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400 Years? Ancestors Disappear! Historical Misorientation and Disorientation in the Year of Return and the 400 Years Narrative

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Abstract

1619 CE was selected as the starting point in reference to enslaved Afrikans supposedly arriving at the British colony of Jamestown, Virginia as referenced on numerous Government of Ghana websites for 2019's Year of Return. In this article, we will use various primary and scholarly sources to interrogate "white" epistemologies and anglocentric frames of reference of using 1619 CE as a starting point for anti-Black enslavement while challenging biblical parallels and references to 400 years (Brauchle in Virginia changing marker denoting where first Africans arrived in 1619, Web: dailypress.com, 2015). Using an Afrikan-centered analysis, we argue that the arbitrary selection of the anglocentric date of 1619 CE cannot be at the center of any narrative told from the perspective of Afrikan=Black people lest we erase the memory of hundreds of thousands of Afrikan ancestors enslaved prior to that time in what would eventually become the continental USA and elsewhere.

Keywords 400 years · Year of return · Anglocentrism · Historical misorientation and disorientation

Introduction

When we start off the discussion about the history of enslavement of Afrikan=Black people with 400 years, the memory of all the Ancestors who were enslaved long before 400 years is erased. There is a proverb that states that "The only truly dead are those who have been forgotten" (Nyanchama, 2021). As Afrikan=Black people, we *must* refuse to forget our illustrious Ancestors. During Ghana's "Year of Return," the year 1619 CE was bandied about as being the start date of the enslavement of Afrikan=Black people including on numerous official

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Government of Ghana websites (Digital, 2019a; GNA, 2019; Obeng-Bediako, 2018). However, this begs the question of “is that true?” In this paper, we will demonstrate that with regard to the enslavement of Afrikan=Black people by western Eurasians often erroneously referred to as “Europeans,” documented evidence shows that this process did not start in 1619 CE, but well before that date in 1441 CE (Russell-Wood, 1978). If we do not limit the discussion to western Eurasians, then we can go back thousands of years in terms of documented attestations of the general Eurasian enslavement of Afrikan=Black people (Waddell, 1964).

For the reader presented with new evidence, we would like to ask several questions that should be kept in mind while reading this article:

- What will you do in your own life to challenge arbitrary anglocentricity and advance evidence/primary-source-based Afrikan-centered analysis?
- What will you do personally with lessons learned?
- What must we do collectively with lessons learned?
- How will you teach this lesson to another Afrikan?
- What commitments and promises can you make to follow through with what you say you will do differently?

Background: Conceptual Clarification

Before proceeding with the discussion at hand, it may be useful to look at the etymology of the word “slave.” Oftentimes, we think about the word “slave” as synonymous with the word Afrikan. However, etymologically speaking, this is certainly not the case. In researching into the etymology of the word “slave,” it is clear that the term dates from the late thirteenth century and is defined as a “person who is chattel or property of another” coming from old French *esclave* from medieval Latin *sclavus*, slave (Harper, 2020). Latin is also the source of Italian *schiaivo*, French *esclave*, and Spanish *esclavo* (Harper, 2020). However, the term originates from the word *slav* and came to be used in its current sense of the many *slavs* who were sold into slavery by their conquerors.

The historical development of this sense arose in consequence of the wars waged by Otto, the “holy” roman emperor and his successors against the *slavs*. Therefore, as Afrikan=Black people, one of our primary objectives must be working towards terminological rectification for conceptual clarification. In short, we must realize that we are not *slavs*. Historically, many of us have been put into a situation *similar to* that of the *slavs* but, that notwithstanding, we are not and cannot be *slavs* even if we are enslaved. Moreover, even when we have been put into a situation like that of the *slavs*—that is to say enslaved—we consistently have fought against our enslavement. In this study, therefore, we will look at various instances of Afrikan=Black resistance to enslavement prior to 1619 CE not only to debunk the erroneous notion that Trans-Atlantic Enslavement began in 1619 CE but to demonstrate our rich history of resistance prior to that date that we would be remiss to consign to oblivion in the interests of savvy marketing.

Background: Afrikan = Black Presence in the So-Called New World Prior to Enslavement

Before comprehensively delving into the topic at hand, we must point out that when the Afrikan presence in the western hemisphere is discussed, it is often in the context of enslavement and so-called “whites” taking Afrikan = Black people there by force. But we have to ask the question, is that true? According to written documentation dating to 1311 CE, there was a massive expedition of Mansa Abu-Bakr II (Hamidullah & Al-Umari, 2015). This was documented in testimony of Mansa Musa—known to history as the richest man ever to have lived. In returning from his famous pilgrimage to Mecca, he was interviewed by an Arab historian called Shihāb al-Dīn Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. Faḍl Allāh al-‘Umarī (شهاب الدين أبو العباس أحمد بن فضل الله العمري) in Cairo. When he was asked how he became the Mansa of Mali, this is what Mansa Musa had to say:

The ruler who preceded me did not believe that it was impossible to reach the extremity of the ocean that encircles the earth (meaning Atlantic), and wanted to reach that (end) and obstinately persisted in the design. So he equipped two hundred boats full of men, like many others full of gold, water and victuals sufficient enough for several years. He ordered the chief (admiral) not to return until they had reached the extremity of the ocean, or if they had exhausted the provisions and the water. They set out. Their absence extended over a long period, and, at last, only one boat returned. On our questioning, the captain said: ‘Prince, we have navigated for a long time, until we saw in the midst of the ocean as if a big river was flowing violently. My boat was the last one; others were ahead of me. As soon as any of them reached this place, it drowned in the whirlpool and never came out. I sailed backwards to escape this current.’ But the Sultan would not believe him. He ordered two thousand boats to be equipped for him and for his men, and one thousand more for water and victuals. Then he conferred on me the regency during his absence, and departed with his men on the ocean trip, never to return nor to give a sign of life (Hamidullah & Al-Umari, 2015)

The above quote is significant in that this constitutes primary source evidence in 1311 CE of the richest nation on the face of the entire planet earth at that time setting off with 3000 ships across the Atlantic (Van Sertima, 1976, p. 28). While this type of information is not a part of our standard curriculum in Ghana and elsewhere, this information is very important. Although, when it comes to history, as Afrikan = Black people, we are often fed the lie that we did not have writing, here, we have a historical event that was written down (albeit in Arabic in this instance), but for some reason the crossing of the Atlantic by Mansa Abubakr II did not make it into our school textbooks. Certainly, writing or lack thereof, therefore, must necessarily not be the operative factor in decisions of what Afrikan = Black children will be allowed to know versus what will be concealed from them. The Afrikan = Black explorers such as Mansa Abubakr II, whose names are already not part of our curriculum, all disappear when we start off with the year 1619 CE with



Fig. 1 “El Negro” Olmec monumental stone sculpture from Tres Zapotes at the Museo Regional Tuxteco in Santiago Tuxtla, Veracruz, Mexico (Garcia, 2013)

regard to our presence in the western hemisphere. However, information about the voyage can be found in Nana Ivan Van Sertima’s book *They Came Before Columbus* (Van Sertima, 1976). Interestingly, a whole motley crew of “white scholars” came together in 1997 to try to refute Nana Van Sertima’s book; however, they failed to mention this documented testimony whatsoever in a typical case of ulterior selectivity (Haslip-Viera et al., 1997). They also failed to show the image we see in fig. 1 referred to as *El Negro* “The Black Man.” This is one of several multi-ton stone heads that are carved out of monolithic blocks of volcanic rock. In this case, we can see not only his distinctly Afrikan = Black features, but also his stylish afro—a hair texture completely foreign to the prototypical indigenous people of the regions of La Venta, Tres Zapotes, and San Lorenzo, Mexico, where the heads have been excavated. In the case of other carvings, we are told that they are just carvings of the indigenous people—clearly an untruth—however, none of those indigenous people have clearly visible afros. Nana Van Sertima not only gathered data from primary sources such as that pertaining to Mansa Musa, but he also conducted research thoroughly investigating botany in terms of analyzing the cotton that is found in the so-called new world, linguistics in terms of the origin of the word guanine, the word for gold, and wide-ranging fields like metallurgy, navigation, oceanography, archeology (new skeletal finds in the Caribbean of Afrikans dated to 1250 CE), and archeology in terms of the Olmec heads and the pyramids. He further researched into fields including Egyptology, Afrikan history, geology, astronomy, rare Arabic and Chinese manuscripts such as the one cited above, letters, and journals of early explorers, and more (Van Sertima, 1976). Indeed, the early western Eurasian explorers, such as Cristóbal Colón, documented the Afrikan = Black presence prior to their arrival

in their own journals, but unfortunately, this is not part of our curriculum! Indeed, *They Came Before Columbus* is one of the most well-researched books that you can find in the world. But all of the aforementioned so-called “impartial,” “disinterested,” and “objective” white so-called “scholars” decided that they had to come together in order to attempt to debunk Nana Van Sertima’s scholarly work—but as they were unable to debunk primary sources, they decided to simply sweep them under the proverbial rug.

The irony of all of this is that white scholars have more recently come together in the name of science and declared the Afrikan origin of New World monkeys in scientifically accepted research (Bond et al., 2015; Gramling, 2015). These studies say that monkeys rafted across the Atlantic 38 million years ago. These researchers looked at genetic data; they looked at the dental data and came to the unequivocal conclusion that these monkeys in the so-called New World are definitely and beyond the shadow of a doubt, genetically related to the monkeys that are found here on the continent now known as Africa. Again, there is much irony to be found in the fact that there is no outcry by the so-called “white scholars” who came together in a sad attempt to debunk the work of Nana Ivan van Sertima. These researchers who researched into the travels of Eocene primates have declared that the only way that the monkeys could have crossed the Atlantic was perhaps in a storm and that some monkeys got stranded on some type of raft and they sailed across, because the nature of the South Equatorial Current is such that anything that finds itself on that current will automatically be transported to the so-called new world (Bond et al., 2015; Gramling, 2015). Again, no subjectively-motivated debunking from any white scientists on the idea that monkeys can sail the Atlantic. Apparently, their incredulity only extends to Afrikan = Black people and not to Eocene primates.

Similarly, other “white scientists” have, through painstaking research, established that some 41 million years ago, a type of rodent called a caviomorph rafted across the Atlantic Ocean (Antoine et al., 2012; University, 2011; Welsh, 2011). Again, relying primarily on comparing genetic and dental data from “Old World” and “New World” populations, these scientists came to the conclusion that these rodents must have rafted together to the “New World” 41 million years ago (Antoine et al., 2012; University, 2011; Welsh, 2011). Ironically, we are told by a gang of “white scholars” that the evidence presented by Nana Ivan van Sertima is inadmissible including historical documentation that 3000 ships were dispatched by the predecessor of the consensus world’s richest man in history. We have a motley crew of “white scholars” who combined their intellectual strength to state their case in the face of an avalanche of evidence that it is impossible that so-called “Negroes” could have traversed the Atlantic Ocean. However, when their racial relatives present a much weaker case about monkeys and rodents, we hear nothing from these defenders of the myth of Cristóbal Colón’s “discovery” of people who were already there. In other words, “white scholars” are up in arms when it comes to Afrikan = Black people crossing the Atlantic, but they have nothing to say when their colleagues credit monkeys and rodents—caviomorphs—with crossing the Atlantic. But primary source historical documents of Afrikans, human beings, from the richest nation in the world with 3000 ships traversing the Atlantic on the same South Equatorial Current requires a special journal issue just for the sake of debunking such sacrilege of even suggesting

the possibility—these same Afrikans who left *El Negro* and dozens of other multi-ton stone heads depicting their likeness is cause for circling the wagons to defend “white” mythology masquerading as objective history and science. From this double standard alone, anyone who still thinks that science is objective has another thought coming (Carruthers, 1972).

The significance of the preceding discussion is that if we are going to deal with the Afrikan presence in the so-called “New World,” we must start our count long before enslavement in accounting for those Afrikans who set sail of their own volition in the spirit of exploration and discovery while leaving behind archeological and documentary evidence in their wake. While not all of the evidence affirming the reality of this fact can be covered here, it is worth noting nonetheless that our count cannot begin at 1619 CE unless we are intentionally dealing in abject ignorance as a matter of course.

What Government of Ghana Representatives and Websites Had to Say About the Year of Return and the So-Called 400 Years

Before we get into debunking the discourse of the supposed 400 years of Trans-Atlantic Enslavement that precipitated Ghana’s Year of Return, it behooves us to consider who is propagating that demonstrably false narrative in the first place. Because the Year of Return was a Government of Ghana initiative, we will turn our attention to looking at exactly what the Government of Ghana has said with regard to the matter. As such, we will embark on a cursory survey of official Government of Ghana websites exclusively. This is necessary because these are the sources of information that the Ghanaian public and the public in general would naturally look to for official and correct information regarding the Year of Return and its historical basis. We thought it was necessary to do this research because in 2019, the first author was approached by a young man named Wode Maya, who it turns out has a significant following online, and he asked him about this Year of Return and the notion of 400 years of enslavement (Maya, 2019). While the first author’s main point was that it is historically inaccurate to start with 1619 CE, Maya put it in terms of the Year of Return being a fraud. While Wode Maya was accused of clickbait; nonetheless, his provocative title surely earned him quite a few clicks on his channel. However, the fraudulence or lack thereof of the Year of Return as an initiative was not the point as fraud implies intentional malice and deceit. However, the point was that while the Year of Return was a “good initiative,” the idea that enslavement of Afrikan=Black people in the western hemisphere started in the year 1619 CE is not only historically inaccurate, but that this idea effectively erases the rich history of resistance prior to that year. Upon seeing the medicinal¹ video, Prof. Esi Sutherland-Addy approached the first author about it, and it made him question the degree to which the Government of Ghana is providing correct information about the Year of Return to see whether Wode Maya had a point about the Year of Return actually amounting to a fraud.

¹ The first author’s videos do not go “viral”; they go medicinal.

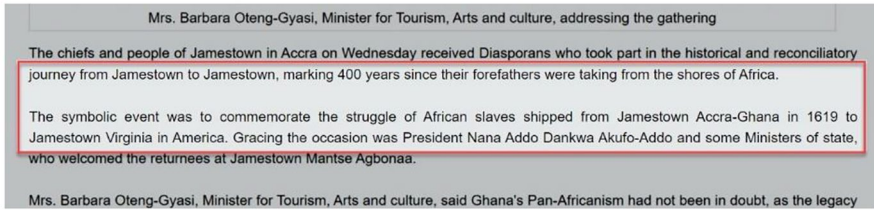


Fig. 2 Government of Ghana website claiming the existence of an imaginary ship from Jamestown Accra to Jamestown Virginia (GNA, 2019)

So, this brings us to the question of what Government of Ghana representatives and websites said about the Year of Return and 400 years. So, Prof. Esi Sutherland Addy's query added this additional dimension to the research.

As such, we first turn our attention to the official Ghana.gov.gh website (fig. 2), featuring Mrs. Barbara Oteng-Gyasi, in her role as the Minister for Tourism, Arts and Culture. In the text of the article, it mentions a

historical and reconciliatory journey from Jamestown to Jamestown marking 400 years since their forefathers were taken from the shores of Africa. The symbolic event was to commemorate the struggle of African slaves shipped from Jamestown Accra in 1619 to Jamestown Virginia in America. Gracing the occasion was President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo and some Ministers of state. (GNA, 2019)

On the same page, we find the following: "Mr. Kwasi Agyemang, Chief Executive Officer of GTA, said Jamestown was the center of tourism in Ghana, as it had the Lighthouse and the Jamestown Fort, through which the first slave ship took off to Jamestown Virginia" (GNA, 2019). While the patently absurd notion that the first ship of enslaved Africans set out from Jamestown, Accra to Jamestown, Virginia is demonstrably false, to call it fraud would require a burden of proof in terms of the intentionality and malice in perpetrating and perpetuating the fraud—in this case for clear financial gain.

However, this fiasco truly begs the question of how the official Government of Ghana website escaped thorough vetting by scholars who know better. Indeed, the first port of call, perhaps, should have been scholars of public universities as we are paid by the Government of Ghana to do research on behalf of Ghanaians. It seems, however, that in sidelining those who are in the know, we end up with false narratives of imaginary ships from places from whence they did not embark to places to which they did not disembark. As scholars are also Government of Ghana employees, it seems that the left hand, perhaps did not know what the right hand was doing.

On another page of the official Ghana.gov.gh website, it "commemorates 400 years since the first enslaved Africans arrived in the USA" (Ghana.Gov.Gh, 2019). Firstly, the USA only dates to 1776 CE so, even if we began with 1619 CE, the place to which they traveled would not technically have been the USA. So, to even entertain the notion, we must speak about the landmass that would eventually become the USA. However, in broadening out the discussion in this way, it still begs the

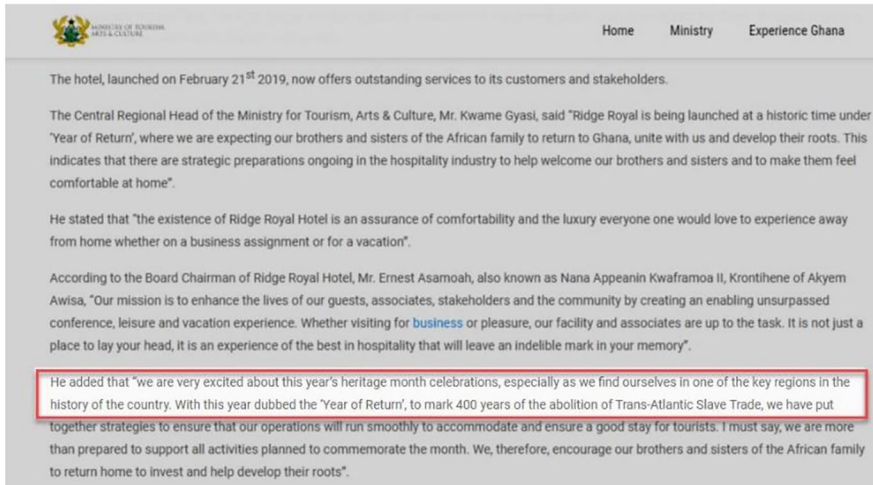


Fig. 3 MOTAC Website mentioning the year 2019 as marking 400 years of the abolition of "Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade"

question of is 2019 really 400 years since Afrikans arrived in what would eventually become the USA? We will demonstrate below how even the proposition phrased in this way is completely and totally untenable.

In perhaps the most embarrassingly inaccurate gaffe, the official website of the Ministry of Tourism Arts and Culture incredulously mentions "this year dubbed the 'Year of Return', to mark 400 years of the *abolition* of Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade" (MOTACGhana, 2019 bold and italic emphasis added).

Now if any well-meaning Ghanaian is looking for right and correct information about this so-called 400 years and Year of Return (fig. 3), where will he/she go other than an official government website? But it seems that those associated with the Year of Return are not even unanimous in terms of whether it is supposed to be 400 years since the beginning of transatlantic enslavement or its abolition.

Again, diasporaaffairs.gov.gh had a bold headline emblazoned on the page touting Ghana's year-long "Marketing and Reunification Initiative Marking 400-Year Anniversary of First Enslaved Africans Arrival in the US in 1619" (Obeng-Bediako, 2018). On GIPC.gov.gh, we have similar language together with a telling statement revealing what the Year of Return might have been all about (not necessarily historical accuracy) stating that:

Ghana has declared 2019 as the 'Year of Return'. This marks the 400 year anniversary since the first slave ship docked on US soil. The yearlong celebration is aimed at boosting tourist visits into the country and also to increase tourism investments (GIPC, 2019).

So, if the aim is boosting tourist visits and increasing tourism investments, perhaps this would explain why the government did not need to get correct information as tourism is not necessarily about historical accuracy.

On www.yearofreturn.com, the official page mentioned “400 years of the arrival of the first enslaved Africans in Jamestown, Virginia” (Digital, 2019b). Here, again on www.yearofreturn.com, it mentions “Members of Congress observed the 400th anniversary Tuesday of the arrival of the first enslaved Africans in America” (Digital, 2019c).

While Government of Ghana web pages are one thing, official government documents are quite another. On the site mofep.gov.gh, the Government of Ghana’s Budget and Economic Policy which indicates that the Year of Return is to “commemorate the 400 years of slavery” and “to promote heritage tourism” (MOFEP, 2019).

Problematizing the 400 Years of African-American History Commission Act

The first problem is that of anachronism as the first documented use of the term “African American” dates to 1782 CE making 240 years maximum, not 400 years. Further, while the rationale for the whole buzz about 400 years seems to have been tied to the “400 Years of African-American History Commission Act,” the fact remains that the term did not enter into popular usage until its popularization by Jesse Jackson in 1988 (Foundation, 1997; Scott, 2017).

The second, and more substantive, problem with 400 years of so-called “African-American” history is that the term is clearly a misnomer. As eloquently argued by Nana Oṃówálé,

What you and I need to do is learn to forget our differences. When we come together, we don’t come together as Baptists or Methodists. You don’t catch hell because you’re a Baptist, and you don’t catch hell because you’re a Methodist. You don’t catch hell because you’re a Methodist or Baptist, you don’t catch hell because you’re a Democrat or a Republican, you don’t catch hell because you’re a Mason or an Elk, and **you sure don’t catch hell because you’re an American; because if you were an American, you wouldn’t catch hell.** You catch hell because you’re a black man (Malcolm, 1963).

To self-identify as a so-called “African American” is simply to be a type of Amerikkkan. English grammar operates whereby the noun comes second, while the adjective comes first. So, whether one describes an Afrikan Amerikkkan, he/she could similarly describe a blue Amerikkkan, a red Amerikkkan, and an Italian Amerikkkan, yet at the end of the day, it is simply a discussion about different types of Amerikkkans. However, throughout the late 1700s CE and 1800s CE, there were numerous organizations such as the Free African Society, the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the African Lodge, and others who from these descriptions self-identified with their race not favoring any form of affiliation with the term Amerikkkan (Lammers, 1982). In fine, to discuss 400 years of so-called “African-American” history is to subsume those who never identified as any kind of Amerikkkan under the shadow of the erstwhile enslavers from whom we have been fighting to get free for 500–600 years and more!

Using Scholarship and Primary Historical Sources to Challenge the Dominant 400 Years and Jamestown, Accra to Jamestown, Virginia Narrative

The first point of correction in challenging the now dominant, but demonstrably false narrative perpetuated on the aforementioned Government of Ghana websites, is the erroneous idea of “African slaves shipped from Jamestown Accra in 1619 to Jamestown Virginia in America” (GNA, 2019) and that of “Jamestown Fort, through which the first slave ship took off to Jamestown Virginia” (GNA, 2019). Firstly, in terms of the point of embarkation, “the first Afrikans brought to Virginia were captured in the village of Ndongo in modern-day Angola” (Brauchle, 2015; Browne-Marshall, 2020; Heywood & Thornton, 2019; Painter, 2006; Thornton, 1998). Ndongo is clearly not Jamestown. It is rather the same place where Nana Nzinga Mbande (circa 1583—17 December 1663), the female ruler of Ndongo and Matamba, fought against the Portuguese who were enslaving her people in Ndongo. Not only that, but this ship set off from Ndongo during the period in which she was actually alive! This irrefutable fact of history is, in reality, much more intriguing than the imaginary story of some phantom ship that never existed going from Jamestown Fort in Accra to Jamestown Virginia. While the academic literature is replete with information on Ndongo as a place of embarkation, apparently, the Government of Ghana’s official websites, representatives, and spokespersons were oblivious to its existence or perhaps simply did not care enough to do the research (Brauchle, 2015; Browne-Marshall, 2020; Heywood & Thornton, 2019; Painter, 2006; Thornton, 1998). Ironically, the real story is more interesting than the fake Jamestown-to-Jamestown story.

Further, in the same vein of setting the record straight, the point of disembarkation was also not Jamestown Virginia, it was rather Point Comfort—the historical marker in Virginia being changed in 2015 to reflect this now-accurate research. In addition to Virginia changing the marker of the denoting the actual landing point, there was actually a ceremony “marking the landing site of more than a dozen Africans in 1619 on present day Fort Monroe” (Brauchle, 2015). According to a news article covering the event,

“There cannot be two first landing sites,” wrote Project 1619 organizer Calvin Pearson in an email. “After a thorough review by Virginia and Jamestown scholars and historians it was confirmed that the first Africans landed at Point Comfort in Hampton and they were later dispersed to plantations including Jamestown.” The Jamestown marker will also be edited to reflect the change. (Brauchle, 2015)

So, the government of Virginia in the USA changed its historical markers because they became aware back in 2015 that the point of disembarkation was not Jamestown Virginia, but rather Point Comfort (Fig. 4). While, apparently, Jamestown to Jamestown sounds a lot cooler than Ndongo to Point Comfort, it is not based on research, nor is it based on reality. When cross-referencing with primary

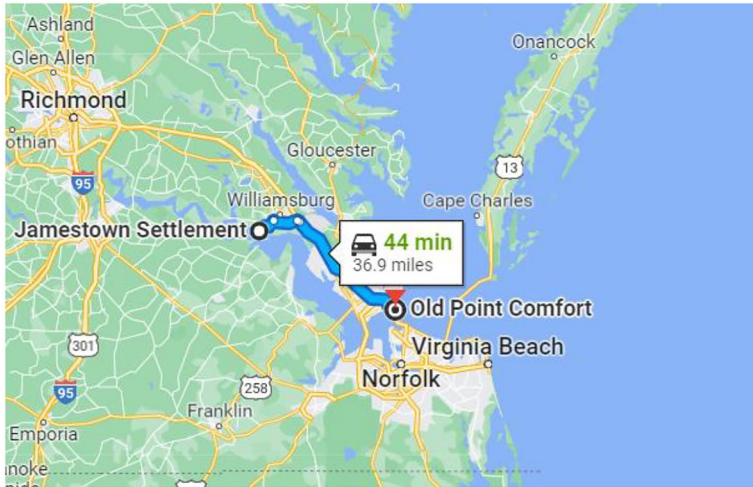


Fig. 4 Distance from Old Point Comfort to the Original Jamestown Settlement by road

sources ourselves, we came across a letter written in 1619 CE from John Rolfe to Sir Edwin Sandys where Rolfe writes thusly:

About the latter end of August, a Dutch man of Warr of the burden of a 160 tunnes arrived at Point-Comfort, the Comandors name Capt Jope, his Pilot for the West Indies one Mr Marmaduke an Englishman. They mett with the Treasurer in the West Indyes, and determined to hold consort shipp hetherward, but in their passage lost one the other. He brought not any thing but 20. and odd Negroes, which the Governor and Cape Marchant bought for victualls (whereof he was in greate need as he pretended) at the best and easyest rates they could. He hadd a lardge and ample Commyssion from his Excellency to range and to take purchase in the West Indyes. (Rolfe, 1619/1620) (idiosyncratic spelling of the original letter has been retained here as it appeared in the primary source document)

Therefore, this is the primary source document by which we know that the point of disembarkation was not Jamestown Virginia but rather Point Comfort—approximately 36.9 miles away by road. Clearly, any ship arriving from the Atlantic Ocean would arrive at Old Point Comfort long before reaching Jamestown Settlement.

Deeper research into the matter shows that the ship was actually operated by English privateers who were financed by the Dutch, and therefore flew a Dutch flag. The original ship departed from Ndongo by the Portuguese, and then in the West Indies, it was assailed by these privateers where the Afrikan=Black people were recaptured yet again and taken to Point Comfort where they were exchanged for food (Thornton, 1998). Heywood and Thornton (2019) give details of the recapture thusly:

When the Thirty Years' War broke out in 1618, the English, though not formally involved in the war, subsidized Protestant forces against the Catholics

and unofficially renewed the naval war against Spain. Soon, English privateers joined with Dutch counterparts in attacking Spanish and Portuguese vessels. The Somers Island project, linked commercially and institutionally with Virginia, was in the forefront of privateering. Somers Island subsequently broke from the Virginia Company and was renamed Bermuda. Already in 1614, the Spanish were complaining that English pirates from Bermuda had raided their coastline. In 1615, a privateer brought the first-known African to Bermuda, taken from South America. A year later, English ships captured a slave ship of the coast of Honduras.

It was in this context that two English privateers set out in 1619 to attack Spanish shipping. Because of the formal truce between Britain and Spain, they did not get their letters of Marque (license to capture enemy shipping) from England. One privateer, John Jope, captain of the *White Lion*, got his from the Dutch Prince William of Orange. The other, Daniel Elfrith, captain of the *Treasurer*, received his from the Duke of Savoy (in northern Italy).

They might have taken any ship that flew the Spanish flag (or Portuguese, because the two countries were united at that time under the Spanish king), but the privateers captured a Portuguese slave ship, the *São João Bautista*, captained by Manuel Mendes da Cunha. Departing the port of Luanda in Angola and on its way to Vera Cruz in Mexico, the ship transported 350 slaves in its initial cargo. *São João Bautista* had a difficult voyage, with a mortality so high that it had to stop in Jamaica and discharge some of its cargo before continuing. But the two English privateers got to the vessel before it reached its destination in Vera Cruz, waylaying it off Campeche in the Yucatan. They could not take all the slaves off the ship, so they split the cargo and took around thirty of the captives each (most likely the healthiest), then headed north for Virginia. (Heywood & Thornton, 2019, pp. 204-205)

In other words, the Government of Ghana websites got it all wrong. There was no ship from Jamestown, Accra to Jamestown, Virginia. The Afrikan = Black people were taken from Ndongo highlands to the east of the Portuguese port of Luanda to the West Indies with a target of Vera Cruz (New Spain, now Mexico) before being recaptured and taken to Point Comfort. Setting the record straight is clearly a case of documentation over mere conversation.

And this is what we find in the documentation. But, again, we find renowned organizations like the NAACP that one would think would be interested in facts and research, talking about Jamestown to Jamestown (NAACP, 2019). This begs the question of why they are not coming to the researchers who know how to get the primary sources, who know how to go to the archives, and who know how to do the research in order to find out what the truth is rather than simply going along with marketing and promotions.

While we have been discussing Virginia, it is worth noting here that Virginia was not even the first British colony in the “New World” with enslaved Afrikan people. Craven (1971, p. 420), speaks of.

an error, of which all too many of us have been guilty, in speaking of the Negroes carried to Virginia by the Dutchman as the first in an English colony.

Actually, Elfrith's arrival in Bermuda brought the total number of Negroes in that colony to something like thirty, and the first of them had come to the islands as early as 1616.

So, even when the cognitively dissonant try to exclude hundreds of thousands of our enslaved Afrikan=Black Ancestors from the narrative because they were not taken to British colonies, even if they inexplicably want to construct an arbitrarily anglocentric narrative, they would still have to deal with Bermuda before turning their attention to the thirteen colonies that would eventually come to be known as the USA.

Setting the Record Straight: If Not 1619, Then When?

Both the aforementioned NAACP on their Jamestown2Jamestown.com site and the Government of Ghana on its YearofReturn.com site mention "Commemorating 400 Years of the African Diaspora Experience" and how Jamestown to Jamestown is to "commemorate 400 years of African diaspora," respectively (Digital, 2019d; NAACP, 2019). Similarly, the Ministry of Finance mentions the Year of Return to "commemorate the 400 years of slavery" (MOFEP, 2019). But is this accurate? Did the "African Diaspora" turn 400 years old in the year 2019 as these sites intimate? Were there only 400 years of enslavement from 1619 CE? Even if one was to count the USA as the whole diaspora, was the first instance of enslaved Afrikans being taken to the territory that would eventually come to be known as the USA really in 1619 CE? If not, where should we start our count?

One place that we could possibly start is in 1441 CE. According to Russell-Wood (1978, p. 16):

IN 1441 ANTAO GONCALVES, the young captain of a small vessel dispatched by the infante Dom Henrique of Portugal to take on a cargo of seal skins and oil, put ashore a landing party on the coast of northern Mauretania **for the express purpose of capturing blacks**. After light skirmishing one black male and one black female were taken prisoner. Shortly afterwards, Goncalves was joined by Nuno Tristao, a knight of the infante's household, who had been commissioned to sail his armed caravel as far as possible down the coast of West Africa and take captives. The two captains combined their forces to assault coastal villages by night and succeeded in taking ten more captives. On their return to Portugal they paraded their trophies before an appreciative Dom Henrique. Initial Portuguese reaction was cool, but entrepreneurial and commercial instincts were soon fanned by the arrival in the Algarve of further consignments of blacks from the sub-Saharan region. Lancarote da Ilha, collector of royal taxes (almoxarife) in the port of Lagos, gained the infante's permission to organize a trading expedition to Mauretania. Six caravels under Lancarote's general command left Lagos **with no other objective than the capture of what were described as "black Moors."** On August 8, 1444 some 235 blacks were unloaded at Lagos. This event heralded a new era in the social, economic, and ideological history of Portugal, and its legacy was to

survive the separation in 1822 of Portugal's largest and richest colony—Brazil. **(bold emphasis added)**

This passage, particularly the parts rendered in bold, is very telling, particularly for continental and diasporan Afrikans, who, by-and-large, have been fed a narrative that keeps our colonial enemy enslavers very safe—physically and economically (which is likely why they originated the narrative in the first place). We have been taught that we enslaved ourselves. Period. This means that there should be no reparations or retribution because we—by ourselves no less—masterminded enslaving ourselves, taking our captive brothers and sisters to the apparently unwitting and unwary ships of so-called “whites” that just happened to be near the shore at the time—or so the narrative goes. We brought them no less than 35,000 times. The poor unsuspecting “whites,” who in turn must have been perplexed with the windfall of free labor, fortunately figured out something to do with the millions of Black people foisted upon them—chattel enslavement. Again, so the narrative goes. In short, you should not think anything ill of so-called “whites” (nor should you do anything to them) because you did it to yourself. However according to the primary texts and scholarly sources, we are confronted with the reality that the very beginning of the enslavement process by western Eurasians was in 1441 CE, not 1619 CE, as sent by Prince Henry the Navigator to raid for the express purpose of capturing Blacks! This is the danger of a single story. Because if one only knows about the role of other Black people but is ignorant about the facts of the whites who originated and benefitted from what they masterminded, then something is missing. And what is missing leads to the folly of the former Governor General of Canada Michaëlle Jean demanding an apology from former President Kuffour for enslavement, while the real culprits sit on the sidelines watching while laughing all the way to the bank (Canada, 2006). It is useful to note Kwame Ture's prescient statement that, “You can make no analysis in the life of an oppressed people and leave out the oppressor. Anytime you make any analysis in any aspect of life of an oppressed people and leave out the oppressor, you will blame the oppressed people for their conditions” (Kambon, 2017; Ture, 2023).

Back to our discussion of those who were captured in 1441 CE, some will argue that although they were taken across the Atlantic to Portugal, this is not truly “Transatlantic” as they did not go from the eastern to the western hemisphere. However, we will not let those suffering from cognitive dissonance escape quite that easily. We will come back to the earliest “Transatlantic” ships, and indeed, we will still be well over a century before the 1619 date that has been etched into peoples' consciousness with slick marketing. Nonetheless, we argue that to forget the thousands upon thousands of Black people who were captured and kidnapped simply because their destination does not fit the dominant narrative is to kill off the memory of our Ancestors. This is unacceptable.

Again, according to Vogt (1973, p. 2).

In his invaluable recounting of the life and deeds of Prince Henry, Gomes Eanes de Azurara tells the lamentable story of one of the first landings of Negro captives from West Africa on the beach at Lagos in August, 1444, by Lançarote de Freitas. Division was made of the proceeds of that expedi-

tion, including the 240 captives, and the latter were apportioned among the ships' captains, the armadores, and the Navigator Prince himself. Although the records for this period and those of the ensuing three decades are sparse, they indicate that the return in slaves to Portugal was considerable, numbering at least several hundred every year. During Prince Henry's lifetime, the majority of this human traffic was absorbed by the nation's first black slave market founded at the port of Lagos in the Algarve. Once the proper duties owed to the prince had been assessed, slaves were placed on the auction block there and sold to private individuals.

The lives of those several hundred Afrikan=Black people kidnapped and taken to Portugal do not fit neatly into the anglocentric 1619 CE narrative, but they matter nonetheless. And for those who are good at arithmetic, 1444 CE is clearly before 1619 CE. As such, to start our count of "400 years of African Diaspora" or "the 400 years of slavery" is wrongheaded at best (1) in its conflationist reductionism of the whole Afrikan Diaspora to just the USA, (2) in its historical inaccuracy in terms of the actual start date of enslavement, and (3) in that Afrikan=Black people were enslaved in what would eventually become the USA almost 100 years prior to the 1619 CE landing at Point Comfort (Digital, 2019d; MOFEP, 2019; NAACP, 2019). More on this, third point will be provided below.

It is important to note that Prince Henry's decision was not a case of an outlier doing his own thing. Indeed, he and others like him would soon even receive papal authorization for his nefarious activities. In the words of Leuprecht (2011, p. 76).

In his Bull, *Dum diversas* of 18 June 1452, Pope Nicolas V authorized King Alfonso V of Portugal to subjugate "the Saracens and pagans and other unbelievers and enemies of Christ" and "reduce their persons into perpetual slavery". His later Bull, *Romanus Pontifex* of 25 March 1455, is a follow-up to *Dum diversas*. It refers to the "savage excesses of the Saracens" and to the "sect of the most impious Mahomet", encourages seizure of the lands of "Saracens, pagans... and other enemies of Christ", permits the enslavement of such peoples, and confirms the Portuguese monarch's dominion over all lands discovered or conquered. (*italics in original*)

Apparently, for the pope, "Thou shalt not steal" did not apply to the Afrikans=Blacks being kidnapped and taken captive against their will. So, essentially, here we have the theft of human beings with divine sanction from the pope.

However, for those intent on consigning some Afrikan=Black Ancestors to oblivion based on their point of disembarkation in favor of a marketing strategy that favors the western hemisphere, we can go back to 1502 CE. According to Pike (1967, p. 346).

As early as 1502, a Sevillian merchant, Juan de Cordoba, sent his Negro slave and two other agents to sell merchandise for him on the island of Hispaniola. Seven years later Juan de Zafra, a Negro slave, was commissioned by his master, the well-known Sevillian physician Dr. Alvarez Chanea, to sell goods in the New World. Zafra remained in America for several years, and at his death in 1515 he was still performing the duties of a commission agent for his master.

So, from at least from 1502 CE we are dealing with Transatlantic enslavement—flying in the face of the so-called 400 years of enslavement and/or 400 years of the African diaspora as though 1619 CE is the beginning of the Afrikan diaspora.

Not only did the enslavement of Afrikan=Black people receive papal “blessing” but it was also legitimized by Ferdinand in what became institutionalization of mass transatlantic enslavement of Afrikan=Black people. So, the pope first gave his “blessing” but with this, actual political actors enforced the pope’s mandate. As articulated by Thomas (1997, p. 92).

[...] on January 22, 1510, King Ferdinand should have given authority for, first, fifty slaves to go to Hispaniola for the benefit of the mines—they had “to be the best and strongest available.” Then, three weeks later, on February 14, in Madrid, the king asked the Casa de Contratación—the new bureaucracy in Seville which managed Spanish maritime activities—to send another two hundred slaves as soon as possible, to be sold in Santo Domingo “little by little” to whosoever desired to buy them. The documents signed by the king do not specify that these slaves should be Africans, so in theory they could have been Moorish or even Canary Islanders, but there is no doubt that Africans, and Africans already in Europe, were intended.

Anecdotally, in speaking to the average Ghanaian, the perception is that only criminals were kidnapped into enslavement. However, clearly “the best and strongest available” gives us a better sense of those who were taken and how they were able to survive such harrowing conditions.

We now turn our attention to the first rebellion of enslaved Afrikan=Black people in the western hemisphere. In the words of Gomez (2005, p. 3).

On the lush island of Hispaniola in 1511, Admiral Diego Columbus, governor and son of the explorer, received a most unusual gift early Christmas morning. At the sound of the second cockcrow, some twenty enslaved persons, heretofore proscribed within what was a sizeable *ingenio*, or sugar mill and its environs, lay aside their fears and set upon a path of alteration. Intent on spreading sedition throughout the island, the insurrectionists moved to mobilize an equal number of coconspirators on neighboring establishments. Machetes in hand, they literally dismembered plantation personnel and livestock as they proceeded, initiating a ‘wild and bloody expedition under dawn’s early light.’ In their wake lay torched houses and fields, while ‘here and there in the open ground lie the decapitated bodies of unfortunate whites who [the insurgents] were able to catch off-guard.’ On December 8 they reached the cattle ranch of Melchoir de Castro, some thirty miles from the island’s capital of Santo Domingo, upon which they may have been planning an assault. By then, however, they no longer enjoyed the element of surprise; a mixed force of Europeans and indigenous persons under Melchoir de Castro’s leadership, both militia and volunteers, attacked the desperate band of Africans, effectively ending the revolt. Those not immediately killed took to the hills, only to be captured within a week. When the dust settled, some fifteen bodies were recovered, including those of at least nine Europeans; Diego Columbus reflected that if

the uprising had not been quickly quelled, many more ‘Christian’ lives would have been lost. Thus began the first collective insurrection of Africans in the Americas, a movement largely composed of Senegambians [...]

This is significant for many reasons, including the fact that this insurrection took place some 108 years prior to the supposedly magical date of 1619 that we are told marks the beginning of the “African Diaspora” (Digital, 2019d; NAACP, 2019).

There are some, however, who are not interested in the history of enslavement with regard to the entire Diaspora. These are people who want to start their count only with the landmass that would eventually come to be known as the USA. However, even those who want to practice such ulterior exclusion for reasons known best to them would still have to look long before 1619 CE to find the first enslaved Afrikan = Black people taken to what would later become the USA.

According to Cameron and Vermette (2012, p. 291),

In 1526 Lucas Vasquez de Ayllon of Spain, with a large number of colonists and slaves, established the colony of San Miguel de Gualdape. Its exact location is unknown; it was planted along the southeast coast of the United States, somewhere between the Carolinas and Georgia. There are several “firsts” associated with this colony: it was the first colony founded on current US soil; **the African slaves were the first imported to the continent (and their uprising was the first slave rebellion in North America)** [...] (bold emphasis added)

This means that while all of the aforementioned Government of Ghana websites and Year of Return representatives mention the first landing of enslaved Afrikans in what would eventually become the USA being at Jamestown, Virginia, in reality, that information is factually inaccurate. In fact, by 1526—some 93 years prior to 1619, enslaved Afrikan = Black people had not only reached the land that would come to be known as the USA but had staged a successful rebellion. Thus, the Spanish were driven off with their tail between their legs and those Afrikans became the first permanent colony—the first permanent settlement from the so-called old world to the so-called new world because they never left. The descendants of those Afrikans who won that victory are still there, their genes are still there to this very day.

However, the year before, in Central America, we have another early rebellion. According to Pike (2007, p. 245).

Black slave rebellions began very early the initial period of colonization there to replace the declining Indian population were introduced to work in the gold construction and rural labor. The first mention of a slave rebellion is in 1525. In that year Governor Pedrarias informed the king that some black slaves had risen up in the city of Panama and fled into the countryside where they had begun to attack the farms and cattle ranches in its vicinity. [...]

Although the revolt was put down and the participants executed, the danger remained. It grew in proportion to the increase in the African slave trade that resulted in the creation of a growing black slave population on the Isthmus (Pike, 2007)

For those keeping track, this is still 94 years before the magic date of 1619 CE.

In a similar vein, the Bayano wars were a series of armed conflicts on the Panama isthmus that occurred between Nana Bayano and his followers and the Spanish crown. The first of these wars took place between 1548 and 1558 CE. The second war took place from 1579 and 1582 CE. An account of the wars is as follows (Pike, 2007, p. 247):

The Governor of Panama Alvaro de Sosa (1553-1556) sent out three military expeditions beginning in 1553 against Bayano and all failed. One of them commanded by Gil Sanchez actually arrived in the area dominated by the cimarrons where they encountered Bayano who defeated them and killed their commander. Only four soldiers escaped alive. Another expedition led by that same Captain Francisco Carrefio who had destroyed the palenque of Felipillo succeeded in capturing Bayano and bringing him to Nombre de Dios." [...] Given the circumstances the Governor Alvaro de Sosa decided upon conciliation. He freed and pardoned Bayano, but this policy failed as well. The cimarrons continued their raids and they became more arrogant and daring.

Eventually, Nana Bayano was tricked into attending a feast held by the Spanish where he was poisoned, eventually captured, and taken to Spain.

In another account from Central America,

In 1570, Gaspar Yanga led a bloody rebellion of slaves in the sugar fields of Veracruz Yanga led the rebels into the mountains, where they found an inaccessible place where they could settle and could found a small town of approximately 500 people. To ensure supplies, Yanga ambushed Spanish caravans that were bringing goods to Veracruz. Yanga establish relations with neighboring slaves and Indians. During more than thirty years, Yanga and his followers lived free. (Rowell, 2008, p. 5)

For those keeping count, 1570 is 49 years before 1619. Apparently, the so-called "African Diaspora" did not get the memo that it was supposed to wait until 1619 CE to get started. Again, think of all of the enriching and empowering stories that are lost forever when we blindly believe a fake story of a phantom ship from Jamestown, Accra to Jamestown, Virginia, that never existed.

Another real story—prior to 1619—is that of Nana Benkos Biohó. Below is a brief synopsis of his rebellion of 1603:

In 1599, Benkos was sold to an enslaver, but the leadership skills that allowed him to be a great king remained with him. During his enslavement, Benkos married an African woman and became the leader of the Africans on his plantation. In 1603, Benkos rebelled and freed himself, his wife, and over 30 other enslaved people from his and neighboring plantations. The newly freed people immediately headed for the mountains and the dense forested regions. Collectively, they established the village [of San Basilio del Palenque]. [San Basilio del Palenque] was established as a home for Africans who were stolen from their land and taken to Colombia. Thus, this palenque (a name that is used to describe Maroon places of refuge) was founded for Africans to re-establish their traditions and be free.

In order to maintain their freedom, on numerous occasions, the [San Basilio del Palenque] Palenqueros fought European armies, which were sent by the Spanish Crown. The [San Basilio del Palenque] palenquero warriors, under the leadership of King Benkos, used guerrilla tactics (strategic positioning and ambushes) to defeat the European armies. Rather than suffer further military embarrassments, in the year 1612, the Spanish crown offered a peace treaty to Benkos and the people of [San Basilio del Palenque]. The treaty established [San Basilio del Palenque] Palenqueros as free people. After the peace treaty was signed, it was common to see Benkos walking the streets of Cartagena as a free African. While touring the city, Benkos would often walk past enslaved Africans and there were times that he would attempt to free them.

After seven years of peace between [San Basilio del Palenque] and the Spanish Europeans, the Spanish violated the treaty that they created and imprisoned Benkos. He was jailed for two years, and in 1621, they killed Benkos and symbolically sent parts of his body to different regions of Colombia.

After the death of Benkos, [San Basilio del Palenque] Palenqueros continued their fight. They were victorious in numerous battles against armies from both Santa Monica (which is in Colombia) and Cartagena. Palenqueros also successfully freed many enslaved Africans who were trapped on the plantations.

In 1691, the Spanish Crown issued a Royal Decree, pledging freedom to all inhabitants of Palenque. (Shockley & LeNiles, 2019, p. 368)

Again, the 1603 date of Nana Benkos Biohó's insurrection predates the supposed 400 years of the "African Diaspora" in 1619 by 16 years. Again, it seems the "African Diaspora" missed the memo!

An equally formidable free society established by Afrikan = Black people is that of the legendary Palmares in Brazil:

The foundation of Palmares [...] appears to have taken place in 1605/06, possibly earlier, but certainly not later. As the report of 1612 indicates, the first Portuguese expedition against Palmares attained little by way of military victory. (Kent, 1965, p. 165)

Writing of the free societies that existed in Brazil—before 1619,

In 1597, a Jesuit Father, Pero Rodrigues, was able to write that the 'foremost enemies of the colonizer are revolted Negroes from Guiné in some mountain areas, from where they raid and give much trouble, and the time may come when they will dare to attack and destroy farms as their relatives do on the island of Sao Thome'. (Kent, 1965, p. 164)

A similar recounting occurs below, which mentions Palmares by name:

In the Captaincy of Pernambuco, reported a high official in 1612, some 30 leagues inland, there is a site between mountains called Palmares which harbours runaway slaves ... whose attacks and raids force the whites into armed pursuits which amount to little for they return to raid again. ... This makes it impossible to ... end the transgressions which gave Palmares its reputation." (p. 164)

Both 1597 CE and 1612 CE predate 1619 CE. These are just a few examples of the existence of Afrikan=Black people who were enslaved in the western hemisphere that, apparently, do not fit neatly into the 1619 CE marketing campaign or the myth of the founding of the “African Diaspora” in that year.

The Forgotten Eastern Diaspora Is Also Older Than 1619 CE

While our attention has been focused on the western diaspora, if we are going to take into account our brothers and sisters who were enslaved in the eastern hemisphere of the Afrikan=Black Diaspora in recent times, we must go back nearly 1000 years prior to 1619 CE. According to (Pandya & Rawal, 2002),

The first Muslims in Gujarat to have arrived are the Siddis via the Bharuch port in 628 AD ... The major group, though, arrived in 712 AD via Sindh and the north.... With the founding of Ahmedabad in 1411 AD it became the concentrated base of the community....

Again, 628 CE is way before 1619 CE—to the tune of 991 years before. In the same vein, we must be allowed to remember Afrikan=Black people who were enslaved by Eurasians in general, not just those of the westernmost peninsula of Eurasia that pretends to be a continent (e.n. so-called Europe). The broad umbrella term Eurasians includes the Arabs, the Indo-Aryans, the French, the Germans, the Russians, and Chinese, among many others, as all of them are on one landmass called Eurasia.

As such, at the very least we have to go back to the time of the Arabs who were enslaving Black people across the “Red Sea” and the “Indian Ocean.” And we go back to 868, The Zanj revolt recounted thusly:

The largest revolt by enslaved Africans was ignited by the Zanj against Arab slavers. The Zanj or Zinj were the inhabitants of the land along the coast of East Africa. They were traded as slaves by Arabs and were made to work in the cruel and humid salt pans of Shatt-al-Arab, near Basra in modern-day Iraq. Conscious of their large numbers and oppressive working conditions, the Zanj rebelled three times. The largest of these rebellions lasted from 868 to 883 A.D., during which they inflicted repeated defeat on Arab armies sent to suppress the revolt. For some 14 years, they continued to achieve remarkable military victories and even built their own capital—Moktara, the Elect City. (Shahadah, 2002)

Now if we are again going to deal with the enslavement of indigenous Black people we can even go long before that to around 1650 BCE up to 1550 BCE. This is according to Nana Manetho who was writing in the third century BCE where he talks about the enslavement of the 𐤀𐤍𐤏𐤍 *Kmt(yw)* “Black people” at the hands of the 𐤏𐤍𐤏𐤍 *ḥkꜣw ḥꜣswt* ‘Hyksos’ (Kambon & Songsore, 2019). This subject will be dealt with at length in Kambon and Songsore (2019) in order to (1) debunk the biblical fairy tale of 400 years of captivity and (2) debunk the effort to link the enslavement of Black people to the biblical fairy tale.

Fig. 5 Ignorance manifest in the form of a “We are not our Ancestors we will fight” t-shirt



Conclusion

In conclusion, we ask the question of who is erasing the memories of over 500,000+ enslaved Afrikans and for what purpose? In the words of Nana Carter G. Woodson—writing with regard to the teacher’s responsibility to the youth—he writes “The teacher must hold up before them the examples of their own people, who have done things worth while. Those who have no record of what their forbears have accomplished lose the inspiration which comes from the teaching of biography and history.” (Woodson, 2008, p. iii).

This is evident in the person of the very descendants of those who fought and won wear T-shirts (Fig 5) that say “We are not our ancestors we will fight”—that these keyboard warriors ironically purchase online via those who they are supposed to be fighting against. Our Ancestors actually fought, and all of that evidence is documented with much of it coming before 1619 CE as this cursory glance provided in the body of this study clearly indicates. One must truly marvel at what an insult that is to our Ancestors who fought tooth and nail to free us—in many cases long before 1619 CE—the 400-year box where we have unceremoniously been held in conceptual incarceration for the sake of a quasi-religious fairy tale coupled with a slick marketing campaign. In a similar vein, there is a proverb in the Gbe languages that states *Gnatola ma no kpon sia, eyenabe adelan to kpo mi sena*. “Until the lion has his or her own storyteller the hunter will always have the best part of the story” (Speake, 2015, p. 95). Where is our part of the story told by us, the descendants, about the gallant resistance in their valiant efforts to fight our collective enemies and adversaries? As a Gurune proverb states: *Naba-Awine ka bore nua noore ge, pegeta ka koboro bora ka*. “The Supreme Being would not preen the feathers of the fowl which it has endowed

with a beak (Afrikan=Black people have been endowed by Naba-Awine to sustain themselves against their aggressors).”

An Afrikan=Black proverb states “A man is not dead until he is forgotten” (Courlander et al., 1987, p. 12). We argue that the historically inaccurate 400 years narrative deletes the memory of the hundreds of thousands of our Afrikan=Black ancestors on the basis of a marketing campaign and/or biblical fairy tales. We are of the view that, as researchers, we have to deal with primary research based on truth over profitable biblical fairy tales referring to some mythical 400 years. We shudder to think about all of the Afrikan=Black people of Ghana and the Diaspora who, having gotten their information from yearofreturn.com and other Government of Ghana websites (not to mention countless other media houses that covered the numerous events that formed the campaign), repeat misinformation regarding the “400 Years of the African Diaspora Experience” or the “400 years of African diaspora” or the equally appalling “the 400 years of slavery” (Digital, 2019d; MOFEP, 2019; NAACP, 2019) as though enslavement of Afrikan=Black people started 400 years ago or as though the “African Diaspora” itself started in 1619 CE! It is conflationary reductionism to make the USA experience equivalent to the entirety of the African Diaspora—especially when, as we have demonstrated above—even the enslavement of Afrikan=Black people in what would eventually become the USA did not even begin in 1619 CE but in 1526 CE.

However, we are well aware that due to conceptual incarceration, there are those who will not cease and desist from their adherence to comforting (and/or profitable) fairy tales. To those, we leave them to their own devices. As an Ancestral proverb in the Akan tradition states: *Nwansenampobire ampa funu hu a, yede no sie* “If the blow fly does not leave the corpse, we bury it” (Appiah et al., 2001, p. 213). In other words, if in the face of facts and historical evidence they refuse to discard clear 400 years narrative misinformation, they will be buried with it.

In short, not only can our reckoning of enslavement not start with 1619 CE, it must also extend beyond 2019 CE to the present day unless and until Afrikan=Black people develop the *Abibitumi* “Black Power” to abolish it and to enforce its abolition on the Eurasians and their wretched progeny who continue to perpetuate, maintain, and expand contemporary enslavement at our expense.

Data Availability Data sharing not applicable to this article as no datasets were generated or analyzed during the current study.

Declarations

Consent to Participate The image that had the faces of persons has been cropped to remove them.

Competing Interests The authors declare no competing interests.

Research Involving Human Participants and/or Animals This research did not involve human participants or animals.

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