CARIBBEAN STUDIES (1984)*

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Over the year 1984, some fifteen books were published on the Netherlands Antilles, and a similar modest amount on Suriname. Dutch, Antillean or Surinamese authors published hardly any books on other parts of the Caribbean. I will discuss these books briefly, as well as some of the more substantial articles published in 1984.

The Netherlands Antilles

In the field of history an important publication, or rather a tool for research, is M.R. Francisco-Granviel's inventory of the St. Eustatius archives of the period 1750-1971, kept at the Central Archive of the Antilles in Curaçao; his inventory was published in the journal of this archive, Lanténru. Statia's history has so far not received much scholarly attention; it is hoped that this guide will stimulate research. Next, a reader edited by O.B. Linker and G. Vrieze, provides a collection of miscellaneous papers on half a century of Dutch Reformed Church in 20th century Curaçao.

Publications in anthropology, sociology and social geography were scarce. The Curaçaoan poet and folklorist Elis Juliana analyzes the origins of the traditional 'tambu' dance in a papiamentu written essay, published in Kristof. In another issue of this journal, J.M. Spanjers discussed the possibilities for agriculture on the arid island of Curaçao. Eva E. Abraham-Van der Mark focussed on the impact of industrialization on Antillean women in her contribution to a reader Women, men and the international division of labor. Finally, Ronald Gill edited the papers of a symposium, partly Dutch, partly English written, on housing in the Netherlands Antilles.

Two students of management science published the results of their participation, in the early 1980's, in the Antillean public sector. Helene P. van Peet reports on the decision making processes involved in the decentralization of

* Based on the ongoing bibliography compiled by Ingrid Loeffen, documentalist, Department of Caribbean Studies, Royal Institute of Linguistics and Anthropology (R.I.L.A.). More detailed information may be obtained by consulting the Department's Central Catalogue Caribiana (published annually on microfiche) or subscribing to the yearly bibliography Caribbean Studies (10-15 pages; Nfl. 15, – for a 3-year period). The column Caribbean Studies in the Boletín surveys the most important social scientific publications on the former Dutch Caribbean (Netherlands Antilles, Suriname), as well as publications of Dutch, Antillean and Surinamese authors on other parts of the Caribbean. The mimeographed overview available from the Department of Caribbean Studies (R.I.L.A.) offers detailed bibliographical data on the books and journals mentioned, as well as on articles published in this year; it covers in addition publications on Surinamese and Antilleans in the Netherlands. For further information, contact the Department of Caribbean Studies, Royal Institute of Linguistics and Anthropology, P.O. Box 9515, 2300 RA Leiden, the Netherlands.
tasks and powers of the central administration in favour of the island authorities. She makes it clear that the current organization of the government bureaucracy and its linkages with the socio-political sector severely hinder any decentralization. L.H.M. Laanen, in his study of a project for reorganization of the Antillean system of Public Services, comes to similar conclusions, particularly focusing on a lack of trust and cooperation between the different parties involved.

Not surprisingly, in view of the importance of Curaçao and St. Martin as tax havens, publications in the sphere of law, international relations and economics are intertwined. The books by Debroit, Joubert and Metry are basically introductory manuals to the working of the Antillean fiscal system.

Two edited works provide a variety of articles. Koperen polyfonie has some twenty articles, most of these particularly in the field of Antillean law. There are however also articles here on local entrepreneurialism, Dutch development aid and the relations between Aruba and the other Antillean islands. O.B. Linker edited a book commemorating the centennial of Curaçao’s Chamber of Commerce. The role of this Chamber in various aspects of the island’s economy as well as possible future developments are analyzed in some detail.

In the same book, we find an essay by A. Römer on the development of labour unionism and, obviously related to this, an article by the political scientist P.C. Verton on the emergence and actual feasibility of the political system of the Antilles. A. Lampe’s article ‘Las Antillas Holandesas y su independencia’ is another of the surprisingly few publications regarding the debate on Aruba’s status aparte and a possible future independence of the Antilles.

Finally, Ingrid Koulen, Gert Oostindie and Peter Verton published a study of social research on the Netherlands Antilles in the period 1967-1984 and beyond. This book came out of a joint Antillean-Dutch project, and offers a lengthy bibliographic essay on all social science publications on the Netherlands Antilles in the above-mentioned period, as well as an assessment of research needs and priorities for future research. An adapted English edition will be published in 1986.

**Suriname**

As for linguistics and literature, Surinamese Creole (Sranan) continues to receive scholarly attention. Marilyn Nickel and John Wilner dedicated the seventh issue of Languages of the Guianas to abbreviations in Sranan, respectively a general introduction to this language. Through contributions of T. Stolz, N.S.H. Smith and G. Huttar, and again N.S.H. Smith, the seventh volume of Amsterdam Creole Studies provides analyses of both Creole and Maroon languages.

A special, English-language issue of OSO (3/1), Essays in memory of Jan Voorhoeve (ed. by Vernie A. February and Herman Wekker), offers a great variety of articles. We find here contributions on Creole and Maroon languages, but also an elaborate essay by February on the work of the Surinamese writer Edgar Cairo, and articles on Maroon culture.
In the field of historical studies, the struggle of the Surinamese Maroons continues to receive much scholarly attention. In the series on the sources for the study of Maroon societies published by the Center for Caribbean Studies (Utrecht), two issues were published. In De eerste Boni-oorlog, 1765-1778, Chris de Beet brought together the documentary sources on the first war of the Boni-Maroons with the Dutch colonists; a short but useful introduction precedes this collection of archival materials. Wim S.M. Hoogbergen, De Boni's of Frans-Guyana en de tweede Boni-oorlog, 1776-1793, documents in similar fashion the next episode in the history of the Boni's, particularly their temporary exile in French Guiana. Both books provide unique archival sources, whereas the introductory essays are merely descriptive. Only in Hoogbergen's 1985 thesis on the Boni's (to be discussed in the next issue of this column), partially based on foregoing volumes in the Utrecht Maroon series, is a more analytical approach adopted.

The main focus of De binnenlandse oorlog in Suriname 1613-1793 is, apart from some twenty pages on the Amerindians, again on the struggle of the Maroons. The author, Hugo A.M. Essed, while not providing new source materials, does offer some new interpretations of Maroon guerrilla tactics. The book, published by the Anton de Kom University, has a polemic anti-colonialist overtone, not unlike recent publications by other young Surinamese historians.

Nowhere in Dutch territories has slavery played a more dominant role than in Suriname. Mention should thus be made here of A.N. Paasman's Reinhart: Nederlandse literatuur en slavernij ten tijde van de Verlichting. This interesting study provides a painstaking overview of attitudes in Dutch literature, fiction and non-fiction, towards slavery and the negro. Paasman provides us primarily with an elaborate exercise in the history of Dutch literature. The theme of this book, however, is obviously relevant for Caribbean studies as well.

Apart from these books, special mention should be made of another special issue of OSO, the new and interesting bi-annual journal for Surinamese linguistics, literature and history. De rol van de vrouw in de Surinaamse geschiedenis (OSO 3/2) is dedicated to the role of women in Surinamese history; the contributions vary considerably both in focus and quality, but this issue gives an interesting introduction to the theme. P.C. Emmer has a particularly interesting article here on female indentured labour, in the years of recruitment (1875-1916), comparing their situation in British India with their life in Suriname. In his contribution to the reader International migration he discusses Indian indentured labour for Suriname more generally.

Of interest for both history and anthropology is Aleks de Drie. Wan tori fu mi eygi srefi, edited and introduced by Trudi Guda. This small book, written in Suriname's language Sranan, offers an oral history of the remarkable character Aleks de Drie, and through this many insights into twentieth century Creole popular culture.

Over the past twenty years, Richard and Sally Price have written a number of very good studies on Maroons, especially based on years of living and research with the Saramaccans. Sally Price has now added to this oeuvre Cowives and calabashes. In this book she analyzes the position of the women of the Pikilio villages at the Upper Suriname. She leaves no doubt about the inferiority
of their position vis-à-vis the Maroon men, as evidenced in the institution of co-wives. The asymmetry in husband-wife relations is also expressed in visual arts and in songs, as she originally demonstrates in this remarkable book.

Finally, Shelby Matthew Givens’ dissertation, *An ethnographic study of social control and dispute settlement among the Aluku Maroons of French Guiana and Surinam*, provides materials for comparison but focuses almost completely on Cayenne, as the Aluku live mostly in French territory.

In the fields of sociology and social geography, a research report on housing in inner-Paramaribo and a study on the informal sector of greater-Paramaribo are among the few studies partially based on actual field work in Suriname after the military coup of 1980. The research report compiled by H. Aarts describes the poor housing situation in the inner city of Paramaribo in the early eighties and argues for residents’ participation in construction projects.

Paul van Gelder’s *Werken onder de boom* is a thesis, exploring the informal sector of greater-Paramaribo. About half of this thesis is dedicated to a discussion of the notion of the informal sector and a description of Suriname’s economy around 1980. In the rest of this work, the author goes into the informal sector of greater-Paramaribo itself, particularly focussing on furniture-making and car-repairs. A revised commercial edition of this thesis was published in 1985.

Finally, Sjoerd Karsten discusses Dutch policy regarding Suriname in the field of education.

In the field of economics, B.P.H. Mhango, a Malawian economist working at Suriname’s Anton de Kom University, wrote an informative and at times provocative book, *Aid and dependence: the case of Suriname*. Mhango analyzes the bilateral aid relations between Suriname and the Netherlands in the period 1975-1982. Upon Suriname’s independence in 1975, a bilateral treaty for development aid came into effect. Mhango argues that this so-called ‘golden handshake’ in reality only strengthened the economic and political dominance of the Netherlands over its former colony. Moreover, the abundant supply of financial aid took the pressure off Suriname’s government to effect measures for the necessary restructuring of the economy.

The interested reader might find additional data and interpretations on the country’s development problems in Moerland’s introductory booklet *Suriname*.

*Non-Dutch Caribbean*

Very few studies were published by Dutch, Antillean or Surinamese authors on other parts of the Caribbean. Sandew Hira, the author of a controversial Marxist history of Surinamese resistance to Dutch colonial rule up to 1940, now published *Grenada tussen revolutie en kontrakrevolutie*, a journalistic pamphlet on the Grenadian revolution and its defeat.

Apart from some research reports, an article by Michiel Baud on a Dominican region in the past twenty years and an article by Oostindie on early Cuban railroad history, further mention can only be made of C.N. Dubelaar’s thesis *A study on South American and Antillian petroglyphs*. In this thesis the much
neglected archeological issue of petroglyphs is thoroughly discussed. Dubelaar brings together the available data and discusses their origins, dating and interpretation in detail. A commercial edition of this thesis will be published in 1986.

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