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Caribbean encounters: rescue excavations at the early colonial Island Carib site of Argyle, St. Vincent

Corinne L. Hofman and Menno L.P. Hoogland

A collaborative rescue project by Leiden University, the St. Vincent and the Grenadines National Trust and the International Airport Development Company Limited (ADC) in 2010 has revealed around 350 features and the floor plans of at least eleven domestic structures at the early colonial Island Carib site of Argyle, St. Vincent. The structures belong to two large oval structures and nine round houses. The presence of three burials inside two of the small round houses attests to the practice of burying the dead under the house floors as mentioned by the early colonial chroniclers. Material remains recovered from around the site suggest an occupation in the late 16th –early 17th century and concurs with the Carib occupation of the Lesser Antilles. Typical Cayoid ceramics, with mainland (Koriabo) and Greater Antillean (Chicoid) affiliation were found associated with European materials. The co-occurrence and intermingling of Amerindian and European artefacts and traits at Argyle point to interactions and inter-cultural dynamics at play hitherto not documented. The settlement which is located on a strategic location on top of a ridge overlooking the Atlantic Ocean, next to the mouth of a river, seems to have offered unique living conditions and subsistence opportunities for the Amerindian inhabitants of this early colonial period settlement. This paper focuses on the early colonial cultural encounters between Amerindians and Europeans in the Caribbean Lesser Antilles and uniquely unravels the layout of an Island Carib village and its individual house structures using archaeological and ethnohistoric evidence.

1 INTRODUCTION

The cultural encounters between the New and Old Worlds are some of the most infamous in human history. The Caribbean was situated at centre stage for these encounters that had profound global impacts and the enduring repercussions of which are etched into the fabric of modern multi-ethnic Caribbean society. Despite the significant role of the indigenous Amerindian inhabitants in these encounters, there is a large gap in our understanding of the transformations of indigenous cultures and societies in response to European colonization. Within the Caribbean, the Lesser Antilles represent one of the major regions in which the lasting effects of encounters between cultures with

dramatically different ideological, social, technological, and economic frameworks can be studied in the context of world history.

In 1492 the Lesser Antilles first became known to Europeans through Columbus' reports of his conversations with the indigenous people of the Greater Antilles (Rouse 1992; Curet 2005; Oliver 2009). These people recounted their fears of cannibalistic Carib Indians allegedly living to the south-east (Lesser Antilles) who continually raided their settlements. Accounts of cannibalism fuelled prejudice on the part of the Europeans who held misconceptions about these distant, unfamiliar peoples based on preconceived (Late Medieval) ideas about a "phantastic insular world" (Hulme 1986; Hofman *et al.* 2008). Spain had designs mainly on the Greater Antilles, considering the Lesser Antilles initially a nuisance and later as a source of slaves. The Spaniards' lack of interest in the *islas inútiles* and their subsequent failed ventures at settlement allowed other European nations to involve in the Lesser Antilles. Approximately 130 to 150 years passed before permanent European settlements were established in the Lesser Antilles despite fierce indigenous resistance from the Island Carib or *Kalinago*, a people who claimed origin from the South American mainland and asserted themselves aggressively – particularly between Tobago and St. Kitts¹ (Allaire 1977; Figueredo 1978; Boomert 1986, 1995; Sued-Badillo 1995; Whitehead 1995a:105) (fig. 1). A pattern of exchange developed in the late 16th century between European nations and the Island Carib which culminated in the cultivation by the latter of tobacco for sale to bypassing traders. Island Carib society was characterized by considerable local autonomy and several levels of political authority. Early documents refer to Island Carib villages as comprising a series of houses, typically a men's house and a number of family dwellings (*e.g.* Breton 1665/1666; 1978). Early colonial sources, written by Spanish, Dutch, French, and English explorers, sailors, and missionaries, provide vivid testimony of the slow but inexorable encroachment of European nations on the Lesser Antilles and the marginalization of Amerindian culture and society (*e.g.* Nicholl 1605; Coppier 1645; Rochefort 1658; Breton 1665/1666, 1978; Du Tertre 1667-1671; Pinchon 1961; Chanca 1988;

Anonyme de Carpentras 2002; Labat 2005[1722]). The sources describe hamlets or single households dispersed across the landscape (Labat 2005[1722]).

Meanwhile, Carib communities on some islands absorbed increasing numbers of escaped African slaves, leading to the formation of a Black Carib ethnic identity, alongside those communities that remained purely Amerindian. After several wars with the English, the Black Carib were deported from St. Vincent to Central America in 1797, where they now live and are known as the *Garifuna* (Palacio 2005). By 1800 a major collapse in native populations dramatically reduced the Carib presence in much of the Lesser Antilles. Indigenous populations either became extinct or were completely marginalized. Descendants of the *Kalinago* are still present throughout the Lesser Antilles, most notably on Dominica, St. Vincent and Trinidad where they actively claim their Amerindian roots as an integral part of their identity in Caribbean society (Whitehead 1995a; Sued Badillo 2003; Reid 2009; Lenik 2012).

2 RESCUE EXCAVATIONS AT ARGYLE, ST. VINCENT

The site area at Argyle was extensively used in the pre-colonial and colonial period, as evidenced from the

presence of two large Early Ceramic Age sites (Escape and Argyle 2) excavated by Richard Callaghan (University of Calgary) and Margaritha Guzman (Canada), the early colonial site of Argyle previously tested by Louis Allaire in the 1990s (Allaire 1994), and several colonial features (*i.e.* tobacco sheds, sugar plantation). Until recently, the ridge on which the site is situated was used as a palm plantation.

In 2009 and 2010, rescue excavations at the Argyle site, St. Vincent were urgently required due to the construction of a runway for a new international airport at its location (Hoogland *et al.* 2011) (fig. 2). At the instigation of Henri Petitjean Roget (Guadeloupe) and Kathy Martin (St. Vincent and Grenadines National Trust), a team from Leiden University in collaboration with the St. Vincent and Grenadines National Trust and financially supported by the International Airport Development Company Ltd. excavated a surface area of 2800 m² at Argyle and revealed the first complete early colonial Island Carib settlement in the Lesser Antilles. The settlement remains were associated with so-called Cayoid ceramics, previously documented by Earle Kirby and Henri Petitjean Roget in the 1970s, and extensively published by Arie Boomert since the 1980s (Boomert 1986; 2009; 2011).

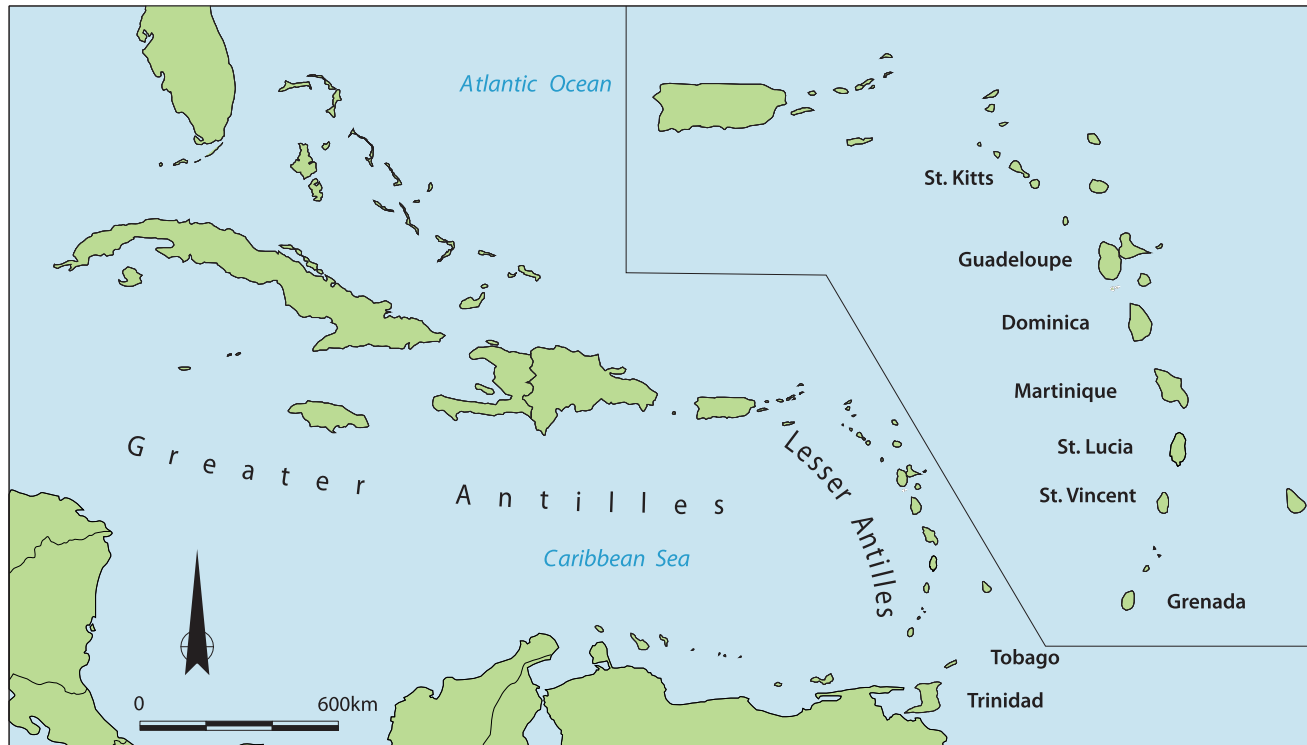


Figure 1 Map of the Caribbean area with major Island Carib strongholds.

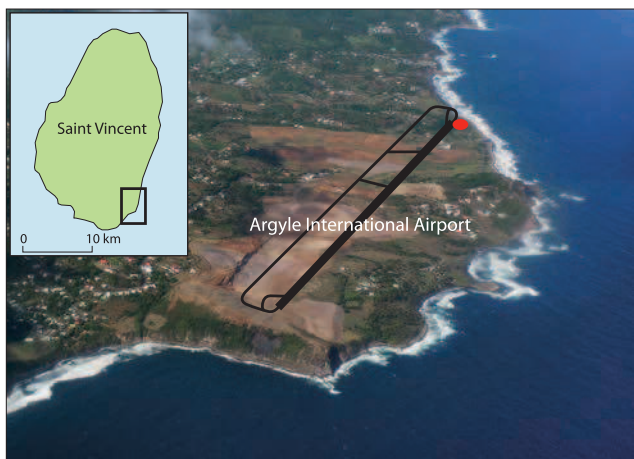


Figure 2 Location of the Argyle site, St. Vincent and construction plans for the new international airport.

3 MATERIAL CULTURE AFFILIATIONS

3.1 *Amerindian artefacts*

The great majority of the material remains were recovered from the eroding slope of the Argyle ridge. As no organic materials appear to have been preserved due to the acidity of the volcanic clays, it is difficult to determine if the ridge slope indeed formed the trash area of the settlement, leaving us with poor information on subsistence and without adequate samples for radiocarbon dating.

The Argyle pottery assemblage is composed of Cayoid ceramics and reflects a mosaic-like cultural aggregate with mainland Koriabo and Greater Antillean Chicoid affiliations illustrative of the wide-ranging contacts of the Island Carib in early colonial times (Boomert 1986; 2004; 2009; 2011; Hoogland *et al.* 2011) (fig. 3). Fabric and compositional analysis carried out by Niels Groot has showed that the majority of the pottery is made of local clays probably quarried at clay sources in the vicinity of the site (Hoogland *et al.* 2011). Until now archaeological components with Cayoid pottery have been found in three locations in Grenada (Sauteurs Bay, Galby Bay and more recently at La Poterie) (Cody Holdren 1998; Petitjean Roget pers. comm. 2012); one site on the Grenadines (Ile de Ronde) (Petitjean Roget pers. comm.); 11 sites on St. Vincent (Mount Pleasant/Rawacou, New Sandy Bay, Owia 2, Spring, Friendly, Fancy, Camden Park, Lot 14, Argyle 1, Sans Souci and Grand Sable) (Bullen and Bullen 1972; Kirby 1974; Boomert 1986; Allaire 1994); five sites on Dominica (Woodford Hill Bay, Melville Hall 1 and 2 (B), Eden 1) (Boomert 2009; Honychurch 2000). Isolated Cayo sherds have been reported from the Black Bay site, St. Lucia and the site of Macabou, Martinique amidst an otherwise Suazoid assemblage (Bright 2011). The most northern occurrence of Cayo pottery is on Basse Terre,

Guadeloupe at the site of Arrière Plage de Roseau in Capesterre Belle Eau (Richard 2002). Also at the site of Anse à la Gourde (Grande Terre, Guadeloupe), and Morne Cybèle and Morne Souffleur (La Désirade) Cayo affiliated pottery has been documented (Hofman 1995; Hofman *et al.* 2004; de Waal 2006) (fig. 4).

Analysis of the lithics carried out by Sebastiaan Knippenberg revealed that the unworked lithic materials include fragments of igneous rock, jasper and chalcedony. Knippenberg conducted an initial analysis of the material and performed a survey of the island to identify lithic sources. He stresses that all igneous rock found at Argyle exhibit strong similarities with the igneous rock occurrences at the adjacent beach and Yambou river bed. He therefore concludes that the occupants of the settlement must have collected these materials locally (Knippenberg 2010). The exogenous jasper and chalcedony, both related to a technology aimed at the manufacture of flake tools, may very well have originated from the northern part of St. Lucia, where these materials occur in large quantities. The most spectacular artefact recovered is an eared stone axe head, which was not found on the slope, but on the contrary in the settlement area on top of the ridge. Such stone axe heads are well known from, for example, Fancy in northern St. Vincent and reported by Fewkes in the 1920s (Fewkes 1922). It was found in situ next to one of the domestic structures (fig. 5). This is the first example of an eared axe head encountered in archaeological context in the Lesser Antilles.

3.2 *European artefacts*

Numerous European trade wares were recovered from the site. These include pieces of iron, lead, earthenware (an admixture of late 16th- to early 17th century Spanish olive jars, and Spanish as well as Portuguese majolica), glass bottles and a series of beads (seed and chevron beads, as well as some 18th century French and English ceramics (fig. 6). Of particular interest is a Cayoid rim fragment inlaid with European seed beads. A similar specimen has been reported from the site by Louis Allaire (1994). Noteworthy of the earlier colonial (16th or 17th century) European ceramics are a tin-glazed serving platter with an orange body decorated in a 'majolica' form most probably produced in Spain and Portugal. Dutch copies of majolica were however produced from the later 17th century onwards but in that case it would have a yellow body and blue painted decorations. Furthermore, there is a rim sherd from a tin-glazed earthenware produced in France known generally outside France as 'Faience'. The undulating rim, cross-hatched pattern, and pinkish/buff coloured body are all indicative of this ceramic type. It is most likely from a serving platter as about 99% of the vessel forms are platters. This could date anywhere from the 1500s to the late 1700s.

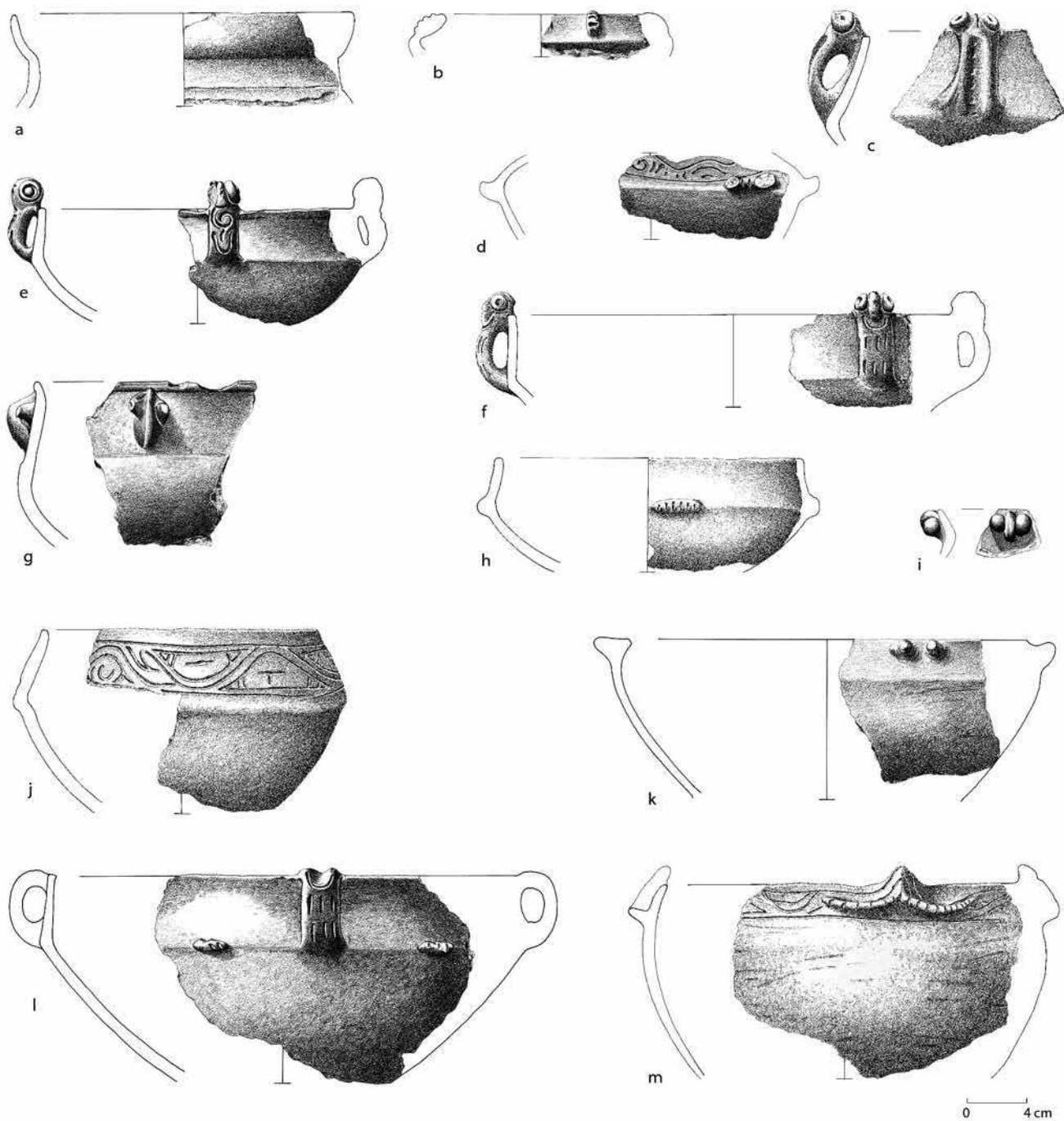


Figure 3 Examples of Cayoid pottery from Argyle.

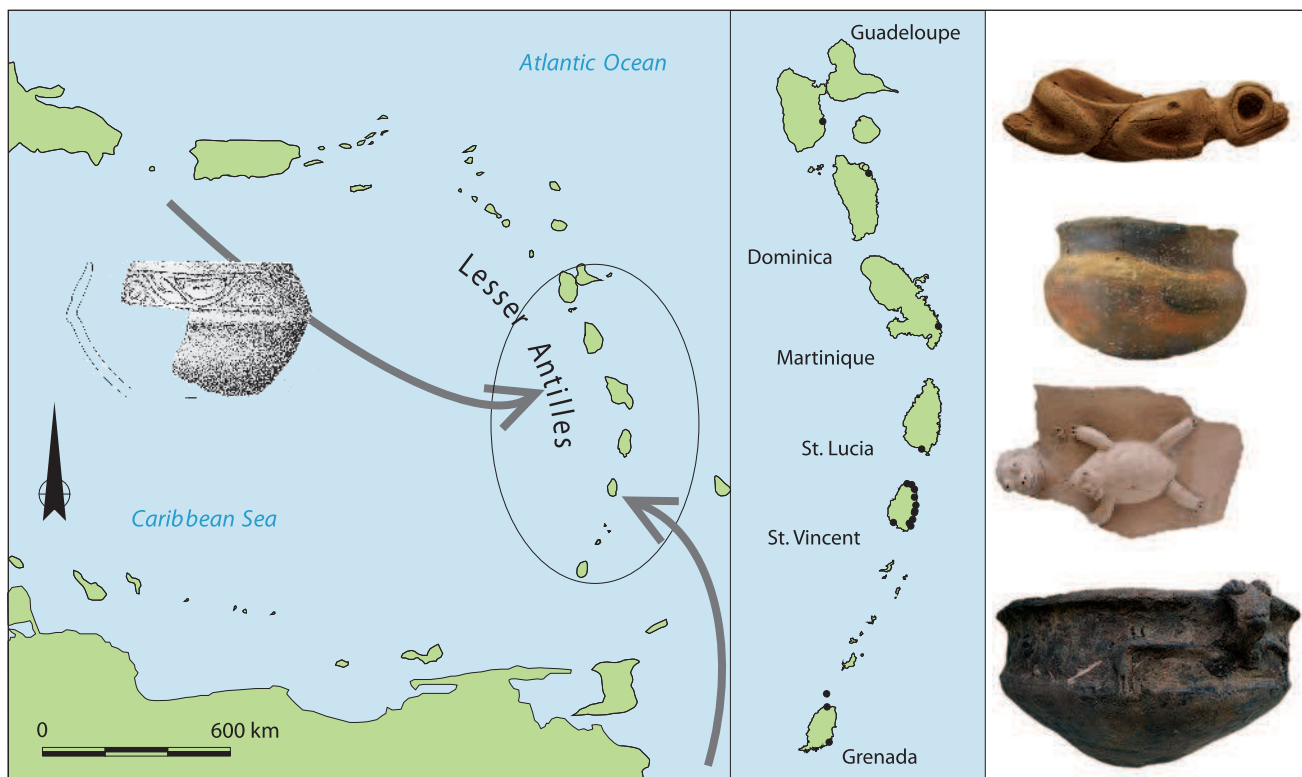


Figure 4 Distribution of Cayoid pottery in the Lesser Antilles.

According to the classification by Goggin (1960), the olive jar is a type B with rim shape 3 (cf. Marken 1994, 50-51). The mark on the rim is stamped in wet clay and represents rather the ownership of the jar than a makers' mark (Marken 1994, 76). The first documented olive jars with rim marks are from three securely dated Spanish wrecks from the first half of the 17th century and disappear in the artefact assemblages of later wrecks (Marken 1994, 116).

Among the later 18th century earthenware are an iron oxide- and salt-glazed stoneware jug fragment – most likely from England dating from the late 18th century on into the 19th century (c. 1840s). The 18th century artefacts possibly belong to the tobacco shed which has been documented among the Amerindian features at Argyle.

4 STRUCTURES, BURIALS AND VILLAGE LAYOUT
 From the 350 documented features at Argyle, approximately 50% could be assigned to domestic structures. There are eleven structures apparent including nine round houses and two which are oval in shape. In addition, two small rectangular structures could be identified. Larger features in the round houses were revealed to be grave pits. The relatively low number of features, the absence of palimpsests and the

high assignment percentage of the features to potential structures attest to a rather short period of occupation of the settlement. The presence of two plazas, however, suggests the rebuilding of structures at least once during the period of occupation of the site.

The settlement data from Argyle strongly match the descriptions of the 17th century French missionary Father



Figure 5 Eared axe found next to one of the house structures at Argyle.

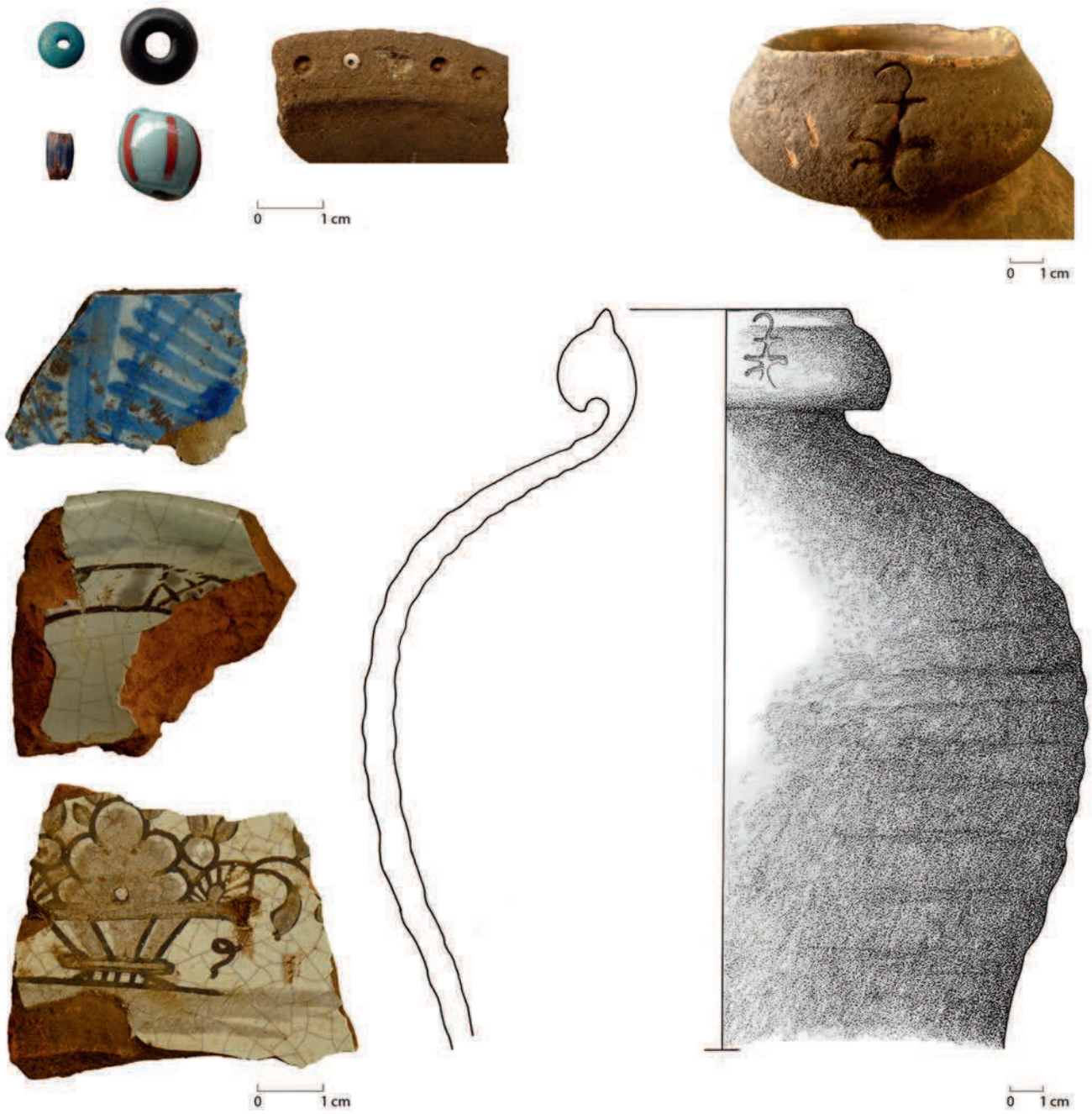


Figure 6 European artefacts recovered from the slope of the ridge at Argyle intermingled with Amerindian ceramics.

Raymond Breton on village organization and domestic structures as described in his two dictionaries “Caraibe-François” (1665) and “François-Caraibe” (1666). Connecting data from various time periods requires the use of the direct historical approach. The principles of this perspective dictate that where cultural continuity is expected from pre-colonial to colonial times, historical data can be extrapolated back into the (later) pre-Colonial period (Lyman and O’Brien 2001). The problem of colonial bias in the historic sources cannot be neglected, however, and therefore, while a degree of continuity can be anticipated in the Lesser Antilles, this study critically applies the direct historical approach, taking into account its potential and pitfalls (cf. Hulme 1986; Wilson 1994). An ethnographically-archaeologically informed reading forms the basis of this approach (cf. Hulme and Whitehead 1992; Whitehead 1995a, b), involving the extraction of ethnographic information on Island Carib society that is compatible with the archaeological data. The great detail of Breton’s descriptions of the construction of the houses and the architectural elements considerably helped to interpret the floor plans identified in the field, in particular the reconstruction of the large men’s houses or *tâbouï*. In the following section the archaeological data on structures, burials and village layout is therefore supported by ethnohistoric information.

4.1 Settlement location

The early colonial site of Argyle is located at a strategic location on top of a ridge overlooking the Atlantic Ocean, next to the mouth of the Yambou River in the southeastern part of St. Vincent (fig. 7). The Yambou River drains the Mesopotamia Valley, an area known to be dotted with petroglyph sites. The valley has extremely rich agricultural soils suited for the cultivations of root crops such as manioc, sweet potatoes, and yam and taller.

Breton mentions that while constructing a settlement or *icâbanum* the Island Carib did not clear many trees, purposefully obscuring their settlements from the view of the Europeans. They also had a preference for the windward side of the islands because of the steep cliffs and rough seas that aided in defending settlements. The settlements are usually located close to the sea and close to the river where they washed and sourced fresh drinking water (Breton 1665, 279). The immediate relationship between village and sea becomes evident from the term *hueitinocou* which both means villager and crewmember of a canao. Their *ichâli* or gardens are situated away from the villages, up to one hour walking distance (Breton 1665, 281). Here cassava, sweet potatoes, yam, taller, maize, pumpkin and other cultigens were planted (Breton 1665, 59, 241, 342-344, 365, 407, 453).



Figure 7 Overview of the location of the archaeological site between the Atlantic Ocean and the Yambou River.

4.2 Plazas

Two plazas are documented at the site. The plaza of the first phase measured approximately 10 × 15 m. During the second phase the plaza was reorganized and measured 15 × 25 m. The two plazas probably represent two construction phases of the village at Argyle (fig. 8).

According to Breton there is in the village is just room for the *tâbouï* or men’s hut and a few smaller houses around a plaza. Breton describes the *acaonagle* or *bouellélebou* as the plaza which lies between the houses (Breton 1665, 10, 85). Every household keeps a part of this plaza in front of its house clean. The village was seemingly kept quite clean and the expression ‘*baraboucae piémbou*’ means take your food remains away. The trash was taken away, because it would attract *chiké* or sand fleas (Breton 1665, 303).

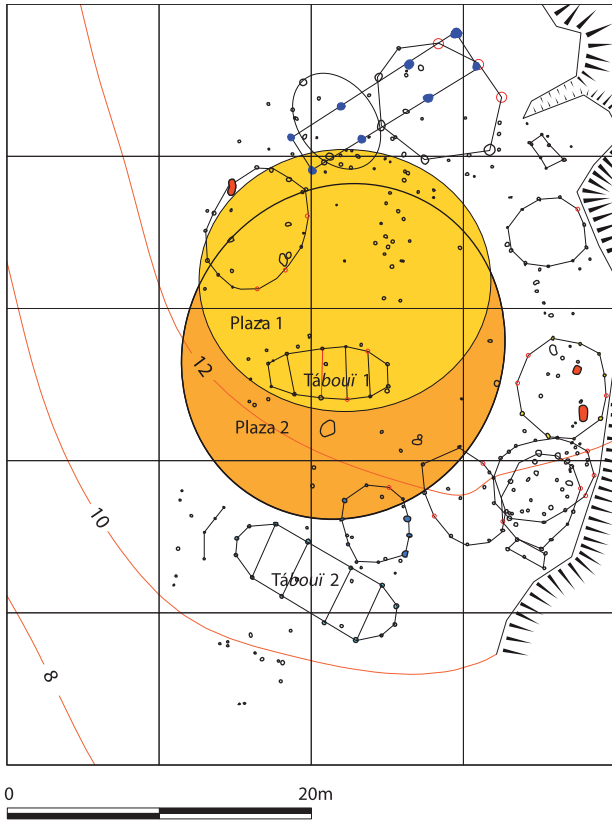


Figure 8 Reconstruction of the two *plazas* at Argyle representing two phases of occupation.

4.3 Large oval structures

There are two oval structures, the smaller one measures about 7.7×3.5 m and the floor plan consists of 12 postholes. This structure probably represents the first phase of the village (fig. 9). The oval house was rebuilt in a more southern location as a part of the second phase. At that point the plaza was reorganized and the oval house was the southernmost structure. The floor plan of this main structure measures 11.8×4 m and consists of 14 postholes, all between 35 and 50 cm deep (fig. 10).

Breton mentions that central in the village is the *táboüi* or *innobone*, an oval structure in the shape of a cradle, where the men drink, rest, meet and receive guests (Breton 1665, 474). The main construction of a *táboüi* consists of posts standing 2 metres above the ground and forked at the top. Lengthwise the main posts were connected by two long wall plates or *boulénium* connected crosswise by tie beams which were set 2.30 to 3 m apart (Breton 1665, 90). The tie beams are important architectural elements as the Island Caribs attached their hammocks to these and the number of tie beams determines how many men could be housed in a

táboüi. In the case of Argyle the large oval structure has only four tie beams and a width of 4 m, so it could eventually have accommodated some 24 to 30 men.

According to Breton the roof construction consisted of rafters resting in notches in the wall plates, coupled and connected at the roof-ridge. A ridge pool was laid on the rafters and tied with lianas. Roof battens lent the construction strength lengthwise and were the framing for the roof covering. On the ground the rafters were resting on small forked posts some 20-40 cm above the surface. The roof was thatched with the heads of reed or *manboúlou* and the stems were split and served to secure the thatching (Breton 1665, 90).

The *táboüi* described by Breton had four small doors 1.20 m high and diametrically situated in the middle of the wall and in the butts of the building; however, the smaller Argyle example likely had only two doors (fig. 11).



Figure 9 Plan view of the oval structure belonging to the first phase of occupation.



Figure 10 Plan view of the oval structure belonging to the second phase of occupation.

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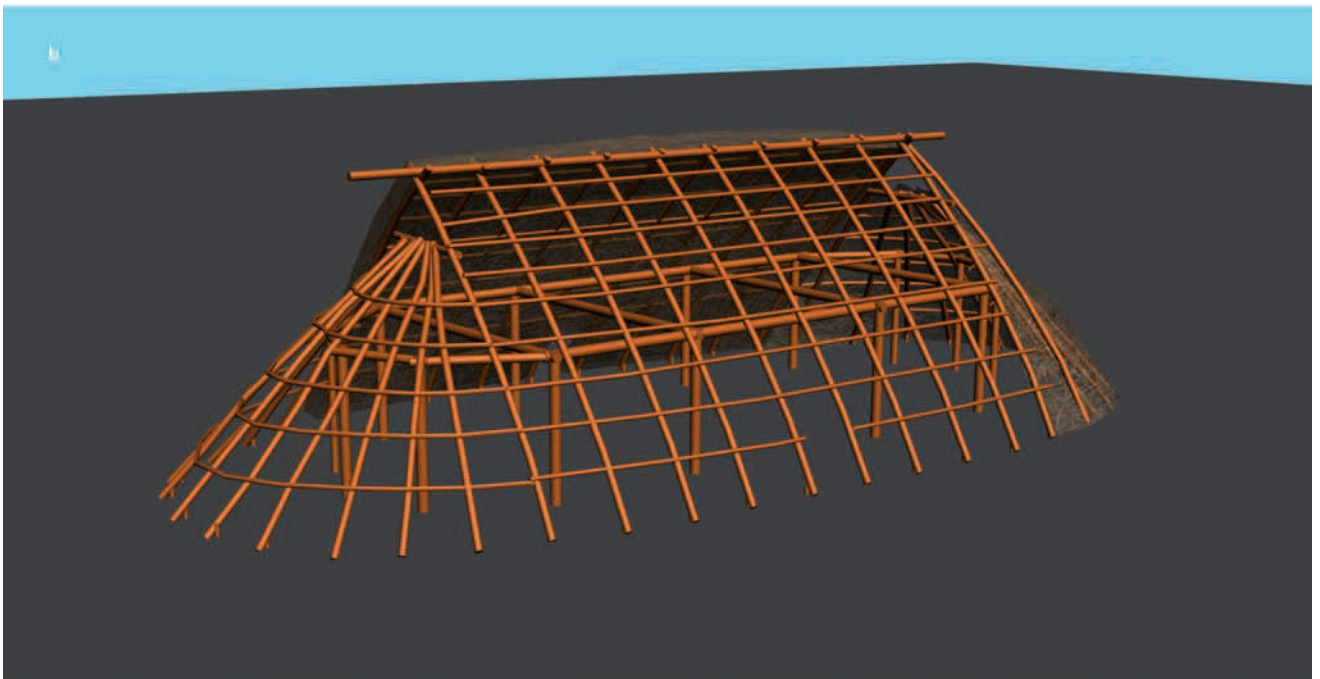
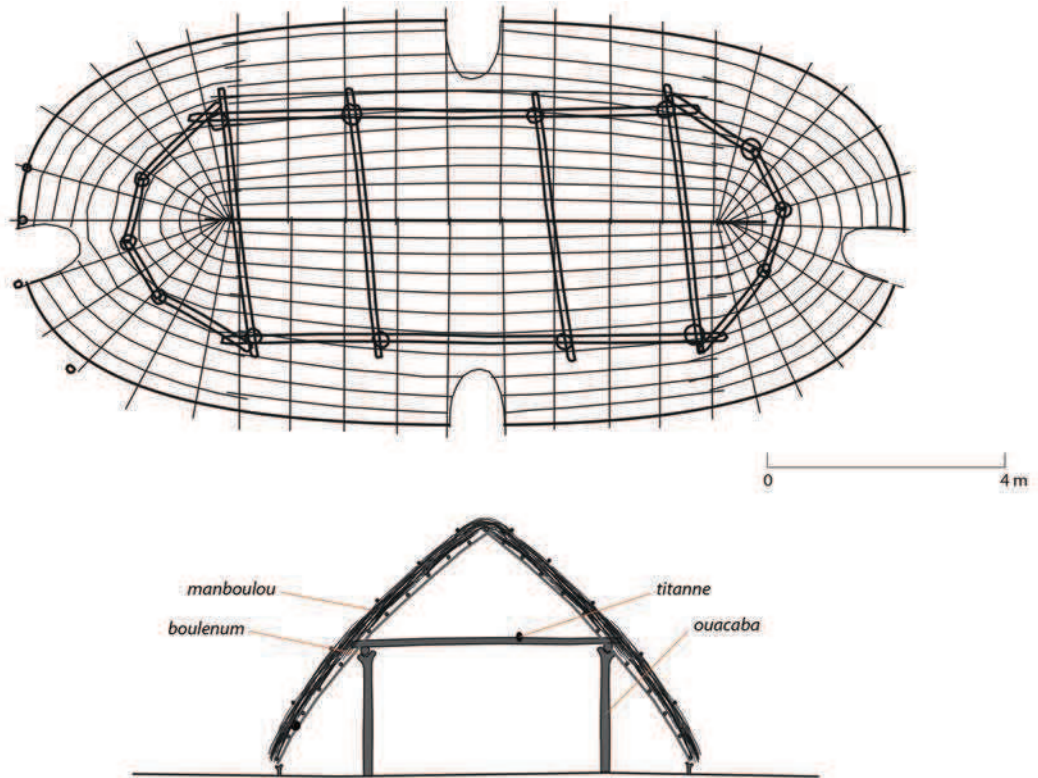


Figure 11 Reconstruction of the Argyle *tá bouï* by Menno Hoogland and Walter van der Laan.

4.4 *Small round to oval houses and auxiliary structures*

In addition to the oval structures, in total nine small round to oval houses have been documented. They are scattered around the plaza. The dimensions of their floor plans vary between 4.5×5 m and 6×8 m (fig. 12). The constructions are simple with 10 to 14 posts. In one case two structures overlay each other, probably pointing to a rebuilding of the structure at nearly the same location. Next to the small family houses, there are a number of small rectangular structures such as racks and sheds, this also concurs with the descriptions in Breton.

The small round or oval houses correspond to the *mánna* or family houses described by Breton. These structures for individual households are spread around the central building. There is only one opening, a small one of approximately 120 cm high. According to Breton the house is not divided into different quarters (Breton 1665, 354-355). Other chroniclers, like Du Tertre (1654; 1667-1671), describe two or three quarters, and compares the *mánna* to the creole houses on the islands. The *barbakot* or *boucan (aribelet)*, is a wooden rack which consists of four forked wooden sticks on which thin straight branches were placed (Breton 1665, 52). The cooking place consisted of three stones or *manbacha*, on which wood and wood pulp was burned (Breton 1665, 350).

4.5 *Burials*

A total of three burial pits have been documented in two of the round houses. Their presence inside the houses attests to the practice of burying the dead under the house floors such as described by the chroniclers. The skeletal material has not been preserved due to the high acidity of the soil. However, two of the three burial pits yielded some fragmented teeth, confirming the use of these pits as inhumation graves. These



Figure 12 Plan view of one of the small round houses.

teeth have been examined by Hayley L. Mickleburgh. The first burial (F 42-15) represents an adult individual, with an age between 17 and 25 years based on the wear of the teeth. The preservation of the teeth is very bad with two examples of caries present. The incisors are very clearly shovel-shaped, a characteristic of Amerindian populations. The second burial (F 23-19) possibly represents an adult individual, but the age based on the dental eruption sequence and wear is between 14 and 25 years, which would mean that it could also be a sub-adult. The teeth are free of caries. The incisors are typically shovel-shaped as well. Strontium isotope analysis on the teeth by Jason Laffoon revealed that the first individual is nonlocal to the site, while the second individual falls within the local range.

It is very unfortunate that bone material is not preserved at Argyle, but similar burial pits under house floors are known from several Late Ceramic Age sites on the neighboring islands. Examples from Anse à la Gourde, Guadeloupe and Lavoutte, St. Lucia (Hoogland *et al.* 1999; Hofman *et al.* 2001; 2012) show a varied and complex mortuary behaviour which also matches the descriptions from ethnohistoric sources. Burials at these two sites revealed that at death, the body of the deceased was likely prepared before deposition, by wrapping the body in a hammock or placing it in a container such as a basket. The body was desiccated over a low fire in a few cases, as evidenced by the extremely flexed lower extremities and the fact that the ribcage is not collapsed. Subsequently, the body was deposited in a small and shallow pit. In some instances the entire body or the face of the deceased was then covered by a ceramic vessel. Ash spots in and around some of the graves suggests that a fire burned near or in the grave pit, possibly to incinerate the personal belongings. Decomposition of the body often took place in an open grave. In some cases bones (*i.e.*, one of the long bones or the cranium) were removed, without disturbance of the anatomical articulations of the skeleton. The bone that was removed was then either reburied in the same grave or in another grave, or kept in the settlement. These examples could serve as a point of reference for the way in which the dead were buried at Argyle and eventually indicate a widespread and long-lasting custom in the region that would have had its roots in pre-Colonial times.

Breton mentions that the dead were buried in the houses, under the house floors or if ever they were buried elsewhere, a small shelter was always erected at the location. After placing the deceased in a prepared grave and wrapping them with a hammock, a large fire would be lit in a circle, around which all the elders, both men and women, would crouch down on their knees (Breton 1665, 237-238; 1978, 80). They would dig a round pit three feet deep in the house for it to be covered. The body was washed and then rubbed down with *roucou*². The hair was carefully oiled and combed, preparing

the deceased as they would be presented at important social events such as a great feast. Wrapped in a brand-new hammock, the deceased would be put in the grave in almost the same position as a child in a mother's womb, neither backwards nor flat faced on the dirt, but straight, feet first, head up, bent on their knees, and the grave covered with a plank. While moaning, the women threw dirt in the grave with their hands. And then they lit a fire over it. If the deceased happened to possess captives, they were to be killed at this time, yet oftentimes they would run away without being pursued. The place of death was considered important, especially in deciding where the deceased should be buried. The grave pit was sometimes covered by reed (mat) or boards/planks and sometimes ceramic vessels were buried over the head. When the burial was outside the house, a small hut or house was built over it, for they would never leave the dead without a cover.

Breton also mentions the unearthing of long bones and crania. After a captain (chief) had been buried for a period of one year, which was called *chiric assoura*, the widow or the children would organize a *cayounage* in which all the inhabitants of the island and some from surrounding islands were invited, and, gathered in the hall or *tabouité*. The three oldest captains (chiefs) of the island, with their faces smeared with black colour and their heads wrapped with linens would hold their bows bent with the arrows prepared as if ready to shoot, whilst outwardly lamenting and jumping incoherently. This would continue for five or six turns around the grave, pretending to shoot their arrows again and again. Afterwards they go back and forth, repeating their entry and exit up to five or six times. After which, they would go drinking with the others until night falls, at which point it is time for the three mentioned above along with the other captains (chiefs) to dig up the captain's (chief's) bones. These remains, as well as those of his relatives and his captives, located on top of his goods, are then burned and the ashes carefully collected. These are then distributed among the closest relatives who pack the ashes into calabashes as small as nuts, which they wear hanging from their necks, especially on days of *cayounages*. And when they go to war, they will drink a little of the ash mixture and rub it on their body to help them defeat their enemies. Sometimes hair or some bones of deceased kin would be put in a calabash and kept in one's house or *carbet*; this was used for sorcery. It was believed that the spirit of the dead would speak to the holder of these remains and warn them of their enemies' plans. The deceased personal belongings such as baskets, spun cotton and other items were burned over the grave by the women in the village. Also at this last point of contact with the deceased, bows and arrows, *boutou* or clubs, a crown of feathers, ear pendants, necklaces, rings, bracelets, baskets, vessels, and other belongings would either be buried with the remains or burned over the grave.

5 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The recent rescue investigations at Argyle, St. Vincent, ironically made possible through the construction of the new international airport, have for the first time yielded 16-18th century Amerindian settlement remains and associated material culture repertoires. Large-scale horizontal excavation and methodological artefact collection have yielded a wealth of new information on Island Carib lifeways, settlement structure, exchange relationships, inter-cultural dynamics and human mobility during the early colonial era. The correlation of the archaeological data with ethnohistorical information has in this case uniquely aided the interpretation of the structures and village layout. This research offers the unique possibility of studying continuity and change of inter-community social relationships and transformations of Amerindian culture and society in the advent of European colonialism. Its relevance lies in recasting Island Carib history in a more nuanced, inclusive light, dispelling colonial documentary bias, and positioning archaeological research on the Island Carib within the wider context of Caribbean archaeology and the European encounter. Further relevance lies in bridging the gap between pre-colonial and colonial period archaeology in the Caribbean and from a more general perspective, this research contributes to the discussions of cultural contact and that of colonial encounters worldwide (e.g. Lightfoot 1995; Gosden 2004; Silliman 2005). Furthermore, the present-day indigenous peoples in the Lesser Antilles are the direct inheritors of Carib cultural traditions, with a considerable stake in archaeological cultural heritage (Honychurch 2000; Twinn 2006). These new discoveries therefore also represent a source of considerable historical interest for the *Kalinago* and *Garifuna* communities, both in St. Vincent and throughout the wider Caribbean area and Central America as their origin has long been contested due to a lack of firm archaeological evidence.

Acknowledgments

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Notes

1 Island Carib is a recent denominator derived from the term *Caraïbes* which was used by 17th century French chroniclers to distinguish them from the *Kali'na/Galibi* (Mainland Carib) of the coastal zone of the Guianas. They have been subject of an ongoing debate centred around theories on their appearance on the islands and archaeological visibility (Allaire 1977, 1987, 1997; Boomert 1995; Davis and Goodwin 1990; Whitehead 1995a). The first theory associates the Island Carib migration with a particular pre-Colonial ceramic assemblage (so-called Suazey or Suazan Troumassoid). The second sees the Island Carib presence as the result of a migration from the mainland or adaptation to cultural influences from the Mainland Carib in pre-Colonial times and relates it to Cayo pottery.

2 *Bixa orellana*

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