

Propositions

1. Modern agricultural sciences developed as, and through, a systematic denial of the role, relevance and impact of the nitrogen delivery capacity of soils (this thesis).
2. World War II impacted in a manifold and so far hardly explored way on postwar agricultural development: agricultural modernization materialized as conquest (this thesis)
3. The thesis that “leaving man and the land to the markets is tantamount to their annihilation” applies more than ever (K. Polayi, “The Great Transformation: the Political and Economic Origins of Our Time”, 1957).
4. The role of Sicco Mansholt in postwar agrarian development in the Netherlands and in Europe is far more contradictory than assumed in current debates (J. Merriënboer, “Mansholt : een biografie” 2006)
5. Carbon fuelled private transport is a clear expression of mankind’s capacity to reach high levels of irrationality.
6. There is no escape from value issues that are part of concepts and methods at the very core of sciences.

Propositions presented with the doctoral thesis:

“Down to earth”

a historical-sociological analysis of the rise and fall of ‘industrial’ agriculture and of the prospects for the re-rooting of agriculture from the factory to the local farmers and ecology

Jozef Visser, 13th of April 2010.