

# Making Historical Archaeology Postcolonial

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## Introduction

How do we deal with the cynicism behind the politics of both intellectual liberals and conservatives today? How do we make an archaeological science that is empirical, yet also is believable to people who think they know that most of the knowledge that is available might not be believable?

How do we approach the realities of our lives today and say something that is not flimsy and is not readily absorbed by a society so cynical that our work has no impact?

How, in other words, can we be outside ideology for very long? There may be a way. We must try to find one, and we can refer to several scholars in our midst whose work helps us.

I refer to the struggle in historical archaeology to move our excavated data beyond the point where scientific discussions of it are tedious and appear on the surface to be unconnected to important problems. Our struggle is accentuated by newspaper and television accounts of archaeological discoveries, which are presented as captivating, pertinent, and essential to knowledge. This disconnection is between what many of us find to be things so small

they should remain forgotten and our exclusion from the kind of archaeology that makes news.

Slavoj Žižek (1989) helps us to deal with our sense of objects. It is simple enough to begin with the agreed upon assumption that we see objects as being apart from ourselves. We all believe this until we read postmodern thought and realize that the measures we have and use to understand that which is outside ourselves organizes and defines the world. They do, but they also create value for the world. So by this date in anthropology, we are almost all used to the idea that we as analysts have a substantial role in identifying and interpreting data and thus conclusions. This used to come as something of a revelation, as well as a conundrum, because we see objects, both things and conclusions, as separate from ourselves. There is nothing new here, and I mention this just to get started.

But how separate are we as individual scientists from the objects we work for? Those objects tend to be of ultimate value: scientific truth, referenced journals or peer publications, science news, the government regulatory agency, museums, the university, the anthropology or archaeology department, and ultimately, the state or some institution independent of the object, but whose legal existence ultimately depends on it. We believe in these objects. They are apart from ourselves, embody our highest values, our greatest goods, and we believe they have a life apart from us. We also assume them to have a greater knowledge about the world than we ourselves possess as individuals.

This definition of object contains the assumption that explains our relationship to the state and tells

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us about its source of authority. We see the state as apart from us and as an object of our attention. We also assume, as Žižek (1989) notes, that the state understands us and is sympathetic to us. We attribute great knowledge, even prescience, to the state and its institutions. This transference of knowledge and understanding is false insofar as knowledge and understanding are based on facts, but, nonetheless, is so as a tendency among object relations. Žižek says that this transference relationship is the initial and lasting basis for the state's authority.

It is this tie that Althusser writes about as ideology, and it would be antecedent to his definitions of givens and taken-for-granted that hide the operations of the state. Althusser's notions help us to understand why we see ourselves as independent of the state, but Žižek precedes this with his idea, borrowed from Freud, that humans begin with unconscious ties that grant not only independence to objects, but also create belief that objects may be above the ordinary senses—they may be sublime. That is, they know more than we do. I would like to challenge these assumptions so that we clarify our true relationship to objects and, thus, to changes in our relationship to authority(ies).

I argue that the problem for us as historical archaeologists is to define how the objects that we see, quite incorrectly, as apart from ourselves, actually work. These objects can be found more easily, using Foucault (1979), who helps us identify the routines of capitalism and colonialism, some of which are called technologies of the self. Foucault means the methods of counting, reckoning time and space, reading, printing, speaking, all forms of map-making, music, using precedent, labeling gender, age, race, and routines for inflicting punishment. We need to see heritage as an object of the state, and the names and directions of our emotions, particularly regarding the past, as our object and problem.

### **Matthew Johnson and the Archaeology of Capitalism**

Since the early 1990s, Matthew Johnson (1993, 1996, 2006) has been an important voice for general thought about historical archaeology in

England. Johnson (1996) solved three problems that bedeviled a field founded, defined, and dominated by North Americans, but which has now spread and is vital in South Africa, Canada, Ireland, and Australia. First, Johnson identified a large range of material culture that could be analyzed by a historical archaeologist. Second, he moved historical archaeology's subject matter from the European colonies into Europe. Third, he focused historical archaeology directly on capitalism.

Like a few other archaeologists, Johnson saw the three-dimensionality of things somewhat differently from North American historical archaeologists. He was not bothered by whether something was broken or whole, and also saw a map and an illustration as part of, not as a supplement to, his subject matter. Whole houses, not just foundations, and whole landscapes, not just backyard dumps and privy holes, became his subject matter. Just as Deetz (1977, 1996) made no conceptual difference between gravestones, dishes, and house floor plans, Johnson built an analysis of early modern England out of all things that transformed English late medieval society.

The founding of historical archaeology in North America included several definitions but, most prominently, it was directed toward European expansion or European colonization. The aim was to take on the worldwide, and therefore universal, effects of Europe's domination of the globe. This definition of historical archaeology did not include studying Europe itself.

To change this, Johnson focused on the transformation of the populace, the countryside, the economy, and the world of work and family (including religion) in England. He called this study in English culture the "archaeology of capitalism," by which he meant the organization of society, including how people saw each other and themselves. Therefore, he worked at understanding the same world in which David Hurst Thomas's Spanish missions and Stanley South's Spanish forts existed. He dealt with the apparatus of using land, buildings, maps, religion, families, and individuals to create productive, early modern workers. He did what Deetz (1977) had done for New England, but Johnson had a far clearer eye for economic and political consequences. He reached this position by using

the principles of E.P. Thompson and Foucault and concepts linked to Marx. Johnson is not a leftist thinker himself, but I am not misrepresenting him in my brief characterization.

Although Johnson never used the term “internal colonialism,” the analytical result he achieved is the same. He showed that the processes of class, work, industry, and profit making—as these were expressed through housing, land ownership, machinery, and table manners—were not different from those used in colonial North America, Australia, North Africa, the Caribbean, or South Africa. So Europe, therefore, was a part of the subject matter of historical archaeology, because what happened there became both the point of origin and the practice field for what happened in each and every colony of Europe.

Johnson saw context, meaning, behavior, impact, habits, and routines—or, as Foucault (1979) put it, the technologies of the self—as central to our study. Even though Foucault was only present indirectly throughout *An Archaeology of Capitalism*, the use of his definitions for understanding the reshaping of daily life from the viewpoint of power had a great effect on Johnson’s text.

Braudel (1979), directly influenced by Marx, is ever-present in Johnson’s book, even though Johnson eschews Marxism. Braudel and Foucault dwell on and utilize material culture in the era of the founding and creation of new nation-states, including their central emphasis on the emerging idea of citizenship. Both Braudel and Foucault show us the role that things have in a society ruled by class, profit, machinery, violence, and the unlimited search for resources and markets.

Finally, I want to draw on Johnson’s pride in England, the emergence of the modern nation under Elizabeth I, and the Reformation that produced the English Church. You can catch Matthew Johnson’s national pride in his writing. You can notice his feeling. I argue that the emotions behind such particular viewpoints are givens in any writer’s life and, if noticed and developed carefully and consciously, can be fostered as potentially productive starting points for any scholar in our field. Carmel Schrire (1995) has become the master of using this insight.

## Carmel Schrire and the Archaeology of Racism

How does one create a model for generalizing work out of one’s autobiography and then use it to study nationalism, capitalism, and colonialism? The best place to look is Carmel Schrire’s *Digging through Darkness* (1995). She writes about the colonial destruction of native peoples in South Africa and Australia both by ecological degradation of the environments and economies of native people and through the rampant racism and genocides that accompanied European colonialism. Schrire uses archaeology to show the severe environmental destruction introduced through Dutch military and agricultural practices in seventeenth-century South Africa. She carries out the same investigation in Australia. In addressing racial hatred, she not only moved beyond the narrow limits set within North American historical archaeology for her and everyone else, but also offered a far more significant role for the field.

Schrire grew up in South Africa and earned her doctorate in Australia working with aboriginal peoples. She had been introduced to archaeology in South Africa as a child. Schrire writes first hand about racial hatred to herself, in South Africa toward native peoples as expressed through apartheid, and to aboriginal peoples in Australia. One is deeply moved by the European savagery to native peoples she describes. It is not only clear who the savages are, but it is also clear that there is still active destruction when Europeans impose terms like “primitive” on native populations, a point also made by Castañeda (1996). Schrire describes the conditions that surrounded her as she grew up, gives them an origin, and tells us how the modern condition came to be, both in South Africa and Australia. It is effective historical archaeology.

If Matthew Johnson uses his pride in England to analyze the emergence of capitalist practices, Schrire uses her sense of injustice and anger about them to start and propel her book. However, she is far more visible about her motivation than he is, and she uses it to shape the rhetoric of her science. I contend that this very same set of feelings is one of the reasons historical archaeologists now argue that one of our field’s goals is to give voice to the voiceless.

Giving voice and validation to the despised, names and labels to anonymous people, and votes to the disfranchised is the focus of much of historical archaeology. Ultimately these objectives correct injustices. No one thinks the forgotten are forgotten by clerical error. They are forgotten because they were said to be dangerous, inconvenient, numerous, aggressive, controlled land or resources that others wanted, or were the laborers whom others sought. One basis for historical archaeology is the correction of injustice and behind that is the anger that such an injustice has existed and continues.

Accompanying these feelings are others, including pride in democracy, such as Johnson shows, and a deep sense of urgency that democratic values and processes be fostered. The key to virtually all of Jürgen Habermas's (1984, 1989) work is the idea of enhancing democratic processes. Their extension to exploited peoples is central to maintaining and extending democratic society. This is critically true because democracy when tied to capitalism, particularly late capitalism, guarantees precisely the opposite of what historical archaeology aims to accomplish. Capitalism, as Althusser has shown, and as our own cynicism betrays, is not about enfranchisement, universal protections, widespread guarantees for welfare, historical and social legitimacy, or people's pride. Its vehicle is class and class protections. Its heritage is violence. That violence occurs through the technologies of the self, which can be exposed through the material culture of their imposition. The ultimate technique that we must be aware of is our own confusion between ourselves and who we think we work for, as Žižek (1989) notes. We cannot assume that a sublime object exists. A sublime object is our state, scientific truth apart from politics, or our museums, for example.

Habermas (1984, 1989) argues that democracy embedded within capitalism, as it has come to be in the last 50 years, requires an aggressive expansion of democratic process, or an enfranchisement, to the exploited. I think that is done in some small ways through historical archaeology, but it will be done better if we recognize that the pride in democracy and the anger at the injustices within class relations, which motivates many of us, is supposed to show up in our work. It is already there, it is sound, and it is not unscientific. Schrire (1995) has shown us this because she allows us to understand

the look and effect of racial hatred first hand. She brings it to the surface and gives place to named feelings that otherwise would be dismissed as bias.

### **Naomi Scheman and the Politics of Naming**

Feminist philosopher Naomi Scheman (1980, 1983) has developed a position like that of Carmel Schrire, in a structured way. Scheman's position is that members of a particular culture are taught to give names to some feelings and not to others, and this process within European societies is gender specific. She argues that before naming there is emotional incoherence, not latent recognition of articulated feelings called anger, grief, anxiety, fear, and so on. Scheman says that there is a culturally specific lexicon of names for feelings, that these are taught, applied, and used as we grow, and that the appropriate reactions to the names are specific to men and women. Scheman points out that American men are given greater latitude to name, and more importantly, the capacity to act on, feelings. American women are more constrained, she says. That may come as no surprise, but her idea is that feelings are named in socialization, with differentiation by gender. Neither the names for feelings, nor the capacity for acting on them, are born with us.

Scheman is concerned with the power that comes with the ability to impose and enforce definitions on feelings. I advocate against the stand that feelings get in the way of science and should be pushed aside and neutralized. I argue, citing Scheman (1980, 1983) and Schrire (1995), that feelings should be acknowledged, drawn to consciousness, and their existence and force be made productive. Schrire and Johnson, to very different degrees, have pointed the way to doing just that. Behind one of the mottos of the field of historical archaeology—giving voice to the voiceless—is an equally deep emotional commitment that comes either from pride in the democratic processes or outrage at their absence. These feelings and political facts are tied, and should be seen to be, in our field.

They are not tied now because of fear of retribution at the exposure of the appearance of a political agenda. The standard argument says that scientists

neutrally discover truths, letting their objective discoveries show in public light for others to interpret. There is both some truth and a lot of safety in this longstanding, but largely morally bankrupt, position. In the long run there is little real protection in taking it. If one's sense of feeling is apparent at the beginning of a report, transparency results. Transparency does not help or hinder the science, and it does not necessarily have to be stated publicly, but if a practicing scientist knows the origin of his or her own views, everyone is safer. Naming and defining the terms of an investigation preempt anyone else from doing the job, and precludes doing the work of having to reorient names and redefinitions after someone else has tried to compartmentalize an author's work.

Scheman (1980, 1983) argues that the naming of feelings is cultural, and that their use and invocation within a field is legitimate to the actual practice of the field. Such discovery of objects like feelings directs us to the social origins of gender and inferiority that concern us deeply. Naming a feeling is naming a motivation. It is not an easy search and clearly it is both private and occurs in the present. Because naming is cultural, potentially arbitrary, and a function of power, it shapes what can be done with the product of one's work. The process is already at work in our field or we would not be attempting to study the muted, silenced, and enslaved. Nobody wants to be neutral regarding these peoples. Most of us are appalled at how they were and are treated. We already argue that silence and exclusion should be cured. Outrage, pride, and happiness at success are all involved in our effort to extend the politics of democracy.

### **Quetzil Castañeda and the Archaeology of the Subjects of the Colonial State**

Quetzil Castañeda has found the damage done by the use of the concept of culture. I argue that *In the Museum of Maya Culture* (1996), Castañeda makes the case for the importance of historical archaeology. He makes three points that are of use. First, the success of anthropology can be measured by the virtually universal recognition and use of the idea of culture. Second, all kinds of colonial and

postcolonial people around the world now look to the concept of culture and find themselves within it, but also often find faded, tattered images of themselves as they used to be. Third, such people never see either an appropriate past or future through the use of the concept. Castañeda creates the term "zero degree culture" for the case of people who are seen by anthropologists and other social scientists, and eventually by themselves, as having lost what they once had, or of not having caught up to what other contemporaries have already achieved.

It is not only that many of the world's anonymous, marginalized, despised, illiterate, powerless, and voiceless peoples are suffering these conditions, it is also the case that the near universal use of the term culture has helped create that condition. This is a serious charge against anthropology, but one with great potential for postcolonial historical archaeologists. Castañeda argues that for most of the twentieth century, anthropologists used a dichotomy in their work that saw a group's integrity as a function of how far from or close they were to the modern world. The primitive, aboriginal, and native worlds had integrity. The modern world was dominant and not an anthropological topic, but rather an anthropological fear. The profession saw that our subject world was in danger of losing what it once had on the way to becoming what the West had achieved. Because the West and modernization were the ideal objects, our discipline produced a colonial subject.

Peasants, the landless, creoles, campesinos, slum dwellers, migrants, the nonliterate, the detribalized, the dispossessed—all had lost some or all of their culture, usually unwillingly, and had not yet been integrated into some version of Western culture. Not able to go back, many had not yet "chosen progress." Therefore, to use Castañeda's term, they had zero degree culture because the anthropologist could not find their culture, or much of it. When it could not be found and the nondiscovery was announced, then lo and behold the uncultured found themselves confronted with a credible description of what was missing. Such a discovery became a vehicle in the marginalization or colonial process that is a part of modernization. Anthropology played a role in the creation of the very people and condition that historical archaeologists now claim as their scholarly purpose.

Castañeda not only makes this claim but also argues that mainstream prehistoric archaeology has seriously abetted the process. So does Nadia Abu El-Haj in *Facts on the Ground* (2001). Castañeda is primarily concerned with the role of a grand archaeological site like Chichén Itzá in the process of defining the people who now live around it. His is an ethnography of a tourist zone whose main physical attraction was created by archaeologists, but he utilizes many of the insights into nation building provided by Benedict Anderson in *Imagined Communities* (1991) to build his interpretation. When Castañeda and Anderson are used together and are focused on characterizing and defining archaeology, the result is our opportunity as historical archaeologists for knowing the voiceless.

### Discovering a Vocal Past

Here is my argument. The world has many grand archaeological zones created since the eighteenth century for the purpose of showing exalted national origins and of offering proof of such origins to visitors, whom we usually call tourists. This connection of archaeologists and origins created heritage. Anderson (1991) points out what most archaeologists know—the newly discovered heritage was that of the elite and powerful, usually recently emerged. In the act of discovery and interpretation, archaeologists usually came to see that their workers, the surrounding villagers, rural farmers, neighboring herdsmen, and fishermen had a distant, yet undeniable, cultural tie to the ruins. Buried in the behaviors, beliefs, things, and habits of the living was a part of the past seen in the grand ruins. The shadows of great past achievements were there among the living. These shadows were to be drawn out by ethnoarchaeology, ethnohistory, oral history, or some combination of these methods that paid close attention to local native thought. It was assumed that there was a tie, but also an epistemological gulf. The living were not great, but they had been great once. They had achieved, but then they had lost something and no longer had the greatness that they once did.

The creation of a group tied to the ruins as the faded remnants of the once great led to destabilizing

knowledge. The new knowledge found by anthropology was consumed by both the colonizer and colonized and produced a group that had no right to the ruins. The descendants, now so faded, could be moved out, their villages bulldozed. They could be provided with little schooling, medicine, roads, land, or income. They could also be despised for being nonmodern, for rejecting progress, and for various primitive practices. They were suddenly voiceless and anonymous. With this process they also become the subjects for historical archaeology. We ought to be able to work with them and find their stories worth listening to. So we have told ourselves.

So where is the object of our work? It is in two places. Most obviously it is in the texts tied to the images of the past found in the newly discovered former glories of a new nation. Heritage is the noble past that all visitors come to see, whether from the capital of the owning nation, or for the travelers who wonder how anyone could achieve such awesome achievements without steel, wheels, or engines. Travelers, of course, begin their journey through texts at home. This is the frequently noted invention of tradition (or heritage) and is an essential part of nation building. Historical archaeologists need to know that the origins of tourism are one preface to our ground for action because it presents a picture of the elite as well as the marginal. This is why we should not be afraid to write for the elite. We should assume we know better than they do.

Our work's second location is marked by the supposed absence of culture among those now marginal to the identity of the nation and its heritage. These are the people whose labor, land, and children are essential to a new economy, but whose vote is not. These are the people who lost out in national emergence, and they are the marginal whom our anthropological field helped to create, and to whom we as historical archaeologists hope to listen. Now we know where to find them, and with the proper conceptualization of democratic speech (Habermas, 1984, 1989) we will not be ventriloquists for them.

Castañeda's legacy, for historical archaeology, is quite positive. Using his critique of tourism at an archaeological locale like Chichén Itzá, we can see that our job as historical archaeologists is to look for the tin cans, nails, nineteenth-century ceramics,

and mass-produced bottles that show the locations, patterns of use, levels of sanitation, water supply, electricity sources, and connections to mass markets that actually characterized those with supposedly faded remnants of the past. We are used to showing combinations of self-sufficiency and integration into international markets. These patterns of consumption and use all show patterns of land use, water savvy, curing, diet and cuisine, cleanliness, family life, and religion.

There is a productive combination of ideas and things for a historical archaeologist if one combines our established work with impoverished communities and Castañeda's critique of the use of modernization theory among anthropologists through the 1960s. Our work on slavery, tenant farms, mill boarding houses, asylums for the poor and orphans, hospitals, factories, kitchens, slums, and the other margins of society all show patterns of culture. We always find patterns of food gathering, use and disposal, room use, curation and discard, self-sufficiency, and market use. We never find people disconnected to the market; there are always levels of market integration. We need to carry this process forward to other colonies in order to counteract the damage done by the idea of zero degree culture, as well as that done by seeing people as remnants.

### **Pisté: Archaeology for the Colony**

Castañeda (1996) describes Pisté, a site whose archaeological characteristics are likely to be easily understandable to us as historical archaeologists. Pisté is the town where the Maya, who sell and work at Chichén Itzá, live. No one in historical archaeology has ever dug there, but we already know its likely array of material culture well and quite likely what it means. Because we know much about Pisté from Castañeda's extensive work there, it might be possible to create an archaeological research design without spending time listening to the needs of the town's people. However, it is better for a historical archaeologist to ask what people want of archaeologists. In my own experience, working with African Americans in and near Annapolis, these are some of their questions to me

and my students. Do we have archaeology? Is anything left from Africa? Tell us about freedom for our people! I want to know about slave spirituality! Where are our borders? When was our town settled? All these questions have archaeological answers.

At Pisté, historical archaeologists would use Redfield (1962), as well as the Chicago school's literature and that of the Carnegie Institution of Washington, to make a precise description of exactly what was said about the town, particularly with reference to the connection between its refusal to modernize and its material culture.

There will probably not be a good description of material culture as we need it, but there will be a photographic archive at the Carnegie Institution of Washington of the many towns (including Pisté) in which its members worked. Redfield's papers can be expected to contain descriptions and photos. Raymond Thompson (1958) studied contemporary pottery making in Yucatán and has an extensive ethnographic description and photographic record of villages from the 1950s. In other words, there is a way to obtain a good, systematic survey of the material culture, its structure of use, and its meaning. This can be done chronologically for Pisté and villages like it. This is a historical archaeologist's early move, which will show patterns, organization, market ties, brand use, and a dozen other elements of cultural organization.

Digging in the village will produce a different set of artifacts depending on where the excavation is done. Domestic and commercial sites, a cemetery survey, a road and house map, and a site of a former village will produce a collection that will be different in measurable ways from the historical, ethnographic, archival, and photographic survey. Charles Cheek (personal communication, 1980) dug in a village in Belize occupied by Garifuna, or Black Caribs, and found a collection of European ceramics not much different from a contemporary deposit in Annapolis, Maryland, or Alexandria, Virginia. Thus the proportion of European to local wares, flatware to tea wares, and glassware to storage wares and chamber pots can be constructed. Automatically these artifacts will show trade networks and habits of food preparation, disposal, part of a cash economy, and habits of cleanliness. People so described are hardly nonmodern, resistant to progress, or purely traditional, but our next move

comes from finding out exactly what was not there that should have been there. Given a prior search of the earlier twentieth-century records, we should notice what was in them that came as a surprise given ideas held by people like Redfield, and what was not predicted from the records and photographs that actually occurred archaeologically.

Why the absences and presences that were not expected? Therefore, the two sets of information should be used to query each other. Because Pisté was repeatedly pillaged and harmed, are these events archaeologically visible? If the town had a market economy, does it show? Do its construction history, property lines, sanitation system, utilities, and field systems show? Do traditional Maya pottery, stone tool use, shrines, house shape, cooking patterns, and incense use all show? What is the age of the village, its adoption of new patterns of items, and their chronology of adoption? This village will have a history and a culture through the integrity connected with understanding the use of all these things and by their having a chronology of change. It will certainly not have zero degree culture. Historical archaeologists must be able to comment on how, in local eyes, the people of the marginalized community have integrity. We must be able to comment on how the anthropological notion of culture has been changed by the action of historical archaeology in order to challenge the colonizing object we are contesting. In Pisté, this would take the form of a description of the culture that resisted and modified the colonizing idea of modern Mexico that was imposed after the Mexican revolution.

## Presenting Culture

After a description of a culture's integrity and resistance, then what? There should be a public presentation of it. People's pasts are on display as tradition and heritage at historical-period sites around the world, and historical archaeology is one of the main means by which sites achieve their integrity. We know that historical archaeology plays a vital role, particularly regarding monuments associated with a European colonial past. Regardless of the kind of archaeology that is employed to build an interpretation of a

monument, all these monuments are modern, and very few even date to the eighteenth century. Therefore, just below the surface of all of them is the historical archaeology of how they were made into monuments, information about those who used to live there, who worked there as laborers, how they lived and were treated, their villages, and their culture. This is where we can also dig.

If one takes a historical-period site, we can connect two processes for ourselves: what the tourist experiences and the impact of tourism on the people who run the site. The best idea to explain why people tour involves reversing alienation. This hypothesis argues that modern work, life, education, and media create a sense of being unintegrated, powerless, and fragmented, or daily lives devoid of meaning, particularly in comparison with what are imagined to be more integrated and fulfilling times. A visit to the places exhibiting an integrated, comprehensive, beautiful alternative is a temporary antidote to alienation. A comprehensive tourist environment with exhibits, guides, reenactors, latter-day natives on display, dioramas, reconstructions, and depictions of various sizes is the vehicle for the cognitive operation of the antidote, or so scholars like Dean MacCannell (1976) argue.

## Public Displays of Heritage

Historic monuments do in fact produce a special sense. Christopher Tilley (1999) locates many of the features of this special sense. The three dimensions of a site, in addition to color, form, and visibility from every angle, are inspectability, texture, and openness to weather and changing light. These are the elements of how it affects viewers. Tilley makes a distinction between communication using words (including print) and communication as it occurs with things. He points out that things can be connected to a wider array of intentions than words, and that things can hold more, as well as contradictory, meanings. Things are more ambiguous than words and they are seen differently even by the same person as time goes by and as events change. Things have both an immediacy and a permanence not possessed by spoken words.



These things, when they take the form of monuments, are unusual in being an abnormal, but quite real, environment. They are orderly, uniform, trimmed, and appear to be from another time, yet are lawn covered, mostly empty, and free from ugliness, unpleasant demands, or lots of requests for money. They enforce and reinforce civil behavior including no pushing, gouging, shouting, cursing, and impoliteness to visitors from ticket sellers, bus drivers, and waiters. It is like being in a hotel for viewing history with the viewer at the privileged top.

In such a setting the interpretation of the past is provided by paths, maps, audio guides, guidebooks, tour guides, costumed workers, craftsmen, administrators, movies, postcards, static exhibits, open archaeological sites, art historians, signs, and viewing platforms with directions. These are all texts of various sorts and they are a component of how concrete things are made to communicate meanings.

When combined with rituals of politeness, things work together to make a formal environment. These are sublime objects. They should be our subjects; we should not be the subjects of them. The monument mixes built settings, formal behavior, texts, and emotions. A new meaning can be created, and some new insight or change in one's perceptions can occur. It need not necessarily be permanent, but it can be thorough. This summary contains Tilley's (1999) hypotheses about why tourists seek out heritage sites, why these sites work, when they were created, and why they are so tightly controlled by their administrators and owners.

Given that such sites memorialize elites and exclude everyone else, it is easy to see why marginalized people resent their exclusion, let alone their inclusion, as faded remnants of what was once great and glorious. How are we to communicate the alternative histories, voices, pasts, and viewpoints that we seek to find? Because it is essential that people feel and rationally articulate the tie between who they are and exactly why they are here now, in the condition they find themselves touched by, people seek constant exposure to legitimizing, textured, figured, and refigured pasts. This is an essential part of daily life. People are denied legitimacy, rights, precedent, reasonableness, or identity all the time. And they are not all minorities or those who are marginalized; life in capitalism is hierarchical

and constantly renegotiated. Who one is, and, therefore, the rights to which one has access, are immediate and ongoing matters. Because capitalism's relationships are unstable the contest for these does not go away.

Running mentally back and forth between how one is challenged right now and how one tries to cite some legitimizing referent is a constant negotiation. Establishing the apparent nonnegotiables, such as the duration of tradition, occurs through the media. The early aspect of establishing durability by discovering history can occur through scholarship like historical archaeology. But because durability is political, media are involved because these are the vehicles of education, and thus a central part of identity. When the concreteness of things and texts of historical-period sites are combined for the marginal, such people as well as their visitors (tourists) may see daily life in a new way, which we hope and plan will be for the better.

Because we ourselves and our society are within capitalism, colonialism, and nationalism, historical archaeology is motivated by our immediate experiences and can also be used to plumb the origins of these experiences. This is true for both dominant nations and former colonies. Once understood, our self-knowledge can be raised to a level of consciousness by exhibiting material culture in organized settings, which may help produce meanings not hitherto available to those who could use them, both ourselves and others.

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