



Training fieldworkers for the Refugee Oral History Project, Netherlands.
Photo: Saskia Moerbeek.

the group projects, twenty fieldworkers from the ten participating communities are following a professional training programme of six months. Every interview will be recorded in a combination of audio and video formats and will be transcribed and/or translated. To ensure the streaming and accessibility of the material we will work together with the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW).

'The first part of the project is funded by SNS Reaal Fonds, the European Commission (migration funds) and the city of Amsterdam. Further funding is currently being sought for the second part of the project.'

- For further information about the project, please visit the project website at www.ongekendbijzonder.nl

LATIN AMERICA

ARGENTINA

Sugar Workers of Tucumán: Working Class Culture and the Marxist Left (1966- 1975)

Tucumán's sugar workers were one of the main groups of social support for the political-military organisation the Revolutionary Worker's Party and the People's Revolutionary Army (PRT-ERP) during the period 1966-1975. Alejandra Pisani, a doctoral student at Universidad de Buenos Aires, has been a member of the Research Group on

Genocide in Tucumán (GIGET) since 2008. She introduces her research which focuses on the culture of the sugar workers in Tucumán, Argentina, between 1960 and 1980.

'The central hypothesis of this research is that cultural traditions have played a key role in forging a relationship between sugar workers and the guerrillas of the PRT-ERP. Research is currently under final development and expected to be completed by 2015.

'So far, sugar workers and grass-roots activists of the time have been interviewed as well as people who came into contact with them. Interviews were carried out by the GIGET and since 2013 have been available to authorised researchers in Tucumán and

in the Oral History Archive of the University of Buenos Aires.

'One of the main research challenges was working with people belonging to a social group specifically targeted by the army's repression (called "Operation Independence") in 1974 and 1975, and by the 1976-1983 military dictatorship in Argentina. The persistence of the effects of terror in the population created challenges in building a relationship of trust in which respect for the interviewees' times and patterns of sociability of the local culture has played a key role. Establishing trust was vital to access the meanings and values of workers in the past.

'One of the main findings of the research has been the identification of a rebellious working tradition grounded on class experience and transmitted orally from generation to generation.'

- For further information about the project, please contact Alejandra Pisani, email alepisan@hotmail.com

CARIBBEAN

ST LUCIA

Celebrating St Lucia's Cultural Community

Marian Nelson and Allen Sherman report on the 'St Lucia Oral History Project' initiated in 2007, which aims to record and communicate the personal histories of St Lucia's artists and other cultural contributors.

'The scenic beauty of St Lucia attracts thousands of tourists every day, however the rich cultural life of the island is much less celebrated. The idea for the St Lucia Oral History Project



Sugar workers on strike at the Santa Ana Sugar Mill in Tucumán, 1964. Photo: *Compañero* newspaper.



was sparked by a three-week visit to St. Lucia in 2004, when the St Lucian poet John Robert Lee introduced us to the artist Dunstan St Omer. In 1972 St Omer painted the first black Holy Family in the Caribbean as a magnificent church mural, yet this historic site is rarely visited by tourists. Similarly, few visitors know that Nobel laureate (for literature) Derek Walcott is St Lucian with much of his poetry filled with imagery from St Lucia.

To date, we have interviewed sixty St Lucian artists, writers, musicians, historians and other cultural figures aged twenty-five to eighty-five. We are helped by students from the University of Vermont who receive college credit for their work on the project. This summer (2014) we will be teaching a course in Caribbean Studies and Literature at the college, with an emphasis on St Lucia.

'The 400 hours of interviews are currently being transcribed, and we are starting to weave together a narrative history of the island told in the voices of the interviewees. St Lucia became independent in 1979; our oral history moves



Top: The Holy Family mural by Dunstan St Omer. **Photo:** Marion Nelson and Allen Sherman. **Above:** Sir Dunstan St Omer and Derek Walcott (Nobel laureate), November 2008. **Photo:** Marion Nelson.

from colonial times through independence and beyond; our interviewees tell the story. We are also working to create a multi-media presentation on the impacts of globalisation on St Lucia's cultural identity and heritage.

'We believe all the history and stories recorded through the interviews belongs to the people of St Lucia. All

interview recordings (audio and video) and transcripts will be given to St Lucia's Folk Research Centre where they will be freely available to everyone to access.'

● For further information about the project, please visit the project website at www.stluciaoralhistory.org