



Kaart Gids Slavernijverleden
Amsterdam |
Map Amsterdam Slavery
Heritage Guide

Gids Slavernijverleden Amsterdam

Slavery Heritage Guide

Tweede uitgebreide editie, 2018
Second extended edition, 2018



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LM PUBLISHERS
Uitgeverij | Publisher LM Publishers, Volendam

Colofon | Colophon

Teksten, beeldresearch en redactie | *Text, research images, and editors:*

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Eindredactie | *Final edits:*

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Productie | *Production*

High Trade, Zwolle

© Tekst, illustraties, kaarten | *Texts, illustrations, maps:*

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© Uitgave | *Publisher:* LM Publishers, Volendam

Eerste druk 2014

Tweede herziene editie 2018

LM Publishers

Parallelweg 37

1131 DM Volendam

E-mail: info@lmpublishers.nl

Website: www.lmpublishers.nl

ISBN 978 94 6022 368 6

website: www.mappingslavery.nl

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De illustratie op iedere pagina onder de paginanummers is de onbekende Afrikaanse bediende op het schilderij op pagina 28, waar hij staat afgebeeld met Margaretha Tromp. Op het huis van de familie Tromp in Amsterdam staat ook een afbeelding van een zwarte bediende. | *The image on every page below the page number is an unknown African servant. He is painted on a portrait with Margaretha Tromp, see page 28. On the house of the Tromp family in Amsterdam there is an image of a black servant as well.*

Preface

Many people in the Netherlands know very little about Dutch involvement in slavery and the slave trade. When I give lectures around the nation people in the audience often tell me 'When I was in school, I was not told anything about the involvement of the Dutch in slavery; and 'There just are not enough books on this topic'; and 'I wish I knew more but I don't know where to look'. This guide responds to these needs. We already have a lot of knowledge about the involvement of the Dutch in slavery and the slave trade but it is mainly in academic books. This guide will make this information more widely known.

Creating and sharing information about national history is a long and arduous process. Most historical facts and interpretations are produced by universities, research institutes and foundations. Individuals working on their own often produce knowledge, as do many community groups. Some of the best knowledge is produced when there are multiple perspectives on similar questions and issues, and when there are discussions and debates about different interpretations. Out of this complex and multifaceted process we continue to develop and refine our understanding of the past.

The guide that is in your hands is a major contribution to historical knowledge about the Dutch involvement in slavery in general and the role of Amsterdam in the Dutch slave trade in particular. It provides new facts and evidence. With this guide, visitors can now put names to the places, and faces to the people centrally involved in this trade in human beings.

The truth is that politics, economics, religion, architecture and art in Amsterdam are inseparable from the Dutch involvement in slavery and the slave trade. The Dutch were involved in slavery for hundreds of years; hundreds of transatlantic voyages departed and arrived in Amsterdam; hundreds of thousands of Africans were bought and sold

by merchants in Amsterdam; and millions of guilders were made from the sale of humans by the residents of Amsterdam. The buildings and locations described in this guide direct us to many of the key institutions and the central actors in this unforgettable period in Dutch history. In particular it highlights the location of the WIC (Dutch West India Company) and the VOC (Dutch East India Company).

This guide will help us better understand the complexities of Dutch history. I believe that an inclusive and comprehensive history of Dutch involvement in slavery is not just about the past, it is also about the future. It is about an education that is extensive, inclusive and examined from multiple perspectives. We should commend the authors of this guide. By identifying these buildings and locations they have added important information and they have enriched our knowledge. With this guide the authors demonstrate that there is more than one side to every story. With this guide the authors enable us to compare the experiences of Amsterdam with experiences described in guides and books about other cities involved in the slave trade, such as Liverpool and Bristol in England, Bordeaux and Nantes in France, as well as New Orleans, Charleston and Savannah in the United States. And by establishing the facts this guide will surely broaden our minds, expand our horizons and motivate others to pursue further research.

Stephen Small, Ph.D.

Associate Professor, University of California, Berkeley

Inleiding

In 2013 liep de Afro-Surinaamse Marian Markelo door de tentoonstelling *De Gouden Eeuw* in het Amsterdam Museum. Ze keek naar een schilderij van de Herengracht en merkte op: 'Als ik langs de grachten loop zeg ik wel eens: ik ben ook een beetje eigenaar van dit pand, want mijn voorouders hebben er hard voor gewerkt. Onbetaalde arbeid.'

Markelo doelde op de geschiedenis van haar voorouders, die direct verbonden was met slavernij. Waar is de geschiedenis van de slavernij nu nog in Amsterdam terug te vinden? Wat is er nog zichtbaar en invoelbaar van? Het simpele antwoord is: niet zo veel want het meeste vond plaats aan de andere kant van de oceaan. Bovendien gebeurde hier veel binnenskamers. Veel is voorname-lijk terug te vinden in archieven: het Stadsarchief, het Nationaal Archief en in familiearchieven. Daarnaast is er wat Gloria Wekker het 'cultureel archief' noemt: een verwijzing naar het collectieve bewustzijn van – in dit geval – Nederland, waarin kennis en beelden, ideeën en opvattingen verborgen zitten en vier eeuwen van koloniale geschiedenis doorklinken. Dat cultureel archief ligt meer onder de oppervlakte.

Van deze verborgen geschiedenis zijn nog wel materiële sporen. Voor wie het wil zien is het slavernijverleden verrassend vaak en duidelijk zichtbaar in de stad: in en op huizen van betrokkenen, gebouwen zoals vroegere kantoren, banken, kerken, synagoge, op begraafplaatsen en bij de rechtbank. Sommige panden zijn bekend, zoals het Paleis op de Dam, dat halverwege de zeventiende eeuw gebouwd is als het Stadhuis van Amsterdam. Minder bekend is dat koloniale bewindhebbers daar vergaderden over zaken die met de slavernij te maken hadden.

Verschillende soorten bronnen helpen om iets over deze geschiedenis te weten te komen. De Amsterdamse socioloog Kwame Nimako zegt hierover: 'Slavernij heeft geleid tot parallelle geschiedenissen en vervlochten



Dit schild van de Sociëteit van Suriname toont de sterke band tussen Amsterdam en Suriname | This shield of the Society of Suriname shows the strong ties between Amsterdam and Suriname

achtergronden van mensen, en die hebben op hun beurt weer geleid tot verschillende interpretaties van de begrippen vrijheid en emancipatie.' Hij wijst op het belang van uiteenlopende bronnen: 'Niet alles ligt in archieven. Levende mensen en hun herinneringen zijn niet in de archieven.'

Amsterdam is onlosmakelijk verbonden met de geschiedenis van de Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie (VOC), de West-Indische Compagnie (WIC), de Sociëteit van Suriname, de Staten Generaal, de koloniale gebieden en daarmee met de slavernijgeschiedenis. Het meest direct was Amsterdam verbonden met Suriname. De stad was zelfs mede-eigenaar van Suriname doordat zij Suriname als kolonie mede als bezit had toegeëigend. Daarmee was Amsterdam in feite slaveneigenaar.

Vanuit de hoofdstad werd – mede – de regelgeving, de rechtspraak, de straffen, de bewapening en de handhaving (de politie) in Suriname bepaald en besloten. Direct maar ook indirect hadden de koloniale handelsactiviteiten grote invloed op de economie en daarmee op de gehele stad.



Het wapen van Amsterdam | The crest of the city of Amsterdam

Introduction

In 2013, Afro-Surinamese Marian Markelo visited the exhibition *The Golden Age* in the Amsterdam Museum. She looked at a painting of the Herengracht and said: 'When I walk along the canals I sometimes say: "I am part owner of this building, because my ancestors worked very hard for that, without pay."'

What Markelo referred to was the history of her ancestors, which was directly linked to slavery. Where can we find this history of slavery in Amsterdam today? What visible and tangible traces are there? The simple answer is: not many, because most things happened on the other side of the ocean.

And what happened here, happened mostly indoors. Much of what is left is stored in archives: the City Archives, the National Archive and in family archives. And then there is what Gloria Wekker calls the 'cultural archive', a reference to the collective consciousness of, in this case, the Netherlands, which stores knowledge and images, ideas and views of four centuries of colonial history. This cultural archive is stored well under the surface. There are some physical traces of this hidden history.

For those who notice, much of the heritage of slavery is surprisingly often quite noticeable in the city: in and on the homes of those involved, buildings such as former offices, banks, churches, synagogues, on cemeteries and in court. Some buildings are well known, such as the Royal Palace on Dam Square, constructed as Amsterdam's town hall in the 17th Century. Less well known is the fact that the colonial rulers met there to discuss business involving slavery.

Several sources help us to learn about this history. Amsterdam sociologist Kwame Nima-ko says: 'Slavery has led to parallel histories and intertwined backgrounds and origins of people, which in turn have led to different interpretations of concepts like freedom and emancipation.' He stresses the importance of widely ranging sources: 'Not everything can



Marian Markelo in de tuin van Museum Geelvinck-Hinlopen. Plengoffer |

Marian Markelo in the garden of Museum Geelvinck-Hinlopen. Libation ceremony

be found in archives. Living people and their memories are not stored in archives.'

Amsterdam is solidly linked to the history of the United East-India Company (VOC), the West India Company (WIC), the Society of Surinam, the States General, the colonial territories; and, therefore with the history of slavery. Amsterdam was most closely linked to Surinam. The city itself was co-owner of Surinam, because the city had taken possession of the colony. This made the city of Amsterdam a factual owner of enslaved people.

Legislation, justice, penalties, armaments and security in Suriname were directed and decided from the capital. Colonial trade had important direct and indirect influence on the economy and the city at large.

About this guide: old buildings, new connections

This guide tells the story of Amsterdam's slavery history in over one hundred locations. Never before were so many places in the Netherlands that have direct connections to slavery collected in a (walking) guide. At



the same time this guide elaborates on the work of Amsterdam institutions like the Centre for the Arts Southeast to The National Institute for the Study of Dutch Slavery and its Legacy (NiNsee), the Tropical Museum and project Madretsma. In earlier years they designed walking tours in Amsterdam. There have also been initiatives in other cities, such as Utrecht, Haarlem and Middelburg, which were sources of inspiration. As was special research done in England, where professor Catherine Hall (University College London) mapped the British slave owners. Results of earlier research by specialists in the history and archeology of Amsterdam in and around the canals are also very relevant for the knowledge of the slavery past of the city.

'The legacy of slavery can be identified throughout the Netherlands today even if it is not currently so explicit, not so visible, not so palpable as it could be,' said sociologist Stephen Small in his inaugural lecture at the University of Amsterdam in 2012.

Inspired by Small (and others) Jennifer Tosch took the initiative in 2013 to organize new boat tours along locations that reveal the history of slavery and black history in Amsterdam. As an American with Suri-

name parents she established the Black Heritage Amsterdam Tours. Black Paris Tours and London Black History Walks were also her inspirations. During the Open Monument days of 2013 new walking tours were organized along some of these locations. For most participants it was an eye opener to discover the extent to which the history of slavery is connected with the history of the capital.

This guide is based on existing and new research. A lot of research has been done into the Dutch role in the transatlantic slave trade, the trade in which the WIC was involved. Apart from the trade between Africa and America, there was also slave trade and slavery in this period in 'the east', where the VOC was active in South and Southeast Asia (and probably also in parts of East Africa).

Although the VOC and WIC had different characters and different modes of operation in the colonies, often the same families and companies were involved with them from Europe. By comparing the histories of these two companies, these insights come to the surface. Generally, more research was done into the VOC than into the WIC. However, the subject of the VOC and slavery has barely been touched or discussed. New research will unearth more.

Research also shows that the name Amsterdam appears all over the world. For instance in fortresses that are (or were) in Suriname, the Netherlands Antilles and Indonesia, in West and South Africa, in North and South America and in East and South Asia. This is related to the fact that colonial history, including the history of slavery, involved more continents than one.

This guide is the result of research in archives and literature, meetings and conversations. The research showed that sources are rarely neutral. As Esther Captain puts it: 'Historic power structures between people decide what we find today in documents relating to the past.' It means very little text or images are found created by Africans and Asians. The handful of traces found so far are mentioned in this guide; hopefully they

will lead us to more. This guide does not pretend to be complete and chooses a wide perspective.

How to use this guide

In many streets in Amsterdam buildings are adjoined that stem from different centuries. This guide moves accordingly and jumps through time, from the 17th to the 21st Century. The stories are about what happened in that place in the past, but also about the current attitude towards the slavery history.

This walking guide does not prescribe a fixed route. It starts, where else, on Dam square and follows a numbered trail you can follow or change as you desire, or you can set your own course. The trail has also been separated in four different themes, which combined give an overall view of this complex history that is so clearly connected with this city. The themes will show that the locations are directly and sometimes indirectly connected to the slave trade and slavery history.

Themes

Trade and profit, the first theme, deals with owners, directors, trade and products. Amsterdammers were actively involved with direct and indirect aspects of slavery and the slave trade: as investors in ships, owners of plantations and the enslaved who worked and lived there, as rulers of the WIC and VOC, all merchants of colonial products (tobacco, sugar, coffee, cotton, spices and tea) and as producers and exporters of numerous goods that were used to barter for enslaving people, including textiles, genever, mirrors, beads, arms and packing materials. There were shipping suppliers such as coopers, sail makers and shipyards. There are levels of involvement of course, but there are many connections between these aspects of the city's economy and slavery. That is why this theme covers a large number of locations. **Black in the city, Africans and Asians in Amsterdam** is the second theme. There

already were some black inhabitants in Amsterdam in the 17th Century, but this was barely noticed for a long time. Artists like Rembrandt, Rubens and Govert Flinck painted black people, but art historians actually ignored this aspect. The documentary *Zwart Belicht* by Tessa Boerman and Esther Schreuder shows this convincingly. The long history of racial thinking and its Dutch contributions are discussed with the different collections in museums and libraries. And finally there was the symbolic black presence in the shape of many 'moors' and 'gapers' (literally 'yawners'). These are not always connected with slavery; the gapers, for instance represent a much older history.

Resistance and abolitionism, the third theme, deals with resistance by the enslaved on ships and in the colonies, despite the hermetic system of suppression. In Surinam groups of slaves escaped the plantations to settle in communities in the hinterland (Maroons). There was resistance in the Indian archipelago/Dutch East-Indies also, as court cases by the VOC in Batavia show. Publicist Reggie Baay shows that the law was applied, but that slaves who were put on trial were severely punished.

In England there was a mass movement to oppose slavery, the Abolitionists. In the Netherlands only some were inspired by them, like in Amsterdam. The late abolition of slavery in 1863 was followed by a ten year extension of the control over the formerly enslaved. Similarly, the ban on the slave





trade (1814) was hardly applied. It shows that abolitionism in the Netherlands was not widely spread but it did exist. Some locations bear witness to this.

Museums and archives is the fourth theme. There is increased attention for the history of slavery. This was clearly visible during the year of commemoration, 2013, the year that marked the 150th anniversary of the abolition of Transatlantic slavery in the Netherlands. More and more institutions and organizations, families and groups look into their own ties with the slavery of the past. Many locations in the city offer clues. Several monuments and iconic locations point to the history of slavery and colonialism. Gable stones, buildings, churches, graves, the synagogue and shipyards contain clues and leads, as does the library collection of Artis (the Amsterdam zoo) and museum collections.

The use of the terms 'slave', black and white

Words veil, unveil and create meaning. A human being who is stolen and captured, transported over long distances, sold several times and then forced into unpaid labor is called a 'slave'. Slavery as a system was legalized out of Amsterdam and made heritable: each child born from a female slave was

regarded the property of the slave owner. Now we realize that nobody is born a slave, but that people enslave other people. That is why the word slave is subject to debate. In English it is increasingly common to speak of *enslaved* rather than *slave*, and of *enslavement* rather than *slavery*. In Dutch 'tot slaaf maken', 'tot slaaf gemaakte' and 'slaafgemaakten' are relatively new expressions which may sound somewhat uneasy and artificial. Yet we choose to use them here, albeit not dogmatically. We also refer in this guide to 'black' and sometimes 'white' people, to acknowledge the different ethnicities; also, there is often a mixed descent.

You are invited to go and explore yourself and come to recognize and acknowledge elements of this history around you in the city. Many experience this part of Dutch history as a new story, but it isn't of course. It is a lesser known part of the history that lives on in the past and is inextricably linked with the success story of the Golden Age. This guide wants to fill this hiatus.

Amsterdam and Slavery: a history in four themes

Trade and profit

Amsterdam and Suriname have a shared history since the 17th century which connects many families and places. In 1621 the West India Company (WIC) was established in Amsterdam. Like the VOC all layers of the population shared an interest in it, from the regent Cornelis Jacobsz. Wayer down to the 'tar buyer' Jacob Gelthouwer. The United East-India Company (VOC) is wider known than the WIC, if only because of the remark that former prime minister Jan Peter Balkenende made about the 'VOC mentality'. He praised the company's decisiveness and ability 'to look beyond borders'. Critics pointed to VOC colonialism, theft and violence. In his book *The History of the Amsterdam Slave Trade*, historian Leo Balai says that there are

two stories of the Amsterdam canal zone: 'A story of pride and prestige, but also one of amazement and shame.' Amsterdam is rightly proud of the fact that the canals are now a UNESCO World Heritage site, but 'the trade and shipping fortunes were also acquired by means of the de-humanizing slave trade, in which many wealthy Amsterdam merchants had an interest. That is the other story of the canal zone: a breeding place for slave traders.'

The first major WIC success was conquering the Spanish Silver fleet by Piet Hein in 1628. The silver was used, among other things, to conquer areas in Africa and South America. The WIC got hold of Fort Elmina (in current Ghana) and part of the coast of Brazil. In North America the WIC traded furs with the indigenous people in the present state of New York.

Along the West African coast African men and women were captured or bought from local slave traders. After a dangerous voyage across the Atlantic Ocean, during which many people died, enslaved people were sold to plantation owners in Suriname and the Antilles. The products these plantations produced, such as sugar, coffee, and tobacco, were shipped to Europe, just like gold and salt. In all these territories there were many international contacts, cooperation, competition and often war.

Dozens of Amsterdam merchants served as a temporary ruler or director of the WIC, the VOC, the Society of Surinam or the Society of Berbice. Until 1730 the WIC held the monopoly on the slave trade. The company transported some 300,000 slaves, more than half of the entire Dutch contribution to the transatlantic slave trade (about 550,000). The 'committee for the issues of the slave trade' was the largest commission within the Amsterdam Chamber. It set the departure dates for the ships and established where in Africa captives were to be bought. The WIC also ruled that slavery was allowed in America. The WIC left many traces in Amsterdam, which are shown in this guide.

Many WIC rulers also served as mayor of Amsterdam or director of the Society of Surinam. In 1683, the Society was established, to become owner of the colony of Surinam after the Zeelanders got rid of the territory. The Society of Surinam was a common enterprise of the WIC, the wealthy family Van Aarsen van Sommelsdijck and the City of Amsterdam, which became factual one-third owner of Surinam. Amsterdam and the WIC handled finances, administration, defense, ships and the supply of slaves. Cornelis van Aerssen van Sommelsdijck became the first governor of Surinam. The number of plantations increased from fifty in 1683 to more than 400 in 1730. Sugar and coffee were the main products.

Guan Anthony Sideron, in slavernij geboren op Curaçao in 1756 werd cadeau gedaan aan Willem V. Hij werd kamerdienaar, net als Cupido die kwam van de kust van Guinea, Afrika. Esther Schreuder publiceerde het levensverhaal van Cupido en Sideron in 2017. Sideron overleed 1803 op het paleis Oranienstein | Guan Anthony Sideron, born in slavery on Curaçao in 1756 was given as a present to Willem V. He became a prominent servant, just as Cupido, from the coast of Guinea, Africa. Esther Schreuder published on the life stories of Cupido and Sideron in 2017. Sideron died 1803 at the palace Oranienstein.



There are many direct historical ties between Amsterdam and Surinam. Somewhat less direct are the ties between Amsterdam and the Netherlands Antilles. However, Curaçao and St Eustatius were important international centers for the slave trade. Amsterdam was not co-owner of the islands (as was the case with Surinam), and there is no parallel history of direct investment in hundreds of plantations. But there certainly are other parallels. Many Amsterdam families and entrepreneurs held investments in Curaçao, Bonaire, Aruba and the smaller islands of St Maarten, Saba and St Eustatius. Many ships that were built in Amsterdam visited the Antilles. The Amsterdam Chamber of the WIC ruled its settlements in the Antilles from Amsterdam and appointed governors and other staff, including for instance ministers and nurses. Jan Veltkamp (1733-c.1780) from Zwolle for instance was a sailor and surgeon employed by the Amsterdam Admiralty. In 1760 he traveled on board the ship *Glinthorst*, under captain Reynst, to Madeira and St Eustatius, international center for the slave trade. He kept a journal, with 30 drawings in it, including one of a sugar plantation on the island. Veltkamp was buried in the Oosterkerk in Amsterdam.

Amsterdam had an interest in slavery and the slave trade in terms of employment. Hundreds of ships were built in Amsterdam shipyards for the transportation of slaves to the plantations and of products to the Netherlands. The ship *De Leusden* for instance was built at a Kattenburg shipyard in 1718/1719. The whole port area stood at the service of ship building, ship supplying and the processing of plantation products. This way rich and poor profited from slave-produced sugar, coffee and other products. The harbor, seen from the current Prins Hendrikade, was full of ships like the replica of the *De Amsterdam*, now anchored next to the Maritime Museum.

Blacks in the City: Africans and Asians in Amsterdam

Slavery and the slave trade itself remained largely invisible during this long period, because the enslaved rarely came here. Only a small number of the enslaved African and Asian men and women, or their descendants ended up in the Netherlands during the slave period. Paintings show well-dressed black children, living as servants or status symbols in the homes of the elite. Merchants brought them to several European port cities, including Amsterdam. We know very little of the names and lives of those they brought to Europe. We may assume that the black children who arrived in Amsterdam could be seen on the street on their way from the harbor to the home of some prominent family. The earliest black servants we know of arrived with Portuguese and Spanish families of merchants. In the early 17th Century they were the first visible group of black men and women in Amsterdam. The first graves of these servants have now been found. One of the graves on the Jewish cemetery in Ouderkerk is that

Drinkglas van de Sociëteit van Suriname, gegraveerd.
Amsterdam Museum |
Drinking glass of the Society of Suriname, engraved.
Amsterdam Museum



of Elieser, the servo (servant or slave) of a Portuguese family. Another grave was found in the Oude Kerk in the old city. It is likely that more graves of black Amsterdammers will be found in the different Christian church cemeteries. In the Jodenbreestraat, where Rembrandt lived and worked, a group of free black men and women lived in a basement. Slavery was not officially sanctioned in the Netherlands. How this worked out in reality needs more research.

Resistance and Abolitionism

In the 18th Century slavery and the slave trade were objects of political debate several times, but there was no active anti-slavery movement in Amsterdam. The slave traders effectively defended their interests. The guide does mention some active opponents, including a 'Ladies' committee'. In 1814 the slave trade was officially banned, but there were no practical sanctions for a long time, so very little changed. It would take decades more with much debate and opposition before slavery finally ended in 1863. The slave owners made sure they were compensated by the government. This money (paid out of the profits that were made in the Dutch East-Indies) flowed back to the Netherlands in part. The plantation share holders received their compensation based on their shares.

The enslaved themselves received nothing. Based on the administration that was kept

for this, researchers at the VU took the initiative to make a map showing the homes of some 80 slave owners who lived in Amsterdam at the time and received compensation. You can find this map on page 138. The project Mapping Slavery continues as this guide shows.

Discovering and Remembering the History of Slavery

Ever since large groups of descendants of the enslaved came to live in the land of their former colonizer in recent decades, several forms of commemoration have come into existence. This is an international phenomenon in Europe. The mixed population of Amsterdam and other cities in Europe is in fact the most visible heritage of the slavery past. As black Britons said years ago: 'We are here, because you were there.' But that history is often unknown. 'Why is it that you speak Dutch so well?' was a common question post-colonial migrants, including Surinamese and Antilleans, were asked when they came to the Netherlands in the second half of the 20th Century. In school they had learned all about the Netherlands, while colonial history was dealt with here in a couple of paragraphs.

With the presence of postcolonial migrants, there is gradually more attention being paid to the history of slavery in post-colonial Netherlands. Some expressions are the national slavery monument, unveiled in the Oosterpark in 2002, and the Monument of Realization on Suirnameplein and the annual ceremony there, which has been held since 1993 every June 30th. With the national monument a knowledge center and exhibition space was established at the NiNsee on the Linnaeusstraat. Unfortunately, the government subsidy was withdrawn after ten years. Generally speaking the level of attention for the heritage of slavery is minute when compared for instance with the commemoration of World War II. The way the Netherlands deal with the history of slavery was hotly debated in the media, science and

politics in recent years. Publicist Anil Ramdas said in the NRC that the debate was 'cold and vindictive'. The NTR television series *Slavery* was seen by many in the fall of 2011 and unleashed many reactions, both positive and negative. Every year, and stronger than ever in 2013, the character of Zwarte Piet and slavery is debated. Several locations in the city provide links to this discussion.

Keti Koti, Surinamese for 'break the chains' remembers the abolition of slavery in the Dutch colonies in the Caribbean on July 1, 1863. Keti Koti has become a tradition in Amsterdam. And it has been in Surinam since 1863. In Amsterdam a wake starts on the evening of June 30, on Surinameplein at the Monument of Realization. On July 1, the celebration starts with the Bigi Spikri (literary: big mirror) parade from town hall (Waterlooplein) to the Oosterpark. This parade is also held in Rotterdam. In Amsterdam hundreds of people participate in wearing the kotomisi and other traditional dress.

This colorful parade through the city is a visible sign of attention for the history of slavery. There are more participants every year. It is followed by a festival with food and music. The Antilleans and Surinamese celebrate July 1 together, even though the official commemoration in the former Netherlands Antilles is on August 17. That is the date when on Curaçao an important uprising started led by freedom fighter Tula. It is expected that this will also receive more attention in the Netherlands in years to come.

Within Indo-European and Moluccan circles, up till now very little connection is felt towards its own slavery history, partly because this history is very unknown and other more recent historical milestones demand attention. The Indo-European community has made a strong endeavor for its own World War II commemoration in the former Dutch East-Indies. This is annually commemorated on August 15 in The Hague at and around the Indo-European monument.

Monuments invite us to engage into rituals of remembrance. When a plaque acknowl-

edging 'slavery as a crime against humanity' was placed in the sidewalk by Unesco outside the official residence of the mayor at 502 Herengracht, a tradition developed to lay a wreath there annually on June 1, at the beginning of a month of remembering. New information leads to new rituals also. When the 1629 grave of Elieser, a black servant, was found on the Jewish cemetery in Ouderkerk aan de Amstel in 2002, an annual boattrip to the cemetery was started and in 2013 a statue was placed. Another recent initiative is the Keti Koti Table, developed by Mercedes Zandwijken. Here black and white Amsterdammers meet to talk about slavery and share a ceremonial meal. And, there are websites, theatre shows, temporary monuments by artists and walking tours to strengthen the ties between the City of Amsterdam and the history of slavery. A plethora of new activities is seen during the *bigi jari* (major years) of commemoration.

Very little has been written about the way the slavery experience affects the experiences of descendants here and now. How the descendants deal with the injustice that was done to their ancestors is a relatively new subject. But the process of recognition, commemoration and celebration is moving and growing, both in Amsterdam and in other places in the Netherlands.

The authors



1

Paleis Royal Palace

Dam nr. 1

Stadhuis en vergaderplaats van de de Societeit van Suriname |
City Hall and meeting place of the
Society of Suriname

Het Paleis op de Dam is gebouwd als stadhuis in 1648. De architect was Jacob van Campen, de gevel (timpaan) ontworpen door Artus Quellinus. Het gebouw toont dat Amsterdam een machtige handelsstad was. Het koggeschip boven op de toren verwijst naar de scheepvaart en de graanhandel. Op de achterkant staan drie beelden: links Temperantia (matigheid), rechts Vigilantia (waakzaamheid), en in het midden Atlas. De tympaan toont ook de stedemaagd van Amsterdam die de schatten uit Europa, Afrika, Azië en Amerika ontvangt.

Slavenhandel en slavernij waren vanaf de vroege zeventiende eeuw verweven met de economie van de stad. De stadsbestuurders waren er

direct bij betrokken. In een mooi gedecoreerde kamer op het stadhuis vergaderde de Sociëteit van Suriname. Via die organisatie was de stad Amsterdam mede-eigenaar van deze door slavenarbeid gevormde kolonie.

De Sociëteit van Suriname vormde het bestuur van het land Suriname, vanuit Amsterdam. In 1683 werden de West-Indische Compagnie (WIC), de stad Amsterdam en de rijke familie Aerssen van Sommelsdyck elk voor een derde deel eigenaar en dus bestuurder van Suriname. Vanaf 1770 trok de familie zich terug en werden Amsterdam en de WIC ieder voor de helft eigenaar van Suriname. Ze spraken over ongehinderde handel en transport, militaire zaken en bewapening, ook in verband met tegen de Maroon opstanden in Suriname. Af en toe komen er in de archiefstukken slaafgemaakten in beeld.

Joost van Nieuw-Amsterdam, Quassie en Coffij

'De Neger Joost van N. Amsterdam heeft bij herhaling verzocht de Vrijheid te mogen verkrijgen', staat in een brief aan oud-gouverneur Crommelin van Suriname, namens de Heeren van de Sociëteit geschreven door JC van den Hoop, 5 december 1770. De Heeren zijn verwonderd dat Crommelin Joost nog niet terug heeft gestuurd naar Suriname, maar hem toestond om voor zijn vrijheid te pleiten. Crommelin moet 1.200 gulden

aan de Sociëteit betalen, tenzij hij hem onmiddellijk terugstuurt. In februari 1771 werd Joost op een schip gezet terug naar de slavernij in Suriname. Een andere slaafgemaakte met de naam Amsterdam herkreeg wel zijn vrijheid, op 1 april 1794. Hij was afkomstig van Curacao.

De beroemde kruidendokter Quassie van Timotibo, geboren in Afrika en tot slaaf gemaakt in Suriname, werd in 1755 vrijverklaard als dank voor zijn diensten in de strijd tegen de Marrons. Hij kreeg toestemming voor een bezoek aan Amsterdam in 1776. Bij die gelegenheid stelde hij dat hij onvoldoende was beloond.

De voormalige slaaf Coffij kwam juist de Sociëteit van Suriname bedanken voor zijn vrijlating. In 1736 had hij in Suriname de gouverneur De Cheusses tijdens diens ziekbed zo goed verzorgd dat de volgende gouverneur, Raije, hem in vrijheid stelde. In Amsterdam werd Coffij lid 19 van een kerkgenootschap. Hij ging in het vervolg als Jan van Breukelerwaard door het leven, genoemd naar het landgoed in Utrecht van Raije.



Koninklijk paleis op de Dam |
Royal Palace on Dam square today



3

Hoekhuis Sint Nicolaas Cornerhouse Saint Nicholas

Dam 2A

Sinterklaas zonder knecht |
Saint Nicholas without servant

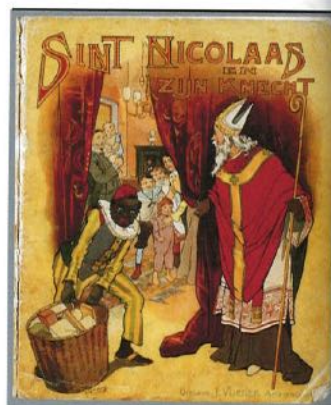
This 1564 corner house is named after Saint Nicholas, the patron saint of sailors and the city of Amsterdam. The gable shows Saint Nicholas protecting three children caught in a salt barrel by an angry inn keeper.

The character of Sinterklaas' servant, 'Black Pete', 'who is black of color' first appeared in an 1850 illustrated storybook published by, Amsterdam schoolmas-

In 1564 was dit hoekhuis al naar Sint Nicolaas genoemd, de beschermheilige van de stad Amsterdam en de zeevaarders. De gevelsteen toont de heilige Sint Nicolaas die drie kinderen beschermt. Zij zijn door een boosaardige herbergier in een vaatje met zout gezet. De sint helpt hen en heeft daar geen knecht bij nodig.

Het verhaal van de knecht Zwarte Piet werd voor het eerst met illustraties en al uitgegeven door de Amsterdamse 'schoolhouder', onderwijzer Jan Schenkman, geboren in 1806. Schenkman woonde met een groot gezin op de toenmalige Anjeliërsgracht, nu een nieuw pand op Westerstraat 71. In 1850 publiceerde Schenkman een prentenboek over Sinterklaas en zijn knecht, 'die zwart is van kleur'. In die tijd was er veel discussie over de

afschaffing van slavernij. Zo ontstond het beeld van Zwarte Piet. In latere kinderboeken heeft de Sint bijna altijd een knecht, maar die is niet altijd zwart en kon net zo goed Jan heten. Zwarte Piet is sinds 2011 terug in de belangstelling, door de campagne Zwarte Piet is Racisme. Op de Dam werd voor en tegen Zwarte Piet gedemonstreerd in 2013.



Omslag van Sint Nikolaas en zijn knecht |
Cover of Saint Nikolaas and his Servant

but not always a black one and often with a different name. Zwarte Piet became the center of attention again in 2011 with the *Zwarte Piet is Racism* campaign. There were demonstrations against and in favor of Zwarte Piet on Dam square in 2013.

ter, Jan Schenkman, born in 1806. Schenkman lived with his large family at Anjeliërsgracht, now a new building on Westerstraat 71. At the time of his publication slavery was hotly debated, possibly leading to the character of Zwarte Piet. Most later children's books show Santa with a servant,



4

De Nieuwe Kerk The New Church

Dam 12

Prominenten |
Prominent people

This early 15th Century church is the place where all the kings and queens are inaugurated. The current building is a 17th century reconstruction after the original burned down.

The inauguration of King William II in this church in 1840 was attended by two African princes, Aquasi Boachi and Kwame Pokoo. They had been 'donated' with the delivery of recruits for the Dutch colonial army by the Ashanti king. The princes received a Western education here. Their story is told in

Deze kerk uit 1400 is in de zeventiende eeuw na een brand verbouwd tot een gebouw met grandeur. Bij de inhuldiging van koning Willem II in deze kerk waren twee Afrikaanse prinses, Aquasi Boachi en Kwame Pokoo, aanwezig. Ze waren 'cadeau' gegeven bij de levering van rekruten door de Ashanti koning aan het Nederlandse koloniale leger.

Arthur Japin's book 'The Two Lives of Boachi'.

Many prominent citizens are buried in this church, including prominent enslavers, such as Solomon du Plessis, father of Susanna du Plessis, one of Surinam's most cruel slave holders. Her father was banned from Surinam after a conflict with the governor. Her brother is buried here also. Both their tombstones have been removed. Other graves hold the remains of

De prinsen kregen alhier een westerse opleiding. Hun verhaal is beschreven in Arthur Japins boek 'De zwarte met het witte hart'.

Alle grote kerken in Amsterdam zijn tevens begraafplaatsen. Hier werden prominente betrokkenen bij de slavenhandel en slavernij begraven, zoals Solomon du Plessis, de vader van Susanna du Plessis, die in Suriname berucht was om haar wreedheid als slaveneigenaar. Haar vader werd verbannen uit Suriname na een conflict met de gouverneur. Ook Susanna's broer werd hier begraven. Hun grafstenen zijn verwijderd. Verder bevinden zich hier de graven van veel leden van de Vroedschap (stadsbestuur) en 'nationale helden', zoals Michiel de Ruyter, hier in 1677 begraven met een massale ceremonie.

city rulers and 'national heroes' such as admiral Michiel de Ruyter, who was buried here with a massive ceremony in 1677.

Voor meer informatie |
For more information see:

www.nieuwekerk.nl



Amsterdam Museum

Kalverstraat 92

Rituelen om slavernij te herdenken |
Rituals of commemoration

Het Amsterdam Museum heeft objecten die (soms verborgen) verhalen vertellen over het slavernijverleden. Werk van eigentijdse kunstenaars laat nieuwe perspectieven zien zoals het drieluik van Iris Kensmil, twee vrouwen en een man die tijdens de slavernij perioden het heft in eigen handen namen. Het werk Manumission Pauline van de in Paramaribo werkende Ken Doorson toont een portret van een vrouw met een bewijs dat zij is vrijgekocht.

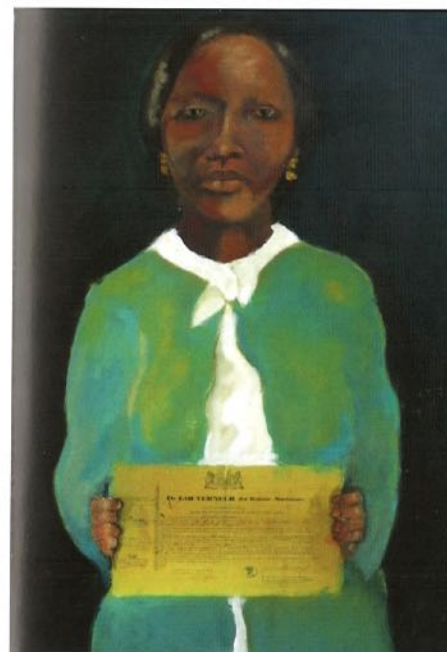
Met activiteiten en events probeert het Amsterdam Museum het Amsterdamse slavernijverleden op de kaart te zetten. Een voorbeeld is de keti-koti dialoog tafel op 5 mei 2013. Wintipriesteres

Marian Markelo uitte tijdens haar plengoffer de wens dat de voorouders het goed vonden dat iedereen zo met elkaar aan tafel zat. Ze hadden immers zo geleden onder de blanke slaveneigenaren. De keti-koti dialoogtafel, een 'invented tradition', is een initiatief van Mercedes Zandwijken. De rituele maaltijd met symbolische handelingen is mede geïnspireerd op eerdere Surinaamse samenkomsten en op de joodse Seidermaaltijd, waarmee de slavernij van de Joden in Egypte wordt herdacht. Het voedsel herinnert aan de slaventijd: heri-heri, aardvruchten en gezouten vis.

Noraly Beyer met naast haar Mercedes Zandwijken in de Schuttersgalerij van het Amsterdam Museum |
Noraly Beyer and Mercedes Zandwijken in the Amsterdam Museum's City Guard Gallery



Iris Kensmil, *Out of History*, 2013, Amsterdam Museum. Drie schilderijen van twee Surinaamse vrouwen en een man: v.l.n.r. Elisabeth Samson, een rijke, vrije zwarte vrouw; Wilhelmina Kelderman, die zichzelf en haar zoon vrijmaakte; en Fabi Labi Dikan, een granman (leider) van de Marrons | Iris Kensmil, *Out of History*, 2013, Amsterdam Museum. Three paintings of two Surinamese women and one man. Left to right: Elisabeth Samson, a rich, free black woman; Wilhelmina Kelderman, who emancipated herself and her son; and Fabi Labi Dikan, a Maroon granman (leader).



Ken Doorson, *Manumission Pauline*, Amsterdam Museum 2016

An example is the keti-koti dialogue table on the 5th of May 2013. This is an initiative of Mercedes Zandwijken. During her libation wintipriestess Marian Markelo expressed the wish that the ancestors, who suffered at the hands of white slavers, would regard this mixed table favorably.

The ritual meal and its symbolic actions are inspired by traditional Surinamese meetings and the Jewish Passover Seder, commemorating the enslavement of the Jews in Egypt. Food is served that is linked to slavery times: heri-heri, tubers and salted fish.

See also:
www.ketikotitafel.nl

The Amsterdam Museum has objects that tell (sometimes hidden) stories about slavery heritage. Work of contemporary artists shows new perspectives, like the three-set paintings of Iris Kensmil, of two Surinamese women and one man who took matters in their own hands during the times of slavery. The work

'Manumission Pauline' by the Paramaribo based artist Ken Doorson shows a portrait of a woman with the evidence of her manumission and freedom. The Kabra Mask has also been added to the collection. With activities and events the Amsterdam Museum puts Amsterdam slavery heritage on the map.



27

Sylvester familie *Sylvester family*

Singel 202

Wereldwijde handelaren |
Global traders

Aan dit stukje Singel woonde Nathaniel Sylvester, geboren in Amsterdam rond 1620. Nathaniels ouders waren van Engelse afkomst. Zij handelden in tabak. Nathaniel en zijn broers doorkruisten de oceanen met het familieschip De Seerobbe. In 1644 kochten ze tabak in Virginia, waar op dat moment al een enkele Afrikaanse slaafge-

Nathaniel Sylvester, born in Amsterdam c. 1620, lived at Singel 202.

Nathaniel's parents were English tobacco traders. The family owned the vessel De Seerobbe (the Seal), which in 1646 sailed to Barbados from Africa, with a cargo of 330 captives, 66 of whom died in transit. In 1644 they bought tobacco in Virginia, where some enslaved Africans were working. In 1651 the Sylvesters paid 1600

pounds of sugar – produced on their Barbados plantation – for Shelter Island in New Netherland (today a two-hour drive from NYC). At least twenty indigenous and enslaved Africans were put to work on Sylvester Manor breeding work horses for the plantation. Salted beef from the Manor was shipped to the Sylvester sugar plantation in Barbados. Sylvester Manor is now an organic farm and open to the public.

Sylvester Manor vandaag de dag |
Sylvester Manor today

maakte was tewerkgesteld. Twee jaar later voer het schip De Seerobbe vanaf Afrika met 330 gevangenen naar Barbados. Onderweg stierven 66 mensen. In 1651 kochten de Sylvesters voor 1.600 pond suiker – afkomstig van hun plantage op Barbados. Shelter Island ligt op twee uur rijden van New York. Op Sylvester Manor Shelter Island werkten minstens twintig inheemse en Afrikaanse slaven. Er werden werkpaarden gefokt voor op de plantage. Het ingezouten vlees van het vee van de Manor diende als voedsel op de suikerplantage van de Sylvesters op Barbados. Sylvester Manor is nu een biologische boerderij en open voor het publiek.



28

Plantage-eigenaren De Hart-Ellis

Plantation-owners
De Hart-Ellis

Herengracht 173

Surinaamse familie op de gracht |
A Surinamese family on the canals

Portretfoto (daguerrotype) van Maria Louisa de Hart (zwanger van Abraham) en Johannes Ellis | *A daguerrotype portrait of Maria Louisa de Hart (pregnant with Abraham) and Johannes Ellis, 1846*

Op de oudst bekende foto uit Suriname staat het echtpaar Maria Louisa de Hart en Johannes Ellis. Een multiculturele Surinaamse familie die zich in 1860 aan de Herengracht vestigde. Maria Louisa de Hart werd in 1826 in slavernij geboren op de plantage Sardam. Zij is de dochter van de tot slaaf gemaakte Carolina Petronella en de planter Mozes Meijer de Hart. De Hart kocht baby Maria Louisa samen met haar moeder en andere kinderen vrij.

Johannes Ellis is de buitenechtelijke zoon van de Nederlandse militair en latere gouverneur van Suriname Abraham de Veer en de Ghane Fanny Ellis.

Na de dood van hun vader erfden Maria Louisa en haar broers en zussen de plantages Sardam aan de Cottica en de Nieuwe Grond aan de Beneden Commewijne. Bij de afschaffing van de slavernij in 1863 bezaten de erven meer dan tweehonderd tot slaaf gemaakten. Zoon Abraham George Ellis was van 1903-1905 de eerste en vooralsnog enige minister van Surinaamse afkomst in Nederland.

The earliest known photograph from Surinam shows the spouses Maria Louisa de Hart and Johannes Ellis, a mixed race family that settled on the Herengracht in 1860. Maria was born into slavery on the Sardam plantation in 1826, the daughter of the enslaved Carolina Petronella and plantation owner, Mozes Meijer de Hart. De Hart paid for the manumission of Maria, her siblings and their mother. Johannes Ellis was the extra-marital son of the Dutch officer and

later governor of Surinam, Abraham de Veer and Ghanaian Fanny Ellis.

Maria and her siblings inherited the plantations Sardam on the Cottica river and De Nieuwe Grond on the Beneden Commewijne river. When slavery was abolished in 1863 the heirs owned more than 200 enslaved. Their son Abraham George Ellis became the first (and until today the only) Secretary of State of Surinamese descent in the Netherlands.



107

Graaf Johan Maurits van Nassau

Gevelsteen | Gable stone
De Baya do Todos Santos

Rozenstraat 144

Enkele plaatsen in de stad herinneren aan de actieve rol van graaf Johan Maurits van Nassau (1604-1679) in de beginperiode van de Nederlandse slavenhandel en slavernij. Deze achterneef van Willem van Oranje was een militair en voerde de strijd tegen de Portugezen aan. Hij veroverde een deel

van Brazilië dat zij hadden bezet. Voor de West-Indische Compagnie veroverde hij Fort Elmina aan de Afrikaanse westkust. Vandaar bracht de WIC gevangenen naar de suikerplantages in Brazilië. Met de opbrengsten van deze plantages werd onder andere het Haagse Mauritshuis gebouwd.

Op het Scheepvaarthuis staat Johan Maurits afgebeeld |
On Scheepvaarthuis Johan Maurits is portrayed



55a

Scheepvaarthuis

Prins Hendrikkade 108



There are several sites in the city which remind us of the active role count Maurits van Nassau (1604-1679) played in the early history of Dutch slavery and the slave trade. This second cousin

of William of Orange was a soldier and commander in the war against the Portuguese. He conquered a part of Portuguese-held Brazil. For the West India Company he took Fort Elmina on the West

African coast. From there he sailed WIC prisoners to the sugar plantations in Brazil. He used the proceeds, among other things, to build the Mauritshuis in The Hague.



108

Rijksmuseum

Museumstraat 1

Slavernijverleden in de collectie |
History of slavery in the national collection

Het Rijksmuseum heeft als nationaal museum een grote collectie voorwerpen uit de gehele met Nederland verbonden geschiedenis en kunstgeschiedenis. In de nieuwe vaste opstelling van het herbouwde museum heeft het slavernij-

verleden een plaats, zij het verborgen achter de pracht en praal van de Gouden Eeuw. Zowel de geschiedenis van de eerste Afrikaanse bezoekers van Nederland, van de VOC en de WIC en van daarbij betrokken families en instituties, en de geschiedenis van de voormalige koloniën wordt getoond. Het verbinden van de nationale en koloniale geschiedenis en de doorwerking daarvan in het heden is een recente ontwikkeling in musea in Europa en daarbuiten. Het Rijksmuseum ontwikkelt een tentoonstelling die opent in 2020 over de geschiedenis en de doorwerking van slavernij.



De WIC stuurde deze octrooi-doos, geïllustreerd met een afbeelding van naakte tot slaaf gemaakte Afrikanen en een Europeaan die hen koopt, met een brief erin aan Koning Willem IV in 1749. Hij werd uitgenodigd om het Opper-Gouvernement van de WIC op zich te nemen. Goud en schilpad, Rijksmuseum | The WIC sent this octroy box, illustrated with images of naked enslaved Africans and a European who buys them, with a letter in it to King Willem IV in 1749. The letter was an invitation for him to become the senior-governor of the WIC. Gold and tortoise, Rijksmuseum.

As the national museum, the Rijksmuseum owns an enormous collection of art and objects relating to Dutch history. The new standing collection in the recently restored museum includes pieces about the history of slavery, although overshadowed by the glamour of the Golden Age. The museum shows the history of the first African visitors to the Netherlands, of the

VOC, the WIC and the families and institutions involved, as well as the history of the former colonies. The linking of national and colonial history and its consequences for the present day is a recent development in museums in Europe and elsewhere. The Rijksmuseum are developing an exhibition that will open in 2020 about slavery history and heritage.

Voor meer informatie |
For more information see:
www.rijksmuseum.nl

Black Heritage Amsterdam Tours heeft ook een specifieke 'Zwarte aanwezigheid en koloniale geschiedenis' rondleiding door het Rijksmuseum | Black Heritage Amsterdam Tours also offers a specific 'Black Presence and Colonial History' tour in the Rijksmuseum.

Het Rijksmuseum heeft een aparte App over het koloniale verleden ontwikkeld | The Rijksmuseum has a separate Colonial Past App



Over de auteurs | About the authors

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Dineke Stam werkt als zelfstandige aan Interculturele Museum- en Erfgoed projecten. Zij was onder meer gastconservator van de NiNsee tentoonstelling *Kind aan de Ketting*. Samen met Ineke Mok ontwikkelde zij in 2013 *Hoezo, Haarlem en Slavernij?*.

Jennifer Tosch is de oprichter en directeur van de *Black Heritage Amsterdam Tours*. Het is de eerste grachten- en wandeltour in zijn soort die zich richt op de aanwezigheid en geschiedenis van zwarte mensen vanaf de 17e eeuw tot nu.
www.blackheritagetours.com

Annemarie de Wildt is conservator bij het Amsterdam Museum. Zij was onder andere verantwoordelijk voor het slavernijspoor *De zwarte bladzijde van de Gouden Eeuw* in 2013.

Dienke Hondius lectures history at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, staff member of the Anne Frank House and initiated the research project Mapping Slavery.

Nancy Jouwe is a cultural historian and works at the intersection of art, heritage and (post)colonial history. With Kosmopolis Utrecht she initiated the project Traces of Slavery Utrecht (2011-2012).

Dineke Stam is an independent professional working on intercultural museum and heritage projects. She was a guest curator for the NiNsee exhibit Child in Chain. Together with Ineke Mok she developed in 2013 the project Hoezo, Haarlem en Slavernij?.

Jennifer Tosch is the founder and CEO of Black Heritage Amsterdam Tours. This is the first of its kind canal boat and walking tour that focuses on the Black presence and history in Amsterdam from the 17th century forward.
www.blackheritagetours.com

Annemarie de Wildt is a curator at the Amsterdam Museum. She was, among other things, responsible for the slavery exhibit The Dark Page of the Golden Age in 2013.

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