

Presentation of the TCH project

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Aruba, Curaçao, Bonaire; September 18 to 25, 2017

Main questions

What is typical Aruban/Curaçaoan/Bonairian cultural heritage, who's heritage is it anyway, why and for whom is it important to pass on to the future? And what is its importance to the nation?

Advantages of TCH

- Most funding invested in Dutch Caribbean researchers and heritage workers
- A combination of academic research and local capacity building
- Bottom up approach using expertise of local heritage organizations and students on Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao and in the Netherlands

Why ABC and (a bit)Dutch Caribbean communities in NL?

- More or less comparable histories (slavery, mineral wealth, tourism)
- Long processes of creolization and migration (in and out)
- Linguistic unity (fundamental heritage item!)
- Inter kingdom influences

Focus of the Traveling Caribbean Heritage project

Because (post-)colonial processes of migration and creolization have shaped, and still shape the societies of Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao, this evokes questions about island identifications, the role, content and future of heritage, and the position of the nation(state) in this.

Therefore, in this project senior scholars and heritage specialists will research together with junior scholars, students and trainees, how cultural heritage can support sustainable and inclusive societies

Nation-building:

What do 'we' want our citizens, young and old, to know and cherish about our unique insular heritage that makes people Arubans (identification), and what is that heritage in the first place? (defining)

nation-branding

What image of our island do 'we' want to present to 'others', emphasizing our unique heritage without falling into the trap of excessive folklorization and stereotyping, at the cost of all kinds of new cultural expressions?

what will be the results of this four year TCH project?

- Academic output in the form of a PhD dissertation, a book and a number of scholarly articles which will be an important input for heritage policy and inclusive nation building, first and for all for the societies concerned, but probably also for many more small scale diverse societies throughout the world

- Training and education trajectories which have 4 years time to work on a sustainable new generation of heritage workers, a.o. showing that heritage pays
- An intra-island and probably intra-Kingdom infrastructure of cooperation and interaction.