Interuniversity
Course Caribbean Studies
2019
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Introduction

The Caribbean has a fascinating, and often disconcerting, history, a dynamic and colorful culture, an uncertain economic and political future. It is an extraordinary multifaceted area with its many languages, population groups, and cultures. It is also a region that has long and close connections with the Netherlands - Aruba, Curaçao, St. Maarten, what are the called BES-islands, and Suriname in particular. Many people migrated to the metropole from these former colonies, so that more than ever the Caribbean is present in Dutch society.

In 2019 the KITLV/Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies organizes the 33nd Interuniversity Course Caribbean Studies. The course will be offered in English. The classes are taught by experts from different universities and organizations. Approximately every three weeks there will be a 30-minute wrap-up and discussion session (see schedule). Participation is open to students from all universities and a limited number of interested non-students.

In this course we will discuss history, politics, economics as well as social-cultural topics. Four key concepts will receive special attention - ethnicity, gender, migration, and creolization. Topics to be discussed include ecology, colonization, slave trade and slavery, indentured labor, small-holding and the post-plantation economy, migration and trans-nationalism, intellectual history, gender, kinship and sexuality, pluralism, languages, art, literature, music, decolonization, local politics, tourism, and international relations.
Practical Information

Information and registration
For all information and registration please contact:
KITLV/Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies
PO Box 9515, 2300 RA Leiden, tel. 071-5272372, e-mail: sitinjak@kitlv.nl.
The reduced registration fee for students is €35.00, which includes access to Leiden
University Library. Participation of non-students is limited; the registration fee is €145.00.
Please note that registration is complete only after submitting your registration form and the
receipt of payment of your registration fee.
Registration is open until January 23, 2019 and is based on order of received payment.

Venue and time
The Caribbean Studies course will take place during the period January 30-April 24, 2019.
Classes are held on Wednesday afternoons from 1.00 p.m. to 5 p.m. (see schedule)
The classes will take place in the Leiden University (Cleveringaplaats 1) in the Witte
Singel/Doelen Complex (see map). This is a 15-minute walk from Leiden Central Station.

Exams and ECTs
The course level is BA-2 with a total 10 ECTs. It is possible to earn more ECT (max 2).
The written exam, consisting of essay questions, covers the lectures, required literature, and one
of the prescribed novels. The exam will be held on May 15, 2019 from 1.00 p.m. till 4.30 p.m.
Participants who chose not to take the exam may receive a certificate of participation, provided
that they have attended all classes.
Literature

The reading lists are intended as preparation for classes and to give background information about the topics to be discussed. The reading lists for each class are listed at the end of each lecture abstract (see following pages). For students wishing to take the exam these are books for the required reading:


In addition, there is a choice of three monographs:
Graziano, Frank, Dominican Migration (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2013)

Participants are also requested to read one of the following novels:

Alvarez, Julia, In the Time of the Butterflies (In Dutch: In de tijd van de vlinders)
Condé, Maryse, La vie scélérée (In Dutch: Het valse leven)
Danticat, Edwidge, The Farming of Bones (In Dutch: Land voor de levenden)
Díaz, Junot, The brief wondrous life of Oscar Wao (In Dutch: Het korte maar wonderbare leven van Oscar Wao)
Eire, Carlos, Waiting for Snow in Havana (In Dutch: Sneeuw in Havana)
Naipaul, V.S., A House for Mr. Biswas (In Dutch: Een huis voor meneer Biswas)
Mootoo, Shani, Cereus Blooms at Night (In Dutch: De cereus bloeit ’s nachts)

* The Dutch version of Paradijs overzee: de ‘Nederlandse’ Caraïben en Nederland and De geboorte van de Afrikaans-Amerikaanse cultuur are for sale at KITLV (second floor). The English version you have to order via internet.

https://www.amazon.com/Paradise-Overseas-Colonialism-Transatlantic-University/dp/1405057130

Course coordinators

This course is coordinated by Rosemarijn Hoeft (hofte@kitlv.nl), Alana Osbourne and Ellen Sitinjak (sitinjak@kitlv.nl).

Education committee
The committee members are Prof. Dr. Michiel Baud (CEDLA/UvA), Prof. Dr. Rosemarijn Hoeft (KITLV/UvA), Prof. Dr. Rivke Jaffe (UvA), Prof. Dr. Gert Oostindie (KITLV/UL) en Prof. Dr. Alex van Stipriaan (EUR).
30 January
Introduction (Rosemarijn Hoefte) 13.00-14.30
Political ecologies (Rivke Jaffe) 15.00-16.30

6 February
Systems of Slavery in the Atlantic (Damian Pargas) 13.00-14.30
Resistance, Marronage and Abolitionism (Alex van Stipriaan) 14.45-16.15
Discussion led by Alex van Stipriaan, followed by drinks 16.30-17.00

13 February
Emancipation and Transition (Michiel Baud) 13.00-14.30
Asian Diaspora (Rosemarijn Hoefte) 15.00-16.30

20 February
Radical Thinkers and Religion (Wayne Modest) 13.00-14.30
Movie Rue cases nègres 14.45-16.30

27 February
Languages in the Caribbean (Margot van den Berg) 13.00-14.30
Ethnicity and Ideology (Michiel Baud) 15.00-16.30
Discussion led by Michiel Baud Rue cases Nègres 16.30-17.00

6 March
Gender, Kinship and Sexuality (Gloria Wekker) 13.00-14.30
Decolonization and Independence (Wouter Veenendaal) 15.00-16.30

13 March
Caribbean Literature (Isabel Hoving) 13.00-14.30
Cultural Changes in revolutionary Cuba (Nanne Timmer) 14.45-16.15
Discussion led by Gert Oostindie 16.30-17.00

20 March
Migration and Transnationalism (Guiselle Starink-Martha) 13.00-14.30
Music in the Caribbean (Ronald Snijders) 15.00-16.30

27 March
Black Archives (Mitchell Esajas & Jessica de Abreu) 13.00-14.30
Art in the Caribbean (Alex van Stipriaan) 15.00-16.30

3 April
Cultural Heritage (Valika Smeulders) 13.00-14.30
Crime and Insecurity in the Caribbean (Rivke Jaffe) 14.45-16.15
Discussion led by Rivke Jaffe 16.30-17.00

10 April
Caribbean Economy and Integration (Gert Oostindie) 13.00-14.30
Tourism (Alana Osbourne) 15.00-16.30
17 April
Disaster in the Caribbean (Kasia Mika)  13.00-14.30
Puerto Rico (Line Algoed)  16.30-17.00

24 April
Americanization, Globalization and the Future of the Caribbean
(Rosemarijn Hoeffe)  13.00-14.30
Decolonization of Caribbean Research (Jordi Halfman, Julian Insenia,
Stacey Mac Donald, Sanne Rotmeijer)  15.00-16.30
Abstracts and course reading

30 January
Introduction (Rosemarijn Hoefte)  13.00-14.30
Political ecolgoies (Rivke Jaffe)  15.00-16.30

Rosemarijn Hoefte, KITLV/University of Amsterdam

This class introduces the course in two ways. First, it sketches in broad strokes Caribbean history - European colonization, patterns of colonization, migrations and demographic development, gradual decolonization, and the heterogeneous character of the contemporary Caribbean. Second, we will discuss the 4 core concepts in Caribbean Studies - creolization, migration, gender, and ethnicity.

Rivke Jaffe, University of Amsterdam

The natural environment has played an important role in the history of the Caribbean, and in the popular and scholarly imagination of the region. Fertile soils and a tropical climate provided the ecological foundation for plantation economies, just as the region’s sandy beaches and turquoise sea encourage contemporary tourism. However, nature has also played a constant role in how the Caribbean has been imagined: in particular fantasies of tropical nature continue to be projected onto Caribbean societies. This lecture discusses similarities and diversity in Caribbean ecologies. We will focus on the role of the natural environment in societies that rely on plantation agriculture and tourism, and the ecological consequences of those economic activities. In addition, we will explore various perspectives on nature, land, and the environment in the Caribbean, including both local perspectives and international representations.

Hillman & D’Agostino, Contemporary Caribbean, Chapter 1, 2 and 7.
6 February
Systems of Slavery in the Atlantic (Damian Pargas)  13.00-14.30
Marronage and Abolitionism (Alex van Stipriaan)        14.45-16.15
Discussion led by Alex van Stipriaan                 16.30-17.00
Followed by drinks

Damian Pargas, Leiden University

As a practice in which human beings were held captive for an indefinite period of time, treated like property, coerced into extremely dependent and exploitive power relationships, denied basic rights (including rights over their labor, lives, and bodies), and forced to labor against their will, the practice of slavery in one form or another has existed in innumerable societies throughout global history. To what extent is the history of Atlantic slavery unique, then? How did Atlantic systems of slavery compare to other systems of slavery in world history? This class will briefly examine these questions. It will delve into the development of Atlantic slavery within the context of early modern European expansion and global capitalism, discuss how and why Atlantic societies developed “racial” systems of slavery, and explore certain aspects of enslavement in the western hemisphere that set Atlantic slavery apart from most other systems of slavery in world history.

Alex van Stipriaan, Erasmus University Rotterdam

From the first to the last days of slavery Afro-Caribbeans have resisted the system which kept them enslaved. However, the forms this resistance took differed not only per society and period, but almost per person as well. Revolution and marronage are the best known and maybe most spectacular forms, but the variety is much broader and deeper. Meanwhile, all the time there have been European protests against the system as well. In this class we will discuss to what extent enslaved were eventually the agents of their own emancipation.

Oostindie, Paradise Overseas / Paradijs overzee, Chapter 1, 2 (UK) 1, 2 and 3 (NL); Hillman & D’Agostino, Contemporary Caribbean, Chapter 3 till page 70. Mintz & Price, The birth of African-American culture / De geboorte van de Afrikaans-Amerikaanse cultuur; entire volume;
Since the end of the 18th century slavery as a system of labor recruitment was no longer taken for granted. The system was increasingly criticized for a myriad of reasons and in the 19th century slavery was abolished in the Caribbean. This led to new forms of social organization. The former enslaved built a new life based on social and cultural elements from the time of their bondage. The planters experimented with new forms of labor recruitment, including the immigration of new groups of workers. In this class we will discuss the different ways in which slave emancipation can be interpreted. Next we will look at different models of transition.

After the abolition of slavery many plantations seemed moribund, but many planters and colonial authorities were not ready to give up on the plantation economy just yet. Tens of thousands of contract laborers were imported from Asia to replace the enslaved and save the plantations: but what was contract labor? How did these newcomers adjust to a strange, and often hostile, environment? This mass immigration solved the labor problem (at least temporarily), but at the same time created new problems, as the majority of the Asians did not return to their homelands and settled in the Caribbean. The creation of so-called plural societies led to economic, social, cultural, and political tensions.

Oostindie, *Paradise Overseas /Paradijs overzee*, Chapter 3(UK) 4(NL); Hillman & D’Agostino, *Contemporary Caribbean*, Chapter 3 till page 70.
Sugar Cane Alley (French title: La Rue Cases-Nègres) is set in Martinique in the 1930s. José, the protagonist, is an 11-year-old orphan who lives in the countryside. Through José the structure of colonial society is shown. A major theme is how José, with the help of his grandmother, uses education as a means to escape the desperate conditions of plantation laborers on the island.

Hillman & D’Agostino, Contemporary Caribbean, Chapter 10,
Humankind can survive because of its flexibility and its ability to adapt to changes. Language is an essential tool for adaptation as it provides both the model and the principal means for its users to sustain functional and meaningful relationships between themselves and their environment. In this session we will explore the creative and adaptive use of language in relation to power, representations and control in the Caribbean. We will discuss creole formation, codeswitching and other instances of multilingual language use on the basis of linguistic research on various islands as well as Suriname in the past and the present.

Michiel Baud, CEDLA / University of Amsterdam

Ethnic heterogeneity characterizes the Caribbean. Population groups with roots in different continents and with different cultural backgrounds live side by side. This ethnic diversity often translates into differences in prosperity and social position. This has sometimes led to tensions and conflicts, but often is also seen as the defining characteristic of Caribbean societies and the core of Caribbean nations. In this class we will discuss different expressions and the consequences of ethnic diversity in the Caribbean. Attention will be paid to interpretations of this diversity by Caribbean intellectuals and the ways in which diversity has been used in politics.

Hillman & D’Agostino, Contemporary Caribbean, Chapter 8.
**6 March**

Gender, Kinship and Sexuality (Gloria Wekker)  
13.00-14.30

Decolonization and Independence (Wouter Veenendaal)  
15.00-16.30

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**Gloria Wekker, Utrecht University**

In this class, Gloria Wekker will introduce the fields of gender, kinship, and sexuality in the Afro-Surinamese working-class from a feminist and intersectional perspective. We will zoom in on a widespread sexual phenomenon in the female working class, the mati work, in which women have male and female partners (not to be equated with bisexuality, however) and typically have children. I hypothesize that this phenomenon is part of the cultural heritage that the enslaved brought with them from West Africa and it is present in the entire Black Diaspora, but especially strongly in Suriname.

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**Wouter Veenendaal, Leiden University**

Caribbean decolonization started early, with the Haitian Revolution (1791-1804), but the process is still unfinished – at least if one assumes that full sovereignty is the only possible outcome of the decolonization process. In spite of this commonly held position, some 15 percent of all 40 million people living in the Caribbean reside in non-sovereign places with little interest in full independence. In the first part of this lecture we discuss this counterintuitive reality. In the second part we focus on the diversity of political systems and cultures of the Caribbean. This discussion will include the functioning of democracy and governance, the impact of small-scale and clientelism, and the influence of colonial traditions and postcolonial orientations.

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Hillman & D’Agostino, *Contemporary Caribbean*, Chapter 4 and 9; Oostindie, *Paradise Overseas*/Paradijs overzee, Chapter 4 and 5 (UK), 5 and 6 (NL);
13 March
Caribbean Literature (Isabel Hoving) 13.00-14.30
Cultural Changes in revolutionary Cuba (Nanne Timmer) 14.45-16.15
Discussion led by Gert Oostindie 16.30-17.00

Isabel Hoving, Leiden University

We will show how diverse works of Caribbean literature can be read in connection with each other—as different solutions for a more or less general problem. After all, every author struggles with the difficulty of articulating the torn, multiple Caribbean identity, or the experiences of migration and (neo)colonialism, and is faced with the choice between a multitude of languages and registers. Using seven novels (by Alvarez, Condé, Danticat, Díaz, Eyre, Mootoo, Naipaul) we will show not only the differences and similarities between the approach of novels from different linguistic and cultural contexts, but also begin to understand the historical changes that have occurred in the literary exploration of Caribbean turbulence.

Nanne Timmer, Leiden University

Graffiti art with political slogans from the 1960s sometimes suggests that in Cuba time stands still: but in over forty years of socialism there have definitely been some important developments in society. In this class we will study these developments by analyzing different cultural manifestations in movies, music, and literature. Special attention will be given to the literature of the last ten years. By analyzing the cultural dynamics of the last decade we will explain societal debates and social characteristics. To what extent did the Revolution

Hillman & D’Agostino, Contemporary Caribbean, Chapter 11 and one of the seven novels
20 March
Migration (Guiselle Starink-Martha) 13.00-14.30
Music in the Caribbean (Ronald Snijders) 15.00-16.30

Guiselle Starink-Martha, University of Amsterdam

The Caribbean is characterized by its history of displacement and migration. In this globalized day and age transmigrants' physical, as well as virtual, movement has become even more extensive. In this session we will discuss the phenomenon of Caribbean migration from a Cultural Studies point of view. We will contemplate Caribbean transnationalism and issues of collective identity construction through the discussion of several performative and everyday-life cases.

Ronald Snijders, ethnomusicologist and musician

In this class we will discuss numerous aspects of and influences on the music culture in the Caribbean. The teacher is an ethnomusicologist and experienced musician who will emphasize Afro-American styles. Examples of these different types of music will be played in class.

Oostindie, Paradise Overseas/Paradijs overzee, Chapter 6 and 7 (UK), 7 and 8 (NL); Hillman & D’Agostino, Contemporary Caribbean, Chapter 12
27 March
Black Archives (Mitchell Esajas & Jessica de Abreu) 13.00-14.30
Art in the Caribbean (Alex van Stipriaan) 15.00-16.30

Mitchell Esajas
Jessica de Abreu

Will follow

Alex van Stipriaan, Erasmus University Rotterdam

It is often stated that art is a mirror of society. If so, is there such a thing as Caribbean art and what can be seen in that mirror? The focus in this class on visual art in Caribbean history will be on Cuba, Haiti, Suriname, the Dutch Caribbean, and Jamaica and their art worlds then and now. A few categorizations will help to get a grip on this enormous field of cultural production, among which a differentiation in classical, academic, and popular art will be applied. Talking about art is unthinkable without seeing it, so a large number of works of art will pass (on screen) during this lecture. And why not have your own critical preview by taking a digital peek at a large exhibition on two centuries of Caribbean art as well as a review http://www.pamm.org/exhibitions/caribbean-crossroads-world and https://srananart.wordpress.com/tag/caribbean-crossroads-of-the-world/

Hillman & D’Agostino, Contemporary Caribbean, Chapter 11
3 April
Cultural Heritage (Valika Smeulders) 13.00-14.30
Crime and Insecurity in the Caribbean (Rivke Jaffe) 14.45-16.15
Discussion led by Rivke Jaffe 16.30-17.00

Valika Smeulders, Pasado Presente / Rijksmuseum / KITLV

When traveling to different locations in the Caribbean, tourists can see many remnants of the colonial past. Much of that material and immaterial heritage, directly or indirectly, is related to slavery. What can be considered the heritage of slavery and how is this heritage presented to tourists? How are the different expectations of audiences, varying from entertainment to very personal pilgrimages into the suffering, or, on the contrary, the resilience of the enslaved, managed? This lecture focuses on the presentation and consumption of the heritage of slavery for and by different audiences, taking into account economic aspects and matters of identity.

Rivke Jaffe, University of Amsterdam

Will follow
10 April
Caribbean Economy and Integration (Gert Oostindie) 13.00-14.30
Tourism (Alana Osbourne) 15.00-16.30

Gert Oostindie, KITLV/ Leiden University

The Caribbean was developed as a collection of individual plantation economies, but alongside, and even within, these large-scale companies subsistence agriculture thrived. In the 20th century, agriculture declined and its place was taken, to some extent, by mining and industrialization, and after World War II, the services industry. Scarcely anywhere did the growth of the labor market keep up with population growth - hence the high levels of emigration. External dependency has remained endemic; opportunities for successful economic integration are limited. Nevertheless, there are stark contrasts in levels of prosperity within the region. In this lecture we will analyze long-term economic developments and address this puzzle.

Alana Osbourne, KITLV

Tourism entails producing spaces as sites for consumption and crafting narratives that entice people into visiting a given area. The Caribbean’s tropical landscapes have long been a major tourism pull, but there is an increasing interest in visiting the region’s cities. Using Trench Town, an infamous Kingston ‘ghetto’ as a case study, this lecture will analyze how different aspirations to create a tourism economy in low income urban areas are tied to - and interact with – tourist reveries of poverty and crime, ultimately assessing how Caribbean cityscapes and marginalized communities are reshaped and shifted in the face of tourism.

Hillman & D’Agostino, Contemporary Caribbean, Chapter 5, 7 (starting from page 208).
Building on our exploration of Caribbean history, in this lecture I want to look to one recent Caribbean disaster - the earthquake in Haiti in 2010 - in order to explore the notion of disasters as ‘processes that unfold through time’ (Oliver-Smith). These ‘natural’ events are deeply rooted in and shaped by the longer socio-economic and environmental histories of the Caribbean. We will first examine the region’s exposure to various natural hazards due to its geographic position and geological features, and then consider the scale of the 2010 earthquake and its aftermath. Finally, we will discuss practices and politics of post-earthquake aid and reconstruction.
24 April
Americanization, Globalization and the Future of the Caribbean
(Rosemarijn Hoefte)  13.00-14.30
Decolonization of Caribbean Research (Jordi Halfman, Julian Insenia, Stacey Mac Donald, Sanne Rotmeijer)  15.00-16.30

Afterwats drinks!

Rosemarijn Hoefte, KITLV/ University of Amsterdam

Americanization, globalization, and the future of the Caribbean
In this lecture we will discuss the ‘American Century’, which started in the Caribbean with the U.S. involvement in the American-Spanish-Cuban War of 1898. The role of Europe steadily diminished, while the position of the USA became stronger each year. We will look at the continuities and changes in U.S. policy in the Caribbean and its political, economic, and cultural effects in the region. Finally, we will discuss the current situation and the role of new powers such as China, Venezuela, and Brazil.

Jordi Halfman, University of Amsterdam / Julian Insenia, University of Amsterdam / Stacey Mac Donald, KITLV / Sanne Rotmeijer, KITLV

Ethics, methods and relationships in doing research in the Dutch Caribbean

What does it mean to do research in the former Dutch Antilles today? What theoretical perspectives and related research methods can one employ? How to write about one's research in ways faithful to the encounters in the field? And how to take into consideration historical developments, current unequal power relations and our own position within Dutch academia without making a priori assumptions? In this conversation five early career academics, with different (inter-)disciplinary backgrounds, but all active in (parts of) the Dutch Kingdom, will discuss their views and practices and give tentative answers to these important questions.

Hillman & D’Agostino, Contemporary Caribbean, Chapter 4, 6 and 13
Recommended reading

Non-Fiction


Philips, Caryl, A View of the Empire at Sunset. Penguin Books Ltd, 2018


Recommended reading

Fiction
Cabrera Infante, Gabriel, Drie trieste tijgers. Amsterdam: Anthos, 1997. (Vert. van, Tres tristes tigres, 1994.)
Césaire, Aimé, Logboek van een terugkeer naar mijn geboorteland. Haarlem: In de Knipscheer, 1985. (Vert. van, Cahier d’un retour au pays natal, 1939.)
Kolk, Geert van der, De waterverkoper. Amsterdam: Nieuw Amsterdam, 2012.
Marugg, Tip, *De morgen looit weer aan*. Amsterdam: De Bezige Bij, 1991.(1e dr.: 1988.)
Ramdas, Anil, *De beroepsherinneraar en andere verhalen*. Amsterdam: De Bezige Bij, 1996.
KITLV/Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies

The KITLV/Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies was founded in 1851 with the aim of promoting the study of social sciences and linguistics, including history, of Southeast Asia, the Pacific, and the Caribbean. Special attention was given to the Dutch colonies of Indonesia, Suriname and the Netherlands Antilles.

The KITLV aims to be a world-class research institute for the study of Southeast Asia and the Caribbean, with a focus on Indonesia and the ‘Dutch’ Caribbean, in an interdisciplinary and comparative perspective. Benefitting from the unrivalled collections offered on campus by Leiden University, KITLV researchers explore (dis)continuities between the (pre)colonial and postcolonial period, and articulate their research agendas empirically and theoretically in order to advance wider debates on the meandering paths of globalization. KITLV engages with the academic community across the world, as well as with (inter)national governmental organizations, NGOs, the media, and the interested general public. KITLV is an institute of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW).

The KITLV publishes the oldest journal on the Caribbean - the New West Indian Guide/Nieuwe West-Indische Gids (1919).

Map of Leiden and the KITLV/Witte Singel Doelen complex.