



Report

Centre for International Heritage Activities (CIE)

Visit to Brazil 21 November – 4 December



Introduction

21 November till 4 December Robert Parthesius (director) and Annemarie Willems (staff member heritage) of the Centre for International Heritage Activities (CIE) visited Brazil to get acquainted with the Brazilian heritage field cooperating with The Netherlands. The CIE is an independent, non-profit, non-governmental organisation. Its focus is on international cooperation in the field of cultural heritage. The aim of the visit was to explain about the Heritage Day Brazil, organised in October 2009 in The Netherlands and to investigate the support for a similar Heritage Day/workshop/seminar to be organised in Brazil in 2010 for the Brazilian heritage field.

The Heritage Day Brazil in The Netherlands took place at the Museum Boijmans van Beuningen in Rotterdam. The aim of this Day was to create more coherence between the various cultural heritage projects and to discuss coordination between Dutch partners and cooperation with Brazil. This event gave the participants the opportunity to meet each other and become inspired by each other's initiatives.

These activities are part of the Mutual Cultural heritage (MCH) Database project. These Days and the preceding inventory of heritage activities are the means to gain input for the database the CIE developing.

The MCH database is a tool designed for the heritage field, the Dutch government, foreign governments and researchers. It allows the users to add and search for international heritage projects. The final product will be an interactive database that holds information on all Brazilian heritage activities and where experiences can be exchanged and possibilities of cooperation can be explored. This will promote continuity, mutual cooperation and efficient ways of executing heritage activities.

Visit to Brazil 21 November - 4 December

We are looking back at inspiring meetings with hospitable and open representatives of a very diverse and active heritage field in Brazil. Although we realise that two weeks were too short to cover the broad and rich heritage field we feel that we have obtained a good impression of the themes and opportunities for the proposed workshop.

Because of the high level of expertise and professionalism in both countries we feel that the focus of the workshop could lie on knowledge exchange between our two countries: What can we learn from each other and how can we strengthen our cooperation?

When talking about Dutch – Brazilian heritage in Brazil there are roughly two interpretations. The first one is that the 17th century Dutch presence in Brazil is most important and should be central point of interest in Dutch-Brazilian heritage cooperation. This group feels the focus should lie on the Northeast of Brazil, because this is the place where the Dutch landed in the 17th century.

The second interpretation is that the focus should not exclusively lie on the Northeast and the 17th century. We should think more about future cooperation. A lot of research is already done on this period and the future of the Brazilian-Dutch cooperation lies within themes like the later Dutch immigration and new ways of cooperation.



Political Climate

There was some confusion in Brazil about the various activities from The Netherlands and the representation of the Dutch government.

During our visit we explained to the different stakeholders that the CIE is an independent NGO operating within The Netherlands and internationally and that there are two proposed activities from The Netherlands in Brazil:

1. A MCH workshop in Brazil organized by the CIE as part of their MCH database project.
2. A government to government conference on cooperation in the field of MCH for the eight priority countries, indicated by the Dutch ministry of Foreign Affairs: Brazil, Surinam, Indonesia, South-Africa, Russian Federation, India, Sri Lanka and Ghana. This is part of the general Dutch policy on MCH.

It is clear that there are different streams within the heritage organisations in Brazil. These organisations are not always concerned with the same themes and don't have the same goals. Especially for a vast country like Brazil this means that there are multifocal perspectives and consequently approaches to the implementation of heritage projects and programmes. Like in so many other countries (like The Netherlands) this diversity leads not always to constructive cooperation. The organisers of the MCH workshops need to take this aspect into consideration.

Themes

Based on our meetings we made an inventory of the themes that could be discussed during the workshop. Many themes and ideas that were brought forward related to the Mutual Cultural Heritage between Brazil and The Netherlands can be centred around the 17th century period and the more recent period of immigration from The Netherlands and other forms of cultural exchange.

Maurits Centre

In 2008 during the MCH Conference in The Hague a proposal was submitted to the Dutch government for the development of a Maurits Centre. A cultural centre aimed at the 17th century Dutch period in Brazil.

This proposed Maurits Centre in Recife is still an important issue in the relationship between The Netherlands and Brazil. The proposal and the offer by IPHAN to host the MCH government to government conference was subject to miscommunication and personal tension and disappointments.

The issue is clearly still an obstacle in the cooperation. It would be good to try to approach the discussions on this subject with an open mind and try to get more insight in the state of affairs (funding) and to explore the expectations from the Brazilian side.

On the one hand there is much interest in a Centre on the Dutch presence in Brazil. Mainly in Recife, where Mauricio de Nassau still is an important historical figure, there is great enthusiasm about the centre. On the other hand we found scepticisms. Some people feel that establishing such a centre creates a narrow vision and blocks thinking about new ways of cooperation and taking the Brazilian-Dutch heritage cooperation to the next level.

Given the importance of the theme and the support for the general idea to have a Brazilian-Netherlands Centre - in whatever form - it is clear that this will be an important theme during the workshop in Recife.



Immigration

In the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed in April 2008 by the Dutch and Brazilian government the 19th and 20th Century migration history is indicated as one of the areas of cooperation. Up till now no activities (as far as we know) have been initiated between our two countries on this subject.

From the 19th century Dutch immigrants went to Brazil to start their new lives, mainly as farmers. They started different 'settlements' under which Holambra and Carambei. Most of the immigrants entered Brazil through Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo.

The settlement of Carambei exists 100 years in 2011 and the people of Carambei are planning to celebrate this in cooperation with other Dutch settlements. They would like 2011 to be the celebration year for 100 years Dutch immigration to Brazil.

In Carambei there's also the idea for a theme park on The Netherlands. The local government likes this idea, but think funding should come from other sources.

In the workshop it could be interesting to think about the icons of immigration: People or things that are still supposed to represent The Netherlands in Brazil.

Do these icons exist and do they still represent The Netherlands, or only a thought of what Holland is, or maybe what once where icons are now transformed and no longer clearly recognisable as such.

Other themes suggested:

1. The subjects and proposals mentioned in: *Basic Lines for construction project of technical cooperation Brazil-Netherlands* by Ministry of Culture-National Institute of Historic and Artistic Heritage Brazil, of September 2008.

2. The relation between "traditional Heritage", environment and sustainability. Also in relation with intangible heritage.

The Brazilian heritage field feels the need to discuss their own pathway within the context of the international cooperation and the interpretation of the UNESCO conventions. The UNESCO convention on intangible heritage doesn't always fit in the situation of Brazil, how is this in The Netherlands and the other priority countries?

The UNESCO conventions and regional implementation are for IPHAN a priority to make international conventions (and also this type of international cooperation) relevant for the common population.

3. Digitization: digital resource centre / library / open source techniques

The Liber Laboratorium project of the UFPE concentrates on digitalization of books and archives of the 17th century Dutch period in Brazil. The big issues with this project are language and the extent of the documents. By digitizing the books and documents these get better accessible to the public, and the originals kept better preserved.

4. Stimulating of exchange of students between The Netherlands and Brazil to lay a basis for future cooperation and a mutual interest in each others country, history and culture.



5. Language

Closely linked to themes like digitization and the exchange of students is the language barrier. Especially for research of the Dutch period in Brazil it's necessary to learn to read and speak Dutch, also 17th century Dutch. In Brazil there are no Dutch courses at the moment. On the other hand it is important when the Dutch want to work in Brazil to speak Portuguese.

6. Museological cooperation: the social aspect of museums, to make a contribution to the local community.

An example is Museu da Maré in Rio de Janeiro. They make an effort to involve the local community in their museum. Aim is to teach the youth about the history of the neighbourhood and to make them proud of where they come from, instead of feeling ashamed. Community involvement is key in this museum.

Expomus, a NGO from Sao Paulo is involved in similar projects, they're also concerned with questions as: How can you make heritage relevant?

These organisations aren't only involved with material heritage and collection management, but also with the immaterial cultural heritage. It could be interesting to see how Brazil and The Netherlands could cooperate on these subjects.

7. Strengthening the ties between the different MCH countries through multilateral and regional cooperation.

8. Monument legislation: The banking district of Sao Paulo has monumental buildings of the early 20th century. These buildings are getting more and more empty because the function of the bank changes. But there are no plans for finding new functions for these buildings, or renovation, so the buildings keep deteriorating.

9. The legislation of private art collections. At the moment there are no clear regulations concerning important private art collections. How does this work in The Netherlands and how could The Netherlands and Brazil cooperate on this subject.

Location / date

In order to do justice to these main themes and to give as many organisations as possible the opportunity to participate and contribute to the workshops we would like to suggest to organise a workshop in Recife (17th C presence) and Sao Paulo (19th -20th C immigration). The tentative planning for these workshops is the beginning of June 2010.

Workshop Recife

The historical roots of Dutch Brazil lie in the state of Pernambuco. This is why Recife is considered the most logical location for a workshop on themes such as restoration, build heritage and research on Dutch Brazil. For organisation of this workshop the logical local counterpart would be the IPHAN.

Relevant projects

Digital research centre – UFPE, Marcos Galindo

Fort Orange, IPHAN

Dutch tiles under the Brazilian tropical sun – MOWIC

Restoration Frans Post Collection – Instituto Ricardo Brennand, Leonardo Dantas



Maurits Centre – IPHAN

Atlas of Dutch Brazil – New Holland Foundation, Oscar Heffing

Workshop Sao Paulo

The south of Brazil has the most connections with the later immigration of the Dutch to Brazil. This is why Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro are considered the best places to organise the second meeting. For organisation of this workshop Memorial do Imigrante from Sao Paulo offered their assistance.

Proposed projects

100 year remembrance Dutch immigrants to Brazil at Carambei

Programme for museological cooperation.

The use of new media in heritage programmes.

The stakeholders we had the pleasure to meet:

Rio de Janeiro

National Archives – Vitor Fonseca

National Library – Carla Chianello

Museu de Bellas Artes – Adriana Caen

Museu Historico Nacional -

Brasilia

Dutch embassy Brasilia – Kees Rade, Anneloes Schueler

IPHAN – Luiz Fernando de Almeida, Marcelo Brito,

Recife

NSBO – Daniel Breda, Dirk Meewis

FUNDARPE – Rosa Bomfim, Celia Maranhao Campos

IPHAN – Frederico Almeida

Instituto Ricardo Brennand – Leonardo Dantas

UFPE - Marcos Galindo, Levy Pereira, Ney Dantos

Instituto Arqueologico Historico Geografico de Pernambuco - George Cabral, Isnard Penha Brasil Jr.

Regional Representation Ministry of Culture - Santino Cavalcanti

Prefeitura do Recife, Secretaria de Cultura – Renato L, Lorena Veloso

Sao Paulo

Dutch Consulate Sao Paulo – Louis Piët, Micha Schijlen

Expomus – Maria Ignez Mantovani, Daniela Coelho

USP - Pedro Puntoni, Edson Satoshi Gomi

Memorial do Imigrante - Ana Maria da Costa Leitão Vieira, Soraya Moura

Grupo Santander - Elly de Vries

Universidade Federal de São Paulo - UNIFESP - Jens Baumgarten



Conclusion and follow-up

Brazil is one of the few countries where the historical ties with the Netherlands is almost exclusively seen in a positive light. This creates great interest in the traces of this relationship and provides a solid basis for a fruitful cooperation.

Apart from the 'classic themes' around 17th century Dutch Brazil this cooperation can also be shaped around more recent themes like the recent immigration and more technical cooperation like in the field of museology, heritage management, digitalization and the use of new media.

The proposed workshops seek to facilitate the discussion around these themes and to reinforce the cooperation between the various heritage institutes in both countries. For the success of these workshops Brazilian counterpart/organizers are selected.

Furthermore it is considered crucial that participants have a clear idea about the set-up and goals. There for we would like to have your feed back on the following questions:

Are there other themes you would like to discuss?

What projects are you involved in at the moment, or do you have plans for in the near future?

Who should be invited?

What should be the best period to organise the meeting?

We're looking forward to the cooperation to make these workshops a success!