suriname to Amsterdam. The ship’s captain, Dennis Butler was from Virginia and had been sailing back and forth between Suriname and Amsterdam since 1793. The ladings in the ship on both voyages were large amounts of sugar, cacao, coffee and cotton. He served several times as a carrier for the SC to bring supplies to the colony. On his last voyage he was to load 110 *last* of various “free and permissible goods”, and because of the good reputation of the captain in previous voyages to the colony he was permitted to use the rest of the available space for his private goods. For the return voyage the Governor was instructed to load 350 hogsheads of sugar that had been collected as taxes in the colony, and the captain was free to load more for his own account, as long as he had a speedy return. The payment for the freight from Suriname to the Republic was set extremely low, at one *stuyver* per pound sugar, and a ten per cent extra for losses on the

⁷²⁹ ‘Request van verscheidene Koopliden, Boekhouders en Reeders van scheepen, mitsgaders schippers, handel drijvende en vaarende op Suriname woonenen binnen deze stad houdende het verzoek om redenen breder bij het zelve Request vermeld, dat het de heren dezer vergaderingmogten behangen van nu voortaan geen permissie tot het equiperen van schepen naar de Colonie te verlenen anders dan aan Ingezetenen dezer staat onder Hollandsche vlag varende en binnen dezer landen gemaakt.’ SvS, Resoluties Directeuren 1783, *Request to ban neutral ships, 3-Sep-1783*, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 73.

⁷³⁰ SvS, Resoluties Directeuren 1785, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 75, *Sailing under Swedish flag, 13-Apr-1785* and SvS, Resoluties Directeuren 1787, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 77, *Slave ship built outside the Dutch Republic, 31-Oct-1787*.

⁷³¹ Letter to Thomas Jefferson from Rudolph Valltravers, Rotterdam, 5/4-May-1793 in: Barbara B. Oberg and J. Jefferson Looney (eds.), *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson Digital Edition* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, Rotunda, 2008).

way.⁷³² Those who were not in the service of the SC received specific permissions to sail to Suriname, but only by paying bail of *fl* 5,000 to ensure that they would sail back to the Republic rather than to North America or other destinations.⁷³³

The convoying to the West was taken more seriously by the States General during the war with France. In May 1794 a large number of interested parties requested a convoy for the ships to the West by two to three frigates. The directors of the SC commissioned Willem Six to discuss with the most prominent *Cargadooren* on the bourse about the time when this convoy would most preferably sail out.⁷³⁴ Six managed to convince the Stadtholder Willem V, Prince of Orange, and it was made public that the *Ceres*, *Thetis* and *Triton* as well as the *Zeemeeuw* would be sailing out as convoy.⁷³⁵ Quickly after the Batavian Revolution the merchants made a plan to send a North American ship to notify the colony of the changes that had taken place, and the directors agreed that this should be done, that this vessel would be exempt from the *lastgeld*.⁷³⁶ The frigate *Zorg en Hoop*, under

⁷³² SvS, Resoluties Directeuren 1794, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 84, Notarial act for the Illustrious President, 19 and 20-Sep-1794; SvS, Resoluties Directeuren 1795, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 85, Letter from captain Butler in Suriname, 29-Jan-1795.

⁷³³ SvS, Resoluties Directeuren 1795, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 85. Permissie om onder borg van *fl*5000 naar Suriname te varen om Provizien af te leveren voor Suriname en weer naar de Republiek te varen: Schipper Mungo Mackay, voerende het Noord-Americaansche schip *Maria en Eliza* (miss. van de Sta. Gen. 30-Dec-1794). On 27 May-1795 a request comes in from captain W. Whetten en S. Simons to sail with the North America ships schepen *The Resolution* en *Clarissa*, to Suriname and back with a bail of *fl* 5,000. In June they are followed by P.W. de Jong, capt of *Petronella Cornelia*. Coenraad Brandligt, boekhouder van *De Zorgvuldigheid* under captain Andries Jensen Smit, with papers of the Court of Denmark to carry the Danish Flag and paying the bail of *fl* 5,000. Samuel Parker, American ship, *The Henry*. Hudig & Blokhuisen, cargadoor te R'dam request permission for the Danish ship *Frieheden* under captain Jacob Prot, a week later the directors send the letter permitting the ships of Jun 10 to sail out.

⁷³⁴ SvS, Resoluties Directeuren 1794, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 84. Request for military protection, 7-May-1794.

⁷³⁵ Ibidem, Convoy for the West Indies, 9-Jul-1794. On the 6-Sep-1794 the *Thetis* under Captain-lieutenant Visser and *De Triton* under captain Lemmers left for the West Indies with 5 ships to Curaçao, one to Elmina, 1 to St. Eustatius, 3 to Demerary and to Suriname: A. de Boer, A. Mol, W. Odewals, J.F. Palm, P. Bloedoorn, C. Eeg, H. Steur, P. Assenholm, K. Duurhagen, N. Adriaans, B. Calgreen, P. Jacobs, A. Muller to Suriname. *Amsterdamsche Courant*, 09-Sep-1794. On that same day out of the Maas the *Ceres* sailed out under captain Ditmers, who had in his convoy J. Pruysing and F. Zeeman to Suriname and a ship to Cape of Good Hope. *Amsterdamsche Courant*, 9-Sep-1794.

⁷³⁶ SvS, Resoluties Directeuren 1795, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 85. North American ship to notify the colony, 3-Feb-1795.

captain Barend Bade was to transport military and other supplies to Suriname. Out of fear for the dangers of sailing through the English Channel he decided to sail north around Scotland and to try and join a squadron to the West.⁷³⁷ The growing power of the Americans in the Atlantic ensured that by the time of the First Coalition War (1793-1795) the growth of the American position in the Atlantic ensured that their ships and merchants started to take ever larger chunks of the shipping between Suriname and the Netherlands. The American ships were not only servicing the regional trade, but also the connection with Africa and Amsterdam.

7.4. Saving Suriname's slavery

After the war with its disastrous outcome, merchants from the seaside-provinces Zeeland and Holland pressured for a revival of the slave trade in the 1780s and the early 1790s. The plans regarding the slave trade came down to a tax-break from the WIC duties and opening of the trade to non-Dutch merchants.⁷³⁸ The argument of the *Amsterdammers* to enter the war with Britain had been to ensure their trade with North-America. While it was far from certain that the rebellious colonies would win, it was clear that having access to that quickly expanded market, both for trade and finance, was important for those in Amsterdam, and especially to those with interests in the arms trade via St. Eustatius.⁷³⁹ The ten ships that were part of the revival of the slave trafficking in 1784 were Dutch and arrived from the Gold Coast as well as from Caribbean destinations. These shipments were initially insignificant compared to the enormous amounts of people who arrived on Dutch ships, but they came to take a substantial part of the trade in all Dutch colonies in the Guianas.⁷⁴⁰

While Suriname had absorbed almost all of the traded slaves of the Dutch in the previous decades, its neighbouring plantations on the Guiana Coast were now also taking in increasing numbers of slaves, reducing Suriname's share to about half.⁷⁴¹ The infringements on the trade in the other Guianas are clear, the strong ties of the colonies with the British Atlantic and its open geography made slave imports easier. In Suriname the North American traders also started to ship slaves to the colony.⁷⁴² The Fourth Anglo-Dutch War had caused a lack of slaves for the planters. In 1784

⁷³⁷ Ibidem. Evading the English Channel, 30-Oct-1795.

⁷³⁸ PSDC.

⁷³⁹ Tuchman, *The First Salute*.

⁷⁴⁰ Oostindie, "British Capital."

⁷⁴¹ Postma, *The Dutch*, 288.

⁷⁴² Ibid., 289.

nineteen slaves arrived in Suriname from the North American port of Halifax on board the schooner *Patty*, captain Samuel Little. The shipment was a gross infringement on the regulation of the States General. John Wentworth was from Halifax in Nova Scotia, was Surveyor General of all his Majesties woods in America and late Governor of New Hampshire. He shipped the nineteen slaves “for the account and risk of Paul Wentworth, formerly of Suriname, but now or late residing in England” to discharge a debt due to Paul Wentworth.⁷⁴³ The SC directors allow the importation of slaves from on board the *Patty* by Rocheteau as attorney for Paul Wentworth in Suriname. The directors explained their action by arguing that the price of “fl 370 per head” sounded very good since they were good slaves, approving the admission of the regionally imported slaves by the Governor.⁷⁴⁴ Burgomaster Rendorp wrote up a report in the issue in August of 1786. This provisional report by Rendorp reminded the directors of the obligation to deliver 2,500 slaves to Suriname yearly, and to raise this proportionally to the growth of the colony. The leniency towards foreign slave ships started in 1783 when the SC directors allowed Jan Willem van Arm of the Imperial brigantine *Paix & Libertas* of captain Henricus Ditmar to sail from Ostend to Guinea, load slaves, sail to Suriname, and sail back with cargo.⁷⁴⁵ The ship left Ostend in August 1783 and arrived as the *Vrede en Libertijt* in Suriname in November of 1784. There it was treated as a Dutch ship on arrival, disembarking 130 of the 150 slaves alive in Suriname. Over the following years several ships would sail from ports such as Ostend, Hamburg and Emden to Suriname, but there were only very few of these non-Dutch ships that would transport slaves. The non-Dutch European ships were mostly employed in the direct connection to the colony.

What was very common in the last years of the war, as well as afterwards, was to request exemption from the WIC taxes on the slave trade. Slavers would request their exemption, but would not always sail to Suriname with their human cargo, some of them went straight to Demerara. The exemption did not only concern the taxation, but also the right not to unload the slaves once the ship arrived in Suriname, but rather to sail onwards to another colony (See Appendix 4).

The many requests to be exempted from taxation culminated in the issuing of the law that relieved the slave traders from several constraints. “Because the trade on the West Indies is one of the most notable, and for as long as no new means have been thought out to provide the colonies in the

⁷⁴³ SvS, *Resoluties Directeuren* 1787, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 77.

⁷⁴⁴ SvS, *Resoluties Directeuren* 1783, *Regional slave trade*, 23-Jun-1784 entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 73-74.

⁷⁴⁵ SvS, *Resoluties Directeuren* 1783, Permission for Ostend slave ship, 5-Feb-1783.

West Indies with hands to do the work, the Negerhandel has to be seen as inseparable for the blossoming and prospering of those colonies and of the entire commerce.”⁷⁴⁶ The States General took a number of measures, that would be in effect until the end of the WIC charter. The first was to reaffirm what had been laid down in the resolution of 27 Augustus 1788; that the ships were free to sell their slaves in the agricultural colonies of the state publicly and directly from the ship, and so there was no need for official auction. The slave traders were also protected from faulty planters, by being allowed to organise their own securities for the slaves that they sold. However, in the relation between the slave traders and the investment funds, the States General organised a strong protection for the investment funds by stating that the suppliers of slaves were not free to demand goods to be laden as payment for the slaves that should be shipped to the general fund or private fund, or one that has mortgage, unless the Agendaris of those funds or creditors of the mortgage agreed. This rule came out of the disparity between the set exchange rate between cash and pounds of sugar and coffee in the colony and the market price of those goods in the Republic. The exchange rate was such that it was far cheaper for the planter to write out a bill of exchange, than paying with sugar and let the slave trader reap the profits of the sale on the metropolitan market. The new regulation made it clear that once the exchange had taken place, neither party could claim payment or restitution. With the acceptance of produce as payment, the slave traders lost any rights to the slaves.⁷⁴⁷

The lobby to reinvigorate the slave trade was led by merchants in Zeeland and Holland, among them many of the absentee plantation owners who had laid their hands on the plantations during the years that credit collapsed and the defaulted plantations changed hands to the *negotiatie* holders. In the regulation of 1789 the trade was encouraged by reducing taxes. The WIC, to whom this *lastgeld* was paid out, lost an important source of income. Postma rightly argued that the “planters would have welcomed foreign slave vendors if they had been allowed to sell slaves in the Dutch colonies.”⁷⁴⁸ The trade was opened by the States General in 1789 to allow non-Dutch ships to bring slaves to the colony.⁷⁴⁹ For Suriname Postma argues that the American ships arriving in Suriname were bringing in slaves “in small numbers”,⁷⁵⁰ and that this import was overall minor before 1795.⁷⁵¹

⁷⁴⁶ NL-HaNA, Verspreide Westindische Stukken, *Placaat tot aanmoediging van den Negerhandel in de West-Indische Colonien*, entry 1.05.06 inv.nr. 1225.

⁷⁴⁷ Ibidem.

⁷⁴⁸ Postma, *The Dutch*, 386.

⁷⁴⁹ Voort, *De Westindische Plantages*, 24.

⁷⁵⁰ Postma, *The Dutch*, 289.

Later he published his data suggesting that there were already increased slave sales from non-Dutch vessels in the 1790s.⁷⁵² In 1791, given the war time interruption, the States General and the SC were making less fuss about the origins of the slave ships coming to the colony. The North American ships started to come in, and overshadowed the Dutch trade completely. Postma's data reveals a quick growth of the number of slave ships coming to Suriname in the early 1790s. There was a clear change in the pattern of the non-Dutch slave trade to the colony. In 1784 a total of 47 slaves were disembarked by non-Dutch ships, but in 1789 this grew suddenly to 1260, and remained high throughout the 1790s. The slaves from non-Dutch ships that arrived in 1789 came from St. Eustatius on North-American ships. In the early nineties the non-Dutch ships started to bring in slaves directly from Africa. Suriname saw the importation of 1 million guilders worth of slaves on board non-Dutch ships. The export of tropical products to the Dutch Republic that year valued 5 million guilders for sugar and 6.6 million for coffee. In the following years the circuit of shipping also changed, with an increased number of embarkation regions in Africa.

Within the Dutch Republic the political context was shaped by military defeats which discredited the rulers as well as the Stadtholder of Orange, William V. The Patriot opposition movement made attempts at unifying the country to turn around the economic, moral and military decline of the Republic. This Dutch Patriot movement did not have a clear vision on how to deal with the colonies other than centralising their administration. Patriotism within the colonies had a strong local dynamic, rather than simply mimicking the Dutch conflict.⁷⁵³ While the colonial policy of these patriots was not formulated coherently for Suriname or the Caribbean more generally, the argument in favour of a centralized government was bound to have an effect on the future rule over the colony. The VOC, WIC and Admiralty were clear examples of the federal divisions in the Republic. They were organised in decentralised provincial chambers. The other colonies were managed by companies in which cities or provincial states had an important say, such as the Company for Trade on Essequibo and annex Rivers (SNER) and the Suriname Company. Once the Patriots came to power with the help of the French invasion during the First Coalition War,

⁷⁵¹ Ibid.

⁷⁵² Postma, "Suriname and Its Atlantic Connections," 306.

⁷⁵³ For the lack of the Patriot vision on the colonies see: G Schutte, *De Nederlandse patriotten en de koloniën. Een onderzoek naar hun denkbeelden en optreden, 1770-1800*. (Groningen: H.D. Tjeenk Willink, 1974), 202.

they quickly disbanded company interests and centralised overseas government.⁷⁵⁴

With the end of the WIC in 1791 part of the overseas Atlantic domains had already changed hands into a central governing body. Therewith also its part in the managing of the SC came into the hands of the *Raad der Koloniën*, which continued to manage it together with the representatives of the city of Amsterdam. After the Batavian Revolution the “Provisional Representatives of the People of Amsterdam” claimed ownership of the colony. De directors protested arguing that “Suriname (...) is not owned, nor can be owned by the common body of the people of this Republic, but belongs to several private individuals or corpora, who have acquired this private property *titulo oneroso*.”⁷⁵⁵ It was no use. The ideology of the time was that colonies should come under central state authority, and no longer be dominated by city interests. All the board members of the city of Amsterdam were replaced by Patriots, who only managed the organisation for a few months. In October 1795 the SC was terminated and Suriname came, together with the other possessions in the Atlantic, under the management of the Committee for the Colonial Affairs on the Coast of Guinea and in America.⁷⁵⁶

⁷⁵⁴ Ibid., 107.

⁷⁵⁵ SvS, *Resoluties Directeuren* 1795, inv.nr. 85, 25-Mar-1795.

⁷⁵⁶ Ibidem, 30-Oct-1795.

Conclusion

The history of the Atlantic world challenges national and empire-centred understandings of the past. Already at the onset of sugar production in the Atlantic basin in the fifteenth century a host of Europeans and Africans of wide-ranging origins were involved in Atlantic trade and production systems. On Madeira there were Italian, Flemish and French merchants operating the sugar trade.⁷⁵⁷ The practice of producing sugar with enslaved Africans spread from Madeira, São Tomé and the Canary Islands across the ocean to Hispaniola and Brazil. Sugar production for the European market hardly ever took place on the African continent. The African states and “a striking angel with a flaming sword of deadly fevers” successfully resisted the European penetration of their lands in ways that the Indigenous Americans could not.⁷⁵⁸ But while the enslavement of Amerindians did not persist, the enslavement of Africans came to provide a reliable source of labour for European projects in the Americas.⁷⁵⁹ The result was the largest forced migration in human history. In the 1580s sugar refining took hold in the Dutch Republic at the same time that the first Dutch slave trading activities were undertaken, mainly in support of Portuguese colonisation of Brazil.⁷⁶⁰ The sugar refiners and merchants active in Amsterdam had rarely been active in those trades before they migrated from the southern Netherlands, but they transported the technical knowledge with them.⁷⁶¹ The fact that producing sugar from a specific cane, with specific techniques and using enslaved Africans as workforce gained prominence throughout the tropical regions of the Atlantic basin is testimony to the interconnected workings of the Atlantic world.

⁷⁵⁷ A. Vieira, “Sugar Islands. The Sugar Economy of Madeira and the Canaries, 1450-1650,” in *Tropical Babels: Sugar and the Making of the Atlantic World*, ed. Stuart B. Schwartz (Chapel Hill & London: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 42–84.

⁷⁵⁸ On the use of soft and hard power by the Portuguese and their settlement on the West African coast see: Charles Ralph Boxer, *Four Centuries of Portuguese Expansion, 1415-1825: A Succinct Survey* (University of California Press, 1969) This includes the famous quote by João De Barros from 1552 on the effect of the African disease environment on Portuguese colonists, traders and missionaries. .

⁷⁵⁹ Klein, *The Atlantic Slave Trade*, 18–22.

⁷⁶⁰ Wim Klooster, “Het begin van de Nederlandse slavenhandel in het Atlantisch gebied,” in *Alle streken van het kompas. Maritieme geschiedenis is Nederland* (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 2010), 249–262.

⁷⁶¹ A. H. Poelwijk, “In dienste vant suyckerenbacken.” *De Amsterdamse suikernijverheid en haar ondernemers, 1580-1630* (Verloren, 2003), 124–126., <http://dare.uva.nl/document/69158>; The research by Poelwijk confirms the older findings by Reese on the introduction of the sugar trade in Amsterdam. Reese, *De suikerhandel van Amsterdam*, 135.

While the traces of Europe-wide engagement with the Atlantic world can be found from the beginning, they only gained great intensity after the middle decades of the seventeenth century. After 1650 the Northern Europeans who joined the profitable transatlantic operations became increasingly successful at introducing the plantation model in the Guianas, the insular Caribbean and southern parts of mainland North America. The scale of North European slave transports from Africa to the Americas came close to equal the massive numbers of people forced across the ocean by the Iberians.⁷⁶² From 1650 onward the myriad of connections that resulted from the expansion of the plantation system and the slave trade formed a human web that was tied together by formal and informal cultural, religious, economic and kinship ties. The Europe-wide engagement with trans-Atlantic trades and production systems was interconnected across formal imperial boundaries through intercolonial trade, emulation of techniques, circulation of knowledge, cooperation in joined projects and of course through war and market competition. For contemporaries outside the Atlantic world it was clear that this area could best be treated as a unity. A Cantonese guide to the “People of the Great Western Ocean” from around 1701 grouped the populations facing the Atlantic Ocean from Europe, Africa and the Americas together, disregarding European racial or national distinctions.⁷⁶³ This world of transoceanic and interimperial connections became a hotbed for creole cultures, economies and social relations, all with distinct local and regional characteristics.

The success of trade and production and its reliance on connections beyond the constraints of national colonial projects also created the conditions for the disintegration of the Atlantic world. Atlantic warfare in the middle decades of the eighteenth century was what “opened the door” to many of the decisive revolts that would come to shape the following decades.⁷⁶⁴ In the Age of Revolution numerous European colonies along the Atlantic West coast became powerful enough to successfully fight off direct European rule. The case of Haiti, with all its specificities, showed similar processes of increasingly self-confident non-white citizens gaining political and economic power. Also in the Dutch inhabitants of the colonies could be found to lay claim to their autonomy.⁷⁶⁵ The subsequent end of the slave

⁷⁶² TASTD.

⁷⁶³ Kenneth Pomeranz and Steven Topik, *The World That Trade Created: Society, Culture, and the World Economy, 1400-The Present* (M.E. Sharpe, 1999), 43.

⁷⁶⁴ Wim Klooster, *Revolutions in the Atlantic World: A Comparative History* (New York: New York University Press, 2009), 5–6.

⁷⁶⁵ Han Jordaen, “Slavernij en vrijheid op Curaçao: de dynamiek van een achttiende-eeuws Atlantisch handelsknooppunt” (Ph.D., Universiteit Leiden, 2012); Karwan Fatah-Black, “The

trade disconnected the plantation colonies from their supply of enslaved Africans. This meant that the connection between the Americas and the African west coast faltered and that the need to finance the slave trade with European credit also waned. The Atlantic interactions based on war, enslavement and plantation production disintegrated around 1800.⁷⁶⁶ The system of interconnected cities became one of increasing territorial divisions along the borders of (nation) states.

* * *

The networks of cities are more telling of the structure of the Atlantic world than the traditional maps detailing the areas controlled by various empires and states. Wind and ocean currents, trade relations and ship routes offset the territorial control of early-modern states in the Atlantic. The basic material for this investigation has been the data of ships moving to and from Paramaribo. Historians have often studied Suriname and Paramaribo from a Dutch or Surinamese national perspective. Using the actual movements of ships has enabled me to transcend both the “national” and “triangular” understanding of Paramaribo’s function in the Atlantic world, and instead has shown the city to be the centre of a star-shaped network connecting multiple Atlantic regions. Shipping routes have been used to analyse the shift in the inter-city network of Paramaribo, and also provided entry into further research into the reasons for these shifts. The shipping connections did not only signify circuits of economic exchange. The movement of goods was paired with the movement of people and ideas as well. The Atlantic world, and Paramaribo’s role within it was not static, but changed over the eighteenth century. At first the fort was founded as a gatekeeper protecting the plantations and also controlling what goods could come in and out of the settlement. Over the course of the century Paramaribo turned into a colonial city with connections throughout the Atlantic world. This dynamic development in the eighteenth century can be attributed to a large extent to the city’s non-Dutch network. There was however a limit to the city’s dynamism. The limited productivity in the city itself prevented further growth of the town beyond that of a nodal point, leaving the city and the colony so dependent on the metropolis that economic or political independence was unthinkable for eighteenth-century colonists.

Patriot Coup D’état in Curaçao, 1796,” in *Curaçao in the Age of Revolutions, 1795-1800*, ed. Gert Oostindie and Wim Klooster, vol. 30, Caribbean Series (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2011), 124–140.

⁷⁶⁶ For the periodization of the disintegration of the Atlantic world see: Bailyn, *Atlantic History*; Karen Ordahl Kupperman, *The Atlantic in World History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012); Benjamin, *The Atlantic World*.

While Atlantic integration took place within a web of interconnected cities, these urban networks have rarely been the starting point of historical investigation of Suriname's colonisation process. The histories of the specific locations within the Atlantic world, including Suriname, have been written along present-day national lines even though the linkages that shaped this world were connecting hinterlands to towns to other hinterlands that do not fall within the confines of any of the present-day nation states. The histories of the African diaspora, the European colonisers, and the ships on Paramaribo's *Waterkant* cannot be captured in a story of Dutch colonialism or the forming of the Surinamese nation. Enslaved Africans not only came from a wide variety of regions in Africa, they were undoubtedly conscious of others who were suffering similar fates in similar colonies. Colonists were freer to use the interimperial compatibility of colonies by moving from one place to another with relative ease. Palatines in the 1730s and 1740s left for Georgia as soon as they had a chance and Sephardic Jews left for North America in the late eighteenth century when the economic tide seemed more favourable there.

Interconnection across imperial boundaries did not mean that the Atlantic world was a self-organised arena for free enterprise. The history of Paramaribo's eighteenth century is clearly not a triumphalist history of stateless merchants creating personal networks across imperial boundaries. Such forceful projects by state institutions like the Admiralty of Zeeland mustering its warships to take possession of Fort Willoughby in 1667, or the Dutch States General arming the *staatse troupen* to fight off the Maroons, were *condicio sine qua non* of Suriname's colonisation. An attempt to lay out a guarded cordon around the plantations was as expensive as it was ineffective. However, it was possible to keep control of limited geographical spaces like cities and river mouths. In this sense Suriname was easier to control and close off from the sea than many of the Caribbean islands. The muddy coast with its sandbanks made any direct landfall difficult, and a few well-placed fortresses along the rivers were enough to bar unwanted access. Limiting sea-access to the colony served two purposes for the directors of the Suriname Company. It prevented a military take-over by a competing power, and indeed real attempts at take-overs occurred rarely. The day-to-day function of the restriction was to enforce import-duties, ensure that exports of 'high goods' went to the Dutch Republic, and smugglers were kept out.

The ability to project violence over long distances was only made possible by financial investments beyond the capability of individual merchants or even the Suriname Company. While planters and their lobbyists in the Republic could demand lower taxes, freer trade and more military protection – as they did in the aftermath of the Cassard invasion of

1712 – they were so unwilling to pay for the building of Fort Amsterdam that the haggling over who was to pick up the bill for this rather sensible project delayed the fort's completion until 1748. As discussed in Chapter 3 only the intervention by the States General could resolve the issue between plantation owners and the directors of the Suriname Company. States and state-like institutions were crucial to overcome the individual qualms of plantation owners, also in the supposedly networked, self-organised and decentred Atlantic world. In Suriname the infringements upon metropolitan restrictions – primarily the regional trade – were not an issue of limited geographical control by the SC, but could practically only take place with the connivance of the local representatives of the SC.

* * *

With the founding of the SC the lack of stability that had initially characterised Suriname's economy and military security ended. After the damage to the colony by war and the large scale emigration of English colonists and slaves, the period after 1683 saw the re-establishing of sugar production and severing trading relations (including slave trading) with the Amerindians. Part of the plan of the SC directors, who now governed the colony, was to profit from Suriname as a market for goods produced in the Republic. However, as demonstrated in Part 1 of this book, the regional connection proved so crucial to the survival of the colony that they allowed the regional trade to infringe on the initial plans. The rebuilding of the colony under the SC relied on colonists who were able to transfer knowledge about colonisation from earlier attempts, and who could rely on a significant personal Atlantic network. While initially there were traders in the colony (people involved in the buying and selling of commodities for profit) their role gradually declined. Once the shipping and credit relations between Suriname and the metropolis had consolidated, the personal aspect of maintaining these withered away and the relation between Paramaribo and the rest of the network came to depend more on formal contacts.

The intercolonial movement of goods was important for the continued existence of the colony, but was seen as detrimental to the Dutch companies who also sought to profit from the sales of provisions to the colonists. Also on the other side of the connection, on the North American and Caribbean side, instructions from the British state were to restrict such trade. As for the Dutch, many successive owners and managers of the colony attempted to restrict inter-colonial movement. First Abraham Crijnssen and later also the Suriname Company tried to block British ships to sail up the river. But these attempts never did the colony any good, as lack of food, draught animals and supplies could ground plantation activity to a halt. This is not to say that this trade was characterised by a favourable balance of exchange for the plantation owners of local Surinamese merchants. The

exchange between Suriname and Barbados and New York in the seventeenth century had been rather equally matched, but it became very unbalanced in the eighteenth century. North American ships loaded with finished products were bringing in so much value that it would take two whole shiploads of molasses to pay for them. And that was only the price of molasses in Suriname, once the syrup had been turned into rum or was resold to consumers the North American merchants had made up for any losses that they might have encountered by selling their products in Suriname. This hampered local productivity in Paramaribo, although it did soften the one-sided exchange with the merchant houses and investors in the Dutch Republic. The shift in the balance of power between the planters in the colony and the owners in the Republic did much to improve the products shipped out from the colony. When ship captains were desperate to find return-goods in the early decades of the colony, sugar planters were getting away with shipping burned uncured sugar in heavily leaking barrels. Due to the consolidation of the connection, with professional freighters loading in consignment the quality of the exports improved.

The growth in plantation production after the end of the War of the Spanish Succession created a growing group of people with interests in the colony, both in Suriname, in the Republic and on the North American east coast. The plantation owners and those who provided essential services to the colony were profiting and they were increasingly demanding protection and privileges from the States General and the Suriname Company. For the market in Amsterdam the rapidly expanding coffee production also increased Suriname's position vis-à-vis the VOC, whose coffee trade remained rather stable throughout the entire eighteenth century.

While the federated and splintered nature of the Dutch Republic and its Atlantic activities prevented a nationally organised West India Interest, there were networks of interested parties integrated in the city and provincial governments in the Dutch Republic, and people addressing the States General. They managed to push for the building of Fort New Amsterdam, the privatisation of the slave trade and when the trade with Suriname fell on hard times in the aftermath of the Fourth Anglo-Dutch War, merchants and planters received beneficial measures. However, as has been noted many times before, Surinamese goods did not receive protection from competing suppliers within the French, British or other domains. The privilege of the colony did not exceed the limits set by wider merchant-interests in the Republic. Also in Suriname's urban network, particularly British North American colonists, started to oppose metropolitan restrictions and tried to have a say in how much they were taxed, and how these taxes were spent. In cities like Boston, Baltimore and New York large scale tax evasions by North Americans was prevalent among captains and merchants bringing in

molasses from the French and Dutch West Indian possessions. Their activities completely undermined the enforcement of the Molasses Act and encouraged industrial production in the thirteen colonies.

Private entrepreneurs became confident enough to try and break open the last monopolies of the WIC, in which they succeeded, and the exclusive rights to Suriname's slave trade ended in 1738. Chapter 6 discussed how from the 1740s until the mid-1760s the onset of the private slave trade secured a steady influx of slaves, and with it the sums of credit extended from the metropolis to the planters in the colony. While the WIC commissioners had been central to recovering debts made by planters when buying slaves, the private companies set up their own system of payment, credit and debt recovery. In the 1750s the debts of planters incurred from buying slaves had risen to an alarming level, and the Amsterdam banker Gideon Deutz used the opportunity to buy up the debts in the form of a mortgage, and started reselling this to investors in the Republic. The fund system (*negotiatiestelsel*) expanded in the 1760s after the credit crisis of 1763 had been overcome, giving the planters and the slave traders another lease of life. The success of this system was great; so much capital was made available that private slave trading companies mushroomed, confident that they would be able to sell their cargo at a good price. Speculation resulted in a bubble, and once it burst, plantations were sometimes abandoned, but many befell the bigger investment funds, centralising ownership and management towards the end of the eighteenth century.

With the tremendous availability of credit and relative peaceful relations of the Dutch with the other empires, all the ingredients were there for a boom in production. The 1760s, 1770s and 1780s were three decades of tremendous turnover of Surinamese products on the Amsterdam market. The representatives of trust funds were later blamed for the collapse of the system in the 1770s, but this blame-game glosses over the enormous growth that had taken place over the period. After the financial crisis of 1773 metropolitan merchant firms took more direct control over production, while representing a smaller amount of owners with large portfolios. The supply of North American provisions in exchange for Surinamese molasses intensified, most strongly with the area that was to become the heartland of North American independence.

The third part of the book focussed on how the outbreak of the Fourth Anglo-Dutch War damaged the colony's shipping, but also that production did bounce back in the 1780s. When in the 1790s the Dutch lost their Atlantic power to the Americans – who took over the shipping in the Atlantic – the slave trade came to a standstill. Unable to rely on other avenues for the supply of new labour (unlike its neighbouring colonies Demerara and Essequibo), production faltered. The nationalisation of the

Suriname Company by the Batavian Republic in 1795 was only an intermezzo in what was the end of the Dutch Atlantic world. The declining hold of the Dutch over Suriname was completed with the British occupation of 1799.

* * *

The tightening of the connection between the plantations and the Dutch Republic might on the surface appear as one of the many forces which was slowly tearing apart the integrated Atlantic world, and recreating the relation between colony and motherland within a nationally defined city network. However, more than anything it was the rise to power of the North Americans as the great freighters of the Atlantic Ocean, and maybe even the world, that was quickly sealing the fate of several branches of Dutch colonial enterprise. In the aftermath of the Fourth Anglo Dutch War, the non-Dutch ships were bringing more and more slaves to the colony. The shipping of goods to and from the colony had always been partly the domain of non-Dutch ships. But when it came to the shipping of 'high goods' the Dutch defended their privilege as long as they could. By now the Americans were also overtaking the shipping of sugar, coffee and cotton to Amsterdam. Slave trading and freight shipping had often been mentioned as areas that made the colonial project of the Dutch in the Atlantic worthwhile. Now they were being outflanked even in the connection to their own colony. When the British attacked Suriname in the late 1790s, the colony fell. While under foreign occupation, the British abandoned the slave trade in their domain, effectively also abolishing it for the Dutch, who took the formal step in 1814.

Looking back at the history of colonisation it becomes clear that there was a strong Atlantic dynamic to Suriname's development. The conquest and subjugation of present-day Suriname could rely on resources from Atlantic subsystems beyond the narrow limits of the Dutch Atlantic. In many cases of cross-Atlantic colonisation, this conquest paradoxically also produced the gravediggers for Europe's dominance. By setting up new centres where economic power was concentrated and military forces could be mustered, cities and colonies along the Atlantic coast gained momentum in the second half of the eighteenth century, resulting in a series of independence struggles. While this development towards independence bypassed Paramaribo and Suriname, this did not mean that connections and circuits outside European control were absent. Much of the colony's economic and social development rested on Atlantic circuits beyond Dutch control.

This book has attempted to position Paramaribo within the field of Atlantic history by broadening our conception of the city to that of an Atlantic nodal point. By taking ship movements as a starting-point, questions

were raised about the connections that developed from Paramaribo to the rest of the world, about the maritime aspect of Paramaribo's development, and the importance of the Dutch as middlemen in the Atlantic. The investigation that followed revealed that Paramaribo was not only connected to various non-Dutch places around the Atlantic, but also that these connections were fundamental to the colony's founding and subsequent development. Paramaribo also turned out to be a place where both Dutch and British trade-restrictions were cunningly evaded by cooperating merchants, captains and local state officials. The research into the maritime aspects of the city's economy resulted in the discovery that not just the enslaved, but also European sailors were working on the colony's rivers. The combined availability of both enslaved and maritime contract-labourers hindered the development of an urban docking industry. For the study of the Dutch in the Atlantic world it was important to find that the famed Dutch brokers were not the ones serving as intermediaries between the developing industries of North America and the Dutch plantation economy. Although the data of non-Dutch shipping in Suriname had been known since the research by Johannes Postma, it was a surprise to find the extent to which the New Englanders were the proverbial Dutch of the eighteenth-century North Atlantic.

Appendices

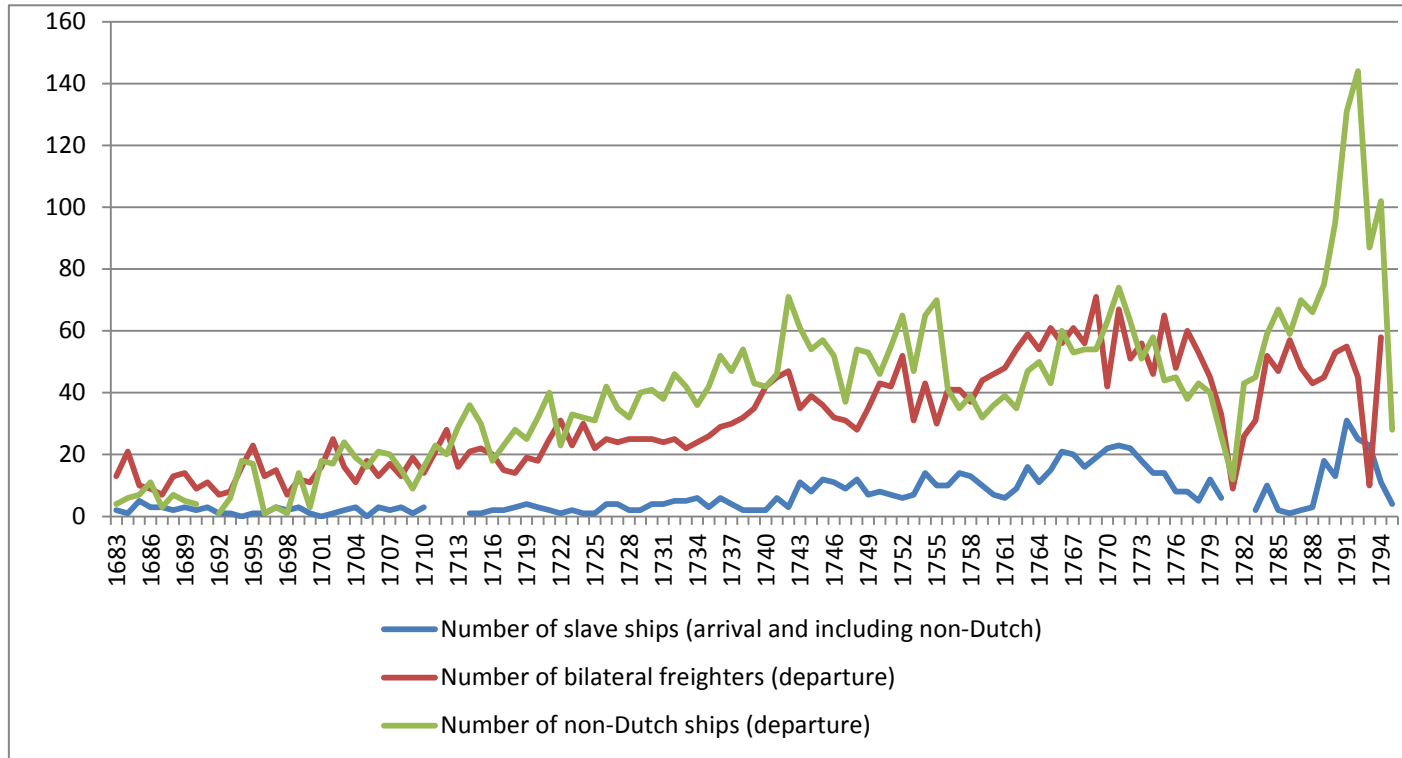
Appendix 1 Shipping data, 1683-1795

The shipping figures are based on the PSNADC, PSDC and the TASTD. The PSNADC and the PSDC are based on two sets of tax records: all ships that paid the Dutch tax rate and a second set of all ships that paid the non-Dutch tax rate. The slave trade appendix is based on both datasets. The slavers are all ships that are registered as having carried enslaved Africans as cargo, both Dutch and non-Dutch ships. Excluded from this are the bilateral freighters that carried enslaved Africans as workers (primarily servants).

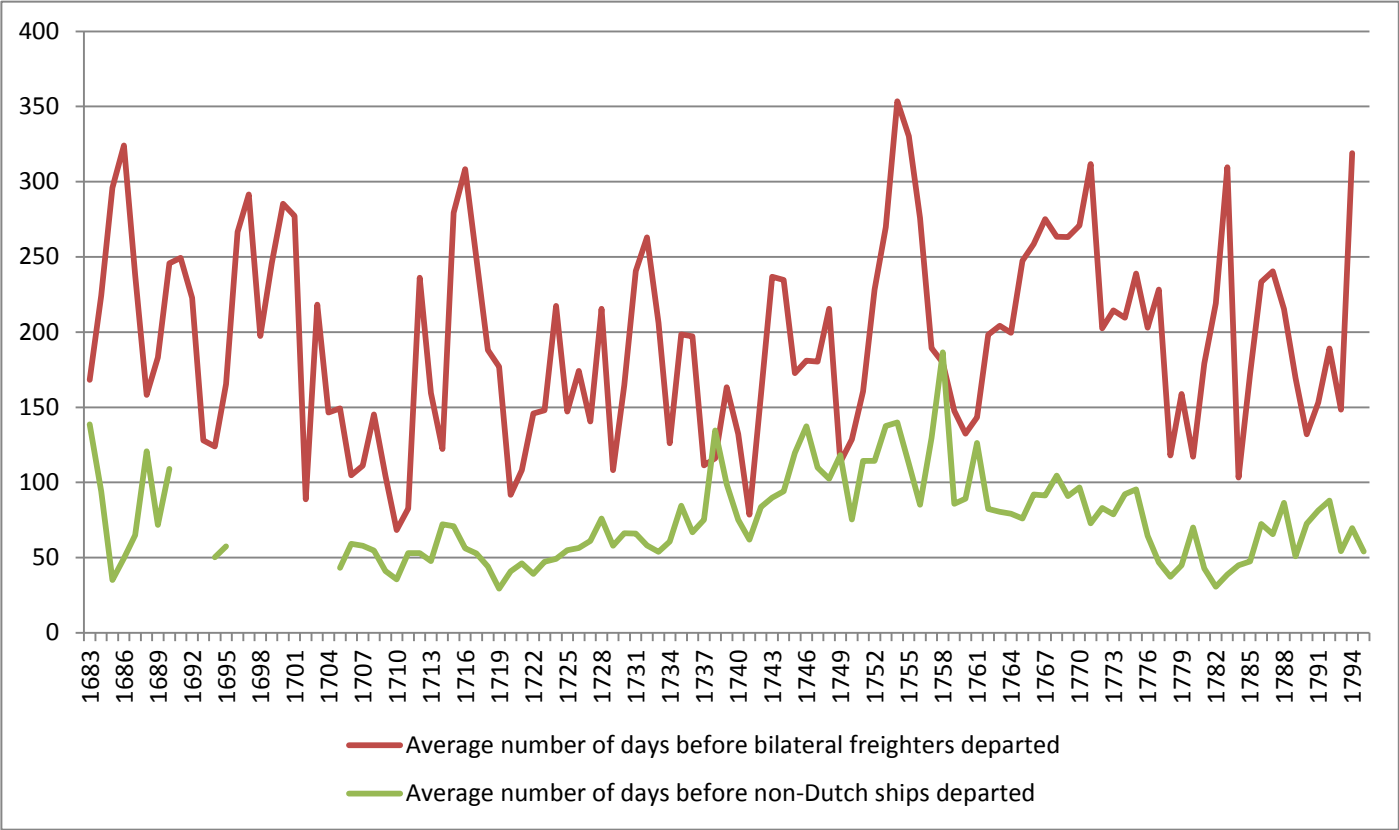
The graphs that show bilateral freighters include all ships registered as having their route: The Dutch Republic – Suriname – The Dutch Republic. Removed are the slave ships, and those who had other business. War ships and Dutch regional ships have been removed from the data because they do not meet the definition of a bilateral freighter. Also if the ship was shipwrecked and failed to leave the Suriname River it is not in here. However, the graphs do contain ships that were taken as a prize on their return voyage.

For the data on freighters the year of departure is used, so as to give a more accurate measure of the colony's exports. With the slavers the year of arrival is used to compile the slave trading data. When for a certain ship no departure data was available, year of arrival was used.

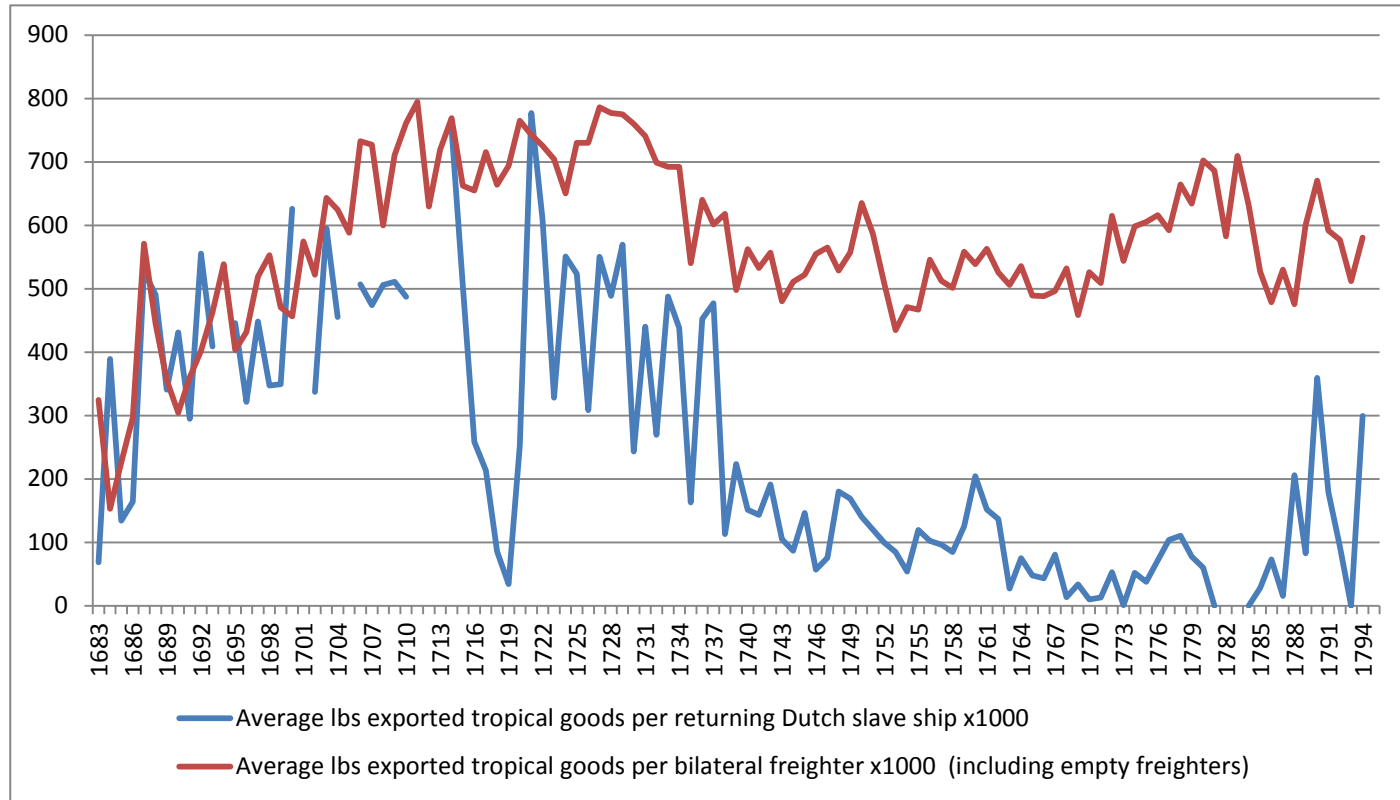
Graph 1 Number of ships per year in Paramaribo (slavers, freighters and non-Dutch), 1683-1795



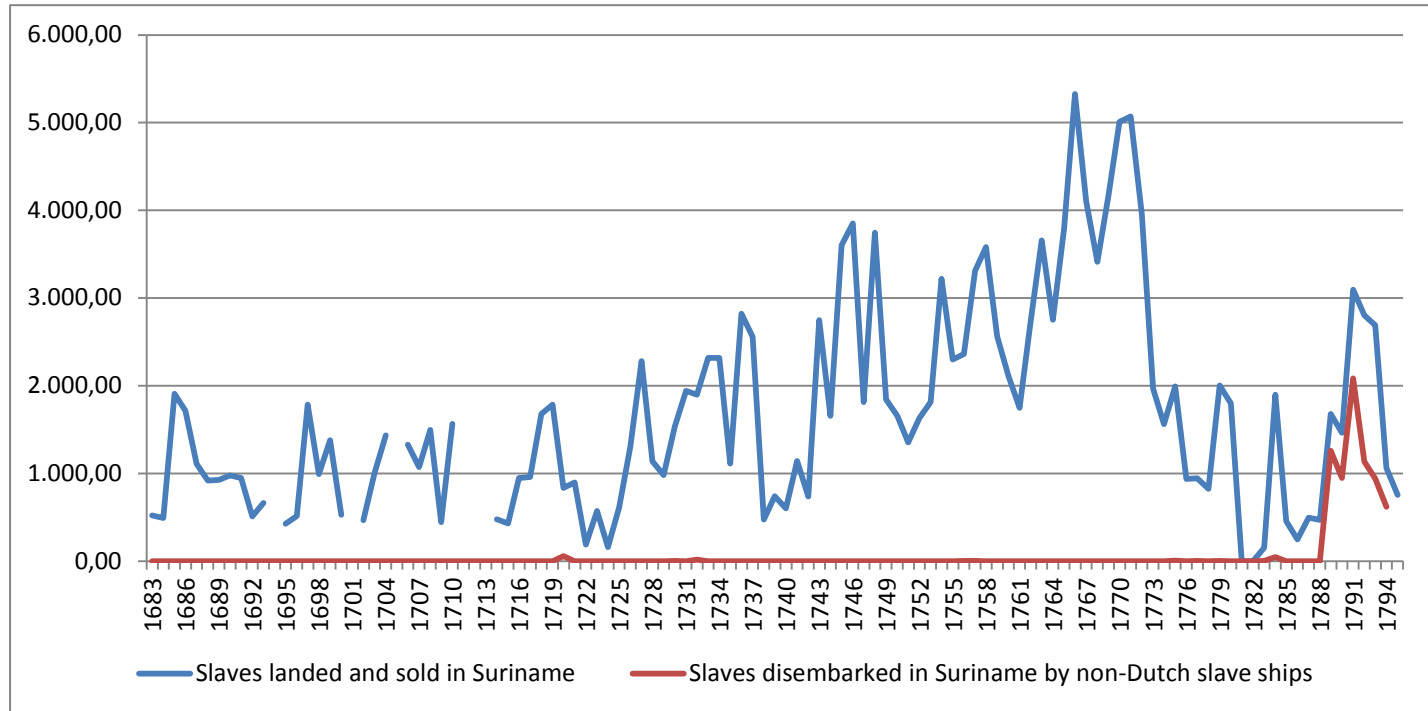
Graph 2 Waitingtimes of Dutch freighters and non-Dutch ships compared, 1683-1795



Graph 3 Average weight of tropical produce on board ships sailing to the Dutch Republic, 1683-1795

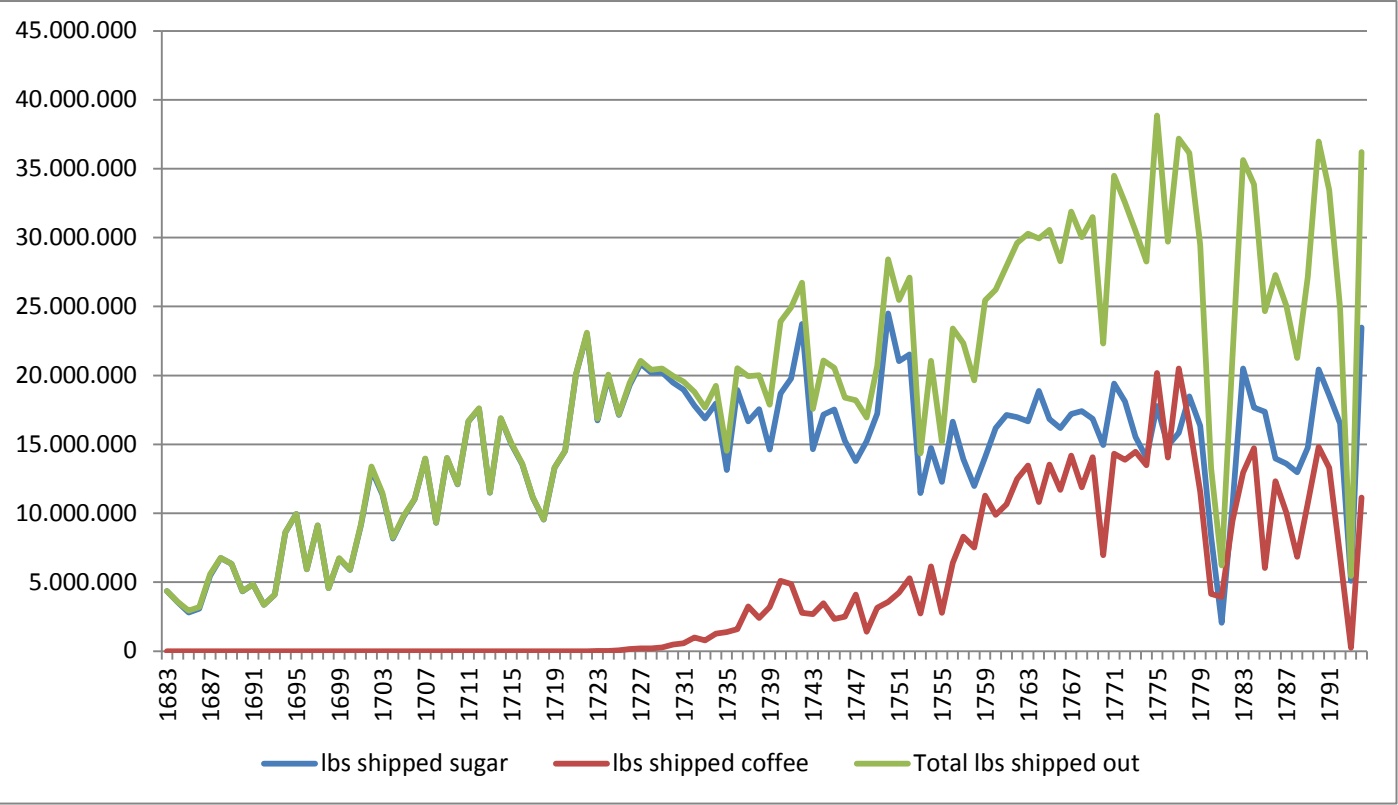


Graph 4 Slave sales in Suriname, including from non-Dutch ships, 1683-1795

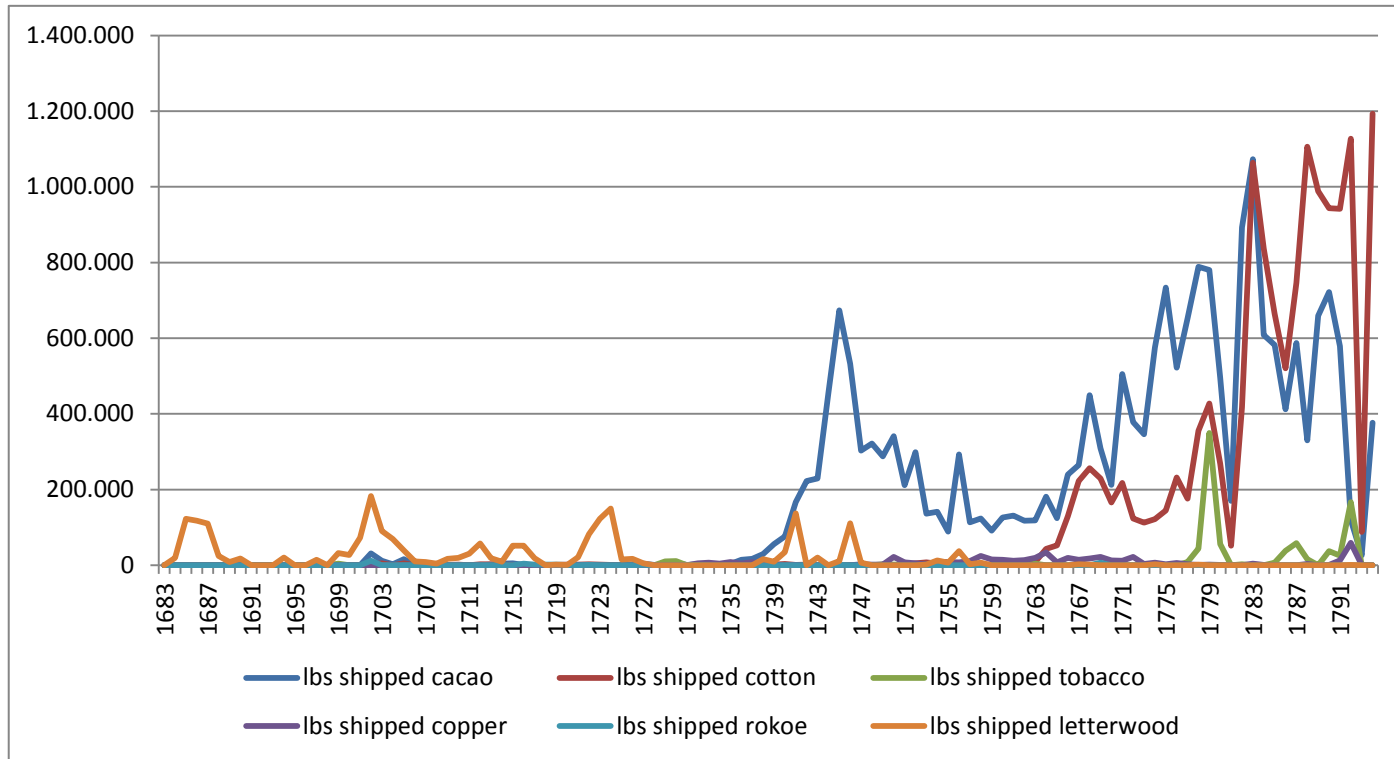


NB: The number of slaves that had survived the middle passage was higher, but some ships sailed onwards to other destinations. Source: PSDC, PSNADC and the TASTD.

Graph 5 Sugar and coffee shipped from Suriname to the Dutch Republic, 1683-1795



Graph 6 Various products shipped from Suriname to the Dutch Republic, 1683-1795



Appendix 2 Amsterdam notarial contracts for slave sales

Notary	Source SAA	Date	Slave trader	Ship	Captain	No. of slaves	Price	Slaves on contract	No. of buyers
Pelgrom, S.	4772 / akt 532	17/09/1688		Fort Cormantijn	Schepmoes, Abraham	500			
Pelgrom, S.	4773 / akt 297	30/12/1692		Juffrouw Debora Emmerentia	Stock, Arent Gijzen van der	500		12	
Pelgrom, S.	4773/ akt 530	13/08/1694		Pijnenburg	Schepmoes, Abraham	400	210	32	4
Pelgrom, S.	4774/ akt 29	20/05/1695	WIC Zeeland	Brigdamme	Pets, Daniel	500		130	10
Pelgrom, S.	4774/akt nn	26/10/1695	WIC, A'dam, Delft, Hoorn	4 different ships		125 per ship	210	500	1
Pelgrom, S.	4774/ akt 246	08/12/1696	All living in A'dam	St. Jan Baptiste	Rijck, Willem Robbertsz	500		30	5
Pelgrom, S.	4774/ akt 289	10/04/1697		Goude Poort	Bodt, Pieter Jansz.	500	210	120	14
Pelgrom, S.	4774/ akt 346	03/12/1697		Different Ships			210	101	6
	4775/ akt 111	07/06/1701	WIC A'dam					6	1
	4775/ akt 199	08/08/1701	WIC A'dam					165	26
	4775/ 341	16/03/1702	WIC A'dam					88	12
	4775/ akt 546	28/04/1704	WIC A'dam					250	30
	4775/ akt 961	13/07/1705	WIC					136	20
	4776/ akt 63	26/04/1706	WIC A'dam					250	25
	4776/ akt 395	20/12/1706	WIC A'dam					130	21
	4776/ akt 853	15/12/1707	WIC					64	12

Source: Stadsarchief Amsterdam, Notarial Archive digitised by Catia Antunes.

Appendix 3 Bills of exchange paying for the enslaved sold by the MCC in 1765

Drawer	Drawee	at	ordre	guilders
Alblus, J. & Arabet, Elie	Poll, Herman van de	Amsterdam	Chabot, Jaques Henrij	2384
Alblus, J. & Arabet, Elie	Poll, Herman van de	Amsterdam	Fernandes, Ishak	4312.2
Meij, D. van der	Terborch, Abm.	Amsterdam	Sabel, J.F.	1470
Mackneill, John	Poll, Herman van de	Amsterdam	denzelve (Saffin)	1600.9
Meij, D. van der	Terborch, Abm.	Amsterdam	Sabel, J.F.	1972
Mackneill, John	Poll, Herman van de	Amsterdam	Buttner, Daniel	7000
Schilling, G.	Becius, Johannes	Dordrecht	Dandiran, D. F.	2200.55
Wentworth, Paul	Marselis, Jan & Th.	Amsterdam	denzelve (Saffin)	180
Nepveu A.	widow Hamilton & Mijners	Rotterdam	deselve (Saffin)	2798
Brandon, Is.H.	Brant, Nicolaas	Amsterdam	Brandon, Moses Hoheb	550
Costa, B.H. D'	Marselis, Jan & Th.	Amsterdam	Turqueman, Abraham	80
Nahar, Eliau de mos.	Becius, Johannes	Amsterdam	Henriques, David	200
Dandiran, D.F. qq & Loncous De, qq	Fremaux, J.J.	Amsterdam	Dandiran, D. F.	552
Dandiran, D.F. qq & Overman, H. qq	Nobel, C.G.	Amsterdam	Dandiran, D. F.	2052
Arrias, Abm. H.	Harbanel, Isaak & Hoab, David Lemak	Amsterdam	denselve qq (Saffin)	350
Nepveu, J.	Brant, N.	Amsterdam	Nepveu, J.	819
Prent, P.K.	[unreadable]	Amsterdam	Meij, D. van der	750.1
Prent, P.K.	[unreadable]	Amsterdam	Meij, D. van der	950
Meij, D. van der	Heirs of J. Witzen	Amsterdam	Sabel, J.F.	3840.35
Kruijff, N. de	Nobel, C.G.	Amsterdam	Kruijff, N. de	6110
Meij, D. van der	Hudig, F.W.	Rotterdam	Sabel, J.F.	1275.6
Rees, F.W. & Sterk, John. Qq	Marselis, Jan & Th.	Amsterdam	Wiltens, A.J.	300
Meij, D. van der	Terborch	Amsterdam	Sabel, J.F.	4401

Kruijff, N. de
Vazfarro, Ishak
Nassy, Moses C.

Nobel, C.G.
Marselis, Jan & Th.
Marselis, Jan & Th.

Amsterdam
Amsterdam
Amsterdam

Kruijff, N. de
Nassij, Mos. C.
Varfarro, Isaak

1489.8
174
284

Appendix 4 Requests for tax-exemption by slave traders 1783-1787

1783: In August 1783 Hendrik de Haan, commissioned by Snoek Hurgonje en Abraham Louijssen, merchants in Middelburg, accountants of the ship De Hoop under captain Pieter Gideon Udemans. It leaves Zeeland a year later, and arrives in 1785 to disembark 300 slaves. Daniel Cornelis Wesselman freighter of the ship Jonge Jan, captain Jan Riems received permission to leave for the Guinea Coast to buy an Armasoen and sell it in Suriname. It arrived with 147 slaves in January of 1784. ¹ In October 1783 Johannes Luden Hendricksz requested permission on behalf of the MCC, the bookkeepers for the ships Nieuwe Hoop under captain Cornelis Loeff. The ship however, did not sail to Suriname, but in stead set course to Demerara, where it sold 202 of the 215 slaves it had acquired in Africa.
1785: In July 1785 Willem Sarton accountant of the Johanna, of captain Pieter Murck received permission to equip the ship and bring slaves from Guinea to Suriname. It sailed out from Rotterdam immediately, and arrived in Suriname a year later, disembarking 249 slaves.
1786: In January of 1786 Hendrick de Haan, again with an order of Snouck Hurgonje & Abraham Louijssen, who are merchants from Middelburg, and bookkeepers of the ship Vigilantie under captain Joost Donker. They claim to be intentioned to have the ship sail to the Guinea Coast to buy slaves and to transport them to Suriname, and sell them there. They want the directors to give the necessary orders to the Suriname Governor <i>'om die slaven zonder eenige kosten te mogen uitbrengen, en in gevalle deze in het geheel of ten deele niet konden worden verhandeld, met alle Vrijheid weder te mogen Vertrekken, zonder betalinge van eenige onkosten, onder wat voorwendsel het ook zoude mogen wezen.'</i> The directors relieve them from their obligation, and their intention to go to Suriname appears to have been less solid than they initially suggested, because once they arrive on the American coast they directly sail on to Demerara and disembark the 271 of the 313 slaves who survived the middle passage there. In May 1786 there is a request by Johannes Luden Hendriksz, attorney of the MCC, the accountants of the ship Vergenoegen under captain Robert Goodwell. They get permission from the Directors <i>"zonder eenige onkosten gem schip slaaven in de colonie te mogen inbrengen, en in gevalle dezelve het zij in het geheel, het zij ten deele niet konden worden verhandeld, met alle vrijheid wederom te mogen vertrekken."</i> It departed the next month, and sailed to Suriname where it disembarked 362 of the 386 slaves it bought in Africa.;
1787: Slave ship <i>Groningen</i> , captain Dirk Toll, <i>rheeder</i> Jean Philipe du Quesne. Slave ship Johan van Olderbarneverld, schipper Willem Dijker, <i>rheeder</i> en boekhouder Jan Gabriel Teegelaar. Slave ship <i>d'Algemeene Welvaart</i> , schipper Wilhelmu Oostdijck, <i>rheeder</i> Turing & Co. 10 Oct 1787 Slave ship <i>Zeemercuur</i> . Johannes Ludens Henriksz, representative of the MCC requests papers for the <i>Zeemercuur</i> , schipper Cornelis van Kakom, to sail to Guinea and Suriname.

Source: SvS *Resoluties Directeuren*, entry 1.05.03 inv.nr. 73-77; PSDC; TASTD.

Consulted archives

Den Haag, Nationaal Archief
Sociëteit van Suriname
Oud Archief Suriname
Tweede West-Indische Compagnie

Kew, The National Archive
High Court of Admiralty

Middelburg, Zeeuws Archief
Middelburgse Commercie Compagnie
Staten van Zeeland

Amsterdam, Stadsarchief
Notariëel Archief
Archief Huis Marquette
Archief familie Bicker
Archief van Burgemeesters
Archief van het nieuw stedelijk bestuur

Data Archiving and Networked Services, www.dans.knaw.nl
Postma Suriname Data Collection (DANS KNAW persistent id.:
[urn:nbn:nl:ui:13-ybr-34p](https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:nl:ui:13-ybr-34p))
Postma Suriname North America Data Collection

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Acknowledgments

In the summer of 2008 I was granted a four year Ph.D. position in the Dutch Connections project, funded by NWO. The interview for the job was my first visit to the KITLV, and also my first meeting with my inspiring supervisors Gert Oostindie and Henk den Heijer, as well as co-applicant of the project Karel Davids. They, and the other people connected to the project were a stimulating group of people from whom I learned a lot. The academic community of lunchbox and coffee friends at the Institute for History made me feel very much at home. The KITLV, at only a stone's throw away, also was a welcoming environment with open doors. The up-to-date and rich collection – and the unique feature of not charging fines for late returns – greatly benefitted my research.

From the moment I acquired a membership-card for the KITLV collection the staff knew me by name and were very willing to help getting the latest literature in a quickly expanding field of study. On one occasion the staff of an archive were willing to bend the rules and let me sit at a small table in the back of the storage rooms to access documents that could officially not be studied because of their poor material condition. Especially at the National Archive in The Hague and the Zeeuws Archief in Middelburg, the staff were very attentive and supportive. Another special mention should go to the Digitale Bibliotheek voor de Nederlandse Literatuur that has made an excellent collection of Surinamica available online.

Since information and data are increasingly free and publically accessible, the danger exists that those who use the information forget how much time and effort was put into compiling it, especially when the data is based on early-modern sources. Many thanks and appreciation goes out to Johannes Postma, John de Bye, and Cátia Antunes for making the fruits of their work available, and to the DANS/EASY project of the KNAW for providing an excellent facility for storing and distributing data.

Today, as in the early modern Atlantic, an informal network is fundamental for ventures into uncharted waters. Lunch, coffee breaks, dinner and drinks have cemented these networks, and they form the most precious memories of my time as a Ph.D. candidate. Thank you Matthias, Pepijn, Titas. Many thanks also to my cohort who shared the experience of the end drawing near: Minte, Carolien, Adriaan, Rombert, Kim, and my roommates Jorrit, Amrit Dev and Ali.

Writing is best done alone, but the end result was greatly improved by an extensive group of people who have read chapters, papers and articles and who reminded me that my subject and approach needed to be introduced explicitly instead of throwing readers in at the deep end. Cátia Antunes, Jessica Roitman and Suze Zijlstra gave me detailed comments on

the structure and arguments of chapters as well as the whole dissertation. I have good memories of the panels of various conferences where I was allowed to present part of my research: ESSHC, ENIUGH, KNHG. Thanks go out to the editorial boards and anonymous reviewers of *OSO*, *BMGN-LCHR* and *Itinerario* who published the articles that resulted from the conference papers. In Brussels, Amsterdam, Barcelona and Utrecht, participants and supervisors of the N.W. Posthumus Institute gave me detailed comments on the design of my research. In Middelburg, Ruud Paesie generously invited Alex van Stipriaan, Kwame Nimako, Jan Lucassen to comment on a collection of my drafts, which resulted in a fruitful discussion.

I thank Ruth for her intellectual contribution to my research, but especially for our life together. Many thanks go to Andrew, Catherine, Evelyn and Jonathan for comments on the text, insights and questions. Truus, Carlo, Jasmine and Abdullah inspired me to pursue a life in academia, as an activist and in a loving marriage. All these wonderful people helped to make this a better book. The remaining shortcomings are only my own.

Samenvatting

Suriname and the Atlantic World is een onderzoek naar de ontwikkeling van Suriname en Paramaribo in relatie tot de Atlantische wereld. Onderzoeken naar Suriname beperkten zich in het verleden veelal tot de directe verbinding tussen kolonie en moederland binnen het wetenschappelijke kader van een centrum-periferie benadering. Door Paramaribo als vertrekpunt van dit onderzoek te nemen en te kijken naar de scheepvaart, migratie en handelsverbindingen die er bestonden wordt echter duidelijk dat er veel uitwisseling plaats had die zich beter als een netwerkstructuur laat beschrijven. Door een dergelijke “cis-Atlantische” benadering te kiezen is duidelijk geworden dat de kolonie al in de eerste decennia van haar bestaan enkel kon overleven door verbindingen op te zetten naar koloniën van concurrerende Europese grootmachten. Zoals in hoofdstuk 1 en 7 wordt getoond bleven deze verbindingen de gehele vroegmoderne tijd van groot belang, al veranderde de aard van deze inter-koloniale contacten wel.

De plantagekolonie was zeer afhankelijk van de aanvoer van producten en migranten van elders uit de regio. Het eerste deel van dit proefschrift bespreekt hoe er een netwerk ontstond tussen Suriname en Barbados, alsmede een aantal Noord-Amerikaanse koloniën. Deze verbindingen waren voor de kolonie van groot belang, zeker toen aanvallen van Inheemsen het voortbestaan van de kolonie bedreigden. In hoofdstuk 2 wordt beschreven hoe de uitruil tussen Barbados en Suriname onder druk kwam te staan toen in de eerste decennia van de achttiende eeuw de Surinaamse suikerproductie flink was toegenomen en men het restproduct van de suikerbereiding, melasse, in de regio wilde afzetten in concurrentie met de gevestigde aanbieders van melasse uit Barbados. Er ontstond een geregelde aanvoer van goederen uit Noord-Amerikaanse havens als Boston, New York, Baltimore en Providence. De directeuren van de Sociëteit van Suriname zagen zich genoodzaakt hun mercantilistische privilege in 1704 op te geven en deze Surinaams – Noord-Amerikaanse handel te gedogen.

Als verbindingspunt tussen de plantages en verschillende Atlantische regio's, maar ook in de rol van bestuurscentrum voor de kolonie, nam het belang van Paramaribo gedurende de achttiende eeuw zienderogen toe. Hoofdstuk 4 bespreekt naast de toenemende centraliteit van de stad ook de grenzen aan deze groei. De stad kende nauwelijks een lokale nijverheids- c.q. industriële ontwikkeling zelfs in de maritieme en aanverwante sectoren. Deze beperking vormde uiteindelijk een rem op de ontwikkeling van de stad.

Hoewel overzeese kolonisatie traditioneel vooral gezien is als een project ter meerdere eer en glorie van de zich ontwikkelende Europese

(natie-)staten, hebben koloniale projecten zich allerm minst binnen nationale kaders ontwikkeld. De realiteit van de koloniën was immers dat zij zich vele malen dichter bij de koloniën van de concurrerende staten bevonden dan bij het moederland. Deze dwingende koloniale realiteit maakte het voor kolonisten noodzakelijk om, onder het motto ‘beter een goede buur dan een verre vriend’, verbindingen aan te knopen met naburige vestigingen. Nationale loyaliteit werd bovendien beperkt door de multinationale afkomst van de kolonisten. In koloniën die vielen onder de soevereiniteit van de Staten-Generaal gold dit bij uitstek. Kolonisten, zoals hoofdstuk 5 van dit proefschrift laat zien, waren vaak afkomstig uit zeer verschillende delen van Europa.

De slavenhandel neemt een prominente plaats in in het vormen van de verbindingen tussen Suriname en de rest van het Atlantisch gebied. Niet alleen zorgde deze handel voor de gedwongen migratie van slaafgemaakten uit verschillende Afrikaanse regio's, het betekende ook dat Surinaamse plantages gefinancierd moesten worden met complexe kredietinstrumenten. Hoofdstuk 6 bespreekt hoe de verhypothekering van plantages, en de daarbij behorende regelementen die plantagemanagers dwongen al hun behoeften uit Nederland te betrekken, er onder andere voor zorgde dat de Nederlandse vaart op Suriname terrein won ten opzichte van de niet-Nederlandse vaart.

De slavenhandel was ook een kwetsbare handel door de grote afstanden die schepen aflegden en de felle, soms gewapende, concurrentie tussen Europese staten. Deze kwetsbaarheid werd zichtbaar toen Nederland tijdens de Vierde Nederlands-Engelse Oorlog (1781-1784) haar macht op zee verloor. De invloed van deze nederlaag op de Atlantische verbindingen van Suriname komt aan bod in hoofdstuk 7. Door de Atlantische benadering van Suriname is duidelijk geworden dat er niet simpelweg sprake was van de achteruitgang van de kolonie als gevolg van het zwakker wordende moederland. De snelle opkomst van de Verenigde Staten als zeevarende natie, en de groei van hun markt voor tropische producten, betekende dat Suriname gedeeltelijk op dit succes mee kon liften. In 1789 werd de slavenhandel op Suriname *de facto* opengesteld voor Amerikaanse en Caraïbische slavenschepen, die direct gretig van deze openstelling gebruik maakten.

Dit proefschrift is een experiment in het toepassen van een Atlantische benadering op een geschiedenis die tot nu toe vooral binnen nationale kaders is onderzocht. Met scheepsbewegingen als startpunt, werd al snel duidelijk hoe omvangrijk de niet-Nederlandse vaart op Suriname eigenlijk is geweest. Ook werd duidelijk dat handelaren en kolonisten tussen Suriname en Noord-Amerika manieren vonden om belastingen en beperkingen die door staten en compagnieën vanuit zowel Amsterdam en

Londen werden geheven te ontduiken. Aangezien dit onderzoek goeddeels beperkt is gebleven tot maritieme en handelsaspecten van de Europese kolonisatie van Suriname, blijven nog veel vragen onbeantwoord over de invloed van de niet-Nederlandse Atlantische verbindingen op het sociale en culturele leven in de kolonie.

Curriculum vitae

Karwan Fatah werd geboren in Amsterdam op 17 april 1981. In 2003 voltooide hij zijn opleiding tot geschiedenisleraar aan de Educatieve Faculteit Amsterdam. In 2006 studeerde hij af als Bachelor (BA) geschiedenis aan de Universiteit van Amsterdam en in 2008 als onderzoeksmaster bij de vakgroep Economische en Sociale Geschiedenis van die zelfde universiteit. Gedurende de jaren na zijn opleiding tot geschiedenisleraar werkte hij naast zijn studie als docent aan het Fons Vitae Lyceum te Amsterdam. Vanaf 2008 werkte hij bij het Instituut voor Geschiedenis te Leiden binnen het project Dutch Atlantic Connections aan zijn proefschrift met als promotoren prof. dr. H.J. den Heijer en prof. dr. G.J. Oostindie.