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Caquetío Indians on Curaçao during colonial times and Caquetío words in the Papiamentu Language

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Some names of Animals and Plants in Papiamentu



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In memory of my grandmother,

*Hendrika Joubert - Pinto
July 17, 1890 - March 17, 1963*







Preface

In this book two articles which were published previously by FPI and UNA are reissued with many illustrations and with two maps added. The list of references for each article has been combined into one listing. The 2009 article on the Caquetío Indians has been revised somewhat, there are some additions; it is thus not identical to the previous version. The 2012 article also has some new entries and additional information was added to some of the entries. The references to the original articles are:

van Buurt G., 2009. Caquetío Indians on Curaçao during colonial times and Caquetío words in the Papiamentu language. In: Leeward voices; Fresh perspectives on Papiamentu and the Literatures and Cultures of the ABC islands. Nicholas Faraclas, Ronald Severing, Christa Weijer & Liesbeth Echteld (Eds.) Proceedings of the ECICC- conference, Curaçao, 2008, Volume I, pp. 57- 82. FPI/UNA Curaçao.

van Buurt G., 2012. Some names of Animals and plants in Papiamentu. In: Multiplex Cultures and citizenships, Multiple Perspectives on Language, Literature, Education, and Society in the ABC- Islands and beyond. Nicholas Faraclas, Ronald Severing, Christa Weijer & Liesbeth Echteld (Eds.) Proceedings of the ECICC- conference, Guyana (in error; should be Grenada) 2011, Volume I, pp. 193-215, FPI/UNA, Curaçao/Puerto Rico.

Aruba (A) uses a different spelling of Papiamento / Papiamentu than Curaçao (C) and Bonaire (B). In the past many different spellings were used; individual persons would write differently in accordance to their linguistic background. Also during different periods of time different influences would predominate. Sometimes the spelling would be more influenced by Dutch while in other times the Spanish influence increased. Other languages would have some influence as well. The Aruba spelling is based on a more or less etymological rendering of the spelling according to the language of origin; while the Curaçao/Bonaire spelling is based on a more phonetic, phonological or phonemical (according to what you hear) background.

Standardized word lists have now been made for both the Aruba and the Curaçao/Bonaire spellings and have been published. For Aruba we have the "*Vocabulario Ortografico di Papiamento (VOP)*" and for Curaçao and Bonaire the "*Ortografia i lista di palabra Papiamentu (Buki di Oro)*". Both were published in 2009. The VOP had an earlier edition in 2007. Although these lists are still incomplete, they can nevertheless also be used as a guideline to deduce the spelling of other words which have not yet been included. In addition to the official spellings which are nowadays in use, many other spellings can be found in older works and historical documents. It is important to give an overview of such earlier spellings as well, since they give some





idea of the evolution of the language. In this work the official spelling for either Aruba or for Curaçao and Bonaire is mentioned first, followed by other versions found in the past. Often there is no difference and for words which are in use on all three islands and for which there is no difference in spelling no separate specification is given. Sometimes a word is in use on one or two of the island(s) only and in such a case the spelling given is the one in use on that island. For example the lizard “Koffie ku lechi” [Kòfi ku lechi] is only found on Aruba and thus only the Aruban spelling is given. The anolis lizard *Anolis lineatus* is found in both Aruba and Curaçao. In Aruba it is called “Waltaca”, this name is in use only in Aruba and is thus given in the Aruban spelling; in the Curaçao/Bonaire spelling it would be written “Waltaka”. While the Curaçao/ Bonaire spelling uses diacritics (to modify sounds: è, ò, ù, ü) and accents (to emphasize vowels: á, é, í, ó, ú), the Aruba spelling does not use them. In this case it is assumed that a native speaker does not need them and that they are thus superfluous. This can however be problematical for an outsider. Also sometimes there is a different pronunciation on the islands. The flamingo is called “Chogogo” on all three islands but on Aruba it is pronounced “Chògògò”. In the official Aruban spelling no accents or diacritics are used and it is written Chogogo just like in the other islands. Thus for Aruba the word has been bracketed [Chògògò] to indicate the different pronunciation. This has also been done for other words in Aruba, where the accents are not written.

Pictures by the author except where otherwise noted,

The author, Gerard van Buurt





Foreword

This superbly researched book represents a welcome and ground-breaking contribution, not only to our knowledge about the flora and fauna of Curaçao and the rest of the former Dutch Leeward Islands, but also about the presence of indigenous peoples such as the Caquetío on these and other islands after colonization and the significant role that they played in forging the creolized languages and cultures of the colonial Caribbean. This work includes a substantial inventory of terms referring to the animal and plant life of Curaçao. Fascinating and richly nuanced descriptions are supplied for each term, and many are illustrated by breathtakingly beautiful photographs. Drs. Gerard van Buurt's careful and detailed focus on the natural history of Curaçao is matched by his comprehensive and encyclopedic knowledge of the island's social history. This rare and uniquely effective combination of approaches yields important insights into the actual words and practices of the people of present day Curaçao, some of which can be traced back to indigenous languages and ways of life. Significant light is also shed on the manner in which the Caquetío and other indigenous peoples of the insular Caribbean managed to integrate their linguistic and cultural heritage into what have become the creolized languages and cultures of the region, despite enslavement, disease, and deportation. This book thus contributes to a growing body of scholarly research that is gradually challenging and dispelling the myth of the complete disappearance of indigenous peoples from Curaçao and most of the other Caribbean islands and to the increasing body of evidence of their dynamic agency within the socio-cultural matrix from which Papiamentu and the other Creole languages of the Caribbean emerged.

Prof. Dr. Nicholas Faraclas
University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras







Caquetío Indians on Curaçao during colonial times and Caquetío words in the Papiamentu language







1. Introduction

The Dutch deportation of Curaçao Caquetío Indians to Venezuela in 1634 is often interpreted as having ended the Indigenous presence on Curaçao. While this diminished the Caquetío presence on the island, some Indigenous people always remained. The first slaves, freed slaves, and some Europeans as well, were in contact with the Caquetío. Thus, even though there were not many Indians, they were definitely present and part of the substratum when Papiamentu was formed. These Indians were in contact with Aruba and Venezuela, which they could more easily reach than Bonaire. A small Indian village in western Curaçao still existed in 1677 and probably lasted until the early 18th century. In Aruba and Bonaire the Caquetío remained. Thus some original Caquetío words can be found in Papiamentu. These are mostly names of local plants and animals and toponyms. The frequent use of the /ʃ/ ‘shi’ sound could also be a Caquetío influence in Papiamentu.

2. The arrival of man in Curaçao, Archaic Age Indians and Caquetío

2800 years BC there were already Indians living on Curaçao, whom we nowadays refer to as the Archaic Age Indians. Later, probably around 500 AD, the Caquetío tribe, a group of Indians belonging to the Maipure-Arawak tribes in Venezuela arrived. The name Caquetío may be related to the name of the Caquetá river in South-Eastern Colombia and the Caquetío tribe may have originated somewhere in this area. It is not known what happened to the Archaic Age Indians. A few Archaic Age Indian sites have been found in Curaçao, some of them dating to about 2500 BC. Recent archaeological investigations during 2008 and 2009 (Hoogland and Hofman, 2011) at Sta. Barbara, along the eastern coast of the Spaanse Water inner bay, have indicated that this site was visited and temporarily occupied during several periods spanning a long period of time. The oldest radiocarbon dates for this site go back to about 2800 BC and are associated with the Archaic Age Indians. It is not clear whether the remains dated to around 500 AD. represent a late Archaic or early Ceramic stage and/or whether they are early Caquetío. The site was still being used around AD 1600, by indigenous people, presumably





the Caquetío. There is a gap of about 1500 years, from about 1000 BC to 500 AD. Up to now no sites with remains of Indian settlements that can be assigned to this interval have been found in Curaçao. The Caquetío lived in the present Venezuelan states of Lara and Falcón and in Aruba (A), Curaçao (C) and Bonaire (B). There were also some Caquetío villages on the western coast of the Gulf of Venezuela and Lake Maracaibo, on the La Guajira Peninsula, as well as south-east of Maracaibo (Oliver, 1989).

3. Contacts between Curaçao, Aruba, Bonaire and Venezuela

The Caquetío Indians on Curaçao could cross to and from Venezuela and Aruba quite easily, which they certainly did regularly. Traveling by canoe, it is much more difficult to reach Bonaire from Curaçao than to reach Aruba or Venezuela which are further away.

To go to Aruba in a canoe would be relatively easy since one would travel with the current. To get back from Aruba, one would have to cross to Venezuela, which is not difficult since one would be able to move across the current. Along the Venezuelan coast there is often a countercurrent. In his book *Aquella Paraguaná*, Alí Brett Martínez describes how salted fish was transported from Punto Fijo to Coro by hugging the coast of Paraguaná and picking up this countercurrent. Indians coming from Aruba and going to Curaçao could take advantage of this countercurrent and travel east to Puerto Cumarebo, and then cross back to Curaçao across the main current. They would leave from a site somewhat to the east of Puerto Cumarebo formerly called “*Puerto de Los Curaçao*” i.e., where “*Los Curaçao*”, meaning the Curaçao Indians, would cross over to Curaçao. From this point the crossover is made easily. Thus getting back to Curaçao from Aruba could probably have been accomplished in less than a week’s time, assuming favorable weather conditions and a few days of rest along the Venezuelan coast.

La Guajira Peninsula was also within range. It could be reached travelling with the current and coming back by a more southerly route toward Punto Fijo, through calmer waters. From there one would travel along the coast toward the east and “*Puerto de Los Curaçao*”. The *Relación de Antonio Barbudo*, which probably dates from 1570, states the following: “*De la parte de Poniente deste Golfo (de Venezuela) están las sierras Coquibacoa Alta y por la noticia que tengo de los indios de Curaçao, es tierra bien poblada.*” [On the western side of this gulf (the Venezuelan gulf) lie the mountains of Coquibacoa Alta [these are in La Guajira], and from what the Curaçao Indians told me this is a well





populated area]. This implies that the Indigenous people on Curaçao knew the Guajira Peninsula well.

Getting to Bonaire from the mainland would probably have been much more difficult. One would have to follow the Venezuelan coast all the way to the mouth of the Tocuyo River, or even further east, then cross over from there. Maybe it would have been possible to make the crossing from Curaçao to Bonaire directly during very calm days, which tend to occur in September or October. Using canoes, both Aruba and Venezuela could thus be reached more easily than Bonaire. According to archaeologist Jay Haviser, the Indigenous pottery in Bonaire is more similar to the pottery of the Aroa area on the Venezuelan mainland, while Curaçaoan pottery is of the Dabajuro type which is found on Aruba. This evidence supports the theory outlined above that contact between Curacao, Venezuela and Aruba was much more frequent than contact between Curaçao and Bonaire.

The availability of high protein sea-food must have been an important factor that motivated Indigenous people to visit and settle on the islands. In Curaçao for example the main Indigenous settlements were situated along the inner bays, and fish and shellfish constituted an important part of the diet. There probably existed some trade with the mainland in sea-food items that could be transported live, such as conch (*Strombus gigas*), West-Indian Top shell (*Cittarium pica*) and sea turtles. A few *Cerion uva* land snails, a species which is only found on Aruba, Curaçao and Bonaire were encountered in Indian shell middens near the Lago de Valencia in Venezuela; these could only have come from these islands (Berry, 1934). During several archaeological excavations in Curaçao, Aruba and Bonaire of Caquetío settlements, remains of animals from the South-American mainland were found (Haviser, 1994; Hooijer, 1960 and 1963; Versteeg & Rostain, 1997). Some of these were probably kept as pets. Stone axes and other implements made of rock material that does not occur on these islands were also found. All of this indicates that contacts with the mainland were probably quite regular and very likely extended well into colonial times. It is also likely that some of the deported Indians filtered back to the island during the years after their deportation, especially after the peace of Westphalia (Münster) between the Dutch Republic and Spain had been concluded in 1648.



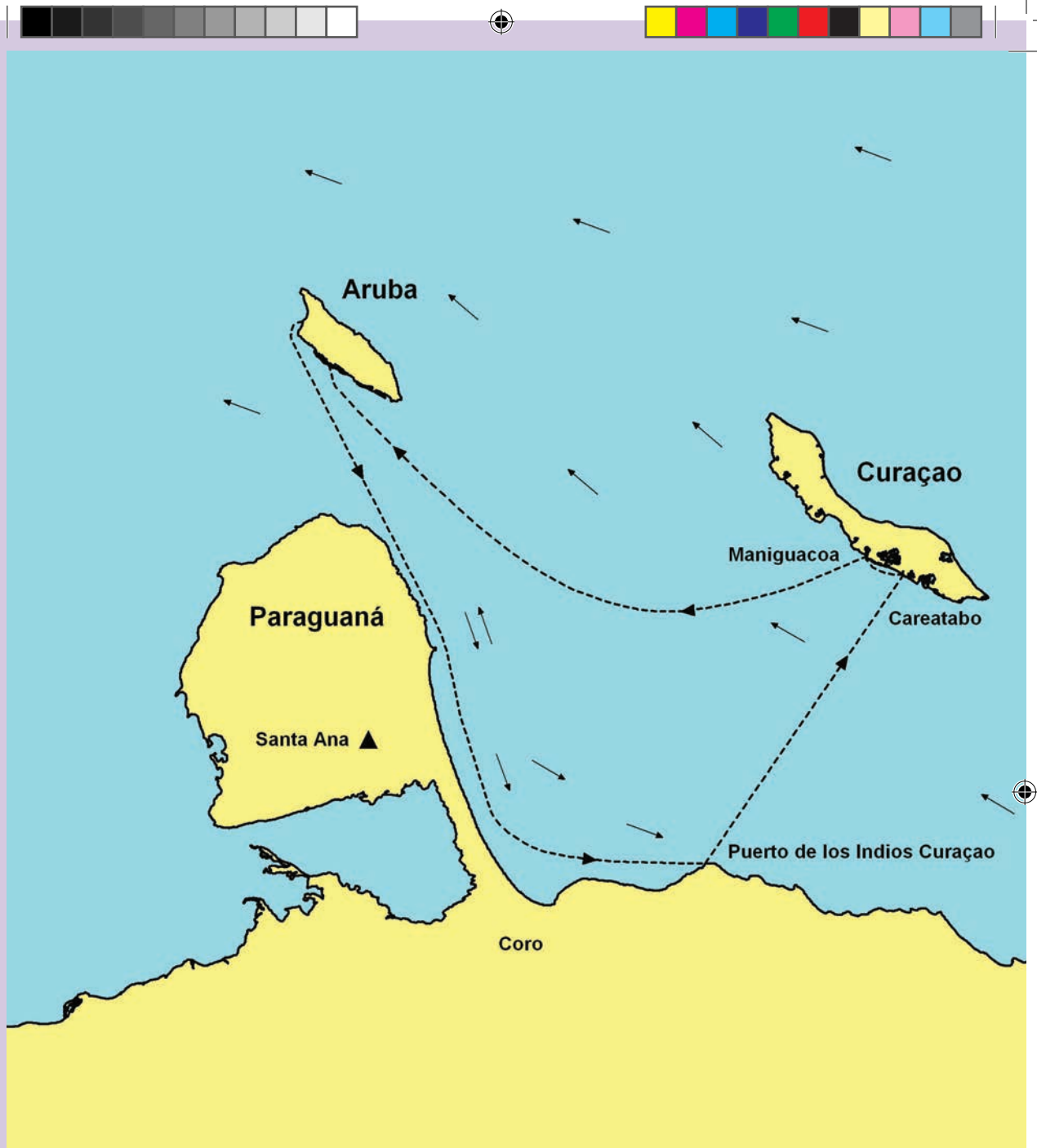


Fig. 1 - Sea travel by Caquetío Indians and prevailing currents.

A little bay east of Puerto Cumarebo was named “Puerto de los Indios Curaçao” and it is known that the Caquetío Indians of Curaçao set out from here to travel to Curaçao in their canoes (Hartog, 1968). Depending on the weather the Tafelberg in Curaçao is either already visible from here with very clear weather, or will come into view early during the trip if visibility is somewhat less. Aiming for the Tafelberg one would travel across the current and will drift somewhat to the West, where the harbor named Careatabo would be a logical place of arrival. There was also a well near this location. From here the voyage can also be made in the reverse direction, while compensating



for the strength of the current. Careatabo, Careotabo, Cariatávo (different spellings exist) was situated at an old lagoon where nowadays the Breezes hotel and Mambo beach are found. From here following the coast, Maniguacoa, the present Piscaderabay beach can be reached easily going with the current. From here travel routes become a bit more hypothetical, no historical records describing them exist, but if one wanted to go to Aruba, this seems to be a logical place from which to depart. With clear weather the Cerro de Santa Ana in Paraguaná (844 m) can be seen from Maniguacoa. One could aim for this hill, and traveling in a Southwesterly direction, the current will then gradually set the canoe more Westward, and this will enable one to reach the South coast of Aruba. If one were to leave from a point Westward of Maniguacoa, which would be nearer to Aruba, then one would run the risk of being swept North of Aruba by the current, drifting in a WNW direction from which it would be very difficult to reach land. Thus by departing from Maniguacoa this risk is minimized. It may be that both Careatabo and Maniguacoa were the important points for travel to and from the mainland and to Aruba and this could explain why these names are mentioned in the historical records. The city of Coro was founded by the Spanish in 1527 and during Spanish colonial times this was also an important destination, which could be reached quite easily. From Aruba to Paraguaná one can travel across the current

and it is known that during the 18th and early 19th century the Aruba Indians went to the village of Santa Ana, quite regularly, to fetch a priest and bring him to Aruba to baptize children and conduct marriages (Nooyen, 1979). Along the Venezuelan coast there is often a counter-current which can be used to travel in an easterly direction. The village of Santa Ana is situated inland just south of the Cerro de Santa Ana. The Aruba Indians had their canoes in the Bubali area and probably departed from there. On the map Klein Curaçao is indicated as Nicula. Bonaire is indicated as Buinare. Although it has also been named in historical records as Boynaj, Buynari, Buynare, I prefer to use the name Buinare since this name seems to be more in harmony with other Caquetío toponyms. Admittedly this is a subjective judgment.



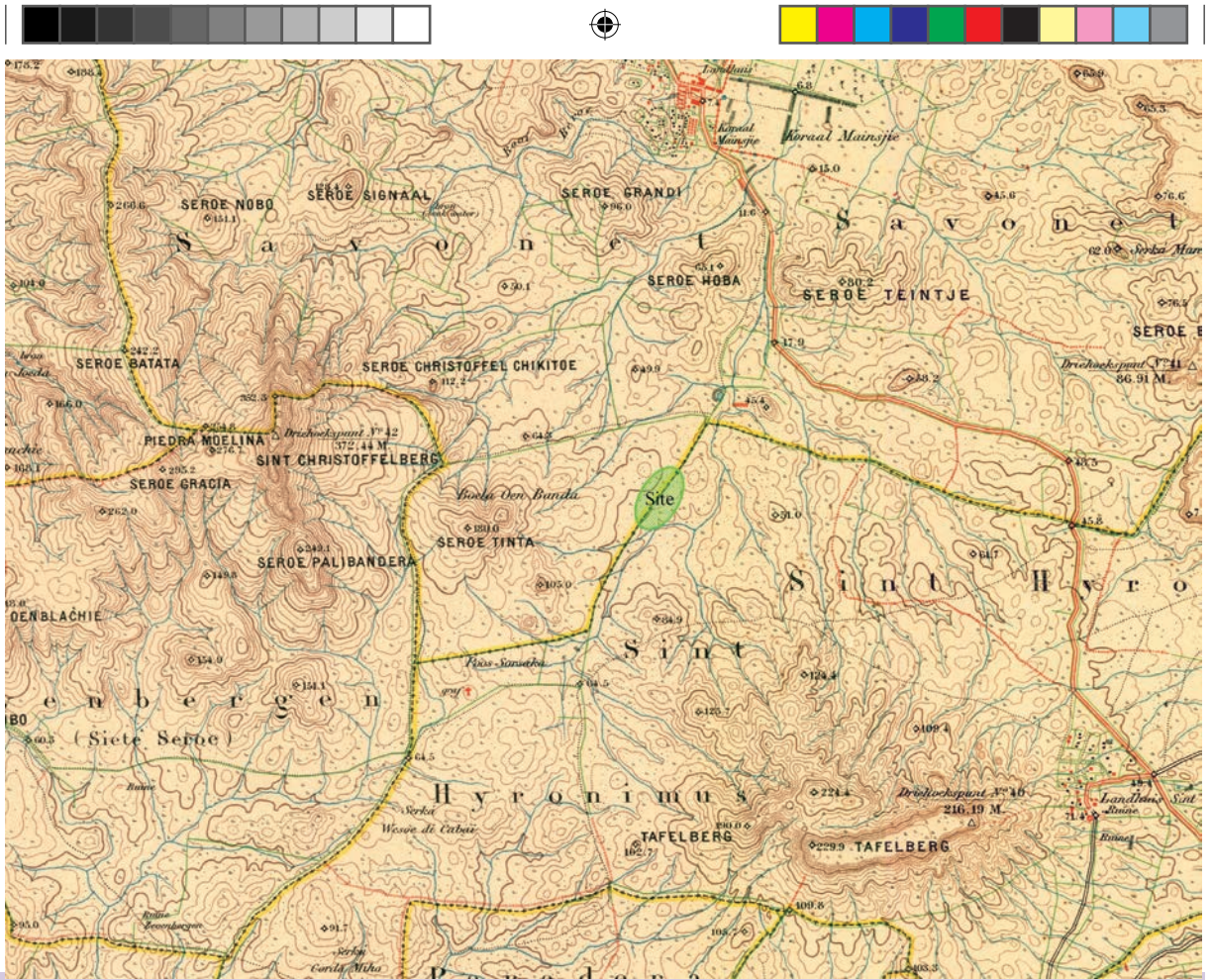


Fig. 2 - On this map (map of Werbata, 1911) the location of the village “Pueblo Nuevo de la Asunción” or “Pueblo de la Ascención Nueva” (Nooyen, 1979), is indicated as Site C-60 (see Haviser, 1987).

4. Caquetío Indians during colonial times

The Spanish arrived on Curaçao in 1499. Between 1515 and 1526, the Spanish raided the island several times for slaves and a large number of Indians were carried off to Hispaniola (Haviser, 1987). In 1634, the Dutch conquered the island and all the Spaniards and most of the Indigenous population were deported to the Venezuelan coast, near Coro. This event is often interpreted as having ended the Indigenous presence on Curaçao, but some Indians remained. After the Dutch deportations, there were still three Indigenous villages on the island and some Indigenous people were living at other locations as well. In the eastern part of Curaçao, there was a village called Rancho Indian near Brievengat and some Indigenous people were living in the Rooi Catootje area. In the western part of Curaçao (Banda Abou) there were two villages; Codoko, near Bartoolbaai, and another one near Seru Bientu. This last village was called “Pueblo Nuevo de la Asunción” or is sometimes referred to as “Pueblo de la Ascención Nueva” (Nooyen, 1979), and was situated near San



Hieronimus hill, toward Seru Bientu and Christoffelberg (Haviser, 1987), where Indian pottery is found together with colonial artifacts, such as Gouda smoking pipes and shards of Delft pottery. This village dates from the Spanish period (Haviser, 1987). Haviser has named the site C-60 (See Fig 2), new archaeological excavations are now being conducted at this site. According to Hartog (1968), the Dutch did not deport all the Indigenous people, some were allowed to live at Ascención. Hartog does not mention the other two other villages listed above. Reference to the “new” village is found in a baptism record from 1677, when it still existed (Nooyen, 1979), and it may have lasted well into the early 18th century.

In 1705 Father Michael J.A. Schabel, S.J. a Catholic priest, wrote a report of his stay in Curaçao and visit to Bonaire and Aruba (in 1704/05). In this “Notitia” of 1705 Schabel says about the Curaçao Indians, on page 112 of the manuscript:

“Redeo ad indos cacathios in ista Insula Coraçao degentes. Antes annos sex me jam noverunt indi isti: dum nimirum per hanc Insulam transivi. Baptizavi enim in transit ille parvulos et indulos eorum complures. Hujus rei causa fuit meus ille Caziquius et princeps indicus mihi postea Bruxellis in Brabantia defunctus. Hic enim etiam ex illius Magni Manaure (: Caziquij et Regis indici:) ab nepotibus et posteris erat lingue et natione cacathius. Cumque ut idiomate sic stirpe et sanguine junctus videretur indis istis hujus Insulae, illis charissimus et gratissimus erat omnia apud ipsos poterat.”

[I am returning to the Caquetío Indians who live on this island of Curaçao. Six years ago these Indians already knew me; when I passed through this island. During this transit I baptized several of their small Indian children. This was possible through (caused by) the Caçique or Indian prince who travelled with me and who later died in Brussels in Brabant. He was indeed one of them and a descendant of the Great Manaure (: The Caçique and Indian King:) and related to them by Caquetío language and nationality. And because he had a bond with the Indians of this Island, through language, descent and blood, he was well received by them and could get anything done.]

Here Schabel refers to a visit he made to Curaçao “six years earlier” (in 1698) when he was travelling to Europe accompanied by a Caquetío cacique. And on page 113 he states:

“..Dictum mihi est de ipsis, quod in duabus insulae hujus partibus duas colonias sive duos pagos indicos habeant. Feruntur omnes se christianos et catholicos nomenare: sed solum ac unicum christiani catholici nomen pretereaque nihil, ut audio habent...”





[... about them I was told that on this Island two villages or settlements still exist, it is said that they all call themselves Catholics. But from what I hear they are Catholics in name only, nothing else.]

He also reports that when Jacob Beck was installed as director of the Dutch West India Company (WIC) in 1704, a group of Indian horsemen were present at the festivities. In his diary of the period 1707-1708, when he was living in Curaçao he mentions that he baptized some Indian children (Schabel, "Diurnum", 1707-1708).

From the above it can be concluded that there were still "Indians" on Curaçao in the late 17th and early 18th century. Some of these were still living in separate villages but others already formed part of a catholic community. These "Indians" were Caquetíos. In the early 16th century, Caquetíos were abducted from Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao during Spanish slave raids, to work in the gold mines in Hispaniola and it has been stated that those Indians that later returned to repopulate the islands would have been mostly Taíno or Guajiro or even Indians of other tribes. The writings of Schabel do not seem to support this idea.

The first African slaves and freed slaves were in contact with these Caquetío . Even though they were not very numerous, Indigenous people were therefore definitely present and part of the substratum when Papiamentu emerged. In his book *Het volk van de grote Manaure*, Father R.H. Nooyen gives numerous examples of contacts between people of Indigenous and African descent, during the late 17th and the 18th century, that he found in early records of the Catholic Church. The book of baptisms of 1677, which was mentioned earlier, is one of the earliest such records. In this book of baptisms it is mentioned that in this year 108 Indians, 209 slaves and some mulattoes and whites were baptized (Nooyen, 1995). He also names some families in Banda Abou which are nowadays considered to be purely of African descent as having Indigenous ancestors (Nooyen, 1979). Schabel ("Diurnum", 1707/08) also mentions baptisms of Indian children where blacks were present or acted as one of the godparents and at one such occasion he adds:

"Haec, si quae in mundo varietas me delectate, mihi in sacris baptismis non infrequens" [If there is anything that delights me it is this diversity and this is not infrequent at holy baptisms.]

Many of these Indians were probably already of mixed blood, which would have given them protection against Old World diseases, but were still described and recognized as "Indians".

During a visit to Bonaire where he baptized many children Schabel remarks:

"...Inter parentes indios etiam comparuit miles natione germanus vel





Fig. 3 - The church of Santa Ana in Paraguaná.

The village of Santa Ana, which is situated South of the Cerro de Santa Ana, already existed in 1571 (Gasparini, Gonzalez Batista and Margolies, 1985). Building of the church probably began around 1661, it was finished before the end of the 17th century.

A sign on this church reads:

“Iglesia de Santa Ana de Paraguaná
Monumento Nacional de Venezuela
Construida al finales del siglo XVII
como templo de adoctrinamiento para
impartir enseñanza religiosa a los Indios
que vivian en Santa Ana
Fue la primera Iglesia edificada en Paraguaná
”.....

*The church of Santa Ana de Paraguaná
National monument of Venezuela
It was built at the end of the 17th century
as a church to indoctrinate the Indians which
lived in Santa Ana with religious knowledge.
It was the first church built in Paraguaná.*

potius polonus, patria Dantiscanus. Hic cum muliere inda (:matrimonium ad libitum:) uxoratus erat, et aliquot ex ea parvulos filiolus suos ad baptismum adduxit...” [Among the Indian parents there also was a soldier, a German or rather (more accurately) a Pole from Dantzic. He was with an Indian wife (to whom he was freely married) (i.e. because he liked her, she was his free choice) and brought some small children he had with her, to be baptized].

In Curaçao the Indians were simply swamped by a much larger African gene pool than those in Aruba or Bonaire. Mitochondrial DNA studies in Aruba indicate mostly Indigenous and to a lesser extent some sub-Saharan African ancestry (Toro-Labrador, Wever & Martínez-Cruzado, 2003). I am convinced that a similar mitochondrial DNA investigation in those African descended Curaçaoan families which were already on the island before the influx of Afro-Caribbean workers during the oil boom in the early 20th century, (especially those whose ancestors lived in Banda Abou) would more or less be the mirror image of the Aruba results, i.e., mostly African, but to a lesser extent





part Indian and European ancestry as well. Many of the Caquetío words in Papiamentu are still in general use, but others are nowadays only rarely used and sometimes only known by older people. In Curaçao today, such words often can be traced back to the Banda Abou area (e.g., *katana*, *kiwa karate*, *shilib*, *wawuya*).

In 1743 many of the remaining Indigenous people on Curacao moved to Coro. They were transported by a Dutch vessel (Nooyen, 1979). This may indicate that by this time they were not crossing over to Venezuela in their own canoes anymore. Although some Indians remained, this last emigration may have ended the presence of Indians as a separate group. In 1747, Van Laar, the secretary of the WIC, reported that there were still 1300 Indians on Curaçao (Nooyen, 1995). This is a surprisingly high number which may be inaccurate or could include a large number of persons of mixed descent. Between 1770 and 1780 Indians are still mentioned quite regularly in the baptism records of the Catholic Church (Nooyen, 1995). By the end of the 18th century the last Indigenous people had been completely absorbed into the rest of the population.

In Aruba and Bonaire Indigenous people maintained their identity as a separate group somewhat longer, e.g., when Father (Pater) van Koolwijk and Pinart published their lists of Indigenous words in use in Aruba in the late 19th century. Several of the surviving Caquetío words in Papiamentu come from these islands. There were many contacts between the Indians from “Pueblo Nuevo de la Asunción” in Curaçao and those from “Alto Vista” in Aruba. In the early records of the Catholic Church (1677), Indians from Aruba are also mentioned as being present during baptisms of African descended people in Curaçao (Nooyen, 1979). Indians had been mixing with African and European descended people from an early stage and some of their offspring ended up



Fig. 4 and 5 - Canoes at Bubali, Aruba, 1905.
The pictures were taken by J. Boeke in 1905 and published in 1907.





in Aruba. This can explain some of the African words found in the Indian wordlist compiled by Pinart in Aruba.

It is not known when Indigenous people ceased travelling to Aruba in canoes. It has been attested that in later years they began travelling as passengers on other vessels, or perhaps in small sail-assisted vessels of their own. In October 1634 and August 1635, the Spaniard Diego Hernandes Carudo, made reconnaissance trips from Venezuela to Curaçao to reconnoiter Dutch defenses. He travelled in a *piragua* (canoe) equipped with sails (Cardot, 1982). During the first trip, he travelled with some “Indios Curaçao”. On the second trip he was accompanied by twelve soldiers. Since a *piragua* has no or almost no keel, the sails must have been small auxiliary sails which nonetheless facilitated travelling considerably. In Aruba, the Indigenous people from Alto Vista maintained regular contacts with priests at the pueblo de Santa Ana in Paraguaná well into the 18th and early 19th centuries. These contacts were very likely maintained utilizing their own vessels (Nooyen, 1995). Canoes were in use for fisheries up to the early 20th century, a photograph of two canoes was taken in 1905 near Bubali in Aruba (Boeke, 1907).

5. Caquetío words in Papiamentu

Papiamentu is a creole language. African influence is very strong in the grammar and there are also some African words in the lexicon. Many words of African origin are related to folklore, others are names of musical instruments and of animals and plants which are also found in Africa (e.g., *maribomba* ‘wasp’, *guiambo* ‘ocra’). The lexicon consists mostly of words of Spanish and Portuguese origin, but about a quarter of the lexicon is of Dutch origin. Schabel says in his “Notitia” of 1705:

“Hispanice enim plerique omnes, vel saltum criolio, hoc est, corrupte loquuntur” [..Most speak Spanish, or at least Creole, which is a corrupted speech (Spanish)].

He does not however mention the name Papiamentu. The earliest reference to the Papiamentu language as such dates from 1747 (Coomans-Eustatia, 2005). From 1806 to 1816, Curaçao was occupied by the British, but in older Papiamentu there is hardly any English influence. At the end of the 18th and in the early 19th centuries there were many French immigrants on the island, many of which left the island during the English occupation. Papiamentu has some French words, but the French did not contribute much to the lexicon. A village named Jan Doret is, however, named after the Frenchman Jean Doray. This can be explained by the fact that Papiamentu was already a fully established language at the time of the presence of these immigrants and during





the English occupation. Nowadays technical terms often derive from English and English influence on Papiamentu is increasing.

When names of local animals and plants are also found on the Spanish Mainland, this does not necessarily imply that the Papiamentu form is derived from the mainland. *dividivi* very likely is the original Caquetío form, it is not necessarily derived from the mainland *dive dive*. There are several Taíno words in Papiamentu, which are also used in Spanish. Papiamentu words like *casabí*, *kanoa*, *komehein*, *kunuku*, *maïshi*, *pita* and *sabana* all derive from Taíno, and although it seems likely that they entered into Papiamentu via Spanish, some of the same words are found in other Arawakan languages and could very likely have been used in Caquetío as well, since it was closely related to Taíno. *pita* is very likely not Caquetío, since Caquetío used *kokuy*, but still the possibility cannot be fully excluded. In addition to the form *maïshi*, Papiamentu also uses the forms *mainshi*, where the insertion of the <n> could be a Bantu influence and also the form *mahishi*, which is commonly used in Bonaire. *mahishi* could very well be an original Caquetío form.

The Caquetío influence in Papiamentu is small, but there are definitely a few original Caquetío words in Papiamentu. In most cases absolute proof is lacking, since only one short Caquetío wordlist from Venezuela has survived to the present (Oliver, 1989). This has led some to claim that no original Caquetío words remain in Papiamentu. Such researchers reason that, since the Dutch deported the Indigenous people, all, or almost all the Indigenous words in Papiamentu: 1) entered the language via Spanish; 2) were brought in from Venezuela from related Indigenous languages such as Guajiro; and/or 3) were the contribution of the Taíno and other Indigenous people brought to Curaçao by the Spanish (Kramer, 2004).

While it is certainly true that many Indigenous words came in these ways, other words must certainly be original local Caquetío words. In almost all cases these are names of local plants and animals and toponyms. Several of these words are only used on either Aruba or Bonaire (or sometimes on both) where there was of course a stronger Caquetío presence. Even though Papiamentu primarily developed on Curaçao it must also have been influenced by speakers from these islands. From an examination of the structure of some of these toponyms found in Curaçao and a comparison between these toponyms and those found in Aruba and Bonaire, it can be seen that the forms used in Papiamentu in many cases must be closer to the original Caquetío forms than similar mainland words which underwent Spanish influence. We will now consider some of the phonological features that could indicate Caquetío origins for words in Papiamentu.





Words with ‘*shi*’ /Σi/ as prefix, *infix* or *suffix* (-/Σi/, /Σi/- and -/Σi/-) are often original Caquetío words. *kadushi*, *kadushi pushi*, *bushi*, are closer to the original Caquetío than the related forms from the mainland, *kaduche*, *buche*. *Shimarucu* is certainly more original than the form *semaruco*. This we can see when comparing to the toponyms, where the occurrence of /Σi/ is quite common. It is interesting that in the earliest Spanish reference to what in Paraguaná is nowadays called *caduche*, we find *caduchi*, Papiamentu uses *kadushi* (see below). *shuata* and *shiwata* are original and do not derive from Spanish *aciguatar*. This can be deduced from the fact that the form *shiwata* is also used in Aruba.

/Σi/ syllables in Papiamentu are also found in words which are definitely not of Caquetío or even Amerindian origin. In Portuguese we sometimes also find the <x> pronounced as /Σ/. Papiamentu *lagadishi* (lizard) is probably derived from Portuguese *lagartixa* (in Brazil it is often pronounced *lagartiesje*) or may be from Spanish *lagartija*. Spanish *cimarrón* becomes *shimaron* in Papiamentu, as in *watapana shimaron*, which in Papiamentu refers to a wild or feral form of a plant or animal. In Dutch we find *-sje* and *-tje* which can become *-shi* or *-chi* in Papiamentu. For example: *dubbeltje – debchi*, *kast – cashi* (in this case the Papiamentu form could be derived from the diminutive *kastje*). The frequent use of /Σi/ syllables in Papiamentu, in many words which do not derive from Caquetío, could very well be a Caquetío influence.

Words with the *gua-* prefix and names of trees ending in *-o* in Spanish may be Caquetío words which underwent Spanish influence. It is interesting to note that some of these words retain the original /w/ sound in Papiamentu. The Spanish language is known to replace /w/ sounds with /gw/ (written <gu>, as illustrated in the following examples:

English: *winch*, Spanish: *guinche*

Nahuatl: *ahuacatl*, Spanish: *aguacate*

Carib: *iwana*, Island Carib: *iuana*, Spanish: *iguana*

Arabic: *Oed el Kebir*, Spanish: *Guadalquivir*

The Papiamentu words *watapana*, *wayaká* and *watakeli* thus seem more original than *guatapaná*, *guayacán*, *guatacare*, *guatacaro* etc.

In Spanish trees are usually male, while their fruits or other products are female. For example: *el caobo*, ‘mahogany tree’, *la caoba*, ‘mahogany wood’. Thus when indicating the tree *guatacare* this word will tend to change to *guatacaro*. Also compare: *shimaruku* with *cemaruco* and *semerúca*.

Papiamentu *-huri* or *-uri* is very likely the equivalent of the mainland Caquetío





–*ure*, which according to Cruz Esteves (1989) means ‘root’. The plants *hurihuri*, *karishuri* and *marihuri/manihuri* all have roots which are used for either medicinal purposes or food.

bara means tree in Caquetío, and it could have been changed to *bari* (analogous to Lokono: *balli*) or *bari* could have been in turn derived from *bara* + diminutive *i*, = ‘small tree’. In the case of the *kalabari*, a large tree, this explanation does not hold, but it could be that the original form was *Kalabara* and that this was changed over to *kalabari* in later times, to conform with the other tree names ending in *-bari*, and to facilitate pronunciation, when the original meaning of *-bara* was lost. In a similar way the name *tarabara*, a shrub could have been derived from *tarabari*. Papiamentu names of plants ending in *-bana* or *-pana* could be derived from Caquetío - *bana* or - *pana* which indicates a leaf or a leaf like flat structure in that language.





6. Words in Papiamentu likely to be of Caquetío Origin (excluding toponyms)

Since no absolute proof exists and indeed, many other Amerindian words were introduced into Papiamentu (van Buurt & Joubert, 1997) it is sometimes difficult to decide which Indian words are likely to be of Caquetío origin. Thus the following listing has a subjective element.

ashibi (A) - a small biting insect also called *praga* (Portuguese: *a praga* ‘the curse’), Guajiro: *shipe*. Along the north coast of Colombia *plaga* is used for biting insects such as mosquitoes and gnats.

batutu (C) - see *maniweri*, *manuweri*

bulabari (B) - a tree (*Guaiacum sanctum*) which is related to Lignum vitae (*Guaiacum officinale*), but is somewhat smaller

bushi (A, B) ^(P1) - a globular cactus, Melon cactus, Turk’s cap (*Melocactus spp.*); this word is also used for sea urchins. In Curaçao we find the *bushito* (composed of Caquetío: *bushi* and the Spanish diminutive *-ito*). The *bushito* is a small globular cactus (*Mammillaria mammillaris* syn. *Mamillaria simplex*). This cactus is not found on Aruba and Bonaire. The existence of the name *bushito* on Curaçao indicates that the word *bushi* was formerly also used in Curaçao, where it was later displaced by the name *milon di seru* (litt: ‘melon of the hill(s)’).

bushicuri (A) - a shrub (*Morisonia americana*)

catashi (A) ^(P13) - a shrub, (*Phyllanthus botryanthus*). Aruba uses a Papiamentu spelling which is different from that of Curaçao and Bonaire, where *catashi* is written *katashi*.

chibichibi (B) - a small bird, the bananaquit, (*Coereba flaveola bonairensis*)

chogogo (B,C), **chogogo** [*chògògò*] (A) - the greater flamingo (*Phoenicopterus ruber*)

chuchubi (A, C, B) - the tropical mockingbird (*Mimus gilvus*)

cushicuri (A) - a climbing cactus (*Acanthocereus tetragonus*)

dabaruida, **yaga dabaruida**, **yaga** (A) ^(P2) - a shrub or small tree (*Pithecellobium unguis-cati*) that has quite flexible twigs with sharp downward curved thorns, like cat-claws. In a list from 1880 with Indian words from Aruba made by Father van Koolwijk we find *dabaroida* (Hartog, 1953). The Pinart wordlist from 1890 gives *dabaraida*. Lokono *dabáda* means ‘nail’ or ‘claw’. *dabára* means ‘hair’, *ida* – ‘surrounded by’, ‘in, with’, ‘skin’ (these are related meanings) See: De Goeje (1928). Pinart also gives a formula which the Aruba Indians used to remove cactus spines from the human body “*Una areya rafayete dudrea ebanero a bono, caburo copudado daburi.*” Pinart gives no translation for this formula, but we can speculate that *daburi* could refer to the cactus spines. In a Shebayo wordlist





from Trinidad dating from 1594-95 published in Taylor (1977), we find *dabodda* and *dabádoh* for ‘nail’, ‘claw’. Shebayo is the Trinidad variant of the Arawakan Lokono language.

dato (A), datu (C) - In Curaçao this is the columnar cactus *Stenocereus griseus* syn. *Lemareocereus griseus*. In Bonaire it is called *yatu* or *yato*. In Aruba this cactus is called *kadushi* while the columnar cactus *Cereus repandus* was sometimes called *dato*, although usually more commonly called *breba*. This can be very confusing. Originally Caquetío *datu* applied to the fruit (see *kadushi* below). According to Oliver the suffix *-ato* indicates a family relationship. *d-ato* is the daughter of the *yato*. In Lokono *otu*, *uttu* means ‘daughter’ (De Goeje, 1928).

dividivi (A, C, B) (P3) - *dividivi* originally is the fruit of the watapana tree (*Caesalpinia coriaria*), but nowadays the name also applies to the plant and in Aruba and Curaçao Papiamentu/ Papiamentu it is also a synonym of *watapana*. However in Aruba *watapana* is more commonly used for the plant. In Bonaire *dividivi* only refers to the fruit.

dori, dori maco (A, C, B) (P4) - Colombian four-eyed frog, froth nest frog (*Pleurodema brachyops*). This frog is native to Aruba, it is also found in the savanna areas of Northern South America and Panama. In Venezuela it is called *sapito lipón* ‘fat little toad’. It was introduced in Curaçao (1910) and in Bonaire (1928). The name *dori, dori maco* originates in Aruba, but is now used on all the three islands. This animal is mentioned in an old Papiamentu rhyme from Aruba. This rhyme is still in use, it was already noted down by the German Professor Martin around 1883 (van Meeteren, 1947):

Dori, dori maco, si mi muri, ken ta derami?, Ami, ami, ami
Dori, dori maco, ora mi muri, ken ta yorami?, Ami, ami, ami
[Dori, dori maco, if I die, who will bury me? Me, me, me
Dori, dori maco, when I die, who will cry for me? Me, me, me]

The name *maco* is also found in Taíno, as the name of another frog (Tejera, 1977). *dori* is an onomatopoea. Thus *dori maco* is the frog that calls “do-ri”.

fofoti (A) (P5) - a type of mangrove tree (*Laguncularia racemosa*)

gobí (C, B) - small calabash cut in two to serve as a small drinking beaker, *-bí* probably means small.

gogorobí (C, B) (P6) - whistle made from a small calabash. In this case *-bí* probably also means small. *gogoro* - could be derived from *kokoro* which refers to a thick-skinned leaf or a rind. Compare: *kokorobana*, a plant with a thick-skinned leaf and *kokorobi*, made from a small calabash rind.

gutu (A,C,B) - General name for a parrotfish. This word is probably related to *kutu*. The word contains the root *-utu*, meaning fish in many Arawak





languages. Transformations from K to G are fairly common. See also *kasha kutu* and also compare with the toponym *Manparia Cutu* in Bonaire.

hubada (A), **hobada** (B) (P7) - a thorny tree, (*Acacia tortuosa*)

hurihuri (C) - winding or climbing brush (*Capparis flexuosa*)

huliba (A) - *Capparis indica* and also *Capparis odoratissima*

ishiri (B) (P9) - a tree (3-7m high) with yellow-brownish globular fruit

(*Crateva tapia*), also called *Surun*. This tree grows in humid areas in and along the flow beds of the “rooien”, where water runs during the rainy season. In Bonaire we have the toponym “rooi Ishiri”. In Aruba this tree is very rare, which is not surprising since Aruba has a somewhat more arid climate.

kadushi (C, B), **cadushi** (A) - a columnar cactus (*Cereus repandus*), in Aruba it is more commonly called *breba*, which is derived from Spanish *breva*. In Aruba the cactus which is called *cadushi* (*Stenocereus griseus*) is the one called *datu* in Curaçao; this can be very confusing. In 1579 the “Relación de Nueva Segovia” gives a description of Paraguaná and states the following:

“...Hay unos árboles que comúnmente se llaman Cardones de ramas y estas ramas espinosas que no llevan hojas sino solamente espinas y muy espesas de manera que no se puede tocar con la mano y son tan largas como una aguja y otras menos y estos arboles serán del alto de una lanza y unos mas y otros menos llevan dos maneras de fruta a manera de ciruelas de monje en la hechura y en cantidad mucho mayor. (...) llamanla en lengua de indio Caduchi que nosotros llamamos brevas, la otra fruta se llama en lengua de Indios, Dato.”

[...There are some trees which are commonly called Cardones with branches and these branches are spiny and do not have leaves, but only spines, which are densely packed, you cannot touch them with your hands and they are as long as a needle and some are shorter and these trees reach the length of a lance, some are higher and some are shorter. They give two types of fruit, which when ripe look like “*ciruelas de monje*” (litt: prunes of the Monks) but in much larger numbers.(...) the Indians call them (the fruits) *caduchi*, which we call *brevas* and the other fruit is called *datu*, in the Indian language].

In Guajiro we find: *kayúsi*, *kayúsi*. Here we see that *kadushi*, like *datu*, *datu* originally applied to the fruit.

kadushi pushi (C, B) (P10) - In Aruba this cactus is called *breba di pushi*.

A somewhat smaller columnar cactus with finer needles (*Pilosocereus lanuginosus*). In Guajiro, *püche* is a melon cactus (Jusayú & Zubiri, 1977) it also applies to *Cactus caesius* a somewhat cylindrical melon cactus (Perrin, 1980). Nowadays this cactus is called (*Melocactus curvispinus* subsp. *caesius*). Since *kadushi* is Caquetío, it is likely that the *kadushi pushi* is also Caquetío.





kalabari (C, B) - a large tree, (*Zanthoxylum flavum*)

kamari (C, B), **camari** (A) ^(P11) - (*Coccoloba swartzii*) a small shrub related to the sea grape (*Coccoloba uvifera*)

karawara (C), **carawara**, **cawara** (A) **koahara**, **koahari** (B) ^(P12) - (*Cordia dentata*) a shrub or small tree, with white, somewhat translucent and slimy round fruits. In Venezuela it is called *caujaro*.

karishuri (B) - a small shrub, whose roots are used for medicinal purposes (*Cordia curasavica* syn. *Cordia cylindrostachia*)

karkidaki, **kashidaki** (B) ^(P13) - a shrub (*Phyllanthus bothryanthus*)

kasha kutu (C) ^(P14) - the name of the tiger grouper (*Mycteroperca tigris*). Compare this name with *gutu* and with the toponym *manparia cutu* in Bonaire.

katana (C) - corn on the cob (*Zea mays*), sometimes referring to corn cobs with large or colored kernels. In Guajiro *kutána* refers to certain varieties of maize with a large cob and large kernels. This is an example of a word sometimes still used in the Banda Abou area of Curaçao

kayuda (C, B), **cayuda** (A) - kayuda is a tropical fruit and tree (*Annona glabra*) related to Soursop. Although it is native to the Caribbean region and Central and South America, the few areas where it is found growing in Curaçao suggest that it is probably not native to the island and may have been introduced by the Caquetío Indians. In Taíno it was named Cayure.

This indicates that this name is probably of Arawakan origin. In Venezuela it is called cayúde. Kayuda may be the original Caquetío name.

kebedu [kebédu] (A) - scorpion fish (*Scorpaena* spp.)

kedébi (B) - very large as in *yuana kedébi* (very large iguana) and *gutu kedébi*, a large parrotfish, larger than others; the blue parrot fish (*Scarus coeruleus*)

kedebre (A) - plumed scorpion fish (*Scorpaena grandicornis*)

kiberi [kibéri] (A) - spotted scorpion fish (*Scorpaena plumieri*)

kiviti (A) - a shrub or small tree, with white flowers (*Croton niveus*)

kiwa (A, C, B) - *kiwa* is the West Indian top shell (*Cittarium pica*). This word is also found in Venezuela as *quigua* and in Cuba as *cigua*.

kiwa karate, **kiwa karati** (C, B) - the name *kiwa karate*, which refers to a gastropod with a marbled appearance, which is edible but can cause food poisoning, is only found in Curaçao and Bonaire. In Curaçao some older people in the Banda Abou area are still familiar with this word, which is not in common use anymore. It is not known with certainty which shell is the *kiwa karate*, it could be *Turbo castanea* or *Cypraea zebra* (synonyms for *Cypraea zebra* are *Talparia zebra* and *Macrocyprea zebra*). In Venezuela and other surrounding countries a skin disease is known which is caused by a fungus and which causes a pattern of light blotches. In Venezuela this disease was called *carare* or *carate* (L. Alvarado, 1921). The word *Carate* often refers to such a marbled or blotched pattern (Dicc. Vox).





kododo, cododo (A, B) ^(P15) - whiptail lizard (*Cnemidophorus* spp.)

kokorobana, cocorobana (A) ^(P16) - Sea purslane, white lavender, a halophilic shrub, with thick leaves, found near the coast or in the vicinity of salt pans (*Mallotonia gnaphalodes*)

kokorobí (C, B) - a small calabash, cut in half over its length and used as a scoop to pick up water, or sometimes a small calabash cut in two to serve as a small drinking beaker, also called *gobí*. In this case *-bi* probably means ‘small’.

koubati, kaubati (B), ***caushati, coushati*** (A) - a tree 3-6 m high, (*Krugiodendron ferreum*)

kwihí, kuigi, cuihi, kuihi (A), ***kuhí, kuí, kwida*** (B) - mesquite tree (*Prosopis juliflora*). *kwihí* sounds more original, is in better harmony with the sounds of the toponyms than the Venezuelan form *cuji*. The other name for this tree used in the Papiamentu of Curaçao, *indju* is definitely not Caquetío and came via Spanish, it is also used in Nicaragua and the Yucatán.

lobi (A, C, B) - In Aruba this is an expression meaning ‘how small!’. In Curaçao and Bonaire a small watermelon, or sometimes another fruit like a small papaya is called *lobi*. *-bi* refers to smallness. In Lokono *l(o)-* is a prefix that can indicate the meaning ‘He (is)...’ (de Goeje, 1928).

mahawa (A, C, B) ^(P17) - a reef fish, the creole fish (*Paranthias furcifer*).

On Aruba and Bonaire a tree, *Ficus brittonii*, is also called *mahawa*.

mahoso, mahos (C, B), ***mahos*** (A) - ugly. Guajiro *muhusu, mujusu* means ‘bad’, Lokono: *maisú- ini* also means ‘bad’.

makambí (C, B), ***macabí [macabí]*** (A) - lady fish (*Elops saurus*), in this case the Spanish version, *macabí* is closer to the original Caquetío than Curaçao Papiamentu *makambi*, which underwent African influence (the insertion of the /m/). In Aruba the form *macabí* was maintained. Although this word is also found in Taíno, I believe it to be Caquetío as well and unlikely to be imported from Taíno. This fish has many very small bones *-bi* could indicate ‘small’ and could refer to these bones. During archeological excavations of a Caquetío village at Tanki Flip in Aruba, 5.2 % of all fish remains found were lady fish (Versteeg & Rostain, 1997). Nowadays *macabí* is not usually eaten because of its many bones, but it can be used for fish soup.

makurá (C, B) ^(P18) - jumby beans; a climbing vine often found on columnar cactus. It has pods with small red colored oval beans with a black spot, which are very poisonous (*Abrus precatorius*). There may exist a relation to Lokono *ikira* ‘tears’ and *ma-kira* ‘no tears’, ‘to dry’ (de Goeje, 1928).

manaria (C, B) - See *wampanaria*

manuweri, maniweri (C) - a creeping vine with relatively large yellow flowers and a beetlike edible root (*Amoreuxia wrightii* syn. *Amoreuxia palmatifida*). The fruit is called *batutu*.





marihuri, manihuri (C, B) (P19) - This is a wild cassava species (*Manihot carthagenensis*), which is not indigenous; it was introduced to the islands from the dry regions of South America by the Indians. In Aruba it is called *yuca amara*, *yuca guajira* or *yuca di mondi*. Its roots are poisonous, and have to be treated like all bitter cassava to be eaten. It has a lower food value than normal cassava, but its roots are much more durable and it can stand considerable drought. In former times this plant was used by the African descended population as a reserve food for very bad times, *tempu berans* (Litt: 'rancid times', from Dutch beransd). Every century there are a few extended dry periods, when there is hardly any rain, which may last up to two years and nine months or even somewhat longer. Here we see an Indian practice being continued by their black descendants. Obviously it was not a preferred food, but something that was eaten only when practically nothing else was available. It was also used to poison cats and dogs. If we compare with Taïno *maní* which means 'peanut', and combine this with – *huri*, *manihuri* could very well mean 'peanut shaped root', which would be a very apt description of the form of its root knolls, even though the *marihuri* root knolls are much larger.

mashibari (C), ***mafobari, mahubari*** (B), ***macubari*** (A) - Small tree or shrub, (*Guapira pacurero* syn. *Pisonia bonairensis*)

oromani (A, C, B) - the chain moray (*Echidna catenata*). This moray is common in the shallow water areas of coral reefs; it is black with a reticulated network pattern of yellow stripes. It is very unlikely that this word is derived from Spanish *oro* and English 'man'. Unlike Sranan Tongo (a Creole language of Surinam), there are no English words in older Papiamentu and certainly the combination of a partly Spanish and partly English word would be very unusual. Such words are quite rare and are found only in modern Papiamentu. An example would be *puwitu-killer* (Spanish *pollito* and English 'killer', meaning an older man with a very young girlfriend or vice versa). The name *oromani* is not found in Sranan Tongo, nor is this animal found on the muddy or sandy coasts of Surinam. An Arawakan etymology for *oromani* seems more likely. In Lokono *ori* means 'snake' and the suffix –*man* or –*mana* is found in the names of many aquatic animals, especially water snakes (Taylor, 1977). Lokono *oroli* is a large mythical snake. Taïno: *caïman, caïmana*. Island Carib (Kallinago): *makáyuman*, a lobster.

palúli (C, B) - the mangrove mussel (*Brachidontes exustus*). The late A.J. Maduro was of the opinion that this name could be derived from the French *palourde*. This however seems unlikely since in the French West-Indian islands *palourde* is a name which is applied to an entirely different group of shells (*Codakia* spp.). Furthermore there are almost no examples of names of indigenous local plants and animals in Papiamentu which are





derived from French. Practically the only examples are the snapper *kapitán* (French *capitaine*), which however could possibly also derive from Spanish and the name *kakabolli* (Creole French: *cacabelli*) which however does not relate to the same fish. It is thus likely that *palúli* is of Caquetío origin.

patalewa (C, B) ^(P20) - the barn owl (*Tyto alba*). In Curaçao this word is not in use anymore, nowadays the barn owl is called palabrua. The Dutch traveller Teenstra who visited Curaçao mentions this name in the account of his voyages (1828/29 and 1833/34) which was published in two volumes in 1836 and 1837. Teenstra is known as an accurate observer and a dependable source of information. In Bonaire the Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) is called Patalewa (Prins et al, 2009). The name Partawela is nowadays used in Curaçao for the Falki (*Buteo albicaudatus*). This is a corruption of Patalewa that has been popularized fairly recently.

sawaka (C) - the underworld, the realm of the dead, the beyond. In old Papiamentu the expression *baha na sawaka* existed, meaning ‘to descend to the underworld’ or ‘to die’. In modern Papiamentu *sawaka* is used as “Dead!” or to express the idea that something went very wrong. In Lokono *sa-* can indicate a small plurality, like 2-6 (de Goeje, 1928). *Waka* means underground. According to Oliver Caquetío *wakaubana* refers to an underground creek, and *-bana* refers to its being covered. In Aruba we find the toponym *wakubana*. Pinart (1890) gives *Wakubana* as the name of a hill in Aruba. This name is not in use anymore. On a map of Aruba of 1825 (Rijksarchief The Hague) it is named *Wacobana*. In Colombia *guacar* means ‘to bury something’, ‘a burial’, and *cavar guacas*, ‘to dig holes’. The Taíno in Hispaniola knew a cave named *Guacayarima*. This cave was the abode of a large mythical monster. *yarima* means ‘anus’, *guaca* “underground area, underground region”. *Guacayarima* then means ‘anus which leads to the underworld’ (Tejera, 1977).

sawáwa (C) - a few large waves, a wave train. This word was used in old Papiamentu (Brenneker, 1978); it is not in use anymore.

shilib, shilip (C) - a small whiptail lizard (*Cnemidiphorus murinus murinus*) or a small green iguana (*Iguana iguana*). This word is still found in the Banda Abou area. Some people (most) insist that it only applies to a small whiptail lizard, others that it applies only to a small green iguana, yet others say it can be used for both. Such divergence is common with little used words and illustrates how a name for one species, given time is often transferred to another species.

shimarucu (A), **shimaruku** (C, B) ^(P21) - small tree or shrub with orange-red fruits, which are very rich in vitamin C (*Malpighia emarginata*). The word *cemaruco*, *semerúca* is found in Venezuela Lokono: *seme* means ‘sweet’ (de Goeje, 1928).

shirishiri (A, C, B) - entrails. There is no proof this is an Indian word. It





has been suggested it came from Africa. Nevertheless it could very well be Caquetío.

shoco, choco (A) - a small burrowing owl found in Aruba (*Athene cucularia*). In Guajiro it is called *shokóhin* (Jusayú & Zubiri, 1977). *shoco, choco* (the Papiamentu spelling in Aruba) is very likely the original Caquetío name.

shoshori (C, B), **shoshoro** (A) (P22+23) - a climbing vine (*Passiflora foetida*)

shuata (C, B), **shiwata, shuata** (A) - to get fish poisoning, nowadays it is used as a general term for food poisoning.

stanibari (B) - a small shrub, with slender twigs and white flowers (*Antirrhoea acutata*)

tampañá (C, B) (P24) - The edible fruit of the *kadushi* columnar cactus (*Cereus repandus*). There could be a relation with Paraujano (Añú) *tapaña*, which refers to the great-grandparents of a man. The fruit which contain numerous small seeds can be seen as a great-grandparent with numerous offspring. The insertion of the /m/ is probably a later African influence.

tapushi (A, C, B) - originally an ear of maize (*Zea mays*), nowadays also an ear of sorghum (*Sorghum vulgare*) or other grasses. In Guajiro several similar words are found that indicate a family relationship, such as *apüshí, tapü'shi, püpüshi, jüpü'shi* and *jüshi*. *tapü'shi* refers to a matrilineal clan.

tarabara (A) (P25) - a shrub with flexible twigs and sharp cat-claw like curved spines (*Mimosa distachya*).

teishi, tishi (A) - a white bird of prey, probably the white-tailed kite (*Elanus leucurus*), which sometimes crosses over to Aruba from Paraguaná as a casual visitor. In Aruba we also find the hill *Sero Tishi*. This is also written as *teishi, tijshi* and *tijssi* (map of Werbata/Jonckheer, 1913).

waiki [waiki] (C, B) - homemade hygienic tampon for women, usually made from the cloth of empty flour sacks, cotton and twine. These were in use until the early 20th century. Presumably in earlier years they would have been made from wild cotton (*Gossypium hirsutum*) and natural fibers, such as agave fibers. Nowadays the word *waiki, waiki* has been replaced by the brand name “kotex”, this word is used generically. In the Carib language Cumanagoto we find the word *huaikur* for a loin cloth. In Chaima, another Carib language from Venezuela, we find the word *guayuco*, also for a loincloth, in Guajiro we find *wüsi*. Although the meaning for these words is somewhat different they seem to be related to *waiki, waiki*. Since the word *waiki, waiki* is known only from these islands it is very likely an original Caquetío word, even though there seem to be parallels with words in Carib languages.

wakurá, wakuri (B) (P26) - a shrub or small tree, with small green globular fruits, which blacken when ripe (*Randia aculeata*). It is also called *Palu di Lele*.





waltaca (A) (P27) - the tree lizard *Anolis lineatus*. In Curaçao *Anolis lineatus* is called *totèki* or *kaku*. In Bonaire *Anolis bonairensis* used to be called *lagadishi di palu*, but nowadays the names *totèki* and *kaku*, which probably originate in Curaçao are more commonly used. *totèki* is related to, or derived from *tuqueque*, *tuteque* an Amerindian word used for geckos in Venezuela and parts of Colombia. In Papiamentu geckos were formerly called *totèki pegapega*, *turtèki* or *turtiki pegapega*. Nowadays they are called *pega pega*.

wampanaria (C, B) - seafans (*Gorgonia ventalina* and *Gorgonia flabellum*). These gorgonians grow in the sea in shallow water where water movement is strong. This word is related to the word *manari*, *manàre*, meaning ‘strainer’ or ‘sieve’, in Guajiro *manái*. In the past in Papiamentu a sieve was called *manaria*. These sea fans were used to sieve flour. *wa-* or *wu-* often indicates a plurality, each fan has several leaf like structures.

waranawa (A, C, B) - salted mullet or sometimes another species of salted fish. This word comes from Paraguaná and it seems to have been introduced into Papiamentu via Spanish. In Paraguaná it is called *guaranaro* (the mullet is called by its Spanish name *lisa*). Nevertheless it is very likely an original Caquetío word, which in the past could have been used by the Caquetío on the islands as well and may have been introduced into Papiamentu quite long ago. It is not known whether the original Caquetío word referred to the mullet or to its dried and salted form or both. Nowadays salted fish is not produced in Curaçao and mullet is not a very popular fish since it is often associated with muddy inner bays, while people prefer fish from the open sea. In the past, when fish from the open sea were more difficult to catch than those in shallow waters and inner bays, this could very well have been different. It is known that the Caquetío used to eat fish such as *warashi* and *macabí*, which today are not popular and are hardly eaten at all. At present, *waranawa* refers exclusively to imported Venezuelan salted fish. *waranawa* is also used figuratively as in *Bo por skonde waranawa, ma bo n’por skonde su oló* (You can hide a *waranawa*, but you cannot hide its smell).

warashi (A, B) (P28) - bonefish (*Albula vulpes*)

warawara (A, C, B) - the crested Caracara (*Caracara cheriway* syn. *Polyborus plancus*)

warwacowa, **warwacoha**, **warbacoa** (A, B), **barbacoa** (A) - the bare-eyed pigeon (*Columba corensis*), Caquetio *wakoa*, Lokono *wakokwa*. Warwacoha is the original form; this has later corrupted into Barbacoa, which is now (sadly) the officially recognized standard (VOP, 2009).

warwarú (A, C, B) - whirlwind, tornado, waterspout or dust devil. Taylor (1958) states:

“Another possible and perhaps more likely etymon for *warrawarrou* and *warwarau* is a word meaning ‘thunder’ (or ‘thunderstorm’), which





Sir Wm. Young recorded in 1792, from a Vincentian Carib in Tobago, as *warawiarou*. Some 150 years earlier, Breton had recorded this word's Dominican equivalent as *ouallouhúyourou*; and some 150 years later, I recorded its Central America Island-Carib equivalent as *uaiuhúru*. The phonetic changes present no difficulty."

In Guajiro we find *wawai* for cyclone or tornado (Jusayú & Zubiri, 1977). It is unlikely that *warwarú* would have been introduced into Papiamentu from Island Carib and that at the same time it would have acquired a somewhat different meaning. Nor is this word found in Spanish. Thus it is likely an original Caquetío word that bears a family resemblance to a related Island Carib (Kallinago) word. Island Carib is an Arawakan language related to Caquetío which is called "Island Carib" because of strong Carib influence in the language.

washiri (A, B) - egg of an iguana

watakeli (C), **watakali** (A), **wakeri** (B) (P²⁹) - (*Bourreria succulenta*) a small tree or shrub with small orange berries, used as food by birds, especially parakeets, parrots and blue doves. In Venezuela it is called *guatacare*, *guatacaro*. In English it is called bodywood, currant tree, pigeonberry, (Bahama) strongbark or Bahama strongback.

watapana (A, C, B) (P³⁰) - (*Caesalpinia coriaria*), a common indigenous tree which is often bent by the wind. *-apana* refers to leaves, *wa-* or *wu-* often indicates a plurality and also the idea of "having", (de Goeje, 1928). The /t/ could be a phonological addition to facilitate the pronunciation (epenthesis). *watapana* probably means "has many (small) leaves". This tree has feathered leaves with many small leaflets. See also: *dividivi*. The form *guatapaná* is found in Taíno and on the Spanish mainland.

wawuya (C) - an almost extinct name for the rufous-collared sparrow (*Zonotrichia capensis*). This word is not in use anymore. Nowadays this bird is called Chochorogai (male) or Chinchirinchi (female).

wayaca [wayacá] (A), **wayaká** (C, B) (P³¹) - The tree *lignum vitae* (*Guaiacum officinale*), according to the Spanish cronistas in Taíno it is named *guayacán*, a word nowadays also used in Spanish. This may also be a Caquetío word, the form *wayaká* seems more original than *guayacán* and it is a very common indigenous tree. The word *guayacán* is also used on the mainland. On the other hand it seems strange that in Bonaire the closely related tree *Guaiacum sanctum* is named *bulabari*, this makes one suspect that *wayaká* could be an imported Taíno word. This example also demonstrates the difficulty of deciding which Amerindian words in Papiamentu are likely to be originally from Caquetío.

wimpiri (C, B) - a small insect, which does not bite like the "- Praga-" but is an annoyance anyway since it tends to enter the nose, eyes and ears. These are *Drosophila* flies. The word is likely of Carib origin and derives from the





Karina form *mapili* or from *mapiri*, which is used in Cariban languages in Venezuela. In Surinam the word *mam'pier* is used for the similar looking *Colocoides* (biting midges, gnats) species (van Donselaar 1989), which in Curaçao are called *Praga*. In Bonaire however the *Praga* is called *Wimpiri*. It thus seems likely that the name *Wimpiri* originally applied to the biting midges which in Curaçao Papiamentu are nowadays called *Praga*, while the name *Wimpiri* was then transferred to the non-biting *Drosophila* flies. This is yet another example of a name being transferred to another, usually somewhat similar, species. *Wimpiri* is clearly related to similar words in Cariban languages. It thus seems less likely that the form *Wimpiri* is of Caquetío origin, however this possibility cannot be excluded; it could be the result of Carib influence on the Caquetío language. The word *Wimpiri* is not found in Spanish, Portuguese or Dutch and cannot have been introduced into Papiamentu through any of these languages. In Aruba the word *Ashibi* is in use, which is related to *shipe* in Guajiro (Wayu, Wayúu, Wahiro), an Arawak language. Taíno, another Arawak language, used *jejenes*, *xexenes*.

yaga (A) - see *dabaruida*

yiwiri (A, B) - white-tipped dove (*Leptotila verreauxi*),

yuana (C, B), **yuwana** (A) (P32) - *yuana* (*Iguana iguana*) is found in Taíno as a name for *Cyclura* iguanas, it is also used in Guajiro for the Green iguana (*Iguana iguana*). It is very likely Caquetío as well. This is a very common indigenous animal. Spanish uses *iguana*, which is derived from Carib *iwana*; it is thus not derived via Spanish. The form *yuana kedébi* indicates it is very likely an original Caquetío word.

yuchi (C, B), **yiuchi** (A) - small child. In Guajiro we find; *jouú*, *jouí*

Many of the words mentioned above (unless otherwise noted) are not found in Spanish, nor in the Diccionario de La Lengua Guajira (Jusayú & Zubiri, 1977), nor in the Taíno dictionaries by Tejera (1977) and Aquino (1977). These words are thus unlikely to have been imported into Papiamentu from Spanish, Taíno or Guajiro.

7. Toponyms likely to be of Caquetío origin

Elements from Spanish include *seru* 'hill', *pos* 'well', *boca* 'bay', 'cove', *punta* 'point', *cueba* 'cave', and *kibrá* 'fissure', 'creek'. *rooi* is derived from Spanish *arroyo*, a usually dry river bed. Names like *Playa Kaketío* in Curaçao, have been excluded. This is a location named after a nearby Caquetío settlement, but not an original Caquetío toponym. Many toponyms with *Sabana* or derived from *Sabana*, which are found on all three islands have also been excluded. An example is "de Savaan" (an old Caquetío settlement





in Curaçao) but not an original Caquetío toponym. *Sabana* refers to a plain or somewhat flat area. In *Yatu (Largu)*, Largu is in parentheses since it is not Caquetío.

Cudishi seems Caquetío, but could also be derived from Papiamentu *kudishi*, which is derived from Spanish. This however seems less likely. *kudishi* means ‘avarice, greed, covetousness’ (in the Curaçao and Bonaire Papiamentu spelling the <c> becomes a <k>, but the original spelling of toponyms is maintained). In Papiamentu *baranca* means a large rock (in Spanish it is a gorge or ravine). *Malmok* is often considered to be an original Indian word, the name is found on both Aruba and Bonaire. However it could very well be derived from Dutch *malle mok* for this reason it is followed by a question mark.





Aruba

Anabui (Seru)
Anamichi
Andicuri, Andicouri
Angochi
Araburu
Arashi
Arikok, Avikok (Sero)
Aruba, Oruba, Orua
Avikurari
Ayo
Balashi
Barbacoa
Basiruti
Behika, Behuko
Boroncana
Bubali
Bucuti
Budui (Boca)
Boegoeroei, Bucurui (Sero)
Burubunu
Bushiri
Bushiribana
Butucu
Cababuna
Caburi
Cadushi (Largo)
Cadushi (Sero)
Camari
Camacuri
Canashito (Sero)
Caushati (Sero)
Caruburi
Cashero
Cashunti (Baranca)
Casibari
Catashi
Catiri
Cawara
Choroni
Cocodoro
Cubeju

Cubou
Cucu (Sero)
Cudarebo, Cudarebe
Curuburi, Corobori (Seru)
Cuwana
Daimari, Damari (Rooi, Boca)
Eayac (Cuy grandi)
Fofoti
Guadirikiri, Wadirikiri (Cueva)
Guarero (Sero)
Hadicurari
Hadicuri
Hubada
Hudishibana (limestone terrace)
Huliba
Jaburibari (Seru)
Jucuri (Seru)
Juditi
Kadiwari
Kamay
Keito
Kimbaima, Kibaima
Kivarcu, Kivarco (Sero)
Kodekodemtu
Koyari
Kudawecha, Kudawechi (Sero)
Kukurui
Kurimiau, Kurimao
Mabon
Macuarima
Macubari
Madiki
Mahos (Boca)
Mahuma
Malmok ?
Manchebo
Masiduri
Matividiri
Moko
Nanki
Noka (Sero)

Paradera?
Paraguana, Parawana
Sasarawichi
Shaba
Shabururi, Shabiburi
Shidaharaca (Sero)
Shiribana
Siribana
Sividivi
Skepou ?
Suduri
Tarabana
Taratata, Tatarata
Tibushi
Tikibanaro
Teishi, Tijsji, Tishi (Sero)
Turibana
Uditi
Huliba, Uliba
Uña uña
Urataka (Sero)
Urirama (Boca)
Utie
Wakubana, Wacobana (Sero)
Wao-Wao (Sero)
Warawao
Warawara (Sero)
Warerikiri
Wariruri
Wayaca
Weburi
Wiriwari (Boca)
Yamanota (Sero)
Yanana
Yara
Yuwana (Morto), Yuana (Morto)
Yuwiti, Yuiti





Curaçao

Adicoura (Klein Curaçao)
Cariatavo
Charomba (Salt pan)
Chinchó, Chinchorro
Choloma
Cocori (Seru)
Codoko
Cudishi
Curazao, Curaçao
Maco
Macola
Mahuma
Maniguacoa
Padiki (nowadays Patrick)
Parasasa
Wakawa, Wacao
Wanapa
Wandomi
Wanota
Watamula

Bonaire

Amboina
Bacuna
Bototó
Buynari, Buynare, Buinare
Cabuja (Seru)
Caracao (Seru)
Casicunda (Seru)
Curuburu
Garati (Pos)
Guarati, Garati (Kibrá)
Hobao (Seru)
Huba (Rooi)
Ishiri
Jua, Juwa (Seru)
Karati (Seru)
Kaumati (Seru)
Koahara, Koahari (Rooi)
Macoshi
Macutucao (Seru)
Malmok?
Manparia Cutu
Morotin
Nawati
Nikiboko
Onima (Boca, Cueba)
Orizjan (Cueba)
Roshikiri
Shishiribana (Seru)
Sorobon
Wamari
Wanapa
Wanico
Warahama, Warahami
Wasao (Seru)
Washikemba, Washikemoa (Boca)
Watapana
Wayacá
Wecua (Punta, Seru)
Yatu Bacu
Yatu (Largu)

Yuana (Seru)





8. Possible etymology and comments on Aruba toponyms

Arashi - nowadays this is one of best sites to fish for *warashi* (bonefish, *Albula vulpes*) in Aruba. This makes it likely that *arashi* could be the/a singular form of *warashi*. It is known that *warashi* was an important food item for the Aruba Caquetío. During archeological excavations of a Caquetío village at Tanki Flip in Aruba, 13,7 % of all fish remains found were bonefish (Versteeg & Rostain, 1997). Nowadays the bonefish is popular for sport fishing, it is not usually eaten because of its many bones, but it can be used for fish soup.

Balashi - contains the root *bala* meaning the sea, Balashi is situated near the sea.

Burubunu - in the Venezuelan state of Falcón, near Zazárida a small village called Borobuno is found (Cruz Esteves, 1989).

Casibari - At this location there is a pile of very large rocks. *ca-*, *ka-* is a localizer meaning ‘there is’, ‘there are’, *siba* or *quiba* means ‘stone’ or ‘rock’, *rí* means ‘strong’, ‘hard’, ‘durable’. Casibari would then mean “there are hard rocks.” The name of the island of Saba is probably also derived from Siba, curiously in English the island is also called “The Rock”.

Hudishibana ^(P8) - a calcareous terrace, nowadays the site of a golf course. *juri*, *judi*, *hudi* means ‘wind’ (Cruz Esteves, 1989), *bana* ‘wide’, ‘plain’. Hudishibana would mean ‘windy plain’. The photograph ^(P8) was taken before the present golf field was constructed.

Macuarima - Named after a legendary Indian girl with this name, who used to live there (Anonymous, 2004).

Matividiri - In Paraganá a hill with a nearby village is called Matividiro (Cruz Esteves, 1989).

Taratata, Tatarata - in the Venezuelan state of Falcón, the toponyms: Taratara, Taratare and Tatatarare are found (Cruz Esteves, 1989).

9. Possible etymology and comments on Curaçao toponyms

Adicoura - According to Van Grol, this is the original name of the island Klein Curaçao. The name Nicula is also found in historical records. In Paraganá we find the village Adicoura.

Cariatávo, Cariatabo, Careotabo - the name of a cove or small lagoon east of the Schottegat (Hartog, 1968). *cari* means ‘coast’, ‘shore’ (Cruz Esteves, 1989) *abo* means ‘place’, *tabo* ‘the branching of a tree or river’, ‘where one river meets another’. Cariatávo was probably a small lagoon at the end of the Rooi Koraal Specht, cq. where this rooi meets the shore. Nowadays this is the site of the Breezes Hotel.





Curaçao, Curazao - Curaçao is definitely not from Portuguese. Both Las Casas and Oviedo mention it very early and although their works were published somewhat later, their information goes back to the early sixteenth century. Las Casas (1552) states: “...y aquella debía ser la que llaman los indios *Curaçao*, la penúltima lengua...” [and this must be the island which the Indians call Curaçao, the before last syllable long]. Oviedo (1535) states: “...más al poniente de las islas de las Aves está la isla Bonaire; más al poniente de la isla Bonaire está otra que se llama de Corazante, más al poniente de Corazante está la isla llamada Aruba a lo que la carta llama *Corazante*, llaman los indios *Curazao*” [more to the west of the Aves islands lies the island of Bonaire; more to the west of the island of Bonaire there is another one called Corazante, more to the west of Corazante lies an island called Aruba....The island indicated as Corazante on the map, the Indians call Curazao]. Federmann (1530) also uses the name Curazao (see Martinez, 1971). The “Relación de Antonio Barbudo” which probably dates from 1570 mentions the Indios de Curaçao (see above). All these reports date back to a time when there was no Portuguese influence in Curaçao. The Spanish and Portuguese crowns had not yet been united under Felipe II of Spain (Felipe I of Portugal) and even then the overseas dependencies were kept under separate rule. Portuguese influence in Curaçao only started after 1634 with the Dutch occupation of the island and use of the island as a slave depot. After the Dutch in Brazil were defeated, some Dutch and Portuguese Jews migrated to Curaçao. The first Portuguese Jews arrived in 1652. If the word Curaçao were Portuguese this would be very exceptional. The word Antilles is of Portuguese origin (antelhas). The names of Brasil, Madeira and Açores are Portuguese as well, but they are within the Portuguese realm. Even in Surinam where early Portuguese influence on Sranan Tongo is in evidence, we do not find Portuguese toponyms. Thus Curaçao or Curazao is of Caquetío origin, but we do not know how the form Kòrsou (Corsow) which is used in Papiamentu came into being.

10. Possible etymology and comments on Bonaire toponyms

Amboïna, Ambuana (pronounce Ambwana) - In the Dominican Republic this name is also found. Amboïna, Amboïna is associated with caves or a well. The name Yuanaboïna is also found (Tejera, 1977). In Bonaire there is a well at Amboïna, Ambuana.

Buynari, Buinare - Nicolaas Federmann passed Bonaire in early 1530, in an account of his voyage which was published in Hagenau in 1557, he gives Buynari as the name of the island (Martinez, 1971). In some other





early sources the name Buinare is found.

Onima - a cave on the North coast of Bonaire, it is also the name of a nearby cove (Boca Onima). Taíno *ní* is ‘water’, Lokono *oni* means ‘rain’, *oniabo* means ‘water’ (Taylor, 1977). Caquetío *ima, nima* means ‘wet’, ‘humid’ (Cruz Esteves, 1989).

Yatu Bacu - In Venezuela the suffix *-baca* is found in place names.

Dauguaraubaca is a place along the Río Amacuro, in Eastern Venezuela near the Guyana border, in an area where Lokono Indians live. Dauguarau is a species of mangrove (*Conocarpus erecta*) – *baca* means ‘a group’, ‘a thicket’ (Alvarado, 1921). Yatu Bacu is probably related to Lokono – *baca*. In this location there are dense thickets of *yatu* cactus.

11. Words with less certain links to Caquetío

There is also a group of words of uncertain etymology. Some of these must surely be of Caquetío origin, but a different origin cannot be excluded.

Examples are:

bara-tai (B) - a bush or small tree (*Samyda dodecandra*)

batuti (B) - a vine (*Doyerea emetocathartica*)

brakuha (B) - a grass (*Sporobolus virginicus*)

bushurumu, bushurumbu (B) - a bush (*Lantana involucrata*)

chananá (C) - a creeping vine (*Evolvulus convolvuloides*)

chanchan (A, B, C) - buttocks

chokuèkuè, chokwèkwè, chokèkwè, chokèkè (C, B) - a seabird, Audubon’s shearwater (*Puffinus lherminieri*)

cocoi (C) - a quail (*Colinus cristatus*)

dakawa (B) - a small tree (*Maytenus tetragona*)

dalakochi (C,B), *tiracochi, dalacochi* (A) - a cricket

djaka (B, C), *djaca* (A) - a rat

djakarou, yakarou, rakiou (C) - edible *Nerita* sea snails

foño, funfun (B) - a cactus (*Pilocereus lanuginosus*)

guengu - a small crab, the “Sally lightfoot” (*Grapsus grapsus*)

huliba (A), *oliba* (B) - a tree (*Capparis indica*)

kahela (B) - the laughing gull (*Larus atricilla*)

karawau - a fish (*Periplus paru*)

kinikini - kestrel (*Falco sparverius*)

kokolodé (B, C), *cocolode* (A) - an herb (*Heliotropium angiospermum*)

makuaku (C, B) - the frigate bird or man o’ war bird (*Fregata magnificens*)

nebuha (A) - a plant with a large tuber (*Cerathosantes palmata*)

olitu - the yellowmouth grouper (*Mycteroperca interstitialis*)





purunchi (A,C,B) - the name for two groupers, the grasby and the coney. The *purunchi* or *purunchi kabritu* (*Cephalopholis cruentata*) and the *purunchi*, *purunchi pretu*, or *purunchi barika blanku* (*Epinephelus fulvus*) in Bonaire it also has the name *rei di punchi*. Pinart (1890) mentions the name *purantsi* on a list of Indian words from Aruba, but this list contains several words which are definitely not Indian (see van Buurt and Joubert, 1997.)

serashi - a small tree, (*Trichilia trifolia*)

tata (A, B, C) - father

teku (C), *teco* (A) - a bromelia (*Bromelia humilis*)

totèki - (C,B) Anolis lizard

uruzján, *urizján*, *ulizján* (B) - part of a pond or water catchment area with a treacherous sucking, sticking muddy bottom, also used to indicate a water hole where water is welling up.

warero, *wareru* (A) - a vine, (*Cissus verticilata*)

12. Acknowledgements

The listing of words in this article is based to a large extent on the book *Stemmen uit het Verleden*, which I published with my cousin Sidney M. Joubert, in Dutch in 1997. Among the many people who cooperated in the publication of this book, mention has to be made of the late Antoine J. Maduro. I also wish to thank Carel P. de Haseth for many suggestions. *Stemmen uit het Verleden* did not explicitly state which Amerindian words in the Papiamentu language are likely to be original Caquetío words and which ones are likely to have been imported via Spanish, Taíno or Guajiro. Since this is to some extent a subjective judgment, it was felt that it would be best to present the available evidence and let readers draw their own conclusions. This has turned out to be a major mistake, leaving room for totally erroneous interpretations. In this publication there are a few additions not found in the original list. I wish to thank Byron Boekhoudt in Aruba for the names of scorpion fishes in Aruba and information on the *warashi* and Julio Beaujon for information on the *teishi*. Ramon Todd Dandaré provided additional information for Aruba and its spelling and Chila de Haseth – Bolivar has proofread the manuscript. Fayona Flanegien provided the addition of the toponym *Suduri* in Aruba. Fred M. Chumaceiro made the maps for this version of the article.







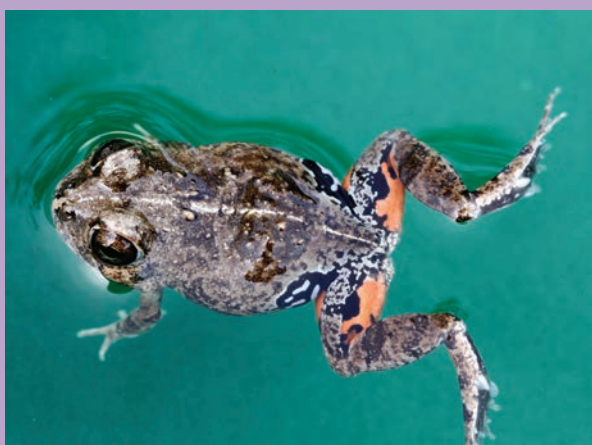
P1 Bushi
(*Melocactus macracanthos*)



P2 Dabaruida (A)
(*Pithecellobium unguis-cati*)



P3 Dividivi
(*Caesalpinia coriaria*)



P4 Dori maco
(*Pleurodema brachyops*)



P5 Fofoti
(*Laguncularia racemosa*)



P6 Gogorobí
(Photo Docco Engels)



P7 Hobada
(*Acacia tortuosa*)



P8 Hudishibana
(Photo Jan Beaujon)



P9 Ishiri
(*Crateva tapia*)



P10 Kadushi pushi
(*Pilosocereus lanuginosus*)



P11 Kamari
(*Coccoloba swartzii*)



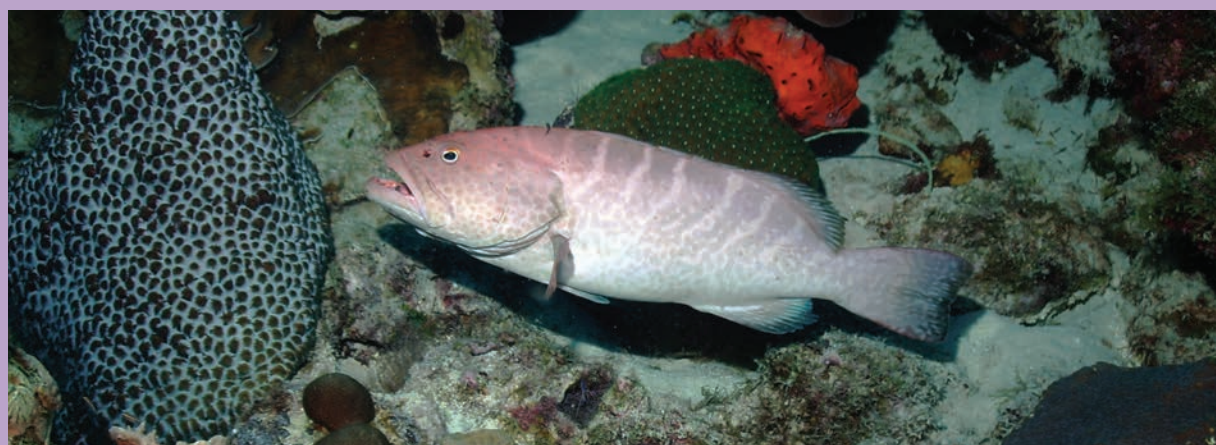
P12 Karawara
(*Cordia dentata*) (Photo Carel P. de Haseth)



P13 Karkidaki (B) Catashi (A)
(*Phyllanthus botryanthus*)



P15 Kododo
(*Cnemidophorus arubensis*)



P14 Kasha Kutu
(*Mycteroperca tigris*) (Photo John Dohmen)

Caquetío Indians on Curaçao during colonial times and Caquetío words in the Papiamentu language



P16 Kokorobana
(*Mallotonia gnaphalodes*)



P17 Mahawa in shallow water
(*Paranthias furcifer*) (Photo Mark Vermeij)



P18 Makurá
(*Abrus precatorius*)



P19 Marihuri-Manihuri
(*Manihot carthagenensis*)



P20 Patalewa (B)
(*Pandion haliaetus*)



P21 Shimaruku
(*Malpighia emarginata*)



P22 Shoshori, Shoshoro
(*Passiflora foetida*) 1



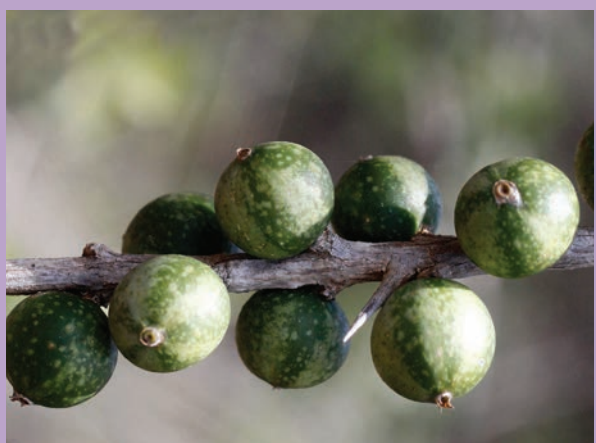
P23 Shoshori, Shoshoro
(*Passiflora foetida*) 2



P24 Tampañá



P25 Tarabara (A)
(*Mimosa distachya*)



P26 Wakurá
(*Randia aculeata*)



P27 Waltaca (Aruba)
(*Anolis lineatus*)



P28 Warashi
(*Albula vulpes*) (Photo Mark Vermeij)



P29 Watakeli
(*Bourreria succulenta*)



P30 Watapana
(*Caesalpinia coriaria*)



P31 Wayaká
(*Guaiacum officinale*)



P32 Yuana
(*Iguana iguana*) (Photo M. da Costa Gomez)

Some names of Animals and Plants in Papiamentu language



P33 Bachi pretu, Barika hel
(*Coereba flaveola*)



P34 Bichi di dos kabes
(*Liotyphlops albirostris*)



P35 Bichi di kandela
(Photo Carel de Haseth)



P37 Blenchi dõrnasol
(Photo Carel de Haseth)



P36 Blousana
(*Cnemidophorus murinus*) male



P38 Bringamosa
(*Jatropha urens*)

Some names of Animals and Plants in Papiamentu language



P39 Bringamosa
(*Jatropha urens*)



P40 Chokuèkuè, Chokèkè
(*Puffinus lherminieri*) (Photo Kai Wulf)



P41 Deklá
(*Phalacrocorax brasilianus*)



P42 Djuku
(*Mucuna sloanei*)



P43 Grastèlchi di piedra
(Photo Mark Vermeij)

Some names of Animals and Plants in Papiamentu language



P44 Guengu
(*Grapsus grapsus*) (Photo Carel de Haseth)



P45 Kahela
(*Larus atricilla*)



P47 Kapoti as
(*Nezara viridula*)



P48 Kenepa spiritu or Guyaba baster
(*Casearia tremula*)



P46 Kaktus sürnam
(*Euphorbia lactea*)

Some names of Animals and Plants in Papiamentu language



P49 Kipópó
(*Coprinus comatus*)



P50 Koffie ku lechi (A)
(*Ameiva bifrontata*)



P51 Kokolishi di kalakuna
(*Cerion uva*)



P52 Lolo di awa
(*Holothuria mexicana*)



P53 Makamba
(*Himantopus mexicanus*)

Some names of Animals and Plants in Papiamentu language



P54 Makamba hulandes
(*Chaetodon capistratus*) (Photo Mark Vermeij)



P57 Maripampun
(*Matelea rubra*)



P55 Makamba marinero
(*Chaetodon striatus*) (Photo Mark Vermeij)



P58 Mata piská
(*Jaquinia armillaris*)



P56 Maribomba
(*Polistes*) (Photo Carel de Haseth)

Some names of Animals and Plants in Papiamentu language



P59 Mata piská
(*Jaquinia armillaris*)



P60 Patia di zumbi
(*Solanum agrarium*)



P61 Patu morèkè



P62 Pishiporko flùitdó
(*Canthidermis sufflamen*) (Photo Mark Vermeij)



P63 Shon Piet
(*Haematopus palliatus*)

Some names of Animals and Plants in Papiamentu language



P64 Soldachi
in Cerion uva shell



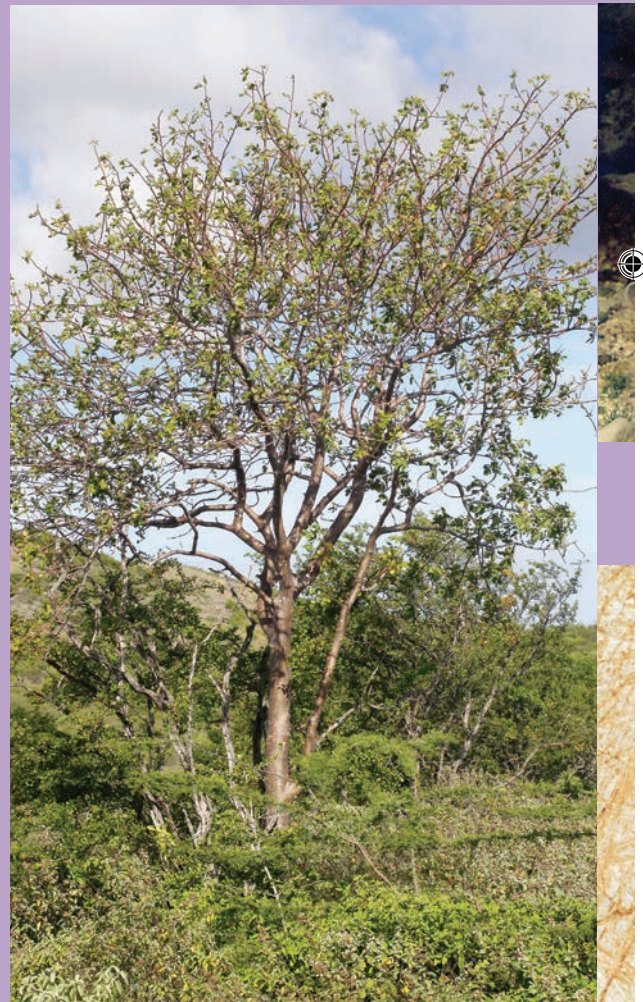
P65 Stul di zumbi
(Ganoderma resinaceum)



P66 Takamahak
(Bursera tomentosa)



P68 Tonto di Lareina
(Clitoria ternatea) (Photo Carel de Haseth)



P67 Takamahak
(Bursera tomentosa)

Some names of Animals and Plants in Papiamentu language



P69 Trupial kachó
(*Icterus nigrogularis*)



P70 Trupial sabí
(*Icterus icterus*)



P72 Yakupeper
(*Epinephelus striatus*) (Photo Paul Hoetjes)



P73 Yeye
(Photo Carel de Haseth)



P71 Vrumu, Frumu
(*Serranus phoebe*)





Some names of Animals and Plants in Papiamentu







For many years I have been intrigued by the names of various animals and plants in Papiamentu and wondered how or why they would have acquired such names. Some of these names I have known since childhood. My grandmother warned me about the *Kenepa spiritu* and told me not to eat its fruit. My mother explained to me that the difference between a *watapana* and a *dividivi* tree was that the *dividivi* was bent by the wind, but that they were otherwise the same (much later I found out, somewhat to my chagrin that this explanation was only correct in the sense that in Curaçao both refer to the same tree; see below). Some of the names in use in Bonaire I learned while vacationing with an uncle living there. Many of these names however I encountered much later at the Curaçao Island Department of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries (Dienst Landbouw, Veeteelt en Visserij, Eilandgebied Curaçao, D.L.V.V.) where I worked from June 1977 to February 2006. I was in charge of Fisheries and had many contacts with local fishermen. For many years I was also in charge of the small local zoo. Many of the local workers in this zoo came from the Western part of the island, the Banda Abou area. This is a more rural part of Curaçao. In this area several names not commonly heard elsewhere are still in use and a few (mostly Caquetío) words are only known and used by people from this region. As a biologist at the Department I was also involved in all things having to do with nature, such as identifying unusual plants and animals and also plant diseases. In the course of my work I visited the nearby islands on many occasions and thus acquired many contacts and became familiar with names used on Aruba and Bonaire as well.

Previously in the former article in this book a list of many original Caquetío words, many of them names for animals and plants was published (most but not all of these words are still being used in Papiamentu). For this reason these names are not included in the listing below. Nevertheless I have since concluded that the words *Gutu*, a general term for parrotfish, about which I was unsure at the time and the name of the tiger grouper (*Mycteroperca tigris*) which is *Kasha Kutu*, should have been included in the previous listing of words of Caquetío origin. *Gutu* is probably derived from *Kutu*, *Cutu* which contains the root *-utu* meaning fish. Sound changes from [g] to [k] and vice versa are fairly common. In Bonaire we also find the toponym *Manparia Cutu*. Among the words in this article some can also be found which should be added





to the listing of “words with less certain links to Caquetío” in the previous article, for example: *Chokwèkè*, *Guengu* and *Kahela*. Thus it can be seen that there always remain loose ends and sometimes suddenly some small eureka moment or a new piece of information makes you see something you did not realize before.

The listing below discusses the etymological origins of many curious names of plants and animals in Papiamentu excluding those of Caquetío origin which were already mentioned in the previous article. Some are fairly common words, while others are only very rarely used.

Unlike the previous list of words of Caquetío origin, this is by no means intended as a complete inventory. Nevertheless I trust that this listing will provide some insight into the Papiamentu lexicon and will be of some interest both to those studying Papiamentu as well as to the general reader.

Lectori Salutem!





Aldu (C,B), **haldo** (A) - This is a name for mullet, the name is derived from Dutch *aarder*, which refers to *aarde* (earth), since the fish derives part of its food by upturning bottom sediments. Nowadays in Dutch it is named *harder*.

Ala seku - Oceanic White tip shark (*Carcharrhinus longimanus*). This shark has very large pectoral fins and also a large broad dorsal fin. These fins have white tips. The word *ala* refers to these fins and the word *seku* (dry) may indicate that the tips of these fins are “dry” or “wilted”.

In the 1960's this shark was still very common around Curaçao; nowadays it is quite rare and the name *Ala seku* is hardly used anymore.

Bachi pretu (B) (P³³) - This is the Papiamentu name for the Bananaquit (*Coereba flaveola*) in Bonaire (The name means Black jacket) where it is also called *Chibichibi*. In Curaçao it is called *Barika hel* (yellow belly), and in Aruba *pecho geel* (yellow breast).

Bai no bolbe, Bai no bolberá (Curaçao, Bonaire) - A bush (*Strumpfia maritima*) which grows on calcareous rocks along the coast. In English it is called *Pride-of-Big-Pine*. Strangely enough this plant is not poisonous. Thus the meaning of the Papiamentu name “go and do not return” or “go and you will not return” is a bit of a mystery. In Bonaire this name is sometimes used for *Suriana maritima* (Bay Cedar), another bush growing near the sea, this plant is not poisonous either. The more common name for this plant in Bonaire is *Tabaku di piskadó muhé*.

Bakoba (C,B) **Bacoba** (A) - A banana for direct consumption such as for example Cavendish (*Musa acuminata* and also hybrids of *Musa acuminata* and *Musa balbisiana*). The word is derived from *Pacoba*, a banana in Angola (Van Donselaar, 1989). Portuguese: *Pacoba*, Dutch: *Bakove*

Bandera spañó - This is the Spanish hogfish (*Bodianus rufus*). This fish normally has a purple upper fore-body with a yellow-gold lower body and tail and again some purple on the belly. The purple often turns to reddish in larger individuals from deeper water, which then display exactly the red-yellow-red colors of the Spanish flag. This is also the origin of the English name *Spanish hogfish*.

Barbulètè (B,C), **Barbulet** (A) - A hawk moth. The word is derived from Portuguese *Borboleta*. Large *Barbulètè*, especially those which are dark brown or grayish black, are feared as a harbinger of death, when they enter a house. They are said to announce that someone will die.

Bèskop - Short fin Pilot whale (*Globicephala macrorhynchus*), from Dutch *butskop*.

Bichi di dos kabes (C) (P³⁴) - This is the name of the whitenose blind snake or blind worm snake (*Liotyphlops albirostris*). This is a very small snake, a reptile, which looks like a worm. It is a burrowing snake which eats ants, termites and their eggs. It is not blind but has very small eyes which are hidden below a scute; the head looks quite similar to the rounded tail. The





Papiamentu word *Bichi* normally refers to worms, thus the Papiamentu name can be translated as “two-headed worm”.

Bichi di kachu - The tobacco hornworm (*Manduca sexta*) and other similar species. This is a large light green caterpillar which often attacks cassava, tomatoes and papaya.

Bichi di kandela (P³⁵) - This is a Firefly. It is curious that in this case the noun *bichi* applies to a flying insect and does not have its normal Papiamentu meaning of “worm, caterpillar or grub”. This is in accordance with the use of the word *bicho* in Portuguese, which refers to animals in general, especially small ones: “*designação generalizada aos animais, especialmente aos pequenos*” (Almeida Costa & Sampaio e Melo, 1992). *Bicho* is derived from “*bestia*”. In Spanish the word *Bicha* exists, which is derived from Portuguese *Bicho*, but which has different meanings (Vox Diccionario, 1977). In some Latin American countries *bicho* is also used with the same meaning in Spanish, and in this case the Spanish word is derived from Portuguese. The noun *bichi* as in *Bichi di Kandela* is probably an older word in the Papiamentu lexicon, probably derived from Portuguese and still used in its original meaning. Later on *bichi* acquired its present more restricted meaning of worm or worm-like animal.

Blousana, Blasana, Bloublou, Blaublau, Blòblò (P³⁶) - The males of the large Curaçao lizard (*Cnemidophorus murinus*), which are light grey with blue on the feet and tail and some blue on the head. The large males are locally called *Blousana*, *Bloublou* or *Blòblò*, derived from the Dutch word *blauw*, meaning ‘blue’, referring to their blue color. The large males of the related species *C. ruthveni* in Bonaire are also called by the same names, although in Bonaire the name *Kododo* is used more frequently. In Aruba *C. arubensis* is called *Kododo*. *Blousana* is someyimes used. *Blòblò* is also used as a derogatory name for the police, especially the riot police, who have blue uniforms. *Blousa* means “to apply blue indigo paint; usually to a baby, to protect it against the evil eye”. The form *Blousana* can be interpreted as meaning “the one that has been painted blue (although not against the evil eye)”.

Blenchi (P³⁷) - General name for a hummingbird. A translation of *Blenchi* would be “the one that blinds”, which refers to its reflective, irriscedent colors. *Blèndu* means “to blind (with light)” and is derived from Dutch *verblinden* (*verblinden* → *ferblèndu* → *blèndu*). The ruby-topaz hummingbird (*Chrysolampus mosquitus*) is called *blenchi dòrnasol*. A somewhat interpretative translation could be “the one that blinds, adorned with the sun’s colors” (the male has red and yellow plumage). Frederiks (1859), the oldest published Papiamentu wordlist, gives “blinkertsji” as the Papiamentu name for kolibrie. In Aruba it is called *blenchi di color*. Nowadays the name *blenchi dòrnasol* is also coming into use in Aruba. This





is probably a result of the fact that the name *dòrnasol* is the only Papiamentu name mentioned for this species in the main bird identification guides for the Islands of Aruba, Curaçao and Bonaire.

Bonchi kinchoncho - See *Wandu*

Brantkónofes, Brantkonefeshi, Brantfes, Brant - This is the name for scorpion-fishes (*Scorpaenidae*). These fishes have poisonous spines and an extremely painful sting which requires medical treatment. Unlike the sting of Indo-Pacific scorpionfishes, however, the sting of the Caribbean scorpionfishes is seldom deadly. These fish are not aggressive but one can accidentally step on one or get injured while pulling in one on a fishing line. The name probably derives from Dutch *brandkoningsvis* (meaning: burning or fire king fish). Often the name *brandkonofes* is shortened simply to *brand*. According to Van Venlo (1954) the name for this fish is *brandhoriveesj*, derived from Dutch *brandhoornvis* (“burning or fire horn fish”). I have never heard this version of the name being used. Often where synonyms exist over time only one form prevails.

Bringamosa ^(P38+39) - A prickly plant (*Jatropha urens*) with very fine sharp venomous spines. The name means “fighting woman” It is however very likely that the name derives from Spanish *pringamosa*, “prickly woman”, sound changes from [p] to [b] and vice versa are very common.

Buní flùitdó - Any very large tuna, such as a large yellow fin tuna or the usually even larger big-eye tuna, which makes the fishing line “whistle” (Dutch: *fluit*) when it is caught. *Buní* is derived from *Bonito*, in Papiamentu it is used to refer to all tunas.

Buní halfash, Buní halfashi - Yellow fin tuna (*Thunnus albacares*). The name is derived from the Dutch word *halfwas*, meaning an animal that is not yet fully grown. The Papiamentu name was initially used to distinguish the yellowfin tuna from the larger, presumably “fully grown” big eye tuna.

Buní karèt - The Skipjack tuna (*Katsuwonis pelamis*). The word *karèt* refers to a marbled pattern on the dorsal side of the fish; it is of Amerindian (Carib) origin. In Bonaire this fish is called *Buní porko*, which may refer to its very rounded appearance.

Buní wowo di baka - Litt. Translation: Cow-eyed tuna. This is the big-eye tuna (*Thunnus obesus*).

Chapin (B) - Name used in Bonaire for trunkfish, in Curaçao they are called *Kaha di morto* (coffin). During the years when a local airline was flying with box-like short commuter airplanes people in Bonaire started to call this aircraft *Chapin*. In Spanish. *chapín* is a type of shoe and is also used as a name for trunkfishes.

Chokuèkuè, Chokwèkè, Chokèkè (B,C)^(P40) - As is often the case with little used words, different forms exist. Voous (1983) uses *Chokwèkwè*, Brenneker (1969) uses *Chokwèkè* and some of the (older) people who still remember





this word use *Chokèkè*. This form was used in a song and most people seem to remember the song, but not the story behind it. The *Chokwèkwè* is both a mythical bird and a real bird. *Chokwèkwè* is an onomatopoeic form.

Breeding calls of the *Chokwèkwè* can be downloaded at the internet site:

<http://www.xeno-canto.org/browse.php?query=puffinus+lherminieri>

The actual sounds of this bird could fit all three descriptions. The easier to pronounce *Chokèkè* would then presumably become the present day preferred form. The mythical *Chokwèkwè* is a bird that was greatly feared, when its cries are heard during the night someone nearby will die (Brenneker, 1969). It can also announce some other impending disaster.

Ai! Chokèkè, Chokèkè, ki ta bai pasa? (“Ai! Chokèkè, Chokèkè, what will happen?”).

The real *Chokwèkwè* is the Audubon’s shearwater (*Puffinus lherminieri*).

This bird is quite rare in this area and is sometimes seen far at sea. Very few people on these islands have ever seen one, or would recognize one if they saw one. It is however likely that they could have been more numerous in the past. The bird is nocturnal at its breeding place and nests underground,

thus its presence is not easily detected. These birds are disoriented by lights and only nest in very dark areas. It has nested and may still be nesting in Bonaire (Voous, 1983) and very likely has nested or could still be nesting in Curaçao also. It makes loud calls in the night. Since the *Chokwèkwè*

plays a prominent role in local mythology, which is mostly of African origin, one would expect this word to be of African origin. It also sounds like an African word. The name is primarily associated with Curaçao, and does not seem to originate in Bonaire. There are no records for this bird from Aruba.

This would also argue in favor of an African origin. These birds are found in Cabo Verde. On the other hand, since *Chokwèkwè* is simply an

onomatopoeic form, it cannot be fully excluded from consideration that this name could be of Caquetío origin. With the advent of electrical lighting and further urbanization of the countryside, both the mythological and the real *Chokwèkwè* are now fading away into the mists of the past. The last report of one seen near Aruba, Curaçao and Bonaire is from 2003, when a group of four was seen flying at sea near Sorobon, Bonaire (Prins et al., 2009).

Audubon’s shearwater is found on Saba, where it is called wedrego and also on St. Eustatius. These shearwaters are experiencing severe declines on Saba and are probably declining on Statia as well. Shearwaters and the related

tropicbirds were both feared on many Caribbean islands, where they were known as ‘devil-birds’. The generic name, *Puffinus* is derived from puffin which is an Anglo-Norman word (Middle English *pophyn*) for the cured carcasses of nestling shearwaters. These puffins are good eating, and it is possible that local folklore on them is so prominent both because of their calls and also because they were prized food. They were certainly eaten on





St. Eustatius where Voous (1983), says that they were... “Esteemed by local inhabitants as good eating...”. In Curaçao there are no historical records mentioning them having been used as food, nor does Curaçao folklore refer to this.

Similar legends exist elsewhere in relation to other species of shearwater. The Vikings were terrified by the very similar manx shearwater around Britain and Norse legend has it that the Vikings thought the shearwater calls were those of local trolls. The island of Pico in the Azores is a major nesting site of Cory’s shearwater. Their homecoming call at night is a strangulated screech; disconcerted sailors believed they were the calls of drowned souls in torment. Papiamentu also has the expression “*Nan ta kwèk manera Chokèkè*” [They are cackling like *Chokèkè*]. This is said when several people in a group are talking loudly at the same time.

Dalakochi (B, C), **Dalacochi**, **Tiracochi** (A) - A cricket. These are very curious names of unknown origin.

Deklá (P41) - This is the neotropical cormorant (*Phalacrocorax brasiliensis*). The name is probably derived from Dutch “duikelaar”. According to Van Dale in Surinam Dutch the name duikelaar was used for both the Anhinga (slangenhalsvogel) and for cormorants (aalscholvers). See Van Donselaar (1989, [1976]) also.

Djakarou, **Rakiou**, **Rakeliou** (C) - The name applies to marine snails of the species *Nerita*, mostly *Nerita peloronta*. These snails are edible and up to the early 20th century they were being sold in the local market in Curaçao (Maduro; Coomans). The name could be indigenous, possibly a Caquetío word, but in my opinion it is more likely that it is derived from Dutch rakelen (to harvest with a rake). (See picture on front cover)

Djampou - The black grouper (*Mycteroperca bonaci*). One would suspect that this name is derived from the name of a person, such as Jan Paul or Jean-Paul.

Djuku (B,C), **Djucu** (A) (P42) - A sea bean or nickar nut. Sometimes we also find the English name as nickar nuts. The more rounded sea beans are called nickar nuts. Such nuts are regularly found on beaches along the North coasts of Aruba and Curaçao and the North and East coast of Bonaire. They are nuts from tropical vines of the *Fabaceae* family, which grow in many tropical regions; including the Central and South American and West-African forests. Such nuts are often carried by rivers to the sea. Many similar species exist. On these islands *Mucuna sloanei*, is most commonly found; a round grayish brown nut with a broad black band around the edge. *Dioclea reflexa* is a somewhat more flattened nut, sometimes D shaped, usually tan with dark brown mottling, with a much narrower band. But some *Mucuna* which are quite similar to *Dioclea* also exist. These seeds can germinate after a long time in the sea, but do not grow on these islands since the





climate is too arid. The English name nickar nut is derived from Dutch *nikker*, meaning “person of African descent” (Nelson, 2000). The, often grayish black or grayish brown, rounded nuts with thick lips were compared to the features of black people in the eyes of some of the beholders. The Papiamentu name *Djuku* could possibly be related to the name of the *Djuka*, an African descended ethnic group in Surinam, based on similar comparisons. Many of these nuts reach the Caribbean from the Amazon and Orinoco deltas and also across the Atlantic from the river deltas of tropical West Africa. Slaves arriving from West Africa must already have been familiar with them. One would expect the name *Djuku* to originate in a West-African Language. Papiamentu also has the expressions *pretu* “*manera djuku*” meaning “black like a djuku” or “jetblack”, “*wowo manera djuku*” meaning “with very dark eyes” and also “*sabí manera djuku*” meaning “smart like a *djuku*” (Henriquez, 1988).

It is strange that *Djuku* is associated with “jet-black” in Papiamentu, while in fact the ones usually found in Curaçao are not jet-black, but dark brown or grayish brown. This suggests that the word *Djuku* originally may have referred to different jet-black species of otherwise similar beans and such species are found in Africa.

***Dradu kabishòt* (C,B), *Doro* [*Doró*] *cabishot*, *Drado cabishot*, *Cabishot* (A) -**

This is the male dolphin fish (*Coryphaena hippurus*) or mahi-mahi. *Dradu* is derived from “dorado” meaning gilt or golden.

Kabisjòt, *kabishòt* is derived from “Cachalot”, the name of the sperm whale. The origin of the name cachalot, cachalote is uncertain; it is thought to derive from the archaic French for “tooth” or “big teeth”, as preserved for example in cachau in the Gascon dialect (a word of either Romance or Basque origin). It is used in various languages such as Spanish, Portuguese, French and Italian. In Dutch it was called cachelot. In Dutch the name potvis is nowadays more commonly used for the sperm whale. The male dolphin fish has a head similar in shape to the head of a sperm whale.

***Flerchi*, [*Fleerchi*] - small species of flying fish with wings having translucent membranes, usually those of the genus *Cypselurus*, are called *Fleerchi*.**

Larger species of flying fish with dark wings, such as the fourwing flying fish *Hyrundichtys affinis* are called *buladó*. *Flerchi* very likely derives from Dutch Vleertje. Vleder, Vleer is a wing with a membrane as in vleermuis (bat), -tje is a Dutch diminutive suffix. Compare with German Fledermaus. *Buladó* derives from Spanish *volador*. Van Venlo (1954) thinks *flerchi* is derived from Old Dutch *fleertje* meaning “arrow”.

***Ganshi*, *Rogans* (A) - *Ganshi* is the name for a goose or geese but is also used for a pelican. At present, the name pelikan is usually preferred since geese and pelicans are clearly different animals. *Ganshi* is derived from Dutch *gans* “goose”. In Aruba the name *Rogans* is used for the brown**





pelican (*Pelecanus occidentalis*).

This name has variously been written as *Rógans* and *Rògans* in some bird identification guides, both are incorrect. *Rogans* is probably derived from Dutch roodgans “red goose”. The name probably refers to the redbrown breeding plumage on the hindneck of the brown pelican which is similar to the redbrown plumage of the roodhalsgans (*Branta ruficollis*) which in English is called red-breasted goose. The red color on this goose is found on the neck and extends to the breast. The name *Rogans* could also be related to Dutch Rotgans (*Branta bernicla*) which is called Brent goose in English. In some areas of the Netherlands Cormorants were also called rotgans (Van Dale, 1999). However the rotgans and the brown pelican do not share any special notable resemblance to each other, so it seems more likely that the Aruba name *rogans* derives from roodgans. Neither the Brent goose nor the red-breasted goose occur on these islands. The neotropical cormorant is called *deklá*.

Grastèlchi di piedra, Grastèlchi di laman (afó) (B,C), ***Grastelchi*** (A) ^(P43) -

The *Grastèlchi di piedra* is the yellowtail snapper (*Ocyurus chrysurus*), which is a reef fish. The *Grastèlchi di Laman*, sometimes also called *Grastèlchi di Laman afó* is the rainbow runner (*Elagatis bipinnulata*) which is a pelagic fish. *Grastèlchi* is derived from Dutch grassteeltje or “small grass stalk” and it probably refers to the yellow stripe on each side of the fish. Both species of fish have a similar form and coloration although they are not related. The terminology *di piedra* “of the stones” refers to the fact that it is found, where the stones are, on the reef. *Di laman* means “of the sea” and *di laman afó* “of the open sea”, thus correctly describing the habits of this fish. Van Venlo (1954) states that the name *grastèlchi* is derived from the fin rays of the dorsal fin of the *grastèlchi di piedra*, which have a greenish color. In Bonaire the form *Gristèlchi* is often used.

Guengu ^(P44) - a small crab that lives on rocks at the edge of the sea. In

English it is called Sally lightfoot (*Grapsus grapsus*). This is probably a name of African origin; these crabs are found in the tropics and subtropics of America and Africa. Slaves coming from African coastal areas would already have been familiar with them. It could also be a Caquetío word or be derived from a Caquetío word. However it sounds more like an African word.

Guepi barahans - This is a large round garfish or needlefish. Large round specimens of both the Ajugón needlefish (*Tylosurus acus*) which is also called *Guepi rondó* in Papiamentu and the hound needlefish (*Tylosurus crocodilus*) which can be similar in appearance, are called *Guepi barahans*. The word *Guepi* is from the Dutch geep while *barahans* seems to be derived from Dutch and could possibly be derived from Bolle Hans.

Infrou - name of Opuntia leaf cactus. Derived from Dutch juffrouw. In Dutch





such cactus are called Spaanse juffer meaning “Spanish señorita”, juffer is a shortened version of juffrouw. In Aruba such cactus are called *Tuna*, a Taíno word also used in Spanish. In Bonaire both names *Infrou* and *Tuna* are used.

Kabaito di diabel - A dragonfly. The name means little horse of the devil. Curiously enough in Caribbean Spanish it is sometimes called *caballito de Dios* “God’s little horse.” Many people nowadays call dragonflies *Yeye* (P73). Originally this name applied to cicadas and not to dragonflies, as older people in Banda Abou, the more rural western part of Curaçao, will assert. However nowadays so many people use the name *Yeye* for dragonflies, that this usage cannot be considered incorrect anymore. Many people in town do not even know what a cicada is and what it looks like. In Aruba the name *yeye* is only used for cicadas, dragonflies are called *spirito di cabrito*, spirit’s *cabrito* (ghost of a goat). This is another indication that *yeye* did not originally apply to dragonflies. In Papiamentu there have been more examples of names being transferred from one animal to another through incorrect usage of the original name. With time the incorrect usage has become accepted as the new norm. Another example of incorrect usage which became the accepted norm is found in the words *Dividivi* and *Watapana*. *Dividivi* originally applied to the fruits while *Watapana* applied to the tree. Nowadays in Curaçao these are considered to be synonyms while in Bonaire this distinction is still being maintained (at least for the time being).

Kahela (P45) - the name of the laughing gull (*Larus atricilla*) in Bonaire. This name is of unknown origin, but it could be derived from Caquetío.

Kakalaka di awa (B,C), ***Cacalaca di awa*** (A) - A water bug, a voracious insect living in fresh water, often found in open water tanks used for irrigation. *Kakalaka* means “cockroach” and is derived from Portuguese *Cacalacca*.

Kakalaka di laman (B,C), ***Cacalaca di laman*** (A) - A chiton (*Polyplacophora*). This name also applies to a crustacean that quickly buries itself in the sand on some beaches; in English these are called mole crabs or sand fleas.

Laman means the sea and is derived from Spanish *la mar*. *La mar* was used in Old Spanish; it is for example encountered in the writings of Bartolomé de Las Casas. Nowadays it is *el mar*. However seafaring people still use *la mar* Dicc Vox says: *entre marinos se usa habitualmente como femenina*. Papiamentu *laman* must be derived from Spanish since Portuguese uses and always used *o mar*.

Kakalaka matros (B,C), ***Cacalaca matros*** (A) - a large cockroach with a white edge along its head shield, similar in appearance to a sailor’s (Dutch: *matroos*) shirt.





Kaka sin sinti (C) - The oil fish (*Ruvettus pretiosus*). This is a deep-sea fish which is very rarely caught at the surface with handlines, it is very oily and its oil has strong laxative properties. The name means “shit without feeling (anything)”. It is said that if this fish is properly slow roasted on a spit and cuts are made in the skin, the oil will then leak out completely. The flesh can then be eaten without suffering from the laxative effects and it is said to be delicious.

Kaktùs sùrnam (P46) - A cactus like tree (*Euphorbia lactea*) which is however a *Euphorbia* and not a cactus. In Papiamentu it is called *Kaktùs sùrnam* (Surinam cactus). *Euphorbia lactea* is native to tropical Asia, especially India. It has been cultivated in many tropical areas worldwide and has often escaped from cultivation and is growing in the wild. It was probably introduced in Curaçao via Surinam.

Karou, Karou na bela (C) - This is the stinging siphonophore jellyfish which in English is called Portuguese man of war (*Physalia physalia*). In Papiamentu nowadays the name *Pèchi Portugues* is more commonly used, *Karou* being an older name (Maduro, 1960). *Karou* is derived from the Portuguese name for these jellyfish. *caravela* or *caravela não*. (a *não* is a small type of *caravela*). Since it is derived from Portuguese it is very likely an old word in Papiamentu.

Kashu (di) sùrnam - A fruit (*Syzygium samaragnense*) which bears a superficial resemblance to a cashew fruit. It originates in south East Asia. It was probably introduced in Curaçao via Surinam. Curiously enough in Surinam it is called “Curaçaosche appel” (Curaçao apple).

Kapoti as (P47) - A stinkbug (Fam: *Pentatomidae*, *Nezara* spp. *Loxa* spp. and many others). The name is derived from Dutch *kapotjas*, a type of coat, with a large cape. Such coats can often be worn inside out, usually each side is of a different color. The stinkbugs have a head shield resembling the cape of such a coat and are present on the island in two colors; the Southern green stinkbug (*Nezara viridula*) and the brown stinkbug (*Euschistus servus*). According to the Dutch Van Dale Dictionary, such coats date from 1817 onward (Van Dale, 1999). Thus the name *Kapoti-as* must have arisen after this date. *Loxa* stinkbugs are somewhat larger and are always green, they are also called *Kapoti-as*.

Kenepa spiritu (P48) - This plant is also more commonly called *Guayaba baster* (*Casearia tremula*). It is also called *Palu di venenu* (poison tree). In English it is called jumbie guava (in Grenada, the only English speaking country where it is found). Its stem is light grayish like the *Kenepa* (*Mellicocca bijuca*), although usually slightly darker. The leaves look similar and the fruit when small and still green also have a superficial resemblance to *Kenepa*. Thus this tree is a “spirit” of the *Kenepa*. Alternatively since the fruits of the *Kenepa spiritu* are poisonous, unlike the





edible common *Kenepa*, the name may also have been intended to indicate that one could become a spiritu by eating them.

Kinkon - This is an old Papiamentu name for the *karkó* (*Strombus gigas*) or Queen conch, it is derived from Dutch kinkhoorn. Nowadays this word is not in use anymore.

Kipopo, Djipopo ^(P49) - The mushroom (*Coprinus comatus*). In English it is called shaggy mane. This mushroom is cosmopolitan in dry tropical and subtropical areas. The early stages are edible. *Kipopo* is very likely a Bantu word, many Bantu languages use the prefix *ki-*. This prefix can have the meaning of “the original”, or “the real one” as in Kiswahili. Slaves arriving from drier areas of Africa would have been familiar with this mushroom. Maduro notes that the name of this mushroom is also found as *Dikpopo* in Saramaccan, the language of a maroon nation in Surinam. He refers to Saramakaanse woordenschat by A. Donicie and J. Voorhoeve.

Klásmulatu, Klásmulato - a shrub (*Tournefortia volubilis*). Is it named after a mulatto named Klaas?

Koffie ku lechi, [Kòfi ku lechi] (A) ^(P50) - This is the Ameiva lizard (*Ameiva bifrontata*) in Aruba. The name means “coffee with milk” and is an excellent description of the usual color of the animal, although sometimes they can also be a bit grayish.

Koko djamina - This is a grass (*Cyperus rotundus*). In English it is called cograss, purple nut sedge or red nut sedge, it is a species of sedge (*Cyperaceae*) native to Africa, southern and central Europe. The name *koko* refers to round tubers in the roots, which look like miniature coconuts; when these are opened the flesh inside also looks and tastes somewhat similar to coconut. The name *Djamina* refers to São Jorge da Mina in West-Africa (da Mina became *djamina*) and implies that this grass came from that region, which is indeed very likely.

Kokolishi di kalakuna ^(P51) - The land snail *Cerion uva*. It was used to feed turkeys (Dutch: kalkoen) and was even exported to Germany for this purpose in the past.

Kolebra di mospel (C,B), **Lagadishi di mispel** (A) - In Curaçao and Bonaire the striped spectacled tegu (*Gymnophthalmus lineatus*) is called *Kolebra di mospel*. It is a small lizard with limbs that are reduced in size, which gives it the appearance of a small snake. It is often found in the leaf litter of the sapodilla tree (*Achras zapote*), which in Papiamentu is called *mispel*. In Aruba the very similar and closely related *Gymnophthalmus speciosus* is called *Lagadishi di mispel*, which is a more accurate name since it is a lizard (*lagadishi*) and not a snake (*kolebra*).

Kolebra di plata, Kolebra di suerte (B) - this is the White-faced worm snake or Wagler’s blind snake (*Leptotyphlops albifrons*) which is found in Bonaire. It is similar to the *Bichi di dos kabes* in Curaçao, but is larger and has a





much lighter silvery color; which gives it its name *Kolebra di plata*. It has a cryptic lifestyle, living under stones and in leaf litter and soil. It eats ants and termites and their eggs and larvae. To find it is like finding silver and is considered to bring luck and this is the origin of the name *Kolebra di suerte*.

Krabèt, Krabèchi, Krabète, Grabèt, Garabèt (B,C), **Garabet** (A) - General name for several species of small herons, The name is derived from Dutch *krabbevreter*. (Teenstra).

Lisinbein (C,B), **Lisimbein** (A) - 1. a centipede, 2. a fern; the fern is often called *mata di lisinbein* “*lisinbein* plant” to distinguish it from the centipede. This is probably a rather curious transformation of the Dutch word *duizendpoot*, *duizendbeen*.

The change from *been* to *bein* we also find for example in *Kakumbein* from Dutch *kaakbeen* “jawbone”. Frederiks (1859), the oldest published Papiamentu wordlist (1859), gives the Papiamentu variant “*dizenbein*”.

Lolo di awa (P52) - name used for sea cucumbers (*Holothuroidea*), usually *Holothuria mexicana*. It means “penis of the water”. *Lolo di awa* can also be used as an insult to indicate a very stupid person.

Lopi - general name for several species of plover (fam: *Charadriidae*). It is derived from Dutch *loper* “walker”, since these birds walk continuously along the water’s edge. In Dutch similar birds are for example called *kleine steltloper*. In the fam: *Scolopacidae* with somewhat larger *steltlopers* we find the names *strandloper*, *steenloper*, *oeverloper*.

Makamba (B,C), **Macamba** (A) (P53) - This is a wading bird, the Black-winged stilt (*Himantopus mexicanus*). In Dutch it is called *steltkluit*. In Papiamentu it is also called *Kaweta di awa* “busy-body of the water” or *Redadó* “tell-all”. In Bonaire it is called *Kaweta di patu* “busy-body of the ducks”. These names refer to its habit of loudly warning all other water birds of the presence of an intruder and flying in his direction and are more commonly used than the name *Makamba*. I suspect *Makamba* for this bird must be a very old Papiamentu name and that it probably refers to the stark contrast in plumage; dark on top and on the back, with a very white breast. The early Dutch colonists wore black laken suits and hats, with white shirts. The purple/pink feet may have contributed to such a comparison, looking a bit like a sun-burnt European. *Makamba* is also the name for some butterflyfish. The Banded butterflyfish (*Chaetodon striatus*) is called *Makamba marinier* (P55), the body of the *Makamba marinier* is silver gray and has black bars. The name *Makamba marinier* probably harks back to a time when Dutch sailors wore shirts with bars or stripes. It seems likely that once the name *Makamba* was established for one type of butterflyfish, other butterflyfish would also be named *Makamba*. The four-eye butterflyfish (*Chaetodon capistratus*), is called *Makamba* or *Makamba hulandes* (P54). The name *Makamba hulandes* goes back to times when the word *Makamba* did not yet





apply exclusively to the Dutch and was often used for sailors (Latour, 1936). There were for example also *Makamba amerikano*. The name *Makamba hulandes* would then refer specifically to a Dutch sailor. Thus these names must be quite old. In the late 19th and early 20th century sailors of the Royal Dutch navy wore finely striped shirts, similar to the stripes on the body of this fish. These shirts were normally covered by a white jacket and would show in the breast area only. The jacket however was not always worn. The *Makamba hulandes* is also called *Makamba kulu bèrdè*. Unlike the word *Makamba* itself, *Makamba kulu bèrdè* is an insulting term for a Dutchman “Dutchman with a green asshole“. This terminology was used to insult the Dutch veldwachters “field police”, who among other tasks, were employed to catch goat thieves. Stealing of goats has always been a problem in Curaçao. These veldwachters had green uniforms. A somewhat different, more specific and ultimately more convincing explanation is given in an interview with the late Gerrit Jansen (Heiligers, 2001). His father was a veldwachter, who was issued a government owned mule. Jansen says:

“Het kwam wel eens voor dat hij, zoals meer van die jongens, zijn leren rijbroek opborg zonder die te laten luchten. Daarom was die broek van achteren wat groenig als hij die de volgende dag weer aantrok. Het zou me niet verbazen als de Nederlanders op Curaçao aan die nalatigheid de weinig flatteuze benaming ‘makamba kulo bèrdè’ (makamba groen achterwerk) hebben overgehouden.”

[Sometimes, like many of these boys, he would store his leather driving trousers without first airing (and drying) them. Thus these trousers were somewhat greenish in the back when he would put them on again the next day. I would not be surprised if the not so flattering name *Makamba kulu bèrdè* for the Dutch in Curaçao is a result of such negligence].

The question then arises as to why a fish which is not green would be called *Makamba kulu bèrdè*; it could have to do with the yellow-greenish area around the anus. The Spotfin butterflyfish (*Chaetodon ocellatus*) is called *Makamba blanku* or *Chamba blanku*. The name *Chamba* is used for some butterflyfish and the similar looking angelfish. The large queen angelfish is called *Rey di chamba*. The body of the *Makamba blanku* is completely white, with yellow fins. The reef butterflyfish (*Chaetodon sedentarius*) is called *Makamba hel*, it is yellowish white. Nowadays the name *Chamba hel* is more commonly used for this fish. The sharptail eel (*Myrichthys acuminatus*) is called *Kolebra makamba*. It is a yellowish brown eel with round light spots that lives in sandy bottoms between corals or in beds of sea grass. I have no idea why it would have been named *Makamba*.

Makapreim, Makapruim (B,C), ***Macapruim*** (A) - a fruit, *Spondias venulosa*. Teenstra (1977) says “Makak of Macaque-pruimen, ook apepruimen genaamd”, which can be translated as “Monkey prune” Thus Papiamentu





Makaprùim is derived from Dutch makak pruim or macaque pruim, which in turn is derived from Portuguese *macaco*, which is derived from a Congolese language (Almeida Costa & Sampaio e Melo, 1992). The Spanish name of this fruit is *jocotillo*.

Mamòndèngùè, Mamundèngùè - This name is probably of African origin and could be a Bantu word. It applies to some parasitic wasps. a. a small wasp with a narrow waist that constantly moves its lower body up and down (*Ichneumon sp.*) b. a much larger wasp with a long narrow waist that makes mud nests (*Sceliphron assimile*). In English such wasps are called mud-daubers. A woman with a very narrow waist is sometimes called *Mamòndèngùè*.

Mangel tan (Curaçao), **Mangel tam** (A, B) - the red mangrove (*Rhizophora mangle*). *Mangel* is derived from Taíno: mangle, meaning “mangrove”. *Tan* is derived from Dutch taan, meaning “tan”. The aerial roots of this mangrove were used to tan fishing lines and nets.

Maribomba (P56) - **Maribomba** is a general name for wasp. In Brazilian Portuguese the word *maribondo* is used, which is derived from *marimbondo* a word from Kimbondo a Bantu language in Angola. *Ma-* indicates the plural, *rimbondo* means “wasp” therefore *marimbondo* = wasps (Almeida & Sampaio e Melo, 1992). In Surinam wasps are called marabons, marbons, marbonsoe (Van Donselaar, 1989).

Maripampun, Maripòmpun, [Mariepampun] (P57) - This is a vine with an edible fruit which is also called *Marie Pompoen* (*Matelea rubra*). Another name for this plant or more specifically its fruit in Papiamentu is the nowadays politically totally incorrect name *Kabes di patin di mariku*, in the Zakflora this has been euphemized to *kabes di mariku*.

Marsiano - a type of small cockroach, which in English is called German cockroach (*Blatta germanica*). *Marsiano* means “Martian”. Probably this is a fairly modern word in Papiamentu. The German cockroach is an invasive species that originated in Asia. Nowadays it is cosmopolitan having been spread all around the world by man. It is possible that this cockroach arrived in Curaçao quite late, just at a time when the concept of Martians was gaining vogue, Martians became popular in the early 20th century.

Masbangu (B,C), **Masbango** (A) - *Masbangu* is the Papiamentu name for the Big-eye scad or goggle-eye scad (*Selar crumenophthalmus*). The name *Masbangu* is derived from *marsbanker*. The Marsbank is a sand bank near Den Helder in the Netherlands. The *marsbanker* is the horse-mackerel (*Trachurus trachurus*).

This fish is normally found in more southern parts of the North Sea, but for some reason it is sometimes found near the Marsbank near Den Helder. Today the Dutch use the name *horsmakreel* for this fish, which is related to the big-eye scad; both belonging to the family of the jacks or *Carangidae*,





which family in Dutch is called *horsmakrelen*. In South Africa the name *marsbanker* became *maasbanker*, although it has nothing to do with the river Maas. From South African Dutch the word *maasbanker* also entered the English language and is commonly used as a synonym for horse mackerel.

Mata piská, Mata di piska (P58+59) - this is the Barbasco tree (*Jaquinia armillaris*). The twigs and leaves contain rotenone, and it was used for fishing in sheltered waters. The name *Mata piská* can probably be best translated as “(it) kills fish” and *Mata di piska* as “plant to fish with”. It is also named *Stengau*.

Mulá (B,C), ***Mulato*** (A) - This is the Papiamentu name for the Wahoo (*Acanthocybium solandri*). The name Wahoo is of Polynesian origin and originates from the Hawaiian Islands. The name *Mulá* is derived from the word mulatto and reflects the belief that this fish is a cross between a tuna and a barracuda. In the French West-Indies it is called *thazard-bâtard*, which conveys the same idea. In Venezuela this fish is called *peto*.

Nanzi di koko - Nanzi normally refers to a spider. The *Nanzi di koko* is not a spider but an ant lion, which catches ants by making a small crater in dry sandy soil. Ants tumble down into this crater to be eaten by the ant lion which is buried at the center of the crater. The ant lion is the larval stage of a lacewing, an insect which is related to the dragonflies. I do not know why the *Nanzi di koko* is called *di koko*.

Palabrua - The barn owl (*Tyto alba bargei*), also general name for owls.

Palabrua derives from para brua meaning “black magic bird”. Spanish *bruja* means witch.

Palu di lele - A *Lele* or *Palu di lele* is a stick with three spokes, which is used as a hand mixer; for example to beat eggs. *Palu* can mean stick, pole, wood or tree. The *Palu di lele* (*Randia aculeata*) which is also called *Wakurá* is the tree from which these handmixers are made. *Lele* could be derived from the Fon language (Fongbè), which is spoken in Benin (formerly the kingdom of Dahomey), in Africa, where *lile* means “to turn”.

In Martinique we find the *bois lélé* which in English is called the Caribbean swizzlestick. It is used by barkeepers to mix drinks; it is markedly smaller than a *Palu di lele* in Curaçao and usually has five spokes instead of three, but otherwise they are identical. The scientific name of the *bois lélé* tree is *Quararibea turbinata*. In the English speaking islands of the Eastern Caribbean, where the tree from which the bois lélé is made is also found it is called the “swizzlestick tree”.

Palu di sia (B,C), ***Palu di siya*** (A) - These are trees of the genus *Bursera*. In Papiamentu we have the palu di sia kòrá (*Bursera simaruba*) and the palu di sia blanku (*Bursera karsteniana*). In English *Bursera simaruba* is called Gumbo-limbo, Copperwood or nowadays also tourist tree. Sia means seat or





saddle. Thus “palu di sia” would literally translate as “saddle tree” or “saddle-wood tree”.

On the islands of Aruba, Curaçao and Bonaire the wood of these trees was formerly used to make saddles, especially those for donkeys. On these islands there is a third species of *Bursera*; *Bursera tomentosa*. This tree is usually smaller and its stem and branches are not as thick; it is thus less likely that it was used for making saddles. In Aruba *Bursera tomentosa* is called palu di siya dushi (Aruban Papiamentu spelling), in Curaçao and Bonaire it is usually called *takamahak*. In Bonaire the name “*palu di sia djaka*” is also used.

Pampuna dól di webu (C) - a local Curaçao landrace of pumpkin. The name, which means “egg yolk pumpkin”, refers to the deep orange color of the interior of the pumpkin. This pumpkin is quite popular, people like its color and the fact that it does not disintegrate when it is cooked. *Dól* derives from Dutch dooier and *webu* from Spanish *huevo*.

Pánikrak (B,C) ***Panicrak*** (A) - The blue crab (*Callinectes*). Pan probably refers to bread while *krak* is derived from Dutch *krab* “crab”. This crab is edible.

Para di Yonchi, [***Para di Joonchi***] - The sparrow (*Passer domesticus*). It is called “Yonchi’s bird” after Mr. Johan Jonkhout (nicknamed Yonchi) who introduced this bird to Curaçao from the Netherlands in 1953. From Curaçao the sparrows spread to Bonaire many years later. In Aruba it is also an introduced bird, however there nothing is known about its origin (Voous, 1983).

Patia di zumbi, ***Patia shimaron*** ^(P60) - a small creeping vine (*Solanum agrarium*), with fruits which resemble a small round *patia* (watermelon). The fruit is very likely poisonous since it belongs to the genus *Solanum*, most of whose members are poisonous. In the case of the *Patia di zumbi* “zombie watermelon” it could be that the name *zumbi* also subtly implies that the fruit is poisonous, may be in a similar way to the use of *spiritu* in *kenepa spiritu*. The term *shimaron* derives from *cimarron*; Spanish for a runaway slave. In Papiamentu many plants which can be considered a “wild” form or simply a less desirable plant in comparison to a better known or more common or cultured plant are called *shimaron*. Often the resemblance is quite superficial. Several examples are given here: *Batata shimaron*, *Bembe shimaron*, *Indigo shimaron*, *Kònkòmber shimaron*, *Kokólode shimaron*, *Lamunchi shimaron*, *Maishi di tofolika shimaron*, *Maishi grandi shimaron*, *Mangel shimaron*, *Pegasaya shimaron*, *Pinda shimaron*, *Pitiseli shimaron*, *Tamarein shimaron*, *Trommelstok shimaron*, *Watapana or Dividivi shimaron*, and *Wayaká shimaron*. *Yerba shimaron* is a general term for weeds (Maduro, 1966). In Curaçao there is also a plant called *Batata di zumbi* “zombi potato”. It is a low vine with a large tuber





(*Ceratosanthes palmata*).

Patu morèkè (B,C), **Pato moreke** (A) ^(P61) - This is the blue-winged teal *Anas discors*. *Morèkè* is derived from Portuguese *marreca*, which refers to smaller species of duck, such as a teals and whistling ducks (amongst others). Larger species of duck are called *Pato*. Since *morèkè* is of Portuguese origin it is probably an older word in Papiamentu.

Pishiporko bambi, bamba - This is the pelagic triggerfish, rough triggerfish or spotted oceanic triggerfish (*Canthidermis maculata*). *Pishi porco* probably derives from Portuguese *peixe porco* or from Spanish *peje puerco* “pork fish”. It is tempting to think that the name *bambi* relates to the little deer of Walt Disney fame. The *Pishiporko bambi* has a similar color pattern, brownish with white blotches. As the English name pelagic triggerfish indicates, this fish is usually only encountered far out in the open sea. It is sometimes caught near Klein Curaçao at certain times of the year. Thus this fish would not have been very well known before fishermen had motor engines and started to fish much further out at sea. While the name *Pishiporko* is probably quite old, the name *bambi* is an example of a fairly modern word in Papiamentu. Old names disappear but some new ones also arise!

Pishiporko flùitdó ^(P62) - This is the Ocean triggerfish (*Canthidermis sufflamen*). As is the case with *Buni flùitdó* this name indicates that this is a larger species in comparison to a more common one, in this case the queen triggerfish (*Balistes vetula*). This species fights on the line and makes the fishing line “whistle” flùit. Usually the Ocean triggerfish is grayish or grayish blue, sometimes however it is brownish with some grayish blotches. The *Pishi porco bambi* is usually brownish but can sometimes also be grayish, thus these two species can be easily confused.

Platlùis, plateis (B,C), **Platleis** (A) - lice in the pubic area (*Phthirus* or *Pediculus pubis*). *Platluis* (“flat lice”) is an archaic Dutch word still used in Papiamentu. Nowadays Dutch uses *schaamluis* “pubic lice” or *platjes* “the flat ones”.

Praga - small biting insect, usually active at dusk and dawn, especially in the rainy season (order *Diptera*, fam: *Ceratopogonidae*, often of the genus *Colocoides*). The name is derived from Portuguese: *a praga* “the curse” which is of course precisely what it is. In English they are usually called gnats, biting midges, no-seeum’s or punkies. In Spanish they are usually called *jejénes*. In Aruba they are called *Ashibi*.

Raton djanochi (B,C), **Raton di anochi** (A) - Bat. *Raton djanochi* = *raton di anochi* = “mouse of the night”. Compare this to Portuguese *morcego* which is derived from Latin: *mure caecu*, meaning “blind mouse” and Spanish *murciélago*. *Murciélago* derived from *murciegalo* by metathesis; and it goes back to Latin *mus caecus alatus* and /or *mure caecu alatu*, “blind mouse with





wings”. Dutch uses *vleermuis*, English “bat” and French *pipistrelle* or *chauve souris*. Thus *Raton djanochi* is very likely an original Papiamentu invention, not directly derived from one of the languages mentioned above, although of course the words *raton* and *noche* derive from Spanish.

Ròbèki (B,C), **Robeki** (A) - a reef fish, the French grunt (*Haemulon flavolineatum*). The name is derived from Dutch *roodbekje*.

Shon Piet (C) ^(P63) - a shore bird, the American oystercatcher (*Haematopus palliatus*). The name can be translated as “Master/ Mister Peter”. This name is used in Curaçao only, in Aruba and Bonaire it is called *Kibra cocolishi* “shell breaker” (De Boer, Newton & Restall, 2011).

Snepi - general name for birds of the family: *Scolopacidae*, such as sandpipers, yellowlegs, the dowitcher and the willet. Derived from Dutch snip “snipe”.

Sobrá di Dios - “what God hath left”, a flounder, also a general name for flounders.

Soldachi ^(P64) - “little soldier”, a hermit crab, from Dutch *soldaat* “soldier”.

Souchi, Sauchi (C, B), **Suarchi, Swalchi** (A) - the Barn swallow (*Hirundo rustica*). It seems farfetched to assume that *Souchi* could be derived from Dutch *zwaluw*. Aruba Papiamentu uses the name *Schwalchi*, which is clearly related to *zwaluw* and with some imagination one can imagine that the form *Swalchi* could be transformed into *Souchi*. Frederiks (1859), the oldest published Papiamentu wordlist (1859), gives “zwouwtsje” as the Papiamentu word for *zwaluw*. The 1955 edition of Voous “Vogels van de Nederlandse Antillen” and his “Birds of the Netherlands Antilles” from 1983, both use *Sauchi*. It is worth noting that even though the VOP gives “suarchi” as the official name for swallow in Aruba, two recent bird guides (Prins et al, 2009 and de Boer, Newton & Restall, 2012) use “swalchi” for Aruba and do not even mention “suarchi”.

Stul di zumbi, Parasòl di zumbi (B, C) ^(P65) - a large fungus which grows on trees (*Ganoderma resinaceum* and other *Ganoderma* spp.). In Dutch such mushrooms are called *houtzwammen* and very similar mushrooms in Holland (*Trametes* spp.) are called *elfenbankje*. Dutch *stoel* is a chair. It is curious that while in Europe such mushrooms are associated with fairies, here they belong to the *zumbi*. Both apparently need to sit and rest once in a while. In Aruba such fungi are called *Pan di diabel* “devils bread”. In Curaçao *Pan di diabel* is the fruit of the plant *Morinda royoc*. This plant grows in the wild and is related to the noni (*Morinda citrifolia*) it has a similar, but much smaller fruit.

Takamahak ^(P66+67) - In Curaçao and Bonaire the tree *Bursera tomentosa* is usually called *takamahak*. In Aruba *Bursera tomentosa* is called *palu di siya dushi* (Aruban Papiamentu spelling). In Bonaire the name “*palu di sia djaka*” is also used. The name derives from Spanish *tacamahaca*, which is derived from Náhuatl: *thekomahyyak*. *Tacamahaca*: “any of several resinous





substances, used in incences, ointments etc., any tree as of the genera *Bursera* or *Populus* yielding such a substance, balsam poplar.” See “*Palu di sia*”.

Tomati kròbe kròbe or ***kròbò kròbò*** - a nowadays possibly extinct local tomato variety or landrace in Curaçao. It is not being planted anymore since seeds of newer imported commercial tomato varieties are available. A small but very sweet tomato with a bumpy surface texture. The name *kròbe kròbe* or *kròbò kròbò* refers to the bumpy surface. It is possibly derived from Old Dutch *krodde* = *klein gerimpeld voorwerp* (Van Dale); which can be translated as “small object with a textured surface”. *Krodde* is related to Hoch Deutsch *Kröte*, “toad”. *Kròbe kròbe* or *kròbò kròbò* can also refer to kinky hair.

Tonto di Lareina (A) (P⁶⁸) - name used in Aruba for the marine snail *Strombus costatus*. In English it is usually called milk conch. The Papiamentu name refers to Her Royal Majesty the Queen’s private parts. A flower *Clitoria ternatea* has the same name in Aruba and in Bonaire this name is sometimes also used for this flower, but not for the snail.

Tortuga, Tortuka blanku (B,C), ***Turtuga*** (A) - This is the green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*). In English, Spanish, French and Portuguese it is known as: Green turtle, *tortuga verde*, *tortue verte*, *tartaruga verde* respectively, after the color of its fat. In Dutch it is called *soepschildpad*; “the one used to make soup”. In Papiamentu, however, it is called *Tortuga blanku* (white turtle) after the white color of its meat.

Totèki (B,C), ***Toteki*** (A) - Name for an anolis lizard on Curaçao and Bonaire, in Aruba such a lizard is called *waltaka*. The Papiamentu word *Totèki* originates in Curaçao, it is at present also used in Bonaire, but the original Bonaire name for this lizard is *Lagadishi di palu*. *Totèki* is derived from *tuqueque* or *tuteque*, names which in Venezuela are used for gecko’s not for anoles (Alvarado, 1921). These are Amerindian names, but it is not known from which language or language group they originate. In Curaçao geckos were in the past also called *Totèki pega pega* or *Turtèki pega pega*, to differentiate them from the other *Totèki*. Today only older people sometimes use these names and a gecko is now simply a *Pega pega*. In Curaçao and Bonaire the name *Kaku*, of unknown, possibly African origin, is also used for an anolis lizard. It thus seems likely that the word *totèki* is derived from *tuqueque* or *tuteque*, that it was introduced into Papiamentu via Spanish and that it originally applied to geckos. The name was then later transferred to the anolis lizard when geckos acquired the name *Pega pega*. There are many examples of names which originally applied to one species of animal or plant having later been transferred to another species, so this would not be unusual. It is also possible that *Totèki* is an original Caquetío word that only applied to geckos and that the name was later transferred to anoles, which





were presumably called *Waltaka* as is the case in Aruba.

Tribon di wesu (C) - Small deep-water sharks such as the Cuban dogfish (*Squalus cubensis*) and some cat-eyed sharks (*Triakis* spp.), which are sometimes caught when handlining for snappers at night. *Wesu* (bone) refers to the sharp dorsal spines of these sharks.

Trupial kachó (C) ^(P69) - The Yellow oriole (*Icterus nigrogularis*). Here *kachó* “dog” from Portuguese *cachorro* is used to indicate a less desirable species in the eye of the beholder (compared to the orange troupial, the *Trupial sabí*). In Aruba it is called *Gonzalito*. The word troupial derives from the Cariban languages of Venezuela, where the forms *turpiára* and *turupiára* are found (Alvarado, 1921). In Spanish this became *turpial*. *Trupial* probably entered Papiamentu via Spanish. It can however not be completely excluded that *trupial* was used in the Caquetío language, it could have been the result of Carib influences in Caquetío, other such examples exist.

Trupial sabí (C), ***Trupial*** (A) ^(P70) - the Troupial (*Icterus icterus*). *Sabí* means “the smart one, the wise one, the wise guy”. Supposedly the more intelligent one? These birds are indeed very smart and quite fearless; they will sometimes fly into houses and grab food. They may even pry open the door of an unlocked cupboard. This sets them apart from the *trupial kachó*, which does not exhibit such behavior. The *Trupial sabí* was introduced in Bonaire.

Vrumu, Frumu ^(P71) - A small bass (*Serranus phoebe*). This bass is not commonly caught since it lives in deep waters, but even so it has a local name. The name means “midwife”. It is derived from Dutch *vroedvrouw*, *vroedmoeder*. This bass has a yellow-brown appearance with a white stripe on each side. These stripes join on the white belly and thus form a white cross over a yellowish background when seen from below. This looks a bit like the White and Yellow cross of the *Wit-Gele Kruis*, an organization involved in medical care, which also provides midwives. The *Wit-Gele Kruis* was established on Curaçao in 1941, and it would have been impossible to catch these fish before the advent of modern synthetic fishing lines. *Vrumoe* as a name of this fish is thus a fairly modern word in Papiamentu. However the name *Vrumoe* was earlier used for another fish, the Jack-knife fish (*Equetus lanceolatus*), which is also called *rei di laman* “king of the sea”. Van Venlo (1954) gives the name *Vroemoe di bon ora* “the midwife who arrives on time” or *Vroemoe*. At present, this name is not used for this fish anymore. This is yet another example of a name having been transferred to another species.

Wandu, Bonchi (di) wandu - The pigeon pea (*Cajanus cajan*), Congo pea In Aruba it is called bonchi kinchoncho. The pigeon pea originates in India and was introduced to East and later West-Africa. Here it was first encountered by the Europeans who called it Congo pea. It was introduced in the Americas, probably in the 17th century. According to Alvarez (1987) the





original name is wandú and probably originates in the Conga language. In Spanish it changed to Guandul. The name kinchoncho is also of African origin; most likely it derives from a Bantu language in Angola.

Yakupeper, [**Jakupeper**] ^(P72) - The Nassau grouper (*Epinephelis striatus*), the name is derived from Jacob Evertsen.

In South Africa the names *Jacopewer* and *Jacopever* are used. Cloete, Van Wyk et al. (2003) say:

“jakopewer s.nw. Rooi of oranjeleurige seevis. Deur volksetimologie ontstaan uit Ndl. jacob-evertsen (1648), so genoem omdat die vis se huid aan die rooi, gevlekte puisiegesig van ’n Ndl. admiraal uit die 17de eeu, Jacob Evertsen, herinner. Eerste optekening in Afr. in Patriotwoordenboek (1902) in die vorm jakopiwer. Vanuit Afr. in S.A.Eng. in die vorm jacopever (1927).”

[Jakopewer a red or orange colored marine fish, derived from Dutch jacob-evertsen (1648), so called because its reddish skin color recalled the reddish blotched face with pustules of Jacob Evertsen, a Dutch admiral in the 17th century. First noted in Afrikaans in Patriotwoordenboek (1902) as jakopiwer. From Afrikaans it was introduced into South African English as jacopever (1927).]

The *Woordenboek Nederlandse taal* (WNT), or “Dictionary of the Dutch language”, which is available online, gives (among others) the following variants for the entry, Jacob-Evertsen:

“Naam aan zekeren visch der Oostindische zeeën (bij de Inlanders ikan krapoe) door Hollandsche matrozen gegeven, omdat zij diens kleur en vlekken vergeleken met de huidkleur en de vlekken enz. in het gelaat van ”Schipper” JACOB EVERTSEN. Zie BONTIUS (gestorven a°. 1639).”

[Name of a certain fish in the seas of the East-Indies (called ikan krapoe by the natives) which was so named by Dutch sailors, because they compared its color and spots with the skin color and spots etc. of the face of ”Captain” JACOB EVERTSEN. See BONTIUS (who died in the year 1639).]

“Sommigen (der Everts-baarzen, Evertsen, Serrani) zijn dwars of in de lengte gestreept, de meesten op allerlei wijzen gevlekt, en laatstgenoemden worden in Nederlandsch-Indië algemeen Jacob Evertsen geheeten, zijnde deze benaming, door de zeelieden gegeven, eene toespeling op het gevlekte en puistige gezigt van den Admiraal van dien naam, die eene der eerste Hollandsche vloten naar Oost-Indië voerde”, SCHLEGEL, Dierk. 2, 144 (1858).

[Some (of the Everts-basses (groupers), Evertsen, Serrani) are either cross-striped or striped along their length, most have all sorts of spots and the latter ones are generally called Jacob Evertsen, in the Netherlands East Indies, this name being the name given by the sailors, which is an





allusion to the spotted and pustulous face of the Admiral of that name, who commanded one of the first Dutch fleets to the Dutch East-Indies. SCHLEGEL, Dierk. 2, 144 (1858).]

And also somewhat differently:

“In Zuid-Afrika als naam voor zekeren rooden visch (roode steenbrasem), die genoemd zou zijn naar het schip Jacob Evertsen, welks bemanning dien visch het eerst op Mauritius zou hebben aangetroffen” (zie Bekn. Nederl. Woordenb. voor Z.-Afrika van ELFFERS-VILJOEN s.v. JAKOB-EVERT).

[In South Africa as the name for a certain red fish (red sea-bass), which is supposed to have been named after the ship Jacob Evertsen, whose crew would have encountered this fish for the first time on the island of Mauritius (see Bekn. Nederl. Woordenb. voor Z.-Afrika van ELFFERS-VILJOEN s.v. JAKOB-EVERT).]

The Papiamentu *Jakupeper*, the Nassau grouper, has diagonal bars on the snout, across the eye and 5 olive-brown bars on the body; it has only a few blotches.

Yeye ^(P73) - See *Kabaito di diabel*

Zekat, Zekat di piedra, Zekat buladó, [Zeekat] (B,C), **Secat** (A) - *Zekat* is a general name for *cephalopods*. The *Zekat di piedra* is an octopus. The expression *di piedra* “of the stones” refers to the fact that it is found where there are stones on the reef. The *Zekat buladó* is a squid. These animals can sometimes jump or “fly” out of the water. *Zeekat* is an old Dutch word for squid, which is however not used anymore in the Netherlands, where the word *pijlinktvis* is now used for squid.





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