

THE PEOPLE OF THE LONELY PLACE: AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL
EXPLORATION OF COMMUNITY STRUCTURE WITHIN
THE GREAT DISMAL SWAMP

By

Jordan M. Riccio

Submitted to the

Faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences

of American University

in Partial Fulfillment of

the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts

In

Public Anthropology

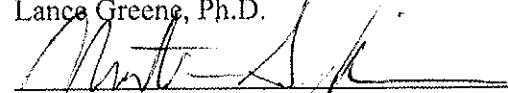
Chair:



Daniel Sayers, Ph.D.



Lance Greene, Ph.D.



Martin Gallivan, Ph.D.



Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences

August 15, 2012

Date

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For my Mother, who always offers inspiration and guidance.

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ABSTRACT

The Great Dismal Swamp of Virginia and North Carolina was once home to many seeking refuge from colonial system, histories that remain hidden or forgotten within today's view of the swamp. The resistance communities that found refuge within the boundaries of the swamp include Disenfranchised Native Americans, African Maroons, and any others seeking a life free of colonial influence. The Great Dismal Swamp Landscape Study (GDSLS) was formed in order to archaeologically explore these resistance communities in terms of their diasporan and exilic characteristics and make known their marginalized pasts. The project employs a predictive model of community structure labeled the Modes of Communitization, which includes the Semi-Independent Mode, the Scission Mode and the Labor Exploitation Mode. This exposition explores the Scission Mode (interior) and archaeologically tests whether or not those communities formed on the north plateau of the nameless site display traits associated with interior community formation.

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There are many that offered me consistent support and educational knowledge throughout the course my graduate work. Their names are many, perhaps to many to write in print, but they know who they are, and they have my utmost gratitude.

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I must also extend thanks to those who have shed sweat and blood alongside me within the forested walls of the Great Dismal, including Dan Lynch, Madeline Konz, Karl Austin,

Ashlee Dunn, Molly Miranker, Scott Quigley, Melissa Frederick, Tam Mihailovic and all of the field school students I had the pleasure of leading through the black waters. My graduate career would have never begun if it were not for Travis Shaw. He inspired me to go back to school and urged me to do so. Lastly, I must thank my mother, Trish Latham. She has worked her entire life in order to make a better one for me. She truly offered me inspiration when the world seemed its bleakest. A man could not ask to have a better mother.

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INTRODUCTION

The Great Dismal Swamp of Virginia and North Carolina has a complex social history, much of which remains marginalized or hidden within the Tidewater region. The pre-colonial landscape offered indigenous communities a means of subsistence while the colonial world saw its transformation into an exilic landscape, where Disenfranchised Native Americans, African Maroons, enslaved canal company workers and others found refuge from oppression. The Great Dismal Swamp Landscape Study (GDSLS) was initiated in 2002 in order to archaeologically explore this complicated social history in terms of their diasporan and exilic natures to better understand those often marginalized pasts and make those histories known by the US government and the public, broadly conceived as including local and regional communities, academics, government agencies, and participants in the project itself (Sayers 2006, Riccio and Sayers 2009).

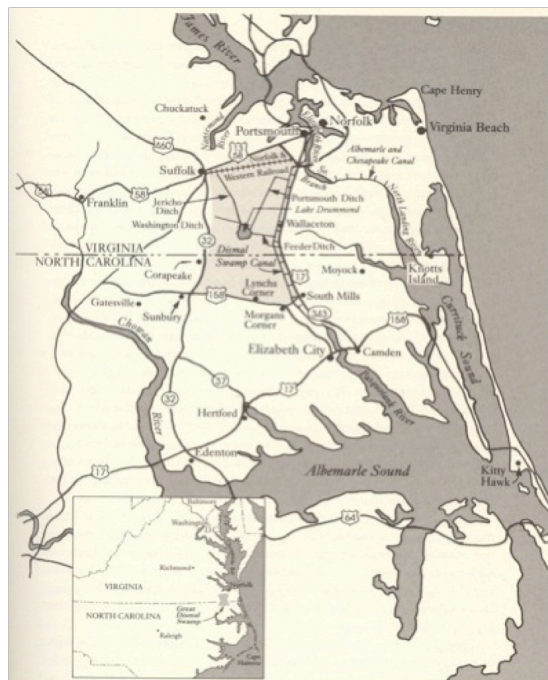


Figure 1. Tidewater Region (GDSLS Research Collection, Original Adapted from Kirby 1995: 9).

One of the key ways that the GDSLS has sought to meet its public dissemination and research goals has been the development of flexible predictive models that have guided the archaeological site and public interpretation. These models represent differing community formations within the Great Dismal Swamp as can be determined through anthropological and archaeological interpretation. As part of the project's research design, these models remain testable and must be subject to consistent revisitation as new data emerges from archaeological fieldwork. Recent work at the Nameless site, a locus of one kind of community suggested to have existed in the post-1600 era, provides us with just such an opportunity to revisit key predictions by GDSLS models for exilic communities that formed in the interior of the Dismal Swamp.

This exposition will focus its attention to an area labeled the North Plateau located on the Nameless site (31GA120) where the validity of GDSLS models of the archaeological signatures of the swamp interior historical communities will be tested. Specifically, this exposition will address whether the findings at the North Plateau support or contradict the GDSLS interior community model. In doing so, an exploration of the recent archaeological excavations on the North Plateau can begin to illuminate the daily lifeways, subsistence practices, and some socio-political dimensions of interior-community structure and organization.

Upon assessing the validity of GDSLS models, the material culture from the North Plateau will be used to interpret the cultural meanings and significances of the history being explored on the North Plateau as well as shed light on the lifeway patterns of interior swamp communities of the Dismal Swamp. This exposition will focus its attention to the 2010 and 2011 excavations of the North Plateau, specifically one feature complex characterized by a substantial architectural footprint and the limited artifactual assemblage recovered in association. In order

to effectively analyze the materials recovered from the North Plateau, a Marxian interpretation will be used to interpret the political economic significance of their production and the types of social relations that are suggested by their creation in context to their location, both regional and stratigraphic.

Theoretical Framework

Marxism offers the archaeologist a theoretical viewpoint of societal change, one that gives focus to the social constructs of material production and the critical understanding of the relations that reflect societal subsistence patterns (Pearson 1984; Patterson 2004; McGuire 2002).

Following the Marxian model of historical materialism, this exposition will examine the ways in which landscape and colonialism influenced the daily lives of those seeking permanent refuge from society. The mode of production can be explored through the absence of large amounts of colonial ceramics and presence of reworked, pre-contact lithic tools and ceramics. When discussing the historic presence, an analysis of posthole features will be explored to indicate possible cultural influences on architecture.

Using the modes of production within our theoretical perspective, a number of things may be able to be seen. If a group of people sought refuge within the Great Dismal Swamp, the types of materials found will tell us the types of lives that they lived, but it may also tell us of the world outside of those lives. If an artifact assemblage is made up of mostly reworked pre-contact projectile points, few ceramic and very few colonial wares, one might say that the mode of production in play was of self subsistence and did not rely on those outside wares for daily survival. “In many ways the organization of production is an artifact itself: it has the potential to both reflect and constitute social and political relations (including social networks and social identity), technological systems, economy, and ideology (Chilton 1999: 4).” This interpretation

can begin to tell the tale of an exilic group, whom used the swamp to get away from the colonial world that introduced chattel slavery to the continent.

The Great Dismal Swamp Landscape Study

Daniel Sayers began the Great Dismal Swamp Landscape Study (GDSLS) in 2002 in order to study the diasporic history residing within the swamp (Sayers 2008). Phase one of this study began as Sayers' dissertation, focusing his attention on the modes of communitization that existed within a post-contact/pre-civil war worldview with focus on those who fought to have freedom during colonial usurpation of human labor and land. Sayers' approach to archaeological study follows a dialectic method in order to discover the past and analyze the landscape with a mode of production in mind, the landscape and how people of the past interacted with it, diasporic exile, alienation and the concept of community (Sayers 2008).

Sayers discussed three main types of community formation within the swamp, which he referred to as "modes of communitization (Sayers 2008)." These modes are the project's models on community structure in which all current work is based. The first of these modes is the Semi-Independent mode of communitization (perimetrical), within which a community existed on the boundary of the swamp (Sayers 2008). Such communities would form near the border of the swamp, making it relatively easy to leave and return to their encampment at any time. Such sites would have a mixture of artifacts, displaying daily subsistence practices as well as trade with people outside the Dismal Swamp.

The second of the modes of communitization is the scission, or interior, mode (Sayers 2008). Such a community would form within the interior of the swamp, making it difficult to leave, but more importantly making it difficult to be found. Such a community would be the result of an alienated, exilic life caused by slavery, violence, land usurpation and other such

occurrences within the pre-Civil War era. Such a site would exhibit materials that were fashioned within the swamp itself. Pre-contact ceramics and reworked projectile points reveal the habitation at such a site, where no stone sources were naturally occurring. The third mode of communitization is that of the labor exploitation, or canal corridor, mode (Sayers 2008). This mode reflected the encampments of the canal companies and the enslaved individuals forced to dig through the swamp. Such sites would contain an artifactual assemblage of colonial wares, since they had constant contact with the outside world.

Beginning in 2009, the GDSLS began to conduct an Archaeological Field School offered through American University. The GDSLS, through the field school, has begun an archaeological interpretation of the cultural presence within the swamp during its constant geological progression from coastline to its use as an exilic landscape by increasing student interest and involvement in different facets of the swamp's cultural history. It was during the 2010 and 2011 field schools when the research design of this exposition was employed in order to test the modes of Communitization as they related to the archaeological data found on the North Plateau.

Significance of the Study

The swamp has a rich diasporic history in which many exilic communities were formed. The cultures that existed were comprised of Indigenous people seeking refuge from the colonists who were invading their lands, those that sought to escape the clutches of slavery as well as those enslaved to dig canals through the swamp itself. The archaeology of the Great Dismal Swamp is an ongoing project, uncovering the forgotten or marginalized past of those who once found refuge within the swamp interior. In order to bring these histories to life once more, archaeologists (through the GDSLS) have begun expeditions into the morass to locate and collect

material remains of these lost cultures for analysis and interpretation. This study's agenda is to come to a better understanding of the community structure within the swamp interior as can be seen through the 2010 and 2011 field school sessions.

The artifactual evidence to date points to large groups of people subsisting within the swamp interior. The Nameless site displays what have been identified as the parameters of an interior scission community, but what was daily life like? Did these groups of people have central areas of their communities where they would gather to cook, eat, and celebrate? Or were communities spread out in smaller groups, based on family, forming a social stratigraphy? How did they protect their homes from outside visitation or possible attack? While a crystal clear picture of this past is not possible, the archaeological efforts being made within this research hopes to fill in some of the gaps regarding the human history of the Great Dismal Swamp.

The cultural history of the Great Dismal Swamp is poorly understood. The area was used as hunting grounds for the Indigenous peoples of America, refuge for those Indigenous communities in the post-contact era, asylum to those that escaped slavery, and was a landscape of enslaved labor for various logging companies. With such a rich history, the swamp has many stories hidden within its soil. But, even if the past is enigmatic, why should people of today care about those lost histories? The focus on the Dismal Swamp today is concerned with the preservation of animal wildlife. The swamp of the past housed those seeking to live a life free of outside influence. In its heart, the archaeological story to be told is the story of people seeking freedom; freedom from oppression, freedom from slavery and freedom from violence. The Dismal Swamp reflects those qualities, people of today admire about the true condition of human existence and the lengths that people will go in order to survive.

Chapter Overview

The proposed research will be separated into several parts, in an attempt to exhibit a dialectical approach to the study of the Great Dismal Swamp's cultural history. The first stage of the writing process will explore the theoretical framework important to such a study. A discussion of Marxism, in Chapter 2, and its applications to archaeology will be followed by an anthropological exploration of the Great Dismal Swamp as a remote landscape and how the complicated history surrounding the Dismal took part in its cultural interpretation as an exilic landscape within Chapter 3. Chapter 4 will review the archaeological fieldwork within the Great Dismal Swamp, covering the research design of two field seasons (2010 and 2011).

Chapter 5 will begin with a discussion on the Modes of Communitization (Community Structures) as they apply to the Great Dismal Swamp. Following this discussion, an exploration of architectural styles will be undertaken, in order to gain a better perspective of the types of architectural signatures that might be encountered within the Dismal Swamp. The architectural study will then be followed up with the data from the 2011 findings. Chapter 6 will then conclude this exposition, giving an anthropological interpretation of the completed research on the North Plateau.

CHAPTER 2

THEORY

This chapter will take a dialectic approach in the exploration of Marxist theory and explain how Marxism can aid archaeology in its pursuit of understanding peoples of the past. Marxism was chosen as the predominant theoretical viewpoint for this project based on its interpretation of material culture in terms of social relations involved within the creation of material goods. In a place like the Great Dismal Swamp, material items played an important part of daily subsistence practices, and the limited artifactual assemblages recovered from excavation sites helps to shed light about the social sphere of those created lifeways within the swamp.

The Theory of Marxism

Marxism is a misunderstood child of the theoretical world and carries with it a poor name within today's social sphere, due to its use in the creation of communist countries. In the extreme of the political right, Marxism can take the role of staunch Stalinism, and in the left it can turn to nihilism (McGuire 2002). This is precisely why this theory must be understood and applied in historic interpretation and understanding of past and present cultures. Marx's interests focused on capitalism and the social relations that were involved within that society to point out its flaws.

Marxism was meant as a way to interpret history to find the contradictions and conflicts within society to come to a better understanding of the overall structure of that culture and the relations that existed. Marx's outlook on history used the Hegelian dialectic model, to view the past society in its entirety, the relations that existed within, and how society operated. The dialectic view focuses on the totality of society and the change that results from the contradictions found within. "Unique events cannot be predicted but can be interpreted within a

general understanding of change (Pearson 1984:60).” This change can be seen as stemming from the conflicts within the contradictory relationships of society.

It is this historic view, a focus on change and the relations involved, which can aid historians and archaeologists in their pursuit to understand the past. Marxist theory has a strong connection to material culture and the social relations involved in the production of material goods. It is this connection with the material culture that can truly aid archaeology in its quest of understanding the past, as material culture is the archaeologist’s main tool in reading the past.

On archaeology, Matthew Johnson (1999: 97) states; “Marxism gives us: an interest in conflict and contradiction; a stress on ideology; an insistence that academic discourse is fundamentally also political discourse in the present; and a model of structure and agency.” Here I examine Marx and his thoughts, and how they can be applied within archaeology. A few examples are discussed below in order to display how Marxism has been used in past archaeological works as well as exhibit the possibilities Marxism holds for future archaeological study.

Roots of Marxism

Marx’s own philosophical beliefs were rooted in Hegelian thought (Singer 1980). Hegel focused on the mind of the people and the collective Mind that encompassed them all. “One might say that Hegel is trying to show that history is the process of Mind along a logically necessary path, a path along which it must travel in order to reach its final goal (Singer 1980: 17).” Without going into much detail about Hegel, his work introduced Marx to the dialectic and some concepts that would impact his outlook throughout his life.

Marx began to study with Bruno Bauer and “under Bauer’s influence Marx seized on orthodox religion as the chief illusion standing in the way of human self-understanding (Singer

1980: 21).” It was here that Marx elaborated on Hegel’s conception of religion as being an alienating factor in human life. “In the Phenomenology Hegel referred to the Christian religion at a certain stage of its development as a form of alienation, for while God reigns in heaven, human beings inhabit an inferior and comparatively worthless ‘vale of tears’ (Singer 1980:21).”

Marx then began to develop his outlook on historical perception. “The goal of history became the liberation of humanity; but this could not be achieved until the religious illusion had been overcome (Singer 1980: 22).” It was about this time that Marx’s thoughts, those that would influence many to come, began to emerge. Marx makes the jump in thought from identifying gods and religion as being the main alienating factor existing within society to the conception of money to fill that role (Singer 1980).

This shift allowed for a greater view into the society of man, and especially that of capitalism. This view of history is an attempt to view humanity and the forces that are alienating them within their own society. “Human beings cannot be free if they are subject to forces that determine their thoughts, their ideas, their very nature as human beings. (Singer 1980: 46).” It is these “forces” as Marx indicated that dictate society. If they were to change, so too would society.

From this realization of human alienation, Marx formulated the materialist conception of history, which “tells us that these forces are not supernatural tyrants, forever above and beyond human control, but the productive powers of human beings themselves (Singer 1980:46).” By identifying this alienating force, Marx believed that an understanding of the true human condition could be obtained. “All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned, and man is at last compelled to face with sober senses, his real conditions of life, and his relations with his kind (Marx 2008: 38).” To comprehend Marx’s view of society, one must explore how Hegel’s

dialectical model can be used to analyze the social relations within to come to a better understanding of society in its totality and the class identities that exist.

Marx's Dialectic Theory

Marx used the Hegelian dialectic model to view society as a whole, take it apart and reassemble it again to understand the relations involved within that societal structure and how each affects the whole. "The method is analogous to peeling an onion layer by layer, revealing its internal structure with each successive layer until reaching its core and then reassembling the whole (Patterson 2004: 8)." This dialectic approach, as its name suggests, is essentially a series of dialogues in which the researcher conducts between him or herself, and the past as well as the present. Patterson (2004) used the analogy of a demon that stole oxen and then, to confuse the villagers, would walk backwards to his cave. By examining the situation and "a wider set of facts and their interrelations (a totality)," the contradiction "of the footprints and the process that actually produced them (Patterson 2004: 8)" can be derived.

By taking the situation apart and reassembling the data, the truth can be discovered and a greater understanding achieved. This dialectic method can be used to study the relations within and their impact on that society. This is the process that Marx believed would prove beneficial in historical interpretation. "Engels tried to reduce the ambiguity in Hegel's dialectic and make it a method for gaining true consciousness, that is, useful knowledge, of both the social and natural world (McGuire 2002: 27)." There are a great number of factors involved within Marx's application of the dialectic in the examination of human history. "It suggests how and where to look, in specific historical cases, to understand change, but it does not predict the path that change will take (McGuire 2002: 99)." By understanding these factors, a theory of societal relations and change emerges to aid in the interpretation and study of cultures. Study is

emphasized here, as not to imply a deterministic view, as human agency cannot always be predicted.

Contradiction and Conflict

“The dialectic views the social world as an elaborate structure of internal relations, within which the relation of any given entity to others governs what that entity will be (McGuire 2002: 94).” Within these “relations,” contradictions exist that house conflict in their very existence. Contradictions are essentially opposites that are in conflict with each other. Randal McGuire (2002: 96) states that relational contradictions are “the idea that all social categories are defined by and require the existence of their opposite.” Contradictions imply two sides of a coin. Each side views the world differently and thus different perspectives can be found when studying the view of each side, yet both exist on the same coin (McGuire 2002). Common examples of these contradictions are that of the master and slave or teacher and student.

“Contradiction and conflict are intimately linked; conflict is the active realization of contradictions, action which is related to a clash of opposed ideologies and their associated practices (Pearson 1984: 62).” Marx then focuses attention to this conflict, as it will be the tension that can ultimately cause the end of that relationship. For example, if the slave rebels against the master and abolishes his or her own slavery, then that relationship no longer exists (McGuire 2002). The master and slave relationship was destroyed by that conflict. Hence, Marx believed that these contradictions and the conflict that existed would eventually bring about the end of that social relation and possibly the end of the system itself. “Motion, that is, change in social form, springs from the conflict inherent in the nature of social relations (McGuire 2002: 96).” These relationships influence society through their function and value within the society.

Social relations can be found everywhere within culture, and to come to a better understanding of societal structure; Marx posited the mode of production.

Mode of Production

The mode of production is the way in which commodities are created within a societal construct. Commodities are items of value that are used within society and can become fetishized, or fixated on, by that society. These commodities are the material products of the mode of production and are very important to historical and archaeological interpretation. The mode of production is made up of the forces of production and the relations of production. The forces of production are the forces that drive that production. These forces can be the machines that produce the physical commodities or the labor that goes into this creation. The relations of production refer to the relationships involved in that production. These relationships include that of the manager and the worker in his or her employ.

“The ultimate cause of social change lay not in peoples’ beliefs and ideas, but in changes from one mode of production to another (Engels, 1954 as quoted in McGuire 2002: 28).” Due to the impact that the mode of production has on society and the relations that are involved in that production, the rest of society will always feel the effect of change within that mode. Change is not dictated by the mode of production alone, rather by all aspects of society and culture, including human agency. “The bourgeoisie cannot exist without constantly revolutionizing the instruments of production, and thereby the relations of production, and with them the whole relations of society (Marx 2008: 38).” Change begets change. Think of this change as the butterfly effect within the social realm. If one thing experiences change, so too must everything else.

Base and Superstructure

Since this mode exists within a dialectical approach, it is important to note the role that the mode of production plays in the base and the superstructure of society. “Culture interacted with matter to create the economic base, that is, the economic structure of a society including a wide variety of things such as technology, technical knowledge, and the social organization of work (McGuire 2002: 28).” The superstructure refers to the overall ideological, political, and economic standings of that society. Each of these things affects the other. If the forces of production were to change, so too, would the relations of production. If the mode of production changed as a result, the base would be altered along with the superstructure.

It is important to note the direct relation between the base, the mode of production and the superstructure. It can be seen that each one influences the other and that each exists because of the other. This is a reciprocal relationship where each relies on the other for existence, much like the Christian trinity but with more logic backing it up. The technology of society dictates the base and the forces of production, which directly impact the relations of production. The relations of production go on to influence society as a whole, the superstructure. The ideologies of the super structure dictate the technologies and workforce of the base hence having affect on the mode of production.

Ideology

Marx also advocated for the analysis of ideology within cultures (Johnson 1999). These ideologies can be seen within the superstructure, and hence influenced by every relation within that culture. Ideology refers to the belief structure of a culture. “The ideological sphere extends to include the vast majority of our activities – the nature of our work and leisure, house forms, food preparation, our use of the past, attitudes between men and women, and our need for certain

kinds of commodities and energy for consumption are just some of the areas in which we make conscious or unconscious political and ideological decisions every day (Pearson 1984: 60-61).”

Matthew Johnson (1999) states that ideology has the ability to mystify the truth within society and bringing about a false consciousness. Hence, ideology is very important in Marx’s quest for the true consciousness. This realization can emerge through a dialectic approach to the study of that society. Ideology is not only present in how life is conducted, but also in what life produces. To this degree, ideology resonates within the artifacts that archaeologists uncover. “Since artifacts are the product of human actions and are also used to carry out actions it follows that their meaning derives from their relationship with beliefs (Pearson 1984:61).”

Structure and Agency

Another important concept to keep in mind when taking a dialectical approach to studying past societies is that of structure and agency. Structure consists of the social relations mentioned above which makes up the overall structure of society. Agency refers to the human action involved within that society. It is this agency that can be seen as “the source of motion in history (McGuire 2002: 48).” Agency is the force that acts on the conflict found within the relational contradictions of a societal framework, and hence allows for change within the totality of that structure.

“Any discussion of human agency in history should start with the realization that human actors are not free agents and that circumstances inherited from the past both enable and constrain human action (McGuire 2002: 113).” While humans have free will, the structure of society will always bear itself over that will. Human actions do lead to change, but it is not this action alone that leads to that change. Human agency in relation to the structure leads to new ideas and can lead to new relations of production. Agency can affect structure, just as that

structure affects agency. Structure and agency are another example of two parts of the whole working together to create a totality. The inner layer of the onion cannot exist without the outer layer.

Toward a Marxian Archaeology

Marxism is the study of society through the economic factors involved in human subsistence and a critique on the historical process, so real change may be understood and achieved in the present. Marxism offers the archaeologist a theoretical viewpoint of societal change, one that can be adopted for the betterment of historic interpretation by giving focus to the social constructs of material production and the critical understanding of the relations that reflect societal subsistence patterns (Pearson 1984; Patterson 2004; McGuire 2002).

Marxian thought calls for a critique of society in order to gain an understanding of the world through the productive forces behind the material goods that create the social division of the private property owner and the proletariat. This quest of understanding the world comes as a study of capitalism, in the hopes of bringing about a social change, stemming from a demystification of human alienation caused by private property productive forces. This study of culture is meant to interpret historical records and the contradictions and conflicts found within to understand the productive relations that existed and formed the superstructure of that culture. As such, Marxism proves to be an exceedingly useful theoretical model for archaeologists since it functions as a way to critique the world in order to understand social change through the materials produced by those cultures and the social relations involved, and subsequently the ideologies, in the production and use of those materials (McGuire 2002; Leone 2010; Patterson 2004).

“Unique events cannot be predicted but can be interpreted within a general understanding of change (Pearson 1984: 60).” It is this understanding of change that Marxism offers the archaeologist when studying those cultures of the past. Such archaeology finds “interest in conflict and contradiction; a stress on ideology; an insistence that academic discourse is also fundamentally political discourse in the present; and a model of structure and agency (Johnson 1999: 97).” When viewing these separate components of society in the dialectic fashion, a total picture of a culture can come into light. “A dialectical archaeology should start and end with the real, lived experience of people and seek an understanding of how that experience changed over time (McGuire 2002: 250).”

Within the German Ideology, Marx states, “the first premise of all human history is, of course, the existence of living human individuals (Tucker 1978: 149).” In order to exist, humanity must find a way of subsistence. Humanity separates itself from the rest of the animal kingdom by its innovative methods, mainly its ability to create and subsist from material goods. “By producing their means of subsistence men are indirectly producing their material life (Tucker 1978: 150).” Humanity’s social relations are found within the mode of production of those material goods that society relies on for existence. The ways in which humanity organizes its production “constitutes a mode of production—a specific, historically occurring set of social relations through which labor is deployed to wrest energy from nature by means of tools, skills, organization, and knowledge (Wolf 1982: 75).” It is this analysis of material culture that is known as the materialist conception of history (D’Amato 2006). “Historical materialism aims at achieving an explanation of social evolution which is so comprehensive that it embraces the interrelationships of the theory’s own origins and application (Habermas 1973: 1).” The dialectic approach to cultural and historical study, engages society in a sequence of dialogues,

meant to separate each section, clarify and define them and then reassemble them to be viewed as a whole structure (McGuire 2002, 2008; Patterson 2004). By studying the process in which society functions and how change occurs within society, archaeologists may begin to understand the past cultures that they study and their relevance within modern society. “A theory of change as the normal order fits archaeology better than steady-state models that freeze change to look for causes instead of studying the process of change (McGuire 2002: 94).”

In order to understand this change in material culture, and understand its effects in society, the archaeologist needs to adapt a way of critique that will allow that greater understanding, but also allow for an archaeology that is relevant within present politics. Such a method can be found within the notion of praxis. Within the Theses on Feuerbach, Marx claimed that, “The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point, however, is to change it (Tucker 1978: 145).” Praxis, then, follows this notion of change with regard to the philosophers’ need to interpret the world. Simply defined, praxis is “theoretically informed action,” that is theory and practice combined to ensure an intellectually considered outcome, rather than impulsive action alone (McGuire 2008, Bernstein 1971). McGuire defines praxis as a “process of gaining knowledge of the world, critiquing the world, and taking action to change the world (McGuire 2008: 3).”

A critical archaeology, as called for by Leone (2010), is one that strives to understand the past in terms of the social influences of the time. Such a critical archaeology must always be aware of the opposing views of history, when studying the past. Archaeology is inherently political, for the past belongs to someone in the present. As such, multiple viewpoints must be considered in the adaptation and interpretation of the past (Leone 2010; McGuire 2002, 2008; Saitta 2007). Marxism can prove to reveal the social conditions within which archaeology exists

today and how to create praxis to study the past while remaining true to the history and the descendant communities. Marxism can offer the archaeologist a way to interpret the past in terms of social structure as well. The manner in which archaeologists can explore the past is found through the material remains of that culture. “The key to gaining such knowledge lay in the fact that artifacts and tools were the products of human labor and, therefore, could be used as indicators of the social conditions under which they were produced (Marx, 1906: 200; McGuire 2002:24).” The material remains can give the archaeologist a better understanding of the people who made them and the social conditions surrounding the material’s production as well as the social relations within the process of production. “These relations are made up of contradictions that bind individuals and groups with opposing and conflicting interests together, and because small changes in any part of this social whole will alter the structure of relations, this whole is always in flux (McGuire 2002: 12).” Marxism grants archaeologists a new way to look at the data they find by analyzing its creation and the social relations involved that brought about its production.

Not only are past relationships explored, but also ideologies of the past can be seen through artifact assemblages. The use and function of these artifacts, as well as their social meanings, directly reflect the society of their origin. The dialectical process, then, allows the archaeologist to view the whole of society and the change that took place within that society through the material remains left behind. “Humans use material culture to transform the natural world for their social use, and archaeologists commonly refer to this aspect of material culture as technology (McGuire 2002: 103-104).” Technology forms the economic base of society. If the mode of production changes, so too does the whole structure. Thus, if technology changes, so does the mode of production and the relations found within. The dialectical approach allows

archaeologists to view the past in terms of a societies means of subsistence and analyze how such understandings relate to the present. “In the end, the goal of archaeology is to understand the social world of the past; archaeology is itself part of the social world of the present (McGuire 2002: 108).” The archaeologist must always be aware of the political implications of his or her data within the modern world. Who will the study affect today and what is the best method to go about the research where everyone will benefit?

When discussing the possible implications of this dialectical materialist model of Marxism towards an archaeology of pre and post-contact America, one can find meaning in the comparison of pre and post-capitalist societies and the modes of production within, how material exchange is viewed in the ideology of that society and how the clash of those cultures can have a transformative effect within society. Within the South American landscape, Michael Taussig (1980) compares the precapitalist view of value with the capitalist within the onset of colonialism. Taussig shows that the precapitalist mode of production within Cauca Valley was one based on use-values where items had a purpose within social context, such as a shoe for walking. The capitalist mode of production is based on an exchange value, where that shoe can generate capital (Taussig 1980). The capitalist mode of production clashed with the superstitions of the people in Cauca Valley, and led to the belief that capital was something to be achieved by dealing with the devil. Going beyond ideologies, an archaeology that uses the Marxian interest in production and social constructs within a theory of change can come to a better understanding of the daily lives of past cultures. Martin Gallivan (2003) explores the settlement organization of Native societies within the Chesapeake region. Archaeological data indicates that as technologies changed, the Native presence of the Chesapeake began to rely more on agriculture. Features from excavations show a larger amount of surplus and larger dwelling houses (Gallivan

2003). It is through this data that Gallivan is able to discuss the complex societies that began to rise and the social inequalities that rose out of such surplus creation.

Marxism is the study of material production, to understand the ways in which humanity exerts itself over nature in order to create a means of subsistence (Bernstein 1971; Roseberry 1989). Archaeology concerns itself with materials produced and left behind by cultures of the past. As such, an archaeology that concerns itself with the different modes of production can begin understanding the way in which those past cultures survived and the social relations, including possibly elitism that may have existed. This understanding of the past can lead itself to present day discourse with the descendants of those past cultures. A Marxist archaeology is one that hopes to aid humanity in its understanding of the world, by critiquing it, abolishing colonial misconceptions, and helping the people of the world work together to change the present for the better.

CHAPTER 3

HISTORIC BACKGROUND

The archaeological work and interpretations within the Great Dismal Swamp follow an anthropological viewpoint with focus on landscape, exile, alienation and diasporic histories (Sayers 2008). In order to come to a better anthropological understanding of the cultures that lived within the morass, the Dismal Swamp must be approached as a landscape with multiple cultural influences rather than a singular occupation site. This chapter will review how the swamp changed as a landscape, from the natural to the cultural and briefly examine those histories associated with the Dismal Swamp.

The Great Dismal Swamp as a Remote Landscape

As a landscape, today's Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge has undergone a great deal of transformation throughout the past 10,000 years. The swamp's formation began when the Pleistocene era coastline receded. Today, Suffolk Scarp remains as a geological formation that indicates that coastal history. Suffolk Scarp acts as a natural eastern edge of the Dismal Swamp, separating it from active farmland and residential properties. Over time, the landscape that was once coastline slowly became marshlands and eventually formed into the present heavily forested swampland. At the time of contact, the Dismal was about 2000 square miles and was home to many types of wildlife (Oaks and Whitehead 1979, Sayers 2008). The swamp has dwindled to roughly 190 square miles, due to the installation of canals and attempts to create more sustainable living space (Sayers 2008).

Of great import to this exposition is the cultural understanding of the Dismal Swamp post-contact. In order to come to this understanding, it is first important to view how the swamp's significance changed due to competing viewpoints across the pre and post-contact

divide. Archaeological evidence performed at the Magnolia site (located just outside of Suffolk, VA) indicates that the swamp had a primary pre-contact occupation during the Middle Archaic period (c 6000-3000 BCE) with a secondary occupation within the Early Woodland (1000-1 BCE) (Blanton 2003).



Figure 2. Current GDS National Wildlife Refuge (GDSLS Research Collection, Original Courtesy of USFWS).

Artifacts recovered through archaeological expeditions and local surface collections indicate that hunting was the dominant use of the Great Dismal Swamp prior to contact (Blanton 2003, Bottoms and Painter 1979). “In the Dismal Swamp area the economic pattern encompasses hunting, fishing, shell fishing, and foraging, with the result that the total environment was exploited for naturally occurring food resources (Bottoms and Painter 1979).” The artifact assemblages that point to this conclusion include lithic pieces that were utilized for hunting various game. Of these groups found within and on the outskirts of the Dismal were rounded stones, identified as the weapon commonly known as the bola (Bottoms and Painter 1979). The bola is a stringed weapon consisting of two or more weights that are swung over the

head and thrown at the legs of the hunter's prey (Bottoms and Painter 1979). The bola would then entangle itself around the prey and trap them for their hunter's capture.

Post-contact, the interactions of the European colonists and the Indigenous populations transformed the landscape of the Great Dismal Swamp from hunting grounds to a place of refuge. The Dismal Swamp was given its name by the colonists and directly reflects their thoughts of the landscape. The swamp seemed to offer little to the colonists, and most dared not tread its black waters. As such, those that opposed the rule of the colonists sought refuge within. This newly formed exilic landscape offered diasporic communities a remote area that had yet to be developed by society. As such, the Dismal Swamp holds a unique look into the material culture of the past throughout the centuries, from hunting and periodic encampment, to housing those diasporic groups that wished to remain on the outskirts of colonial expansion.

Anthropologically, the shift of the Dismal Swamp from a natural to a cultural landscape must be examined in order to understand the post-contact world and the social relations that were formed by its capitalistic ventures. "With the transformation of simple geography into landscapes of capitalism, these areas of land that prove difficult for exploitation and extractivist efforts emerge as remote landscapes (Sayers 2008: 47)." It is in this fashion that the vast, wild landscape of the Great Dismal was transformed into a remote landscape that exists within the developing capitalist system of the Tidewater region (Sayers 2008). These remote landscapes exhibit a lack of colonial control, suggesting a more natural state of being. As such, communities that were victim to land usurpation, violence and enslavement were able to find refuge within these remote landscapes, however the state of living was one of exile.

Diasporic communities were formed within the Great Dismal Swamp, attempting to find a quality of life denied them within the colonial system. The term diaspora refers to a group of

people with common ancestries that have been removed from their native homelands by force or other varying social conditions (Sayers 2008). Within the Tidewater region during the historic era, “the general eviction of indigenous Americans from their land – economically, physically, and culturally – through colonial and capitalist expansion can be construed as a diaspora(s),” while “the kidnapping and forced and coerced transplantation of Africans from their traditional lands and countries for captive enslavement were main elements of the African Diaspora (Sayers 2008: 50-51).” Both of these kinds of diasporic histories will be discussed in more detail, but first we must explore the notion of exile in terms of the Great Dismal Swamp.

Exile refers to the forced removal of an individual from their social spheres. The GDSLS takes the theoretical approach that “the concept of exile can be melded with the concept of diaspora to help generate a more sophisticated and potentially analytically useful construct by highlighting the psychosocial impacts of diasporas and the influence of alienation on diasporan praxis (Sayers 2008: 51).” By combining these two terms, a better understanding of the communities that formed within the Great Dismal Swamp may be undertaken, by shedding light on their social conditions within the colonial world, and the natural state of being in which they sought.

Alienation, according to Marx, represents an estrangement of man from the product of their labor within the capitalist system (Singer 1980, Sayers 2008). Another way to understand alienation is to view the notion in terms of the natural state of humanity. Humans create and adapt in order to survive. A system revolving around the use-value mode of production creates what is needed to continue that survival. In a capitalist exchange-value mode of production, the need of that item becomes lost to the creator. The object has no meaning for the people responsible for its production other than the process of creation itself. The natural state of being

of survival is then interrupted and focus is then changed to the labor of production for capital gain. “It is critical to understand that for Marx labor, ideally, is how human beings are fully human, maintaining identities, sense of historical significance, and creative abilities (Sayers 2008: 56).” Within the colonial system, the natural state of being, of living, was interrupted by chattel slavery and capitalistic view of private property. To those affected by this alienating process, defiance and resistance to this unnatural way of life was found within the remote, exilic landscape of the Great Dismal Swamp. “Resistance and defiance are thus a tangible social and political phenomena that can erupt out of diasporan exile, a most noted form of alienation under historical capitalism (Sayers 2008: 53).”

Post-Contact Histories and the Dismal Swamp

The Great Dismal Swamp has no natural occurring stone sources that could have been utilized for hunting and subsistence purposes. This being the case, all artifacts, or at least the raw materials, were carried in by human hands. It is important to keep this fact in mind when analyzing any artifacts found within the border of the morass. These artifactual assemblages can be used in the study of the precapitalist society of American Indians, the effects of colonial expansion and trade systems on the Tidewater region, and how capitalism affected those involved. In keeping with this understanding, it is understood that disenfranchised, exilic communities used swamp available materials in order to survive without assistance from the outside, colonial world (Sayers 2008). Disenfranchised Indigenous Americans undoubtedly used the swamp as a place of refuge, as can be seen by the example of the Nansemonds, who lived on the outskirts of the swamp during the 1700s and maintained open trade with the English (Rountree 2007). Thousands of maroons found the swamp to be a refuge during their flee from

colonial chattel slavery, some as a permanent solution, while others found it to be temporary, a place of solace along their way north (Sayers 2008).

American Indian Histories

When discussing the complicated cultural history involving the Great Dismal Swamp, it is important to take note that the swamp was a very large landscape. 2000 square miles of swampland proved useful to many throughout the ages, from the hunters to the exiles. The colonial world of the Tidewater region was also a very complicated setting. As can be seen by John Smith's travels and his writings left behind, many indigenous groups existed within the region (Rountree 2007). In order to understand how cultures viewed and used the Great Dismal swamp, it is necessary to dive into the history of some of the groups living within the vicinity of the swamp, and whom used the swamp for various purposes during the post-contact era. Following is an exploration of various cultures seeking refuge from the colonial system in various ways.

The Nansemonds were located within the Southern Virginia area, in close proximity to the Jamestown colony (Rountree 2007). In 1622, the Jamestown colony was attacked by a group of Native Americans in an effort to rid the lands of the colonial invaders (Roundtree 2007). It was believed that the Nansemond people had a direct involvement with the 1622 attack, and the colony responded in 1623 by attacking the Nansemond's village. It was this attack that led the Nansemonds to break apart in search of refuge (Vest 2003). Among the places where the Nansemonds found asylum include the Great Dismal Swamp. Those that remained on the outskirts of the Great Dismal Swamp, became pro-English and adapted Christianity (Rountree 2007). In 1638, an English preacher by the name of John Bass (Bias) married the daughter of the

Nansemond's current chief, a marriage that many of the state recognized Nansemond people of today find lineage (Rountree 2007).

The Rechahecian people have a very complicated history, one that resonates with the complicated cultural signatures found within the Great Dismal Swamp. John Smith identifies the Rechahecians as having taken part in the 1622 conflict at Jamestown (Tooker 1898). The Rechahecians were recorded to have lived on the outskirts of the Dismal Swamp (Tooker 1898). This fact does well to exhibit Tooker's (1898) interesting perspective on the meaning of the name "Rechahecian," which he translates as "the people of the lonely place".

Colonial expansion affected the Rechahecians during the later part of the 17th century, by displacing them from their various locations (Juricek 1964). Being of a somewhat nomadic presence at this point, the Rechahecians would have undoubtedly relied on a hunting subsistence strategy. The advent of colonial trade and growing colonial hostilities brought about the need for various goods. The primary commodity that was used within such trade interaction by the Rechahecians was found in beaver pelts (Juricek 1964). Beaver pelts became a very popular commodity amongst the colonies, which stirred competition amongst American Indians familiar with catching these creatures. In this exchange-value system, guns and munitions became the desired commodity for the American Indians. Power revolved around the use of such a weapon, and with power one could accumulate more capital.

By 1670, the Westo appeared on the North Carolina side of the Great Dismal Swamp. "The Westo had just migrated to the Savannah River from Virginia, where they were known as the Richahecian (Gallay 2002: 41)." It is believed that the Westo migrated several times due to the Beaver Wars from Pennsylvania and New York, and again from Virginian colonial expansion (Gallay 2002). As mentioned above, the Westos have been associated with the Rechahecians of

Virginia, but it is believed that this is not their only origin. In fact, leading researchers have made the claim that they formed a kind of confederacy, joining several groups together, such as the Timucua and Iroquois groups from the north (Juricek 1964, Bowne 2005).

A convincing argument for the connection between the Westos and the Timucuas is the terminology used by the colonials when referring to various aspects of their daily lives. One such term is “paracousa”, which refers to an elected leader of a warring confederation faction of the Timucua (Juricek 1964). Oustaca, one of these paracousa, is believed to have been “one of the progenitors of the Westo confederation (Juricek 1964: 142).” Juricek (1964) claims that due to the lack of a Spanish record of the Oustacks, as they were known under Oustaca, this group migrated north due to the defeat of French missions by the Spanish.

Early documents mention that the Westo were involved in cannibalistic activities, a practice more common among the Iroquois of the north (Juricek 1964). The use of cannibalistic ritual and engagement in beaver pelt trade represents the northern influence of the Rechaecrians, while the leadership adapted using paracousas, and the northern migration of the Oustacas indicate that these two groups merged to form the Westos (Juricek 1964). “In short, the Rickohokans seem to have acted as a magnet upon alienated southern Indians (Juricek 1964).”

The Westo became a very powerful group through their engagement in trade with fur pelts, but they soon found another form of commodity; the prisoners taken during their expansion. They sold their American Indian captives into slavery under the colonists for munitions (Gallay 2002). “As the demand for Indian slaves increased after the founding of Carolina, the Westos turned the focus of their economic activity from the exploitation of beaver to the exploitation of humans as a profitable commodity (Bowne 2005: 27).”

Due to the Westos foray into various commodities of trade, other groups began to follow in their footsteps. More groups acquired guns and more planters found ways of accomplishing their goals without the help of the Westo (Bowne 2005). Eventually, the Westo were seen as being an unnecessary middleman in the Indian trade. This resulted in the Westo War of 1680, and ended in the destruction of the Westo (Bowne 2005). The Westo town disappeared, and the Westo themselves were either sold into slavery, dispersed into other groups or perhaps found refuge within the Great Dismal Swamp.

African and African American Histories

As the colonial system grew, so too, did the capitalist mentality. Chattel slavery became more prevalent, and as such, more enslaved individuals were being displaced from their homes (and homelands) and forced to exchange their labor for their continued existence. As such, maroon communities found refuge within the Great Dismal Swamp prior to the Civil War. Marronage refers to the process of resistance to the slavery system in which groups of enslaved individuals escaped and created their own way of life outside of those systems (Sayers 2008, Weik 1997). There are two forms of marronage, extralimital and intralimital. Extralimital marronage refers to “the flight to locales outside the slavery system to areas in non-slavery systems,” while intralimital marronage refers to the “flight to remote locales within slavery systems (Sayers 2008: 68).” The Great Dismal Swamp proved to be a remote landscape within the greater Tidewater region, offering refuge to those maroon communities looking to remove themselves from the slavery system within the local landscape, and thus offers us a look into intralimital marronage.

Within the process of marronage, one may discuss the length of time spent outside of the slavery system as another aspect to those diasporic communities resisting colonial control. Petite

marronage refers to temporary, short-term occupation of landscapes outside of the slavery system, with an eventual return to that system (Sayers 2008). Grand marronage is the major focus of the GDSLS and refers to the “permanent flight” of enslaved individuals to landscapes outside of the slavery system (Sayers 2008: 69). Those African diasporic communities that formed within the Great Dismal Swamp represented both grand and petite marronage, as may be related to the modes of Communitization that they engaged in. The scission mode of Communitization exhibited the characteristics of grand marronage, in that those communities formed to maintain separation from the outside world, while the semi-independent and enslaved canal company laborer modes represent petite marronage, in that contact with the outside world was more frequent, or perhaps even necessary to maintain certain trade relations (Sayers 2008).

There have been many academic sources to discuss the maroon communities that formed within the Great Dismal Swamp, such as Herbert Aptheker (1939) and Hugo Leaming (1995). By taking a look into the public record, one can find numerous sources mentioning runaway slaves living within the Great Dismal Swamp. One such article published in the Frederick Douglass Paper in 1848 entitled “Slaves in the Dismal Swamp” states that the Dismal Swamp is “a city of refuge for the poor slave” and attests that “hundreds of fugitives...sought an asylum from oppression in this damp and dreary region (Frederick Douglass’ Paper 1848).” Many newspapers in the region would print advertisements about runaway slaves thought to have taken up residence in the Great Dismal (Sayers 2008).

As Canal Companies started to make their presence known within the swamp after 1763, many enslaved individuals found themselves digging the canals through that harsh environment. Dr. Sayers (2008) states that slave registries were very descriptive of their enslaved workers, in order to identify any maroons possibly taking up residence within the canal system. These canal

companies also led to logging interests within the swamp and created another form of trade within the swamp communities. An account of an escaped slave living in Canada describes life within the swamp (Frederick Douglass Paper 1859). The account begins with the narrator's escape from slavery and how he got work in the Dismal Swamp through a friend of his making two dollars a day (Frederick Douglass Paper 1859). He goes on to describe the people working in the swamp, most of which he states, were "fugitives, or else hirin' dar time [hiring their time] (Frederick Douglass Paper 1859)." He states that they seemed to be "united" together and they loaned him their tools to make shingles. He then goes into an account about life within the Dismal Swamp.

"Well de great Dismal Swamp (dey call it Juniper Swamp) 'stends from whar it begins in Norfolk, old Virginny, to de upper part ob Carolina. Dat's what I's told. It stands it se'f more'n fifty mile north and souf. I worked 'bout four mile 'bove Drummond Lake, which be ten mile wide. De boys used to make canoes out of bark, and hab a nice time fishin' in de lake.

Best Water in Juniper Swamp ever tasted by man. Dreadful healthy place to live, up in de high land in de cane-brake. 'Speck ye've heern tell on it? There is reefs ob land – folks call de high lands. In dar de cane-brake grow t'irty feet high. In de mar cane-brakes de ground is kivered wit leaves, kinder makin' a nat'ral bed. Dar be whar de wild hogs, cows, wolves, and bars (bears) be found. De swamp is lower land, whar dar's de biggest trees most ever was. De syress is de handsomest, an' anudder kind called de gum tree.

Dismal Swamp is divided into tree or four parts. Whar I worked da called it Company Swamp. When we wanted fresh pork we goed to Gum Swamp, 'bout sun-down, run a wild hog down from de cane-brakes into Juniper Swamp, whar dar feet can't touch hard ground, knock dem over, and dat's de way we kill dem. De same way we ketch wild cows. We troed dar bones, arter we eated all de meat off on 'em up, to one side de fire. Many's de time we waked up and seed de bars skulking round our feet for de bones. Da neber interrupted us; da knowed better; coz we would gin dem cold shot. Hope I shall live long enough to see de slaveholders feared to interrupt us! (Frederick Douglass' Paper 1859)"

He then states that there were many families that “grewed up in dat ar Dismal Swap dat never seed a white man, an’ would be skeered most to def to see one (Frederick Douglass’ Paper 1859).” In this statement it can be gathered that generations of maroons have been living within the Dismal Swamp for quite some time. His account of life within the swamp indicates a complex social system that interacted with Company workers in order to make money and then another side, responsible for their own foodways. The dividing of the swamp into several sections indicates that those who sought work in the swamp knew a much larger social sphere, then, perhaps the families living within the interior reaches. This account gives one of the best descriptions of life within the Dismal Swamp found so far. He states that people lived on the high grounds of the Dismal, something that has been shown in Dr. Sayers’ (2008) archaeological work to date.

The archaeological explorations of the GDSLS have just begun to break the surface of the communities living within the Great Dismal Swamp, these histories give the researcher a better understanding of the world both inside and outside of the swamp during those pre-Civil War times, where the Dismal Swamp played a heavy role as a landscape to the cultures seeking refuge from oppression. The swamp itself, was not limited to one group, but rather was a large landscape that provided a haven for many different cultures and time progressed. It is to the understanding of these communities that current archaeological research focuses its attention and hopes to demystify these forgotten and marginalized histories.

CHAPTER 4

FIELD EXPEDITIONS AND EXCAVATIONS

In 2009, the GDSLS established the first Great Dismal Swamp Archaeology Field School through American University, with Dr. Sayers leading the research team as the Field and Site Director. Five students joined the excavation efforts, including one graduate teaching assistant, two (2) graduate students, and two (2) undergraduate students. The field school ran 7 weeks in total, with the first week introducing the students to the GDSLS research questions and cultural history revolving around the Great Dismal Swamp. The remaining six (6) weeks were spent in the field.

The field school students and faculty set up camp about an hour's drive from the dig site, mostly due to a lack of cooperation of local camp sites to host such a long term group of campers. Once the hour of automobile travel was complete, the students found themselves within the great expanse of the Dismal Swamp. We traveled on dirt roads along canals, twisting and turning deeper into the interior portion of the swamp. Wildlife would stir upon our arrival, making their presence known, such as deer, herons, wild turkeys and turtles. The great blue suburban that we were traveling would pull to a stop along a water-filled canal. We would then depart the suburban and begin our preparation for swamp travel. This process involved the donning of hip waders, bug repellent and depending on the mosquitoes, mosquito nets. We traveled about 20 minutes through standing water and mud, weaving around and over (and sometimes under) trees, roots and deep water-filled holes until land was located. Once solid land was reached, we would then swap out our waders for hiking boots, more suitable for the rest of the journey. As you left the swamp portion and hiked farther up in elevation, the scenery changed from a dreary swamp to a great forest. After another 20 minutes of hiking and keeping an active eye out for snakes, bears or any other kind of hazard, the site known as the Crest was

located and introduced to the students by Dr. Sayers. Excavation began with a series of shovel test pits (STPs). These STPs were excavated in the tradition of a normal excavation unit (EU) only in a 0.5 x 0.5m square. The reasoning behind this method was to introduce the students to the proper excavation techniques as well as orient them to the soil found within the Great Dismal Swamp.

By the end of the field school, the students had come proficient in the excavation and identification of artifacts and features of the area. Several postholes were located, indicating a greater structure and a fire pit (or hearth) feature was first identified using Geophysical detection. Two (2) EUs were placed over the geophysical anomaly and confirmed a large circular area with higher concentrations of charcoal. At the end of the Field School, Dr. Sayers was confident that we had located a Maroon settlement area.



Figure 3. 2009 Excavation (GDSLS Research Collection).

Over the course of the next year, I began my academic studies as a full time graduate student with the Great Dismal Swamp on my mind. Dr. Sayers and I conversed many a time about the potential for research to be completed with the swamp and how a Master's thesis would be able to contribute to the greater archaeological understanding of the Great Dismal Swamp as a cultural landscape.

I was invited to join the 2010 Great Dismal Swamp Archaeology Field School as a teaching assistant. Dr. Sayers, Dr. Greene and I decided to open excavation on another area of the swamp, just across a ravine from the 2009 field school excavation site, with the intention of gaining a better understanding of landscape use. We entered the 2010 field season with the basic idea of beginning the students on STPs in the same 0.5 x 0.5m units as had been done in the 2009 field school. The 2010 Field School was comprised of Dr. Sayers, Dr. Greene and thirteen (13) students, 2 graduate teaching assistants, 1 graduate student and 10 undergraduate students. This years living quarters were found in a house located in Chesapeake, VA. A fair journey was required via motor vehicles, but overall the commute was much less time consuming then the previous year.

Seven (7) STPs were placed on the new area of the excavation site, which was dubbed the North Plateau, because it is a lower, flat area to the north of the Crest. These seven STPs were placed along the same transect, stretching across the North Plateau. Many of these STPs showed great research potential, including EU 1, EU 4, and EU 5. The most time was spent on EU 4, as it proved to hold a very intriguing question.

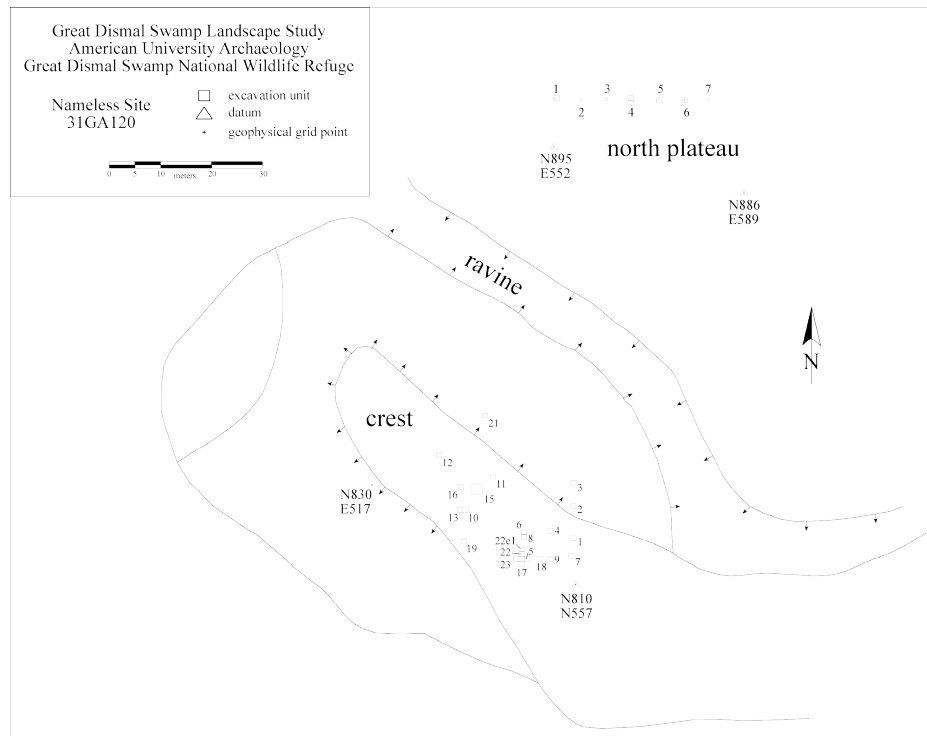


Figure 4. Excavation Site Map (GDSLS Research Collection).

It's the first field week of the 2010 Field School, and students have begun excavating their STPs. Artifacts and features were being identified at an alarming rate. As previous excavations have shown, the swamp has a sparse amount of artifacts, due to the lack of resources available to those living within the interior reaches of the swamp. Two students, who as fortune had yet to smile upon, found themselves staring deep into a shallow hole that had yet to yield anything of interest to a new student of archaeology. The students began to close their excavations, hoping to discover something of interest within a new excavation unit. As this is a learning adventure, a wall profile was to be done, to give the student that necessary experience. Because there was no apparent feature within the unit, the north wall was arbitrarily picked to be the one that would be mapped.

The students began to clean the north wall, and as they were doing so, a trowel unexpectedly sang. The song, which rang in her ears, was that of metal clinking against something made of a harder substance. One of the students excitedly exclaimed, “A rock!” The faculty, including myself, ventured over to EU 4 in order to investigate the commotion. The song of the trowel spoke the truth, something was indeed there, but it was no rock. Upon closer inspection, Dr. Greene identified the mysterious object as a ceramic sherd.



Figure 5. Ceramic Sherd, EU 4, View North (GDSLS Research Collection).

The ceramic sherd was located in the northwest corner of EU 4. The sherd was left in place and the EU was expanded. Instead of placing a new unit number over top of this one, we decided to label the expansions E-1 to represent Expansion 1 and E-2 for Expansion 2. So the official label of these units were EU 4 E-1 or EU 4 E-2. EU 4 E-1 expanded the 0.5 x 0.5m EU into a 1 x 1m EU. After root cap was removed and Stratum I was excavated into the transitional

layer of Stratum I/II, it began apparent that there was some sort of feature in existence. The feature was represented by dark soil stains to the north and west, but was unable to be identified. EU 4 E-2 expanded the unit south with a separate 1 x 1m EU, turning the entirety of EU 4 into a 1 x 2m EU.

Upon the completion of EU 4 E-2, it began apparent that there was a trench-like feature (Feature 508) running north-south through the middle of the entire EU. The ceramic sherd found within the original EU was explored, revealing more ceramic sherds. Dr. Greene began investigation of the cluster of ceramic sherds and what was revealed proved even more interesting than originally expected. The sherds seemed to be clustered within a posthole (Feature 507), but not just lying within, they seemed to line the very post itself, a method that could have been used to stabilize a post, due to the sandy nature of the Dismal Swamp soil.



Figure 6. Plan View of Feature 508, EU 4, View West (GDSLS Research Collection).

The remainder of the time spent on the North Plateau during the 2010 field season focused on the excavation and recovery of the ceramic sherds from their place of rest. As the sherds were recovered, it became apparent that they were pre-contact in origin, that is, in their initial creation. However, the location (depth) in which they were found at the base of Stratum I, 23cm below the unit datum. Previous work by Dr. Sayers has shown this level to be within the historic period (Sayers 2008). In an attempt to assess the possible time frame for the posthole feature (Feature 507) an OSL (Optically Stimulated Luminescence) sample was secured and sent off for analysis.



Figure 7. Plan Drawing of EU 4, Feature 508 (GDSLS Research Collection).

Following Dr. Sayers model for the Interior (or Scission) mode of communitization, this feature could represent a structure built by resistance communities during the historic period. Since swamp materials are limited, anything would find a use-value within the swamp interior.

Following this line of thought, the topic was further explored after the 2010 field season, within the 2010-2011 academic year.

Feature 507, the posthole, was bisected and all of the sherds in the eastern half were removed, fifteen (15) ceramic sherds in total. All of the fragments were taken to the GDSLS laboratory and underwent cleaning, cataloguing and interpretation. Dr. Greene and I worked together in the identification of the ceramic sherds recovered from EU4 of the North Plateau. He suspected that the majority of the sherds in question were Croaker Landing Ware, which dates from 1200 BC – 800 BC (Egloff and Potter 1982). At least two sherds among the group were noticeably different. The vessel walls were much thinner, they were net impressed and the inside portion was much more refined. Dr. Greene identified these two as belonging to the New River series of ceramic production, which dates to 1750 BC – 400 BC (Herbert 2009).

Five (5) of the Croaker Landing Ware sherds proved to mend together, while another two (2) mended separately. Due the separate ceramic types, this post seems to fit into the projected Scission mode of communitization, indicating previously made ceramics were found and used for a practical purpose by post-contact resistance communities. However, the structure itself was poorly understood and required further exploration to access its function and to further discover its time period of use.



Figure 8. Refitted Croaker Landing Ware (GDSLS Research Collection).

It was to this purpose that preparation for the 2011 Field School began. Dr. Sayers, Dr. Greene and myself sat down to discuss the research focus of the 2011 field school and my research interests within the North Plateau. We decided that Dr. Greene and myself would resume our work on the North Plateau and have volunteers and several students join us in our endeavors. In order to proceed on, it was decided that I would draft a research design for the 2011 excavation of the North Plateau, but before this was to occur, another adventure to the Great Dismal Swamp was in order.

In March of 2011, Dr. Sayers, Dan Lynch, a graduate student and myself ventured to the tannic waters of the Great Dismal Swamp. We spend a week within the morass with the intention of accomplishing a series of geophysical detection. Dan Lynch has been working with the GDSLS since Dr. Sayers' dissertation days. The goal of the week was to use two instruments in the geophysical survey, the magnetometer and the resistivity meter. The magnetometer is set

to the frequency of the earth's magnetic signature and is able to detect slight changes within, and is good as detecting clusters of rocks and higher areas of magnetic activity (Lynch and Reitz 2009). The resistivity meter is very adept at measuring the rate of water retention and drainage within the soil, indicating probable use areas (Lynch and Reitz 2009). If the landscape proves to be well drained, then that land would work well for habitation.

We arrived in Suffolk, VA and began to assemble all of the required gear for the field survey. Unfortunately, due to a faulty connector, the magnetometer was not functional. We decided to move forward with the resistivity meter, and perform a geophysical survey of various areas of 31GA120. We placed a survey grid over top of the North Plateau and performed a resistivity meter survey. Dan Lynch took the data generated from the survey and created a digital map of the results. He then compared his map to the hand drawn one I created in the field. The resistivity survey map showed that the area had a high potential for soil disturbance and hence indicated a cultural presence (Lynch and Reitz 2009).



Figure 9. Geophysical Survey (GDSLS Research Collection).

We then combined this information with our previous information collected from the 2010 excavations and began to proceed with the creation of a research design for the 2011 field season. The research design focused its attention to the trench feature (Feature 508) found with EU 4 of the North Plateau. The initial idea was to place a series of 1 x 2 m EUs over Feature 508 in a cruciform pattern, to gain a better perspective of the possible structure. Looking back to Feature 508, and the ceramic lined posthole, the line of inquiry followed the thought pattern questioning the purpose of strengthening the posts of this particular structure. Dr. Sayers had not encountered this type of ceramic use before, and was new to the project. Perhaps this was a palisade, meant to further protect the interior community from outsiders and would be invaders. Or perhaps it was simply a dwelling structure, where strengthening of the post seemed to make the most sense, due to the sandy nature of the dismal soil itself.

The research design for the 2011 field school expanded from curiosity of the North Plateau to include a teaching element. In prior years, STPs were used to familiarize the students to the excavation procedures of the GDSLS. It was decided that instead, we would start everyone on 1 x 1m EUs. The Great Dismal Swamp has proven in the past to be a feature heavy landscape, yielding very few artifacts. With this in mind, 0.5 x 0.5m just did not explore enough of the larger picture to be seen. Dr. Sayers, Dr. Greene and myself decided that opening a larger area initially would not only help the students to understand the landscape, but would allow for greater excavation of potential feature areas. Students were to begin in pairs and then branch out on their own, allowing each to go through the process of excavation, artifact collection, mapping and note taking needed to successfully complete their archaeological introduction.

The first week of the 2011 Great Dismal Swamp Archaeology Field School was spent in the lab, just as had been done in the years prior, introducing students to the cultural history of the

swamp and the archaeological work done to date. This year, we had artifacts on display from previous excavations to familiarize the students to the types of items they would be looking for, once digging commenced. The end of the first week was spent traveling to Suffolk, VA where our rental house awaited, and setting up camp.

The first week of the field season was spent carrying equipment to the site and beginning student excavation, in the process stated above. The students began their work on the Crest, where the majority of them were to stay for the duration of the field school. Dan Lynch, Dr. Greene and myself ventured to the North Plateau, where we cleared a 5 x 10m block for a ground penetrating radar (GPR) survey. The first sensor used failed, but we had success with the second. The survey area was right over EU 4 and EU 5. We hoped that the GPR would give us better insight as to the cultural use of the area before excavation began. After the GPR survey was complete, we returned to the Crest and aided in the student instruction on excavation procedures.

The second week began the intensive work on the North Plateau. Dr. Greene and myself removed the backfill from EU 4 and uncovered Features 507 and 508 once more. It was then decided to realign the North Plateau's grid, in order to have it uniform with that of the Crest. This venture began by cutting (with machete) a line of sight between the Crest and the North Plateau. The total station was set up over the Crest site datum and a temporary datum point was placed in the ravine just beyond the tree line separating the two sites, 15m south of the North Plateau. The total station was then set up over the North Plateau site datum and EU 1 was zeroed and used as our base line. This effectively established a new grid on the North Plateau, bringing the two sites onto the same grid pattern.

Using the new grid, Dr. Greene and myself set up a 2 x 3m EU over PEU 4 (Previously Excavated Unit). The new unit created continued the numeric sequence of the EUs of the North Plateau, and was thus labeled EU 8. EU 8 was divided into 1 x 1m sections that were alphabetically labeled A through F. The purpose of this decision was to maintain provenience while systematically removing soil stratum levels. The established excavation procedure to soil stratum levels uses an arbitrary system with an added methodological approach. The first level to be removed was the root cap which we dubbed I1. Stratum I (Munsell 10YR 3/3, dark brown sandy loam) is divided into as many arbitrary levels so as to gain a better understanding on the historic period and a better provenience of the artifacts discovered within. Next on the stratum totem pole would be Strat I2, and then Strat I3 and I4 if needed. The use of the arbitrary levels depended greatly on the terrain, but on most accounts, 3 arbitrary strata were used before hitting the transitional soil stratum called Stratum I/II. Just under this stratum was Stratum II, which had a much more tan soil coloration (Munsell 10YR 5/6, yellowish brown sandy loam).

The new methodological approach used for the 2011 field season centered on the screening process. Originally, 1/4" screens were used on all Stratum levels except for feature soil, where a 1/16" screen would be employed. After a year in the lab, we noticed that much of the artifacts found are very small in size, ranging from small tertiary lithic flakes, to very small lead shot. Some of these artifacts were spotted during the 2010 field season by a very astute and meticulous student. For the 2011 season, the root cap (I1) was screened through the normal 1/4" screen while all other stratum levels were screened using the 1/16" screen. The result proved to boost our artifact collections by quite a significant number. We also began to use a magnet before any screen was dumped, and sure enough, small fragments of metal and magnetized rocks were found.

Returning to the excavation of EU 8, Stratum I1 was removed by Dr. Greene and myself. PEU 4, due to the grid reorientation, now sat diagonally within EU 8. Two ceramic sherds remained in situ in posthole feature 508. Dr. Greene and I began excavating Stratum I2 in each of the 1 x 1m sections. A quartz flake was found within EU 8C. Using what we had done to this point, Dr. Greene and I presented the large block excavation to the field school students, to show them what we were doing (as those mysterious North Plateau folk) and introduce them to a cultural feature found within the swamp.

We decided to expand our excavation efforts and brought two (2) students from the Crest to join our archaeological endeavors and teach one on one during the excavation process. We set up a 1 x 1m unit (EU 9) to the east of EU 8E and a 1 x 2m unit (EU 10) to the north of EU 8C and EU 8 D. EU 10 was segmented in the same manner as EU 8 and was labeled EU 10A and EU 10B. As the root cap (I1) was being removed from EU10, a metal spike was uncovered and remained in situ. The spike was the average type used for archaeological excavations and was determined to be part of Dr. Sayers initial STPs set over the area during his dissertation work. The North Plateau was Excavation Block 11 (EB 11) during his initial survey of 31GA120. Another quartz flake was found within Stratum I2 of EU 8F.

The two students that began work on EU 9 and 10 departed to join the rest of the students on an introduction to Tree Root Mass (TRM) surveys. During Dr. Sayers dissertation, he established a new method of archaeological excavation and exploration by using the natural state of the swamp. TRMs are just as they sound, a systematic excavation and investigation of tree falls (Sayers 2008). Due to the natural state of a forested area, and especially due to past hurricane activity, the swamp is rife with fallen trees. After these trees fall, their roots are left exposed and much of the soil in which they once rested. This process of TRMs focuses its

attention on the soil Stratum that can be seen within the roots of the fallen tree, and can be a key insight into the cultural understanding of the swamp itself.

Two volunteers joined us on the North Plateau and one student returned to help after the introduction to the TRMs was complete. Excavations continued on EU 8A and 8B, EU 9 and EU 10. EU 11, a 1 x 1 m EU, was opened west of EU 8C. It was at this point that EU 8, at the base of Stratum I2, began to show signs of a structural footprint. We were joined by another volunteer and two (2) more EUs were opened. A 1x 1m unit (EU 12) to the north of EU 9 and to the east of EU 8D, while another 1 x 1m unit (EU 13) was opened to the south of EU 9 and to the east of EU 8F. The idea behind these expansions was to gain a better, larger view of the growing structural footprint. A square soil stain was located within the base of Stratum I2 of EU 11 and measured roughly 0.5 x 0.5m. It was determined that this is most likely one of Dr. Sayers' initial STPs during his survey work of EB 11.

We expanded excavation again with EU 14, EU 15 and EU 16. EU 14 is a 1 x 1m unit located north of EU 12 and east of EU 10B. EU 15 is a 1 x 2m unit located east of EU 9, and segmented into EU 15A and 15B. EU 16 is a 1 x 1m unit located west of EU 8B and south of EU 11. EU 15 was an attempt to bridge the gap between EU 4 and EU 5 in order to test the possibility of their relation. EU 15B had a much lighter soil coloration, and initially was believed to have been sterile soil, or at least sterile of historic artifacts, however this notion was far from the truth. EU 15A remained darker in soil coloration and suggested a connection to the structural footprint of EU 8.

Public attention to the GDSLS grew quite a bit this past field season, and we found ourselves informing reporters of the significance of our site and the excavations to date. While cleaning EU 8 and EU 10, a possible pit presented itself within the eastern section of EU 8.

Unfortunately, Dr. Greene's time with the field school was on a limited basis. On his last day, we found ourselves scrambling to beat the clock. We decided to perform a soil probe on the possible pit feature in order to gain a better perspective on its shape and form and decide whether or not it was indeed a pit. We set up a bisect line through the middle of the possible pit feature and the trench (Feature 508).

Again, time was not on our side, as we were informed of an early departure. Hastily, Dr. Greene and myself map and photograph four (4) soil probes. The series of probes ran east-west with Probe 1 beginning at the western edge of the pit feature. The perceived pit feature was 160cm in length and 135cm in width. The probes were placed at 35cm, 70cm, 105cm and 135cm along the bisect line. Dark soils (feature fill) run 6cm to 11cm in depth while lighter soils (Stratum II) follows. Probe 2 (located at 70cm) yielded one (1) piece of burnt clay and two (2) small ceramic sherds. Dr. Greene and myself felt fairly confident that the possible pit feature was indeed a pit of sorts. The soil probes revealed that one end of the pit feature had a depth of 9cm, the middle two probes (Probe 2 and 3) displayed a feature depth of 11cm and Probe 4 showed the pit feature was becoming more shallow at 6cm in depth.

After Dr. Greene's departure, we returned to the North Plateau and continued excavation with the plan derived by Dr. Sayers, Dr. Greene and myself. We were joined by two (2) new volunteers (the previous ones had also departed) and one more student, giving us two (2) volunteers and two (2) students and myself still working on the North Plateau. One last excavation unit was opened during the 2011 field season, EU 17. EU 17 was located outside of the block excavation to the south of EU 8. EU 17, a 1 x 1m unit, was excavated in an attempt to catch the trench feature (Feature 508) running south, and perhaps even find a corner of the greater structure presenting itself within the larger block excavation.

We now had a chance to return to EU 15 and explore that lighter soil of EU 15B. As mentioned above, EU 15 proved much more interesting than our original projections. Volunteers and students kept finding small white fragments within the screened soil of EU 15. One of the artifacts has a slight curve to it, while the other resembled part of a tobacco pipe stem. Dr. Sayers inspected the many small white fragments and informed me that they were indeed tobacco pipe fragments. Included in the assemblage, was half of a pipe stem in length. Half of the bore was still intact, making it possible to get a general bore diameter.

With the remainder of the field school, our goal was to record as much as we could with the time we had left. I climbed a ladder (that we had trekked through the mud) in order to take some good photos of the excavation block. What we had uncovered through those past few weeks, displayed a rectilinear footprint, as if someone were playing ticktacktoe across the sandy soil of the Dismal Swamp. Our curiosities had certainly grabbed our attention surrounding this large structural feature, which we labeled St. 1. The area that we had originally thought to be a pit, then presented itself as a series of post holes within the larger structure. Upon cleaning up the excavation block, we decided to place a few feature bisections in order to explore St.1 as well as give the students the experience of bisecting a feature.



Figure 10. Plan View of Structure 1, View North (GDSLS Research Collection).

Three (3) features were excavated in total, during the last week of the 2011 excavation. ST1-A was identified as a circular posthole within EU 8B, located adjacent to Feature 507 and Feature 508. The feature was bisected, removing the eastern half. The feature had a maximum width of 35cm and a maximum length of 40cm. The feature was opened at 11cm below unit datum and excavation concluded at 27cm below unit datum. At the base of the bisection, a ceramic sherd was located in situ. ST1-B was also identified as a circular posthole within EU 10A, located north of Feature 507. Feature had a maximum width of 48cm and a maximum length of 34cm. Feature was bisected, removing the western half. Excavation was opened at

12cm below unit datum, and concluded at 23.5cm below unit datum. No artifacts were recovered from the excavation, much to the excavator's chagrin.

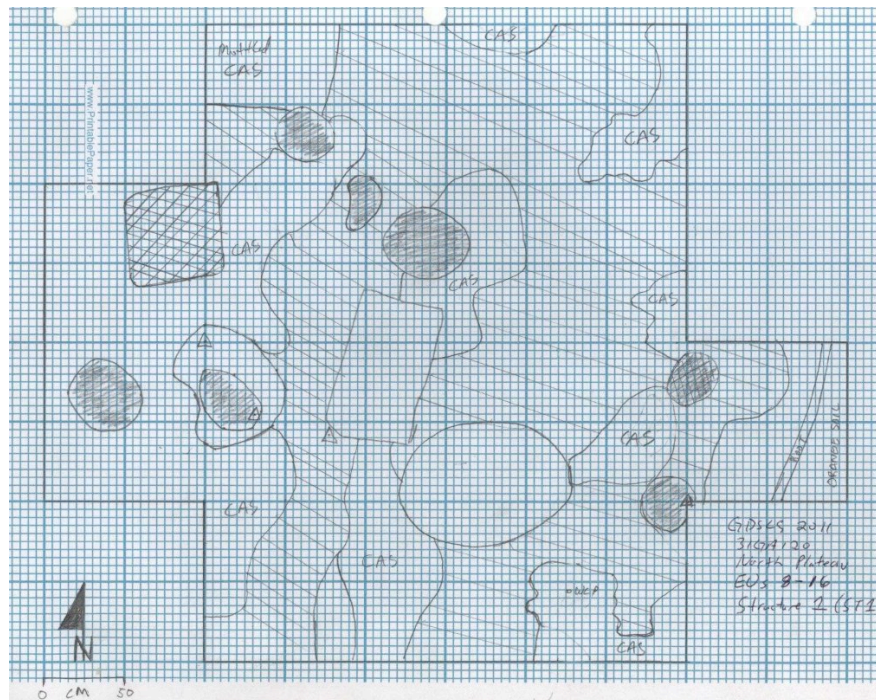


Figure 11. Plan Drawing of Structure 1 (GDSLS Research Collection).

Feature 507 was bisected south of the bisection preformed in 2010, following the trench feature. Bisection extended 75cm south of the previous years bisection, and had a width of 37cm. Excavation was opened at 12cm below unit datum and ended at 24cm below unit datum. Two ceramic sherds were located within what would appear to be another posthole within the Feature 507 complex and were located in situ. An extremely interesting find occurred within in the screen. A tobacco pipe fragment was recovered within the screen, at 24cm below unit datum. Excavation ended at the identification of the new posthole, due to time constraints.

The field season of 2011 ended on my birthday, June 29th. As with all archaeological projects, time seems to go by within the blink of an eye, but with confidence, we looked at the excavation block of the North Plateau, and saw a rectilinear structure, where no doubt, a scission

community once took residence. With one last thoughtful glance, we placed tarps over the entire block and began to backfill. Once finished, it was hard to believe we had even been there. We grabbed all of our gear and proceeded to venture out of the Dismal Swamp. Now that we had endured the heat and shed our own blood and sweat, it was time to head to the lab and make sense of everything we had uncovered.

CHAPTER 5

INTERPRETING ARCHITECTURE ON THE NORTH PLATEAU

The Great Dismal Swamp has a poorly understood cultural history, which has been the focus of the Great Dismal Swamp Landscape Study (GDSLS) since its initial conception. It is to this greater understanding of the cultural aspect of that particular landscape that archaeological efforts within the swamp have focused. This following analysis hopes to work towards that goal, while giving a basis for future archaeologists to begin their work within the forested walls of the swamp itself. Three models have been set in place based on the communities that existed within the swamp during the historic era (post-contact). These models (named Modes of Communitization) include the Semi-Independent Mode, the Scission Mode, and the Labor Exploitation Mode (Sayers 2008). Following is an analysis of architectural forms associated with each mode, as well as the presentation of a fourth model of community structure.

The Great Dismal Swamp as a cultural landscape has proved to have offered refuge to groups of varying backgrounds, including Disenfranchised Native Americans, Maroons, enslaved canal company workers, those harvesting swamp materials for profit, pirates and anyone looking to find solace from the colonial structure of early American development. As such, the architectural signatures of those living within the swamp vary, but also overlap quite a bit. Important parts of any community structure are the materials that are readily available for construction purposes. The swamp itself finds its geological origins as coastline that formed into marshlands as the water table receded and eventually became the heavily forested swamp at the time of cultural contact between Europeans and the Native cultures surrounding the Virginia and North Carolina region. Being former coastline, the swamp itself is comprised of a very sandy soil that offers no lithic sources (Sayers 2008).

The Semi-Independent Mode of Communitization

It is to this knowledge that the Modes of Communitization mentioned above begin to shed light on those individuals surviving within the morass. Beginning with the work presented by Dr. Daniel Sayers, the first Mode of Communitization is the Semi-Independent Mode (perimetrical), which refers to the fringes or fray of the Swamp. These communities are believed to have existed within the protective borders of the swamp, but with access to the colonial world if they wished (Sayers 2008). These communities could have engaged in active trade with the colonials, or those who did trade directly with colonials, without having to fully expose their community to the dangers of colonial life. The artifactual signature of such a culture would encompass colonial goods as well as swamp available materials. Communities that would fit this model would include Native Americans, Maroons, fugitives and anyone else looking to find temporary solace from colonial lifeways (Sayers 2008).

The Scission Mode of Communitization

The Scission Mode of Communitization is just as its title suggests, communities that formed within the interior of the Great Dismal Swamp with the explicit purpose of removing itself from the colonial system as much as possible. Such groups include Disenfranchised Native Americans, Maroons, refugees, fugitives and anyone attempting to cut themselves off from the colonial system. Land usurpation and chattel slavery are the types of events that led such communities to seek refuge within the interior reaches of the swamp (Sayers 2008). The swamp itself provided great protection for such communities, with its thick brush of thorns and ample wildlife. The Great Dismal Swamp has many areas of dry, high ground, referred to as mesic islands, which made habitation several miles (more than 0.75 miles) within the swamp very

possible (Sayers 2008). As such, it is these communities that have been the focus of the GDSLS since its initial conception in 2002.

Within the context of the Scission Mode of Communitization, communities would have formed with the purpose to limit its reliance on the outside world making the need to travel outside of the swamp and trade for colonial wares less prevalent. Instead, swamp available materials would have been used and sought after for daily subsistence. Such materials include wood, plants, wildlife and pre-contact wares such as lithic tools and ceramics (Sayers 2008). Archaeological field expeditions into the swamp have recovered reworked lithic tools on sites that fit the expected artifactual assemblage patterns of a Scission Community, as well as its positioning on dry ground within the interior reaches of the swamp. Such lithic tools appear as projectile points or other tools that have been reworked for a new purpose, such as a scraper or knife. Architecturally, an interior community could have differing signatures depending on the architects; however, the materials used would have been exclusively swamp ready materials. As such, one might expect a footprint to reflect a Native American Structure or one of Western influence.

Labor Exploitation Mode of Communitization

Canal Companies began to take interest in the Great Dismal Swamp ca. 1763 as the swamp became viewed as home to profitable resources to be exploited for capital gain (Sayers 2008). George Washington helped form the Adventurers to Drain the Great Dismal Swamp, the first corporate attempt to build canals through the swamp itself (Sayers 2008). This venture used the exploitation of slave labor to accomplish its goals. Not only did the construction of canals create easier travel within the region, but also it brought about easier transportation of swamp materials, such as lumber.

As the exploitation of the swamp increased, so too did the exploitation of enslaved individuals. These enslaved laborers found themselves living alongside the canals that they were being forced to dig. This mode of Communitization is “represented architecturally by wood structures of limited quality; in some case[s], standing trees were incorporated into the structures themselves as vertical posts (Sayers 2008: 130).” These community structures stemmed from outside (colonial) interest within the swamp as a commodity, and therefore would have an artifactual assemblage of swamp available materials as well as outside world materials. Mass produced ceramics and nails may be found in association with such encampments (Sayers 2008).



Figure 12. Harper’s Magazine: Horse Camp (GDSLS Research Collection, Crayon: 1856: 449).

Architectural Exploration

Taking note of such complicated histories, one may wonder what type of architectural signature may be found within the swamp itself, which may reflect such communities. As mentioned earlier, the artifacts associated the Semi-Independent Mode would be comprised of colonial wares as well as swamp materials, the Scission Mode would be predominately swamp materials, reworked lithics, and little outside wares, and the Labor Exploitation Mode would have a greater amount of outside wares. Even though the materials used and produced for everyday life would be different within each Mode of Communitization, there would be a greater reliance on swamp available materials in each mode, such as in the case of habitation construction.

The first step in understanding the architectural signatures within the swamp is to study the first occupiers of the Dismal. When discussing Native American architecture, it is important to note that many factors are taken into account during construction. In this case, “Native American building evolved in direct response to climate, local materials, and hunting and farming patterns, as well as to social and religious organization (Carley 1994: 12).” When discussing a particular landscape such as the Great Dismal Swamp, rather than a central town with direct cultural influences, it is important to know that the climate and the materials played a huge role in the determination of structure formation. As shown above, many cultural players existed around the swamp during colonial times, and examples of each might be seen through the archaeological record, given the time for excavation. As such, several architectural examples need to be explored to gain a better perspective of the Native American influence on swamp structures.

To begin this understanding of architectural signatures, we begin with the types of buildings found within the region where the Great Dismal Swamp resides. John White

accompanied Sir Walter Raleigh to the Virginia Coast in 1585, he created a set of drawings depicting the community sphere of the local Algonquian cultures residing on the Carolina Coast (Nabokov and Easton 1989). These drawings were reproduced by Theodore de Bry for *A Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia* by Thomas Harriot. Amongst the original drawings of John White can be found the water color entitled “The Towne of Pomeiooc,” which depicted a town that was positioned around a central fire and fortified by a circular palisade (Nobokov and Easton 1989, Harriot 1972). “The Algonquian village of Pomeiooc, in what is now North Carolina, consisted of barrel-roofed structures ranging from forty to one hundred feet long, and each housing several families (Carley 1994: 15).”

These depictions of Native American structures leads the discussion into an exploration of the Powhatan Chiefdom. The houses constructed by the Powhatan people were called “*yi hakan* (yee-ha-cahn) (Rountree 1989: 60).” These barrel-roofed structures, as mentioned above, were constructed from saplings that could easily be manipulated and “bent directly from the ground to resemble tunnels with flattened ends (Nobokov and Easton 1989: 55).” These saplings were “set into the ground at one foot intervals, in two rows,” and then shaped into the barrel-roofed structures mentioned above (Rountree 1989: 60). In many cases, the framework of such structures were covered with “bark or with mats made of marsh reeds (Rountree 1989: 60).” Within the hotter climate of the Virginia and North Carolina coast, these mats could be rolled up, allowing for ventilation (Rountree 1989, Nobokov and Easton 1989). These structures were assembled in a matter of hours and could be disassembled and moved with relative ease. Hunting parties made use of this feature by carrying the mats from one location to the next, and just assembling a new base structure (Rountree 1989). These barrel-roofed structures, seen in John White’s drawings appear to be rectangular and not circular, however circular structures did

exist. These circular “wigwams” (as they have become known) are constructed in a similar manner, beginning with saplings, which were bent inward, forming a dome (Nobokov and Easton 1989). In both cases, a hole was kept at the top of the structure to allow smoke to escape from the hearth kept ablaze within for warmth (See Carely 1994: 14 for Iroquois Longhouse and Carley 1994: 13 for Algonquian Wigwam).

Of course, there are more structures associated with daily living than just the main dwelling homes of the families residing within the town. Such other buildings include a “ramadalike shelter...which at times served as a loft for laying out corn and fish to dry. These shelters were well-lighted, shaded places for summertime living; some sleeping went on in them in spite of the mosquitoes (Rountree 1989: 62).” Two other structures found within Powhatan communities include sweathouses and bridges (Rountree 1989).

Due to the Great Dismal Swamp’s use by multiple cultures, it is important to study other possible structural influences. In the case of the Westo, various influences can be seen in their structure, including that of the Timucua located in the Southeast. This connection may be another avenue to explore when attempting to gain a better understanding of the possible architectural footprints that may exist within the Great Dismal Swamp. One form of architecture that can be found within the southeast landscape of America displays a gabled roof (See Carley 1994: 20 for Gable Roof Wattle-and-Daub Construction). These structures tend to have an earthen floor, where “the interior walls were formed of rows of poles set vertically into narrow trenches,” while “[t]he exterior walls were wattle-and-daub; roofs were covered with cane mats or thatch (Nobokov and Easton 1989: 97).”

In the exploration of colonial structures within the region surrounding the Great Dismal Swamp, we begin with folk houses. Folk houses are “built by their occupants or by non-

professional builders, and all are relatively simple houses meant to provide basic shelter, with little concern for presenting a stylish face to the world (McAlester 1984: 5).” Based on this classification, structures built within and surrounding the swamp would predominately fall into this category of architectural style. The Native American structures mentioned above are also considered folk houses based on this definition. Folk houses were intended for shelter above all else. It was this intent that led to their utilization of local materials in the construction of the dwellings (McAlester 1984). This use of local materials was often the result of availability. Before the railroad was built, or the canals dug through the swamp, transportation of goods was a very difficult endeavor. As such, housing construction relied heavily on the locally available materials.

Within the Tidewater South, these folk houses are expected to be simple linear structures (McAlester 1984). While brick was a popular architectural choice, our understanding of folk structures and the area surrounding the Dismal Swamp paints a picture of wooden structures. While folk houses could be expanded to have several rooms and several floors, the expected signature of such a dwelling within the Dismal Swamp would have been one story and most likely one room, due to limited heating techniques.

Within the Tidewater landscape, plantations grew on the exploitation of enslaved human labor. As such, these plantations constructed housing for the enslaved individuals forced to work. “Excavations of slave quarters in Virginia show house plans similar to the so-called earthfast houses of the early British pioneers; in the Carolina lowcountry the floor plan, small rooms, clay walls, and gabled roofs of slave houses are analogous to houses in West Africa (Ferguson 1992: 37).” The clay walls mentioned refer to wattle and daub construction methods.

Such structures used wove sticks together to form the wall, referred to as wattle, and mud or clay to insulate the walls, called daub (Ferguson 1992).

Upon excavation of the Curriboo Plantation in South Carolina, archaeologists found evidence of African influenced house structures (Ferguson 1992). These structures were constructed by digging trenches “to hold the foundations; then according to the excavators, courses of clay reinforced with upright posts were laid in the bottom of the trenches and built to the desired height of the wall plate (Ferguson 1992: 64).” Such structures hint towards other possible structural types to be found within the Great Dismal Swamp (See Ferguson 1992: 65 for Curriboo Plantation image).

These various architectural types begin to allow an archaeological investigation to understand that the Great Dismal Swamp was a vast landscape that was utilized by many cultures. Communities that formed within the swamp, no matter whether they were on the outskirts or the most interior reaches, they still relied on the materials made available by the swamp as well as the climate. By studying these various forms of architectural signatures, we may begin to see the similarities found on the architectural features found on the nameless site of the Great Dismal Swamp, with specific concern (for this project) to the North Plateau.

Architecture on the North Plateau

Many cultures surrounded the Great Dismal Swamp, giving the swamp a complex history through the archaeological record. During excavations on the Nameless Site, evidence gathered points to a Scission Mode of Communitization. This research focuses its attention to the excavation efforts of the North Plateau of the Nameless Site. The footprint of a structure, labeled Structure 1, was located and documented during the 2011 field season. Only a segment of the structure was exposed, but due to its rectilinear pattern, the size of the postholes and the close

proximity of the posts, this architectural feature has been interpreted as a Western influenced structure within the post-contact era.

Past excavations have shown that Stratum I resides within the post-contact realm. Tobacco pipe fragments were recovered during excavations from Stratum I. Included in that assemblage were two tobacco pipe stem fragments. The measurement of the bore showed a diameter of 6/64", which based on past works places, a possible production range between 1680 and 1720 (Deetz 1977: 28). A great number of tobacco pipe fragments were found within Stratum I, in association with the structural feature. While the date range of 1680-1720 may not be an exact occupation date, we can be reasonably sure that the tobacco pipe in question was dropped sometime after 1680 and probably before 1740.



Figure 13. Pipe Stem Fragment (GDSLS Research Collection).

Other artifacts found in associated with the structural feature include a tiny sliver of clear glass, burnt clay, pre-contact ceramics, lithic flakes and tiny pieces of metal. The metal could be a by-product of various metal objects or it could be naturally occurring bog iron. The fragments were found with the use of a magnet, and are very miniscule in size. The burnt clay could be evidence of a waddle and daub type structure. The burnt clay is of poor quality and is very

brittle to the touch. The sliver of glass, while too small to be identified as a strongly diagnostic tool, it can at least give us the impression that the structural feature had a post-contact element.

The lithic flakes and the ceramic sherds prove to hold a great number of questions. A higher amount of tertiary flakes were recovered as opposed to primary flakes or complete lithic tools. This indicates that the surrounding area was used to rework lithic tools, to either sharpen them or to repurpose them completely. The pre-contact ceramic sherds were found within a posthole in great number. Upon excavation, it became clear that these ceramic sherds were not a pot break, or a mere trash deposit, but rather, these sherds were in fact lining the post itself.

Due to the projected Scission Mode of Communitization of the Great Dismal Swamp as a cultural landscape, this potsherd-lined posthole has been interpreted as being of post-contact origin. The posthole is part of the larger structural feature found on the North Plateau, and finds its origin within Stratum I. The ceramic sherds were identified as Croaker Landing Ware, dating from 1200 BC – 800 BC (Egloff and Potter 1982) and two sherds belonging to the New River series, dating to 1750-400 BC (Herbert 2009). Even though these ceramics find their production within the pre-contact era, they found another purpose within the post-contact communities formed within the interior of the Great Dismal Swamp. Due to the swamp's geological formation, its soil has a very sandy composition. This may not have offered great support when building structures. A broken pot, found within the swamp interior, might not have offered its intended use to the finders, but rather support for the structures they were building.



Figure 14. EU 4, Feature 508, Ceramic Sherd-lined Posthole, View East (GDSLS Research Collection).

An example of this type of practice can be found at the Jordan's Journey site in Virginia. Here, bricks were used to line the post, adding additional support. This practice is not uncommon in colonial structures and follows suit with human innovation and creativity when faced with a need to secure a structures integrity. Features 3 and 5 from 44PG303 show brick distinctly surrounding the post, instead of merely floating within the feature (See McLearen and Mouer 1993: 227).

Another possible explanation for the ceramics may come from the description of the architecture found on the Curriboo plantation above. Clay was used to support posts that were set into trenches in the foundation of the structures. Instead of using clay, which could have been reserved for daub, they again used what they could find in order to offer the support needed, but also to follow an architectural plan that was known to work.

While Structure 1 was not completely exposed, the segment that was can give us a better understanding of the inhabitants of the structure by the artifacts found in association as well as the form of the footprint left behind. As stated in Chapter 4, Feature 507 was bisected, in order

to follow the trench feature south. In doing so, another posthole was located, which also had ceramic sherds associated with it, much like those of Feature 508, found immediately north. To the east of Feature 508, a posthole was bisected, and at 24cm below unit datum, a piece of white ball clay tobacco pipe was recovered. Due to the great number of pipe fragments, and the production date range put forth by the bore diameter of the pipe stem fragments, it would stand within reason to say this structure was occupied somewhere between 1660 and 1740.

The post holes associated with Structure 1 are not small, reflecting the use of small saplings to construct the dwelling, but rather larger, reflecting the use of more substantial timber. Due to the use of ceramic sherds to line the larger post hole, which reflects the use of brick or stone to reinforce post holes in sites like Jordan's Journey, as well as the rectilinear pattern of the structure we can infer that Structure 1 had a Western influence. Furthermore, burnt clay found in association with Structure 1, reflects the use of clay or mud to form wattle and daub structures. These wattle and daub structures may reflect American Indian architecture from the Southeast, or as our model may suggest, African architecture as seen in South Carolina.

The rectilinear pattern of Structure 1 is not the first to be found within the Great Dismal Swamp. Dr. Sayers found a similar structure within his dissertation work. Feature 81 was described as a "rectilinear post-in-ground structure (Sayers 2008: 152)." Both Structure 1 from the North Plateau and Feature 81 have the grid-like pattern with apparent postholes throughout. The main difference between the two structures is the structural support of the postholes found on the North Plateau.



Figure 15. Feature 81 (GDSLS Research Collection, Sayers 2008: 152).

Following what we now know about the architectural signatures surrounding the Great Dismal Swamp and a closer look at the artifact assemblages recovered during the GDSLS's field seasons, we can begin making statements regarding the cultural presence on the North Plateau. Based on what we have collected, the occupation of Structure 1 on the North Plateau was most likely sometime between 1660 and 1740. Based on the Scission Mode of Communitization, this landscape offered an area that could be cut off from the outside world. These communities are referred to as resistant communities, because they were resisting that outside world, where they found oppression and strife. The architectural signatures are similar to many varying cultures, and could possibly be explained by several cultural influences. What is known for sure, is that community formed within the interior reaches of the Great Dismal Swamp, and adapted to their surroundings in order to survive.

Using Marx's model of historic materialism in the exploration of cultural occupation of the Great Dismal Swamp, we look to the use-value of objects, rather than their exchange-value. In an landscape where survival outweighs luxury, we find materials at hand, whether found or

brought in, being used to daily subsistence. Pre-contact projectile points being re-used and made to function as knives or scrapers and ceramic sherds being used to reinforce house posts point to the over all importance of daily life within the Great Dismal Swamp prior to the Civil War.

This study has only begun to scratch the surface of a cultural understanding of the Great Dismal Swamp, but hopes to aid in future studies by offering ideas and data to the next set of archaeologists ready to traverse the black waters of the Great Dismal Swamp. Perhaps one day, someone may fully expose Structure 1 on the North Plateau, and find its dimensions and other associated artifacts that will bring about and even greater understanding to cultures living on the North Plateau. The architectural exploration of the surrounding area of the Dismal Swamp, including the vast history reviewed within this document hope to express how diverse the post-contact tidewater area was, and with that vast history in mind imparts that the Dismal Swamp was a landscape for multiple cultures that sought to escape a world of oppression and slavery. A publication in 1848, commenting on the maroon communities living within the Dismal Swamp and the state of the colonial system, stated, “If the slaves are happy in their present condition, would they prefer a residence in the Dismal Swamp to it! (Frederick Douglas’ Paper, 1848).”

CHAPTER 6

INTERPRETATIONS AND FINDINGS

As stated in previous chapters, the social history hidden within the Great Dismal Swamp is a complicated tale, with many actors across time. These actors found differing significances within the swamp throughout the pre and post-contact divide. Before the contact period, the swamp served as a temporary dwelling place, utilized by Indigenous peoples for hunting subsistence. Post-contact brought with it a focus on capitalist mentalities and chattel slavery, changing the cultural landscape and significance of the swamp to one that embodied refuge from the outside world. This chapter will review the archaeological data uncovered through previous excavations and apply an anthropological approach in the interpretation of the North Plateau site. A Marxian model will be used to analyze this archaeological information and will rely on past works by Dr. Sayers to discuss the possible implications of what it means to live within the Great Dismal Swamp.

Research and Interpretations

This research has focused its attention to the North Plateau of the Nameless site in an attempt to gain a better perspective of the communities that once inhabited that particular area as well as gain more information of the people living within the interior reaches of the Great Dismal Swamp. To this end, two seasons have been spent on the North Plateau. The first was an exploration of the area through shovel test pits and ended with the location of a ceramic sherd-lined posthole sitting within a trench. The second season explored the trench and posthole feature by setting up a block excavation over the original features. By the end of the field excavations, it was clear that a structural footprint was present which followed a rectilinear

pattern. With this information along with the artifactual assemblages recovered through excavations, a more in depth analysis of the North Plateau can now be conducted.

To begin the analysis, it is important to establish a period of occupation. Based on the artifactual assemblages recovered to date, the structure on the North Plateau (labeled Structure 1, or ST-1) has been associated with the post-contact era. The ceramic sherds found within the posthole were dated to the pre-contact era. Twenty-one (21) ceramic sherds were recovered in association with the trench feature, most of which were found to be lining the post. The majority of the ceramic sherds were identified as Croaker Landing Ware, dating to 1200 – 800 BC while the others were identified as belonging to the New River series, dating to 1750 – 400 BC. The bottom of any one vessel was not located and the fact that two distinctly different kinds of ceramics were found support the idea that they were found items used to support the post. These ceramic sherds were located 20-25cm below the unit datum, situating them in what the GDSLS has identified as the post-contact era stratum level. Furthering this notion of Structure 1 having been occupied during the post-contact era is the recovery of fifty-one (51) tobacco pipe fragments. Of these fragments, two (2) belong to the stem allowing for a bore reading. The bore measurements of both of the tobacco pipe stem fragments are 6/64” and based on Deetz’s (1977) work with tobacco pipes, the probably production date range is from 1680 to 1720. Along this same reasoning for a post-contact occupation, the OSL (Optically Stimulated Luminescence) sample from Feature 507 was analyzed and came back with the date 1620 +/- 80 (Feathers: See References). Due to the rectilinear pattern of the structure as well as the tobacco pipe fragment, it could certainly be argued that the architectural feature in question leaned closer to the 1700 period of the OSL sample. Thus, it is believed that the occupation of Structure 1 would have been somewhere between 1660 and 1740.

Table 1. North Plateau Artifacts Associated with Structure 1.

Type	Quantity	Additional Info
Ceramics – Croaker Landing Ware	19	1200-800 BC
Ceramics – New River Series	2	1750-400BC
Tobacco Pipe Fragments	49	
Tobacco Pipe Stem Fragments	2	Bore Diameter: 6/64” – 1680- 1720
Burnt Clay	62	
Lithic Flakes	61	
Metal Fragments	17	
Glass	2	

The GDSLS follows models in regards to the inhabitation period during the post-contact era. These models have been labeled the Modes of Communitization, as mentioned in earlier chapters (Sayers 2008). The mode that was being explored and fits the best with the community structure on the North Plateau is the Scission (or Interior) Mode of Communitization. Such a group is defined as utilizing the interior of the swamp in order to find refuge from the outside world, which has alienated them from the natural state of life, by commoditizing their labor in the form of chattel slavery, removing their rights as human beings and the usurpation of land rights. Such communities could be consisted of Disenfranchised Native Americans, Maroons, and/or colonials (indentured servants, outlaws, etc). Whatever their ethnic background, the mode

of interior community structure shows that very little outside wares were brought into the swamp. A lifeway was created that relied on swamp available materials as opposed to those colonial goods, such as ceramics and glasswares. As such, these outside materials are not found with any great regularity, in fact they are quite rare to come across. These swamp available materials include wood, brush, mud and whatever forested swamp related materials could be utilized for daily subsistence. The swamp itself originated as coastline before its geological formation settled on a cypress swamp, making the soils of today's Dismal Swamp very sandy (Oaks and Whitehead 1979). As such, the landscape has no naturally occurring rock sources. This being the case, interior swamp communities had to find other ways in which to create knives and other such useful tools, if they wished to continue their severed ties from the outside world. Besides naturally occurring materials within the swamp, these communities could find artifacts left behind by those generations of people who used that landscape in the past, such as pre-contact hunting tools. These pre-contact tools could then be reworked to fit the need of those interior communities. This act has been documented within Dr. Sayers' previous excavations in the swamp, displayed in such artifacts as reworked projectile points, being made into scrapers or knives. This brings the conversation back to the pre-contact ceramic sherds mentioned above.

Due to the sandy soils of the Great Dismal Swamp, a post may require additional support, whether in its initial setting or resetting. As such, a broken pre-contact vessel, which serves no functional purpose, could be used as structural supports. Through the architectural exploration reviewed in Chapter 5, such methods could be related to Western practices or sheer human adaptability. Either way, a post-contact community could find various ways in order to maintain an occupation within the interior reaches of the swamp.

In the discussion of these interior communities, a Marxian approach may be engaged in order to gain greater view of community structure. The colonial world brought with it an exchange-value system, in which commodities had an exchange-value in terms of capital and labor. Life within these interior swamp communities would have followed a use-value system, wherein items found or made served a distinct purpose for daily life (be it subsistence or entertainment) rather than assigning it a value in terms of capital. The outside world (colonial) focused its attention on trade and industry, as can be seen in the swamp as the canal companies began to find a market for lumber and faster travel within the swamp. Enslaved individuals were forced to trade their labor for their lives within this society, thus the colonial system alienated these enslaved individuals from their basic humanity, to live lives free of oppression. The indigenous communities that existed in the Americas prior to the contact period did not have such outlooks on life. Land was not owned, but occupied. Items were traded, but not assigned a value based on capitalistic views.

The productive forces behind the superstructure of the colonial system, then focused its attention to industry, bringing about mass produced goods and services in exchange for capital, which could be attained through one's labor or in the case of private property owners, at the expense of others, their labor and their cost of living. Dr. Sayers' (2008) uses Plant's (1974) description of such a society to outline that this capitalist mentality "replaced the communal virtues of co-operation and fraternity[sic] with those of conflict and competition (Plant 1974: 19 as used in Sayers 2008: 37)." Conflict, within Marxian terms, can reveal the social situations of groups, such as the enslaved and the enslavers. The industrial capitalist goals did not value indigenous claim to land, nor did it value a man's right to a free life. It used these things to achieve its goal, obtain private property, use labor to produce goods and establish a trade system

for the growth of personal capital. This capitalist force, then, is the force that alienated those workers from their natural state of being and imposed slavery on those very workers (Sayers 2008).

A good example displaying the clash of a pre-capitalist society with that of a capitalist society can be seen within Michael Taussig's *The Devil and Commodity Fetishism in South America* (1980). Within this ethnography, Taussig explores colonialism within the South American Landscape and how differing modes of production formed as a result. The plantations of Cauca Valley, Colombia, had two distinct modes of production, the peasant mode and the capitalist mode. Taussig explores the difference of these two modes, mainly focusing on the role of the peasant versus the capitalist. The peasant, or proletariat, is the workforce of the plantations. Under the peasant mode of production the peasant has control over the mode of production while under capitalism the proletariat has no control. "The peasant uses cash, not capital, and sells in order to buy, whereas the capitalist uses cash as capital to buy in order to sell at a profit, thus adding to capital and repeating the circuit on an ever-increasing scale lest the enterprise die. The peasant producer lives in a system that is aimed at the satisfaction of an array of qualitatively defined needs; contrarily, the capitalist and the capitalist system have the aim of limitless capital accumulation (Taussig 1980: 25)." Cauca Valley underwent a large transformation, as much of the America's did, in response to colonization. Indigenous life ways were disturbed by colonial desires, and slavery was introduced to achieve these ends. The two main forms of cultivation that existed after the abolishment of slavery were the peasant mode of production as well as the capitalist plantation mode. "The difference in aesthetic forms, peasant and plantation, comes down to this: peasants have some control over materials, tools, time, and land; wage laborers have control over none of these (Taussig 1980: 86)." In this particular case,

the differing viewpoints culminated in religious ideology. Within South America, the devil was defined as being “he who resists cosmic process (Taussig 1980: 18).” Due to the differing viewpoints between the precapitalist and capitalist modes of production, the exchange value embodied by capitalism seemed unnatural. It was this belief that led the indigenous communities to engage in making a deal with the devil in order to achieve capital gain.

Similarly, life inside and outside of the Great Dismal swamp can be discussed in terms of their modes of production. While the colonial system relied on an exchange-value system, interior swamp communities would have relied on a use-value system, as mentioned above. The forces of production within the colonial system alienated people from their labor and a natural way of life. Interior communities found refuge within the Great Dismal Swamp, because it allowed them to return to a system where their daily lives were not exploited for capital gain, placed the production of materials back into the hands of those previously alienated and also allowed them to resist the colonial system that brought about such alienating practices.

Lance Greene (2010) discusses the resistant traits of the Welch family of post-Removal era North Carolina. John Welch, a member of the Cherokee Nation, and Elizabeth Welch, a white woman, headed the Welch family. Together, the two suffered through various hardships throughout the removal efforts within North Carolina, but resisted these efforts, eventually purchasing their own farm (which they had already owned). Green (2010) uses the archaeological evidence combined with historical documentation in order to display how the Welches participated in “cultural resistance” by using varying aspects of modernity, such as architectural styles and the creation of farming surplus, to maintain an outward appearance of modern practices, but resisted other aspects of modernity and the removal process by practicing cultural traditions within the limits of their land in order to maintain their Cherokee identity

(Greene 2010: 66). The communities of the Great Dismal Swamp were resisting the colonial system in a similar manner by settling within that remote landscape and creating a cultural space where they could engage in traditional cultural practices or to simply exist within a living space where slavery did not exist.

Significance of the Research

This research can aid in the understanding of communities that took refuge in the interior of the Great Dismal Swamp, but displaying their independence from the outside world. The idea of reusing found pre-contact materials is seen within the artifactual assemblages as reworked lithic tools, but also by the lack of tools found. Rather, a large amount of lithic flakes (debitage) found in association with Structure 1 indicates that lithic tools were being reworked within the vicinity. In some ways, the archaeological endeavors within the Dismal Swamp are akin to looking at the negative of a picture; you may not have all of the colors at your disposal, however, if you look long enough, and perhaps with a general knowledge of what you're looking for, you may start to put the picture together without the color. The North Plateau doesn't have a great number of colonial wares, or any artifacts that can give an exact production date, but it does have the footprint of a human presence left behind.

The reworking of lithic tools is not just the act of a post-contact interior community, but could be the sign of a pre-contact temporary occupation. However, archaeologically, this project views the entire picture. The structure itself (Structure 1) is rectilinear in pattern with larger postholes. This type of architectural styling resembles a Western influence as opposed to American Indian, however an abundance of burnt clay has been associated with wattle and daub techniques, which could indicate African influences or Southeast American Indian cultures. The time period, based on stratum location, the dating of the tobacco pipe and the OSL sample

identify several possible cultural identities of those living on the North Plateau, but no distinct cultural signifiers have yet to be recovered. Instead of incorrectly identifying a certain cultural presence, it is important to take note of the complicated histories discussed in Chapter 3.

It is believed that American Indians were the primary swamp residents before 1680, after which, maroon communities began to form (Sayers 2008). As with other areas in the region, it is possible that a creolization of cultures began. Creolization is the process of multiple (two or more) cultures coming together, forming a new cultural presence (Ewen 2000). This is not to say that a dominant group assimilates another group through conquest, or forces these new ways of life of the other, but rather a merging of cultures as well as cultural practices (Ewen 2000). “The problem for the archaeologist (and especially the ethnologist) is distinguishing transitory acquisition from incorporation (Ewen 2000: 38).” In discussing creolization, Ferguson states, “the complex processes of creolization produced mixed cultures with divisions within the mixes, a series of interacting subcultures rather than a single creolized blend (Ferguson 1992: xlii).

Perhaps, then, communities formed within the Great Dismal Swamp have a creolized culture. It is distinctly possible that American Indians, Maroons and even colonials choose to live within the swamp to escape the outside world, but relied on each other and their own cultural practices to adapt to the harsh environment of the Dismal Swamp. This may be the reason why the architectural signature found on the North Plateau resembles a Western construction, while the wattle and daub construction point to American Indian or African practices. If American Indians had been using the swamp landscape for temporary encampment during hunting parties, perhaps they were lending aid to those communities looking for swamp available materials to make working tools. The Western architectural style could have been learned on plantations, interactions within the colonial world or perhaps even direct contact with those who know that

type of architecture, as may be suggested by creolization. There are many possibilities that exist that could account for the architectural formation of interior swamp communities, but the overall statement of this exposition is that human occupation of the North Plateau did occur, and it did so as a response to the colonial system.

Conclusions and Notes to Future Researchers

This exposition stands as yet another stepping stone in the archaeological understanding of life within the Great Dismal Swamp. The research agenda was to test the project models in terms of the Modes of Communitization with regards to the North Plateau of the Nameless site. Certainly, those communities associated with Structure 1 on the North Plateau were part of a Scission Mode of Communitization and sought to resist colonial control by not taking part within that society. This exposition has taken a Marxian approach to the interpretation of the archaeological evidence in order to explore these cultures through the materials they produced and what the evidence of that production indicates about the different cultural spheres. Due to the lack of concrete cultural identification of those inhabitants of the North Plateau, no discernable descendant community could be identified, resulting in an inability to work with descendant communities. The GDSLS project as a whole hopes to bridge this gap by making the information learned available to the public (short of disclosing site location). Such methods of public presentation being undertaken are seen through the projects interaction with news and magazine reporters, as well as open presentation to the public and other archaeologists through conferences and archaeological societies.

This project hopes to encourage future archaeologists to create new avenues for study within the swamp. There are many different theoretical perspectives out there that may account for different aspects of these interior communities. Perhaps these future archaeologists might be

able to identify a culturally distinctive element to the North Plateau, create a praxis of engagement with descendant communities with regards to the archaeological exploration and understanding of that history. The Great Dismal Swamp is home to a very interesting cultural history, one that has been overlooked to a great degree. I hope that one day, an archaeologist will choose to continue this work, and give voice to those people of the lonely place.

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