



PROJECT MUSE®

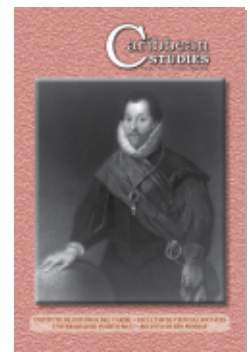
Theodoor De Booy in Puerto Rico: An Untold Story in the
History of Caribbean Archaeology

L. Antonio Curet

Caribbean Studies, Volume 46, Number 1, January - June 2018, pp. 3-32 (Article)

Published by Institute of Caribbean Studies

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1353/crb.2018.0000>



➔ *For additional information about this article*

<https://muse.jhu.edu/article/720220>

THEODOOR DE BOOY IN PUERTO RICO: AN UNTOLD STORY IN THE HISTORY OF CARIBBEAN ARCHAEOLOGY

L. Antonio Curet

ABSTRACT

Like many other regions throughout the world the colonial experience in the Caribbean included the arrival of foreign archaeologists conducting research and taking collections to their countries of origin. These were mostly composed of North American and European scholars representing different institutions such as museums, universities, or scientific academies. One of these expeditions poorly known by Caribbean, but more specifically by Puerto Rican archaeologists is the 1916 expedition of the Museum of the American Indian led by Theodoor de Booy. This paper describes and discusses this expedition within its institutional and historical context and how it relates to the early to the history of museums and archaeology.

Keywords: Archaeology, history of archaeology, history of museums, museums, Theodoor de Booy, anthropology of science, academic colonialism, imperial science.

RESUMEN

Como muchas otras regiones a través del mundo, la experiencia colonial del Caribe incluyó el arribo de arqueólogos extranjeros para investigar sitios y llevarse colecciones a sus países de origen. Éstos se componían mayormente de académicos norteamericanos y europeos que representaban instituciones como museos, universidades o academias científicas. Una de estas expediciones poco conocida por los arqueólogos del Caribe es la expedición del Museo del Indio Americano a Puerto Rico en 1916 dirigida por Theodoor de Booy. Este trabajo discute esta expedición dentro de su contexto institucional e histórico y cómo se relaciona con la historia temprana de los museos y de la disciplina de la arqueología.

Palabras clave: arqueología, historia de la arqueología, historia de los museos, museos, Theodoor de Booy, antropología de la ciencia, colonialismo académico, ciencia imperial

RÉSUMÉ

Comme cela fut le cas dans de nombreuses autres régions du monde, l'expérience coloniale de la Caraïbe s'est traduite par l'arrivée d'archéologues étrangers venus fouiller des sites pour ramener ensuite leurs découvertes dans leurs pays d'origine. Dans le cas de la Caraïbe, ces archéologues se composaient essentiellement de chercheurs nord-américains et européens qui travaillaient pour des institutions comme des musées, des universités ou des sociétés savantes. Parmi ces expéditions figure celle, peu connue des archéologues de la Caraïbe, du *Museo del Indio Americano* effectuée à Porto Rico en 1916 et dirigée par Theodoor de Booy. Cette contribution resitue l'expédition dans son contexte institutionnel et historique, puis en étudie les liens avec les débuts de l'histoire des musées et de l'archéologie.

Mots-clés : archéologie, histoire de l'archéologie, histoire des musées, musées, Theodoor de Booy, anthropologie de la science, colonialisme universitaire, science impériale

Received: 3 February 2016 Revision received: 21 July 2016 Accepted: 26 July 2016

Introduction

Like many other regions throughout the world the colonial experience in the Caribbean included the arrival of foreign archaeologists conducting research and taking collections to their countries of origin. These were mostly composed of North American and European scholars representing different institutions such as museums, universities, or scientific academies forming part of what Baatz (1996) has called imperial science. Part of their mission was to bring back objects, specimens, drawings, photographs, and information on regions and peoples little known to Westerners. While some reports from 18th and 19th centuries travelers exist, the work that had the most impact on Caribbean archaeology took place after the turn of the 20th century. Some examples of this included Fewkes (1907), Mason (1917, 1941), and Rainey (1940) in Puerto Rico; Osgood (1942), Harrington (1921) and Rouse (1942) in Cuba; Rainey (1941) and Rouse (1939, 1941) in Haiti; and de Booy (1915, 1919) and Krieger (1929) in Dominican Republic among others.

This paper discusses one of these expeditions little known to most Caribbeanists: Theodoor H. de Booy's 1916 expedition to western Puerto

Rico. With at least 13 expeditions to a number of islands, de Booy could easily be considered the leading specialist of Caribbean archaeology of his time. Unlike most of his other projects, his expedition to southwestern Puerto Rico and its collections of over 800 objects were never published.

This article serves a dual purpose. First, it will make known some of the details about this expedition and the role it played or may have played in the history of Caribbean archaeology and, perhaps, anthropology. Second, it will promote the use of the photograph and object collections produced by this expedition by future researchers. This paper begins by discussing the history of the man behind the expedition and the institution he represented, the Museum of the American Indian. This is followed by an account of the little documentary information accessible from his visit to the island and his archaeological work in three sites in western Puerto Rico. The excellent, but understudied, artifact and photograph collections are then described and used to shed more light on de Booy's archaeological work on the island. The paper ends with a discussion on how this expedition relates to the history of museums and archaeology.

From MAI to NMAI (based on McMullen 2009)

George G. Heye conceived the collections of the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) in 1897 when he purchased a Navajo (today Diné) hide shirt. This event was to become the catalyst for both Heye's intense interest on Indian cultures (especially material culture) and his eagerness, passion, or *idée fixe* on collecting both ethnographic and archaeological native objects. His collection continued to grow and by 1903 he was already purchasing large archaeological collections. By this time, Heye began building a professional staff for what was known as the "Heye Museum" sending expeditions that involved not only purchasing objects, but also undertaking archaeological and ethnographic field research. By 1916, the collection had grown to 58,000 objects and he officially created the Museum of the American Indian (MAI), Heye Foundation. The museum opened its doors to the public in 1922 and included ancient and ethnographic exhibits on North and South American and Caribbean indigenous cultures. Throughout the rest of Heye's life the collections continued to grow and by the time of his death in 1957 it is estimated that the collections reached about 700,000 objects.

The museum struggled at the face of overwhelming financial difficulties in the late 1970s and 1980s. In 1989 the U.S. Congress passed the NMAI Act that provided the funds to purchase MAI and transferred it to the Smithsonian Institution as the National Museum of the American Indian.

Heye's West Indian collection program began with Utley's expedition in 1904-1905 to Puerto Rico to purchase objects from local collectors. In 1907, Rev. Thomas Huckerby became a collector for the MAI in the Lesser Antilles. De Booy joined these efforts in 1912 when he began conducting archaeological expeditions to various parts of the Caribbean and Venezuela. Mark Harrington, mostly a North Americanist, led an expedition to Cuba in 1915 and 1919 where he excavated a large number of sites. In addition to contributing thousands of objects to the collections, these expeditions also generated archaeological information, some of which is still useful to archaeologists today. Although only two published reports by Huckerby on petroglyphs from Granada and St. Vincent are available, extensive and detailed reports were published by de Booy and Harrington of many of their expeditions. Other professional archaeologists such as Marshall Seville, Jesse Fewkes, and Samuel K. Lothrop conducted minor museum-sponsored expeditions to the region or donated some objects to MAI. Further additions to the collections were made by sales or donations of objects by American, European, and local Caribbean collectors or from art brokers.

Today, NMAI's insular Caribbean collections have over 9,000 catalog numbers representing over 43,000 objects, most of which were obtained between 1905 and 1985. Of these objects over 99% are archaeological in nature, arguably representing one of the largest Caribbean-wide archaeological collections in the world. Despite this substantial quantity, the entirety of the Caribbean is not represented equally as some islands are better represented than others.

Theodoor H. de Booy: A Biography (based on Saville 1919)

Theodoor de Booy (Fig. 1) was born in 1882 in Hellevoetsluis, Netherlands. For unknown reasons, he migrated to the United States in 1906 and became a naturalized citizen in 1916. He married Elizabeth Hamilton Smith in 1909 and had two children, Mary Hobson and George. De Booy's interest on Caribbean archaeology seems to have begun during a trip to Turks and Caicos with his wife in 1911. During his stay, he visited most of the islands that compose this archipelago and investigated both cave and open-air sites. This work was published the following year in *American Anthropologist* (de Booy 1912), the same year he was hired by the Heye Museum as a field explorer for its West Indies research program. His first official MAI expedition was for six months in Bahamas (de Booy 1913). It was on this occasion that he discovered the famous canoe paddle in a cave in Mores Island. Between this time and until his resignation in March 1918, de Booy led more than 10 MAI expeditions to the Caribbean (Table 1) where he conducted reconnaissance and site

excavations in many islands. These expeditions also involved purchasing from local collectors and the acceptance of donations of objects.



Figure 1. Theodoor de Booy in Dominican Republic (National Museum of the American Indian [Neg. N04834]).

Table 1
de Booy's Expeditions and Research Projects
in the Caribbean Region

Year	Location	Type of Work	Reference
1911	Turks and Caicos	Reconnaissance and excavations	de Booy 1912
Jun-Dec. 1912	Bahamas	Reconnaissance and excavations	de Booy 1913a
Jan-Mar 1913	Jamaica	Reconnaissance and excavations	de Booy 1913b
Jul-Oct 1913	Dominican Republic	Reconnaissance and excavations	de Booy 1915
Spring 1914	Dominican Republic	Reconnaissance and excavations	de Booy 1915
Oct-Nov 1914	Cuba	Reconnaissance	Harrington 1921: Chap IX
Feb-Apr 1915	Margarita Island, Venezuela	Reconnaissance and excavations	de Booy 1916
May-Sept 1915	Trinidad	Reconnaissance and excavations	de Booy 1918d
May-Aug 1916	Dominican Republic	Excavations	de Booy 1919a

Year	Location	Type of Work	Reference
1916	Puerto Rico	Excavation	Not Published
1916	Martinique	Reconnaissance (?)	Not Published
Oct 1916- Feb 1917	Danish West Indies (Virgin Islands)	Reconnaissance and excavations	de Booy 1917c, 1919b
May-July 1918	Perijá Mnts., Venezuela	Ethnographic	de Booy 1918b, 1918c

It is not clear why de Booy decided to resign from MAI in early 1918, though his resignation coincided with de Booy's recruitment by the U.S. Office Naval of Intelligence (ONI) as an agent in foreign lands (Browman 2011; Browman and Williams. 2013:346; Harris and Sadler 2003:372). Significantly, several American archaeologists and anthropologists were recruited as naval officers during WWI to conduct espionage in foreign countries under the guise of conducting field research. That same year, de Booy headed an ethnographic expedition sponsored by the Geographical Society and the Museum of the University of Pennsylvania to the Sierra de Perijá in eastern Venezuela to research the Motilone Indians (de Booy 1918a, 1918b, 1918c). In discussing the involvement of American archaeologists in ONI, Bowman states:

The espionage activities of Theodoor de Booy (1881-1919) have been overlooked by previous discipline historians. De Booy began archaeological explorations in the Caribbean islands in 1909. He secured a position with the Museum of the American Indian (MAI), continuing this work in 1912, and returned to New York frequently to consult with Franz Boas, Marshall Saville, and other anthropologists at the MAI, AMNH, and Columbia University. In early 1918 de Booy began archaeological work in Venezuela for the University Museum at Pennsylvania, concomitantly working for the ONI. While in Venezuela, he utilized his archaeological credentials as a cover identity for his espionage activities. When Saville wrote of de Booy's death in 1919, he referred to this work under the official Department of State 'Inquiry Force' listing, rather than the actual ONI association (Saville 1919:182-183). (Bowman 2011:12)

In addition to his fascination with archaeology, de Booy was interested in history, folk traditions, and the cultural and physical geography of the places he visited. Sections in many of his archaeological publications dedicated to some of these topics attest to this, as do a number of articles he published in a variety of venues ranging from popular newspapers (e.g., de Booy 1917c, 1918a, 1918b, 1918c) to more specialized journals like the *Geographical Review*, *Bulletin of the Pan American Union*, the *Hispanic American Historical Review*, *Scientific Monthly*, and *Scientific American* (e.g., 1916 a, 1917b, 1918e, 1918f).

De Booy died at his home of influenza on February 18, 1919

following his return from the Venezuelan expedition.

It is clear from this cursory summary of de Booy's life and work that he was a very responsible, active, dedicated and prolific researcher. According to Seville (1919:183-184), he made a point of always preparing "reports immediately after each expedition." In terms of his scholarly contributions, much of his work can be considered seminal. Many of his field projects, for example, were the first archaeological studies conducted on some of the islands (e.g., Virgin Islands) or regions (e.g., eastern Dominican Republic). Further, the scope of his research program, which included all of the Greater and some of the Lesser Antilles, the continental island of Margarita, and Venezuela, may have been surpassed only by Rouse's endeavor decades later. Although several foreign archaeologists had already worked in the Caribbean prior to de Booy's arrival to the region, it is clear that with the possible exception of Fewkes, de Booy could be considered the primary expert on West Indian archaeology of his time.

Theodoor de Booy in Puerto Rico

Very little information is available on de Booy's expedition to Puerto Rico. One major problem is the meager documentation available in NMAI's Archive Center related to any of de Booy's expeditions. Even though de Booy published reports on almost every archaeological trip, Puerto Rico was one of three exceptions (the two others being eastern Cuba [eventually published by Harrington in his book] and Martinique).

References to this expedition are few and insubstantial. Based on the object catalog information and photographs in NMAI's Archive Center, it seems that de Booy visited the island in 1916 and concentrated his efforts on investigating at least three sites in southwestern Puerto Rico: Punta Ostiones, Joyuda, and Hacienda Belvedere. In their obituaries, Saville (1919) and Heye (1919) also mention that in 1916 de Booy led an expedition to Santo Domingo as well as "Porto Rico and Martinique." This is confirmed by the 1916-1917 Report of the Board of Trustees of MAI, which states that de Booy made a reconnaissance of Martinique and Porto Rico, obtaining some specimens from each island" (MAI 1916-1917:4). Some more specific information about the timing of his visit is suggested in other documentary sources. Passport applications and passenger lists show him arriving Santo Domingo on May 12 of that year and leaving from Macorís, Dominican Republic to New York on August 30. If de Booy visited Puerto Rico and Martinique in the same trip, this places de Booy's visit to the island sometime between late spring and summer of 1916.

The documentary evidence on the nature of the expedition in

Puerto Rico and Martinique is similarly unclear. On one hand, Saville (1919:183) indicates that de Booy “conducted excavations” on all of those islands (Hispaniola, Puerto Rico and Martinique), while Heye (1919: 9), on the other hand, specifies only that he “conducted archaeological researches.” The Report of the Board mentioned above states “De Booy made a reconnaissance of Martinique and Porto Rico, obtaining some specimens from each island” (Report 1916-1917:4), implying that no major excavations were conducted. The low number of objects (a total of 8 objects: 7 celts and 1 sherd) and photographs (16, most of them ethnographic) from Martinique in NMAI’s collections support the idea that no excavations were conducted in this island. This may not necessarily be true of Puerto Rico.

Additional information on the expedition is provided by Irving Rouse (1952), who was well acquainted with MAI, its staff, and de Booy’s collections. In his published work on Puerto Rican archaeology he not only specifies the nature of de Booy’s work, but clearly distinguishes between the types of work conducted on the different sites. According to Rouse, “...de Booy collected specimens at Ostiones and excavated briefly at the site of Joyuda...” (Rouse 1952: 374). Later on, he restates that “...de Booy visited the site [Punta Ostiones] the same year [1916], collecting predominantly potsherds ...” (Rouse 1952:394) adding that Joyuda was excavated (Rouse 1952:398). No mention, however, is made of the Hacienda Belvedere site. As discussed below, the artifacts and photographs from the expedition support Rouse’s account.

The reasons de Booy selected southwestern Puerto Rico for his work are unknown. MAI’s collections at that time had excellent objects from the central regions of the island, and many large and dense sites were known from the southern coast thanks to Lothrop’s survey, the results of which were already circulating in an unpublished manuscript among American archaeologists (e.g., see Rouse 1952). However, the fact that the site of Punta Ostiones was also visited and/or excavated in 1916 by Lothrop, Spinden, and possibly de Hostos (see below) suggests that his selection was based on suggestions from one or more of these other researchers. Coincidentally, Lothrop and Spinden were also recruited by ONI as government agents in 1917 (Browman 2011; Browman and Williams 2013; Harris and Sadler 2003).

Photograph Collection

Of de Booy’s 71 photos from Puerto Rico in NMAI’s Archive Center, 27 portray archaeological excavations or sites. The rest can be considered ethnographic. The descriptions and information on these images in NMAI’s catalog tend to be non-descriptive or non-specific. Though de

Booy never published a report on this expedition, some of the photos were published in unrelated articles (de Booy 1918b; 1918f:13). No reference was made to his archaeological work in any of these articles, but some of the figure captions provided some information, such as an article on the Panama hat industry of western Puerto Rico (de Booy 1918e).

Few of the photographs depict scenes of Old San Juan (Fig. 2), including two views of the San Felipe del Morro fort (Fig. 2A) from the ocean, suggesting that this was de Booy's point of arrival (possibly from Dominican Republic or Martinique) or departure (either returning to Dominican Republic or on his way to Martinique). The rest of the photos are on western Puerto Rico, mainly in the southwestern municipality of Cabo Rojo, Mayagüez and Aguada, locations he seemed to have visited.

Most of the images from Cabo Rojo concentrate on de Booy's archaeological work at the sites of Punta Ostiones and Joyuda (Fig. 3; see below). Other photographs from this municipality capture more

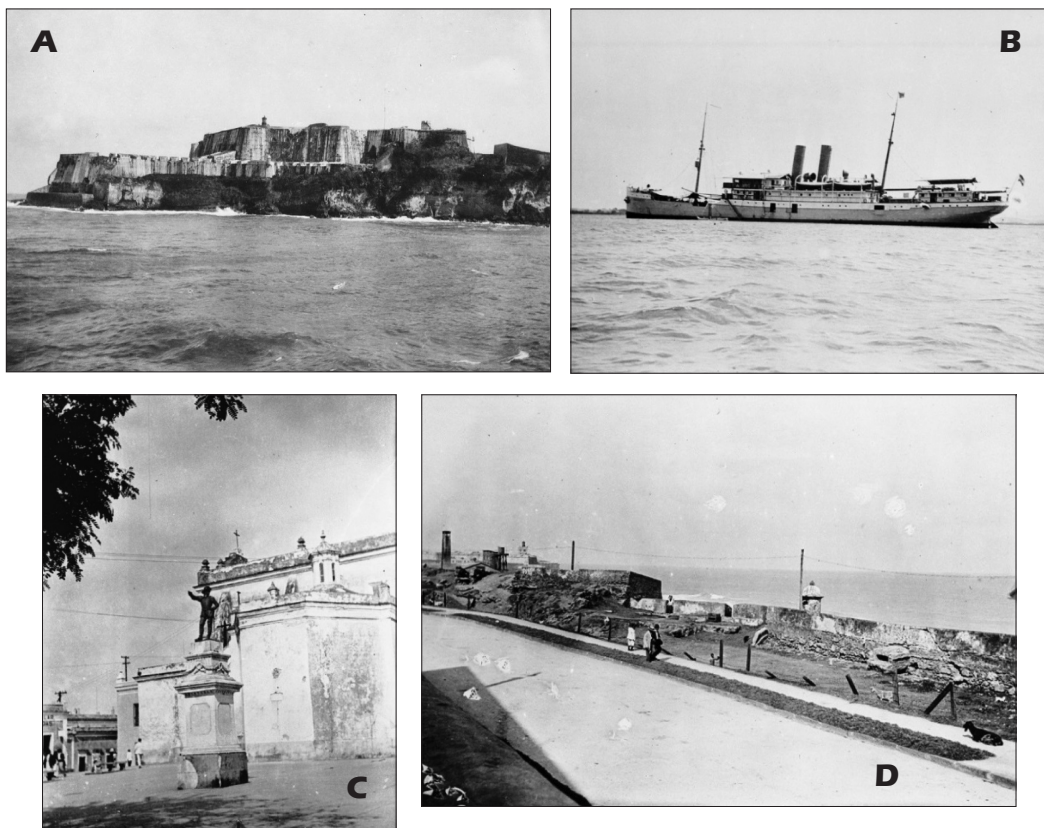


Figure 2. Examples of a photograph set taken by de Booy during his visit to Old San Juan (National Museum of the American Indian).

ethnographic settings including the community of Joyuda, “primitive” houses (Fig. 4), and a woman weaving Panama hats (Fig. 5). A series of five photos showing what seems to be a warehouse of a dealer/distributor of Panama hats (Fig. 6) is probably from Mayagüez. His 1918 article mentions that the hats produced in local communities, were “bought regularly up by buyers sent out by the large hat dealers from Mayaguez” (de Booy 1918:329). Finally, 16 photographs show what seem to be the ruins of churches (Figs. 7A and 7B) and one monument. The latter is the Cruz de Colón (Columbus’ Cross) erected in the Municipality of Aguada in 1843 to commemorate the 400th anniversary of Columbus landing in Puerto Rico; the monument was destroyed by an earthquake later in 1918 (Montalvo Guenard 1933) (Figs. 7C and 7D). It is unclear if the rest of the structures are from this municipality as well.

Archaeological Photographs.

The photographic collection includes 28 images related to the

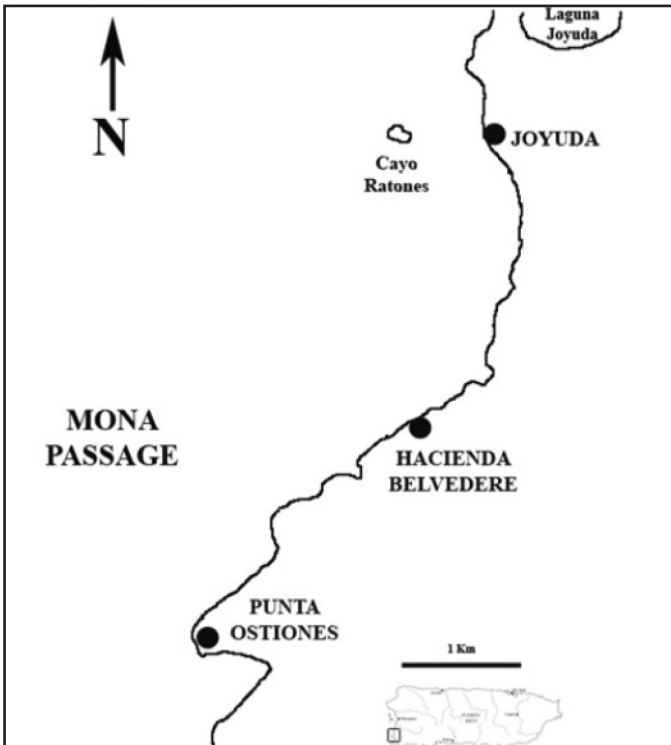


Figure 3. Map of southwestern Puerto Rico showing the location of the three sites visited by de Booy.



Figure 4. Examples of a photograph set taken by de Booy during his visit to Joyuda (National Museum of the American Indian [Negs.: A: N04759; B: N04768; C: N04764; D: N04762]).



Figure 5. Examples of a photograph set taken by de Booy in Joyuda of woman weaving a Panama hat (National Museum of the American Indian [Negs.: A: N0771; B: N04769; C: N04773; D: N04772]).

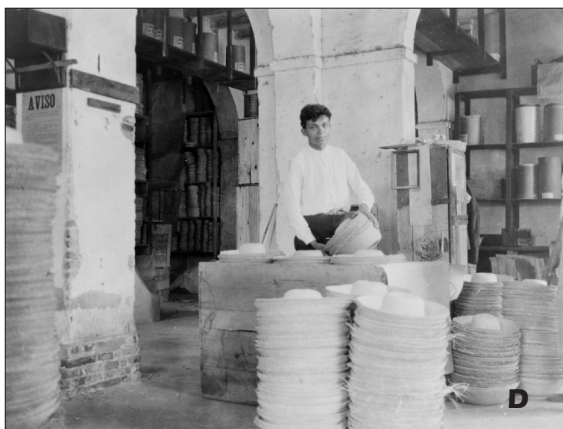
**A****B****C****D**

Figure 6. Examples from a photograph set taken by de Booy of a Panama hat dealer (National Museum of the American Indian [Negs.: A: N04776; B: N04778; C: N04781; D: N04780]).

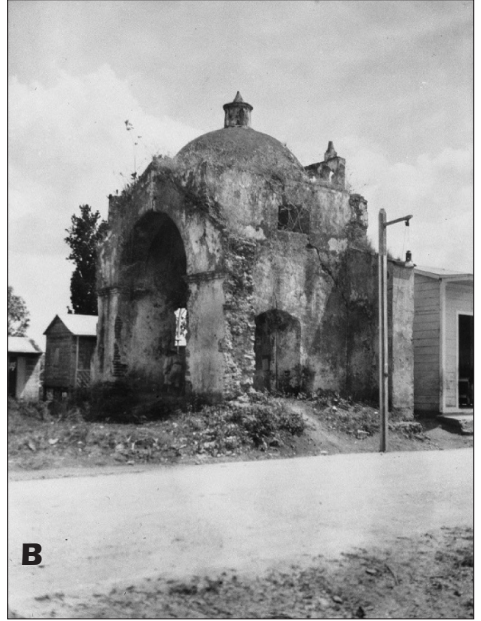


Figure 7. Examples of photographs of architecture and monuments taken by de Booy (National Museum of the American Indian [Negs.: A: N04750; B: N04743; C: N04755; D: N04751]).

excavations or archaeological sites. These photographs were simply labeled as excavations in “Punta Ostiones or Joyuda.” In an attempt to assign the images to particular sites and excavation units they were grouped in four sets (Figs. 8-10) based on the presence of similar features in the images. This, however, does not necessarily mean that each group represents different excavation units or sites as two or more sets may represent different angles of the same excavation. Six photographs could not be assigned to any particular group (Fig. 11). The first grouping (Fig. 8) can be assigned without any doubt to the Joyuda site, mainly because of the presence of Cayo Ratones visible in some of them (Fig. 8A). Other images that do not include Cayo Ratones were assigned to this group based on shared unique features (e.g., unique traits on some palm trees, fence posts, a stump, etc.) with those photos that included the small islet.

I believe that one of the groups (Fig. 9) can be assigned with some confidence to the site of Punta Ostiones for three reasons. First,

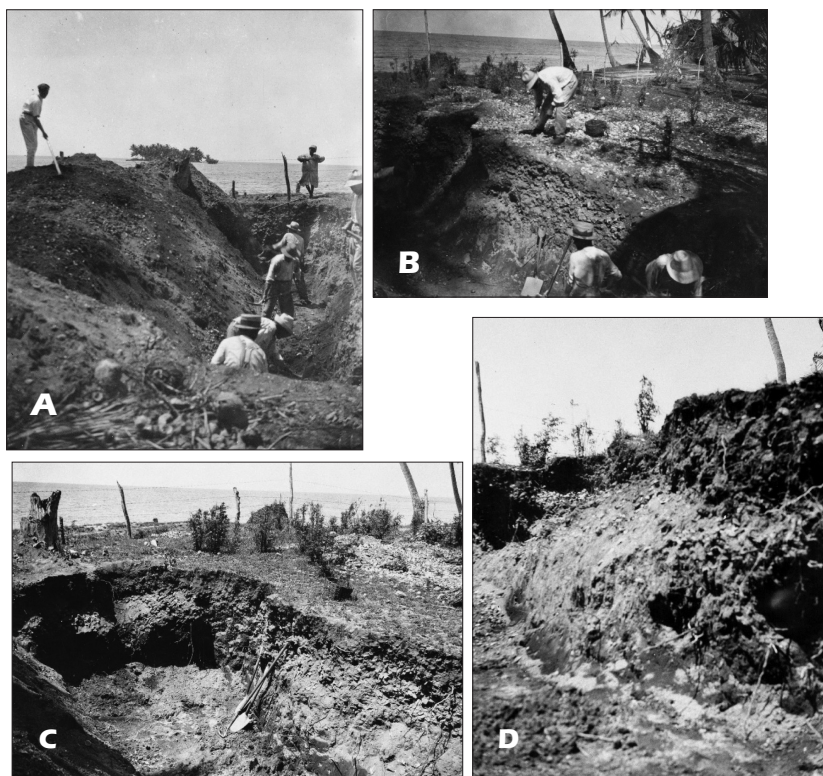


Figure 8. Examples of photographs of excavations at the site of Joyuda taken by de Booy (National Museum of the American Indian [Negs.: A: N04735; B: N04734; C: N04724; D: N04738]).



Figure 9. Examples of photographs of Punta Ostiones (National Museum of the American Indian [Negs.: A: N04721; B: N04730; C: N04723; D: N04726]).



Figure 10. Examples of photographs of excavations taken by de Booy at an unknown site, possibly Joyuda (National Museum of the American Indian [Negs.: A: N04729; B: N04733; C: N04731; D: N04736]).



Figure 11. Examples of photographs of excavations taken by de Booy at unknown sites (National Museum of the American Indian [Negs.: A: N04732; B: N04737; C: N04740; D: N04739]).

Figure 9A was described by de Booy (1918b:233) as “an aboriginal heap and village site at Punta Ostrones [sic], Porto Rico” in one of his articles. Furthermore, this particular set shares two features that are not seen in any of the images in the other groups. The first feature is the large amount of shells visible on the natural surface, which is how Punta Ostrones still looked until at least the mid-1990s, the last time I visited the site. Shells are also present in other photographic groups, but most of them represent excavation discards (i.e., the high shell density was

not present on the surface prior the excavations). The second feature is a metal sheet wrapped around the trunks of almost each palm tree in these images. These sheets, which are placed by farmers to prevent rats from reaching the coconuts, are not present in any of the palm trees of the other groups. While some of the photographs from this group show what appear to be old excavation trenches (see discussion section below), none of them include a unit in the process of being excavated like in the images of Joyuda. If these photographs are actually from the site of Punta Ostiones they, combined with the low quantity of artifacts from this site in MAI's collections (Table 2), imply that de Booy did not excavate this site as Rouse suggested.

The other groupings and unassigned photographs (Figs. 10 and 11) are more difficult to place. However, the presence of neither large

Table 2. Distribution of artifact types per sites in NMAI's collections obtained by de Booy.

Type of Object	Joyuda	Punta Ostiones	Hacienda Belvedere	Total
Pottery	737	43	7	787
Stone tools	16	6	1	22
Shell celts	32	0	0	32
Natural shells	2	0	0	2
Coral abraders	2	0	0	2
Faunal remains	2	0	0	2
Totals	791	49	8	847

concentration of shells on the natural surface nor metal sheets on palm trees suggest that they are not from Punta Ostiones, leaving only two other possibilities: the Joyuda site or the third site of Hacienda Belvedere. The fact that Rouse never mentioned Hacienda Belvedere and the limited number of artifacts in our collections from this site (N=7), suggest that these belong also to the site of Joyuda.

Archaeological Collections

Of the 847 objects collected by de Booy, an overwhelming majority is pottery (N=788 or 93%) (Fig. 12). Archaeologically, most of the diagnostic, ceramic material seems to belong to the Ostionan Ostionoid subseries, but some Chican Ostionoid pottery is also found (Rouse 1992). The distribution of these objects by site and object type is shown in Table 2. As mentioned above, it is clear that most of the objects in the

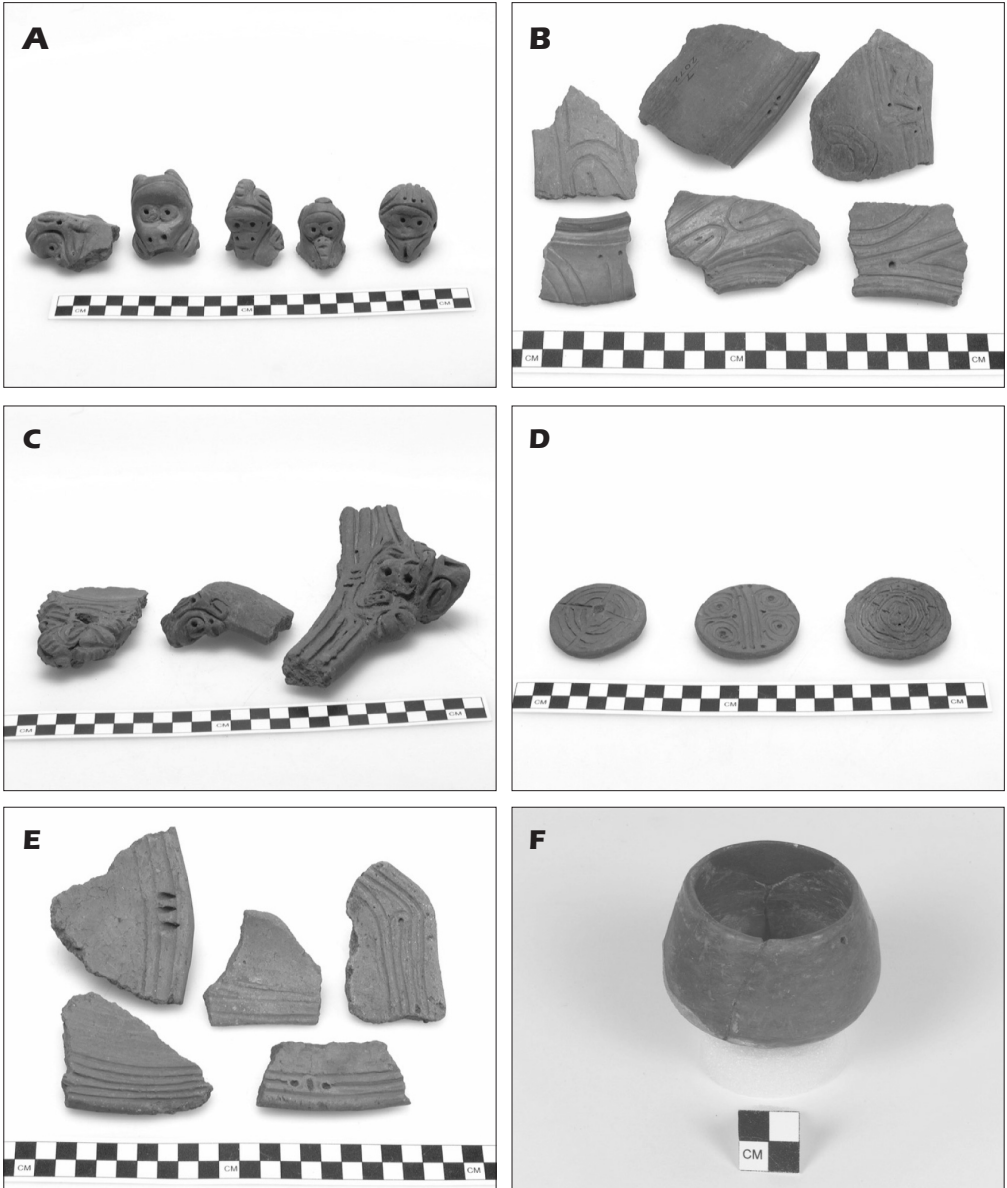


Figure 12. Examples of pottery collection obtained by de Booy during his visit to Puerto Rico (National Museum of the American Indian, Cat. Nos.: A: 072071; B: 072072; C: 072070; D: 072079; E: 072067; F: 072052).

collection from this expedition are from the site of Joyuda. The pottery collection is composed mostly of rimsherds of different ceramic forms including bowls, burenes or cassava griddles, plates, ceramic stamps, and adornos or modeled handles. Some catalog numbers were assigned to particular objects or to lots where similar artifacts (e.g., rimsherds, adornos stylistically similar) were grouped. In terms of the context, the catalog specifies only the site of origin. These collections will be discussed in the following sections within the context of the history of each one of the sites.

Punta Ostiones

This site is located on a low sandy point on the southwestern coast of Puerto Rico and it is composed of (Meléndez 1999):

- a series of shell middens arranged in a semi-circle with the opening towards the south,
- a midden composed mostly of sand located towards the middle of the opening of the semi-circle,
- and a low central area in the middle of the enclosure produced by the midden formation, deprived of shell.

The site seems to have been first reported by Lothrop in a list of Puerto Rican sites that circulated extensively among the community of archaeologists from various interested U.S. institutions. In an article published in 1927, Lothrop implies that he excavated in Punta Ostiones in 1916. Adolfo de Hostos (1919), a Puerto Rican collector and historian, also excavated the site on an unspecified date well before 1919. Rouse simply states that it took place during World War I (Rouse 1952:393-394). Herbert Spinden (Meléndez 1999) of the American Museum of Natural History in New York, excavated Punta Ostiones in 1916 as well. Therefore, Punta Ostiones site was excavated by at least two different projects in 1916, and by a total of three in a matter of few years if de Hostos project is considered. Between these early years and the 1930s the site seems to have been visited by local collectors, the best known Montalvo Guenard (1933). It is not surprising, then, that after his visit to the site in 1934, Rainey (1940:117) decided not to excavate because it was “too much dug over” and “greatly altered by various excavations”. In 1937, Rouse excavated small, undisturbed areas (Rouse 1952). Since then very few serious archaeological projects have been conducted in Punta Ostiones, as the large number of local looters has worsened its condition. More recently, an assessment of the site was conducted by Meléndez (1998, 1999) as part of her study of Spinden’s project and collections.

Today, the site still bears the scars of the numerous excavations,

many of them showing the remains of long trenches across the highest points of the middens. In addition, rain, wind, and possibly surges produced by hurricanes have contributed to its erosion; the elevation of the middens are currently much lower than those reported by the early excavators.

Archaeologically, the site of Punta Ostiones occupies a prevalent position in the history of Puerto Rican and Caribbean archaeology. To begin with, it seems that this site was the first one where stratigraphic excavations were conducted in this island and probably in the Caribbean, by both de Hostos (1919) and Spinden (Meléndez 1998, 1999). While Spinden never published his work, the stratigraphic approach used by de Hostos in this and the Joyuda sites lead de Hostos to propose a sequence of ceramic traits wherein pottery lacking “paint” (most probably referring to slip), but with incisions and modeling (today Rouse’s [1992] Chican Ostionoid subseries; AD 1200-1500), superimposed painted (slipped) ones (today Rouse’s [1992] Ostionan Ostionoid subseries; AD 600-1200). After conducting some excavations at the site and studying the collections obtained by de Hostos and Spinden, Rouse agreed with de Hostos assessment of the ceramic assemblage. The presence of the “painted” pottery led Rouse to select Punta Ostiones as the type-site of the Punta Ostiones styles (both the Pure and Modified styles), the Ostionan subseries, and the Ostionoid series of the Greater Antilles.

Joyuda

This site is located about 3.4 km (2.1 mi.) north/northeast of Punta Ostiones. In many aspects both sites share similar characteristics and history. Lothrop’s (cited in Rouse 1952:399) states that “This shell heap is shaped like the one at Ostiones... but not so deep.” Joyuda is also located close to the shore and it is impacted by the ocean where the “sea is cutting into it (the midden) and many objects have been found on the beach” (Lothrop cited in Rouse 1952:399). Moreover, Joyuda was excavated by the same researchers as Punta Ostiones, including Lothrop in 1915 (Rouse 1952:399), de Hostos sometime before 1919, de Booy in 1916, and Montalvo Guenard (1933).

Like in the case of Punta Ostiones, Joyuda also contributed to an improved definition of the Puerto Rican ancient chronology. The material recovered from Joyuda provided evidence for the sequence developed by de Hostos of early “painted” (slip) pottery and later unpainted, but incised sherds. Rouse does not seem to have excavated this site and instead studied the collections in the Harvard Peabody Museum and MAI. While he agreed that the ceramic assemblages in Punta Ostiones and Joyuda are similar, the higher number of incised

redware and unpainted, incised sherds led him to suggest that the latter site is chronologically later than the former.

Hacienda Belvedere

Hacienda Belvedere is not only the least represented in NMAI's collections, but also the most enigmatic. While NMAIs catalog clearly identify this as a site, Rouse (1952:394) does not even mention the name. However, a "Conchero (shell midden) Hacienda Belvedere" is registered in the archaeological site inventory of the *Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña* with the designation of CR-101 located on the shore approximately 1.8 km (1.1 mi.) northeast of Punta Ostiones. The information in this file provided by Antonio Ramos Ramírez, however, indicates that the site was never before reported. While it is highly possible that this site is the same one visited by de Booy, it could also be a different one that, by coincidence, received the same name. To date no "official" excavations have been reported for this site, although it could have been visited and excavated by local collectors and looters. The eight sherds present in NMAI collections seem to belong to the Ostionan Ostionoid subseries.

Discussion and Conclusions

In order to understand the efforts of MAI and de Booy to study, record, and collect archaeological objects from the Caribbean it is necessary to place them in their historical context. While some cases of travelers and people interested in the ancient Caribbean are reported for the 18th and the early 19th centuries, the works that had the most significance and impact on Caribbean archaeology took place shortly after the end of the Spanish-Cuban-American War (Curet 2011). Many of them were American and European scholars who came to the islands representing different institutions, such as museums, universities, or scientific academies.

In the particular case of Puerto Rico, many Americans came to inventory the cultural resources of the newly acquired U.S. colony and to obtain objects for museum collections (e.g., Fewkes 1907; Mason 1917, 1941; Rainey 1940). Most of them were part of the early, global history of archaeology and museums, when scientific expeditions were sent by institutions to explore regions of the world little known by Europeans and North Americans.

While the origin of museums can be traced to the early antiquarians of the 1700s and 1800s, museum as institutions developed from an interest (mostly among the elite) on knowledge and science. They were highly influenced by the "knowledge for the sake of knowledge" ideas

that prevailed among the scholarly circles in Europe and the U.S. Some of the tendencies within this perspective fell more into the model of the humanities aiming for the ideals of the Enlightenment of the Age of Reason prevalent among the elite of this period. A sign of being cultivated was to be educated in multiple areas of knowledge. It was even better to own exotic objects associated with that knowledge (e.g. hunting trophies, “tribal” objects, exotic plants). One aspect of this tendency focused more specifically on the sciences with a strong interest on natural history that led to the establishment of natural history and anthropology museums. In short, these tendencies were interested in new knowledge focusing mostly on the “uncivilized or non-domesticated world.” In human terms, other cultures were seen as uncivilized, savages, or wild as a non-domesticated, dark jungle and where non-Westerners were considered less humans or less developed both physically and culturally. In other words, they were the “others.”

Similarly, the origin of archaeology can be traced to the early antiquarians, and its growth and early development happened within the same humanistic, “intellectual” tendencies mentioned above. While many of the works of these early archaeologists lacked a theoretical component, few were indeed heavily influenced by the ideas of cultural evolution. For example, in some instances Caribbean Indians were placed within the Stone Age, a “universal” evolutionary scheme developed by European thinkers. This approach also supported a perspective wherein the indigenous peoples of the Americas were seen as frozen in earlier cultural evolutionary stages. An extension of this was the notion that native groups were considered to belong to a past disconnected from the history of people that inhabit the American continents today. For many of these scholars, their own past was in Europe, unrelated to the indigenous people or the “other.”

Because of the lack of basic background and comparative information most of these early works can be described as exploratory. Researchers focused on collecting or excavating the material culture of a particular region or island. Part of the mission of early archaeology was to bring back objects or specimens, drawings, or photographs, and collect information to serve the interests of a mostly educated audience. The selection of artifacts was based on their artistic quality, completeness, aesthetics, or the presence of traits that could inform their cultural affiliation. Little importance, if any, was placed on other aspects of the archaeological assemblages such as diet or mundane tools. Artifact collections were used in two ways: first, to “confirm” the evolutionary concept of progress and, second, to begin developing cultural-chronological sequences and defining culture areas. Moreover, their collection, excavation, and recording methods were not well developed, yet. Nevertheless,

the trends established by these early foreign archaeologists that began working in the Caribbean and other parts of the world influenced later works, setting the bases for most of current archaeological work.

It is during this early age of museums and archaeology that MIA and, by association, de Booy began their work in the Caribbean. Both the photographs and the objects selected for the collections are a testimony of the early, misguided practices of the beginnings of these disciplines. Among other things, the photographs speak volumes of the underdeveloped field practices. For example, the use of hoes and shovels as the only tools and the lack of any indication of horizontal or vertical control demonstrate how the methodology (or lack of it) emphasized more the recovery of objects rather than their contexts. For example, while some attention is given to stratigraphy as indicated by three photos of excavation profiles, this interest did not influence their approach to the excavation techniques where materials recovered at various depths were not kept separate. This is also demonstrated by the absence of detailed contextual data (other than site) in MIA's collection catalog. The interest on primarily large pieces or whole artifacts is evidenced by the absence of screens, the selective process of collecting (see Figs. 7, 9, and 10), and the underrepresentation of fauna remains in the collections when large amounts of at least shells are observable in the excavation photographs.

Despite the many paradigmatic and methodological problems with expeditions such as de Booy's in Puerto Rico, the data and objects collected remain useful in present archaeological research. For example, most of these early projects were conducted at a time when many of the sites have not been impacted by development, natural formation processes, collectors, looters, or even other archaeologists, leaving behind a more reliable description of its integrity. Maps, photographs and writings and, in some cases, films are helpful sources for archaeologists to reconstruct some aspects of sites that are no more. The site of Punta Ostiones is a case in which these early studies are useful today. As stated above by 1916-1919 this site was excavated by at least three archaeologists and a number of Puerto Rican collectors, and the degree of destruction was so high that by the 1930s Rainey could not find an untouched area to excavate. Although de Booy did not excavate this site, his photographs of Punta Ostiones show two things. First, they (Fig. 8) present general views of a less impacted site, useful as a visual record of its condition. Second, it also includes views of older trenches already visible on the surface in 1916. These views combined with the photographs of de Booy's excavations at Joyuda show the size of the traditional trenches and the magnitude of their impact to the general landscape of sites. An example of the use of both collections and records by modern archaeologists is Meléndez's study on Punta Ostiones by using the results of Spinden's

expedition in 1916. Besides the collections, Meléndez used maps, photographs, field notes, and drawings to reconstruct the conditions of the site in 1916 in order to assess changes the general landscape and the degree of destruction. She was able to assess aspects of stratigraphy, changes in topography, and the degree of impact produced by ocean or hurricanes surges, and other anthropogenic factors.

Additionally, collections obtained from these projects are valuable for many purposes. Despite the absence of detailed contextual information, these collections are useful for a myriad of studies, ranging from stylistic studies to sourcing of artifacts to the characterization of sites and regions. Excellent Caribbean examples of the research potential of many of these early collections include Meléndez work cited above, Ostapkowicz's work on wood and other perishable materials (Ostapkowicz *et al.* 2012; Ostapkowicz and Newsom 2012), and Rouse's consultation of MAI's, AMNH's, and the Peabody Museum-Harvard early in his career (Rouse 1952). Unfortunately, these examples tend to be in the minority. The reality is that most museum collections around the world tend to be underused. In general terms one can say that there is a bias in the discipline in favor of conducting excavations and against the use of museum collections in order to answer our research questions. Many university departments throughout the U.S and elsewhere, for example, make a requirement for dissertation projects to include excavations, even when the answer to their questions can be obtained from museum collections. The same is true for obtaining a position in American universities and some museums where many job announcements require active field project. This biased (and in some cases unethical) tendency in the discipline is problematic on many levels, mainly because of the promotion of the unnecessary destruction of the archaeological record with more excavations when the answers are available in museum collections.

The collection obtained by de Booy, although limited to the site of Joyuda, is an example of underused collections. In fact, they are not only underused, but few Puerto Rican or Caribbean archaeologists are actually aware of it and the expedition that obtained them. Possibly, one reason for this is that de Booy never published it. The reasons for this are not quite clear, and it is more baffling when one considers that he published almost every one of his other projects (see Table 1). One possibility is that his work in Puerto Rico was not an actual expedition, but a reconnaissance in preparation for a larger project. Another possibility is that the material was aesthetically poor and none of the artifacts were of the artistic quality of those found from other islands. In other islands de Booy was able to obtain large complete bowls and bottles, many of them decorated (including the famous effigy vessel of Deminán), a wooden paddle and even a *duho* (stool). In contrast, most of the materials from

Puerto Rico consist of relatively simple sherds, some with “adornos”, but none of them exceptional or complete specimens.

Moreover, besides collecting archaeological objects and information, many of these early archaeologists also registered various aspects of the local populations. Although many times this was done from the perspective of recording the “other”, photos, journals, letters, and even objects collected by these expeditions can contribute to the reconstruction and understanding of Puerto Rican societies in the first half of the 20th century. In the case of Puerto Rico, the period between late 19th and early 20th centuries is a critical time when the relatively young American empire was developing and putting in practice their colonial administrative strategies. Simultaneously, Puerto Ricans were trying to understand what their role in the new establishment would be, and how to cope with issues that ranged from cultural and national identity to the re-alignment of social, political, and economic alliances. But, more importantly, in the majority of the cases these early researchers left a record of the lower and rural, working classes (or, in some cases, the underclass) of the islands which are normally not considered by the local scholars of the time, which was normally composed of urbanites of the elite class. The people and their life-style included in these records ranged from peasants and farmers to craftsmen and itinerant salesmen. These early researchers have left us a considerable body of information (written and visual) useful to anthropologists and historians to better understand Puerto Rican societies of the recent past, and the metamorphosis it went through during the early 20th century.

Summarizing, despite the lack of documentary documentation (i.e., field notes or report) on de Booy’s expedition to Puerto Rico, the photographs, collections, and some passages in few of his publications provide enough helpful hints to reconstruct some details of his work. It is clear that he concentrated most of his efforts in the southwestern municipality of Cabo Rojo and visited at least three sites there: Joyuda, Punta Ostiones, and Hacienda Belvedere. Of these three, both the collection catalog and photographs strongly suggest that he excavated primarily in Joyuda, while the other two seem to just have been visited. De Booy’s was a man of his time and in archaeological terms this is obvious from the “primitive” approach to research and field methodology. Despite the many weaknesses of this project and its colonial origin, however, the resulting photograph and artifact collections are useful resources that are underestimated and under-used by many researchers. This is true not only of this collection, but of the great majority of museum collections throughout the world. There remains a general tendency in the discipline reflecting a bias that, in many cases, feeds into a poor practice and vicious cycle of researchers giving preferential treatment

to excavation, producing large collections that end up collecting dust in museums or on repositories shelves, which few people come to study and that are ignored by future researches who give preferential treatment to excavations.

Acknowledgments

During the research and preparation of this manuscript I received valuable help from several colleagues. First, I would like to express my gratitude to several of my colleagues at NMAI. Ann McMullen, Maria Galban, Rachel Menyuk, and Heather Shannon provided key information and documents on de Booy and his expedition to the island. McMullen and Galban also provided illuminating and helpful comments on earlier versions of this paper. I am most indebted to Katherine Fodgen and Ernest Amoroso of Photo Services, NMAI for going through the painstaking and tedious process of scanning or re-photographing the negatives of de Booy's images. I want to extend my gratitude to Laura del Olmo and Erika Valle of the *Programa de Arqueología y Etnohistoria* of the *Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña* for providing information, maps and air photos on the site of Hacienda Belvedere site. Finally, I am grateful to Kelsey Gerber for editing previous versions of the paper.

References

- Baatz, Simon. 1996. "Imperial Science and Metropolitan Ambition: The Scientific Survey of Puerto Rico, 1913-1914." Pp 1-16 in *The Scientific Survey of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands: An Eighty-Year Reassessment of the Islands' Natural History*, edited by J.C. Figueroa Colón. Annals of the New York Academy of Science, Vol. 776. New York: New York Academy of Science.
- Browman, David. 2011. "Spying by American Archaeologists in World War I." *Bulletin of the History of Archaeology* 21(2):10-17.
- Browman, David L., and Stephen Williams. 2013. *Anthropology at Harvard: A Biographical History, 1790-1940*. Boston: Harvard University Press.
- de Booy, Theodoor. 1912. "Lucayan Remains on the Caicos Islands." *American Anthropologist* 16(1):81-105.
- . 1913a. "Lucayan Artifacts from the Bahamas." *American Anthropologist* 15(1):1-7.
- . 1913b. "Certain Kitchen-Middens in Jamaica." *Contributions from the Heye Museum*, No. 3, New York.
- . 1915. "Pottery from Certain Caves in Eastern Santo Domingo, West Indies." *American Antiquity* 17:69-97.
- . 1916. "Island of Margarita, Venezuela." *Bulletin of the Pan American Union* 42:531-546.

- . 1917a. "Indian Petroglyphs in the Antilles." *Forward*, Vol. 36, nos. 17-18, Philadelphia.
- . 1917b. "The Virgin Islands of the United States." *Geographical Review* 4(5):359-373.
- . 1917c. "Archeological Investigations in the Virgin Islands." *Scientific American Supplement* 2180:232-234.
- . 1918a. "Noises in Baracoa, Cuba." *Forward*, January 19, 1918, vol. 37, no. 3.
- . 1918b. "Buried Treasure in the West Indies." *Forward*, April 13, 1918, vol. 3.
- . 1918c. "The Fragrant Island of St. John." *Forward*, March 2, 1918, vol. 37, no. 3.
- . 1918d. "Certain Archeological Investigations in Trinidad, British West Indies." *American Anthropologist* 19(4):471-486.
- . 1918e. "Panama Hats, the Chief Industry of South-Western Puerto Rico." *Scientific American Supplement* 85(2212):328-329.
- . 1918f. "The Museum of the American Indian: A New and Noteworthy American Institution." *Scientific American Supplement* 85(2206):232-234.
- . 1919a. "Santo-Domingo Kitchen Midden and Burial Ground." *Indian Notes and Monographs*, Vol. 1, No. 2.
- . 1919b. "Archaeology of the Virgin Islands." *Indian Notes and Monographs*, Vol. 1, No. 1.
- De Hostos, Adolfo. 1919. "Prehistoric Porto Rican Ceramics." *American Anthropologist* 21(4):376-399.
- Fewkes, Jesse W. 1907. "The Aborigines of Porto Rico and the Neighboring Islands." Pp. 1-220 in *Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology for 1903-1904*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution.
- Harrington, Mark R. 1921. *Cuba Before Columbus*. Indian Notes and Monographs, Museum of the American Indian. New York: Heye Foundation.
- Harris, Charles H., III, and Louis R. Sadler. 2003. *The Archaeologist Was A Spy: Sylvanus G. Morley and the Office of Naval Intelligence*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.
- Heye, George G. 1919. "Foreword." *Indian Notes and Monographs* 1(1):7-11.
- Krieger, Herbert W. 1929. "The Aborigines of the Ancient Island of Hispaniola." Pp. 473-506 in *Annual Report*. Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution.
- Mason, J. Alden. 1917. "Excavation of a New Archaeological Site in Porto Rico." Pp. 220-223 in the *Proceedings of the 19th International Congress of Americanists*. Washington, D.C.
- . 1941. "A Large Archaeological Site at Capá, Utuado, with Notes on Other Porto Rican Sites Visited in 1914-1815." Vol. 18, Pt. 2 in *Scientific Survey of Porto Rico and the Virgin Islands*. New York: New York Academy of Science.
- McMullen, Ann. 2009. "Reinventing George Heye: Nationalizing the Museum of

- the American Indian and Its Collections.” Pp. 65-105, in *Contesting Knowledge: Museums and Indigenous Perspectives*, edited by S. Sleeper-Smith. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- Meléndez, Marisol J. 1997. “Punta Ostiones, Cabo Rojo, Puerto Rico. Excavaciones de Herbert Spinden en 1916.” Pp. 240-254 in *Proceedings of the 18th International Congress for Caribbean Archaeology*. St. George, Granada: St. George’s University Campus.
- . 1998. “Estudio arqueológico de Punta Ostiones, Cabo Rojo: Análisis de las excavaciones realizadas por Herbert Spinden en 1916.” Manuscript on file, Puerto Rico State Historic Preservation Office, San Juan, Puerto Rico.
- Montalvo Guenard, José L. 1933. *Rectificaciones Históricas: El Descubrimiento de Boriquén*. Ponce, Puerto Rico: Editorial Llano.
- Osgood, Cornelius. 1942. *The Ciboney Culture of Cayo Redondo, Cuba*. Publications in Anthropology No. 25. New Haven: Yale University.
- Ostapkowicz, Joanna, Christopher Bronk Ramsey, Fiona Brock, Tom Highham, Alex C. Wiedenhoeft, Erika Ribechini, Jeannette J. Lucejko, and Samuel Wilson. 2012. “Chronologies in Wood and Resin AMS ¹⁴C Dating of Pre-Hispanic Caribbean Wood Sculpture.” *Journal of Archaeological Science* 39:2238-2251.
- , and Lee Newsom 2012. “Gods... Adorned with Embroiderer’s Needle”: The Materials, Making, and Meaning of a Taíno Cotton Reliquary.” *Latin American Antiquity* 23(3):300-326.
- Pané, Fray Ramón. 1999. *An Account of the Antiquities of the Indians*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Rainey, Froelich G. 1940. “Porto Rican Archaeology.” Vol. 18, pt. 1 in *Scientific Survey of Porto Rico and Virgin Islands*. New York: New York Academy of Science.
- . 1941. *Excavations in the Ft. Liberté, Haiti*. Yale University Publications in Anthropology No. 23. New Haven: Yale University.
- Rouse, Irving B. 1939. *Prehistory in Haiti: A Study in Method*. Yale University Publications in Anthropology, No. 21. New Haven: Yale University.
- . 1941. *Culture of the Ft. Liberté, Haiti*. Yale University Publications in Anthropology No. 24. New Haven: Yale University.
- . 1942. *Archaeology of the Maniabon Hills, Cuba*. Yale University Publications in Anthropology, No. 26. New Haven: Yale University.
- . 1952. “Porto Rican Prehistory.” Vol. 18, pts. 3-4 in *Scientific Survey of Porto Rico and the Virgin Islands*. New York: New York Academy of Science.
- . 1992. *The Tainos: Rise and Decline of the People Who Greeted Columbus*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Saville, Marshall H. 1919. “Theodoor de Booy.” *American Anthropologist* 21(2):182-185.