

Stupid Arrogant and Ignorant Comments by the NWIG (Nieuwe West-Indische Gids)

Comments on the manuscript

“Caquetío Indians on Curaçao during Colonial Times,
Caquetío Words in the Papiamentu Language”

“The author’s project seems to be to qualify the well-known thesis that Papiamentu is primarily an Afro-Portuguese based Creole (though he never spells out that project)”. This is entirely imagined by the NWIG, only the last part is true: “though he never spells out that project”

The author never ever states that Papiamentu is not an Afro-Portuguese based Creole, nor does he in anyway suggest this.

The author merely suggests that there is a Caquetío influence in Papiamentu, which is not illogical. This influence is especially found in toponyms and in names of plants and animals. Many of these plants and animals are different from those Africans would have known and are not found in the Old World, so for these the Caquetío names were maintained.

Dutch is a Germanic language but it has many Roman influences.

“Finally, much of the evidence for the persistence of Caquetío words in Papiamentu seems anecdotal, indirect, or frankly speculative”. Apparently, the historical reports by Schabel are “anecdotal, indirect, or frankly speculative”.

It is clear that the NWIG has a preconceived notion; when confronted with other evidence the chessboard is simply overturned.

Gerard van Buurt

Comments on the manuscript

**"Caquetío Indians on Curaçao during Colonial Times,
Caquetío Words in the Papiamentu Language"**

By Gerard van Buurt

This essay posits that the Caquetío Indians of Curaçao and Venezuela influenced the development of Papiamentu during the 17th and 18th centuries. The author's project seems to be to qualify the well-known thesis that Papiamentu is primarily an Afro-Portuguese based Creole (though he never spells out that project). To substantiate the claim that the language has a strong Amerindian component, the author includes a list of Papiamentu words, mostly the names of plants and animals and toponyms, which are probably of Caquetío origin. Unfortunately, this inventory is not likely to sustain the readers of the *New West Indian Guide*. In any case, it is difficult to assess the broader significance of the author's argument. If he is interested in documenting the survival of Arawak languages and cultures in contemporary Caribbean cultures, then he should frame his essay in those larger terms, and perhaps offer a comparative perspective on other Creole languages in the region. If he wants to underline the continuing interethnic contacts between the Dutch Antilles and the Spanish colonies, mainly Venezuela, then the study of Amerindian influence on Papiamentu seems a minor point. Finally, much of the evidence for the persistence of Caquetío words in Papiamentu seems anecdotal, indirect, or frankly speculative. In particular, archaeological and biological research does not provide a persuasive data base for the author's argument. At times, he appears to suggest that the Caquetío language must have contributed to the origins of Papiamentu simply because of the geographic proximity between Venezuela, Curaçao, and Aruba; or because of the extensive genetic intermixture among Indians, Africans, and Europeans. The latter two may be considered necessary but not sufficient conditions to explain the rise of Papiamentu as the lingua franca of the Dutch Antilles.