



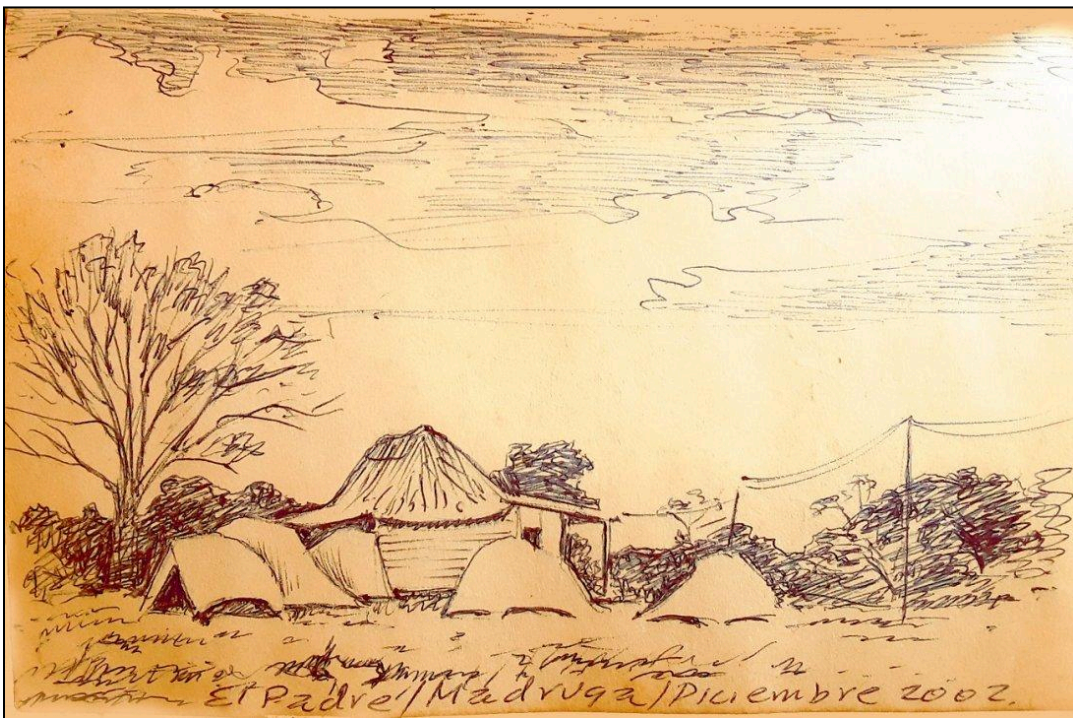
NICHOLE BODIN

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HACIENDA'S DYNAMIC INFLUENCE

How Ethnohistorical Archaeological data integrates economic and social status



Drawing of the tents silhouetted against Consuelo and Ismael's hut. / Image: Amilkar Feria Flores

Archaeological studies on “**Haciendas**” have certain distinctive differences from those conducted at sites associated with the industrial aspects that contributed to the economic development of Cuba, the Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico.

Most archaeologists agree with the sentiments expressed about the lack of attention paid to the industrial sphere in the practice of Historical Archaeology. The **Industrial Revolution** was a social phenomenon responsible for transforming the modern world with changes in productive organization. Technological sophistication has led to the emergence of social dimensions, with an emphasis on productivity, settlement patterns, distribution, and exchange, having a profound and lasting impact on the way we live today. **The International Committee for the Conservation of the Industrial Heritage (TICCIH)** has been influential as a venue for over 40 nations represented by holding occasional meetings, publishing a newsletter (**TICCIH Bulletin**), and sponsoring its journal. Since 2000, The **TICCIH** has also served as a *Scientific Commission*, advising on World Heritage nominations of industrial sites.

Early **Industrial Archaeology** efforts in the United Kingdom and the United States were primarily directed toward heritage documentation and conservation. Their focus was on the recognition of the physical remains of industrial heritage, preservation, high-quality documentation, and impacts on cultural values. At the local, national, and international levels, increased attention is being paid to industrial sites due to the influence of Industrial Archaeology scholarship. The **Historic American Engineering Record (HAER)** program, established in 1969, was an ally of the engineering community along with the American Society of Civil Engineers. HAER's formative years served as a generator of practical knowledge, establishing standards for documentation that remain in effect today. HAER, with the Smithsonian Institute, has been the key source of support for the growing group of professionals and enthusiasts. In 1971, the **Society for Industrial Archaeology (SIA)** was established to promote interdisciplinary exchanges, generating publications and bibliographic resources. Industrial Archaeology's interdisciplinary position (encompassing *History, Anthropology, and Engineering*) has led to the formation of new academic organizations when it comes to combining its lucrative and professional perspectives. The conflict between the emphasis on documentation and preservation is supported by governments, museums, and professionals in Social Sciences, and driven by academic

archaeologists. This creates, on the other hand, insufficient space for diversity in emphasis and opportunities for mutual professional benefit.

Documentation and preservation professionals have been successful in educating the public and raising awareness of the value of industrial heritage on both the national and international stages. Scholars have made great progress in explaining the dynamics of industrialization as a process and have strived to cultivate a generation of scholars to continue the work of research and interpretation.

According to archaeological investigations, the ruins of **Hacienda La Esperanza** in



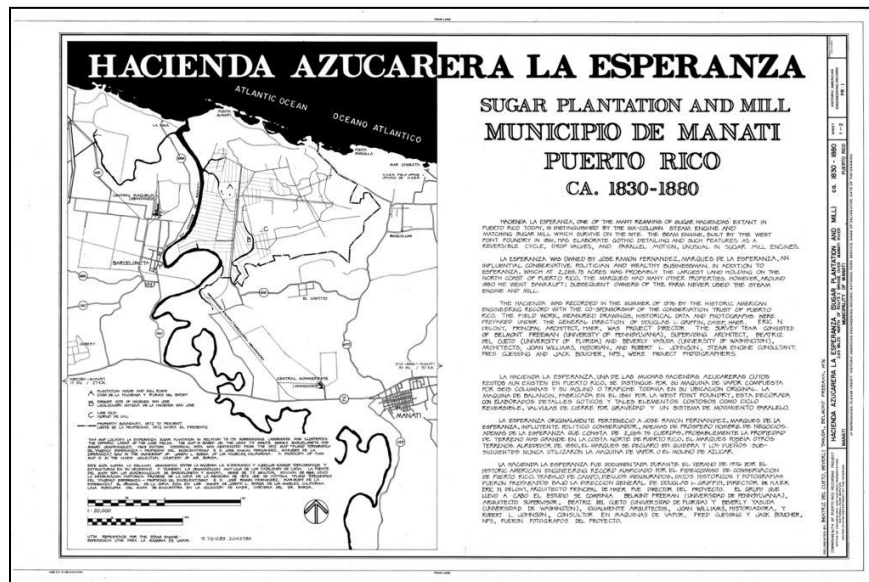
Manatí, Puerto Rico demonstrate a complex technological and construction evolution, and conservation measures for the various ruins, such as the contemporary exhibition areas that are being restored, demonstrate their importance.

Credit: Wikipedia/Ligocsicnarf89

It was founded in the 1830s and by the 1860s had grown to become one of the largest on the island. It remained operating from 1830 to 1880. The planting of "white gold" was adjusted in the Antilles during the Spanish colonial period due to the commercial need and demand for sugarcane production, and sugar plantations were also founded in Hispaniola and Cuba.



Steam engines at the Esperanza Hacienda Credit: Commons Wikipedia / Fred Gjessing, Virgin Islands National Park/ United States Library of Congress's Prints and Photographs division



Map showing the Hacienda Azucarera La Esperanza/ Credit: Commons Wikipedia



Sugar mill ruins showing chimney and masonry base of steam engine and cane mill, ca. 1968
Credit: Commons Wikipedia/ Survey HAER PR-1-B Historic American Engineering Record

Two steam engines were acquired to automate sugar production at the hacienda: one in 1841 and another in 1861. The steam **trapiche** (mill) bought in 1861 is still present on the premises, making it the last known preserved engine of its type. The steam engine at Hacienda La Esperanza has been recognized as a **National Historic Mechanical Engineering Landmark**. Currently, the entire estate is owned by the Conservation Trust of Puerto Rico (FCPR, based on its Spanish initials), which is responsible for its preservation and protection. This property encompasses some of the last remaining coastal forests in the area. The organization **Para La Naturaleza** oversees visitor access to the historic site, along with educational and cultural programs and tours of the adjacent nature reserve.



Abandoned locomotives at Hacienda El Padre /Photo: Svetlana del Río

Archaeological excavations carried out in 1999 at the **El Padre** coffee plantation in Madruga, Cuba, revealed a walled village with slave housing (with barracks and huts) within the plantation, identified as a transcultural aboriginal-Afro-Hispanic complex. Slave housing on each plantation consisted of an autonomous complex, with its own customs, rules, and regulations independent of the regulations established by the colonial government. Industrial development fostered slave plantations in Cuba, with simple settlements located in areas predetermined by the owners. Buildings were erected without organization, and staffing was small.

Huts, especially on coffee plantations, were often located in mountainous areas, so the plantation's architectural design had to be adapted to the topographical conditions of the terrain. Slave housing was located in the areas with the worst conditions, with topography possibly contributing to the establishment of huts. The economic status of the landowners and their interest in the living conditions of their workers were concealed when improvements were made to plantation buildings, rather than to the slaves' quarters. Slaves continued to live in shacks, huts, or ranches (the barracks became obsolete), predominating throughout the country. Social control, the economic exploitation of workers, and the development of the plantations cannot be recovered through archaeological efforts alone.



The findings relate to the modes of exchange within the social structure restructured by populations of African origin, taking into account that the slave population was drawn from various ethnic groups in West Africa, geographically and culturally distant from each other.

Ceramic fragments and other objects found in the barracks./
Photo: Amilkar Feria Flores

Ethnohistorical approaches, combined with documented archaeological data, demonstrate that economic and social status can be defined archaeologically, but do not present a legal status imposed by time. The combination of archaeological and documentary data provides a fruitful approach to the study of slavery. Archaeology provides details of slave life, their settlement patterns, material culture, subsistence, and nutritional information. Archaeological excavations have been able to recover chronological data through material culture and previously undocumented slave status patterns.

Although the development of artifact patterns for colonial America has been documented, it has not been proven that these patterns are directly derived from slave plantation contexts. Archaeological studies on **Haciendas** provide information that considers the socioeconomic foundations and how cultural materials could be used as part of commodity distribution and supplier demand.