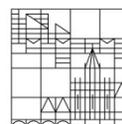


Fieldwork Report

St. Kitts

2014 - 2015



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Field work report on the island of St. Kitts (2014-2015)

Introduction

The Faculty of Archaeology of the University of Leiden in the Netherlands conducts research in the Caribbean, within its European-funded research projects: CARIB and NEXUS1492, under the direction of Professor Dr. C.L. Hofman. Within this framework and following the agreements made with St. Kitts authorities in the form of a Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2010, a multi-disciplinary team of researchers have carried out field work campaigns in St Kitts in 2014 and 2015, followed by a workshop in March 2015 to wrap up the field work activities in the island. This is a report of those activities.

Background

The Caribbean was the center stage for interactions between cultures of dramatically different backgrounds, which after a turbulent colonial period eventually laid the foundations for the modern-day, multi-ethnic societies of the region. Our knowledge of the beginnings of this unsettled history is based on descriptions by early European chroniclers, who provide vivid but heavily biased and fragmented accounts of the indigenous Amerindian inhabitants of the islands. Archaeological research of this period, now virtually non-existent, is needed to provide a more balanced picture of the transformations of cultures and societies across the historical divide (AD 1000-1800). In trans-national collaboration, the universities of Leiden, Leuven, and Konstanz employ a multi-disciplinary approach to study this epoch in the Lesser Antilles, one of the key regions of the Caribbean in which the lasting effects of these encounters are represented.

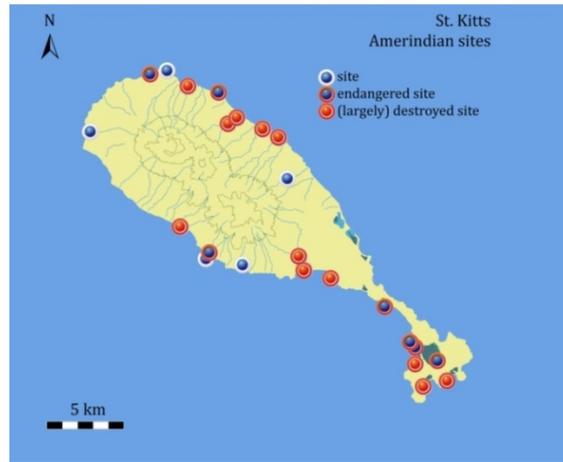
1. ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

1.1. Archaeological surveys and test pits focusing on the indigenous past of St. Kitts

Samantha de Ruiter (Leiden University)

Samantha de Ruiter, PhD researcher at Leiden University (HERA project), conducted the archaeological surveys in an expanded area including both the leeward and windward side as well as part of the peninsula. The surveys in the Cayon-Tabernacle area, focusing on gutts and the adjacent plateaus, were carried out under military protection arranged by Graeme Brown and the National Trust, for which an expression of gratitude is in place. Furthermore, to gain more in depth knowledge on several sites both De Ruiter and Liliane de Veth (research assistant), in collaboration with Graeme Brown and other members of the Leiden team, excavated a number test pits of 1x1 m. The locations of these test pits were chosen based on the presence of archaeological material on the surface, which indicates there might be more buried underneath. All test pits were located in Old Road and west of Gibbons Hill in Dieppe Bay. Both places are of interest because of the known Amerindian as well as the early Colonial presence. The test pits often revealed several layers of archaeological material which can be used to analyze the materials chronologically. Samples of the ceramic material are taken to the labs at Leiden University where stylistic and archaeometric analysis of the material is conducted by researchers at KU Leuven. The archaeometric analysis will consist of documenting the composition of the ceramics in order to identify if they were locally made or imported from other islands. The results of these analyses will be incorporated in a regional database on ceramic composition initiated by Leiden University a decennium ago and will also be incorporated in a report and disseminated to the National Trust. All recorded site locations and additional site information are mapped, evaluated, and analyzed. This results in several archaeological value maps showing areas of archaeological interest, and how certain of these areas may be endangered by natural or human factors such as coastal erosion or construction activities. As presented at the HERA Workshop on the 18th of March 2015, Amerindian archaeological sites

in St. Kitts are incredibly vulnerable. As a result of this study, the image below shows an overview of the sites, highlighting the (largely) destroyed and the endangered sites.



Indigenous archaeological sites on St. Kitts, map courtesy of Samantha de Ruiter.

1.2. Ceramics in archaeological science: possibilities within the HERA/NEXUS projects

Patrick Degryse, Bert Neyt, Becki Scott (KU Leuven)

Ceramic vessels are studied on virtually every excavation worldwide, as the prime stratigraphic dating tool in archaeology. Ceramics are also a proxy for the study of many things archaeological, from craft organization and trade/exchange, to social stratigraphy (exotic goods), subsistence strategies (provenance of food based on the provenance of containers) and chronological changes in the standard of living (changing proportions of import versus local production). Ceramics therefore, can be extremely useful, both to the societies who have employed them, and to the scientists who study them.

It could be argued that for all archaeological artefactual evidence, the study of the provenance of raw materials, the production technology and trade of raw materials, and the study of formed artefacts must be based on scientific analysis. Continuity and change in the indigenous ceramic material culture repertoire, from the late pre-colonial to the early colonial period, will be studied for St Kitts ceramics. Amerindian ceramic manufacture and style across the historical divide, mixed Amerindian-African-European artifact assemblages dating to the early colonial period, and the provenance of the pottery and the interrelationships in manufacturing techniques and technological choices will be described.

Provenance studies with methods including petrography and geochemistry (XRF, ICP-OES) will be performed. A compositional map of Lesser Antillean clay sources and pre-colonial pottery has previously been compiled by the Leiden University team active in this HERA project, and will be used as a baseline for this study. Where needed additional clay samples will be collected. Reference collections in the form of artifact assemblages from sites on Guadeloupe, Dominica, Martinique, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, Grenada, and Trinidad are also studied, to be able to reconstruct ceramic exchange and mobility.



Cross-section of a ceramic sherd (L) and the conduct of a geochemical analysis (R), images courtesy of Patrick Degryse.

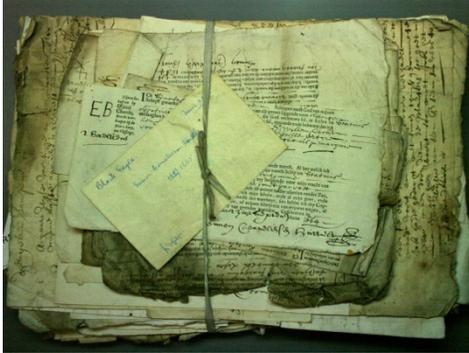
1.3. Early colonial encounters and the Dutch connection

Monique Klarenbeek (Leiden University)

During the first half of the 17th century St. Kitts emerged as a hub for Dutch private traders, who contributed to a great part to the development of the European colonies on the Caribbean Islands. Archival sources prove that by the mid-17th century the island had a large Dutch merchant community, which dominated the intra-Caribbean trade for a long time. My research focusses on the emergence of St. Kitts as a trade hub and free port for Dutch traders during the late 16th and the early 17th century, its place in the Dutch network and the impact on the anchorages and port settlements on the Islands.

International research in French, English, Spanish, and Dutch archives has been done and is ongoing, the advice and help of Victoria O'Flaherty of the National Archives was of great importance to me. Planned is archaeological research on land as well as under water in order to compare the development and importance of the anchorages and port settlement of Basseterre, Dieppe Bay, Old Road and Sandy Point. During the last years I conducted several exploratory surveys with archaeologists of Leiden University in order to define the suitable places for further investigation. The documentation center of the National trust was very useful. Research under water has been started at Sandy Point in cooperation with Cameron Gill, General Manager of Brimstone Hill Society.

Since St. Kitts was the first Island permanently settled by the North Europeans, research on St. Kitts as hub for Dutch trade provides us with more knowledge on the beginning of colonization of the Lesser Antilles and the subsequent interaction between peoples with different backgrounds, religions and cultures from an international perspective. It tells us more about the Caribbean Sea as unifying factor connecting the Islands and about the exchange of goods and ideas.



Dutch archives (L) and underwater archaeology (R), photographs courtesy of Monique Klarenbeek.

1.4. The Indigenous of St. Kitts: From history to present day perspectives

Jimmy Mans (Leiden University)

The early colonial indigenous history of St. Kitts takes center stage in a study in which indigenous movements and transformations in the early colonial Lesser Antilles are investigated. With the permanent arrival of the English and French colonizers on the island of St. Christopher from c. 1623 onward, the ethnic Leeward landscape started to change drastically. From popular history we learn about the English encounters with the ‘Carib King’ Tegreman and his people who were allegedly living in what would later come to be known as Old Road, the first town in the English mother colony. After peacefully living next to one another for the first few years, Indigenous-European relations turned sour and hostile. An indigenous woman informed the English about a planned ‘Carib’ attack. The English and French formed an alliance, and together ambushed hundreds of indigenous in the infamous massacre at Bloody Point in c. 1626, turning the eponymous river ‘red for days’ and chasing the remainder of the indigenous population of the island. That was supposed to be the end of the indigenous presence on the island of Liamáiga as it was later referred to by the Kalinago of Dominica.

In a history-based study this popular snippet is being deconstructed and contextualized. Early Spanish, English, French and Dutch historical sources are being revisited to advance new historical and archaeological questions for the indigenous-Kittitian late precolonial and early colonial past. One of the interesting finds here is a relatively unknown Dutch manuscript from 1627 speaking of indigenous people living in the mountainous interior of St. Christopher. Next to clarifying and contextualizing the information derived from these historical sources, there was also an interest in finding out what oral Kittitian histories exist that explicitly pertain to the indigenous past. A small interview survey has been conducted from Basseterre to Dieppe Bay to find out what people know about the indigenous past of their island and how they perceive it. One of the interesting findings here was not so much the oral histories pertaining to the indigenous past, but predominantly the way people have recently been appropriating the indigenous past, in particular in this case in the village of Challengers.



Interviews concerning the indigenous past, photographs courtesy of Jimmy Mans.

2. HERITAGE AND SOCIETY

2.1. Crowd Perception of heritage and culture of St. Kitts: An interactive tool for mapping heritage and culture

Habiba (University of Konstanz), Eloise Stancioff (Leiden University), Marlene Philips, Raheem Thatcher, Ophelia Blanchard, Pierre Bowrin (Kittitians)

We have built a crowd sourcing tool to collect, educate, visualize, and analyze information pertaining to the tangible and intangible cultural heritage of St. Kitts. Based on an open source platform, this tool can be accessed through web and mobile platforms. Providing a visually pleasing and user friendly interface, the site displays geographical information pertaining to the crowd informed culture of St. Kitts. It contains geo-localized sites of importance - including archaeological, built, intangible heritage linked to performing, culinary, visual, and literary arts as well as professional services. A user can seek, as well as, disseminate information and their personal views regarding different heritage sites, foods, and festivals. Hence, everyone who lives or visits St. Kitts can be an active contributor to the perception of the history and culture of St. Kitts. To contribute information to the tool, users can submit online forms, email, or tweet information that will then be collected in a database that is managed by the Department of Culture. Information can then be verified and approved before it appears on the home page, featuring a map of St. Kitts with important submitted information. This crowd sourcing tool is hosted by the Department of IT in St. Kitts on the behalf of Department of Culture. This tool represents an interactive, distributed, and innovative way to collect and promote information related to the creative arts industry and diverse cultural heritage of St. Kitts. This tool provides an interesting platform for the Department of Culture to promote collaboration with other governmental departments, such as department of Tourism. Also, it can serve as a possible educational tool, if schools are involved in the process. Further, research will be conducted on the tool's use and user profile in the coming months to assess the effectiveness of such tools in the heritage domain.



Close-up of the website culturesnaps.kn (L) and presenting the website in Basseterre (R), images courtesy of Habiba and Eloise Stancioff.

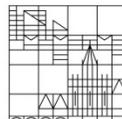
2.2. Coastal Erosion, Community and Heritage in St. Kitts

Eloise Stancioff (Leiden University), Graeme Brown (Kittitian)

Working together with the Department of Planning, this research involved a 12km area from Challengers to Fig Tree. This area was identified because of the diverse heritage- Amerindian, colonial, natural and community. Further, the Department of Planning views the area as under severe threat from coastal erosion. As described by the Department of Planning, the area will need to undergo new planning initiatives to protect the communities in the area and the heritage. This research was conducted in multiple phases. First, an ethnographic methodology was undertaken to understand the area and the diverse communities. 30 interviews were completed with different members of the community. These interviews were transcribed and coded and analyzed to understand main themes and sub themes. Interviews provided the changing environmental context and its effects on livelihoods to proceed with land change analysis and further ethnographic material. GIS and satellite imagery were collected to analyze the environmental change, specifically coastal erosion in this area. Digital Shoreline Analysis toolkit was used, an open source shoreline analysis system from the USGS. The environmental analysis revealed a trend towards coastal erosion, especially in the Fig Tree to Sandy Point area. There has been a large net shoreline loss overall. Further analysis will be completed, but this provides a baseline for continuation. Surveys were conducted in the study area that focused on community perceptions of environmental change and heritage. This data was then analyzed statistically and through network analysis to understand main themes. The next steps are to continue the analysis of the survey data to make the connection with the environmental factors. All of this data and information will be provided to the Department of Planning at its completion.



The Leeward coast of St. Kitts, photograph courtesy of Eloise Stancioff.



2.3. Visualizing heritage perspectives on St. Kitts: A creative approach to value-assessment

Sjoerd van der Linde, Jimmy Mans (Leiden University), Cameron Gill, Marlene Phillips, Vida Rawlins (Kittitians)

This project is based on a pragmatic collaboration formed between researchers Sjoerd van der Linde and Jimmy Mans, heritage manager Cameron Gill from Brimstone Hill Society, Marlene Phillips from the Kittitian department of culture and film maker Vida Rawlins. After some oral historical-ethnographic interviews had been conducted relating to historical places of the late precolonial and early colonial period of St. Kitts (Gill's research, Mans's research, see above), the potential was advanced by Van der Linde to visualize some of these interviews as part of a heritage value assessment strategy. An expert in visualizing Kittitian heritage, Marlene Phillips from the department of culture, was contacted and the idea was born to visualize stakeholder perspectives for two historical Kittitian landscapes, one being marked by the late precolonial indigenous history of Bloody Point, Old Road and its associated petroglyphs, the other landscape being marked by early colonial structures of Brimstone Hill and Charles Fort. Marlene Phillips contacted Vida Rawlins who documented the interviews with a second roaming camera in order to make a documentary for local and regional broadcast. The interviews that were filmed with the first camera have been edited by Rawlins to be uploaded as separate webclips to the youtube channel of the Kittitian department of culture. Van der Linde and Mans are currently investigating how such collaborations and their emanating visual products can be seen as heritage value assessments bringing benefits to all parties involved. For heritage managers, specialists and researchers alike, these visual documents can both be seen as an outreach product as well as a pragmatic status quo showcasing the way sites are currently being made significant by their contributing stakeholders.



Interview in Bloody Gutt, photograph courtesy of Sjoerd van der Linde.

2.4. Photogrammetric recording of Petroglyphs in Bloody Gutt and UAS video footage of Brimstone Hill Fortress

Till Sonnemann (Leiden University)

The frail Amerindian petroglyphs at Bloody Gutt on St. Kitts on brittle conglomerate rock faces are strongly affected by weather and there is a need to document them. Initial trials of their documentation by photogrammetric means were performed in January 2015, resulting in 13 different models, that were presented, together with an instruction on how to apply the now relatively simple method on more targets, at the Kittitian Heritage Workshop 2015. Creating digital 2.5D models (a of walls that feature petroglyphs is the fastest and cheapest option to record them in their current state for future research.

A video drone flight over Brimstone Hill Fortress, permitted by the Brimstone Hill Society, resulted in a demonstration video that shows the fortress from a different angle, was uploaded on youtube, and was presented at the 50th anniversary celebration of the society in May 2015.

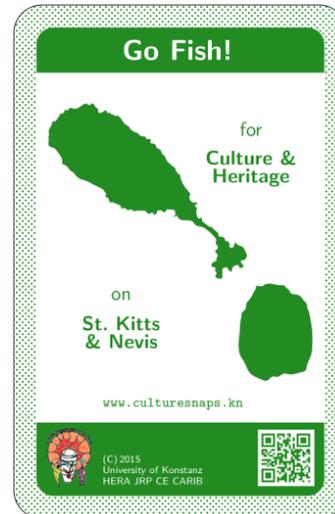


Digital 3D-model of a petroglyph of Bloody Gutt (L) and a drone picture of Brimstone Hill (R), courtesy of Till Sonnemann.

2.5. Go Fish! For culture and heritage on St. Kitts & Nevis

Mereke van Garderen, Ulrik Brandes (University of Konstanz)

In support of culturesnaps.kn, a crowdsourcing website set up to collect experiences and interpretations of culture and heritage on St. Kitts, we wanted to draw the attention of the general public to the website and the importance of such a culture and heritage database. Psychological research has shown that people are best able to memorize information when it is presented to them in small portions with visual appeal; flashcards are the most commonly used example. The huge success of trading card games like Pokémon showed that also children are attracted to the concept and are able to absorb impressive amounts of information this way. We therefore developed a deck of playing cards, in which each card represents an entry in the culture and heritage database of the website. The deck can be used for any card game, but instructions for the popular children's game "Go fish!" are included. The cards were distributed among workshop participants, school teachers, the ministry of culture, and the general population. We hope these people will keep the website in mind whenever they use the cards and visit and contribute to the site when they notice some of their favorite heritage is still missing, and that the game concept shows children that culture and heritage can be fun.



Example of a card from the deck, images courtesy of Mereke van Garderen.

2.6. Educational Practices in Promoting Indigenous Heritage in the Caribbean: Saint Kitts-Nevis

Eldris Con Aguilar

It has been possible to conduct this research in Saint Kitts and Nevis thanks to the collaboration of many people: Mr. Michael Blake, Senior Officer from the Ministry of Education and the Saint Christopher National Trust; Mr. Cameron Gill from the Brimstone Hill Fortress National Park Society; and the Principals and teachers from secondary schools whose voluntary participation in the activities organized in 2014 was extremely valuable. This investigation on education and heritage studies the place indigenous heritage presently occupies in the school curriculum and its impact for teacher education. Practical activities were organized with the collaboration of the educational stakeholders in which the teachers explored from a didactic perspective the ways to provide the students with meaningful learning experiences about their past. The following activities were carried out last May 2014. These activities had an exploratory purpose and teachers' participation was voluntary.

Date	Activity	Time	Location
15 th May 2014	Introductory Meeting Presentation of PhD Research Project Discussion Calendar of Activities	13:30-15:00 pm	Charles. E. Mills (Sandy Point)
22 nd May 2014	Workshop "Teaching archaeological heritage opportunities and challenges"	13:30-15:00 pm	Charles E. Mills (Sandy Point)
29 th May 2014	Wrap-Up Meeting Feedback on Workshop Presenting the Project Proposal (Opportunities)	13:30-15:00 pm	Charles E. Mills (Sandy Point)

Along with the activities here described, meetings and interviews were held with educational and cultural stakeholders as part of the program of this visit. The outcomes from the experience with the school community in May 2014 resulted very positive and a new visit is being planned

to Saint Kitts and Nevis for October 2015. For this visit it is intended to complete a program of workshops for primary and secondary school teachers on the didactics for the teaching of indigenous heritage in schools.



Workshop with teachers, photograph courtesy of Eldris Con Aguilar.