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Subversive Cartography: Teaching Mary Prince and Saidiya Hartman

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Subversive Cartography: Teaching Mary Prince and Saidiya Hartman

Abstract
This chapter utilizes Hartman's methodology of retrieval to create a map1 in StoryMap JS2 (“the map” or “this map”) that analyzes multiple geographic spaces in The History of Mary Prince: A West Indian Slave Narrative and Saidiya Hartman's Lose Your Mother: A Journey Along the Atlantic Slave Route. The map is an archive or a witness to some of the geographical spaces Mary Prince lived (and was sold) as an enslaved woman seeking freedom and the places in which Saidiya Hartman has conducted research or visited in Ghana as a “free” woman. Layering the past over present creates a subversive cartography, one that subverts and unsettles the monolithic geographical narrative of the transatlantic slave trade. Twenty-two locations are mapped that merge past, present, and future as one narrative and not a compartmentalized narrative contained by borders or timelines because “At stake is not recognizing antiblackness as a total climate” (Sharpe 21). This map will elicit questions of responsibility on how to unsettle colonial narratives about Black and African American women. This map interrogates geographical spaces of the formerly enslaved as already and always in existence beyond hegemonic structures that contribute to a capitalist economy.

Keywords
Cartography, digital humanities, geography, mapping, spatial rhetoric, teaching subversive cartographies, Mary Prince, Saidiya Hartman

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Cover Page Footnote
The author wishes to express deepest gratitude to Dr. Kerry Sinanan for her enthusiasm and constructive criticism to improve this essay. Gracias, Profe!
In short, what becomes clear is that the past is neither remote nor distant and that Africa is seen, if at all, through the backward glance or hindsight. For these reasons, it is crucial to consider the matter of grief as it bears on the political imagination of the diaspora, the interrogation of U.S. national identity, and the crafting of historical counternarratives. Saidiya Hartman, *The Time of Slavery*

...the earth is also skin...
Katherine McKittrick, *Demonic Grounds: Black Women and The Cartographies of Struggle*

In the wake, the past that is not past reappears, always, to rupture the present. Christina Sharpe, *In the Wake: On Blackness and Being*

I am a Chicana from the southside of San Antonio, Texas, and my pedagogical approach is from this positionality. It is important to note that this article seeks to participate in the work many Black women are already doing: centering Black feminist perspectives and Black lives in literary studies and digital humanities. My contribution is to open a dialogue between Black Studies’ and Latino/a/x/es’ pedagogical approaches to *The History of Mary Prince: A West Indian Slave Narrative* as we continue to unsettle colonial geographies and confront anti-Blackness in literature and rhetoric. History is in a perpetual state of being (re)written. In this context, we must question our collective and intersectional responsibility to the enslaved, formerly enslaved, and descendants of the enslaved. As Saidiya Hartman warns, “How best to remember the dead and represent the past is an issue fraught with difficulty, if not outright contention” (Hartman 758). History often fails to acknowledge the multiple cartographic narratives of the enslaved. While the Middle Passage is a well-known geography within historiography, many other spatial-political movements of the enslaved exist. The pedagogy described here develops a map¹ to analyze multiple geographic spaces in *The History of Mary Prince: A West Indian Slave Narrative* and in Hartman’s own *Lose Your Mother: A Journey Along the Atlantic Slave Route*; using StoryMapJS² (“the map” or “this map”). StoryMapsJS is a free online tool that uses GPS mapping to pinpoint locations that can be annotated with photos, data, videos, and more. I follow Hartman’s example to recover the presence of Black women in the institutional archive. These texts together serve as an intertextual archive and allow us to witness some of the geographical spaces
in which Mary Prince lived and the places to which Hartman has traveled. The layering of the past over the present creates a subversive cartography that undisciplines and unsettles the predominant geographical narrative of the British Caribbean. By enacting subversive cartography, Frances Aparicio’s example of shifting cultural signifiers in language by “rewriting and transforming ‘American’ culture with sub-verse signifiers” (“On Sub-verse Signifiers” 796) shows how Prince and Hartman’s movements subvert dominant narratives of space and their relationship to race and gender. As Katherine McKittrick argues, “Geographies of domination, from transatlantic slavery and beyond, hold in them the marking and contestation of old and new social hierarchies” (x1x). Subversive cartography becomes a way to undo these persistent geographies of domination. While Aparicio calls attention to shifts in language, scholars like Yomaira Figueroa-Vásquez insist on radical remappings when articulating the decolonial diaspora.

The map narrates the geographic space of both Prince and Hartman across temporalities to show Black women’s lives interweaving in what Figueroa-Vásquez calls “radical Afro-diasporic imaginaries that subvert coloniality and usher in new ways of knowing and being, and interrogate and excavate location and dislocation” (“Decolonizing Diasporas” 25). The map, “Subversive Cartography: Mary Prince and Saidiya Hartman,” is a tool for instructors to use in their classrooms. It is one avenue to undiscipline colonial formations within the academy with instructors. As Yomaira Figueroa-Vásquez notes, the academy retains within it “the preoccupation with dictatorship, occupation, and coloniality” and so she notes “the need to mark it, name it, document its actions, subvert it, and topple it [as] pressing political concerns within Afro-Atlantic literature” (Figueroa-Vásquez 34). This commitment, core to African American and Afro-Latinx methodologies, is fundamental to the thinking leading to Prince’s story’s digital mapping. The main thrust of this essay is to identify theoretical and critical synergies between Prince and Hartman, and to use the digital map as an exercise in archival memory-making. The digital map creates a narrative where Hartman and Mary Prince are present simultaneously in these specific spaces, whether they have been present in one another’s temporality and geography or not. One vital outcome of this article is emphasizing the need for multidisciplinary and cross-Ethnic Studies work.

As Madelaine Cahuas says:

There would be no Latinx geographies without Black geographies. What I mean by this is that Latinx and Black geographies are inextricably linked, because Blackness and Latinidad are not mutually exclusive and because Black thought, experiences, history and politics, along with the legacy of
transatlantic slavery, profoundly shape contemporary social and spatial arrangements in las Americas.

Layering Hartman’s archival work in Lose Your Mother, an autobiographical account of Hartman’s journey from the US to Ghana and the Door of No Return, with Prince’s narrative, creates a spatiotemporal artifact that considers how narratives of slavery remain present within liminal spaces. Hartman sets out to “engage the past… because Black lives are still imperiled and devalued by a racial and political arithmetic that were entrenched centuries ago” (16-17).ii 

In 1828, Prince crossed from Antigua to London with her enslavers, the Woods, as their property, and we never know if she could return to her family in the Caribbean. Reading her journey with Hartman’s journey produces a powerful intertextual memory of Black space and time. Students must be guided not to romanticize the journeys of two Black women, one by bill of sale and one by choice. Mary Prince’s autobiography is integral to creating one of many voices for enslaved African women in England and the West Indies. Similarly, Saidiya Hartman’s work is integral in recovering archives and resisting the archival erasure of enslaved peoples like Mary Prince. The map serves, then, as an artifact of remembrance because “remembrance is entangled with reclaiming the past, propitiating ancestors, and recovering the origins of the descendants of this dispersal” (Hartman 758). The map interrogates these sites where Prince and Hartman physically stood, keeps them in conversation, and makes their narratives more immediate. When reading Prince and Hartman together, the map can be used in classrooms as a ready-made tool for discussing these subversions and acts of memory.

Teaching with the digital map, “Subversive Cartographies: Mary Prince and Saidiya Hartman”

Instructors can access the map here: https://bit.ly/PrinceHartmanMap. One can navigate 21 places with various embedded photographs, maps, and videos as a slideshow. Each highlighted place contains a description of the current meaning of the place and the corresponding citation to that location in either Prince’s or Hartman’s narratives. The digital map layers 11 locations for Mary Prince and 10 for Saidiya Hartman, respectively. None of the locations appear in one another’s text:

1. Brackish Pond, Bermuda (Prince)

2. Hamble Town-Hamilton, Bermuda (Prince)
3. Spanish Point, Bermuda (Prince)
4. Turk’s Island (Prince)
5. Grand Quay-Grand Cay (Prince)
6. South Creek, Salt Cay (Prince)
7. St. John’s, Antigua (Prince)
8. Winthrop’s Plantation, Antigua (Prince)
9. Moravian Chapel, Spring Gardens (Prince)
11. Anti-Slavery Society, Altenbury, London (Prince)
12. Elmina, Ghana, Africa (Hartman)
14. Beyin, Ghana (Hartman)
15. Keta, Ghana (Hartman)
16. Queen of All Saints Academy, Brooklyn, New York (Hartman)
17. Curaçao (Hartman)
18. Park Place, Brooklyn (Hartman)
19. Marcus Garvey Guest House, Ghana (Hartman)
20. University of Ghana in Legon (Hartman)
21. Cape Coast, Ghana (Hartman)

The mapping of these locations disrupts present narratives of tourism and colonialism, reminding us of slavery’s history that continues to reside in these locations.
In “Subversive Cartography: Mary Prince and Saidiya Hartman,” former salt plantations have become part of a tourist economy filled with resorts, luxury homes, and docking places for cruise ships. “The means and modes of Black subjection may have changed, but the fact and structure of that subjection remains” (Sharpe 12). The land continues to exist as currency in coloniality. It continues to function as a space of production absent of the cartographic narratives once written upon the land and woven within the fabric of its history. The continued terrorization and violence of spaces like Grand Cay, and the Turks and Caicos Islands, from nineteenth and twentieth-century British literature, ultimately influencing North American literature and canonical texts. These islands are British territories. “The power to narrate, or to block other narratives from forming and emerging, is very important to culture and imperialism, and constitutes one of the main connections between them” (Said xiii). Prince and Hartman’s routes are not only rewritten on this map; the routes are also layered to etch a subversive narrative.

Many modern places in the Caribbean, such as the Turks and Caicos Islands, where affluent people choose to vacation, are the spaces of formerly enslaved people. Nevertheless, “the history of capital is inextricable from the history of Atlantic chattel slavery” (Sharpe 5). From resorts to hotels, Airbnb’s, museums, castles, and more, a new narrative emerges about these spaces continuing to erase formerly enslaved peoples and the histories of the lands which continue to be economic repositories that sustain imperialism and capitalism; commerce exports a new narrative of “getting away” to these places just as previous colonizers tended to do. Hartman asks, “Yet, what does it bode for our relationship to the past when atrocity becomes a commodity for transnational consumption, and this
history of defeat comes to be narrated as a story of progress and triumph?” (Hartman 760). Hartman, who is from Brooklyn, creates her own subversive cartography by writing her travel narrative to Ghana in her own words. Though, *Lose Your Mother* is more than a travel narrative and autobiography:

It locates Harman’s travel and writing in relation to a longer and multifaceted legacy of black travel that includes the coerced movement of black people across the Atlantic during the slave trade, the migratory travel of black diasporic peoples from the Caribbean to America and from America to Africa, and the travel of black tourists seeking to recover their roots in Africa (Brooks 58).

Hartman’s subversive cartography, her consciousness, and (re)visitation become “the principal authority, an active point of energy that [makes] sense not just of colonizing activities but of exotic geographies and peoples” (Said xxi). Hartman reclaims the narrative from the point of departure and the point of witness and rupture.

While European and Spanish cartographers wrote a narrative that upheld empire, conquest, and genocidal actions, Prince wrote her own cartography. She tells the reader where she has been in her own words. “I was born at Brackish-Pond, in Bermuda, on a farm belonging to Mr. Charles Myners,” states Mary Prince (3). She will continue to name geographic locations as she is sold between enslavers. This powerful geo-locating is a counter-narrative in the colonial narrative of slavery. She situates herself and writes herself into history. Prince negotiates her identity between space, place, and time. Iterations of this spatiotemporal negotiation are prominent in the first paragraph of her autobiography: “I was born at . . . When I was an infant . . . I was bought . . . and given . . .” (Prince 3). While Kerry Sinanan addresses a different passage, the same can hold true for the entirety of the narrative: “Prince utilizes the language of empiricism in order to assert her authority in an absolute way. Her knowledge of slavery, she claims, is based on what she has seen and felt: her impulse to speak, to tell the truth is based on her first-hand experience of slavery” (Sinanan 72). By geo-locating places in specificity, Prince names spaces where she has been sold and where other enslaved peoples have been sold and used. While she tells her narrative by location, she is also locating others within a spatiotemporal framework where conquest and chattel slavery have been devastating.

Hartman’s (re)visit to Ghana resists slave tourism in which the sites of capture
and ports of departure become romanticized as places to make a reclamation of ancestry. Hartman documents, archives, and geo-locates places rewritten by Western extraction as Mary Prince did before her. Brooks explains, “In chronicling her visits to the slave forts, Elmina Castle in particular, Hartman considers the ways in which the tourist industry in Ghana participates in the construction of a single narrative about Africa and about slavery that intersects in key ways with the singular and limited narrative black émigrés have embraced” (70). Elmina Castle is an important location because the castle, founded by the Portuguese, was owned by various colonial figures, and played a key location as a trading post and major stop during the Atlantic slave trade from Africa to America. More vitally, millions of enslaved Africans were exported through the underbelly of Elmina Castle, “The Door of No Return.” Hartman is not coming home; she is building a bridge between Africa and African Americans (Brooks 71). Hartman confronts the differences between herself and the people of Ghana, which lends a particular respect and a resistance to erasure (Brooks 71). In stark contrast, the tourism of the Bahamas completely erases the history of the West Indies. A deeper question to ask is, who is working in the resorts, serving on the luxurious waterfronts, and who continues to benefit from this commodification of land? When the tourist industry of Ghana and the tourist industry of the Bahamas are juxtaposed against one another, there are clear ways the exploitation of the land continues. Both have become destinations for different reasons and for the same economy. “Juxtaposing her own decolonized viewing practice against a colonized vision, Hartman challenges the Africanist discourse implied by Western travelers who envision Africa as ‘the heart of darkness, the dark continent, the blighted territory’” (Brooks 65). In the classroom, we can explore how the conditions for these afterlives of slavery are anticipated in Prince’s narrative.

As Said tells us, empire functions as a “device and instrument” in literature and land (Said 85). “Territory and possessions are at stake, geography, and power. Everything about human history is rooted in the earth...” (Said 7). While in South Creek, Prince “cut up mangoes to burn lime with. While one party of slaves were thus employed, another was sent to the other side of the island to break up coral out of the sea” (Prince 16). In these few lines and the proceeding lines, Prince maps the labor she and enslaved peoples carried out on the land and sea and their entanglement in empire and African extraction. Prince details several ways she and the others would draw salt from the earth. Prince urgently tells us, “Sometimes we had to work all night, measuring salt to load a vessel; or turning a machine to draw water out of the sea for the salt-making” (17). Prince plots the points of salt harvesting along Turks Island. She creates a cartographic image of Turks Island that resists erasure by present-day tourism to Turks and Caicos Islands. In horrific contrast, Prince describes Turks Island as a “horrible place...
cruel, horrible place!” (Prince 17). Glistening clear waters and beautiful ocean views were once cruel and horrible. It is written on the land and on time, mentioning “raw flesh” against the whiteness of salt from a bucket (Prince 17). If Prince's political mapping is read via a close reading, the geo-location of Turk’s Island becomes a metaphor for the functionality and the instrumentation of empire. With this one image, a multiplicity of images and functions erupt to name how whiteness cultivates, reproduces, exports, and institutionalizes the open wound of the world.

Prince was sold for 300 dollars to Mr. Wood, who lived in St. John, Antigua (Prince 21). Prince continues to locate herself almost as if plotting points into Google intertwined with racial capitalism. Prince becomes awfully ill in Antigua, with rheumatism and St. Anthony’s fire (Prince 21). Her narrative becomes a walking map detailing each place and condition she has inhabited. Sinanan explains that Prince is a cultural artifact for present-day consumption in heritage cultures of liberal abolition; she “has been reconstituted as a cultural artifact for the present but is presented to us in ways that obscure her presentation in the present as an artifact (emphasis hers, Sinanan 70). It is also fitting, then, to explain how Prince creates herself as a text and a map of her subjugated life: “The body African henceforth inscribed with the text of events of the New World. Body becoming text” (NourbeSe Philip 95). The invention of perceived locations relies on "whose" and "what" extensions. For example, “Whose past? Whose land? What counts.” Further, how long do these definitions last, and how long do these imaginings count? These are the questions that Prince’s narrative and attention to her mapping can lead to in the classroom for all levels.

Marked by her time in Ghana, Hartman faces the tensions of for who, for what, and for how long:

I was a stranger in the village, a wandering seed bereft of possibility of taking root. Behind my back people whispered, dua ho mmire: a mushroom that grows on the tree has no deep soil. Everyone avoided the word “slave,” but we all knew who was who. As a "slave baby,” I represented what most chose to avoid: the catastrophe that was our past, and the lives exchanged for India cloth, Venetian beads, cowrie shells, guns, and rum. And what was forbidden to discuss: the matter of someone’s origins (Prologue).
In this passage, Hartman locates not only where she is physically but also where she is situationally and spatiotemporally. Moreover, all of this is a matter of narrative and power. She begins her journey as a stranger. Going to Ghana does not promise welcome, nor does it promise rootedness, as she explains. Hartman creates a powerful image of herself without roots, further solidified by the image of the mushroom growing on a tree. Mushrooms serve as networks for trees to communicate. In this passage, Hartman hears whispers of folks referring to her as a mushroom that grows on a tree severing the possibility of becoming networked into the place she physically finds herself, a place where she makes geographical sense, yet at the same time, does not. “The geographical sense makes projections—imaginative, cartographic, military, economic, historical, or in a general sense cultural. It also makes possible the construction of various kinds of knowledge, all of them in one way or another dependent upon the perceived character and destiny of a particular geography” (Said 78).

Hartman and John Ray speak in Cape Coast where he explains to Hartman that “there are nine major slave routes in Ghana . . . . Every step you take in Ghana crosses the trail of slaves” (Hartman, Chapter 1). John reveals a different network, where the enslaved and their journeys are etched into the land and water. While Hartman finds herself in liminal existence, she resists forgetting these carved narratives. Hartman finds herself at a contested site, or a place of collective memory, “and the concomitant failure to integrate varied and often tenuous histories and perspectives within the slave forts is the reproduction of forgetting in spite of the central mission and invocation of heritage tourism to
remember" (Brooks 71-72). Hartman’s physical existence at the forts on the coast of Ghana creates an additional cartographic route of remembrance—a counter-narrative. She is both a contradiction and a paradox (Brooks 76). Hartman explains “these peregrinations might be less about the search or reclamation of home, than expressions of the contrarities of home” (Hartman 764-765). Both Hartman and Prince cannot return to a point of origin even if for different reasons though freedom is the point. This cartography has no beginning and no end. Of the servants in England, Prince urges, “They have their liberty. That’s just what we want” (34). Hartman’s (re)return to Ghana is about “the unfinished project of freedom” and our responsibility as scholars and readers to that unfinished project moving it toward completion (Brooks 77). Hartman acknowledges that the routes of strangers form a mother country and realizes that it is as close as she will ever arrive at the origin. “I realized too late that the breach of the Atlantic could not be remedied by a name and that the routes traveled by strangers were as close to a mother country as I would come,” explains Hartman (emphasis hers Chapter 1). Both she and Prince, while born in different places, are strangers as they travel, forging new cartographies and counter-narratives that are not replacement narratives; theirs are narratives that exist with and alongside and yet contradict existing narratives of the routes of enslaved peoples. “Recognizing black women’s knowledgeable positions as integral to physical, cartographic, and experiential geographies within and throughout dominant spatial models also creates an analytical space for black feminist geographies: black women’s political, feminist, imaginary, and creative concerns that respatialize the geographic legacy of racism-sexism” (McKittrick 53).

The map interrogates our spatiotemporal awareness of past and present by respatializing mapped and unmapped routes. Students can witness cartographically, via the digital, a site of slave auction which has now become a burgeoning tourist site for the wealthy to escape present realities. In other words, the map presents the imperative to see the amelioration of whiteness as it persists in the erasure of Black consciousness and Black women’s narratives already written on those lands. It is equally urgent to cartographically witness a site of export of Black bodies which has now become a tourist attraction, to see castles where the enslaved lived, which uses African American consciousness to keep those places trapped in time—places never quite attainable in the human imagination. Hartman states, “Images of kin trampled underfoot and lost along the way, abandoned dwellings repossessed by the earth, and towns vanished from sight and banished from memory were all that I could ever hope to claim. And I set out on the slave route, which was both an existent territory with objective coordinates and the figurative realm of the imagined past, determined to do exactly this” (Hartman Chapter 1). In this “figurative realm of the imagined past,”
Hartman and Prince are dispossessed bodies with coordinates etched into spatial consciousness. McKittrick warns, “the dispossessed black female body is often equated with the ungeographic, and black women’s spatial knowledges are rendered either inadequate or impossible” (121). Prince’s awareness of the location where she was sold or lived is a spatial awareness that produces a subaltern space because it is from her perspective and geopolitical positionality. Written from the perspective of Black women, the power of geography shifts, and the meaning of the space becomes alterable.

Black intellectuals already wrote these places/locations; this map unsettles the Columbus narrative and the narrative that chattel slavery happened long ago and too far away both in place and history to affect the present still; it unsettles the erasure of an awareness that the United States reaps the benefits of chattel slavery and often reproduces it--still. McKittrick suggests that “Geographic alternatives are best displayed through communicative acts—geographic expressions that, as mentioned in previous chapters [of Demonic Grounds], cite/site under acknowledged black geographies” (143).

This map is not only about placing Prince and Hartman in the context of the West Indies or resistance to tourist routes but about respatializing the narrative of chattel slavery in the West Indies. Similarly, Katherine McKittrick articulates for the geographic location of Canada, “Thus, it is not simply a matter of placing blackness within Canada, or the world; nor is it a matter of superimposing black maps atop the nation-space. Rather, black diaspora theories hold place and placelessness in tension, through imagination and materiality, and therefore re-spatialize Canada on what might be considered unfamiliar terms... it advances a different sense of place” (McKittrick 106).

The map seeks to unsettle and blur the lines between the binaries of past and present, enslaved and free, African and African American, ancestral and collective memory, and statistical data and lived epistemologies. By unsettling these lines, a liminal space emerges from a layered consciousness that Christina Sharpe calls the wake. Adapting the images from the Middle Passage, she writes, “As this deathly repetition appears here, it is one instantiation of the wake as the conceptual frame of and for living blackness in the diaspora in the still unfolding aftermaths of Atlantic chattel slavery” (Sharpe 2). The locations are more than locations in the world pulled from literature; they are “ongoing locations of Black being: the wake, the ship, the hold and the weather” (Sharpe 16). This map also shows how both conversations (Prince and Hartman) are still ongoing and present. To memorialize the castles in Ghana or place a plaque for Prince in London is to enslave the narrative of Black testimonies, to freeze the wake in time. Mary
Prince’s memorial plaque is in England, but she was not free in England. This plaque’s location erases her life before England, which was mostly all of it (Sinanan 70-71). This erasure perpetuates the myth of slavery as a past event. It upholds capitalistic endeavors on the luxurious islands—a getaway from the perceived labor of everyday lives for those who can afford it. “In commemoration of Prince [elsewhere], we seem to want the simulation of the real slave but do not want to recognize it as a simulation [right here]” (Sinanan 76). Slavery becomes a keychain we purchase at the destination boutique after the Caribbean ship docks. The land is a continuous enterprise. “The actual geographical possession of land is what empire in the final analysis is all about” (Said 78).

Sharpe urges, “How do we memorialize an event that is still ongoing? . . . How does one memorialize the everyday?” (Sharpe 20). When cruise ships dock at Grand Cay, they leave a wake. Cruise ships loaded with vacationers and tourists dock on living history, on a consciousness that persists within the erasure of luxury resorts, immaculate landscapes, and top-tier service. Wake after wake creates another narrative, insisting on intersecting routes. Sharpe’s call to action warns, “At stake, then is to stay in this wake time toward inhabiting a blackened consciousness that would rupture the structural silences produced and facilitated by, and that produce and facilitate, Black social and physical death” (Sharpe 22). While Sharpe acknowledges that “Black peoples in the wake” are stateless and nationless, Hartman also acknowledges this reality and forges additional intersectional routes of existence through her work to rescue or resuscitate the archive.

There is a careful line to balance between historiography and creating Mary Prince as a “spokeswoman for all slaves, a symbol and a de-historicized, de-contextualized artifact that presents the fictional as the biographically real” (Sinanan 77). This map is not a plaque; on the contrary, the map is a living text in the context of present-day reclamations of narrative spaces. By not viewing Prince’s journey as one that is stand-alone, instead, Hartman’s travel narrative is layered upon, within, and in tandem with Prince’s travel, the danger in romanticizing a narrative that is catch-all becomes a counter-narrative, subversive cartography. Hartman’s narrative cannot exist without Prince’s, and neither can Prince’s narrative continue beyond the archive without Hartman’s.

Mary Prince is not a spokeswoman for all enslaved peoples though she is often presented and memorialized as one (Sinanan 77). It is important to show that most of her narrative details her life spent in the West Indies, and this is a truer narrative of who she was than the plaque in London suggests. There are only two locations plotted in England for Mary Prince. While other historical timelines
exist from which to extract information about places Prince had been, relying solely on her autobiography keeps her narrative in the conversation, an essential point since her autobiography remains largely inaccessible (Sinanan 77). Hartman and Prince were not in the same exact geographical locations, but their narratives intersect in more ways than one. Visually, their journeys cross one another, yet both are profoundly entangled and enmeshed with one another. They both create a wake, a cartographic narrative that lives beyond maps, space, and time. This map is intentionally borderless. A graphic watercolor background, as opposed to a traditional cartographic map, visually layers and blurs both Hartman and Prince’s routes to show the spatiotemporal implications of both narratives. I am not doing wake work, as named by Sharpe, because it is created for and created by Black people. While this is an introductory way to use this map, I present, to the best of my ability, a map that merges past, present, and future as one narrative and not a compartmentalized narrative contained by borders or timelines because “At stake is not recognizing antiblackness as a total climate” (Sharpe 21).

A few questions remain that Latina/o/x/es and Chicana/o/x/es should continually ask of ourselves: What more about my perceptions of slavery and its continued narrative will we choose to unsettle? Beyond this chapter, how will we continue to grow in awareness or unlearning antiblackness? How can we learn even when it is uncomfortable or seems never-ending? How can our work not silence or erase Black women’s voices and lived epistemologies?

Notes

This essay is part of a special issue: “Teaching The History of Mary Prince (1831), guest edited by Kerry Sinanan,” Aphra Behn Online 13, no. 1 (Summer 2023). To read the essays in the cluster, follow this link: https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/abo/vol13/iss1/.
Works Cited


Appendix

The transdisciplinary nature of these projects lends well to the literature or the rhetoric classroom spaces. I would challenge instructors to bring these into their humanities and ethnic studies classrooms, possibly science and mathematics. One does not have to have experience in geography or cartography to engage these resources. For instructors interested in teaching courses on mapping and colonial spaces, the following projects are already in existence:

- **Women and the Places of African Diaspora**
- **Migrations and the Black Experience**
- **Preserving Significant Places of Black History**
- **Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Introductory Maps**

Students may choose other locations from both texts, which will also work. If a location lives merely in collective memory and not in the present time, the location can still be plotted on the map on top of or alongside the current location to show the layered history of a place.

Sample Lesson Plan

Subversive Cartography: Mary Prince and Saidiya Hartman

Objective

Students will create a digital map that plots the journeys of Mary Prince and Saidiya Hartman via slave narrative and travel testimony respectively. Students will use primary and secondary sources including the StoryMapsJS digital platform to create an interactive digital map.

Tools Needed

- Computer, laptop, tablet
- Access to the internet
- Knight Lab’s StoryMapJS
- Primary Texts
  - Mary Prince’s *The History of Mary Prince, A West Indian Slave Narrative (1831)*
- Secondary sources
  - Choose 2 -3 secondary sources
  - Keywords: diaspora, chattel slavery, digital humanities, slave narratives,
etc.

Course Overview
1. Introduce Mary Prince and Saidiya Hartman and their contribution to literature, testimonios, and historical as well as cultural legacies.
2. Gather into groups. Each group will choose three locations from each of the narratives. (It is assumed that both texts have been read in their entirety.) Locations should vary from group to group. Groups should begin researching these locations both in historical and contemporary contexts.
3. Groups will discuss these locations and their findings in terms of chattel slavery, imperialism, colonialism, diasporas, and what it means to undiscipline or unsettle dominant narratives.
4. Each group will work collaboratively to create a digital map in StoryMapsJS. The platform itself is not collaborative, so groups will have to choose one person to locate, plot, add a citation, and aggregate media to the digital map. Groups can choose these elements together but one person will be responsible for adding these elements to the digital map.
5. Once maps are complete, have students present to the class their digital map and findings. Why did they choose these locations and what thematic connections did they make to chattel slavery, imperialism, colonialism, diasporas, unsettling, and undisciplining?
6. Take a few minutes after each presentation to have other groups engage with the presenters’ work.
7. Students may individually reflect on all the maps presented via a written reflection piece about how creating a map helped them understand the narratives differently or more deeply. Was this digital tool effective for what they were assessing? How could this tool improve or be more conducive to analyzing these two narratives?
8. Students can brainstorm a final digital research project using their maps.

Discussion Questions
1. How can we ethically map a story of someone who was enslaved or is currently marginalized?
2. What resources would we need to inquire to create a more comprehensive framework for mapping an enslaved woman and a free woman?
3. What is our responsibility to both the digital humanities and Black communities as we undertake this map? Who does it benefit? Who is further marginalized as a result of the creation of this map?
4. How does your perception of this map change if you have not been to the locations on the map?
5. How do you hold praxis and theory in productive tension in your approach?
6. Are you citing Black women?

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1 Hinojosa, Carolina, *Subversive Cartography: Mary Prince and Saidiya Hartman*
2 There are many Black geographers doing this work: Katherine McKittrick, Caroline Bressey, Tiffany Lethabo King, Yomaira Figueroa-Vázquez, Lorgia Garcia Peña, and more. The University of British Columbia has an excellent reading list of Black geographers and works here:
   https://geog.ubc.ca/news/a-reading-list-of-black-geographers/