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**“Better than we”: landscapes and materialities of race, class, and gender in pre-emancipation colonial Saba, Dutch Caribbean**  
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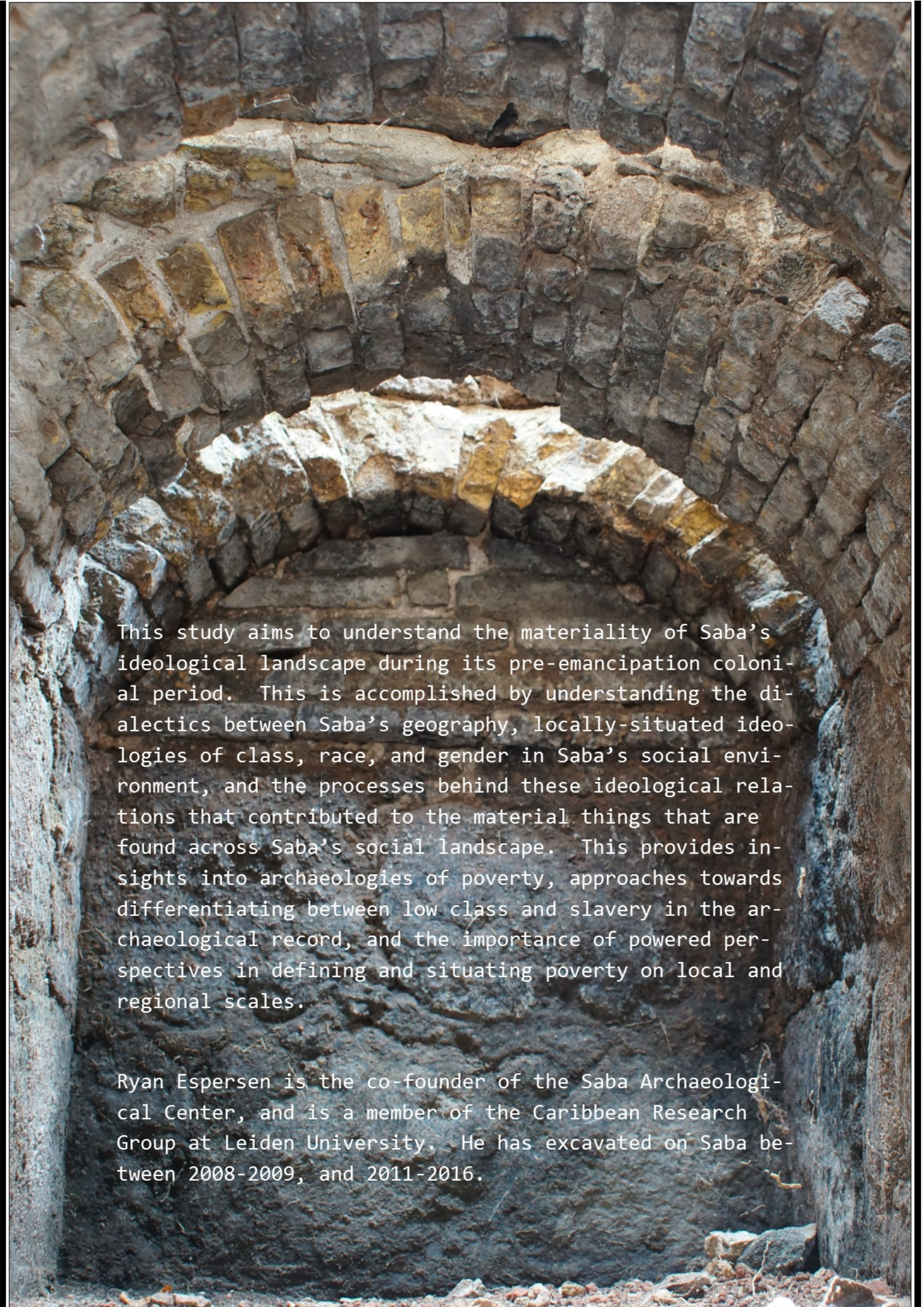
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## Curriculum vitae

After completing his secondary education at Dryden High School in Dryden, Ontario, Canada, Ryan Erik Espersen (Terrace, 1982) studied archaeology and Latin American history at the University of Calgary, Alberta, Canada, resulting in a Joint Bachelors Degree in Archaeology and Latin American History in (2001-2006). He participated in several excavations, beginning at the Honen Dalim synagogue in St. Eustatius in 2007 with the St. Eustatius Center for Archaeological Research (SECAR), followed by two months of excavations in the Chontalpa region of southern Oaxaca, Mexico, assisting Danny Zborovber with his PhD research at the University of Calgary. From 2007-2009 he earned a Research Masters degree from Leiden University in Archaeology, studying the origins of Palmetto Point colonial village in Saba, Dutch Caribbean. During his second year of study he was awarded a Leiden University Fund (LUF) scholarship. Later in 2009 to early 2010 he worked as a lab assistant at SECAR, and from 2010-2011 he earned a Bachelor of Education (BEd) Lakehead University, Ontario, Canada. Every summer, from 2001-2011, he worked as a forest firefighter for the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, the last four years as a Unit Crew Leader, wherein he was responsible for coordinating and executing the ground suppression of forest fires. In 2011, he moved to Saba to begin teaching at the Saba Comprehensive School in Geography, History, and Social Studies, and together with Jay Haviser, started the Saba Archaeology Center (SABARC). Every Saturday, he organized archaeologically-centered projects to allow the island youth to participate in the discovery of their own history. SABARC was turned into a non-profit organization in the Netherlands in 2012, with Espersen serving on the board as Secretary and Haviser as President. In the same year, Espersen started his PhD at Leiden University as a Marie Curie scholar, a member of the EUROTAST (European Transatlantic Slave Trade) research group which consisted of twelve early stage researchers (PhD students) and experienced researchers (postdocs). He continued to live on Saba from 2012-2013, and between Leiden and Saba from 2013-2015, undertaking surveys and excavations on sites across the island. He participated in a month-long UNESCO regional capacity building program for underwater cultural heritage management in Port Royal, Jamaica in 2012, and later instructed segments of the same course in St. Eustatius in 2014. In 2013, His Majesty King Willem III and Queen Máxima of the Netherlands officially opened the Saba Heritage Trail, which was initiated by SABARC due to the excavations he undertook as part of his EUROTAST research. In 2015, Espersen's funding proposals to the Prins Bernhard Cultuur Fonds and the Mondriaan Fonds were accepted in order to finance the creation of the Saba Heritage Center (SHC), a multi-functional locus dedicated to the preservation and promotion of Saba's cultural heritage. The SHC was opened in early 2016, and now houses the office of SABARC. Since 2015, Espersen has been working as Director of the Saba Archaeological Center.







This study aims to understand the materiality of Saba's ideological landscape during its pre-emancipation colonial period. This is accomplished by understanding the dialectics between Saba's geography, locally-situated ideologies of class, race, and gender in Saba's social environment, and the processes behind these ideological relations that contributed to the material things that are found across Saba's social landscape. This provides insights into archaeologies of poverty, approaches towards differentiating between low class and slavery in the archaeological record, and the importance of powered perspectives in defining and situating poverty on local and regional scales.

Ryan Espersen is the co-founder of the Saba Archaeological Center, and is a member of the Caribbean Research Group at Leiden University. He has excavated on Saba between 2008-2009, and 2011-2016.