

Chapter 1

Introduction to *Historical Archaeologies of Capitalism*, Second Edition

Mark P. Leone and Jocelyn E. Knauf

How We Study Capitalism

Beginning in the 1970s, historical archaeology began to examine capitalism's parts explicitly, including labor in North American and European life. This was a core concern of historical archaeology when the first edition of *Historical Archaeologies of Capitalism* was published in 1999, and remains a focus of our field. However, recent studies by historical archaeologists have produced more nuanced views on these topics over the past several decades (Shackel 2009; Wurst 2006). Recent scholarship has revolutionized the ways in which archaeologists conceptualize capitalism and its effects, particularly spatially and temporally. New spatial geographies, time periods, and subjects have been opened up to the critical lenses of historical archaeology, highlighting the diversity of economic parts related to capitalism across different contexts worldwide (this volume, Croucher and Weiss 2011b). In this opening chapter, we introduce the ways that contemporary historical archaeologists are approaching the study of capitalism now. Although we set out several themes that have united historical scholarship which focuses on capitalism and its effects, it is also critical to highlight the diversity of theoretical and methodological approaches, power relations, material culture, and subjects that the authors in this volume and other recent scholarship investigate. Less neat and united than earlier approaches to the study of capitalism, current approaches ensure, however, that the "modern world" studied by historical archaeology is not reduced to the extension

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M. P. Leone, J. E. Knauf (eds.), *Historical Archaeologies of Capitalism*,

Contributions To Global Historical Archaeology, DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-12760-6_1

of European or North American paradigms globally; that capitalism can no longer be seen as a unified homogeneous system that operates in the same way across time and space; and that there is room to explore the borders, margins, orders, and disorders created and perpetuated by capitalist economies and resistance to them. The first half of this chapter discusses the study of capitalism through historical archaeology, highlighting current and innovative approaches to the subject. In the second half of the chapter, Mark Leone describes and introduces updated rationales for the purpose of historical archaeology, the place of artifacts, and the place of social criticism, using the work of Slavoj Žižek.

Defining Our Subjects

No discussion of the importance of the study of capitalism to historical archaeology can begin without looking at foundational definitions of historical archaeology and the ways in which they are entangled with the study of capitalism. The archaeological study of capitalism through Marxist approaches began four decades ago. Influenced by the work of the Frankfurt School and the structural Marxism of Louis Althusser (1971), Leone (1981, 1984) and colleagues (Handsman 1981; Leone et al. 1987) explored the potential of “critical archaeology” to expose the workings of ideology in capitalist systems. In the 1980s, Randall McGuire, Robert Paynter, and other scholars began to utilize Marxist scholarship to examine the “anthropological political economy,” adopting the Hegelian concept for the dialectic (McGuire 1992; McGuire and Paynter 1991; Paynter 1985, 1988). Today, mixes and refinements of these approaches are common among English-speaking Marxist historical archaeologists (Matthews et al. 2002; McGuire 2006, p. 135). Although his volume did not deal directly with archaeological materials, Eric Wolf’s (1982) *Europe and the People Without a History* had a large impact on the early study of capitalism and was well received by historical archaeologists. Wolf (1982) explored the political uses of history, capitalism, and the modern world system, concerns that are still relevant to contemporary historical archaeologies of capitalism (Little 1994, p. 4; Orser 2010, p. 114).

Charles Orser (1996, p. 27) defines capitalism as one of the four “haunts” of historical archaeology, along with colonialism, modernity, and Eurocentrism, highlighting the divides between the “modern world” of historical archaeology and earlier archaeological periods. In so doing, he has rejected “unrestricted” definitions of the field that divide the historical period from earlier periods based only upon the presence or absence of oral or written histories, further arguing that the material culture of historical archaeology is more “easily and readily understandable today” (Orser 1996, pp. 15–25). Orser’s definitions of historical archaeology have been widely accepted in the field (Croucher and Weiss 2011a, p. 4). In fact, some scholars argue that the influence of archaeologists who explicitly study capitalism are so influential in the field of historical archaeology that many archaeologists and nonarchaeologists alike now equate historical archaeology with the archaeology of capitalism (Hicks and Beaudry 2006, p. 5 cf. Wilkie and Bartoy 2000, p. 748).

However, definitions of historical archaeology that focus on the study of the modern world have drawn criticism for using time as a major boundary, positing a decisive break between the “them” of prehistory and other earlier times, and the “us” of modernity (Croucher and Weiss 2011a, p. 4, Dawdy 2010). Critics have also asserted that a focus on historical archaeology and capitalism centers on the Euro-American world and Europeans, excluding cultures not directly involved in the capitalist project. Some historical archaeologists have further argued that placing a primary focus on an economic system such as capitalism creates disciplinary boundaries that are artificial, separating historical archaeologists from prehistorians and creating disciplinary distinctions that are unnecessary (Orser 2001, p. 625 cf; Funari et al. 1999; Lightfoot 1995; Wesler 1998). As a response to the critique of any sort of separation between “prehistory” and “history,” Orser (2013, pp. 145–146) has responded that collapsing these disciplinary boundaries would serve to erase the global impact of worldwide European expansion and exploitation, thereby reducing the significance of anticolonial struggles and failing to acknowledge fully the effects of the modern era on global lives.

In a similar vein, Alfredo Gonzalez-Ruibal (this volume) discusses how the dominant approaches in current postcolonial scholarship, which focus on consumption as agency in colonial situations, are not incompatible with views of capitalism and modernity that focus on the predatory nature of colonial relationships and their depredations on the non-European world. Studying the creativity of communities and individuals during the crosscultural encounters of modernity does not have to occlude the long-term negative repercussions of capitalist expansion (Gonzalez Ruibal, this volume). Approaches of this type, when coupled with the unique potential of the archaeological study of material culture, can help counter today’s neoliberal narratives and historical amnesia about how past situations have structured present contexts. This makes it more difficult for modern actors to use cultural arguments to place blame on contemporary individuals or social collectivities for their alienation in the global capitalist system. This means not blaming postcolonial nations for their continuing political and economic turmoil after decades of postcolonial rule, or the working poor’s so-called “culture of poverty” for their continued exploitation.¹

¹ Beginning in the late nineteenth century, North American sociologists began to encourage the study of urban poverty among African American residents in cultural terms, focusing on past and present treatment and opportunities, in order to reject explanations of poverty based on biological notions of racial inferiority (DuBois 1996[1899]; Frazier 2001[1939]). In the early twentieth century, canonical sociology, including scholars working within the traditions of the Chicago School, adopted similar arguments that addressed culture as the site of human difference, instead of biology. The “culture of poverty” idea was proposed by Oscar Lewis (1959) and discussed the idea that in addition to lacking resources, the poor had also developed a poverty-perpetuating system of values, which held them back from material progress. Lewis’ ideas were later used in ways not anticipated by the author (including the Moynihan Report published in 1965) to place the blame for poverty on its victims (Bourgeois 2003, p. 64). Surviving harsh critique in the mid- to late-twentieth century, the “culture of poverty” idea and “underclass” arguments of William Julius Wilson (2012) became popular ways in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries to explain poverty and inequality as neoliberalism blossomed. The “culture of poverty” and “underclass” concepts both focused on cultural arguments, occluding the structural constraints placed on those living in poverty.

Capitalism and its parts are defined succinctly in the first edition of *Historical Archaeologies of Capitalism* (Leone and Potter 1999, pp. 4–7). Capitalism is generally defined as an economic system based on a set of social relations characterized by private ownership of resources, including land, raw materials, and property. A major characteristic of capitalist societies is the continuous introduction of technical changes, which are pushed into places where they did not previously exist, and therefore alter the structure of labor and consumption. The capitalist system relies on the expansion of production to produce increased profits. Therefore, owners and agents are constantly looking for new markets and customers, both domestically and internationally, as well as expanded resources to bring into their production processes, including labor and raw materials. In a capitalist system, the differences between owners and workers, the colonizers and the colonized, and profits and wages represent real differences in ownership and power (Leone 1999, p. 4).

Christopher Matthews (2010, p. 1) writes that the reach of capitalism in the modern world is “a result of its function as an economic order and social system explicitly geared for the creation of private profit, an emphasis that challenges and erodes alternative forms of production and social life based in collective and local traditions of production and exchange.” The study of capitalism worldwide can help historical archaeologists to explore the complexities surrounding the development and maintenance of capitalist systems, providing a common topic of study with significant anthropological relevance that can be explored through a wide range of approaches. Analyses of capitalism have also generally stressed the relations between social classes, negotiation and resistance, and the workings of ideology and power.

Historical archaeologists argue that the field is uniquely positioned to study the expressions of historical capitalism since the 1500s, and its material and cultural expressions (Johnson 1996; Leone and Potter 1999; Little 1994; Paynter 1988, 2000). Historical archaeology studies a range of material culture from the monumental and symbolic to the everyday, including landscapes, architecture, food remains, ceramics, glass, tools, and artwork. As Matthews (2010, p. 1) explains, everyday objects, “as commodities, implicated persons in meaningful capitalist systems of production, distribution, and consumption” (Matthews 2010, p. 1). Studies of landscape can also show, as Sayers, Burke, and Henry (2006) wrote, the “ways in which space and place have historically been utilized, interpreted, codified and (re)created over time within the fluid constraints of the capitalist system.” Archaeological studies, which focus on material culture, can therefore illuminate how capitalism emerged and became a dominant form of social practice and organization, and how people negotiated their commodification as individuals and embraced or resisted capitalist transformations (Matthews 2010, pp. 1–2).

Current Directions in Historical Archaeologies of Capitalism

In recent scholarship, the historical archaeology of capitalism has expanded its foci spatially and geographically, temporally, and conceptually. In response to critics who argue that historical archaeology has been too Eurocentric, the past few decades have seen historical archaeologies of capitalism become more global. What was once an exclusive focus on the Atlantic world has become an exploration of the emergence and maintenance of capitalist formations in a variety of global contexts. Capitalism is now being studied in Central and South America, Africa, and Asia, as well as in Australia, North America, and Europe. Diasporic and postcolonial scholarship has had a profound effect on the field of historical archaeology since the publication of the first edition of this book.

Homi Bhabha (1994, p. 142) encouraged the breakdown of Western thought's "linear narrative of the nation," with its claims of a "fixed horizontal nation-space" with "holism of culture and community," a call that has been taken up by historical archaeologists. This opens up studies to thinking about the fault lines and borders where cultural hybridities and identities in late capitalism are contested and performed and the "terms of cultural engagement, whether antagonistic or affiliative," that produce the social articulation of difference performatively (Bhabha 1994, p. 2).

Drawing on the work of Bhabha and other postcolonial scholars, archaeologists who examine colonial, postcolonial, and diasporic conditions through the study of capitalism have drawn attention to the suppressed or forgotten aspects of social, political, and economic history. This scholarship has served to highlight the contradictions of "progress" and "modernity" including capitalist excesses, violence, and political inequality (Gonzalez-Ruibal 2008). Gonzalez-Ruibal, for example, focuses his work in this volume on the instabilities and contradictions of capitalism. Drawing on the decolonial school of thought, he explores how the construction of modernity was predicated on colonization and exploitation by European powers, how civilization—building on Elias (1989)—is a technology of domination and an exercise in self-repression, and the ways in which capitalism is a predatory system that can be studied through, and not in spite of, its contradictions and ambiguities (Gonzalez-Ruibal this volume).

Influenced by postcolonial theory and a critique of the developmentalist historicity of Western scholarship, historical archaeologists have further highlighted the fallacy of assuming that the historical formations of capitalism are "always-already everywhere the same" (Croucher and Weiss 2011a). Capitalism in historical archaeology has sometimes been over-applied and under-theorized, becoming in some ways a status quo, taken-for-granted, idea in historical archaeology. Therefore, in the same way that critical archaeology has encouraged historical archaeologists to historicize and question the status quo in our interpretations of the past and present, historical archaeologists are increasingly questioning the status quo of the study of capitalism. This requires breaking down the idea of a ubiquitous, homogeneous, and

monolithic global capitalist system and demands innovative approaches to the study of capitalism in different contexts.

Guido Pezzarossi's work (this volume), builds on this critique of current definitions of capitalism in historical archaeology. Pezzarossi, drawing on Manuel DeLanda, encourages a reorientation of how we think about capitalism for his work on Maya contexts in Guatemala. He approaches capitalism as the social and material effects of unfree "antimarkets," instead of as a system defined by free markets. In this way, focus is placed on how power is used to manipulate commerce and exchanges on the marketplace, arguably a central mechanism of the emergence of the early modern and modern global capitalist economy. This approach is explicitly counter to neoliberalism and Adam Smith's focus on the importance of "free markets" in capitalism (Pezzarossi, this volume). New ways of thinking about capitalism often highlight the contours of power and how "free" markets and "free" choices can be decidedly unfree, and have been productive for the study of both Western and non-Western contexts.

As Orser's (1996) definition of the four "haunts" of the field suggests, the study of capitalism has been closely connected to other major topics in historical archaeology, including but not limited to colonialism, modernization, globalization, and diaspora. The diversity of contributions in this volume highlights the fact that there is no single grand narrative of global capitalism, and that the same terms and approaches cannot be used to examine capitalism in every context. They further highlight that historical archaeologists are engaging with scholarship from other disciplines to formulate their interpretations about capitalist economies. Croucher and Weiss (2011a, p. 9) wrote of historical archaeology that "no single discipline has the 'answer' to the question of what, epistemologically or practically, delimits or defines the enactment of capitalism." As archaeologists expand their work into new contexts, they also must necessarily expand the knowledge base that informs their work. This requires moving beyond the canonical texts of Euro-American scholarship on capitalism, and in some cases engaging regional traditions of scholarship and thought, while simultaneously recognizing the possible problematic nature of appropriating and applying terminology from these traditions in new contexts. Another key challenge for historical archaeologies of capitalism is how to move from the investigation of concrete, on-the-ground, particulars to understanding the systemic and economic processes of capitalist systems under which those particulars emerged (Wylie 1999, p. 28).

Studies of capitalism must interpret multiple lines of evidence, explore the power and ideology behind capitalist formations as well as resistance to them, and attempt to interpret the multiple types of social action, both on the macro- and microscales, through which the capitalist system is enacted at any moment in time. Historical archaeologists in the past largely disregarded or ignored the material evidence from more recent time periods, prizing excavation-based approaches. However, archaeologies of the more recent past, informed by anthropological material culture studies, are now explicitly applying archaeological techniques to new and more recent capitalist contexts (Camp and Ng this volume; Dawdy 2010; McAtackney this volume; Roller this volume). As part of the critique of linear narratives of sites and

site formation, archaeologists are also increasingly shifting away from a focus on bounded “structured deposits,” in favor of looking at what Joyce and Pollard (2010, p. 308) call “the broader structuring of deposition through which sites as a whole came into being,” an approach that historical archaeologists may find fruitful.

Since the turn of the twenty-first century, archaeologists have brought increasing attention to the processes and relationships that surround class relationships and laborers, rather than limiting their focus to interpreting the lives of laborers themselves. This involves a move away from the creation of celebratory labor histories, which do nothing to address the problems of the present, and towards an examination of past and contemporary workings of power (Roller this volume, Fracchia and Brighton this volume). Therefore, views of class have become increasingly relational, recognizing that it is through their relationships with each other that the lives and identities of workers, overseers, owners, colonizers, and colonized, are constituted (Silliman 2006, p. 149). Social systems of capitalism embrace fixed identities, and ideologies such as possessive individualism and rational objectification of social relations (Althusser 1971; Handsman 1981; Leone 2005; Matthews 2010), although historical archaeologists now see these separations as mutable and historically constructed. Therefore, the study of the creation and negotiation of these identities has become a major topic of study for historical archaeologists studying capitalism. Scholars in this volume and others increasingly examine the ways that capitalist systems enact specific separations around race and ethnicity, gender, sexuality, age, natural versus unnatural, and other categorizations that are context specific.

Identities become normalized and naturalized, and structure everyday interactions. Exposing the fallacy of identities as biologically determined categories, and showing and accepting that identities are culturally constructed, does not mean that historical archaeologies of capitalism can or should ignore the impact that identifications have had on people in the past and present (Orser 2007; Voss 2008). Identifications become embedded in the structures, histories, and daily practices of social systems such as capitalism, and therefore have objective effects on the lives of people. Through historical archaeology, we can look at the daily practices that constructed and reproduced the social identifications of capitalism in context, and study identities as multidimensional, interconnected, and in a constant process of negotiation (Voss 2008, p. 5). Therefore, instead of focusing on fixed notions of status, the contributors to this volume, and many scholars in the discipline as a whole, study vectors of social inequality and the negotiation of power relations in distinct social and historical settings. These concerns speak directly to topics that the authors of this volume explore, including how people become incorporated into capitalism, and accept or resist their separation into different identity categorizations, some of which correspond directly with labor opportunities.

The interpretations of the past produced through history and archaeology can legitimize contemporary power relationships by creating precedent (Leone 1999, p. 6). Historical archaeology has often been motivated by a desire to use the examination of history as a source of contemporary critique and to offer alternative possibilities in the present (Leone et al. 1987; McDavid 2002; Palus et al. 2006; Wood 2002). Therefore, the chapters in this volume are also in dialogue with the present

through their examination of the historical roots of inequality and engagement with contemporary local communities and contexts. Archaeological studies of capitalism often incorporate a reflexive perspective about the position of the archaeologist and his or her approach to the research, skepticism towards the ways in which the past has been interpreted, and a desire for social or political change in the present.

One of the most enduring contributions of historical archaeologies of capitalism has been the project of critical archaeology (Palus et al. 2006). The goal of critical archaeological work is to conduct careful analyses of archaeological materials using inclusionary local histories, thereby avoiding creating self-justifying or ex post facto metanarratives (Schmidt and Walz 2007). Critical archaeology has been used to study the relational negotiations of identity. Giddens and Foucault have influenced much of that work. Critical archaeologists argue that modern ideologies can be challenged and exposed as contingent on specific circumstances and social relations. This is often accomplished through the study and contextualization of the origins and histories of specific social practices and exploitative circumstances.

The critical project has also brought attention to assemblages and material remains that have been hidden or obscured in the service of contemporary politics. By drawing attention to new contexts, historical archaeology can question the ways in which certain events or lifeways are deliberately forgotten, obfuscated, or pushed aside to protect the societies that produced them (Camp and Ng this volume, McAtackney this volume). In this volume, Camp and Ng explore the landscapes and lives of those imprisoned at Japanese incarceration camps during World War II in the United States and McAtackney explores prison life in Northern Ireland during the Troubles. These authors are drawing attention to the landscapes of political incarceration and their functions in capitalism, exploring these spaces beyond the political propaganda that national governments presented about them. These authors and others also show the ways in which historical archaeology can help to question present-day interventions in the interpretation, remembrance, and dissemination of information about the past, as well as the predominance of certain types of material culture and representative production over others in historical analysis and interpretation.

Historical archaeologists who study capitalism examine the ways in which structural inequalities are created and reproduced through ideological narratives about the past. Therefore, memory and representation are major concerns for historical archaeologies of capitalism. Representation is critical to the function of ideology in capitalism. Historical archaeology can expose the disjunctures and tensions between ideology and representation and the active, sometimes unexpected, daily social experiences and connections within capitalist systems. Cossin and Hauser (this volume) discuss how visual representations of plantation landscapes and people functioned as commodities themselves, and were consumed by elite Europeans as confirmation that colonialism and the expansion of capitalism were noble projects. Roller (this volume) also explores the function of public rhetoric, looking at the role of propaganda and the management of public relations in the institutionalization of mass consumerism in the early twentieth century and today, and drawing on Žižek to explore the disorder necessary to produce surplus value.

Understanding the genealogy of specific ideologies and social structures is an enduring form of polemical discourse and a political necessity (Shklar 1971). These ideologies seem natural, timeless, and placeless, and serve to mystify power relations that are actually local. Critical archaeology can therefore become a tool to subvert ideologies, using the study of material culture to make critiques of the status quo concrete and understandable. Historical archaeologies of capitalism can also be important tools to make our understanding of the past more multivocal, and alter scholarly and popular discourses about people who have been historically misrepresented. Fundamentally, archaeologies influenced by Marxist and critical traditions—as historical archaeologies of capitalism are—are social and political, although their subjects are material, ethnographic, and historical. The interpretations and public activities of critical archaeology are also socially constituted agents, and contain claims to authority over knowledge about the past (Castaneda and Matthews 2008). Therefore, many historical archaeologists working in this tradition have attempted to form a praxis that encourages political critique.

Critical theory focused attention on the ways in which the past is created and interpreted for use now, as well as how archaeology can be used to challenge inequalities defined as the status quo. Contributors to this volume address the question of why historical archaeologists study capitalism's forms and the relevance of this work. The degree of public or community involvement varies between projects, but it is generally recognized that in order to sustain an effective social critique, researchers must engage audiences beyond academia and be self-reflexive about their own approach to the past. Many scholars argue that important changes in the world come from collaborating with communities and effectively communicating with publics outside academia (see Shackel and Chambers 2004; Hantman 2004 for examples). However, whether archaeologies of capitalism, and public and community archaeology in general, have brought about the intended social commentary has been questioned. Cristobol Gnecco (this volume) questions whether mainstream collaborative archaeology can bring about change. Daniel Sayers (this volume) argues that there is a need to move beyond the "study" of capitalism towards a transformational, activist historical archaeology grounded in praxis and with the potential to have real impacts on the future. He defines praxis as "real world action driven by a long-term and developing critique of the social world" (drawing on McGuire 1992, 2008; Gadsby and Barnes 2010; Nicholas and Hollwell 2007). Eschewing work with communities as a practice that can actually be counterrevolutionary, Sayers argues that explicitly activist orientations would pair theoretically sophisticated critique with the goal of transforming capitalist production, illuminate past praxis that can provide alternatives to modern capitalism, and do not limit discussions in historical archaeology to the level of community involvement alone.

Authors in this volume ask tough questions about the potential impacts of their projects, which echo larger concerns in our field. Are audiences developing an historical consciousness about the origins of present-day, unequal circumstances? What can archaeology do to effect change? What successes and failures have historical archaeologists encountered while studying capitalism? Have they effectively exposed the inequalities of the capitalist system and enhanced reform? If capitalism

is often seen as an “unreformable system,” can archaeologists make a difference? These questions are ever-present in the volume, but find their most explicit voice in Sayers’ (this volume) discussion of the lack of praxis in historical archaeology addressing the systematic alienation and social, political, and economic dehumanization of modern capitalism. Questions about the rationale for historical archaeology that studies capitalism and archaeology’s potential role for social criticism is further discussed in the next section of this chapter, in which Mark Leone outlines a program, inspired by Žižek, for future study in historical archaeology.

How to Study Capitalism: The Theory and Method

Historical archaeologists excavate house lots, privies, factories, wells, forts, cemeteries, outbuildings, slave cabins, tenant homes, gardens, sewers, electric and gas pipes, cellar pits, landfills, and some churches and schools. There are more and we do not enumerate them any more, nor do we make the artifact patterns associated with them the primary way we come to our conclusions any more, either. There was nothing wrong with where we were.

But some of us, Stanley South included, understood from the beginning of historical archaeology, and certainly by the 1970s, that our digging up all these objects was part of our study of European colonization of the Atlantic world. However, we aren’t there any more, either.

Some of us chose to call European expansion or colonization the drive of Europeans to invest for profit. So, we argued that historical archaeology was the study of the spread of capitalism, as a process, around the whole world. Colonization was an early form of capitalist entry, not something separate. This argument was meant to provide a larger anthropological context for each of the kinds of sites we all work on, such as those just named, as well as to move the impact of our work into the domain of European history and its intellectual thought.

Colonization and capitalism have, as their early stages, the movement of people we often see as traders, fishermen, miners, and missionaries far beyond the home borders. These are sometimes seen in hindsight as connected with the spread of an intention to profit. It is easy and important now to see that capitalism is not necessarily at first a state policy. Even with this exonerating of the motivations of missionaries and frontiersmen, we should try not to neglect to see Cromwell’s Irish program or his Western Policy of 1655, or the Swedish Crown’s northern expansion policy as imperialism for capitalist purposes. These were deliberate for-profit moves, which, once understood from their intellectual heart, allow us to see how early modern nation-states created merchants, classes, serfs, slaves, census takers, mapmakers, dish factories, boatyards, scientific instrument makers, scientific societies, publishers, banks, credit, interest, people exempted from law, people subject to legal harassment, and law as a trap.

So, although we don’t set dates for capitalism, because it is a process, we do invite any historical archaeologist to see a mission, a Christian cemetery, a temporary

fishing encampment, an early mine, prospectors' camps, ship refilling stations, cantons, penal and leper colonies, island collecting stations for animals and plants, signs of early deforestation, and early human depopulation as the time to ask "Why?" Why is this site here for European use? To what does the stratigraphy lead? This means both excavated stratigraphy and historical stratigraphy. Ask: What happened next? Always, we begin with exploitation.

As Žižek (2012, p. 1004) wrote, "... only in capitalism is exploitation "naturalized," inscribed into the functioning of the economy—it is not the result of extra-economic pressure and violence, and this is why, in capitalism, we have personal freedom and equality: there is no need for direct social domination, domination is already inscribed in the structure of the production process." To paraphrase Žižek (2012, p. 1004): domination in capitalism is no longer direct, or through violence. Domination occurs through the use of notions such as fair wages, or the idea of an even free exchange of work for money. That the relationship is almost always unequal but hidden because it is called fair and based on the concept of a free exchange, capitalist labor relations look civilized. The material conditions of peoples' existence reveal this set of relationships to be historically untrue (Žižek 2012, p. 1004). Within this imbalance between the cant of capitalist rationality and the material culture of the different classes within a capitalist society is not only the role of historical archaeology, but also of its capacity to be an alternative form of truth. It is not the voice of the disfranchised. That is too narrow. It is another voice altogether.

Frequently, an historical archaeologist asks questions at the frontiers of capitalist expansion, because that is where we often work and should often think. All these early and capitalist relationships come out of Europe from Marco Polo going to the East and Norse fisherman and Hanseatic traders going West across the North Atlantic or South down to Kiev. This is trade and isn't always capitalism. It isn't always Europeans who did this. But we invite historical archaeologists not to begin capitalism in 1400, but with how the resources, especially rationalized labor relationships, were sought, were sold, and where the money made went, how the money was saved, used, and the workers paid. The answers to those questions are about capitalism.

I turn to Slavoj Žižek on Marx and exploitation. I like Žižek because he is current and a materialist and expands our understanding of how people can be included as topics for historical archaeology. Reinterpreting Marx's *Capital*, to highlight unemployment, he wrote:

...[U]nemployment is structurally inseparable from the dynamic of accumulation and expansion which constitutes the very nature of capitalism ... it is the very success of capitalism (higher productivity, etc.) which produces unemployment (renders more and more workers useless)- [and] what should be a blessing (less hard labor needed) becomes a curse. ...[The unemployed include] "those massive populations around the world who have ... 'dropped out of history,' who have been deliberately excluded from the modernizing projects of First World capitalism and written off as hopeless or terminal cases" ... so-called "failed states" ... victims of famine or ecological disasters, ... or ... of the "war on terror." (Žižek 2012, pp. 1001–1002)

We have never before seen the unemployed as the people without history and that they include large numbers of people affected by the West. These include the partially unemployed, the left behind, “people living in slums and ... populations or states excluded from the global capitalist process” (Žižek 2012, pp. 1001–1002). This is the material of historical archaeology. Could it be that we have failed to see that the archaeology of immigrants, famines, concentration camps, and slums is the archaeology of unemployment? Unemployment is a purposeful product of capitalist exploitation because it is a way of enhancing reproduction to produce more people than are needed for labor. This results historically in a process that keeps costs down and profits up, but actually fills the category of slum dweller, homeless person, welfare queen, gypsy scholar, ethnic minority member, object of religious hatred, and, almost any eighteenth, nineteenth, or twentieth century community member who is the voiceless part of a democracy we say we want to hear from through our work. So, don’t we now have a new part of the capitalist process by seeing that unemployment is a part of profit making and that the unemployed, and underemployed, which include many of our own colleagues, are our subject matter?

Therefore, we are not looking at the excluded, we are looking at a deliberate part of capitalism that operates to save costs in order to create profits. It has always operated. It operates now. It is part of Orthodoxy’s opposition to family planning. It is what causes academic unemployment. With these insights, historical archaeology is two new things: our lives and our waste.

So, don’t we now have a new part of the capitalist process by seeing that unemployment is an intrinsic part of profit making?

Who do we excavate and who excavates? To find these subjects, the unemployed, and underemployed, today we need look no farther than our own colleagues and students, and all those who labor within our own discipline. Try to see the “permanently unemployable ... which consists of those educated but with no chance of finding employment[,] a whole generation of students have almost no chance of finding a job corresponding to their qualifications, ... those who are condemned *not* to ‘create.’ [Then see] ... that the market dynamic itself renders the education provided by universities ‘obsolete’” (Žižek 2012, pp. 1002–1003). Is it not true that in this way we may not speak clearly? So our colleagues within historical archaeology are part of the unemployed and therefore subjects of our own field. Is this why our field is so tongue-tied?

Evolutionary theory has struggled for 50 years with the idea of processes, trajectories that go from past events through history to today, providing a sense of why history works, or flows. For about 20 years now, the newer purpose of historical archaeology involved working for democratic ideals by illuminating those removed, displaced, marginalized, enslaved, and murdered by European expansion when it was caused by the search for profit. Historical archaeology went from being about European expansion, to colonialism, to creating a past for those whose present, whose history, and whose destruction had been guaranteed by colonialism. We became the voice of the voiceless, but did not include ourselves or the unemployed.

This could only be done if the descendants of any of these groups could use it, want it, see it as worthwhile, understand it, or relate to it. Within this derivative aim

of historical archaeology sat the problem of: So what? Could we succeed at this goal? If we could, does one write for the scholarly field? Does one write for descendants? Or both? The field is not clear; those who study capitalism or capitalism's processes and results have been in the hands of good, deep, transparent writers for over a century and a half. Our job as Marx's successors is to write using the many languages within English, and the many media that use it, for all.

The purpose of writing about capitalism's worst effects is to escape them. We want those most victimized to have a way to shout out what they went through. We want the living descendants, the genealogies, the names of the oppressors, the trail back to origins—Africa, Spain, Britain—and we want the perpetrators skewered in print, now. But historical archaeology is not only for descendants, people who we may see as distant from ourselves. The historical archaeology of capitalism is for us all, at every level. There is no better example of how to write for us than Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker's, *The Many-Headed Hydra* (2000). Here is a book no historical archaeologist could write yet, but which one of us must write before too long. It would cover the entire Atlantic basin during Europe's plundering of it, but also tell us by whom and how the plundering was stopped. We know the plundering was never stopped, and continues even today. But their book is a warning to the rapacious: a cold, all-seeing warning, written like a judge's sentence and with the look from the judge that you see from the altar wall of the Sistine Chapel.

Thus, the study of capitalism is about finding your allies. This imperative solves the problems of what you study and how you write, as well as for whom.

Historical archaeology has not been fixed on the past. I doubt that it ever was. We know we are about the early modern and modern world. Even though there is resistance within the United States, we know from British and some European scholars that modern material culture is our subject matter, as well. We have tripped over the archaeology of border crossings and homeless people. These are the same wasted people we see in the Irish Famine and on the North American plantations in slave quarters. These are the unemployed and underemployed.

These problems can be addressed by finding allies. This means we are not different from them. Long ago in his *Autobiography*, R. G. Collingwood told us to use our common understandings as humans to know something about historical events we were studying. Humans are humans as far back as we know and therefore, we connect with views and perspectives. This is neither presentism nor projection.

To historical archaeologists, by studying the underbelly of capitalism's work for profit we can find the point of our objective by looking at how we see and react to the condition of people around us. That process links us. That is how we find our allies because our problems come from the ones we most want to deal with and can consider taking on. They all have histories. All those pasts are in material culture.

So, back to rabble, one can argue that the position of the "universal rabble" perfectly captures the plight of today's new proletarians. ... equal subjects of the same legal order, citizens of the ... state, with the same civil and political rights. Today, this legal frame of equality, this shared participation in the same civil and political spaces, is gradually dissolving with the rise of new forms of social and political exclusion: illegal immigrants, slum-dwellers, refugees ... [But] ... today's rabble is denied even the right to be exploited through work, its status oscillating between that of a victim provided for by charitable humanitarian help and that of a terrorist to be contained or crushed. ... (Žižek 2012, p. 440)

Here are some parts I want to use to show how I think an historical archaeology actually can work, so that we can use Collingwood and Marx. Think of Frederick Douglass, slavery, Emancipation, the Irish Famine, and my mother's family and her history. These are all unlinked. Then, they can be linked through historical archaeology to solve a problem about the rabble.

In historical archaeology we are not prepared for any particular problem. The field was founded as being about historic sites, or European expansion, at best. Even the Georgian Order was about the commonality of artifacts, more than about culture, structural or cognitive. Even now historical archaeology is not about slavery, abolition, plantations, diaspora, North Atlantic settlement, minted coinage, mass production, or waste. How do we find out what to do?

Begin with the power of the artifacts themselves. Let me try to adapt Žižek on voice. He is trying to find the alternative way to see reality that many scholars do. Žižek opposes human voice—particularly song—to written words. This is not new. New, however, is matching voice with historical archaeology's emphasis on our mission as being another kind of understanding, sometimes calling ourselves the voice of the voiceless. Žižek begins with the uncanny but universally recognized fact that the voice endures after its source has stopped speaking or singing. Further, the memory of it is changeable, but not irrational. He sees this as a source of revolution. I argue that Žižek is also talking about artifacts and archaeology. I argue that he can be read this way. His opposition is the voice to the printed word. Artifacts in the hands of archaeologists are revolutionary too. Just look at paleoanthropology and much of prehistoric archaeology. Look at how these revolutionized human origins, the occupation of the world, the history of farming, Biblical history, and Native American history. It's a long list that has been blunted by a dull field.

What we encounter ... again and again is a voice that threatens the established Order and which thus has to be brought under control, subordinated to the rational articulation of the spoken and written word, fixed in writing. ... one tries to restrain it, to regulate it, to subordinate it to the articulated Word, yet one cannot dispense with it altogether, since a proper dosage is vital for the exercise of power. ... [The] 'transgressive' voice: on the one hand, the articulated Word that disciplines and regulates the voice as a means of asserting social discipline and authority, on the other, the self-enjoying Voice which acts as the medium of liberation, breaking the disciplinary chains of law and order. ... (Žižek 2012, p. 672)

Eight or nine years ago, when the late Mary Tilghman and I agreed that my project, Archaeology in Annapolis, should dig at Wye House, she assigned us to the Long Green because slavery was now a current topic and African American history was timely. I did not understand what was off limits when this assignment was made. I just found plenty to dig. At the time, I also did not understand the tie of Wye House to Frederick Douglass, how important he was, let alone what he was then and is becoming now.

Mary Tilghman owned Wye House. Frederick Douglass discovered there in the 1820s that he was a slave when a little boy. At the time, in 2000, I did not know why Frederick Douglass was important. I did not understand that he was and is seen as a Marylander of enormous and growing distinction. Further, I know I did not understand slavery because the African American constituents I had been working

with in Annapolis wanted to know how their people had made themselves free and remained free and achieved equality. I was ignorant and I knew it. But the descendant community of Wye House wanted resurrection through Frederick Douglass and access to Wye House's history. They said that to me and to others when I asked to be educated. So, Frederick Douglass, slavery, and abolition and Emancipation in the ongoing sense of equality got assigned to me incidentally. This could happen because historical archaeology, like all archaeologies, is a source of hope. Its findings are not precluded necessarily by class or ideology because we are like the voice Žižek hypothesizes. Artifacts don't speak at all. They are spoken for.

At Wye House we did not learn much about Frederick Douglass through archaeology. But the archaeology from Wye House meant huge amounts to the descendants of those whom he helped free. Through archaeology, our work got to be known locally just as much archaeology is known worldwide.

Then, there are and were two problems that appeared. How do we get to the end of slavery? Second, how do we get beyond a plantation? The first of these is of concern to descendants, and to almost everyone else who thinks about slavery and particularly when one discovers that slavery is not over but still exists around the world. Here one has to strike down the chant in historical archaeology that the past is different from the present and we only study the past: slavery then is not slavery now. But, it is. Such a move is essential if an archaeologist is going to study capitalism and mean it. Historians Against Slavery mean it (<http://www.historiansagainst-slavery.org/main/>). We don't yet, in historical archaeology.

I recount one event that made my students and me move beyond Wye House. Historical archaeologists get surprised. We get requests. We get ordered to do things and see these as opportunities. I was told to teach a course on Frederick Douglass in conjunction with a course with an identical syllabus at University College Cork, Ireland. Much of the course was taught simultaneously during January 2014 at College Park and Cork using streaming and Skype. Here is what I learned that universalized historical archaeology and made it about the present.

Douglass went to Ireland in 1845–1847. He was invited to go as an abolitionist. He entered Ireland at the same time that Daniel O'Connell was attempting Catholic Emancipation. Douglass not only grasped that the native Irish were little more than slaves in their own land, but, worse, that they were about to be extinguished by the coming Famine. He and O'Connell agreed to be allies in abolition and Emancipation. The alliance worked for them but didn't work in Ireland because of the need in Ireland for the support of US Southern slaveholders who were Irish and who would work for Catholic Emancipation but not for the abolition of North America slavery.

Even though Douglass went to Ireland to gather allies for freedom from bondage—North American and Irish—he is also remembered as being one of the first to announce the coming Famine. In the course of reading and teaching, I began to understand as an archaeologist that the landscapes I walked on Maryland's Eastern Shore were created the same way that the landscapes that Douglass walked and saw in Ireland in 1845 were. I had known about the plantation system the English imposed on Ireland from the seventeenth century on, but I had not connected them to the landscapes of the Famine. The villages of the starving native Irish were an

analogue to the orderly slave quarters of North American plantations. The clusters of native Irish villages on marginal land were the same as those on the margins of American plantations before and after Emancipation. Suddenly, a look at Douglass in Ireland allowed my students and me to see a whole colonizing technique that used monocrop agriculture and inexpensive laborers who were disposable human beings. There was one system, not two. There were many examples of the same process. Such an insight got us to see comparatively, not singularly. Our view was broadened by using class, profit making, and a revolutionary speaker.

A scientific question comes from somewhere. I was pushed to Ireland by an academic obligation. I taught about Douglass at and with University College Cork through no particular plan of my own. However, while preparing to teach, I remembered that my mother's family, surnamed Flynn and Curley, had come to the United States in the nineteenth century from County Cork. I did not grow up with my mother's family and all I could remember was County Cork and that they hated the English. I had forgotten both until this course forced me, as a historical archaeologist, to Ireland, from plantations with slave labor to plantations with bound labor. This is the paradigm that can make an historical archaeology of capitalism work productively, scientifically.

What difference does using this chain of connections make? There are two steps to a Marxist answer. Classes are always in conflict, real, or real but disguised. Real could include active conflict that is unproductive of social change. In the second step, conflict is avoided and social production and the reproduction of society as is, is made possible by ideology. Ideology convinces people that their condition is not what it appears to be—exploited—but one of potential well-being, equality, fulfilled individualism, and life with many freedoms. There is a lot of historical archaeology on ideology and how it works. There is also a lot of historical archaeology on how people do not believe ideologies, but cannot resist police actions, state violence, poverty, and a venal bureaucracy.

Wherever the scholarship on ideology points, Marx himself leads to seeing that exploiting labor leads to resistance. It is this conflict that matters to us as archaeologists. We have done enough on sources of resistance to see that exploited peoples actually know what is happening to them and resist in innumerable ways. Can they win? We have not asked this question yet. We have not asked whether the goal of historical archaeology can be realized. We need to.

Regarding ideology and victory over capitalism, Žižek sees: “that our liberation from ideology is not a spontaneous act, an act of discovering our true Self ... we are “naturally” in ideology, our natural sight is ideological” (Žižek 2012, p. 999).

It is this understanding of ideology and the underlying struggle to understand the push to be richer, happier, freer, better provided for, better cared for when old, that gives us our reason to dig and think as archaeologists. Any archaeologist who works with community members sees two things. People want to know what we are finding and they want to know what it means for them. Almost all of us who work with almost anyone, anywhere, see that archaeology offers hope. Hope means being greeted as having knowledge worth having and as having knowledge that can be told plainly.

We know from Terry Eagleton that the nugget that makes language possible is the anticipation of being understood. When someone speaks, we anticipate we will comprehend. I have found in archaeology that there is a near universal welcome for the field, if not for all breeds of archaeologists. We are welcomed in the same way that most people welcome doctors. People try hard to understand what we have to say. This is the hope that is our opening. To realize this hope,

... we have to renounce ... the common-sense notion of a primordial, fully constituted reality in which sight and sound harmoniously complement each other ... [Our] voice acquires a[n] autonomy, it never quite belongs to the body we see speaking, there is always a minimum of ventriloquism at work: it is as if the speaker's [archaeologist's] own voice hollows him out and in a sense speaks "by itself," through him. In other words relationship is mediated by an impossibility: ultimately, *we hear things* [do archaeology] *because we cannot see everything.* (Žižek 2012, pp. 676–677)

It is this source of independence that is our revolutionary potential. Žižek tells us this so that we can see Marx's point that it is ordinary workers who will change society, not scholars. Our job is to analyze, and record, and tell the truth. I think we are improving on that process and doing just that.

Žižek, like other critics, says that an emphasis on the mechanisms of domination and regulatory power seen in Foucault and Agamben lead to a re-emphasis on democracy. He prefers a communist program. Žižek sees that any failure to focus on capitalism and its many forms of exploitation will aim at a "fairer" capitalism, one "without domination" (Žižek 2012, pp. 1003–1004). He does not see this as long lasting or possible.

Žižek repeats what we have begun to understand widely. A fairer capitalism is one that recognizes more subjects: gays, ethnic and racial groups, religions, and all the diversities in the rainbow coalition. These all serve to have people remain in bourgeois society and provoke no change. Capitalism remains unchanged and so do its horrors, particularly in slums, the Third World, Native American and indigenous enclaves, and religious and racial ghettos.

Žižek and I would prefer to have historical scholars and historical archaeologists focus on how our socialisms and communisms failed (Shakers, Mormons, utopias). They tried to solve the problems of capitalism. There are many failed communist experiments, including some in universities and some in religious communities. They tried to be radically egalitarian. They tried collective will, collective wealth, and collective child-rearing. They proclaimed racial equality. They all failed (Žižek 2012, p. 903).

Here is where Žižek concludes. Can we resuscitate these lost causes through historical archaeology? "The communist horizon is peopled by two millennia of failed radical-egalitarian rebellions from Spartacus onwards—yes, they were all lost causes, but, as G. K. Chesterton put it in his *What's Wrong with the World*, 'the lost causes are exactly those which might have saved the world'" (Žižek 2012, p. 1010).

Thus, there are three novelties left within historical archaeology: artifacts, ourselves, and utopias. I could have searched and quoted widely for scholars on Marx and critical theory, but I have been reading Žižek. He has three qualities that are attractive. He likes things and so do we, as archaeologists. He focuses on modern

life and we are told, increasingly, through modern material culture studies, a focus on Walter Benjamin, British archaeology, and border-crossing archaeology, to see it as important. Third, we all want some form of utopian reform and the ruins of these are everywhere from early Christian communities to slave revolts and maroon settlements. This essay is an effort to link life in capitalism to artifacts and to reform by finding out what went wrong with earlier attempts to fix capitalist exploitation.

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