Slavery on the Move: The Impact of the British Abolition of Slavery on Surinamese plantocracy in the 19th Century

Roos Meijer

503740

ERASMUS UNIVERSITY ROTTERDAM Erasmus School of Economics

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Supervisor: prof.dr. PAE Koudijs

Second assessor: H. Zhu

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Abstract

This research examines the role of British slaveholders on the Plantocracy in Surinam surrounding the emancipation in 1833 in the British Empire. Using data collected from almanacs and poll taxes, this thesis demonstrates that in the beginning of the 19th century, slaveholders migrated from British Guiana to Surinam to establish completely new plantations and acquire formally Dutch-owned plantations. A static and dynamic difference-in-differences analysis revealed a significant increase in the number of slaves on plantations acquired by English owners in the years following the acquisition. Furthermore, this research investigates the number of slaves on English-owned plantations surrounding two significant dates: (1) British emancipation in 1833 and (2) the end of the apprenticeship period in 1838. Contrary to the hypothesis, the dynamic difference-in-differences analysis demonstrated a decline in the number of slaves on plantations with English involvement immediately after 1833. However, five years later, the number of slaves increased again. Caution is applied when interpreting the coefficients of the difference-in-differences, as the infrequent updating of the almanacs could have led to inconsistencies in the data set. Furthermore, there is reason to believe that the parallel trend assumption was violated. Nonetheless, this research establishes a positive correlation between English involvement and the number of slaves on a plantation, making a contribution to a quantitatively and fact-based story of a history that belongs to us all.

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I. Introduction

Slavery is gaining more attention in the current social debate and is claiming a new place in social science. This thesis contributes to this growing discourse by examining the emigration of slaveholders from British Guiana to Surinam in the 19th century and its impact on the number of slaves on plantations in Surinam.

On July 22, 1833, the British House of Commons passed the ministerial plan for the abolition of slavery in the United Kingdom, which came into force on August 1, 1834 (House of Commons, 1833). However, this did not mean that former slaves in British Colonies were freed upon that moment, everyone who was registered as a slave and was older than six years became apprenticed laborers until 1838 (Victorian Royal Navy, 1833). Although slaveholders were to receive compensation for their loss, they strongly opposed these new regulations (Green, 1993). Their relationships with the colonial office had gotten worse over the course of abolition (Josiah, 1997). They were even willing to go to extremes if that could result in keeping their slaves and their plantations (Waddell, 2012). The United Kingdom was in possession of a wide range of colonies. Due to the many dissimilarities, the consequences of abolition were different in all of them. British Guiana, was already experiencing labour shortages before the emancipation, which put the freedmen in a more powerful position (Green, 1993). Land was in abundance, so the freedmen would be able to flee the plantations and move to unoccupied land when the apprenticeship period would end. Of particular relevance to this thesis, is the fact that British Guiana was located next to Surinam, a Dutch colony where slavery was still legal for another thirty years. There was a continuous trade between Surinam and British Guiana and the borders were not well defined (Thompson, 1985). Besides, the local authorities of Surinam showed a welcoming attitude towards people from other countries (Hoonhout, 2020). This created an opportunity for British Guiana's planters to emigrate and continue their business. Which led to the research question: *Did the dissatisfaction of the British slaveholders, concerning the (impending) abolition of slavery, result in emigration of slaveholders from British Guiana to Surinam?*

This paper relates to several strands of literature, three of which will be expounded upon. A prominent literature in the history of the relationship between British Guiana and Surinam is the book written by Bram Hoonhout (2020) about the geographic conditions and the institutional openness of the two colonies. Noorlander (2020) highlights in his research the

recent evolution of scholarship noting a shift from a focus on colonial weakness to recognizing Dutch impact and vitality. Firstly, this research contributes to this debate by examining and quantifying the role of British Guiana on the plantocracy in Surinam.

Miller (2002) examines the motivations behind the emigration of slaveholders from Georgia and South Carolina to lands in Alabama to Texas, including economic, nationalistic, and political factors. According to Miller, planter mobility is a defining characteristic of the planter class. Censer (1991) explored this relocation of planters within America of slaveholders as well and found that it was the materialistic and success-oriented nature of the white men that led them on these elusive quests. Secondly this research contributes to the literature by exploring the international migration of slaveholders from British Guiana to Surinam.

Furthermore, this thesis provides insights into how the compensation for emancipation was received by the planters of British Guiana. Draper (2010) sheds light on the more complex and contentious subject of how slave owners regarded themselves and were perceived by others the years following emancipation. The findings of this research indicate that for a proportion of the planters the compensations were inadequate to satisfy them with the new regulations. Additionally, there are several other research works complementing the results of Draper (2010), such as those by Hoppit (2011), Rauhut (2020) and Draper (2007).

Above mentioned researches were primarily theoretical and speculative, but more recent studies were able to draw quantitative conclusions about the effects of slavery on our present life. This change in the academic literature can be explained by the revival of public conversations about racial reparations, combined with the quite recently promulgated historical census data. The legacy and pain of slavery are made palpable and the effect on inequality today becomes more apparent (Bertocchi & Dimico, 2014; Gouda & Rigterink, 2017; Lagerlöf, 2005; O'Connell, 2012; Reece, 2020). However, relatively little scientific research has been done about the circumstances that prevailed during this period. This paper could contribute to greater awareness of this controversial legacy from our history.

Using data from almanacs of Surinam published from 1818-1847 and employing a dynamic difference-in-differences analysis based on the theoretics of Borusyak, Jaravel & Spiess (2022) this thesis demonstrates a significant growth in plantations with English involvement (hereafter English plantations) after 1818 and a subsequent increase in the number of slaves for English plantations. By providing a historical framework (Section II) that contextualizes

the circumstances of the time, this thesis provides insight into why planters would want to migrate and contributes to a broader understanding of the legacy of slavery. In Section III and IV, the data and methodology will be explained in detail. Afterwards, in Section V, the results will be exanimated and interpreted. The study will conclude by giving a brief summary of the findings in Section VI and by a small discussion where the limitations of this study will be mentioned.

II. Historical Framework

The road to the abolition of slavery was long lasting and difficult. This period was characterized with internal conflict between the enslaved, the planters, the Colonial Office and the government (Josiah, 1997). In order to gain insight into the relevance of this research, it is important to outline the historical context in which this specific part of history took place.

When Europeans started settling in America in the early 16th century, they immediately commenced the importation of enslaves Africans (The National Archives, n.d.). Britain was particularly successful in the slave trade from 1640 to 1807, until its eventual abolition in the United Kingdom (The National Archives, n.d.). The abolition did not happen overnight. Gradualism dominated the course of actions of the government concerning anti-slavery regulations (Green, 1993).

Road to Abolition in the British Empire

By 1770 the general thought of educated men in Britain, the political nation included, was to view slavery as morally condemned (Anstey, 1975). However, personal opinions did not play a substantial role in politics, it was the national interest that dominated which was particularly influenced by the actions of the *Society of West India Planters and Merchants* (Carey, 2002). The interest of West India was represented by this society and was funded through taxes on imports at the port of London (Penson, 1921). In the 1790s, William Wilberforce submitted, without any luck, the Abolition Bill almost every year. It would take until January 1907 for the Abolition Bill to receive substantial support (Drescher, 1994). And so, on 23 February 1807, Parliament passed a resolution that effectively ended the slave trade.

Interestingly, after the abolition of the British slave trade, the export of tropical products grew rapidly (Mitchell & Deane). This paradox can be explained by the conquests of the British imperium. Britain was absorbing the competing colonial networks, including

Surinam (Drescher, 1977). This growth however, was not tenable because in 1813, the prices of the British colonial products started to rise. And a year later, Britain signed a treaty with France which included not only the return of the confiscated French colonies, but the reopening of the French slave trade for five years as well (Parliamentary Debates, 1814). Things would get worse for Britain in the years that followed, both economically and politically. France continued the trade for much longer than agreed upon, putting British colonies at a significant disadvantage. The price of an African slave rose rapidly, and became four times more expensive compared to the slave-importing areas of their competitors. Resulting in rising prices for British products, declining prices for competitors, and limited credit options for British plantation owners (Drescher, 1977). Credit has always been extended with the understanding that rising production would repay the loan within three years. This situation made it challenging for plantation owners to remain profitable and optimistic about their future prospects.

From 1823 onwards the government would with small preparatory steps prepare the enslaved for freedom (Buxton, 1866). Cautious that new regulations would cause tensions between them and the Caribbean colonies, if they were imposed too rapidly (Encyclopedia, n.d.). Despite this cautiousness, the West Indian colonies responded with outrage and fury (Encyclopedia, n.d.). Their anger that the British government was intruding on their legislative rights was heightened by their worry that trans-Atlantic interference in the slave trade would provoke rebellion. It was not the intention of the British government to "coerce" the colonists by enacting laws in Parliament and enforcing them on the colonists (Green, 1993). Consequently, in the first year of amelioration, almost no changes were made in the colonies.

Gradually, more things started to change, inhumane punishments were abandoned, slave marriage was legalized, families were no longer allowed to get separated by sale and enslaved obtained religious liberty (Smandych, 2005). The planters however, vehemently opposed these regulations. The relationship between planters and the Colonial Office were further poisoned by controversies like this. According to Green (1993) West Indians viewed the Colonial Office as intellectual slaves of the Anti-Slavery Society who were unaware of conditions in the colonies and unfit to pass judgment on their legislation. Conversely, the Colonial Office saw plantation owners as obstinate and ungenerous.

Despite the increasing familiarity with the idea of emancipation, it still remained a distant reality for the enslaved. According to Waddell (2012) Jamaican colonists publicly

vilified abolitionists and threatened to "*join America and wade in the blood of their slaves rather than set them free*" (p. 68). Plantation owners remained firmly opposed to the emancipation plan and were willing to go to extreme lengths to keep their plantations and slaves.

Furthermore, drafting a bill was not an easy process (Green, 1993). One important factor was that the government wanted to maintain the plantocracy, by letting the enslaved, and later the freedmen, work on the plantations for wages (Gross, 1980). They were afraid however, that the freedmen would not be willing to continue working on the plantations. This was especially a concern for planters in British Guiana and Trinidad, because these colonies faced strong labour shortages. Of the 1,300,000 acres in these colonies, only 43,000 were estimated to be under cultivation (Green, 1993). The freedmen could move to unoccupied land and provide for themselves. In contrast to colonies like Antigua or Barbados, where land was scarce, and the population was abundant. In such cases, the freedmen would have no other option but to work, or they would likely starve.

In 1833 the final Emancipation Bill was approved and in 1834 it would come into force (House of Commons, 1833). The British Parliament agreed, to set the level of compensation to a total of £20,000,000. Based on the type of labour they had performed before the adoption of the Emancipation Bill, all freedman over the age of six were to be classed as apprentices of their former owners. These apprenticeships were to last until 1840 for agricultural servants, and until 1838 for domestic servants (Gross, 1980). Eventually the apprenticeships ended two years earlier for agricultural servants than originally planned (Prasad, 2020). So, all apprenticeships were ended in 1838 resulting in the freedom of the enslaved.

British Guiana

British Guiana was located on the South American mainland, unlike the other British colonies which were mostly islands. The export of sugar and cotton was the most prominent contributor of their revenues. Important to note is that the majority of the colony's revenues flowed directly back to Britain, in the form of remitted profits and interest costs (Moohr, 1972). Unlike the islands, British Guiana had an abundance in land relative to the population, this left a large proportion of the country inhabited. Despite the ample land, the plantations were concentrated along a narrow eight- to ten-mile strip, the rest was uninhabited terrain

(Directorate of Colonial Surveys, 1948). This would eventually be a big determinant for the post-slavery economy of this economy.

The period that followed emancipation (1833) was characterized by conflict in British Guiana (Josiah, 1997). The planters insisted on treating their workers as though they were still slaves. Three significant economic changes followed emancipation. The first was the increasing role of the government in covering costs that were previously the responsibility of the plantation owners (Dalton, 1855). Second, the effective consumer demand increased due to the newfound purchasing power of the freedmen. However, this demand was not accompanied by a rise in internal output, as the majority of the population was employed in the sugar industry or the government (Moohr, 1972). The newly gained disposable income of the freedmen consequently flowed abroad. The third change came at the end of the apprenticeship period, planters knew that the labour market would decline and would therefore drive up the wages (Moohr, 1972).

Plantations were experiencing difficulties trying to stay profitable after 1833. More and more planters were compelled to abandon cultivation. Besides the economic difficulties, Josiah (1997) states that the planters struggled to adjust to free labour, because they desired controlled labour. This together with the conflicts with the colonial office made the future of Guiana's sugar industry uncertain. After 1838 the colony had become accustomed to seeing completely deserted estates (Moohr, 1972).

Road to Abolition in Surinam

Surinam was a British colony from 1804 to 1814 (Cahoon, n.d.), during the time the United Kingdom was approaching the abolition of the slave trade. The area had fertile soil suitable for sugar cultivation, and British capitalists imported new slaves to take advantage of this opportunity. The Abolition Committee wanted an immediate ban on all imports. (Anstey, 1975). Two arguments were made in favour of abolition: first, importing slaves into a territory that might be returned to the Dutch was against UK policy (Parliamentary Debates, 1806); second, the British plantation economy relied on the re-export of goods, and the recapture of Guiana would oversupply the sugar market (Ragatz, 1928). As a result, slave trade into Guiana was made illegal (Anstey, 1975).

When Surinam was given back to the Netherlands, the British included the abolition of the slave trade in the transfer (Van Winter, 1953). However, enslaved who were already on the American continent were not subject to the restrictions, allowing the supply of slaves to

continue in Surinam due to the great need for labour on the plantations (Nationaal Archief, 2019). The supply of enslaved people came to an end in 1826, when Governor De Veer forced a better registration of enslaved people by the plantation owners (Van Daalen, 2015).

Despite the new laws, Heeckeren (1826) states that the general opinion was that emancipation was truly impossible. Due to the poor living conditions, life expectancy was low and men and women were barely fertile. Consequently, the enslaved population was shrinking, and laws were passed in 1828 to improve their working and living conditions (Nationaal Archief, 2019). In 1833, when slavery was abolished in the United Kingdom, the discussions about the abolition of slavery in the Netherlands were still merely theoretical and the focus was on economic recovery and debt reduction (Van Daalen, 2015).

Only in 1848, after the abolition of slavery in France, it became clear that emancipation was inevitable for the Netherlands as well (Jennings, 2000). Five years later, the government ordered a plan to free all enslaved people, but the process was delayed by 10 years due to differing views on implementation and fear of financial loss (Kuitenbrouwer, 1978; Netscher, 1859). In 1863 the king of the Netherlands signed the official Emancipation Bill. Slavery was abolished, but all freedmen were nevertheless forced to work on a plantation for another ten years, similar to apprenticeships in the United Kingdom. To put this in perspective, while all enslaved individuals in the British colonies were granted freedom in 1838, those in Surinam were in captivity for another 35 years until 1873 for emancipation (Prasad, 2020).

Relationship of British Guiana and Surinam

The United Kingdom played a critical role in the abolition in the Netherlands, by strongly urging the Dutch authorities to initiate emancipation (Nationaal Archief, 2019). In the 18th century, the boundaries of British Guiana and Surinam were not properly defined (Thompson, 1985). The Netherlands was in possession of three colonies in Guiana: Essequibo, Demerara and Berbice (Hoonhout, 2020). At the start of the 19th century, Britain annexed the colonies to create British Guiana, causing the colonies to vanish from Dutch memory. Hoonhout (2020) however, states that this deletion of memory is unjustified. The Dutch had made significant investments in Essequibo and Demerara, which allowed the growth of the cotton plantations in the area. In the years that followed the colonies remained strongly connected as well. Because of the absence of regulation regarding the slave trade, the Dutch were able to import slaves until 1826 (Van Daalen, 2015). The British took advantage of this and

developed an illegal slave trade with Surinam. In his book, Hoonhout (2020) writes about the local authorities of Surinam and their welcoming attitude towards foreigners. The colonies were more internationally oriented than typically thought of as "Dutch colonies" (Oostindie, 2012).

In summary, the historical context shows that Britain was ahead of other countries in abolishing slavery, which put British colonies at an economic disadvantage. In British Guiana, the prospect of complete freedom raised concerns for the plantocracy due to the abundance of land compared to the population. The period following the 1833 abolition was marked by conflict, as British plantations struggled to stay profitable and planters found it difficult to adjust to free labour. At the same time, discussions about abolishing slavery in the Netherlands were still theoretical, and the borders between Surinam and British Guiana were poorly defined. These circumstances suggest theoretical evidence why planters might have considered emigrating to Surinam.

III. Data

Data Description

To answer the research question: if the dissatisfaction of the British slaveholders resulted in emigration from British Guiana to Surinam, data was used from almanacs of Surinam retrieved from dbnl.org (dbnl, 1818-1847). In 1788 Surinam made their first almanac and subsequent almanacs have been produced quite sporadically until 1820, after which they were published more frequently with almost annual publications from 1827 to 1847. The content of the almanacs differed over the years. Most importantly from 1818 onwards all the plantations in Surinam were reported together with information on the plantation. The almanacs were made in anticipation of each year, with, for example, the almanac of 1838 was written in 1837. This created potential lags in the data, furthermore the data in the almanacs were updated infrequently, hence the exact timing of the data might be subject to some inaccuracies.

A data set was formed with information on all plantations located in Surinam from 1818 until 1847, with some gaps in several years. This included the name and location of each plantation, the number of fields, the crops grown, and information on the plantation's owner, administrator and director. From 1834 onwards the number of enslaved located on the plantations were included as well. Before 1834 data was obtained from 'Het Nationaal Archief' (Nationaal Archief, 1816-1828; Nationaal Archief, 1828-1903) based on poll taxes

reports[1]. Poll tax was a levy imposed on every liable person in the Netherlands, regardless of their income or resources (Benjamins & Snelleman, 1916). The head of each household was required to report the number of individuals in their household, including "whites," "slaves," and "freed" individuals. Based on these reports a data set was formed with the number of slaves per plantations from 1811 – 1832 but reliably from 1824-1832. Together with the data from the almanacs this resulted in a panel data set with data of the number of slaves per plantation from 1824 until 1847.

In the data set there are ultimately 1039 unique plantations, there is data of 24 different years which results in a total of 23,083 unique observations. The panel is unbalanced, this can be explained by the emergence and abandonment of plantations. The average plantation had 100 slaves and there was English involvement in 12.1% of the plantations (Appendix Table 1).

Location

The plantations in this study were divided into five regions based on their relative location to British Guiana and the four main rivers where plantations settled of Surinam. From West to East respectively: Nickerie, Saramacca River, Suriname River, Commewijne River and the Cottica River. A detailed map of the regions and rivers can be found in Figure 2 in the Appendix (the Coppename river is not listed because there were no plantations settled).

The oldest plantations were situated next to the Suriname River, which is also home to the capital city of Paramaribo (Hest, 2019). Right in the middle of Surinam the first plantations emerged around 1667. Twenty-two years later Fort Sommelsdijk was built on the mouth of the Cottica river for defence purposes, and plantations emerged alongside this river afterward (Atlas of Mutual Heritage, n.d.). In the eighteenth century, the value of plantations increased, leading to confidence in investing in the plantocracy (Kesler, 1926). Fonds W.G. Deutz introduced mortgage-backed securities in the mid-eighteenth century, resulting in the establishment of 56 new plantations on the Commewijne River (Meulen, Deutz, & Weede, 1904). Surveyor Bohm developed a plan for new plantations alongside the Saramacca River and a new city called Colombia in 1800 (van Hest, 2019). However, the expected development did not materialize, and many projected plantations were never cultivated (Dikland, 2003). Lastly, from 1818 onwards, plantations were established in the most western part of Surinam, Nickerie, with almost exclusively English owners.

[1] I would like to thank Tim Kooijmans and Peter Koudijs for providing me with this digitalized data set.

Product

The plantations in Surinam cultivated a variety of crops. This research classifies the crops into five groups: the four most common crops and a group capturing the other. Additionally, a distinction is made for abandoned plantations. The plantations are categorized in: Coffee, Sugar, Wood, Cotton, Other and Abandoned.

The layout of a plantation was greatly influenced by the type of crop being grown, making it costly and difficult for plantations to switch products (Hest, 2019). Nevertheless, some few plantations did switch from sugar to coffee or cotton due to low market prices of sugar in later years. Sugar was initially the most commonly cultivated crop in Surinam, starting from the colonization period around 1650 (Stipriaan, 1993). Within the sample studied, coffee was the most common crop, with coffee plantations emerging around 1713 and gaining popularity for their revenue. However, by the end of the 18th century, coffee revenues had begun to decline due to soil exhaustion caused by intense cultivation (Stipriaan, 1993). Cotton production began during the same period as coffee, with high demand for cotton in Europe between 1820 and 1850. In British Guiana they were specialized in the production of cotton and sugar (Hoonhout, 2020). The last regarded product is Wood. Most of the plantations were surrounded by enough forest to provide them with firewood, however these forests were not able to provide them with lumber. Wood grounds and exhausted plantations met this need.

Ownership

During the early stages of plantation development in Surinam, individual owners established and managed their own plantations, with a director appointed to oversee planning, accounting, and maintaining order (Hest, 2019). However, as plantations came under the ownership of creditors or banks, due to the mortgage-backed loans that could not be repaid, the system became more complex. It became common for plantation owners to live outside of the colony, while administrators in Paramaribo acted as representatives of absentee owners (Encyclopaedie van Nederlandsch West-Indië, 2022). The directors of the plantations were subject to their authority. By examining the names of the owner, administrator, or director, it is possible to determine whether English individuals were involved in the ownership or management of a given plantation.

IV. Methodology

Before the data analysis, the gathered data was prepared, the duplicates were dropped and each plantation was given a unique code that remained constant over time. Three analyses were performed to research the effects of English involvement. First the number of plantations with English involvement will be researched, secondly the number of slaves on plantations and thirdly the determinants of English involvement will be examined.

Analysis I: Plantations with English Involvement

The goal of analysis I is to investigate whether there was an increase in the number of plantations with English involvement. To accomplish this, the number of English plantations in Surinam are plotted over time and studied carefully. To gain a more comprehensive understanding, a distinction is made between the extensive and intensive margin. When a new plantation was set up by an English owner it belongs to the extensive margin, this happened most in the region Nickerie. The intensive margin includes all plantations that were previously Dutch-owned but were later taken over by an English owner. The first hypothesis relates to English involvement as a whole while the second hypothesis refers only to the extensive margin:

Hypothesis 1.1: There was an increase in the number of plantations with English involvement after 1818.

Hypothesis 1.2: A significant proportion of the total newly established plantations were set up by English owners.

Analysis II: Number of Slaves on Plantations

For the second part of the research, the focus is on the impact of English involvement on the number of slaves per plantation. To reduce skewness and the effect of outliers in the number of slaves, the natural logarithm of slaves is used. It should be noted that not all plantations in the sample were in the possession of slaves, and some may have only had slaves for a limited period of time. Therefore, the analysis only considers plantations that had at least one slave during the sample period, and excludes those that never engaged in slavery according to the almanacs. This is to examine the potential effects of plantation abandonment on the practice of slavery. If plantation owners emigrated to Surinam, it is plausible that they took their slaves alongside with them, this led to hypothesis 2.

Hypothesis 2: The takeover of a plantation by an English owner had a positive effect on the number of slaves on that plantation.

A simple regression is used to study the effect of English involvement on the number of slaves on a plantation.

$$\log(S_{it}) = \omega_i + \delta_i + \lambda_t + \beta_1 * E_{it} + \varepsilon_{it} \quad (1)$$

$$\log(S_{it}) = \alpha_i + \lambda_t + \beta_1 * E_{it} + \varepsilon_{it} \quad (2)$$

Where S_{it} is the number of slaves of plantation i in year t, ω_i and δ_i are product and location fixed effects, λ_t are year fixed effects, E_{it} is a dummy variable that equals 1 when plantation i in year t has English involvement. In Equation (2), the product and location fixed effects are replaced by plantation fixed effects. The standard errors are clustered in both equations on plantation level. The effect caused by plantations in the extensive margin is captured by plantation fixed effects in equation (2) because English involvement is a constant factor for this group. Therefore, with equation (2) we can estimate the effect of when a plantation is taken over by an English owner.

For a difference-in-difference coefficient to be unbiased, the parallel trend assumption has to hold, which means that before English requirement the plantations follow the same trend. However, this is a challenging requirement for this study, as there may be some selection bias involved in which plantations were taken over by the English. Moreover, the use of two-way fixed effects designs with a simple treatment dummy has been critiqued in recent literature, particularly in cases where treatment adoption is staggered or where there are dynamic treatment effects. These concerns have been highlighted in recent econometric literature by Borusyak, Jaravel, & Spiess (2022), Callaway & Sant 'Anna (2019), Goodman-Bacon (2021) and Sun & Abraham (2021). Callaway & Sant 'Anna (2019) advises to carefully match treatment and control group based on propensity scores. However, with the little observed characteristics of the plantations, this method can lead to biased results, making the approach unfit for this dataset. In this paper the method discussed in Borusyak, Jaravel, & Spiess (2022) is followed because the approach can be used for staggered and fixed treatment adoption, making it applicable to all hypotheses in this study.

$$\log(S_{it}) = \alpha_i + \lambda_t + \sum_{\substack{k=-22 \\ k\neq -1}}^{k=14} \tau_k \mathbb{I}[t - T_i = k] + \tau_{15+} \mathbb{I}[t - T_i \geq 15] + \varepsilon_{it}, \qquad (3)$$

Where S_{it} is the number of slaves of plantation i in year t, α_i and λ_t are planation and year fixed effects, $\mathbb{I}[t - T_i = k]$ is an indicator variable for being k years from T_i, the year that a plantation is taken over by an English owner. The term τ_{15+} is the combined effect of the years after the first fifteen years since take-over. When estimating Equation (3) one relative year dummy has to be excluded, in order to avoid collinearity. I follow convention, and omit the year before T_i, this is the last year before the "treatment" should have effect. The standard errors are clustered on plantation level.

As described above in the historical framework, slavery was abolished in 1833 and the enslaved were freed from 1838, when the apprenticeship period ended. This analysis seeks to investigate the possibility of involuntary emigration of former slaves alongside their planters.

Hypothesis 3.1: After the emancipation, in British Guiana in 1833, a significant growth can be observed in the number of slaves on English plantations in Surinam.

Hypothesis 3.2: After the abolishment of the apprenticeships, in British Guiana in 1838, a significant growth can be observed in the number of slaves on English plantations in Surinam.

A static difference-in-differences analysis is performed to find if there is a significant difference in growth of the number of slaves working on a plantation with English involvement before and after these two years. However, the parallel trends assumption complicates once more the interpretation of the coefficient. It is expected that plantations with English involvement are inherently different from Dutch-owned plantations. To shed light on this issue, Royston's test for parallel trends is performed (Royston, 2014). The test results reveal that for both 1833 and 1838, the null hypothesis of parallel trends cannot be rejected (F-value > 0.1). However, logic and reason tell us to remain cautious when interpreting the coefficient due to the potential for confounding variables. Therefore, with the use of a dynamic difference-in-difference, the coefficients of the effect of English involvement are studied over the years surrounding emancipation as well.

$$\log(S_{it}) = \alpha_i + \lambda_t + \beta_1 E_i^{33} + \beta_2 t_t^{33} + \tau(E_i^{33} * t_t^{33}) + \varepsilon_{it} \quad (4)$$

$$\log(S_{it}) = \alpha_i + \lambda_t + \sum_{\substack{k \\ k \neq -1}} \tau_k \mathbb{I}[t - 1833 = k] + \varepsilon_{it} \quad (5)$$

Where S_{it} is the number of slaves of plantation i in year t, α_i and λ_t are planation and year fixed effects. The difference-in-differences effect is measured with coefficient τ, $E_i^{33}$is the treatment variable that equals 1 when plantation i has an English owner in 1833, $t_t^{33}$is a variable that indicates if the year t is post 1833. In Equation (5), $\mathbb{I}[t - 1833 = k]$ is an indicator variable for being k years from 1833. Because of missing data of the number of slaves in 1832 the omitted year is 1831 when estimating Equation (5). The standard errors are clustered on plantation level in both regressions.

The same analysis is done for the year 1838, equation (4) and (5) are essentially the same, except for the treatment year being 1838.

Analysis III: Determinants of English Involvement

For the third analysis we will closely examine the factors that determine the establishment of English plantations.

Hypothesis 4.1: English plantations were primarily established in close proximity to the border of British Guiana.

British Guiana was specialized in the cultivation of sugar and cotton. Given that cotton was not a widely cultivated crop in Surinam at the beginning of the 19th century, it is unlikely that English plantation owners would have acquired cotton plantations by chance. Rather, it is possible that their decision to cultivate cotton was influenced by their previous experience with this crop in British Guiana. Which led to hypothesis 4.2.

Hypothesis 4.2: English plantations primarily cultivated sugar and cotton crops.

An attempt is made to confirm the hypotheses by performing a logistic regression on English involvement.

$$Logit(E_{it}) = \omega_i + \delta_i + \lambda_t + \varepsilon_{it} \quad (6)$$

The dependent variable E_{it} is a dummy variable that equals 1 when plantation i in year t has English involvement, ω_i and δ_i are product and location fixed effects, λ_t are year fixed effects. When estimating equation (6), one relative location and product dummy have to excluded in order to avoid collinearity. The region $Suriname$ and the product category $Other$ are omitted. The standard errors are clustered on plantation level.

V. Results

Analysis I: Plantations with English Involvement

The First study aimed to investigate the growth and sustainability of English-owned plantations in British Guiana. The total number of active English plantations over time is displayed in Figure 2. The graph indicates that in 1818, there were 25 English plantations, which increased sixfold in the following 15 years. This number experienced a slight decline, only to increase again after 1838. These findings provide support for the first hypothesis, which posited that there was a growth in English plantations after 1818.

The growth of the number of plantations with English ownership could be attributed to two factors: the establishment of new plantations by English owners (extensive margin) or the takeover of existing plantations by English owners (intensive margin). The growth in the number of total active plantations over time can be partially explained by the extensive margin, as presented in Figure 3 of the Appendix. From 1818 to 1825, a total of 60 new plantations were established, with over half of them established by English owners, thereby providing support for Hypothesis 1.2. After 1828, a number of Dutch plantations went out of business, while the extensive margin remained relatively constant, suggesting that English plantations were more sustainable.

Analysis II: Number of Slaves on Plantations

Analysis II focuses on the number of slaves per plantation. Figure 4 displays the average number of slaves for English and Dutch plantations over time. The variation observed in the early years can be attributed to inconsistencies in the dataset before 1828. A steady increase in the average number of slaves is evident after 1837 for English plantations and the number afterwards consistently exceeds that of Dutch plantations.

Hypothesis 2

Table 2 presents the results of four different regression models used to examine the relationship between the number of slaves and English involvement. In Model A and B, the coefficient is not significant, suggesting no effect. However, when location fixed effects are included, the coefficient becomes significant at a 1% level. Model D includes both location and product fixed effects and yields a coefficient of 0.45 ($p < 0.001$). To interpret the coefficient as a percentage, the following transformation was applied $(e^{0.45} - 1) * 100 = 56.83$, indicating that the number of slaves is on average 57% higher on plantations with English involvement controlling for year, product and location fixed effects. The coefficient of Nickerie -0.990 ($p < 0.001$), suggests that plantations in Nickerie had a significant lower number of slaves compared to the region Commewijne. Nickerie was a relatively new region, along like Saramacca, explaining why the plantations might not have been as large as plantations in other regions. More than half of the English plantations were located in Nickerie, explaining why including location fixed effects positively influenced the coefficient of English involvement. The coefficient decreases in Model D compared to Model C, implicating that English plantations were likely cultivating labour-intensive crops.

In Model E, plantation fixed effects are included, and the effect of English involvement now only captures the intensive margin, as plantations in the extensive margin always had English ownership, which will now be controlled for by the plantation fixed effects. This coefficient can therefore be interpreted as the difference in the number of slaves as a result of English take-over. Using the same transformation as before, it can be concluded that when a plantation becomes English, the number of slaves is expected to rise by 32% ($p < 0.05$) controlling for plantation and year fixed effects.

Figure 5 shows the average behaviour of the number of slaves on plantations before and after the acquisition by an English owner. The graph represents the coefficient estimates derived from Equation (3). The dependent variable in this analysis is the logarithm of the number of slaves, with the last year prior to English acquirement set as the reference category (-1). In the initial years following the acquisition, no significant effect on the number of slaves can be observed. However, after four years, the coefficient begins to increase and reaches statistical significance ($p < 0.05$) after nine years. The coefficient ultimately stabilizes at approximately 0.5 ($p < 0.05$) for the next five years. The combined effect of the years after fifteen years is non-significant, suggesting that this effect eventually fades out. The transformation of $(e^{0.5} - 1) * 100 = 64.87$, indicates that the number of slaves on the

plantation is expected to increase 65% after nine to fourteen years after the English takeover, controlling for plantation and year fixed effects. This provides evidence for Hypothesis 2: When a plantation is taken over by an English owner, the number of slaves of that plantation is positively influenced.

Hypothesis 3

Next the behaviour of the number of slaves around the time of emancipation in British Guiana is researched. First this is done by preforming a static difference-in-differences for the years 1833 and 1838. The results, presented in Table 3, indicate a significant and positive effect of the interaction term between emancipation and English involvement, as observed in Model A and B. However, this effect becomes non-significant upon inclusion of plantation fixed effects, suggesting that the observed effect is not visible within English plantations. In other words, when the same English plantations are compared before and after 1833, there is no significant change in the number of slaves on those specific plantations. Important to note is that model C substantially enhances the explanatory power (Model B: $R^2 = 0.04$; Model C*:* $R^2 = 0.56$). The positive DID effect in Model A and B can be explained by the large differences between plantations in the number of slaves. In contrast, the DID analysis of 1838 yielded positive and significant DID coefficients at a 5% level across all three Models. Nevertheless, the magnitude of this effect is reduced.

To gain a deeper understanding of the results described above, a dynamic difference-in-differences analysis was conducted. Figure 6 presents the results of this analysis for the year 1833, which includes three models with fixed effects added to each model. In Model A and B, a gradual increase in the coefficients can be observed after the year 1833, eventually becoming significant compared to the reference year 1831. In Model A, the coefficients are statistically significant after 1838, while in Model B they become significant after 1843. This indicates that in the first time period after 1833 the number of slaves of all plantations increased, as depicted in Figure 4.

When plantation fixed effects are added to the model, an intriguing finding emerges. Model C (Figure 6) shows that within plantations, there was a significant decrease in the number of slaves on English-owned plantations after the year 1833 compared to 1831 contrary to hypothesis 3.1, which expected an increase. This effect weakens after 1838 and the coefficient eventually becomes positive but not significant after 1842. It is evident that something changes in the composition of English plantations in the years surrounding British

emancipation, though it is not clear what exactly causes this effect. The coefficients and year fixed effects are likely biased in Model B resulting in the difference between Model B and C.

The results presented in Figure 7 show the results of the dynamic DID with 1838 as a cut off. After 1838 an increase in the number of slaves is visible within English plantations. Together with the positive and significant results of the static DID analysis, we can confirm hypothesis 3.2.

Analysis III: Determinants of English Involvement

Results indicate that coffee, sugar, and wood were the most commonly cultivated crops. Of note, 54% of cotton plantations had English involvement. The region with the highest English involvement was Nickerie (90%) while Cottica had the lowest (8%) involvement, as detailed in Appendix Table 1.

To explore the impact of location and product on the likelihood of a plantation having English involvement, a logistic regression was performed (Table 4 Appendix). The Logistic regression model was statistically significant, X^2 (32) = 359.06 $p \leq 0.001$. Results showed that plantations located in Nickerie were 70 times more likely to have English involvement than those in Commewijne, the reference location category (95%CI [34.35-141.21]). In contrast, plantations located in Cottica, the easternmost region, were less likely to have an English owner (OR= 0.57, 95%CI [0.35-0.94]). The other locations do not significantly influence the likelihood of English involvement compared to Commewijne. Cotton had the most substantial influence on the likelihood of English involvement (OR=8.32, 95%CI [4.76-14.54]), while sugar and coffee plantations were 4 and 2 times more likely to have English involvement, respectively, compared to the reference group "other" (95%CI [2.30-6.20], [1.47-3.85]). Wood and abandoned plantations did not exhibit a significant association with English involvement compared to the reference group. Hence, English plantations did not have a lower tendency to own abandoned plantations. In conclusion, the study suggests that English planters who emigrated to Surinam were more likely to start or acquire a plantation cultivating cotton, sugar, or coffee in Nickerie and less likely to locate east. This is in line with hypothesis 4.1 and 4.2 given that British Guiana specialized in cotton and sugar cultivation, it is reasonable to assume that the newly established plantations were primarily cotton plantations, close to the border

VI. Conclusion

The goal of this paper was to shed light on the emigration of British Guiana slaveholders to Surinam in the 19th century and its impact on the number of slaves on plantations with English involvement. The historical framework provided evidence of the dissatisfaction by the planters regarding the abolition measurements and outlines the historical motives which made them consider emigrating to Surinam. In line with Hypotheses 1.1 and 1.2, results indicate that British slaveholders did indeed emigrate to Surinam in the early 19th century, establishing completely new plantations in the region of Nickerie and taking over a significant number of formerly Dutch-owned plantations. These plantations likely cultivated cotton and sugar and were most likely located in the western part of Surinam close to British Guiana.

Furthermore, this research explored the relationship between English involvement and the number of slaves on plantations. A positive association between English involvement and the number of slaves on a plantation was found, with the acquisition of plantations by English owners leading to an increase in the number of slaves over time.

This research extends by investigating the effect of English involvement around two crucial dates concerning the emancipation in British Guiana; 1833 and 1838. The dynamic DID analysis showed a decrease in the number of slaves within English plantations in the years immediately following emancipation, contrary to hypothesis 3.1, which expected an increase. The reason for this decrease is indefinite. The dynamic DID effect for the year 1838 proved significant in all three models, indicating a significant growth in the average number of slaves within English plantations compared to Dutch plantations, confirming hypothesis 3.2. However, it is important to acknowledge that the data in the almanacs used in this study were updated infrequently, and as such, there may be a potential for lags in the reported data. While the precise timing of the effect may not be accurate, the results suggest a positive association between the number of slaves on a plantation and English involvement.

This study has offered insights into the emigration of British Guiana slaveholders to Surinam in the 19th century and its impact on the number of slaves on plantations with English involvement. Although the data used in this research is limited and the use of two sources (almanacs and poll tax reports) may introduce inconsistencies, the large sample size over several years mitigates this concern. The absence of information about the establishment of plantations with English involvement before 1818 require further investigation. Future

research should consider examining reports from British Guiana after emancipation to obtain more accurate and comprehensive data on slaveholders and their compensation. As well should one account for the difference in the pre-event trends of English and Dutch plantations. Even though this study used a dynamic DID analysis; the coefficients can still be prone to biases due to the non-parallel trends. Several improvements are offered in literature such as the framework provided by Callaway & Sant' Anna (2021) or Sun & Abraham (2021). An alternative approach would be to carefully match the untreated and treated group for a more representative case.

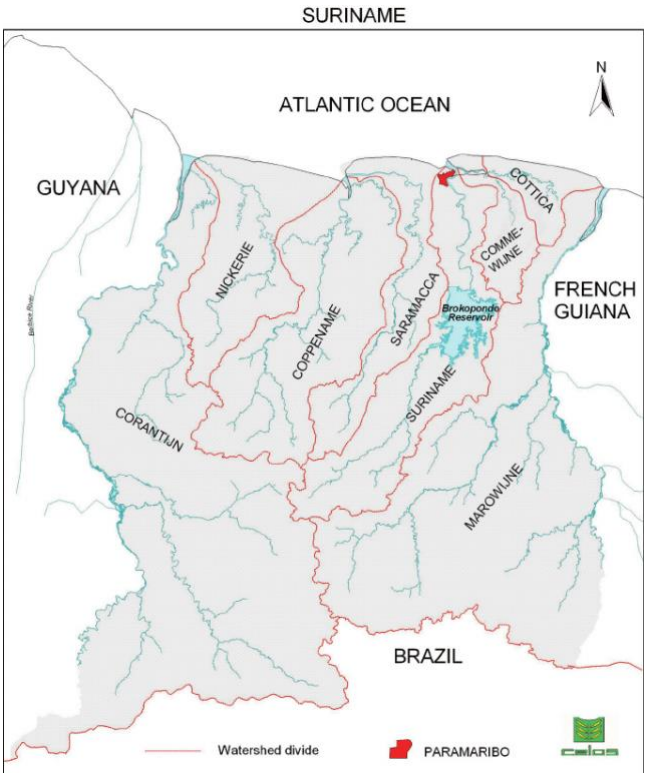
Nevertheless, this research contributes to the current growing awareness regarding slavery and its intergenerational consequences. This awareness still primarily revolves around the painfulness of the sense of guilt. But with increasing openness, a more realistic and fact-based story can gradually emerge, which no longer needs to remain hidden but will become a part of an integrated history that belongs to us all.

Appendix

Table 1: *Summary statistics of the plantations in Surinam 1818-1847. English involvement indicates a plantation that has an English owner, director or administrator.*

Plantation	% Allocation	% English Involvement	Mean Slaves	Mean Fields
General Plantation		12.14	100,01	992.92
Sugar	12.08	17.01	148.73	1475.49
Cotton	6.29	53.54	132.48	605.64
Wood	11.17	7.41	56.56	1756.31
Coffee	14.92	14.66	93.33	689.99
Abandoned	22.93	7.63	58.62	818.33
Other	32.59	5.82	86.51	769.17
Cottica	16.75	8.08	98.68	742.73
Commewijne	26.74	11.37	120.85	915.22
Suriname	39.93	5.46	96.91	1341.30
Saramacca	10.11	10.45	54.37	863.87
Nickerie	6.46	89.53	100.79	665.75

Figure 1*: Map of regions and rivers in Surinam.*



Adapted from "Annotated checklist of the freshwater fishes of Suriname", by J.H. Mol, R.P. Vari, R. Covain, P.W. Willink & S. Fisch-Muller, *International Journal of Ichthyology, 36(1),* 266.

Figure 2: *Number of total active plantations with English involvement in Surinam, 1818-1847. The extensive margin consists of all completely new plantations that were established by English owners, the intensive margin contains previously Dutch-owned plantations, acquired by English owners.*

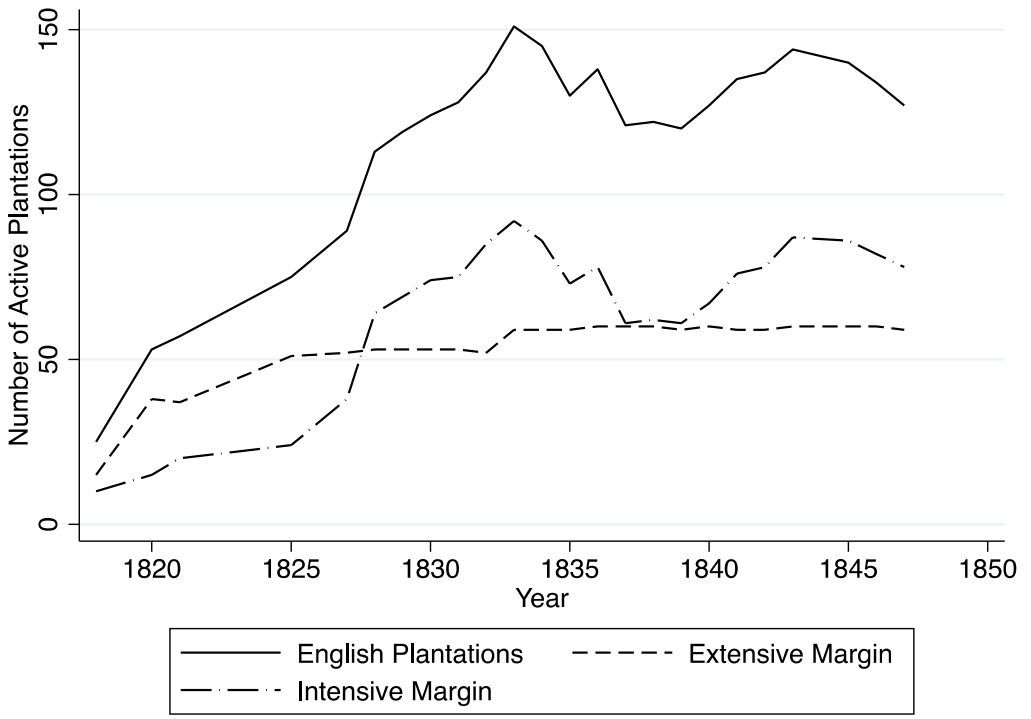


Figure 3*: Number of active total plantations and active extensive plantations in Surinam, 1818-1845. On the left y-axis the number of active plantations is displayed. In 1845 the total number of active plantations is 640. On the right y-axis the number of active plantations of the extensive margin is displayed. The extensive margin consists of all completely new plantations that were established by English owners. This line represents the part of the growth in total plantations that can be attributed to the arrival of English men.*

***Figure 4**: Average number of slaves per plantation with English involvement vs no English involvement in Surinam, 1818-1847.*

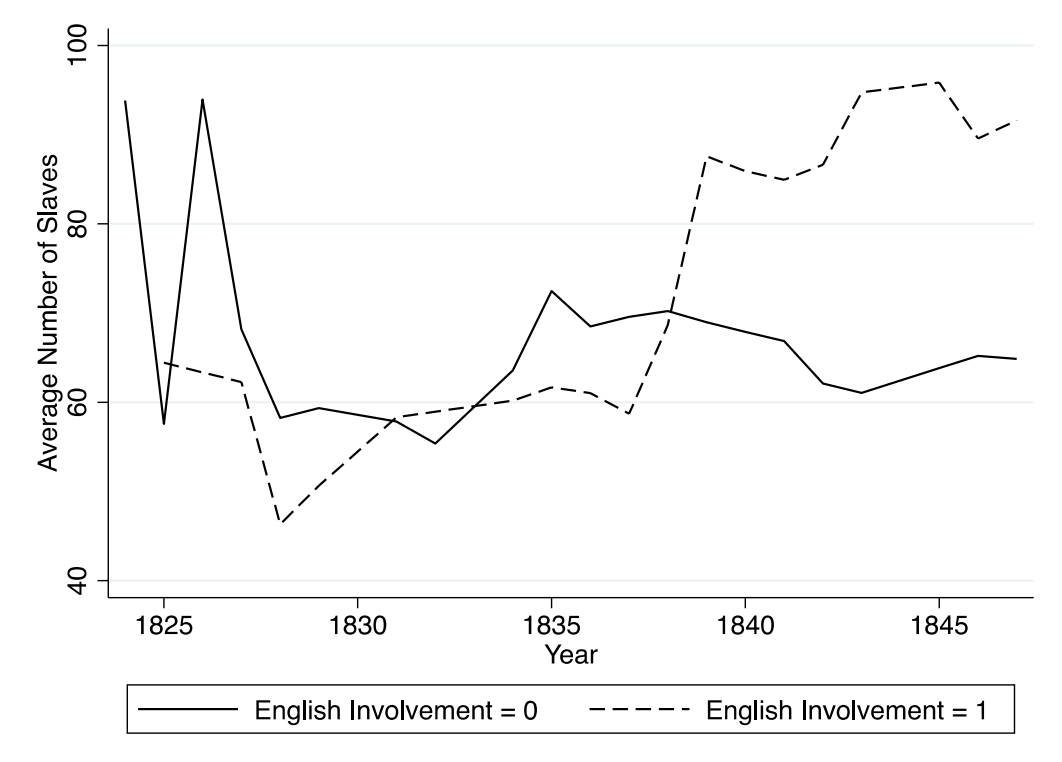


Table 2: *Regression results for the relationship between the logarithm of the number of slaves on a plantation and English involvement in Surinam, 1818-1847, presented in equation (1) and (2). Location and product fixed effects are included in Model C, and D. The omitted variables are the location "Commewijne", and the product group "Other".*

	Model				
Variable	**A**	**B**	**C**	**D**	**E**
English	-0.104	0.0171	0.672***	0.453***	0.275**
	(0.134)	(0.137)	(0.147)	(0.124)	(0.127)
Fields			0.000***	0.000***	
			(0.000)	(0.000)	
Cottica			-0.286*	-0.362***	
			(0.167)	(0.1359	
Suriname			-0.552***	-0.143	
			(0.193)	(0.156)	
Saramacca			-1.325***	-0.421**	
			(0.194)	(0.178)	
Nickerie			-1.451***	-0.990***	
			(0.142)	(0.255)	
Sugar				1.923***	
				(0.160)	
Cotton				1.154	
				(0.214)	
Wood				-.386***	
				(0.175)	
Coffee				1.592***	
				(0.137)	
Cons	2.827***	2.807***	2.503***	1.355***	2.714***
	(0.062)	(0. 062)	(0.142)	(0.142)	(0.032)
Observations	11,875	11,875	8,470	8,470	11,389
R^2	0.037	0.075	0.122	0.273	0.573
Fixed Effects	No	Year	Year	Year	Year & Plantation

*Note: Standard errors are in parentheses; the independent variables are binary variables except for fields; * p<0.1, ** p<0.05, ***p<0.01*

Figure 5: *Coefficient plots of estimates of Equation (3), with the logarithm of number of slaves as the dependent variable. The omitted variable is one year before a plantation is acquired by an English owner. The red line marks the moment of acquirement. The 95% confidence interval around the point estimate is showed.*

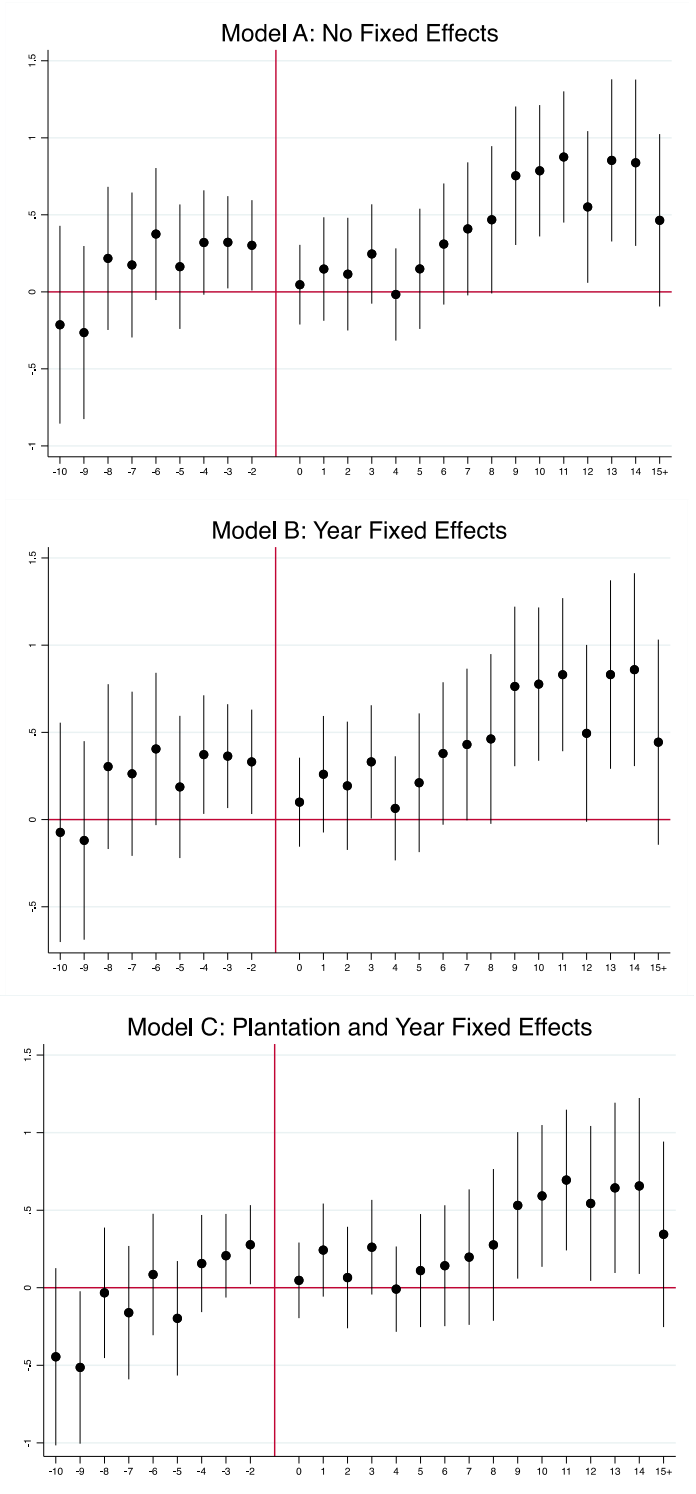


Table 3: *Regression results of the Static difference-in-differences analysis for the years 1833 and 1838 in Surinam, presented in Equation (4) with the logarithm of number of slaves as the dependent variable.*

	Model		
Variable	**A**	**B**	**C**
Post 1833	-0.194*		
	(0.105)		
English involvement in 1833	-0.777***	-0.466**	
	(0.199)	(0.202)	
DID 1833	0.900**	0.591**	-0.259
	(0.257)	(0.258)	(0.270)
Cons	2.948***	2.820***	2.797***
	(0.067)	(0.064)	(0.036)
R^2	0.0065	0.039	0.569
Post 1838	-0.131		
	(.080)		
English involvement in 1838	-0.662***	-0.480***	
	(0.167)	(0.169)	
DID 1838	1.133***	0.951***	0.457**
	(0.186)	(0.184)	(0.187)
Cons	2.881***	2.820***	2.732***
	(0.0591)	(0.062)	(0.012)
R^2	0.009	.0620	0.569
Fixed effects	No	Year	Year & Plantation

*Note: Standard errors are in parentheses; the independent variables are binary variables; * p<0.1, ** p<0.05, ***p<0.01*

Figure 6: *Coefficient plots of estimates of Equation (5) for the year 1833, with the logarithm of number of slaves as the dependent variable. The omitted variable is 1831, the last year available in the data set before 1833. The red line marks the moment of emancipation. The 95% confidence interval around the point estimate is showed.*

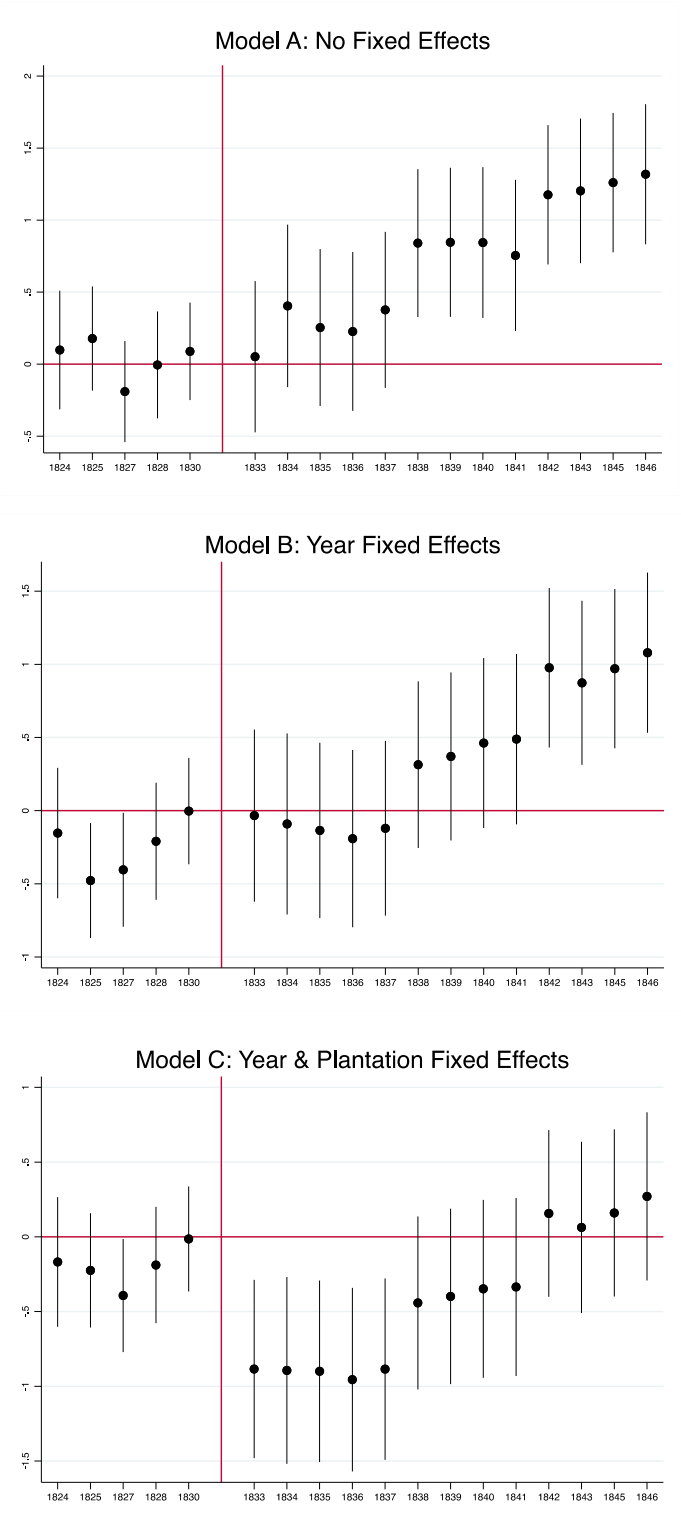


Figure 7: *Coefficient plots of estimates of Equation (5) for the year 1838, with the logarithm of number of slaves as the dependent variable. The omitted variable is 1837. The red line marks the end of the apprenticeship period. The 95% confidence interval around the point estimate is showed.*

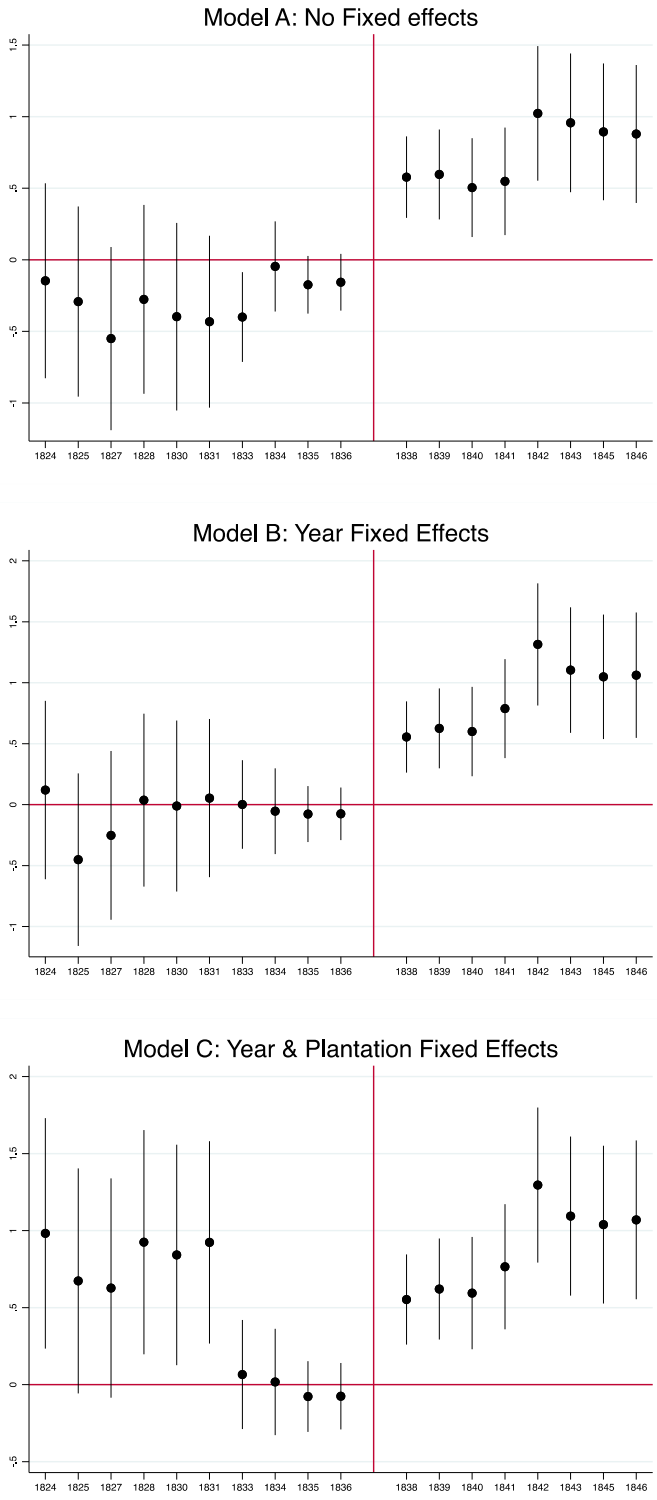


***Table 4**: Logistic regression results for the relationship between a dummy variable for English involvement and determinants: dummy variables for location and product group, controlling for year fixed effects. The omitted variables are the location "Commewijne", and the product group "Other". The Odds Ratio represents the odds that a plantation is English given a particular exposure (e.g., located in Nickerie), compared to the odds that a plantation is English occurring in the absence of that exposure. If 1 is in the confidence interval the coefficient is not significant, for 1 indicating no difference in the odds.*

	Model 1		**Model 2**	
Variable	**OR**	**95% CI**	**OR**	**95% CI**
Cottica	0.70	0.41-1.17	0.57**	0.35-0.94
	(0.18)		(0.15)	
Suriname	0.75	0.50-1.11	0.98	0.64-1.48
	(0.15)		(0.91)	
Saramacca	0.77	0.44-1.34	1.19	0.67-2.12
	(0.22)		(0.35)	
Nickerie	68.62***	37.07-123.01	69.65***	34.35-141.21
	(21.56)		(25.12)	
Sugar			3.77***	2.30-6.20
			(0.96)	
Cotton			8.32***	4.76-14.54
			(2.37)	
Wood			1.22	0.64-2.31
			(0.40)	
Coffee			2.38***	1.47-3.85
			(0.58)	
Abandoned			0.84	0.51-1.37
			(0.21)	
Observations	21,578		21,578	
Chi^2	363.17		359.06	
Df	27		32	

*Note: Standard errors are in parentheses; * p<0.1, ** p<0.05, ***p<0.01*

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