

Where the Salt ‘Kerns’: Historical Archaeological Investigations at the Saltpans of the Venezuelan Islands, 17th–19th Century

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Abstract

The saltpans of the islands of the Venezuelan Caribbean were visited by numerous local and foreign seafarers to rake their plentiful salt between the 1620s and the 1880s. The historical archaeological investigations at one site on the island of La Tortuga and two sites on the island of Cayo Sal, in the Los Roques Archipelago, have opened a window onto the material lives of seafarers throughout this 256-year swath of time. This overview summarizes the excavations and the recovered material remains; preliminarily reveals the ways in which the salt from the islands was involved in large-scale political-economical processes; and underlines the potential of these archaeological sites in disclosing the often elusive everyday lives of seafarers.

Keywords: Sea salt, saltpans, seafarers, historical archaeology.

Introduction

The abundant marine and terrestrial natural resources of the dry and low-lying islands of the Venezuelan Caribbean have attracted countless foreigners since Columbus’ third voyage in 1498. At the break of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Venezuelan Caribbean continued beckoning seafarers from near and distant shores, luring them no longer only with cacao, tobacco, and hides from the mainland, but also with sodium chloride from the islands—the salty mineral precipitate born from the marriage of sun and sea. Salt was in fact ‘white gold’ for European imperial powers since, in an age without refrigeration, it was used to preserve foodstuffs. In this way, it played a key role in extending long-distance seafaring, expanding commercial networks, and prolonging the expeditionary and military forays of empires. Salt from the Venezuelan islands was intimately entwined in the mercantilist workings of the Dutch and British empires, playing only a marginal role on the local Venezuelan scale.

In 1624 the Dutch from the Low Countries were drawn to the desolate island of La Tortuga in their quest for an alternative source of salt that they required for their lucrative herring fisheries (Figure 1). Anglo-American colonists were also enticed by the island’s saltpan in the later 17th and 18th century, finding its salt free for the taking and indispensable to preserving their cod, caught on the Grand Banks off of New England’s coast. One hundred and eighty kilometers to the northwest of La Tortuga, the saltpans on the long and narrow island of Cayo Sal, in the Los Roques Archipelago, drew the eyes of Dutch Antilleans and various other seafarers in the

18th century (Figure 1). In the 19th century they vied for a position amongst the most important saltpans of the Caribbean, together with those on Curaçao, Bonaire and the Turks and Caicos Islands, being harvested by merchants from the Netherlands Antilles and the recently established United States until the 1880s.

In this chapter I will present a short overview of the historical archaeological investigations undertaken at the saltpans of the islands of La Tortuga and Cayo Sal. I will briefly discuss the different seafarers who arrived at these saltpans and what we know about them from the archaeological record. Finally, I will also disclose the larger picture of the destinations of the salt that was loaded aboard ships at the Venezuelan islands, uncovering some of the ways in which it was entangled in the large-scale workings of empires and nations.

La Tortuga (1624–1638)

The Punta Salinas archaeological site (TR/S), located at the southeastern point of the island of La Tortuga and some 100km north of the Venezuela port-city of Puerto La Cruz, is approximately 5.6ha in area (ca. 200 x 280m) (Figures 1 and 2). The saltpan extend to the site’s north and run more than 1km eastward towards the coast (Figure 3). Initial survey was conducted here in February 1993, shovel, test pit and systematic trench excavations were carried out in May 1993, and further trench excavations were conducted in 2009 and twice in 2010 (Antczak 2015; Antczak et al. 2015).

The human post-contact (1498+) presence at the site of Punta Salinas began in earnest during the second decade of the 17th century. The inhabitants of the

Spanish mainland provinces of Maracaibo, Venezuela, Nueva Andalucía (later Cumaná), and Margarita largely disregarded the salt-producing internal lagoons of the island of La Tortuga throughout the colonial period, having a sufficient supply of salt to the west at the salt pans of Sinamaica, Sauca, Guayguaza, and Borburata, and to the east at the great Salinas of Araya and the salt pans of Pampatar on Margarita Island

(Figure 1) (María 1966: 338; Ojer 1962; Sarabia Viejo 1995). As the saltpan of La Tortuga lay unutilized by the Spanish, at the break of the 16th and 17th centuries, the Dutch began to make inroads into the Venezuelan Caribbean impelled by a pressing need for salt to preserve their vital Baltic herring fisheries. Conflict and tensions between the rebellious Dutch Republic and the Spanish Crown resulted in the 1598 ban on Dutch ships



Figure 1. Map of the Caribbean.

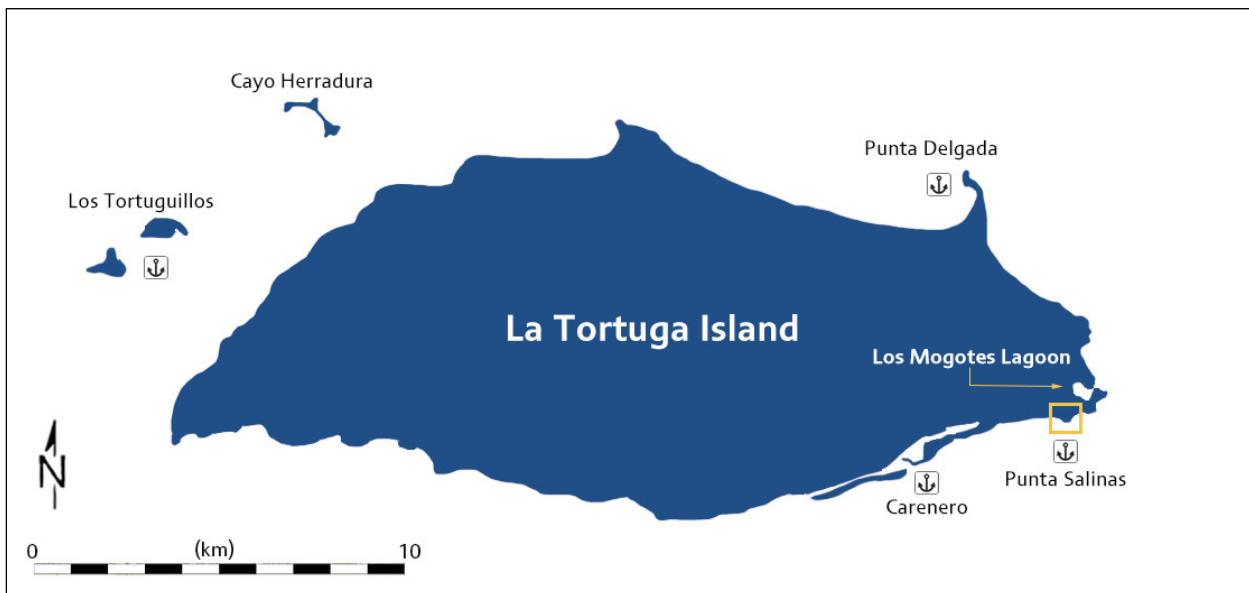


Figure 2. La Tortuga Island and the site of Punta Salinas at the southeastern corner.

and goods from all Iberian ports (Israel 1990: 56). As a result, the Dutch supply of salt from the Portuguese ports of Setúbal and Aveiro was cut-off, impelling Dutch seafarers beyond the Atlantic to rove the Caribbean for salt (Antunes 2008; Klooster 2003). In the following years, Dutch insistence and industriousness in the perilous and bloody business of salt harvesting would lead them on a Venezuelan saltpan-hopping quest that would claim dozens of lives and produce thousands of tons of salt.

Initially, the Dutch *zoutvaerders* (salt carriers) were enthralled by the large and productive saltpans of Araya, harvesting them since 1599 only to be repelled by the Spanish *Armada de Barlovento* in 1605. During the Twelve Years' Truce (1609–21) pressure on salt harvesting in Araya ceased, but the Dutch returned again in 1621 and 1623. They were repelled from Araya by the Spanish fort erected at the entrance to the saltpans in 1622—effectively closing them off to foreigners (Antczak et al. 2015: 191–192). The *zoutvaerders* then turned their attention to the uninhabited island of La Tortuga. Beginning in 1624, ships from West Frisia and Amsterdam loaded salt at the island. By 1632 the *zoutvaerders'* production of salt expanded to a semi-industrial scale and included pumps, channels, wooden boardwalks, a jetty, and cannon emplacements, as well as other ingenious anthropogenic modifications to the saltpan landscape (Antczak 2018: 61–62). The Dutch

presence on La Tortuga was intensive and industrious, yet also bloody and short-lived. In 1630 alone, Dutch seafarers managed to cultivate and rake more than 1400 metric tons of salt at Punta Salinas (Antczak et al. 2015: 198). They persisted through three attacks by Spanish forces in 1631 and 1633, when they sustained human losses and their installations were razed to the ground. Finally, in 1638, Benito Arias Montano, the governor of the Province of Cumaná, together with 150 Spanish infantrymen and 150 allied Cumanagoto Indians, raided and destroyed a small wooden fort erected by the *zoutvaerders* and defended by 40 musketeers and eight cannons, effectively ending the chapter of Dutch harvesting of the island's salt (Antczak et al. 2015: 202–204).

In 2010, excavations of an earthwork feature (TR/S/T-1) and adjacent sandy ridge (TR/S/T-2) at the Punta Salinas site revealed what was probably the site of the 1638 Dutch fort and violent confrontation with the Spanish (Figure 4). The material evidence recovered includes various Dutch lead-glazed red earthenware cooking vessels and tablewares, Dutch and Mexican tin-glazed earthenware dishes, glass bottle fragments, lead shot, cannon balls, and other metal items, as well as 191 Dutch clay pipe fragments (Figure 5). The faunal collection, that predominantly includes rabbit bones and has very few remains of local marine resources, suggests that the musketeers—who were garrisoned at



Figure 3. Punta Salinas with the saltpan at the top (photo: José Voglar).

the site—were probably hesitant to consume local fish and mollusks and, rather, depended on more known sources of meat such as rabbits, that lived in coastal dunes on the island, and ship provisions of salted beef and pork (Antczak et al. 2015: 206–207).

The paucity of material remains from the Dutch occupation of Punta Salinas is reflective of the brief and fiercely contested timespan during which the *zoutvaerders* engaged with the island. Yet the intensive and industrious nature of Dutch salt harvesting at

Punta Salinas is evidenced by the ingenious way in which the Dutch managed to modify the natural saltpan environment, maximize salt production, and resiliently weather Spanish aggression.

La Tortuga (1638–1781)

The saltpan of La Tortuga was not abandoned for very long, for in the same year that the Dutch were ousted from the island, Anglo-Americans began to venture there for salt. In 1638 the ship *Desire* returned from a



Figure 4. Map of the site of Punta Salinas (TR/S).

voyage to the West Indies and along with slaves, tobacco, and cotton, brought salt from 'Tertugos' (La Tortuga) to the small New England port-town of Salem (Newton 1934: 260). In the following decades, seafarers from Salem began to frequent Punta Salinas to load salt for the town's commercially important cod fisheries. Even though La Tortuga was a Spanish possession, Anglo-Americans assumed they were allowed to harvest salt there according to the Anglo-Spanish treaties of 1667 and 1670, and only being explicitly allowed to in the treaties of 1715 and 1750 (Headlam 1926: 244; Hertslet 1878: 82, 87).

By the early 1700s, Boston had taken over as the principal port sending merchant vessels to La Tortuga for salt, resulting in more than double the number of ships coming to Boston from La Tortuga than from Salem. Soon many other ports of the Anglo-American Atlantic world, such as New York, Philadelphia, Newport, Piscataqua (now Portsmouth,

New Hampshire), New London, Connecticut, and Bermuda were involved in the harvesting of salt on La Tortuga. The author's analysis of the eighteenth-century Naval Office Shipping Lists for Boston, Salem, Piscataqua, and New York, as well as Anglo-American newspapers from the same period, shows that between 1700 and 1775 at least 939 ships loaded with salt from La Tortuga came to the aforementioned ports of the Eastern Seaboard (Antczak 2015: 162). The Venezuelan Caribbean was, nonetheless, no safe haven since, during the second half of the 17th century and especially with the appearance of the Real Compañía Guipuzcoana de Caracas in 1728, it was patrolled by Spanish *corsarios* (corsairs), who were given orders to seize any vessels engaged in illicit trade with the Spanish mainland provinces (Vivas Pineda 1998).

These *corsarios* often seized Anglo-American salt ships under pretense that they were engaging in contraband. In response to this threat, New England

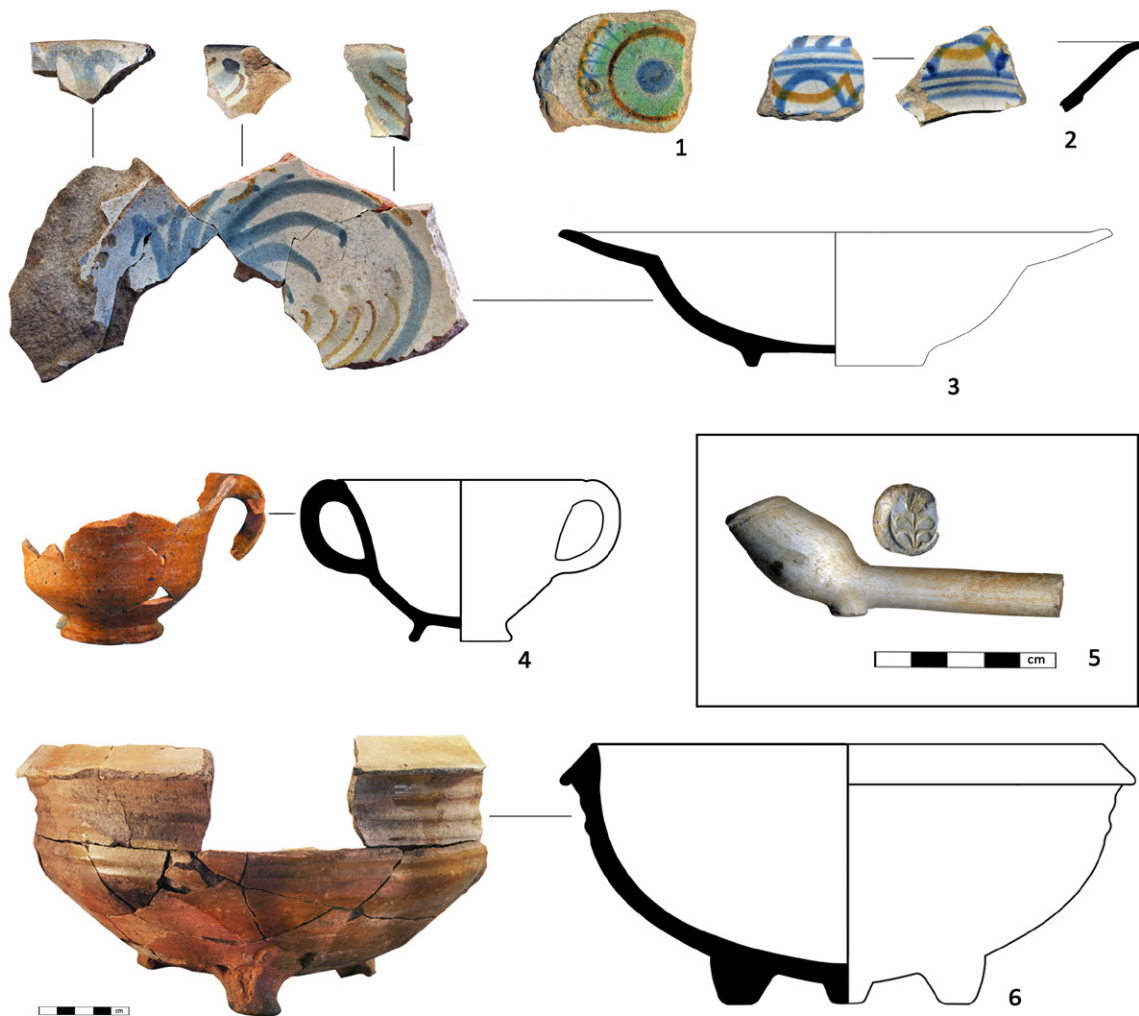


Figure 5. 17th-century artefacts recovered from the earthwork feature (TR/S/T-1). 1-2. Dutch tin-glazed earthenware dish fragments; 3. brimmed dish probably of Mexican majolica and attributed to the San Juan Polychrome style; 4. Dutch lead-glazed red earthenware two-handled porringer with a thick green glaze on the interior; 5. Gouda pipe with a tulip mark; 6. Dutch lead-glazed red earthenware tripod saucepan.

merchants organized a yearly *Saltertuda* Fleet that would sail to and from La Tortuga escorted by British Navy warships. From 1687 to 1768 the fleet, consisting of numerous vessels, is known to have sailed at least thirty times (Antczak 2015: 162). In 1781, the *corsario* Vicente Antonio de Icuza appeared at Punta Salinas and evicted thirty (presumably US American) salt-rakers from the island, seizing their salt in the process (Amezaga Aresti 1966: 94). The saltpan of Punta Salinas was not to be harvested by foreigners again after this incident, producing a reliable *terminus ante quem* of 1781 for the archaeological deposits there.

The merchant ships heading to La Tortuga usually left the New England coast in early December and would congregate at Barbados between December and January. Once the *Saltertuda* Fleet had gathered, and a British Navy ship was ready for escort, they set sail for La Tortuga in mid-January. Upon arrival at the island, the saltpan was divided up according to ship tonnage and, depending on the weather, the crews could rake salt for more than a month, often waiting for it to crystallize on the pans multiple times (Brownrigg 1748: 24–28). The dry months between February and June were perfect for the production of solar salt as pirate naturalist William Dampier (1699: 52) noted in 1682: ‘the salt begins to kern, or grain in April, except it is a dry season.’ Before the arrival of the rains, and once the ship holds had been loaded with salt, the fleet would set sail and pass through the Windward Passage and north of Bermuda disperse, each ship sailing to its home port (see Figure 1). In late April and early May of nearly every year, these ships arrived from La Tortuga with the salt necessary for the New England spring fisheries (Pares 1963: 631). La Tortuga salt was used to cure low-quality refuse cod which was then shipped back to the Lesser Antilles to feed the enslaved laborers on sugar plantations, providing them with a staple source of protein (Innis 1940: 76–78; Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts 1927: 241).

Constrained by the La Tortuga’s bleak and dry landscape, the Anglo-American seafarers-turned-salt-rakers, set up camp at Punta Salinas and interacted here with one another for up to a month at a time. Meanwhile, hanging on their bodies, buried in their pockets, and stowed within the sea chests they brought on land came their personal possessions. Many of these material things were discarded, left, or lost on the island and have been recovered through archaeological excavations. These things paint a vivid picture of the lives of ordinary merchant seafarers, their consumer practices, their senses of fashion, and their material discourses. The historical archaeological analysis of things recovered in the Dunes activity area (Figure 4), at the site of Punta Salinas, has revealed the cosmopolitan identities of

seafarers, especially ship captains. When their crews raked salt on the saltpan beyond, the Anglo-American ship captains would engage in a leisurely material discourse with their peers, bringing from onboard their ships fine tablewares, exotic ingredients, and associated paraphernalia.

Drinking punch was prevalent at the site among captains and crews alike, as the 142 punch bowls from the site indicate. The Dunes activity area—overlooking the saltpan beyond—offered a prime setting for masculine sociability and material discourse. The temporality of the effects of punch as a social lubricant was capitalized on by captains. La Tortuga offered enterprising captains a unique opportunity to show off their purchasing power to their peers through personal belongings—among them fashionable English delftware punch bowls filled with exotic ingredients such as sugar, nutmeg from the East Indies, madeira wine, and seltzer water from Germany (Figure 6) (Antczak 2015).

On La Tortuga captains also put simple rum punch into circulation among their crews, helping to lessen the evident vertical distinctions between themselves and the crews toiling on the saltpan in the inclement sun and stinging salt. Alcohol, paternalistically distributed by captains to working seamen in the form of punch, was thus a key safety valve that assured that the crews would comply with the captains and do their jobs as expected. It also obfuscated the true nature of the power relations operating on the island, and limited the crews’ awareness of their social situation (Antczak 2015: 183). Punch bowls and punch, therefore, became a potent metaphor of the far-reaching tentacles of the growing British mercantile capitalist world order. They became, as art historian Eric Gollanek (2008: 220) describes them, ‘supercharged space[s] for the sensory consumption of empire.’

Punch, however, was not the only fancy thing brought to and consumed at Punta Salinas. Excavations at the site have revealed various teapots along with close to thirty delft and Chinese porcelain tea bowls (Antczak 2019: 275). Pouring tea from an egg-shell-thin melonware teapot into a fine porcelain tea bowl on this scorched island—where daytime temperatures often rise to above 40°C—must have involved the building of what anthropologist Pierre Bourdieu (1986: 249–251) termed ‘social capital.’ Other conspicuous items include a Whieldon ware coffee or chocolate pot, brass drawer pulls, escutcheons, keys, and a fine lock that might have pertained to a liquor box. Among the more than thirty shoe buckles recovered, one particularly stands out as it is an oversize and fashionable late 18th-century Artois buckle (Figure 6). The fluidity of movement of New England captains to ports in



Figure 6. 18th-century artefacts recovered from the Dunes activity area. 1. German stoneware mineral water jug; 2. melon-ware teapot from Staffordshire; 3. Wieldon ware coffee or chocolate pot; 4. English delft punch bowl probably from Liverpool; 5. copper-alloy and pewter Artois-style shoe buckle; 6. copper-alloy liquor box lock.

the circum-Atlantic was a contributing factor to the presence of the fashionable at Punta Salinas. It was through these fashionable things that the captains could underscore their cosmopolitan identities and their connections to far-flung places of the Atlantic world and beyond. These early modern seafarers were not only the movers but also the consumers of empire.

Cayo Sal (c. 1700–1800)

The long and narrow island of Cayo Sal in the Los Roques Archipelago (135km from the central coast of Venezuela) spans 16km of the southwestern boundary of the archipelago. Cayo Sal has two post-contact archaeological sites by the salt pans

located at its western end (Figures 1 and 7). The first site, Uespen de la Salina (CS/A), is located at the westernmost end of the salt pans and on the leeward (northern) coast of the cay (Figure 8). Excavations here, including shovel and test pits and two trenches, were undertaken in the decade of the 1980s (Antczak and Antczak 2006: 86–87) and more recently in 2007, and in 2009 and 2010, systematic in-trench and block excavations were performed (Figure 8). The site harbors the foundations of a coral stone structure and, on the adjacent saltpan, there can be found a series of coral dikes and walkways most probably associated with it.

The analysis of the ceramics recovered at the site suggests that it was visited from the 1720s up until the late 18th century, intermittently by Dutch Antillean salt rakers from Curaçao and Bonaire, inhabitants of the Spanish provinces of the mainland, as well as Bermudians and seafarers and privateers from the French and British Lesser Antilles (Davies 1963: 11; Jarvis 1998: 445; Klooster 1998: 101–102). The ceramic collection can be separated into five categories: 1) English creamware and delftware; 2) Spanish (Iberian) majolica and lead-glazed earthenware; 3) French faïence and lead-glazed earthenware; 4) lead-glazed ‘El Morro’-type earthenware of yet-unknown provenance (Deagan 1987: 50; Smith 1962:

67–68), and; 5) a variety of coarse Afro-Amerindian earthenwares (*criollo*-wares) probably of local Venezuelan manufacture (Figure 9). Each of these categories of ceramics is well represented by a wide array of ceramic vessel forms. The site also yielded abundant zooarchaeological remains of local resources including mollusks, fishes, and marine birds as well as resources of allochthonous origin primarily consisting of cow and pig.

The documentary evidence that has been found so far for this site is still quite fragmentary, especially when compared to the abundance of records relating to La Tortuga. One Venezuelan source mentions that in 1775 eleven Dutch Antillean creoles (seven of whom were enslaved) were left on Los Roques for a week to rake salt and to fish under the supervision of an unarmed white mariner (Cromwell 2012: 257). The salt raking could have only happened on Cayo Sal, and leaving free and enslaved laborers to engage in this activity on Los Roques might have been a common Curaçaoan *modus operandi* throughout the 18th century. Moreover, the Los Roques Archipelago, with its myriad sheltered coves and secluded cays, is known to have been a favorite turtle-fishing spot for Dutch Antilleans, as well as an ideal theatre for engaging in illicit trade with the Spanish mainland. During the 17th and especially the 18th centuries, Curaçao was deeply

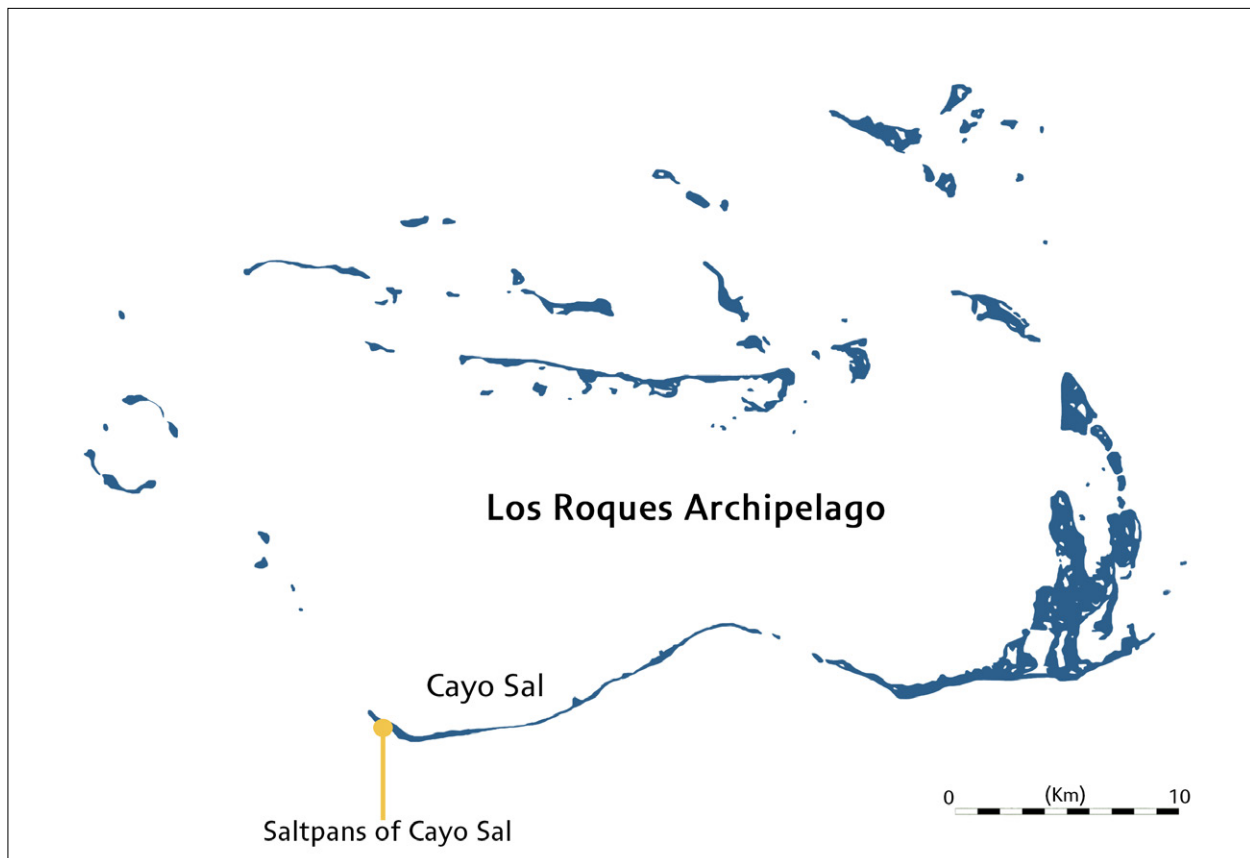


Figure 7. Map of the Los Roques Archipelago with the location of Cayo Sal and the salt pans.



Figure 8. Map of the site of Uespen de la Salina (CS/A).

involved in cacao contraband on the Venezuelan coast. Other smuggled goods included mules, hides, and tobacco (Aizpurua 1984, 1988). Dutch ships regularly sneaked into numerous sheltered and secluded bays of Venezuela's central coast to sell their goods and buy cacao from the plantations nestled in the valleys extending inland from the sea (Aizpurua 1993). In fact, Los Roques became an uninhabited and clandestine transshipment point for cacao smuggling. During rendezvous, often prearranged by letter, Venezuelan cacao growers would meet Curaçaoan traders on these islands—among which Cayo Sal was probably the most familiar—and exchange cacao beans for manufactured goods that were in short supply on the Spanish Main (Klooster 1998: 126–127).

The heterogeneous material remains at the site of Uespen de la Salina on Cayo Sal are reflective of the medley of maritime interaction and mobility in the 18th-century Southern Caribbean. Los Roques would have been an attractive site for foreign seafarers to catch turtle and fish, rake salt, and engage in lucrative informal trade with the Spanish mainland provinces. The site also displays a broader range of quality in ceramics and glass than Punta Salinas, from the more refined English delftware and fine drinking glasses, to much more mundane mended lead-glazed earthenwares and Afro-Amerindian ceramics. Los Roques, and especially the island of Cayo Sal, would have become trans-imperial places of contact for seafarers roving the Venezuelan Caribbean.

Cayo Sal (c. 1800–1880)

Finally, the site of Los Escombros (CS/B) is located 1km east of CS/A on a sandy corridor between two large saltpans to the east and west of Cayo Sal (Figure 10). Here, the saltpans are crisscrossed by a dense network of coral stone dikes and walkways. The site and its adjacent areas harbor the remains of a partially standing coral stone and mortar house, a large salt-packing patio, and many coral stone shelters on the windward storm terraces. Excavations of shovel and test pits have been undertaken here since the 1980s and, more recently in 2005, 2010, 2012, and 2013, larger systematic excavations were performed. In 2013 the author led a community archaeology workshop at this site for schoolchildren from the local Escuela Bolivariana Archipiélago Los Roques.

During the 19th century, the site of Los Escombros was probably visited by Dutch Antillean salt rakers who had frequented the Los Roques Archipelago for decades. It is, however, uncertain who first built the coral-stone dikes and walkways on the saltpans. During the 1810s and 1820s various Venezuelan ships are known to have arrived to the port of La Guaira from Los Roques with salt from Cayo Sal.¹ US American Jeremiah Morrell was given the right to harvest the saltpans by the

¹ *Gazeta de Caracas* Mar. 3, 1814 and Mar. 7, 1814; *Gaceta de Caracas* Oct. 11, 1815 and Oct. 18, 1815; *Gaceta de Caracas* Nov. 29, 1815 and Dec. 13, 1815; *Iris de Venezuela*, Mar. 18, 1822; *Iris de Venezuela*, Jul. 15, 1822.



Figure 9. 18th-century artefacts recovered from the site of Uespen de la Salina. 1. 'El Morro'-type lead-glazed earthenware puchero (cooking pot); 2. Spanish majolica plato from Triana, Seville; 3. English delft plate; 4. French Faïence blanche plate from Normandy; 5. Afro-Amerindian earthenware cooking pot.

Venezuelan Republic between 1834 and 1842, and, at least at the beginning of the enterprise, more than 120 'free coloreds' from Bonaire and Curaçao worked on Cayo Sal (Bosch 1836: 307; Goslinga 1990: 122). It is noteworthy that during the first half of the 19th century, US Americans were the principal buyers of the sodium chloride from the salt pans of Bonaire and Curaçao, along with that from the Turks and Caicos Islands. The takeover of the Cayo Sal salt pans by Morrell angered the salt merchants of Curaçao since they

were used to complementing their local salt harvests with salt brought from this island (Bosch 1836: 307). Moreover, Morrell sold his Cayo Sal salt at a lower price than the Dutch Antilleans, curtailing the Curaçaoan salt's competitive strength for a few years (Goslinga 1990: 122-123).

The archaeological materials recovered from the site of Los Escombros are abundant. The ceramic wares mostly date to between 1830 and 1840, falling within the years



Figure 10. Map of the site of Los Escombros (CS/B).



Figure 11. 19th-century artefacts recovered from the site of Los Escombros. 1. industrial slip whiteware bowl; 2. hand-painted whiteware teacup; 3. hand-painted whiteware saucer; 4. Afro-Amerindian red-slipped and incised earthenware cooking pot; 5. copper-alloy thimble; 6. Probably a gaming piece made from a shell-edged whiteware sherd; 7. clay pipe.

of Morrell's tenure of the salt pans. The ceramics mainly consist of hand-painted British whiteware and industrial slipwares from Staffordshire, but also include English delft apothecary jars, flow blue and yellowware plates, and French Vallauris coarse earthenware cooking pots (Figure 11). A large number of both plain and decorated Afro-Amerindian ceramics have also been found at the site. The archaeological materials also include various forms of glassware and glass containers, metal objects including a thimble, clay pipes, and objects in bone and stone (Figure 11). The zooarchaeological remains are varied and include both local marine fauna and seabirds, as well as allochthonous species such as pig and cow.

Concluding remarks

In conclusion, the temporary salt raker campsites excavated on the islands of the Venezuelan Caribbean offer a 256-year-long view of the lives of seafarers at the uninhabited mid-points on their maritime itineraries. This research seeks to broaden scholarly understandings of seafaring lives from the 17th to the 19th century by complementing and contextualizing the work of historians studying seafaring life and that of archaeologists delving into the material aspects of life at sea through excavations of shipwrecks, the homes of ship captains, and port taverns of the period.

The investigations reveal that the Venezuelan Caribbean and its insular salt pans were entangled in a web of local, regional, and trans-Atlantic dependences. Even though the salt harvested on the Venezuelan islands was important to imperial and national political-economies, the historical archaeological investigations at the salt pans tell stories of a more life-sized scale. Not only were 'anonymous' seafarers the backbone of colonial economies and essential to the rise of modern empires, they were also avid everyday consumers of the fruits of those very empires. Seafarers were increasingly entrapped in a new and growing world of interrelations with material things, brought about by the expansion of global capitalism and by the dawn of industrialization. While large-scale phenomena and their global effects have been extensively studied in history and archaeology, the manner in which they came about through everyday life, involving the engagement of seafarers with concrete things, is being understood in a new light from the salt pans of the Venezuelan Caribbean.

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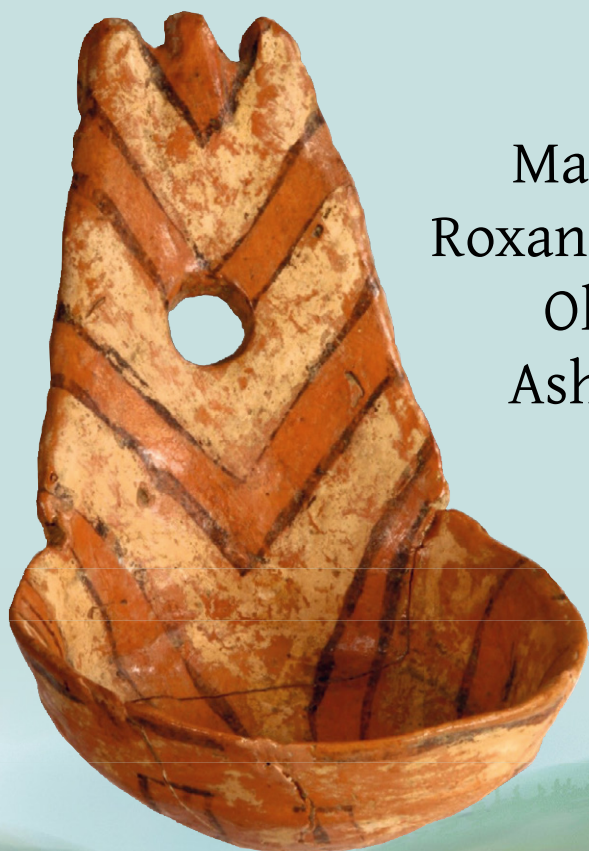
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Cover: Cucuteni typical ladles, Romania (photo: C. Preoteasa).
The production phases of salt crystallization in Cacica, the Cucuteni culture (Mugur Andronic).

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