

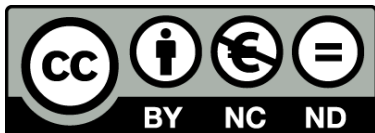
## Flipping the Script: Upending Approaches to Power in the Work of James C. Scott

**Bill Angelbeck**

### Zitiervorschlag

Bill Angelbeck. 2025. Flipping the Script: Upending Approaches to Power in the Work of James C. Scott. Forum Kritische Archäologie 14, Theme Issue: Unearthing Resistance – James C. Scott's Legacy for Critical Archaeologies and Histories: 34–42.

URL <https://www.kritischearchaeologie.de>  
DOI <http://dx.doi.org/10.17169/refubium-47045>  
ISSN 2194-346X



Dieser Beitrag steht unter der Creative Commons Lizenz CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 (Namensnennung – Nicht kommerziell – Keine Bearbeitung) International. Sie erlaubt den Download und die Weiterverteilung des Werkes / Inhaltes unter Nennung des Namens des\*der Autor\*in, jedoch keinerlei Bearbeitung oder kommerzielle Nutzung.

Weitere Informationen zu der Lizenz finden Sie unter: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/deed.de>.

## Flipping the Script: Upending Approaches to Power in the Work of James C. Scott

**Bill Angelbeck**

Douglas College, Department of Anthropology and Sociology, New Westminster, BC, Canada,  
angelbeckw@douglascollege.ca

### Introduction

“Lacking a comprehensive anarchist worldview and philosophy, and in any case wary of nomothetic ways of seeing, I am making a case for a sort of anarchist squint. What I aim to show is that if you put on anarchist glasses and look at the history of popular movements, revolutions, ordinary politics, and the state from that angle, certain insights will appear that are obscured from almost any other angle.” (Scott 2012: xii)

When you read about James Scott, you commonly come across words such as ‘provocative,’ ‘contrarian,’ alongside ‘counter-narrative’ – such are the attempts to place his histories as outside the mainstream of thought. For this reason alone, his work is so worthwhile. He has always offered a striking perspective that can have a lasting influence on how you view things thereafter. In a way, he finds the blind spots in much of historical and cultural perspectives, and shows us how much we miss when not shining the light in such directions.

I maintain here that it is the anarchistic elements of Scott’s thought that leads him to address the blind spots of others. He developed his anarchist perspective increasingly throughout his books, culminating in *The Art of Not Being Governed* (2009) and *Two Cheers for Anarchism* (2012). At first, he described how he characterized political organizations in his lectures and seminars in ways in which he found himself noticing how much they shared with anarchist perspectives, finding himself saying, “Now, that sounds like what an anarchist would argue” (Scott 2012: ix; see also 2020: 64; Holmes 2023). So, he began to explore anarchist theorists more closely, and in the process he even taught a course on anarchism at Yale.

We should note that his anarchism is not at full throttle. After all, he did only offer “two cheers” (2012) for it, not three, but the weight of his scholarship is surely towards the anarchist side. In this sense, Scott represents one of the few prominent intellectuals that opted to work in this vein, alongside the contributions of Noam Chomsky (2005, 2013) or David Graeber (e.g., 2004, 2009, 2020). There are also several works that collect together scholars working in this direction for the social sciences, social movements, and theory (e.g., Shukaitis et al. 2007; Klausen and Martel 2011; Lilley and Shantz 2015; Levy and Newman 2019), all of which reveals that there’s been an increasing turn to this line of thought, after a period in which Marxist thinking was more common in the academy.

Here, I discuss how Scott’s lifework has had an important influence on archaeology, anthropology, political science, and history through his theoretical approach in addition to several concepts that he developed that have been useful for considering political dynamics at various scales, in ancient early states (and their peripheries) to contemporary states and non-state regions such as the *zomias* of Southeast Asia. Throughout, I emphasize how Scott’s thinking upends so many common perspectives about political dynamics.

## Scott “Flips the Script”

“A great many barbarians, then, were not primitives who had stayed or been left behind but rather political and economic refugees who had fled to the periphery to escape state-induced poverty, taxes, bondage, and war.” (Scott 2017: 234)

One of the main aspects to Scott’s thought is that he commonly flips the script in contrast to most approaches towards cultures of the present and the past. He does not take the perspective of the apex position, or that of the *arché*. Instead of views from the top of the temple mound, Scott views things from the perspectives of the bulk of people in society. Or, when he does look from above, as with *Seeing Like a State* (1998), it’s to demonstrate the problems with the State’s gaze.<sup>1</sup> In this way, he shares in the notion of a “people’s history” like that pioneered by Howard Zinn (1980), to shift away from a perspective that is not from that of pharaohs or kings, presidents and prime ministers; Zinn’s work, of course, has influenced others (e.g., Bass 2009; Dunbar-Ortiz 2013; Harman 2017), and it aligns with Eric Wolf’s (1982) recounting of “people without history,” also oriented to portray the history of those left out of traditional narratives, those without monuments to etch their accomplishments. Yet, while most “people’s histories” are a chronicle from another vantage point, Scott goes much further than most do. Scott analyzes the actions of what they do in practice, in specific historical settings, such as the highlands of Southeast Asia or the lowlands of early Mesopotamia, even as those studies uncover patterns that are applicable for analyses in other situations. In the process, he develops concepts of the ‘hidden transcript,’ ‘weapons of the weak,’ or what he referred to more generally as ‘infrapolitics’ (Scott 1985, 1990). Plus, he has offered alternate perspectives upon numerous cultural aspects, whether it concerns the anarchic structure of ‘barbarian’ regions hovering in the peripheries of states, *zomia* as ungoverned zones, or the fragility of the power of state governments themselves (Scott 2009). It’s worthwhile to consider some examples of how he upends common approaches to political analyses.

Many have regarded ‘barbarian’ areas as simply undisciplined, or even precisely what happens in the absence of a Hobbesian Leviathan. But Scott (2017: 255) shows how the so-called ‘barbarians’ – a loose characterization of non-state peoples generally – were healthier and freer than those within states. They lived longer, were taller, and ate healthier, in part due to a subsistence that relied upon a much broader basis of foods. Plus, they had more leisure time, and were generally not subject to the classes of superiors. In this sense, he does what Marshall Sahlins (1972) did for foragers in presenting the ‘original affluent society’, in contrast to the idea that hunter-gatherers were in a constant struggle for existence.

Similar studies apply to recent treatments of pirate societies, which also engage in what Scott (2009: 89, 2017: 172) would call, after Max Weber (2013 [1930]), “booty capitalism.” This refers to how groups basically can pursue, typically through militant means, profit from plundering trade routes or other peoples. The loot is redistributed among the group’s members in a manner like a “joint-stock company” (Scott 2017: 172). Pirates often operated in such ways. Peter Leeson (2007, 2014) has shown that pirates organized themselves in ways that promoted the redistribution of goods and prevented captains from accumulating excessive amounts of wealth. They also developed institutions to maintain order among the crew. In so doing, Leeson applied an anarchist approach to pirate cultures, as others have done, such as Gabriel Kuhn’s (2009) study of Caribbean pirates and David Graeber’s (2023) research on pirate societies in Madagascar from their heyday in the late 1600s through 1700s. For groups that were often violent towards others, they treated each other in remarkably egalitarian ways – this led to Graeber’s (2023) suggestion of a “pirate Enlightenment.”

Another example of how Scott flips the script is the way he treats the ‘collapse’ of states throughout the past. In conjunction with words like ‘fall’ or ‘decline’ in regards to societies, such terms reveal their bias right on the surface as to which kind of sociopolitical structure is preferred by the author (Borck and Sanger 2017: 11). Similar biases are seen as well in describing periods of ‘cultural climax,’ ‘high point,’ or ‘peak.’ Such terms do not reveal a scientific or neutral attitude toward the archaeological record. Scott (2017: 209) is quite good at undermining these common tropes, writing, “Why deplore ‘collapse,’ when the situation it depicts is most often the disaggregation of a complex, fragile, and typically oppressive state into smaller, decentralized fragments?” Further, these periods

---

1 Hereon, I’ll use the capitalized form of ‘State’ to refer to the reified state forms in common with much of Scott’s description, which aligns with much of anarchist thinking. I do think that emerging within these are other forms that do not advance such aims of the centralization of power; that unions, civil rights, suffragette, abolitionist, and other sociopolitical movements have institutionalized many protections that constrain the aspects of States.

may have “represented a bolt for freedom by many state subjects and an improvement in human welfare” (Scott 2017: 209).

Scott’s theoretical contributions extend beyond the shifting of vantage-points for analysis. His work has also provided critical tools for analyzing how resistance manifests in material culture and social practices, influencing a broad range of archaeological studies as well. Alfred González-Ruibal (2014) has applied Scott’s work in his analyses of the borderlands of Ethiopia and other areas, where communities such as the Gumuz, Bertha, and Mao exert efforts to resist the imposition of state authority. He argues that such expressions of resistance are apparent through their material culture and practices. Scott’s (1985, 1990) emphases on hidden transcripts describes how oppressed peoples find ways to not overtly critique authorities, that these are “veiled forms of resistance that allow the subaltern to get their way to a point, without openly opposing power (which can be dangerous)” (González-Ruibal 2014: 9); for this reason, González-Ruibal refers to this as “resilience, rather than resistance.” He makes useful distinctions between resilience, resistance, and rebellion. Resilience occurs a lot, but is not overt, and for this reason, González-Ruibal (2014: 9–10) refers to it as politically acting on an “unconscious level, beyond discourse,” where traditional and local practices continue despite the presence or impositions of oppressive authorities. Resistance is more politically conscious and tactical, challenging structural authorities through syncretic adaptations of local and external symbols in material culture or through symbolic aspects of their practices. Rebellions are the overt and politically explicit actions that leave archaeological remnants in weapons or defensive sites; “rebellion implies a political consciousness”; these three forms embody “different forms of being against domination” (González-Ruibal 2014: 10). In this way, we see how foundation for further theoretical applications towards traces of resistance throughout the past.

In overturning common approaches, Scott has opened the perspective to further such analyses. Indeed, many have explicitly applied analyses in a Scottian vein, such as Bengt Karlsson’s (2013) ethnographic study of subaltern peoples in Northeast India, Mark Hauser and Douglas Armstrong’s (2012) archaeological study of settlements in the Caribbean as “arts of resistance”, or Richard Horsley’s (2004) “hidden transcripts” approach towards early Christianity.

### **The State as Separate from Society**

Scott describes States as parasitic sociopolitical formations, where many within the scope of the polity are unfree. His work, along with Graeber’s (e.g., 2006), highlights the degree of unfreedom within most states. In this way, Scott helps us think more concretely about the construction of the State form itself. Those subjected to the exploitative nature of power often evade the reach of the State, seeking refuge in the margins – going ‘off the map’ into so-called barbarian regions, forming maroon societies, or retreating to places like the Great Dismal Swamp of North Carolina and Virginia (Sayers 2014). In this way, Scott has detailed how ‘barbarians’ form in conjunction with States, such that the periphery is important to the State as a core (Scott 2017).

Scott also helps us remain conscious that States are separate from society, much as Pierre Clastres (1987) emphasized, in his *Society Against the State*. Accordingly, the State concerns the interests of a subset of society (i.e. elites). States structure power to ensure their continuing position, combined with the perpetual pursuit of finding ways to increase their profits and surpluses from the rest of society. In this sense, all States are oligarchies.

In his discussions of the fragility of states, Scott suggested that political forms have a Leachian quality, meaning that the political formations can readily shift over time. In Edmund Leach’s (1954) classic study of Burmese societies, which Scott often discussed, there was a fluidity in their political forms over time, involving alterations or oscillations between *gumsa gumlao* political structures. Accordingly, the *gumsa* formation was a nascent hierarchy, but unstable. The *gumlao* form, however, was resistant to hierarchy, and formed an example of active state prevention (Scott 2009: 214–216); Jonathan Friedman (1998) developed this argument, adding historical or diachronic contexts and dynamics to Leach’s (1954) synthetic model, which Scott (2009: 355) cited with approval. In this active prevention of the centralization of power, we find affinities to Clastres’ (1987) arguments. As Scott turns to the archaeological record, he finds the innumerable chronicles of States rising and collapsing due to war, droughts, epidemics, and so on (Scott 2017: 7), and the Leachian dynamics and oscillations are present. While, ideologically,

those ruling states always imagine some perpetuity, they succumb to collapse like any and all other political formations. As archaeologists know well, everything that has a beginning also has an ending (Rosen 2019).

### Assertions of Power are Met with Resistance

“The condensation of history, our desire for clean narratives, and the need for elites and organizations to project an image of control and purpose all conspire to convey a false image of historical causation. They blind us to the fact that most revolutions are not the work of revolutionary parties but the precipitate of spontaneous and improvised action [...], and that the great emancipatory gains for human freedom have not been the result of orderly, institutional procedures but of disorderly, unpredictable, spontaneous action cracking open the social order from below.” (Scott 2012: 141)

Scott has often reoriented our focus towards other forms of power, those of the oppressed or governed. While power is often viewed as applicable to those ‘in power,’ in positions of authority, with the ability to coerce, as ‘power over’ others, Scott focuses on the power from below, more in alignment with Hannah Arendt’s (1958) notions of power, in reference to collective action, to ‘act in concert’ with others. Some have expanded upon Scott’s approach to describe the dynamics of non-state polities operating as actively working against concentrations of power, in contrast to states. Raúl Zibechi (2010: 55), for instance, describes Bolivian Aymara communities as “dispersal machines” that actively inhibit the concentration of power; in this sense, he highlights the significance of the work of Clastres (1987) and Scott (2009) for such dynamics.

Archaeologists increasingly are focusing on bottom-up aspects of power, as the title of T. L. Thurston and Manuel Fernández-Götz’s (2021a) recent edited volume indicates: *Power from Below in Premodern Societies*. As the editors state, “The point of raising issues of self- or co-organization and self- or co-management [from the bottom up or local scales] is not to reject the existence of inequality or the power of leaders and rulers, but to grant reasonable agency to others, gaining a more realistic view of the past and a better reading of our data” (Thurston and Fernández-Götz 2021b: 5). They also draw explicitly upon Scott’s (1985, 2009) work to highlight opposition to “those ‘above,’” particularly through the act of departing to join other communities or establishing new ones (Thurston and Fernández-Götz 2021c: 298).

Scott often grappled with Michel Foucault’s theories, for whom social relationships were imbued with power. For Foucault, even relations of dominance entail the giving of power to the person claiming it, even if they are planning for rebellion or abandonment of their situation at some point in the future. In this way, power is never totalizing, for then it would no longer be a form of power. There is always some degree of freedom present on any side of a power relation; hence, one could not exert power over a robot, due its lack of existential consciousness and freedom. Furthermore, Foucault (Gordon 1980: 142) stated that, “there are no relations of power without resistances.” Therefore, one could say that Foucault presented a social science variant on Newton’s third law of motion, “To every action there is an equal and opposite reaction,” which would be: “To every application of power there is an opposing resistance” – even if generally not always an equal reaction or at the same time. Scott’s focus on the “weapons of the weak” and the “arts of resistance” adds ethnographic and historic cases that complement and expand upon Foucault’s analyses of power.

### The Seeming Eruption of Politics from Below

“When the first declaration of the hidden transcript succeeds, its mobilization capacity as a symbolic act is potentially awesome. [...] It portends a possible turning of the tables. [...] At the level of political beliefs, anger, and dreams it is a social *explosion*.” (Scott 1990: 227; emphasis added)

Geo Maher is one scholar who has recently expanded upon the power of the oppressed. In his excellent *Anti-colonial Eruptions* (Maher 2022), he draws on Scott at many points, as well as heavily on Frantz Fanon (2007 [1963], 2008 [1952]), when he discussed how the power of the underclass is not just in the foot-dragging, the work-only-to-the-rule practices, or other infrapolitics. Rather, Maher focuses on cases where the oppressed groups appear to explode outright, upending assertions of power from oppressors. The metaphor that Maher finds to be commonly used to describe revolutionary moments, such as the Haitian Revolution circa 1800, is ‘eruption.’ To

use such allusions, the oppressors reveal that they are not very good at seeing the resistance of the oppressed. The colonizers have a blind spot, which comes with their ideology of superiority: they assume that the oppressed are no threat because they deem them to be inferior. They imagine themselves as intelligent and rational and those they enslave as akin to lesser animals, relegating them essentially to a “zone of nonbeing”, in Fanon’s words (2008: 2). For such reasons, any acts of resistance appear as “cunning” and unexpected. In a dialectical reversal, Maher (2022) highlights how the ideologies of colonists, for instance, are also their Achilles’ heel, providing opportunities for the oppressed to seemingly appear as if rebellion is sudden. Their blindspots afford the oppressed a “second sight” into the nature of the overt thinking of the oppressors, as servants within the house knowing the master closely. Maher’s recounting moves from minor strategies of resistance to full-out forms of revolution. With his notion of the “second sight” of the oppressed, Maher (2022) detailed how the state is viewed from the perspective of the oppressed.

For James Martel (2022), the State ‘sees’ things from the perspective of the *arché*, or an ‘archist’ position. The state is only one of many anarchist positions, as others can be marked by lineage patriarchs, bosses, CEOs – or really anyone acting in authoritarian ways. The State as an empire is simply the largest scale of authoritarian expressions. In contrast to Scott’s (1998) “seeing like a state,” he shifts the vantage point to “seeing like an anarchist.” Martel (2022: 18) offers that “anarchist sight organizes just as much as anarchist sight does, but it organizes horizontally among and between the community rather than from above.” Furthermore, he argues that such views are much more common than realized, since grand narratives take on the State-centric position. As he puts it:

“If Scott’s account is credible and if it can be generalized, it suggests once again that it is not anarchism but archism that has to swim against the current of a universe given to entropy and diffusion rather than to stasis and control [...]. Archism in this view has to work very hard to keep itself in power, and anarchism has the advantage of being a political form that requires no coercion, no mythic violence, and no spectacularity, none of that extra effort that archism must ceaselessly engage in to be able to ‘exist’ at all.” (Martel 2022: 269)

Here, Martel (2022: 269) reiterates a point strongly made by Scott (2017) that early states, for instance, were fragile, constantly working to support their claims of sovereignty: building temples to justify their divine sources of authority; building walls to keep barbarian threats out (and their taxable citizens within), and so on. Martel (2022: 269–270) writes that oppressed communities, for Scott, are “always resisting archism.” Yet, while agreeing with Scott, he also builds upon and emphasizes that:

“collectivities do not only engage in resistance. They also engage in collective forms of politics in their own right; whenever they speak to each other, whenever customs arise, whenever collective judgments are engaged with, whenever people have a chance to experience themselves as a collectivity, even – or maybe especially – one marked by disharmony and disagreement, some kind of alternative form of political power is being exercised and created as well. This too is anarchy.” (Martel 2022: 269–270)

For Martel (2022: 292), archists are a political “parasite, a vampire that feeds off the life it oversees,” which for him helps to explain the fragility of early states that Scott describes. Over millennia, however, States seemed to have lost much of their fragility.

### **On the State as Not Necessarily Centralized (Or So Separate from Society)**

“Unlike many anarchist thinkers, I do not believe that the state is everywhere and always the enemy of freedom.” (Scott 2012: xiii)

Some superficial readings of Scott might regard him as entirely opposed to the state, but he clearly was not. We could say that he was opposed to the capital-S State, with a reified oligarchy that maintains its separation from the masses. As one example, he emphasized that one “need only recall the scene of the federalized National Guard leading black children to school through a menacing crowd of angry whites in Little Rock, Arkansas, in 1957 to realize that the state can, *in some circumstances*, play an emancipatory role” (Scott 2012: xiv, emphasis in the original). This shares Pierre Bourdieu’s (1998) notion that capitalism in its neoliberal instantiation aims to tear down collective laws that have been established in such institutions.

Scott (2012: xiv) argued that such rights as protected by the state have only been a recent phenomenon in the history of states, that “only in the last two centuries or so has even the possibility arisen that states might occasionally enlarge the realm of human freedom.” Such developments only occurred, Scott (2012: xiv) maintained, when “disruption from below” formed a threat to the State itself.

As William Remley (2018: 2) has argued, anarchist thought does not aim for no government at all, but “it puts into question the type of government allowing for the peaceful coexistence of all human beings while safeguarding individual freedom.” So, Remley (2018: 11) is clear that anarchists have often criticized the state, as Scott does, but “nothing precludes a state from becoming legitimate.” In this way, Scott’s thinking in this regard has parallels with others.

Scott (2012: xv) does point to the ‘structural violence’ inherent in the presence of States, emphasizing that “huge disparities in wealth, property, and status make a mockery of freedom.”

“This, of course, [...] is the great dilemma for an anarchist. If relative equality is a necessary condition of mutuality and freedom, how can it be guaranteed except through the state? Facing this conundrum, I believe that both theoretically and practically, the abolition of the state is not an option. We are stuck, alas, with Leviathan, though not at all for the reasons Hobbes had supposed, and the challenge is to tame it.” (Scott 2012: xvi)

This shows that Scott is not just a scholar who applies anarchist thought, but that he is one who is also providing critique to better hone anarchist theory.

### Overarching Theme: Dialectical Relations

“So, apropos of the counter-narrative theme, it seems to me, I’m rather proud that I did not follow the forced march of my discipline, and that I decided for personal and intellectual reasons to do things that were heterodox and at the margin of my discipline, and at least as a topic and as methodology that is not respected, and I ended up making a pretty good career out of being a dissident, if you like. And if I’m proud of that—I think I’m proud that I did it, of course, but I’m also proud that I hope that encourages other people to take similar kinds of risks, and not to sort of knuckle under to the orthodoxy.” (Scott 2020: 111–112)

Here, I have considered the works of a thinker who set out in dissident directions within his discipline, resulting in broad influences on other social sciences. This is all the more surprising, given that he had spent some of his early career writing reports for the CIA about Burma and other countries (Scott 2020: 9). It is quite the irony. Perhaps those experiences, in a dialectical kind of way, spurred him to reconsider his “Seeing for the State” and to focus on non-State dynamics for the rest of his career.

It is clear that Scott demonstrates the utility of an anarchist perspective, or ‘squint,’ for historical and archaeological studies. In his work, he was always willing to challenge predominant perspectives, to take an outsider perspective. In the process, he expanded our understanding of the workings of power and set the foundation and example for other scholars to proceed. He offers ways for archaeologists to think through the agency and power of oppressed peoples as they express their aims through hidden transcripts, infrapolitics, and other weapons of the weak, including tactics of State evasion and prevention.

### References

- Arendt, Hannah. 1958. *The Human Condition*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Bass, Diana Butler. 2009. *A People’s History of Christianity: The Other Side of the Story*. New York: Harper Collins.
- Borck, Lewis and Matthew C. Sanger. 2017. An Introduction to Anarchism in Archaeology. *SAA Archaeological Record* 17: 9–16.

- Bourdieu, Pierre. 1998. Neo-Liberalism, the Utopia (Becoming a Reality) of Unlimited Exploitation. In Pierre Bourdieu, *Acts of Resistance: Against the Tyranny of the Market*, pp. 94–105. New York: The New Press.
- Chomsky, Noam. 2005. *Chomsky on Anarchism*. San Francisco: AK Press.
- Chomsky, Noam. 2013. *On Anarchism*. New York: The New Press.
- Clastres, Pierre. 1987. *Society Against the State: Essays in Political Anthropology*. New York: Zone Books.
- Dunbar-Ortiz, Roxanne. 2013. *An Indigenous Peoples’ History of the United States*. New York: Beacon Press.
- Fanon, Frantz. 2007 [1963]. *The Wretched of the Earth*. New York: Grove.
- Fanon, Frantz. 2008 [1952]. *Black Skin, White Masks*. London: Pluto Press.
- Friedman, Jonathan. 1998. Transnationalization, Socio-Political Disorder, and Ethnification as Expressions of Declining Global Hegemony. *International Political Science Review / Revue internationale de science politique* 19: 233–250.
- González-Ruibal, Alfredo. 2014. *An Archaeology of Resistance: Materiality and Time in an African Borderland*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Gordon, Colin. 1980. *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972–1977*, by Michel Foucault. New York: Pantheon.
- Graeber, David. 2004. *Fragments of an Anarchist Anthropology*. Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press.
- Graeber, David. 2006. Turning Modes of Production Inside Out: Or, Why Capitalism is a Transformation of Slavery. *Critique of Anthropology* 26(1): 61–85. DOI: 10.1177/0308275X06061484.
- Graeber, David. 2009. Anarchism, Academia, and the Avant-Garde. In Randall Amster, Abraham DeLeon, Luis Fernandez, Anthony J. Nocella II, and Deric Shannon, eds.: *Contemporary Anarchist Studies: An Introductory Anthology of Anarchy in the Academy*, pp. 119–128. New York: Routledge.
- Graeber, David. 2020. *Anarchy – In a Manner of Speaking: Conversations with Mehdi Belhaj Kacem, Nika Dubrovsky, and Assia Turquier-Zauberman*. Zürich, Paris, Berlin: Diaphanes.
- Graeber, David. 2023. *Pirate Enlightenment, or the Real Libertalia*. New York: Penguin.
- Harman, Chris. 2017. *A People’s History of the World: From the Stone Age to the New Millennium*. New York: Verso Books.
- Hauser, Mark W. and Douglas V. Armstrong. 2012. The Archaeology of Not Being Governed: A Counterpoint to a History of Settlement of Two Colonies in the Eastern Caribbean. *Journal of Social Archaeology* 12(3): 310–333. DOI: 10.1177/1469605312443940.
- Holmes, Todd (director/interviewer). 2023. In A Field All His Own: The Life and Career of James C. Scott. Berkeley, California: Teidi Productions and The Oral History Center at University of California. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r-IgJJW5Fkc&t=2s>. Last viewed 4.3.2025.
- Horsley, Richard A. 2004. *Hidden Transcripts and the Arts of Resistance: Applying the Work of James C. Scott to Jesus and Paul*. Leiden, Boston: Brill.
- Karlsson, Bengt G. 2013. Evading the State: Ethnicity in Northeast India through the Lens of James Scott. *Asian Ethnology* 72(2): 321–331.
- Klausen, Jimmy Casas and James Martel, eds. 2011. *How Not to Be Governed: Readings and Interpretations from a Critical Anarchist Left*. New York: Lexington Books/Rowman & Littlefield.
- Kuhn, Gabriel. 2009. *Life Under the Jolly Roger: Reflections on Golden Age Piracy*. Oakland, California: PM Press.

- Leach, Edmund R. 1954. *Political Systems of Highland Burma: A Study of Kachin Social Structure*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Leeson, Peter T. 2007. An-arrrgh-chy: The Law and Economics of Pirate Organization. *Journal of Political Economy* 115(6): 1049–1094. DOI: 10.1086/526403.
- Leeson, Peter T. 2014. Pirates, Prisoners, and Preliterates: Anarchic Context and the Private Enforcement of Law. *European Journal of Law and Economics* 37: 365–379. DOI: 10.1007/s10657-013-9424-x.
- Levy, Carl and Saul Newman. 2019. *The Anarchist Imagination: Anarchism Encounters the Humanities and the Social Sciences*. New York: Routledge.
- Lilley, P. J. and Jeff Shantz. 2015. *New Developments in Anarchist Studies*. Goleta, CA: Punctum Books.
- Maher, Geo. 2022. *Anticolonial Eruptions: Racial Hubris and the Cunning of Resistance*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Martel, James R. 2022. *Anarchist Prophets: Disappointing Vision and the Power of Collective Sight*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Remley, William L. 2018. *Jean-Paul Sartre’s Anarchist Philosophy*. New York: Bloomsbury.
- Rosen, Matt. 2019. *Speculative Annihilationism: The Intersection of Archaeology and Extinction*. Winchester, UK: Zero Books.
- Sahlins, Marshall. 1972. *Stone Age Economics*. London: Tavistock.
- Sayers, Daniel O. 2014. *A Desolate Place for a Defiant People: The Archaeology of Maroons, Indigenous Americans, and Enslaved Laborers in the Great Dismal Swamp*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida.
- Scott, James C. 1985. *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Scott, James C. 1990. *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Scott, James C. 1998. *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Scott, James C. 2009. *The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Scott, James C. 2012. *Two Cheers for Anarchism: Six Easy Pieces on Autonomy, Dignity, and Meaningful Work and Play*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Scott, James C. 2017. *Against the Grain: A Deep History of the Earliest States*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Scott, James C. 2020. *James C. Scott: Agrarian Studies and Over 50 Years of Pioneering Work in the Social Sciences. Interviews conducted by Todd Holmes in 2018*. Oral History Center, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.
- Shukaitis, Stephen, David Graeber, and Erika Biddle, eds. 2007. *Constituent Imagination: Militant Investigations, Collective Theorization*. Oakland, CA: AK Press.
- Thurston, T. L. and Manuel Fernández-Götz, eds. 2021a. *Power from Below in Premodern Societies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Thurston, T. L. and Manuel Fernández-Götz. 2021b. Power from Below in the Archaeological Record: Trends and Trajectories. In T. L. Thurston and Manuel Fernández-Götz, eds.: *Power from Below in Premodern Societies*, pp. 1–38. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Thurston, T. L. and Manuel Fernández-Götz. 2021c. Restoring Disorder: Thoughts on the Past and Future of a Politically and Socially Conscious Archaeology. In T. L. Thurston and Manuel Fernández-Götz, eds.: *Power from Below in Premodern Societies*, pp. 295–314. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Weber, Max. 2013 [1930]. *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. New York: Routledge.
- Wolf, Eric. 1982. *Europe and the People without History*. Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Zibechi, Raúl. 2010. *Dispersing Power: Social Movements as Anti-state Forces*. San Francisco: AK Press.
- Zinn, Howard. 1980. *A People’s History of the United States*. New York: Harper & Row.