

BOUNDARY-WORK, REPUTATIONAL SYSTEMS, AND THE DELINEATION OF PREHISTORIC INSULAR CARIBBEAN CULTURE HISTORY

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Abstract

Boundary-work is a term introduced by sociologists of science to recognize the initial definition of a field of scientific inquiry, while reputational systems are the manner in which these inquiries are hierarchically stratified. The present paper explores the ways that these have been used to delimit and structure the investigation of culture history in the prehistoric insular Caribbean. This inquiry demonstrates that representations of culture history are a product of historical contingencies within the discipline of Caribbean archaeology and not necessarily an accurate portrait of human movements into and within the islands.

Résumé

Le concept de "travail frontière" (Boundary work) a été introduit par les sociologues des sciences pour définir les bornes initiales d'un champ de recherche scientifique, tandis que la notion de "systèmes de réputation" (reputational systems) désigne la manière dont cette recherche est hiérarchiquement stratifiée. Cet article examine la façon dont ces concepts ont été utilisés pour délimiter et structurer l'étude de l'histoire culturelle de la préhistoire caribéenne. L'enquête menée démontre que les représentations de cette histoire culturelle sont le produit des contingences historiques que connaît l'archéologie caribéenne et pas nécessairement un tableau exact des mobilités humaines extra et intra-insulaires.

Resumen

"Boundary-work" es un término introducido por sociólogos de ciencia para reconocer la definición inicial del campo de investigación científica, mientras que "reputational systems" es la manera a través de la cual la investigación está jerárquicamente estratificada. Este artículo explora las maneras como estos métodos han sido aplicado para delimitar y estructurar la investigación de historia cultural ("culture history") en el Caribe prehistórico insular. Esta investigación muestra como las representaciones de historia cultural son históricamente contingentes en la disciplina arqueológica del Caribe y no necesariamente un reflejo exacto de movimientos poblacionales dentro y alrededor de las islas.

Introduction

All sciences are faith-based organizations. By this I mean that they all have basic beliefs and assumptions concerning the

proper way to describe, predict, and explain the phenomena that fall within the purview of a discipline. It all boils down to epistemology and the philosophy of ar-

chaeology (Bell 1994; Salmon 1982; Schiffer 1988; Wylie 1985) as reflected in the differences between conceptual systems and archaeological practice (cf. Hodder 1999; Keegan 2007a).

One of the most influential writers on this topic is Thomas Kuhn (1962) who identified what he called scientific “paradigms.” For him, science operates under a particular set of rules (called paradigms), and that science is often business as usual until sufficient evidence accumulates to overthrow previous beliefs in a scientific revolution. Since Kuhn, there has been a dramatic growth in the field of Science Studies or Science and Technology Studies (STS). Practitioners of this field study what scientists *do* in comparison to what they *say*. Scientific research is not as objective as scientists would lead us to believe. The work of science involves continuous feedback from the public, colleagues, and funding agencies (Latour 1999). Moreover, science often is more of an art than a strict adherence to some scientific method.

Kuhn’s (1962) notion of paradigm was quite vague, and several new concepts have been added to clarify the concept. These include “boundary-work” and “reputational systems” (Ramsden 2002). This paper addresses the beliefs and assumptions that underlie archaeological practice in the insular Caribbean. To a large degree these have gone unrecognized or unquestioned by the archaeologists who work in the region. From the majority perspective, Caribbean archaeology has been business as usual. However, many of our basic tenets are the product of ancient debates as synthesized by one individual. These debates are relevant toward the goal of understanding the orientations of current studies, but in some cases they continue to hamper our ability to progress.

Recently, Keegan and Rodríguez Ramos

(2004) identified two meta-theories (paradigms) in Caribbean archaeology. We suggest that neither of these is adequate for accurately interpreting and understanding the prehistory of the islands. One meta-theory is a focus on Marxist notions of “modo de vida” (ways of life) that characterizes the majority of research by Hispanic archaeologists (e.g., Moscoso 1986; Veloz Maggiolo 1976). Bradley Ensor (2000) examined this approach in detail, so it will not be considered here. This paper will focus on the culture-historical model developed by Irving Rouse. Rouse’s (1992) paradigm has been the dominant approach in Caribbean archaeology for decades. The time has come to examine the assumptions and beliefs that underlie this belief system.

Boundary-work and Reputational Systems

Boundary-work is a term introduced by sociologists of science to recognize the initial definition of a field of scientific inquiry, while reputational systems are the manner in which these inquiries are hierarchically stratified (Ramsden 2002). These two concepts recognize that there are specific ways of conducting research, that there are limits to the range of subjects included in such inquiries, and that there are structures or rules of practice that define the manner in which such studies are conducted. Although there are numerous ways to characterize the prehistory of the insular Caribbean, only some of these are accepted by the archaeological community. For example, we would immediately reject the absurd notion that space aliens were responsible for the development of human civilizations. This interpretation is viewed as outside the boundaries of scientific inquiry.

A variety of different means for classifying and describing Caribbean prehistory have been developed over the years (Petersen et al. 2004). Ripley Bullen

(1964), Luis Chanlatte Baik (1981; Chanlatte Baik and Narganes Storde 2005), Jacques Petitjean Roget (1970), Charles Hoffman (1963), and William Sears (Sears and Sullivan 1981) have all offered alternative approaches to the one pursued by Rouse. Yet in the end, it is Rouse's approach that has held sway. Moreover, Rouse (1972, 1978) has offered clear explanations of his hierarchical ordering of investigations (reputational system). The point is that all of these approaches define the data we need to collect and how these should be interpreted. If you stray outside the "boundaries," then your work will be rejected for not conforming to the "reputational system."

The Rousean Paradigm

When Rouse began conducting research in the Caribbean in the 1930s there was no systematic method for relating the cultural remains on different islands (see Keegan 2007b). He created what is called the "modal" approach, which focuses on particular attributes, especially as these relate to the decoration of pottery (Rouse 1939). He developed this approach because most of the sites he worked on lacked clear natural or cultural strata, and because most of the artifacts were potsherds that lacked specific evidence for the shape of the original vessel (see Siegel 1996). His approach was based on the McKern Midwestern Taxonomic System, and on his training in forestry. In sum, he attempted to combine the Linnaean classification used in biology (Kingdom, Phylum, Class, Order, Family, Genus, species) with the archaeological classification developed by McKern. His efforts were so successful that Willey and Sabloff (1974), in *A History of American Archaeology*, placed Rouse at the base of the tree they used to describe the development of American archaeology. Rouse was *the* founding father of the classificatory-

historical school (Willey and Sabloff 1974).

Rouse's continuing influence is evident in debates during the 1950s and 1960s concerning the proper way to classify artifacts and cultures (e.g., Ford 1954; Hill and Evans 1971; Rouse 1960; Spaulding 1953). He took a sabbatical in England where he completed the book *An Introduction to Prehistory: A Systematic Approach* (Rouse 1972), and he recognized David Clarke (1978) as a kindred spirit in the effort to classify and order the past. His hierarchical approach to writing the past is clearly stated, and he went on to propose an overall approach to archaeology in which specific aspects of the past must be examined in turn (Rouse 1978). According to Rouse, one needed to define time (chronology), space (geography), economy, social organization, political organization, and ideology in order. In other words, until you have tight chronological and spatial controls it was impossible to address the higher-order categories of economy, society, and polity. While each category of data is important, few would agree that we must climb this "ladder of inference" rung by rung.

Rouse recognized the need to consider language, biology, material culture, and ethnohistory together in order to accurately describe a prehistoric culture we need (Rouse 1992). At the time, relevant studies of language and biology were in their infancy, and he focused his attention on material culture and ethnohistory. With regard to ethnohistory he was somewhat hampered by the attitudes of his day in which the written record was taken as fact. More recent work has identified issues with the Spanish chroniclers who wrote about the native peoples. It has become increasingly apparent that they did not really understand Taíno societies, that their interpretations were based on the characteristics of Spanish culture, and that their writings often

served political agendas. With regard to material culture, Rouse focused on ceramics and on identifying particular characteristics on potsherds (“modes”) as a means for identifying “peoples and cultures.” He believed that modes reflected the mindset of the peoples who manufactured them, an approach that received the pejorative label of “normative” archaeology (see Binford 1965).

Rouse (1939) recognized both behavioral (functional) and cognitive aspects to the production of material culture. He was among the first to adopt the “scientific method,” although he erroneously assumed that there were only two possible hypotheses and that if one was disproved the other was proved. He recognized that all elements of material culture needed to be studied, albeit he focused his attention on the attributes of ceramics. Finally, he sought multiple levels of analysis, originally two – style and series. He developed a comprehensive framework for investigating the past. Yet, despite his efforts to apply his approach on an international scale (Rouse 1986), the insular Caribbean is the only place it has been adopted and maintained (cf. Kirch 1978).

It is necessary to recognize a fundamental flaw in his thinking. Rouse believed that there was only one “right way” to do archaeology. As he told Peter Siegel: “As I look back, I’m impressed by the fact that archaeology in the 1960s had reached the same state of maturity in classification that biology had reached when I was an undergraduate” (Siegel 1996:672). “Just before the revolution in archaeology took place, archaeologists had a very high prestige in the discipline of anthropology because we knew what we wanted to do. Then Binford and his generation destroyed all that” (Siegel 1996:677). Thus, his approach was the only correct reputational system, and all Caribbean archaeologists

were expected to work within the boundaries he established.

Rouse’s approach begins by defining local styles based on a set of attributes defined as “modes.” These local styles are situated in time and space, and are then grouped into “series” that share a substantial number of modes (see Curet 2004). These series represent groups of “peoples and cultures” that share a common identity and ancestry. The first site at which a particular style was identified determines the name for these styles and series. This practice follows what Rouse learned from biological taxonomy, and unfortunately has caused much confusion among those trying to use this system. There is a tendency in archaeology to consider the site used to name a style as the ‘type site’ (meaning the site at which the most characteristic modes or attributes are present), but several of the named styles and series actually come from atypical sites at which the style just happened to be present and was found first. For example, the Saladoid series is named actually is dominated by Barrancas style pottery and the Saladoid component is an intrusive pit (Barse 2009). Also, the Troumassoid series is named for the Troumassée site on Saint Lucia where the materials also were excavated from a large pit (McKusick 1960). In sum, these sites are not characteristic of the styles or series, but simply reflect the first site at which they were identified.

Rouse conducted research in Haiti (Rouse 1939, 1941), Puerto Rico (1952a, 1952b; Rouse and Alegría 1990), Cuba (Rouse 1942), Trinidad (Bullbrook 1953), Venezuela (Rouse and Cruxent 1963) and Antigua (Rouse and Morse 1999). His students investigated Saint Lucia (McKusick 1960), Jamaica (Howard 1950), Martinique (Allaire 1977), and the Cuban Archaic (Hahn 1961). The evidence from these and other studies were used to construct his

time-space diagram for the Caribbean. In every case, the classification of peoples and cultures was based on Rouse's beliefs regarding the prehistoric colonization of the Antilles.

The emphasis on local styles and regional series produced a two-tier hierarchy. The key factor in Rouse's analysis was documenting a linear sequence in which all subsequent developments in the insular Caribbean derived from a single source. This taxonomy quickly ran into problems, with the nudge coming from Luis Chanlatte's (1981) Huecoid. If each of these series, identified with -oid as the suffix, were distinct *groups* of "peoples and cultures," then where did they come from? Several archaeologists suggested that they represent different migrations of peoples into the islands (e.g., Veloz Maggiolo 1991; Zucchi 1990).

These multiple migration hypotheses contradicted Rouse's most cherished beliefs. Therefore, he adopted a suggestion by Gary Vescelius and added a "subseries" to his model. Subseries are noted by the use of -an as a suffix. The result was that the separate and distinct Ostionoid, Meillacoid, and Chicoid series were transformed into Ostionan, Meillacan, and Chican subseries of the Ostionoid series. Thus, there could not possibly be different "peoples and cultures" arriving from different places when they all developed from the same ceramic tradition.

Establishing the Boundaries

As STS scholars have pointed out, every discipline has boundaries within which their research is contained. Two fundamental "laws" of insular Caribbean culture history were established in the 1940s and early 1950s. The first was that insular Caribbean peoples came from lowland South America. The second was that there was only one migration of Ceramic Age peo-

ples.

Rouse contributed articles to Julian Steward's *Handbook of South American Indians* on The Arawaks and The Caribs of the West Indies (Rouse 1948a, 1948b; Steward 1946). Steward recognized that he needed a way to organize the six volumes and to classify these native groups. He developed a four-part schema that identified Marginal Tribes, Tropical Forest Cultures, Circum-Caribbean Chiefdoms, and Andean Civilizations. According to Steward, the Circum-Caribbean Chiefdoms, including the Taínos (nee Island Arawaks), were derived from Andean Civilizations by people who spread along the Caribbean littoral and into the Antilles (Steward and Faron 1959).

Rouse (1953) rejected that notion, and set out to prove that the Taínos were a culture unique to the Caribbean that had not developed through outside influences. Instead, he traced the origins of the Ceramic Age Caribbean to lowland South America and peoples living along the Orinoco River in eastern Venezuela. Over the years he strongly defended this position, despite counter arguments from James Ford (1969), Betty Meggers and Clifford Evans (1983), and Donald Lathrap (1970). His assertions were supported by the discovery of potsherds decorated in what would be called the Saladoid series at the site of Saladero on the lower Orinoco, and similar pottery at Wonotobo Falls in western Suriname (Boomert 1983; Rouse 1992). Thus, while Steward's followers proposed that people moving along the north coast of South America settled the Caribbean islands, Rouse placed their origins in the lowlands and along the east coast of Venezuela, the Guianas, and Trinidad where the Orinoco drains into the Atlantic Ocean.

After concluding that coastal South and Central American peoples were not involved in the colonization of the insular Caribbean (they came instead from low-

land South America and the Orinoco basin), he turned his attention to a new threat to his beliefs. Rouse initially worked with Froelich Rainey in Haiti (Rainey 1941; Rouse 1939, 1941) and then followed Rainey in his research in Puerto Rico (Rainey 1940; Rouse 1952a, 1952b). Rainey identified two cultures in Puerto Rico. A “crab culture” (Saladoid) based on the high incidence of crab claws in the deposits, and a “shell culture” (Ostionoid) based on the high incidence of marine bivalves in the deposits. Rainey (1940) proposed that these cultures represented separate migrations into the islands based on their stratigraphic position at the Cañas site in Puerto Rico, and the very different appearance of the pottery recovered (see Rodríguez Ramos 2005). Rouse rejected Rainey’s interpretation, and proposed that this situation actually reflected a gradual transition from one to the other (Rouse 1952a, 1952b; see Siegel 1996).

It is not clear the degree to which Rouse’s interpretation reflected the archaeological evidence, his belief in the uniqueness of insular Caribbean prehistory, or personal animosity toward Rainey. It is absolutely clear in Rainey’s (1992) book *Reflections of a Digger* that he and Rouse did not particularly like each other. There potentially is a subjective element here that we no longer can explore (see Keegan 2007b; Siegel 1996). In any event, Rouse maintained his belief in the uniqueness of insular Caribbean cultures, and refused to accept that there were other migrations (Rouse 1992). Other archaeologists also have proposed separate migrations into the islands. Luis Chanlatte (1981) proposed an Agro-I (or Huecoid) migration, Marcio Veloz Maggiolo (1991) has suggested a Meillacoid migration from Colombia, and Alberta Zucchi (1990) has proposed a Cedeñoid migration from coastal, western Venezuela.

All of these migrations have been rejected by Rouse, and in his culture history the islands were hermetically sealed from outside incursions. Rouse did recognize that the peoples of the insular Caribbean probably were in contact with their neighbors on the surrounding mainland. However, he was never willing to accept that any other mainland peoples migrated to the islands after the initial Saladoid (Rouse 1986, 1992). As he expressed it (Siegel 1996:682): “*My efforts have been largely devoted to trying to counteract the assumption that everything had to come in from outside*”.

The Reputational System

There are at least seven key assumptions that underlie the classification scheme now employed for the insular Caribbean. Many of these beliefs have gone unrecognized, and investigators who violate these assumptions are viewed as operating outside the reputational system. The current system amounts to dogma, based on the best efforts of one archaeologist. The time has come to recognize these assumptions and beliefs, and to give them the scrutiny they deserve. We need to redefine our boundaries, and reform the reputational system.

First, when Caribbean archaeology was first systematized there were two theories concerning the migration of peoples into the Antilles. Julian Steward, and others, argued that the origins of Caribbean peoples could be traced to the expansion of peoples out of the Andes and along the Caribbean coast of South America (Circum-Caribbean Theory). Rouse rejected this theory and instead proposed that Caribbean peoples originated in lowland South America along the banks of the Orinoco River. In contrast, recent evidence indicates strong ties between the islands and the Isthmo-Colombian region of South and Central America (Rodríguez Ramos

2010; Rodríguez Ramos and Pagán Jiménez 2007; Wilson 2007a). Moreover, Saladoid deposits at the Saladero site in Venezuela date to after AD 1000 (Barse 2009). How is it possible that a site dating to AD 1000 was the precursor of sites dating to as early as 400 BC in the central Caribbean? The distribution and movements of peoples on the South American mainland require more detailed study before overwater exchanges can be defined more accurately (Heckenberger 2002; Lathrap 1970; Zucchi 2002).

A subset of this assumption is that peoples spread through the stepping-stone islands of the Lesser Antilles until they reached Puerto Rico, where their progress was halted (Rouse 1986, 1992). New evidence suggests that the Windward Islands were by-passed during the initial migrations (Fitzpatrick 2006; Keegan 2004), and that a direct jump across the Caribbean was not only likely, but was the most efficient route (Callaghan 2001, 2010). We need to reconsider the source(s) and migration routes for the earliest colonists. The time has come to reexamine the Circum-Caribbean Theory.

Second, it is assumed that there was only one migration of Ceramic Age peoples into the Antilles. This assumption forms the basis for identifying all later Ceramic Age styles as developing from the previous style in a unilinear sequence. New evidence suggests that this was not the case, and the possibility of multiple migrations and contacts between the islands and a variety of places in South and Central America need to be considered. A case in point is Luis Chanlatte's (1981) identification of a completely different ceramic and lithic inventory at the site of La Hueca on Vieques Island off the east coast of Puerto Rico (Rodríguez Ramos 2005, 2010). The bottom line is that la Hueca is a distinct and contemporaneous cultural expression.

The pottery vessels from la Hueca represent a completely different ceramic tradition (Chanlatte Baik and Narganes Storde 2005), and the lithic artifacts are very different from those in typical Saladoid sites (Rodríguez Ramos 2005). This situation needs to be explained, and not simply classified.

Third, it is assumed that pottery decoration is adequate to define different peoples and cultures. Rouse (1992) did recognize the need to include language, biology, and other items of material culture in these definitions. However, in many cases, these other aspects of culture have simply been added as frosting to the established framework. We need to consider all of these elements to redefine the peoples and cultures of the prehistoric Caribbean.

Fourth, it is assumed that Ceramic Age cultures developed in a linear sequence. The original formulation is like the biblical accounting of genealogies – Saladoid begat Huecoid, Troumassoid, Elenoid and Ostionoid, Troumassoid begat Suazoid, Ostionoid begat Meillacoid, and Meillacoid begat Chicoid. The classification of these material expressions as distinct "series of peoples and cultures" undercut the assumption that one had developed from the other. Other archaeologists looked outside the Caribbean for the sources of these of these series, but because migrations were not allowed, Rouse needed to change the system. He did so by adopting Gary Vescelius' suggestion that subseries be added between style and series. Thus, Ostionoid became the parent class and the other series were relegated to subseries status as part of a singular line of development – Ostionan, Elenan, Meillacan, and Chican Ostionoid. If you compare the characteristics of these pottery styles, it is hard to believe that they all developed in a linear sequence from a single tradition (Figures 1, 2, and 3 from Keegan 2007a).

We need to look carefully at the possibility of multiple migrations, and/or the diffusion of people, goods, and ideas from inside and outside the insular Caribbean. For example, the evidence from Jamaica indicates that there were two separate migrations to the island, one by Ostionan peoples and one by Meillacan peoples (Keegan and Atkinson 2006); the origins of the Huecoid remain obscure (Chanlatte Baik 1981; Chanlatte Baik and Narganes Storde 2005), and the Meillacoid does have striking resemblances to pottery manufactured at the same time in Colombia (Veloz Maggiolo 1991) and western Venezuela (Zucchi 2002). It is possible that one developed from the other, but this needs to be proven and not simply assumed (Keegan 2001). The focus has been on similarities as a way of demonstrating continuity in cultural development. The time has come to emphasize differences. This change in emphasis will require a more concerted focus on lo-

cal styles, and more than just decorative techniques. There are a variety of new approaches to the study of ceramics, including whole vessel analysis (Donop 2007; Espenshade 2000); ethnotypology (Harris 1995), and various techniques for sourcing and use-wear analysis (Descantes et al. 2008). These approaches need to be added to the current emphasis on modal analysis.

Fifth, the time-space diagrams are based on the assumption of hard-and-fast boundaries. For example, in Hispaniola the Ostionoid begins around AD 500, it ends around AD 800 when the Meillacoid begins, which in turn ends around AD 1200 when the Chicoid begins. Yet we now know that each of these series began and ended at different times in different places (Keegan 2001, 2004). Some groups were conservative and maintained the old ways of doing things (Oliver 1995), while others were more precocious in adopting new styles and practices. We need to stop using



Figure 1. Ostionan pottery. Caribbean collection, Florida Museum of Natural History.



Figure 2. Meillacan pottery. Caribbean collection, Florida Museum of Natural History.



Figure 3. Chican pottery. Caribbean collection, Florida Museum of Natural History.

hard-and-fast temporal boundaries, and instead adopt the method used in radiocarbon dating where there is a statistical range for different expressions of time and culture.

Sixth, it is assumed that there were only three migrations into the Caribbean, and that following each new migration the previous inhabitants were displaced (Rouse 1992). Thus, the Lithic Age peoples were displaced by the Archaic Age peoples, who were in turn displaced by the Ceramic Age peoples. There are several problems with this assumption. It is no longer clear that there was a separate migration of Archaic Age peoples (Callaghan 2010). It now appears that a ground-stone technology either diffused into the Caribbean or was independently invented in the islands. There also is increasing evidence that Archaic and Ceramic Age peoples interacted, that Archaic peoples were making pottery long before the Ceramic Age peoples arrived, and that the Ostionoid may actually have developed first among Archaic peoples (Keegan 2006; Rodríguez Ramos 2005; Samson 2010).

Seventh, it generally is accepted that material culture is more similar across water passages than across the breadth of a single large island (Watters and Rouse 1989). The classic example is Puerto Rico where the island was divided in half between a western Ostionan Ostionoid and an eastern Elenan Ostionoid. Yet the evidence shows that these differences in subseries do not simply bisect the island on a north/south axis (Torres 2009), and that there is a much more complicated distribution of ceramic styles on the island (Rodríguez Ramos 2010). In sum, there probably are greater similarities among groups living on either side of a water passage, but this does not exclude the possibility of equally complex distributions on the island itself.

Paradigm Shift

Ben Rouse developed a method for classifying archaeological materials that greatly contributed to the Classificatory-Historical approach in American archaeology, and established the basic framework for the study of insular Caribbean culture history. By classifying material culture according to time-space systematics the essential components of Caribbean archaeology were for the first time organized in a systematic way. Yet no one, including Rouse, would accept that our initial formulations will last forever. We are at the point at which similarities trump differences, and we have created generalized trends over space and through time to the point that such generalities become meaningless. For example, Rouse's framework pigeonholes cultures in time and space, despite increasing evidence that these boxes cannot contain the variability evident in the archaeological record. The native peoples of the Caribbean did not all stop making a particular style of pottery and all change to a new style at the same time. There is enormous variability in styles even within the same time period. In addition, the calibration of radiocarbon dates shows clearly that a variety of different styles were made during the same time period (e.g., Davis 1988).

In the early days of Caribbean archaeology there was not much data, and evidence from one site often was used to characterize an entire culture period. Thus, evidence of structures (houses) at the Golden Rock site in St. Eustatius were taken as characteristic of all Saladoid sites (Versteeg and Schinkel 1992), the community plan at Maisabel became the template for all Saladoid sites and the notion of ancestor veneration was generalized to all Saladoid cultures (Siegel 1992; cf. Keegan 2009), and the presence or absence of a single mode (e.g., white-on-red painted or zoned-incised-crosshatch) came to be em-

blematic of a particular ceramic series which translated as a “people and culture”. A major problem is that “modes” have never been prioritized so it is difficult to determine which modes are essential to the definition of a style. Do we need one, ten, one hundred?

Recent studies have shown dramatic differences in the distribution of cultural characteristics. These differences are especially apparent in specific items of material culture such as *duhos* (Ostapkowicz 1997), three-pointed stones and stone collars (McGinnis 1997; Walker 1997), ball courts and stone-lined plazas (Wilson 2007a), lithics (Rodríguez Ramos 2005), and “jewelry” (Chanlatte 1981). In sum, the general characteristics that have been ascribed to a singular culture are actually demonstrating that numerous cultures inhabited the Caribbean islands in the past (Wilson 2007b). The same is true for language (Granberry and Vescelius 2004), burial practices (Curet and Oliver 1998; Hofman and Hoogland 2004; Keegan 2009), and mobility and exchange (this collection), especially between the peoples of the Greater and Lesser Antilles in the immediate pre-contact period (Hofman et al. 2008). There is also new evidence concerning biological differences (Coppa et al. 2008). In sum, the paradigm of homology is finally on the verge of being replaced by a paradigm of diversity (e.g., Curet 2003; Wilson 2007b). Should we expect any less for a region that, as the Jamaicans say: “Out of many, one people”? The key issue for Caribbean archaeology today is to identify the “many”.

Real dangers in writing the past occur when you believe that you know the beginning and the end of the story, and then try to fill in the gaps. This is the situation we face with the dominant paradigm in Caribbean archaeology. Rouse defined Taíno culture based on ethnohistoric accounts

(Rouse 1948a, 1992). He then proposed (assumed) that their story began in lowland South America (Rouse 1953, 1992). The development of the Taíno became fossilized as a singular course of development, and the time-space systematics was developed specifically to demonstrate unilinear progress toward the ultimate (Taíno) outcome. Over the years this schema has been tested, and has proved to be wanting. Yet many practitioners refuse to accept the contrary data, and still cling to the old beliefs, while others assume it is business as usual. The challenge today is to develop a new paradigm that preserves enough of past formulations to allow us to communicate, but moves us toward a more complete understanding of the Taínos, their ancestors, and their neighbors.

Conclusions

The burden of Caribbean archaeology does not rest solely on the shoulders of Irving Rouse. Sixty years ago Rouse set out to systematize the archaeology of a region that lacked any form of organization. He developed a classificatory approach that integrated the region and provided a foundation for future research. His was one of many approaches, and was found to be the most useful, at least in terms of the number of practitioners who adopted it (Wilson 2007b).

We do need to recognize that he had particular goals and objectives in mind. He sought to prove that Caribbean peoples were not the product of migration and diffusion from the Andean area. He sought to prove that the peoples of the islands were not the product of multiple migrations, and he did so by defining a unilinear sequence of cultural development from the Saladoid to the Taínos. He sought to prove that every new cultural innovation (stone blades, ground stone tools, ceramics) was the product of a separate migration and that

every new migration obliterated the previous inhabitants. If you accept Rouse's approach, then you accept these fundamental truths.

Most Caribbean archaeologists do not explicitly acknowledge the objectives and goals toward which the regional culture-historical systematics were created. The assumptions that underlie the system must be made explicit and carefully examined. "Conservative arguments, as arguments, ensure the maintenance of the status quo. There can be no scientific paradigm shifts" (Pauketat 2007:44). It is my belief that a critical examination of our reputational past is necessary to define new boundaries and a more encompassing reputational system.

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