
(I ENTERED THE LISTS)

I have told this story elsewhere. Differently.¹ This story has three sections that work toward reimagining the spatial politics of the black diaspora. These sections can be read separately, together, or in any order. I begin with method and the framing and organization of the story. The first section, “The List,” is an excerpt of a human geography encyclopedia entry on diaspora.² The entry has been revised, amended, and modified; it also contains many ellipses, pauses . . . indicating breaks, breaths, erasures that are not found in the original encyclopedia entry. The list, with any luck, will hint at how cataloguing a material, conceptual, and imaginative site—diaspora—does little to undo, and indeed reconstitutes, our present geographic order. “The List” serves as a guide, or an opening, to the second section, “Ungeographic,” which outlines the limits of mapping diaspora through prevailing geographic concepts. In that section I discuss how listing functions to affirm mapping—a cartographic practice that is laden with oppressive geographic techniques: in short, to map the diaspora by enfolding it into a human geography encyclopedic entry and listing its fundamental characteristics forecloses the radical spatial politics diaspora offers. In the final section of this story, “Tormented Chronologies,” I work with the writings of Édouard Glis-

The title of this story, “(I Entered the Lists),” is from Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* (New York: Grove, 1952), 114.

1. A very different version of this story was written as “I Entered the Lists . . . Diaspora Catalogues: The List, the Unbearable Territory, and Tormented Chronologies—Three Narratives and a *Weltanschauung*,” *xcp: Cross Cultural Poetics* 17 (2007): 7–29. Thank you, Alexander Weheliye, for sharing that this imperfect story of lists, now and then, matters.

2. Katherine McKittrick, “Diaspora,” in *International Encyclopedia of Human Geography*, ed. Rob Kitchin and Nigel Thrift (London: Elsevier, 2009), 156–161.

sant to consider how we might undo the colonizing desire that underpins place-making (ownership as authenticated by list and map and list and map as coveted objects). To do this, I think through Glissant's concept of "tormented chronology."

ONE METHOD

I entered the lists

—FRANTZ FANON

I begin with a somewhat crude remixing and mashing-up of the language that animates human geography and diaspora studies.³ I remix and mash up an encyclopedia entry I wrote in 2009. The scholarly remix and mash-up used in the section "The List" is one method that hopes to illuminate the limits of what is on the page; point to what we can do *with* the page itself; wander off the page. The method draws on Mark V. Campbell's study of the remix. In theorizing turntabling and DJing, he asks that we think about how an original text—a sample, a tune, a beat, a song—is reinvented to produce new modes of relationality. Campbell observes how black cultural production is intellectual work that consists of layering, interrupting, fusing, and grooving to narratives that might otherwise be disconnected. He also theorizes remix as a way to call into question racial authenticities by centering how members of the black diaspora lyrically, sonically, and rhythmically write race outside normative biocentric categories. Black music—scratch, boom—is a generative expression of diasporic unbelonging. "Mash-up" refers to the process of layering songs on top of one another. In mash-ups we see and hear and feel long bars, riffs, and scores that are sonically pressed together. These overlaid tracks offer a familiarity (we recognize something, we recognize a piece of that song we love) that is re-expressed in a slightly different context (through doubling or tripling musical scores on top of one another, through pressing that song we love into the bass line of the song we remember). The mash-up produces a new and different song while also pointing to for-

3. Mark V. Campbell, "Everything's Connected: A Relationality Remix, a Praxis," *C. L. R. James Journal* 20, no. 1 (Fall 2014): 97–114. See also Alexander Weheliye, *Phonographies: Grooves in Sonic Afro-Modernity* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005); Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993).

mer “umashed” or “unmixed” texts and sounds. *Donuts* by J Dilla is exemplary.⁴ The remix and the mash-up are useful, as method and model, because these creative activities reveal the lived and expressive poetics of the black diaspora (the sound, the grooves, the collaborative narratives, the reinvention of text and sway, as well as those moments of love and other sonic mnemonics). We might imagine the black diaspora, and expressions of black life, to be constituted through and by the remix mash-up and the mash-up remix. Thus, the crude remix and mash-up in part 1 might inform how the reader attends to parts 2 and 3 (in these sections I tease out how normative modes of belonging, which are determined by the geographies of market-time-nation-time-blood-and-land, are mashed up and undone by diasporic logics). This, ideally, interrupts and reimagines and creates new stories by

- inventing with found objects;
- breaking free of old associations;
- engendering new contexts from old histories;
- flipping the script;
- learning to speak in new forms;
- noticing how the sound of thought becomes legible;
- producing work at the edge of new meanings;
- taking an idea and folding it in on itself.⁵

Remixing and mashing-up reconfigure text on the page, within the story, and in extant of the story. Imperfectly, this story is an experiment in un-mapping the diaspora and recognizing black methodologies as reworking and re-creating what they think we are—and where we are, spatially—through the study, praxis, and reinvention of black life. The story believes that the black diaspora is not a settled place, but a way of being. Black geography is, perhaps, a method of living outside geographic norms.

4. J Dilla, *Donuts*, Stone's Throw, 2006. Thank you, Elliot Jun. See also Aram Sinnreich, *Mashed Up: Music, Technology, and the Rise of Configurable Culture* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2010).

5. The list is from Paul D. Miller aka DJ Spooky that Subliminal Kid, *Rhythm Science* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004), 25.

I entered the lists

—FRANTZ FANON

Glossary: for readers *from elsewhere*, who don't deal very well with unknown words or who want to understand everything. But, perhaps, to establish for ourselves, ourselves as well, the long list of words within us whose sense escapes or, taking this farther, to fix the syntax of this language we are babbling. The readers of *here* are the future.⁶

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Creolization: . . . the coming together of diverse cultural traits or languages . . . a new or different (rather than subordinate/dominant) cultural practice that encompasses the social and political relations of two or more ethnic groups . . . unlike hybridity (see below) . . . renewed socio-spatial consequences . . .

Displacement: the geographic process of being removed, exiled, or marginalized . . . displacement can occur due to racism, sexism, homophobia, or other acts of discrimination and violence that subordinate particular communities, even though these communities may not have the means to escape . . . discrimination . . .

Homeland: a territory to which one belongs, was born in, or is tied to ancestrally . . . also understood as a "country of origin," . . . in the past or the present . . .

Migration, Migratory Subjects: any movement of humans from one location to another . . . the experiential tenets of migration that . . . forced expulsions, colonial displacements, or economically induced movements . . .

Nation: . . . demarcates the geographic location of a particular ethnic group . . . a government manages and protects . . .

6. Édouard Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*, trans. Betsy Wing (1990; rpt., Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997), xxi.

... “diaspora” is inherently geographical ... exile, displacement, and resettlement ... migratory processes and experiences as well as imagined communities ... anti-Semitism, war, transatlantic slavery, colonial violence, homophobia, or poverty ... diaspora challenges and contributes to the ways in which modernity, nation, identity, and place are understood and experienced ...

Diaspora: ... the scattering of people across spaces, borders, and nations ... ethnic and racial traumas as well as geographic losses have underwritten the scattering of people ... particular groupings of people have been violently forced to leave their homeland because they are racially, ethnically, and/or religiously different from those in power ... forced expulsion might be coupled with ethnic cleansing ... Jewish exiles, for example, have been regarded as forced scatterings instigated by anti-Semitism, genocide, and war ... in addition to physical violence that targets and expels a particular ethnic group ... lack of a stable nation-space and geopolitical independence, and transnational dispersals ... the desire to establish and secure a location that can replace former geographic losses ... World War II, Shoah ... Israel in 1948 ... neighboring states ... attendant and diasporic Middle Eastern communities ... new spaces of settlement in North America, Africa, Australia, South America, and Asia ... memorials have been constructed in various sites internationally ... African peoples ... violently exiled ... expulsion and bondage ... sold and transplanted into the Americas and Europe, and geographically disconnected from their former African homelands ... sociocultural ruptures ... expunged ... entangled with centuries of violence wherein the question of homeland and geographic loss shapes how belonging and nationhood are experienced within the new region of relocation ... human removal, death, and displacement ... Palestine.

settling after such exile carries with it ... history of removal, death and displacement ... relocation in the Americas is, at times, understood through their diasporic relationship to the Middle Passage, the continent of Africa and/or transatlantic slavery ... debates over this ... some memories too unbearable to return to, some generations rethinking the past ... the Armenian community ... displacement and exile ... centuries of ethnic and religious subordination ...

massacres of 1915–1916 . . . mass genocide and displacement . . . discrimination, war, poverty, colonialism, ethnic cleansing and violence have removed and moved Irish, Asian, South Asian, Caribbean, Eastern European, and Middle Eastern groups from their countries of birth . . . war, ethnic cleansing, colonialism, and various genocides

paved the way for . . . gay, lesbian, transgendered, and bisexual communities . . . queer diasporas . . . spaces of resettlement . . . homophobia and heterosexual gender conventions . . .

. . . returns . . . the process of returning, whether imaginary, real, filmic, fictional . . . what returns are possible . . . through travel, remembrance, imagination, remittances, yearnings, stories, or songs? are past cultural practices retained on relocation, and do these cultural practices carry in them the history of violence, dispersal, and memories of home? . . . Afrocentrism, Negritude, and Pan-Africanism produce links . . . funds are sent “home” to assist family and friends or to secure future departures . . . films that take up departures or violence, novels that remember slavery, poetry that explores forced human migrations, internet sites that map Holocaust memorials and record the lives of survivors, songs that sample the music of Bob Marley and are then played on local radio stations, globally, live performances of Ghidra in the UK or Canada . . . diasporic returns . . . real, imaginary, political, economic, and creative . . . if diaspora fundamentally centers on the movement of people, are not all traveling cultures diasporic . . . if departure is voluntary, or individual rather than collective, is this diasporic process . . . do all diasporic subjects return? . . . all diasporas are historically contingent on the specificities of time and space . . .

- Exile of a substantial population based on ethnicity, race, religion, or difference that is often coupled with violence and/or genocide
- Loss of or displacement from homeland
- The mutual construction of identity and place as they are experienced by migratory diasporic communities

RETURNS

“routes and roots” . . . diasporic cultures are not traveling and migrating with ease . . . a particular event or events—poverty, violence,

war—initiated flight and this movement is difficult (psychically, physiologically) because it is wrapped up in loss . . . exiled communities formulate their collective identities not as victims but, rather, as subjects who negotiate, transgress, and fracture the boundaries of and between nation, territory, and culture . . .

territorialization (the jurisdiction and regulation of land and its citizens by a particular government) . . .

alternative understandings of modernity, nation, identity, and place . . . do not assume a clear or stable “beginning” and “end” . . . site and cite human violence, but do not explicitly locate a region of liberation or freedom at the end of diasporic travels . . . are concerned with nation, are critical of borders, nationalism, and the limits of nation-state citizenship . . . imagine homelands and returns, but do not assume that “home” is either returnable or innocent . . .

modernity . . . transnational flows beginning in the fifteenth century (colonial expansion, exploration, transatlantic slavery, indenture) . . . crystallized in the seventeenth century during . . . multiscalar social hierarchies began to shape economic, political, cultural, and social systems inside and outside imperial nations . . . the shift away from feudal political systems, the development of the modern nation-state, and new international economic profits . . . systems of knowledge became increasingly based on categorization in the name of rationality, progress, and democratic liberalism . . . a corporeal hierarchy based on sexuality, race, ethnicity, phenotype, and gender wherein the white man symbolically came to represent and embody democracy and rationality . . .

close studies of plants, insects, animals, women, the poor, the insane, and positivist mappings of European, indigenous, and colonial physical and human geographies . . . “discover” and ultimately transform “primitive” or “nonrational” cultures or “enlightened” justifications for racial-sexual subordination . . . trains, gas chambers, work camps, plantations, ghettos, ethnic enclaves, reservations . . .⁷

7. “The homeless, the jobless, the semi-jobless, the criminalized drug offending prison population, the damnés, the global archipelago, constituted by the Third- and Fourth-World peoples of the so called ‘underdeveloped’ areas of the world.” Sylvia Wynter, “Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom: Towards the Human, After Man, Its Overrepresentation—an Argument,” *CR: The New Centennial Review* 3, no. 3 (Fall 2003): 261.

... the disappearance of indigenous communities ... bondage, genocide, violence, and colonialism are ...

progress, enlightened reason, democracy ... negotiate and enlightened modernity if, in its various implementations, it negates their world-view and figures, even prefigures, them as irrational, uncivilized, and worthy of expulsion and bondage? ... is often equated with democratic citizenship, technological progress, and new ways of organizing the world ... validated the expulsion of particular groups from their country of origin ... nation is central to theorizing diasporas ... forced dispersal carries with it the idea of "displacement from" somewhere and "displacement to" somewhere ... how diasporic communities understand themselves in relation to the nation ... racial identities within a prescribed country or region (Vietnamese only live in Vietnam ...)

... the nation, as a political bounded entity that safely houses and supports its citizens, is constantly being breached ... some citizens are not, in fact, welcome or at ease within the boundaries of their country of birth ... as a refugee, economic migrant, or exiled subject ... fraught with ambivalence ... acts of discrimination ...

... not outside of modernity ... the experiences of removal, travel, and return are indicative of how roots and routes (indeed diaspora spaces) intersect with, and therefore are indicative of, modern geographies ... these processes of displacement, outer-national ties, and settlement demonstrate the workings of modernity and the modern nation not as bounded or unchanging but as a territory inflected with difference ... this formulation attempts to recuperate or restore a broken past ... anticolonial struggles ... how masses of people might, together, relate to this history vis-à-vis their common identities and contemporaneous political struggles against oppression ... identities were and are soldered as a counter-narrative to Eurocentric modernity and the nation-state ... absolutely other or wholly different from the bourgeois hegemonic class ... diaspora identities change from moment to moment and place to place ... original geographic loss ... can only be understood as fluid and changing: there is no satisfactory relationship with historic regions of displacement ...

... as they continue to experience discrimination within the nation of re-location (racial profiling, segregations, incarcerations, poverty) ... neither outside modernity or the nation ... combine and creolize multiple points of identification ... a process of entanglement ...

... diaspora as a fundamentally geographic process, as it is underwritten by exiles, displacements, and regional specificities ... use the term “diaspora” as a descriptor for movement ... not exploring questions of identity, modernity, violent exile, collective histories, and ambivalent nation-making ... diaspora is simply synonymous with migration and immigration ... those geographers interested in ... trauma, displacement, and identity shape and are shaping the production of space ... advance a unique conceptualization of what is often called diaspora spaces ... diaspora and diaspora studies is focused on the highly metaphoric ... diaspora is primarily theorized through the production of identity, rather than a materiality of displacement ... many geographers have noted that questions of hybridity, imagined communities, and returns are ... collective histories lack geographic specificity and political economy ... frustrated with the unrepresentability of the psychic themes in diaspora studies ... three-dimensionality and geographic specificity—are coupled with emotional and psychic processes ... the materiality of modernity ...

positivist mappings ... difficult spatial conditions through which diasporic exile is a part ... this critique of the unrepresentability of diaspora experiences is hasty ... questions of memory, psychic attachment, past exiles, and collective histories always carry in them the materiality of displacement ... the language of diaspora, one must always imagine the three-dimensionality of expulsion, in order to fully grasp that diaspora is a human phenomenon ...

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KEYWORDS: colonialism, diaspora, displacement, exile, holocaust (Shoah), home, homeland, identity, migration, modernity, nation, transatlantic slavery

UNGEOGRAPHIC

I entered the lists

—FRANTZ FANON

In 2007 or 2008 I was invited to write a “diaspora” entry for the *International Encyclopedia of Human Geography*. I envisioned that this task would be relatively straightforward: I had planned to provide a genealogy of sorts, tracing displacements experienced by Jewish, African, Armenian communities, outlining exiles instigated by war, violence, and then taking up contemporary debates on queer diasporas and migration and globalization. I had planned to outline, furthermore, some of the central questions selected diaspora theorists raised: how expulsion is attached to memory and modernity; how traveling cultures are not always diasporic; how nostalgia and/or the nation underwrite many diasporas. While writing up these themes, ideas, and histories, I was asked to pay close attention to the “aims and scope” provided by the *International Encyclopedia of*

Human Geography editors: my entry must be detailed, authoritative, and comprehensive; my entry must be inclusive and global in scope; my entry must be written in English, four thousand words long, and an invaluable source of information on diaspora. My entry must be multidisciplinary yet focused on the key debates in human geography. I was also asked to provide a list of defined key terms and a limited bibliography that would serve as a next step for the interested reader. This bibliography and my dictionary entry, ideally, would *not* rely on a singular “seminal work” (see APA References above); an ideal entry would, then, draw on my broad knowledge of the available literature on the subject without paraphrasing any central theorists of diaspora.

Since about the mid-1990s, and in human geography alone, there has been an expanding and expansive production of dictionaries, encyclopedias, and reference primers written in English.⁸ Excluding world and regional atlases and popular travel guides like the *Lonely Planet* series, there are dictionaries on feminist geographies, historical geographies, modern geographies, and premodern geographies. There are the “classic” human geography dictionaries produced by publishers such as Oxford, Penguin, and Blackwell; there are interdisciplinary texts, like the *Encyclopaedia of Housing*.⁹ Sage Publications has produced primers on human geography, geographic methods, key geographic thinkers, and geographic

8. Outside the discipline of human geography, primers, lists, and encyclopedias abound—too many to compile here, subjects range from bird guides, plant guides, car guides, and other object, animal, people guides, to the texts like Michael Gray’s *Bob Dylan Encyclopedia* (New York: Continuum, 2006), which is over seven hundred pages long. The interested list-reader might also look to the Routledge “Key Guides,” which includes texts such as Diané Collinson, Kathryn Plant, and Robert Wilkinson, *Fifty Eastern Thinkers* (London: Routledge, 2001); Yvone Tasker, *Fifty Contemporary Filmmakers* (London: Routledge, 2002); Diané Collinson, *Fifty Major Philosophers* (London: Routledge, 1988); G. R. Evans, *Fifty Key Medieval Thinkers* (London: Routledge, 2006); Martin Griffiths, *Fifty Key Thinkers in International Relations* (London: Routledge, 1999); John Lechte, *Fifty Key Contemporary Thinkers: From Structuralism to Post-modernity* (London: Routledge, 1994); Martha Bremser and Lorna Sanders, *Fifty Contemporary Choreographers* (New York: Routledge, 2011). These primers, lists, might be thought about alongside the too-brief discussion of syllabi in the story “Footnotes (Books and Papers Scattered about the Floor).”

9. For example, Alisdair Rogers, Noel Castree, and Rob Kitchin, *A Dictionary of Human Geography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); Derek Gregory, Ron Johnston, Geraldine Pratt, Michael J. Watts, and Sarah Whatmore, eds., *The Dictionary of Human Geography*, 5th ed. (Oxford: Wiley, 2009). Yes, there is *A Dictionary of Geography* and *The Dictionary of Geography* . . . Andrew T. Carswell, *The Encyclopedia of Housing* (London: Sage, 2012); W. G. Moore, *The Penguin Dictionary of Geography* (New York: Penguin, 1978).

concepts.¹⁰ These sources of geographic knowledge do not pay close attention to geographies of race and racism or what we might call alternative geographies: the Middle Passage, W. E. B. Du Bois's urban studies, Toni Morrison's site of memory are not to be found. Sometimes key thinkers of race are included (Gayatri Spivak, bell hooks, Edward Said). Of course, opening up the possibility of nonwhite geographic knowledge is not the point of the texts—they are designed to outline and therefore fashion a particular geographic story.

The production of knowledge within the discipline of geography is closely related to the discipline's history of positivism and exclusion. While many human geographers, anxiously and not, name legacies of whiteness, colonialism, and heterosexism that inhabit their areas of study, the production of the discipline—as *disciplined*—thrives. When the production of specialized handbooks, lists, and encyclopedias are incorporated into academic and nonacademic spheres, they follow similar guidelines to the *International Encyclopedia of Human Geography*. This emphasizes the ways in which the production of knowledge is intimately bound to the production of space. Indeed, the work of cataloguing and naming diaspora is a mapping exercise; it is a renewed enlightenment exercise of classifying, finding, discovering, and documenting. With this in mind, there are written and unwritten codes within the discipline of human geography that understand knowledge to be fundamentally spatial; the spatialization of ideas—material, metaphoric—can easily replicate colonial efforts.¹¹ That is, the knowledge that is documented and collected and listed is tied to a legacy of colonialism, extraction, and cataloguing.

Given our present and prevailing geographic system—wherein we are rewarded for owning things and places and ideas—spatializing the black diaspora (and by extension the subdiscipline of black geographies) in normative ways risks partaking in a politics of territorialization. More specifically, the exercise of authenticating an authoritative and compre-

10. See Phil Hubbard, Rob Kitchin, and Gill Valentine, eds., *Key Thinkers on Space and Place* (London: Sage, 2004); Stuart Aitken and Gill Valentine, eds., *Approaches to Human Geography* (London: Sage, 2006); Nicholas Clifford and Gill Valentine, eds., *Key Methods in Geography* (London: Sage, 2003); Sarah Holloway, Stephen Rice, and Gill Valentine, eds., *Key Concepts in Geography* (London: Sage, 2003). In fact, the “reference” series from Sage is unending. See <http://sk.sagepub.com/reference>.

11. Neil Smith and Cindi Katz, “Grounding Metaphor: Towards a Spatialized Politics,” in *Place and the Politics of Identity*, ed. Michael Keith and Steve Pile (New York: Routledge, 1993), 67–83.

hensive understanding of diaspora enacts the jurisdiction and regulation of diaspora-lands and its diaspora-citizens even though diaspora, ideally, works to undo this jurisdiction and regulation. All of the entries in the *International Encyclopedia of Human Geography*—from whiteness and postcolonialism to Global Information Systems and the entry on David Harvey—are intended to literally map out, and therefore stake a claim to, some kind of space. Diaspora, then, is to be mapped and disciplined and institutionalized, unfolding as a “conceptualization of geography that is reassuringly secure and familiar.”¹² The rigor of cataloguing, classifying, and mapping knowledge on the terms outlined by the *International Encyclopedia of Human Geography* corresponds with familiar (normative, prevailing) geographic patterns that frame our spatial world as it already is (transparent, colonizing, knowable). My entry was and is a project of disavowal. That is, our present geographic system demands an authoritative diasporic map, with classificatory regions easily corresponding with their inhabitants, thus obscuring the potential geographic trouble diaspora—and blackness—can actually do.

What are the politics of mapping the black diaspora, and how is this mapping done? In 2015 a map titled “The Atlantic Slave Trade in Two Minutes” circulated online. The viewer is invited to watch dots on an animated map moving quickly between different sites on the continent of Africa toward the Americas and parts of Europe. Numbers are provided: 20,000+ voyages are tracked, slave-trading countries are counted, the enslaved are enumerated (315 years; 20,528 voyages; millions of lives).¹³ The map is interactive, and “if you pause the map and click on a dot, you’ll learn about the ship’s flag—was it British? Portuguese? French?—its origin point, its destination, and its history in the slave trade.”¹⁴ I am not sure why we need to observe the Atlantic slave trade in two minutes. I do not find it easy to interact with this map. Watch it. Watch it disappear black life. The supplemental materials (there is a piece on Olaudah Equiano, there are links to studies on Equiano, there are links to other slave histories)

12. Philip Crang, Claire Dwyer, and Peter Jackson, “Transnationalism and the Spaces of Commodity Culture,” *Progress in Human Geography* 27, no. 4 (2003): 446.

13. Andrew Kahn and Jamelle Bouie, “The Atlantic Slave Trade in Two Minutes,” *Slate*, June 25, 2015, http://www.slate.com/articles/life/the_history_of_american_slavery/2015/06/animated_interactive_of_the_history_of_the_atlantic_slave_trade.html. See also http://www.slate.com/articles/life/the_history_of_american_slavery.html, accessed April 23, 2018.

14. Kahn and Bouie, “The Atlantic Slave Trade in Two Minutes.”

do not undo the feeling of dread that accompanies witnessing centuries of racial violence in two minutes. You watch and you know the timing—so fast, so dehumanizing—is awful and unspeakable.¹⁵

The interactive map is, in theory, diasporic (it shows that transatlantic slavery, beginning in the fifteenth century, forcefully moved black peoples—in slave ships represented as dots—from the continent of Africa to a range of non-African geographies). It shows dispersal, displacement, exile. It shows 315 years, 20,528 voyages, millions of lives, in two minutes. It is nauseating. This is one way to map the black diaspora. But there are other ways, too: mapping the creative works of authors, musicians, and poets, analyzing postslave travels or the work of scholars like NourbeSe Philip or Jennifer Morgan or Gayl Jones or . . . The two-minute map is not enough. The map needs . . .¹⁶

While I was writing the encyclopedia entry, I was preoccupied with two other geographic concerns: the expulsion of black and poor peoples from New Orleans, and a paper by Carole Boyce Davies and Babacar M'Bow titled "Towards African Diaspora Citizenship: Politicizing an Existing Global Geography."¹⁷ The black diaspora—the process of dis-

15. Pair with the interactive map of lynchings in the United States: *The Map of White Supremacy Mob Violence*. This reflects the difficult research conducted by Monroe Nathan Work. I am uncertain how to interact. I look. Ida B. Wells. She was the first. I stop.

Home: the horror of these gruesome killings was surging.

Instructions: zoom in using slider; click on the points that appear; drag the timeline that appears.

This is a learning tool. I hate the map.

Monroe Work Today, accessed December 21, 2018, <http://www.monroeworktoday.org/index.html?u=2>.

16. We need Treva C. Ellison and Romi (Ron) Morrison, "Decoding Possibilities: An Alluvial Map of Black Feminist Praxis," paper presented at *Black Geographies: A Symposium*, University of California, Berkeley, October 12, 2017.

17. Karen Bakker, "Katrina: The Public Transcript of Disaster," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 23, no. 6 (2005): 795–801; Neil Smith, "There's No Such Thing as a Natural Disaster," *Understanding Katrina: Perspectives from the Social Sciences*, June 11, 2006, <https://items.ssrc.org/understanding-katrina/theres-no-such-thing-as-a-natural-disaster/>; Bruce Braun and James McCarthy, "Hurricane Katrina and Abandoned Being," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 23, no. 6 (December 2005): 802–809; Carole Boyce Davies and Babacar M'Bow, "Towards an African Diaspora Citizenship: Politicizing an Existing Global Geography," in *Black Geographies and the Politics of Place*, ed. Katherine McKittrick and Clyde Woods (Toronto: Between the Lines Press, 2007), 14–45; Katherine McKittrick and Clyde Woods, "No One Knows the Mysteries at the Bottom of the Ocean," in *Black Geographies and the Politics of Place*, ed. Katherine McKittrick and Clyde Woods (Toronto: Between the Lines Press, 2007), 1–13.

placement and unbelonging—is a human phenomenon that has highlighted, called into question, and refused the positivist contours of human geography and thus worked toward creating alternative spaces for political struggle. It is unlisted. It offers a perspective that is not always understood by the geographic language of insides and outsides, margins and centers, borders and nations. Black diaspora and diasporic communities engender poetic spaces that redraw and remap the landscape. Part of this redrawing and remapping offers a black sense of place: the sustained production of multiple and overlapping (past and present) liberation praxes that are not legible on cartographic maps but, instead, notice black ways of being. Diaspora geography is not the act of making maps; rather, it is the act of sharing ideas about where liberation is and might be. In this way, diaspora (black geography) is not a legible geography or geographic process, per se, but the practice of recognizing black life and livingness. Here colonial-imperial-capitalist geographic processes—violent removal from one’s homeland, Middle Passage terror, slave labor—unfold into a geographic praxis that is outside the colonial-imperial-capitalist logics (ungeographic).

Black diaspora narrates livingness underneath and across existing maps, while recognizing how these maps are constituting diaspora itself; the material and imaginative geographies of the black diaspora are boundary-less (beyond a boundary), global, unfinished, dispersed, migratory, underwater, routed-rooted, underground, and inflected by the local.¹⁸ Rather than participating in reterritorialization, engaging the black diaspora and its attendant communities involves recognizing, without officially demarcating, spaces that are not normally celebrated—or even noticed—in our present geographic order. These texts, experiences, resistances, places, and narratives are wide-ranging, sometimes (not always) legible in their materiality and their opaque black epistemological work—the Middle Passage, the plantation, the slave ship, the prison, the regions of the “underdeveloped” and “global South,” the underground, the elsewhere, the nowhere, the out there, the invisible. Depending on our vantage point, black diaspora spaces, and what we do within them, are right in front of us while also hidden from view. Black diaspora spaces are nowhere and everywhere, practical and rebellious.

18. C. L. R. James, *Beyond a Boundary* (1963; rpt., Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993).

I am in search of an expansive methodology . . .¹⁹

The one hundred years and 133 troubling cases of Black criminals covered in these pages . . .²⁰

You better go back in and ask her to draw you a map . . .²¹

TORMENTED CHRONOLOGIES

I entered the lists

—FRANTZ FANON

The violent dislocation that accompanied the slave trade, Édouard Glissant notes, reconfigures black diasporic time. Black consciousness, too, is dislocated and reconfigured. The question of History—linear, totalitarian, clear—cannot account for black time.²² Glissant writes that History (colonial) narratively erases black history (nonhistory), but he also thinks through how the violent dislocation produced a sense of time that “came together in the context of shock, contraction, painful negation, and explosive forces.”²³ He is keenly aware of, but not preoccupied by, discursive erasure because the Middle Passage and forced plantation labor (time characterized by ruptures) produced totally different temporal conditions for Caribbean populations. This is a meaningful analytical move, one that recognizes that erasure from history is oppressive yet, at the same time, draws attention to how the material conditions of displacement—the punishing expulsion of black peoples—lead to “a painful notion of time and its full projection into the future.”²⁴ This painful notion of time, expulsion, and loss can be theorized in tandem with diaspora space (un-geographic), thus totally calling into question the Eurocentric inventories and geometrics that dominate how we know where and who we are.

19. Jennifer L. Morgan, *Laboring Women: Reproduction and Gender in New World Slavery* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 201.

20. Barrington Walker, *Race on Trial: Black Defendants in Ontario's Criminal Courts, 1858–1958* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 23.

21. Alice Walker, “Looking for Zora,” in *In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens: Womanist Prose* (New York: Harcourt and Brace and Company, 1983), 103.

22. Édouard Glissant, *Caribbean Discourse: Selected Essays*, trans. J. Michael Dash (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia), 61–65.

23. Glissant, *Caribbean Discourse*, 62.

24. Glissant, *Caribbean Discourse*, 64.

Glissant, extending a thread from Edward Kamau Brathwaite, theorizes this—(ungeographic)—as subterranean convergence: “all those Africans weighed down with the ball and chain and thrown overboard whenever a slave ship was pursued by enemy vessels and felt too weak to put up a fight. *They sowed in the depths the seeds of an invisible presence . . . floating free, not fixed in one position in some primordial spot, but extending in all directions in our world through its network of branches.*”²⁵

Glissant asks that we reconstitute the “tormented chronology” of the History described above (imposed erasure, broken memory, rupture) by holding on to multiple and converging versions of (ungeographic) time and space.²⁶ He reimagines the work of history by creatively restructuring time and space. This “new methodology” repoliticizes lists and list-making by offering different modes of periodization and temporalities and identifications.

If therefore one abandons the absurd catalogue of official history . . . and one tries to see what really happened . . .²⁷

. . . the directions he will provide will have nothing to do with the precise and objective nature of the location that is at stake . . . you will also find that he will not attempt to impose on you any set notion of time. He will offer a version *parallel* to your own.²⁸

We, thereby, live, we have the good fortune of living, this shared process of cultural mutation, this convergence frees us from uniformity.²⁹

Our tormented chronologies (lists, registers, entries, catalogues, cartographies that function to erase and objectify) must therefore be understood through “*all the perspectives of the human sciences.*”³⁰ And here we should not be distracted by Glissant’s use of “sciences” and fear a return to another objective, measurable listing of things and places, for his conception of science here is importantly human, and includes, among other intellectual spaces and processes, literatures, poetics, nonhistories, the everyday world, latent memories, explosive emotions, nature, cultural

25. Glissant, *Caribbean Discourse*, 66–67 (emphasis in the original).

26. Glissant, *Caribbean Discourse*, 65.

27. Glissant, *Caribbean Discourse*, 88–89.

28. Glissant, *Caribbean Discourse*, 93 (emphasis in the original).

29. Glissant, *Caribbean Discourse*, 67.

30. Glissant, *Caribbean Discourse*, 65 (emphasis added).

production, creativity, and beyond. The tormented chronology, read with and alongside black humanity (black ungeographic time space), turns the lists upside down, tears them up, adds and discards, not with the ongoing fear of disavowal but, rather, through the pain and pleasure of what is made possible, and new, as our listings converge, confront one another, and overlap. While lists function to catalogue and affirm geopolitical boundaries (territories of Man and his human others), Glissant reads them as changeable and always changing precisely because they emerge from the material conditions of displacement that engender submarine roots and the alterability of time and space.

.....

History has its dimension of the unexplorable, at the edge of which we wander, our eyes wide open.³¹

. . . they burned the pages/they signed the papers/she signed the paper/I better get some sleep . . . it is possible to reduce our chronology to a basic skeleton of “facts,” in any combination . . . Saturday July 19, 2025: Time drags! . . . my name is . . . one eleven . . . five haunted years.³²

31. Glissant, *Caribbean Discourse*, 66.

32. Gayl Jones. Nina Simone. Édouard Glissant. Toni Morrison. Octavia Butler. J Dilla.