
Traveling Caribbean Heritage

Workshops report || 18 – 25 September, 2017

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Traveling Caribbean Heritage

General Goals

Traveling Caribbean Heritage (TCH) focuses on cultural heritage and national identification in Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao and their diaspora in the Netherlands. The broader context is defined by changing relations in the trans-Atlantic Kingdom of the Netherlands and the effect of migration and tourism on the shaping of heritage and identity, and on nation building and nation branding. TCH is a four year project of KITLV, Erasmus University Rotterdam, University of Curaçao, University of Aruba and Fuhikubo Bonaire. Antillean and Dutch scholars and cultural heritage specialists jointly address the dual challenge of identifying and questioning the specific dynamics of heritage formation, while at the same time jointly helping to create a new generation of heritage specialists on the islands. Eventually this should also contribute to the emergence of an infrastructure for heritage interaction for the entire Kingdom. Further information on TCH may be found on the website <http://www.kitlv.nl/traveling-caribbean-heritage/>

Project Start

On each of the islands (as well as in the Netherlands), TCH works with a broad group of heritage workers and heritage makers called the consortia. The project started off in June of 2017 with a survey among these consortium partners. The next step was a round of workshops organized in September 2017, on Aruba the 18th and 19th, Curaçao the 20th and 21st and Bonaire the 23th and 25th. The workshops consisted of two days each. The first day was particularly geared towards working with the project consortium members, the second towards working with a more general audience of specialists, students and others interested in heritage and history. On each island, the first workshop day was opened with a presentation of the TCH project¹ and the results of the survey.² The second day was opened with presentations on historical canons generally.³ On Curaçao, the first experiences with the creation of a national canon were presented and discussed.⁴ On Aruba, part of the workshop was the kick-off of a recently established academic course on heritage⁵. On Curaçao, two new academic courses were presented: a *studium generale* dedicated to heritage, and a program on Cultural Studies⁶. On Bonaire, there was a presentation for students interested in following these courses online⁷.

Most importantly, next to the presentations, each workshop day consisted of lively exchanges and group sessions on particular themes and relevant assignments. TCH project members, local specialists and other participants exchanged views and particular knowledge, and in doing so learned a lot from each other. We worked, for instance, on formulating goals for the local heritage field, and

¹ [Backgrounds of the TCH project by Alex van Stipriaan/Gert Oostindie](#)

² [First outcomes of TCH survey by Joeri Arion/ Valika Smeulders](#)

³ [Formulating a historical canon by Alex van Stipriaan/Gert Oostindie](#)

⁴ [A canon for Curaçao by Rose Mary Allen; Curaçao's canon: motives and challenges by Max Scriwanek; What is central to Curaçao's history and national identity by Richenel Ansano.](#)

⁵ [Cultural heritage: communities, management and policy by Luc Alofs - http://www.ua.aw/2017/08/25/cultural-heritage-our-history-and-identity/](#)

⁶ [Studium Generale and Cultural Studies at University of Curaçao by Rose Mary Allen; https://www.uoc.cw/cultuur/;](#)

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⁷ Idem.

visions on heritage, nation building and branding were related to the challenge of formulating a local historical canon and/or a national heritage exhibition.

ARUBA – day I

Nicolas Store, San Nicolas || Monday, September 18 2017

Panel

A panel discussed the UoA heritage course, which contains a series of 5 modules. These modules provide separate elements that jointly cover the major field of heritage:

1. Historical Canon ||
2. Culture Studies ||
3. Monuments, museums and narratives ||
4. Cultural policy and management ||
5. Nation building & -branding in the 21st century.

The initiative for this course was unanimously accepted by the members on the panel and workshop participants. There was a consensus that the format of the course needs to accommodate the forthcoming students' work schedules, as many interested persons are employed and work during daytime. Furthermore, the course's configuration creates opportunities for *learning by doing*, shortening of the program from 4 to 2-years, advancing on a HBO-level and gain 4 to 5 EC's per module.

Working groups

The following matters came to the fore as the most pressing subjects requiring research, as well as recommendations for activities which were considered important:

Research themes

- Determining the *interest, challenges* and *experiences* of heritage makers (in particular youth and 'older' generations) in Aruban society. Conduct a comparative historic analysis of the ideas on, and conceptualizations of heritage.
- Investigating the extent to which the 'status aparte' era forms a benchmark in this process, as identity politics reached a particular level and national priorities were firmly established in the domains of economics, politics and culture.
- Inventorying of policy plans (and programs) pertaining to cultural development drafted over the past decades and making an inventory of the organizations that were and are active in the area of culture and heritage.
- Investigating the correlation between notions of Aruban society being 'multi-cultural' and language policies, proficiency and acquisition (particularly with regards to Papiamentu as a key marker of identity).

Action list for the future

- Enhance cohesion and collaboration amongst the various organizations active in the field of culture and heritage.
- Establish a cohesive community of heritage makers and professionals/ workers, e.g. by linking artists and commercial industry.
- Conduct a thorough assessment and development of an implementation strategy for drafted policy plans and programs.

- Organize and establish a strong lobby group in order to create political leverage and general cultural awareness amongst politicians and government generally, particularly aiming to promote political willingness for cultural and heritage preservation and management.
- Stimulate the educational system to achieve a more holistic approach in the transmittance of culture and heritage, as culture is integral in all aspects of life.
- Focus on youth (5-years and up), as youngsters should form the most important target group in this process, which calls for an inclusive approach and investment in youth with regards to cultural development activities.

ARUBA – day 2

Cas di Cultura, Oranjestad || Tuesday, September 19 2017

This day started off with presentations on the production of historical canons in Europe (by Alex van Stipriaan), in Curaçao (by Rose Mary Allen) and a possible time-frame for historical canon for Aruba (by Luc Alofs).

Working groups

After these presentations, working groups discussed the methodological criteria for the development of *their* Aruban canon for insular history and prioritized these guidelines in the order of perceived importance:

1. Geography || Humanities || European and Latin-American connections || Significance of identity (inclusively engage community)
2. Human narratives || Diversity || Identity || Coloniality and Modernity
3. Questions of value & shared heritage || Scale/ Geography || Economic development || Periodization
4. Trends (time-frames)

Curaçao – day I

UoC – Dr. Moises da Costa Gomez Wednesday, September 20 2017

Working groups

The group assignment of the first workshop day was much the same as on Aruba, but obviously the focus was on Curaçao. The initial assignment aimed to validate the outcome of the survey conducted amongst Curaçaoan heritage workers. After the lunch break, the four subgroups of participants discussed an action list of activities to overcome bottlenecks hindering progress in the area of heritage.

Key points of working group discussions

- What is heritage and what are the main criteria in defining heritage?
- In heritage management, the focus should be on 'opportunities' (in the context of the presented S.W.O.T.).
- The history of slavery is a crucial point of reference in Curaçaoan historiography.

- Curaçaoan history should become a more important subject in the school curriculum.
- While it is impossible to define one fixed insular or broader notion of cultural identity, the process of defining and redefining is important in itself, as it helps to reflect on what you/we are.
- Papiamentu forms a unique characteristic of cultural identity.
- The awareness and activity of young people in creating heritage is underestimated. Youth should be systematically included in heritage management.
- Heritage is created continuously, but what is broadly accepted and hence codified as 'cultural heritage' remains to be seen. Heritage has many dimensions, not only cultural, but also economic, social, and political.
- While there is a preference for a non-racial definition of Curaçaoan identity, race and race relations should be discussed as an integral element in Curaçaoan history and heritage.
- Cultural heritage should be approached in an interdisciplinary way. Scholarly research should stick to rigorous methods, but must be aware of multiple perspectives and the need to take aboard expertise from heritage workers.
- The great number of heritage organizations in Curacao is seen as characteristic for the island, but also as a challenge as presently there is not enough synergy and cooperation.

Research themes pertaining to concept of heritage and heritage themes

- | | |
|---|--|
| - Mapping and investigating cemeteries of enslaved. | - Heritage and innovation |
| - Culinary (and food) customs/ culture | - Diversity and power |
| - Language | - Best practices in popularization of heritage, locally and in the region. |
| - Investigate bottlenecks hindering collaboration within and between organizations | - United Nations Sustainable Development Goals as starting point for development heritage management |
| - Cultural heritage management programs in cultural studies featuring critical inquiry, new interactive methods | - Sources of heritage information (lieux de mémoire) |
| - Marketing | - Similarities historical canon and heritage |
| - New terminology | |

Action list for the future - Strengthening local capacity in the field of heritage management

- Diversify and enforce legislation pertaining to culture and heritage
- Enhance & streamline communication and information flows within sector/ field and develop/ launch integral heritage platform (heritage workers)
- Database development (e.g. oral history) and more efficient and extensive utilization of existing databases
- Collaboration on national and international level
- Create heritage inventories
- Develop methodology of 'good practices'
- Work towards a vision; strong focus and orientation
- Efficient management structure
- Enhance financial management.
- Connect traditional knowledge with conservation and education
- Create or improve digital access to the knowledge and education

- Make sure that we safeguard the knowledge we already have
- Popularize the knowledge. Make it visual tactile. (What do you give value to?)
- Work towards an understanding of human values from the perspective of your heritage. Universal values and human rights. Democratic citizenship. Stimulate critical thinking skills.
- Evaluate what has been written and established on heritage, and how this found its way into the established curriculum.
- Review 'Enseñansa pa un i tur' report, and all other reports that have been produced about education and culture(al heritage).
- Come up with a strategy to make people aware of the value of heritage.
- Analyse how and why much of what has been thought up before was not executed in practice.
- Organize brainstorm session to figure out what strategies to use to achieve goals set in the field of heritage.
- Organize communication between stakeholders for best practices. Analyze failures and successes.

Priorities on curriculum development

- Concepts and Theory (definitions and debates)
 - o Cultural development
 - o Culture and Commerce
 - Cultural entrepreneurship
 - Fundraising
 - Lobbying
- Art & Culture:
 - o History
 - o Ethics – Norms & Values
 - o Oral History
 - o Methods and Techniques

Curaçao – day 2

UoC – Dr. Moises da Costa Gomez Wednesday, September 21 2017

Working groups

The objective of the second day was to discuss ideas about setting up a virtual exhibition on Curaçaoan heritage, with seven separate thematic spaces which would jointly display a canon for Curaçaoan cultural heritage. The results of the group assignments showed some overlap between the various subgroups, resulting in the following summarized list:

- Religion & spirituality
- Food/ Culinary – Immaterial Cultural Heritage
- Kinship & Dwelling
- Government, Liberation and Political Leadership
- Storytelling, Language and Communication
- Craft/ Métier and entrepreneurship
- Music and Dance
- Education
- Insular geography, small scale, climate, non-sovereignty
- Health, Medicine, relation with nature (cultural ecology), Urbanization, Agriculture and Fishery, physical space, environment & pollution, Architecture and construction

- Ethnicity, Gender and Sexuality, Colorism, Intersectionality, Creolization, Migration, Multiculturalism, Region(ality)
- Education and upbringing, Science, Psychology, Behavior, Mannerism, habitus and performativity, norms and values, Sports and Games
- Papiamentu, Language, literature, oral traditions, (connections Aruba and Bonaire)
- Religion, faith, rites and rituals, spirituality
- Music, folklore, dance, theater, clothing, festivities, instruments
- Spirituality and life-cycle events
- Food and natural medicine
- Cohabitation, Community life, snèk life, Cooperatives (Sam & Sitter)
- Migration and migrant communities
- Arts and Crafts
- Music, dance and popular culture
- Papiamentu

Bonaire – day I

FuHiKuBo, Kralendijk | Saturday, September 23 2017

Working groups

The working groups presented the following outcomes/ resolutions of their discussions:

Heritage themes and concepts mentioned

- National sentiments
- Local governance
- Inclusivity
- Education
- Papiamentu
- Celebrations of the nation
- Capacity Strengthening
- Showcase culture and heritage
- Youth
- Tradition and modernity

Research themes identified by the participants

- Correlation of (im)migration and acculturation; exchange between cultures, and its effects on perceptions of Bonairean heritage. Particularly with regards the migratory movements of Bonairians between the ABC islands.
- Investigate build/ monumental heritage and their social ensembles and cultural histories.
- Inventorize the historic development of the island's place names; also with the development of cultural tourism products in mind.
- Historic development of Bonairean Papiamentu, comparative analysis with Curaçaoan and Aruban Papiamentu.
- Comparative analysis of the inter-insular distinctions of corresponding cultural traditions/ expressions/ practices (e.g. Tambú/ Bari, Ka'i orgel, and other.)
- Correlation of tourism (industry) and Bonairean (cultural) heritage

BONAIRE – day II

Conference room - Captain Don's, Kralendijk | | Monday, September 25 2017

Working groups

The working group assignment to define a canon for Bonaire was conducted in separate exercises, whereby one group was to come up with a shortlist of priorities for a canon for Bonairean history, the other with an exhibition on cultural heritage. The results of both exercises of this working group assignment are shown as follows:

Canon

- Geology and origins of the island
- Indigenous/ First inhabitants
- Colonialism/ WIC/ Slavery
- Papiamentu & lingual diversity
- Religion/ Spirituality
- Economy (Import and export)
- Cultural expressions
- Pinnacle Moments in Bonairean history

Exhibition

- Cultural identity
- National history
- Environment
- Folklore
- Craft/ Métier and entrepreneurship
- Monumental (build) heritage
- Religion/ Spirituality

General conclusion and next steps

It is obvious that six days of intensive discussions – all conducted in a very constructive and amicable atmosphere – resulted in a sharpening of the contributors' ideas, in an increased understanding of shared objectives and concerns, and in much enthusiasm for further reflection and active cooperation in the field of heritage. At the same time, it is obviously not realistic to follow up on the entire long series of ideas, priorities and concerns listed above, as well as the result of the preliminary surveys conducted by TCH. We need to set priorities and manage expectations. There is a difference between what TCH can do, together with the consortia and others, and what the local heritage fields could do by their own initiative and effort – of course using TCH's expertise and advise when necessary and feasible.

So, what the TCH project applauds and would want to support, but will not be able to undertake itself:

- Create local cohesion and collaboration in the heritage field.
- Write policy or legislation proposals and/or creating lobby groups.
- Construct educational curricula, canons, inventories or databases.
- Provide funding.

In contrast, TCH DOES aim to contribute to the shared objectives of the heritage domains in Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao by focusing on these activities:

- Organize meetings/workshops for the exchange and creation of all kinds of ideas and knowledge pertaining to the heritage field (which in itself will stimulate cohesion, collaboration and empowerment to act).
- Make inventories, evaluations and analyses of those heritage elements which both the researchers and the consortia perceive to be relevant for policies and academic research.
- Write a scholarly analysis on the historical and political context, the structure and the challenges of the present heritage field on the three islands, including, where relevant, the state of affairs in the Netherlands.
- Provide advice and further support for local initiatives that aim to formulate insular canons of history and/or heritage.
- Contribute to, and participate in, the programs presently conducted by the universities in Aruba and Curaçao aiming towards the formation of a next generation of heritage experts.
- Help consortium partners to find partners outside their own island to collaborate with (which might be a route to funding as well).
- Explore ways to establish a more structural institutional and financial platform for cultural exchange within the Kingdom.

Over the next months, we will be working both on a policy paper setting out our priorities and on the outlines of the scholarly paper.

Workshop Participants

Participants for TCH

Rose Mary Allen; Luc Alofs; Joeri Arion; Liliane de Geus; Stacey Mac Donald; Gert Oostindie; Valika Smeulders; Alex van Stipriaan

Registered workshop participants – Aruba

University of Aruba: Patrick Arens; Tamara Beaujon; Shamilla Croes; Mieke de Droog; Marc Farro; Thais Franken; Rosette Hernandez; Bryan Krosendijk; Mandy Laclé; Gerardi Lanoy; Yuri Nicolas; Yolanda Richardson; Sinthya Ridderstaat; Victoria Sequera; Glenn Thodé; Ruchella Tromp || **Aruba certification program:** Giovanni de Windt; Indra Zaandam || **FAS:** Tim Croes || **FDR:** Viola van den Bogaard || **FEF:** Joost Joosten || **FMHTS:** John Wardlaw || **IPA:** Kees de Jong; Paula Kibbelaar; Gregory Richardson || **ANA:** Raymond Hernandez; Edrick Croes || **Directorate education:** Vanessa Pieters || **BNA:** Astrid Britten; Lourdes Croes; Ryan Oduber; Peter Scholing || **DCA:** Astrid Thiel; Marilyn Ellis || **ATA:** Isha Kok || **Carubian Foundation:** Joane-Ann van der Biest || **Cosecha:** Joanne Dirksz; Soraida Wever || **UNESCO:** Zetsia Ponson || **Fundacion 1403:** Eduard Dresscher; Sue-Ann Croes || **Museo Archeologico National Arubano:** Marguerita Wever; Suzy Boekhoudt || **Stichting Rancho:** Clifford Rosa || **Monumentenfonds:** Mircla Nava || **FMA:** Renwick Heronimo; Rostena Martinez; Mariana Paula; Anky Vrolijk; Valerie Willer || Annemarie Proveyer || Joost Saris || Yvonne Webb || Anne Witsenburg || Stanley Kuiperi || Artwell Cain || Ronella Croes || Gracy Dijkhof || Siegfried Dumfries

Registered workshop participants – Bonaire

FUHIKUBO: Carolina Alvares; Ubaldo Anthony; Sheyla Chirino; Julianka Clenda; Vanessa Daniel; Rudy Domacasse; Gregorio Gomez; Anneke Jansen; Maidelin Martijn; Izain Mercera; Leoncita Sint Jago; Max Theodora; Suzanne Thodé; Kyshanna Thodé; Nadya Tromp; Encarnacion Villanueva || **OCW-RC:** Sedney Marten || **Mascarada:** Hubert Vis || **Foundation Arts & Culture Bonaire:** Emma Sint Jago; Mary Tjin-A-Sjoe || **SKAL:** Timoteo Siberie; Felix Thomas || **Soldachi Tours:** Maria Koeks || Minhela Helmyer

Registered workshop participants - Curaçao

Information Solution (digitalising DCLC): Yvette Aniceta || **University of Curaçao:** Keval Bissessar, Bibian Carolina George, Farley Victoria, E. Virginie || **UNESCO:** Richenel Ansano, Marva Browne || **SEFBA:** Waleska Berginia, Arminda Elizabeth || **SBO:** Norella Bernardina, Melrose Cornelia, Michnon Martis || **IBB:** Crystal Boomgaard, Omar Kuwas || **Monumentenfonds:** Hensley Brigitha, Rhuendley Janzen, Michael Winklaar || **NAAM:** Dimitri Cloose, Nidelly Martis, Lida Pandt, Marlon Reina, Amy Victorina || **Unidat di Barrio:** Sweeleny Constancia, Jeanette Juliet-Pablo || **Children's Museum:** Nikki Dijkshoorn || **Government of Curaçao:** Virlene Els, Sigviana Nola Francisca, Louella Getrouw || **UNSEBAKO:** Max Elstak || **UniArte:** Sharelly Emanuelson || Verele Engels || **Art foundation Curaçao:** Mary Feliz || Ana-Lisa Garcia || **Researchers:** Su Girigori || **Museo Kas di Pali Maishi:** Jeanne Henriquez || **PhD candidates:** Julian Isenia, Jacqueline Martis || **Fundashon Pro Monumento:** Dennis Klaus || **Kas di Arte:** Ossandra Lewis || **Maritiem Museum Curaçao:** Thamara Moreno Vervuurt || **Amigu di Tera:** Lloyd Narain || **Gogobori Foundation:** Sheila Payne || **CBS:** Nicole Pranger-Wever || **Tayer Mama Sa:** Migarda Raphaëla || **FMA:** Naomi Rogers || **Fundashon dushi Papiamentu:** Ewart Arthur Sealy || **Social worker:** Robert Boodhoo Singh || **Linguist:** Ini Statia || **Mongui Maduro (Biblioteka/Fundashon):** Rayna van Gils Bikker, Esther van Haaren-Hart, Viola Statia || **Infinitum BV:** Clifton Wallé || **IDA-SA:** Ieteke Witteveen || **African Fashion:** Marilyn Isaac-la Cruz || Sra. Monsanto || Arthur Sillé || Sra. Engels || Bernadette Heiligers || Sigviana Matos Francisca || Zaida Lake || Evander Virginie