

Law in the Dutch Caribbean, a historical introduction

Invited speaker: Dr. Bastiaan van der Velden

The Bynkershoek Institute is proud to announce the inception of its evening symposium series. These symposia will provide a series of lectures, distributed over several evenings, focusing on a central topic or theme. On some occasions the symposia will include multiple speakers or might concentrate on the work of a single author. In keeping with the Bynkershoek Institute's objectives of viewing The Hague as a window to international, European and comparative law, the topics of the symposia will vary across those fields of research.

The first of these symposia will involve a series of lectures on the legal history of the Dutch Caribbean. The first lecture will deal with the legal concepts of the Amerindian tribes of the Arowaks and the colonial Spanish legal system and the way legislation was used to conquer and govern the continent. The second lecture will deal with the Dutch West Indian Company period and the laws regarding the slave trade. Further lectures will deal with the law of the Jewish inhabitants and the internal social control of enslaved Africans as a legal system. The Dutch Civil code introduced in 1869 and the functioning of this codification in the Caribbean will be discussed in the 5th lecture. Finally a lecture deals with the normative role of Curacao voodoo and its influence on the legal system. Each lecture will be introduced by a guest speaker.

26th Sept.	Legal structures of the Native Americans in the Caribbean Area (pre 1492) Law and government in the Spanish colonial empire (1492-1634)
24th Oct.	The Dutch West Indian Company (1634-1794) Roman Dutch law and legal regulations on slave trade (17th-19th century)
21st Nov.	Legal pluralism: Jewish courts on Curacao (17th-18th century)
19th Dec.	Legal pluralism: enslaved Africans and their system of dispute resolution in the Caribbean Area (18th-19th century)
23th Jan. 2012	Legal transplant: introducing the Dutch Civil code in the Caribbean (19th century)
27th Feb. 2012	The normative role of Afro-Caribbean popular belief (19th-20th century)

Bastiaan van der Velden holds a Doctorate from the University of Amsterdam, and an LL.M in Dutch law from Maastricht University. Prior to working at The Hague University, Bastiaan van der Velden worked as a policy officer to a member of the Dutch parliament, and as a lecturer and researcher at the University of the Netherlands Antilles, Maastricht University, Leiden University and the University of Amsterdam. He is the author of a book and several articles on the legal status of minority languages and of: *Ik lach met Grotius, en alle die prullen van boeken* (Amsterdam: SWP 2011) (<http://www.swpbook.com/1364>), a legal history of the island Curacao. This book is the first academic research on this topic, describing the different periods from pre Columbian times till the abolition of slavery in the end of the 19th century.

The lectures will take place at the venue of Bynkershoek Institute, Groot Hertoginnelaan 3, The Hague (2517 EA). The door is open at 19.15, and the lectures will start at 19.30. Since available seats are limited, people who want to attend are requested to register by email at: caribbeanlectures@bynkershoek.eu