The Entanglement of the Disciplines: Why an Afrocentric Methodology to Advance Humanizing Research on People of the African Diaspora

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Abstract: This review identifies some of the pitfalls in assuming the dominant theories, constructions of race and power, and methodological tools scholars are left to inherit in their traditional disciplinary training. In a quest for a new episteme for Black life, Africana Studies created space for methodological frameworks such as Afrocentricity. This analysis offers examples through an Afrocentric methodology to confront and repair research on Black populations that assume othering, permanent dislocation from power, land, and authority—particular to Africans in diaspora, and methodological constraints around language and conceptual construction in research on Black life. An Afrocentric methodology can and should be advanced beyond scholarship proliferating within Africana Studies. Research considerations and questions that distinguish disciplinary method from methodology are discussed. Additionally, a new conceptual framing is offered here—cultural location, as a theoretical tool for historical and cultural examinations of African diasporic groups that applies the aforementioned reorientation toward humanizing research.

Keywords: afrocentric methodology, academic disciplines, African diaspora, cultural location

Introduction

When I entered Africana Studies as an undergraduate student I had not yet discovered the language to describe my reality accurately or with grounded conviction. Prior to my commitment to Africana Studies I drifted in and out of vapid periods of regimented education. It was only through intentional re-education from within an Africana Studies paradigm that I could articulate my simultaneous proficiency and dysphoria within my academics as the consequence of the deliberate and long-term domination by Eurocentric epistemologies. I understand the Eurocentric indoctrination of people of African descent to primarily be a process of disinheritance of people of African descent from Africa, and thus world history. This disinheritance has been most effective at the psychological level and maintained through the construction of de-centered educational narratives in traditional disciplines about the role and impact of African people all over the world. This paper seeks to present some of the pitfalls and intellectual consequences suffered by Black scholars who are attempting to advance radical work within the confines of learned Eurocentric values which are presented as objective sciences. I also provide a sample of research questions and paired arguments to present readers with why and how you can re-orient your research towards a more humanizing outcome particular to people of African descent regardless of your disciplinary location. An Afrocentric methodology is advanced here as an alternative to adopting Eurocentric epistemologies. Lastly, I present a new concept—cultural location, as a possible theoretical tool to advance research on African diasporic peoples consistent with solutions for better social science.
Afrocentricity is defined as, “…a paradigmatic intellectual perspective that privileges African agency within the context of African history and culture trans-continentially and trans-generationally.”

Afrocentricity has been necessitated in Africana Studies as an intellectual tool to re-orient academic impulses that perpetuate works on African people which only reference them on the margins of history and particularly only as they collide with moments that are deemed significant in European history. As stated by Ama Mazama, in addition to European economic and political colonialism, “…our struggles for emancipation from colonial domination [have been co-opted] by controlling our conceptual/cultural space through the imposition of the European cultural mode as universal”; this has resulted in the “ontological reduction” of African humanity.

By ontological reduction, Mazama explains that within a colonial paradigm, ones’ being or ontology “…is self-evident: only through a careful imitation of Europeans can colonized people hope to improve their lot, and move out of animality and childhood into full humanity and adulthood.”

The European cultural constructions of orientations toward humanity are deeply embedded in the philosophical impulses of traditional disciplines within the Academy. These impulses fail to acknowledge the scope of African life, contribution, and ingenuity. The most common failure of European trained scholars is due to the tendency of theories and paradigms produced by European thinkers to observe all non-Europeans under the metaphorical microscope. The narrow vision is then followed by a Eurocentric revelation and interpretation of world events through the European cultural worldview. The Eurocentric worldview is characterized by independence, separation of humans from nature, materiality, inherent conflict of opposing forces, imposed order to reduce chaos, mastery of all life, and a “survival of the fittest” cultural ideology.

Diasporic scholar Ruth Simms Hamilton writes,

European cultural ideologies, systems of social thought and reputation, put Europe at the center of the world to reinforce claims of European universality. European ideas, art, representation, and imagery thus followed an imperial framework, a “hierarchal logic,” that “remained basically unaltered into the twentieth century,” in which the “myths of Africa and other continents correlate with a myth of Europe itself.”

Hamilton concludes that the European mode of systematic processing reaches cultural limitations, as we approach Africa, to the extent that they may calcify complete myths about Africa within human history and memory. This is not trustworthy science.

For example, in the American Academy I have been exposed to research “tools”, particularly within the discipline (Cultural) Anthropology, that instruct me to remove myself from the research underway and the subjects of interest in order to best present “objective” results. The “tools” and literatures offered to me to conduct valid research had often directly assumed European cultural norms to be the standard of communication, schooling, learning, curtesy, political orientation and

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1 Asante 2007: 2.
2 Mazama 2003: 3-4.
4 Azibo 1992: 529. See also Ani 1994.
development, to name a few. Moreover, the researcher is readily assumed to be of European descent and the subject theorized as the other. As an African American researcher under these philosophical and epistemological constraints I am conditioned to do one of two things: 1) assume the position of the European in perspective and action by engaging research on African people and their ancestors as others in relation to myself, or 2) identify as an “other” but devoid my research of any emotional, spiritual, political or otherwise critical position of European hegemony to establish my validity and collegiality within the existing order. “To be of African descent and to study anthropology [or any European discipline] is to be struck by the pervasive anti-Africanism of the discipline. And if one then approaches the discipline critically, it emerges as a tradition of Eurocentrism, functioning to satisfy the needs of the European ethos.”

Afrocentric research does not emphasize the examination of data from a distance for the purposes of forging ‘objectivity’ nor does it operate solely to predict human behavior like Western social science. “[M]eaning the Afrocentrist in the contemporary context must be derived from the most centered aspects of the African’s being…We are either existing on our own terms or the terms of others…By “term” I mean position, place or space.” The Afrocentric researcher is encouraged to utilize several approaches to phenomena that engage Africa and African subjects through the Afrocentric paradigm. The authorization of several approaches to phenomena is significantly noted here to distinguish methods from methodology, and discipline from subject (or topic of analysis). For example, I am not a historian simply because I have included archival data as a method of inquiry; likewise, works produced by sociologists, anthropologists or historians are not inherently Afrocentric or Africana Studies because the subjects of their research are people of African descent.

In an Afrocentric study one seeks to develop epistemological questions relevant to the experience of people of African descent. Below I will provide a specific example of a research question, how ideas were negotiated and how I applied an Afrocentric methodology to advance the data in research I have previously conducted. Hopefully this can provide a pathway for application beyond abstract hypothesis.

**Exhibit A: The Research Question & Your Discipline**

**Sample**

This project will interrogate the significance and context for the relationship between Haiti and free Africans of Philadelphia following the Haitian Revolution. To do this, I am applying the Afrocentric paradigm, under which, I will draw from Afrocentricity, the African worldview and my development of cultural location as a conceptual framework.

**Research Question(s)**

- How have Africans in diaspora extended the presence of Africa?

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7 Ani 1994: 3.
8 Ani 1994: 11.
• What is the significance of the relationship between Haiti and free Africans of Philadelphia following the Haitian Revolution as African diasporic communities?  
  
(a.) What is the significance of the African diaspora to Africans in the diaspora?

Part (a.) of question two is a supplemental question that will have many answers as it is applied to different groups historically, currently, and in the future. I believe it has great heuristic value and will enrich both Africana Studies and general research related to the African diaspora conceptualization.

**Developing Your Epistemology**

The unique depth of this work is in how I am studying African people. The how is answered by the vantage point, theories, and cultural worldview employed by the researcher to interpret the phenomena at hand. James Turner reminds Africana Studies practitioners that for any discipline to qualify as a discipline, it must offer a significantly distinctive approach to the construction of knowledge. According to Serie McDougal, “An academic discipline’s epistemic identity is located in its unique concepts, theories, and paradigms. A discipline is distinguished by several key characteristics: its units of analysis, subject matter, approach to inquiry, and purpose.” The scope and methodology of sound Africana Studies research is thus consistent across disciplinary grand theory, meta theory, paradigm, conceptual development, and subject foci; ultimately lending people of African descent as primary beneficiaries of the research. “The prioritization of Africana people’s customs, beliefs, motifs, values, and conceptualizations is the rubric by which the application of an Afrocentric methodology operates.” If this seems questionable then we must ask, who should benefit from research identified as ‘Black’ or ‘Africana’ Studies?

With these considerations’ Afrocentricity is best suited for me as a researcher and for the subjects of this historical study. The Afrocentric paradigm is an instrument for human science. As a methodology it anticipates the cultural allegory and presuppositions of my ancestors and it allows me to exist in that space. My ontology has not been compromised nor is my intellectual ability diminished by locating myself within the cultural perspective of the research subjects. In this work, Afrocentricity is not plainly a theory of resistance to oppression or a theory of unity; it is a theory of African affirmation and regeneration. Danjuma Modupe concludes, Afrocentricity is the collective continental and diasporic African conscious will to cultural and psychic liberation with the ultimate goal being African existence on African terms.

Afrocentricity as a theoretical standpoint is corrective to the desperate fragmentism of Africa and her descendants, which has been the trajectory of many intellectual projects including the modernist, post-modernist, Marxist, existentialist, Africanist, historians, anthropologists, and sociologists alike. Asante writes,

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10 McDougal 2014a: 236.
11 Pellerin 2012: 151.
Africology rejects the Africanist idea of the separation of African people as being short-sighted, analytically vapid, and philosophically unsound. One cannot study Africans in the United States or Brazil or Jamaica without some appreciation for the historical and cultural significance of Africa as source and origin…Thus, if one concentrates on studying Africans in the inner cities of the Northeast United States, which is reasonable, it must be done with the idea in the back of the mind that one is studying African people, not “made-in-America Negros” without historical depth.13

This Afrocentric analytical position is especially relevant to my research development. The primary subjects of this work are 18th and 19th century Haitians and African Americans native to Philadelphia. While each of these communities have rich distinctive qualities, in this project the significance and context for their relationship is grounded in the fact that they, 1) mutually exist as African diasporic groups and, 2) express a cultural and psychological orientation toward Africa as their binding homeland.

It is foundational to this research study to appreciate Haitians and African Americans as a community of African people chiefly and as branches of the African diasporic community secondarily.

**Note here my process of reorganizing knowledge and conceptual space**

This project reveals European nation-state boundaries, being French Saint Domingue and British North America, were minimally significant to the African people who are the subjects of this work.

Therefore, identifying African Americans or other diasporic Africans as “Westerners”, “black” or “black diaspora” or “black Atlantic” will not be a part of this research analysis. These terms generate conclusions from the perspective of the outsiders in this narrative; those who see various African communities as novel discoveries needing redefinition, as slaves, property, Western oysters, and/ or European destinations. Through the Afrocentric paradigm (methodology) the theoretical orientation of this work is however, informed by the African Worldview and cultural location concept.

**Exhibit B: Be Clear About Your Framing & Assumptions**

_Sample_

African Worldview

Paralleled with the Afrocentric paradigm, the African worldview commands the idea of an African conceptual universe. This is to say, the first self-evident fact is that there is an _African people_. Making sense of the totality of African people is more of a historical truth than a modern construction. The centricity of the African mode, aesthetic, cosmology, and expression, derive from a shared

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13 Asante 1990: 15.
African cultural perspective. According to Maulana Karenga, culture is the totality of a people’s thought and practice by which they celebrate themselves, and introduce themselves to history and humanity.\textsuperscript{14} What becomes African culture is not a static category because we are always a history in process. However, the shared culture of African people is identifiable and is translated across time, geography, and generation.

As an umbrella term to conceptualize the fundamental diversities between human cultures, African worldview is generally interchangeable in praxis with ‘African cosmology’ or ‘African philosophy’. According to Cheikh Anta Diop, “…African philosophy cannot develop except on the original terrain of…African thought. Otherwise, there is the risk that it will never be.”\textsuperscript{15} Thus, we see the development of the African worldview as an observation and product of, “… African history, culture, and philosophy” throughout space and time.\textsuperscript{16} The purpose of a worldview analysis is to represent a racial-cultural groups’ conceptual orientation or perspective on the construction of their reality. Worldview systems often assert the following assumptions:

Every culture generates its own distinct approach to and experience of reality, which we might call its cosmology or worldview. It grows out of their distinct (collective) bio-genetic and geo-historical condition in the world.

The worldview system naturally evolves through and reinforces the survival maintenance of the culture; that is, its cumulative-collective approach to survival.\textsuperscript{17}

Applying the African worldview as a logical system that orients African people through their own cultural truths and stock in self-preservation gives agency and proper location to the subjects of the African diaspora in my research. The African worldview is characterized by interdependence, spiritual or divine force in all things, rhythmic interchange between opposites, divine law revealed through laws of nature, harmony with nature, and group maintenance, collectiveness, and sharing for survival.\textsuperscript{18}

In context Reiland Rabaka continues,

The African worldview theory is essentially a combination of the classical and contemporary, continental and diasporic African overarching outlook on human experience and the natural and phenomenal world… African peoples’ beliefs about God, nature, and major life rituals—such as birth, puberty, adulthood, marriage, elderhood, and death—exhibit enough commonalities to warrant being called an African worldview.\textsuperscript{19}

As I seek to present Africa, the Homeland, as principal to the investigation of African diasporic communities, it is vital to operate from the more longstanding evidences of African civilization and society. The African worldview provides the framework for interpreting African cultural expressions and orientations to reality based in the historical and philosophical evidence of African world

\textsuperscript{14} Karenga 1982.
\textsuperscript{15} Diop 1991: 324.
\textsuperscript{16} Azibo 1992: 528.
\textsuperscript{17} McDougal 2014b: 43.
\textsuperscript{18} Azibo 1992: 529.
\textsuperscript{19} Rabaka 2005: 57.
people. In concert, utilizing the African worldview in this research will elicit greater accuracy in locating what Africa looks like in the modern world — in diaspora.

**Introducing Cultural Location as a Theory & Method in Diasporic Research**

In the research on African diaspora, the theme of location is of great heuristic importance. Where has one come from? Where are you going? Where are you now? Will you leave again one day? Will you return home? Whole communities within the African diaspora, alongside sincere artist, literary contributors, social activist, spiritual leaders, and academics have approached these very questions. The development of the ‘modern world’ was supposed to answer them. The modern world, arbitrarily fixed by nation-state boundaries, attempted to predict the flow, creation, or destruction of space and power. It is a part of how the world is conceived in the future and in the past, in our minds.

Undoubtedly, the mapping of the world was not waterproof and has been colored by the ubiquitous presence of the African diaspora. If not carefully examined, the very idea of a living African diaspora, Africa being in multiple places at once, can aggravate the curious modern thinker and tempt them to again re-organize people and place by geopolitical lines. According to Sandhya Shukla, “Diaspora, by definition, is dispersion, which effectively compresses time and space such that it enables the experiences of many places at what would appear to be one moment...land of settlement, space for travel, all undergo significant reworking through the concept and object of diaspora.” Thus, the beauty and the battle of the diaspora concept then, is that it is reflexive. It is the subject in constant movement while also in constant reflection of oneself. This is why the concept of location from an Afrocentric analysis lends so much value in African diasporic research more generally. In an Afrocentric study, the African is central to the narrative and the perspective in the telling of the narrative. Therefore, the ‘reflection of oneself’ is just as critical as the observation of the movement of the subject; the latter often being the only approach visible in African diaspora research.

Location in this sense is therefore not married to a longitudinal or latitudinal coordinate. In our contemporary world, fashioned by migration and diasporic African world influence, ones’ location is a constitution of ones’ culture. We can make sense of relationships, where we feel comfortable, where our language makes sense, and where we feel at home, through shared cultural space. Shared cultural experience often transcends geography or nationality and is particularly observable in this way through diasporic movement. While national identity is a basic marker of legal citizenship in a country, culture is the passport of the African agent, particularly as the privileges of citizenship for many diasporic African communities are in constant dispute. As stated by Ruth Simms Hamilton,

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20 The concept of location has been explored in Afrocentric scholarship as a method for identifying the worldview and cultural perspective of a text and the author of the text. See Mazama 2003, Asante 2007, and Asante 2015. However, in this Afrocentric work the concept of location is defined and applied differently.

21 Giddens 1990.

There is no country-specific ‘African homeland’. The nature of the dispersion process and the culture of violence associated with enslavement and colonialism is such that there are multiple diasporic identifications with Africa that do not necessarily coincide with legal/political boundaries linked to specific nation-states, past or present. As a place, Africa in the diaspora is part of a collective memory, a reference for tradition and heritage.\(^{23}\)

The cultural location and imaginative space of Africans in diaspora thus becomes a greater tool in mapping the spatial residence of various communities. Communities are identified by their cultural locations all over the world. This is not a rare phenomenon. Jamaica for example, culturally exists in several cities within different nations. There are ‘Jamaica towns’ in New York City, in Berlin, Germany, in Accra, Ghana, and in Limon, Costa Rica; and those are just a few I have personally been acclimated with. Similarly, you can access China in most major cities in the United States. ‘China towns’ are resurrected and maintained by Chinese people to create home and familiarity for those living abroad and for those Chinese family members who will one day arrive.\(^{24}\) These locations are not simply tourist attractions, even if we consume them as such. Jamaica and China can exist in multiple locations at once because the people who claim these spaces as home carry their culture with them and are able to recreate this home as they settle in sizable communities.\(^{25}\)

The same is applicable to Africans in diaspora. The cultural locations of these communities are more real than a measure of whether they exist based on border sovereignty or colonial possession. Identifying the scope and influence of African diasporic communities is thus a project of identifying Africa. As aforementioned by Ruth Simms Hamilton, by the nature of the African diaspora, “there is no country-specific African homeland”. Therefore, accepting Africa as a diverse but singular cultural location to make sense of diasporic iterations is more logical in conclusion than the attempt to fragment Africa because: 1) the African worldview informs us that for the greater portion of human history Africans have dwelled with a distinct collective cultural approach to reality and 2) the African diaspora has existed longer than contemporary African nation-states. According to the Afrocentric Paradigm, African people’s cultural center is critical to their existence “since [they] exist in borrowed space.”\(^{26}\) The idea of borrowed space is consequential to the territorialization of land and human beings by European slavery and colonialism. As it has been decided by some that the land, the power, and the human beings existing on the land are under the ownership of Europe and its’ descendants, then one can understand for example, why a European

\(^{23}\) Hamilton 2007: 19.


\(^{25}\) “Communities” is an intentional descriptor of the subjects undergoing observation. Consistent with base assumptions in diaspora scholarship, individuals do not exist in ‘diaspora’- diasporic communities exist. A community can be described as a group of individuals related by blood, heritage, culture, and or common purpose that operate as a unit in one or more capacities.

\(^{26}\) Mazama 2003: 41.
immigrant in America can become a native while an African American, a Jamaican, or a Haitian would be considered a refugee or a person in perpetual exile. Abdias Do Nascimento, a renowned Afro-Brazilian scholar, writes,

My position in this interview is the most paradoxical possible. Here I am talking to white intellectuals, children of the elites that have been oppressing people of my color in Brazil for four hundred years. For this reason and others, I have to make it clear from the beginning that my situation is different from yours. My exile is of a different kind. It didn’t start in 1968 or 1964, or at any other time in my life. Now, more than ever, I understand that I was born in exile, and my parents and grandparents as well: descendants of African people brought by force to the exile of enslavement in the Americas.

Nascimento goes on to explain the circumstances he faced within ‘his country’. He expresses that all Brazilian governments have been openly against Africans and hold contempt toward African cultural tradition. For these reasons he states, “If I have a homeland, it is Africa. Brazilian society tried to refuse me my African roots, tried to cut them off, pull them up by force.” This sentiment exhibits the profound splintering that is possible between the physical and the cultural location of an African in diaspora. Based on my analysis I would forward that when a people are subjected to being both culturally and physically dislocated then they have truly been exiled. In fact, one of the most popular themes within African diaspora research is exile or dispossession. However, by description in the literature, Africans in diaspora are all assumed to be a permanently exiled class of people without attention to how Africans perceive themselves. The literature has not paid tribute to potential variance between cultural and physical locations. The grand classification is rooted in the initial premise; that Africans in diaspora are living in the Western world (European territory) and therefore have no claims to the space- being their physical location, regardless of how long they have inhabited the space. Are Africans only allowed to claim nativism within the perimeter of the African continent while Europeans, fewer in number, extend their reach of nativism around the world? A re-examination is long overdue.

The research must consider the question, if Africa is not where African people have settled, then where is Africa? When does a space or a place become an African location? Asante writes, There is a clear separation of African peoples. Those who remain on the continent and may have been exploited on their own lands and those of us who were brought across the ocean are seen as fundamentally different…Like the literary critics, the historians often dismiss the African

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27 “Nativism” refers to persons perceived as most belonging to the nation-state as naturalized citizens; holding the authority to determine outcomes for the populations living within the national borders.
29 Do Nascimento and Nascimento 1992: 5.
30 Ibid: 49.
31 See Clifford 1994; Raboteau 2013; Conniff and Davis 1994; Guridy 2010.
elements that survived and developed on the American continents as purely temporal...we are essentially left with a discontinuous history and an uncertain future...Thus, the Afrocentrist expands human history by creating a new path for interpretation...African is identified with time, place, and perspective.\textsuperscript{32}

To be consistent within the Afrocentric paradigm and utilize \textit{cultural location} as a method to identify communities across time and space is to reject the Eurocentric ideal that African people can only exist where Europeans decide not to. This ideal rationalizes that Africa exists only on the African continent, which is shrinking due to the attribution of North Africa as Arab territory and South Africa as European. Ironically, just as Europeans have committed to the imperial domination of most of the world, they too have created the construct of simultaneously living in a separate world from everyone else, i.e. the ‘first world’ juxtapose with the ‘third world’. The conceptual space of an existing first and third world was established by European thinkers to draw attention to the differences in material excess and political ally-ship between Europe and the rest of the world.\textsuperscript{33} However, it is also applied to create the feeling of distance in our measure of time and space, ‘development’, memory, and familiarity between groups. In the end, we know we do not live in two worlds; we live in one fractured world. The ‘multi-world’ construction is compelling nonetheless, and has now been embraced by many thinkers in the twenty-first century for a variety of reasons. Scholars have referred to the Arab world, Asian world, and African world for example.\textsuperscript{34} Compared to the theorizing of \textit{cultural location}, there is a similar repurposing. The first world framework was established to serve Europeans in locating where it was safe and comfortable for them to settle and flourish. To find the \textit{cultural locations} of African people is to find where Africans have asserted themselves around the world through their cultural presence and other self-determining factors.

To operationalize the \textit{cultural locations} of African people, firstly, one must locate Africa. We find Africa from within through the long-term cultural continuities and historical sites on the African homeland. Secondly, we find Africa from without through the \textit{cultural locations} established by African people in diaspora. These sites may be geographically represented (geo-political independence) and/or cognitively represented (Africa in memory and cultural practice). Geopolitical and cognitive representation may or may not overlap remembering that while a people can be physically dislocated from their homeland they can still cognitively reconstruct it through cultural transmission and practice; they do not cease to exist just because they adapt to ‘borrowed space’. This premise is substantiated through Afrocentricity. Asante writes, “...separatist views carry the false assertion that Africans in the Americas are not Africans connected to their spatial origin...[however] African American culture and history represent developments in African culture and history, inseparable from place and time.”\textsuperscript{35} The alternative is to accept how Eurocentric research has fragmented African history the same as it has fragmented African people under its colonial projects. In this way, nothing more is accomplished by Africa after Africa has encountered Europe. Research that does not attribute the African diasporic presence and its accomplishments to Africa

\textsuperscript{32} Asante 2003b: 43-44.

\textsuperscript{33} See Chambers 2013 and Gaddis 1997.

\textsuperscript{34} Barakat 1993; Kenoyer and Heuston 2005; Forde and James 1999.

\textsuperscript{35} Asante 2003b: 44.
minimizes the contributions of African people everywhere. I forward that conceptualizing cultural location as a method to measure proximity—where Africa is, will provide a fresh intake on African diasporic research and in the terrain of African Diaspora Studies.

Cultural location is the identification of where a collective people are located geographically and cognitively by their cultural expressions, orientation toward their immediate environment, and orientation toward their place of origin.

One may use cultural location as a theory or method to maintain that while the African continent is the centralized homeland, parts of Africa exist all over the world through cognitive placement and cultural expression in diasporic communities. Through the language, intentions, documents, and actions left behind by diasporic groups you can locate their orientations toward their immediate environments and toward Africa—the homeland. The Afrocentric paradigm and the African worldview are a compass to map African cultural locations. The Afrocentric paradigm weights the magnitude of reliable research on Africa and African people through the cultural and historic experiences of African people on their own terms; from their own perspectives. Asante writes, “…the serious reader of writers must work to re-affirm the centrality of cultural experience as the place to begin to create a dynamic multi-cultural literacy because without rootedness in our own cultural territory, we have no authentic story to tell.”

The alternative approach here considering the existing literature, is an attempt to relay the significance of the African diaspora to African people themselves. How did people of African descent use their diasporic relationships to create cultural links to Africa wherever they found themselves?

Conclusion

In this article we apply the utility of an Afrocentric methodology to advance humanizing premises, considerations, and outcomes for African diasporic populations in research. There is still much work to be accomplished as radical social scientist must be both revisionist and anticipatory in their aims to present truths consistent with the subjects of their research and communities despite disciplinary constraints. An important characteristic of research coming out of the Africana Studies discipline is that blackness itself is offered as a modality of power rather than a location of inferiority. Scholars have the responsibility to divorce themselves from intellectual inheritances that are analytically void of responsible and progressive rationalizations of Black life or moreover, theories and constructs that have never considered Black life in their design. The aim is to reorganize the world away from colonial and imperialist impulses. We must start by reorganizing our minds; and thus, our knowledge production. Don’t be a slave to your discipline.

References


