

(Translator's Note: The translation intends to maintain the style, tone and lexicon of the Spanish speakers. For brevity and to avoid confusion, excessive use of repetitive verbal tags by some speakers is generally eliminated. No effort has been made to correct poor grammar by some speakers.)

"Mi name is María Teresa Damos Navarro. I am assistant technician of the Museum; I have 4 years working here. To say that the name of the Museum is Ovidio Hernández Matos and that its name comes from a hero of Conde del Silencio who fell the 13<sup>th</sup> of April of 1870, when thirteen mercenaries entered through Imurí River, and in Punta de Silencio there was a confrontation where five heroes from this Municipality (*Municipio*) lost their lives.

As you can see, the Museum is small, but this does not stop it from exhibiting the very beautiful history of our Municipality, a beautiful and long history.

The Municipio has never been far from all the battles that this country has engaged in, and there have been important battles here at Punta del Silencio, the occupation and burning of the town of Sabana, always by mercenaries.

Here there was good participation in the July 26 movement, there was... there were four... four division groups; there was one in Sabana, another in La Tinta, one in Maizí and another one in Gran Tierra.

Women always played a very important rol. Here, the women were busy making *bonos*, bracelets, etc. There was also much involvement with the insurrectionist "mambices". In the History Room can be seen diving objects that belonged strictly to "mambices" from the territory here.

There were Bartolo Legrá and Manuel Legrá who are... who were... brothers, the cousin Manuel, and objects that were strictly used by them and donated to the museum here by their families. As you go through all the rooms, you can see diving objects that belong strictly to the history of the Municipio. They are very important, of course.

We received here visits from the commander in chief on three occasions; one... in the last one, he was here when he came to attend the wake at Punta del Silencio... and that event has great relationship with him, because the year '67 he came, [and] started a number of social works in the Municipio, for example, five children centers, two basic secondary schools, the electric plant, the connecting Maizí – Baracoa highway, among other social works that he founded.

He comes back again in the year '70 when he came to attend to the burial of the five that fell in Punta del Silencio. He attended the burial of those valiant patriots that died in Punta del Silencio.

(A feminine voice is heard in the background: “Why does he want to do that?”)

... Oh! I was saying that here this display case, as you can see, is dedicated to a forefront pioneer from the Baracoa region, when that was a region; it was not a Municipio of Maizí, it was a Baracoa region. In '67 the pioneer won herself a trip to all socialist countries, because she was the best pioneer of the Baracoa region.

And when they return... one more of those attacks that the Batista tyranny was making... the plane fell, and all pioneers died along with the guides that traveled with them. There in the photograph can be seen the pioneers from here... they are from here, from Cuba, with their guide, the one in the center, the tall woman is the guide and, precisely those clothes that are there, that are being exhibited, are those in which she had the accident.

Those little clothes spent 31 years in the cemetery buried with her, and at 31 years that her mother dies, the mother never thought that her daughter was in the box. [The box] meant nothing to her. The mother did not think that her daughter thought that it was a symbolic box, and when the mother dies, the sons took her remains to bring them to the cemetery and join the remains with her mother.

And precisely, the girl was intact, it was Elena Fuentes with her clothes... with her clothes on... she was quite complete. The brothers got nervous at seeing her so well preserved, and started to strip her. They were not even able to look for another box because with being so nervous, they did not have it in them to look for a box. (There is loud background talk and noise.) And they came

and donated the clothes to the Museum, and took the remains to the internationalist's cemetery where her remains rest.

The other objects are really hers, they were hers; the flag that the grandmother embroidered, which was of her outpost. She took a flag similar to this one in her trip, which characterized her as an outstanding pupil of the region. Another flag similar to that one because, naturally, all were burnt. She took a headscarf similar to this one on her trip, when headscarves were still being used. This headscarf actually was hers; before leaving she left this one that she used [to wear], and took a new one with her.

(A man's voice)

"Mi name is Elidio Masón Mosqueda, descendant of Narciso; he is my great-grandfather on my mother's side who was the leader in those days, when Harrington visited our country. According to knowledge that I have acquired through comrades of the Academia de Ciencias (*Science Academy*) who have come to this place, I know that Harrington visited Patana in the year 14. Later he made a second trip, and that is when he took the Zenith of the Indians, the idol from the ceremonial cave... the Calor Cave, which we know as the "Cueva de los Murciélagos" (*Bat Cave*).

And he absolutely had to do with those people, because they were the owners of the lots that delimited the area... where those Indian idols were located. And then, Harrington came with a group... I do not know who the actual people were, but they did receive help from the local people, who are my descendants (sic) and, as far as I know, with two wood saws they sawed-off the idol of the Indians. One person whom I knew personally... Fermín Mosqueda, carried it on a mule to Sabana, toward Yimurí.

Within that period of time, Patana *Jiba* did not exist. Patana Baja did exist. I do not know the historical reason why they left. I would think it had to do with water, because these nations were little... they did not have a water supply and I... I... like to learn... to know... to understand my

history, the cultural history of my place, my area, and I would need some material that someone might give me through our scientific institutions, so that the people might know, and become acquainted with the true history, because many of us Pataneros do not know it, and that this might serve to unite in our effort to get to know more each day about the history of our descendants (sic), because the history of Patana has a mixture of Indian, Spanish, French. In other words, we are a mixture of the human race. But this area was given little attention, precisely for the location where it is. Unfortunately we are placed within the context of the history of the archeology of the world, and no one knows about us.

(A woman's voice asks:)

"Excuse me, what did your grandfather tell you about that trip?"

(The main speaker responds:)

"... Well, my grandparents told very little because they were people that, in fact, were not fluent in Spanish... in... in... in English and so, they had to use interpreters." I have spoken with some... experts of the Academia de Ciencias, and here stayed behind the one who loaded the mules... on the mules... the idol of the Indians. He kept a phrase that I told a visitor that came once... I told him, "Hey, to me, there is a phrase that is memorable; I don't know why, he made it up in his own way, he learned it, it seems, only by phonetics from the North American's speech... from Harrington", to whom we thank very much because he has made us known to the world through, even, the archeology, although he hurt our cultural patrimony and our own history. I do not condemn Harrington. I do not condemn him because he was a seasoned man who truly cared for the history of the American Indian. Today [that history] is out there in our idol, understand? It is our cultural identity that identifies us as a race, as a species before the world, and we do not have it. Some day, the history of the North American people, that is a great nation, a great nation that I admire.

In every country there are good people and bad people. Here there was thieves of things, precisely through ignorance. They did not know what they were doing. We can't condemn them. We have to forgive ourselves of things the we have done wrong because, otherwise, as a human race, we will not get anywhere and will stop being civilized. And so, remember this for history, the man

that loaded that idol remained with a phrase that he repeated: “uachimanin, uachimanan, uashintin, uashinton vertigel for.” I do not know for what reason “vertigel for” (unintelligible); the name...

(A man’s voice interrupts:)

“I know that that phrase (unintelligible)”

(The main speaker continues:)

“... “uachimanin, uachimanan, uashinton vertigel for...”

He kept that as a remembrance of those olden times that you reminisce today, coming here to Cuba to the place where Harrington, for the first time in the cultural history of this small town, brought Patana before the world and the history of the world’s archeology. Thank you.”

(A man and a woman speak unintelligibly)

(The main speaker continues:)

“... Of course! That was our property, the property of these people! I have thought a lot. I read in a newspaper somewhere, our newspaper, a newspaper... “Venceremos”, where it seems like there are people that are not informed... who have not bothered, who said that these were Mayan pieces. I said, “Hey! That is a historical, cultural mistake; they should say that it is the idol of the Indians from Patana, from Gran Tierra, and not from the Mayan Gran Tierra, because it is the property of their descendants, the natives of that place, of our race, that is, the cultural patrimonies belong to humanity.” In a personal vein, they belong to this small group of citizens that remain in this tiny piece of land. We still maintain some criteria that, if they had tried to bring it up in our minds, our cultural history would be richer, but nothing like that was done. But perhaps some day it will come back to this little town, and true archeological history [will] be put together.

That property belongs to us. I believe that the North American people are reasonable.

Harrington’s descendants are educated people, reasonable people. And if we went there, to the United States, and snatched the Statue of Liberty and brought it to Cuba, would that be our statue? No, it wouldn’t be! The Statue of Liberty of the people of the United States, [these] are things that,

as patrimony, do not belong to us. And the history of the United States is very rich, and it has great men. I have read something about their presidents, about Truman, about... about George Washington, understand? What the North American people has done... in every society there are men with malevolent ideas, understand? There are terrorists! Can we say that there are no Cuban terrorists? There are! Understand? Because that is a way to force to humanity... I will... I have to make you do this... I will plant a bomb because you cause inconvenience to me, because I don't like what you do... there are perverse people. But the United States has many good people; millions... millions. As Cubans, we admire the North American people; we do not hate them. There are people that in the United States condition have precisely that idea. They think that we think badly of North Americans.

North Americans are human beings, just like we are. They feel, grieve, love, suffer. They understand the problems we are going through today. But, proverbs can be true, understand? And some times the righteous pay for the sinners. That is the story of life, which sometimes bears upon humanity and upon men. But we are people... I could be locked up in a cell, but I am free to think as I wish... to see the culture, to see the art, to see the people of the United States. The people of the United States are decent, that is a great nation, understand? It is a developed nation. We have nothing! Perhaps some day, our leaders will seat at the negotiation table and confer, understand? We have been mistaken. Whoever does not recognize that he has made a mistake is not human, understand? He has nothing good in his heart. And may they extend their hand to us, the generous hand of the North American people that may one day remember us, that we exist here as a species, as a race, that we are not bad, that we love culture, that we love freedom the same as they do. And if one day they bring and return those relics that belong to our history, we will thank them one thousand times, to Harrington, because he made us known, sure, before the world, because if it had remained here, and the thieves taken it, a malevolent person would have taken it. Because sometimes there are people who work at collecting things for themselves. The ego, the unfair within a human being. This is mine. I am going to make a private collection; I am not going to make a collection for Herman to have here in the Museum, so that I can go to Baracoa and see those things, learn about my history, the history of the French, the history of the Spanish, understand? We tell the Cubans that the "*gaitos*" were bad people (unintelligible) but, all right, I have read the history of my country, and he was a man of great ideals. Others wanted to do things,

others wanted to get rich, because the God Money has a place in life, understand? And a great deal, precisely, that desire to seek what the King of Spain sought: Riches, to be richer and become more powerful.

(Man in the audience asks:)

“What would you do if they returned the Patana idol? What would you like to see done with it?”

(The main speaker continues:)

... “... Well, the idol of Patana... I think that the cultural media, the cultural resources of the peoples, of a nation, must be in a museum under keeping, custody and care by certain determined persons that would truly be responsible to society for their existence... I would like to see it in Patana...”

(Man in the audience asks:) (“Where is it?”)

(The speaker tries to continue: “... because that is not patrimony...”)

(Another man from the audience: “In [the Museo de] La Máquina!”)

(The speaker continues:) “... It is not a patrimony of Cuba. It is a cultural patrimony of Guantánamo, of our province, of Camagüey and of Villas Clara but, specifically, it was the private property of the indigenous people because the sculptor, he who sculpted the work was not in [*the Museum of*] La Máquina. He was a native Patanero and he was an owner, because whoever creates a work, is the owner of that work. Da Vinci passed to history; his works are somewhere, understand? But if someone created a personal sculpture and left it somewhere with a relative of Da Vinci, that is the work of that person, and this is a cultural work of the Pataneros who, by a question of historical harmony of human principles, it must be in Patana, understand? That cave must be upgraded, provide security, shape up the place and place there a great sign, and make an inscription for our idol and for Herman, understand? (Several voices are heard from the public, and the speaker corrects himself) “... to Harrington, to Harrington... not to Herman. Herman is a municipal historian from the Municipio... to Harrington! (unintelligible), and say that Harrington

was a great man, an explorer who gave us a place in the archeology of the world, who made us known to the world as a community, who was the one who said the we still existed. That is why Antonio Núñez Jiménez later investigated precisely the family's life... Nicomedes Terán's family, the family that has more physically anthropological Indian characteristics... then his children, he even has a daughter, a "little Indian" and also the other one, with highly evident morphologic characteristics, and that is the property of the Mosquedas, understand? It is Cuba's, it is property of humankind and also of the North American people because before the world, the North American people made that figure known, understand? It is the collective cultural property of humankind. Martí said that "Homeland is Humankind", but he also said that to be free you have to be a cultured person, and you had to (unintelligible). Culture is precisely a part of the archeological history, of the political history, of the socioeconomic history. All of that enriches and produces the great culture of peoples. And if some time in coming days someone were to ask me, as a descendant of the Mosqueda family, because my mother is a Mosqueda, daughter of Sixto, a son of Narciso, who through ignorance (several voices are heard speaking at the same time)... traded off our historical resources...

(Man in the audience interrupts:)

"My great-grandparents are like that!"

(Main speaker continues:)

... "What would you say... what do you want?" "To have what is ours return to Patana!"... Harrington took it so that the North American people and the world would see it. And let a day come when the people of Patana, these young descendants that are living today, see it with their own eyes and touch it with their own hands, because they do not know it, nor the historic document, because I have tried to get that document, for a matter of wishing... of... of thirst for learning about our ancestor's culture, and I have not been able [to get it], understand? If some of you could some day send us something...

(Several voices interrupt unintelligibly)

(Main speaker continues)



... (unintelligible) Elidio Masón Mosqueda... Elidio Masón Mosqueda. “Well... let them send us something! Understand? I want to know something more about Harrington. Not only about Patana’s archeological history... of world history... because he was a great archeologist. I consider that he might have been born about the end of the eighteenth or nineteenth century, because in the year 19 he might have been thirty-something, forty-something years old, I calculate more or less, a man already an archeologist, with a well-defined life dedicated to such enterprises must have been of an age going on maturity (unintelligible voices continue)... because I do not have a picture of him; I don’t know who Harrington is...

(Voice from someone in attendance: “I knew him!”)

(More unintelligible comments from someone in attendance)

(The speaker continues) “... that specific name sounded to me like...” (Several people talk at the same time) “Departamento de la Dirección de (*the Board of*) (unintelligible) Patana Arriba... ... Patana de (unintelligible) Principal Maizí, Tienda (*Store*) number 169 (more voices from the background).”

Another person speaks)

I am Alejandro Alba Matos, historian of the city of Aragüey, Director of the Municipal Museum (*Museo Municipal*). We are in the Patana cave, a very important ceremonial precinct, which we consider the most important of the Taino culture in this country, and one of the most significant of the Caribbean Taino culture; I am speaking of the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico in the Bahamas islands. Harrington visited this cave here in 1915. From here he took an important idol, which he cut with a wood saw, helped by the Mosqueda family, and that later he had to cut into five sections to do... to be able to transport it, due to the weight of the idol. It is meaningful that... before his visit, Esteban Cubbins, Teodoro Goyi, Walter (unintelligible), North Americans who preceded his visit and who gave him information regarding the importance that this territory represented to the study of the Taino culture of Cuba. He was here eleven months. He visited

many sites here where there are a numerous percent of pieces; more than 5,000 pieces that are at this very moment in possession of the storerooms of the Museo del Indio Americano (*American Indian Museum*), in perfect state of preservation and carefully inventoried, and the probability by the very friends of the Smithsonian and their (unintelligible). With Mr. Gene Henry, Pepper and our friend Nancy Oswald we had the privilege of studying this collection exhaustively, to see each one of the pieces, among them extremely important ones like the Máscara de Caracol (*Snail's Mask*), which still has not been reported in any of the most important archeological literature of the Caribbean; I am referring to Marcia Vélez Mayolo, Ricardo Alegría (unintelligible names) Rivera (unintelligible) for Cuba, (unintelligible) for Cuba, (unintelligible) Ramón (unintelligible) for Cuba among other personalities of studies of Cuban and Caribbean archeology. Really, for us to make this moment, as we said a little while ago, it is a most significant detail for the history of the brotherhood of all the United States and Cuba through the studies of the Taino Culture, since in 1915, Harrington took to his country significant Taino pieces and today, through Gene Henry, Pepper and Nancy Oswald's personal work, their sensibility, we managed... we have managed today to return invaluable human remains that on (unintelligible) were interred with Indian quality. In other words, our ancestors came back to their homeland, they came back to their country thanks to that sensibility and magnificent posture of our friends Pepper and Nancy Oswald of the Museo del Indio Americano. (Unintelligible) it is also a historical fact that after Harrington, no North American has visited this place. Other people, from Italy, France and Cuba have been here, have had the privilege of seeing this important petroglyphic mural that is the largest petroglyphic mural of the Taino culture in Cuba, of seeing the cut base where the idol was placed, idol that we think some day we will have here in this very Patana Cave and for that reason, truly make this moment, on this day, at this time, a most meaningful and historic accomplishment that will be perdurable and that will be in the annals of archeological history of Cuba and the United States.

(Another man speaks.)

“We are very thankful for your visit, to the Cubans as well as the North American comrades that met today in the Patana Cave, above where it was cut (unintelligible) of the Indians, where we are

near the hillock and the petroglyphs, and this was taken out from here by means of Fermín (unintelligible) and it was cut with a saw, and taken on a couple of mules (unintelligible), and I understand all these problems because I have been born...

A woman interrupts: "An what is your name?")

(Main speaker continues:)

... .. My name is Nicomedes Mosqueda... and I am here, comrade, I work with comrade Antonio Núñez who is now deceased, who was ambassador of Peru. I also worked here with comrade Andrés, a soviet, and I have the soviet book that he sent to me in... (voices are heard continuously from the public)... instead of sending it to me in the Spanish... Cuban language, he sent it to me in Russian, a language that I don't understand, right? So, I thank the American Embassy comrade and the Cuban comrades that where the petroglyph was cut, that is where it should be, because we love it, and you like it too. We are Cubans and we claim what is ours, we claim what is ours, we love what is ours and every one loves what belongs to them, understand? Then, that is why I will say that... many thanks that today we find ourselves in the Cave, and thanks for the return that, surely I understand that it is in New York, if it has not returned to its place. Then, many thanks. One day he will come to his place where I also want to talk about this problem, seeing that he is in his place where he has your... his... around him there are... all (unintelligible) the buried Indians, that we can go over them and show them one by one where everything is, where here, when he is already here in the Cave where he always was, because he is not here, he is absent (unintelligible), he is not present. Guards, men, would be placed here, and we will also do some reconditioning to the road so that we can also bring the cars, that would be easier for us here... we are a bit old already, and then be able to bring the cars right to the mouth of the Cave. If a barricade, two barricades should be built, we will do that too. So... from you I expect his return, like was said by comrade Nicomedes, who worked with Antonio Núñez in the scientific commissions. Comrades, (unintelligible)."

(Another man speaks.)

“I wanted to say something... wait... I wanted to say that we are in front of the Mosqueda family. The Mosqueda Indians from Patana; there are their descendants. All of their ancestors were Indians from this territory that is very important, that is, they are all Mosquedas, and it is the Mosqueda Indians who ask that the idol comes back to this ceremonial cave, to this funerary site that, as you can see, is in their hearts, in their sentiments, in their wish that it comes back here to Patana, as the other Mosqueda said. Not to the Museo de La Máquina, not to La Habana, not to Baracoa, but to Patana, to this Cave, because this belongs to them, to their sense of belonging, their local identity and their love for this territory.”

(Several people speak at once)

Another person speaks)

“I want to say a few words... I am a descendant of the Mosquedas, as I mentioned in the previous interview. The right of property ownership must be respected in the whole world, that which is owned, everything. This is the property of descendants of the Indians and it is ours, and we will thank the people of the United States and the Museo del Indio Americano of New York that they return what is ours. They should not feel offended, for we will know how to care for the culture that they have known how to protect and maintain during sixty-four years. Thank you very much, and I give to you this day, when you walked the same path that in a previous time walked the North American archeologist Harrington with the best desire that our history, our true culture be made known, and here is the place, exactly the place where the idol of the Indians was cut and, as the comrade director of the Baracoa Museum said, that it be brought to the place where it belongs, and be placed in... in the monument that suits the idol. It is so because that symbol identifies us as a human element and a cultural element before the history of universal archeology. “

(Another man speaks; he seems to be answering an inaudible question.)

“Antonio Mosqueda... Mosqueda Mosqueda... this day, today... yes... of January of 2003. We are very thankful for your visit to our Cave. We... what we want is that, where the Indian was cut

off, that that piece be brought here, since it was patrimony of ours, the Pataneros. And what we want from the people of the United States is that it be brought from there to here, and be delivered to us here, to our Cave, which is a part of us, as well as some more pieces that are now in the United States. We are very thankful for your visit. All I want to say is that Harrington disembarked at the Baracoa pier in La Habana. He went to Tinta de Jauco, where in Patana... at the site where Cecilio Mosqueda, brother (unintelligible) of my grandfather... when he found that Harrington was at Tinta de Jauco had a meeting... the meeting... he came up to Cecilio's house, and came to the Cave here, this Cave. They camped where Marcelino Mosqueda Matos lives, had breakfast, lunched and had dinner. Two mules were brought, and then he went to United States, brought the saw with which they cut, yes, our symbol, let us say it that way, that we are asking the people of the United States (unintelligible) to return here. When they left their camp, where they were camped in front of Marcelino, they took the mule, loaded our symbol, and from there they went to Sabana. In Sabana the mule dropped dead. From there it was taken to Yumorí. From Yumorí he took a boat to the United States and us comrades, comrades that are here today, January 11, 2003, what we want from the people from the United States (unintelligible) that you who are here represent, is that they deliver it here, to us, the revolutionary government, the Cuban revolutionary people and we expect the best representation from you (unintelligible) for us who are here together today. Thank you very much... thank you very much."

(Another man speaks.)

"Yes... good... Before anything else, thank you for allowing us this time. The name is Diego Boscio Ferrer, director of the Centro Provincial del Patrimonio de la Provincia de Guantano (*Provincial Center for the Patrimony of the Guantano Province*) and, truly, the expedition being made today, I think, as the historian of the city of Baracoa said, will be most interesting for all and for history. I believe that at the time we make this expedition, Huamán and Atuey come to my mind; they were the persons that gave origin to our process of nationalism, and I think that their activities left an interesting path for our people; not only for Cuba or the Dominican Republic, but for all of America, and I think that is to be recognized. The return, the possibility that the *Semí* comes back to this place would be truly of extraordinary importance... and I, as representative of the patrimony of the province, there would be many places where we would like it to be, but I

believe that where it should really be is in the Patana Cave because that way we will be respecting the identity that belongs to Pataneros and the municipality of Maizí, which in other times was part of the Baracoa territory. I believe that it is very interesting to us because I think that, along with the sister province of Holguín, we practically are the archeological capital of Cuba and, basically within the Taino culture, Guantánamo is important because that is where all Tainos were established initially when the Spaniards came. Actually, the Taino culture established itself in all that territory that at the present time consists of more than 300 ruins, not ruins, I should say, but installations of the aborigine culture that exist in this province, and in the case of Maizí, which is where they are, right now there are more than ninety-one. There is also much more to be discovered, and several activities are taking place to recover both, tangible and intangible patrimony because I think that the objects that belonged to them, are as important as the things that from a spiritual point of view also fulfill people, and that knowing more about those cultures, we will be really stronger as a nation, because going by what has been said by José Martí, “Homeland is Humankind” (*Patria es Humanidad*), I think that defending the identity of this territory, we will be defending the Cuban identity and the identity of the world, which makes us stronger, and I believe that foremost, with this move, once more the Cuban and the United States people become more united. I think this is...I think that is the most advantageous thing to all. Many thanks to all of you.”

(Another man speaks.)

“My name is Juan Ruiz Ortiz, director of the Museo Municipal de La Máquina (*La Máquina Municipal Museum*), to whom at this precise time belongs the idol that is now in New York, the *Semí* (unintelligible) idol, dear to the comrades that lived in that area and that live relatively near, and it is a very popular request that this idol come back to its original site because of what it means for the Taino culture and the national culture, as well as to the Municipio. We hope that through you, a request is also made, and that you will be carriers of this information, of the claim that make the comrades descendants of the Mosquedas who participated in, as Herman said, interesting of Harrington, not thievery because right now it is being preserved and we want that, regardless of the... number of years [passed since] it was taken, that it returns. “It is never too late if the milk is

good”, says a popular maxim, and so, we expect it to come back to its original site, and that it will be conserved as it is right now in the Museo Indio de Nueva York. Many thanks, and we hope you will be carriers of this information.”

(A woman speaks.)

“Ana Luisa Gazón Casamayor, archeologist of the Centro Provincial del Patrimonio Cultural de Guantánamo (*The Provincial Center for the Cultural Patrimony of Guantánamo*). With the importance of this site, the dried bed of Laguna de Limones, there is an investigation in progress that consists of a topographic elevation of the site, before any excavations, so as to be able to rescue all the information that the site would yield. This site was reported the first time by Harrington in 1919, who made studies here because of the characteristics of the site, which is a wall built by the aborigine with native materials and remains of... of their diet. This... this enclosed area (*cercado*) that delimits the area, is very much related with a lake that gives its name to the site, the Laguna de Limones, and the farmers of the area think that there existed a close relationship between that area and the lake, due to the difference in levels between the enclosed area [of the *cercado*] and the lake. It is believed that the interior of the... the land of the *cercado* may have served... may have been used by the inhabitants of this area, that is, the aborigines, as a ball-playing field, to play, or to conduct rituals. But then... precisely, the investigation that is being conducted by CENCREM archeologists, that is of the Centro Nacional de Restauración y Museología (*National Center for Restoration and Museology*) and by archeologists from the Centro Provincial del Patrimonio Cultural, intend to prove that precisely, the use was that: A ball-playing field, to play, or a location for ceremonies. This *cercado*, according to investigations that have been made, is one of the... it is the best preserved in the entire area of the Antilles. This investigation also intends to prove that, among aborigine constructions, this one is the best preserved in the entire area of the Antilles.

(The speaker asks a third party:) “What else, Nancy?...” (The speaker continues) ... Due to the characteristics of the area where the *cercado* is located, and the studies being made, it is

considered that this was one of the largest aborigine settlements in this entire area because, in fact, through the studies presently being made, 13 hillocks are known to be outside the *cercado*. This means that it takes up an immense area and, there is even the hypothesis that there was... there existed within that aborigine community an organization... an organization that allowed the existence of a chieftain (*cacique*) for the entire community and his subordinate (*vehique*) and adjacent to that, several Taino hamlets, because that was the culture of all that area... it was a Taino culture, several of the Taino villages were all around and made up the community, this entire community of Laguna de Limones.”

(Another man speaks.)

“Abigaíl Lores Matos is my name. And 60 years ago, or somewhat more than 60 that I am alive... I always took care of this here, although before, this was imperialist, and then they wanted to go in the woods and do something; they said they wanted to make an enclosed area (*cercado*)... (Unintelligible voices are heard from the public)... that everyone should respect, and everyone respected, and I always was taking much care of this; after that, now the revolution came and then... well, as I have always liked this, the issues of the Indians and I have read that, but I don't have much education but, well, while (unintelligible) I have always read about those things and I know what they are, those who were there, that suffered, and when they were being chased and all that, and then I have always liked to take care of this. And in the end they did... they gave me... a prize, very happy... I accepted it, and a diploma... I am very thankful.

(Someone asks the speaker: “Abigail, “In what year did you come here?”)

- “In '49 or '45.”

(Another question: “How old were you?”)

- “I... well... I was some thirty-some years; I already am 86; I (unintelligible) the 6th of January, and so, I have already some few little years living here.”

(Another question: “And whom did you find living here?”)



- “No one lived here; there was one... one that lived here whom I caught stealing this, they called him “Luigami”.

(Interviewer: “Oh... Gámez!”)

The speaker continues – “Yes, the Gámez... There were others, they called them “Colmenares” who also stole for selling to the doctors, to send them up north and all those things. But everything that I found here, everything has been for the revolution. I have given to the Museum...”

(The interviewer asks: “You have donated, what museum do you remember donating to?)

(Speaker) – “Well, I have donated... there has to be... there has to be something in La Habana, and there must be something also in Baracoa.”

(Interviewer: “And to the museum here in Maizí?”)

(Speaker) – “No, because what we have planted here until now is the (unintelligible).”

(Interviewer: “Alexis!”)

(Speaker – “Alexis... and he has... he goes there picking that up too...”

(Interviewer: “The President of the Delegation to (unintelligible)”

(Speaker) – “Oh, yes!”

(Interviewer: “About the lake, Abigail, what characteristics did the lake have when you got here?”)

(Speaker) – “Well, it was nice and round, like a plate, and it was...”

(Interviewer interrupts: “How deep was it?”)

(Speaker) – “... It was deep... with me riding a horse it reached almost to the top of the horse. ... It was nice and clean, it was... and many birds came from elsewhere; that does not exist any more, they are gone.”

(Interviewer: “So, it never dried out?”)

(Speaker) – “It did not dry out. It would have to be a very big draught, very big. We had one [that lasted] nine months, I think it was, there was little left, but it did not dry out.”

(Interviewer: “The lake did not dry out!”)

(Speaker) – “The animals all around would die, but that one did not dry out (unintelligible) food and that (unintelligible).”

(The speaker continues) – “But what I think is, what I have always said, that this was for them to have that water and they took... Because I have always said, when it rained a lot they came there

and then came just a little bit... they all came here... the water... there would be there for two things, perhaps to play with little balls from trees... from something... (Interviewer interrupts unintelligibly)... like today they play that ball... (Interviewer interrupts: "Within the *cercado*")... "yes, the same..." (Interviewer: "The aborigines")... (Continued interruptions and speaking both at once)... "... yes, the aborigines, and take that water for their use."

(Interviewer: "Then, you think that the inside of the *cercado* may have served as a dam for the water?")

(Speaker) – "Yes, I think so, like for... playing or for... to do something there that they would have as a sport. Today there is a sport, and perhaps they had a sport too. And now... then, they used that water because it almost did not dry up and it was always nice and clear."

(Interviewer: "Could you tell me how old you are?")

(Another person also speaks, unintelligibly)

(Speaker) – "Eighty-six."

(Interviewer: "And when did you became that age?")

(Speaker) - "I just now had a birthday the 6<sup>th</sup> of January."

(Interviewer: "Oh! What happens is that when I came here in December you were still eighty-five.")

(Speaker) – "Yes!"

(Several people talk amongst themselves, some in English.)

(A woman speaks, as explaining those conversations.)

"Oh! They are talking about a piece of terracotta... (someone sets her right: "ceramic")... ceramic, that in the beginning they thought it was an earring... (someone sets her right again: "pendant")... pendant, because it has a small perforation. But by its form now, it looks like the form of a piece of dough, some decoration (unintelligible).

(Someone asks: "How old could this be?")

(A man speaks.)

"How old could this be? Well, approximately, of course... I think that... in what time they were...

(Several people speak at once, some in English)... then they were here from the coasts to here in the forest, and this was a forest, it is not like it is now (unintelligible)... when I came here there were many forests here but now... with the forestry and that...much has been cleared"

Several people talk, one after the other: "500 years... approximately." "In what archeological period, if it is known?" "Has it been classified by archeological periods, or is just knowledge?" "It is knowledge!"... "There are no archeological periods!"... "It is culture!"

(A feminine voice)

"About the water... "Oh!... local farmers have... think, that there has existed a direct relationship between the *cercado* and the lake that gives its name to the site. First, because the material of... of the soil, I mean, it has been proven that the soil that is part of the lake has in fact similarity with the soil that the aborigine used to make the wall of the *cercado*. Also, because they, from their experience, they propose that it is in during the rainy season, the heavy rainy season, that water that accumulates within the *cercado* goes directly to the lake due to the difference in levels between the lake and the *cercado*. On the other hand, this site keeps... has, great similarity to sites found in Dominican Republic. We are located in the southern end of the Guantánamo province...the Guantánamo province, specifically the municipality of Maizí, which is the area nearest Dominican Republic. Then, specifically, the usage that is attributed to this place, as a ball-playing field, as a ceremonial site, as a place to play within the *cercado*, is similar to the use that aborigines give to this type of construction, that also exists in Dominican Republic; to this type of construction they gave the same use, that is, the use is similar. There is only difference in the criteria that the construction here, at the Maizí site is only soil and residue of the aborigines diet. And in Dominican Republic, *cercados* are constructed also with stones, besides soil, and residues

of their diet, that is, the remainders of the diet... they also used stones. There is only this difference, but as far as characteristics... rectangular... perhaps of smaller size in Dominican Republic, but as of general characteristics, they were the same.

Oh! It is meaningful that this area that forms part of this archeological site was huge, it was a huge site. I already said previously that only outside the site, 13 hillocks have been found near the enclosed area, that investigations are still going on, and that possibly when they are completed, there will be many more hillocks. However, I said that it was meaningful that in this area has been... has not been... reported that the Spanish managed to get, and were able to colonize the aborigines in that area, that is, that it should be investigated what were the characteristics of that community, what characteristics had the people who lived there, that the Spanish could not colonize them. They could not reach them. Perhaps they were rebellious, perhaps... it should be investigated.