

RS10000 2936



# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

## 1. Name of Property

Historic name Puerta de Tierra Historic District / Distrito Histórico de Puerta de Tierra

Other names/site number N/A

Name of related multiple property listing N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

## 2. Location

Street & Number San Juan Islet to the east of the Old San Juan Historic District

City or town San Juan State Puerto Rico County San Juan

Not for publication  Vicinity

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:  national  statewide  local

Applicable National Register Criteria:  A  B  C  D

Carlos A Rubio Cancela, Architect

Signature of certifying official/Title:

Puerto Rico State Historic Preservation Officer

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

September 27, 2019

Date

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of Commenting Official

Date

Title

State of Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

## 4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register.
- determined eligible for the National Register.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain):

Signature of Keeper

10-15-2019

Date of Action

United States Department of the Interior

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Puerta de Tierra Historic District

San Juan, Puerto Rico

Name of Property

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- Private
- Public-local
- Public-state
- Public-federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
0	0	Districts
151	92	Buildings
45	46	Sites
35	7	Structures
5	13	Objects
236	158	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 34

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC / multiple dwelling, institutional housing, hotel

COMMERCE / business, professional, organizational, specialty store, restaurant, warehouse

SOCIAL / meeting house, clubhouse, civic

GOVERNMENT / capitol, correctional facility, fire station, government office, post office, public works, courthouse

EDUCATION / school, college, library, research facility

RELIGION / religious facility, church school, church-related residence

FUNERARY / mortuary

RECREATION AND CULTURE / theater, auditorium, museum, sports facility, outdoor recreation, fair, monument marker, work of art

AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE / processing, storage, agricultural field, animal facility, agricultural outbuilding

INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION / manufacturing facility, communications facility, industrial storage

HEALTH CARE / hospital, clinic, sanitarium, medical business/office, resort

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC / multiple dwelling, institutional housing, hotel

COMMERCE / business, professional, organizational, specialty store, restaurant, warehouse

SOCIAL / meeting house, clubhouse, civic

GOVERNMENT / capitol, correctional facility, fire station, government office, public works, courthouse

EDUCATION / school, library

RELIGION / religious facility, church school, church-related residence

FUNERARY / mortuary

RECREATION AND CULTURE / museum, sports facility, outdoor recreation, monument marker, work of art

AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE / storage

INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION / manufacturing facility, industrial storage

HEALTH CARE / sanitarium

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DEFENSE / arms storage, fortification, military facility, battle site, coast guard facility, naval facility

DEFENSE / coast guard facility

LANDSCAPE / park, plaza, garden, forest, unoccupied land, underwater site, natural feature, street furniture/object

LANDSCAPE / park, plaza, unoccupied land, underwater site, natural feature, street furniture/object

TRANSPORTATION / rail-related, air-related, road-related, pedestrian-related

TRANSPORTATION / pedestrian-related

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification** (Enter categories from instructions.)

Late Renaissance, Colonial (Spanish Colonial), Beaux Arts, 20<sup>th</sup> century Gothic Revival, Mediterranean Revival, Chicago, International Style (Modernism), Art Deco, Brutalism, Deconstructivism

**Materials** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property:

Reinforced concrete, Brick, Stone, Metal, Stucco, Terracotta, Ceramic tile, Glass

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Puerta de Tierra Historic District

San Juan, Puerto Rico

**Name of Property****County and State****Description****Summary Paragraph**

The Puerta de Tierra Historic District – located in San Juan Islet, Puerto Rico – is characterized by its unique historic properties that include: (i) components of the 17<sup>th</sup> defense system; (ii) remains of San Juan's three outer defensive lines (*líneas avanzadas*), part of Spanish military masterplans; (iii) post 1898 buildings iconic of the USA's colonial outreach; (iv) sites associated to World War I, World War II, Korean War and Vietnam War. Its central spine includes the principal buildings of both Puerto Rico's judiciary (Supreme Court Building, listed in the National Register of Historic Places) and legislative (Capitolio de Puerto Rico, listed in the National Register of Historic Places) government branches. A 19<sup>th</sup> century orthogonal matrix frames Renaissance, 18<sup>th</sup> century military structures, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries' historicist revivals, as well as Art Deco, Modernist, Brutalist and Deconstructivist examples. Public, domestic and military buildings create a unique urban and architectural entity that exemplifies five centuries of the island's history.

**Narrative Description****Introduction**

The Puerta de Tierra Historic District (San Juan Municipality) is one of two sectors into which San Juan Islet, a small island north of Puerto Rico, is divided. (The other one is the Old San Juan Historic District, a National Register of Historic Places and National Historic Landmark historic district, components of which are listed in the UNESCO World Heritage List.) Although inhabited by natives prior to the 15<sup>th</sup> century, by the time the Europeans settled (1519) the tiny isle was uninhabited. San Juan, the capital of the Puerto Rican archipelago, has been sited here since 1519.



Figure 1. San Juan Islet is divided into two sectors: the Old San Juan Historic District (green) and the Puerta de Tierra Historic District (blue).<sup>1</sup>

The history of the two districts is intertwined. Until the third decade of the 17<sup>th</sup> century the urban precinct comprised the whole isle with one section serving as urban core and the other one as *ejido*.<sup>2</sup> The Puerta de Tierra Historic District occupies approximately 2/3 of San Juan Islet. (See Figure 1.)

<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise noted, Ms Imandra Martínez and Mr Agustín Grateroles prepared all drawings included in this nomination. Thanks are also extended to the Puerto Rico State Historic Preservation Office staff, particularly Ms Berenice Sueiro, Mr José Marull, Ms Diana López Sotomayor, Ms Cariangeli León and Mr Carlos A Rubio Cancela.

<sup>2</sup> *Ejido* is defined as the territory surrounding and under the jurisdiction of a town. *Diccionario de la Real Academia de la Lengua Española* (Madrid: Real Academia de la Lengua Española, 2014), 23<sup>rd</sup> edition, word: *ejido*.

Puerta de Tierra Historic District

San Juan, Puerto Rico

**Name of Property****County and State****Natural and Urban Physiognomy**

The Puerta de Tierra Historic District is located on the central and eastern side of San Juan Islet and is bounded by the Atlantic Ocean (north), San Juan Bay and San Antonio Channel (east and south, respectively), the Condado Lagoon and a section of San Antonio Channel (east), and the Old San Juan Historic District (west). (See Figure 1.) From the 17<sup>th</sup> century until the 1890s, a defensive wall divided both sectors with the Puerta de Santiago providing entrance/exit to the urban core. Because it was the only portal facing land it was nicknamed Puerta de Tierra (Land's Door), a name later bestowed upon the rest of the islet. The wall and door were destroyed in 1897 in response to the desire to have a less cramped urban center.



Figure 2. The Puerta de Tierra Historic District, San Juan de Puerto Rico, 2017.

The Puerta de Tierra Historic District is approximately .061 miles in length with a varying width of .31 to .60 miles. (See Figure 2.) The longest measurement is the east-west one, along which the principal streets are aligned. From north to south they are: Avenida Muñoz Rivera, Avenida Constitución, Paseo de Covadonga, Calle San Agustín, Calle del Tren and Avenida Fernández Juncos. Less than fifty feet of water (San Antonio Channel) separate islet and island on the east.



Figure 3. The Puerta de Tierra Historic District, San Juan de Puerto Rico, 2017. (Green represents sea level and dark red the highest areas.)

Rocky promontories between forty and ninety feet above sea level frame the Puerta de Tierra Historic District's Atlantic Ocean shore. Until the 1940s, mangroves and swamps bordered the islet's southern side, as well as sections of the eastern one. From higher levels along the north, the district gradually slopes down towards sea level (southern and eastern coasts). (See Figure 3.) Several beach venues dot the northeastern area where the famed El Escambrón Beach Club was sited during the early decades

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of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. These inviting beaches merited construction of the first of three Spanish 18<sup>th</sup> century<sup>3</sup> defensive lines (*líneas avanzadas*) found in the Puerta de Tierra Historic District. A north-south ravine, known as El Trincherón and El Zanjón, is located close to the middle of the islet dividing it into two parts. The military used this most convenient natural feature to create a third line of defense. The second defensive line and last one to be erected was sited between the first and third ones.



Figure 4. The Old San Juan Historic District (green) and Puerta de Tierra Historic District (dark turquoise). (Landfilled sections are colored in light turquoise.)

San Juan Islet's original configuration was transformed due to landfill activities initiated during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and finished during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. (See Figure 4.) During the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, before the mangroves covering the southern shore were desiccated, thousands of migrant workers settled here creating slums that literally floated over the muddy water.

At present, three vehicular bridges connect the Puerta de Tierra Historic District to the main island: the two-ways Puente Dos Hermanos Behn that transforms into the Avenida Ashford in the Condado area and the inbound and outbound bridges part of Route PR 1 (known as the Puente Guillermo Esteves and Puente San Antonio). (See Photograph 001.) The last two substitute various ones that have been built throughout the centuries, such as: a 16<sup>th</sup> century causeway (*calzada* or *predraplén*), as well as a bridge-aqueduct known as the Puente de Agua. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Tren Ferroviario de San Antonio (structure listed in the National Register of Historic Places), currently not in use, also linked island and islet.

As mentioned, three avenues and three streets traverse the Puerta de Tierra Historic District from east to west. They are (from north to south): Avenida Muñoz Rivera, Avenida Constitución, Paseo de Covadonga, Calle San Agustín, Calle del Tren and Avenida Fernández Juncos. (See Photographs 043-049.) PR Route 25 slices through the islet's center as Avenida Constitución (known until recently as Avenida Ponce de León). Identified by multiple names throughout the centuries – Camino Real, Camino

<sup>3</sup> At present, two principal interpretative perspectives exist regarding the number of defensive lines sited in the Puerta de Tierra Historic District. The traditional one establishes there were two defensive lines and adheres to Adolfo de Hostos' perspective, presented in his *Historia de San Juan Ciudad Murada*. Discovery of historic plans describing the El Trincherón (El Zanjón) as a third line made possible for the interpretation that three defensive lines existed outside the city walls. Arleen Pabón Charneco, *The Architecture of San Juan de Puerto Rico Architecture Five Hundred Years of Architectural and Urban Experimentation* (London: Routledge, 2016). The composition of defense lines was extremely fluid since they were constantly transforming as needs changed. The fact all lines were part of a defense masterplan does not necessarily imply they were completely finished by any particular date as a totality.

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Real del Puente,<sup>4</sup> Carretera Militar, Carretera de San Juan a Río Piedras, Carretera a Caguas,<sup>5</sup> Avenida de Juan Ponce de León and Avenida de la Constitución, among others – sections of the road are dated to 1519 (at the latest) making it the oldest (post 1492) thoroughfare in the islet, island, and the USA. A spur of PR Route 25, the early 20<sup>th</sup> century Avenida Muñoz Rivera, coasts along the northern shore. The early 20<sup>th</sup> century Avenida Fernández Juncos performs the same function along the port area. At present, Avenida Muñoz Rivera and Avenida Fernández Juncos provide entrance to the islet while exiting is done via the Avenida Constitución and Avenida Fernández Juncos. Paseo Covadonga follows the same alignment as the 19<sup>th</sup> century Paseo de Covadonga (Paseo de Puerta de Tierra), the first urban promenade. The Calle del Tren, in turn, follows the 19<sup>th</sup> century train tracks.

While San Juan Islet was uninhabited when Caparra (la ciudad del Puerto Rico<sup>6</sup>), the first Spanish settlement in Puerto Rico (at the time named San Juan Bautista<sup>7</sup>), was moved to the diminutive isle, two pre-Columbian sites have been found. One of them, PR-Archaeological Site 01, is located within the Puerta de Tierra Historic District.

When the Kingdom of Castile settled the isle, the millennia old cloistered city peninsular scheme was abandoned in favor of that of a peace-city,<sup>8</sup> an unwallled urban core first experimented with in the Canary Islands.<sup>9</sup> As a result, the unwallled 16<sup>th</sup> century core had no man-made boundaries and developed in one islet - one city fashion. Because of enemy attacks, a defensive stone circuit was planned and erected around the city starting during the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Although physically separated by the east wall and its Puerta de Santiago, the entrance/exit land door to the city, the Puerta de Tierra Historic District was still considered an intrinsic part of the urban core given the fact that three of the five defensive lines organizing the islet's military masterplan were located here. When physical separation took place, the sector gained its "Puerta de Tierra" nickname.

As a result of the construction of San Juan's defensive ring, all land east of the massive fourth line, the present Puerta de Tierra Historic District, was under military control until the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when urbanization efforts directed by the government started. The loosely orthogonal urban grid that presently organizes the district, as well as most road names, date to this period.

**Overview of the District**

After crossing the San Antonio Channel via one of two bridges one enters San Juan Islet through the Avenida Muñoz Rivera (contributing structure) or Avenida Fernández Juncos (contributing structure). It is most common, however, to use the first one as entrance. Past the first clover highway interchange

<sup>4</sup> The Camino Real del Puente (Royal Bridge Road) name appears in the University of Florida, "Isla de Puerto Rico" 19<sup>th</sup> century historic plan by D Francisco Coello de Portugal y Quesada. It is not clear which bridge the name refers to since there was, in addition to the structure uniting islet and island, another one over the El Trincherón (El Zanjón) ravine.

<sup>5</sup> The name Carretera a Caguas appears in an 1879 plan authored by Spanish Army Engineer José Laguna entitled "Plano de la Plaza de San Juan y de su puerto."

<sup>6</sup> For centuries, San Juan was known by Caparra's name: the ciudad del Puerto Rico (the City of the Rich Port). In this context, *rico* is synonymous of bountiful.

<sup>7</sup> San Juan Bautista is the original name given to Puerto Rico by Christopher Columbus when he discovered the island during his second trip on 19 November 1493.

<sup>8</sup> Leonardo Torriani, a 16<sup>th</sup> century Italian naval engineer who lived in the Canary Islands, first described San Cristóbal de La Laguna (Canary Islands) as a: *Ciudad hecha desde la paz para la paz. No fortaleza y no murallas.* (Translation: "A city built from peace for peace. No fortress or walls."). He authored a series of plans detailing unwallled cities in the archipelago. Leonardo Torriani, *Descubrimiento e historia del reino de las Islas Canarias antes Afortunadas, con el parecer de sus fortificaciones* (Santa Cruz de Tenerife: Goya Ediciones, 1950). Spanish scholars use the term *ciudad de la paz* for the unwallled urban scheme first experimented with in the Canary Islands. This work will use the term peace-city. (All translations by Dr Arleen Babón-Charneco.)

<sup>9</sup> The Kingdom of Castile conquered and colonized the Canary Islands during the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Ideas experimented with in the archipelago were imported to the Caribbean, the next Castilian exercise in colonial organization.

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constructed in the island (1958; contributing structure), standing opposite the 17<sup>th</sup> century<sup>10</sup> Fortín de San Jerónimo del Boquerón (building listed in the National Register of Historic Places), the avenue softly curves allowing a processional view of elegant buildings to come into view. Luis Muñoz Marín Park is a site listed in the National Register of Historic Places), an early 20<sup>th</sup> century urban park designed by the prestigious Chicago firm of Bennett, Parsons & Frost, part of the City Beautiful Movement urban scheme deployed in the Puerta de Tierra Historic District after the 1898 American invasion. Sited within the park is a Spanish military structure, an 18<sup>th</sup> century Polvorín (Powderhouse) de San Jerónimo. During the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Supreme Court Building (listed in the National Register of Historic Places) was constructed at the eastern end of the park. Directly facing the park across Avenida Muñoz Rivera two other striking buildings are found: the 1930s Art Deco Hotel Normandie (building listed in the National Register of Historic Places) and the 1930s Spanish Revival (Softball Park) Parque Sixto Escobar (contributing building). On the right is the entrance to the 1940s Caribe Hilton Hotel District (contributing district).

Avenida Muñoz Rivera curves towards the left and runs along the islet's north shore framed by the Luis Muñoz Rivera Park on the left and several recreational venues on the right. The El Escambrón Beach Club, a quasi-mythical locale part of the Puerto Ricans' communal memory, preceded the present Balneario El Escambrón (public beach). The Batería del Escambrón (also known as Fortín del Escambrón), part of the first (from north to south) defensive line (listed in the National Register of Historic Places) frames the beach. As the drive continues along the Avenida Muñoz Rivera, the north side of the former US Naval Radio Station precinct (contributing district) is found on the left. In this area the terrain rises to approximately 80 feet above sea level allowing for a breathtaking view of the Atlantic Ocean. From this point on, Avenida Muñoz Rivera seems to float over the ocean until it reaches the Castillo de San Cristóbal Outworks sited on the right on top of a hill. Before the Outworks is the Plaza de San Juan Bautista, a late 1960s square (part of a contributing district) with a dramatic bronze sculpture of St John the Baptist, the city's and island's patron saint. Buildings along the south side of Avenida Muñoz Rivera are divided into two categories: residential ones dating to the 1920s and 1930s and grand civic examples constructed during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Although back façades of civic examples line the thoroughfare, their beauty and uniqueness is still appreciated as they align in parade-like form. Avenida Muñoz Rivera ends at Plaza de Colón, the Old San Juan Historic District urban vestibule.

The principal way to exit the Old San Juan Historic District and the Puerta de Tierra Historic District is via Avenida Constitución. As mentioned, this is the oldest post-1493 thoroughfare in San Juan Islet, Puerto Rico and the USA providing access to San Juan Islet since 1519 (at the earliest). During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the road also served as urban boundary of sorts for all land north of it was reserved for the military while the Municipality of San Juan controlled the southern portion. After 1898, the thoroughfare transformed yet again into a City Beautiful Movement-inspired promenade, a showcase of the American way of life. Civic buildings of magnificence – Casino de Puerto Rico (building listed in the National Register of Historic Places), Young Men's Christian Association (contributing building), Ateneo Puertorriqueño (contributing building, determined eligible by National Register of Historic Places on March 19, 1984); Biblioteca Carnegie (building listed in the National Register of Historic Places), Casa de España (building listed in the National Register of Historic Places), El Capitolio de Puerto Rico (building listed in the National Register of Historic Places), School of Tropical Medicine (building listed in the National Register of Historic Places), Puerto Rico National Guard building (contributing building), US Department of Commerce Weather Bureau building (contributing building), Escuela Graduada José Celso Barbosa (building listed in the National Register of Historic Places), Asilo de Ancianos Nuestra Señora de la Providencia (part of a contributing district), Escuela Brumbaugh (building listed in the National Register of Historic Places) and the Church, School, Convent and Parish House of San Agustín (listed as building

<sup>10</sup> As with most San Juan Islet military structures, several dates are used since it is a known fact that 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries originals were remodeled and rehabilitated with time.

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in the National Register of Historic Places) – form an exemplary collection. All were erected during the first four decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the only exception being the El Capitolio de Puerto Rico's Annex Buildings (listed in the National Register of Historic Places) that date to the 1950s. Along the southern side of the Avenida Constitución one finds the: 1913/1930 Art Deco Gran Logia Soberana de Puerto Rico (today Departamento de la Familia, a contributing building) and the Mediterranean Revival Cruz Roja Americana Capítulo de Puerto Rico building (contributing building), as well as the 1950s International Ramón Mellado Parsons building (contributing building). On the east side of the last one is the Plaza Ramón Mellado Parsons, part of the commemorative sector (part of a contributing district) facing the El Capitolio de Puerto Rico along the south side of Avenida Constitución.

The sliver of land between Paseo de Covadonga and Avenida Constitución is packed with memorials and monuments honoring varied persons and historic moments. From a City Beautiful Movement statue, *Victory*, dedicated to the fallen of World War I, to others celebrating the Puerto Rican Teacher, Woman, Policeman, among several, different types of commemorative objects, buildings and structures are found. International events, like the Holocaust are also memorialized. This contributing district includes a 1920s pair of City Beautiful Movement pergolas and two exedrae, one of them crowned by a balustrade with marble lions. A contemporary plaza dedicated to music composer Rafael Hernández marks the juncture of Paseo de Covadonga and Avenida Constitución, a place known during the 19<sup>th</sup> century as Plaza de la Lealtad. As mentioned, Paseo de Covadonga (contributing structure) follows the 19<sup>th</sup> century promenade Paseo de Covadonga's (Paseo de Puerta de Tierra) alignment.

The civic character of the northern boundary of the Avenida Constitución ends after the Escuela Brumbaugh (building listed National Register of Historic Places). From this point on, both sides of the avenue are lined with residential and commercial buildings. The Mediterranean Revival Puerto Rico Medical Arts Building (1940) (contributing building) and the Art Deco Instituto Oftálmico de Puerto Rico (1939) (contributing building) are but two examples. The Catalan Modernism Teatro Sylvia Rexach (1937) (contributing building) and post-modern office buildings (contributing buildings) are additional distinguished examples. Commercial buildings, as well as tenement house buildings, are also found in the sector. On the south side of the avenue is the 1930s Spanish Revival Edificio Moregón (NR determined eligible 2006, contributing building), one of the most elegant examples of this paradigmatic Puerta de Tierra Historic District architectural typology. The Santiago Panzardi building, today Partido Popular Democrático headquarters (contributing building), originally designed Commercial Style as an automobile showroom, finishes the alignment of private buildings on the north side of Avenida Constitución. To the west of this last building is the former US Naval Radio Station, distinguished by its ten Art Deco buildings (contributing buildings).

The Puerta de Tierra Historic District's central spine concludes at the Luis Muñoz Rivera Park. Across this green space is the Cárcel de Puerto Rico (building listed in the National Register of Historic Places), a 19<sup>th</sup> century Spanish jail-cum-hospital, now housing the island's historic public archives. The last two buildings ending the processional organization are the 1935 Templo del Maestro (building listed in the National Register of Historic Places) and the Condominio Millenium completed in 2000 (noncontributing building).

Close to the Paseo de Covadonga and Avenida Constitución junction Calle San Agustín (contributing structure) starts. Running in almost parallel fashion to the Avenida Constitución, the street is narrower than this thoroughfare as it slashes through a residential sector where multiple domestic examples, principally tenement house buildings and housing projects, are found. The street meets Avenida Constitución in front of the 18<sup>th</sup> century Bastión Isabel II (contributing structure), a small structure part of the second defensive line.

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The 19<sup>th</sup> century train tracks corridor recently transformed into the Calle del Tren (noncontributing structure) allowing for the opportunity of traversing the train route along the Puerta de Tierra Historic District. (Train service ended in 1953.) As a direct result of this transformation, buildings originally facing the train tracks, like the 1930s Mediterranean Revival Hogar Infantil (contributing building), now face the street allowing the public to enjoy them.

The last road running from east to west is the Avenida Fernández Juncos (contributing structure). Known by varied names, the avenue starts at the corner of Tanca Street facing the 1923 Edificio Ochoa (contributing building) in the port area south of the Old San Juan Historic District, where it is treated as a boulevard named Paseo Gilberto Concepción de Gracia (noncontributing structure). In this area it continues towards the east dividing the Puerta de Tierra Historic District's residential sector (located along its northern side) from the port area (sited along the south). El Falansterio de Puerta de Tierra (district listed in the National Register of Historic Places), a 1930s Modern model tenement building, and the Puerta de Tierra Residencial San Antonio District (contributing district) align along Avenida Fernández Juncos' northern boundary. The 1940 Art Deco US Engineer Office building (USACE determined the property eligible to the National Register of Historic Places) is the one major building in the district's port district. Before crossing the bridge to the island across the San Antonio Channel one finds the 1951 Modern Movement Club Náutico de San Juan and its marina (contributing district) on the right.

**Properties Listed in the National Register of Historic Places**

Sixteen properties sited in the Puerta de Tierra Historic District are registered in the National Register of Historic Places. (See Table 1.) As mentioned, the district shares its west boundary with the Old San Juan Historic District / Distrito Histórico del Viejo San Juan, a National Register of Historic Places and National Historic Landmark historic district.

TABLE 1

THE PUERTA DE TIERRA HISTORIC DISTRICT PROPERTIES  
LISTED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

NAME OF PROPERTY (as listed in the NRHP)	CADASTRE NUMBER	INCLUSION DATE
Cárcel de Puerta de Tierra (Archivo General de Puerto Rico)	040-016-143-01	11 August 1976
El Capitolio de Puerto Rico	040-003-097-05 022-094-098-01 022-094-099-01	18 November 1977
Hotel Normandie	040-007-136-01	29 August 1980
Casa de España	040-003-097-04	5 July 1983
School of Tropical Medicine	022-094-100-01	29 September 1983
Fortín de San Gerónimo de Boquerón	040-017-148-13	11 October 1983
Biblioteca Carnegie	040-003-097-03	20 October 1983
Church, School, Convent and Parish House of San Agustín	040-005-119-01	30 December 1985
El Falansterio de Puerta de Tierra	040-015-150-01	3 May 1984
Escuela Brambaugh	040-005-122-01	5 May 1989
Escuela Graduada José Celso Barbosa	040-004-118-02	19 May 1989
Línea Avanzada	040-017-148-13 040-017-148-16 040-006-134-02	25 September 1997
Supreme Court Building	040-006-145-03	14 June 2006
Luis Muñoz Rivera Park	040-006-134-02	14 November 2007

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San Antonio Railroad Bridge	n/a	30 September 2009
Templo del Maestro	040-016-144-01	19 April 2016

**Puerta de Tierra Historic Properties Configuration**

The Government of Puerto Rico Centro de Recaudación de Ingresos Municipales (CRIM) organizes the Puerta de Tierra Historic District into 73 urban blocks<sup>11</sup> and 303 *parcelas*.<sup>12</sup> (See Table 2 and Table 3.)

TABLE 2

PUERTA DE TIERRA HISTORIC DISTRICT CONTRIBUTING *PARCELAS*

BLOCK/ <i>PARCELA</i>	CADASTRE NUMBER	ADDRESS
<b>Block 91</b>		
Parcela 05	040-003-091-05	M 3A Parcela 26 Barrio La Marina
<b>Block 92</b>		
Parcela 01	040-002-092-01	Calle Tanca 500
<b>Block 93</b>		
Parcela 02	040-003-093-02	Calle Comercio <sup>13</sup>
<b>Block 95</b>		
Parcela 01	040-013-095-01	Paseo Concepción de Gracia N/A
Parcela 02	040-013-095-02	Paseo Concepción de Gracia N/A
Parcela 03	040-013-095-03	Paseo Concepción de Gracia N/A
Parcela 04	040-013-095-04	Avenida Fernández Juncos N/A
<b>Block 97</b>		
Parcela 01	040-003-097-01	Avenida Constitución N/A
Parcela 02	040-003-097-02	Avenida Constitución N/A
Parcela 03	040-003-097-03	Avenida Constitución
Parcela 04	040-003-097-04	Avenida Constitución
Parcela 05	040-003-097-05	Avenida Constitución

<sup>11</sup> Historic properties in the Puerta de Tierra Communications District have no CRIM block or *parcela* numbers.

<sup>12</sup> According to the Centro de Recaudación de Ingresos Municipales (CRIM), a *parcela* usually includes a single property. The words lot and *parcela*, however, are not synonyms for two or more properties may be located within one *parcela*. On the other hand, a building may be sited in two or more *parcelas*. As a result, the number of *parcelas* is not equivalent to the number of historic properties. The CRIM's numbering and data is infamous for its errors and inconsistencies. Numbers of blocks and, at times, *parcelas* are not in any special order and different *parcelas* within a block may share the same cadastre number. The general reconnaissance and intensive inventories carried out by the Puerto Rico State Historic Preservation Office, bases for this nomination, scrutinized inconsistencies in varied ways, including contrasting what was found in the field with recently available aerial photographs and digital cadastre plans. In spite of its many shortcomings, CRIM numbers are used to identify properties because they are the Government of Puerto Rico official identification for the island's real estate property.

<sup>13</sup> The Calle Comercio is also known as the Paseo Concepción de Gracia.

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## National Park Service / National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Puerta de Tierra Historic District

San Juan, Puerto Rico

**Name of Property****County and State**

<b>Block 98</b>		
Parcela 01	022-094-098-01	Avenida Constitución
<b>Block 99</b>		
Parcela 01	022-094-099-01	Avenida Constitución
<b>Block 100</b>		
Parcela 01	022-094-100-01	Avenida Constitución
Parcela 02	022-094-100-02	Avenida Constitución N/A
<b>Block 102</b>		
Parcela 01	040-003-102-01	Avenida Constitución N/A
Parcela 02	040-003-102-02	Avenida Constitución N/A
Parcela 03 <sup>14</sup>	040-003-102-03 A, B & C	Avenida Constitución N/A
<b>Block 103<sup>15</sup></b>		
Parcela 01	040-004-103-01	Avenida Constitución N/A
<b>Block 104<sup>16</sup></b>		
Parcela 01	040-004-104-01	Avenida Constitución N/A
<b>Block 105<sup>17</sup></b>		
Parcela 01	040-004-105-01	Avenida Constitución N/A
<b>Block 107</b>		
Parcela 04	040-003-107-04	Paseo Covadonga 54
Parcela 19	040-003-107-19	Paseo Covadonga 50
Parcela 24	040-003-107-24	Paseo Covadonga 52
Parcela 35 <sup>18</sup>	040-003-107-35	Paseo Covadonga N/A
<b>Block 108</b>		
Parcela 05	040-004-108-05	Paseo Covadonga N/A
Parcela 06	040-004-108-06	Calle Valdéz 104
Parcela 09 <sup>19</sup>	040-004-108-09	Paseo Covadonga N/A
<b>Block 109</b>		
Parcela 01	040-004-109-01	Calle San Agustín N/A
Parcela 02	040-004-109-02	Calle San Agustín 152-154

<sup>14</sup> Block 102 Parcela 05 includes one contributing building, one contributing site and one contributing object. The last two are part of the Puerta de Tierra Capitolio de Puerto Rico Commemorative District. Whenever more than one property is sited in a *parcela*, letters have been assigned to distinguish them.

<sup>15</sup> Block 103 is part of the Puerta de Tierra Capitolio de Puerto Rico Commemorative District.

<sup>16</sup> Block 104 is part of the Puerta de Tierra Capitolio de Puerto Rico Commemorative District.

<sup>17</sup> Block 105 is part of the Puerta de Tierra Capitolio de Puerto Rico Commemorative District.

<sup>18</sup> Block 107 Parcela 35 includes one contributing building, one contributing object and one noncontributing structure. All are part of the Puerta de Tierra Departamento de Hacienda District.

<sup>19</sup> The Puerta de Tierra Hogar Crea District is sited in Block 108 Parcela 09.

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## National Park Service / National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Puerta de Tierra Historic District

San Juan, Puerto Rico

**Name of Property****County and State**

Parcela 03	040-004-109-03	Calle San Agustín 156
Parcela 04	040-004-109-04	Calle Valdéz 100
Parcela 05	040-004-109-05	Calle Valdéz corner Calle Coconut Palm
<b>Block 110</b>		
Parcela 01	040-004-110-01	Paseo Covadonga 151
Parcela 02	040-004-110-02	Avenida Constitución 150
Parcela 06	040-004-110-06	Avenida Constitución 158
Parcela 07	040-004-110-07	Avenida Constitución 160
Parcela 08	040-004-110-08	Avenida Constitución 162
Parcela 14	040-004-110-14	Avenida Constitución 164
Parcela 15	040-004-110-15	Avenida Constitución 166
Parcela 42	040-004-110-42	Avenida Constitución 152-Calle San Agustín 153
<b>Block 111</b>		
Parcela 01 <sup>20</sup>	040-004-111-01 A	Calle San Agustín-Calle del Tren-Calle Valdéz- Calle San Andrés
<b>Block 115</b>		
Parcela 01	040-005-115-01	Avenida Fernández Juncos N/A
Parcela 02	040-005-115-02	Avenida Fernández Juncos N/A
Parcela 03	040-005-115-03	Calle San Andrés (Muelle 10)
Parcela 04	040-005-115-04	Avenida Fernández Juncos N/A
Parcela 05	040-005-115-05	Avenida Fernández Juncos N/A (Muelle 8)
Parcela 06	040-005-115-06	Avenida Fernández Juncos N/A (Muelle 10)
Parcela 07	040-005-115-07	Avenida Fernández Juncos N/A
<b>Block 117</b>		
Parcela 09	040-004-117-09	Calle San Andrés 150
Parcela 13	040-004-117-13	Avenida Fernández Juncos 159
Parcela 14	040-004-117-14	Avenida Fernández Juncos 161
<b>Block 118</b>		
Parcela 01	040-004-118-01	Avenida Constitución N/A
Parcela 02	040-004-118-02	Avenida Constitución
Parcela 03 <sup>21</sup>	040-004-118-03	Avenida Constitución N/A
Parcela 04 <sup>22</sup>	040-004-118-04	Avenida Constitución N/A
<b>Block 119</b>		
Parcela 01	040-005-119-01	Avenida Constitución
<b>Block 120</b>		
Parcela 01	040-005-120-01	Avenida Constitución 301
Parcela 02	040-005-120-02	Avenida Constitución 307- Avenida Muñoz Rivera 296
Parcela 03	040-005-120-03	Avenida Constitución 298

<sup>20</sup> Block 111 Parcela 01 includes three properties: one contributing district (the Puerta de Tierra Residencial Parque de San Agustín District), one noncontributing building and one noncontributing site.

<sup>21</sup> Block 118 Parcela 03 is part of the Puerta de Tierra Asilo de Ancianos District.

<sup>22</sup> Block 118 Parcela 04 is part of the Puerta de Tierra Asilo de Ancianos District.

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Puerta de Tierra Historic District

San Juan, Puerto Rico

**Name of Property****County and State**

Parcela 04	040-005-120-04	Avenida Muñoz Rivera 300
Parcela 05	040-005-120-05	Avenida Muñoz Rivera 302-304
Parcela 06	040-005-120-06	Avenida Muñoz Rivera N/A
Parcela 08	040-005-120-08	Avenida Constitución 309
<b>Block 121</b>		
Parcela 03	040-005-121-03	Avenida Constitución corner Calle San Juan Bautista
Parcela 04	040-005-121-04	Avenida Constitución N/A
<b>Block 122</b>		
Parcela 01	040-005-122-01	Avenida Constitución
<b>Block 123</b>		
Parcela 09	040-005-123-09	Avenida Constitución N/A
Parcela 10	040-005-123-10	Avenida Constitución 401
Parcela 11	040-005-123-11	Calle San Juan Bautista 9
<b>Block 124<sup>23</sup></b>		
Parcela 01	040-005-124-01	Avenida Muñoz Rivera-Avenida Constitución- Calle San Agustín- Calle Lugo Vítias
<b>Block 125</b>		
Parcela 01	040-006-125-01	N/A
Parcela 02	040-006-125-02	N/A
Parcela 03	040-006-125-03	N/A
Parcela 04	040-006-125-04	N/A
Parcela 05	040-006-125-05	N/A
<b>Block 126</b>		
Parcela 02	040-006-126-02	N/A
Parcela 03	040-006-126-03	N/A
<b>Block 127</b>		
Parcela 01	040-004-127-01	Avenida Constitución 200
Parcela 06	040-004-127-06	Avenida Constitución corner Calle Pelayo 212
Parcela 09	040-004-127-09	Calle San Agustín 207
<b>Block 128</b>		
Parcela 01	040-005-128-01	Avenida Constitución N/A
Parcela 04	040-005-128-04	Avenida Constitución 256 <sup>24</sup>
Parcela 05	040-005-128-05	Avenida Constitución 256 <sup>25</sup>
Parcela 06	040-005-128-06	Avenida Constitución 260
Parcela 08	040-005-128-08	Calle Padre Hoff N/A
Parcela 09	040-005-128-09	Calle Padre Hoff N/A
Parcela 14	040-005-128-14	Calle San Agustín corner Calle Pelayo 253

<sup>23</sup> The Puerta de Tierra US Naval Radio Station / Casa Cuna District occupies Block 124.

<sup>24</sup> According to the CRIM, Parcela 04 and Parcela 05 share the same address.

<sup>25</sup> According to the CRIM, Parcela 05 and Parcela 04 share the same address.

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Puerta de Tierra Historic District

San Juan, Puerto Rico

**Name of Property****County and State**

Parcela 15	040-005-128-15	Calle Pelayo N/A
<b>Block 129</b>		
Parcela 01	040-005-129-01	Avenida Constitución 264
Parcela 02	040-005-129-02	Avenida Constitución 266
<b>Block 130</b>		
Parcela 11	040-005-130-11	Calle San Agustín 319
Parcela 14	040-005-130-14	Calle San Agustín 313
Parcela 15	040-005-130-15	Calle San Agustín 311
Parcela 18	040-005-130-18	Calle San Agustín 303
Parcela 20	040-005-130-20	Calle San Agustín 305
<b>Block 131</b>		
Parcela 01	040-005-131-01	Avenida Constitución N/A
Parcela 02	040-005-131-02	Avenida Constitución N/A
Parcela 08	040-005-131-08	Calle San Agustín corner San Juan Bautista 631
Parcela 10 <sup>26</sup>	040-005-131-10 A	Calle San Agustín 355
Parcela 11	040-005-131-11	Calle San Agustín 351-353
Parcela 12	040-005-131-12	Calle San Agustín corner Calle Matías Ledesma
<b>Block 132</b>		
Parcela 05	040-005-132-05	Avenida Constitución 406
Parcela 06	040-005-132-06	Avenida Constitución 408
Parcela 07	040-005-132-07	Avenida Constitución 410
Parcela 08	040-005-132-08	Calle Martín Fernández 52
<b>Block 133</b>		
Parcela 01	040-005-133-01	Avenida Constitución-Calle San Agustín-Calle Martín Fernández
<b>Block 134</b>		
Parcela 02	040-006-134-02	25 Avenida Muñoz Rivera (north), Avenida Constitución (south), Calle San Agustín (west)
<b>Block 135</b>		
Parcela 01	040-006-135-01	Avenida Muñoz Rivera N/A
<b>Block 136</b>		
Parcela 01	040-007-136-01	Avenida Muñoz Rivera
<b>Block 137</b>		
Parcela 03	040-004-137-03	Calle San Agustín 202
Parcela 11	040-004-137-11	Calle San Agustín corner Calle Pelayo
Parcela 24	040-004-137-24	Calle San Agustín N/A
Parcela 26	040-004-137-26	Calle San Agustín 214

<sup>26</sup> Before Hurricane Maria, Block 131 Parcela 10 included a contributing building and a noncontributing one. The second one was destroyed.

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Puerta de Tierra Historic District

San Juan, Puerto Rico

**Name of Property****County and State**

Parcela 33	040-004-137-33	Calle Pelayo 102
Parcela 34	040-004-137-34	Calle San Agustín 212
<b>Block 138</b>		
Parcela 11	040-005-138-11	Calle San Agustín 266
Parcela 17	040-005-138-17 A & B	Calle San Agustín 65
Parcela 20	040-005-138-20	Calle San Agustín 272
Parcela 22	040-005-138-22	Calle San Agustín N/A
Parcela 23	040-005-138-23	Calle Pelayo 101 corner Calle San Agustín
<b>Block 139</b>		
Parcela 01 <sup>27</sup>	040-005-139-01	Calle San Agustín-Calle del Tren- Calle Tadeo Rivera
Parcela 02	040-005-139-02	Calle San Agustín 364
Parcela 04	040-005-139-04	Calle San Agustín 308
Parcela 05	040-005-139-05	Calle Matías Ledesma 100
Parcela 06	040-005-139-06	Calle Matías Ledesma 102
Parcela 07	040-005-139-07	Calle Matías Ledesma 104
Parcela 08	040-005-139-08	Calle Matías Ledesma 301 (Interior)
<b>Block 140</b>		
Parcela 01	040-005-140-01	Calle Matías Ledesma 101
Parcela 02	040-005-140-02	Calle San Agustín 350
Parcela 03	040-005-140-03	Calle San Agustín 352
Parcela 05	040-005-140-05	Calle San Agustín 358
Parcela 07	040-005-140-07	Calle San Agustín-Calle del Tren 362
Parcela 13	040-005-140-13	Calle San Juan Bautista 100
<b>Block 141</b>		
Parcela 08 Parcela 09 <sup>28</sup>	040-005-141-08 040-005-141-09	Calle San Agustín 402
Parcela 10 <sup>29</sup>	040-005-141-10 A	Calle San Agustín 400
<b>Block 142</b>		
Parcela 01	040-006-142-01	Calle San Agustín- Calle del Tren
Parcela 02	040-006-142-02	Avenida Constitución 450
Parcela 03	040-006-142-03	Calle San Agustín- Avenida Constitución
<b>Block 143</b>		
Parcela 01	040-016-143-01	Avenida Constitución
Parcela 02	040-016-143-02	Avenida Constitución N/A
<b>Block 144</b>		
Parcela 01	040-016-144-01	Avenida Constitución
<b>Block 145</b>		

<sup>27</sup> Block 139 Parcela 01 includes the Puerta de Tierra Residencial San Agustín.

<sup>28</sup> One building is sited in Block 141 Parcela 08 and Parcela 09.

<sup>29</sup> After Hurricane Maria, Block 141 Parcela 10 includes one contributing building and one noncontributing site. While the *parcela* includes two properties, in the total count of *parcelas* only one will be counted.

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Puerta de Tierra Historic District

San Juan, Puerto Rico

**Name of Property****County and State**

Parcela 03	040-006-145-03	Avenida Constitución
<b>Block 146</b>		
Parcela 03	040-016-146-03	Calle San Jerónimo (aka Calle Rosales) corner Calle Las Palmeras
Parcela 04	040-016-146-04	Avenida Muñoz Rivera corner Calle San Jerónimo (aka Calle Rosales) 51
Parcela 05	040-016-146-05	Calle Las Palmeras 54
<b>Block 147</b>		
Parcela 01	040-017-147-01	Calle Las Palmeras 55
Parcela 03	040-017-147-03	Calle Las Palmeras corner Calle San Jerónimo (aka Calle Rosales)
<b>Block 148</b>		
Parcela 01	040-017-148-01	Calle San Jerónimo (aka Calle Rosales) N/A
Parcela 02 <sup>30</sup>	040-017-148-02	
Parcela 12 <sup>31</sup>	040-017-148-12	Calle San Jerónimo (aka Calle Rosales) N/A
Parcela 13	040-017-148-13	N/A
Parcela 15	040-017-148-15	Calle San Jerónimo (aka Calle Rosales) N/A
Parcela 16	040-017-148-16	N/A
Parcela 17 <sup>32</sup>	040-017-148-17	Calle San Jerónimo (aka Calle Rosales) N/A
<b>Block 150</b>		
Parcela 01	040-015-150-01	Calle del Tren (north), Avenida Fernández Juncos (south), Cale San Juan Bautista (east), Calle Matías Ledesma (west)
<b>Block 151<sup>33</sup></b>		
Parcela 01	040-015-151-01	Avenida Fernández Juncos N/A
<b>Block 153</b>		
Parcela 01	040-016-153-01	Avenida Fernández Juncos N/A
Parcela 03	040-016-153-03	Calle del Tren N/A
<b>Block 155</b>		
Parcela 01	040-014-155-01	Avenida Fernández Juncos N/A
Parcela 03 <sup>34</sup>	040-014-155-03	Calle Sur N/A corner
Parcela 04	040-014-155-04	Calle Tadeo Rivera N/A
Parcela 05	040-014-155-05	Calle Sur N/A
Parcela 07	040-014-155-07	N/A
Parcela 08	040-014-155-08	N/A
<b>Block 156</b>		
Parcela 01	040-015-156-01	Avenida Fernández Juncos 300
Parcela 03	040-015-156-03	Avenida Fernández Juncos 304
Parcela 04	040-015-156-04	Avenida Fernández Juncos corner Calle Matías Ledesma
<b>Block 157</b>		
Parcela 02	040-015-157-02	Avenida Fernández Juncos corner Calle San Juan Bautista (aka Calle Raphy Leavitt)

<sup>30</sup> Block 148 Parcela 02 is part of the Puerta de Tierra Caribe Hilton Hotel District.

<sup>31</sup> Block 148 Parcela 12 is part of the Puerta de Tierra Caribe Hilton Hotel District.

<sup>32</sup> Block 148 Parcela 17 is part of the Puerta de Tierra Caribe Hilton Hotel District.

<sup>33</sup> Block 151 includes the Puerta de Tierra Residencial San Antonio District.

<sup>34</sup> Only one building is located in Block 155 Parcela 03 and Parcela 04.

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Puerta de Tierra Historic District

San Juan, Puerto Rico

**Name of Property****County and State**

Parcela 03	040-015-157-03	Avenida Fernández Juncos corner Calle Matías Ledesma
<b>Block 159</b>		
Parcela 01	040-014-159-01	Calle Sur N/A
<b>Block 160</b>		
Parcela 01	040-015-160-01	Avenida Fernández Juncos 350
Parcela 08	040-015-160-08	N/A
<b>Block 162</b>		
Parcela 01 <sup>35</sup>	040-016-162-01 A	Calle del Tren-Avenida Fernández Juncos
<b>Block 164</b>		
Parcela 01 <sup>36</sup>	040-027-164-01	Avenida Fernández Juncos- Avenida Muñoz Rivera
<b>Block 170</b>		
Parcela 07	040-016-170-07	N/A
Parcela 09	040-016-170-09	Avenida Fernández Juncos corner Calle San Juan Bautista (aka Calle Raphy Leavitt)
Parcela 10	040-016-170-10	Avenida Fernández Juncos N/A
Parcela 11	040-016-170-11	Avenida Fernández Juncos N/A
Parcela 12	040-016-170-12	Avenida Fernández Juncos N/A
Parcela 13	040-016-170-13	Avenida Fernández Juncos N/A
Parcela 14	040-016-170-14	Avenida Fernández Juncos N/A
Parcela 15	040-016-170-15	Avenida Fernández Juncos N/A
Parcela 16	040-016-170-16	Avenida Fernández Juncos N/A
Parcela 17	040-016-170-17	Avenida Fernández Juncos N/A
<b>Block 172</b>		
Parcela 02	022-093-172-02	N/A
<b>Block 612</b>		
Parcela 01	040-003-612-01	Paseo de Covadonga N/A
<b>No CRIM Number</b>		
Puente de San Antonio	N/A	N/A
Puente Guillermo Estéves	N/A	N/A

The total number of contributing *parcelas* in the Puerta de Tierra Historic District is 192, out of a grand total of 321. Thus, the percent of contributing *parcelas* is 60%. As mentioned, the number of *parcelas* is not equivalent to the number of properties. Individual tables for contributing properties (districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects) are presented further along this work.

<sup>35</sup> Block 162 Parcela 01 includes a contributing site and a noncontributing structure.

<sup>36</sup> Block 164 Parcela 01 is part of the Puerta de Tierra Communications District.

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Puerta de Tierra Historic District

San Juan, Puerto Rico

**Name of Property****County and State**

TABLE 3

PUERTA DE TIERRA HISTORIC DISTRICT NONCONTRIBUTING *PARCELAS*

BLOCK/PARCELA	CADASTRE NUMBER	ADDRESS
<b>Block 67</b>		
Parcela 08	040-003-067-08	Calle Muelle 3607
<b>Block 89</b>		
Parcela 03	040-002-089-03	Calle Recinto Sur 410
Parcela 04	040-002-089-04	Calle Recinto Sur N/A
<b>Block 90</b>		
Parcela 08	040-003-090-08	M 2B Parcela 25 Barrio La Marina
<b>Block 92</b>		
Parcela 07	040-002-092-07	Paseo Concepción de Gracia 505
<b>Block 106</b>		
Parcela 01	040-003-106-01	Paseo Concepción de Gracia 401
<b>Block 107</b>		
Parcela 17	040-003-107-17	Paseo Covadonga-Paseo Concepción de Gracia- Calle Juan Corretjer
Parcela 25	040-003-107-25	Paseo Covadonga-Paseo Concepción de Gracia- Calle Juan Corretjer
Parcela 26	040-003-107-26	Paseo Covadonga-Paseo Concepción de Gracia- Calle Juan Corretjer
Parcela 27	040-003-107-27	Paseo Covadonga N/A
Parcela 28	040-003-107-28	Paseo Covadonga N/A
Parcela 29	040-003-107-29	Paseo Covadonga N/A
Parcela 34	040-003-107-34	Paseo Concepción de Gracia N/A
<b>Block 108</b>		
Parcela 01	040-004-108-01	Paseo Covadonga 102
Parcela 02	040-004-108-02	Paseo Covadonga 102
Parcela 03	040-004-108-03	Paseo Covadonga 104
Parcela 07	040-004-108-07	Paseo Covadonga 102
Parcela 08	040-004-108-08	Paseo Covadonga 110
<b>Block 109</b>		
Parcela 06	040-004-109-06	Calle Coconut Palm corner Capitán Berreteaga
<b>Block 110</b>		
Parcela 12	040-004-110-12	Avenida Constitución 154-Calle San Agustín 155

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Puerta de Tierra Historic District

San Juan, Puerto Rico

**Name of Property****County and State**

Parcela 13	040-004-110-13	Avenida Constitución 156
Parcela 16	040-004-110-16	Avenida Constitución 168
<b>Block 113</b>		
Parcela 03	040-003-113-03	Paseo Concepción de Gracia N/A
Parcela 04	040-003-113-04	Paseo Concepción de Gracia N/A
Parcela 07	040-003-113-07	Paseo Concepción de Gracia N/A
<b>Block 116</b>		
Parcela 03	040-004-116-03	Avenida Fernández Juncos corner Calle Valdéz 151
<b>Block 117</b>		
Parcela 08	040-004-117-08	Avenida Fernández Juncos N/A
Parcela 11	040-004-117-11	Avenida Fernández Juncos 153
<b>Block 119</b>		
Parcela 02	040-005-119-02	Avenida Constitución N/A
Parcela 03	040-005-119-03	
<b>Block 120</b>		
Parcela 07	040-005-120-07	Avenida Constitución 313
Parcela 09	040-005-120-09	Avenida Constitución 307
<b>Block 121</b>		
Parcela 01	040-005-121-01	Avenida Muñoz Rivera 350
Parcela 07	040-005-121-07	
Parcela 02	040-005-121-02	Avenida Muñoz Rivera 352
Parcela 05	040-005-121-05	Avenida Constitución N/A Stop 6.5
Parcela 06	040-005-121-06	Avenida Constitución N/A
<b>Block 123</b>		
Parcela 05	040-005-123-05	Calle Lugo Vitías 9
Parcela 06	040-005-123-06	Calle Lugo Vitías 8
Parcela 07	040-005-123-07	Calle Lugo Vitías 7
Parcela 08 <sup>37</sup>	040-005-123-08	Calle Lugo Vitías N/A
Parcela 12	040-005-123-12	Calle San Juan Bautista
Parcela 13	040-005-123-13	(aka Calle Raphy Leavitt) 17 Calle San Juan Bautista 4 (aka Calle Raphy Leavitt)
Parcela 14	040-005-123-14	Calle San Juan Bautista 3 (aka Calle Raphy Leavitt)
<b>Block 127</b>		
Parcela 03	040-004-127-03	Avenida Constitución 204
Parcela 04	040-004-127-04	Avenida Constitución 208
Parcela 05	040-004-127-05	Avenida Constitución 210
Parcela 07	040-004-127-07	Calle Pelayo N/A
Parcela 08	040-004-127-08	Calle San Agustín corner Pelayo

<sup>37</sup>

According to the CRIM, Block 123 Parcela 08 faces Avenida Constitución.

United States Department of the Interior

## National Park Service / National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Puerta de Tierra Historic District

San Juan, Puerto Rico

**Name of Property****County and State**

Parcela 10	040-004-127-10	Calle San Agustín corner Calle San Andrés 51
Parcela 11	040-004-127-11	Avenida Constitución 302
Parcela 12	040-004-127-12	Calle San Agustín N/A
<b>Block 128</b>		
Parcela 02	040-005-128-02	Avenida Constitución 252
Parcela 03	040-005-128-03	Avenida Constitución N/A
Parcela 07	040-005-128-07	Avenida Constitución 262
Parcela 11	040-005-128-11	Calle San Agustín 261
Parcela 12	040-005-128-12	Calle San Agustín N/A
Parcela 13	040-005-128-13	Calle San Agustín 255
Parcela 16 <sup>38</sup>	040-005-128-16	Calle San Agustín 265
Parcela 17 <sup>39</sup>	040-005-128-17	Calle San Agustín 265
<b>Block 129</b>		
Parcela 03	040-005-129-03	Calle San Agustín 271
<b>Block 130</b>		
Parcela 01	040-005-130-01	Avenida Constitución 298
Parcela 02	040-005-130-02	Avenida Constitución 300
Parcela 03	040-005-130-03	Avenida Constitución 302
Parcela 04	040-005-130-04	Avenida Constitución 308
Parcela 05	040-005-130-05	Avenida Constitución 310
Parcela 06	040-005-130-06	Avenida Constitución 312
Parcela 07	040-005-130-07	Avenida Constitución 316
Parcela 09 <sup>40</sup>	040-005-130-09 A & B	Avenida Constitución 318
Parcela 10	040-005-130-10	Calle San Agustín 321
Parcela 12	040-005-130-12	Calle San Agustín 317
Parcela 16	040-005-130-16	Calle San Agustín 309
Parcela 17	040-005-130-17	Calle San Agustín 307
Parcela 19	040-005-130-19	Calle San Agustín 319
<b>Block 131</b>		
Parcela 03	040-005-131-03	Avenida Constitución 356
Parcela 04	040-005-131-04	Avenida Constitución 358
Parcela 05	040-005-131-05	Avenida Constitución 360
Parcela 06	040-005-131-06	Avenida Constitución 362
Parcela 07	040-005-131-07	Calle San Juan Bautista 52
Parcela 09	040-005-131-09	Calle San Agustín 363
<b>Block 132</b>		
Parcela 01	040-005-132-01	Avenida Constitución corner Calle San Juan Bautista 51

<sup>38</sup> According to the CRIM, Block 128 Parcela 16 and Parcela 17 share the same address.

<sup>39</sup> According to the CRIM, Block 128 Parcela 17 and Parcela 16 share the same address.

<sup>40</sup> Block 130 Parcela 09 includes a noncontributing building and a noncontributing site.

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## National Park Service / National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Puerta de Tierra Historic District

San Juan, Puerto Rico

**Name of Property****County and State**

Parcela 02	040-005-132-02	Avenida Constitución 400
Parcela 09	040-005-132-09	Calle San Agustín 413
Parcela 22	040-005-132-22	Avenida Constitución N/A
<b>Block 137</b>		
Parcela 01	040-004-137-01	Calle San Agustín corner Calle San Andrés
Parcela 27	040-004-137-27	Calle San Andrés 111
Parcela 28	040-004-137-28	Calle San Andrés N/A
Parcela 29	040-004-137-29	Calle San Agustín 204
Parcela 30 <sup>41</sup>	040-004-137-30	Calle Pelayo 104-106
Parcela 31 <sup>42</sup>	040-004-137-31	Calle San Agustín 214 (Interior)
Parcela 32	040-004-137-32	Calle del Tren N/A
Parcela 36 <sup>43</sup>	040-004-137-36	Calle San Agustín 212
<b>Block 138</b>		
Parcela 01	040-005-138-01	Calle Pelayo 106
Parcela 02	040-005-138-02	
Parcela 05	040-005-138-05	Calle San Agustín N/A
Parcela 06	040-005-138-06	Calle San Agustín 65
Parcela 09	040-005-138-09	Calle San Agustín N/A
Parcela 10	040-005-138-10	Calle San Agustín 262
Parcela 19 <sup>44</sup>	040-005-138-19	Calle San Agustín 272
Parcela 21	040-005-138-21	Calle Tadeo Rivera N/A
<b>Block 139</b>		
Parcela 03	040-005-139-03	Calle San Agustín 306
<b>Block 140</b>		
Parcela 10 <sup>45</sup>	040-005-140-10	Calle San Agustín 364
Parcela 11	040-005-140-11	Calle San Agustín 356
Parcela 12	040-005-140-12	Calle del Tren N/A
<b>Block 141</b>		
Parcela 03	040-005-141-03	Calle San Agustín 404
Parcela 04	040-005-141-04	Calle San Agustín 406
Parcela 05	040-005-141-05	Calle San Agustín 408
Parcela 06	040-005-141-06	Calle San Agustín 410
Parcela 10A	040-005-141-10	Calle San Agustín 400
<b>Block 143</b>		
Parcela 03	040-016-143-03	Avenida Constitución 530
Parcela 04	040-016-143-04	Calle Ramón Power-Calle del Tren
<b>Block 144</b>		

<sup>41</sup> Block 137 Parcela 30 includes two noncontributing buildings.

<sup>42</sup> According to the CRIM, Block 137 Parcela 31 is sited inside a block, a location that makes no sense.

<sup>43</sup> *Idem.*

<sup>44</sup> Block 138 Parcela 19 has the same address as Block 138 Parcela 20, a contributing *parcela*.

<sup>45</sup> Block 140 Parcela 10 includes two noncontributing buildings.

United States Department of the Interior

## National Park Service / National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Puerta de Tierra Historic District

San Juan, Puerto Rico

**Name of Property****County and State**

Parcela 02	040-016-144-02	Avenida Fernández Juncos 305
<b>Block 146</b>		
Parcela 02	040-016-146-02	Avenida Muñoz Rivera N/A
<b>Block 147</b>		
Parcela 04 Parcela 05 <sup>46</sup> Parcela 07 Parcela 08	040-017-147-04 040-017-147-05 040-017-147-07 040-017-147-08	Calle San Jerónimo (aka Calle Rosales) N/A
Parcela 12	040-017-147-12	Avenida Muñoz Rivera N/A
Parcela 13 Parcela 14	040-017-147-13 040-017-147-14	Avenida Muñoz Rivera N/A
<b>Block 148</b>		
Parcela 09	040-017-148-09	Calle San Jerónimo (aka Calle Rosales) N/A
<b>Block 149</b>		
Parcela 01	040-005-149-01	Calle del Tren-Avenida Fernández Juncos- Calle Matías Ledesma-Calle San Andrés
Parcela 02	040-005-149-02	Calle Matías Ledesma N/A
Parcela 04	040-005-149-04	Calle Matías Ledesma N/A
Parcela 05	040-005-149-05	Calle Matías Ledesma N/A
<b>Block 152</b>		
Parcela 02	040-016-152-02	Avenida Fernández Juncos N/A
Parcela 03	040-016-152-03	Avenida Fernández Juncos N/A
Parcela 04	040-016-152-04	Avenida Fernández Juncos corner Calle Ramón Power (Stop 8)
Parcela 05	040-016-152-05	Avenida Fernández Juncos corner Calle Ramón Power (Stop 8)
<b>Block 153</b>		
Parcela 02	040-016-153-02	Avenida Fernández Juncos-Calle del Tren
Parcela 04	040-016-153-04	Avenida Fernández Juncos 517
<b>Block 154</b>		
Parcela 01	040-016-154-01	Avenida Fernández Juncos N/A
Parcela 02	040-016-154-02	Avenida Fernández Juncos N/A
<b>Block 155</b>		
Parcela 02	040-014-155-02	Avenida Fernández Juncos corner Calle Tadeo Rivera
<b>Block 156</b>		
Parcela 02	040-015-156-02	Avenida Fernández Juncos 302
<b>Block 165</b>		
Parcela 01	040-016-165-01	Avenida Constitución-Calle San Agustín- Calle Capitán Berreteaga

<sup>46</sup> Parcela 04, Parcela 05, Parcela 07 and Parcela 08 in Block 145 are part of the Puerta de Tierra Hotel Caribe Hilton District.

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Puerta de Tierra Historic District

San Juan, Puerto Rico

**Name of Property****County and State**

The number of noncontributing *parcelas* in the Puerta de Tierra Historic District is 127<sup>47</sup> or 40% of the grand total of 321 CRIM *parcelas*. (*Parcelas* that include contributing and noncontributing properties are counted as contributing.)

**Contributing and Noncontributing Properties**

The methodological approach designed to count contributing and noncontributing properties included the *a priori* decision that all empty lots (sites), except those in close proximity to historic fortifications, were considered noncontributing, a decision consulted with the National Register of Historic Places' staff.

**Historic Properties Classification**

Historic properties in the Puerta de Tierra Historic District are classified as per the five National Register of Historic Places categories: (i) district; (ii) site; (iii) building; (iv) structure; and (v) object. To understand better the resource composition of the district, previous listed resources were counted in Table 4.

TABLE 4

## PUERTA DE TIERRA HISTORIC RESOURCES

CATEGORIES	PREVIOUSLY LISTED	CONTRIBUTING	NONCONTRIBUTING	TOTAL
Buildings	27	151	92	270
Sites	1	45	46	92
Structures	6	35	7	48
Objects	0	5	13	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>428</b>

The number of contributing resources (270) represents 63% of the total number of resources (428) in the Puerta de Tierra Historic District.

**I Districts**

The Puerta de Tierra Historic District is the architectural and urban product of diverse historic moments that will cover a span of 500 years in 2019. As such, it is possible to organize its varied and multiple historic properties into groups exemplifying specific subthemes.<sup>48</sup> In other words, it is possible to organize other individual districts. There are thirteen contributing districts.

<sup>47</sup> After Hurricane Maria, Block 141 Parcela 10 has one contributing building and one noncontributing site. As is the case with Block 111 Parcela 01; Block 131 Parcela 10; and Block 162 Parcela 01 all have contributing and noncontributing properties. Therefore, 4 *parcelas* were subtracted from the total number of contributing and noncontributing *parcelas*.

<sup>48</sup> Additional districts may be organized within the Puerta de Tierra Historic District using varied themes. This nomination includes the ones the Puerto Rico State Historic Office approved as most outstanding.

United States Department of the Interior

## National Park Service / National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Puerta de Tierra Historic District

San Juan, Puerto Rico

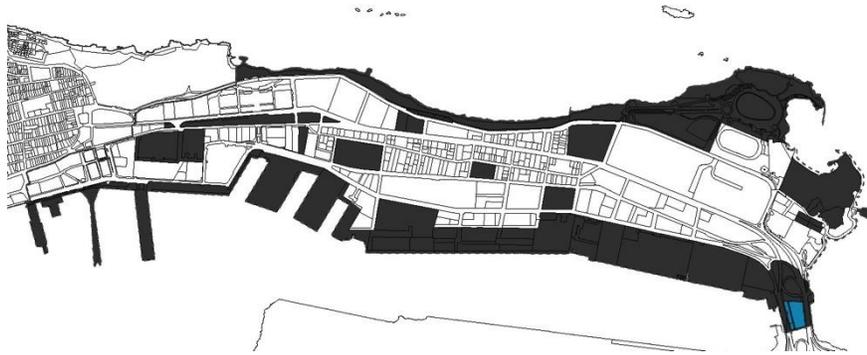
**Name of Property****County and State**

Figure 5. The Puerta de Tierra Historic District thirteen districts (in black and blue).

The thirteen districts are listed below.<sup>49</sup> Each district may include properties constructed at different dates. (See Figure 5.)

- (i) Puerta de Tierra Capitolio de Puerto Rico Commemorative District;
- (ii) Puerta de Tierra Port District;
- (iii) Puerta de Tierra Recreational District;
- (iv) Puerta de Tierra Departamento de Hacienda District;
- (v) Puerta de Tierra US Naval Radio Station / Casa Cuna;
- (vi) Puerta de Tierra Hogar Crea District;
- (vii) Puerta de Tierra Club Náutico de San Juan District;
- (viii) Puerta de Tierra Residencial San Antonio District;
- (ix) Puerta de Tierra Residencial San Agustín District;
- (x) Puerta de Tierra Residencial Parque de San Agustín District;
- (xi) Puerta de Tierra Hotel Caribe Hilton District;
- (xii) Puerta de Tierra Asilo de Ancianos Nuestra Señora de la Providencia District;
- (xiii) Puerta de Tierra Communications District.

One of the districts – the Puerta de Tierra Communications District – includes a portion of the San Antonio Channel. The property is included due to its cultural significance as physical link between the island and islet.

A description of each district is presented below illustrated with a plan depicting the extent of the precinct and its location within the Puerta de Tierra Historic District.

<sup>49</sup> It is possible to consider there exists one noncontributing district that includes the precinct where the Residencial de Puerta de Tierra was once located. It is included as a noncontributing site (empty lot) due to the fact that, at the time this nomination was prepared, buildings outside the time frame of this nomination were being constructed. The first housing project constructed in Puerto Rico was located in the Puerta de Tierra Historic District. The Residencial Puerta de Tierra was sited on Block 149 Parcela 01, Parcela 02, Parcela 04 and Parcela 05. At a later stage, two towers (Residencial Las Gladiolas) were added. All buildings were destroyed during the 1990s.

United States Department of the Interior

## National Park Service / National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Puerta de Tierra Historic District

San Juan, Puerto Rico

**Name of Property****County and State**

\* \* \*

## District 1

## Puerta de Tierra Capitolio de Puerto Rico Commemorative District

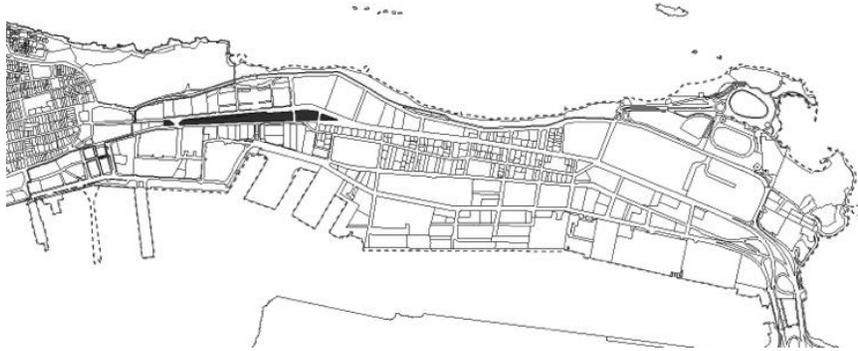


Figure 6. Puerta de Tierra Capitolio de Puerto Rico Commemorative District.

Three blocks (Block 103, Block 104 and Block 105), once part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Paseo de Covadonga (Paseo de Puerta de Tierra) promenade, facing the El Capitolio de Puerto Rico along the southern side of Avenida Constitución, presently include memorials to varied persons and events significant to Puerto Rican history. (See Memorials Table below.)

*Block 102*

The plaza located in Block 103 is considered part of this district. Constructed during the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century it is dedicated to educator Dr Ramón Mellado Parsons. (The building gracing the plaza's western side is a contributing building also named in his honor.)

*Block 103*

The semi-circular shapes of the original 19<sup>th</sup> century promenade resting stops were incorporated to the 1920s-1930s landscape design of an urban garden inspired by the Beaux Arts and City Beautiful Movement. Pergolas, as well as two exedrae, one crowned by a balustrade topped with marble lions, known as Plaza de los Leones, were added during this period. The composition's central object is a stunning statue of *Victory* by Bonnie McLeary, honoring the fallen during World War I. Recent memorials have been added, including bronze sculptures of eight USA presidents who have visited the island. The promenade, known locally as the Walkway of the Presidents (Paseo de los Presidentes), depicts: Theodore Roosevelt, Herbert Hoover, Franklin D Roosevelt, Harry S Truman, Dwight D Eisenhower, John F Kennedy, Gerald Ford and Barack Obama.<sup>50</sup>

*Block 104*

The grand plaza honoring Santiago Iglesias Pantín, includes a bronze statue of the patriot within an area guarded by a low wall decorated with plaques of the same material. Iglesias was a prominent labor leader and liberal politician who served as one of Puerto Rico's sixth Resident Commissioners (1933-1939) in Washington DC.

*Block 105*

This block marks the place where the 19<sup>th</sup> century Plaza de la Lealtad, terminus of the Paseo de Covadonga (Paseo de Puerta de Tierra), was once located. At present, the plaza honors Puerto Rican composer and performer of popular music Rafael Hernández (1891-1965). The bronze *jíbaro* (local version of a hillbilly) on horse characterizes the protagonist of his famed *El jíbarito* song.

<sup>50</sup> There is no information regarding if and when a sculpture of Donald Trump will be added to the roster. He visited the island after Hurricane Maria famously throwing paper towel rolls to those present at a reception held in his honor.

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Puerta de Tierra Historic District

San Juan, Puerto Rico

**Name of Property**

**County and State**

The Puerto Rican Legislature interprets the sector as a shrine of sorts, meant to serve as iconic urban center of patriotism and civic virtues. These blocks (and section of Block 102) form a distinct district, a three-dimensional representation of values upstanding citizens ought to emulate. Located in front of the Capitolio de Puerto Rico's main façade, the district underscores the civic relevance of this building, seat of the Puert Rican Legislature.

BLOCK COMPOSITION	
Block 102	
Parcela 03 B	N/A
Block 103	
Parcela 01	040-004-103-01
Block 104	
Parcela 01	040-004-104-01
Block 105	
Parcela 01	040-004-105-01

MEMORIALS <sup>51</sup>
Rafael Hernández Monument
Santiago Iglesias Pantín Monument
Altar to the Nation
Carlos Luis Cáceres Collazo Monument
Monument to Puerto Rican Recipients of Honor Medal
Memorial Monument
Monument to the Holocaust
Lions' Plaza
Police Monument
Puerto Rican Woman Monument
Mural <i>Paseo de Covadonga</i>
Teachers Monument (two)
Walkway of the Presidents
Monument to the World War I Fallen

<sup>51</sup> The number of commemorative and memorial plaques and objects within the district is huge. The list exclusively enumerates the prominent examples.

Puerta de Tierra Historic District

San Juan, Puerto Rico

Name of Property

County and State

\* \* \*

District 2  
Puerta de Tierra Port District

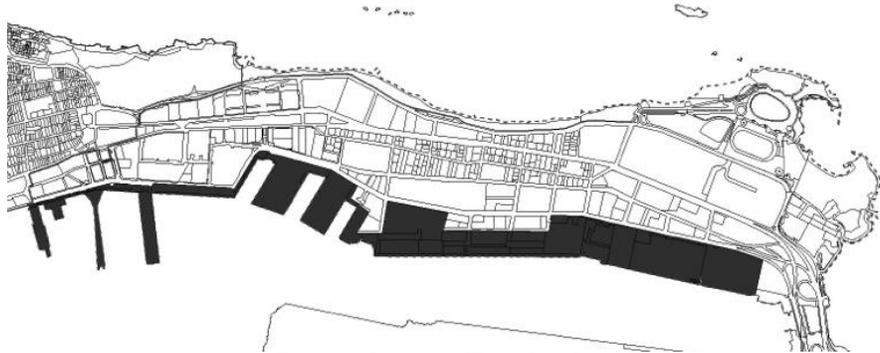


Figure 7. Puerta de Tierra Port District.

San Juan’s first formal name – the ciudad del Puerto Rico (City of the Rich Port) – substantiates the port’s relevance to the enclave. The fact the core was designed following the Canary Islands port-city model further evidences the intimacy between the settlement and its water venue. Until airplanes came into fashion, the San Juan’s port was the link uniting the islet (and Puerto Rico) to the rest of the world. The San Juan US Naval Radio Station was once located in San Juan Islet spanning the San Antonio Channel and encompassing neighboring Isla Grande. Former naval properties associated to World War I, World War II, Korean War and Vietnam War are found in the sector.

The district includes the 1940 Art Deco US Engineer Office building (determined eligible for inclusion to the National Register of Historic Places in February 2011) and eight Art Deco and Modern buildings belonging to the US Department of Health. The Puerta de Tierra Port District exemplifies Puerta de Tierra Historic District’s intimate association to the sea serving as icon of its half a millennia old (in 2019) mariner’s soul.

While at present the district evidences the transformations that have taken place since the land was returned to the Government of Puerto Rico, the sector is a most sensitive one that intimately relates to the capital and the archipelago’s history.

PUERTA DE TIERRA PORT DISTRICT BLOCK COMPOSITION	
Block 95	
Parcela 01	040-013-095-01
Parcela 02	040-013-095-02
Parcela 03	040-013-095-03
Parcela 04	040-013-095-04
Block 115	
Parcela 01	040-005-115-01
Parcela 02	040-005-115-02
Parcela 03	040-005-115-03
Parcela 04	040-005-115-04
Parcela 05	040-005-115-05
Parcela 06	040-005-115-06
Parcela 07	040-005-115-07
Block 155	
Parcela 01	040-014-155-01

Puerta de Tierra Historic District

San Juan, Puerto Rico

Name of Property

County and State

Parcela 05	040-014-155-05
Parcela 07	040-014-155-07
Parcela 08	040-014-155-08
Block 160	
Parcela 01	040-015-160-01
Parcela 08	040-015-160-08
Block 170	
Parcela 07	040-016-170-07
Parcela 09	040-016-170-09
Parcela 10	040-016-170-10
Parcela 11	040-016-170-11
Parcela 12	040-016-170-12
Parcela 13	040-016-170-13
Parcela 14	040-016-170-14
Parcela 17	040-016-170-17

\* \* \*

District 3  
Puerta de Tierra Recreational District

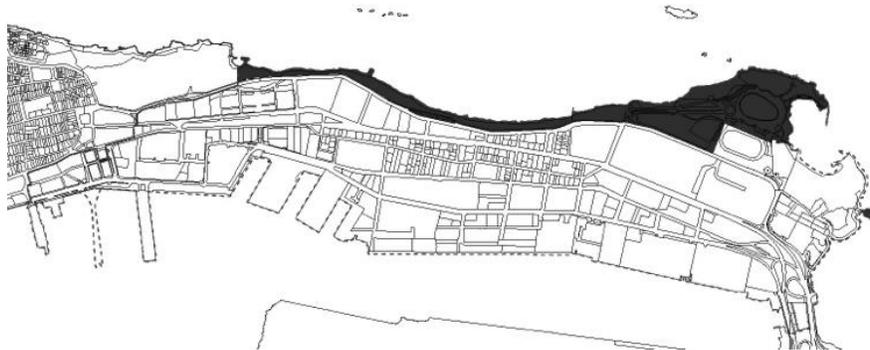


Figure 8. Puerta de Tierra Recreational District.

The Puerta de Tierra Recreational District includes leisure venues along the sector’s northern shore – some of which were first proposed by the Bennett, Parsons & Frost 1920s masterplan of the area. During the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, the district was the locale where bullfights, horse and canine races (Hipódromo La Feria), respectively, took place. Fairs and exhibitions were also scheduled within its boundaries. Since time immemorial Old San Juan residents enjoyed Puerta de Tierra Historic District’s beaches. In fact, during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, an overzealous governor prohibited the two genders simultaneous use of beaches.

Anchored at the western end by the Plaza de San Juan Bautista, a square perched over the northern cliffs, decorated with a statue of St John the Baptist, the district continues until it reaches the eastern end of San Juan Islet. To the east of the Plaza de San Juan Bautista, the remains of the third defense line of the city, the 18<sup>th</sup> century Bajamar (also known as Tajamar) is found. The district runs, strangled by the rock cliffs bordering the shore, until it reaches the eastern beaches. During the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the El Escambrón Beach Club was sited in this area. In 1928 in an air field west of these eastern beaches, *The Spirit of St Louis*, piloted by Charles Lindbergh landed.

At the westernmost point of the district the 17<sup>th</sup> century Fortín de San Jerónimo del Boquerón and the 18<sup>th</sup> century Batería del Escambrón are found. Further evidence of its central role as a recreational venue,

Puerta de Tierra Historic District

San Juan, Puerto Rico

**Name of Property**

**County and State**

during the 1952-54 the sector was used (in the first year Parque Sixto Escobar and the other two years in Luis Muñoz Rivera Park) as urban stage for an event, organized by the mayor of San Juan, to bring snow to San Juan by planes for the children to play with.

At present, the Parque del Tercer Milenio occupies the easternmost part of the district. Several sports arenas and beach facilities comingle, as well as large abstract sculptures. A restaurant is also found in the sector. The Puerta de Tierra Recreational District – formed by 3 blocks, 8 *parcelas*, 4 sites, 2 structures and 3 objects – has served for almost five centuries as the playground of *sanjuaneros* allowing them to luxuriate and experience the islet’s uniquely beautiful tropical milieu. Evidence of the role the district plays in the communal memory is the fact that two of the very first tourist hotels constructed in the island – Hotel Normandie and Caribe Hilton Hotel – were planned as part of this area.

PUERTA DE TIERRA RECREATIONAL DISTRICT BLOCK COMPOSITION	
Block 125	
Parcela 01	040-006-125-01
Parcela 02	040-006-125-02
Parcela 03	040-006-125-03
Parcela 04	040-006-125-04
Parcela 05	040-006-125-05
Block 126	
Parcela 02	040-006-126-02
Parcela 03	040-006-126-03
Block 172	
Parcela 02	022-093-172-02

\* \* \*

District 4

Puerta de Tierra Departamento de Hacienda District

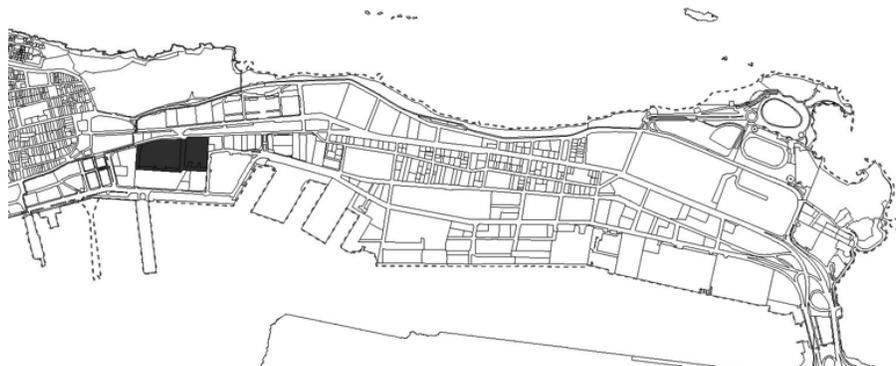


Figure 9. Puerta de Tierra Departamento de Hacienda District.

One measure taken by the Spanish crown to control its 19<sup>th</sup> century fiscal debacle was to appoint Intendente Alejandro Ramírez Blanco to oversee much-needed reforms to the Real Hacienda (Royal

Puerta de Tierra Historic District

San Juan, Puerto Rico

**Name of Property**

**County and State**

Treasury). Until the Intendente Ramírez Building was built in the Puerta de Tierra Historic District during the 1960s, the palatial Real Intendencia (Real Hacienda) in the Old San Juan Historic District housed this government unit.

The Puerta de Tierra Hacienda District includes one 1960s Modern Movement contributing building (Edificio Intendente Ramírez), one noncontributing structure (Estacionamiento del Departamento de Hacienda), one contributing site (Plaza del Intendente Ramírez), and one contributing object (*Intendente Ramírez*), a magnificent bronze sculpture honoring the distinguished public servant). The building’s introverted personality, obtained by means of ample use of reinforced concrete *brise-soleils*, results in a ponderous and secretive approach that evidences an *architecture parlante* Brutalist theoretical approach. Silently “speaking” of its crucial social role, the reclusive and introverted design, elegant plaza and dramatic sculpture are symbolic of the substantial and inevitable role the district plays in the lives of all.

PUERTA DE TIERRA HACIENDA DISTRICT BLOCK COMPOSITION	
Block 107	
Parcela 35	040-003-107-35

\* \* \*

District 5

Puerta de Tierra US Naval Radio Station / Casa Cuna

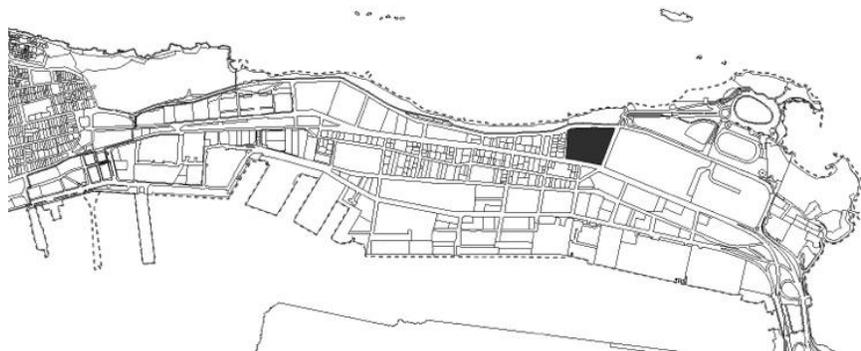


Figure 10. Puerta de Tierra US Naval Radio Station / Casa Cuna.

In 1905, the US Navy established a wireless telegraph station on a lot that, at the time, ran from the Atlantic Ocean (north) to Avenida Constitución (south). Originally belonging to the Spanish Crown,<sup>52</sup> the land was leased by the US War Department to the US Navy in 1904. Later in 1919 by an act of Congress permitted the transfer of the land to the US Navy. Remains of the 18<sup>th</sup> century second line of defense and other 18<sup>th</sup> century Spanish military structures, such as ramparts and coastal defenses, were extant at the time. (According to local archaeologists, remnants have been preserved buried underground.) The original US Navy structure was a Signal Shore Station that, in coordination with the Henry Barracks

<sup>52</sup> Paolo Coletta, *United States Navy and Marine Corps Bases Overseas* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1985), p 301. Quoted in: Arleen Pabón Charneco, “In the Service of Ares: The United States Military Bases in Puerto Rico” (MS: San Juan de Puerto Rico, 1995), p 28.

Puerta de Tierra Historic District

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Communication Center (Cayey, Puerto Rico) and a radio station (Culebra, Puerto Rico), used high frequency radio for military purposes. After the completion of an extension of the Salvador Brau Street from the city of San Juan to the San Antonio Bridge (extension now called Avenida Muñoz Rivera) in the 1928, the lot was divided into two and the part closest to the ocean housed a US Naval Reserve Officers' Beach Club. (The unassuming wooden buildings sheltering this use no longer exist.)

During the 1930s, six residential, one administrative and one storage buildings and parking facilities were constructed along the southern part of the lot. Set amidst greenery and palm trees, the Art Deco buildings organize a compound intimately associated to World War II efforts to track German U-boats movements in the Caribbean. Some sources point out the design was the work of noted architect Albert Kahn.<sup>53</sup> The district was determined eligible for inclusion to the National Register of Historic Places in October 2002. At present, the Municipality of San Juan uses the precinct as an orphanage (*casa-cuna*). The Puerta de Tierra US Naval Radio Station/ Casa Cuna has ten contributing buildings and one contributing object.

PUERTA DE TIERRA US NAVAL RADIO STATION/CASA CUNA BLOCK COMPOSITION	
Block 124	
Parcela 01	040-005-124-01

\* \* \*

District 6  
 Puerta de Tierra Hogar Crea District

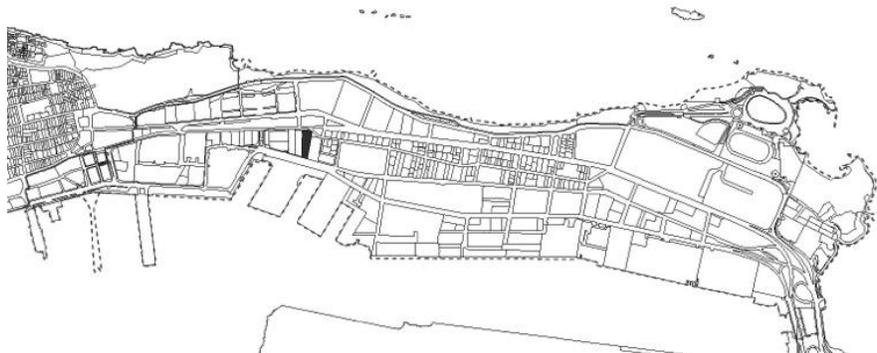


Figure 11. Puerta de Tierra Hogar Crea District.

In 1968, Mr José Juan García founded the Hogar Crea, a local organization gone international that fights opioid addiction. Occupying one *parcela* running from Paseo de Covadonga (north) to Calle San Agustín (south), the compound serving the “Others” is organized in the manner of a small island town. Except for the fact that a wire fence encloses the precinct, the three contributing wood buildings are arranged as traditional island houses with balconies facing the central “street.” The district is an icon of the high social price Puerto Rican culture has paid in its effort to become “modern.”

<sup>53</sup> Law-Gibb Group, “Architectural Resources Inventory and Evaluation Naval Radio Station and Naval Reserve Center – Stop 7.5 San Juan, Puerto Rico” (MS: San Juan, Puerto Rico, 2001), p 13. This essay attributes the work to Albert Khan although no information is provided to substantiate authorship. Given the fact that the Khan Brothers designed the Smallwood Building, a stone’s throw away from the naval historic district, it is not a farfetched to assume the attribution may be correct.

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PUERTA DE TIERRA HOGAR CREA BLOCK COMPOSITION	
Block 108	
Parcela 09	040-004-108-09

\* \* \*

District 7

Puerta de Tierra Club Náutico de San Juan District

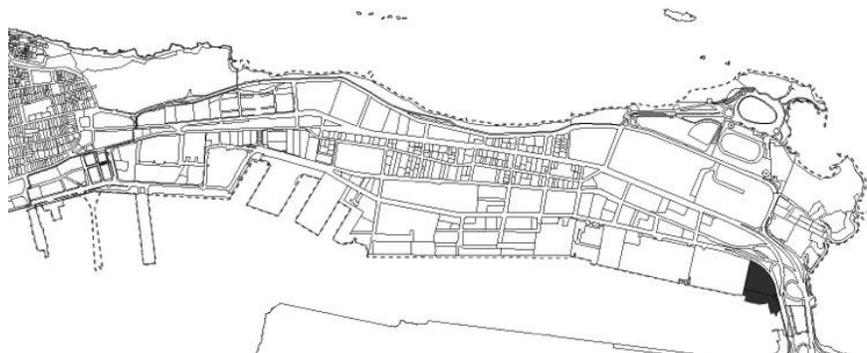


Figure 12. Puerta de Tierra Club Náutico de San Juan District.

Fishing aficionados founded the Club Náutico de San Juan in 1930 to empower nautical activities. The Puerta de Tierra Club Náutico de San Juan District is close to where the secondary port depicted in the 1598 Archivo de Simancas (Spain) plan of San Juan Islet was located. (See Photograph 020.) Because of its closeness to the main island the district graces the exit/entrance to San Juan Islet making the venue an essential component of the Puerta de Tierra Historic District’s urban landscape features. The district includes: one contributing 1951 building aligned to Modern Movement ideals, a contributing dockyard, a noncontributing marina (adversely impacted by Hurricane Maria in 2017) and a contributing object (a sculpture).

The Puerta de Tierra Club Náutico de San Juan District underscores Puerta de Tierra’s multiple services, as well as its centuries-old maritime connection.

PUERTA DE TIERRA CLUB NAÚTICO DE SAN JUAN DISTRICT BLOCKS COMPOSITION	
Block 170	
Parcela 15	040-016-170-15
Parcela 16	040-016-170-16
Marina	N/A
Sculpture	N/A

Puerta de Tierra Historic District

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**Name of Property**

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\* \* \*

District 8, District 9 and District 10  
 The *Residenciales* (Housing Projects)

Given they all belong to the same architectural typology (public housing project), Residencial San Antonio (5 contributing buildings), Residencial Agustín (4 contributing buildings) and Residencial Parque de San Agustín (4 contributing buildings) are listed as individual contributing districts. While the first one makes uses of the super block morphology first experimented with in the USA, the designers of the other two – especially the Residencial de San Agustín – adapted the architectural typology to the 19<sup>th</sup> century urban grid. The Residencial Parque de San Agustín was conceived as a middle option of sorts occupying half a block.

These public districts exemplify the type’s dissonance with traditional urban organization: (i) buildings are higher than most examples in the neighborhood; (ii) the precincts have no interior streets emphasizing urban isolation; and (iii) all create a super block (or half a super block) that has little or anything to do with the Puerta de Tierra Historic District urban context. They are iconic of the adaptation of USA models to the island’s social problems. Timid transformations to suit the tropical climate – such as the diminutive balconies and open stairway wells – are evident in the designs. It is also possible the insertion of balconies recognizes the outdoor preference of many in a very hot environment.

All are contributing districts for they architecturally represent Populist solutions that came to the fore during the 1940s-1960s in order to solve workers’ housing issues. Public projects were the second type of architectural typology experimented with in the archipelago. The first one was the model tenement house building of which the El Falansterio is the best example. Both types mark the government’s involvement in housing issues.

\*

Puerta de Tierra Residencial San Antonio District

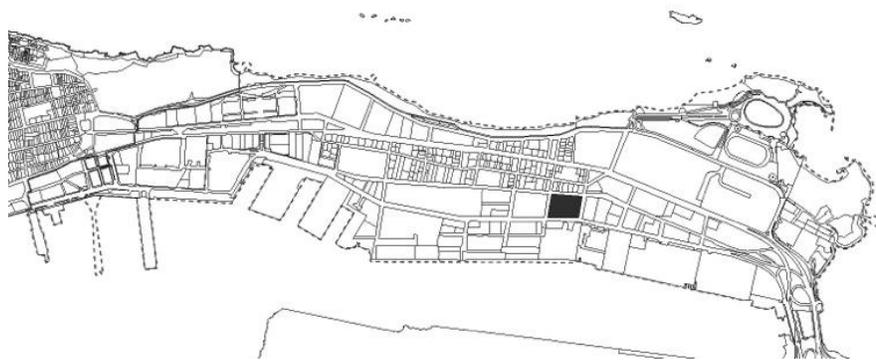


Figure 13. Puerta de Tierra Residencial San Antonio District.

PUERTA DE TIERRA RESIDENCIAL SAN ANTONIO DISTRICT COMPOSITION	
Block 151	
Parcela 01	040-015-151-01

The Residencial San Antonio District includes five contributing buildings.

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Puerta de Tierra Residencial San Agustín District

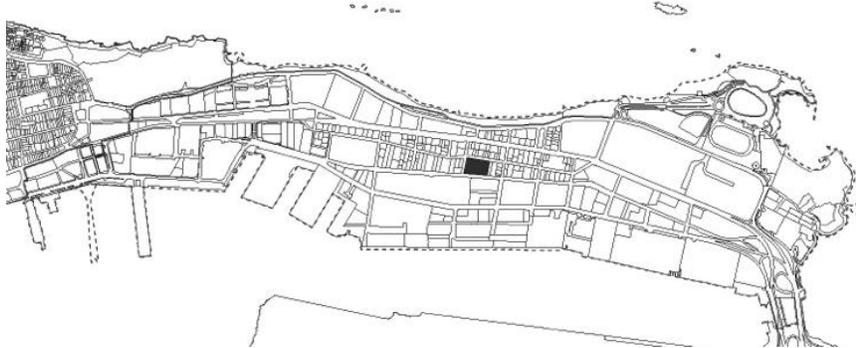


Figure 14. Puerta de Tierra Residencial San Agustín District.

PUERTA DE TIERRA RESIDENCIAL SAN AGUSTÍN DISTRICT COMPOSITION	
Block 139	
Parcela 01	040-005-139-01

The Residencial San Agustín District is composed of four contributing buildings.

\*

Puerta de Tierra Residencial Parque de San Agustín District

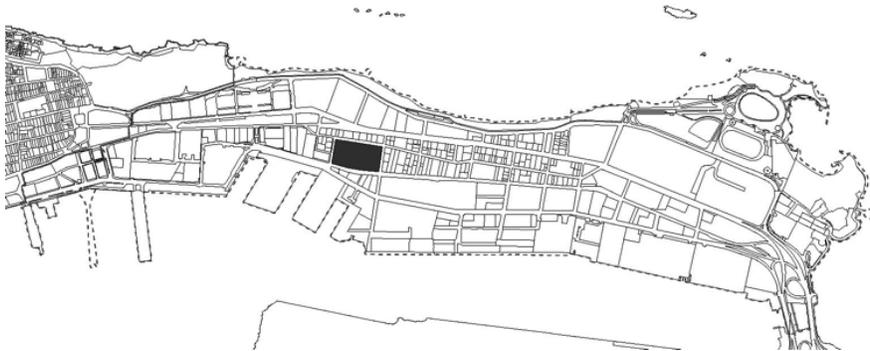


Figure 15. Puerta de Tierra Residencial Parque de San Agustín District.

PUERTA DE TIERRA PARQUE DE SAN AGUSTÍN DISTRICT COMPOSITION	
Block 111	
Parcela 01 C	040-004-111-01

The Residencial Parque de San Agustín District includes four contributing buildings.

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As mentioned, these three districts iconically represent mid 20<sup>th</sup> century's concern for workers' living conditions and Populist agendas theoretically designed to achieve social equality. First known as *caseríos* and later as *residenciales*, in Puerto Rico the compounds represent solution to housing issues of the previously forgotten masses. They are highly symbolic of the USA influence regarding architectural and urban solutions.

\* \* \*

District 11  
Puerta de Tierra Hotel Caribe Hilton District

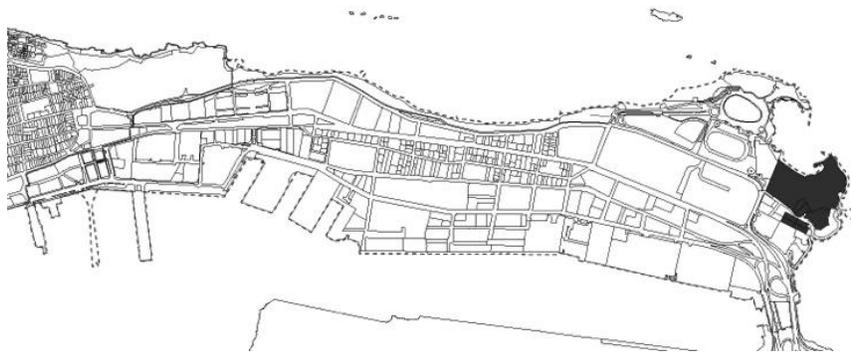


Figure 16. Puerta de Tierra Hotel Caribe Hilton District.

During the 1950s, the government of Puerto Rico formally promoted tourism. Until that decade, hotels were privately owned and generally were not centered on beach activities. Partnering with the then famous Hilton hotel chain, the local architectural firm of Toro y Ferrer designed a sprawling complex distinguished as unique on several counts. Sited within the historic first defensive line and next to the Fortín de San Jerónimo del Boquerón, the precinct includes the only private beach in the island. The compound was landscaped following the English garden tradition incorporating remnants from the first defensive line, as well as exotic elements such as a Picturesque lake graced by an Asian-inspired pavilion reached by means of a curved wood bridge. The fluid and transparent relationship between building and landscape was most creative with the peacocks that freely roamed the open lobby underscoring this appreciation. The Puerta de Tierra Caribe Hilton District includes three contributing buildings (part of the hotel), one noncontributing structure (parking garage), and one contributing site (gardens).

Its association to the island tourism ventures, unique design and exceptional location this district transformed the Puerta de Tierra Historic District, placing the sector at the center of the island's tourism efforts.

PUERTA DE TIERRA HOTEL CARIBE HILTON DISTRICT COMPOSITION	
Block 147	
Parcela 04	040-017-147-04
Parcela 05	040-017-147-05
Parcela 07	040-017-147-07
Parcela 08	040-017-147-08
Block 148	
Parcela 01	040-017-148-01

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Parcela 02	040-017-148-02
Parcela 12	040-017-148-12
Parcela 17	040-017-148-17

\* \* \*

District 12

Puerta de Tierra Asilo de Ancianos Nuestra Señora de la Providencia District

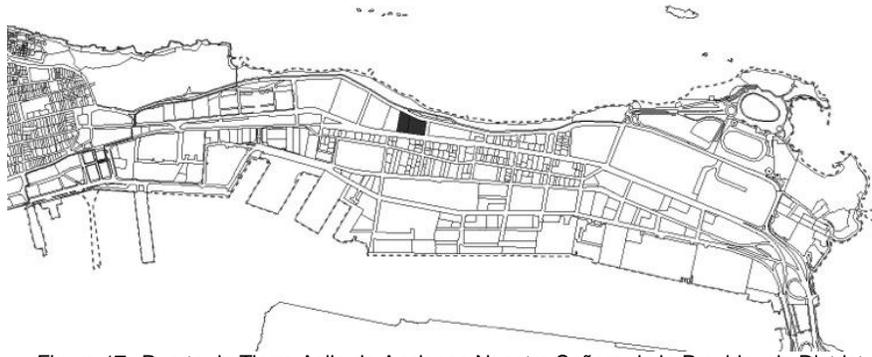


Figure 17. Puerta de Tierra Asilo de Ancianos Nuestra Señora de la Providencia District.

Historic photographs of the site depict an unassuming wood one-floor asylum for elders built during the 1890s by the Sisters of Abandoned Elders (Hermanitas de los Ancianos Desamparados). The Puerta de Tierra Asilo de Ancianos District includes one contributing and one noncontributing building. Members of the same family of architects and engineers designed the older architectural masterpiece, started in 1913, as well as the 1990s building. The precinct is a catalog of architectural styles: While the modern building incorporates second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Brutalist motifs, the earlier one includes fascinating details that cover the historicist range from Mesopotamian-inspired architecture to Neo-Gothic.

The Puerta de Tierra Asilo de Ancianos District evidences both the century plus presence of this service in the Puerta de Tierra Historic District, as well as architectural examples of architectural uniqueness.

PUERTA DE TIERRA ASILO DE ANCIANO NUESTRA SEÑORA DE LA PROVIDENCIA COMPOSITION	
Block 118	
Parcela 03	040-004-118-03
Parcela 04	040-004-118-04

Puerta de Tierra Historic District

San Juan, Puerto Rico

Name of Property

County and State

\* \* \*

District 13

Puerta de Tierra Communications District

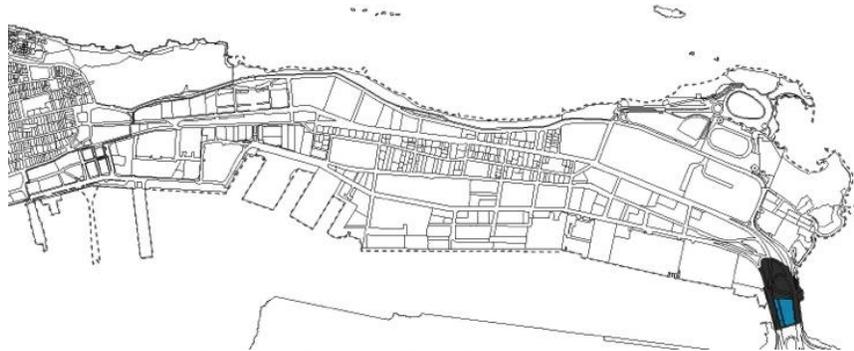


Figure 18. Puerta de Tierra Communications District.

When the 16<sup>th</sup> century settlement was moved from Caparra to San Juan Islet, the narrow water crossing separating island and isle, the San Antonio Channel (Caño de San Antonio), became vital to the success of the enterprise. Historic documents mention stones were placed to create a causeway (*calzada* and *pedraplén*) that allowed settlers to safely cross the body of water. With time, varied structures were constructed (one incorporating an aqueduct) and, during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Puente Ferroviario de San Antonio (structure listed in the National Register of Historic Places) was built for the train. Underscoring the neuralgic relevance of the sector, during the 1950s-1960s the first cloverleaf interchange in the island was constructed at both ends of the main roads connecting the two landmasses.

The Puerta de Tierra Communications District includes two non contributing structures (Puente San Antonio and Puente Guillermo Esteves), the historic train bridge (listed in the National Register of Historic Places), a contributing tunnel part of the cloverleaf interchange, remains of the first defensive line (listed in the National Register of Historic Places), as well as green areas uniting all these properties. It also includes the water passageway between the island of Puerto Rico and San Juan Islet, the highly iconic physical separation that provides the small isle its unique geographic and urban personality.

The Puerta de Tierra Communications District identifies the significance the interaction Puerto Rico – San Juan Islet has for the small isle and Puerto Ricans for almost five centuries.

PUERTA DE TIERRA COMMUNICATIONS DISTRICT COMPOSITION <sup>54</sup>
Block 164 Parcela 01 (contributing site)
Puente Guillermo Estéves (non contributing structure)
Puente San Antonio (non contributing structure)
Tunnel (contributing structure)
Cloverleaf interchange (contributing structure)
Puente Ferroviario de San Antonio (structure listed NRHP)

<sup>54</sup> The CRIM has not assigned *parcela* or block numbers to any of these properties.

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## II Sites

The Puerta de Tierra Historic District includes forty six contributing sites. (See Table 5.) In all cases, these properties have an intimate relationship to contributing buildings or structures and can be considered essential to their correct interpretation. There are also examples that merit this standing due to their intimate relationship with the Old San Juan Historic District. Sites sited next to the historic wall perimeter, for example, were automatically considered contributing due to their research and interpretative potential.

TABLE 5

## PUERTA DE TIERRA HISTORIC DISTRICT CONTRIBUTING SITES

BLOCK / PARCELA	CADASTRE NUMBER	NAME (if any)	Site
<b>Block 91</b>			
Parcela 05	040-003-091-05	---	1
<b>Block 95</b>			
Parcela 01	040-013-095-01	Dock No.1	1
Parcela 02	040-013-095-02	Cataño Ferry Terminal/ Dock No. 2	1
Parcela 03	040-013-095-03	Dock No. 3	1
Parcela 04	040-013-095-04	Dock No. 4	1
<b>Block 103</b>			
Parcela 01	040-004-103-01	Plaza de los Leones	1
<b>Block 104</b>			
Parcela 01	040-004-104-01	Monumento a Santiago Iglesia Pantín	1
<b>Block 105</b>			
Parcela 01	040-004-105-01	Monumento a Rafael Hernández	1
<b>Block 107</b>			
Parcela 35	040-003-107-35	Plaza Intendente Ramírez	1
<b>Block 142</b>			
Parcela 01	040-006-142-01	---	1
Parcela 03	040-006-142-03	---	1
<b>Block 115</b>			
Parcela 01	040-005-115-01	---	1
Parcela 02	040-005-115-02	---	1
Parcela 03	040-005-115-03	Dock Number 10	1
Parcela 04	040-005-115-04	---	1
Parcela 05	040-005-115-05	Bahía Urbana/ Dock Number 8	1
Parcela 06	040-005-115-06	Dock Number 10	1
<b>Block 125</b>			
Parcela 01	040-006-125-01	[Baseball field and Parking area]	2
Parcela 02	040-006-125-02	[Third Millenium Park path]	1
Parcela 04	040-006-125-04	Reserve Officers Club/ Casa Cuna	1
Parcela 05	040-006-125-05	[Park]	1
<b>Block 126</b>			
Parcela 02	040-013-095-02	[Field Running Track]	1
Parcela 03	040-013-095-03		
<b>Block 128</b>			
Parcela 08	040-005-128-08	Iglesia Metodista's courtyard	1
<b>Block 134</b>			
Parcela 02	040-006-134-02	Luis Muñoz Rivera Park	1
<b>Block 142</b>			
Parcela 01	040-006-142-01	---	1
Parcela 03	040-006-142-03	---	1

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<b>Block 148</b>			
Parcela 15	040-017-148-15	[Fortin San Gerónimo's parking area]	1
Parcela 16	040-017-148-16	[Zalemas Beach]	1
<b>Block 153</b>			
Parcela 03	040-016-153-03	Hogar Infantil	1
<b>Block 155</b>			
Parcela 01	040-014-155-01	[Wharf area, Port District]	1
Parcela 05	040-014-155-05	[Quayside, Port District]	1
Parcela 07	040-014-155-07	[Wharf area, Port District]	1
Parcela 08	040-014-155-08	[Wharf area, Port District]	1
<b>Block 160</b>			
Parcela 08	040-015-160-08	[Wharf area, Port District]	1
<b>Block 162</b>			
Parcela 01	040-016-162-01 A	---	1
Parcela 07	040-016-170-07	---	1
Parcela 09	040-016-170-09	---	1
Parcela 10	040-016-170-10	[Wharf area, Port District]	1
Parcela 11	040-016-170-11	[Wharf area, Port District]	1
Parcela 12	040-016-170-12	---	1
Parcela 13	040-016-170-13	[Wharf area, Port District]	1
Parcela 17	040-016-170-17	[Wharf area, Port District]	1
<b>Block 172</b>			
Parcela 02	022-093-172-02	[Northern bluffs]; San Juan Bautista Plaza	2
<b>Block 612</b>			
Parcela 01	040-003-612-01	[Parking lot]	1
<b>Total</b>			<b>46</b>

There are a total of 92 contributing and noncontributing sites in the Puerta de Tierra Historic District. All empty *parcelas* and/or lots not possessing significance as explained above are considered noncontributing sites. There is a total of 46 non contributing sites in this category. (See Table 6.) As explained, this determination was consulted with the National Register of Historic Places staff.

TABLE 6

## PUERTA DE TIERRA HISTORIC DISTRICT NONCONTRIBUTING SITES

BLOCK / PARCELA	CADASTRE NUMBER	NAME	Site
<b>Block 107</b>			
Parcela 28	040-003-107-28	AEE Subestación Covadonga GIS	1
Parcela 34	040-003-107-34	[Edificio Intendente Ramírez's Parking]	1
<b>Block 108</b>			
Parcela 08	040-004-108-08	[Lot used for parking for vehicles]	1
<b>Block 110</b>			
Parcela 16	040-004-110-16	[Lot used for parking for vehicles]	1
<b>Block 111</b>			
Parcela 01	040-004-111-01	[Lot used for parking for vehicles]	1
<b>Block 113</b>			
Parcela 03	040-003-113-03	[Lot used for parking for vehicles]	1
Parcela 04	040-003-113-04	[Lot used for parking for vehicles]	1
Parcela 07	040-003-113-07	[Lot used for parking for vehicles]	1
<b>Block 116</b>			
Parcela 03	040-004-116-03	[Empty lot]	1
<b>Block 120</b>			
Parcela 09	040-005-120-09	---	1

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<b>Block 123</b>			
Parcela 05	040-005-123-05	[Lot used for parking for vehicles]	1
Parcela 08	040-005-123-08	[Lot used for parking for vehicles]	1
Parcela 12	040-005-123-12	[Lots used for parking for vehicles]	1
Parcela 13	040-005-123-13		
<b>Block 127</b>			
Parcela 08	040-004-127-08	[Lot used for parking for vehicles]	1
Parcela 10	040-004-127-10	[Empty lot]	1
Parcela 11	040-004-127-11	[Empty lot]	1
Parcela 12	040-004-127-12	[Empty lot]	1
<b>Block 128</b>			
Parcela 03	040-005-128-03	[Parking]	1
Parcela 12	040-005-128-12	[Closed lot]	1
Parcela 13	040-005-128-13	[Building in ruins]	1
Parcela 17	040-005-128-17	[Asphalted lot]	1
<b>Block 130</b>			
Parcela 01	040-005-130-01	[Lots used for parking for vehicles]	1
Parcela 02	040-005-130-02		
Parcela 09	040-005-130-09	[Lot used for parking for vehicles]	1
Parcela 10	040-005-130-10	[Lot used for parking for vehicles]	1
Parcela 19	040-005-130-19	[Lot used for parking for vehicles]	1
<b>Block 131</b>			
Parcela 07	040-005-131-07	[Lot used for parking for vehicles]	1
Parcela 09	040-005-131-09	[Lot used for parking for vehicles]	1
<b>Block 137</b>			
Parcela 31	040-004-137-31	[Asphalted lot]	1
<b>Block 138</b>			
Parcela 01	040-005-138-01	[Lots used for parking for vehicles]	1
Parcela 02	040-005-138-02		
Parcela 05	040-005-138-05	[Lot used for parking for vehicles]	1
Parcela 06	040-005-138-06	[Closet lot]	1
Parcela 09	040-005-138-09	[Empty lot]	1
Parcela 10	040-005-138-10	[Empty lot]	1
<b>Block 139</b>			
Parcela 03	040-005-139-03	[Lot used for parking for vehicles]	1
<b>Block 141</b>			
Parcela 03	040-005-141-03	[Asphalted lot]	1
Parcela 04	040-005-141-04	[Asphalted lot]	1
Parcela 05	040-005-141-05	[Asphalted lot]	1
Parcela 06	040-005-141-06	[Empty lot]	1
Parcela 10	040-005-141-10 B	[Ruins of a house]	1
<b>Block 143</b>			
Parcela 04	040-016-143-04	[Closed lot were the WKAQ station used to be located prior to its demolition]	1
<b>Block 149</b>			
Parcela 01	040-005-149-01	[Empty lot]	1
<b>Block 152</b>			
Parcela 02	040-016-152-02	[Asphalted lot]	1
Parcela 05	040-016-152-05	[San Juan Island Marina's Parking]	1
<b>Block 153</b>			
Parcela 02	040-016-153-02	[Lot used for parking for vehicles]	1
<b>Block 154</b>			
Parcela 01	040-016-154-01	---	1
<b>Block 165</b>			
Parcela 01	040-016-165-01	[Lot used for parking for vehicles]	1
<b>Total</b>			<b>46</b>

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## III Buildings

As expected in an urban historic district, a large number of the historic properties belong to the building category. (See Table 7.) The Puerta de Tierra Historic District has a grand total of 270 buildings that can be subdivided into four groups: civic, ecclesiastical, commercial and domestic. (All buildings sheltering public uses are included in the first category.) Given the fact they do not belong to the government or serve as seat of a club or public organization, churches and related buildings belong to the ecclesiastical category. During the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, commercial buildings included car showrooms, movie theaters and medical clinics, among other architectural typologies. At present, varied types of commercial venues are still extant.

The number of architectural typologies in the Puerta de Tierra Historic District is overwhelming. The only examples of 17<sup>th</sup> century independent military structures (small fort, bastion or battery), legislative capitol, state-level supreme court in Puerto Rico, as well as a 19<sup>th</sup> century hospital-cum-jail, are found here. Additionally, Puerto Rico's most distinguished catalogue of tenement house buildings and public housing are located within the district. The earliest tourist hotel built in the island (Hotel Normandie) and the Government of Puerto Rico's tourism flagship (Hotel Caribe Hilton) are also part of the sector.

TABLE 7

## PUERTA DE TIERRA HISTORIC DISTRICT CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS

BLOCK / PARCELA	CADASTRE	NAME OF PROPERTY	Bldg
<b>Block 92</b>			
Parcela 01	040-002-092-01	Edificio Ochoa	1
<b>Block 93</b>			
Parcela 02	040-003-093-02 A	---	1
<b>Block 97</b>			
Parcela 01	040-003-097-01	YMCA	1
Parcela 02	040-003-097-02	Ateneo Puertorriqueño	1
Parcela 03	040-003-097-03	Biblioteca Carnegie	1
Parcela 04	040-003-097-04	Casa de España	1
Parcela 05	040-003-097-05	West Annex building, El Capitolio	1
<b>Block 98</b>			
Parcela 01	022-094-098-01	El Capitolio de Puerto Rico	1
<b>Block 99</b>			
	022-094-099-01	East Annex building, El Capitolio	1
<b>Block 100</b>			
Parcela 01	022-094-100-01	School of Tropical Medicine	3
Parcela 02	022-094-100-02	Puerto Rico National Guard building	1
<b>Block 102</b>			
Parcela 01	040-003-102-01	Departamento de la Familia	1
Parcela 02	040-003-102-02	Cruz Roja Americana Capítulo de Puerto Rico	1
Parcela 03	040-003-102-03	Ramón Mellado Parsons Building	1
<b>Block 107</b>			
Parcela 04	040-003-107-04	---	1
Parcela 19	040-003-107-19	---	1
Parcela 24	040-003-107-24	---	1
Parcela 35	040-003-107-35	Intendente Ramírez Building	1
<b>Block 108</b>			
Parcela 05	040-004-108-05	Insular Police Force Headquarters	1
Parcela 06	040-004-108-06	Salvation Army Building	1
Parcela 09	040-004-108-09	Hogar Crea	3

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<b>Block 109</b>			
Parcela 01	040-004-109-01	--	1
Parcela 02	040-004-109-02	Capitol Hill Apartments	1
Parcela 03	040-004-109-03	---	1
Parcela 04	040-004-109-04	---	1
Parcela 05	040-004-109-05	---	1
<b>Block 110</b>			
Parcela 01	040-004-110-01	Puerto Rico Medical Arts Center	1
Parcela 02	040-004-110-02	---	1
Parcela 42	040-004-110-42	Sevilla Court Building	1
Parcela 06	040-004-110-06	Primera Iglesia Bautista de Puerta de Tierra	1
Parcela 07	040-004-110-07	Instituto Oftálmico de Puerto Rico	1
Parcela 08	040-004-110-08	---	1
Parcela 14	040-004-110-14	---	1
Parcela 15	040-004-110-15	---	1
<b>Block 111</b>			
Parcela 01	040-004-111-01A	Residencial Parque de San Agustín	4
<b>Block 117</b>			
Parcela 09	040-004-117-09	---	1
Parcela 13	040-004-117-13	---	1
Parcela 14	040-004-117-14	---	1
<b>Block 118</b>			
Parcela 01	040-004-118-01	US Department of Commerce Weather Bureau	1
Parcela 02	040-004-118-02	Escuela Graduado José Celso Barbosa	1
Parcela 03	040-004-118-03	Asilo de Ancianos de Nuestra Señora de la Providencia	1
Parcela 04	040-004-118-014	Asilo de Ancianos Desamparados (Asilo de Ancianos de Nuestra Señora de la Providencia)	1
<b>Block 119</b>			
Parcela 01	040-005-119-01	Church, School, Convent and Parish House of San Agustín	3
<b>Block 120</b>			
Parcela 01	040-005-120-01	Smallwood Brothers Building	1
Parcela 02	040-005-120-02	Condominio Villa Aurea	1
Parcela 03	040-005-120-03	---	1
Parcela 04	040-005-120-04	---	1
Parcela 05	040-005-120-05	Condominio Crescent Beach	1
Parcela 06	040-005-120-06	Iglesia Evangélica Luterana de San Pablo	1
Parcela 08	040-005-120-08	---	1
<b>Block 121</b>			
Parcela 03	040-005-121-03	---	1
Parcela 04	040-005-121-04	---	1
<b>Block 122</b>			
Parcela 01	040-005-122-01	Escuela Brambaugh	1
<b>Block 123</b>			
Parcela 09	040-005-123-09	Santiago Panzardi building	1
Parcela 10	040-005-123-10	---	1
Parcela 11	040-005-123-11	---	1
<b>Block 124</b>			
Parcela 01	040-005-124-01	US Naval Radio Station/ Casa Cuna	4
<b>Block 127</b>			
Parcela 01	040-004-127-01	---	1
Parcela 06	040-004-127-06	---	1
Parcela 09	040-004-127-09	---	1
<b>Block 128</b>			
Parcela 01	040-005-128-01	Teatro Eureka	1
Parcela 04	040-005-128-04	Notre Dame Industrial School (La Costurera)	1
Parcela 05	040-005-128-05	---	1
Parcela 06	040-005-128-06	---	1

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Parcela 09	040-005-128-09	Iglesia Metodista	1
Parcela 14	040-005-128-14	---	1
Parcela 15	040-005-128-15	---	1
<b>Block 129</b>			
Parcela 01	040-005-129-01	---	1
Parcela 02	040-005-129-02	---	1
<b>Block 130</b>			
Parcela 11	040-005-130-11	---	1
Parcela 14	040-005-130-14	---	1
Parcela 15	040-005-130-15	---	1
Parcela 18	040-005-130-18	---	1
Parcela 20	040-005-130-20	---	1
<b>Block 131</b>			
Parcela 01	040-005-131-01	Teatro Silvia Rexach (originally named Teatro Martí and later called Cine Lara)	1
Parcela 02	040-005-131-02	Edificio Moragón (Casa de la Muñecas)	1
Parcela 08	040-005-131-08	---	1
Parcela 10	040-005-131-10 A	---	1
Parcela 11	040-005-131-11	---	1
Parcela 12	040-005-131-12	---	1
<b>Block 132</b>			
Parcela 05	040-005-132-05	---	1
Parcela 06	040-005-132-06	---	1
Parcela 07	040-005-132-07	---	1
Parcela 08	040-005-132-08	---	1
<b>Block 134</b>			
Parcela 02	040-006-134-02	San Geronimo Powder House	1
<b>Block 135</b>			
Parcela 01	040-006-135-01	Parque Sixto Escobar	1
<b>Block 136</b>			
Parcela 01	040-007-136-01	Hotel Normadie	1
<b>Block 137</b>			
Parcela 03	040-004-137-03	---	1
Parcela 11	040-004-137-11	---	1
Parcela 24	040-004-137-24	---	1
Parcela 26	040-004-137-26	---	1
Parcela 33	040-004-137-33	---	1
Parcela 34	040-004-137-34	---	1
<b>Block 138</b>			
Parcela 11	040-005-138-11	---	1
Parcela 17	040-005-138-17 A & B	---	2
Parcela 20	040-005-138-20	---	1
Parcela 22	040-005-138-22	---	1
Parcela 23	040-005-138-23	---	1
<b>Block 139</b>			
Parcela 01	040-005-139-01	Residencial San Agustín	4
Parcela 02	040-005-139-02	---	1
Parcela 04	040-005-139-04	---	1
Parcela 05	040-005-139-05	---	1
Parcela 06	040-005-139-06	---	1
Parcela 07	040-005-139-07	---	1
Parcela 08	040-005-139-08	---	1
<b>Block 140</b>			
Parcela 01	040-005-140-01	---	1
Parcela 02	040-005-140-02	---	1
Parcela 03	040-005-140-03	---	1
Parcela 05	040-005-140-05	---	1
Parcela 07	040-005-140-07	---	1

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Parcela 13	040-005-140-13	---	1
<b>Block 141</b>			
Parcela 08 and Parcela 09	040-005-141-08- 040-005-141-09	---	1
Parcela 10	040-005-141-10 A	---	1
<b>Block 142</b>			
Parcela 02	040-006-142-02	Condominio Torre de la Reina	1
<b>Block 143</b>			
Parcela 01	040-016-143-01	Carcel de Puerta de Tierra, today Archivo General de Puerto Rico	2
Parcela 02	040-016-143-02	(Colectiva Tabacalera)	1
<b>Block 144</b>			
Parcela 01	040-016-144-01	Templo del Maestro	1
<b>Block 145</b>			
Parcela 03	040-006-145-03	Supreme Court Building	1
<b>Block 146</b>			
Parcela 03	040-016-146-03	---	1
Parcela 04	040-016-146-04	---	1
Parcela 05	040-016-146-05	---	1
<b>Block 147</b>			
Parcela 01	040-017-147-01	---	1
Parcela 03	040-017-147-03	Edificio Caribe	1
<b>Block 148</b>			
Parcela 01	040-017-148-01	---	1
Parcela 12	040-017-148-12	---	1
Parcela 17	040-017-148-17	Caribe Hilton Hotel	1
<b>Block 150</b>			
Parcela 01	040-015-150-01	El Falansterio de Puerta de Tierra	9
<b>Block 151</b>			
Parcela 01	040-015-151-01	Residencial San Antonio	5
<b>Block 153</b>			
Parcela 01	040-016-153-01	Cárcel Municipal	1
Parcela 03	040-016-153-03	Hogar Infantil	1
<b>Block 155</b>			
Parcela 03	040-014-155-03	Departamento de Agricultura	1
Parcela 04	040-014-155-04		
<b>Block 156</b>			
Parcela 01	040-015-156-01	Policia de Puerto Rico Headquarters	1
Parcela 03	040-015-156-03	---	1
Parcela 04	040-015-156-04	Policia de Puerto Rico	1
<b>Block 157</b>			
Parcela 02	040-015-157-02	---	1
Parcela 03	040-015-157-03	Administración General de Suministros	1
<b>Block 159</b>			
Parcela 01	040-014-159-01	Storage building, Port District	1
<b>Block 160</b>			
Parcela 01	040-015-160-01	Pyramid Products Inc. Office building	1
<b>Block 170</b>			
Parcela 10	040-016-170-10	US Engineer Office building	1
Parcela 13	040-016-170-13	---	2
Parcela 14	040-016-170-14	Food and Drug Administration facilities	7
Parcela 16	040-016-170-16	Club Náutico	1
<b>Total</b>			<b>178</b>

The number of contributing buildings (178) represents 66% of the total number of buildings (270) found in the Puerta de Tierra Historic District.

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It is relevant to note that a large number of buildings are assigned to the noncontributing category due to the fact that they are in a state of disrepair. Buildings originally constructed during the first three decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century that have been altered and therefore lack historic integrity form the second largest group. Finally, there are a few modern buildings that lack cultural significance altogether on the basis of their construction date. (See Table 8.)

TABLE 8

## PUERTA DE TIERRA HISTORIC DISTRICT NONCONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS

BLOCK / PARCELA	CADASTRE NUMBER	NAME OF PROPERTY	Bldg
<b>Block 67</b>			
Parcela 08	040-003-067-08	Condominio Capitolio Plaza	1
<b>Block 89</b>			
Parcela 04	040-002-089-04	Colonial Parking	1
<b>Block 90</b>			
Parcela 08	040-003-090-08	Sheraton Hotel	1
<b>Block 92</b>			
Parcela 07	040-002-092-07	Condominio Harbor Plaza	1
<b>Block 106</b>			
Parcela 01	040-003-106-01	Condominio Reina de Castilla	1
<b>Block 107</b>			
Parcela 17	040-003-107-17	---	1
Parcela 25	040-003-107-25	---	1
Parcela 26	040-003-107-26	---	1
Parcela 27	040-003-107-27	---	1
Parcela 29	040-003-107-29	---	1
<b>Block 108</b>			
Parcela 02 Parcela 07	040-004-108-02	Luis a Ferré Office Building and Parking Deck	1
Parcela 03	040-004-108-03	Edificio Corrada del Río/ Edificio Covadonga	1
<b>Block 109</b>			
Parcela 06	040-004-109-06	---	1
<b>Block 110</b>			
Parcela 12	040-004-110-12	---	1
Parcela 13	040-004-110-13	---	1
<b>Block 111</b>			
Parcela 01	040-004-111-01	---	1
<b>Block 117</b>			
Parcela 11	040-004-117-11	---	1
<b>Block 119</b>			
Parcela 02 Parcela 03	040-005-119-02 040-005-119-03	---	1
<b>Block 120</b>			
Parcela 07	040-005-120-07	---	1
<b>Block 121</b>			
Parcela 01 Parcela 07	040-005-121-01 040-005-121-07	---	1
Parcela 02	040-005-121-02	---	1
Parcela 05	040-005-121-05	---	1
Parcela 06	040-005-121-06	---	1

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<b>Block 123</b>			
Parcela 06	040-005-123-06	---	1
Parcela 07	040-005-123-07	---	1
Parcela 14	040-005-123-14	El Hamburger	1
<b>Block 125</b>			
Parcela 02	040-006-125-02	Public Baths	1
Parcela 03	040-006-125-03	Public Baths, Restaurant	2
<b>Block 127</b>			
Parcela 03	040-004-127-03	---	1
Parcela 04	040-004-127-04	---	1
Parcela 05	040-004-127-05	---	1
Parcela 07	040-004-127-07	---	1
<b>Block 128</b>			
Parcela 02	040-005-128-02	Funeraria San Agustín	1
Parcela 07	040-005-128-07	---	1
Parcela 11	040-005-128-11	---	1
Parcela 12	040-005-128-12	---	2
Parcela 116	040-005-128-16	---	1
<b>Block 129</b>			
Parcela 03	040-005-129-03	---	1
<b>Block 130</b>			
Parcela 03	040-005-130-03	---	1
Parcela 04	040-005-130-04	---	1
Parcela 05	040-005-130-05	---	1
Parcela 06	040-005-130-06	---	1
Parcela 07	040-005-130-07	---	1
Parcela 09	040-005-130-09 A	---	1
Parcela 12	040-005-130-12	---	1
Parcela 16	040-005-130-16	---	1
Parcela 17	040-005-130-17	---	1
<b>Block 131</b>			
Parcela 03	040-005-131-03	---	1
Parcela 04	040-005-131-04	CDT Dr M Quevedo Báez	1
Parcela 05	040-005-131-05	---	1
Parcela 06	040-005-131-06	---	1
<b>Block 132</b>			
Parcela 01	040-005-132-01	---	1
Parcela 02	040-005-132-02	---	1
Parcela 09	040-005-132-09	---	1
Parcela 22	040-005-132-22	Condominio Atlantis	1
<b>Block 134</b>			
Parcela 01	040-006-134-01	Administration building and Pabellón de la Paz, Luis Muñoz Rivera Park	2
<b>Block 137</b>			
Parcela 01	040-004-137-01	Ferretería Méndez	1
Parcela 27	040-004-137-27	---	1
Parcela 28	040-004-137-28	---	1
Parcela 29	040-004-137-29	---	1
Parcela 30	040-004-137-30	---	2
Parcela 36	040-004-137-36	---	1
<b>Block 138</b>			
Parcela 19	040-005-138-19	---	1
Parcela 20	040-005-138-20	---	1
<b>Block 140</b>			
Parcela 10B	040-005-140-10B	---	2
Parcela 11	040-005-140-11	---	1
Parcela 12	040-005-140-12	---	1
<b>Block 143</b>			
Parcela 03	040-016-143-03	West Indies Advertising	1

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<b>Block 144</b>			
Parcela 02	040-016-144-02	Condominio Millenium	1
<b>Block 145</b>			
Parcela 03	040-006-145-03	Library Buildings, Supreme Court	2
<b>Block 146</b>			
Parcela 02	040-016-146-02	Condominio Caribe Plaza	1
<b>Block 147</b>			
Parcela 12	040-017-147-12	Condominio Bahía Plaza	1
Parcela 13	040-017-147-13	Condominio Laguna Plaza / Condominio Condado Lagoon Villas II	1
Parcela 14	040-017-147-14		
<b>Block 148</b>			
Parcela 09	040-017-148-09	Condominio Condado Lagoon	2
Parcela 16	040-006-125-03	Kiosk, Public Bath	2
<b>Block 149</b>			
Parcela 02	040-005-149-02	---	1
Parcela 04	040-005-149-04	---	1
Parcela 05	040-005-149-05	---	1
<b>Block 152</b>			
Parcela 03	040-016-152-03	---	1
Parcela 04	040-016-152-04	---	1
<b>Block 153</b>			
Parcela 04	040-016-153-04	San Juan Fire Station building	1
<b>Block 154</b>			
Parcela 02	040-016-154-02	---	1
<b>Block 155</b>			
Parcela 02	040-014-155-02	---	1
<b>Block 156</b>			
Parcela 02	040-015-156-02	---	1
<i>Total</i>			<b>92</b>

The number of noncontributing buildings (92) represents 34% of the total number of buildings (270) in the Puerta de Tierra Historic District.

**Domestic Architecture**

There exist varied examples of domestic architecture in the Puerta de Tierra Historic District including: apartment buildings, single-family houses, public housing projects, and tenement house buildings. Research and field investigation carried out for this nomination has found 46 tenement house buildings.<sup>55</sup> This staggering number is unique to the island. (See Figure 19.) (See Table 9.)

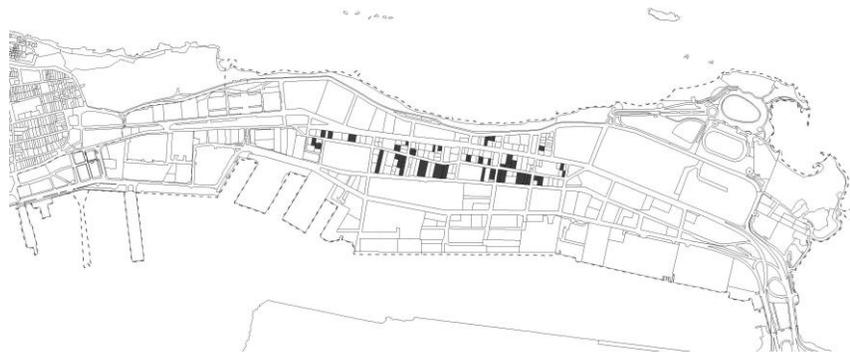


Figure 19. The Puerta de Tierra Historic District tenement house buildings.

<sup>55</sup> It is possible the number of tenement house buildings may be higher given the fact that some buildings have been altered drastically making it difficult to assess, even when using aerial photographs, whether they are examples of the type or not. In any case, there is no other place in Puerto Rico with such a high concentration of tenement-house buildings.

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TABLE 9

PUERTA DE TIERRA HISTORIC DISTRICT TENEMENT HOUSE BUILDINGS<sup>56</sup>

BLOCK	PARCELA	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	CONTRIBUTING
Block 109	Parcela 02	1920s-1930s	x
Block 109	Parcela 04	1920s-1930s	x
Block 110	Parcela 42	1930s	x
Block 110	Parcela 13	1930s	---
Block 120	Parcela 04	1920s-1930s	x
Block 120	Parcela 05	1930s	x
Block 123	Parcela 11	1930s	x
Block 127	Parcela 06	1920s-1930s	x
Block 127	Parcela 09	1920s-1930s	x
Block 128	Parcela 05	1923	x
Block 128	Parcela 06	1923	x
Block 128	Parcela 07	1930s	---
Block 128	Parcela 14	1960s	x
Block 128	Parcela 15	1932	x
Block 130	Parcela 11	1920s	x
Block 130	Parcela 14	1920s	x
Block 130	Parcela 15	1920s	x
Block 130	Parcela 18	1930s	x
Block 130	Parcela 20	1920s	x
Block 131	Parcela 02	1930s	x
Block 131	Parcela 10A	1930s	x
Block 131	Parcela 11	1920s	x
Block 131	Parcela 12	1920s	x
Block 132	Parcela 06	1930s	x
Block 132	Parcela 08	1930s	x
Block 137	Parcela 11	1920s	x
Block 137	Parcela 24	1930s	x
Block 137	Parcela 26	1920s	x
Block 137	Parcela 30	1930s	---
Block 137	Parcela 33	1950s	x
Block 137	Parcela 34	1920s	x
Block 138	Parcela 11	1920s	x
Block 138	Parcela 17	1930s	x
Block 138	Parcela 22	1930s	x
Block 139	Parcela 02	1920s	x
Block 139	Parcela 04	1920s	x
Block 139	Parcela 05	1920s	x
Block 139	Parcela 06	1920s	x
Block 140	Parcela 01	1920s	x
Block 140	Parcela 02	1920s	x
Block 140	Parcela 03	1920s	x
Block 140	Parcela 05	1920s	x
Block 140	Parcela 07	1920s	x
Block 140	Parcela 13	1920s	x
Block 141	Parcela 08	1922	x
Block 141	Parcela 09		
Block 141	Parcela 10	1920	x

<sup>56</sup> Question marks in entries reflect doubts regarding possible transformations. As expected of buildings created for the financially strapped, most construction dates are undocumented. Approximate dating has been carried out based on stylistic features and knowledge of the historic district's evolution. Some buildings do include dates on their façades.

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As expected of a rich and complex sector like the Puerta de Tierra Historic District there are multiple examples of varied stylistic periods and aesthetic affiliations. (See Table 10.) The defensive lines and their structures represent the earliest stylistic expressions. All are interpretations of Renaissance and Baroque military European military architecture.

The sector is particularly bountiful regarding 20<sup>th</sup> century revivalist expressions, such as the Neo-Gothic, Neo-Mesopotamian, Neo-Arab, Castellated, Mediterranean Revival, and varied types of Classicisms. Side by side with this impressive catalogue of historicisms, Art Deco, Modernist and Brutalist expressions are also found. Given the fact some sectors of the Puerta de Tierra Historic District were designed to serve as showcase of the American way of life, City Beautiful Movement and Beaux Arts architectural rhizomes are also found within the historic district boundaries.

TABLE 10

PUERTA DE TIERRA HISTORIC DISTRICT ARCHITECTURAL STYLES<sup>57</sup>

BLOCK/PARCELA	NAME	ARCHITECTURAL STYLE
<b>Block 97</b>		
Parcela 01	<b>YMCA</b> (B.V. White, 1913)	Beaux Arts
Parcela 02	<b>Ateneo Puertorriqueño</b> (Francisco Roldán, 1923)	Art Deco/ Moorish Revival
Parcela 03	<b>Biblioteca Carnegie</b> (Ramón Carbia, 1914)	Classical Revival
Parcela 04	<b>Casa de España</b> (Pedro de Castro y Besosa, 1932)	Mediterranean Revival
Parcela 05	<b>Office buildings for the legislators (west annex)</b> (Torro-Ferrer, 1955)	International Style
<b>Block 98</b>		
Parcela 01	<b>El Capitolio de Puerto Rico</b> (Rafael Carmoega Morales, 1929)	Classical Revival
<b>Block 99</b>		
Parcela 01	<b>Office buildings for the legislators (east annex)</b> (Torro-Ferrer, 1955)	International Style
<b>Block 100</b>		
Parcela 01	<b>School of Tropical Medicine</b> (Joseph O'Kelly/Rafael Carmoega Morales, 1936)	Mediterranean Revival
<b>Block 101</b>		
Parcela 02	<b>Puerto Rico National Guard building</b> (unknown, c. 1935)	Classical Revival
<b>Block 102</b>		
Parcela 01	<b>Gran Logia Soberana de Puerto Rico</b> [Archivo Histórico de Puerto Rico/ Comisión Industrial de Puerto Rico/ Departamento de la Familia] (Antonin Nechodoma, 1913/1930)	Art Deco
Parcela 02	<b>Cruz Roja Americana Capítulo de Puerto Rico</b> (Rafael Carmoega/Joseph O'Kelly, 1935)	Mediterranean Revival
Parcela 03	<b>Edificio Ramón Mellado Parsons</b> (Jose Firpi, c. 1950)	International Style

<sup>57</sup>

Only a sample of buildings is listed in Table 10.

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<b>Block 107</b>		
Parcela 24	Commercial Building (unknown, c. 1945)	Art Deco/International Style
Parcela 35	<b>Edificio Intendente Ramírez</b> (Toro Ferrer Arquitectos, 1969)	Modern Movement
<b>Block 108</b>		
Parcela 05	<b>Insular Police Force General Headquarters Building</b> (unknown, c 1935)	Art Deco
<b>Block 109</b>		
Parcela 04	Tenement House Building (unknown, 1920s-1930s)	Beaux Arts
<b>Block 110</b>		
Parcela 01	<b>Puerto Rico Medical Arts</b> (attributed to Joseph O'Kelly, 1940)	Mediterranean Revival
Parcela 07	<b>Instituto Oftálmico de Puerto Rico</b> (unknown, 1939)	Art Deco
Parcela 06	<b>Primera Iglesia Bautista de Puerto Rico</b> (unknown, 1920)	Neo-Byzantine/ Neo-Paleo Christian
Parcela 15	<b>Federal Sales Company Building</b> (unknown, c 1930)	Mediterranean Revival
Parcela 42	<b>Sevilla Court Building</b> (Pedro de Castro, c 1930)	Mediterranean Revival
<b>Block 118</b>		
Parcela 01	<b>U.S. Department of Commerce Weather Bureau</b> (Albert B. Nicholson, 1930)	Mediterranean Revival
Parcela 02	<b>Escuela Graduada José Celso Barbosa</b> (del Valle & Co., 1927)	Beaux Arts
Parcela 04	<b>Asilo de Ancianos Desamparados</b> (Architect José Lázaro Costa, Eng. Carlos E. Lázaro García, Eng. Carlos A. Lázaro León y Architect. Enrique J. Lázaro León, 1913)	Late Gothic Revival
<b>Block 119</b>		
Parcela 01	<b>Church, School, Covent and Parish House of San Agustín<sup>58</sup></b> (John Niggle, 1915)	Romanesque Revival
<b>Block 120</b>		
Parcela 01	<b>Smallwood Brothers building</b> (Albert Kahn, 1922)	Commercial Style
Parcela 06	<b>Iglesia Evangelica Luterana de San Pablo</b> (unknown, 1916)	Neo-Gothic
<b>Block 122</b>		
Parcela 01	<b>Escuela Brumbaugh (Puerta de Tierra Public School)</b> (G. R. Gilmore, 1912)	Mission
<b>Block 123</b>		
Parcela 09	<b>Santiago Panzardi building</b> [Partido Popular Democrático Headquarters] (unknown, 1928)	Commercial Style
<b>Block 124</b>		
Parcela 01	<b>US Naval Radio Station– Casa Cuna</b> (unknown, 1940s)	Art Deco
<b>Block 128</b>		
Parcela 01	<b>Teatro Eureka</b> (unknown, 1930)	Art Deco
Parcela 09	<b>Iglesia Metodista</b>	Neo-Romanesque

<sup>58</sup> The architect of the Iglesia de San Agustín, Mr John Niggle, first designed the building using Mission Style. However, as the project progressed he found that the style “was not effective for such a large building” so he changed it to Romanesque. “American Marble in Porto Rico”, *Stone*. Volume XXXIX, July 1918, No. 7, 322.

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		(unknown, 1938)	
<b>Block 131</b>			
Parcela 01	<b>Teatro Sylvia Rexach</b> [Teatro Martí/ Cine Lara] (Pedro de Castro y Besosa, 1937)		Catalan Modernism
Parcela 02	<b>Edificio Moragón</b> (unknown, 1920)		Spanish Revival
<b>Block 132</b>			
Parcela 08	Apartament Building (Pedro Méndez Mercado)		Moderne
<b>Block 133</b>			
Parcela 01	<b>Bastión de Isabel II</b> (unknown, c 1799)		Late Renaissance/Early Baroque
<b>Block 134</b>			
Parcela 02	<b>Luis Muñoz Rivera Park</b> (Bennett, Parsons & Frost, 1924)		Beaux Arts/ City Beautiful Movement
<b>Block 135</b>			
Parcela 01	<b>Parque Sixto Escobar</b> (Rafael Carmoega Morales, 1932)		Spanish Revival
<b>Block 136</b>			
Parcela 01	<b>Hotel Normandie</b> (Raúl Reichard, 1939)		Moderne/Art Deco
<b>Block 138</b>			
Parcela 17	Tenement House Building (unknown, 1930s)		Mediterranean Revival
<b>Block 141</b>			
Parcela 08 Parcela 09	Tenement House Building (unknown, 1922)		Classical Revival
<b>Block 142</b>			
Parcela	<b>Torre de la Reina</b> (William M. Biscombe, 1968)		Modern Movement
<b>Block 143</b>			
Parcela 01	<b>Cárcel de Puerta de Tierra</b> [Archivo General de Puerto Rico] (Domingo Sermero, 1887)		Classical Revival
<b>Block 144</b>			
Parcela 01	<b>Templo del Maestro</b> (Joseph O'Kelly, 1935)		Beaux Arts, Mediterranean Revival and Classical Revival
<b>Block 145</b>			
Parcela 03	<b>Supreme Court Building</b> (Toro-Ferrer and Charles H. Warner, Jr., 1956)		International Style
<b>Block 146</b>			
Parcela 05	<b>Condominio San Luis</b> (Rene O. Ramírez, c.1962)		International Style
<b>Block 147</b>			
Parcela 03	<b>Caribe Office Building</b> (Enrique Gutierrez, 1969)		International Style
<b>Block 148</b>			
Parcelas 01, 02, 17	<b>Caribe Hilton Hotel</b> (Toro-Ferrer & Torregrosa, 1947)		International Style
Parcela 13	<b>Fortín de San Jerónimo del Boquerón</b> (unknown, c. 1799)		Late Renaissance/Early Baroque
<b>Block 150</b>			
Parcela 01	<b>El Falansterio de Puerta Tierra</b> (Jorge Ramírez de Arellano, 1937)		Moderne
<b>Block 153</b>			
Parcela 01	<b>Cárcel Municipal</b> (unknown, 1937)		Art Deco
Parcela 03	<b>Hogar Infantil</b> (Hernando Hernández Batista, c 1930)		Mediterranean Revival

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<b>Block 157</b>		
Parcela 03	<b>Administración General de Suministros</b> (William Schimmelpfennig, Ruiz y Asociados, 1949)	Modern Movement
<b>Block 160</b>		
Parcela 01	<b>Pyramid Products Inc. Office building</b> (unknown, c. 1935)	Art Deco
<b>Block 170</b>		
Parcela 10	<b>US Engineer Office building</b> (William Schimmelpfennig, 1940)	Art Deco
Parcela 14	<b>Food and Drug Administration</b> (Luis A. Simón, 1941-42)	Moderne/Art Deco
Parcela 16	<b>Club Náutico de San Juan</b> (Joseph O'Kelly, 1951)	Modern Movement
<b>Block 172</b>		
Parcela 02	<b>Tajamar</b> (unknown, second half of the 18 <sup>th</sup> century)	Late Renaissance/ Early Baroque

As mentioned, the Puerta de Tierra District includes examples from varied architectural styles that are the only ones of their kind in San Juan Islet, Puerto Rico and the USA. A summary of major styles is presented below.

**A Late Renaissance/Early Baroque**

Two small military structures – the Bastión de Isabel II and Tajamar – part of San Juan Islet’s second and third defensive line, respectively, exemplify the earliest post-1519 architectural expression preserved in the Puerta de Tierra Historic District. Part of the military masterplan that defended San Juan Islet for centuries, these bastioned defenses evidence state of the art martial and artistic influence. The use of the bastion is a Renaissance solution experimented with throughout Europe while the conceptual idea that the urban core was one holistic entity served by one military masterplan depicts a Late Renaissance/Early Baroque approach. All buildings belonging to this expression are masonry structures.

**B City Beautiful Movement / Beaux Arts**

After 1898, USA urban and architectural influence grew exponentially in Puerto Rico. City Beautiful Movement ideals, first experimented with in the 1893 Chicago Columbian Fair, became the favorite instrument to establish symbols of colonial power. During the first three decades after the invasion, the Puerta de Tierra Historic District transformed into a showcase of the American way of life. In Puerto Rico, interpretation of this expression and its aesthetic rhizomes needs to incorporate an analysis of the Third Space postcolonial theories to appreciate the ideal and physical space gestated by the Puerta de Tierra Historic District, at a time when architectural mimicry battled side by side with social and political archetypes. Colonial imitation is the result of the colonist desire to replicate and embrace the culture of the colonizers. Underscoring architectural and urban mimicry the USA transformed Puerto Rico into a recognizable Other.

*... Bhabha se refería, sobre todo, a las identidades híbridas que se fraguan en contextos que han sido sometidos a procesos de colonización durante décadas y en los que el sujeto colonizado construye una identidad intersticial, asumiendo parte de los rasgos culturales de su colonizador, pero transformándolos desde sus códigos culturales propios; convirtiéndolos, pues, en algo distinto. Esa identidad híbrida genera un Tercer Espacio que escapa ya la propia dicotomía colonizador/colonizado*  
 ...<sup>59</sup>

<sup>59</sup> Translation: “Bhabha refers to hybrid entities formed in contexts that have suffered decade-long colonization processes where the colonial subject forges an interstitial identity that embraces part of the cultural traits of the colonizer, transforming them by using the colonized cultural codes and transforming this influence into something different. This hybrid identity

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This search for a Third Space was conceived as a showcase for the “new” Puerto Rico, modeled after the USA. As a result, the Puerta de Tierra Historic District was dressed by means of historicist architectural versions iconic of the USA grand urban schemes by means of which buildings were conceived as civic icons of novel political and social visions. Grand revivals rooted in historicisms were favored in the creation of an urban dorsal spine symbolic of the new Puerto Rico. This alignment still has the power to impress and emotionally move thanks to its richness and diversity. Classicist-inspired expressions like the ones present in the US Department of Commerce Weather Bureau and YMCA Buildings, as well as in the Asilo de Ancianos de Nuestra Señora de la Providencia principal façade, exemplify this aesthetic approach.

### **C Medievalisms**

The Chapel of the Asilo de Ancianos de Nuestra Señora de la Providencia abandons the Neo-Mesopotamian façade treatment in favor of the Neo-Gothic. The crisp lines of the quadripartite ribs and pointed arches, as well as the magnificent stained-glass windows repertoire, evidence this affiliation. The Iglesia Evangélica Luterana de San Pablo is another example of the use of the semantics. Use of the Neo-Early Christian or Neo-Romanesque in the Iglesia Bautista de Puerto Rico, as well as the Castellated in the Teatro Sylvia Rexach and the Edificio Moregón, exemplify the attraction Medievalisms had for designers during the first three decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### **D Mediterranean Revival (Hispanomediterráneo)**

The Mediterranean Revival, interpreted at the time as an option to Modernism’s minimalism, was a favorite architectural style during the first three decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Rooted in the Mediterranean (Italian, Spanish and Portuguese, among other expressions) Renaissance, the style was invented in the USA. Blank stuccoed walls are contrasted to rich decorative detailing underscoring the elegance and sophistication of the building. Colored terracotta motifs add a sense of elegant luxury to the Classically inspired (principally Italian Renaissance and High Renaissance) organizations. Imported from the USA, the use of the style betrays a desire to be “modern” without abandoning traditional architectural ideals, such as rich decoration and Classicist inspiration.

### **E Art Deco**

Side by side with varied historicisms, Art Deco was used to impart buildings with an air of modernity since the aesthetic expression was also interpreted as an alternative to the ascetic Modernism. The buildings housing the Instituto Oftálmico de Puerto Rico, US Engineer Office building and US Naval Radio Station, as well as several tenement house buildings, use this style as an architectural “brand” associated to progress and innovation.

### **F Modernism**

Modernist expressions were integrated to the Puerta de Tierra Historic District during the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Exposed reinforced concrete, geometric brise soleil and Modern Movement influences are found in the Intendente Ramírez Building. One of the buildings of the Asilo de Ancianos de Nuestra Señora de la Providencia and several buildings found along the south side of Avenida Constitución also reflect this tendency. Among the organizations directly indebted to the International Style are the Hotel Caribe Hilton, Condominio San Luis, Condominio Torre de la Reina and Edificio Caribe.

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generates the Third Space that escapes the colonizer/colonized dichotomy . . .” Olalla Castro Hernández, *Entre-lugares de la modernidad Filosofía, literatura y Terceros Espacios* (Madrid: Siglo XXI de España Editores SA), 2017), p 15.

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**G Post-Modernism**

In 2019 the buildings grouped under this style have not reached the required 50 years by the National Register. Therefore, they have been listed as noncontributing resources in this district. This style developed in late 1960s but flourished in the 1970 through the 1990s. There are five distinct examples within the district: West Indies Advertising Building designed by Thomas S. Marvel (1983); State government office building at 360 Avenida Constitución designed by Héctor Arce (1980s); the San Juan Fire Station building at 517 Avenida Fernández Juncos (1980s); the commercial building at Avenida Constitucion 51 corner Calle San Juan Bautista (1970s); and the Office building at Avenida Constitucion 302 (1970s).

IV Structures

The Puerta de Tierra Historic District structures fall into the following categories: the Spanish fortifications, utilities facilities, parking structure and 36 streets, most of which were platted during the 19<sup>th</sup> century by the Spanish. (See Table 11.)

TABLE 11

STRUCTURES (CONTRIBUTING AND NON CONTRIBUTING)

BLOCK/PARCELA	CADASTRE NUMBER	NAME OF STRUCTURE	CONSTRUCTION DATE	CONTRIBUTING (C)/NONCONTRIBUTING (NC)
<b>Block 89</b>				
Parcela 03	040-002-089-03	Municipal Parking (Doña Fela)	C 1968	<b>NC</b>
<b>Block 117</b>				
Parcela 08	040-004-117-08	Parking structure	20 <sup>th</sup> century	<b>NC</b>
<b>Block 133</b>				
Parcela 01	040-005-133-01	Bastión de Isabel II	18 <sup>th</sup> century	<b>C</b>
<b>Block 148</b>				
Parcela 13	040-017-148-13	Fortín San Gerónimo del Boquerón	17-18 <sup>th</sup> centuries	<b>C</b>
Parcela 16	040-017-148-16	Batería del Escambrón	18 <sup>th</sup> century	<b>C</b>
<b>Block 159</b>				
Parcela 01	040-014-159-01	[Quayside, Port District]	20 <sup>th</sup> century	<b>C</b>
<b>Block 162</b>				
Parcela 01	040-016-162-01	Power Substation	20 <sup>th</sup> century	<b>NC</b>
<b>Block 172</b>				
Parcela 02	022-093-172-02	Tajamar	18 <sup>th</sup> century	<b>C</b>
<b>N/A</b>				
N/A	N/A	Lower battery of the Fortín San Antonio	18 <sup>th</sup> century	<b>C</b>
N/A	N/A	Puente Ferroviario San Antonio	20 <sup>th</sup> century	<b>C</b>
N/A	N/A	Puente Guillermo Estéves	21 <sup>st</sup> century	<b>NC</b>
N/A	N/A	Puente San Antonio	21 <sup>st</sup> century	<b>NC</b>
NAME (STREETS & AVENUES)		HISTORIC NAME	DATE	CONTRIBUTING (C)/NONCONTRIBUTING (NC)

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Avenida Muñoz Rivera	Calle San Francisco (proposed) Boulevard del Mar (proposed) Army Boulevard (proposed) Constructed	19 <sup>th</sup> century 20 <sup>th</sup> century 20 <sup>th</sup> century 20 <sup>th</sup> century	<b>C</b>
Calle Los Rosales (aka Calle San Jerónimo)	---	20 <sup>th</sup> century	<b>C</b>
Avenida Constitución	Carretera del Puente Carretera Militar Carretera a Caguas Avenida de Ponce de León	16 <sup>th</sup> century (sections)	<b>C</b>
Paseo Covadonga	Paseo de Puerta de Tierra	19 <sup>th</sup> century	<b>C</b>
Calle San Agustín	---	19 <sup>th</sup> century	<b>C</b>
Calle Coconut Palm	---	20 <sup>th</sup> century	<b>C</b>
Calle del Tren	---	21 <sup>st</sup> century	<b>NC</b>
Calle Muelle	---	20 <sup>th</sup> century	<b>C</b>
Calle Comercio	Camino del Salvavidas	18 <sup>th</sup> century	<b>C</b>
Avenida Manuel Fernández Juncos	Carretera Número 1 PR 1	20 <sup>th</sup> century	<b>C</b>
Paseo Gilberto Concepción de Gracia	Carretera Número 1, Calle Marina, Avenida Fernández Juncos	1980s	<b>NC</b>
Calle Sur	---	20 <sup>th</sup> century	<b>C</b>
Calle Las Palmeras	---	20 <sup>th</sup> century	<b>C</b>
Calle Cinco	---	20 <sup>th</sup> century	<b>C</b>
Calle Tres	---	20 <sup>th</sup> century	<b>C</b>
Calle Ramón Power	---	19 <sup>th</sup> century	<b>C</b>
Calle Martín Fernández	---	20 <sup>th</sup> century	<b>C</b>
Calle Lugo Vitías	---	19 <sup>th</sup> century	<b>C</b>
Calle San Juan Bautista aka Raphy Leavitt	---	19 <sup>th</sup> century	<b>C</b>
No Name	---	19 <sup>th</sup> century	<b>C</b>
Calle Matías Ledesma	---	19 <sup>th</sup> century	<b>C</b>
Calle Tadeo Rivera	---	19 <sup>th</sup> century	<b>C</b>
Calle Padre Hoff	---	19 <sup>th</sup> century	<b>C</b>
Calle Pelayo	---	19 <sup>th</sup> century	<b>C</b>
Calle San Andrés	---	19 <sup>th</sup> century	<b>C</b>
Calle General Estéves	---	20 <sup>th</sup> century	<b>C</b>
Calle Valdés	---	19 <sup>th</sup> century	<b>C</b>
Calle Capitán Berreteaga	---	19 <sup>th</sup> century	<b>C</b>
Calle Rvdo Gerardo Dávila	---	20 <sup>th</sup> century	<b>C</b>
Calle Paseo General Pershing	---	20 <sup>th</sup> century	<b>C</b>
Calle General Contreras	---	20 <sup>th</sup> century	<b>C</b>
Calle José Antonio Corretjer	---	20 <sup>th</sup> century	<b>C</b>
Calle Nilita Vientós Gastón	---	20 <sup>th</sup> century	<b>C</b>
Paseo de Colón	---	20 <sup>th</sup> century	<b>C</b>
Calle Brumbaugh	---	20 <sup>th</sup> century	<b>C</b>
Street With No Name	---	19 <sup>th</sup> century	<b>C</b>
<b>Total</b>			<b>48</b>

Of 48 structures in the district seven structures are noncontributing while 41 are contributing to the Puerta de Tierra Historic District.

## V Object

An unusual number of contributing objects – statues, sculptural groups, and commemorative plaques, among others – are part of the different districts found within the Puerta de Tierra Historic District. (See

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Table 12.) Examples date from the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to the present. In terms of sculptures, all styles – from naturalistic to abstract – are represented. (Because they belong to the different districts they do not appear in the table below.)

The only exception of an object on its own is the Ateneo Puertorriqueño's contributing seated sculpture of Ramón Emeterio Betances. Although a relatively modern piece, the seated bronze figure contributes to the historic district by bringing to mind one of Puerto Rico's leading patriots who led the fight against the Spanish government fighting for Puerto Rico's independence. The piece sits in front of the Ateneo Puertorriqueño, a leading cultural group in the island founded during the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

TABLE 12

## PUERTA DE TIERRA HISTORIC DISTRICT OBJECTS

BLOCK / PARCELA	CADASTRE NUMBER	NUMBER	CONTRIBUTING (C)/ NON CONTRIBUTING (NC)
Block 103 Parcela 01	040-004-103-01	11	<b>NC</b>
Block 104 Parcela 01	040-004-104-01	1	<b>C</b>
Block 105 Parcela 01	040-004-105-01	1	<b>NC</b>
Block 107 Parcela 35	040-003-107-35	1	<b>C</b>
Block 124 Parcela 01	040-005-124-01	1	<b>C</b>
Block 170 Parcela 16	040-016-170-16	1	<b>C</b>
Block 172 Parcela 02	022-093-172-02	1	<b>NC</b>
Block 97 Parcela 02	040-003-097-02	1	<b>C</b>
<i>Total</i>		18	13 NC, 5 C

**Plazas, Promenades and Gardens**

Interestingly for a historic district that was stage for Old San Juan Historic District's first urban promenade (the 19<sup>th</sup> century Paseo de Covadonga or Paseo de Puerta de Tierra) and evidencing a 20<sup>th</sup> century urban interpretation, the number of plazas in the historic district is small. The handful that exist are part of individual historic districts.

The Puerta de Tierra Capitolio de Puerto Rico Commemorative District includes several plazas-within-plazas and monuments that intersect the 1920s City Beautiful Movement reinterpretation of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Paseo de Covadonga. The small plaza dedicated to Ramón Mellado Parsons to the west of this district manages to unite the difference in height that exists between the former Paseo de Covadonga and the Avenida Constitución.

On the western end of the Puerta de Tierra Recreational District, facing the Atlantic Ocean, is the 1960s Plaza de San Juan Bautista. Dedicated to the patron saint of the city and directly facing the north façade of the Capitolio de Puerto Rico, the quasi-abstract sculpture of a haranguing St John anchors the Modernist composition that was an interpretation of the 1920s Bennett, Parsons & Frost proposal. As mentioned, the entire northern coast forms the Puerta de Tierra Recreational District. This precinct is organized by stretches of the Atlantic Ocean shore and formal entertainment venues like the Playa El

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Escambrón, the Batería del Escambrón, Parque del Milenio and Parque Sixto Escobar. For a long stretch this district borders the Luis Muñoz Rivera Park (listed in the National Register of Historic Places), dated to the 1920s. This park follows traditional urban parks models rooted in 19<sup>th</sup> century European urban ideals. The so-called Paseo de Puerta de Tierra, recently revamped, hugs the northern shore until it reaches the Plaza de San Juan Bautista.

Along the port and bordering the Old San Juan Historic District one finds the 1990s Paseo de Concepción de Gracia. Until the 1980s, this area was considered Old San Juan's red-light district. During the 1980s and 1990s, efforts were made to eliminate such venues and to transform the port into a recreational place for residents and visitors alike.

The Puerta de Tierra Historic District treatment of plazas is quite different from the one found in the Old San Juan Historic District, where these spaces are relatively common elements underscoring the relevance of certain buildings. With the exception of the Plaza de San Juan Bautista in front of the Capitolio de Puerto Rico, the treatment was outmoded by 20<sup>th</sup> century standards. In this particular case, the plaza is divided from the building by a highway becoming an isolated entity in a manner quite different than traditional interpretations. Another interesting example is the plaza-like entrance to the Departamento de Hacienda, anchored by a sculpture of Intendente Ramírez. As is the case of the one above, the intention is quite different from earlier examples and responds to 20<sup>th</sup> century architectural ideals. All plazas and gardens are considered contributing and are included in their respective districts.

**Conclusion**

The Puerta de Tierra Historic District is a unique sector with a high degree of integrity that summarizes Puerto Rico and San Juan Islet's development. It not only includes one of two prehistoric archeological sites found in the isle but three of the five defensive lines that were part of the San Juan Islet 18<sup>th</sup> century military masterplan, components of which are listed in the UNESCO World Heritage Site List.

Poems, songs and short stories tell the story of a place considered the Other face of the Old San Juan Historic District that managed to survive dramatic changes throughout the centuries creating a unique physical and spiritual community. The Puerta de Tierra Historic District is culturally important in its own right and as urban vestibule to the Old San Juan Historic District. Serving as urban foyer to the oldest post 1492 city in Puerto Rico and the USA and second oldest in the American Hemisphere the futures of both historic districts are intimately intertwined.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "X" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- X A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
X C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
B Removed from its original location.
C A birthplace or a grave.
D A cemetery.
E A reconstructed building, object, or structure.
F A commemorative property.
G Less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture

Community Planning and Development

Landscape Architecture

Politic/ Government

Education

Period of Significance

1625-1970

Significant Dates

1625, 1769, 1799, 1867, 1881, 1883, 1887, 1897, 1905, 1922, 1929, 1937, 1939, 1940, 1949, 1955 1956, 1962, 1970

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

EB Homer (Clarke, Howe & Homer Architects); Purdy & Henderson; Julius and Albert Khan; John Niggle; Toro & Ferrer Arquitectos; Del Valle Zeno; Henry Klumb; Ramón Carbia; Hunter Randolph; Joseph O'Kelly; Albert B Nicholson; Lázaro Costa, Lázaro Janer, Lázaro León & Lázaro León; Rafael Carmoega

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**Name of Property****County and State****Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph**

The Puerta de Tierra Historic District nestles within its borders a most impressive collection of historic architectural and urban properties that embody distinctive characteristics of types, periods and methods of construction. Examples by distinguished Puerto Rican and USA designers are included in this exceptional assortment. The Puerta de Tierra Historic District is a unique and distinguishable entity representative of varied cultural aspirations. It possesses cultural significance in its own right and as urban vestibule to the Old San Juan Historic District, a National Register of Historic Places and National Historic Landmark district.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

PART ONE  
PROLOGUE: ONE ISLET - ONE CITY

**Puerta de Tierra Historic District's First Post-1519 Stage of Development (1519-1625)**

Conquistador Juan Ponce de León founded Caparra, Puerto Rico's first European settlement, in 1508. Formally known as the ciudad del Puerto Rico (City by the Rich Port), the site was surrounded by plenty of drinking water sources, forests, quarries and farmland. It also was close to the gold mines that made the island such an attractive place during the early years of the Spanish Conquest. In spite of its many positive aspects, however, the venture was doomed from day one. Only a treacherous miles-long road, bordered by swamps and thick mangroves, connected the embryonic community to its life-sustaining port. Mosquitos and other hazardous animals<sup>60</sup> compounded problems. Lack of defense from the natives' attacks added difficulties that outweighed all positive features.

Even though Ponce de León's exploration and conquest of Puerto Rico was detailed in the legal contract (*capitulaciones*) he entered on 15 June 1508 with Friar Nicolás de Ovando,<sup>61</sup> it is obvious he interpreted Caparra as a personal holding, in the manner of medieval fief. Use of the introverted tower-house architectural typology (known as *torre*, *casa-torre* and *casa-fuerte*), a by then old-fashioned domestic type, substantiates he was not necessarily thinking in terms of an urban organism.<sup>62</sup> Judging from the settlers' vociferous complaints, his positive assessment of the site was at odds with theirs. The conquistador's determined opposition to the move confirms he was more concerned about his future than the community's.<sup>63</sup> In fact, although he described Caparra as a city (*cibdad*), it is highly probable the

<sup>60</sup> One of the meanings of the word *caparra* is tick. Real Academia Española, *Diccionario de la lengua española*, word: *caparra*.

<sup>61</sup> While Nicolás de Ovando was authorized to establish Castilian-American settlements in America, consultation with the crown was expected. De Ovando, however, did not have formal authorization when he granted Ponce de León exploration rights to Puerto Rico. King Fernando's permission was given *a posteriori* on 3 May 1509. Salvador Brau, *La colonización de Puerto Rico Desde el descubrimiento de la Isla hasta la reversión de la corona española de los privilegios de Colón*, p 104. Before Ponce de León, Vicente Yáñez Pinzón enjoyed those rights (1505). Esteban Mira Caballos, *Nicolás de Ovando y los orígenes del sistema colonial español 1502-1509* (Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic: Patronato de la Ciudad Colonial de Santo Domingo, 2000), p 139.

<sup>62</sup> The *torre* architectural typology dates to the Middle Ages, if not earlier. During the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the *palazzo* – a single family, grand urban residence – was invented in Italy to replace the type. When used in an urban context the *torre's* introverted and bellicose character underscores political and social instability.

<sup>63</sup> As mentioned, the fact Ponce de León sought authorization to continue living in Caparra after 1519 evidences the strong personal attachment he felt for the Guaynabo site.

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settlement was closer to a *factoría*.<sup>64</sup> In the intervening years between 1508 (when Caparra was established) and 1519 (when it was abandoned, after the move to San Juan Islet was authorized) the crown wrestled power away from conquistadors transmuting urban and architectural goals in the American continent. By this time, it was obvious the Conquest presented complicated issues that could not be delegated to individuals.

Ponce de León was forced to accept the monarch envoy's decision that Caparra be abandoned in favor of San Juan Islet. In this manner, the Guaynabo settlement became an example of Cicero's dead city (*urbium cadaver*), a core with no future, the personal undertaking of a conquistador who probably never completely carried out subdivision and assignment of lots, peninsular legal requirements. Whether the intention was for Caparra to become a full-fledged urban center or not, there is no doubt the move transformed the prospective city: from an enterprise controlled by a conquistador, sited on a plain in the main island, to one organized by a legal representative of the Kingdom of Castile sited in an isle of its own.<sup>65</sup>



Figure 20. Plan of San Juan Bay, San Juan Islet and Caparra, Puerto Rico by Rodrigo de Figueroa, 12 September 1519.<sup>66</sup>

Puerta de Tierra post-1493 development began the moment Rodrigo de Figueroa penned the phrase "This is where the city will be." (*Aquí ha de estar la cibdad.*) on a 12 September 1519 plan of San Juan Islet.<sup>67</sup> (See Figure 20.) The *oidor*<sup>68</sup> travelled from Spain to Puerto Rico in order to appease protesting settlers. Agreeing Caparra's location was unsuitable, he selected the uninhabited (at the time) isle north of the bay as site for the new capital describing it as: *el mejor asiento para la Cibdad quen el mundo se pueda buscar*.<sup>69</sup> From that moment on, the Puerta de Tierra Historic District's development has been

<sup>64</sup> *Factorías* were settlements established by the Portuguese along the African coast, anchoring commercial activities, including the slave trade.

<sup>65</sup> According to some historians, upon the death of Queen Isabela I of Castille in 1504, her daughter Juana inherited the crown. Castille was jointly governed by her and her son, Emperor Carlos I (Carlos V of Spain). (Ferdinand, her father, had acted as regent for some years after the death of Felipe I, Juana's husband, and before Carlos, son of Felipe and Juana, came of age.)

<sup>66</sup> "Plano del asiento y del puerto de la ciudad de Puerto Rico, hecho por el licenciado Figueroa," Archivo General de Indias, Seville, MP-Santo Domingo, 1.

<sup>67</sup> On 15 June 1519, the Padres Jerónimos (St Jerome Order), charged by Cardinal Cisneros with management of the American colonies in 1516, approved the move of the settlement of ciudad de puerto Rico to San Juan Islet, a decision suspended out of deference towards the emperor's envoy (de Figueroa).

<sup>68</sup> During the 16<sup>th</sup> century, an *oidor* was equivalent to a notary-cum-judge.

<sup>69</sup> Translation: "The best site in the world for the city." "Información fecha [sic] por el Lyscenciado [sic] Rodrigo de Figueroa en la Ysla de Puerto Rico sobre mudar asiento," Archivo de Indias, Simancas, Spain, Patronato, Isla de Puerto-Rico, Gobierno, Papeles pertenecientes al buen gobierno de la Ysla de Sant Xoan de Puerto-Rico, Años 1510 a 1599, Est 2º, Caja 1º, Leg 1/23.

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intimately related to the capital city of San Juan. This relationship, in turn, was (still is) determined by the islet's geography: a thin rocky isle, inaccessible along most of its northern coast, framing a magnificent protected southern bay. Naturally draining morphology, great defense, impressive views and refreshing breezes were added bonuses. Notwithstanding the existence of a deep ravine in the place where the third defensive line (*tercera línea avanzada*) was later organized, the 16<sup>th</sup> century urban scheme is best summarized as one islet – one city. Evidence of this theoretical objective is the fact that the whole isle was considered the core's *ejido*, the area reserved for future urban growth. Change of patron (from conquistador to emperor) and locale (from a Guaynabo inland plain to a thin rocky islet) would influence the development of the Old San Juan and the Puerta de Tierra Historic Districts.

Because of the *ultramar* (beyond the sea) colonial nature of 16<sup>th</sup> century Caribbean settlements, the Canary Islands' port-city (*ciudadpuerto*) urban scheme was replicated quickly becoming a favorite. Conceived as one in a worldwide chain of commercial centers, the original San Juan was unwallled, a center sited close to the sea, rejecting millennia-old patterns. The port-city was one of two 15<sup>th</sup> century unwallled Canarian types.<sup>70</sup> Both (the other one is known as *ciudadterritorio* or territory-city) were conceived as peace-cities (*ciudades de la paz*) designed to organize a global commercial network. Guided by pacific objectives (*ciudad hecha desde la paz para la paz*) the schemes abandoned traditional urban configurations in favor of novel aspirations. The fact they had no walls facilitated moneymaking activities. San Juan de Puerto Rico was one such center.<sup>71</sup>

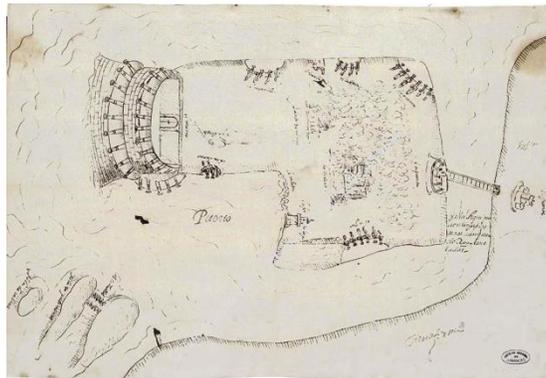


Figure 21. Plan of San Juan Islet, San Juan de Puerto Rico, 1598.<sup>72</sup>

Until the third decade of the 17<sup>th</sup> century the one islet – one city paradigm controlled San Juan Islet's urban growth. This condition was still preserved in 1598, even in the face of continuous enemy attacks that tested the novel idea of an unwallled enclave. As depicted in a plan dated this year, isolated bastions throughout the isle were proposed as intermediate solution to defend the theoretically depicted centrally located core. (See Figure 21.) Two ports along the southern shore underscored the ideal centralized location. While protection from enemies demanded formal defense, as late as 1598 the intention was to preserve the original unwallled peace-city scheme. Because the one islet – one city organization

<sup>70</sup> The Inter-Atlantic Paradigm describes the cultural interdependence that existed between the Canary Islands and America. Anthony M Stevens-Arroyo, "The Inter-Atlantic Paradigm: The Failure of Spanish Medieval Colonization of the Canary and the Caribbean Islands," *Society for Comparative Studies in Society and History* (Cambridge University Press: Volume 35, No 3, July 1993), pp 515-543; 515, Digital source: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/179144>. Arleen Pabón Charneco, "Puerta de Tierra, San Juan de Puerto Rico A Place of Memories and Meanings A Historic Context Interpreting the Period from 1519 to 2015" (Tallahassee, Florida, 2015), p 31.

<sup>71</sup> The peace-city paradigm was first interpreted in the context of San Juan de Puerto Rico in Arleen Pabón Charneco, *The Architecture of San Juan de Puerto Rico Five Centuries of Urban and Architectural Experimentation*, pp 12-27.

<sup>72</sup> "Plano en perspectiva muy sencillo . . . Con una relación sobre la fortificación de Puerto Rico," 12 October 1598, Archivo General de Simancas, Spain, Guerra y Marina, Legajos, 00520, 219, Signatura: MPD, 50, 100.

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prevailed, the Puerta de Tierra Historic District did not exist in its own right during the first thirteen decades of San Juan's history.

### Changing Times – Changing Cities

In order to better understand the unique experimentation that took place in San Juan Islet from 1519 until the third decade of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, it is convenient to interpret the transformation of traditional Spanish urban parameters during the period. Peninsular changes resulted from several 15<sup>th</sup> century events: (i) the end of the centuries-old Reconquista<sup>73</sup> with the defeat of Islamic forces in Granada (1492); (ii) the establishment of the first Castilian colonies in North Africa (1402); (iii) Castilian colonization activities in the Canary Islands (1402-1496); and (iv) the discovery of America by Castile (1492). New times forged novel perspectives and innovative cities. Emergence of capitalism also provided a powerful dislocation during the period significantly empowering urban transformation.<sup>74</sup>

Development of large-scale entrepreneurial activities came hand in hand with a renewed interest in Classical Antiquity. As a result of Mehmed the Conqueror's 29 May 1453 conquest of Constantinople, a virtual flood of erudite scholars, profoundly knowledgeable in Greek and Roman Antiquity, immigrated to Europe. Their familiarity with Classical literature and the previously unknown treatises they brought fueled the continent's perpetual interest in its Greco-Roman past.<sup>75</sup> Although this curiosity was constant throughout the ages, arrival of the Byzantine émigrés generated a unique renaissance. Discovery of America brought specific topics, particularly those related to the Classical ideal city,<sup>76</sup> to the fore. In 1539, Friar Vicente de Valverde examined the new Hispanic-Chilean settlements lamenting absence of Aristotelian inspiration. [O]viera mirado major [sic] la Política de Aristóteles en la fundación de los

<sup>73</sup> The Reconquista is the name given to the centuries old Christian efforts to wrestle the Spanish peninsula away from Islamic control.

<sup>74</sup> Capitalist expansion began during the 16<sup>th</sup> century. One of its by-products was the emergence of colonialism that peaked between 1850 and 1900. Zhidong Hao, *Macau History and Society* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2011), p 10. Although Hao principally refers to Portugal and China, other scholars, like Dr Yuval Noah Harari, agree with the contention that capitalism and 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> centuries colonization activities need to be analyzed as mutually dependent conditions.

<sup>75</sup> During this period, Vitruvius' work was introduced to a generation thirsty for Classical knowledge. The Roman architect's consideration of the city as the paradigmatic product of the noble art of architecture had a powerful impact on Renaissance designers and writers. After discovery of the manuscript, Antiquity's architecture was no longer interpreted as a curiosity but as an ideal based on philosophical, theoretical and scientific vantage points that emphasize human's centrality. Marcus Vitruvius Pollio's (c 80 BC-70 BC - c 15 BC) *De Architectura libri decem* is the earliest architectural treatise preserved. Notice needs to be taken of the schematic nature of Vitruvian urban thought which basically is limited to recommendations along the lines of: "Towns should be laid out not as an exact square nor with salient angles, but in circular form, to give view of the enemy from many points. Defense is difficult where there are salient angles, because the angle protects the enemy rather than the inhabitants." Vitruvius Pollio, *The Ten Books on Architecture* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1914), p 22. Translation by Morris Hicky Morgan.

Interest in the Classical past and its rigorous research developed in Spain during the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. *Desde de un punto de vista cultural, la España de fines del siglo XVI y comienzos del XVII conoció una verdadera explosión de la investigación histórica. Fue incorporada a esa investigación tanto la nueva ciencia de la arqueología como ciertas visiones casi romántica, pero en todo caso con el deseo de lograr un auténtico rigor histórico.* Translation: "From a cultural perspective, interest in historic research grew in Spain during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The at the time new science of archaeology was incorporated, as well as a somewhat Romantic search for true historic rigor." Alicia Cámara Muñoz, *Arquitectura y Sociedad en el Siglo de Oro Idea, traza y edificio* (Madrid, España: S A Ediciones El Arquero, 1990), p 15.

<sup>76</sup> Analysis of ideal cities has been pursued since Classical Antiquity. Plato and Aristotle, among others, expounded at length on the concept and its implications. St Thomas of Aquinas was interested in the topic, manipulating Classical perspectives to fit Christianity. In 1516, St Thomas More wrote *Utopia*, a treatise about an imaginary, ideal island-nation. Hugh Thomas suggests More's work may have influenced Friar Reginaldo de Montesinos and Friar Bartolomé de las Casas. ". . . *Utopia*, published in Louvain the previous year may have been known, in Latin, in the Library of San Gregorio in Valladolid." Hugh Thomas, *Rivers of Gold: The Rise of the Spanish Empire, from Columbus to Magellan* (New York: Random House, 2005), p 399. Both de Montesinos and de las Casas resided for some time in San Juan de Puerto Rico.

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*pueblos de christianos* [sic] *no se perdiera nada*.<sup>77</sup> That a 16<sup>th</sup> century monk in faraway Chile would suggest American cities follow Greek ideals is quite telling. Appreciation for straight streets, orthogonal grids, central plazas and unwallled cities owes much to Classical literature and the religious interpretations made of these texts by Christian theologians like St Thomas of Aquinas, St Thomas More and Eiximenis.<sup>78</sup> Aristotle's preference for the urban context (as opposed to the rural one) served as model for the mandate all colonists reside within the urban core. Plato's disdain for defensive walls, in turn, directly inspired the unwallled peace-city.<sup>79</sup>

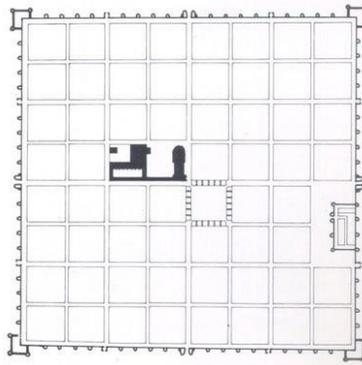


Figure 22. Plan of the Ideal City by Eiximenis, 14<sup>th</sup> century, Google, Public domain.

Friar Francesc Eiximenis first analyzed the intersection of Platonic, capitalist, and urban ideals in his *Regiment de la cosa publica*, included in the *Dotzè del Cretià*.<sup>80</sup> While it may seem he strictly followed Classical influence, this is not the case being the first to propose the novel concept that a city belongs to its residents. This unprecedented hypothesis translated into the American preference for a holistic enclave<sup>81</sup> with no ghetto-like sectors or trade-specialized streets, paradigmatic characteristics of European Medieval cities. This one city – one organism rational approach would produce the beautiful, noble and well-ordered city (*ciudad bella, noble y bien ordenada*) indispensable to Christians. (See Figure 22.) The use of the gridiron to organize urban blocks evidences Eiximenis' credence that all citizens were important and, therefore, equal in term of rank. (This principle guided the design of

<sup>77</sup> Translation: "It would have served better when establishing Christian settlements to seek inspiration in Aristotle's *Politics*." Guillermo Lohmann Villena, *El proceso ocupacional territorial y la ordenación urbana Siglos XVI XIX en La ciudad Iberoamericana Actas del Seminario* (Buenos Aires, 1985), 1; (Madrid: Ministerio de Obras Públicas y Urbanismo, 1987). Quoted in María Isabel Navarro Segura, "Las fundaciones de ciudades y el pensamiento urbanístico hispano en la era del Descubrimiento," *Scripta Nova: Revista electrónica de geografía y ciencias sociales*, Extraordinary Number, 218, 2006. Digital source: [dialnet.uniroja.es/servlet/articulo?codigo=2109003](http://dialnet.uniroja.es/servlet/articulo?codigo=2109003).

<sup>78</sup> An example of this stance is Aquinas' *Regimine Principium ad Regem Cyprì*, a reinterpretation of Roman writer Vegecius.

<sup>79</sup> Other Classical authors provided inspiration. "The letters of Cicero to his friends were available, as were the works of Ovid and Pliny. There was Ptolomy's *Geography*; there was St Augustine's *City of God* . . ." Hugh Thomas, *Rivers of Gold The Rise of the Spanish Empire from Columbus to Magellan*, p 36.

<sup>80</sup> Eiximenis work was published a century after it was written.

<sup>81</sup> According to Eiximenis, a city's most relevant role was to provide healthy communal life, hence the requisite it be designed according to humanistic principles. Just as the head ruled the body, temporal (political) power was charged with ruling the residents. Continuing the parallel with the human body, the church was considered the city's heart while commercial ventures were equivalent to the intestines (the organs that process and digest the body's sustenance in the same manner commerce maintained a community). Legs were metaphors for agricultural concerns, the earth-linked base that sustains society in the same manner the extremities support humans. Accepting people as God's most distinguished creation, it made sense the city be organized in anthropomorphic manner, the perfect simile for the ideal Christian city-republic. While some grant Italian Francesco di Giorgio Martini authorship regarding the comparison between city and human body, Eiximenis expounded on this similarity decades before the Italian's iconic image was created. The monk's rational approach limited the human metaphor to a theoretical perspective never forcing the city to be shaped like a human, as the Italian was bound to do at a later time.

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Aragonese Medieval cities. The orthogonal organization of blocks subdivided into equal lots was a three dimensional interpretation of the *fueros* (charters) mandating Aragonese cities have *parcelas iguales para hombres iguales*.<sup>82</sup>) (Eiximenis lived in Valencia a sector that at the time was part of the Kingdom of Aragon.) The centrally located plaza, in turn, was iconic of the community's power.

Important to the development of the American city was the fact that Eiximenis believed the most relevant social class was the merchant one and that magnificent urban centers were the product of commercial accomplishments.<sup>83</sup> He was, therefore, the first to introduce the notion that a city needs to facilitate profitmaking activities. Discarding millennia-old beliefs, money was now considered the root of all things good. *Desde fines del siglo XV el dinero aparece como un poderoso resorte de movilidad social. Aunque el linaje era importante para establecer la calidad social, la importancia de la riqueza como nivelador era innegable.*<sup>84</sup> The paradigmatic example of this trend was the discovery of America, the ultimate profitmaking enterprise (at least, as originally planned).<sup>85</sup> Business ventures only flourished in enclaves that sustained the appropriate milieu required by the nascent capitalist society. Historic walled introverted cores were obsolete because they presented obstacles to the free exchange of goods. Eiximenis' treatise had profound impact on theoretical and practical levels. His interpretation of the city required an ordered and balanced organization that was also aesthetically pleasing.

Capitalism made possible for, first Castile then Spain, to emerge as imperial powers with international colonies in Africa, the Canary Islands and America.<sup>86</sup> This reality propelled the previous conglomerate of independent kingdoms to the forefront of humanity, shifting the world power axis. Timely discoveries in navigation, "the science of the time,"<sup>87</sup> made possible to organize worldwide colonies as links in an imperial trade chain embracing the globe. In order to achieve the goal of peaceful and harmonious living, the peace-city scheme was invented.

First used in the Canary Islands, the peace city was a Castilian invention dated to the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Its two versions – the port-city and the territory-city – embraced Eiximenis' Classically inspired ideals, specifically the use of straight streets forming an orthogonal grid anchored by a central plaza. The

<sup>82</sup> The Aragonese *fueros* phrase [P]*parcelas iguales para hombres iguales* translates into English as: "Equal lots [of land] for equal men."

<sup>83</sup> During the Middle Ages, scoffing those "in trade" as tainted was extremely common, a prejudice probably inherited from Classical Rome.

<sup>84</sup> Translation: "Starting during the final years of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, money becomes the instrument of social mobility. Even though lineage was considered important to establish social quality the role played by money as leveling tool cannot be denied." Elsa Gelpí Baiz, *Siglo en blanco Estudio de la economía azucarera en Puerto Rico, Siglo XVI (1540-1612)* (Río Piedras, Puerto Rico: Editorial de la Universidad de Puerto Rico, 2000), p 158. Many San Juan Islet's early settlers hailed from Spain's south, an area characterized by the relatively novel acceptance and appreciation of mercantile activity as motor of social mobility.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, p 194. *En Indias, al contrario de lo que ocurría en la Península, el comercio mayorista nunca se tuvo como actividad de carácter vil. Igualmente ocurrió en Sevilla donde, por sus características como centro de la navegación trasatlántica, las actividades mercantiles dieron lugar a un conglomerado social diferente al resto de España. Allí los comerciantes, situados tradicionalmente entre la nobleza y los artesanos, tuvieron mayores oportunidades de ascender, llegando, incluso, a formar parte de las estructuras de poder. Algo parecido sucedió en Puerto Rico . . . .* Translation: "In contrast to the Peninsula, commercial ventures were never considered lowly activities in the Indies. The same was true of Seville, center of transatlantic mercantile activities, and a city that developed as a social conglomerate quite different than in the rest of Spain. The commercial class, traditionally positioned between the nobility and artisans, had more opportunities of upward mobility becoming part of the power structures. Something similar happened in Puerto Rico . . ."

<sup>86</sup> Some scholars do not believe the term "colony" should be used within the context of the Spanish Conquest of America. María Elvira Roca Barea, *Imperiofobia y Leyenda Negra Roma, Rusia, Estados Unidos y el Imperio español* (Madrid: Siruela, 2017), p 295.

<sup>87</sup> The astrolabe was an invention of the period that empowered navigational activities. "San Cristóbal de La Laguna UNESCO World Heritage Sites List Nomination," Digital source: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/929>, 8 November 2014.

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*potente imagen de orden y regularidad* was the result of *la voluntad de adjudicar solares iguales*<sup>88</sup> since in most Hispanic colonial cities the gridiron reflected lot distribution. The monk's idea that cities were commercial centers, profitable hubs of ever expanding empires-in-the making,<sup>89</sup> produced multiple unwallled centers. Designed as Christianity's moral and spiritual anchors, cryptograms of God and crown, the urban schemes were to encourage an exemplary life as symbols of a new world order that birthed a novel kind of existence.<sup>90</sup> Living *una vida sobria, recoleta y ceremoniosa* residents would be *labradores y artesanos . . . caballeros, licenciados, escribanos, regidores y eclesiásticos*.<sup>91</sup> Although describing San Cristóbal de La Laguna, these and similar anticipations were expected of all peace-cities. The period discovered that a peaceful and harmonious existence empowered international trade and, thus, the glory of church and crown. As added benefit, natives would admire the type of life such enclaves fostered expediting their "melting" process into the imperial "pot."

Peace-cities – designed to organize and dignify human activities, particularly trading ones – were doors opening every single day to great opportunities. In addition to being a functional organism, the type was a visual representation of imperial governance and, as such, of social and spiritual order. Each one of the traditional powers – religious, political and communal – was represented appropriately not solely as an exercise in organization but as physical representation of the moral balance expected from a perfect Christian society.

*El debate se produjo en España, en un momento en que se descubrió la ciudad como ámbito de las relaciones de poder, en el que se debían resolver los conflictos entre la Corona, los poderes señoriales, y la Iglesia. De hecho, cabría considerar que en el momento se vive un verdadero asalto a la ciudad por estos tres poderes, que aspiran a detentar el control y la supremacía en un nuevo espacio de convivencia social. Por este motivo, dos argumentos aparecen unidos en las decisiones tomadas en los primeros núcleos de fundación: las cualidades estratégicas y naturales del lugar, y la configuración de un modelo de ciudad que contenga los órganos imprescindibles para su mantenimiento adecuado, en el que quedarán incluidos desde el primer momento los factores de significación de la estructura social y sus instituciones, como imagen de una ciudad cristiana ordenada conforme a un ideario religioso. En ambos casos, el principal objetivo de la fundación eras de carácter jurisdiccional, como mecanismo sancionador del hecho del descubrimiento y conquista.*<sup>92</sup>

<sup>88</sup> Translation: "A powerful image of order and regularity." "The desire to grant regular lots." Jesús Pérez Morera and Carlos Rodríguez Morales, *Arte en Canarias Del Gótico al Manierismo* (Gobierno de Canarias, 2008), Tomo II Historia Cultural del Arte en Canarias, p 48.

<sup>89</sup> For some years after 1492, the idea prevailed that the American route was the shortest way to fabled Cipango. As a result, the Caribbean basin inspired varied commercial dreams based on the notion that the region was as a middle point of sorts between the Europe and Asia.

<sup>90</sup> During the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries, Castile and Aragon, then Spain, led the way regarding urban experimentation, sponsoring activities that resulted in new complete cities and not limited insertions to existing ones (Renaissance Pienza comes to mind in terms of this Italian limitation) or theoretical writings (as proposed by Leon Battista Alberti, Francesco di Giorgio and Antonio Averlino [Filarete], among others).

<sup>91</sup> Translation: "[F]armers and artisans . . . knights, *licenciados* (may refer to lawyers and other educated persons), scribes, politicians and church people." María Isabel Navarro Segura, "Las fundaciones de ciudades y el pensamiento urbanístico hispano en la era del Descubrimiento," *Scripta Nova: Revista electrónica de geografía y ciencias sociales*.

<sup>92</sup> Translation: "The debate took place in Spain at a time when the city was interpreted as the stage for power relationships, where conflicts between the crown, aristocracy and church were solved. It can be stated these three powers assaulted the city during the period aiming to obtain control and supremacy in the new space where social coexistence took place. Two stimuli intersect all decision making processes: allow for the morphology to adapt to the geographic characteristics of the site and formalize an urban model containing all necessary components for healthy growth, that would include icons representative of the social structure and its institutions, that were to underscore the Christian city, product of religious ideals. In both cases, the final objective had a legal component, as sanctioning mechanism of the discovery and the conquest." María Isabel Navarro Segura, "Las fundaciones de ciudades y el pensamiento urbanístico hispano en la era del Descubrimiento," *Scripta Nova: Revista electrónica de geografía y ciencias sociales*.

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During this period, the city – interpreted as a legal entity belonging to the crown – came to exemplify Christianity’s social order.

Created to empower harmony and concord, peace-cities abandoned the millennia-old separation between urban and suburban districts, creatively interpreting the second one as an essential component of the first one. Plato,<sup>93</sup> like Spartan Lycurgus, believed defensive walls were detrimental to the moral of any city by creating a false sense of security and weakening the residents’ resolve and strength. Aristotle’s idealized version of an unwalled urban entity also expresses admiration for the model. The Canary Islands’ examples were the first built cores to discard defensive rings, an essential constituent of the millennia old urban paradigm.

*En esta toma de decisiones [before 1520, when the “Classic” stage of the American post-European city started] encomendada en el periodo a descubridores y conquistadores prevaleció, por tanto, una idea de ciudad más universal y teórica que formal, basada en principios aristotélicos, especialmente en territorios que no contaban con precedentes urbanos cuya impronta pudiera servir de base a los nuevos trazados.<sup>94</sup>*

Platonic and Aristotelian prototypes were ideal conglomerates; theoretical proposals that discoursed on what imagined cities ought to be. Contrarily, Caribbean (first Castilian and then Hispanic) colonial settlements were real cities, three-dimensional organisms reflective of a new world order.

With time, opposition to defensive perimeters stemmed from other reasons. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, many in Old San Juan favored destruction of the stonewall circling the core agreeing with the Greek philosophers it was an insalubrious barrier. Concerns principally revolved not around personal and communal courage but around hygiene. For *sanjuanero* Alejandro Tapia y Rivera anything obstructing the free flow of air was unhealthy:

*En el tiempo que me refiero (1833) fabricábanse de azoteas y no eran muchas las que quedaban con tejados; así como por la necesidad de fabricar dentro de las murallas, comenzaron a desaparecer los corralones y, por consiguiente, la ventilación y desahogo al par que los árboles que los hermozeaban, oxigenando el aire durante el día con beneficio de la salud. . . .<sup>95</sup>*

Since prehistoric times, walls were considered essential to the defense of a settlement, hence the massive time and financial investment spent in their construction. The novel 15<sup>th</sup> century unwalled centers were at odds with this millennial tradition. So solidified was the walled city paradigm that, as late as the 18<sup>th</sup> century, unprotected enclaves dedicated to peaceful objectives were considered incomprehensible oddities. Cuban José Martín Félix de Arrate (1701-1765) elucidated:

*Error fue de Licurgo y otros antiguos, imitado después de la arrogancia de los numantinos y de los bárbaros etíopes de la Abassia, librar únicamente la defensa de las ciudades en el esfuerzo de sus habitantes, despreciando el abrigo de las murallas y el resguardo de las fortificaciones como desdoro de la animosidad de los ciudadanos, cuando aún la misma celestial Jerusalén que nos describe San Juan en su Apocalipsis se manifestó cercada de muros y guarnecida de almenas, siendo en todas edades y*

<sup>93</sup> Plato expounded on unwalled enclaves in his description of the ideal city of Magnesia (*Laws*).

<sup>94</sup> Translation: “Part of the period’s decision-making process [before 1520 when the ‘Classic’ stage of the American post-European city started], trusted to conquistadors, the idea of a universal and theoretical urban core based on Aristotelian principles prevailed. This was particularly true in locales that had no urban precedents that could be used as basis for the new masterplans.” María Isabel Navarro Segura, “Las fundaciones de ciudades y el pensamiento urbanístico hispano en la era del Descubrimiento,” *Scripta Nova: Revista electrónica de geografía y ciencias sociales*.

<sup>95</sup> Translation: “At the time I am describing (1833) *azoteas* (flat roofs) were used and not many remained with their roofs; due to the need to build inside the defensive circuit, many animal pens disappeared resulting in less ventilation and the cutting of trees that added beauty and oxygenated the air in a healthy manner. . . .” Alejandro Tapia y Rivera, *Mis memorias o Puerto Rico como lo encontré y como lo dejo* (Río Piedras, Puerto Rico: El Edil, Inc, 1996), p 32.

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*poblaciones tan precisos como practicados estos reparos, que sólo en el capricho de los expresados pudo tener estimación tan soberbia idea, a la que parece fue en parte algo semejante la de aquellos ministros que a los principios del descubrimiento y población de este Nuevo Mundo componían el consejo de nuestros monarcas, pues adhirieron, según dice Herrera, al dictamen de que no convenía se fortificasen las recientes plantaciones de Indias, hasta que el año de 1526, prevaleciendo como más bien fundado el opuesto sentir, se mandaron resguardar con algunos castillos y fortalezas, principalmente las marítimas.<sup>96</sup>*

Havana was designed as a peace-city anchored around the Plaza de Armas, a public space next to the water. De Arrate regarded the scheme a foolish one, evidencing memory of the novel scheme goals had all but disappeared by his time. Considering the lack of defensive walls an arrogant (*arrogante*) mistake (*error*) mimicking other failed experiments in Antiquity, he *ex tempore* blamed the Catholic Monarchs' council of ministers (*el consejo de nuestros monarcas*) ascribing the deficiency to a design scheme formally (and, in his opinion, equivocally) embraced by the crown. Since the reasons and goals of the 16<sup>th</sup> century peace-city masterplan had vanished, de Arrate found the decision illogical and perplexing. As a result of the belief walls were essential to the well being of any enclave – a conviction that lasted until the early 19<sup>th</sup> century – congested urban centers were the norm throughout history.

Fortified enclaves exist since humans invented urban living during Prehistory. Domestication of animals<sup>97</sup> and the discovery of agriculture made possible for humans to settle, transforming gatherers and hunters into city dwellers. Control of rich, arable lands, sources of drinking water and/or transportation routes brought attacks from enemies wishing to govern a locale's positive characteristics. As a result, defensive circuits became standard components of any settlement aiming to prosper. Castile, then Spain, deconstructed the millennia-old tradition in the search for a new world order characterized by peace given the fact that only concord and harmony guaranteed profitable commercial activities. This avant-garde approach guided San Juan's one islet – one city masterplan. The scheme was cherished and preserved until the construction of the eastern wall during the first half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

It is convenient to analyze varied historic issues that propitiated use of the unwalled peace-city urban model. The first one was the need for cores to anchor unknown territories providing a sustainable and appropriate milieu for both settlers and natives. In order to accomplish this goal, enclaves needed to be visual reminders of the colonial power. Symbolically and physically laying claim to their immediate context – in a way the traditionally introverted and bellicose walled organisms could not – underscored the objective in a different manner than the conventional isolationist stance. Abandoning the familiar sequestration of the urban sector in favor of an expansive presence reminded all, particularly the natives, of the colonial power's intention to be a permanent part of the territory.

A second reason behind the abandonment of walled enclaves was that while they did protect from enemies they also empowered sedition and troublemaking by creating protected enclaves that could provide refuge to dissidents. Castilian monarchs experienced many a struggle caused by fellow

<sup>96</sup> Translation: "Lycurgus and others in Antiquity erred, a mistake later imitated by Numantians and Ethiopian barbarians from Abassia, in believing residents efforts alone could defend cities ignoring walls and fortifications as symbols of dishonorable attitudes from their residents regarding their defense, since even Celestial Jerusalem – as described by St John in the Apocalypse – had walls protected by parapets, something used throughout the ages except by those mentioned above, something similar to what was done in the beginning of the discovery and conquest of this New World following the advice of our monarchs' councils adhered – according to Herrera – to the idea that cities should not be fortified until 1526 when a different course of action was taken and some castles and fortifications, principally maritime, were erected." José Martín Félix de Arrate, *Llave del nuevo mundo. (Ante mural de las Indias Occidentales)*, pp 102-103. The author mentioned by de Arrate is Antonio de Herrera who penned the *Historia General de los hechos de los castellanos en las islas i tierra firme del mar océano* (1600).

<sup>97</sup> Hugh Thomas believes American pre-1492 urban enclaves were invented prior to the domestication of animals. Traditionally, domestication of animals and the invention of agriculture have been considered the two activities responsible for urban emergence.

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Christians entrenched in walled towns. During the early years of the American Conquest there was a desire to avoid such situations on the vast land across the sea. Spending time and money on artifacts that could be used against the crown was considered foolhardy.

Additionally, the perception of the period was Castile and Aragon had no declared enemies. With the expulsion of the Jews and Muslims from the peninsula in 1493 and tight control of the aristocracy by forcing an abandonment of their feudal expectations defense needs were limited. During the early years of the Conquest the only foreign power feared was Portugal, the country that shared legal "rights" to explore new lands. Once the Pope got involved in determining the commercial boundaries of both countries the two kingdoms toed the line. The Canary Islands and American natives, in turn, were subjected by force in a relatively short period of time. Their rapidly diminishing numbers and weak opposition fostered a false sense of security. This appreciation obviously suggested use of old urban formulas was unnecessary for new cities having no enemies in the traditional sense. Development of the peace-city in America was fueled by the vast expanse of apparently empty land that in the early days may have lend credence to the notion protection was not necessary. The Caribbean *noble savage's* (Rousseau *dixit*) apparent docility underscored the rationality of the peaceful urban approach.

Although some will undoubtedly interpret the expectation of urban cores actively contributing to a peaceful atmosphere where healthy capitalist ventures would prosper as wishful thinking, this was not the case during the first decades of the Conquest. Evidence suggests there was sincere expectation a new world order had been birthed. San Juan de Puerto Rico was one urban core designed to serve the novel times.

**One Islet – One City**

San Juan de Puerto Rico, Havana (Cuba), Ciudad de Panamá (Panamá) and St Augustine (Florida) are some American peace-city examples. Traditional interpretations describe Hispanic-American enclaves as: *un artificio mecánico perfectamente acompasado, una maquinaria creada para establecer un control riguroso sobre una sociedad colonial.*<sup>98</sup> First and foremost, however, settlements were conceived as active links in an international commercial chain. Also serving as acculturation instruments and symbols of Christianity, the model evidences an intimate relationship between capitalist and imperialist activities: each one reflecting in one manner or another the colonial power-colony trade relationship. During the first thirteen decades after 1519 San Juan Islet was interpreted as a three dimensional icon of first Castilian and then Spanish imperialism, a commercial empires cog.

Adaptation of the peace-city model to San Juan Islet resulted in a one city – one islet masterplan. Since the enclave was unwalled, it fully embraced the present day Puerta de Tierra Historic District. Until the eastern wall was erected during the first half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, man-made limits – scattered hermitages dedicated to San Sebastián, Santa Bárbara, Santa Ana and El Calvario – defined the 16<sup>th</sup> century urbanized perimeter, creating a spiritual protective barrier that safeguarded the city in lieu of walls. Hand in hand with the one islet – one city concept the Canarian port-city scheme was adopted, an enclave intimately related to its water venue. Described in the 1573 *Ordenanzas de la Población* as both maritime cities (*ciudades marítimas*) and coastal cities (*ciudades costeras*), the historic precedents were traditional Mediterranean locales. The second model, the territory-city, was described in the 1573 *Ordenanzas de la Población* as Mediterranean-cities (*ciudades mediterráneas*). Since they were located inland they had

<sup>98</sup> Translation: "A perfectly designed mechanical artifact, a machine created to control a colonial society." María Isabel Navarro Segura, "Las fundaciones de ciudades y el pensamiento urbanístico hispano en la era del Descubrimiento," *Scripta Nova: Revista electrónica de geografía y ciencias sociales*.

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no port. A plaza-cum-dock (*plaza del mar*), underscoring the relevance of commercial activities,<sup>99</sup> and a second square (*plaza de la iglesia* or *plaza mayor*) found inland were part of the concept. The double public square idea stems from Vitruvius, who equated the one next to the port to the Roman forum.<sup>100</sup>

The first plaza organized in San Juan Islet was present day Plaza de la Catedral (originally known as *plaza pública*) directly opening unto the port. Due to the site's complicated topography (it was sited between three hills and the beach) a second plaza, the Plaza de Armas, was in use by the 1520s. It is not clear whether this second space was the result of the use of the territory-city scheme or the Plaza de la Catedral's well-documented deficiencies. We do know that, if the Plaza de Armas resulted from the use of a port-city scheme, it was not conceived as a church plaza since the cathedral faced the *plaza pública*. Contrarily, it is also possible the first masterplan only included one square, the Plaza de la Catedral, making Old San Juan's dual plaza condition a fortuitous development product of experimentation.

Unwalled cities required some sort of defense against pirates and other predators. Vitruvius provided the solution to this problem.

*Como las ciudades-puerto, las ciudades marítimo-comerciales se vieron abocadas a desarrollar un sistema defensa para proteger el comercio, fuente de su prosperidad, y defenderse de los ataques de la piratería. Durante los primeros tiempos y antes de que se impusieran – en la segunda mitad del siglo XVI – los complejos fortificados globales e integrados del renacimiento, el esquema adoptado se reducía a un estrecho engranaje entre el puerto, la plaza del muelle o plaza del mar, centro de la actividad comercial, y la torre defensiva. Este modelo de ciudad costera, con torre dominando sobre el puerto junto a la plaza del muelle, se remontaba también al tratado de Vitrubio.<sup>101</sup>*

In San Juan, a defensive tower (*torre*), the Fortaleza de Santa Catalina (also known as La Fuerza), was erected on top of a hill south of the port-cum-plaza. Notwithstanding Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo's<sup>102</sup> subsequent derision regarding this site, the building had defense capabilities, albeit not of the kind he

<sup>99</sup> This seemingly logical connection was quite novel. For millennia, docks of important cities were physically separated since having urban cores close to the sea was considered unwise. Athens and its port Piraeus, as well as Rome and its service core Ostia, are good examples of this condition.

<sup>100</sup> *De acuerdo a la citada norma vitrubiana – recogida por las ordenanzas de población de 1573 –, las ciudades marítimo-comerciales se caracterizaban por su dobles de plazas—como ejemplificaban Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Santa Cruz de La Palma, Garachico o San Sebastián de La Gomera –, una central con los edificios oficiales o simplemente la iglesia mayor y otra marítima comercial, la plaza del muelle o plaza de la mar, centro de la actividad mercantil y financiera. La función de esta plaza marítima era la de espacio de entrada y salida de mercancías y pasajeros, lugar de tratos y de negocios y foco clave de la vida económica de la ciudad. Para que las naves hiciesen aguada, en ellas era imprescindible la fuente o pilar. . . .* Translation: "According to the above-mentioned Vitruvian ideal – included in the 1573 *Laws of Indies* – maritime-commercial cities had double plazas – as seen in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Santa Cruz de La Palma, Garachico o San Sebastián de La Gomera – a central one around which important buildings or simply the most important church was situated and a second one, the dock or sea plaza, that served as mercantile and financial center. The maritime plaza was used as entrance/exit of merchandise and passengers, the place to make contracts and commercial deals and the focal point of the economic life of the city. In order for ships to acquire drinking water it was essential it had a fountain . . ." Jesús Pérez Morera and Carlos Rodríguez Morales, *Arte en Canarias Del Gótico al Manierismo*, p 63.

<sup>101</sup> Translation: "Like port-cities, maritime-commercial cities were forced to develop a defense system to protect commercial activities, the essential contributing factor of their prosperity. During the early years and before the Renaissance global and integrated fortified precincts were erected, the adopted scheme included a defensive tower to protect the port and the sea plaza. This coastal city model, with a tower controlling the port next to the sea plaza, had as precedent Vitruvius." Jesús Pérez Morera and Carlos Rodríguez Morales, *Arte en Canarias Del Gótico al Manierismo*, pp 64-66. An example of the port and the tower relationship in the Canary Islands that may have inspired Old San Juan is the defensive tower of San Miguel del Puerto in Santa Cruz de La Palma (1511).

<sup>102</sup> During the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo was charged with an analysis of San Juan Islet defenses. He famously described those in charge of selecting the La Fortaleza de Santa Catalina site as blind men given the fact that the tower was incapable of defending the bay's entrance.

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expected. In tandem with the Ponce de León family tower, located on the north side of the port, both structures could defend the anchorage and its plaza by means of crossfire. Fernández de Oviedo's myopic critique did not take into account Santa Catalina's main defense objective – as suggested by Vitruvius – was to protect the port and plaza and not the bay's entrance.

Until the early years of the 17<sup>th</sup> century San Juan Islet cradled a city that was one with the small isle since there were no walls to foster isolation and introspectiveness. The original main street (Calle Real de San Juan, present day Calle del Santo Cristo de la Salud) and the port-cum-plaza on its west side were designed to empower trade activities, even though the square also acted as cathedral atrium. This "systematic" and "rational" organization<sup>103</sup> was a three-dimensional representation of power that was completed by the Convento de Santo Domingo, located at the apex of the street. A road roughly following the alignment of present day Avenida Constitución connected the two southern ports depicted in the Archivo de Simancas 1598 plan. As per Eiximenis ideals, the city was reflective of a novel peaceful social order based on Christian and capitalist principles. Platonic in inspiration, San Juan Islet served as an idealized interpretation of city living within a novel global network.

Hispanic colonial mandates established residents, regardless of continent, were to live in the city. Scholars mention Aristotle's disdain for the non-city as precedent for this extraordinary directive.<sup>104</sup> First tried in the Canary Islands, the concept's goal was that: *bien acostumbrados e dotrinados [sic] en la fee [sic], porque oyesen misa sepan como an [sic] de bevir [sic] y sean puestos en camino de buenos cristianos.*<sup>105</sup> In other words, settlements were considered enculturation instruments making possible the transformation of the natives into exemplar Christian subjects. Granting of land plots that could be inherited strengthened the popularity of the scheme. By means of these and other policies, the crown guaranteed both the future of the core and submission to its ideology. Had settlers been allowed to disperse and plant roots in various parts of the territory, the enclave's social, political and communal role would have been hindered. Simply put, feeble urban cores could not be icons of the monarchy, much less stages for international commerce. San Juan's early urban universe included the whole islet with no walls to separate it into sectors. Peace-cities included no religious or ethnic ghettos since all residents (including the natives and, at a later time, slaves) were considered vassals of the crown. This reality shaped San Juan Islet resulting in a core that was not organized into apartheid archetypes. The same was true of the characteristic European specialized streets: they were non-existent.

<sup>103</sup> Nuria Benach, Miriam Hermi Zaar and Magno Vasconcelos P Junior (editores), *Actas del XIV Coloquio Internacional de Geocrítica: Las utopías y la construcción de la sociedad del futuro*, Arleen Pabón Charneco, "San Juan de Puerto Rico: Utopía de tres imperios" (Barcelona: Universidad de Barcelona, 2016), Digital source: <http://www.eb.edu/geocrit/xiv-coloquio>.

<sup>104</sup> The idea that city living was the only appropriate kind of existence had a long history evidenced by the Romans' use of the word *suburbia* (under the city) to describe the empty land surrounding a settlement. The *Real Cédula de la Reina Juana para que los encomenderos tengan sus casas pobladas y vivan en la ciudad del distrito de sus encomiendas*, officially dated 13 May 1538, established: . . . *hay muchas personas que tienen de repartimientos pueblos de indios en encomiendas y no tienen hechas sus casas en la dicha ciudad, a cuya causa no se puebla*. As a result, the Queen mandated: *que todas las personas que tuvieren indios de repartimiento, depósito o en encomienda en los términos y comarca y obispado desa dicha ciudad, fuesen obligados a tener sus casas pobladas y vivir en ella, so pena de suspensión de los indios que tuviesen . . . encomendados . . . Real Cédula de la Reina Juana para que los encomenderos tengan sus casas pobladas y vivan en la ciudad del distrito de sus encomiendas*. Translation: "There are many persons that have *encomiendas* that include Native settlements and have not made houses in the city . . ." [Therefore, the Queen mandates] "[A]ll persons owning Natives or *encomiendas* must have and live in a town house and if not their are to lose their assigned Natives . . ." Although this quote refers to the city of Antequera, the idea all settlers should live in town was considered a basic one for all Spanish colonial settlements. Quoted in: Richard Konetzke, *Colección de documentos para la historia de la formación social de Hispanoamérica 1493-1810* (Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas: Madrid, 1953), Volume I (1493-1592), p 184.

<sup>105</sup> Translation: "Well accustomed and taught in the faith because they hear Mass they will learn how to behave as good Christians." *Acuerdos del Cabildo de Tenerife II, 1508-1513*. Quoted in: Jesús Pérez Morera and Carlos Rodríguez Morales, *Arte en Canarias del Gótico al Manierismo*, p 49.

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Figure 23. San Juan Islet, Puerto Rico, c 1840.<sup>106</sup>

Calle del Santo Cristo de la Salud's north-south organization may seem puzzling at first since an east-west organization appears more suitable given the islet's shape and the existence of a second port on the eastern shore. (See Figure 1.) Had this development strategy been followed, conurbation between the Old San Juan and the Puerta de Tierra Historic Districts would have taken place before the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Tradition, however, dictated maritime cities streets avoid opening unto the water to avoid the humid sea breeze (*maresía*). Calle del Cristo's north-south linear arrangement<sup>107</sup> made possible for buildings to create a protective barrier between the sea and the town's main street.

*Al igual que en otras ciudades atlánticas – andaluzas o portuguesas –, el trazado de las ciudades marítimas presentaba un diseño regular o semirregular formado por una trama de calles ortogonales, pero con manzanas desiguales o alargadas y calles principales paralelas a la costa . . . o ciudades lineales diseñadas a lo largo del litoral y en torno a una larga calle principal, verdadero eje del asentamiento. . . . En la línea litoral las viviendas unidas formaban una barrera continua que protegía la población de la brisa húmeda del mar – la “maresía”, al tiempo que constituían una defensa frente a los eventuales ataques piráticos. Solo estrechos callejones – fácilmente defendibles en caso de invasión – daban acceso al mar.<sup>108</sup>*

By not opening to the sea, the scheme additionally facilitated defense of the core. It is interesting to note that, according to the 1573 *Leyes de Indias*, the urban houses of the most important residents were to be sited north and south of the principal church, a reality in San Juan long before the *Laws* were enacted. The Calle del Cristo's alignment resulted in these residences not opening to the port. Seldom mentioned

<sup>106</sup> “Plano geométrico del Puerto Capital de la Ysla de Puerto Rico Dedicado al Excmo Sr General Dn Segundo Olibarri Segundo Cabo de la misma,” 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, AR\_J\_T\_4\_C\_2\_56, c 1840, Archivo Cartográfico y de Estudios Geográficos del Centro Geográfico del Ejército, Madrid, Fondo de Cartografía Exenta. Serie; Cartografía Exenta de Puerto Rico. I thank Mr José López for bringing this image to my attention and Mr José Marull for finding its provenance.

<sup>107</sup> It is probable Caribbean cities included no regular orthogonal grid during their early days. *El tipo de ciudades que se fundaron, salvo excepciones, fueron de traza regular aunque el grado de su regularidad fue evolucionando desde las primeras que tuvieron trazado sólo rectilíneo, como Santo Domingo y Panamá, hasta las estrictamente cuadrículares que asomaron hacia 1530 en México y, en 1535, en el Perú, luego de producido el encuentro de los españoles con las dos grandes culturas americanas.* Translation: “With a few exceptions, all cities founded used a regular organization even though this characteristic evolved with time. The first ones had straight streets like Santo Domingo and Panama. Orthogonal ones appeared in 1530 in Mexico and in 1535 in Peru after the Spanish encounter with the two American native cultures.” Alicia García Santana, *Las primeras villas de Cuba* (Ciudad de Guatemala, Guatemala: Ediciones Polymita SA, 2008), p 10.

<sup>108</sup> Translation: “Like other Atlantic cities, whether Andalusian or Portuguese, the design of maritime-cities exhibited either a regular or semi-regular arrangement of straight streets, with blocks of different sizes and all principal streets parallel to the coastline, . . . or linear cities designed along the sea shore and along the principal street, the axis that guided settlement activities . . . the houses next to the shoreline formed a continuous barrier that protected the central area from the wet sea winds forming a defensive barrier against pirate attacks. Only narrow lanes – easy to defend – provided access to the sea.” Jesús Pérez Morera and Carlos Rodríguez Morales, *Arte en Canarias Del Gótico al Manierismo*, p 50; 52; 64-66.

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when considering San Juan's main street's north-south organization is the fact that a deep ravine (El Trincherón or El Zanjón) roughly divides San Juan Islet into two parts. (See Figure 23.) Some sort of bridge would have been needed in order to safely cross it.



Figure 24. San Juan Islet, Puerto Rico, c 1579.<sup>109</sup>

Presence of the El Trincherón and the length an east-west corridor made a north-south development more sensible during the early stages of development. Due to these considerations, San Juan Islet settlement activities began along its western shore, close to the so-called *fondeadero* (anchorage site), an organization that assigned the Puerta de Tierra Historic District a secondary role during the early phases of the islet's urban development. The ravine was used as divide as early as 1579. (See Figure 24.) On the east side of the canyon the words *Esto es lo que se reserva* ("This is [the land] reserved.") indicate the gorge was used as boundary between the core and the area reserved for future growth.

As mentioned, the port-city model is intimately connected to its dock, the heart of all commercial activities. Regarding San Juan, however, there is evidence multiple anchorage places existed. As mentioned, the 1598 Archivo de Simancas plan describes the islet's eastern area as such venue: *yasta [y hasta] Aquí pueden llegar las naos aunque sean de 200[?] toneladas*.<sup>110</sup> (See Figure 21.) Another such place, known as the Caleta de los Monjes, also existed in a location presently unknown. Like the one related to the Calle de San Francisco, these venues were on the isle's western coast. This multiplicity evidences the relevance maritime connection had to colonial enclaves. As a result, multiple facilities had to be provided for commercial activities. In San Juan Islet, even when the principal square was moved to the Plaza de Armas and the anchorage to the south shore,<sup>111</sup> the main seaport was but a few blocks away from the town center and not miles away as had been the case in Caparra.

It was logical to use the peace-city scheme as first masterplan for San Juan Islet. There were no existing historic cores or commercial routes, as per European standards, to serve as embryos for the new urban entity. No professional groups like guilds existed that could assist in the organization of services. Although historians agree some Hispanic American settlements were organized close to existing native ones, in Puerto Rico their delicate "touch" provided limited availability.<sup>112</sup> The Canary Islands' schemes were particularly suitable given the fact that San Juan's principal responsibility – like the Canarian

<sup>109</sup> "Diseño de la ciudad de Puerto Rico y sus cercanías," Archivo General de Indias, Seville, Spain, ES.41091.AGI/27.23/MP-SANTO\_DOMINGO, 6.

<sup>110</sup> Translation: "Ships up to 200 tonnes can reach this point."

<sup>111</sup> The principal port activities were moved to the southern shore during the 16<sup>th</sup> century although the original anchorage in front of the Puerta de San Juan was still in use until the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>112</sup> The *Laws of Indies* discouraged use of native settlements as foundation basis for new ones. María Elvira Roca Barea, *Imperiofobia y Leyenda Negra Roma, Rusia, Estados Unidos y el Imperio español*, p 297.

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archipelago – was to empower international commercial activities. Because there were no physical boundaries separating the core from the rest of the islet, its geographic and legal universe, the city could grow in unrestricted manner. The intersection of the aspiration of unencumbered growth and the islet's geography, a small world surrounded by maritime boundaries, made logical the use of Canarian schemes.

San Juan's one islet – one city urban solution is a formidable historic contribution of national and international significance. While apparently abandoned after the construction of the eastern defensive wall, the concept experienced a renaissance during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries impacting masterplans that treated Old San Juan Historic District and Puerta de Tierra Historic District as one organism. A city is a conglomerate of historic and cultural layers that manifest in the form of a historic urban landscape that constantly evolves and transforms. No urban sector is static and unchanging. Accepting the present historic product goes hand in hand with understanding its evolution and history, as well as its absences. While no historic property dated to the peace-city period has been preserved in the Puerta de Tierra Historic District, its present personality reflects events and experimentations that took place centuries ago when the peace-city scheme was first deployed. Although considered an integral part of the urban core, the historic district's defining characteristic during its first stage of development was the absence of buildings and other urban artifacts. Since this state no longer exists, the first Puerta de Tierra Historic District stage of growth is not considered a contributing context of this nomination. It is essential, however, to analyze the period as unique prologue in order to fully understand and appreciate the Puerta de Tierra Historic District's urban and architectural exceptional history.

## PART TWO FROM PEACE-CITY TO WAR-CITY

### **Puerta de Tierra Historic District's Second Post-1519 Stage of Development (1625-1800)**

During the 17<sup>th</sup> century, as a result of enemy attacks and raids, San Juan Islet's peace-city was transformed into a war-city. At this time, the urban scheme of an unwalled core was discarded in favor of an introverted organism surrounded by fortifications. As a result and for the first time in its history, the small isle was physically divided into two sectors. Construction of the massive stone ring resulted in the desertion of Platonic concepts, specifically those interpreting the core as the product of and nurturer of peace. Most importantly, the theoretical model of one islet – one city was discarded. Out of this regression<sup>113</sup> a new type of city materialized and, as collateral result, the Puerta de Tierra Historic District emerged as a sector in its own right. The impact of this forced territorial segregation was so remarkable the new sector borrowed its name from the military structure responsible for its isolation (the Puerta de Santiago, commonly known as Puerta de Tierra or Land's Door).<sup>114</sup>

<sup>113</sup> The transformation from an unwalled urban core to a walled one represents a regression in that the Spanish Renaissance model (the peace-city) was abandoned in favor of millennia old traditional cloistered one.

<sup>114</sup> Days before this nomination was finished Mr José E López, author of an unpublished account of the British 1797 invasion, contacted me and provided the plan depicted in Figure 37. He believes the wood gate door depicted in the drawing is the one that inspired the name Puerta de Tierra. According to him, the area close to the Castillo de San Cristóbal was not considered part of the Puerta de Tierra sector properly for the name was reserved for the eastern sector outside this gate. I thank Mr López for sharing his interpretation of the third defensive line.

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By the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century Spain was a full-fledged empire. The powerful independent Kingdoms of Castile and Aragon had merged into one country and, as a result, social and political conditions were drastically different from the ones existing during the early years of colonization. From a peace-city, San Juan transformed into one of the points of the two symbolic spears defending the empire (the second one was Havana, Cuba). Just as the first defensive line served the islet as initial protection, San Juan was to act in the same manner for the hemisphere. Although considered the Hapsburgs' (also known as the Austrias or Austrian Dynasty) Golden Age, the period was nonetheless characterized by continuous difficulties. First and foremost, by the early 17<sup>th</sup> century the emperor was no longer Rey Planeta (King Planet) for scores of colonies had been lost. Destruction of the Grande y Felicísima Spanish Armada by the British in 1588 was an even greater calamity. In spite of the fabulous riches that streamed from America, Spain declared bankruptcy four times in 39 years (1557, 1560, 1576 and 1596). Puny monarchs,<sup>115</sup> inefficient taxation schemes and a weak economy facilitated a centuries-long decline that was to end catastrophically in 1898.

Instability brought concern regarding the safety of the American colonies for enemy nations doubled efforts to wrestle them away from Spanish control. Sixteenth century attacks by the French, Dutch and British<sup>116</sup> continued unabated a century later. As mentioned, the 1598 Archivo de Simancas plan evidences concern by deploying an intermediate military masterplan between the 16<sup>th</sup> century one city – one islet scheme and the 17<sup>th</sup> century one. (See Figure 21.) The proposed small and isolated bastions (at times, known as batteries) were erected throughout the islet in high strategic places, primarily along the Puerta de Tierra Historic District's north coast.

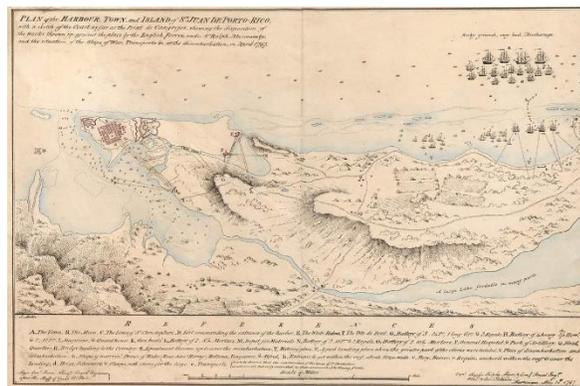


Figure 25. San Juan Islet 1797 British attack landing sites.<sup>117</sup>

This type of defense strategy (cannons on high points within unconnected bastion-like emplacements) rests on the premise that a navy will do the lion's share of protection. In other words, expectations were for the enemy's assault to come by sea. Even assuming naval support would be available there were important flaws to the strategy. First, while it may have seem logical to assume few foreign vessels would dare attack an island guarded by the mighty Spanish Armada, by 1588 it was obvious the Felicísima

<sup>115</sup> Habsburgs monarchs Felipe III (1598-1621), Felipe IV (1621-1665) and Carlos II (1665-1700) reigned during the period. Carlos, the last monarch of the dynasty, was followed by Felipe V (1700-1746), first Borbón (from French Bourbon lineage) king and grandson of Louis XIV of France.

<sup>116</sup> For the sake of consistency and although aware of the differences inherent to the names England, Great Britain and the United Kingdom, the term "British" will be used throughout this work.

<sup>117</sup> "Plan of the Harbour, Town and Island of San Juan de Porto Rico," 1797, *London Gazette*, 6 June 1797, RCIN 712360, Google, Public domain.

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Armada Invencible was quite vincible. Even if defeat had not come about, the isolated unconnected bastions protection was predicated in the Spanish naval force abandonment of peninsular defense in order to sail for months across a vast ocean to face the enemy in the Caribbean. Second, no navy could carry out defense responsibilities without help from the artillery corps. This is the reason why, as early as 1585, Francés de Alava proposed cannons be placed near the port, next to the Ponce de León family house, and also at the Puntilla de San Lázaro as reinforcement to be used in case the enemy gain access into the bay. Third, no defense against a land attack was possible should the enemy successfully disembark along San Juan Islet northern shore beaches. Possible breaching points were: (i) El Escambrón Beach; (ii) the Condado Lagoon; and (iii) the San Antonio Channel. Enemy attack via any one of these sites, as well as from the main island (along the islet's southern coast), could cause San Juan's downfall in a relatively easy manner. In fact, this last strategy was used during the 1797 British attack, although at that point the wall ring was almost finished. (See Figure 25.)

By 1587, the Condado Lagoon sector was protected by means of a cannon battery and a ditch. Three years later, another cannon battery was erected at El Escambrón. The beach areas presently occupied by the Balneario El Escambrón<sup>118</sup> and Hotel Caribe Hilton were defended from these positions. After Sir George Clifford, Third Earl of Cumberland, attacked the sector in 1598, Governor Gabriel de Rojas Páramo (governor from 1608 to 1614) reinforced defenses constructing a small fort or battery, known as the Fortín<sup>119</sup> de Santiago. Under his tenure the Puente de San Antonio, connecting islet and island was restructured. The by then decrepit wooden fort crowning the bridge, the Fuerte de San Antonio, was rebuilt in masonry at this time.



Figure 26. *La recuperación de San Juan de Puerto Rico* by Eugenio Cajés, 1634-1635, Museo del Prado, Madrid, Spain.

During this period, the rest of the Puerta de Tierra Historic District remained empty of construction. In fact, as late as the 1640s, Juan de Laët<sup>120</sup> described the sector as an impenetrable forest with only a few dirt roads connecting the city to the military positions. The principal thoroughfare (present day Avenida Constitución) linked islet and island via the San Antonio Bridge. A 17<sup>th</sup> century painting by Eugenio Cajés,<sup>121</sup> *La recuperación de San Juan de Puerto Rico*, depicts San Juan Islet's unwalled shoreline. Commemorating the Spanish defeat of the Dutch led by Boudewijn Hendricksz, the painting depicts the

<sup>118</sup> On 22 November 1595, Sir John Hawkins and Sir Francis Drake attacked via the El Escambrón Beach.

<sup>119</sup> *Fortín* is the Spanish diminutive form of *fuerte* (fort).

<sup>120</sup> Juan de Laët, *Historia del Nuevo Mundo Descripción de las islas occidentales Escrita en 18 libros (1640)* (Caracas, Venezuela: Universidad Simón Bolívar, 1988).

<sup>121</sup> Baroque painter Eugenio Cajés (1577-1634) (also known as Caxés, Cazés, Caxesi, and Caxete), appointed Painter to the King in 1612, received varied commissions from Emperors Philip II and Philip III. The painting *La recuperación de San Juan de Puerto Rico* depicts a scene that would have taken place on 24 September 1625 when the Dutch retreat took place.

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unwalled western coast. (See Figure 26.) With only a small portion of the fortification north of the present day Puerta de San Juan finished, the retiring Dutch are seen leaving a city that has no physical limits except the geographical ones. The fluid relationship between culture (represented by the urban core) and nature (embodied by the rest of the isle and the sea) was absolute, underscoring their intimate relationship with an extraordinary sense of transparency that, unfortunately, varied enemies tried to use to their advantage. In spite of the above-mentioned defense insertions the urban core and *ejido* were one entity until the eastern wall was erected. This reality evidences that, as late as the early years of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, efforts were made to preserve the peace-city model.

### Military Masterplan

Isolated unconnected bastions offered limited protection against enemies, as evidenced by the Dutch 1625 attack when the enemy managed to gain control of the core, albeit for a relatively short period of time (from 24 September to 27 October 1625). The point of no return had been reached: the city needed to be defended by means of traditional walls and mighty fortresses even if this meant abandoning the Castilian Renaissance peace-city model in order to go back to millennia-old urban configurations. It is interesting to note, however, the power the one islet – one city paradigm still had at this late date. This is evidenced by the fact that the military masterplan included the whole islet, a scheme that was to have a profound impact in Puerta de Tierra Historic District's future development. Even though the district's bilingual personality starts at the time when the exclusionary discourse created by the binary of opposites city-suburbia was put in place, the historic district – although interpreted as no-man's land – was still considered an integral part of the military masterplan.

By the 17<sup>th</sup> century the need to secure by means of fortifications the by then fabled plazas of San Juan and Havana, the jewels of the imperial crown, was already of paramount importance. Assailed by enemies, the crown abandoned the unwalled peace-city model returning to safer historic urban models.<sup>122</sup> Encompassing varied types of structures – fortified moats, fortresses, castles, defensive walls, bastions, towers, garites, water batteries, and trenches, among others.

A bastioned system, a Renaissance's state of the art defense arrangement, was chosen. An ingenious use of the type created a defense curtain additionally strengthened by bastioned forts. Traditional straight walls, regardless of width or height, present serious problems in terms of defense. In fact, the higher and wider a wall the more difficult it is to effectively defend its lower sections from "blind spots" or "dead spots" that allowed creative enemies to dig tunnels and place gunpowder along its base.<sup>123</sup> Bastions angled walls solved this problem by allowing for the whole perimeter to be clearly seen and, thus, protected. The system is described as a: ". . . revolutionary design innovation known as the bastioned trace, which dictated a star-shaped or polygonal form for the fortress, and outworks projecting from the shielding wall that would provide artillery positions capable of flanking fire without 'dead spots'."<sup>124</sup>

Bastioned fortresses characterize most Spanish military structures in America. Interestingly and in spite of the reams of paper used to describe their martial role, relatively little has been written on their urban

<sup>122</sup> Juan Bautista Antonelli's authored the Panamá, Veracruz, Havana, Cartagena de Indias and San Juan (Puerto Rico) defense masterplans. The architect hailed from Italy, a country on the vanguard of military experimentation. A transformation to the masterplan ensued after 1765 when Field Marshal Alejandro O'Reilly and Chief of the Royal Engineers Tomás O'Daly realized an inspection visit. At this time, San Juan was considered a defense of the first order (*defensa de primer orden*), a status granted by Emperor Carlos III (1716-1788).

<sup>123</sup> In addition to its imposing bastions, at the Castillo de San Cristóbal, dishes with liquid mercury were placed on the interior side of the wall. Since mercury is sensitive to movement, this was a way to make sure the enemy was not digging close to the outer base of the walls near the "blind" or "dead" spots.

<sup>124</sup> Anne W Tennant, "Architect of a king's defense: dedicated to the service of the Spanish sovereign, Juan Bautista Antonelli designed innovative fortifications that still tower over the Caribbean today," 2003. Digital source: <http://findarticles.com>.

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impact. Straight Roman and medieval walls and their infinite number of towers impacted a town's morphology in a different manner than a bastioned trace. A non-bastioned scheme, for example, may be organized into rigid geometric patterns, such as the rectangle. Some enclaves founded by the Romans throughout Europe, as well as French Medieval bastides, Aragonese Medieval towns, as well as the iconic Santa Cruz de Granada, are examples of this approach.

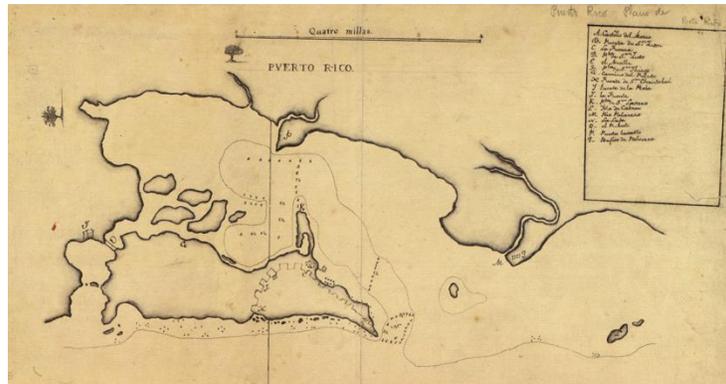


Figure 27. East, west and south fortification walls, San Juan de Puerto Rico, 1780.<sup>125</sup>

The San Juan Islet defense masterplan rested on three basic components. First, it included a strong fort to guard the bay's entrance. In order to achieve this goal the humble hornwork (*hornabaque*) on top of the outcrop sited by the bay's entrance was transformed into a mighty fortress named after Emperor Felipe II, the Castillo de San Felipe del Morro. A second constituent of the scheme was a wall circuit surrounding the urban core, the first section of which was constructed along the south, judged to be the weakest flank. (See Figure 27.) While cliffs created a natural barrier along the northern coast, the eastern side of the enclave could be breached with relative ease. The third component was rebuilding in stone and permanent material the forts on the eastern coast.

### The Puerta de Santiago

By 1640 the Puerta de Santiago and the eastern wall of the city dividing Old San Juan from Puerta de Tierra were finished. The portal was not conceived as a mere defensive structure in so much that: *Las nuevas fortificaciones de las ciudades del siglo XVI estuvieron por encima tanto de intereses particulares como municipales o de la iglesia, pues lo que en ellas se materializaba no afectaba sólo la defensa de la ciudad, sino de la misma monarquía.*<sup>126</sup> In other words, the gate, as all entrance/exit portals in defensive circuits, served as icon of the kingdom. As such, it silently conveyed imperial power by means of its size and architectural features. The onerous task of providing a town with defense walls brought multiple issues to the fore.

*[L]as palabras de Castillo de Bobadilla pueden ser útiles para abordar este tema: después de recordar la polémica existente sobre "si conviene o no, que la ciudad esté murada," concluye que las murallas son necesarias sobre todo en España tanto por el odio que despierta su imperio "como por la natural inquietud, y ardiente cólera desta [sic] nación," que puede dar lugar a "guerras civiles." Esto por lo que se refiere a las murallas que tienen un fin defensivo, pero son también importante los muros "por el mucho*

<sup>125</sup> "Ysla de San Juan de Puerto Rico," 1780, Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division, Digital source: g4974s lh000773; Call Number: G4974 S5 1780.P 82; <http://hdl.loc.gov/gmd/g4974s.1h000773>.

<sup>126</sup> Translation: "During the 16<sup>th</sup> century new city fortifications were erected for other reasons beyond municipal or ecclesiastical interests due to the fact that they provided defense and also represented the monarchy." Alicia Cámara Muñoz, "Murallas para la guerra y para la paz. Imágenes de la ciudad en la España del siglo XVI," *Espacio, Tiempo y Forma* (Serie VII, Historia del Arte, t 6, 1993), pp 149-174; 151.

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*lustre y ornato que se sigue de estar las fortalezas y murallas enteras y con almenas,” argumento que, como veremos, será utilizado por Cristóbal Pérez de Herrera cuando proponga la construcción de una nueva muralla para Madrid.<sup>127</sup>*

In Madrid, defensive walls (after the Reconquista) were metaphorically considered peace-walls (*murallas para la paz*) given the fact their existence forced enemies to exercise caution and be less inclined to attack.<sup>128</sup> In 1597, one such wall was proposed for Madrid. The barrier was to serve as decoration and persuasion instrument more than fortress or defense (*server por aora [sic] mas de ornato y guarda, qe [sic] de fortaleza y defensa*).<sup>129</sup>



Figure 28. Puerta de Santiago (Puerta de Tierra) from inside San Juan de Puerto Rico, 1890s.<sup>130</sup>

This was also the case with the Puerta de Santiago: a structure meant to serve as both decoration and icon of Spain's magnificence and power. (See Figure 28, Figure 43 and Figure 44.) Just as the Castillo de San Felipe and the diminutive Fortín de San Juan de la Cruz assumed leadership regarding naval defense, the Castillo de San Cristóbal, assisted by its Outworks, the three defensive lines in the Puerta de Tierra Historic District, and the colossal Puerta de Santiago were charged with land defense. The trio safeguarded the herculean Puerta de Santiago, the largest of all the existing doors<sup>131</sup> and San Juan's principal entry by land. (Although San Juan had several urban entry/exit portals, this was considered the

<sup>127</sup> Translation: "Castillo de Bobadilla's words are useful to understand the topic. After analyzing the 'whether it is convenient or not to have the city walled' debate, he concluded walls were necessary in Spain due to the hate the country managed to rise in its enemies and 'the natural volatility and angry disposition of this country' that could result in 'civil wars.' He also underscored walls' persuasive and decorative roles. The argument was used by Cristóbal Pérez de Herrera to back his proposal for a new wall for Madrid." Castillo de Bobadilla, *Política para corregidores* (1597), 126. Quoted in: Alicia Cámara Muñoz, "Murallas para la guerra y para la paz. Imágenes de la ciudad en la España del siglo XVI," pp 149-174; 151-152.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, p 171.

<sup>129</sup> Cristóbal Pérez de Herrera, *Discurso a la Católica y Real magestad [sic] del Rey D Felipe nuestro Señor, en que se le suplica, que considerando las muchas calidades y grandezas de la villa de Madrid, se sirva de ver si convendría honrarla, y adornarla de muralla, y otras cosas que se proponen, con que mereciese ser Corte perpetua, y asistencia [sic] de su gran Monarquía* (Madrid, 1597). Quoted in: Alicia Cámara Muñoz, "Murallas para la guerra y para la paz. Imágenes de la ciudad en la España del siglo XVI," p 171.

<sup>130</sup> Puerta de Santiago (Puerta de Tierra) from inside the city of San Juan with the Plaza de Colón on the right, 1890s, Google, Public domain.

<sup>131</sup> The following doors allowed entry/exit into San Juan's core: Puerta de San Juan (facing the sea), Puerta de San Justo (defended by the semi-bastions Pastor and Justo), Puerta de Santa Rosa, Puerta de San José and Puerta de Tierra. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Puerta de San Rafael (also known as Puerta de España) was inserted. Arleen Pabón Charneco, "The Old San Juan Historic District / Distrito Histórico del Viejo San Juan National Register of Historic Places Nomination" (Tallahassee, Florida, 2012) and Arleen Pabón Charneco, "The Old San Juan Historic District / Distrito Histórico del Viejo San Juan National Historic Landmark Nomination" (Tallahassee, Florida, 2013).

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principal one. Its highly symbolic role was highlighted by the fact it was dedicated to St James, Spain's patron saint.)

*Las puertas en las murallas de las ciudades y ciudadelas fueron un elemento urbano de primer orden por ser el acceso a un espacio acotado por unos muros que, cualquiera que fuera su finalidad, establecían un afuera y un adentro con un único elemento permeable que era la Puerta. Cargadas de simbolismo, en ellas hay dos aspectos esenciales: los escudos con su mensaje de poder y unos almohadillados que las convierten en fragmentos arquitectónicos capaces de expresar por sí mismos la fuerza de lo que guarda. . . . Fernando de Villalpando en las líneas de "el intérprete al lector" de su traducción de los libros III y IV de Serlio – escribía que al poner las armas o estatuas de los fundadores en los edificios "parece que cada piedra . . . está diziendo [sic] y representando la persona, la magestad [sic], el pontificado y autoridad del fundador."<sup>132</sup>*

The contrast between the congested urban interior and the almost empty military preserve must have been dramatic reinforcing perception of the Puerta de Tierra Historic District as a suburban locale. A liminal artifact, the Puerta de Santiago served as urban, architectural and sensory threshold into the countryside-like territory.



Figure 29. The Puerta de Tierra Historic District, San Juan de Puerto Rico, second half 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>133</sup>

During the time it existed, a traveler leaving the city would cross the Puerta de Santiago's arched opening outfitted with massive wooden doors. (See Figure 28.) Once outside, a small masonry bridge (that could be blown up if needed to impede enemy access into the city) over a dry moat leading to the Revellín del Príncipe was crossed. (See Figure 43.) The person would then pass through the ravelin doors in order to access another masonry bridge that spanned a second dry moat. Then and only then would the person reach the royal road exiting the city (the *camino central*, present day Avenida Constitución). (See Figure 29 and Figure 44.)

By the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Puerta de Santiago had transformed from a noble portal guaranteeing security into a derided obstacle. Constricting the historic core, it impeded healthy growth towards the Puerta de Tierra Historic District. Ironically, the structure that made possible for sector to emerge had to be destroyed for the sector to flourish.

### Defensive Lines

As mentioned, three defensive lines were planned for the Puerta de Tierra Historic District in order to underscore the Castillo de San Cristóbal's land defense. The object of some confusion, they were known

<sup>132</sup> Alicia Cámara Muñoz, "Murallas para la guerra y para la paz. Imágenes de la ciudad en la España del siglo XVI," pp 149-174; 151.

<sup>133</sup> "Plano de la Plaza San Juan de Puerto Rico, 1887, AR\_J\_T\_4\_C\_2\_61, San Juan National Historic Site, National Park Service.

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as *líneas avanzadas*, advanced defenses sited before the city proper. Meandering from north to south they were obstacles any land invader would need to take by force in order to get closer to the urban core. Small forts, wall sections and other martial structures, such as gunpowder magazines and trenches, were some of their associated structures.

Regardless of composition, there is evidence the trio of lines and the sectors they guarded were in constant state of flux. (This complex existence is partly responsible for the confusion that still exists among some.) This is particularly true of the third one – known as El Trincherón or El Zanjón – the most mysterious one. Underscored by a now you see it (in historic plans) now you do not ravine, it unequivocally made use of the terrain to establish a defensive position.<sup>134</sup>



Figure 30. The Puerta de Tierra Historic District, San Juan de Puerto Rico, undated, late 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>135</sup>

In late 18<sup>th</sup> century, after the completion of the outworks the Spanish Army Engineers made plans for the increase the defensive works in Puerta de Tierra. Twelve small defensive posts (*apostaderos*) and provisional trenches were built to defend beaches in the eastern lowlands against landing by an enemy force. These posts would support the existing two forts (San Antonio and San Jerónimo). Also, several trenches or caponiers<sup>136</sup> (*caponeras*) were made between the Castillo de San Cristóbal and the third line. (See Figure 30.) The drawing's legend details the plan depicts the defense works created during the "war." As seen when compared to earlier and later plans, the trenches were specifically outfitted for this particular martial event. The above-mentioned plan depicts only the third defensive line and belonging to the first one. Absence of the second defensive line evidences it was probably the last one to be erected. There is a need to note that during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when all lines were in place, repairs and additions to the lines and structures continued in earnest.

Until the early decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the military zealously controlled the Puerta de Tierra Historic District. Slowly, however, non-military presence started to solidify. According to Adolfo de Hostos, Governor Juan de Rivera decreed an emergency measure establishing Danish and British refuges arriving in 1714 could seek shelter on land located on the southern side of the central highway (present day Avenida Constitución). A series of *bohíos* were constructed after this date in the sector. Domestic use, however, was highly restricted. As late as the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century no non-military building or structure could be built north of the road.

<sup>134</sup> Some historic plans depict the ravine as a water connection between the Atlantic Ocean and the San Antonio Channel.

<sup>135</sup> "Plano de la Plaza de San Juan de Puerto Rico y del terreno comprendido entre esta al Puente de San Antonio en que se manifiestan sus fortificaciones y las Obras Provisionales executadas [sic] durante la guerra," late 18<sup>th</sup> century, Puerto Rico State Historic Preservation Office, San Juan de Puerto Rico, Mapas en Archivos Españoles Collection, PRI-15-08.

<sup>136</sup> Caponier is a covered means of access to the outworks, ditches that were defended from the main bastion parapets.

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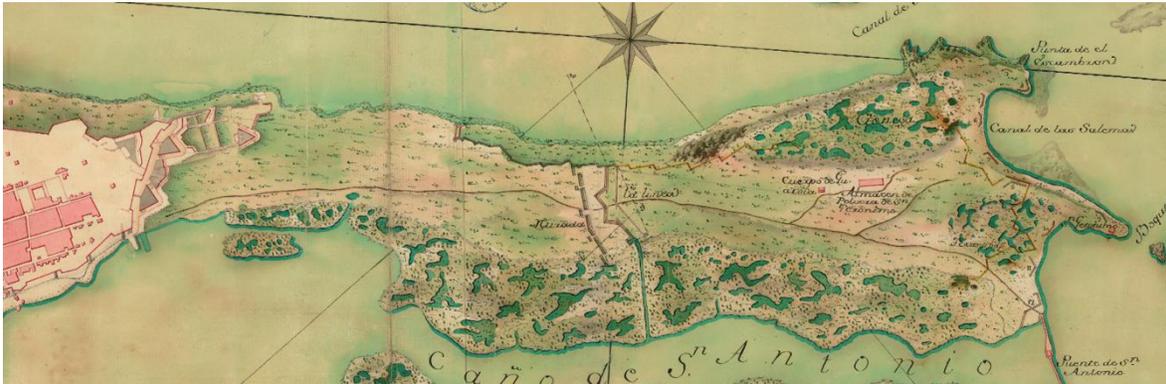
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Figure 31. The Puerta de Tierra Historic District, San Juan de Puerto Rico, 1783.<sup>137</sup>

As was also the case with the rest of the military components of the masterplan, there was an intimate relationship between the defensive works and San Juan Islet's geography. (See Figure 31.) While the coastal advanced works curved along the El Escambrón and Caribe Hilton Hotel<sup>138</sup> beaches the one closest to the city (called "Trincherón") made use of the existing ravine, incorporating this moat-like fissure to the design.



Figure 32. First three defensive lines, Puerta de Tierra, San Juan de Puerto Rico, 1887.<sup>139</sup>

Puerta de Tierra's northern shore cliffs and the huge southern mangrove effectively deterred assaults. Until the second defensive line was constructed, there were only two advanced defenses of the city: the first one and the one at El Trincherón. The Polvorín de San Jerónimo (1768-1769), was a rectangular structure enclosed in a defensive wall, supplied the garrison in eastern coastal defenses with gunpowder and ammunition.

In 1776, O'Daly proposed modifications for the Fuerte de San Antonio in order to strengthen it; a new 4.8 meters wide Puente de San Antonio with a central removable section was built around this time. (Campeche's painting of Governor de Castro clearly depicts the missing middle section.) (See Figure

<sup>137</sup> "Plano de la Plaza de Puerto Rico y sus inmediaciones," 1783, Puerto Rico State Historic Preservation Office, San Juan de Puerto Rico, Mapas en Archivos Españoles Collection, PRI-15-09.

<sup>138</sup> Some historic plans name the beach next to the Caribe Hilton Canal de las Salinas.

<sup>139</sup> Detail of "Plano de la plaza San Juan de Puerto Rico," 1887, AR\_J\_T\_4\_C\_2\_61, San Juan National Historic Site, National Park Service. (See Figure 29 for complete plan.)

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37.) From 1795 to 1800, a masonry wall 4,200 Castilian feet (*pies castellanos*<sup>140</sup>) long was constructed to unite the Batería del Escambrón, Batería de San Ramón (located to the east of the Fortín de San Jerónimo del Boquerón) and a small garrison building (to the northeast of Fortín de San Antonio). Another line started perpendicular to the first line on the northwest corner of the San Ramón battery moving west connecting with the eastern corner of the Polvorín de San Jerónimo's defensive wall. The construction work of the lines progressed more vigorously after the 1797 British assault against San Juan. The first defensive line (listed in the National Register of Historic Places) was a complicated organism fashioned of different components designed to deter attacks via the beaches, the main island, and the San Antonio Channel. (See Figure 32.) Small forts and fort-like structures defended the bridge (Fuerte de San Antonio), the Condado Lagoon or Canal de las Salemas (Fuerte de San Jerónimo del Boquerón), as well as the diminutive peninsula between this and El Escambrón area (Batería del Escambrón). Initiated in late the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the Puerta de Tierra Historic District's defensive lines were finished probably in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.



Figure 33 and Figure 34. Second defensive line, Puerta de Tierra Historic District, San Juan de Puerto Rico, Bastión de Isabel II (left), 1954 and Wireless US Navy Base, Puerta de Tierra Historic District, San Juan de Puerto Rico, 1910s-1920s.<sup>141</sup>

The second line included a small structure (presently known as the Bastión de Isabel II), as well as a north-south wall. (See Figure 33 and Figure 34.) In combination with the first line, the second one created a self-supporting precinct. Bastión de Isabel II is still preserved and is a contributing structure of the Puerta de Tierra Historic District. (See Photograph 005.) Archaeological evidence points out that sections of this defensive line may be under the US Naval Radio Station/ Casa Cuna Puerta de Tierra. It is assumed the remnants of the wall were covered with dirt increasing the height of the small hill where the precinct is sited.<sup>142</sup> (See Photograph 024.) As mentioned, this defensive line, constructed after the third one, seems to have displaced the El Trincherón (El Zanjón) in terms of military strategic relevance.

For unknown reasons, the El Trincherón (El Zanjón), the third line of defense, located at the ravine close to the islet's middle line (*línea de medianía*), is seldom mentioned.<sup>143</sup> In fact, the gully separating the islet

<sup>140</sup> Also known as Burgos foot (*pie de Burgos*), the Castilian feet measures .278635 meters.

<sup>141</sup> Second defensive line, Puerta de Tierra Historic District, San Juan de Puerto Rico, Bastión de Isabel II (described as Ravelin), Historic America Building Survey, Frederik C Gjessing, 12 April 1954 and US Naval Radio Station, Puerta de Tierra, San Juan de Puerto Rico, 1910s-1920s, Google, Public domain.

<sup>142</sup> Personal communication, Mr José E López, September 2017.

<sup>143</sup> During the preparation of the Old San Juan Historic District / Distrito Histórico del Viejo San Juan National Register of Historic Places and National Historic Landmark nominations, all three lines were researched, analyzed and interpreted even though no historic plans with the words "third line" had been found. Mindful of this absence, the Puerto Rico State Historic Preservation Office decided to follow convention including description of only two lines. Continuous research has yielded additional historic plans that clearly evidence the El Trincherón (El Zanjón) was indeed a defensive advanced line. At this time, it is unknown if Adolfo de Hostos – considered the classic interpreter of the system – had access to these documents. The issue is extremely relevant for it demonstrates San Juan Islet had a most advanced military masterplan that included a total of five

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into two sections is depicted differently in historic plans. While there are drawings that present the two connected by a very thin strip of land, others do not depict the ravine at all. (See Figure 30 and Figure 31.) Still others show a waterway connecting the Atlantic Ocean and San Antonio Channel. (See Figure 40.)

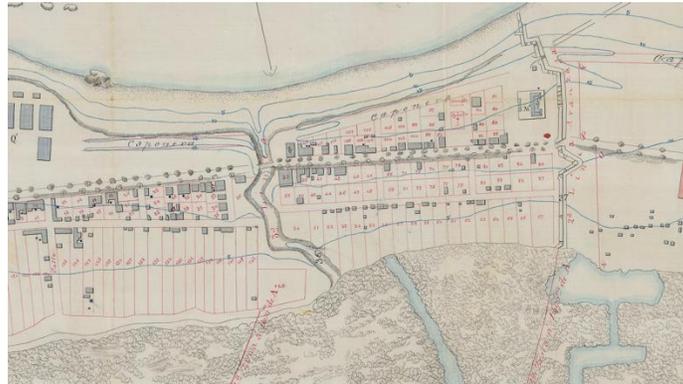


Figure 35. Second and third defensive lines, Puerta de Tierra Historic District, San Juan de Puerto Rico, 1879.<sup>144</sup>

Some drawings suggest the line included formal structures while others do not. It is possible the complex nature of the ravine and the swampland along the southern shore resulted in changes throughout the centuries. A plan dated to the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century includes a zigzagging wall while in an 1879 plan only caponiers are depicted. (See Figure 35.) This last drawing depicts a small bridge connecting both sides of the canyon. Most importantly, the legend “3<sup>a</sup> línea” (Translation: “third line”) is clearly seen, debunking theories that no such line existed.

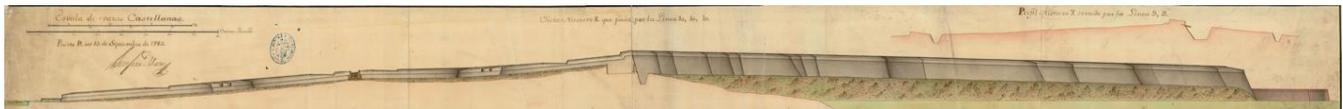


Figure 36. Third line of defense, Puerta de Tierra Historic District, San Juan de Puerto Rico by Juan Francisco Mestre, 1783.<sup>145</sup>

Regardless of form, shape or architectural morphology at least two 19<sup>th</sup> century plans describe El Trincherón (El Zanjón) as a defensive line. (See Figure 35 and Figure 36.) One of these depicts it as a continuous moat: “3<sup>a</sup> línea avanzada o fozo [sic] corrido” (Translation: “Third advanced line and continuous moat”). (See Figure 37.) The 1783 plan clearly depict a continuous north-south wall ending to the Charca de las Brujas<sup>146</sup> on the islet’s south side. (See Figure 36.) On its north side, the third line ended in the so-called Bajamar (also known as Taxamar and Tajamar), a contributing structure that has been preserved. (See Photograph 004.) This small fort sat in a tiny peninsula of its own (hence its name cutwater or *tajamar*) defending the Atlantic Ocean north shore at the base of the cliffs. Its role seems to

(not four, as believed) defensive lines. The complexity of the system makes it a unique example granting it international significance.

<sup>144</sup> “Plano de las líneas avanzadas de la plaza de San Juan Levantado en el año 1879,” by José Laguna, Puerto Rico State Historic Preservation Office, San Juan de Puerto Rico, Mapas en Archivos Españoles Collection, PRI-17-08.

<sup>145</sup> “Plano de la planta y varios perfiles de una fortificación indeterminada,” Puerta de Tierra, San Juan de Puerto Rico by Juan Francisco Mestre, 13 September 1783, Red Bibliotecas de Defensa, Ministerio de Defensa, Spain, PRI-24-11. I thank Mr José López for bringing this drawing to my attention.

<sup>146</sup> Cayetano Coll y Toste, *Boletín Histórico de Puerto Rico* (San Juan de Puerto Rico: Ateneo Puertorriqueño, 1916), Volume III, pp 48-49 mentions some “witches” were executed by the Inquisition during the early years of the city. According to the legend, the Inquisition pyre was supposedly located close to the Witches Lagoon (Charca de las Brujas). The water feature no longer exists for it was filled up and it is now part of the islet. It can be considered, however, an intangible resource of the Puerta de Tierra Historic District.

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have been to guard the ravine at sea level given the fact that the nature of this fissure would have allowed intrepid climbers to try an assault by climbing the small canyon.<sup>147</sup>

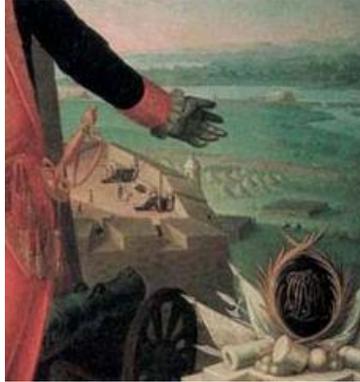


Figure 37. Portrait of Governor Ramón de Castro (detail of the El Trincherón) by José Campeche, 1800.<sup>148</sup>

In spite of the contradictory and confusing facts surrounding its history, El Trincherón (El Zanjón) was a defining element during the 1797 British attack. Governor Ramón de Castro y Gutiérrez's official portrait depicts him in a triumphal stance decked with the traditional paraphernalia of a victor pointing towards this particular defensive works. (See Figure 37.) The painting also depicts the camp of the Regimiento Fijo and the Milicias Disciplinadas next to the El Trincherón (El Zanjón). Obviously, the sector was considered the heart of the battle for, had the British overtaken these defenses, only the Puerta de Santiago would have stood in their way in conquering the city.

*La verdadera importancia de El Trincherón en relación a la sociedad puertorriqueña moderna es evidente en la pintura de José Campeche de don Ramón de Castro, Capitán General en 1797. Es donde por primera vez, en propósito común y victorioso, se reúnen y conocen puertorriqueños de toda la isla. Hablan, comparten, celebran empuñando fusiles bajo la bandera de Carlos IV. No eran jíbaros locos, descalzos con pavas deshilachadas. Eran soldados de primera forjados con disciplina de filosofía militar prusiana y fuego inglés. Aunque ya hablábamos con acento andaluz y lo que comíamos entonces era igual que lo que comemos hoy, aquí en ese momento es que nos definimos y se 'fija' nuestra identidad junto al Trincherón y para siempre se establece el nombre de el sitio donde ocurrió como 'Puerta de Tierra'.*<sup>149</sup>

Campeche's triumphal portrait depicts the 1797 San Juan defensive strategy. In spite of its relevance and the existence of the Tajamar, the memory of El Trincherón (El Zanjón) disappeared with time allowing some to categorize it as a legend.

<sup>147</sup> Although at present, El Trincherón is no longer visible, site inspections, interpretation of historic plans and photogrammetric comparisons part of the research carried out for this nomination, establish it is located under Block 119. In fact, Avenida Muñoz Rivera visibly goes down and then up near this location. (See Photograph 048.)

<sup>148</sup> Portrait of Governor Ramón de Castro (detail) by José Campeche, 1800, Google, Public domain.

<sup>149</sup> Translation: "The relevance of the Trincherón to contemporary Puerto Rican culture is evident in José Campeche's painting of Governor Ramón de Castro, Captain General in 1797. For the first time, united by a common purpose and victorious Puerto Ricans from all over the island meet, share and celebrate with their guns under Carlos IV flag. They were not crazy jíbaros, barefoot and with frayed straw hats. They were first class soldiers forged by Prussian-like discipline and English fire. Even though at that time we still spoke with Andalusian accent and what we ate was the same as today, this is the historic moment when we were defined as a people and when our identity as Puerto Ricans emerged next to the Trincherón next to the 'Puerta de Tierra'." Personal communication, Mr José López, August 2017.

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Figure 38. Reconstruction of the third line of defense (in light brown), Puerta de Tierra Historic District, San Juan de Puerto Rico.<sup>150</sup>

It is probable this most important defensive line was made of rammed earth covered with masonry, a relatively usual construction technique. Why the wall was deconstructed with time remains a mystery. As mentioned, the terminus on the north side was the Tajamar and on the south the Charca de las Brujas. A reconstruction of its alignment depicts that it had a northern section that ran along the upper part of the cliff facing the Atlantic Ocean. (See light brown representation in Figure 38.) As it reached the ravine sector it turned towards the south ending in the mangrove area. The only preserved elevation drawing includes a huge wood gate that, as mentioned before, has led some to believe this was the original Puerta de Tierra (Land's Gate). (See Figure 36.) The sector was also protected by secondary defenses probably short sections of wall parallel to the main one.



Figure 39. Excavations during the construction of the Paseo de Puerta de Tierra, Puerta de Tierra Historic District, San Juan de Puerto Rico, 2014-2015, Mr José López.

It is highly probable sections of the line and related structures still exist under streets and some buildings. This assumption is confirmed by the fact that remains of structures part of the El Trincherón (El Zanjón) defensive line were found in 2015 during construction work of the so-called Paseo de Puerta de Tierra. (See Figure 39.) While this nomination uses the National Register of Historic Places' Criterion C as frame of reference, there is a need to emphasize that sections of this most important historic property that once defended the island from varied international enemies are probably preserved. In any case, the Tajamar is a contributing structure dating the early decades of the 18<sup>th</sup> century although it was a theoretical component of the 18<sup>th</sup> century military masterplan. Its significance rests on the fact that it sheds light on multiple aspects, from experimentation with Late Renaissance-Early Baroque defense systems and military strategies to the symbolic place where Puerto Rican identity may have received emotional empowerment. The 18<sup>th</sup> century Tajamar is the only one of its type acting as defensive cutwater of the Atlantic Ocean.

<sup>150</sup>

Mr José López is the author of this superimposition of the third defensive line on a Google map of San Juan Islet.

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Spain imported the millennia old tradition of cloistered cities defended by massive walls to America, dramatically transforming the hemisphere. The Puerto Rican exceptional military masterplan proved its worth for centuries. Once finished, no enemy ever tried to conquer the city. Not even Admiral William R. Sampson during the Spanish-American War San Juan Islet's scheme is unique meriting standing as a UNESCO World Heritage Site (as per the opinion of UNESCO consulting parties). Its uniqueness principally depends on the Puerta de Tierra Historic District's three defensive lines. While other Hispanic American cities have forts and varied military structures not one, not even fabled Havana, had such a complex and multifaceted system.

### Territorial Organization

While it is true that in some Spanish cities: *Las murallas, bien para la guerra, bien para la paz, configuraron una imagen urbana, desdibujada en muchos casos por la extensión de los arrabales – sobre todo en la ciudades del interior peninsular en las que esos muros habían perdido su carácter defensivo – pero protagonista en otros . . .*,<sup>151</sup> this was not the case in San Juan Islet. Once the east wall was built, San Juan transformed into a cloistered enclave, a withdrawn and introverted urban universe. By 1640, the physical division of the islet into two sectors (Old San Juan and Puerta de Tierra) had taken place.

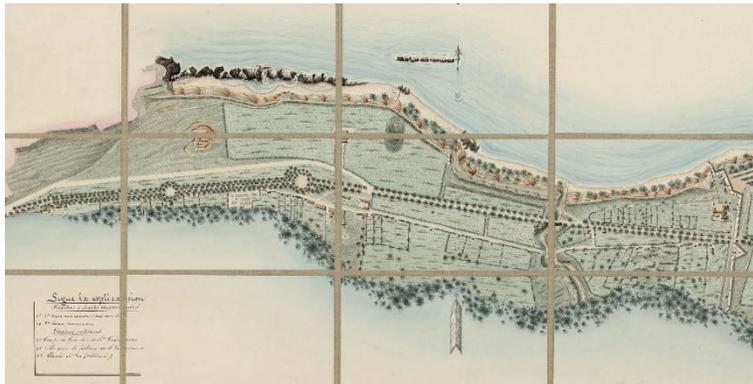


Figure 40. "Plano de la Plaza de San Juan Bautista de Puerto Rico hecho hasta la 1ª línea avanzada," Puerta de Tierra Historic District, San Juan de Puerto Rico, 1862.<sup>152</sup>

Although no longer a physical part of the core, the Puerta de Tierra Historic District served secondary functions, shadowing its original vocation as an essential part of the city. As mentioned, sectors of the historic district were also used as shelter for refugees from nearby islands. By 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Puerta de Tierra Historic District was the place where *sanjuaneros* could enjoy contact with nature. The Paseo de Covadonga (Paseo de Puerta de Tierra) copied European promenades with a twist since it was not located within but outside the city. (See Figure 40.)

During this stage the binary of cultural opposites that was to rule San Juan Islet for centuries was set in place. The outside the walls sector became a liminal place belonging not to the dead, as had been the

<sup>151</sup> Translation: "Walls, used for war and peace, created an urban image, at times blurred by slums, particularly in cities in the peninsula's interior, where walls lost their defensive character, but were protagonists in others . . ." Sebastiano Serlio, *Tercero y Cuarto libro de Arquitectura*, Toledo, 1552). Quoted in: Alicia Cámara Muñoz, "Murallas para la guerra y para la paz. Imágenes de la ciudad en la España del siglo XVI," p 152.

<sup>152</sup> "Plano de la Plaza de San Juan Bautista de Puerto Rico hasta la 1ª línea avanzada año 1861," 1862, San Juan National Historic Site, National Park Service, San Juan, Puerto Rico, AR\_J\_T\_4\_C\_2\_60\_02.

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case in Classical Antiquity, but to the military. A symbiotic relationship was born at this time: the urban core was the relevant sector because it was “inside” (*intramuros*) while the “outside” (*extramuros*) was no man’s land. As the Puerta de Tierra Historic District lost its role in the one islet – one city scheme, it acquired a new role as land bridge between capital city and island. While some may point out that “bridges,” as connectors, do not empower “dwelling” (hence they are not considered “places” given the fact that they are designed for movement), this was not the case regarding the Puerta de Tierra Historic District. Its new military personality simply added a new set of memories and meanings.



Figure 41. San Juan Islet, Puerto Rico by Luis Venegas Ossorio, 1678.<sup>153</sup>

It is convenient to interpret traditional peninsular territorial organization in order to better understand San Juan Islet’s development. The first ring around a core was the *ejido*. As mentioned, the original masterplan established the whole islet was to serve as *ejido*. After the defensive circuit was in place the *ejido* reduced in size, limited to a small, unconstructed area within the walls. A 1678 plan depicts the new condition describing this sector as: *Todo el anillo [?] que se incluye dentro desta línea de puntos rotos es lo que ocupan las casas de la ciuda [sic] Depuerto rico [sic] [.]. Y de la línea de puntos Rotos a la muralla es campaña para pastar ganado y algunos huertos[?].*<sup>154</sup> (See Figure 41.) From a sector covering almost half the islet, once the walls were in place, the *ejido* transformed into a sliver of land sandwiched between the core buildings and the defensive pommerium. In spite of its description as open land (*campaña*), implying pasturage and small vegetable garden could be found here, the sector significantly decreased in size. The fact the *ejido* was limited to land inside the walled precinct explains that it was never considered a suburban area. This understanding, in turn, sheds light on the 16<sup>th</sup> century peace-city model intentions. The original master plan for San Juan included the whole islet, a most novel approach to urban design.

<sup>153</sup> “Puerto Rico, puesto en planta don Luis Venegas Ossorio, teniente del castillo de la ciudad de Badajos, ingeniero maior [sic] de la frontera de Estremadura [sic] y sarjento [sic] general de batalla por su Magestad [sic], bisitador [sic] general de las fortificaciones de Tierra Firme y costas del mar del Sur, año del señor de 1678 años,” Archivo General de Indias, Seville, Spain, ES.41091.AGI/27/ MP-SANTO\_DOMINGO, 74.

<sup>154</sup> In this context, the word *campaña* (*campiña*; countryside) translates into: *campo llano sin montes ni asperezas*. *Diccionario de la Lengua Española*, word: *campaña*.

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Figure 42. Plan of San Juan Islet, Puerto Rico, 1770.<sup>155</sup>

A 1770<sup>156</sup> plan depicts the two sectors as separate entities divided by the eastern defensive wall. (See Figure 42.) The binary of opposites is in full display for even the colors of the terrain inside and out the defensive circuit are different. While order and systematization reigns supreme within the embrace of the stone ring, emptiness characterizes the Puerta de Tierra Historic District. The wall divides the islet into two sections that will never be one again as long as the man made boundary is in place. Tellingly, the depiction of the plan emphasizes the sector cannot serve as *ejido* due to its location outside the walls. Modification of the *ejido* after 1625 transformed the islet into a geographic entity with two personalities: the urban (Old San Juan Historic District) and suburban (Puerta de Tierra Historic District) ones. Most importantly, when the separation took place the Puerta de Tierra Historic District became not only an isolated sector but Old San Juan's urban Other.

The second sector surrounding peninsular urban enclaves was known as the *dehesas*.<sup>157</sup> It is not clear whether San Juan had such a sector or not. The principal difference between the *ejido* and the *dehesas* was that the second area was not used for urbanization purposes. *Por el contrario, las dehesas, terrenos vallados de uso comunal, eran reservadas para el pasto de los ganados, entre los que se encontraban los pertenecientes al común, con destino a las tierras de labor también comunales, los destinados a la carnicería, y aquellos que debían poseer los vecindados.*<sup>158</sup> While the slaughterhouse (*matadero* or *carnicería*) was ideally located in the *dehesas*, in San Juan the Venegas Ossorio plan depicts the venue sited in the *ejido* within the walls.<sup>159</sup> In Spain, olive trees and grapes, as well as additional *huertas* (vegetable gardens) and communal gardens could be found here. Abbad y Lasierra mentioned that during the 18<sup>th</sup> century many San Juan houses had vegetable gardens. These small, planted areas were located on the side and back yards, as well as in the *traspatio* (a secondary area of the backyard). This

<sup>155</sup> "Plano de la ciudad de S Juan de Puerto Rico," 1770, Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division Washington, DC, Call Number: G4974.S5 1770.P5 Vault; Digital Source: g4974s ct003784 <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc/gmd/g4974s.ct003784>.

<sup>156</sup> The Plaza de Armas configuration in the plan (See Figure 42.) is different than the one recorded in multiple plans throughout the centuries, although it does represent the traditional American organization with six streets opening unto the principal square instead of the actual four. It is possible absence of the El Trincherón may be a second inaccuracy, assuming as incorrect the representation of the Plaza de Armas.

<sup>157</sup> The word *dehesas* comes from the Latin word "defended" and implies a walled area. It is defined as: *tierra generalmente acotada y por lo común destinada a pastos*. *Diccionario de la Lengua Española*; word: *dehesa*. In English, the word translates into grassland, pasture and meadow.

<sup>158</sup> Translation: "On the other hand, *dehesas* were fenced public lands reserved for the community's pasturage and farming, the slaughterhouse and other residents' uses." María Isabel Navarro Segura, "Las fundaciones de ciudades y el pensamiento urbanístico hispano en la era del Descubrimiento," *Scripta Nova: Revista electrónica de geografía y ciencias sociales*.

<sup>159</sup> During the 19<sup>th</sup> century the Old San Juan slaughterhouse was moved outside the walls to the present La Perla community.

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was specially the case during the early stages of the city's development when most lots still included empty areas.

The sector known as *propios*<sup>160</sup> included the municipality's agricultural land, once this territorial organizational unit was imported from Spain. Under extraordinary circumstances, this land reserve could be used for expansion. *Finalmente, los terrenos de Propios contaban con una reserva de suelo próxima a la villa para diversos usos agrarios, que generalmente eran explotados a censo, y con diversas fórmulas de pago, que incluían el pago en especie de la cosecha del año.*<sup>161</sup> In theory, the sector served as a source of income for a town.

Each community decided the sizes of the *ejido*, *dehesas* and *propios* in relatively *ad hoc* manner until Emperor Felipe II established formal guidelines. It is logical to assume topographical considerations played a key role in their establishment. Additionally, it is not farfetched to assume that, during early periods, San Juan organization may have replicated Canary Islands examples. In San Cristóbal de La Laguna:

*Desde 1498 se ordenó a todos los vecinos de Tenerife que hiciesen casa en la villa de San Cristóbal. Lejos de la costa y abierta al territorio circundante al carecer murallas, en el ámbito de una ciudad-república, representa un nuevo modelo de ciudad jurisdiccional que comparte un espacio físico común con su término, integrado por un anillo de suertes de terreno cultivables de secano entre caminos en una disposición semejante al modelo concéntrico de asentamiento – con ejido, dehesas y tierra de labor envolviendo al núcleo edificado – que será característico de la ciudad clásica americana a partir del siglo XVI.*

While in San Cristóbal de La Laguna: *Los repartos de tierras de sembraduras – que garantizaban la subsistencia de la unidad de los nuevos colonos – se hicieron corresponder con la concesión de un solar dentro del perímetro urbano.*<sup>162</sup> there is no evidence the rocky, maritime-breeze exposed Puerta de Tierra was organized in a such a systematic manner during its early post-1519 history.

The Puerta de Tierra Historic District includes all remaining structures of the three defensive lines, unique components of the 18<sup>th</sup> century Spanish military masterplan. The first line is listed in the National Register of Historic Places and one structure within the Luis Muñoz Rivera Park (listed in the National Register of Historic Places). The Bastión de Isabel II was part of the second line is a contributing structure. The Tajamar (Bajamar), part of the third line of defense, is located down on the beach area west of the Trincherón (El Zanjón). Along the Calle San Agustín remnants of the lower walls that created the actual lines in some places have been preserved. Although older, the Avenida Constitución is another structure dating from this historic context.

San Juan Islet's military masterplan and the structures that formed it are unique in the world. So is the exceptional interaction between military defense and the islet's geographic characteristics. The lines

<sup>160</sup> *Propios* is defined as: *Heredad, dehesa, casa u otro género cualquiera de hacienda que tiene una ciudad, villa, o lugar para satisfacer los gastos públicos. Diccionario de la Lengua Española; word: propios.*

<sup>161</sup> Translation: "Finally, the *propios* included a land reserve close to the urban core where diverse agricultural concerns could be exploited following varied financial agreements including in kind payment with the crops." María Isabel Navarro Segura, "Las fundaciones de ciudades y el pensamiento urbanístico hispano en la era del Descubrimiento," *Scripta Nova: Revista electrónica de geografía y ciencias sociales.*

<sup>162</sup> Translation: "After 1498, all Tenerife residents were requested to construct a house in San Cristóbal. Away from the coast and open to the countryside since it was unwalled, this city-republic belonged to a new type of legal entity that shared physical space with its terminus and was integrated in a circular manner to the *ejido*, *dehesas* and agricultural lands embracing the core in an organization that will become standard in all American settlements after the 16<sup>th</sup> century." "The division of farming lands guaranteeing the existence of settlers was linked to the granting of a lot inside the urban perimeter." Jesús Pérez Morera and Carlos Rodríguez Morales, *Arte en Canarias Del Gótico al Manierismo*, pp 47-48.

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were part of a totality and not isolated structures. Contributing historic properties of the Puerta de Tierra Historic District include components of the second and third defensive lines that holistically interpret the islet and its defensive system.

### PART THREE THE NINETEENTH CENTURY ENSANCHE

#### **Puerta de Tierra Historic District's Third Post-1519 Stage of Development (1800-1898)**

In 1897 the decades-long controversy regarding Puerta de Tierra's apartheid status reached the point of no return when a large section of the massive fourth defensive line – including its herculean land gate, Puerta de Santiago (Puerta de Tierra) – was imploded.<sup>163</sup> Nineteenth century needs for an urban expansion (*ensanche*<sup>164</sup>) transformed the military structure into an insurmountable obstacle since no conurbation was possible as long as the barrier existed. Interpreted as a physical obstruction impeding healthy urban growth, its destruction was welcomed by most. At the time of its demolition, development of the Puerta de Tierra Historic District was a reality despite decades-long infighting between military and municipal authorities.



Figure 43. Puerta de Santiago (also known as Puerta de Tierra) from outside the city, Puerta de Tierra Historic District, San Juan de Puerto Rico, 1890s.<sup>165</sup>

As mentioned, by the early years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the historic stone belt transformed into a hated obstacle to modernity. Described as an oppressive ring, it not only represented a gigantic nuisance but an insalubrious constriction that encumbered healthy urban growth as per the standards of the times.<sup>166</sup> *En la actualidad, ni cocoteros ni corrales han quedado, gracias al enorme cinturón de piedra que ciñe la ciudad condenando sus edificaciones a la estrechez, su atmósfera a la insalubridad y sus habitantes a la asfixia.*<sup>167</sup> Four years prior to the demolition, a Spaniard who visited San Juan described the city as an asphyxiated organism:

<sup>163</sup> San Juan de Puerto Rico's defense circuit destruction plans centered on the fourth line and the sections south of the core since the rest of the stone ring faced water (the Atlantic Ocean on the north and the bay on the south and west).

<sup>164</sup> *Ensanche* (widening) was the name given in Spain to 19<sup>th</sup> century urban developments. The best-known example is Barcelona's Eixample (Ensanche) designed by Ildefons Cerdà in 1859.

<sup>165</sup> Puerta de Santiago (also known as Puerta de Tierra), Puerta de Tierra Historic District, San Juan de Puerto Rico, 1890s, from outside the city, Google, Public domain.

<sup>166</sup> Alejandro Tapia y Rivera, *Mis memorias o Puerto Rico como lo encontré y como lo dejo*, p 32.

<sup>167</sup> *Idem*. Translation: "Nowadays, there are no more animal pens or palm trees, thanks to the enormous stone belt that constricts the city condemning its buildings to narrowness, its atmosphere to pollution and its residents to asphyxiation."

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[L]as murallas que van a derribarse a petición del vecindario, que se ahoga ya dentro de un recinto amurallado que los técnicos juzgan ya inútil para la defensa de la plaza, y los higienistas cinturón que oprime con sus ligaduras los pulmones y la fuerza expansiva de una ciudad que crece y se desarrolla a impulsos de su riqueza y trabajo.<sup>168</sup>

The feeling of incarceration augmented due to the gargantuan size of the defenses and the fact one had to traverse two sets of doors and two moats to exit or enter the city. (See Figure 28, Figure 43 and Figure 44.) Since the fourth and fifth defensive lines (the Castillo de San Cristóbal and Castillo de San Felipe del Morro, respectively) and the stone wall connecting them embraced the city, the sense of imprisonment was quite formidable, making their presence an unwanted (for many) part of daily life. In Havana most military activities took place on the other side of the bay. Although a stone ring surrounded the city, the segregation allowed this city to develop a different urban personality from the presidium-like San Juan.



Figure 44. Destruction of the Puerta de Santiago (Puerta de Tierra) from outside San Juan de Puerto Rico during its destruction, 1897.<sup>169</sup>

*Sanjuaneros* were familiar with the fact fortification walls of varied European cities, including Barcelona (Spain) and Vienna (Austria), were demolished as part of 19<sup>th</sup> century modernization processes.<sup>170</sup> The first city was a favorite precedent for San Juan: [S]e llevó a cabo la destrucción del fuerte de Atarazanas y de todo el lienzo de muralla que se hallaba en iguales condiciones respecto a aquel puerto que las de la muralla sud de que se habla de respecto a este [San Juan de Puerto Rico].<sup>171</sup> Havana was also a source of inspiration.<sup>172</sup> Novel hygiene ideas and obsolescence of the once mighty defenses, as well as a dramatic population increase, were some of the reasons that made San Juan's tightly huddled core positively outmoded. All seemed to agree: the wall section dividing San Juan Islet into two sectors had to come down in order for the city to grow in a healthy manner. (See Figure 44.) When amid much

<sup>168</sup> Translation: "The people want the walls destroyed for they asphyxiated in a walled precinct which the military experts judge cannot defend the town and the health experts describe as a belt that constricts the lungs and the expansive force of a growing city thanks to its richness and work." Salvador Puig y Valls, *Viaje a América, Estados Unidos, Exposición Universal de Chicago, México, Cuba y Puerto Rico* (Barcelona: Tipolitografía Luis Tasso, 1894), Tome II, p 248.

<sup>169</sup> Puerta de Santiago (Puerta de Tierra) from outside the city of San Juan during its destruction, 1890s, Google, Public domain. Archivo General de Puerto Rico, San Juan de Puerto Rico, FMSJ. Thanks are extended to Mr José Marull who provided information regarding this image.

<sup>170</sup> Barcelona third defensive ring (erected during the Middle Ages) was destroyed in 1854. Vienna followed suit in 1857 substituting its stone belt with the famed *Ringstrasse*.

<sup>171</sup> Translation: "The Barcelona Atarazanas Fort and wall section facing the sea were destroyed in similar manner as what could be done in this city [San Juan de Puerto Rico]." "Informe de la Comandancia de Ingenieros," March 6, 1883, Archivo Histórico Nacional de Madrid (Spain), Ultramar, Legajo 407, File 18, 3.

<sup>172</sup> Havana's defensive circuit was demolished in 1863 although the "Plano del Ensanche de La Habana" by Mariano Carrillo de Albornoz proposing demolition of the entire defensive ring is date 1850. Juan Bautista Orduña authored the development project for the 6.5 acres of land that were liberated. "Arquitectura y Urbanismo en la República de Cuba (1902-1958) . . . Antecedentes, Evolución y Estructuras de Apoyo," pp 1-20; 4, Internet source: lasa.international.pitt.edu.

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merriment the demolition of the wall started on 17 May 1897 the one islet – one city 16<sup>th</sup> century scheme experienced a rebirth.

*La aprobación despertó singular entusiasmo en todas las clases sociales. Proyectóse primeramente un parque en parte del espacio que ocupaban los muros y baluartes. Los jóvenes y señoritas de la buena sociedad ofrecieron sus servicios gratuitamente para coadyuvar a la obra demoledora. Los primeros, en número de doscientos, organizaron diecinueve brigadas de honor que bautizaron con los nombres de Ortega, Lealtad, Rey, Reina, Regente, Colón, Matilde, Pura (en honor de la hija del gobernador), etcétera. Proveyéndose de palas y picos en la Casa Consistorial, uniformándose con un ancho sombrero de jipi-japa y una camisola (bajo la cual las tendencias aristocráticas de la época imponían, con el inferior pretexto el rígido cuello postizo, o permitieron el uso de un fino pañuelo anudado a la garganta). Las señoritas, por su parte, formando grupos de aguadoras, acudieron, amables y solícitas, en sus primaverales toillettes, provistas de lindas canastillas adornadas con flores y lazos, a mitigar la sed y a ofrecer delicado sustento a aquellos jóvenes obreros del civismo. Colocóse la primera brigada bajo la dirección de la señorita Pura Marín y León, primogénita del gobernador Marín. Improvisóse un campamento de tiendas de campaña a lo largo de la calle San Francisco, frente a la plaza de Colón, para proteger del sol a las aguadoras.*

*Pareció político a las autoridades españolas de la Isla imprimir cierta solemnidad al acto de sacrificar al progreso de la ciudad un jirón del famoso Presidio de San Juan, secular exponente del poderío de España en el Nuevo Mundo. Dio comienzo la tarea el 28 de mayo de 1897, previamente declarado festivo por el gobernador Marín y anunciado al público por el alcalde, doctor José M Marxuach, en un ambiente que contribuían a hacer alegre un sol espléndido y el esperado júbilo de la población. Arbolóse una hermosa bandera nacional sobre la puerta de Santiago, empavesáronse las naves ancladas en el puerto y cubriéronse de colgaduras los balcones de las residencias que circundaban la plaza de Colón. Mantenido a raya la multitud en la esquina nordeste de dicha plaza, ascendieron al terraplén que cubría la bóveda de la vetusta puerta el gobernador y capitán general Marín, el general Ortega y la comitiva oficial, para presenciar la colocación del primer cartucho de dinamita. Descendió la comitiva, despejáronse los alrededores, y el gobernador hizo explotar aquella primera carga. Arremolináronse entonces al pie del terraplén las brigadas de honor y los trabajadores para comenzar la labor de remover en carretillas de mano las piedras y la tierra de la enorme obra.<sup>173</sup>*

<sup>173</sup> Translation: "When authorization for the destruction was granted all social groups were delighted. A park was first projected for the area occupied until then by the moat and bastions. Young men and ladies of the upper class freely offered their services to help with destruction work. Up to 200 of the first organized 19 honor brigades named Ortega, Loyalty, King, Queen, Regent, Colón, Matilde, Pura (in honor of the governor's daughter), among others. Provided with picks and shovels by the Municipality, all wearing a *jipi-japa* hat and a camisole (some had the rigid collar that was de rigor at the time under it while others used a loosely tied handkerchief). The young ladies, for their part, acting as water carrier dressed in spring toillettes carrying beautiful baskets adorned with flowers and bows, offered the precious liquid to the young workers of civism. The first brigade was placed under Miss Pura Marín y León, eldest daughter of Governor Marín. Several tents were placed along San Francisco Street in front of the Plaza de Colón, to protect the water carriers from the sun." "The authorities agreed the activity merited a solemn approach in order to properly commemorate the sacrifice of one part of the famed Presidio de San Juan symbolic of Spain's power in the New World. Work started on 28 May 1897, declared a holiday by Governor Marín and seconded by the mayor, Dr José M Marxuach, on a sunny day filled with enthusiasm. A beautiful national flag flew over the Puerta de Santiago and on all masts of the ships in the harbor, as well as the balconies of all houses facing the Plaza de Colón. While crowd was kept safe on the northeast corner of the plaza, Governor Marín, General Ortega and the official party climbed the embankment to witness the placing of the first cartridge of dynamite. After they descended and the governor exploded the charge. Afterwards, the honor brigades and workers started to work on removing the stones and earth of the enormous structure." Adolfo de Hostos, *San Juan Ciudad murada* (San Juan de Puerto Rico: Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña, 1979), p 260.

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A day before the event the local young ladies extended an invitation to all *sanjuanero* males via a local newspaper.

*Brigada Purita*

*Obreros: Mañana vais a realizar una obra que simboliza para el país y para la patria un hecho tan trascendental que formará página en la historia de este país, tan sabiamente gobernado por el ilustre General Marín que ha logrado realizar tan acariciadas aspiraciones.*

*Las murallas que formaban un círculo de opresión de esta ciudad van desaparecer por mandato de nuestro augusto Rey, que identificado con los deseos de pueblo ensancha este suelo jardín del mundo americano.*

*Vais a tener el honor de ser los primeros en derribar estos muros, y nosotras que, débiles para el trabajo material no podemos ayudaros en tan ruda faena compartimos con vosotros, no la Gloria del trabajo, porque esa es exclusivamente vuestra, sino la Gloria de la iniciativa a la cual nos asociamos de una manera absoluta.*

*Confiamos, pues, en que llenareis vuestro cometido a entera satisfacción y en esa seguridad nos hemos congregado para q resulte vuestra obra tal como vuestro deseo requiere.*

*Puerto Rico, 27 de mayo de 1897  
Sus Aguadoras<sup>174</sup>*

Implosion<sup>175</sup> of the Puerta de Santiago and accompanying structures was the final act in a decades-long crusade striving to urbanize the entire islet in the manner closely resembling the by now forgotten 16<sup>th</sup> century peace-city masterplan. Eliminating the artificial frontier created by the fourth defensive line was the last step in the unification of the intramural sector and its hinterland. The moment came after decades of dealings with the military, the iron-fisted principal objectors to the Puerta de Tierra Historic District's urbanization. Although aware bastioned masonry structures were by then obsolete, opposition to the demolition was based on the same reason the public favored it. Creating a modern urban center at the expense of the centuries-old defenses stood against everything the establishment represented: Spain's immutable colonial control over San Juan Islet and Puerto Rico.

Considered no-man's land for centuries, the Puerta de Tierra Historic District was scarcely inhabited during the early years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Edward Bliss and Charles Chauncy Emerson, who visited San Juan during the period from 1831 to 1834), provided a telling description of "St Johns" (their nickname for San Juan). The brothers described the "outside of the walls of the city" as the countryside, the place you went for a Sunday walk.

We strolled along a green road, bordered here & there by a few peaked cabins, looking simple & native as though they had grown out of the spot of earth they covered; on our right hand was the creek of the sea which have said runs behind the island of St Johns & makes its harbour . . . . On the left was a sloping

<sup>174</sup> Translation: "Purita Brigade" "Workers: Tomorrow you will carry out a transcendental activity symbolic of the country and the Motherland that will mark a new page in the history of the country so wisely managed by General Marín who has made possible this goal." "The walls forming an oppressive ring will disappear as mandated by our august king who has joined the wishes of the people in this American garden." "You will have the honor to be the first ones to bring down these walls and we, weak regarding physical work are unable to help you in such rude activity, wish however to share not the glory of the work which is yours exclusively, but the glory of an initiative we absolutely agree with." "We trust you will carry out your work in a satisfactory manner wishing you it is performed in the manner you wish for." "Puerto Rico, 27 de mayo de 1897" "Water Carriers." Quoted in: Osiris Delgado Mercado, *Historia General de las Artes Plásticas en Puerto Rico Tomo I*, p 239.

<sup>175</sup> Adolfo de Hostos, *San Juan Ciudad murada*, p 260. Destroying the defense line was no easy task since the structure was approximately 23.76 meters wide.

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bank of green on the summit of which run along the fortifications of the City & on whose acclivity the Spanish soldiers were now parading to the music of a full band . . . <sup>176</sup>



Figure 45. Paseo de Covadonga (Paseo de Puerta de Tierra), Puerta de Tierra, San Juan de Puerto Rico, 1879.<sup>177</sup>

Puerta de Tierra Historic District's few "cabins" (*bohíos*) and "green road" (present day Avenida Constitución) provided a striking contrast to the congested urban core, distinguished by a solitary green area reserved for military use (the Esplanade in front of the Castillo de San Felipe del Morro). Because of this circumstance *sanjuaneros* could interact with nature exclusively when outside the city walls. During the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries two exterior promenades (Paseo de la Princesa and Paseo de Covadonga,<sup>178</sup> also known as Paseo de Puerta de Tierra) were organized for such a purpose. (See Figure 45.) All social classes enjoyed going "outdoors." In 1848 Governor Prim was seen enjoying the second promenade mentioned above.<sup>179</sup> The use of promenades and boulevards evidences a strong European influence for these recreational venues were now considered de rigueur in continental cities.

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Old San Juan experienced a gigantic population explosion that led to extreme density and serious sanitation issues. In 1898, a committee organized by the Americans described the unsavory conditions created by just one of the core's many historic buildings:

The ground floors [of the Cuartel de San Francisco, previously known as the Convento de San Francisco] are upon different levels with obstructed drainage, which act as catch basins, and the soil is permeated with the excretions from the cesspools above on Luna Street. . . . With moisture, mold, and absence of sunlight and air, and an average temperature above 70 degrees F, throughout the year, and ideal culture bed is formed for the propagation of disease germs. . . . Dr Gabriel Ferrer, of this committee, is personally cognizant of the origin and development of yellow fever in these quarters, he having been frequently called in as a consultant. He states: "I can affirm, because experience has taught me so, that the greater number of people attacked with yellow fever always proceeded from the soldiers located in these barracks." This is also personally known to Dr Ricardo Hernández. Cases were allowed to remain until in a desperate

<sup>176</sup> Frank Otto Gattel (editor), "Puerto Rico Through New England Eyes, 1831-1834," *Journal of Interamerican Studies*, Volume 1, No 3 (July 1959), published by Center for Latin American Studies at the University of Miami, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/164896>, p 284. I thank Dr Mark Barnes for bringing this article to my attention.

<sup>177</sup> "Primera Zona de Puerta de Tierra," Puerto Rico, by José Laguna, 30 de Septiembre de 1879, Puerto Rico State Historic Preservation Office, Mapas en Archivos Españoles Collection, PRI-17-04.

<sup>178</sup> Asturians celebrated yearly festive pilgrimages (*romerías*) by marching through the Puerta de Santiago and picnicking in the Puerta de Tierra Historic District. The community was so large that during the 1880s the Virgen de Covadonga, patron of Asturias, was declared the historic district's patron. Some years later, she was joined in her holy responsibility by St Augustine.

<sup>179</sup> José Marcial Quiñones, *Un poco de historia colonial (Incluye de 1850-1890)* (Barcelona: I J Pareja, 1978), p 67.

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condition, often dying during removal to the hospital, and the death rate was as high as 47 percent, showing a virulent type of disease.<sup>180</sup>

The Convento de San Francisco, constructed during the 17<sup>th</sup> century, by the 19<sup>th</sup> century the building was being used as infantry barracks (Cuartel de San Francisco).

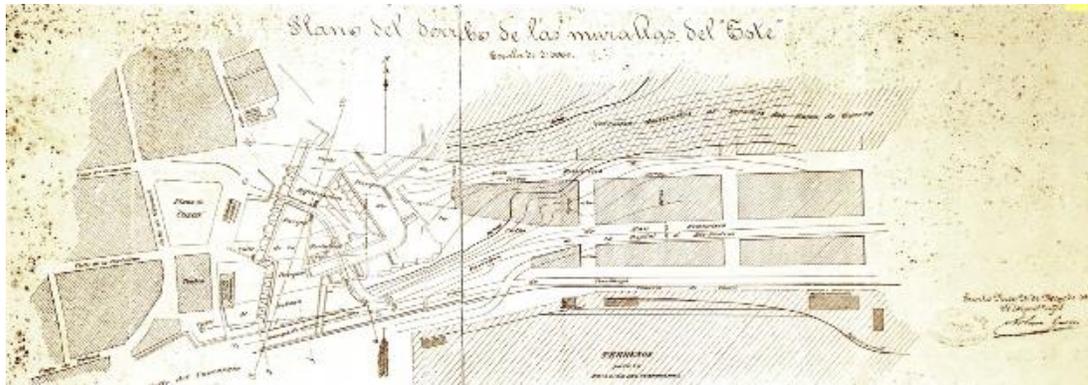


Figure 46. Puerta de Santiago and surrounding areas, Puerta de Tierra Historic District, San Juan de Puerto Rico by Architect Antonio Guerra, 1897.<sup>181</sup>

San Juan's growth by means of an *ensanche* could only take place in the Puerta de Tierra Historic District. As a result, during the early years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the goal of reverting to the one city – one islet scheme began in earnest. While elimination of the western wall facilitated conurbation between Old San Juan and the Puerta de Tierra Historic District, its disappearance generated important secondary effects. For example, the Avenida Constitución's section that starts at the southeast corner of the Plaza de Colón and ends in front of the YMCA was formally platted at this time. This new arrangement substituted the original entrance to the city via the Puerta de Santiago: a curved road sited further south, closer to the bay. (See Figure 46.)

Multiple bureaucratic stalemates slowed military abandonment of the Puerta de Tierra Historic District. On 2 August 1802, however, a first step in the resolution of the conflict was taken when the military rented land south of present day Avenida Constitución to the Municipality of San Juan. As mentioned, in 1714 Danish and British refugees were sheltered in the district and a series of *bohíos* were constructed after this date. This development, however, was a less formal one than the 1802 agreement. At this time, the historic road transformed into a boundary: the military controlled all land north while the Municipality developed the southern sector. As a result of this first planning decision, the northern border of Avenida Constitución remained mostly unoccupied until the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Commercial venues also grouped south of the road. In spite of this new arrangement, strict military restrictions continued to exist for decades after 1802. For example, all non-military buildings, regardless of location, had to be constructed of wood in order to guarantee rapid destruction in case of enemy attack. Additionally, size

<sup>180</sup> Report of the "Special Committee to Inspect the San Francisco Barracks" made for the American military government with the objective of: "[M]ake a sanitary inspection of the San Francisco barracks with a view of determining their fitness for a jail." Military Government of Porto Rico, *Military Government of Porto Rico From October 18, 1898, to April 30, 1900 Appendices to the Report of the Military Governor* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 1901), pp 44-45.

<sup>181</sup> "Plano del derribo de las murallas del Este" by Antonio Guerra, 24 May 1897, Puerto Rico State Historic Preservation Office Collection. I thank Mr Santiago Gala for his assistance in obtaining this image.

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was carefully monitored. Underscoring the district's martial control, as late as 1847, the Puente de San Antonio, the only access connecting islet and island, was closed from 12:00 AM until 6:00 AM.<sup>182</sup>



Figure 47. Dredging and landfilled sectors carried out by Spanish government until 1894, San Juan Islet, Puerto Rico.<sup>183</sup>

The Municipality's sector was smaller in terms of area and covered with mangroves, a limitation solved by the landfill work that started in 1805 at La Puntilla de San Lázaro, slowly moving in an easterly direction along the islet's southern shore. (See Figure 47.)

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Puerta de Tierra Historic District's urban development met with unending military hostility producing a pendular attitude. This defiance was signaled in varied manners. A mere three years after ceding the sector south of Avenida Constitución to the Municipality, the military erected twelve wooden barracks, designed to house 100 soldiers each. Another incongruity arose when, on 2 November 1834, military presence in the historic district was reduced when several structures were demolished. Contrarily, around the same time, the Rifle School (Marksmanship School) (Escuela de Tiro) was moved to the Puerta de Tierra Historic District. The presence of a rifle practice range next to dozens of houses did not merit any government concern.

In 1862, the Corps of Engineers of the Spanish Army foreseeing a call by municipal authorities for the expansion of the city of San Juan to Puerta de Tierra after the authorized demolition of the walls of Barcelona prepared a plan that would permit development that would preserve the walls of San Juan. This plan, prepared by engineer Manuel F. Castro, would help the city's urban development by providing space for eighteen blocks from the city up to second defensive line. Three year later, the municipal assembly of San Juan disregarded the military's proposed plan passing a resolution that called for the demolition southeast sector of city walls and the urban expansion up to the San Antonio Bridge. However, because of San Juan's military importance to Spain as a military post the municipality could not get the approval for their petition from the the Crown authorities in Madrid. Two years later (1867) the military's stranglehold over Puerta de Tierra was loosened when a crown ordered the transfer of some lands in the area between the walled enclave and west of the second defensive line from the military to the Insular Treasury. The Insular Treasury was authorized to rent or sell these lands. As result of this order one plan was made that year by the military engineer (Manuel Walls) marking the delimitation of the military and the Insular Treasury lands.

<sup>182</sup> As late as 1853 an iron chain was placed on one side of the bridge effectively closing the structure from 10:00 PM until 6:00 AM.

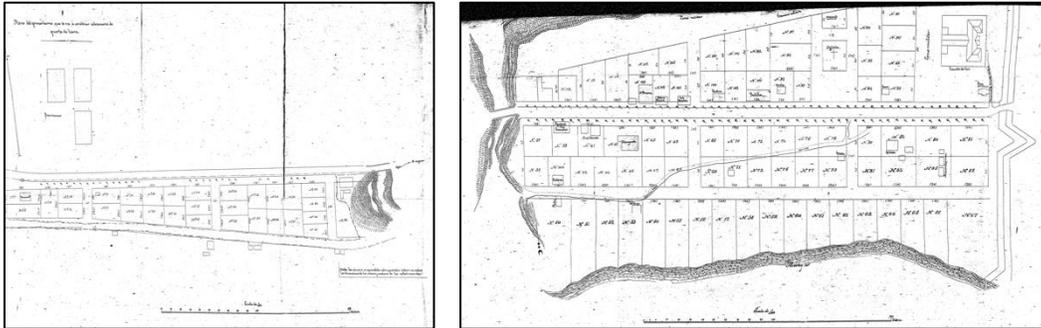
<sup>183</sup> "Plano del puerto de San Juan de Puerto-Rico: con la representación de las obras ejecutadas desde 1887 hasta el 30 de Junio 1894," 1894, US Library of Congress Geography and Map Division, Washington DC, Call Number/Physical Location G4974.S5 1894. P5; Repository Library of Congress 20540-4650 USA dcu; Digital Source: <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g4974s.ct002238>.

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Figures 48 and Figure 49. Primer Barrio and Segundo Barrio, Puerta de Tierra Historic District, San Juan de Puerto Rico, 1866.<sup>184</sup>

The masterplan organized development using historic defensive lines as frontiers. The Primer Barrio (First Barrio), closest to the city, included the sector between Puerta de Santiago and the third line (El Trincherón or El Zanjón). (See Figure 48.) The Segundo Barrio (Second Barrio), in turn, was sited between the third and second defensive lines. (See Figure 49.) As expected, the Primer Barrio was the first one to be urbanized. The use of defensive lines as boundaries for the stages of development is quite interesting. There was no reason all of the Puerta de Tierra Historic District could not be treated as one holistic organism rather than one divided into smaller components. This is yet another impact the military masterplan had in the urbanization of the sector.

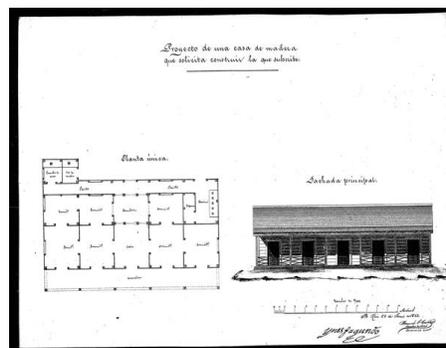


Figure 50. House for Inés Fagundo, Puerta de Tierra Historic District, San Juan de Puerto Rico, 1862.<sup>185</sup>

In 1867, the third defensive line at El Trincherón (El Zanjón) was completely revamped. Five years earlier one of many residential buildings built between the second and third defensive lines was erected for Inés Fagundo. (See Figure 50.) Quite different from the *bohíos* seen by the Emerson Brothers, historic architectural drawings depict a very large house with seven rooms plus a living room, dining room and kitchen. An open corridor along the back of the house provided access to toilet facilities, segregated for masters (*amos*) and servants (*servientes*). The façade wide balcony (*corredor*) evidences this was the home of a family of means. At the same time houses large and small were built, extensive defensive

<sup>184</sup> "Plano de la zona derecha e izquierda del 2do barrio que se va a construir extramuros de Puerta de Tierra," 20 August 1866, Archivo General Militar de Madrid, Capitanía General de Puerto Rico, Signatura 5189.02.

<sup>185</sup> "Proyecto de una casa de madera que solicita construir la que subscribe," Expediente de obras promovido por Inés Fagundo, vecina de San Juan de Puerto Rico, para la construcción de una casa entre la segunda y tercera línea defensiva, en el Barrio de Puerta de Tierra de San Juan de Puerto Rico, 21 July 1862, Archivo General Militar de Madrid, Sección de Ultramar del Ministerio de la Guerra, Signatura: 5619.13.

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caponiers, moats and other military structures continued to be organized underscoring the bipolar personality of the Puerta de Tierra Historic District.<sup>186</sup> The fact most believed the district had no civic future is corroborated by the emergence of San Juan earliest suburbs in Condado and Miramar on the main island and not, as expected, closer to the enclave. In spite of military obstinacy, by 1836 the district was dotted with approximately 45 houses (mainly *bohios*). Nine years later, there were 223 residents, a relatively small number when compared to the urban core, formed by 1,000 houses sheltering from 12,000 to 14,000 dwellers.

In May 1872 San Juan Municipal Government again made a petition to the Insular Spanish Government for approval of the demolition the walls and expansion the city to Puerta de Tierra. This petition revived the conflict between the military and the municipal authorities over the control of the area. The Spanish Governor ordered the municipal architect to elaborate an expansion plan that would safeguard the rights of those private owners in the area and take into the consideration the requirements made by the military. In October 1872 coronel Fernando F. Córdova a Spanish Army engineer presented a plan that would incorporate both the military and the civilian interests. Among the things he proposed included a park in front of Puerta de Santiago serving as pivot between the urban and suburban districts. Imitating Barcelona's Plaça de Catalunya's function, the green area reflected 19<sup>th</sup> century urban ideals, specifically Baron Haussmann's Parisian *bois* (urban forests). Although Puerta de Tierra's main east-west streets correlated to *sanjuanero* streets, the size of both historic districts' gridirons was different. Preserved in its entirety, the 19<sup>th</sup> century orthogonal grid is formed of varied roads, all contributing properties of the Puerta de Tierra Historic District.<sup>187</sup>

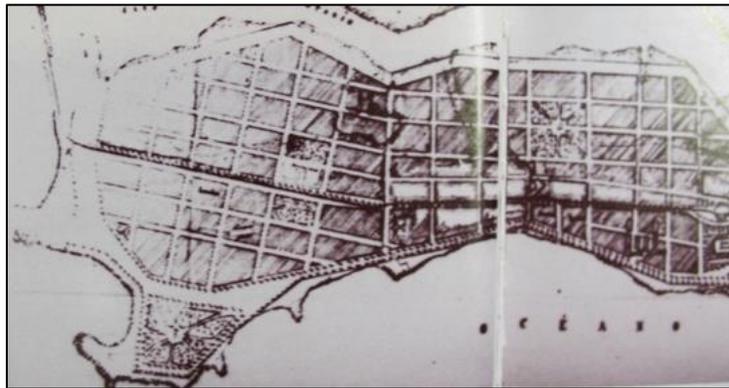


Figure 51. Ensanche Proposal, Puerta de Tierra Historic District, San Juan de Puerto Rico by Pedro Cobreros, 1881.<sup>188</sup>

In 1881, San Juan's municipal architect Pedro Cobreros presented yet another masterplan. In this particular case, it was to be developed within a thirty-five years span. (See Figure 51.) An orthogonal matrix of eighty some blocks of varying sizes, anchored by the Avenida Constitución, sprawled over 128.3

<sup>186</sup> "Plano de las líneas avanzadas de la Plaza de San Juan levantado en 1879," by José Laguna, 30 September 1879; approved by the Real Orden 23 August 1880, Archivo General Militar de Madrid, Puerto Rico State Historic Preservation Office, Mapas en Archivos Españoles Collection, PRI-17-08.

<sup>187</sup> No specific date for the laying of the orthogonal grid has been found. The scheme, however, was in place by the 1860s, at the latest.

<sup>188</sup> "Plano para ensanche de Puerta de Tierra," Pedro Cobreros, 7 July 1881, Archivo General de Puerto Rico.

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*cuerdas*.<sup>189</sup> Following the scientific approach in vogue at the time, the designer proposed a density of 123 persons per *cuerva*. Cobreros calculated living space within the core to be eight cubic meters, at a time when the international community's recommended as healthy minimum 140 cubic meters. A large, centrally located plaza surrounded by pie-shaped blocks plays a prominent role in the composition. In keeping with 19<sup>th</sup> century penchant for promenades and boulevards, an *alameda* (a poplar lined walk) was proposed for the sector's north side while a sea walk or boardwalk (*malecón*) hugged the Caño de San Antonio. (The proposed *alameda* can be considered a precedent of sorts for the 20<sup>th</sup> century Avenida Muñoz Rivera and the Paseo that frames it since the 1980s. Starting at the 20<sup>th</sup> century Plaza de San Juan Bautista the walkway hugs the northern coast providing impressive views of the Atlantic Ocean.) The existing tree-lined boulevard, the Paseo de Covadonga (Paseo de Puerta de Tierra), was incorporated to the Cobreros masterplan.

A church, several schools and smaller plazas, as well as a produce and meat market (*plaza del mercado*), were also part of Cobrero's scheme. Inclusion of such venues proves the project's principal goal was for the new sector to have urban independence in terms of some services. (No cemetery, however, was provided.) Lack of understanding of 19<sup>th</sup> century density standards coupled with antipathy towards the high cost of the needed infrastructure fueled opposition to the project. Others believed the Puerta de Tierra Historic District needed to be reserved for more important uses. After the 1867 earthquakes, dozens of residents sought refuge in the sector. Critics were quick to point out that, if Cobrero's plan was carried out, this and other emergency uses would not be possible. It seems many believed the area should be treated as a reserve of the congested urban core.



Figure 52. Development plan for landfill sector south of Avenida Constitución Puerta de Tierra Historic District, San Juan de Puerto Rico by Architect Arturo Guerra, 1895.<sup>190</sup>

In 1895 Arturo Guerra proposed uses for the land acquired around the port as a result of landfill activities. (See Figure 47 and Figure 52.) Although aspects present in Guerra's masterplan were not carried out, it is obvious that, by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the military had given up their control making possible for the Municipality of San Juan (Guerra was municipal architect) to make plans to use sections of land north of Avenida Constitución. It is interesting to note that Guerra anticipated a similar arrangement to the one created by means of the civic showcase constructed during the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Interpretation of schemes proposed reveals interesting facts that shed much light into the 19<sup>th</sup> century planning strategies for the Puerta de Tierra Historic District. First, all masterplans validate European urban ideals. One example of this inspiration is the ever-present presence of parks, plazas, boulevards

<sup>189</sup> A *cuerva* measures approximately 3,930 square meters, 4,700 square yards or .971 acre.

<sup>190</sup> "Plano del ensanche de San Juan de Puerto Rico" by Architect Arturo Guerra, 22 December 1895, Archivo General de Puerto Rico, San Juan de Puerto Rico.

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and promenades, considered at the time indispensable urban components.<sup>191</sup> Beautification of the metropolitan milieu additionally exemplifies European impact. In 1897, to celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the successful repeal of the British attack, the Plaza de la Lealtad was created as east terminus of the Paseo de Covadonga. (Although a statue of former Governor Ramón de Castro was planned to grace the space, it was never installed.) This interest in urban embellishment preceded the post-1898 Avenida Constitución's boulevard-cum-civic showcase personality. This by then traditional association of the historic district with entertaining activities was to experience its peak during the first three decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Second, most schemes analyzed urban issues using a scientific perspective, a trend started in Barcelona with Ildefons Cerdà's invention of the word urbanism. As mentioned, Cobreros masterplan proposed a designed rational and scientific solution to the core's population density problems. Precisely because it was based on modern methodology, the scheme was received with fierce criticism given the fact many considered the area to be excessively urbanized (the Cobreros Ensanche doubled the historic core area). Adding a layer of significance to the Puerta de Tierra Historic District is the fact that its gridiron organization is a reflection of 19<sup>th</sup> century urban ideas. The physical arrangement preserved to this day confirms acceptance of the time's ideals regarding a city's planned development.

Third, all masterplans are similar for they conceived the Ensanche as an expansion of sorts of the historic core, albeit one with autonomous urban personality. A different vision interpreting the Puerta de Tierra Historic District as an entity in its own right, a completely independent urban organism, could have been implemented. Such an approach – a barrio emerging as a separate entity – had been tried before. San Juan Municipality, in particular, had several examples: Condado, Miramar, Cangrejos, Santurce, among others. This was not the case with the Puerta de Tierra Historic District, even though by the 1880s the district was constituted as a parish. While all urban schemes granted it some autonomy regarding services, implicitly, this approach rested on the idea of San Juan Islet was one organism that merited a holistic treatment. Additionally, it reflects the intimacy between the geographic entity and its enclave.



Figure 53. Proposal for extending Calle de la Fortaleza along the Ensanche, Puerta de Tierra Historic District, San Juan de Puerto Rico by Architect Arturo Guerra, 1895.<sup>192</sup>

<sup>191</sup> The obsession with parks and gardens continued after 1898. In 1900, the federally-appointed special committee inspecting the Cuartel de San Francisco established: "It may be a little out of the province of this report but still a matter of sanitation to state that public air spaces are very limited in San Juan, which is compactly built and contains a dense population. For this reason many of its citizens wish the site of the San Francisco Barracks converted into a public park." Military Government of Porto Rico, *Military Government of Porto Rico From October 18, 1898, to April 30, 1900 Appendices to the Report of the Military Governor*, pp 44-45.

<sup>192</sup> "Plano del ensanche de San Juan de Puerto Rico" by Architect Arturo Guerra, 11 December 1895, Archivo General de Puerto Rico, San Juan de Puerto Rico.

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Fourth, all development proposals include special treatment to the urban fulcrum (the area where the Puerta de Santiago was sited) uniting Old San Juan and the Puerta de Tierra Historic District, marking the transitional point between city and former suburbia. Arturo Guerra's 1895 "Plan de ensanche" is interesting because it proposes a regular grid to organize the land north of Avenida Constitución close to the urban core. (See Figure 53.) His scheme further emphasizes this liminal place by proposing Calle de la Fortaleza extend as a parallel thoroughfare to Avenida Constitución. The project included three roads to serve as entrances/exits, a trivium that organized the border of both sectors, creating a monumental portal-like sector to the enclave. (Around this time, the urban core had a population of 27,327.) A great park like area, the Parque del General de Marín, substituted the Puerta de Santiago. The transformation of the previous defensive site into a plaza or park, serving the two districts and acting as transitional space and monumental urban portal, evidences Barcelona's impact upon the scheme.<sup>193</sup> This is not surprising for the Ciudad Condal's masterplan was the principal one implemented in Spain during the period.

Fifth, all schemes – in one manner or another – used the defensive lines that divided the Puerta de Tierra Historic District into sectors as urban instruments guiding urbanization efforts. On the one hand, they created borders for development stages, as depicted in the plans for a Primer Barrio (First Barrio) and Segundo Barrio (Second Barrio) mentioned above. (See Figure 49 and Figure 50.) On the other hand, the former defensive lines created district sectors exhibiting different urban personalities (clearly reflected in their names: Primer Barrio and Segundo Barrio).

The district continued expansion resulted in an increase of services. In 1870, Calle del Comercio (also known as the Camino de Salvavidas), on the southern part of the core, was formally platted creating another link between the two sectors. A year later, Antonio Portell established a garbage dump (*vertedero*) in a desiccated section of the mangroves. He also constructed a slipway for fixing ships (*varadero* or *carenero*), an early example of the many business ventures that would underscore the relationship between the Puerta de Tierra Historic District and the port.<sup>194</sup> Another such venue was established close to the Charco (Charca) de las Brujas and the Caño Novas by Eduardo E Crosas in 1876. (Both sites disappeared due to landfill activities.) The same year, Silvestre Iglesias constructed a wooden pier close to the Batería de San Toribio. All these projects, as well as landfill activities, accentuated the historic district's potential as urban partner of Old San Juan and major player regarding maritime services.

Urban conurbation received an important boost as a result of the train and steam tramway. San Juan Islet became a mass transit key player when in 1880 the crown approved a plan for an island's circumambulating train. As expected, Old San Juan was chosen as urban terminus for all services. The linear organization of the two transit systems reinforced Avenida Constitución and Paseo de Covadonga (Paseo de Puerta de Tierra) alignments. Close to the point where the terminus of the promenade (Plaza de la Lealtad) was sited, another east-west road, the Calle San Agustín, facilitated residential development along the southern portion of the district. All these thoroughfares – Avenida Constitución, Paseo de Covadonga, Calle San Agustín and the train and tramway tracks (present day Calle del Tren) – formally wove together the two previously separated districts.

In 1876, the Municipality sought authorization to construct a hospital in the district. Started in 1877, as *Hospital Civil* (civilian hospital, listed as Cárcel de Puerta de Tierra in the National Register of Historic

<sup>193</sup> Plaça de Catalunya in Barcelona serves as urban pivot in similar manner as proposed for the Puerta de Santiago site in San Juan Islet.

<sup>194</sup> This service area is depicted in the "Plano de Ensanche de San Juan de Puerto Rico Redactado por la Comisión Mixta con Arreglo a lo Dispuesto en RO de 19 de setiembre de 1884.", Puerto Rico 11 de abril de 1896, Archivo General Militar de Madrid, PRI-07-06.

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Places) was finished in 1886. An example of the by then traditional treatment of *sanjuanero* civic buildings, the elegant building was designed by Architect Domingo Sesmero. Influenced by varied Classicisms, the E-shape building organizes spaces around two open courtyards surrounded by loggias on three sides. (Similar examples of this architectural morphology in Old San Juan are the 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings housing the Beneficencia, Manicomio and Diputación Provincial.) Once the hospital was finished other uses were given to the edifice.<sup>195</sup> Its construction evidenced how the Puerta de Tierra Historic District could serve as service partner to the by then almost four centuries old enclave.

In spite of the long history of military opposition, by 1890 the Ensanche had coalesced reaching the second defensive line.<sup>196</sup> The Puerta de Tierra Historic District's exponential growth required administrative transformations. One of these was the transfer of the roadway leading from Puente de San Antonio to the city of San Juan from the Spanish military to the island's Public Works (Obras Públicas) agency. This put an end to closing hours that forced some to stay in the main island or islet for a night. A metal bridge was erected in 1881 following the design of Royal Engineer Joaquín Gisbert. Another one of Governor Dabán's colleagues, Enrique Bartrina,<sup>197</sup> supervised construction work of the seven meters span structure and its two wide sidewalks. In order to facilitate connection between islet and island, in 1894 the upper battery of Fortín de San Antonio, was demolished. This action opened the area and, by 1898, three bridges united the two landmasses: (i) Puente de San Antonio, (ii) the Ubarri Tramway Bridge; and (iii) the San Antonio Railway bridge (train bridge; listed in the National Register of Historic Places) built by the Compañía Francesa de Ferrocarriles de Puerto Rico.

The civic sector continued scoring victories in its war against the military with the partial demolition of the Bastión San Francisco de Paula in 1883. That same year, a 1,008 square meters lot north of Avenida Constitución, between the second and third defensive lines, was donated to the Catholic Church. Ecclesiastically considered a *barriada*<sup>198</sup> belonging to the San Francisco Parish, the Puerta de Tierra Historic District lacked such a venue. After years of requests, on 13 March 1889 the district was declared an independent religious entity. During the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Church, School, Convent and Parish House of San Agustín precinct was created in the same place proposed by most of the 19<sup>th</sup> century masterplans.<sup>199</sup> With the creation of the Parroquia de San Agustín the historic district continued its transformation providing varied services some of which (the jail and hospital) complemented services offered in congested San Juan. In 1891, the trend continued when an asylum for abandoned elders was established in a small wooden building sited where the present contributing district Puerta de Tierra Asilo de Ancianos de Nuestra Señora de la Providencia District is sited. Two years later the government donated the 3,600 square meters lot where, during the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the elegant asylum and stunning chapel presently stand.

## The Orthogonal Grid

Although several masterplans and varied reports exist information is scant regarding how and when each component of the Puerta de Tierra Historic District's infrastructure was put in place. Additionally, there is no information regarding how and when the third defensive line was deconstructed. We do know,

<sup>195</sup> For some time, the west wing served as public jail while an arts and crafts school was located on the west one.

<sup>196</sup> In 1875, drinking water was obtained from a well located in front of the third gazebo of the Paseo de Covadonga (Paseo de Puerta de Tierra).

<sup>197</sup> Engineer Enrique Bartrina designed several lighthouses belonging to the island's light system.

<sup>198</sup> *Barriada* is synonym to *barrio* but is also use to describe part of a *barrio*. *Diccionario de la Real Academia Española de la Lengua*, words: *barriada* and *barrio*.

<sup>199</sup> It is interesting to note the closeness of the site assigned to the church to El Trincherón. Since the government had to gift the land to the Catholic Church they probably selected the least valuable and most problematic lot as donation.

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however, all major streets were platted by the 1860s and named by 1884. While an orthogonal grid was also used in Old San Juan, the one in the district was quite different for streets were wider and blocks and lots more commodious. Because the gridiron of roads is an extant example of the 19<sup>th</sup> century transformation that served as urban stage to a unique collection of buildings in the nation, the island, and San Juan Municipality it is considered a contributing component of the Puerta de Tierra Historic District. As a result, all streets are contributing structures.

Streets (*calles*) and avenues (*avenidas*) in this man-made landscape create a cryptogram of hidden texts (names and shapes) that represents the multiple transformations experienced by islanders throughout the centuries. To this day, the streets honoring Asturian hero (Pelayo) and Spanish mayor of San Juan<sup>200</sup> (Matías Ledesma) ratify the ties that united the island to a European crown for four centuries and four years. Calle Ramón Power (y Giralt), in turn, echoes the extraordinary role played by some 19<sup>th</sup> century *sanjuaneros* within the Spanish political labyrinth. Power y Giralt, who served as second vice-president to the *cortes extraordinarias* (special legislative session) that birthed the *Constitución de Cádiz* (Cádiz Constitution) in 1812, embodies the islanders' failed hopes of obtaining full representation at the Cortes (Spain's legislative body). Privation of such a right actively collaborated in the political and cultural 1898 "disaster." Disenfranchised by Spain, many islanders saw in the USA a welcomed partner that would help solve their centuries-old political limitations. Unfortunately, this last country had its own agenda. In spite of this and other shortcomings, the relationship shaped Puerto Rico's present and future, transforming the Puerta de Tierra Historic District in myriad ways while underscoring its standing as showcase of the American way of life.

Not all 19<sup>th</sup> century Spanish street names in the Puerta de Tierra Historic District have been preserved. Calle del General Pershing – uniting the historic 19<sup>th</sup> century Paseo de Covadonga, present day Calle del Tren and Avenida Fernández Juncos – commemorates the forces that intervened in the Spanish American War and the results of the conflict.<sup>201</sup> Calle del General Esteves<sup>202</sup> bears witness to Puerto Ricans' acculturation processes. Following the general's example, thousands of islanders distinguished themselves serving in the USA armed forces. Calle del Padre Hoff, dedicated to a beloved Redemptorist priest, celebrate the pivotal cultural and religious role played by the American Redemptorists during the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>203</sup> While representatives of this order came from the mainland after 1898, the Catholic Church played a prominent role since the moment Europeans landed on the archipelago. Religion continued to be extremely important to Puerto Rican culture after the Hispanic-American War. What changed was that after this date other faiths were free to have a presence in the island. This street is a mnemonic component reminding acculturation processes disguise in myriad ways and manners: religion being an instrument in the practice. Additionally, the street name brings to mind the thousands of destitute Others, the ones Padre Hoff served, who inhabited the sector during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Thanks in great measure to people like Padre Hoff, the Puerta de Tierra Historic

<sup>200</sup> Matías Ledesma was mayor of San Juan Municipality during 1894 and the period from 1894 to 1897.

<sup>201</sup> General John J Pershing (1860-1948) was director of the Office of Customs and Insular Affairs, the USA government unit that oversaw occupation forces in all territories acquired as a result of the Spanish-American War.

<sup>202</sup> Major General Luis R Esteves (1893-1958) was the first islander and Hispanic to graduate from the United States Military Academy at West Point. He founded the Puerto Rico National Guard.

<sup>203</sup> As with most things in life, there are varied interpretations of events and activities surrounding the Redemptorists' presence in Puerta de Tierra after 1898. A cartoon created by Mario Brau (son of distinguished patriot Salvador Brau) entitled *Cualidades*, presents a less benign role of this religious order. Alighting the cruise ship *Brazos*, three wolves face a lamb representing Puerto Rico and named *Presupuesto* (Budget), tied by means of a rope, as well as a dog called *Servilismo* (Servility). Servility is presenting the Budget to the three wolves called Politics, Education and Redemptorists, a triad representative of the "interventions" imposed by the American government. I thank Architect Gloria M Ortiz for bringing Brau's work to my attention. Arleen Pabón Charneco, "Puerta de Tierra: Un lugar de memorias y significación cultural" (MS: Tallahassee, Florida, 2014).

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District became a stage of compassionate concern structured to guarantee active insertion of the less fortunate into the social fabric.

Running from east to west, the Calle del Tren is iconic of the Industrial Revolution impact upon the Puerta de Tierra Historic District. This linear arrangement parallels 20<sup>th</sup> century Avenida Fernández Juncos, 19<sup>th</sup> century Calle San Agustín and 16<sup>th</sup> century Avenida Constitución. Traversing the small isle from east to west the last one concisely summarizes the island's history by means of its roster of names: Camino Real, Camino Real del Puente,<sup>204</sup> Carretera Militar, Carretera de San Juan a Río Piedras, Calle de la Capital a Río Piedras, Calle del Ensanche, Carretera a Caguas,<sup>205</sup> Avenida Juan Ponce de León and Avenida Constitución (the correct format should be Avenida de la Constitución). Under various guises (from dirt-packed path to asphalt covered road) this approximately thirty feet wide thoroughfare has effectively linked both geographic entities (San Juan Islet and the island of Puerto Rico) for half a millennia (2019). From a road that belonged to the Spanish monarch (hence its appellation *camino real* or royal road), it transformed into Puerto Rico's premier avenue and the setting for a spectacular architectural showcase created during the first three decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Appropriately given the name of Juan Ponce de León, the conquistador charged with settling the island, this late 19<sup>th</sup> – early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries designation was substituted some years ago with a name honoring the 1952 Commonwealth of Puerto Rico constitution.

Avenida de Muñoz Rivera, running in parallel fashion to Avenida Constitución, is proposed in several 19<sup>th</sup> century Spanish urban masterplans as extension to the centuries-old Calle de San Francisco. By the 1920s, it was reinterpreted as a promenade named Ocean Boulevard in the Bennett, Parsons & Frost's March 1925 plan for the Luis Muñoz Rivera Park. (See Figure 68.) Bordering on the north the elegant Luis Muñoz Rivera Park and connecting 1930s premier social centers like the El Escambrón Beach Club and Hotel Normandie to Old San Juan and the island, by 1932 the present name was the official one, in spite of suggestions it be named Army Boulevard.<sup>206</sup> This unique promenade serves as San Juan Islet's principal entrance providing the visitor with some of its most memorable images.

The 19<sup>th</sup> century orthogonal arrangement of streets made possible for the Puerta de Tierra Historic District to develop into a unique urban conglomerate. The gridiron united the previous three sectors (the result

<sup>204</sup> The Camino Real del Puente name appears in the University of Florida, "Isla de Puerto Rico" 19<sup>th</sup> century historic plan by D Francisco Coello de Portugal y Quesada.

<sup>205</sup> The name Carretera a Caguas is depicted in a 1879 plan by José Laguna entitled "Plano de la Plaza de San Juan y de su puerto." Archivo General Militar de Madrid, España, PRI-17-06.

<sup>206</sup> Letters at the Archivo General de Puerto Rico part of the "Proyecto, Plano y Contrato Prolongación Calle Salvador Brau" file (present day Calle de San Francisco) reveal an interesting anecdote related to the Army Boulevard name. Coronel Estes, "Commander of US Troops in Porto Rico," suggested: "In view of the fact that the entire route is over the property of the army including the small tract occupied on a revocable license by the navy I ask that your influence be exerted to give to this new street the name 'Army Boulevard'. Thus we shall establish a permanent symbol of friendship between the US Army and people of Porto Rico." He also recommended: "The beginning of work on this new route should be marked by formal ceremonies of an appropriate kind in consideration of the strenuous times through which we have gone to get it establish." The Commissioner of the Interior, Guillermo Estevez, to whom the letter was addressed, answered on 24 May 1927. "Your suggestion in regard to giving the name 'Army Boulevard' to the extension of Salvador Brau Street which will be begun in the near future appeals to me and I earnestly think you are justified in wishing the street so named. I have only to regret that the matter of naming the boulevard does not concern me directly since it is wholly under the control of the city of San Juan. You can rest assure nevertheless than when the time comes I shall be glad whatever influence I have in order to have it named 'Army Boulevard' and thus as you say establish a symbol of friendship between the United States and people of Porto Rico." Archivo General de Puerto Rico, Legajo 626, Expediente 5, 1926. In this same file, the plan for the "Proyecto de Prolongación de la Calle Salvador Brau de San Juan Puerto Rico," 5 January 1926, is found.

The western sector of this thoroughfare is named Calle del Ensanche in a late 19<sup>th</sup> century plan. Puerta de Tierra Archivo General Militar de Madrid, España, PRI-07-06 "Plano de Ensanche de San Juan de Puerto Rico Redactado por la Comisión Mixta con Arreglo a lo Dispuesto en RO de 19 de setiembre de 1884," 11 April 1896.

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of the three lines of defense) framing and organizing the sector's exceptional collection of historic properties.

#### PART FOUR ARCHITECTURAL AND URBAN IMPERIAL ACCULTURATION

### **Puerta de Tierra Historic's District Fourth Post-1519 Stage of Development (1898-1950)**

In 1898, as a direct result of what Spain still labels the *Desastre del 98* (The 1898 Disaster), the USA transformed from an introverted country into an imperial conglomerate with vassal territories outside its frontiers. At this time, Puerto Rico and the Philippine Islands were strategic locales critical to the USA's commercial and military fleets in the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans. Lasting but a few months the Spanish-American War – smugly described by Secretary John Hay as “a splendid little war” – introduced new life to the former Spanish colonies, as they became instruments of this agenda. As corollary, USA notions of cultural exceptionalism solidified into its unique imperial stance.

The USA considered Puerto Rico “our island,” a colony destined to play a crucial role in its imperial plans. *Au contraire*, its residents were viewed as “their [island's] people”<sup>207</sup> (as opposed to our people), a backward “race”<sup>208</sup> permanently marred by the centuries old cultural connection with Spain. Since the Middle Ages, Anglo culture has interpreted Spanish civilization in a disdainful manner. Corroborating American's superiority over Hispanic culture served as the piously intoned principal reason for the Spanish-American War. It is not surprising the conclusion was reached that Puerto Rican cultural expressions were tainted with this limitation.

*La imperiofobia es una forma de racismo que no se basa en la diferencia de color o en la religión, pero se apoya en ambas. El racismo tradicionalmente afirma que la etnia que tiene tal o cual color o religión es inferior a otra. Lo peculiar del prejuicio racista es ir al genus, a la estirpe. Un individuo que ha nacido en el seno de un grupo determinado es calificado a priori de manera negativa. No importa lo que haga o diga, pues todo vendrá a abundar en la idea previa que de él se tenía. Antes de su nacimiento ya está condenado.*<sup>209</sup>

As a result, Puerto Rico's acculturation, the ungrateful undertaking of forcing American civilization unto the “retrograde” former Spanish subjects began before the Paris Treaty's ink was dry.<sup>210</sup> The island's transformation found three-dimensionality in the Puerta de Tierra Historic District, now construed as showcase of the American way of life. This reinterpretation deconstructed the historic core's centuries old insularity making possible the emergence of a novel state of urban transparency, porousness and integration. It also transmuted the sector into a unique liminal place.

<sup>207</sup> *Our Islands and Their People*, a book of images published in 1899 depicting daily life in Cuba, Puerto Rico and Philippine Islands, is a good example of this perspective. William S Wheeler (author) *et al* and N D Thompson (illustrator) *Our Islands and Their People As Seen with Camera and Pencil* (Thompson Publishing Company, 1899).

<sup>208</sup> While at present only one humanoid race exists, during the turn of the century (19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> centuries) the word was used to describe ethnicity and cultural affiliation.

<sup>209</sup> Translation: “Imperial phobia is a kind of racism not based on skin color or religion although it is rooted in both. Traditionally racism believes a particular ethnicity is inferior to another one due to its skin color or religion. Racism goes against to the genus, the lineage. An individual born within a particular group is automatically and negatively disqualified regardless of what he/she does or say for he/she is branded by the preexisting idea of what he/she is believed to be. He/she is condemned even before he/she is born.” María Elvira Roca Barea, *Imperiofobia y Leyenda Negra Roma, Rusia, Estados Unidos y el Imperio Español*, p 119.

<sup>210</sup> The Paris Treaty, approved by Congress on 11 April 1899, formalized the terms of Spain's defeat and cession of the Puerto Rican archipelago to the USA.

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## Twentieth Century Architectural and Urban Imperial Ideals

During the turn of the century, Japan and Great Britain forced enculturation colonial processes similar to the one deployed by the USA on their colonies. All three political powers placed modernization, the way to achieve progress, as central objective of their conquests. Japan's approach regarding Taiwan sheds light on this issue: "This optimistic plan, in which an efficient transportation system joins sites of civic leisure, is a statement of a progressive modernity that was the logical extension of Japan's rising prominence in the world and Taihouku's [Taiwan's] symbolic value within it."<sup>211</sup> During the period, avant-gardism in Taiwan and Korea (another Japanese vassal territory) depended on modern trappings like communication systems, as well as imported Japanese architectural styles and typologies.<sup>212</sup> While many empires have used urbanism and architecture as instruments of propaganda, the early 20<sup>th</sup> century colonial mission, as per American and Japanese, ideals rested on the elusive concept of progress. At some point or another, both justified their invasions as actions stemming from the desire to bring "progress" to the "less advanced." In the case of the USA, in particular, an international chorus reinforced the country's perception it was the ultimate purveyor of "modernity" and, thus, progress. This invented reality (Yuval Noah Harari *dixit*) transformed the 1898 military invasion into a *mission civilisatrice*.

The idea of civilization which inspired the Meiji government *mission civilisatrice* was no longer the Chinese notion of *ka*, with its emphasis on order and outward property, but rather the Western-inspired version of civilization which the Meiji scholars were obliged to invent a Japanese translation: *bunmei*. Unlike *ka*, *bunmei* was a dynamic concept, laden with overtone of progress.<sup>213</sup>

A most important component of this theory: ". . . was the way in which it allowed difference to be transposed from the realm of space to the realm of time, so that 'foreignness' increasingly came to be reinterpreted as 'underdevelopment'."<sup>214</sup> This stance was the foundation of the USA-Puerto Rico post 1898 relationship.

Great Britain's Asian colonies (Singapore and Hong Kong)<sup>215</sup> offer interesting contrasts to the American and Japanese colonial relationship since both cities were on the receiving end of fin de siècle architectural and urban impositions. In the case of Great Britain, "[the colonizers] conviction of themselves as 'bona fide possessors' spurred them to give an air of permanence to their Chinese colony." This would also be the case regarding Singapore.

They would live and built in British manner, cementing their ownership of the island through the design of its colonial institutions: the Gothic of St John's Cathedral (1849), recalling the Early English architecture

<sup>211</sup> Joseph R Allen, *Taipei City of Displacements* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2012), p 23.

<sup>212</sup> "There was some hesitancy in the early years, but by 1898 Japan embarked on an extensive and calculated colonial remaking of the island [Taiwan]. The Japanese rulers were determined to 'outcolonize' Western colonial powers, which they studied and often emulated. The reach of those colonial efforts was far and deep, especially for the Chinese population, and included education and language reforms, sanitation and hygiene regimens, detailed census taking and map making, modern police and military controls, extensive development of rice and sugar production, promotional of the recreational and tourist industries, and . . . urban planning and development transformed the cities of Taiwan into models of colonial modernity." Joseph R Allen, *Taipei City of Displacements*, p 7.

<sup>213</sup> Tessa Morris-Suzuki, *Re-Inventing Japan Time Space Nation* (Armonk, New York: M E Sharpe, 1998), p 24.

<sup>214</sup> *Ibid.*, p 26. The early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century were influenced by negative eugenics ideas. "Since early in the century, a large number of prominent and learned Americans had been preoccupied, often to the point of obsessiveness, with the belief that the country was filling up with dangerously inferior people and that something urgent must be done about it." Bill Bryson, *One Summer America 1927*, pp 478-479.

<sup>215</sup> Yet another early 20<sup>th</sup> century example of forceful urban and architectural impositions by a colonial power is Shanghai (People's Republic of China) where every pediment, architectural order and dome, particularly those along the famed Bundt, is the product of colonialism.

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of the thirteenth century; the neo-classical Government House (1855); the colonnades and cupolas of the Renaissance-styled City Hall (1869); the arches and verandah of the Royal Observatory Building (1883) – as well as the vast godowns lining the harbour.<sup>216</sup>

While in Hong Kong, Singapore and Taiwan forceful occupation sparked acculturation processes, Koreans rejected the importation of Japanese architectural semantics.<sup>217</sup> Although undoubtedly disdain was felt towards imported ideas, the first three colonies accepted the foreign urban and architectural ideas not as symbols of oppression but progress. Puerto Rico followed their lead embracing American models.

Regardless of national origin and period, importing urban and architectural semantics to a colony underscores the legitimacy of the new regime. (This had previously been experienced during the Spanish regime.) At times forgotten in the emotional and violent fog military assaults engender, hunger for conquests is parallel to the urge to transform the acquired land into an architectural and urban stage that mutely discourses on the conqueror's culture. This goal requires two things: (i) territorial space and (ii) the colonizer's interest in leaving its mark. All of the Puerta de Tierra Historic District (approximately, two thirds of San Juan Islet) was transformed after 1898 into a showcase that highlighted the positive aspects of the American way of life. Whether designed by locals or Americans, scores of buildings and sites silently spelled out the new political and cultural bonds. In a sense, urban and architectural artifacts became clauses in a contract formalized with no words.



Figure 54. Capitol Building (Casa de la Nación) projected for Manila, Philippine Islands, first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>218</sup>

For eons the best way to validate colonial power has been to “gift” the invaded land symbols similar to those considered sacred by the invader. An example of a 20<sup>th</sup> century mimicking of the colonizers’ cherished icons are Hong Kong’s Legislative Council Building, framing the green square anchored by the iconic Cenotaph (a smaller copy of London’s Whitehall Cenotaph). This ideological path was followed by the USA and is exemplified by the fact that capitols, the country’s paradigmatic architectural typology, were planned for both the Puerta de Tierra Historic District and Manila. (See Figure 54.) This quasi-sacred architectural type recounted unspoken stories meant to facilitate the melting pot strategy of the exotic locales.

<sup>216</sup> Tristram Hunt, *Ten Cities that made an Empire* (London: Allen Lane, 2014), p 254.

<sup>217</sup> The Jeonju Korean village is a classic example of the rejection of Japanese models by the Koreans.

<sup>218</sup> “Proposed Capitol Building” (Casa de la Nación), projected for Manila, Philippine Islands, first decade 20<sup>th</sup> century, Google, Public domain. In the Philippines the capitol was called the *casa de la nación* (house of the nation) rather than *capitolio*, as is the case in Puerto Rico.

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There existed differences between turn of the century *casus belli* impositions and earlier historic ones. At this time, Puerto Rico – as was also the case of Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong – was not the prehistoric realm dotted with ephemeral examples it had been during the 16<sup>th</sup> century but the heir to centuries-old European-inspired urban and architectural traditions. In spite of this reality, American early 20<sup>th</sup> century perception of San Juan was that it was a “weird” medieval-like city. One visitor portrayed the Castillo de San Cristóbal as a “grim-old sentinel” guarding the historic core that sat under the “frowning walls of the great castle.” “As we enter the city proper it seems as if we were stepping back into medieval times. There are all the marks of the walled towns of feudal days, portcullis, battlement, parapet, bastion and remains of a moat. An immense wall surrounds it making San Juan the only city of its kind belonging to the United States. . . .”<sup>219</sup>

For many Americans, Old San Juan was an alien place unlike anything in the USA. As a result, its architecture was discarded as old fashioned, exclusively capable of sheltering extinct ways of life.<sup>220</sup> Puerto Rican urban and architectural examples – like those in Hong Kong for the British and Taiwan for the Japanese – served as reminders of a past that excluded the invaders. As such, they were considered heathen examples. Highlighting ties with European academic ideals (Puerto Rico) and non-European ancestry (Hong Kong, Taiwan and Korea) they reflected a world deeply rooted in the past.

Colonial control has the potential to delete from communal memory urban and architectural achievements. What was becomes part of a past the colonizer and, on many occasions, the colonized wish to erase. In Puerto Rico’s case, Spanish architecture was equated with “old” (as opposed to historic) and also with backward ideals. When such a situation takes place, the present is associated to progress and, as a result, attachment to the past becomes a chore, something extravagantly exotic and unnecessary. Hong Kong and Puerto Rico “accepted” the new ideals because they represented modernity and progress. Although describing the sugar industry, the argument quoted below is pertinent to both urbanism and architecture.

*La historia de la azúcar de Puerto Rico tampoco se agota en la recitación acrítica de la villanía colonial. La americanización, económica y cultural, no tuvo siempre una agenda fija: a veces espectacular crecimiento, a veces calloso capitalismo, a veces reforma social. Diversos intereses y perspectivas, locales y estadounidenses, lucharon por apropiarse sus contenidos o resistir sus definiciones. En su nombre actuaron los centralistas, pero también los novotratadistas. La americanización es un concepto indispensable, pero abierto, del que se ha abusado para oscurecer las responsabilidades que tuvo el país no solo por los problemas sino también por los aciertos de su desarrollo cañero y de su historia.*<sup>221</sup>

Regarding the Puerta de Tierra Historic District, it would be a complete misrepresentation to assume urban and architectural ideas were forced by the “bad” colonial power upon “innocent” subjects. No evidence exists of an enforced, fixed and definitive agenda except for the fluid and ever-constant goal of presenting the benefits of the American way of life in the best light possible. Complicating the issue is the need to underscore that many locals valued this objective, interpreting it as a positive force to be embraced. Corporeal evidence of this stance is the presence of singularly native organizations – the

<sup>219</sup> Joseph B Seabury, *The World and Its people Book XII Porto Rico: The Land of the Rich Port* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 1908), pp 124-125.

<sup>220</sup> Frederick Albion Ober, *Puerto Rico and Its Resources* (New York: D Appleton and Company 1899), p 171.

<sup>221</sup> Translation: “Puerto Rico’s sugar history need not be simplified by making villains of colonizers. Economic and cultural Americanization had no fixed agenda: sometimes it exhibited spectacular growth; others callous capitalism; still others social reform ideals. Varied interests and interpretations, local and American, appropriate their content or resist its definitions. Both *centralistas* and *novotratadistas* appropriated the ideas. Americanization is an indispensable concept yet an open one; it has been abused in order to obscure the Puerto Rico’s responsibilities in terms of negative and positive issues regarding sugar cane and its history.” Rubén Nazario Velasco, *El paisaje y el poder: La tierra en el tiempo de Luis Muñoz Marín* (Colombia: Nomos Impresores, 2014), p 17.

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Casino de Puerto Rico, Ateneo Puertorriqueño and Casa de España – along the Avenida Constitución showcase, side by side with paradigmatic American institutions, such as the YMCA and the imported capitol architectural typology.<sup>222</sup>

During the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the USA sphere of influence in Puerto Rico grew at exponential rate, thanks to dozens of builders and designers who, in unison with local entrepreneurs, participated in the new and ever-expanding commercial opportunities. In other words, in addition to the incentives offered by the federal government, the private sector contributed much to the Puerta de Tierra Historic District's transformation. This created a two-pronged effect: the imposition of mainland ideals on everything – from city living to education – and the three-dimensional shaping of USA invented realities. Admiration towards American technology and know-how facilitated the above-mentioned circumstances.

Whether during the 16<sup>th</sup> century or early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it is a known fact colonial activities fuel capitalism and vice versa. There is a need, however, to be prudent regarding the idea of the former Spanish colonies as captive markets. The vastness of the commercial world American innovation pried open – that included powerhouses like Havana, China, Argentina, Chile, among others – made Puerto Rico and the Philippine Islands trade minuscule by comparison. Colonial power consolidation, on the other hand, needs not spend vast amounts in urban and architectural artifacts. Hong Kong and Singapore evidence how some powerful countries like Great Britain spent significantly less on grand colonial construction programs than the USA did in Puerto Rico. In other words, there were other objectives in the American agenda resonating in a “loud” and “pious” way (Mark Twain *dixit*).

It is convenient to compare Puerto Rico's Americanization agenda with the one deployed in California, during the same period. Its final objective was described as the need to invest: “[I]n the [state's] cultural memory by fashioning a ‘built environment’ – buildings and other structures of human design that mark the physical landscape – that echoed Spanish forms.”<sup>223</sup> Even though one was a colony (Puerto Rico) and the other a state (California) the schema was identical: to advance Americanization. The experiment, if successful, would prove that a modern civilization (American) was a powerful instrument in liberating from old and supposedly decrepit cultural links (Hispanic). Answer to which culture excelled was replied in two contrasting manners. Contrarily, California was expected to embrace its Hispanic past since it marked a period of great deeds. This oxymoronic stance (that the same civilization rejected as worthless to some could inspire others) was not understood as such at the time.

### **The Pathological Space**

For almost four centuries, civic architecture in San Juan Islet served as canvas for the Spanish colonial government. The paradigmatic Palacio de Santa Catalina, Casa Alcaldía and Real Intendencia in Old San Juan were icons of the regime, corporeal impositions of a distant country ruled by a sovereign on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean. Architectural gestures – such as the Palacio de Santa Catalina's façade-wide balcony, the Casa Alcaldía's first floor arcade and magnificent second level balcony, and the Real Intendencia's elegant Juliette balconies – were subsumed within the beloved academic Classicist styles (closely related to the Rundbogenstil and Neo-Cinquecento) that informed these designs.

<sup>222</sup> I am aware this presence, the sharing of the Puerta de Tierra Historic District stage, can also be interpreted as a kind of show of force of Puerto Rican culture.

<sup>223</sup> Phoebe S Kropp, *California Vieja Culture and Memory in a Modern American Place* (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 2006), p 1.

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It is possible to ascribe to the American urban and architectural agenda for the Puerta de Tierra Historic District the same goals experimented with in the Philippine Islands: to “improve” and “disassociate”<sup>224</sup> the colonial urban psychogeography<sup>225</sup> from its Spanish past, moving it ever closely to the USA. Ironically, this objective was reached in the Puerta de Tierra Historic District within the 19<sup>th</sup> century urban gridiron. While pre-1898 Spanish architectural and urban objective was to create associational links with the peninsula by using analogous aesthetics, the USA goal was to contrast American and Spanish architecture in the hope the disparity would result in repulsion of the four centuries plus past underscoring American architecture as symbolic of a new era of civic virtues.

While both San Juan and Manila had been Spanish colonies, their urban personalities were quite different. Therefore, inner city interventions in Manila offered a wider range of prospects than San Juan. The Philippine Islands capital offered more opportunities for creative insertions than the Puerto Rican capital. San Juan was not only a “finished product” but located in an islet.



Figure 55. Urban masterplan for Manila in the Philippine Islands by Daniel H Burnham, 1905.<sup>226</sup>

This contrasting difference is evidenced by the fact famed architect and urban planner Daniel H Burnham created a new masterplan for Manila using City Beautiful Movement ideals outlined by magnificent miles-long promenades framed by hundreds of trees. These enchanting boulevards anchored a gaggle of civic buildings.<sup>227</sup> (See Figure 55.) The size and geographic characteristics of the Philippine capital allowed the Chicagoan to expand in a similar manner as his almost contemporary schemes for San Francisco (1905) and Chicago (1909). In spite of the different locales, all three achieve majestic drama by means of broad and straight avenues and elegant meeting points. While Burnham, as well as William E Parsons<sup>228</sup> and Forestier, had more opportunities to leave a mark in smaller Manila and expansive Havana, this type of solution was inapplicable to San Juan Islet. When the time came, Bennett, Parsons and Frost had to limit interventions to an urban park, gardens for the Capitolio de Puerto Rico and an alignment of trees for Avenida Constitución. This situation resulted from: (i) the islet’s geography and (ii)

<sup>224</sup> Ian Morley, “America and the Philippines modern civilization and city planning,” *Education about Asia* (Cornell University, Ithaca: Cornell Southeast Asia Program Publication), Volume 16, 2, Fall 2011, pp 34-38; 35.

<sup>225</sup> Psychogeography is “the study and the precise laws and specific effects of the geographical environment, consciously organized or not, on the emotions and behaviors of individuals.” Guy Dubord, “Introduction to a Critique of Urban Geography,” 1955. Digital source: cddc.vt.edu.

<sup>226</sup> “Masterplan for Manila” by Daniel H Burnham, 1905, Google, Public domain.

<sup>227</sup> Burnham put to good use the lessons learned from Pierre L’Enfant (designer of Washington DC) and Baron Georges-Eugène Haussmann (creator of the 19<sup>th</sup> century master plan for Paris). Pope Sixtus VI’s Rome and Versailles Palace are precedents for both projects. During the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Jean-Claude Nicolas Forestier also used infinite-looking promenades and boulevards in his Havana masterplan.

<sup>228</sup> On Daniel H Burnham’s recommendation, William E Parsons was consulting architect and planner for the American government in Manila. Parsons was a member of the Bennett, Parsons and Frost firm that worked in San Juan Islet.

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the urban core's congested occupation of the western sector of San Juan Islet. (Notice needs to be taken that the Puerta de Tierra Historic District's 19<sup>th</sup> century urbanization activities unequivocally mandated a particular type of urban development defined by a gridiron of streets.) Manila and Old San Juan also exhibited different levels of progress. For example, while a tramway was installed in Manila post-1898, both a train and tramway existed in San Juan Islet prior to this date.

The American imperial urban and architectural agenda in Manila is described in the following fashion:

At the closing of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Manila, as a new American colonial city, received massive urban transformation aimed at concretizing America's imperial imagination in the tropics. This imperial ambition drove the colonial authorities to structure Manila's urban built environment as a model colonial outpost. This urban revision was initiated to facilitate efficient colonial governance and to signify the power and prestige of the new colonial order. Manila, perceived by the colonist as a pathologic space, became the vortex of colonial urban reengineering that systematically transformed the city into a sanitized, ordered, and regulated domain so structured to enhance the flow of economic activities.<sup>229</sup>

Although Old San Juan can be explained as possessing a similar type of "pathologic space" (Lico *dixit*), the urban core offered no space for "reengineering." This presented a problem for: "Developing urban places was considered central to successfully managing [the colonies]."<sup>230</sup> In San Juan Islet only the Puerta de Tierra Historic District could be used as showcase for the grandiose American ideals of a "model colonial outpost." As a result, it was chosen as the place to remedy the "pathology" by forcing new civic, educational and cultural goals on the locals via architecture and urban planning.



Figure 56. Avenida Constitución, Puerta de Tierra Historic District, San Juan de Puerto Rico, early 1920s.<sup>231</sup>

In order to achieve these objectives, City Beautiful Movement urban and architectural semantics were embraced. The Puerta de Tierra Historic District insertions responded to the interpretation of an idealized cosmos, as per the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition standards. Until this exhibition's theoretical and aesthetic ideals impacted designers and government administrators, most cities in the USA were anything but organized and elegant concoctions of civic life. As a direct result of the Chicago masterplan, the city transformed into a carefully planned conglomerate distinguished by refined and sophisticated architecture. At this time, American urban schemes sought modernization and sophistication by means of historicist-inspired flights of fancy. Application of the model to San Juan Islet transformed the centuries-old Avenida Constitución into the Puerta de Tierra Historic District's urban dorsal spine and

<sup>229</sup> Gerard Lico, "Imperial Manila: American Colonial Architecture and Urbanism Exhibition, 1898-1942" (Vargas Museum: University of the Philippines, 2011).

<sup>230</sup> Ian Morley, "America and the Philippines modern civilization and city planning," p 35.

<sup>231</sup> Avenida Constitución, Puerta de Tierra, San Juan de Puerto Rico, 1920s, Google, Public domain.

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Puerto Rico's new iconic heart. An early 20<sup>th</sup> century photograph depicts the new buildings, as well as the gigantic vases that marked the beginning of Avenida Constitución. (See Figure 56.) An alignment of magnificent architectural examples framed the thoroughfare transforming it into a unique promenade symbolic of modernity and, therefore, progress. The scale, materials, dramatic decoration and complex iconography of the new buildings rejected the sober centuries-old neighboring Old San Juan traditional "pathological space."

Benevolent assimilation practices pursued long-term objectives while architects-cum-urban planners became the surgeons of choice in the surgery that was to definitively separate the colonies from the mother country. Imposition of urban and architectural "modernity" as per the City Beautiful Movement standards was the first breach in the centuries-old relationship between Puerto Rico and Europe via Spain, even though some, like Burnham, described the emerging aesthetic expression as a fusion between "colonialism" and modern American urban ideals. Using this rhetorical and architectural imagery, Burnham described Manila's masterplan's main objective in the following manner:

. . . [to] fuse colonialism with contemporary American urban design practice by establishing a new hub that consisted of a collection of public buildings, called the Government Group, which were to be laid out in strict geometric manner so as to form a single, coherent architectural unit, thereby bequeathing both beauty and convenience.<sup>232</sup>

Applying the same principles albeit more freely to the Puerta de Tierra Historic District would result in a "coherent architectural unit" characterized by obsessive visuality with profound emotional and civic underpinnings. While only a select few could read the rustication vs architectural orders contrast present in the Palacio de Santa Catalina and Real Intendencia 19<sup>th</sup> century façades as metaphor for the nature vs culture paradigm, all could easily understand what the terracotta stars and stripes and screeching eagle stood for in the historic district's US Department of Commerce Weather Bureau building (Block 118, Parcela 01). (See Photograph 014.)

### The Acculturation Agenda

As Puerto Rico and the Philippine Islands became receptors of lavish American interest, urban sectors – strikingly different from traditional Hispanic Colonial<sup>233</sup> ones – were furiously planned and carved from the centuries old historic urban landscapes. Buildings of all sorts, in an array of new construction materials and techniques, were erected to shelter myriad activities. Since American narrative focused on empowering civic ideals, transportation, education, and Anglo culture, grandiose urban and architectural venues associated to these goals were produced. According to Ian Morley, the colonial mission programmed by the USA for the Philippine Islands was designed around several goals.<sup>234</sup> Analysis of his thesis reveals similar urban and architectural objectives were pursued in Puerto Rico as the enculturation agenda took root. All found corporeal shape in the Puerta de Tierra Historic District, the USA's showcase in Puerto Rico and the Caribbean.

<sup>232</sup> Daniel Burnham and Pierce Anderson, *Report on the Improvement of Manila* (Washington DC: US Federal Government, 1905), p 631. Quoted in: Ian Morley, "America and the Philippines modern civilization and city planning," p 35.

<sup>233</sup> The term "Colonial" is exclusively used as a cultural and political attribution.

<sup>234</sup> Ian Morley, "America and the Philippines modern civilization and city planning," p 35. Morley's goals have been reinterpreted for the Puerta de Tierra Historic District urban and architectural artifacts. Arleen Pabón Charneco, "Puerta de Tierra: Un lugar de memorias y significación cultural," pp 295-305.

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## A Freedom of Worship

The unwritten agenda sought formal separation between the controlling Catholic Church and the state, a relationship Americans censured due to the domineering and stifling role this faith played in Puerto Rico for centuries. Although the Spanish government financed the ministry, it closely acquiesced to religious mandates during both monarchical and republican periods. Described in the following manner: “[T]his island [Puerto Rico] like a docile child follows the mother country, & rests in the bosom of the Catholic Church,”<sup>235</sup> the centuries-old interdependence had to end to comply with the freedom of religion ideals espoused by the USA. A corollary of this objective was the deconstruction of the spiritual-cum-cultural allegiance.

During the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Redemptorist Father John Lynch, in charge of the Iglesia de San Agustín, mentioned to his Baltimore supervisor, Father Joseph Schenider, a telling concern dealing with religious loyalties:

In reference to the triennial meeting there is but one question we would like to hear discussed – and how far must we in the direction of parishes in Puerto Rico hold the customs and practices that are traditional among the people? For instance, processions of the 8<sup>th</sup> of December, feast of the patron Corpus Christi ect, May devotions ect, Good Friday procession Spanish ritual is used. Puerto Rico bishop uses it.<sup>236</sup>

While all were Catholic activities Father Lynch’s concern regarding the differences in American and Hispanic rituals reflects acculturation issues, principally the desire for his flock to break the centuries old ties with Spanish spiritual tradition. Acculturation processes have multiple and complex undertones. The perpetuation of traditional religious activities implicitly substantiated loyalties towards the Spanish church structure. Father John Lynch was aware that backing the island’s traditional activities reinforced Puerto Ricans’ loyalty to Rome via Spain and not via the USA, as desired.

American Catholicism was different than the Spanish version. The Puerta de Tierra Historic District’s new Catholic parish church, the Iglesia de San Agustín, underscored this reality. Shakily established during the 1880s as one of Old San Juan parishes, it was completely reinvented by the Redemptorists during the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Foreign to the locals was the concept of a parish with a free parochial school, as well as an active social role in the community. The precinct’s fashionable temple, architecturally distinguished convent, stylish parochial house and majestic school underscored its novelty. The same was true of the Asilo de Ancianos Nuestra Señora de la Providencia, another venue that existed in emaciated fashion before 1898. The ultra chic and luxurious new buildings carried powerful messages, principally the emergence of a novel type of spiritual interaction. After 1898, the district’s architecture was used to three-dimensionally express not only religious but civic grandiosity.

Creation of temples of varied faiths after 1898 in the Puerta de Tierra Historic District attests to the goal of separating church and state in what cynics may consider a divide and conquer approach. The Iglesia Evangélica Luterana de San Pablo (c 1916) and the Primera Iglesia Bautista de Puerta de Tierra Inc (c 1919) balanced the San Agustín Catholic precinct allowing for three different faiths to peacefully co-exist.<sup>237</sup> (See Photograph 008 and Photograph 009.) In the district, multiplication of churches using

<sup>235</sup> Frank Otto Gattel (editor), “Puerto Rico Through New England Eyes, 1831-1834,” *Journal of Interamerican Studies*, p 282.

<sup>236</sup> Letter to Father Joseph Schenider from Father John Lynch, 11 December 1914, Archivo de la Parroquia de San Agustín, Puerta de Tierra, San Juan de Puerto Rico.

<sup>237</sup> American Catholicism clashed with other Christian faiths in San Juan Islet. Construction of an additional section of the façade of the Catedral de San Juan in the Old San Juan Historic District in order to make it higher than the Neo-Gothic Lutheran temple in front of it comes to mind as an example.

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uniquely distinctive architectural expressions, more than constitutional edicts proclaiming freedom of worship, provided evidence that the centuries old religious Catholic stronghold was a thing of the past.

**B Eradication of Native Language**

To eradicate native linguistic expressions – Spanish in Puerto Rico and Spanish and Tagalog in the Philippine Islands – in order to promote rapid and efficient acculturation was a second goal of the post-1898 USA civilizing agenda. Whether spoken, written or architectural, language, when astutely manipulated, can be used as both a divisive and unifying cultural instrument. Architectural language, a three-dimensional idiom, was vested with extraordinarily powerful authority. Since language shapes thought, empowerment of architectural linguistics was essential to the enculturation process.

After 1898, designers, an array of American publications and, at a later time, Puerto Rican architects educated in the USA, provided fresh alternatives to traditional architectural semantics. Massive scale novel architectural typologies like the public school (Escuela José Julián Acosta, Escuela José Celso Barbosa and Escuela Brumbaugh, all listed in the National Register of Historic Places); grand architectural gestures (YMCA, US Department of Commerce Weather Bureau and Ateneo Puertorriqueño buildings; contributing buildings) (See Photograph 007, Photograph 014 and Photograph 016.); elegantly rich and highly decorated façades (Asilo de Ancianos Nuestra Señora de la Providencia and Cruz Roja de Puerto Rico buildings; contributing district) (See Photograph 011 and Photograph 015.); luxurious commercial buildings (Avenida Constitución 166, Puerto Rico Medical Arts, Smallwood, and Instituto Oftálmico buildings; contributing buildings) (See Photograph 018, Photograph 019 and Photograph 020.); sumptuous government examples (Capitolio de Puerto Rico, listed in the National Register of Historic Places), and grand promenades (Avenida Constitución; contributing structure) are but a few examples of imported architectural idioms. A paradigmatic example of architectural novelty was the introduction of the Mediterranean Revival (Hispanomediterráneo) architectural style, a rich and complex expression invented in the USA.<sup>238</sup>

Eradication of native architectural language included more than aesthetics. American institutions – the Carnegie Library (listed in the National Register of Historic Places), Young Men Christian Association (YMCA) (contributing building), Red Cross (contributing building), Puerto Rico National Guard (contributing building) and US Department of Commerce Weather Bureau (contributing building) – were additional ways in which novel civic ideals were introduced. Buildings housing these services and groups were silent signs (communicators) epitomizing the proper manner to “do things,” three-dimensional advocates of “correct” Americanized behavior.<sup>239</sup> Because of their relevance as communicators of the American way of life buildings housing these and similar institutions can be found in both the Puerta de Tierra Historic District and Manila.

<sup>238</sup> Arleen Pabón Charneco, *La arquitectura patrimonial puertorriqueña y sus estilos* (San Juan de Puerto Rico: Puerto Rico State Historic Preservation Office, 2010), pp 355-390. In 1915, California hosted the San Francisco’s Panama-Pacific International Exposition and the San Diego’s Panama-California Exposition. While the first one embraced City Beautiful Movement semantics, the second event incorporated the newly minted style, interpreted as a Californian expression representing modernity and aesthetic alternative to the minimalist approach sponsored by Modernists. The style’s almost infinite list of names belies the fact that it still needs to be academically interpreted in a more insightful manner. It is ironic Spain embraced, albeit in a limited manner, the expression by copying American examples.

<sup>239</sup> Although readily accepted, these institutions are still interpreted as “foreign.” Evidence of the intimate association that exists between these organizations and American ideals is the fact that, to this day, the first building is known as “*la Carnegie*” while the second one is colloquially named “*la Y.*” In both examples the article, *la* (feminine for “the”), is pronounced in Spanish and the second one in English. *La Cruz Roja* is pronounced in Spanish for the organism existed, albeit in feeble fashion, prior to 1898.

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Yet another goal of the American mission was to educate as many as possible. Although defectors describe what took place after 1898 as a “change” in educational system, honesty compels to state no system existed, in spite of disjointed centuries-long private and government efforts.<sup>240</sup> This informal link to learning, shattered after the invasion, found in San Juan Islet a stellar educational stage where five palatial schools were erected during the first three decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century: the Escuela Técnica y Graduada Ramón Baldorioty de Castro and Escuela Abraham Lincoln within the historic core and the Escuela José Julián Acosta, Escuela José Celso Barbosa and Escuela Brumbaugh in Puerta de Tierra.<sup>241</sup> (All five schools are listed in the National Register of Historic Places.) Other educational centers found their way into the district. Among these were the Escuela Industrial Notre Dame (also known as *La Costura*; contributing building), the Redemptorists vocational center for women; the university-level School of Tropical Medicine (listed in the National Register of Historic Places) and private schools such as the Colegio de San Agustín (listed in the National Register of Historic Places). Evidence of the high standing granted to education is the Templo del Maestro (listed in the National Register of Historic Places), a jewel of a building designed exclusively to house teachers’ activities.

The first formal American public school in Puerto Rico, the San Juan Model and Training School, was erected in the Puerta de Tierra Historic District and sited where the Puerta de Santiago (Puerta de Tierra) had once been located. (At present, the Casino de Puerto Rico – listed in the National Register of Historic Places – is located on this site.) Inaugurated on 16 January 1900, the rambling wooden building facing the Plaza de Colón also sheltered the island’s new Department of Education.<sup>242</sup> The idea seems to have been to transform the emblematic square, urban portal to the historic district, into an educational epicenter since buildings housing state archives and library were also planned for its periphery. (A similar core, dedicated to the federal government, was created in the port area, where the impressive US Post Office and US Customs Buildings – both listed in the National Register of Historic Places – were erected.) When a fire destroyed the wooden school, the magnificent reinforced concrete Escuela José Julián Acosta was constructed across Avenida Constitución, quickly followed by the other four. Contemporary interpretation of the architectural typology, as per German educational standards, required open areas to provide space for gardens and play areas. The Puerta de Tierra Historic District could offer large, sunshine-filled sites where such educational centers could be erected.

**D Empowering Communications**

According to Morley, another goal of the American agenda was to create a sound system of communications that would bolster USA commercial traffic. The island’s geographic location was considered enviable for global trading pursuits and construction of the Panama Canal underscored this expectancy during the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Therefore, it was considered essential for Puerto Rico to have state of the art port facilities. The Puerta de Tierra Historic District was at the heart of this objective.

<sup>240</sup> An analysis of the architecture-education conundrum within the Old San Juan Historic District is found in: Arleen Pabón Charneco, *San Juan de Puerto Rico Architecture: Five Hundred Years of Urban and Architectural Experimentation*.

<sup>241</sup> Dr Martín Grove Brumbaugh (1862-1930) was Puerto Rico’s first American commissioner of education, appointed in 1900 by President William McKinley. To his credit: “. . . within two years introduced a modern American school system on the island.” When Brumbaugh ran for governor of Pennsylvania he was described by the press as a “Hercules of the Educational World.” “His previous achievements and his success in modernizing Philadelphia’s public schools as that city’s superintendent had by then made Brumbaugh one of the most prominent men in Pennsylvania.” “Martin Grove Brumbaugh,” Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Digital source: [http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/phmc\\_home/1426](http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/phmc_home/1426), 23 October 2015.

<sup>242</sup> Archivo General de Puerto Rico, San Juan de Puerto Rico, 1900, File (*Legajo*) 32a, 13c, Record (*Expediente*) 12.

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Until the last decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, both the small beach in front of the Puerta de San Juan (known as *la caleta* and *el fondadero*) and the south shore operated simultaneously as seaports. In 1893, a visitor described the second venue as a humble one, lacking the charm of a grand city (*el encanto de una gran ciudad*). Ascetically framed by a diminutive garden (*su jardinito a la orilla del mar*)<sup>243</sup> it provided limited services. All arriving passengers, for example, had to alight into small rowboats in order to visit the city. This primitive system was completely overhauled after 1898.

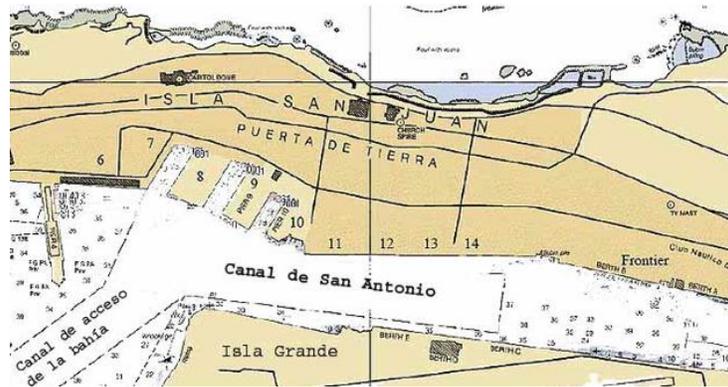


Figure 57. Port area, Puerta de Tierra Historic District, San Juan de Puerto Rico, after 1898.<sup>244</sup>

Construction of a formal pier, known as Muelle Número 1 (Pier or Dock Number 1), started in January 1900. The impressive 80 feet wide and 420 feet long trestle pier, the work of the New York and Porto Rico Steamship and Co, was considered an essential investment (\$90,000.00) in the modernization of San Juan Islet and Puerto Rico. A second pier, Muelle Número 2 (Pier or Dock Number 2), was in place by 1908. With time, a total of fourteen piers (not counting the US Navy and US Coast Guard facilities), ten of which aligned along the Puerta de Tierra Historic District's southern shore, served the island. (See Figure 57.) Presence of so many maritime outlets transformed the Puerta de Tierra Historic District into a Caribbean hub serving American commercial interests, as well as military ones. By the 1951, the elegant Club Náutico de San Juan private marina occupied the place where a 16<sup>th</sup> century secondary anchorage place had been. (See Photograph 032.) All these facilities empowered San Juan Islet's centuries-old mariner's soul.



Figure 58. Eastern sector of the Puerta de Tierra Historic District, San Juan de Puerto Rico, 1930s.<sup>245</sup>

<sup>243</sup> Salvador Puig y Valls, *Viaje a América, Estados Unidos, Exposición Universal de Chicago, México, Cuba y Puerto Rico*, pp 175; 213; 246. The small garden described by Puig y Valls was sited where the Plaza de la Dársena is presently located.

<sup>244</sup> Ports, Puerta de Tierra, San Juan de Puerto Rico, after 1898, Google, Public domain.

<sup>245</sup> Puerta de Tierra Historic District, San Juan de Puerto Rico, 1930s, Google, Public domain.

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Creation of a state of the art port sector transformed the district in multiple ways. Within a few years, the area teemed with burgeoning commercial activity<sup>246</sup> covering a service arch that went from traditional venues to novel ones. Industries settled in the Puerta de Tierra Historic District evidencing a business boom. Oil tanks, storage sheds, among others, quickly transformed the district's genteel suburban personality. One product intimately tied to the sector was tobacco. In 1900, the Porto Rican-American Tobacco Company, also known as *La Colectiva*, united several tobacco and cigarette brands under its aegis.<sup>247</sup> By 1905, the company occupied the 19<sup>th</sup> century Cárcel de Puerta de Tierra (listed in the National Register of Historic Places). An extension to this building was needed at a later time in order to expand the work area.<sup>248</sup> It was most convenient to manufacture the merchandise in the district and then ship it from the neighboring piers. Participation in capitalist ventures required the Puerta de Tierra Historic District to shelter industrial activities contravening their long historic absence.<sup>249</sup> For some years, the district served a fantastic array of services including those related to the Puerto Rico Reconstruction Administration (PRRA). Temporary buildings to house these facilities were constructed on the eastern end of the Parque Muñoz Rivera. (See Figure 58.)



Figure 59. Pyramid Products Inc. Office Building and Gas Station, Bulkhead and Shed-Pyramid Dock Company, Puerta de Tierra Historic District, San Juan de Puerto Rico, 1931.<sup>250</sup>

Increase in ventures resulted in frenzied construction efforts making possible the importation of new architectural typologies, such as the gas service station. (See Figure 59 and Photograph 57.) Close to the port, a reinforced concrete pyramid and a gas station exemplified imported fuel's novel role in people's lives. Given the fact that not many owned an automobile the service was associated with exotic architectural revivals. Egypt provided inspiration for the storage building while vaguely Moroccan aesthetics made possible the design of a structure dramatically highlighted by a dome. This last building was demolished decades ago and substituted by a contributing building designed by famed architect

<sup>246</sup> During research activities, several sources mentioned many residents were involved in black market activities. The port sector also sported an infamous red light district destroyed during the 1970s.

<sup>247</sup> Some of the cigar brands crafted were: *El Toro, Ricoro, Portina, Tunita, Flor de Castillo, La Sunchita, El Pratco y La Restina*. Cigarette brands manufactured were: *El Pratco, Colectiva, Violetas, Aromas and Frutas Excelsior*.

<sup>248</sup> Proving that there are, at least, two sides to every story while some laud the tobacco industry for providing work opportunities in Puerta de Tierra, the Redemptorists blamed tobacco workers for bringing multiple vices to the community.

<sup>249</sup> Historically, examples of relatively light industry like the bottling company *El Polo Norte* existed within the Old San Juan Historic District. Because of the port needs, however, not so light industry was also introduced to Puerta de Tierra during the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Gasoline and coal industries were but two of these.

<sup>250</sup> The gas station was destroyed during the 1950s making possible the construction of a contributing property, a jewel of a building designed by Henry Klumb (Block 157 Parcela 03). Google, Public domain: <http://www.puertadetierra.info/edificios/piramide/piramide.htm>. 7 July 2017.

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Henry Klumb. The pyramid has been preserved and is considered a contributing property of the Puerta de Tierra Historic District.

Modern port services generated secondary effects. The School of Tropical Medicine (listed in the National Register of Historic Places) attracted scholars from the international community, serving as anchor for medical studies and research activities. The state of the art communications system underscored the Puerto Rico-USA relationship making it easier for locals to study in American universities and for professors and teachers from the USA to come to the island. Puerta de Tierra's state of the art port made possible for the American acculturation agenda to prosper on many fronts.

### The Second Invasion

For the above-mentioned acculturation goals to prosper urban and architectural artifacts were chosen to assist in the colonizing mission. Just as Rome and Spain respectively dotted European and American landscapes with orthogonal grids, establishing sovereignty over conquered territories, the USA sought to impose its ideals by means of complex city planning activities and costly building programs. This philosophical approach transformed the Puerta de Tierra Historic District for the third time (since 1519) into an instrument of colonial propaganda.<sup>251</sup> The almost overnight physical transformation of the previous no man's land was described by the British as a second American invasion: "[S]uddenly beset and overwhelmed by the lusty, virile Yankees, roused out of its somnolent state and fired with cosmic urge, the spirit of the times, the desire for advancement, for emulation, for a closer kinship with the outside world of thought and action." Accordingly, the by then four centuries plus capital city:

[W]ill be given over entirely to business places in the same way as the "down-town" section of New York. . . . point of similarity in each city's problems readily suggest themselves, each is built on an island, long and narrow, entirely inadequate in area for the housing of the people it supports, whose homes are in the suburbs, and the transportation of whom presents identical features. Catano [*sic*] is the Brooklyn, and Santurce and Rio Pedras [*sic*] the Harlem and Westchester of San Juan.<sup>252</sup>

Notwithstanding the confusing comparisons regarding San Juan and New York neighborhoods, this narrative was one of many depicting San Juan Islet as the ultimate place to experience urban and architectural evolvement.

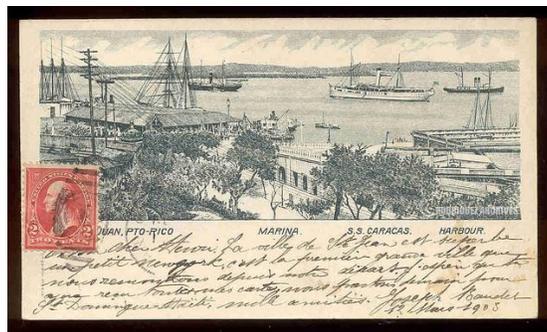


Figure 60. "Mon Cher Henri" Postcard, 1908.<sup>253</sup>

<sup>251</sup> The empires are Castile, Spain and the USA. Nuria Benach *et al*, *Actas del XIV Coloquio Internacional de Geocrítica: Las utopías y la construcción de la sociedad del futuro*, Arleen Pabón Charneco, "San Juan de Puerto Rico: Utopía de tres imperios."

<sup>252</sup> Alister Macmillan, *The West Indies Illustrated* (London WH & L Collingridge, 1911), pp 153-154. Quoted in Jeffrey W Cody, *Exporting American Architecture 1870-2000* (New York: Routledge, 2003), p 87.

<sup>253</sup> "Mon Cher Henri" Postcard, 1908, Google, Public domain.

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A 1908 postcard brings to life a visitor's opinion: *La ville de St Jean est superbe, un petit New York, c'est la première grande ville que nous rencontrons depuis notre départ.*<sup>254</sup> (See Figure 60.) It was understood at the time that the small Puerto Rican New York was the work of the Americans who managed to exploit the opportunities present by dragging a whole culture from its previous "somnolent" state into modernity. Fired with "cosmic urge," San Juan Islet now represented the future while the Puerta de Tierra Historic District was its gateway.



Figure 61. Puerta de Tierra Historic District, San Juan de Puerto Rico, 1920s, *The Blue Book of Porto Rico*.

Expectations were enormous. In 1923, *The Blue Book of Porto Rico* described an image of the Escuela José Julián Acosta, YMCA, Biblioteca Carnegie and Archives buildings framed by the train tracks in the following fashion: "Here religion, knowledge and industry, backed by a mighty culture of centuries, blend into a perfect picture." (See Figure 61.) The publication, designed to attract investors, depicted the Puerta de Tierra Historic District as a middle terrain, a connecting land bridge not only between two geographic and cultural entities (island and islet) but also between Puerto Rico and the world. As it linked symbolic poles and histories the region evolved – one more time – into something novel. From the 16<sup>th</sup> century secondary sector part of the one islet – one city paradigm it transformed to become the 17<sup>th</sup> century urban Other: the core's less significant partner. During the 20<sup>th</sup> century a third transmutation shaped the Puerta de Tierra Historic District again, this time it became a liminal place, a Third Space, an inbetween [*sic*] threshold pulsating with opportunities and a new kind of life.

[El entre-lugar] . . . posee una identidad híbrida que se fragua[ ] en contextos que han sido sometidos a procesos de colonización durante décadas y en los que el sujeto colonizado construye una identidad intersticial, asumiendo parte de los rasgos culturales de su colonizador, pero transformándolos desde sus códigos culturales propios; convirtiéndolos pues en algo distinto. Esa identidad híbrida genera un Tercer Espacio que escapa ya la propia dicotomía colonizador/colonizado . . .<sup>255</sup>

During the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the previous archetype defining the Puerta de Tierra Historic District as an extension of the historic core was abandoned in favor of a different interpretation. The district was now an urban and architectural showcase serving as bridge between several real yet highly symbolic entities by means of its unique urban persona. While the centuries old insular historic core

<sup>254</sup> *Mon Cher Henri, La ville de St Jean est superbe, un petit New York, c'est la première grande ville que nous rencontrons depuis notre départ. J'espère que tu auras reçu toutes mes cartes, nous partons demain pour St Domingue – Haiti. Mille amities. Josep Baudet.* Translation: "My dear Henri. The town of San Juan is superb, a little New York, it is the first big city we come across ever since we left. I hope you have received all my postcards, we shall be leaving tomorrow for Santo Domingo – Haiti. Best personal regards. Joseph Baudet – 12 March 1908." "Mon cher Henri," Postcard, 12 March 1908, Google, Public domain. I thank Mme Sophie Chevallier for her assistance in translating the document.

<sup>255</sup> Translation: "The Third Space has a hybrid identity and is the result of contexts that have experienced decades-long colonization processes that make possible for the colonized to form an interstitial identity that assumes part of the cultural characteristics of its colonizer although transforming them from its own cultural codes and, thus, creating something different. This hybrid identity creates a Third Space that is beyond the colonizer/colonized dichotomy." Olalla Castro Hernández, *Entre-lugares de la Modernidad Filosofía, literatura y Terceros Espacios* (Siruela, Madrid: 2017), p 15.

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embraced a new state of transparency, porousness and integration, the historic district's unique hybrid personality emerged in its own right as the icon of things to come.



Figure 62. View of Avenida Constitución, Paseo de Covadonga and the YMCA, Puerta de Tierra Historic District, San Juan de Puerto Rico, early 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>256</sup>

Achieving the showcase persona required a series of unique architectural insertions anchored by the four centuries old Avenida Constitución, now transmuted into the dorsal spine of the liminal space. Realigned in 1909, the former royal and military road became an urban mall, paralleling similar organizations in Washington DC, Chicago and Manila. (See Figure 62.) The new boulevard was not a solitary road snaking its way along no man's military land but an elegant organization framed with grand buildings and sites on both sides. An impressive park, the Luis Muñoz Rivera Park (listed in the National Register of Historic Places), an urban *bois*, was created as east terminus of the alignment bordered by lines of trees framing exquisite architectural jewels.

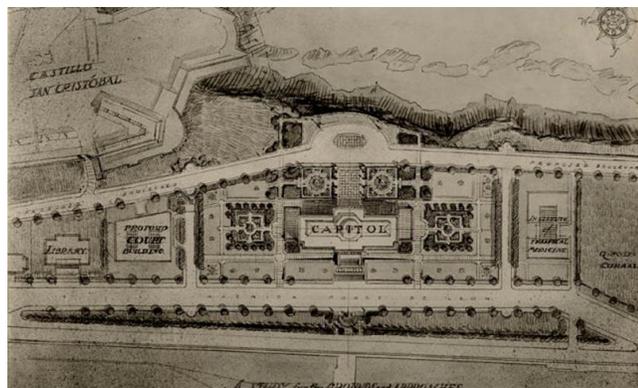
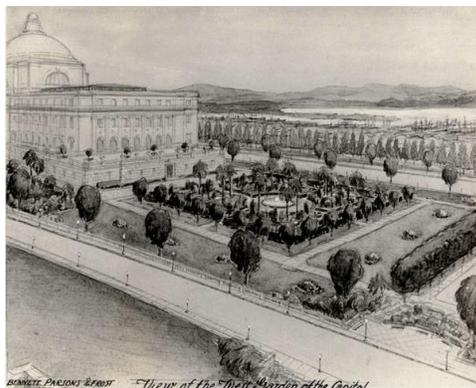


Figure 63 and Figure 64. Proposed gardens for the Capitolio de Puerto Rico by Bennett, Parsons & Frost, Puerta de Tierra Historic District, San Juan de Puerto Rico, 1925.<sup>257</sup>

The magnificent boulevard was a linear park much more grandiose than anything ever created in the island. Buildings were treated as beautiful objects, splendid urban sculptures that lined the majestic thoroughfare. Their dramatic scale and fanciful decoration brought a new sense of elegance and sophistication. Gardens surrounding each building underscored this appreciation. In the case of the El

<sup>256</sup> View of Avenida Constitución and Paseo de Covadonga with YMCA Building in forefront, Puerta de Tierra Historic District, San Juan de Puerto Rico, early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Google, Public domain.

<sup>257</sup> "View of the West Garden of the Capitol" by Bennett, Parsons & Frost, 1925, Art Institute, Chicago, Illinois, Digital source: <http://www.artic.edu/research/archival-collection>, 19773.1 1999.10 (microfilm); 197301; 090 202-05 (RBA Digital File).

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Capitolio de Puerto Rico (listed in the National Register of Historic Places), the eminent Bennett, Parsons & Frost firm was involved in the proposal of magnificent formal gardens to enhance the building. (See Figure 63 and Figure 64.) This proposal included an *allée* of trees framing Avenida Constitución. (Notice needs to be taken that the El Capitolio de Puerto Rico's western garden, proposed by Bennett, Parsons & Frost, linked this building to the proposed court building. The Casa de España is presently sited here.) Landscape was to act as unifying theme. As a result, most of the central spine architectural examples had some sort of formal greenery surrounding them. Sacralization of architecture by means of exotic architectural styles, exquisite decoration and lush landscapes was one of the most powerful messages the new Puerta de Tierra proposed.

As mentioned, Old San Juan's inherited historic urban landscape presented physical limitations that made insertion of new, grandiose architectural and urban examples difficult if not impossible. The tightly packed grid of narrow streets and plazas could hardly be "improved" much less "disassociated" (*Lico dixit*) from their cultural roots. Even if possible, how could new insertions surrounded by historic ones effectively deconstruct the past? There was no way American novel meanings could be read when historic Spanish architectural semantics competed with them. While limited cosmetic transformations could take place in the previously intramural enclave, the Puerta de Tierra Historic District was the perfect place-cum-stage where novel buildings and sites could be displayed for all to enjoy.

### The Fourth Post 1519 Phase Subperiods

The Puerta de Tierra Historic District fourth phase of post 1519 development covers the period from 1898 to 1950. It can be organized into two subperiods intimately related to acculturation stages.<sup>258</sup>

#### *First Subperiod (1898-1905)*

As mentioned the Puerta de Tierra Historic District's first architectural acculturation subperiod started in 1898 and lasted until 1905, when the first formal actions regarding urban and architectural development were initiated. With the possible exception of work in the port sector, the period seems to have been one of examination, even if uncoordinated, regarding the sector's potential. New buildings, like the San Juan Model and Training School, were constructed of wood, reflecting a lack of certainty regarding the future.<sup>259</sup> This plausible ambiguity is corroborated by the fact that the mainland trend at the time called for schools to be made of reinforced concrete. When on 30 June 1900 a fire destroyed the center, a reinforced concrete building, the Escuela José Julián Acosta, was built as substitute. The lot where the wooden school had been sited became the west terminus of the central spine where the sumptuous Casino de Puerto Rico was erected.

It was at this time that the Puerta de Tierra Historic District lost – one more time out of several – against the military for, on 29 March 1899, Congress approved the Port and Rivers Act (*Ley de Puertos y Rios*) by means of which approximately eighty acres of the sector were sequestered for the US Navy use. While during the 19<sup>th</sup> century the Spanish military reserved the sector north of Avenida Constitución, during the 20<sup>th</sup> century the Americans also occupied sections of the south shore. Additionally, a north-south strip of land along the Spanish second defensive line was under their jurisdiction. Isla Grande – across San Antonio Channel – was earmarked for naval use. With the US Army and the US Coast Guard entrenched in the northern and southern sectors of Old San Juan core (US Army Fort Brooke Military

<sup>258</sup> Cody has subdivided Cuba's selective transplantation (acculturation) of urban and architectural solutions after 1898 into three periods. Unfortunately, these do not apply to Puerto Rico given the fact that Cuba became an independent nation in 1902. Jeffrey W Cody, *Exporting American Architecture 1870-2000*, p 89.

<sup>259</sup> The fact the San Juan Model and Training School was constructed of wood does not necessarily mean it was conceived as an ephemeral artifact.

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Base and US Coast Guard La Puntilla Base) martial presence in the historic district continued uninterrupted. In fact, by including Isla Grande as part of the naval base, the USA military straddle both shores of the San Antonio Channel.

*Second Subperiod (1905-1950)*

The Puerta de Tierra Historic District's second subperiod, part of the fourth post 1519 period, covers from 1905 to 1950. By 11 September 1908, the Municipality of San Juan was divided into five districts: (i) Ballajá, Mercado and Catedral; (ii) San Cristóbal and San Francisco; (iii) La Marina (La Puntilla); (iv) Puerta de Tierra; and (v) Santurce. San Juan Islet's population in 1910 was 30,571 distributed in the following manner: 17,130 lived in the core; 2,605 at La Marina (La Puntilla); and 10,836 in Puerta de Tierra. When compared to 1899 numbers, Old San Juan registered a 70.3% growth and La Puntilla-La Marina a 21.5% one. The largest one, 98.7%, was recorded in the Puerta de Tierra Historic District.

As mentioned, during the 19<sup>th</sup> century the physical shape of San Juan Islet started to transform as a result of the dredging and landfill activities around the harbor. Desiccation of the marshland along the southern border also contributed to this transformation. By the end of the fourth decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when these activities were completed, the isle had a different shape. The Charca de las Brujas (Witches Lagoon) disappeared, as well as Isla Carbonera (Isla del Carbón or Coal Island) and other diminutive keys. (See Figure 4.) Since the mangroves all but disappeared more land was available for development. Another physical transformation came as a result of the construction of the Puente Dos Hermanos, a project financed by the eponymous Behn Brothers.<sup>260</sup> For the first time ever, San Juan Islet and, thus, the Puerta de Tierra Historic District, were connected to the Condado sector.

Construction of the Escuela José Julián Acosta in 1905 marked the end of the first subperiod and initiation of the second one. Two years later, a competition<sup>261</sup> was called for the design of the El Capitolio de Puerto Rico at a cost of \$300,000.00. All buildings built during this period evidence inspiration from the USA, either by way of precedent or designer's origins. El Capitolio de Puerto Rico, for example, directly relates to Columbia University's Low Library (New York), the work of McKim, Mead and White. Other precedents are more liberal. This is the case of the Escuela José Julián Acosta and Escuela José Celso Barbosa both inspired in Palladian and High Renaissance aesthetics, one of the City Beautiful Movement's most outstanding sources of inspiration. On 3 September 1910, the YMCA acquired a lot of 6,000 square meters at a nominal fee west of the Biblioteca Carnegie. Purdy and Henderson directly imported City Beautiful Movement ideals, underscoring the period's admiration for academic semantics. All these buildings exhibit profound American influence via their American-educated authors.

The second subperiod evidences an interest for buildings and sites to serve as stages for civic and government rituals. An interpretation of the first formal educational center created in San Juan Islet – the Escuela José Julián Acosta – allows for a better understanding this goal. Architect EB Homer, partner of the American firm of Clarke, Howe & Homer Architects,<sup>262</sup> was head designer. Although principally

<sup>260</sup> In 1907, the Behn Brothers moved to Puerto Rico establishing a development firm, one of several commercial interests that included radio communications.

<sup>261</sup> The competition's first prize was \$5,000; second and third prizes, respectively, were \$2,000 and \$1,500. Frank E Perkins' design was chosen.

<sup>262</sup> The firm originally had two partners Prescott Orlott (senior one) and Wallis Eastburn Clarke. In 1901, the Rhode Island firm was joined by Wallis Eastburn Howe and in 1903 the tandem became Clarke and Howe. During the period from 1910 to 1913, Eleazer B Homer acted as third partner. *Providence Board of Trade Journal*, 1/903: 442. Digital source: www.rid.uscourts.gov, 10 November 2012.

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engaged in domestic architecture, an important early commission of the firm was the Providence US Federal Building and Courthouse (1904-1908), a project that consolidated the studio's fame.<sup>263</sup>

The Clarke and Howe Federal Building built in Providence, Rhode Island is considered an example of the Beaux Arts Style, the American equivalent to the Second Empire Baroque and the Spanish Belle Époque. Inspired by the City Beautiful Movement, therefore, the principal goal of the style was to create elegant civic buildings to frame various activities. Not one aesthetic current was used for this purpose but a fusion of semantics that organize elegant, exuberant and grand buildings full of architectural drama and decorative richness.<sup>264</sup>

This firm's approach to civic architecture reflected City Beautiful Movement ideals regarding public buildings and their use as stages for communal rituals. Since education was one of these, the main objective was to create a beautiful artifact that would elegantly frame the process at its earliest stage. The Classicist inspired hierarchical and symmetrical composition sharply contrasts to "the liberally-inspired decorative elements, such as the curved gables and applied décor."<sup>265</sup> Following German educational standards, the building clearly and rationally spelled out the new scholastic agenda.

Varied stylistic currents co-existed during the second phase. Nevertheless and regardless of specific architectural source of inspiration, the general tendency was towards City Beautiful Movement ideals. As a result, Classical, Renaissance and Baroque inspiration was predominantly used. Other styles, such as the Mediterranean Revival, Art Deco and Modern, became favorite choices at a later time. This does not represent a dry and cut tendency for City Beautiful Movement modes of expression lasted, particularly in domestic design, as late as the 1930s.

In order to better understand the Puerta de Tierra Historic District's use of City Beautiful Movement aesthetic expressions during the second post-1898 stage it is relevant to analyze some of the movement basic tenements.

### The City Beautiful Movement

The 1893 World's Columbian Exposition commemorating the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Columbus arrival to America transformed Lake Michigan's southern shore into a magical "white city."<sup>266</sup> Chicago, the "very real and very earthly" enclave, the quintessential 19<sup>th</sup> century example of the "monotony of ugliness,"<sup>267</sup> was able to present to the world a unique precinct distinguished by elegant architecture framed by modern inventions. Order out of urban chaos was predicated on: ". . . a system of arrangements which has been carefully and studiously planned." Existence of a preconceived "plan"<sup>268</sup> (urban masterplan), one of the design's most admired characteristics,<sup>269</sup> allowed the "noble sketch of architecture" with "streets [that]

<sup>263</sup> The project led to many other works, including the New England Telephone and Telegraph Company Building (1917; 1931), the Providence Gas Company Building (1924), and three buildings for Brown University designed between the years 1903 and 1927.

<sup>264</sup> Arleen Pabón Charneco, "Old San Juan Historic District / Distrito Histórico del Viejo San Juan National Register of Historic Places Nomination," p 123.

<sup>265</sup> *Idem.*

<sup>266</sup> The name "White City" was given for the splendid use of light-colored marbles and the electric lighting system that was used at night.

<sup>267</sup> John Coleman Adams, "What a Great City Might Be – A Lesson from the White City," *The New England Magazine*, 14:1 (March 1896), pp 3-13; 3.

<sup>268</sup> *Ibid.*, p 10.

<sup>269</sup> Efforts such as Sixtus V's rehabilitation of Rome and Baron Haussmann's Paris plan were quite different in that emphasis was given to religious (Rome) and circulation (Paris) aspects rather than recreational ones.

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were not a tangle of thoroughfares representing individual preferences or caprices,<sup>270</sup> to create a new type of urban enclave.

Accumulated collateral damages caused by the Industrial Revolution marred urban cores prior to this historic moment. Solutions evidence a wide range of approaches: from metaphysical ones sponsored by John Ruskin and Marcus Welby Pugin to slightly bombastic ones promoted by Daniel Burnham; McKim, Mead and White *et al.* One goal united them all: the belief modern life demanded a new type of city. “The great blemish upon our cities is the fact that their natural advantages have been squandered by uses which had no forethought of future needs.” The Chicago experience proved to be crucial to this quest.<sup>271</sup> Although one admirer of the exposition wrote: “Not that anybody expects to see those great buildings reproduced anywhere else!,” dozens of “little Romes”<sup>272</sup> were organized around the country. As both Puerto Rico and the Philippine Islands evidence, the City Beautiful Movement ideals were also used to promote American imperial goals.

Because of its relatively short history and closeness in terms of time there are varied perspectives regarding the architectural style associated to the Chicago Fair. In fact, a definitive scholarly interpretation has yet to be organized. The expression’s name is still fluid: some use City Beautiful Movement while others favor Beaux Arts and still others Belle Époque. This last one, preferred in Spain,<sup>273</sup> is a convenient designation for it evokes the Second Empire Baroque, the Chicago Fair’s most relevant precedent. American Renaissance is another designation used:

It was loosely called the “American Renaissance” – that rage for stately Roman architecture that came to the United States under the pervasive influence of the Ecole des Beaux Arts, the French national school of architecture. Seduced by the muscular glory that was Rome, as taught by the French, American architects at the turn of the twentieth century, as one wag has remarked, “put up little Romes everywhere.” This style, known as Beaux Arts, after the School of the same name, became the preferred expression for all manner of public buildings – state capitols, courthouses, banks, libraries, even lodge halls. It was what clients wanted.<sup>274</sup>

This last name pays homage to the Italian Renaissance, one of the sources of inspiration. In Puerto Rico, the Hispanomediterráneo evidences the Hydra-like qualities of the aesthetics. It is possible name consistency is irrelevant at this point in time. There is a need to accept that proximity blurs the period’s products making interpretative ideas difficult to emerge in a final and definitive manner.

At the time of its birth the style was not associated to a particular name, the result of several circumstances. First, no single aesthetic source was used since “Classicism” was understood in myriad ways. Comparison between Henry H Richardson’s Transportation Building and Richard Morris Hunt’s Administration Building at the Chicago Fair evidence the existing stylistic chasm.<sup>275</sup> Second, the City Beautiful Movement impacted countries at different times. While in the USA 1893 marks its debut, Spain experienced a delayed version that emerged during the second decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>276</sup> Third, in the USA the style was used in civic buildings, be they post offices, customhouses, government centers or schools. Contrarily, Europeans used it principally in hotels and monumental spaces. An example of this last type is Barcelona’s Plaça de Espanya by Josep Jujol, one of Antoni Gaudí i Cornet’s most

<sup>270</sup> John Coleman Adams, “What a Great City Might Be – A Lesson from the White City,” p 4.

<sup>271</sup> *Ibid.*, p 9.

<sup>272</sup> “The Beaux Arts Style,” Digital source: [www.crt.state.la.us/.../beauxartsREVISED](http://www.crt.state.la.us/.../beauxartsREVISED).

<sup>273</sup> Catalunya, in turn, defines the expression as Noucentisme.

<sup>274</sup> “The Beaux Arts Style.”

<sup>275</sup> Classically inspired vocabulary was preferred during this period for it was considered more flexible, as well as universal.

<sup>276</sup> The Seville 1929 Exposición Iberoamericana’s masterplan evidences Chicago’s Columbian Exposition impact, although the Ecole des Beaux Arts’ theoretical approach profoundly influenced Jean-Claude Nicolas Forestier, author of the scheme.

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distinguish architectural collaborators.<sup>277</sup> Americans' use of the semantics as a civic instrument provides the expression a profound theoretical layering.

Regardless of name, the semantics ultimate inspiration comes from Classicist-inspired architecture via the Renaissance, the Baroque and the Second Empire Baroque. France played a role of great relevance in the dissemination of this preference because the Ecole des Beaux Arts [ha] *difundido por todo el mundo civilizado (metrópolis y colonias)*<sup>278</sup> the style. This country's decision to dress its 1900 Exposition Universelle (Paris) in this architectural garb solidified the tendency.<sup>279</sup> While it is true the Ecole des Beaux Arts ideals were influential, particularly since several American designers studied at the center, the Chicago fair's impact was exponential for it shaped academic ideals into a three-dimensional reality. It also provided the USA with a powerful ideological urban tool. For millennia groups in power, whether governmental or religious, erected buildings to impress their control upon the populace. City Beautiful Movement edifices were designed to elicit a different reaction since they were interpreted as civic objects to be enjoyed by all. Belonging to the community they were symbols of shared civic values.

The American visitor to the Fair was permitted another sensation, as unusual as it was agreeable, and as strange as it was unexpected. He was treated to the extraordinary experience of feeling that all this beauty, order, protection and display were for his sake, to minister to his enjoyment and to his case. He knew that the White City was built and furnished on his account, and that everything has been done with a view for making him feel at home in the enjoyment of his inheritance. There was no other place in America where the American citizen could feel so much of the pride of popular sovereignty, as he could after he had paid his half dollar and become a naturalized resident of this municipality.<sup>280</sup>

The City Beautiful Movement's most relevant contribution was the appropriation of the idea that architecture needs to be conceived as an instrument of civic pride and enjoyment. This is one of the principal reasons why its urban impact was so pronounced.

Collusion between varied styles is a distinguishing trait of the Puerta de Tierra Historic District's version of the aesthetics, a reality that further complicates its interpretation. This liberality is especially hard for those fixated in stylistically categorizing buildings. Aesthetic inventiveness, at times verging on naiveté, is one of its most charming and enduring characteristics. Architectural goals include an enchanting appearance, tinged with exoticism that would initiate an escape from the here and now into a fantastic world of sorts. A case in question is the Hispanomediterráneo, viewed as design option to Modernism. It would be a mistake to solely attribute Hispanic precedents to the expression. In so much as this style is inspired in Italian, Portuguese and Spanish Renaissance sources, among others, and had as final goal to create buildings that would evoke civic pride and pleasure, it can be considered one of the many rhizomes of the City Beautiful Movement.

The Puerta de Tierra Historic District's version of the City Beautiful Movement is distinguished by rich architectural semantics that convey a sense of opulent decorum. When used in civic buildings the

<sup>277</sup> In Catalunya, the term Noucentisme is used. Another example philosophically aligned with the City Beautiful Movement was the 1929 Exposición Internacional de Barcelona fair precinct, as well as projects such as Madrid's Gran Vía (1904-1929) and Seville's Parque de María Luisa. The grand urban vocabulary used for the fair district, urban promenade and park (also by Forestier), in their drama and grand scale, bear profound allegiance to the Chicago masterpiece.

<sup>278</sup> Translation: "[France] has spread around the civilized world (metropolis and colonies)." Joaquín Lorda, "A la Manera Española y Mexicana El triunfo del estilo hispánico La época de los descubrimientos (1892-1930)," Digital source: unav.es.

<sup>279</sup> *Idem.* Many countries' pavilions designed for the Exposition used "national" expressions. Spain's pavilion – *una amalgama plateresca, que acumulaba rasgos del Palacio de Monterrey y la Universidad de Alcalá de Henares, y otros toques* (Translation: "A Plateresque amalgam of the Palacio de Monterey and Universidad de Alcalá de Henares") – is similar to the Puerta de Tierra Historic District's School of Tropical Medicine. Both used the Palacio de Monterrey (Spain) as architectural precedent.

<sup>280</sup> *Ibid.*, p 11.

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language transforms the building into an icon of authority, be it of a private organization, the government or business. Use of architecture as colonial instrument of acculturation is a millennial propensity. What was new during the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was that the City Beautiful Movement and its many variances were interpreted as architectural Americanisms and, as a result, imported symbols of modernism. “[T]he idea of ‘modern’ for the Philippines was based on the American experience. The colonial policies in the Philippines were directed expressly to ‘remake the colony in the image of the United States’ calling it an ‘experiment in duplication’.”<sup>281</sup>

Some design characteristics of the rich architectural expression as executed in the Puerta de Tierra Historic District are the following. First, the building’s façade is treated in monumental manner reaching, on occasion, bombastic levels by means of the drama of its components (Casino de Puerto Rico), scale (El Capitolio de Puerto Rico), decoration (Asilo de Ancianos Nuestra Señora de la Providencia) and contained grandeur (Biblioteca Carnegie and Escuela José Celso Barbosa). Most buildings include elegant porticos and stairways anchoring façades in grand academic manner (Casino de Puerto Rico, YMCA, Casa de España, El Capitolio de Puerto Rico, US Department of Commerce Weather Bureau, Escuela José Celso Barbosa, Asilo de Ancianos Nuestra Señora de la Providencia, Departamento de la Familia (Archives) and Cruz Roja). As mentioned, the feeling of monumentality is underscored by the gardens planned around the buildings, an unknown treatment in Old San Juan.

A second architectural characteristic of the Puerta de Tierra Historic District’s City Beautiful Movement is the preference for elegant decorative schemes that include dreamlike gesso-sculptures (Ateneo Puertorriqueño) (See Photograph 016.), opulent architectural decoration (YMCA) (See Photograph 007.), colorful figural terracotta panels (US Department of Commerce Weather Bureau) (See Photograph 014.), and rich textures (Casa de España). The new architectural agenda rejected the four centuries old ascetic and minimalist Spanish architectural approach, something particularly evident in the use of added decoration.

Grand axial organization with a taste for central entrance composition is the Puerta de Tierra Historic District’s City Beautiful Movement third distinguishing characteristic. In addition to the El Capitolio de Puerto Rico and the Ateneo Puertorriqueño, the Casino de Puerto Rico’s *porte cochère*, the Biblioteca Carnegie’s imposing loggia, the Asilo de Ancianos Nuestra Señora de la Providencia’s exotic portico evidence this approach. (See Photograph 016 and Photograph 011.) Centrality is emphasized by means of Colossal columns (Biblioteca Carnegie and Escuela José Celso Barbosa), entrance loggias (YMCA and Asilo de Ancianos de Puerta de Tierra de Nuestra Señora de la Providencia), arcuated portals (US Department of Commerce Weather Bureau building and Ateneo Puertorriqueño), Picturesque gables (Escuela Brumbaugh) and varied other elements. (See Photograph 011 and Photograph 014.) On occasion, asymmetry is favored. This is the case of the Casa de España and its fascinating side entry that initiates the spectacular spatial sequence ending in the second floor ballroom.

A fourth characteristic of the Puerta de Tierra Historic District’s City Beautiful Movement is the penchant for architectural orders. The Casino de Puerto Rico, YMCA, Biblioteca Carnegie, El Capitolio de Puerto Rico, Departamento de la Familia (See Photograph 015 and Photograph 025.), Escuela José Celso Barbosa, and Asilo de Ancianos de Nuestra Señora de la Providencia (See Photograph 011.) – all use free standing architectural orders (at times invented) to add elegance to the composition, as well as three dimensionality. Classically inspired entablatures also aspire to the same goals. It is relevant to point out

<sup>281</sup> Edson Cabalfin, “Conquest and Resistance: Intersections of Colonialism and Modernity in Twentieth-Century Philippine Architectures” (Cornell University, Ithaca, New York), Digital source: <http://www.academia.edu/772612>. Quoted in G May, *Social Engineering in the Philippines: The Aims, Executions and Impact of American Colonial Policy 1900-1913* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1980), p 17.

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that the orders also served as signs that silently conjured visions of a rich past that went all the way back to Classical Greece and Rome. While it is possible to surmise the signifier (the three dimensional order element) carried the message of elegance, the signified (the symbols related to the particular orders) associated Romantic visions and dreams of civic ideals to the buildings.<sup>282</sup>

A fifth commonality of the Puerta de Tierra Historic District version of the City Beautiful Movement is the picturesque roofline, a prominent component that dramatically contributes to the building's impact. Examples are the Casino de Puerto Rico mansard roof; El Capitolio de Puerto Rico hemispheric dome, a US Department of Commerce Weather Bureau's terracotta tiled hip roof (See Photograph 014.); Casa de España Picturesque towers covered with blue and white terracotta tiles; and School of Tropical Medicine Spanish Plateresque filigree dado-like motif. This characteristic adds to the architectural drama and complexity of each building.

In the sixth place, the Puerta de Tierra Historic District Beautiful City Movement exhibits a preference for façade academic composition, a standard Classicist influence. Inclusion of a podium, as well as a tripartite organization with partiality towards horizontality, is *de rigueur*. Whether by means of a frieze or entablature (Ateneo Puertorriqueño) (See Photograph 016.) or both (YMCA) (See Photograph 044.) the tripartite arrangement and horizontal emphasis appear time and time again. As mentioned, academic concepts, such as symmetry, play a most relevant role in the organization of most façades.

Not one of the buildings lacks the seventh Puerta de Tierra Historic District Beautiful City Movement characteristic: grand interior rooms, monumental staircases and elegant spatial sequences. From "L" to "Y" staircases, marble and luxurious decorative schemes dignify and empower the interior vertical connections. Front loggias are used as transitional spaces that, in turn, open to vestibules and lobbies designed to provide character and variety to interior arrangements. In addition to exquisite décor that can be truly mesmerizing (Casa de España and Asilo de Ancianos Nuestra Señora de la Providencia), interiors are a constant source of surprise. Although it could be considered a characteristic in its own right, buildings evidence a taste for architectural vistas. The magnificent perspectives found in the Casino de Puerto Rico, YMCA, Ateneo Puertorriqueño, Biblioteca Carnegie, Casa de España, El Capitolio de Puerto Rico, School of Tropical Medicine, US Department of Commerce Weather Bureau building, Escuela José Celso Barbosa, Asilo de Ancianos Nuestra Señora de la Providencia exemplify this approach. It is obvious all generate scenographic effects that intimately tie interiors to exteriors.

The Casino de Puerto Rico's massive mansard, originally covered with green bronze tiles; the exotic decorative frieze that symmetrically emphasizes the Ateneo de Puerto Rico façade and main entrance crowned by a an arcade of multifoil arches, the white and blue terracotta tiles used in the Casa de España roof line, the august El Capitolio de Puerto Rico dome, the filigree cornice of the School of Tropical Medicine, among others, create dramatic visual and imaginative effects that empower each building in its own right as a unique creation. This goal transcends on an urban scale given the fact that the cumulative effect of all these buildings creates a magnificent and superb showcase along San Juan Islet's and Puerto Rico's main road (Avenida Constitución) connecting the capital city and the rest of the island.

In terms of the urban setting Baroque axial compositions offered appropriate precedents. Straight axes cross the space and end in open perspectives alla Versailles in both fronts of the El Capitolio de Puerto Rico. Exedras with curving concrete balustrades and varied sculptural objects add a sense of movement and drama to the three blocks of the Paseo de Covadonga that form the south border of the collection.

<sup>282</sup> According to contemporary linguistic interpretative analysis architecture is composed of signs, each one having two components: the signifier (perceived with our senses) and signified (intangible). Meaning is produced when the mind unites them both.

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The transformation of the Avenida Constitución during the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is truly mesmerizing. From a royal and military road connecting the capital city and the Puerta de Tierra Historic District to the main island, it became a magnificent boulevard, a “little Rome” iconic of the civic virtues the new Puerto Rican society anticipated to attain.

**Exporting American Architectural Know-how**

During the fin de siècle, in addition to multiple novel stylistic symbolic readings, American architecture, characterized by its bravado, was synonymous of modernity associated as it was to such feats as the Panama Canal and the skyscraper. As a result, the USA became a purveyor of progress and innovation. This standing was interpreted in varied manners. For some, it was a welcome change from the traditional Spanish architectural approach. For others, however, it:

. . . also ushered in new forms of marginalization. Poor quarters of the city were pushed further away from the urban core while rich enclaves were further developed. The large-scale Neoclassical civic buildings were not just an expression of a new architectural idiom in the Philippines but more so served as a constant reminder of the American colonial presence in the city. The colonial masters similarly brought in technologies associated with modernity like steel, concrete and glass.<sup>283</sup>

If the assessment that the 20<sup>th</sup> century is the “American Century”<sup>284</sup> is correct it is partly due to the gigantic strides made in the fields of architecture and construction by the USA. Modernization came not only via the creation of new architectural styles and the invention of new architectural typologies and morphologies. Old architectural ideals were given a new twist thanks to the new technologies that emerged during the period. American entrepreneurs and professionals dispersed around the globe became consummate purveyors of the American way of life. The 1898 annexation of Hawaii and the former Spanish colonies (Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippine Islands) provided not only experimentation opportunities but also places to summersault into the international arena.

It was in this imperial context that American planners, and constructors in several allied professions began to ride on the political coat-ties created by those victories. They began to plan new communities, erect structures using US technologies, fashion commercial and residential landscapes befitting American capitalistic enterprise and ship American-based building technologies to far-flung shores that most Americans could locate on the globe.<sup>285</sup>

While it is true the new imperialistic milieu promoted commercial activities in the far-flung territories and their neighbors, it is also correct that many countries – from Argentina to China – sought American expertise on the basis of what the country was creating architecturally. In other words, importation of American ideas was not always the result of capitalistic or imperialistic impositions but of foreigners’ aspirations to obtain state of the art architectural and urban artifacts guaranteeing modernity. America know-how became the way to achieve this.

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century Chicago, closely followed by New York, developed a new type of structural system that made possible the construction of higher buildings. The skyscraper structural system discarded bearing walls in favor of a prefabricated metal skeleton that concentrated loads in specific points, supporting them by means of columns. A “free plan” that could be transformed at any given time in a relatively easy manner was one of the results of this accomplishment. Prefabricated glass panes, known

<sup>283</sup> Edson Cabalfin, “Conquest and Resistance: Intersections of Colonialism and Modernity in Twentieth-Century Philippine Architectures.” Quoted in: G May, *Social Engineering in the Philippines: The Aims, Executions and Impact of American Colonial Policy 1900-1913*, p 4.

<sup>284</sup> The American magazine *Life* declared the 20<sup>th</sup> century “The American Century” in its January 1941 publication.

<sup>285</sup> Jeffrey W Cody, *Exporting American Architecture, 1870-2000*, p 2.

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as “curtain walls,” delicately enclosed each floor that was served by a “service core.” William Le Baron Jenney’s experimentation at the Home Insurance Building (Chicago), the first building to sport a skyscraper structural system, accomplished one of the most dramatic revolutions in the history of architecture. Cities now were spiked with multiple towers that reached for the heavens. American technological bravado reached its zenith with the successful completion of the Panama Canal.

As a result, Europe and Asia expressed interest in American architects, such as Frank Lloyd Wright.<sup>286</sup> Wright’s onetime assistant, Marion Mahony Griffin and her husband Walter Burly Griffin were invited in 1911 to create Canberra’s (Australia) urban masterplan, another example of the respect American designers commanded. New architectural typologies, novel structural systems that made use of mass-produced metal components and new technologies – such as elevators, electric stairs and ramps, as well as the pneumatic post (mail) and the telephone, among others – literally transformed the character of both architecture and traditional urban cores. It comes as no surprise architectural Americanisms came to be respected and interpreted as the way to the future.

A series of American stellar designers are associated to the Puerta de Tierra Historic District. As mentioned, one of the partners of Clarke, Howe & Homer Architects,<sup>287</sup> EB Homer, designed the Escuela José Julián Acosta. Another professional was Corydon Tyler Purdy of the Purdy and Henderson Company, the team in charge of construction of the YMCA Building in the Puerta de Tierra Historic District. (See Photograph 044.) Designers of the Capitolio Nacional de Cuba<sup>288</sup> and Hotel Nacional de Cuba, both in Havana, by 1903, this firm was considered: “A Pioneer Designer of Steel Construction who has made this work a Life Study.” With offices in Chicago, Boston and Havana his studio was described as: “the largest firm of Engineers in building construction in the world.”<sup>289</sup> Although *The Successful American’s* principal goal was to exult businessmen, it is telling the magazine describes Purdy as proprietor of a: “busy career of a distinguished engineer who, by his original methods of a genius, has revolutionized the profession of modern architecture as exemplify in the great ‘skyscrapers’ of the present day.”<sup>290</sup> The amount of work the office was engaged in is astounding:

Messrs Purdy & Henderson have now in their employ a corps of one hundred and thirty to one hundred and fifty engineers, engaged in making plans and designs for many buildings now being constructed in all parts of the United States, some of them the highest and largest in the world. Fifty millions of dollars per annum is a very low estimate of the value of the buildings the constructive features of which have been designed by the firm of Purdy & Henderson, which has as clients many of the leading architects of the country.<sup>291</sup>

The YMCA’s impressive design and exuberant decoration echoes the firm’s strong affiliation to City Beautiful Movement ideals. (See Photograph 007.)

<sup>286</sup> Publication of the Wasmuth Portfolio in 1910 evidences this interest (the formal title was *Ausgeführte Bauten und Entwürfe von Frank Lloyd Wright*). Best described as *catalogue raisonné* of Wright’s works it included detailed architectural plans.

<sup>287</sup> *Providence Board of Trade Journal*, 1/903: 442. Digital source: www.rid.uscourts.gov.

<sup>288</sup> According to some sources, Purdy and Henderson acted as “overseers” of this work.

<sup>289</sup> “Corydon Tyler Purdy,” *The Successful American* (Press Biographical Company, 1903), Volume 7 Part 1 and Volume 8 Part 1, pp 104-107; 105-106.

<sup>290</sup> *Ibid.*, 104.

<sup>291</sup> Purdy worked for the George G Fuller Company where: “In nearly all the great buildings constructed by that Company, Mr Purdy, or the firm of Purdy & Henderson, have been the Designing or Consulting Engineers.” “Corydon Tyler Purdy,” *The Successful American*, Volume 7, Part 1 – Volume 8, Part 1, pp 104-107; 105.

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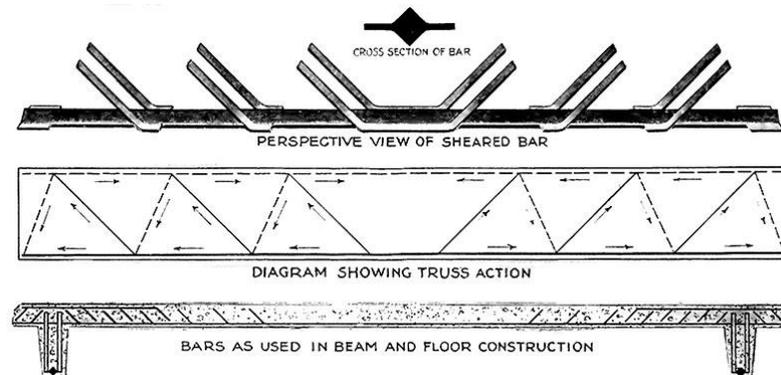


Figure 65. Diagram of the Khan Structural System, Khan System of Reinforced Concrete, first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>292</sup>

Julius Khan, brother of Architect Albert Kahn, designer of the Smallwood Building (Ford Automobile Showroom) (contributing building) and probably of the US Naval Radio Station precinct (contributing district) in the Puerta de Tierra Historic District, invented the reinforced concrete Kahn System in 1902. (See Photograph 020.) Khan is another distinguished designer who made possible for American know-how to impact the historic district. At this time, reinforced concrete was a relatively new material packed with possibilities but still an unknown quantity.<sup>293</sup> The Khan system was quite novel: “[I]t consisted of visually distinctive rolled diamond-shaped bars with flat-plate flanges (or “wings”) that were sliced and bent up at regular intervals at approximately 45 degrees from the longitudinal axis of the reinforcement.”<sup>294</sup> (See Figure 65.) The Puerta de Tierra Historic District provided the Khan Brothers a laboratory where they could experiment with their structural models and prefabrication techniques. The showroom was structurally designed so that several floors could exhibit the automobiles. Ramps connected the levels providing a unique experience for the client. The building is an interesting interpretation of Modernism ideals, specifically its use of the skyscraper structural system. The glass blocks inserted throughout the exterior walls of the building evidence it is a curtain wall. Intimately tying the new typology (automobile showroom) to the novel experience of owning a car, the design rejects historicisms in favor of a modern aesthetic approach. The US Naval Radio Station buildings include reinforced concrete Art Deco curved walls and incised decoration, considered modern at the time.

Another notable architect who worked in the Puerta de Tierra Historic District was John Niggle,<sup>295</sup> designer of the Church, School, Convent and Parish House of San Agustín precinct. His ideas were considered so avant-garde, the professional magazine *Stone* published an article on experimentations he carried out as part of this project: “Mr Niggle first designed the church in Mission style, but was not

<sup>292</sup> Diagram of the Khan Structural System, Khan System of Reinforced Concrete, first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Google, Public domain.

<sup>293</sup> While there is evidence Spanish royal engineers used hydraulic construction materials (*materiales hidráulicos*) in some buildings (the lighthouses built during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century throughout the island are prime examples), reinforced concrete buildings were not erected in the island until after 1898.

<sup>294</sup> Ryan Salmon and Meghan Elliott, “The Kahn System of Reinforced Concrete,” *Structure Magazine*, Digital source: <http://www.structuremag.org/Archives/2013-4/C-HistStructures-Salmon-Apr13.pdf>, pp 9-12; 10.

<sup>295</sup> “I hereby accept your contract for furnishing Atlas cement in bags for the entire church, school and rectory buildings, but I will not bind myself to any specific number to be purchased by me for this work. . . . Your Atlas cement furnished by you must stand all standards specifications for Portland cement as adopted by the American Society of Engineers for testing materials.” Letter from John Niggle (alias Juan Niggle, arquitecto contratista y constructor Carretera [sic] parada 5.5) to Fritze, Lundt & Company (April 21, 1924). Atlas Cement “was once one of the world’s largest cement companies, providing cement for the Panama Canal, the Empire State Building and the Hoover Dam.” “Atlas Cement Museum is Dedicated” *The Morning Call*, 7 September 1997.

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effective in so large a building, so he changed to the Romanesque [sic].”<sup>296</sup> This is an interesting comment for it is tempting to assume architectural styles were capriciously selected by designers of the period. In addition to a relationship between aesthetic discourse and function, other considerations – as the size of the building – were contemplated. While there is a tendency to assume style is intimately tied to function, Mr Niggle expressed concern about the intersection between style and building’s scale, in other words, aesthetic aspects.

These and other professionals were admired in their time. They used the Puerta de Tierra Historic District as a laboratory, experimenting with construction materials, structural systems and architectural semantics. The distinguished crop created daring (for the time) designs even though some of their projects’ new concepts were masked behind architectural revivals as if they wish to assure all that, in spite of the novelty and creativity of the technological solutions, the buildings were in fact decorous architectural examples.

The fourth post-1898 stage second subperiod introduced to the Puerta de Tierra Historic District a number of novel architectural typologies. While some have disappeared reflecting modern uses and concerns, they are part of the collective memory. As such, they add a layer of cultural significance to the historic district. They also shed light on acculturation exercises that took place during the period.

### Exporting Architectural Typologies

New construction materials, structural systems, and morphologies empowered the creation of new architectural typologies, some of which materialized in Puerto Rico for the first time in the Puerta de Tierra Historic District. One of these was the automobile showroom and garage.



Figure 66. Oldsmobile Showroom, 1925, Puerta de Tierra Historic District, San Juan de Puerto Rico.<sup>297</sup>

The 1922 Smallwood Building (contributing building) by Albert Khan (See Photograph 020.) and the 1928 Edificio Panzardi (contributing building), present headquarters of the Partido Popular Democrático de Puerto Rico (Block 123 Parcela 09), housed the Ford Motor Company and Hudson-Essex,

<sup>296</sup> The article also informs: “Mr Niggle also built a small church in the Mission style at Miramar, P. R. These Porto Rican buildings [Iglesia de San Agustín and Iglesia del Perpetuo Socorro] have an interest from the fact that they are probably the first ones in which a delicately tinted stone has been embedded directly in concrete without any protection.” “American Marble in Porto Rico,” *Stone* (New York, Volume 39), pp 322-323; 322.

<sup>297</sup> Oldsmobile Showroom, Puerta de Tierra Historic District, San Juan de Puerto Rico, 1925, Google, Public domain. The original building was sited in Block 130 Parcela 04. During the 1950s a second floor was added. The building is considered noncontributing because it has suffered great transformations during the intervening years which have negatively impacted its historic integrity

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respectively.<sup>298</sup> (See Photograph 020.) In 1925, Oldsmobile automobiles were sold in a showroom designed in the Commercial style. (See Figure 66.) The building sited in Avenida Constitución 166 distributed trucks and other vehicles for the National Sales Company (See Photograph 019.) (contributing building) while the 1939 Caribe Motors Corporation was located on Stop 2.5 along Paseo de Covadonga. The alignment of so many venues along Avenida Constitución created an automobile row or automobile corridor, a street sector that contained a large number of auto-related buildings. A new interpretation of the historic thoroughfare emerged as a result: it was now a promenade of sorts lined with what at the time was considered newfangled businesses empowering modernity and luxury (only the extremely rich could buy an automobile). The buildings were specially designed to exhibit an architectural personality quite different from contemporary venues.<sup>299</sup> Showrooms could have one or several floors since they sheltered varied services including: exhibition of cars, administration offices, garage for the models and repair shop. The showroom, where the client would take a look at the cars and the sale would be made, was usually located in the first or second floors, allowing for a user-friendly relationship between seller and buyer. Not surprisingly, the administrative offices, and repair shop were sited in more private areas of the building.

Façades usually include wide spanned glass panes in order to allow the exhibition of the different models in the manner of a shop front. There was another reason for this solution. Wide spanned entrances were needed to allow cars to go into and out of the building. Since many of these structures were expressly built for this use and there was a desire for elegance, the proportions resulting from the unique use are usually present in the rest of the façade composition. In other words, wide spans characterize the structural system. This required the use of metal or reinforced concrete structures, particularly useful in buildings that needed floors that could support the weight of several cars. Not only were both materials extremely appropriate regarding fire concerns, both allowed for wide spans, as well as free plans that could be adapted to various uses. Additionally, reinforced concrete was convenient for building ramps needed to vertically unite the different levels so that cars could be moved between them with ease. (Some showrooms had special elevators.) The skyscraper construction structural system skeletal organization made possible these solutions.

While during the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century American automobile showrooms were relatively humble venues, by the second decade they transformed into elegant and luxurious locales. In California, "The earliest auto showrooms were of wood frame or brick masonry construction, and were modest in their proportions and in their ornamental schemes. They were nevertheless intended to be attractive."<sup>300</sup> While "lavish ornamentation"<sup>301</sup> was *de rigueur*, in the Puerta de Tierra Historic District the architectural style preferred was the "modern" one with a streamlined approach. The building on Avenida Constitución 66 (Block 110 Parcela 15) (contributing building), the outlet of the Federal Sales Company, is an example of the Mediterranean Revival. (See Photograph 019.) Car showrooms, the ultimate Americanism, represented progress and modernity. Notice needs to be taken of the fact that no showroom in the historic district exhibited the baroque and dramatic chandeliers, overwrought metal banisters, and melodramatic staircases *alla* Opera de Paris present in some American examples.

A second novel architectural typology imported from the USA to the Puerta de Tierra Historic District was the private clinic. Two magnificent examples of the type are preserved: the 1930s Instituto Oftálmico de Puerto Rico (contributing building) (Block 110 Parcela 07) and the 1940s Medical Arts Building by

<sup>298</sup> On occasion, individuals erected the building on their own in order to sell cars and, at other times, the automobile manufacturers would be in charge of the design and construction of their outlet.

<sup>299</sup> William Kostura, "Van Ness Auto Row Support Structures A Survey of Automobile-Related Buildings along the Van Ness Avenue Corridor" (MS: San Francisco, 2010), p 11.

<sup>300</sup> *Ibid.*, p 30.

<sup>301</sup> *Ibid.*, p 11.

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Architect Joseph O'Kelly (contributing building) (Block 110 Parcela 01). (See Photograph 019.) Puerta de Tierra attracted such venues for varied reasons. In addition to the district's central location and proximity to the port, the School of Tropical Medicine was within walking distance of both buildings, allowing practicing doctors to have a private practice and a career in teaching at Puerto Rico's only school of medicine (at the time) (School of Tropical Medicine; listed in the National Register of Historic Places).

The urban intersection that took place in the Puerta de Tierra Historic District's development during the first four decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is truly mesmerizing. Iconic buildings, pioneering private medical centers, a university institution, car showrooms, varied commercial venues and domestic districts created a powerful urban amalgam that was a first in Puerto Rico.

**Puerta de Tierra Civic Architecture**

An analysis of Puerta de Tierra civic architecture unavoidably concentrates on the urban dorsal spine along Avenida Constitución, conceived as a showcase of the American way of life. The majestic group experimented with City Beautiful Movement ideals in order to provide three-dimensional shape to acculturation and colonial archetypes. Each building represents a unique pearl forming an outstanding architectural necklace that provides the historic district and San Juan Islet with an enduring air of elegance and sophistication.

The spine starts in front of the Plaza de Colón with the mansard roofed Casino de Puerto Rico (listed in the National Register of Historic Places), a luxurious interpretation of the Spanish social club.<sup>302</sup> Surrounded by lush gardens, the design substituted the dark and introverted old clubs of yesteryear. Its French-inspired architecture reeked of refinement and social superiority. Started in 1911, the work is credited to the local firm Del Valle Zeno Hermanos.



Figure 67. Masonic Lodge (destroyed), Puerta de Tierra Historic District, San Juan de Puerto Rico by Antonin Nechodoma, 1920s.<sup>303</sup>

On the southern side of the Avenida Constitución opposite the Casino, a Cinquecento-inspired stylish school – Escuela José Julián Acosta (listed in the National Register of Historic Places) underscored the right all, poor or rich, had to an education. The palatial Palladian-inspired design associated learning to opulence: the gift of the new government to the people. A formally laid park was sited east of the school

<sup>302</sup> Casinos were a 19<sup>th</sup> century Spanish institution that transformed during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Originally gentlemen's clubs, they slowly evolved to include activities for all members of the family. At this time, some changed their names becoming "country clubs."

<sup>303</sup> Masonic Lodge (partly destroyed), Puerta de Tierra Historic District, San Juan de Puerto Rico by Antonin Nechodoma, 1920s, Google, Public domain.

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and a now gone small street divided this block into two sections. The park allowed for the French inspired train station (Estación Término) to be seen from Avenida Constitución. In 1913, the Classically-influenced Templo Masónico<sup>304</sup> (Gran Logia Soberana Lodge), attributed to Antonin Nechodoma, was constructed east of the park and this road.<sup>305</sup> (See Figure 67.) After a 1926 fire, the building was rehabilitated and transformed into an Art Deco low skyscraper that housed the Comisión Industrial de Puerto Rico (See Photograph 015 and Photograph 025.). (The building presently houses the Government of Puerto Rico's Departamento de la Familia.) The elegant design makes use of the style's typical decoration masterfully adapting it to a tall building. The present entrance portico echoes the Masonic lodge's Classically inspired one. To the east of the Departamento de la Familia, the Cruz Roja Americana was erected during the 1930s. (See Photograph 015.) This Hispanomediterráneo masterpiece is treated as a cube finished with a terracotta tiles parapet. The "Cruz Roja Americana Capítulo de Puerto Rico" legend underscores the emphasis in horizontality. The smooth walls are contrasted to a magnificent portal exhibiting engaged pilasters supporting a decorative terracotta lintel with two finials treated like candelabra that frame a tribune-like balcony that further emphasizes the principal entrance. During the early years of the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the Ramón Mellado Parsons Building was constructed (Block 102 Parcela 03). It is probable Henry Klumb was involved in this superb International Style design that adapts perfectly to the elegant alignment. The horizontal lines are underscored in order to grant the composition an air of modernity with seemingly cantilevered projections obviously inspired by the work of Frank Lloyd Wright, with whom Klumb worked for several years. (See Photograph 015 and Photograph 038.) Reinforced concrete brise soleil elements harmoniously balance the cantilevers creating a daring asymmetrical composition.

On the other side of the street, east of the Casino de Puerto Rico, the Young Men's Christian Association (Block 97 Parcela 01) was built as home for the new-fangled imported American organization promoting egalitarianism. The generous and beautifully decorated first floor loggia invited all to be part of the fraternal atmosphere. Classicist motifs symbolically represented the moral values all young men were expected to develop. While locals would recognize the Casino as Puerto Rico as a symbol of the native bourgeoisie, Americans would associate the YMCA to their culture, an insertion that guaranteed the civic showcase was meaningful to both islanders and newcomers. Framing the YMCA on its east side was the august 1923 Ateneo Puertorriqueño (Block 97 Parcela 02). Its new prominent location reminded all the 19<sup>th</sup> century organization was an intrinsic part of Puerto Rican and its culture. Garbed in Moorish-inspired semantics the building, credited to Francisco Roldán, was a mnemonic artifact of the island's four centuries old past. A favorite architectural subterfuge, the style evoked Spain by means of Islamic architecture. A gift from a benevolent robber baron, serving as public relations for his company, the 1914-1916 Biblioteca Carnegie (listed in the National Register of Historic Places) allowed locals access to a free collection of reading sources under the guise of a Classicist portico that mutely reminded all that the ancestry of the architectural typology went all the way back to the first public libraries in Ancient Greece. Located east of the Ateneo Puertorriqueño, its entrance portico is framed by Colossal Tuscan columns that create a portico to the cubic building. The hip roof covered with green terracotta tiles creatively ends the Classically inspired composition. Another private club, the Casa de España (listed in the National Register of Historic Places), maintained cultural equilibrium in the block by emphasizing the four centuries plus ties of the locals with Spain. The Hispanomediterráneo concoction paired with the Ateneo Puertorriqueño reminded all of the common shared past. Block 97 ends with Parcela 04 where the West Annex to the El Capitolio de Puerto Rico is sited (listed in the National Register of Historic Places). As is the case of the identical East Annex, both were designed by the famed Toro y Ferrer local firm. Dated to 1955, the interior patio was created by distinguished landscape architect Hunter Randolph. Use of the

<sup>304</sup> The Spanish government prohibited Masonic activities fearing they could be interpreted as a religion.

<sup>305</sup> The Food Commission, created by law in 1917, acquired the building some time later and after two years the Archivo Histórico de Puerto Rico was moved here.

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same marble as the El Capitolio de Puerto Rico guaranteed architectural compatibility respecting the historic integrity of the main building, at a time when no such standard existed. The marble brise soleil covering the rectangular buildings on both sides provide a sense of restrained decoration (Block 97 Parcela 05 and Block 99 Parcela 01) to the introverted buildings that have interior courtyards to provide light and natural ventilation if needed.

The 1929 El Capitolio de Puerto Rico (listed in the National Register of Historic Places), east of the West Annex, is an example of the USA's paradigmatic architectural typology (Block 98 Parcela 01).<sup>306</sup> Anchoring the Avenida Constitución the Classicist inspired morphology (via McKim, Mead and White) served as mnemonic device bringing Greek and Roman republican political tenements to mind. Its white marble sumptuous composition, imposing Colossal orders, dramatic dome and splendid staircase remind all that power – as was supposedly the case in democratic Greece and Republican Rome – emanates from the people. The dramatic staircase was part of a spatial axis that continued on the other side of Avenida Constitución in the form of an exedra anchored by a Classically inspired sculpture (*Victory*). The exedra formed a balcony from where the port could be seen. (See Photograph 006.)

The wide site of the El Capitolio de Puerto Rico and its two annexes is framed on the south side of the Avenida Constitución by a garden of which the exedra mentioned above is part (Block 103 Parcela 01). The composition authoritatively dealt with the difference in height that existed between Avenida Constitución and Paseo de Covadonga. Another exedra exists west of the one in front of the El Capitolio de Puerto Rico, on level with the Paseo de Covadonga. A balustrade with marble lions capped this space. It is possible the exedras are urban and architectural remnants of the rest stops included in the 19<sup>th</sup> century Paseo de Covadonga (Paseo de Puerta de Tierra) promenade. Pergolas and lush vegetation complete the composition.

The City Beautiful Movement underscored the relevance of urban parks like this one that also framed the southern side of the building housing the two legislative bodies (Senado and Cámara de Representantes). The original plan by Bennett, Parsons and Frost anchored the axis formed by the exedra and its sculpture, majestic south staircase, domed central hall and north entrance with a square on the other side of the at the time proposed Ocean Boulevard (present day Avenida Muñoz Rivera). The Plaza de San Juan Bautista, constructed during the 1968-1970, anchors this powerful axis on the north side elegantly floating above the Atlantic Ocean.

<sup>306</sup> This uniquely American architectural typology is profoundly inspired by Platonic concepts regarding the balance of powers. While the two bodies (Senate and House of Representatives) have are different size (in terms of members), this difference is not expressed on the outside in order to emphasize the theoretical political concept of two houses having equal power. The central dome with its two wings organization was inspired by 19<sup>th</sup> century German projects designed by Carl Langhans and Leo von Klenze. Importation of the capitol architectural typology to the Puerta de Tierra Historic District is iconic of the desire to create three-dimensional symbols of the federal government in order to underscore the post-1898 colonial relationship. The Spanish royal engineers who produced many 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings in the island were profoundly versant on Classical semantics. Some of their buildings explore Neoclassical and Neo-Cinquecento ideals creating works of great beauty that stood as symbols of the Crown. Nevertheless, there are significant differences between the Capitolio de Puerto Rico and the Palacio de Santa Catalina, Real Hacienda and Alcaldía de San Juan Buildings, the most significant examples of this trend. All existed within the tight and congested urban fabric. Although two sides of the Real Hacienda are free the building is not sited on an independent block. The Capitolio de Puerto Rico not only sits in splendid isolation, but also has two equally imposing façades. Although monumentality is a goal of the designers of all these buildings, it is achieved in different manners in the Old San Juan and the Puerta de Tierra Historic District examples. The fact that the Capitolio de Puerto Rico is an isolated architectural artifact makes possible the dramatic staircase that provides entrance, adding a touch of splendor and an air of Roman grandeur. The use of a dome is a histrionic touch as are the Colossal architectural orders and the acres of white marble covering the building. Nothing like this ceremonial, theatrical Classical temple look alike had ever been created in the island. (Nothing like it would be erected again. Ever.) Of interest in terms of the spatial organization of the group of buildings facing the Avenida Constitución is that the Capitolio de Puerto Rico is the only building in the Puerta de Tierra civic showcase that has two principal façades, one facing the above-mentioned thoroughfare and a second one facing the Avenida Muñoz Rivera.

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Education was of paramount importance for the social and cultural agenda devised after 1898. All levels – from primary school to university – were represented in the Puerta de Tierra Historic District. Built in 1936, the School of Tropical Medicine (listed in the National Register of Historic Places), attributed to Rafael Carmoega, served as both university institution and research center (Block 100 Parcela 01). Carmoega, a USA educated architect, was a virtuoso when it came to his use of varied architectural styles, was especially adept at using the Mediterranean Revival modes. City Beautiful Movement ideals, encased in Mediterranean Revival (Hispanomediterráneo) forms imported not from Spain but from the USA, lend an exotic air to the School of Tropical Medicine.

Joseph O’Kelly, one of Rafael Carmoega’s assistants, used the expression in the 1940 Puerto Rico Medical Arts Building (Block 110 Parcela 01) sited on the south side of Avenida Constitución in front of the Escuela. (See Photograph 018.) Decorating the novel typology of a private clinic, Mediterranean-inspired decoration (principally of Renaissance extraction) is lovingly sprinkled over the sober cubic composition. In keeping with the characteristics associated to this aesthetic rhizome smooth plastered walls contrast the decorated frames surrounding all openings.

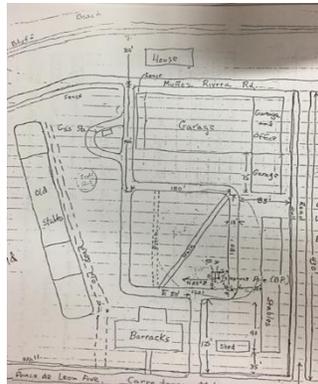


Figure 68. Drawing of the Puerto Rico National Guard building Archaeological Site by Dr Irving Rouse, Puerta de Tierra Historic District, San Juan de Puerto Rico, first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>307</sup>

The Classic Revival Puerto Rico National Guard Building shares the School of Tropical Medicine block, bordering this building on its east side (Block 100 Parcela 02). A 1937 photograph in the *Álbum de Oro de Puerto Rico* depicts a three floors high building with two cornices. At some unknown date other sections, as well as the crenellated towers, were added. In spite of its liberal history regarding construction dates, the building is an extremely significant one and it is a contributing property of the Puerta de Tierra Historic District on several counts. First and most obvious, its uncommon architectural style intimately ties the building to its principal function: serve as military dwelling (National Register of Historic Places Criterion C) for the only local defensive group in the island (the Puerto Rico National Guard). There are only three buildings in the district that use Castellated aesthetics. In this particular case, the use is meant to elicit a sensorial memory connection to the castle architectural typology and its implied martial power. Second, parts of the building can be dated to the 19<sup>th</sup> century (if not earlier) when it was used by the Spanish military (National Register of Historic Places Criterion B) as barracks and stables. This layer of significance is tied to the building being part of the Spanish defensive system for San Juan Islet. Third, the building is associated to eminent archaeologist Dr Irving Rouse’s first scientific research ever on prehistoric archaeological sites in the Puerto Rican archipelago. It was here he started numbering the sites he discovered by means of his immensely relevant work. Dr Rouse labeled the

<sup>307</sup> Drawing of the Puerto Rico National Guard building Archaeological Site by Dr Irving Rouse, first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Puerto Rico State Historic Preservation Office Collection.

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prehistoric site, a section of which still exists under the Puerto Rico National Guard Building, PR-01<sup>308</sup> (Puerto Rico Archaeological Site Number 1). A drawing preserved at the Puerto Rico State Historic Preservation Office, drawn by the renowned archaeologist, informally depicts the relationship of the prehistoric site to the building. (See Figure 68.)

The block 108, east of Block 100, includes the US Department of Commerce Weather Bureau building, erected in 1930 following the design of Albert B Nicholson (Block 118 Parcela 01). (See Photograph 014.) The elegant building is treated as a self-contained block crowned by a terracotta tile covered hip roof that emphasizes its “Mediterranean” character. Revivalist decoration inspired in the Spanish Plateresque and Churrigueresque highlights the main entrance. Glazed color terracotta panels both decorate and educate in similar way as done in the US Customs Building in Old San Juan. Iconographical detailing includes two gigantic eagles on top of two engaged pier-like elements that frame the arched entryway and its narrow barrel vault. These elements frame the name of the building – US Department of Commerce Weather Bureau – that appears in beautiful architectural script. The roundels crowning the vertical components, arched entryway and the barrel vault are inspired in Italian Renaissance motifs. Light-colored smooth walls highlighted by beautiful glazed motifs and terracotta tiled roofs characterize the style used for government buildings, a complete novelty in the island until this time. The Avenida Constitución and Avenida Muñoz Rivera façades are completely different in keeping with Architect Nicholson’s eclectic design approach. Like most buildings in the Puerta de Tierra Historic District spine it sits in elegant isolation surrounded by areas of greenery. This adds a layer of historic significance to the property for, part of PR-01 Archaeological Site mentioned when analyzing the Puerto Rico National Guard Building, extends to this lot. In recent years, the building has been used as the Puerto Rico National Guard’s Museum. On the east side of the US Department of Commerce Weather Bureau building is another palatial school, the Escuela José Celso Barbosa (listed in the National Register of Historic Places) (Block 118 Parcela 02) constructed in 1927. An open loggia, framed by majestic Colossal Tuscan columns, dignifies the façade associating it to Ancient Greece and Rome. As was the case with all the Puerta de Tierra Historic District’s schools, the building was constructed of reinforced concrete. Its U-shaped floor plan guarantees cross ventilation and natural illumination, considered key factors in terms of this architectural typology. The material, as well as architectural style, provided the building with a powerful sense of decorum silently commanding attention to the activity it sheltered.

The two remaining buildings in the block are part of the Asilo de Ancianos de Nuestra Señora de la Providencia District (Block 118 Parcela 03 and Parcela 04). (See Photograph 011.) Since 1913, members of the same family – Architect Jose Lázaro Costa, Engineer Carlos E Lázaro García, Engineer Carlos A Lázaro León and Architect Enrique J Lázaro León – have been involved in the design of the precinct, including the 1970s expansion. The buildings exhibit distinct characteristics of their construction period: the earlier one is a magnificent eclectic combination of architectural expressions. While the exterior exhibits Neo-Mesopotamian and Decorated Gothic influences the interior chapel is a most creative Neo-Gothic interpretation. (See Photograph 012.) The ribbed quadripartite vaults, Tau floor plan and magnificent stained glass windows evidence a magisterial use of historicist inspiration. The later building’s use of reinforced concrete brise soleil elements evidences the composition’s 1960s-1970s Brutalist influence.

<sup>308</sup> Another prehistoric archeological site has been found in San Juan Islet under the Iglesia de San José in Old San Juan. This site is at times confusingly also labeled PR-01.

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Figure 69. Rose window, Iglesia de San Agustín,  
Puerta de Tierra Historic District, San Juan de Puerto Rico, 2015. APC

Block 119 is occupied by the Iglesia de San Agustín precinct constructed in 1915 (listed in the National Register of Historic Places). Designed by American architect John Niggle, the building reflects Neo-Romanesque and Neo-Gothic inspiration although, as mentioned before, an article on the building published at the time of its construction describes the designer first tried the Mission Style. The vast temple with its dramatic barrel vault, magnificent stained glass windows program and rose window gracing its façade contrasted dramatically with traditional churches in Old San Juan. (See Figure 69.) A contributing property not included in the Iglesia de San Agustín NRHP nomination is the Notre Dame Industrial School across Avenida Constitución (known as La Costura Building) (Block 128 Parcela 03). A tall reinforced concrete building using the skyscraper structural system provided shelter for parochial activities. As mentioned, the name refers to the educational activities created by the Redemptorists so that women from the neighboring sectors could learn to sew and, thus, earn a living.

Commercial and residential buildings are found in the next two blocks (Block 120 and Block 121) along the central spine. As mentioned, the Ford automobile concessionary was located here as well as several tenement house buildings (Block 120 Parcela 05 and Block 123 Parcela 11). (See Photograph 020, Photograph 029 and Photograph 030.) Yet another palatial school, the 1912 Escuela Brumbaugh, occupies Block 122. One of the Mediterranean Revival rhizomes, the Mission Style, inspired the designer. The next block includes the elegant Hudson-Essex automobile concessionary now housing the Partido Popular Democrático headquarters (Block 123 Parcela 09).

The US Navy Radio Station precinct (Block 124 Parcela 01) was part of the extensive US Navy base that was located in Puerta de Tierra and Isla Grande. (See Photograph 024.) The land originally belonged to the Spanish government, during World War I a radio station was sited in this lot. This particular district was constructed during the 1940s for administrative and residential uses. The lush gardens lovingly frame the Art Deco buildings organized in a very academic manner. The site is associated to both World Wars, as well as to other conflicts the USA was involved during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The pristine buildings exhibit decorations and forms characteristic of the style. Associated to the US Engineer Office building on Avenida Fernández Juncos (Block 170 Parcela 10), the elegant expressions incorporate Art Deco decoration embracing modernity as the armed forces theoretical architectural stance. (See Photograph 023.) The block is a contributing district of the Puerta de Tierra Historic District while the US Engineer Office building is a contributing building. Both are incomparable examples of the use of the Art Deco, as well as on the basis of their uniqueness (as a district and building related to a USA Navy base).

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Figure 70. A Study of a Plan for Muñoz Rivera Park at San Juan, Puerta de Tierra Historic District, San Juan de Puerto Rico, Bennett, Parsons & Frost, March 1925.<sup>309</sup>

Puerta de Tierra's unique urban spine showcase ends (along the north side of Avenida Constitución) at the Parque Muñoz Rivera (listed in the National Register of Historic Places). During the 1960s, the Supreme Court Building (listed in the National Register of Historic Places) was built from 1955-1956 on its easternmost side. Designed by the famed local firm of Toro y Ferrer, the building representing the third government branch is the first encountered when entering San Juan Islet through its principal entrance. A 1925 masterplan by Bennett, Parsons & Frost proposed the area north of the Parque was to be a recreational sector with a thoroughfare, labeled "Ocean Boulevard,"<sup>310</sup> bordering its north side. (See Figure 70.) This scheme includes several noteworthy ideas. First, the proposal transformed the 18<sup>th</sup> century Batería del Escambrón (listed in the National Register of Historic Places) in one of a series of sites that could be visited by car. While the 1932 Spanish Revival Parque Sixto Escobar is depicted in the drawing; the 1939 Moderne/Art Deco Hotel Normandie (listed in the National Register of Historic Places) is not. (See Photograph 026.)

Only the French inspired 1932 beach-cum-nightclub known as El Escambrón and a proposed Ocean Boulevard that would divide the parks were part of the 1925 masterplan. However the Ocean Boulevard route and San Juan from Condado continued to be the Dos Hermanos Bridge. Had this road been constructed the Laguna del Condado would have been divided into several sectors by the two bridges. The idea seems to have been to completely modernize San Juan Islet in keeping with the communications agenda adding a third entrance-exit to facilitate circulation of traffic. In late 1930s, another mayor transformation to the masterplan took place when the Hotel Caribe Hilton was constructed on the easternmost proposed beach area.

<sup>309</sup> "A Study of a Plan for Muñoz Rivera Park at San Juan," March 1925 by Bennett, Parsons & Frost, Google, Public domain.

<sup>310</sup> Note needs to be taken of the fact that the 1920s Bennett, Parsons & Frost plans for the Capitolio de Puerto Rico gardens and present day Plaza de San Juan Bautista include a "Proposed Boulevard" where Avenida Muñoz Rivera is presently located.

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Figure 71. Puerta de Tierra Historic District, San Juan de Puerto Rico (from San Agustín Church), 1910s-1920s.<sup>311</sup>

Of all the civic buildings along the northern border of Avenida Constitución, only the El Capitolio de Puerto Rico and USA Weather buildings have formal façades facing the 1927-1929 Avenida Muñoz Rivera. Even though there were plans for a thoroughfare bordering the northern cliffs as early as the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the rest of the buildings treat their north sides as their backs. In some cases – like the Casa de España and the Ateneo Puertorriqueño – the road runs at a much higher level. Aesthetically this semi-buried condition underscores interest in these façades. El El Capitolio de Puerto Rico’s Avenida Muñoz Rivera façade includes a magnificent set of steps and is treated in similar manner as the one facing Avenida Constitución. Two transformations took place that altered the 1920s organization. First, during the 1960s, the Plaza de San Juan Bautista (Block 172 Parcela 02) was inserted across the Avenida Muñoz Rivera in a manner similar as to the plaza across Avenida Constitución. As mentioned, the 1925 Bennett, Parsons & Frost landscape masterplan included such a space. (See Figure 63 and Figure 64.) A powerful modern interpretation of a haranguing St John (patron saint of San Juan) anchors the simple rectangle. In addition to serving as plaza, the space allows interested persons to access the beach and the preserved remnants of the third line (Fortín de Tajamar). Some years ago additional decoration representing Puerto Rico’s municipalities was added, a centuries old bid to remind the archipelago has other cities.

During the 1990s, a marble esplanade-cum-plaza was added in front of the north façade of the El Capitolio de Puerto Rico at level with Avenida Muñoz Rivera. As a result, the El Capitolio de Puerto Rico north façade is no longer lower than this thoroughfare gaining both prominence and elegance. The final effect is that both public squares seem to extend and form one unit with the Plaza de San Juan Bautista enhancing the building and creating a terminus for Avenida Muñoz Rivera and the so-called Paseo de Puerta de Tierra along the northern side of the road. A new interpretation of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Paseo (not to be confused with the 19<sup>th</sup> century one) brings to mind the *alameda* proposed and never carried out in Spanish times. While noncontributing due to its recent date (2016), the Paseo is a mnemonic instrument of centuries old ideas providing a place for walkers, joggers and bicycle riders to safely enjoy the unique panorama and seascape.

The Puerta de Tierra Historic District’s central civic spine is still to this day Puerto Rico’s “White City,” an elegant and splendid urban sector dedicated to the common folk. Traversing the long islet and the historic Spanish defense lines, while entering or leaving the almost five centuries old urban core, the alignment serves as physical reminder of the dramatic transformations Puerto Ricans experienced after 1898

<sup>311</sup> Puerta de Tierra Historic District, San Juan de Puerto Rico from the San Agustín Church roof, 1910s-1920s, Google, Public domain. Of interest are: a *ranchón* and several tenement house buildings (foreground), the Escuela Brumbaugh (middle ground), and train tracks (bordering the present day Avenida Constitución). The image shows what the northern coast looked like prior to the construction of the Avenida Muñoz Rivera.

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providing, by means of architectural avant-gardism, the suggestion great goals were within the citizens' reach. The place of memories that so intimately relates to the urban nucleus is also one of multiple novel meanings. The jewel-like collection silently speaks of new opportunities, unique goals and unlimited ambitions. Designed to impress, the buildings seem to promise a new dynamic future within the reach of every citizen. The collection transformed the Puerta de Tierra Historic District into a unique sector within the archipelago, providing lasting inspiration. One of the most enduring impacts to our land is found in this unique urban spine. Masterfully decorating the entrance-exit to the capital city, the Puerta de Tierra Historic District's highlighted important civic, cultural and political transformations, providing three-dimensional form to new ideals. Most importantly, the symbols of power shifted from the old historic core to a "new" territory. With time, only the executive branch would maintain its connection with Old San Juan for both the legislative and judicial buildings would be located in Puerta de Tierra.

### **Puerta de Tierra Ecclesiastical Architecture**

For centuries, only the Catholic Church was allowed to have a legal presence in Puerto Rico. One of the most formidable transformations experienced after 1898 was acceptance of other religions, a situation that resulted in several contributing properties of the Puerta de Tierra Historic District. Two<sup>312</sup> examples – the 1916 Iglesia Evangélica Luterana San Pablo and the 1920s Primera Iglesia Bautista de Puerta de Tierra – paradigmatically evidence a new religious outlook based on a plurality of faiths. Co-existence of varied Christian churches in the district was a first in the island, showcasing post-1898 religious liberality.

The design approach mirrors the Iglesia de San Agustín incorporation of non-Classical semantics, adapting an array of expressions that range from Neo-Gothic to Neo-Paleochristian to Neo-Byzantine ones. Following the period's tendencies, these historicisms were used to infuse buildings with an air of spirituality and holiness. It is not surprising Medievalisms were used. Since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the work of British writers and architects Pugin and Ruskin promoted them as the perfect source of inspiration for modern churches.

#### *Asilo de Ancianos Nuestra Señora de la Providencia Chapel*

While located inside the elegant Asilo de Ancianos de Nuestra Señora de la Providencia, the institution's chapel merits distinction as one of the most beautiful and poetic examples in the Puerta de Tierra Historic District distinguished roster of ecclesiastical buildings (Block 118 Parcela 04). (See Figure 17.) Perfectly adapted to its function as chapel of an institution sheltering elders, the chapel has multiple entrances in order to allow for uninterrupted traffic flow from different places within the building. The Chapel's Tau floor plan, inspired by Italian Trecento precedents, underscores accessibility and spatial interaction. The reinforced concrete pointed arches and ribs of Gothic inspiration create a series of quadripartite bays that serve as mnemonic architectural elements underscoring spirituality. The stupendous stained glass windows inventory depict a complex iconographical program that allows for colored rays of sun to highlight the interior validating Gothic interpretation of light as poetic presence of the divinity.

#### *Iglesia de San Agustín*

<sup>312</sup> This number does not include the Iglesia de San Agustín since the property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The precinct is interpreted in this text because additional material was found during research activities leading to this nomination. There is an additional ecclesiastical example on Calle Padre Hoff influenced by the Mediterranean Revival style (Block 128 Parcela 09). While the 1938 Iglesia Metodista Reverendo Pedro Rosa Viruet is a contributing property, it is not analyzed in this section that concentrates on the oldest and premier architectural examples.

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As was the case with the Asilo de Ancianos Nuestra Señora de la Providencia, the history of de Church, School, Convent and Parish House of San Agustín (listed in the National Register of Historic Places) starts during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Sited within a precinct that includes: (i) an imposing church, (ii) the Convento de Santa Teresa housing the sisters of the Notre Dame Congregation; (iii) the Colegio de San Agustín (parochial school); (iv) the parochial house; and (v) the 1929 Notre Dame Industrial School, known as La Costura (on the south side of the Avenida Constitución),<sup>313</sup> the center is located on an lot gifted by the Spanish government. As mentioned, until its creation the Puerta de Tierra parish belonged to the Parroquia de San Francisco inside the defensive perimeter.<sup>314</sup> By 1886, two unimpressive wooden buildings existed, sheltering a limbo-like existence that transformed during the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century when members of the American Redemptorist Order assumed management.<sup>315</sup> Their impressive charity work within the Puerta de Tierra Historic District is described in the following manner:

*Estos primeros redentoristas se remangaron y se metieron entre la gente con todas aquellas epidemias, fuegos y pobreza. Se instituyó el "Programa de la leche" para alimentarse [sic]. Los sacerdotes compraban la leche y la repartían entre las madres, quienes la venían a buscar. El convento se conoció como el edificio de La Costura, habilitado con máquinas de coser y fue donde se crearon los mejores pañuelos. Eso duró hasta los 60. Otro elemento fue la educación, inaugurada el 9 de septiembre de 1915, con sobre 700 muchachitos descalzos para obtener clases y comida gratuita.*<sup>316</sup>

The Puerta de Tierra Historic District slums were the perfect ground for Redemptorists lay and religious work making possible, as early as 1912, for the precinct to be considered a Christian vortex dedicated to finding solutions on all fronts for the Others. This help comprised taking care of their spiritual and physical needs, as well as children's education and the creation of job opportunities for women.

Construction of the church started in 1914, a year after the work in the school was initiated. A professional magazine described the precinct designer, Architect John Niggle,<sup>317</sup> in the following manner:

<sup>313</sup> The now gone one room wooden school located in the Salsipuedes slum was also part of the complex.

<sup>314</sup> Iñigo Abbad y Lasierra, *Historia geográfica, civil y natural de la isla de San Juan Bautista de Puerto-Rico* (Madrid: Carlos Bailly-Bailliere, 1866), p 267.

<sup>315</sup> Having served as American military chaplains during the Spanish-American War and entrusted since their foundation with the caring of society's Others, it made sense to invite this order to work in one of Puerto Rico's poorest sectors. Additionally, their work with Native Americans made the order particularly suitable. By the *fin-de-siècle* Redemptorists' dedication to this sector of society was unquestioned. While in Canada they worked among the Canadian natives and by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century they were in charge of several parochial centers in the South.

<sup>316</sup> Translation: "The first Redemptorists worked in close contact with sicknesses of all kinds, fires and misery. The Milk Program was established. Priests bought milk and gave it to needy mothers. The convent was known as La Costura and it had sewing machines and great handkerchiefs were produced here. That kind of work was carried out until the 1960s. Another contribution was education started on 9 September 1915 with 700 kids without shoes who got free education and food." Father Miguel García. Quoted in: Jorge Rodríguez, "Iconos arquitectónicos de Puerta de Tierra celebran centenario" *El Nuevo Día* (San Juan de Puerto Rico, 18 de diciembre de 2014), p 28.

Active involvement with the community was a 19<sup>th</sup> century ideal first sponsored by Marcus A W Pugin and John Ruskin.

<sup>317</sup> According to some local sources Antonio M Martínez and José Lázaro Costa, principal partners of the Martínez y Lázaro firm, were the designers of the church. Others insist Father Joseph Schneider, a "German" priest, was the author. (Father Joseph Schenider is also credited with the iconographical program of the church's amazing stained glass windows that, supposedly, were made in "Germany.") Father Miguel García, personal communication, 25 May 2014. These attributions are incorrect given the fact the "Chronica Domus ad S Augustini, Puerta de Tierra, Porto Rico, 13 February 1913 to 31 December 1923," chronicles Niggle's participation on a day-to-day basis. In the volume covering the period from 13 February 1913 to 31 December 1923 one finds entries describing a group of workers who came from New York and take charge of all thr project relevant construction positions. On 12 March 1914, the following notation was inserted: "Today the first worker for the new building arrived in San Juan from New York – Jerome Bandivilli [sic]. He is to arrange matters for the architect and others who will arrive next week." Apparently, the newcomer had no luck, a situation that is reflected in the 20-21 March 1914 entry of the "Chronica": "Spent in hunting up a house for Mr Niggle. Good houses can scarcely be found." It is known that Niggle arrived New York aboard the vessel *Coamo* on 19 October 1914, leaving San Juan on 14 October 1914. "List or Manifest, of Alien

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[A]rchitect, contractor and builder [who] several years ago . . . took up practice in San Juan, Puerto Rico, [where] “[h]e designed a large group of buildings in that city for the Catholics, consisting of a church, school, rectory and convent. These were erected in Puerta-de-Tierra, Carretara [sic] in 1914-1915, at a cost of a quarter of a million dollars.<sup>318</sup>

Although there is limited information on Niggle, he paradigmatically represents American designers who profoundly impacted the Puerta de Tierra Historic District. His is not a household name, however, he was distinguished by an avant-garde approach to the art. His treatment of reinforced concrete finishes in the Iglesia de San Agustín was considered quite novel by a professional journal:

Naturally considerable ornamentation was required and the selection of a proper stone for trim was important. Mr Niggle had worked in Georgia marble, and he made up his mind that this would suit his purpose, used in the way he intended. He buried a piece of the marble in concrete and left it embedded for three weeks. When taken out and brushed off, it was just as white as before, not a stain penetrating the stone. This was the material selected, and ten or twelve carloads of marble, all cut in the finishing plant in Georgia, were shipped by sailing vessel from Savannah. The Georgia marble was used for the door and window jambs, the window traceries and the mullions; belt courses, corbels, etc. The backs and beds of the stones were not painted or protected in any way. The stones were simply placed in the forms and the concrete poured around them. Mr Niggle’s confidence in marble was fully justified, as the buildings are today white and absolutely free from stains. This non-staining quality of Georgia marble is generally recognized. The government specifications for the post office at Morristown, NJ, finished in 1917, called for the coating with waterproof paint of the backs, beds and joints of all stone, “except Georgia marble.”<sup>319</sup>

Reinforced concrete was a relatively new material at the time and there were concerns regarding its behavior in a tropical environment, particularly when it interacted with other materials, such as marble. Another example of Niggle’s vanguard’s approach is evidenced in the use of trussed concrete elements, supplied by the Trussed Concrete Steel Company in Youngstown, Ohio.

The busy contractor well knows the desirability of purchasing all materials of a similar type from one company and in this way avoids the expense and delays of handling a number of shipments from various sources. By ordering from one company all his material reaches him in one car when he needs it, saving also in freight and handling.

When it comes to reinforcing steel, metal lath, studs, corner beads and fireproofing materials, the service given by the Trussed Concrete Steel Company, Youngstown, Ohio, is conspicuous. Their lines of products are the result of many years of experience and development. Each product has been perfected for its particular use so as to secure ample strength without the waste of an ounce of material.<sup>320</sup>

(Even though on the forefront of architectural issues Niggle could make mistakes regarding architectural issues. On 22 April 1914 he wrote a letter to Rev Joseph A Schneider, Baltimore’s father provincial: “We

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Passengers from US Insular Possessions, for the United States Immigration Officer at Continental Port of Arrival, Elis Island – Free Port of New York Passengers Records Search.” Digital source: [http://ellisland.or/search/Format\\_PassRec.asp?ID=100527110223&BN=P00052-7&sship=Coamo&lineshipid=2-45](http://ellisland.or/search/Format_PassRec.asp?ID=100527110223&BN=P00052-7&sship=Coamo&lineshipid=2-45). Under Niggle’s “Nationality” and “Race or People” quotes appear. This may be interpreted as quote marks signifying he had the same nationality of the person listed before him, Adolf Friedericks, a German. Information under “Time of Entering Insular Possession” and “Country where Alien Entered Insular Possession” are missing or scratched. We do know however, Niggle was 32 years of age at this time. Since he appears in the list of aliens, he was not a citizen of the USA at this time. I thank Ms Gloria M Ortiz for her research assistance.

<sup>318</sup> “American Marble in Porto Rico,” *Stone* (New York, Volume 39), pp 322-323: 322.

<sup>319</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>320</sup> “Reinforcement, Metal Lath, Studs, Corner Beads, Etc,” *The American Contractor* (Volume 36, Saturday June 5, 1915), p 119.

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are building a shoot from the ocean to our place to pull up the sand.”<sup>321</sup> As known, sea sand should not be used in reinforced concrete due to its high saline content.)

As was the case of the Khan Brothers, who designed the Ford automobile showroom (Smallwood Building), Purdy and Henderson (YMCA Building), Clarke, Howe and Homer (Escuela José Julián Acosta), among others, enterprising designers were not afraid to work in a foreign land and experiment with new construction materials and techniques. Niggle’s case also allows for an analysis of the “Us” (Americans) vs the “Others” (islanders) not so silent conflict. “I think everything is going fine and the natives have learned to like us.”<sup>322</sup> This apartheid stance permeated many activities in post-1898 Puerto Rico.<sup>323</sup> It is possible this ambivalent attitude towards the locals affected Niggle’s professionalism. Self-described “Honest John Niggle” was summarily separated from work by means of a 25 November 1914 letter from Joseph A Schneider.<sup>324</sup> The document elegantly accuses him of stealing church funds.

As per the period aesthetics, the church design includes multiple references to varied historic styles creating a striking contrast to the relatively simple solution used in the adjoining school and parochial house. A frieze formed by a blind arcade divides the interior of the church into two principal levels: the arcaded sides and the barrel vault that includes a clerestory in the Palladian (or thermal windows) manner. While the first elements belong to Early Christian and Neo-Romanesque models, the barrel vault has Neo-Cinquecento precedents.<sup>325</sup> In the exterior, Niggle abandons these stylistic influences and

<sup>321</sup> The material was so new in the island cement sacks had to be imported from the mainland. At one point, Niggle wrote: “I have made a contract with Fritz . . . and Company for \$1.34 per four bags of Atlas cement as you know it is as cheap as getting it up north.” At the time, the Atlas Cement Company was the world’s largest cement company. It prided itself in having supplied the material to famous projects such as the Empire State Building, Rockefeller Center and Holland Tunnel all in New York City.

<sup>322</sup> “Letter from Architect Niggle to Rev Joseph A Schneider,” 22 April 1914, San Agustín Parish Archives, Puerta de Tierra Historic District, San Juan, Puerto Rico.

<sup>323</sup> The article “Our Duty in Porto Rico” by Brigadier General Guy V Henry, who served as governor of the island, exemplifies this mentality. While by means of his introduction the governor informs islanders: “really are an amiable and intelligent people.,” later in the same article, he describes them as “childlike.” Henry, Guy V, “Our Duty in Porto Rico,” *Munsey’s Magazine*, Volume 22, November 1899, 233-249; 233 and 236.

<sup>324</sup> “Letter from Joseph Schneider to John Niggle, 25 November 1914,” San Agustín Parish Archives Puerta de Tierra, San Juan, Puerto Rico. The full text of the letter reads as follows: “Dear Sir, Having found a number of discrepancies and mistakes in the payroll and statements sent to us I am sending Rev A[ugustus] Dooper to Porto Rico as my personal representative with full authority to make and investigation into all accounts, agreements, contracts etc. and into all the operations of the buildings so far constructed or to be constructed in San Juan, Porto Rico for the Redemptorists Fathers. You will, therefore, turn over to him all bills and accounts and receipts and expenditures, all accounts of payrolls, or all contracts or agreements of any kind, which have been contracted to date, and a list of all the contracts still to be given out. You will also give him a full set of plans and details for each and every building and contract that has been let or is to be let and the various estimates, which were received for every contract. Furthermore, you will kindly extend to him every courtesy and facility for making a full report on the condition of the work done and of the balance still to be done. I have given to Rev A Dooper full authority to act for me . . . any orders issued by him are to be complied with immediately and are to be considered and to have the same force as though issued by me personally. Any infraction of these orders will be considered as sufficient reason for terminating the contract without further notice as constituting a breach of contract as provided for in the contract under the contract reading: “That said John Niggle shall faithfully, honestly perform the duties as the owner’s representative, architect, builder and superintendent and will guard the interests of his employers in every way.” [Underlining appears in historic document.] Trusting that the investigation will be favorable, I remain, Yours truly, Joseph A Schenider CSSR.” Niggle’s reply is not preserved but Dr Patrick Hayes, Redemptorist Archivist of the Baltimore Province, explained the architect answered by means of a “cowering letter” dated 5 December 1914 in which he defended himself by stating: “He had all sort of calumnies said against him but that he was indeed true to his word.” Personal communication to Ms Gloria M Ortiz, Dr Patrick Hayes, the Redemptorist Archivist of the Baltimore Province, November 2014. In spite of his protestations, Niggle was separated from the work and replaced by Foreman Walter Thompson.

<sup>325</sup> Use of a barrel vault with an inserted clerestory was used in San Juan Islet previously. The Iglesia de San José, Catedral de San Juan Bautista, Iglesia de las Carmelitas and Iglesia de San Francisco and Iglesia de Santa Ana all sport similar vaults. They were, however, historic solutions and not architectural revival adaptations.

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fully embraces the Neo-Gothic via French architect and theorist Eugène E Viollet-le-Duc.<sup>326</sup> The architectural style French and British writers had equated with rationality, was used around the globe at this time. A City Beautiful Movement characteristic is the intersection of varied historicisms in one design. At the Iglesia of San Agustín this collusion includes elements from both the Gothic and Romanesque traditions. In addition, the pointed mansard-like roofs that crown the westwork towers pay homage to 19<sup>th</sup> century ideas espoused by Pugin, Ruskin and Viollet-le-Duc,<sup>327</sup> as well as to the High Victorian Gothic and Second Empire Baroque ideals. The blind semicircular arcades used as decoration, in turn, owe stylistic allegiance to the Romanesque and its varied 19<sup>th</sup> century revivals including the German *Rundbogenstil*. Stylistic intersections, the hallmark of the City Beautiful Movement, made possible the emergence of new architectural forms and shapes.<sup>328</sup>

Much attention was given to the interior of all the Puerta de Tierra Historic District ecclesiastical buildings as if to clearly proclaim their role as “modern” examples, the opposite of the cramped core’s old, musty, dark temples of yesteryear. Magnificent stained-glass windows visually explain the mysteries of the faith adding beauty to the interiors.<sup>329</sup> In most examples, the windows act as architectural protagonists filtering light in a magnificent and eloquent manner reminding us of Abbot Suger’s<sup>330</sup> principles regarding natural light representing the divinity. Of special impact is Iglesia de San Agustín’s rose window where the city of San Juan<sup>331</sup> (represented by St John’s lamb depicted in the same pose it appears in the city and island’s seal) is surrounded by rays of divine light and a circle of seraphims, the six-winged beings closest to God.<sup>332</sup> (See Figure 69.) Located at the highest part of the church, the spectacular window is a

<sup>326</sup> During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Neo-Gothic was used for churches and other architectural typologies taking, in a sense, the style away from its medieval spiritual roots. The John Mead Howells and Raymond Hood’s Tribune Tower in Chicago (1923-1925) is just one example evidencing this synergy. It is a fact the Neo-Gothic was used by some designers during this period in the same manner as the Spanish Revival: as an alternative to streamlined, minimalist Modernism. It is quite understandable the semantics be used in a church for the historic period not only produced the magnificent European examples but Viollet-le-Duc, Ruskin and Pugin made it the only alternative for rational designers by means of their influential 19<sup>th</sup> century writings.

<sup>327</sup> While some local sources point to a stylistic connection between Paul Abadie’s design for the Basilique du Sacré-Coeur in Paris (consecrated in 1919) and the Iglesia de San Agustín, a careful analysis evidences this connection is not necessarily correct. The fact that the Parisian temple was inaugurated four years after the Puerta de Tierra one makes the connection doubtful.

<sup>328</sup> There exists a crop of similar parochial temples around the island built between 1898 and the 1950s inspired by Medievalisms. The Iglesia del Sagrado Corazón (Santurce), Iglesia de la Inmaculada Concepción (Santurce), Iglesia de la Milagrosa (Santurce), Iglesia de la Milagrosa (Río Piedras), Iglesia del Pilar (Hato Rey) and Iglesia del Espíritu Santo (Floral Park, Hato Rey) are but a few examples of the collusion of architectural styles that, additionally, respond to the City Beautiful Movement programmatic ideals. All are characterized by the free intersection of Early Christian, Romanesque and Gothic elements. While some proclaim their Neo-Gothic filiation in crystal clear manner, others – the Puerta de Tierra and Floral Park examples come to mind – evidence a free approach that depends on an intersection of components from both styles. Both these buildings, for example, have Cinquecento-inspired barrel vaults covering their main naves and Gothic detailing on the exterior. The Iglesia de San Agustín has pointed arched caps in the westwork towers while the Iglesia del Espíritu Santo has pseudo-flying buttresses framing the exterior sides of the main nave. A most fluid interpretation of historicist semantics characterizes these and other such works.

<sup>329</sup> From an architectural point of view, the lofty and elegant temple was sparsely decorated. Architectural elements underscore an aesthetics program characterized by its gravitas and elegance. As mentioned, the San Agustín iconographic program is credited to Father Schneider while the exceptionally beautiful windows were supposedly manufactured in Germany. This provenance needs to be questioned given the fact World War I raged from July 1914 to November 1918 making improbable German imported stained glass could reach the island. The windows, however, could have been imported after the conflict ended. It is also possible the work could be commissioned to American or French firms experts at this kind of work. The similarity between the Puerta de Tierra examples and those found in the Cathedral of St Joseph in Hanoi, Vietnam is truly astounding.

<sup>330</sup> Abbot Suger (1081-1151), prior of the St Denis Basilica in France, is credited with the invention of the Gothic, a style conceived as an architectural interpretation of the mysteries of God.

<sup>331</sup> The lamb is symbolic of St John, patron saint of the island, islet and capital city. (Puerto Rico was originally named St John the Baptist by Christopher Columbus in honor of the then crown prince Juan, son of the Catholic Monarchs.)

<sup>332</sup> A special mention needs to be made of the pavement made of hexagons formed by small round tiles in white, light gray, dark green and terracotta. Round yellow tiles form the center of small flowers created by means of grouping of six terracotta

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metaphor for San Juan's closeness to God by means of this most beautiful of temples so different – in terms of its size, elegance and lighted interior – from the traditional ones created during the Spanish regime.<sup>333</sup>

The varied Christian and Roman Catholic churches established their clout by means of the elegant and aesthetically diverse architectural semantics. By far, the most visible one was the Iglesia de Agustín precinct for it included a convent, school, parochial house, magnificent church, as well as the La Costura (Notre Dame Industrial School). Constructed on a lot bought in 1928 this last building is attributed to Martínez y Lázaro, the local firm involved with the neighboring Asilo de Ancianos Nuestra Señora de la Providencia. (A contributing building of this nomination, La Costura was not included in the Iglesia de San Agustín National Register of Historic Places nomination.) Inaugurated on 22 August 1929, it sheltered a specialized training center providing women with basic sewing skills to earn a living. Víctor Cott designed the stucco medallion that highlights the relative simplicity of the design and vague Classicist detailing.

*Iglesia Evangélica Luterana de San Pablo*

A few months after the construction of the Iglesia de San Agustín, the Iglesia Evangélica Luterana de San Pablo Building was erected a few blocks away. (See Photograph 009.) Although smaller, the building strived for elegance by means of an allegiance to varied Medievalisms stemming from Anglo-Saxon sources of inspiration. (Although the Gothic was invented in France during the Middle Ages, 19<sup>th</sup> century British designers developed a fixation with the style thanks in part to the writings of Pugin and Ruskin, who help foster the idea the semantics were the best representation of the national ethos.) Even though not a Catholic church, the building style allows for the collusion of Romanesque and Gothic elements, in a similar manner as seen in the Iglesia de San Agustín. While this last example pays homage to millennial old traditions by means of its main façade westwork, the Iglesia Evangélica Luterana de San Pablo is closer to British prototypes. Exemplary characteristics that evidence this affiliation are the principal entrance located on the side of the building and the Picturesque composition that includes a single tower crowned by merlon-like elements. The rectangular floor plan respects the spiritual mandate the altar face east. Rather than an apse to highlight the altar, a segmental arch<sup>334</sup> frames a magnificent stained glass window that provides light to the interior. This magnificent example depicts Our Lord as the Good Shepherd. (See Photograph 010.)

*Primera Iglesia Bautista de Puerta de Tierra*

By 1919, plans were already in place to construct a new building for the Primera Iglesia Bautista de Puerta de Tierra to substitute the Old San Juan quarters. (See Photograph 008.) As was the case with the Iglesia de San Agustín and Iglesia Evangélica Luterana de San Pablo, Medievalisms inspired the architectural expression. Rather than Gothic, however, elements from Early Christian, Byzantine and Romanesque aesthetics provided inspiration, particularly to the church proper. Its centralized floor plan has a long history that goes all the way back to Classical Antiquity via Early Christian and Byzantine models.

tiles. Each angle of the hexagon has a small flower of this sort creating a simple yet most effective arrangement of geometric and naturalistic forms. Use of a hexagons underscore the six-winged seraphims' depicted in the rose window.

<sup>333</sup> Other examples of this first crop of non-Catholic churches are the: Union Church, Stop 11, Santurce; Methodist Episcopal Church, Miramar, Santurce, 1910s; Presbyterian Church, Río Piedras, 1920s; Iglesia Presbiteriana de San Juan, Old San Juan; and Iglesia Metodista de San Juan, Old San Juan.

<sup>334</sup> A segmental arch is organized around one or more centers below the springer and, therefore, has a lower profile than a semicircular one.

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The main façade includes the temple proper, a cloister and a third volume. This arrangement is framed on the east side by a small two floors high building. The dramatic tripartite juxtaposition found in the Iglesia de San Agustín's more traditional façade may be compared to the diminutive arrangement found in this building that exhibits much charm in spite of its petite dimensions. In keeping with Picturesque ideals an asymmetrical composition emphasis on the church proper is obtained by making this volume higher. An octagonal dome with a clerestory anchors this sacred space supporting the dome that crowns it.

Ecclesiastical buildings in the Puerta de Tierra Historic District are characterized by the variety of their architectural morphologies. While a traditional westwork and basilica arrangement were used in the Iglesia de San Agustín, the designs of the other churches interpret buildings as three-dimensional artifacts surrounded by empty area and/or gardens. To a certain extent, the Iglesia de San Agustín urban relationship to the street paralleled compositions found in the Old San Juan historic churches. The non-Catholic buildings, on the other hand, introduced novel architectural themes. One of these is the formal side entrance seen in the Iglesia Evangélica Luterana de San Pablo. Another one is the use of an asymmetrical side steeple. The centralized floor plan scheme present at the Primera Iglesia Bautista de Puerta de Tierra was also a first in the island.<sup>335</sup>

### **Puerta de Tierra Recreational Architecture**

As known, the concepts of communal entertainment and leisure were byproducts of the Victorian era when interest was paid to the working masses. Promenades and boulevards were products of this concern. The Spanish language is rich describing urban instruments – *paseos, alamedas, malecones, ramblas, bulevares* – that offered contact with nature and a chance for the common folk to enjoy their free time. Due to Old San Juan's urban congestion the Puerta de Tierra Historic District was the sector best suited for these and similar venues.

As mentioned, historic evidence indicates the Puerta de Tierra Historic District was used for recreational activities as early as the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. On 8 June 1854, a fair (*feria*) was held in the district, one of several activities underscoring its potential as stage for leisure. Cattle exhibitions, and, at a later time, movie shows followed suit. Diversity was its hallmark: in 1893 there was a bullfighting ring at Peña Parada, a now lost location of the historic district. The Paseo de Covadonga (Paseo de Puerta de Tierra) stretched from the Puerta de Santiago to the Plaza de la Lealtad, close to where Block 110 is presently located. Venues transformed with time in order to embrace modernity. By 1909, there were movie tents (*cine carpa*) close to where the Casino de Puerto Rico presently stands.<sup>336</sup> By the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century San Juan Islet beaches became locations the public enjoyed. El Escambrón, the once weak point in the defense of San Juan protected by the first defensive line, was transformed due to new sports and recreational activities.

As mentioned, a formal grand park in the manner of European examples and New York City's Central Park was planned quite early during the 20<sup>th</sup> century for San Juan Islet. The distinguished Parsons, Bennett & Frost firm designed the Parque Muñoz Rivera (listed in the National Register of Historic Places). A curious intersection of formal elements aesthetically associated to French gardens and Picturesque components associated to the English garden create a unique site that marks the entrance/exit of the Puerta de Tierra Historic District, acting as east terminus of the central spine of civic

<sup>335</sup> When centralized floor plan arrangements were used prior to 1898 they were specifically related to funerary examples (the Capilla de Santa María Magdalena in the Old San Juan Cemetery comes to mind).

<sup>336</sup> Some of these open-air movie theaters were the: Cine Pathé (1909), Carpa Colorado (Carpa Puerto Rico) (1909), and Cine Tres Banderas (1910).

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architectural jewels. For decades visiting the park was considered a de rigeur Sunday activity. Avenida Muñoz Rivera borders the park along its northern boundary while the Avenida Constitución runs along its south side. This northern thoroughfare separates the park from the El Escambrón area were – as seen in 1920s plans – a less formal sector was planned so that the public could enjoy its beaches. (See Figure 70.)



Figure 72. El Escambrón Beach Club Postcard, Puerta de Tierra, San Juan de Puerto Rico, 1930s.<sup>337</sup>

The legendary El Escambrón Beach Club was constructed in 1932 close to the beach bearing this name. (See Figure 72.) The complex exemplified the intersection between the British recreational pier and the French beach resort. A much-remembered boardwalk (*malecón*) was constructed over the water uniting two sides of the small beach. The complex included a beach house and a nightclub. Oceans of ink have been used to write about the experience provided by this unique place that, simply put, has no equal in Puerto Ricans memory. Walking the sea promenade at night with the moon reflecting on the sea is a memory shared by dozens. No hotel, regardless of luxury level, has equaled this experience that may be considered part of the Puerta de Tierra Historic District's most relevant by now intangible cultural resources.

Engineer Félix Rexach, a man of numerous and important political contacts in Santo Domingo and Puerto Rico and jet setter *extraordinaire*, was behind this project, as well as the neighboring Hotel Normandie (listed in the National Register of Historic Places). Friend to the powerful Rafael Trujillo (Dominican Republic's dictator at the time) and Greek shipping magnates, he excelled as builder and developer.<sup>338</sup> While promenades were common in Europe, by the 19<sup>th</sup> century the British recreational piers were unique to this country. The sea breeze and aesthetic value of the marine landscape provided much enjoyment and a healthy environment. "The health giving climate of the seaside gave rise to a brand new industry, created on the getting away from the drudgery of industrial work. The pier was a major contributor, first allowing passengers to disembark and, later, escape into a fantasy world created by the pier owners."<sup>339</sup>

There are several differences between such structures and a *malecón*. While the first one juts out into the sea the second one embraces the coast. An example of the first type was the one projected for the Puerta de Tierra Historic District's northern shore during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a sort of balcony hovering over

<sup>337</sup> El Escambrón Beach Club Postcard, Puerta de Tierra, San Juan de Puerto Rico, 1930s, Google, Public domain.

<sup>338</sup> Like the recreational centers he constructed, Rexach is part of Puerto Rican collective memory principally due to his flamboyant lifestyle. It is said his yacht was the envy of many a Mediterranean tycoon. His French wife underscored his colorful life. At a time when local ladies followed stringent codes of behavior as per Hispanic propriety, Mme Rexach would not only bath in the Hotel Normandie's pool in the nude but also wear pants in public.

<sup>339</sup> Anthony Wills and Tim Phillips, *British Seaside Piers* (London: English Heritage, 2014. Quoted in: Maeve Kennedy, "Paeon to piers published to mark 200<sup>th</sup> birthday of British seaside institution," *Daily Mail*.

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the cliffs and sea. The recreational pier, in turn, sits perpendicularly to the shore and therefore gives the impression of being a vessel in the water. It also includes places to eat and entertainment areas.<sup>340</sup> While the El Escambrón Beach Club boardwalk was designed for walking, it jutted out into the sea discarding the traditional *malecón* personality allowing its users to literally walk on top of the sea. El Escambrón was designed for the rich but its presence popularized the sector's beaches, still enjoyed to this day by hundreds.

Rexach was instrumental in the construction of the Hotel Normandie (listed in the National Register of Historic Places), the first luxury hotel in the island, so close to the seashore it can be classified as a beach hotel. The original 1925 masterplan proposed for the area did not include this hotel. In fact the preserved drawing mentioned before depicts the triangular Hotel Normandie lot empty. (See Figure 70.) In any case, the engineer was able to convince the authorities to site the El Escambrón Beach Club and the Hotel Normandie in the sector. American educated architect Ricardo Reichard designed the 1930s Art Deco masterpiece. The site informed the shape of the hotel underscoring the style's curved surfaces. Its prominence as portal to the Puerta de Tierra Historic District via the Avenida Muñoz Rivera and unusual shape appealed to the public giving rise to the urban legend that the building was designed in the shape of a ship. Mr Reichard was adamant: he never designed it to look like a ship but as reflection of the triangular lot where it was sited. He would explain he had nothing to do with the name and that the portholes that lend the building a nautical air were an addition extemporized by Rexach, a great admirer of the *Normandie*, the most famous cruise liner of the time.<sup>341</sup>

Rexach's contacts in the Dominican Republic, where he had planned and constructed varied buildings and structures, allowed for the interiors to be sumptuously decorated. Craftspeople were imported from the neighboring island so they could work in the complicated woodcarvings and gesso decorations found throughout the interiors. The famed Gold Ballroom (Salón de Oro) and Silver Ballroom (Salón de Plata) are considered unique in the nation. Lalique crystal lamps in the shape of graceful foliage provided illumination throughout the building. The building included a swimming pool in its center and all floors opened to this space resulting in a several stories high atrium. The Hotel was inaugurated on October 12, 1942.

The Parque Sixto Escobar, inaugurated in 1935, faces the Hotel Normandie.<sup>342</sup> (See Photograph 026.) Named after Puerto Rico's first world boxing champion, the building was designed by Architect Rafael Carmoega in his inimitable Mediterranean Revival style. First and largest of its type until the 1960s, the venue was unique in the island seating c 15,000 fans. Designed as a baseball field, it was also used for basketball games and boxing matches that took place on specially built wooden stages. Because of its size it also served as meeting hall. In 1940, for example, the Partido Popular Democrático de Puerto Rico was founded here during a popular (no pun intended) assembly. Carmoega is justly known for his use of the Mediterranean inspired aesthetics. Given the fact he authored the School of Tropical Medicine he was the designer of at least two of the district masterpieces. At the Parque Sixto Escobar he divided the building into three angled wings using the central one as main entrance. Two towers frame this

<sup>340</sup> "In 1906, Clacton pier offered every delight the holiday heart could yearn for. The photographer captured elegantly dressed people approaching the immaculately painted entrance to consider the rival offers of 'bathing, dancing and fishing,' an American soda fountain with cream ices, 'coffee specialists' in the Blue Lagoon Lounge, motor launch trips, entertainment in the pavilion, and 'elaborate prizes' for 'the most fascinating game Skee-ball.'" Maev Kennedy, "Paean to piers published to mark 200<sup>th</sup> birthday of British seaside institution," *Daily Mail* (21 July 2014).

<sup>341</sup> During the 1980s, I met and interviewed Architect Ricardo Rexach. As a result of these conversations and in order to set the record straight, I published a column in the *El Mundo* newspaper. He was kind enough to give me a copy of the Normandie architectural plan that I treasure to this day.

<sup>342</sup> As mentioned when analyzing Figure 071, the Parque Sixto Escobar appears in the 1920s plan contravening the traditional date given for its construction.

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section transforming it into an elegant portal. Terracotta tiles, semicircular arches, and square towers capped with hip roofs, reminiscent of Moorish architecture in Spain, add flair to the design as well as an exotic air.

The Puerta de Tierra Historic District was unique in more ways than one from neighboring Old San Juan, particularly in terms of recreational spaces and places. In fact, *The Spirit of St Louis* piloted by Charles Lindbergh alighted close to El Escambrón and present day Parque Muñoz Rivera in 1928 during his "cross-country barnstorming tour."<sup>343</sup> His airplane touched down on a landing strip in the Escambrón area in presence of large crowds that came to see the illustrious adventurer. Although not preserved physically in its entirety, Lindbergh's improvised landing strip is yet another intangible historic resource associated to the district.

**Puerta de Tierra Domestic Architecture**

If the Spanish military had ceded control of the Puerta de Tierra Historic District during the early decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century it is probable the sector would have developed into a suburb for the rich, in the manner of Centro Habana, El Vedado and El Cerro communities in Havana, Cuba. Since this was not possible, prosperous *sanjuaneros* scampered to Miramar and Condado in the main island making possible for the historic district to become the place of residence of the Others. During the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century their numbers grew exponentially resulting in the development of varied architectural typologies: (i) slums, (ii) tenement-house buildings; (iii) model tenements; and (iv) public housing projects. All confirm shifting social expectations and, in the case of the last two, development of populist solutions to a seemingly ever-lasting problem: the lack of proper housing for the working class. To this day, the Puerta de Tierra Historic District evidences this unique development.

**The slums**

Historic accounts dated before 1898 mention the presence of squatters in the Puerta de Tierra Historic District. During the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, however, their numbers increased in exponential manner resulting in the organization of multiple shantytowns and slums<sup>344</sup> (known as *barriadas*, *barrios* and *arrabales*). Paradigmatic examples of urban dystopia, development of these locales resulted from Old San Juan's premier role as a labor center. Close to the port and the light industry organized in the eastern portion of the islet, it was only logical thousands would seek to live in the neighborhood. Old San Juan's congested conditions underscored use of the relatively empty (when compared to the historic urban core) Puerta de Tierra sector.

<sup>343</sup> As known, after his successful crossing of the Atlantic Ocean, Charles Lindbergh undertook a public relations tour flying to many locales, including San Juan de Puerto Rico. Bill Bryson, *One Summer America 1927* (London: Transworld Publishers, 2013), p 433.

<sup>344</sup> A slum is defined as the product of the physical degradation of an existing urban sector while a shantytown refers to empty land occupied by squatters.

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Figure 73. Salsipuedes Slum and Iglesia de San Agustín, Puerta de Tierra, San Juan de Puerto Rico, 1920s (?).<sup>345</sup>

During the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century squatters first settled south of the train tracks along the mangroves bordering the Puerta de Tierra Historic District's southern shore where they organized a slum known as Salsipuedes.<sup>346</sup> (See Figure 73.) By the 1930s, additional shantytowns – Miranda, Hoyo Frío and Gandulito, among others – emerged. During the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Abbad y Lasiera wrote similar areas (*arrabales*) existed inside the walled city, describing them as places where large numbers of freed slaves lived. In his opinion, they compared negatively with prosperous urban areas. Abbad, nevertheless, depicted them as intrinsic components of the urban core, a reality underscored by the fact they were inside the defensive belt. Twentieth century slums, on the other hand, exhibited a different urban personality for they were the product of dozens of makeshift constructions used by hundreds who needed to live in San Juan Islet but lacked the means to reside in the Old San Juan Historic District. In other words, the modern slums were not part of the historic enclave's urban fabric.

Historic photographs depict terrible living conditions caused by diminutive ephemeral constructions seating precariously on mangroves lacking privacy and basic comforts. Dangerously close to the port, the slums incarnated problematic health and security issues. El Coal, for example, was next to where the coal deposits were located. It is no exaggeration to state living conditions in these locales were inhuman. Unfortunately, they grew at a constant rate during the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. According to Manuel A Pérez's<sup>347</sup> much quoted study, during the period from 1898 to 1935, San Juan Islet experienced a demographic growth of 328%, a large number of which lived in the Puerta de Tierra Historic District's slums. As expected, the situation created all sorts of human and urban ills.

Regardless of country, slums were the direct result of the Industrial Revolution. This pacific revolt initiated in Great Britain impacted the social fabric in twofold manner. First, it fostered a population explosion forcing thousands to abandon traditional ways of living in favor of the industrial centers dotting the British landscape. Second, as thousands moved to these cores, slums were created. In *The Conditions of the Working-Class in England in 1844 With a Preface written in 1892* Frederick Engels described the British slums in the following manner: "But as to the great mass of working people, the state of misery and

<sup>345</sup> Salsipuedes and Iglesia de San Agustín, Puerta de Tierra Historic District, San Juan de Puerto Rico, 1920s (?), Google, Public domain. The name Salsipuedes is formed by the Spanish words: *sal*, *si* and *puedes* ("get out if you can"), an appellation reflecting its irregular and *ad hoc* labyrinthic organization.

<sup>346</sup> The El Falansterio Model Tenement District (listed in the National Register of Historic Places), constructed during the 1930s. It was here that the inhabitants of Salsipuedes were relocated after their shanty houses were demolished during the project to dry out the mangrove in the San Juan Islet's southeastern coast.

<sup>347</sup> Manuel A Pérez, "Estudio preliminar para estudiar las condiciones de vida en los arrabales de San Juan" (San Juan de Puerto Rico: Puerto Rico Reconstruction Administration, 1939), pp 1-2.

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insecurity in which they live now is as low as ever, if not lower. The East End London is an ever-spreading pool of stagnant misery and desolation, of starvation when out of work, and degradation, physical and moral, when in work.”

At the time Engels penned his account slums were exclusively a British phenomenon. By the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, however, they could be found in other countries including the USA. Although a bit behind regarding the Industrial Revolution, during the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Puerto Rico shared common issues that fostered their growth, such as land distribution and poverty.

It is estimated that in the country districts there are at least 600,000 landless workers. The situation of the city dwellers is not much better. In Puerta de Tierra, the suburb of San Juan, previously described, the land on which its 10,936 inhabitants (in 1913) lived was owned by thirty families.

For the city dweller of the working class the conditions are the same, i e, the evil system is present of building on leased land without protection for the owner of the house, as he has no lease, the owner of the land can, and often does, force him to abandon the building he has constructed by increasing the land rental to a figure impossible for him to pay.<sup>348</sup>

Lacking money, a steady job and a parcel of land they could call their own, many interpreted Old San Juan as the golden land of opportunities flocking in ever growing numbers in order to be close to the center. During the 1920s a visitor wrote:

The problem of housing the constantly mounting population has been one which has constantly agitated the cities of the Island since the lack of proper facilities has resulted in the aggregation of the poor and unemployed in *barrios* on the outskirts of the cities under conditions so sordid and unsanitary that their existence has constituted a continual menace to the cities themselves.<sup>349</sup>

As a result of these conditions, during the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Puerta de Tierra Historic District's physical development along its southern shore was completely unplanned. A 1914's description of this extemporaneous organization was adamant regarding the problems it entailed.

There is a serious problem of congestion in many parts of Puerta de Tierra. The blocks are large and big tenements and small huts tumbled together without plan and with inadequate provision for air, light or sanitation. The worst conditions are in the sections back from the main streets. Many of the houses in these sections are reached by alleys or paths, and are thus deprived of the air and light that cannot be denied houses in more important residential and business quarters where streets have been laid out. Most of these sections have grown up by happen-chance, the landlord originally building only a few large tenement and leaving ample yards. Then, as the value of the land increased and the profits to be obtained from renting became larger, these yards were filled up with cheap shacks and *ranchones* [similar to tenement housing]. The greatest number of inhabitants per unit of area is in the sections along San Agustín Street, but, due to the marshy and unhealthy conditions of the land below The American Railroad tracks, the congestion problem is worse there than in the higher quarters. The future growth of San Juan and the necessity of providing living quarters for its laborers within walking distance of their work may some day so increase the population of Puerta de Tierra as to create a problem of congestion that cannot easily be remedied. San Juan and Puerta de Tierra are situated on an island and the possibilities for expansion without stretching over into Miramar or Cataño or other places on the mainland are limited. But all of the available land in Puerta de Tierra has not yet been used. The reclaiming of portions of the marshland along the harbor, which will be discussed in a later section, will open up an extensive area. There are also several sections of land, both public and private, in the vicinity of Puerta de Tierra that could be built up and thus relieve the present congestion. Or, if the area now used were rebuilt with larger

<sup>348</sup> Knowlton Mixer, *Porto Rico History and Conditions Social, Economic and Political*, pp171-172.

<sup>349</sup> *Ibid.*, p 202.

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modern tenements, the worst features of the present congestion would be remedied. The vacant public land between the main *carretera* [road] and the ocean would house thousands of people. This is valuable land, the best situated and probably the highest priced vacant land in Porto Rico. Portions of it should clearly be reserved for hotels, parks, etc., but the lower part on both sides of the old city wall could be used for substantial tenements whose appearance would be a credit to The People of Porto Rico and a blessing to the poor people who would live in them. The present occupants of some of the worst sections of Puerta de Tierra are paying rents sufficient to pay for quarters in such tenements. A part of the land included within the Insular Fair grounds might well be so used. If the Insular Government or the city of San Juan could build tenements in these sections, or could lease the land to a housing association under proper restrictions as to the character of the tenements to be erected and the rents to be charged, the rent rates in Puerta de Tierra would be lowered and the present fictitious land values that prevail there would cease to exist. Or if a heavy land tax were put upon unimproved private land within urban zones the vacant areas in Puerta de Tierra would be built up with an improvement of the housing conditions and a lowering of rents in that barrio. The following diagram shows the ground plan of a typical block along San Agustín Street in Puerta de Tierra. The various lines and combinations of lines on the diagram refer to the material of construction, size, etc., of these houses and are explained in the note below. The numbers on the diagrams refer to the table following it, in which the essential facts regarding each house are given.<sup>350</sup>

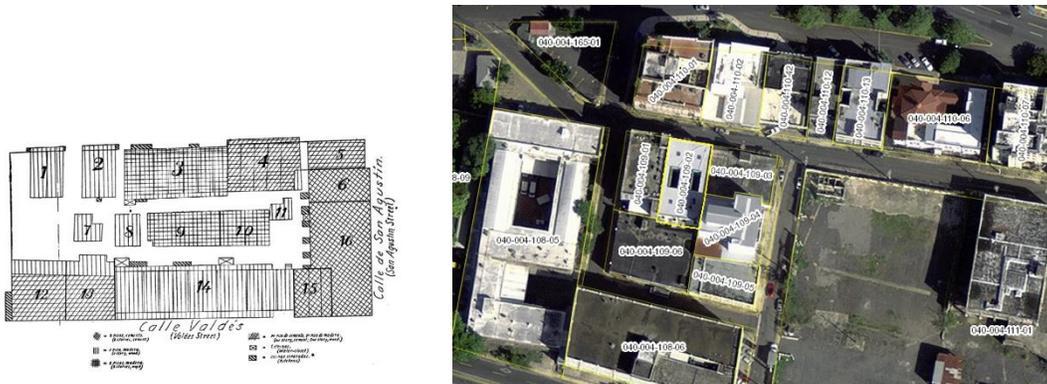


Figure 74 and Figure 75. Block 108 and Block 109, Puerta de Tierra Historic District, San Juan de Puerto Rico in 1914 and at present. Bills, *Report on Housing Conditions of Laborers in Puerto Rico* and Puerto Rico CRIM.

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House number on above diagram	Base of houses in square meters	Number of apartments in each house	Number of rooms per apartment	Total monthly rent on each house	Total occupants to each house			File number
					Men	Women	Children	
1	66.21	2	8	816	2	2	2	Ms 10
2	72.89	2	8	10	2	2	2	Ms 15
3	294.31	14	8	(b) 114	19	17	21	Ms 14
4	117.90	12	8	38	3	15	19	Ms 13
5	68.56	2	5	18	(a) 4	1	5	Ms 12
6	85.79	2	5	(c) 18	1	1	1	Ms 11
7	36.38	1	5	6	1	1	1	Ms 10
8	32.64	1	2	5	1	1	3	Ms 9
9	111.78	8	2	45	1	15	15	Ms 8
10	72.50	4	2	21	5	5	6	Ms 7
11	26.21	1	2	5	4	1	1	Ms 6
12	133.75	3	5	45	1	7	12	Ms 6
13	136.35	4	5	65	1	8	15	Ms 4
14	405.86	12	2	90	5	21	19	Ms 2
15	80.90	6	2	41	1	0	19	Ms 2
16	270.08	7	3	170	1	21	21	Ms 1

(a) One apartment used for a store.  
 (b) One apartment occupied by water.  
 (c) House occupied by owner.

Figure 76. Analysis of domestic facilities existing in Block 109 prior to 1914, Puerta de Tierra Historic District, San Juan de Puerto Rico. Bills, *Report on Housing Conditions of Laborers in Puerto Rico*.

<sup>350</sup> J C Bills (editor), *Report on Housing Conditions of Laborers in Puerto Rico* (San Juan de Puerto Rico: Bureau of Supplies, Printing and Transportation, May 30, 1914), p 54.

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Analysis of a 1914 diagram and table included in Bills's *Report on Housing Conditions of Laborers in Puerto Rico* provides much information. (See Figure 74, Figure 75 and Figure 76.) The original block exhibits an *ad hoc* organization with sixteen small and large buildings of varied types, chaotically organized in dystopia manner. This is particularly true regarding the shacks sited in backyards. At the time of the study there were approximately 386 residents, a staggering number considering there were no high-rise buildings. While in 1914 the block extended from Calle San Agustín to Calle del Tren, at present it is subdivided into two blocks divided by Calle Coconut Palm that include only seven buildings.

At the time, there were voices raised against these conditions expressing humanitarian concern. Others believed the conditions adversely impacted the Puerta de Tierra Historic District's future. In 1910, for example, one Walter Prentice Sanger proposed a beautification plan that would eradicate slums in the district so that "first quality" buildings could be constructed. These were to provide an elegant entrance to San Juan in keeping with his expectations the core become one of America's leading cities. According to Sanger, Chief City Engineer Miguel Ferrer agreed with him although he found the plan's financial cost too high.<sup>351</sup> While some like Sanger concocted whimsical proposals it was not until the 1920s when the first solutions emerged as a result of the dredging of the port and landfill (of the mangrove area) activities.

*Durante los años 1920 y 1921 se dragó la Bahía de San Juan y el Caño de San Antonio. El cieno del dragado se utilizó como relleno para los manglares de las tierras del "Pueblo de Puerto Rico": tierras que más tarde se convirtieron en los muelles y almacenes que servirían las necesidades comerciales en expansión de San Juan. Como consecuencia era necesario realojar los residentes de Salsipuedes, Hoyo Frío y Gandulito . . .*<sup>352</sup>

As the slums disappeared, privately owned tenement-house buildings took their place.

### The tenement-house building

The few existing analyses regarding living conditions in the Puerta de Tierra Historic District traditionally jump from the slums to the public housing projects created during the 1940s and 1950s, obliterating the role played by the dozens of tenement buildings that substituted the slums. In fact, it is no exaggeration to claim this is the district's paradigmatic architectural typology. The appellation *casa de vecindad*

<sup>351</sup> Research activities have failed to find Walter Sanger's plan. It is also unclear whether his proposal was part of a report on the state of military bases in the island he supposedly prepared for the armed forces. Sanger's qualifications were of the highest caliber for he studied landscape architecture for two years at Harvard University graduating in 1907. After working for a landscape architect in New York City, in 1908 he organized the Saltus & Sanger firm. In 1911, he wrote: "In July, 1910, I went to Porto Rico to study the city of San Juan, and I am now making a plan for its development." If this is correct, why was he asked to prepare a masterplan for San Juan Ferrer found too expensive? The anecdote, however, confirms the district's sorry state during the period.

<sup>352</sup> Manuel A Pérez, "Estudio preliminar para estudiar las condiciones de vida en los arrabales de San Juan," p 168. In characteristic manner the government efforts did not achieve the desired results: "Such conditions, added to the dredging of the harbor, which forced many of the squatters in Puerta de Tierra to move, induced the Insular government to appropriate funds by which a 'Barrio de Obreros' was constructed on government land near San Juan. More than five hundred model houses were erected, some of concrete and others of frame which were sold to worthy applicants at very moderate prices, divided into easy payments." "The houses are well planed and constructed and establish a living standard far in advance of the existing among the laboring class. One could have wished that a less substantial type of building had been adopted, so that with the money available more could have been constructed. These houses also are available only for those who have a little money or a regular employment. They make no provision for those without resources and generally without a job who constitute the really serious element of the problem. In spite of this, this effort toward improving living conditions is in the right direction and should be applied to other cities." Knowlton Mixer, *Porto Rico History and Conditions Social, Economic and Political*, pp 202-203. Since Barrio Obrero was not sited in San Juan Islet, the problem of housing those working in the small isle was not solved. At a time when many did not own a car and when public transportation was sketchy, at best, it is easy to understand how illogical this government solution [sic] was.

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(tenement-house building) is seldom used in the island even though it is the correct one. One of the few exceptions to this rule is a newspaper article published in 1936.

*En relación con el proyecto de eliminación de Arrabales, la Administración de Reconstrucción de Puerto Rico tiene el propósito de construir otra casa de vecindad por el estilo de la que se ha de subastar dentro de poco en el barrio Miranda [El Falansterio] de Puerta de Tierra, con el fin de terminar en breve tiempo con las pésimas condiciones de vida prevalecientes en la barriada La Perla, de San Juan.<sup>353</sup>*

A few days earlier the same newspaper confusingly described the type as an apartment house (*casa de apartamentos*). *El proyecto de Miranda ha progresado satisfactoriamente pues ha obtenido una transferencia de terrenos el Gobierno Insular con el objeto de construir una gran casa de apartamentos en Puerta de Tierra.<sup>354</sup>* To this day, the district residents use *callejón* (alleyway) instead of *casa de vecindad* or *casa de vecinos* to describe the type. Regardless of name,<sup>355</sup> the typology is best described as a building that includes multiple individual residences that are rented. On occasion, they only include individual rooms or sets of rooms. Traditionally, the term is associated to a run-down and overcrowded building or complex owned by a single proprietor.

Late 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries American writers used the name to describe Old San Juan examples where people rented rooms or small apartments for a few dollars a day. In most cases, these were commodious houses belonging to families that had scampered to the sun-filled Condado and Miramar suburbs. The large buildings sheltered several families per room and interior patios served as communal kitchen.

San Juan proper is a walled city and it is evidently the desire and intention of its people to live within its walls, as a total population of 32,000 in the entire municipality, about 18,000 are packed within a space on 140 acres; i e they occupy so much of the land within the walls as was given up to them for building purposes. The remaining 14,000 are scattered about in the suburbs of Puerta de Tierra and Santurce....

The buildings are, as a rule, two stories in height. They abut directly on the street, and in compliance with a municipal ordinance about one third to one fourth of the ground upon which they are erected is left uncovered and is used as courtyard. . . . About four-fifths of the houses in San Juan proper are tenement houses, according to the American idea of a tenement house, i e, roughly speaking, a house in which three or more families dwell. The ground floor consists of a hallway leading to the courtyard, on each side of which, on all sides of the courtyard, are small rooms, each occupied by one entire family of the poorer classes. The wealthier people live on the upper floor or floors. . . .

In some of the large tenement houses there is a person whose business it is to see no one sleeps therein without paying rent, but there is no one to look after the cleanliness of the place in general.<sup>356</sup>

The difference between these domestic arrangements, known as rookeries, and the ones that peppered the Puerta de Tierra Historic District is that the second ones were new buildings, specially designed for

<sup>353</sup> "La 'PRRA' construirá otra casa de vecindad para alojar a residentes del barrio La Perla de San Juan," *El Mundo* (San Juan de Puerto Rico), 28 January 1936, p 1. The article mentions the proposed second tenement-house to be located *al este* (to the east) of what must be presumed is the El Falansterio. If this assumption is correct and the tenement-house described is indeed El Falansterio, the planned second example was not constructed. At present, the Residencial San Antonio is sited here.

<sup>354</sup> Translation: "Project Miranda is evolving in satisfactory manner since the government donated a large lot where an apartment house will be constructed in Puerta de Tierra." "La limpieza de arrabales. Administración y organización interna de la 'PRRA'," *El Mundo* (San Juan de Puerto Rico), 12 January 1936, p 1.

<sup>355</sup> The word tenement is Latin in origin deriving from *tenere* or "to hold." In Great Britain the names court and cellar houses are used to describe this architectural typology.

<sup>356</sup> *Porto Rico from October 18, 1898 to April 30, 1900* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 1901), p 160.

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this purpose and not historic houses transformed in an ad hoc manner. Research reveals the first examples may have been erected during the 1920s.

*Hasta fines de los años veinte las casas de vecindad de una y dos plantas, y los pequeños apartamentos de dos o cuatro unidades dominaban la vivienda de la clase baja. Todas las áreas de viviendas de clase baja generalmente se conocían como “barrios obreros,” o “barrio bajo” o “barrio pobre.” Las casas de vecindad dominaban los barrios obreros del Viejo San Juan; en Puerta de Tierra dominaban, unidos a los pequeños apartamentos, aunque los asentamiento de invasores eran espectacularmente visibles durante el dragado del canal San Antonio de los años 1920-21. . . .<sup>357</sup>*

Although some of the units inside the tenement house buildings were quite small, the edifices were quite different from slum structures. While commonalities with the slave hut have been found:

Until two decades ago, one was able to glimpse here and there in Villa Palmeras the difficult passage from the slaves barracks to the tenement houses. These two story houses, with their long wooden or stone balconies and the rooms all in a row, contained part of a forgotten social history, where the abolition of slavery did not overcome the cruel overcrowding that today has been transformed into “public residential areas” or public housing. Tenement houses, then, would be midway between slums and public housing. Like in the “Fourier Community” of Puerta de Tierra, the “Falansterio,” they would test new ways of communal living for those in flight from abject poverty. The city contains the remains of an architecture that is wanted to transform time and time again, the memory of a space occupied by bodies exhausted from work, forced into the oppressive despair of sharing a roof and being denied privacy.<sup>358</sup>



Figure 77. A Puerta de Tierra tenement-house described in 1926 as a “new” construction. Knowlton Mixer, *Porto Rico History and Conditions Social, Economic and Political*.

it is highly improbable the ephemeral slave barracks (*bohíos* or *cuartelones*) influenced the Puerta de Tierra Historic District tenement-house building since it is obvious the precedent for the local type was the New York tenement-house building. This is clearly evident when floor plans are studied and their interiors visited. (See Figure 77.)

<sup>357</sup> Translation: “Until the end of the 1920s, one and two floors tenement house buildings and small apartment buildings were quite numerous. The areas where the poor lived were known as “workers barrios,” “low barrio” and “poor barrio.” Tenement house buildings formed the largest group of domestic building in the workers barrios; in Puerta de Tierra they dominated the landscape although the shantytowns were spectacularly visible during the bay’s dredging during 1920 and 1921 . . .” Roberto W Stevens, “Los arrabales de San Juan: Una perspectiva histórica,” Chapter 2, *Lower Class Settlement Patterns: Macro Level Differentiation Within Slums: San Juan Puerto Rico* (Doctoral Dissertation: Syracuse University, 1977), p 166.

<sup>358</sup> Edgardo Rodríguez Juliá, *San Juan: Memoir of a City* (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 2007), p 115.

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Figure 78. Ranchón, Puerta de Tierra Historic District, San Juan de Puerto Rico, turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>359</sup>

During the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, buildings belonging to the *ranchón* (*barracón* or *casa de habitación*) architectural typology were found in the Puerta de Tierra Historic District. (See Figure 78.) Made of prefabricated wood they sported zinc-sheathing roofs and housed up to sixteen living units. Well-known examples include *El Tesoro* (The Treasure), *El Laberinto* (The Labyrinth) and *El 83* (The 83). Rectangular in shape, upper floors included exterior corridors that provided entrance to individual units. Although living arrangements were quite flexible, *ranchones* were usually subdivided into one-room units. This is the most significant difference between *ranchones* and tenement-house buildings. Although diminutive by present standards, there are examples of the second type was organized into small apartments. Another relevant difference is the fact *ranchones* were made of wood while masonry (principally) and, at a later stage, reinforced concrete were used for the second type.

As mentioned, the Puerta de Tierra Historic District tenement-house building originated in New York. While there is no doubt about this provenance, at this point in time there is no information regarding how the idea reached Puerto Rico. Was the first example constructed by an American intent on making money? Or was it the result of an enterprising local that was familiar with New York examples? What is known is that by the 1920s several buildings introduced this foreign domestic type to the Puerta de Tierra Historic District.<sup>360</sup>

While the concept of multiple family dwelling goes all the way back to the Roman *insula* and the Spanish *casa de corral*, the district's tenement-house building is intimately tied to the Big Apple's urban organization. New York provided inspiration even though many reviled the type.

The greatest evil which ever befell New York City was the division of the blocks into lots of 25 by 100 feet. So true is this, that no other disaster for the moment can be compared with it. Fires, pestilence, and financial troubles are nothing in comparison; for from this division has arisen the New York system of tenement-houses, the worst curse which ever afflicted any great community.<sup>361</sup>

<sup>359</sup> Ranchón, Puerta de Tierra Historic District, San Juan de Puerto Rico, turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Google, Public domain.

<sup>360</sup> In a sense, the tenement-house building veered from local domestic traditions. "A short time afterwards a meeting was held at the governor's palace, the governor, the commissioner of the interior, and representatives of the American Red Cross and of the 'Comité Pro-Aguadilla' being present and it was decided to undertake the work in accordance with preliminary plans prepared by this division and by the division of public housing. Its is intended to build a separate small house for each family, with sanitary installation for every four houses, preference to the less expensive plan of tenement houses, as it is believed that the moral conditions of the poor people will be improved if each family is given a separate house, so that each may enjoy real homelike commodities, in a certain measure limited as we are by the small amount of money at out disposal." *Report of the Governor of Porto Rico to the Secretary of War 1919* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 1919), p 468.

<sup>361</sup> Ernest Flagg, "The New York Tenement-House Evil and its Cure," *Scribner's Magazine*, Volume 0016, Issue 1 (July, 1894), pp 108-117; 108.

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From the start, they were considered different from apartment buildings, a distinction that underscores the social status of the dwellers. “Apartment houses only became acceptable for middle-class people in the late nineteenth century, and not until the early twentieth century did the very wealthy begin to move into apartment houses.”<sup>362</sup> While in apartment buildings the living units belong to different owners in a tenement-house building all belong to the same owner.

Massive immigration, population explosion and industrial development transformed New York City during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In order to eliminate the many ills created by shanties and rookeries, the tenement-house building became an alternative during the 1860s. Unfortunately, since the objective of many owners was to maximize rents with as small an investment as possible, the more people crammed into a building the better. As the numbers of underprivileged workers moving to the city increased, dozens of buildings were constructed. “Some historians have dated it back to the 1830s, others to the 1840s, but it’s clear that by the 1860s tenements – that is, buildings that were specifically built to house large numbers of poor families in the same structure with very few amenities – begin to appear in large numbers.”<sup>363</sup>

Tenement-house buildings offered no amenities and rooms were diminutive to the point of claustrophobic. Scores of living units had no direct access to the exterior and, therefore, no ventilation or natural illumination. According to Architect E Flagg, New York’s grid determined the 25 feet wide lots that, in turn, established the twelve feet wide room in the earliest examples. “What I like to call pre-law tenements, such as the building that the Tenement Museum now occupies on Orchard Street, were built with four apartments per floor, three rooms in each apartment. That’s 12 rooms on which only one room in each apartment had a window.”<sup>364</sup> Several Puerta de Tierra Historic District examples – Edificio Moregón (Block 131 Parcela 02) and the tenement-house buildings sited on Block 131 Parcela 11 and Block 138 Parcela 17, among others – use this measurement (or one quite close) as organizational module of the façades and floor plans. (See Figure 81.)

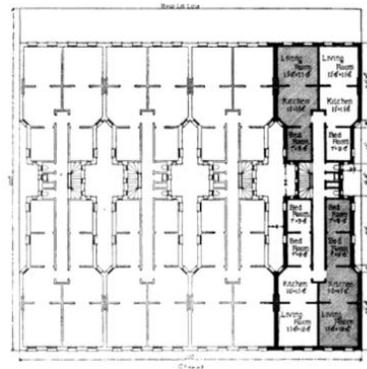


Figure 79. Dumbbell floor plan, tenement house building, New York City, 1894, E Flagg, “The New York Tenement-House Evil and Its Cure.”

As a result of the proliferation of unsuitable domestic arrangements, *The Tenement House Act of 1879* was passed and the dumbbell floor plan in New York came to exist. (See Figure 80.) The name refers to the fact the body of the building is narrower than its two end façades. While the arrangement made possible for interior rooms to have windows, most open into small narrow vertical shafts. These

<sup>362</sup> Andrew S Dolkart, “Columbia University Digital Knowledge Ventures, The Architecture and Development of New York City,” Digital source: ci.columbia.edu, 17 July 2016. In Puerto Rico, this acceptance is dated to the 1920s-1930s when some of the first apartment buildings were constructed in Miramar and Condado.

<sup>363</sup> Andrew S Dolkart, “Living Together,” Digital source: <http://nycarchitecture.columbia.edu>.

<sup>364</sup> *Idem*.

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inadequate sources provided natural light and ventilation exclusively to the upper floors. Many agreed with Architect Flagg in his critique of this floor plan type. "The dumbbell block is perhaps the worst type of tenement ever allowed in a modern, enlightened community. The halls and ten of the fourteen rooms on each floor are dark and ill ventilated, dependent for light and air solely upon narrow airshafts that give little or no light below the top floors."<sup>365</sup> Directly addressing the evils of this kind of arrangement, Flagg established:

. . . [A]ll the evils of the system lie entirely in the plan; that with another plan light, air, health and comfort can be furnished at the same, if not at less cost than the great majority of the inhabitants of this town are now forced to pay for dwellings not fit for the lower animals. Unfortunately the same division of the land which led to the plan of these houses is the chief obstacle in the way of reform.<sup>366</sup>

The execrable designs allowed for all sorts of unsanitary spaces.

The plan of the buildings is extremely interesting. The apartments were less than twelve and a half feet wide, and the rooms measured maybe 11 by 13, and the inner room, the second inner room, was a tiny little bedroom, which must been an extraordinarily claustrophobic place in which to live. This type of plan was attacked by tenement reformers. There were a lot of people that wanted to improve by legal mandate the construction of tenements. And there was a huge campaign to get buildings like this building to be declared illegal to construct anymore. And the first major tenement house law was passed in 1879 and led to what are referred to as old-law tenements or dumbbell tenements.<sup>367</sup>

While *The Tenement House Act of 1901* prohibited use of the dumbbell floor plan in New York, it was the solution of choice in the Puerta de Tierra Historic District, particularly during the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In many examples, small "interior patios" substituted the constricted New York City vertical shafts. On occasion, narrow side alleys connect these courtyards to the sidewalk allowing access to the units in the back of the lot. These buildings may be rectangular or sport a "T" shape, allowing patios to exist on both sides. The historic district tenement-house buildings also favored "E" and "U" shaped floor plans with one or multiple entrances, as well as multiple aesthetic expressions. (See Table 9.)

Mr José María Méndez is the owner of the famed Ferretería Méndez Building located in Calle San Agustín. The 1930s sturdy four floors high reinforced concrete building housed a well-known hardware store (first level), as well as the Méndez family living quarters. The rest of the building was subdivided into 21 apartments. Constructed by Méndez's grandfather, a Spaniard who came to the island to *hacer las Américas*<sup>368</sup> during the second decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, according to family folklore the present building, started in 1936, was designed by one of the brothers: José Méndez (uncle of José María). The small apartments were rented for a day, week or months to: "*Trabajadores de los muelles*."<sup>369</sup> The Méndez family was one of dozens that found tenement renting a lucrative business. Like most of the district examples, the Méndez Building presents an elegant façade that incorporates curved balconies, a diluted Art Deco touch. The imposing height of the building (when compared to others in the neighborhood), deep overhang crowning the composition and cantilevered reinforced concrete elements provide the building with an air of contained elegance and substance. All balconies rest on reinforced concrete brackets and have curved concrete balustrades. As mentioned, this unique example had an apartment were the owners lived which was not necessarily the case in other examples of the type.

<sup>365</sup> *House and Garden Magazine*, quoted in Andrew S Dolcart, "Columbia University Digital Knowledge Ventures, The Architecture and Development of New York City."

<sup>366</sup> Ernest Flagg, "The New York Tenement-House Evil and Its Cure," *Scribner's Magazine* (Volume XVI, Number 1, July-December 1894), pp 108-117; 108.

<sup>367</sup> Andrew S Dolcart, "Living Together."

<sup>368</sup> The Spanish phrase *hacer las Américas* means to make one's fortune in America.

<sup>369</sup> Personal communication, Mr José María Méndez, June 2016.

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Forty-nine tenement house buildings have been preserved in Puerta de Tierra.<sup>370</sup> (See Figure 19.) The oldest one dates to the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the last one was built during the 1960s. By the time the Méndez Tenement-House Building was inaugurated, the government – mindful of the many problems confronted by the economically strapped and searching to underscore family life (in many tenement house buildings only single rooms were rented to males) – imported from New York the “model tenement” concept, a favorite of reformers.

**Model Tenements**

When the dumbbell tenement-house floor plan was prohibited in New York during the 1870s, the model tenement building took its place as the perfect housing solution for workers.

In fact the first model tenements in America are located in Brooklyn in the neighborhood that's now called Cobble Hill. They're called the Home and Tower Buildings, and they were built by a man named Alfred Tredway White. White was a wealthy businessman who was a member of the Unitarian Church. It was through Unitarian theory that he became very much involved in progressive reform efforts.<sup>371</sup>

The shift from private to government housing is significant and responds to the goal of making forceful and paternalistic transformations to workers' lives. It is also intimately related to the emergence of populist movements around the globe.



Figure 80. El Falansterio Model Tenement Building, Puerta de Tierra Historic District, San Juan de Puerto Rico, 1930s.<sup>372</sup>

While 19<sup>th</sup> century reforms were not necessarily incorporated in the Puerta de Tierra Historic District examples, where most tenement-house buildings made use of the dumbbell model or variations, the New York model tenement concept was behind El Falansterio (listed in the National Register of Historic Places), a government-sponsored project dating to the 1930s. (See Figure 80.) Its name evidences inspiration came from 19<sup>th</sup> century French *phalanstères*, the most famous of which is the one proposed by Charles Fourier. There are differences between tenement-house buildings and El Falansterio, the first and only model tenement constructed in the Puerta de Tierra Historic District. In the first place, the first type was privately owned while El Falansterio was a government housing project. (At a later date,

<sup>370</sup> While two inventories (reconnaissance and intensive levels) were carried out for this nomination, the exact number of tenement-house buildings will always be an unknown due to the fact that some have been transformed and, at present, house different uses making it difficult in some cases to assess their original architectural personality.

<sup>371</sup> Andrew S Dolckart, “Living Together.”

<sup>372</sup> El Falansterio Model Tenement, Puerta de Tierra Historic District, San Juan de Puerto Rico, 1930s, Google, Public domain.

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residents were given the opportunity to buy the apartments.) Anyone having the rent amount stipulated could move into a tenement-house building while at El Falansterio the government vetted residents. Architecturally, private tenement-house buildings were treated as one architectural organism facing the street in traditional manner. El Falansterio, on the other hand, had “interior” communal areas and green spaces that – as per the model tenements ideals – were designed to improve the residents’ quality of life. In fact, El Falansterio made use of the “super block” concept years before public housing project designs incorporated the solution. Use of this solution accentuates the complex’s independence from its context.



*Figure 81.* Tenement-house building, Puerta de Tierra Historic District, San Juan de Puerto Rico, 1922, Block 141 Parcela 08 and Parcela 09, 2017. APC.

Puerta de Tierra Historic District’s only model tenement used a vanguard architectural style (Art Deco) in its design. Most tenement-house buildings, on the other hand, include a potpourri of styles, favoring Classicist influence over all others. (See Figure 81.) Examples of this approach include the buildings sited in: Block 138 Parcela 11; Block 130 Parcela 20; Block 140 Parcela 02; Block 140 Parcela 03; Block 141 Parcelas 08 & 09. In fact, of all existing buildings only a handful (Block 132 Parcela 08) exhibits Art Deco influence. In addition, reinforced concrete was used at El Falansterio for all components of the building, including the roof. Many tenement-house buildings, on the other hand, were constructed of masonry and there are several examples that incorporated zinc sheathing sheets roofs.

Development of Populist political theories account for the government’s involvement in the housing industry during the 1930s, a period framed by two world wars and a serious national recession. Changing perceptions regarding workers’ rights were also responsible for this transformation. Involvement of the local government in workers’ housing issues reflects:

By the mid 1930s the federal government begins to build public housing as well. The Congress finally passes a law that allows the federal government to invest in housing construction. And this was not only to create quality housing but it was during the Depression to create work for architects and construction workers. So the reason why the government got involved in housing was very complex. Creating good housing wasn’t [*sic*] the only reason.<sup>373</sup>

Varied reasons, principally the advent of World War II, limited the number of model tenement buildings to just El Falansterio. After the conflict was over, the American public housing project idea proved to be more influential.

<sup>373</sup> Andrew S Dolckart, “Living Together.”

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**Name of Property****County and State****The Public Housing Projects**

Just as the tenement house buildings and model tenement buildings, public housing or projects<sup>374</sup> – known locally as *caseríos* and *residenciales* – were also imported to the Puerta de Tierra Historic District from the USA. The architectural typology was part of the battle against slums and inhuman living conditions that continued unabated during the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>375</sup> It also reflects growing Populism ideas.<sup>376</sup> Public housing projects, paid and controlled by the government, were symptomatic of the new times, seemingly providing novel solutions to the old issues of workers' living arrangements. Public housing projects were a way for the government to "take charge." From an architectural perspective, the typology is at odds with traditional urban organization.<sup>377</sup> While buildings were relatively usually low (four or five floors high), the size of the precincts was usually out of scale with its urban context. Since there were no interior streets inside the complex, its size and introspection underscored isolation.<sup>378</sup>



Figure 82. Residencial Puerta de Tierra (destroyed), Puerta de Tierra Historic District, San Juan de Puerto Rico, late 1940s.<sup>379</sup>

The Puerta de Tierra Historic District ended up with several *residenciales* organized as super blocks. The Residencial Puerta de Tierra was the first one to be constructed and the first one to be imploded during the 1990s. (See Figure 82.) Built during the 1940s, it was quickly followed by several others. Each one of the three preserved ones – Residencial Parque de San Agustín, Residencial San Antonio and Residencial San Agustín – is influenced by the concept of the super block relating in a limited manner

<sup>374</sup> In Great Britain these conglomerates are known as council homes or council estates.

<sup>375</sup> J A Riis' *How the Other Half Lives: Studied Amongst the Tenements in New York* and his *The Battle with the Slum* are but two examples of the ferocious attacks deployed against inhuman living conditions. J A Riis, *How the Other Half Lives: Studied Amongst the Tenements in New York* Editor Sam Bass Jr (Cambridge: Massachusetts, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1970/1980) and J A Riis, *The Battle with the Slum* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1902).

<sup>376</sup> Populist movements are characterized by: (i) charismatic leaders that lead the way against bourgeoisie economic, social and political control; (ii) agendas to achieve social equality; and (iii) active and vocal participation of the masses. According to experts, Populism emerged more or less simultaneously in Russia and the USA. As the Great Depression underscored the need for government intervention, politicians embraced such ideals. In Puerto Rico, all conditions are met by the 1950s-1960s government vision.

<sup>377</sup> The earliest examples – Williamsburg Houses (located in Brooklyn, New York City and originally known as the Ten Eyck Houses was started in 1936) and Harlem River Houses (sited in Harlem, New York City and dated to the period from 1930 to 1937) – were characterized by the novel approach.

<sup>378</sup> "Williamsburg Houses are set an angle to the street, and if it to say the street is not a friendly space to be. Instead, you don't want to be on the street, you want to be inside in the protected core of the complex, which was a vast open park with trees and benches and playgrounds, sunny places and shady places, a really delightful place to be." Andrew S Dolckart, "Living Together."

<sup>379</sup> Residencial Puerta de Tierra, Puerta de Tierra Historic District, San Juan de Puerto Rico, late 1940s, destroyed, Google, Public domain.

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to the district's 19<sup>th</sup> century gridiron or its architecture. Each one is considered a contributing district of the Puerta de Tierra Historic District.

From 1950 until the 1960s the government created approximately 15,000 subsidized living units,<sup>380</sup> housed in this type of precincts with an unhealthy and dangerous concentration in the Puerta de Tierra Historic District. Residencial Puerta de Tierra's planned destruction demonstrates how ill conceived the government solution was. Another example of the fracas is the fact that the two Las Gladiolas towers, sited next to the Residencial Puerta de Tierra, were destroyed several decades ago due to the massive social problems they came to shelter.<sup>381</sup> Evidence of how public project strategies were viewed by most is seen in the negative connotation that arose regarding the previously neutral word *caserío*. In yet another misguided attempt, the government decided it would alter people's perception by changing the name to *residenciales*. On occasion, politicians are unaware that a rose by any other name is still a rose.

Although the American model served as inspiration, in the Puerta de Tierra Historic District the projects' buildings were placed much closer, resulting in tighter and more claustrophobic organizations and seriously limiting natural illumination, ventilation and privacy.<sup>382</sup> The relatively *ad hoc* site plan present in the historic district examples evidences more interest in bird-eye aesthetics than in convenience. Innovations to the American type were inserted. One of these was the small balcony present in all units that provided an outdoor place from where to enjoy a sense of communal life. A second one was the open staircase that led to the different floors in each building. Whether stemming from client's stipulations (the government) or scant concern, limited creativity is the hallmark of these solutions. The government used the public housing project concept as a Populist instrument that, unfortunately, accomplished very little of its original agenda.

The preserved three examples are of enormous relevance as icons of a way of life, an architectural typology and urban arrangement that marked the period from the end of the 1940s until today. The Puerta de Tierra Historic District served as laboratory for experimentation with this foreign architectural typology. This fact adds an additional layer of historic significance. Although small and uncomfortable, the units were a far cry from the slums dwellings many had inhabited previously. Most importantly and even if the government failed, the realization that Puerto Ricans living conditions are a political issue was first faced here. Finally, it allowed the historic district to become the birthing place of citizens' dependence on government help.

The Puerta de Tierra Historic District's cultural significance as per Criterion C is the result of varied stages and multiple periods that started in 1519 when authorization to abandon Caparra was granted by the crown. Nevertheless, there is no doubt the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the district's fourth post-1519 development stage, left an indelible mark upon the personality of the district since a large percent of its contributing properties date to this period.

<sup>380</sup> Roberto W Stevens, "Los arrabales de San Juan: Una perspectiva histórica," p 180.

<sup>381</sup> The situation paralleled the Pruitt-Igoe Residential Complex (St Louis, Missouri) situation. Built in 1956 and hailed as a model project, it was destroyed in 1972 due to the infamously terrible living conditions it sheltered by the time of its implosion.

<sup>382</sup> It is instructive to compare the Williamsburg and the destroyed Residencial de Puerta de Tierra regarding this aspect. While in the first complex twenty buildings were sited throughout twelve city blocks, the Residencial de Puerta de Tierra included 24 zigzagging buildings crammed into one super block smaller than New York City ones. The Harlem housing complex, in turn, had an area of nine acres two-thirds of which was reserved for green areas.

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PART FIVE  
MODERN PUERTO RICO

**Puerta de Tierra Historic District's Fifth Post-1519 Stage of Development  
(1950-2000)**

The Puerta de Tierra Historic District's fifth urban and architectural stage of development starts after World War II when the sector was chosen as standard-bearer for Puerto Rican tourism and high-end living. Following the trend established during the 1930s with the construction of the Hotel Normandie, the beach area to the east of the Art Deco hotel was chosen as site for the Hotel Caribe Hilton, Puerto Rico's tourism flagship. The easternmost sector close to the hotel developed during the period from 1950 to 2000. In spite of their variety, office buildings and assorted apartment buildings became icons of architectural theories such as "Form follow function." and "Less is more." All designers of the period abandoned historicist approaches in favor of the sleek abstract lines characteristic of the aesthetics known as Modernism and International Style. American educated locals designed many of the buildings.

The Hotel Caribe Hilton is the best example of the new approach. Designed during the early 1950s by the local architectural firm Toro-Ferrer,<sup>383</sup> the block of angled balconies was masterfully contrasted to the open first level. (See Photograph 033.) The famed Oriental [*sic*] garden with its asymmetrical lake and curved bridge leading to a small pagoda-like structure provided an air of exoticism which contrasted with the tropical ocean views surrounding the site and the 18<sup>th</sup> century Fortín de San Jerónimo. Remnants of the first line of defensive were also incorporated to the grounds design. During the 1960s, a wing was added to the hotel and a few years later a taller one was constructed that dramatically anchors the composition. Both are contributing components of the Hotel Caribe Hilton District since they are unique architectural examples, in their own right and as part of the precinct. (In recent years, yet another wing was added. It is considered noncontributing for it is dated after the end year of this nomination.) The intimate relationship with the glorious seascape, structures belonging to the first defensive line and the malecón-like sectors rapidly became part of a fabled man-made landscape that has framed innumerable celebrations seeking the ultimate luxurious "tropical" hotel. The open character of the lobby, the screeching parrots and wandering peacocks all lend an air of exoticism to the government's intent of transforming the island into a tourism paradise.

Although the Club Náutico de San Juan (founded in 1930) had a building and marina before World War II during the 1951 renovation work transformed it into one of Modernism's jewels in the Puerta de Tierra Historic District. (See Photograph 032.) Reinforced concrete cantilevers and brise soleil are used to create an asymmetrical composition that serves as the historic district's northeast exit terminus. The building's extending terraces and piers seem to embrace the water space between the islet and isle. In addition to the building's contributing status, the Club Náutico de San Juan's marina serves as mnemonic artifact of the secondary port that existed here during the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

Of special importance was the construction of the neighboring Supreme Court Building (listed in the National Register of Historic Places) in the Luis Muñoz Rivera Park during the 1950s. Designed by the eponymous Toro y Ferré architectural firm the building became the terminus of the central spine and entrance portal into Puerta de Tierra and San Juan Islet. Its presence underscored the relevance of the urban organization devised during the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century for now two of the three political powers (legislative and judicial) were represented in the central spine. The building's delicate forms

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<sup>383</sup> The distinguished firm of Toro y Ferré authored dozens of paradigmatic buildings associated to Modernism. The classic *Architecture: Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* by Henry-Russell Hitchcock (The Yale University Press Pelican History of Art) mentions their outstanding work.

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underscore the pilotis that allow views of the Parque Muñoz Rivera. The sculptural effect created by its centrally located helical stair and segmental dome adds an air of sophistication to the composition.

The 1970 Edificio Caribe exemplifies the intersection of Modernism ideals with the Puerta de Tierra Historic District's traditional decorative emphasis. (See Photograph 036.) Covered by a mosaic of monumental proportions that extends several floors high, *Las antillas* and *Flora*, created by Cuban artist Cundo Bermúdez (1914-2008), the sleek glass tower's core is expressed on the outside as a block. Contrast between the glazing and the work of art achieves an inspired level that continues the decades long historic district's tradition of buildings treated as artistic jewels.

A transformation was initiated at this time when high-end residential buildings were constructed. This perspective was a completely novel one for – with the exception of the military bases domestic units – the Puerta de Tierra Historic District was basically the place where workers lived. With time, it has become obvious these examples were not exceptions but the first in a trend: appropriation of the historic district in order for the more powerful (financially speaking) to enjoy the unique landscape. (See Photograph 034.) Domestic examples vary from three stories high to high rises. The first type (Block 146 Parcela 03 and Block 146 Parcela 04) emphasizes balconies as the most relevant compositional elements. Façades are organized symmetrically. No added decoration is used in keeping with Modernism dicta. Reinforced concrete was used in all examples; on occasion, brise soleil elements made of the same material are inserted. The San Luis and Torre de la Reina condominiums, both designed during the 1960s, best represent the second type. As was the case of the lower density examples, these two condominiums were meant to cater to the high middle class.

The contributing Condominio San Luis is a masterpiece designed by René O. Ramírez and built during the early 1960s. (See Photograph 035.) Reinforced concrete pilotis<sup>384</sup> support the body of the building that exhibits, multiple angles and cantilevered sections. The architect was known for his use of reinforced concrete balcony balustrades that double as brise soleil. Like the Hotel Caribe Hilton and the Edificio Caribe, the trio continued historic district's tradition of elegant architecture.

During the same period, the Torre de la Reina condominium was constructed in 1969 on a lot where petroleum storage services had been located next to the port. (See Figure 56.) The building sits close to the Batería de Isabel II facing the Parque Muñoz Rivera along its south side. (A seated park sculpture of Queen Isabel La Católica inspired the name of the apartment tower.) Several floors of offices create a two-story block with an arched façade upon which the living units tower section sits.<sup>385</sup> As is the case with most examples of this architectural typology in the island, the apartments' balconies are key components in terms of the façades' organization. As is the case of the San Luis condominium, both towers are contributing for they exemplify, in a creative and distinguished manner, the transformations experienced by the historic district during the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

In a similar manner as the Art Deco and the International Style intersected in some designs, the second expression fused with other currents during the 1960s. One example of this aesthetic collusion is the building sheltering the Puerto Rico Departamento de Hacienda, also by Toro-Ferrer Arquitectos. (See

<sup>384</sup> Pilotis are columns, piers or stilts that support a building above ground or water allowing for a separation to exist between the surface and the building.

<sup>385</sup> This lower block not only provides a semi-public loggia with office and retail spaces towards the main thoroughfare and the park but, stylistically speaking, the use of a classical elements as emblems of modern design also represents what has been recently argued as "a polemical entanglement" with Puerto Rico's Spanish colonial building tradition. MPS Architecture of the 1960s in Puerto Rico, 1958-1972, pages 21-30.

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Photograph 037.) In this particular case, so-called Brutalism<sup>386</sup> aesthetics were incorporated to the composition. International Style characteristics include the raised main body on pilotis-like elements that also frame the main entrance, a must of this expression meant to underscore the purity of the geometric parallelepiped resting on top.<sup>387</sup> Brutalism influence is evidenced in the use of exposed reinforced concrete and the pre-fabricated *brise-soleil*<sup>388</sup> curtain wall surrounding all upper floors of the building. The ponderous and secretive effect provided by this treatment underscores the style's principal goal: to serve in *architecture parlante* manner, permitting buildings to silently "speak" of their social role. The reclusive and introverted nature of the Departamento de Hacienda was interpreted (still is) by many as symbolic of the substantial and inevitable role it plays in the lives of all.<sup>389</sup>

<sup>386</sup> Le Corbusier first used the term *brut*, French for "raw," to describe the effect of exposed reinforced concrete (*bréton brut*). Reyner Banham, a British architectural critic, used "Brutalism" to identify the aesthetics.

<sup>387</sup> Made famous by Le Corbusier and Mies van der Rohe (Unité d'Habitation in Marseilles and Lake Shore Drive Apartments in Chicago, respectively, are the best examples of the use of this solution) during the 1950s, the theoretical approach was used to underscore the clean-cut lines of the building.

<sup>388</sup> Le Corbusier is the paradigmatic expert regarding the use of *brise-soleil*. These perforated louver-like elements were used for shutting out excessive sunlight. Obviously, they also had an aesthetic role within the composition. Architect Henry Klumb in the island was known for his interest in this solution.

<sup>389</sup> A comparison between the 1960s Departamento de Hacienda and the 19<sup>th</sup> century Real Hacienda Building in the Old San Juan Historic District sheds light on interesting aspects. While both designs are examples of state of the art architectural aesthetics (whether dating to the 19<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup> centuries), the ultra-elegant Neo-Cinquecento *sanjuanero* building depends on millennia-old traditional elements, such as engaged Composite pilasters. Its decorative elements offer a different kind of "discourse" reminding most not of brutal force but of Classical elegance. The fact that the architectural orders, symbolic of humans – hence their consideration as *opera di mano* – are located in the noble floors supported by the pseudo-rusticated base – representing the *opera di natura* or work of nature – silently dictates the "triumph" of humans or civilized behavior. Myriad balconies open the building to its immediate context implying a transparency missing from the Departamento de Hacienda secretive and introverted architectural treatment.

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National Park Service / National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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## 9. Major Bibliographic References

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## National Park Service / National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Puerta de Tierra Historic District

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San Juan, Puerto Rico

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
previously listed in the National Register
previously determined eligible by the National Register
designated a National Historic Landmark
recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #
recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey #

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
Other State agency
Federal agency
Local government
University
Other (Name of repository)

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Approximately 4419.89 acres USGS Quadrangle San Juan

(Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates. Delete the other.)

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or X NAD 1983

Table with 4 columns: Index, Zone, Easting, Northing. Contains 11 rows of UTM coordinate data.

United States Department of the Interior

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14	Zone	19	Easting	807593	Northing	2043555
15	Zone	19	Easting	807493	Northing	2043553
16	Zone	19	Easting	806854	Northing	2043699
17	Zone	19	Easting	806084	Northing	2043699
18	Zone	19	Easting	805980	Northing	2043746
19	Zone	19	Easting	805565	Northing	2043911
20	Zone	19	Easting	805250	Northing	2043917
21	Zone	19	Easting	805288	Northing	2043657
22	Zone	19	Easting	804852	Northing	2043686
23	Zone	19	Easting	804782	Northing	2043904
24	Zone	19	Easting	804784	Northing	2043904
25	Zone	19	Easting	805044	Northing	2044082
26	Zone	19	Easting	805049	Northing	2044169
27	Zone	19	Easting	805205	Northing	2044163
28	Zone	19	Easting	805205	Northing	2044220
29	Zone	19	Easting	805586	Northing	2044332

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The northern boundary starts at the Plaza de San Juan Bautista and runs along San Juan Islet’s Atlantic Ocean shore. At the easternmost point of the islet it moves the south until it reaches the northern most bridge connecting islet and island. At this point, it changes direction towards the east until it touches the shore of the island of Puerto Rico. Moving south until it reaches the second bridge south side, it then moves in westerly direction until it reaches the islet again. From this point onwards, it continues along the western and south shores of the islet until it reaches the Edificio Ochoa west side. At this point until it reaches the Plaza de San Juan the border follows the boundary of the Old San Juan Historic District.

**Boundary Justification**

The Puerta de Tierra Historic District comprises all the land within San Juan Islet that is not part of the Old San Juan Historic District (a National Register of Historic Places and National Historic Landmark historic district). The sector has been known by this name since the first half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century when a fortification wall and entrance portal into the city (Puerta de Santiago also known as Puerta de Tierra; destroyed during the 1890s) was built separating the islet into two. The boundaries of the Puerta de Tierra Historic District correspond to all the land that was not inside Old San Juan’s defensive ring.

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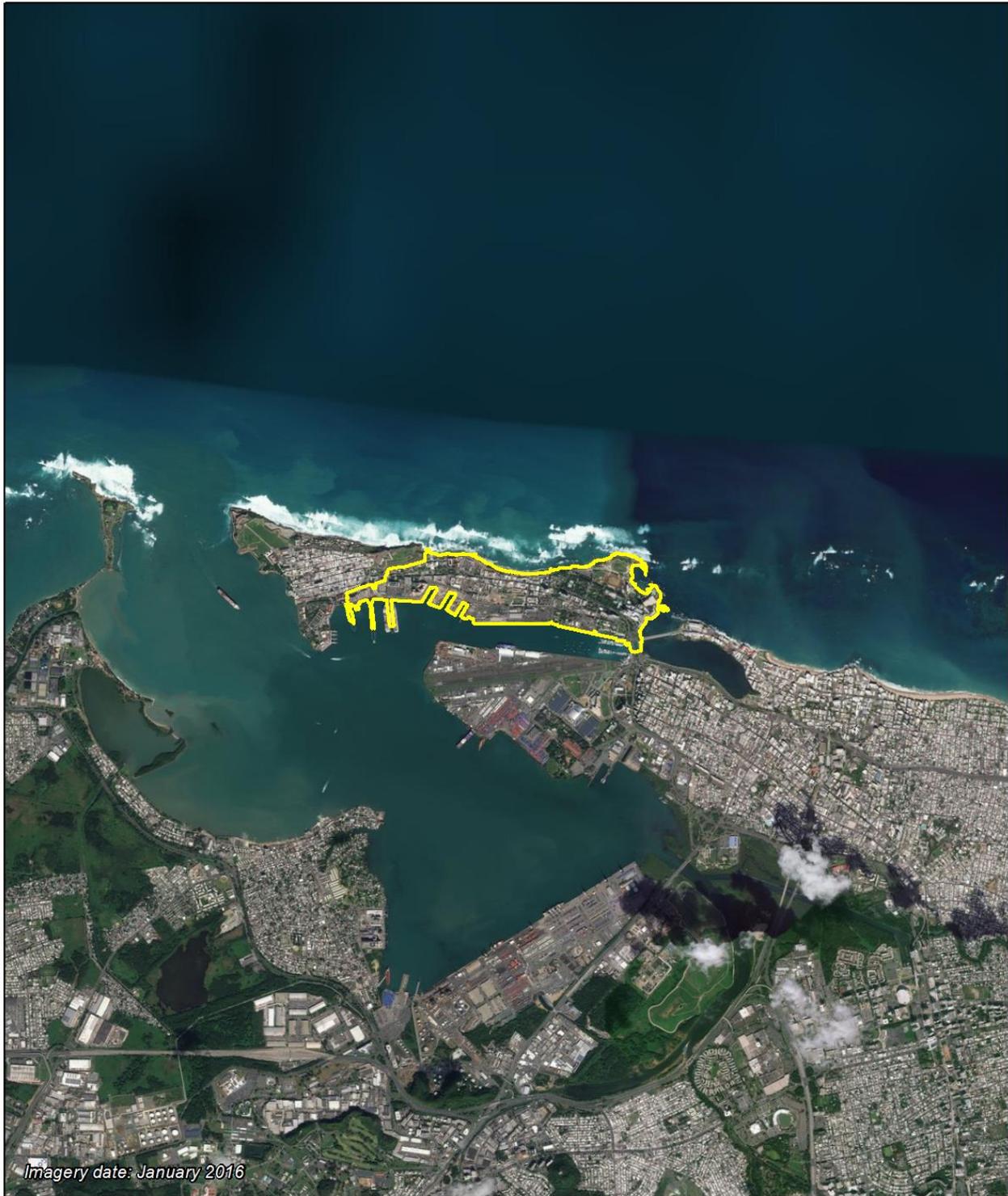
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Puerta de Tierra Historic District

San Juan, Puerto Rico

Name of Property

County and State



Imagery date: January 2016



**Puerta de Tierra Historic District /  
Distrito Histórico de Puerta de Tierra**

San Juan, Puerto Rico

1:50,000



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Miles

United States Department of the Interior

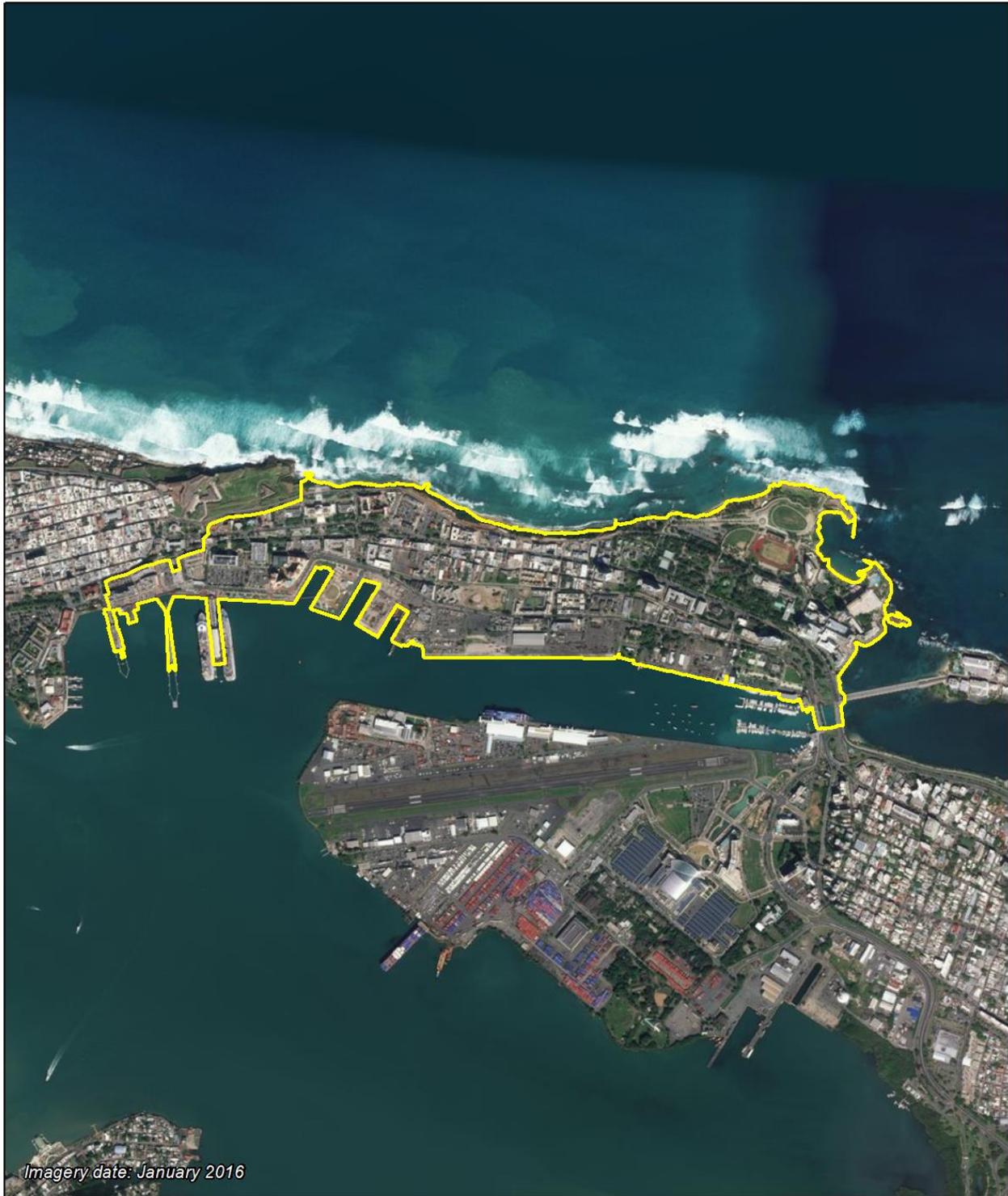
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Puerta de Tierra Historic District

San Juan, Puerto Rico

Name of Property

County and State



Imagery date: January 2016



**Puerta de Tierra Historic District /  
Distrito Histórico de Puerta de Tierra**

San Juan, Puerto Rico

1:20,000 

0 500 1,000  Feet

United States Department of the Interior

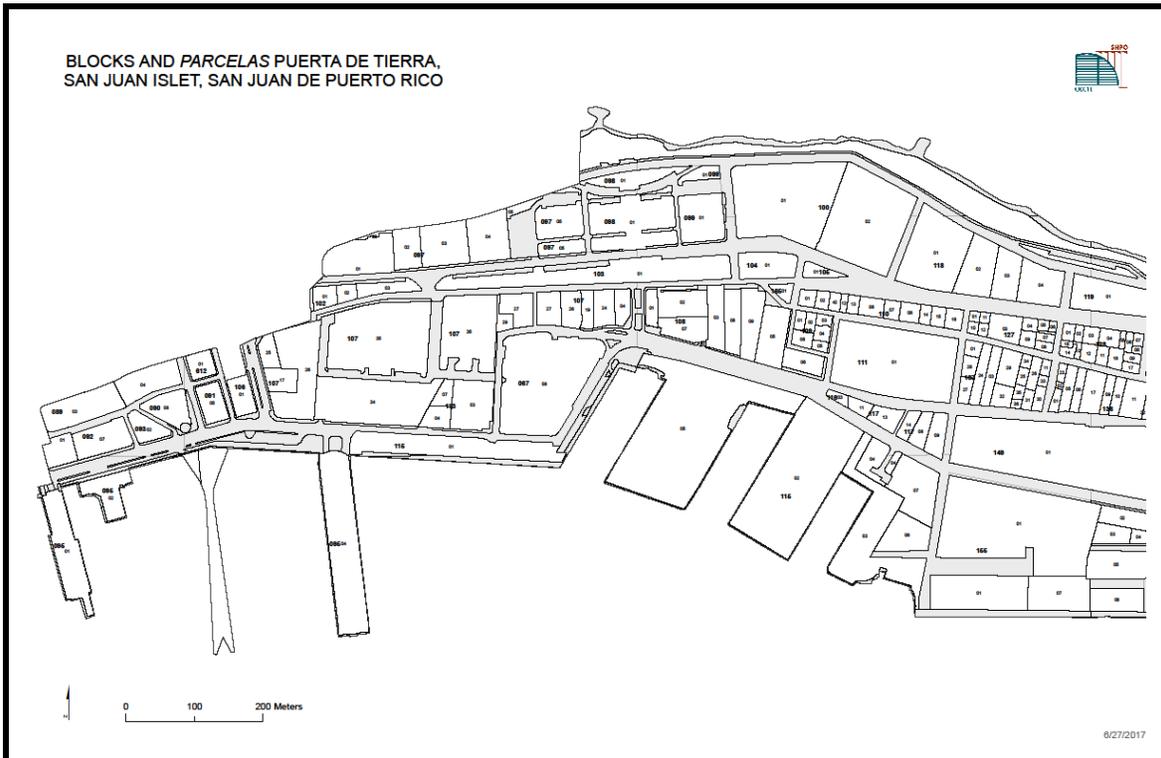
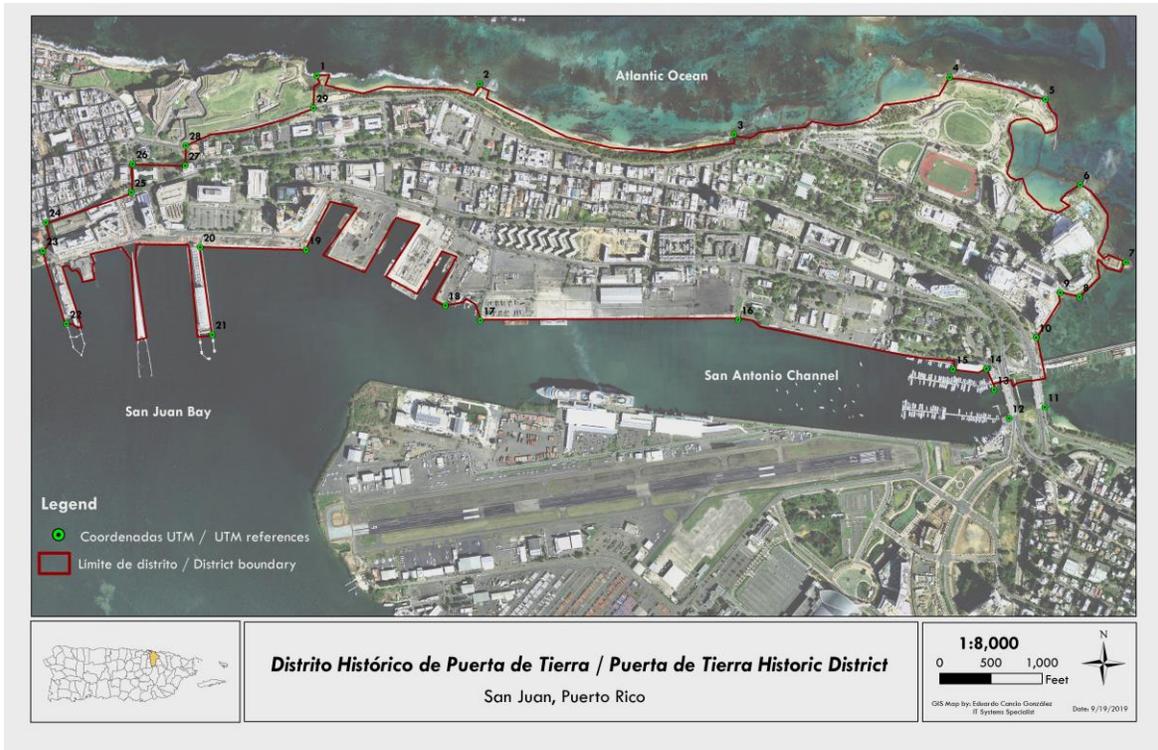
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Puerta de Tierra Historic District

San Juan, Puerto Rico

Name of Property

County and State



United States Department of the Interior

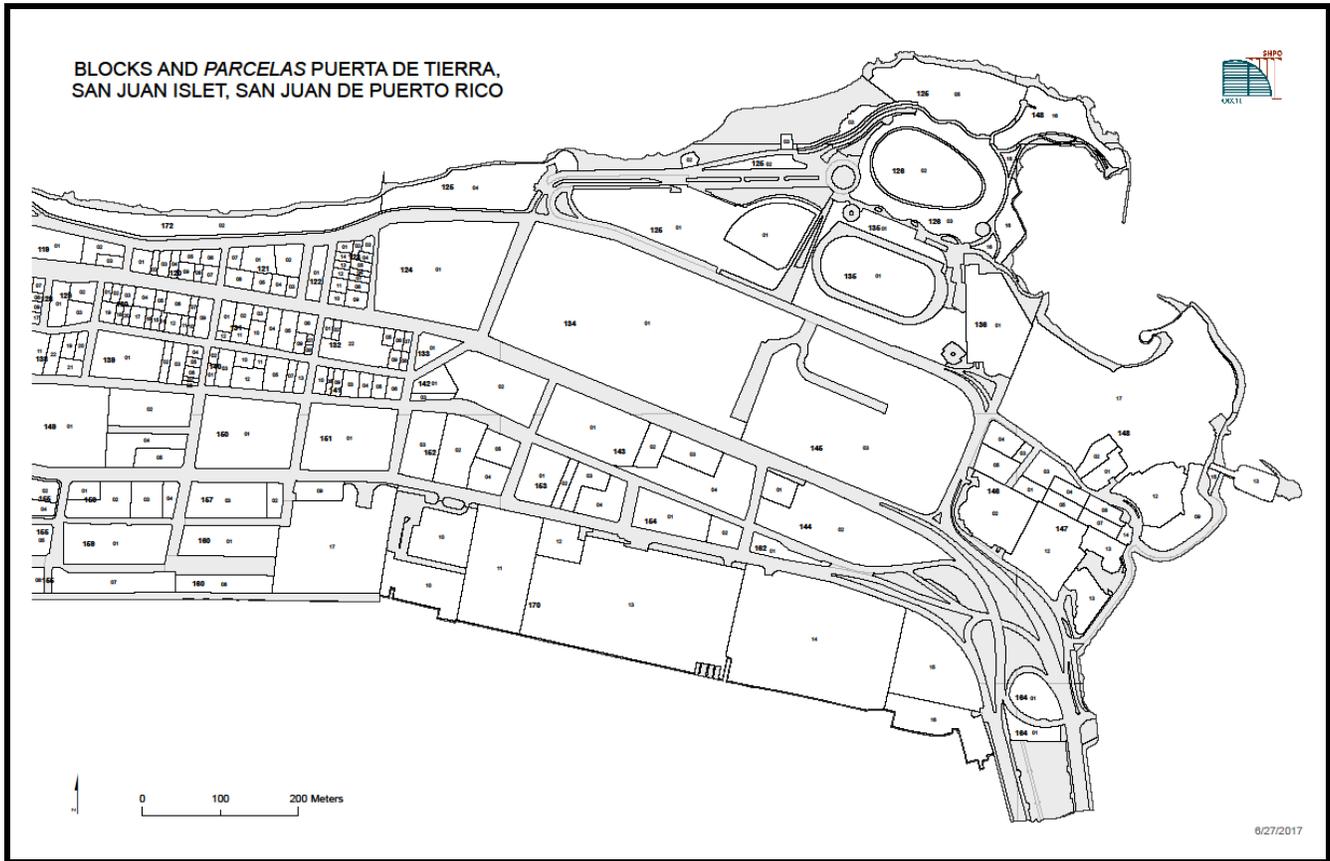
National Park Service / National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Puerta de Tierra Historic District

San Juan, Puerto Rico

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County and State



11. Form Prepared By

Arleen Pabón-Charneco PhD JD / Revised by PRSHPO. José Marull del Río, historian, and Santiago Gala Aguilera, architect

organization PRSHPO date September 23, 2019

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email arleenpabon@yahoo.com; jmarull@prshpo.pr.gov; sgala@prshpo.pr.gov

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minutes series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

United States Department of the Interior

## National Park Service / National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Puerta de Tierra Historic District

San Juan, Puerto Rico

**Name of Property****County and State**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

**Photo Log**Name of Property Puerta de Tierra Historic DistrictCity or Vicinity San Juan County San Juan State Puerto RicoPhotographer Dr. Arleen Pabon-Charneco Date Photographed June 29 – July 6, 2017

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera.

San Antonio Channel  
Puerta de Tierra Historic District  
July 2, 2017  
View from San Juan Islet towards the island of Puerto Rico.  
001.

Port District  
Puerta de Tierra Historic District  
July 2, 2017  
View towards west.  
002.

Pyramid Products Inc. Office building, Port District  
Puerta de Tierra Historic District  
July 3, 2017  
View towards southeast.  
003.

Fortín de Tajamar, Recreational District  
Puerta de Tierra Historic District  
July 3, 2017  
Aerial view from the south.  
004.

Fortín Isabel II, part of the second defensive line  
Puerta de Tierra Historic District  
July 2, 2017  
View towards the north.  
005.

El Capitolio de Puerto Rico District  
Puerta de Tierra Historic District  
July 2, 2017  
View towards the north. The sculpture of *Victory* is dated to the 1920s. El Capitolio de Puerto Rico (listed in the NRHP) is in the back.  
006.

YMCA  
Puerta de Tierra Historic District

United States Department of the Interior

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Puerta de Tierra Historic District

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July 3, 2017

Photograph taken from the southeast.  
007.

Primera Iglesia Bautista de Puerta de Tierra Inc.

Puerta de Tierra Historic District

July 2, 2017

Photograph taken from northeast.  
008.

Iglesia Evangelica Luterana de San Pablo

Puerta de Tierra Historic District

July 3, 2017

Photograph taken from northeast.  
009.

Iglesia Evangelica Luterana de San Pablo

Puerta de Tierra Historic District

July 6, 2017

Stained glass window. Photograph taken inside the church looking towards the east.  
010.

Asilo de Ancianos Nuestra Señora de la Providencia District

Puerta de Tierra Historic District

June 29, 2017

Photograph taken from southeast.  
011.

Asilo de Ancianos Nuestra Señora de la Providencia (Chapel)

Puerta de Tierra Historic District

June 29, 2017

Photograph taken inside the chapel looking towards the north.  
012.

Calle San Agustín #352

Puerta de Tierra Historic District

July 2, 2017

Tenement House Building. Photograph taken from the northwest.  
013.

US Department of Commerce Weather Bureau building

Puerta de Tierra Historic District

June 29, 2017

Main façade, south façade.  
014.

Cruz Roja Building

Puerta de Tierra Historic District

July 2, 2017

Cruz Roja Building in the center flanked by the Departamento de la Familia (east) and Mellado Parsons (west) buildings. All three are aligned along the south side of the Avenida Constitución.  
015.

Ateneo Puertorriqueño

Puerta de Tierra Historic District

United States Department of the Interior

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Puerta de Tierra Historic District

San Juan, Puerto Rico

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July 2, 2017

South façade facing north side of the Avenida de la Constitución.  
016.

Ateneo Puertorriqueño

Puerta de Tierra Historic District

July 3, 2017

Seated sculpture of Ramón Emeterio Betances. South façade facing north side of the Avenida de la Constitución.  
Contributing object.  
017.

Puerto Rico Medical Arts Building

Puerta de Tierra Historic District

July 3, 2017

Principal façade facing north; building sited on south side of the Avenida Constitución.  
018.

Avenida Constitucion #166 Building

Puerta de Tierra Historic District

June 29, 2017

North façade; building sited on south side of the Avenida Constitución.  
019.

Smallwood Building

Puerta de Tierra Historic District

June 29, 2017

South west corner and south façade; building sited on north side of the Avenida Constitución.  
020.

Calle San Agustín #402

Puerta de Tierra Historic District

July 2, 2017

Tenement House Building. Northwest corner of building.  
021.

Calle San Agustín #351

Puerta de Tierra Historic District

July 6, 2017

Tenement House Building. South and principal façade of building.  
022.

US Engineer Office building

Puerta de Tierra Historic District

July 3, 2017

North façade of building.  
023.

US Naval Radio Station/ Casa Cuna

Puerta de Tierra Historic District

July 2, 2017

South side of complex facing north side of Avenida Constitución.  
024.

Departamento de la Familia Building

Puerta de Tierra Historic District

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July 2, 2017

North façade of building sited on south side of Avenida Constitución.  
025.

Parque Sixto Escobar

Puerta de Tierra Historic District

July 2, 2017

Principal façade of complex facing east.  
026.

Moregón Tenement House Building

Puerta de Tierra Historic District

July 2, 2017

Principal façade of building facing north on south side of Avenida Constitución.  
027.

Calle San Agustín #65

Puerta de Tierra Historic District

July 3, 2017

Tenement House Building. North façade.  
028.

Avenida Muñoz Rivera #302-304

Puerta de Tierra Historic District

June 29, 2017

Tenement House Building. North façade.  
029.

Calle Matías Fernández #52

Puerta de Tierra Historic District

July 2, 2017

Tenement House Building. Looking northwest.  
030.

Calle San Juan Bautista (aka Raphy Leavitt) #9

Puerta de Tierra Historic District

July 2, 2017

Tenement House Building. West (principal) façade.  
031.

Club Náutico de San Juan District

Puerta de Tierra Historic District

July 3, 2017

North façade.  
032.

Caribe Hilton Hotel District

Puerta de Tierra Historic District

West façade of historic district.

July 2, 2017

033.

Avenida Muñoz Rivera #51

Puerta de Tierra Historic District

July 2, 2017

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Apartment Building. West façade of building.  
034.

Condominio San Luis  
Puerta de Tierra Historic District  
July 2, 2017  
East façade of building.  
035.

Caribe Building  
Puerta de Tierra Historic District  
July 2, 2017  
North façade of building.  
036.

Departamento de Hacienda District  
Puerta de Tierra Historic District  
July 2, 2017  
North façade of district  
037.

Mellado Parsons Building  
Puerta de Tierra Historic District  
July 2, 2017  
North façade; building sited on south side of Avenida Constitución.  
038.

Condominio Torre de la Reina  
Puerta de Tierra Historic District  
July 2, 2017  
North and west sides of the building.  
039.

Residencial San Antonio District  
Puerta de Tierra Historic District  
July 2, 2017  
South side of the precinct.  
040.

Restaurant Cathay  
Puerta de Tierra Historic District  
July 2, 2017  
North and east sides of the building.  
041.

Avenida Constitución #302 Building  
Puerta de Tierra Historic District  
July 2, 2017  
North façade of building.  
042.

Street View Avenida Constitución  
Puerta de Tierra Historic District  
July 2, 2017.

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Smallwood Building on forefront right, Avenida Constitución #302 Building on forefront left and San Agustín Church (listed in NRHP) on background right. Looking west.  
043.

Street View Avenida Constitución  
Puerta de Tierra Historic District  
July 2, 2017  
YMCA Building is seen on forefront left. Looking east.  
044.

Street View Avenida Constitución  
Puerta de Tierra Historic District  
July 2, 2017  
Smallwood Building on forefront left. Looking east  
045.

Street View Paseo de Covadonga  
Puerta de Tierra Historic District  
July 2, 2017  
The Paseo de Covadonga Street aligns with the 19<sup>th</sup> century promenade known as the Paseo de Puerta de Tierra (aka Paseo de Covadonga). The Plaza de Rafael Hernández is seen on the forefront right while the 1930s *Sevilla Court* Tenement House Building appears on the left. The plaza is approximately located where the 19<sup>th</sup> century Plaza de la Lealtad, terminus of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Paseo, was originally sited. Looking west.  
046.

Street View Paseo de Covadonga  
Puerta de Tierra Historic District  
July 3, 2017  
Three contributing 1930s buildings align along the Paseo de Covadonga Street (Paseo de Covadonga 54, Paseo de Covadonga 52 and Paseo de Covadonga 50) south side. Looking west.  
047.

Street View Avenida Muñoz Rivera  
Puerta de Tierra Historic District  
June 29, 2017  
At the forefront left is the Iglesia Evangelica Luterana de San Pablo and the Avenida Muñoz Rivera #302-304 Tenement House building; in the background is the Iglesia de San Agustín (listed in the NRHP). The 1920s Avenida lowers significantly as it crosses over the El Trincherón. On the right is the Atlantic Ocean shore and the Recreational District. Looking west.  
048.

Street View Calle San Agustín  
Puerta de Tierra Historic District  
July 2, 2017  
A number of contributing tenement house buildings align on both sides of this 19<sup>th</sup> century thoroughfare. Looking west.  
049.

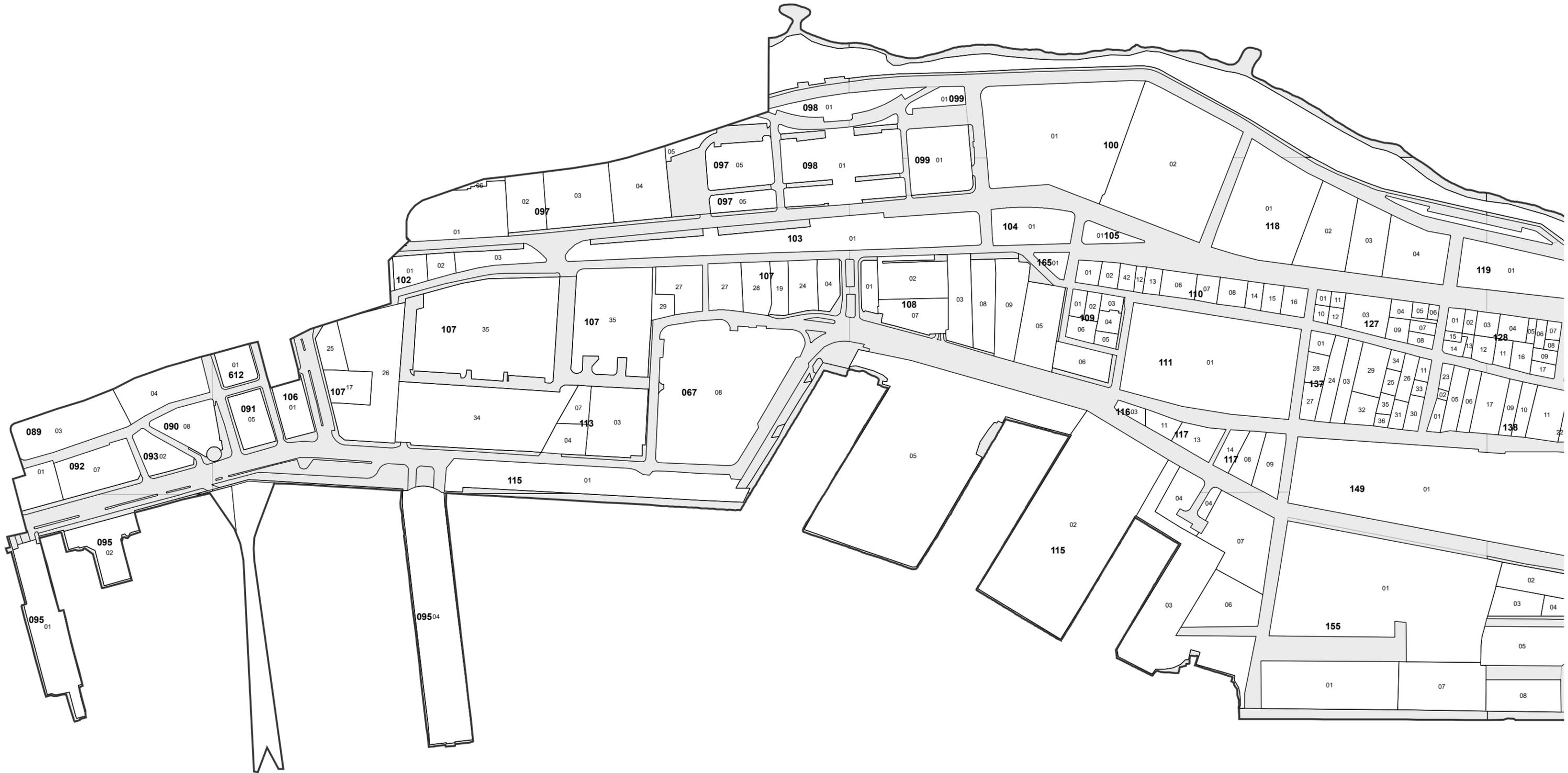
**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

# BLOCKS AND PARCELAS PUERTA DE TIERRA, SAN JUAN ISLET, SAN JUAN DE PUERTO RICO

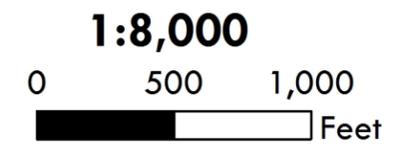


# BLOCKS AND PARCELAS PUERTA DE TIERRA, SAN JUAN ISLET, SAN JUAN DE PUERTO RICO





***Distrito Histórico de Puerta de Tierra / Puerta de Tierra Historic District***  
 San Juan, Puerto Rico



GIS Map by: Eduardo Cancio González  
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 Date: 9/19/2019