

Panel 4: Gender and Migration

Moderator: Kari Winter

Rose Mary Allen, U of Curaçao [adr550@hotmail.com]

Women Making Freedom: Rethinking Gender in Caribbean Intra-Regional Migration from a Curaçaoan Perspective

In recent decades, the number of scholarly publications on the feminization of migration has grown exponentially, as women increasingly migrate in the contemporary era of globalisation. Although migration is rooted in Caribbean history, very little attention has been paid to the autonomous migration of women in the past and they have been made invisible by sidelining gender in historiography. Yet, in similar ways to men, women in the Caribbean left their countries and migrated to seek employment elsewhere.

The intra-migration movements of women from Curaçao to other Caribbean countries provides sufficient evidence that also women from a Dutch colony in the Caribbean participated independently from their males in these migration dynamics. After emancipation in 1863 in the Dutch colonies, a large group of people of African descent, both men and women remained at the bottom of the social hierarchy and used the demand for labor in other Caribbean countries to realize their aspirations.

My paper, “Women Making Freedom: Rethinking Gender in Caribbean Intra-regional Migration from a Curaçaoan Perspective” draws on archival documents and some auto/biographies of Curaçaoan women who have participated in intra-Caribbean migrations in the 19th and 20th century. I will look at the experiences and concerns of these working-class women, migrating from one post-emancipation Caribbean society to another at a time when these societies were still struggling to deal with the legacy of slavery and colonialism. The paper also situates the migration of these women in the wider context of Caribbean women participating independently in migration movements in search of work and it will consider the implications for studying migration as a survival strategy for women in particular in post-emancipation Caribbean societies.

Hende muhe hasiendo libertat: konsiderando genero den migrashon intra-regional for di un perpektiva Kurasoleno

Den dekadanan resien, e kantidat di publikashonnan sientífiko riba femeninashon di migrashon a krese masha hopi, komo hende muhé masi mas ta migrá den e period kontemporareano di globalisashon. Anke ku migrashon tin rais den historia di Karibe, poko atenshon a keda duna na e migrashon outónomo di hende muhé den pasado i nan a keda invisibel dor di omete hende muhé for di historiografía. Sin embargo, meskos ku hende hòmber, hende muhé den Karibe tambe a bandoná nan país i a migrá pa buska empleo otro kaminda.

E movement intra-migrashon di hende muhé for di Kòrsou na otro paisnan den Karibe ta duna suficiente evidensha ku hende muhé for di e kolonia ulandes a partisipá

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independientemente for di nan hende hòmber den e dinámika di migrashon. Despues di 1863 den e colonial Ulandes, a grupo grandi di hende di desendensia afrikano, tantu hende hòmber I hende muhe a keda na base di e hierarkia.

Mi ponensha “Hende muhé hasiendo libertat: konsiderando genero den migrashon intra-regional for di un perspektiva Kurasoleño” ta basa riba dokumentonan di archif i algún outo biografia di Kòrsou ku a partisipá den e migrashon intra-Karibe den siglo 19 i siglo 20. Mi lo wak e ekperensha i preokupashon di e hende muhé trahado, migrando for di post emansipashon sosiedat Karibeño na e otro den un tempu ora e sosiedatnan tabata xxxx pa dil ku e legato di esklabitut i kolonialismu. E paper ta situata e migrashon di e hende muhe den un konteksto mas amplia di hende muhe di Karibe partisipando independentoemente en buska di trabou i e ta considera e implikashon pa studia e stratèfia di sobrevensha di hende muhe en particular di sosiedatnan d Karibe post-emansipashon.

Rose Mary Allen was born in Curaçao and studied Anthropology at the University of Nijmegen, the Netherlands. She obtained her doctorate at the University of Utrecht. Allen has been conducting oral history interviews on the islands of the Dutch Caribbean. She is working as a freelance researcher and as a part-time lecturer at the University of Curaçao, where she teaches Caribbean studies. She has authored and co-authored several curricula on issues of Curaçao culture and society for the University of Curaçao and other institutions. She has co-published, edited and published several books and articles on the cultural and social history of Curaçao with special attention on cultural traditions, migration, gender studies, and cultural diversity. Allen has served as a representative of the government of Curaçao in numerous committees on cultural and on gender issues. In 2015, she was awarded the Cola Debrot Prize, Curaçao’s most prestigious national award in the area of culture, art and science, for her research on oral history. At the moment, she is a postdoc in the research project *Traveling Caribbean Heritage*, KITLV, University of Leiden and University of Curaçao, and in the research project of the University of Amsterdam *Cultural Practices of Citizenship under Conditions of Fragmented Sovereignty: Gendered and Sexual Citizenship in Curaçao and Bonaire*, Universiteit van Amsterdam, and University of Curaçao.