

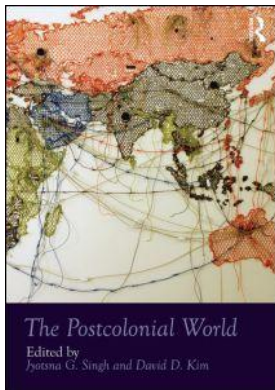
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## **The Postcolonial World**

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### **Subaltern Archives, Digital Historiographies**

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## CHAPTER TWENTY

SUBALTERN ARCHIVES, DIGITAL  
HISTORIOGRAPHIES

*Angel David Nieves and Siobhan Senier*

A critical project among scholars who have convened around the movement calling itself #dhpoco is what we might call subaltern archives – digital projects devoted to “history from below.” These projects are anti-elite, anti-colonial, and anti-essentialist; they are concerned with questions of representation, identity, modernization, and power. As facilitators of subaltern archives, we retain the hope that digital technologies can represent and empower marginalized groups committed to social and political change. Far from naively celebrating the digital realm, however, we find it to be a powerful terrain for working through persistent questions of power and access.

Subaltern Studies has been particularly concerned, on the one hand, to recover histories of revolt and resistance normally excluded from official archives and, on the other, to provide a rigorous accounting of how subjects are constituted *by* power even as they resist it. As scholars who tend to lean more heavily on the side of recognizing marginalized people’s agency, we appreciate the argument that “power needs to be located in the spatial and temporal realities of social activities, and [that] this requires a disaggregation and examination of the processes through which it is produced, exercised, limited and appropriated.”<sup>1</sup> For us, digital sites constitute new spatial and temporal activities within which colonial power can be disaggregated and examined. Whereas subaltern readings have had to take place “against the grain,” as it were, of traditional print and paper archives and historiography, digital sites can be living documents allowing continual revision, contest, and expansion and thus the inclusion of ever more voices and perspectives.<sup>2</sup>

We aspire to decolonize online spaces and technologies by building archives devoted to insurgent histories, by collaborating with marginalized groups in that building, and by learning how such groups build their own archives in the first place. At the same time, we try to stay attuned to the ways in which such efforts remain vulnerable to co-optation or, in some cases, to cessation. In this essay, we describe two sites. *Writing of Indigenous New England* is a crowd-sourced, online anthology of literature produced by the first peoples of this region, from before the so-called first contact to the present.<sup>3</sup> *The Virtual Freedom Trail Project* documents the physical spaces (houses, apartments, offices, meeting places) used in Tanzania during the struggle against South African apartheid.<sup>4</sup>

At first glance, this analysis seems like an unusual geographic and disciplinary juxtaposition, but both projects target huge erasures in dominant discourses and dominant archives. Both sites aim to create space for histories that have been assiduously preserved by specific communities, yet rendered invisible by colonial archives and discourses. Both bear witness to the variety of strategies that communities traumatized by colonialism have used and still use to remember their past and prepare for the future. And both document micro-geographies of resistance to colonial violence, whether that resistance appears in action, in built forms, or in *story*. These are all affective processes of memory-making and imagining future possibilities through digital technologies.

New England and Tanzania, for us, are representative of places worldwide that have been construed as lacking in subaltern resistance and survival. But forgetting those histories of resistance is politically problematic for many reasons, primarily because it denies the potential for building broader cultures of democracy. How, we ask, can (always) emergent digital archives help challenge such assumptions? And how, we ponder, can our two disciplines contribute to the building of such archives? Granting that there is no “pure” academic field from which to launch subaltern projects, how might literature and architectural history, among other disciplines, make space for subaltern voices?<sup>5</sup>

### WRITING OF INDIGENOUS NEW ENGLAND: AGAINST REGIONAL HISTORY AND CANONICAL LITERATURE (SIOBHAN SENIER)

*Writing of Indigenous New England* has grown out of a print anthology that is itself an attempt to decolonize the archive. *Dawnland Voices: An Anthology of Indigenous Writing from New England* (2014), nearly 700 pages long, includes the writing of 11 tribal nations, from the Mi'kmaq of northern Maine and the Maritimes to the Schaghticoke of southern Connecticut. It ranges from some of the earliest pictographs and English-language political petitions to present-day poetry, fiction, and blogs. It seeks to decolonize the archive in two ways: first, by asserting the *continuous presence* of Native American people and writing; second, by decolonizing the very process of anthologizing.

The myth of the vanishing Indian exercises special force in New England, the location of Puritan arrival and therefore of U.S. national origin myths. That force, in turn, owes a great deal to colonial history and archives. Jill Lepore, for example, has traced how the earliest Puritan historians narrated (and re-narrated) King Philip's War (1675–1676) as the effective “end” of Native presence in the northeast. Jean O'Brien (Ojibwe) pursues this colonial project through eighteenth- and nineteenth-century town histories in her aptly titled *Firsting and Lasting: Writing Indians Out of Existence in New England*. Year after year, O'Brien finds, local historians eulogized “the last of the tribe” – so enthusiastically and consistently, in fact, that they created a landscape “thickly populated by ‘last’” members of a given “race” (113).<sup>6</sup> These suppositions continue to the present day, where regional Native people face the supposition that they no longer really exist, or that those who would assert their heritage and rights are merely “casino-grubbing.” Historians like Lepore, O'Brien, and Colin Calloway have attempted to correct these legacies from within

their own discipline. In gathering the writing of indigenous people themselves, however, *Dawnland Voices* provides an alternative archive, one that documents Native people's persistence and survival.

Literary anthologies carry a heavy burden of taste- and nation-making; by their very nature, these tomes make lofty claims to represent what Matthew Arnold famously calls "the best that has been thought and said." Standard classroom texts like the *Norton Anthology of World Literature* purport to give comprehensive coverage of Great Works that have withstood the Test of Time; the *Best American Poetry* series implies the highest standards of taste, and yokes those standards to national pride. Thus, Karen Kilcup, herself a thoughtful anthologist, has said there is no escaping this central fact: "an anthology creates a miniature canon, no matter how resistant the editor is to the vexed notions of goodness and importance."<sup>7</sup> *Dawnland Voices* pushed back against this impulse to fix categories of taste and value in print. It redistributed the evaluation of literary value to a much wider range of people than the usual editorial team or individual – and made this evaluation an ongoing process. Compiled by a team of a dozen tribal editors and coordinated by Siobhan Senier, *Dawnland Voices* reevaluated what falls under the broad rubric of world literature. The community editors are highly regarded scholars and knowledge keepers, including archivist Joan Avant (Wampanoag), tribal historic preservation officer Donald Soctomah (Passamaquoddy), literary historian Lisa Brooks (Abenaki), linguist Stephanie Fielding (Mohegan), and others. They used highly variable, community-specific methods of gathering and soliciting their materials – sometimes consulting with family members, sometimes with tribal councils; sometimes soliciting new writings through tribal newsletters, and sometimes vetting the proposed writings through formal committees.

As we prepared *Dawnland Voices* to go to press, we began to feel the limitations of the print medium. Averaging only 50 pages per tribal nation, the book barely scratched the surface of the wealth of writing that regional Native people had produced: historic petitions; letters and diaries; tribal newsletters and periodicals; recipes; oral histories and children's stories; memoirs, poetry, fiction, and plays. Nor could a print volume reflect the new knowledge about these texts and writers that was continually emerging in the process of talking with tribal members about them: recollections of how a tribal newsletter ran out of funding, for instance, or which poems have been recited at powwows over the years, or how non-Native editors and scholars affected the production of a particular book. Nor, finally, could a print volume really represent the state of tribal archives. Most tribal communities do *have* archives of their own, although they may be in a variety of preservation and access situations: some, like the Mohegan Tribal Archives in Connecticut, are basically private; others, like the Tomaquag Indian Museum in Rhode Island, seek to be public with tribal control, but lack funding. Still others, like a wide range of tribal offices, have impromptu collections of filing cabinets catalogued more or less in the heads of individual historic preservation officers; and still other individual elders retain shoeboxes, attics, and garages full of family photographs and tribal letters, documents that are vastly uninventoried and unprotected.

Digital collections, we considered, are living documents in some ways not unlike oral histories: they can be expanded, amended, and contested. They can increase access to particular stories and materials, help preserve those stories in different

forms and make new visions and questions possible. And they can prompt the creation of new cultural heritage material in the form of community annotation and response. Therefore, we began to extend the work of *Dawnland Voices* to *Writing of Indigenous New England*. This began as a pedagogical project: Siobhan Senier enlisted her students to research and write brief introductions to the work of regional Native authors, partnering students with living authors (for contemporary literature courses) or with tribal historians and/or local historical societies (for earlier literature courses). Local historical societies and scholars at other institutions have begun to express interest in partnering on this project.<sup>8</sup>

The most successful exhibit to date is *Along the Basket Trail*, a partnership with the Mt. Kearsarge Indian Museum in Warner, New Hampshire. To consider baskets as “texts” is already to decolonize canons of alphabetic literacy and primacy. The Mt. Kearsarge Museum had already staged a traveling exhibit of its remarkable collection of northeastern indigenous baskets and wanted a digital exhibit to record it. Even better, the curators conceived this exhibit from the beginning as crowd-sourced. While they were drawing from their own collections, they also held “Out of the Attic” days, when they encouraged local residents to bring in baskets they had in their homes – a la *Antiques Road Show* – for assessment with an expert in Abenaki baskets. The curators understood, then, that museum collections do not tell the whole story, that many items wind up in personal collections, and contain personal stories about their origins. UNH students helped translate the traveling exhibit to the online platform, actively consulting with local basketmakers and tribal historians as they wrote up the exhibit text. In this mutually beneficial model, tribal artists and historians, who did not have the time or resources to build corrective online exhibits themselves, got help in doing so, while students got real-life writing and research experience.<sup>9</sup>

*Writing of Indigenous New England* owes a great deal to indigenous digital heritage projects that have come before it.<sup>10</sup> Most of them pursue “digital repatriation,” whereby libraries, museums, and other heritage institutions create electronic surrogates of original materials, which are then theoretically available to the source communities that created them. For example, at *Gibagadinamaagoom* (an Ojibwe word meaning “to bring to life, to sanction, to give permission”) a birchbark drawing of a thunderbird, from collections at the American Philosophical Society, is surrounded by the voices of Ojibwe knowledge-keepers. Instead of the usual thumbnail images, metadata, and explanatory captions, the site yields to elders telling “their own history, in their own language, and on their own cultural terms.”<sup>11</sup> The *Yale Indian Papers Project* (YIPP), meanwhile, addresses the problem in New England Indian historiography mentioned above: the relentless re-narrating of Indian disappearance, even when there exist primary documents that tell a different story. YIPP is building a massive database of high-quality, open-access facsimiles and annotated transcriptions in close consultation with tribal community members. Paul Grant-Costa and his colleagues explain:

we . . . recognize that we cannot speak for all the disciplines that have a stake in our work, nor do we represent the perspective of Native people themselves. . . . Consultants’ annotations might include Native origin stories, oral sources, and traditional beliefs while also including Euro-American original sources of the same historical event or phenomena, thus offering two kinds of narratives of the past.<sup>12</sup>

In these projects, close consultation with indigenous people and space for indigenous interpretation are key. Everybody working in this area owes a huge debt to the anthropologist Kimberly Christen, a leader in the international conversation around digital repatriation. Originally working with an Australian Aboriginal community to create a digital catalog of photographs and video taken during her fieldwork, Christen found that tribal members had a complex rubric for what images should be shared, and with whom: some were open to all; others were meant for specific kin groups; still others should be made available only to people with particular ritual knowledge. Christen translated this model – this ability to complicate the usual dichotomies of public/private, open/closed – into Mukurtu, a content-management system that allows communities to establish their own protocols for sharing, viewing, and curating materials. She says:

If the colonial idea of the archive was to collect and store the world's treasures for the betterment of mankind, this emerging . . . archive is part of an intimate set of kinship relations and a dynamic socioterritorial network that rubs up against national territorial boundaries and legal structures aimed at protecting indigenous culture.<sup>13</sup>

Tribal protocols and relations, rather than the demands of the settler gaze, structure these post or (anti-) colonial archives.

As we discuss at the end of this essay, conversations around intellectual property are still only a first step in decolonizing digital archives. Many of the biggest and best-funded projects to date center on indigenous collections held by *non*-Native institutions. They sidestep the simple fact that most tribal people *have* archives of their own, and that they *want* to digitize much of this information in the interest of disseminating it more broadly to tribal members – including younger tribal members and people living off-reservation – as well as to the general public. The invisibility of tribal stories and tribal ways of knowing and keeping stories is an ongoing concern, even on the “open” Web. So while Native people *will* ensure that their cultural patrimony is protected, we still need a larger conversation about redistributing some of the basic material resources for archives and digitization.

**THE VIRTUAL FREEDOM TRAIL PROJECT:  
ARCHIVING WOMEN'S CONTRIBUTION TO  
THE LIBERATION STRUGGLE IN SOUTHERN  
AFRICA (ANGEL DAVID NIEVES)**

First announced in 2005<sup>14</sup> and unveiled in 2011, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) funded “Roads to Independence: African Liberation Heritage Programme” marked the fiftieth anniversary of liberation from colonial rule in Tanzania and the onset of a wave of freedom for African countries across the continent. The project in question was

an acknowledgement of the importance of liberation movements to the process of decolonization of the continent as well as the role played by Tanzania in providing material and moral support to the liberation movements which led to the struggle for independence in southern Africa.<sup>15</sup>



The project would initially focus on Tanzania and the SADC (Southern African Development Community) countries whose liberation movements were based in Tanzania during the struggles against colonization. Those countries supported by Tanzania during the liberation struggle included Angola, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. Critical to the success of the program were the dual goals of sustaining research into the complex history of the liberation struggle across southern (and eastern) Africa and the ability to build the capacity of heritage professionals in the “strategic management and presentation of Africa’s liberation heritage.”<sup>16</sup> In Tanzania, efforts to begin the process of identifying, surveying, recording, and documenting sites also resulted from the passage of the Ministry of Natural Resources, Division of Antiquities 2008 Cultural Heritage Policy. As noted in one of the first reports issued by the Ministry in 2010, resulting from support provided by the Swedish National Heritage Board (and only coincidentally resulting from UNESCO’s proposed Liberation Heritage Route),

[i]t is upon this legal, administrative framework and custodianship that the Division of Antiquities decided to undertake studies aiming at identification, documentation and dissemination of African Liberation Heritage sites to enable their legal protection and conservation for present and future generations.<sup>17</sup>

As a result of my own oral history research in South Africa, surrounding the events of June 16th, 1976, and the subsequent deaths of countless students at the

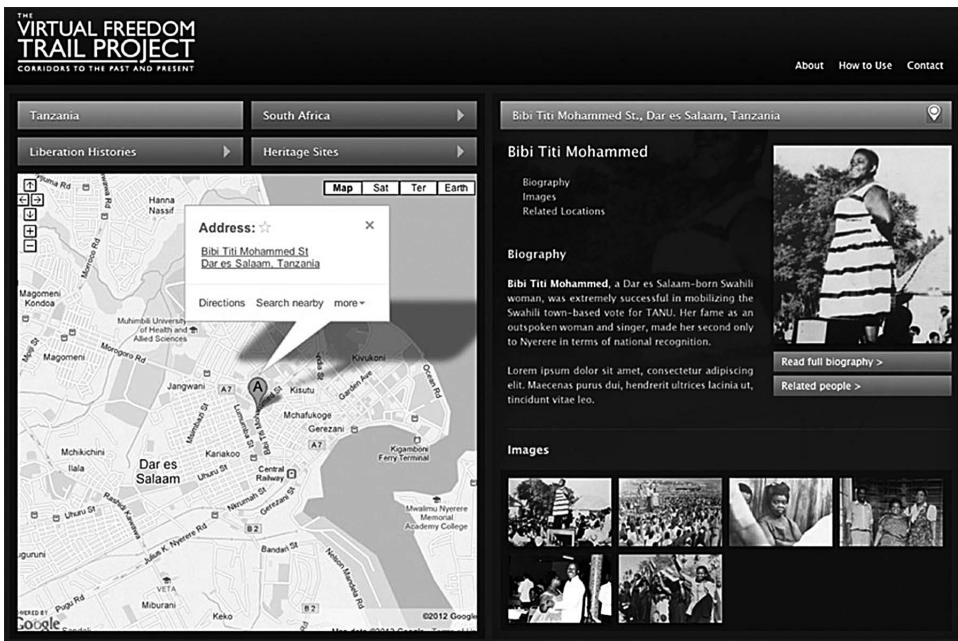


Figure 20.1 From *The Virtual Freedom Trail Project*.  
Open Source: <http://www.dhinitiative.org/projects/vftp>

hands of the apartheid government, I became aware of Tanzania's role in providing a safe harbor for young men and women from Johannesburg's Soweto township. After some discussion with a colleague at Hamilton College, it became clear to us that a project was desperately needed. We decided that through a unique cross-disciplinary partnership – between a women's studies scholar (Jaksch) who was a subject expert on women and social movements in Tanzania, and an architectural historian (myself) – we could address the uneven portrayal of women in this complex history. We designed *The Virtual Freedom Trail Project* (VFTP) to document the participation of Tanzanian women in the anti-apartheid struggle and to engage its very subjects in the co-production of the archive, the better to investigate the silences in existing historical scholarship, contemporary political discourses, nationalist histories, and the archive itself. Using geospatial technologies and ethnographic field research, this archive reveals a rich network of spaces and places related to liberation movements occurring across sub-Saharan Africa.

*The Virtual Freedom Trail* uses a unique mapping application to provide both broad and specific access to the historical records and places that tell the story of the struggles for freedom in both Tanzania and South Africa. At its broadest scale, this interface provides users with an enhanced map, offering a number of useful, pre-selected features that allow users to focus their interest on either Tanzania or South Africa, or onto specific locations that serve as important liberation histories or heritage sites.

From there, the map will provide access to individual locations, both through clickable map “pins” or a list of locations and related people in a central column. Once a user selects one of these locations or topics, the interface will adapt and display a rich database record of various multimedia information about their selection. These media will include, at least, biographies, images, relevant locations associated with the record, and links to similar or related database entries. This interface is designed to provide both specific, targeted searches, and general browsing and explorability of the large dataset that makes up the *Virtual Freedom Trail's* project archive. The initial work has raised much interest in Tanzania, but it is delayed pending development of a suitable platform and host for the project.

The VFTP, begun in 2009 in Tanzania and South Africa, may well be seen as an analogue to similar efforts in the development of heritage routes and corridors such as these across the United States. The United States, itself emerging from centuries of gender, racial, and ethnic inequality, is now actively embracing a heritage of diversity – memorializing as it has the Civil Rights Movement with the National Park Service's *Historic Places of the Civil Rights Movement* and the *Alabama Black Heritage History Trail*, and likewise, American feminism with the *Women's Rights National Historical Park* in Seneca Falls, New York. In the past decade, historic sites of the Civil Rights Movement and heritage tourism have emerged across the U.S. South. Numerous state and local counties have begun to actively commemorate their unique civil rights histories.

The VFTP examines postcolonial history in Tanzania and its critical relationship with South Africa, including the almost 20-year period of exile of many young South Africans to Tanzania. Beginning in the 1960s, Tanzania played a leading role in the pan-African struggle for continent-wide independence, providing a safe-haven for anti-apartheid activists with then President Julius Nyerere committed to solidarity



with other African liberation movements. While there had been waves of South African exiles secretly making their way out of South Africa to Tanzania for decades, it was not until the Student Uprisings in 1976 that a massive influx of exiles – mostly youth – arrived in Tanzania. With the growing number of exiles there it was decided that schools and training centers needed to be established in Tanzania. Little has been documented about the many youth that fled South Africa to receive educational and vocational training in unique, largely self-reliant model communities there. Significantly, the use of new media and information technologies connecting Tanzania to the history of South Africa’s struggle against apartheid has not yet been implemented.

While the stories of the struggles of anti-apartheid resistance in South Africa have become more widely known and celebrated, the contributions of an economically beleaguered Tanzania remain mostly invisible. Scholars have widely accepted the notion that the lack of extant archival sources in Tanzania is due to political restrictions originating in South Africa placed on the ANC. Interestingly, ANC papers, minutes, plans, discussions, or resolutions in South Africa were almost always destroyed to prevent incriminating evidence from falling in the hands of the apartheid state. In Tanzania, however, many of the documents and papers related to the struggle against apartheid remain unknown to researchers simply because of a lack of resources for their conservation and promotion. A unique opportunity exists to begin the process of cataloguing these extant material artifacts, documents, and holdings from these schools and settlements. Through the VFTP project, exiles, of the South African and Tanzanian Diaspora, will no longer remain passive participants in the truth-telling process; they become actively enlisted participants and users in ways that were never previously possible before the advent of digital media.

In South Africa, the legacy of apartheid has meant a constant engagement with cultural trauma and its impact on all aspects of social life, particularly for township residents beginning in the early twentieth century. Few studies have considered the historical significance of South Africa’s townships as extant physical artifacts of a difficult past; however, they now face the complex heritage issues and concurrent pressures of the international tourist market. Do the meaning and significance (as sites of trauma, for residents) of these planned communities defer to the competing interests of urban redevelopment, large-scale heritage planning, and globalization? In the face of a rapidly developing heritage market and a growing foreign tourism industry in South Africa, how might we address some of the similar issues we might encounter in an environment such as Tanzania where little tourist development has centered on the liberation struggle?

A blog post sent to me by a colleague reminded me that much of the work that we have been engaged in through collaboration with communities is what the Lesbian Herstory Archives calls “radical archiving.”<sup>18</sup> We can easily deconstruct and take issue with the term “radical,” but in many ways those of us working at the intersections of archive-making, virtual world development, and historical reconstructions have grappled with a series of complex social justice issues while working within communities that have been adversely impacted by the work of architects and planners in service to the state. Apartheid planning and architecture were the direct results of serious human rights violations perpetuated by a state that was based entirely on racial violence against anyone other than those labeled “white.” For many South African freedom fighters who escaped to Tanzania, alternative settlements, schools, and

training bases were opened across the country as a response to the spatial oppression they faced back home.

Between 1978 and 1992 several thousand young exiles studied, trained, and worked at the Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College in Tanzania. As a result of the 1976 Soweto Uprising many young men and women fled to urban centers across the continent seeking a place of refuge and new freedoms in countries sympathetic to the anti-apartheid struggle. In 1978 the Government of Tanzania gave the ANC two large tracts of farmland at Mazimbu and Dakawa near the city of Morogoro. Facilities were built for schooling (from nursery through adult education levels), for healthcare, farming, horticulture, small industries, sports, and administration. All of these facilities were built to support the social, political, and economic struggle against apartheid while also creating “an exceptionally wide support base, which in turn promoted the image and assisted the funding of the movement (ANC) as a whole.”<sup>19</sup> Very few publications have discussed the direct influence school and settlement sites across Tanzania and elsewhere had on the many liberation movements against apartheid, colonialism, and imperialism beginning in 1960s and lasting to the 1990s. The international dimensions of the anti-apartheid struggle occurred across many sites in Europe and Africa. With the banning of the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA) in 1950 and the ban on liberation movements, more broadly, after the Sharpeville Massacre of March 1960, many people fled the country. Sean Morrow and Lyiso Pulumani’s 2004 publication *Education in Exile SOMAFCO, The ANC School in Tanzania, 1978 to 1992* brought much attention to this little understood history.<sup>20</sup> Pethu Serote’s earlier article of 1993, “Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College: A Unique South African Educational Experience in Tanzania” provided an in-depth look at efforts to build uniquely alternative South African spaces within the boundaries of Nyerere’s African socialism.

In South Africa, over the past ten years, growing concern over the preservation of documents related to the liberation struggle of the 1970s against apartheid has spurred new theoretical, methodological, and pedagogical questions over the making of web-based archives for local community-based township museums. The VFPT proposes the potential for an African digital history to interrogate the conditions of life histories of human rights violations by examining those conditions for their “emancipatory potential and their capacity for instituting dialogical forms of historical consciousness between the testimony donors and possible communities of witness” on the Internet.<sup>21</sup> In other words, can those stories about life under apartheid actually effect change among their viewership on the Internet? Can “radical archive” making act as a form of advocacy, alongside efforts to promote a form of restorative social justice?

As cultural studies scholar Chela Sandoval has argued in *Methodology of the Oppressed*, the world inhabited by wired, technologized, privileged subjects requires a shift in educational preparation and cultural expertise such that “the technologies developed by [and with] subjugated populations to negotiate this realm of shifting meanings can prove indispensable.”<sup>22</sup> Placing various technologies in the hands of “subjugated populations” allows for new kinds of engagements to occur. The rise of network technologies has now allowed a diverse group of users to actively express and interrogate their racial, gendered, national, and class identities. We have seen the power of the Internet to transform the political, social, and economic future of a nation – for example, here in the US with Obama’s first election, with the many “Arab

Springs” that have occurred across the Middle East, and within countries across the African continent including Liberia, Rwanda, and South Africa. I see the emancipatory potential of the Internet and new digital technologies for disclosing as yet untold stories about the anti-apartheid movement which not only impacted South Africans, but which was a worldwide movement. In South Africa those post-apartheid identities have largely been mediated through what Deborah Posel sees as the “avowedly normative, officializing project of the truth commission [or Truth & Reconciliation Commission].”<sup>23</sup> This project was in some ways developed to address the failures of the Truth & Reconciliation Commission of the mid-1990s to adequately address the role of women in the struggle against apartheid – particularly those women and their historical agency about whom we (as outsiders to that story) know so little. Most recently, the field of e-Black Studies advocates social change, as outlined in its manifesto, where it states clearly: “We work to promote eBlack Studies as an interdisciplinary study of Black life and information communications technology across the African Diaspora based on an engaged model of praxis-centered, community advocacy.”<sup>24</sup>

Black feminist scholarship during the past 30 years or so, I would argue, has made so many of us more conscious of the importance of letting women speak about their experiences as a legitimate way of questioning dominant paradigms of knowing and even unknowing. The popularity of oral histories, on the web, in recent years, reflects an attempt to capture the voices of immediate experiences, but as has been pointed out, many of these “so-called voices . . . are mediated (edited, translated, corrected) by ‘intellectuals’ working in the academy” or even in libraries and repositories already strapped for resources.<sup>25</sup> As seen across South Africa, resources are needed to preserve intangible heritage and even extant cultural heritage (artifacts, buildings, material objects, etc.), in part because of the unequal access of Black heritage professionals to digital projects such as the Liberation Heritage Route. White heritage professionals and historians retain their intellectual stranglehold over the reinterpretation of apartheid’s legacy and the history of Black spatial agency in the liberation movement.

The VFPT incorporates visual ethnographies, audio diaries/life histories, digital mapping, and archival evidence to create a dynamic virtual trail with resistance sites as complex living places. We are proposing a “network of nested multi-modal spatial narratives”<sup>26</sup> in relation to a thorough media-rich, interactive “map” of the accompanying historic site. These media-rich site maps feature details about each location within Tanzania and South Africa (and where applicable, in the United States) and are mapped and linked (or nested) to testimonies, inventories, bibliographies, scholarship, historic images/3D models, geospatial data (including GIS), texts, and audio. Clearly, this “mapping” is not intended to result in merely describing the geographic, topographic, and spatial features of resistance as it was manifested in several sites in Tanzania and South Africa. Rather, the goals of the project require that we utilize creative and innovative methodological approaches that will allow us a better, more complex understanding of what is commonly referred to as heritage resulting from state oppression and violence in post-conflict societies.

While we acknowledge that there are already a number of web-based oral history projects and archival collections on South Africa’s struggle against apartheid, no site currently attempts to incorporate Tanzania’s critical role (or the Diaspora) in the anti-apartheid movement through exile narratives.<sup>27</sup> For the VFPT, the historical experiences of struggle of the South African anti-apartheid movements will be

integrated into a larger region-wide study of resistance movements, alliances, solidarities, exile, and refugees in Tanzania.

I would also argue that the link between “human rights” and the preservation of cultural heritage resources – particularly those in the built environment – is often misunderstood. Nations must apologize and/or offer compensation for historical injustices if there is to be a process of healing and remembrance. If we are truly seeking social justice, we must remember these historical injustices and recognize how they continue to shape identities even today. Therefore, it is essential to understand cultural heritage resources as a part of peoples’ efforts to maintain and construct their own identity within a reconciliation process. Historic sites are critical elements in the struggle for equality and democracy, and new technologies can be used to increase access to the information kept in these important spaces. For example, the work of Edward Gonzalez-Tennant comes to mind with his efforts to “utilize new media to open (digital) spaces thus encouraging candid reflection on the connections between historical, face-to-face violence and present inequality.”<sup>28</sup> In recreating the historical development and destruction of Rosewood, Florida, culminating in the 1923 massacre and leveling of the town, Gonzalez-Tennant uses geographic information systems (or GIS) to provide a deeper contextualization of its history.

I would argue that new digital technologies can also help to challenge the ways one interprets and uses various forms of historical evidence and testimony concerning the legacy of apartheid. In particular, digital technologies can work to fill in those many absences in the historical record, particularly as they relate to everyday citizens and their roles in social movements across the Global South.

## CONCLUSION: RESOURCES FOR THE 99 PERCENT

Subaltern archives are legion. The tiniest random sampling would include sites like Adeline Koh’s *Digitizing Chinese Englishmen*, Grace Yeh’s *The Re/Collecting Project*, and *The Bracero Archive*.<sup>29</sup> These archives illustrate that the subaltern emphatically *does* speak. The questions are: how do we map that speech? How do we read it? And – perhaps most pressingly, in this neoliberal era – how do we sustain it in the face of shrinking resources?

By way of conclusion, we reflect on existing DH funding mechanisms and power structures, and how these may replicate colonial patterns and colonial subjugation. As with physical archives, digital archives are seeing the emergence of a highly tiered system, with the lion’s share of the funding, resources, and visibility going to established and already well-endowed institutions. In the United States, while institutions like the APS and Yale can garner significant grants from entities like the National Endowment for the Humanities to launch these projects, smaller tribal and community collections still struggle in many cases just to get broadband access, hardware, and software, never mind long-term data curation and backup. In Africa, the majority of projects have been funded at large research universities in countries like South Africa with many resources going to the University of the Witwatersrand or the University of Pretoria with support from American foundations including Andrew W. Mellon or Andrew Carnegie.<sup>30</sup>

We have seen this before. As Amy Earhart has shown, the 1990s saw a profusion of digital archives devoted to authors of color, in particular, many of which fell into

rapid obsolescence while DH funding and prestige seemed to retrench around canonical figures (e.g., Shakespeare, Petrarch, Jefferson) and “analytics.”<sup>31</sup> It would seem, then, that the field’s privileging of “tool-building” and “more-hack-less-yack” has had the unfortunate effect of disenfranchising the communities that arguably need some of these tools the most. We haven’t seen much change since a decade ago, when Alondra Nelson, Alicia Headlam Hines, and Thuy Linh N. Tu wrote:

Most often when attention is turned to the implications of race for theorizing technology, people of color are cast as victims. . . . [U]nfortunately these accounts sometimes become rationalizations for why people of color fail to have “productive” relationships with technology, and justifications for the still uneven distribution of technological resources and knowledge. After all, if people of color are seen only as victims, then there is very little reason to entrust them with the tools of the future.<sup>32</sup>

For us, subaltern digital projects have been steady prompts to ponder the sometimes productive, sometimes precarious relations between our own academic institutions and the communities we wish to learn from and support. We see the lion’s share of DH time, energy, and funding going to existing print archives in the most powerful institutions. There are some practical reasons for this: digitization is expensive and labor-intensive, and scanning and uploading materials that have already been professionally preserved and inventoried seems to provide the biggest bang for the buck. At the same time, we feel some frustration, although academics should by now be more attuned to the fact that archives do *have* politics.<sup>33</sup> As always, it seems, subaltern communities have had to take matters into their own hands. In her indispensable collection, *Archive Stories*, Antoinette Burton describes the emergence of

hundreds, perhaps thousands of . . . archive enterprises taken up by groups who believe that their histories have not been written because they have not been considered legitimate subjects of history – and hence of archivization per se. The fact that many of these archive entrepreneurs rely on the Internet as their storage space represents a tremendous challenge to the basic assumptions of archival fixity and materiality.<sup>34</sup>

Thus, while we remain excited – on some days, positively optimistic – about the potential for digital archives to render subaltern voices and histories audible and visible, we also remain deeply concerned about the future of these projects. It is hard not to see higher education itself these days reinforcing rather than mitigating social inequalities. Where will DH finally cast its allegiances: with the 1 percent, or the 99?

## ENDNOTES

1. K. Sivaramakrishnan, “Situating the Subaltern: History and Anthropology in the Subaltern Studies Project.” *Journal of Historical Sociology* 8.4 (December 1995): 395.
2. For an excellent introduction to subaltern reading strategies, see Ranajit Guha, ed., *A Subaltern Studies Reader, 1986–1995* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997).



3. <http://www.indigenousnewengland.com>, now re-titled and relocated at [dawnlandvoices.org](http://dawnlandvoices.org).
4. <http://www.virtualfreedomtrailproject.org/>
5. We mean explicitly to invoke Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's famous argument that such voice is always heavily mediated: "Can the Subaltern Speak?" In *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, ed. Cary Nelson and Larry Grossberg (Basingstoke: Macmillan Education, 1988), 271–313.
6. See Jill Lepore, *The Name of War: King Philip's War and the Origins of American Identity* (New York: Vintage, 1999); Jean M. O'Brien, *Firsting and Lasting: Writing Indians Out of Existence in New England* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010): 113. See also Colin G. Calloway, ed., *After King Philip's War: Presence and Persistence in Indian New England* (Dartmouth: University Press of New England, 1997).
7. Karen Kilcup, "The Poetry and Prose of Recovery Work." In *On Anthologies: Politics and Pedagogy*, ed. Jeffrey DiLeo (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004), 113.
8. The site was initially set up with support from the James H. and Claire Short Hayes Chair in the Humanities, an internal grant at the University of New Hampshire. The National Endowment for the Humanities recently provided additional support for the work of training tribal historians in digitization methods. Partnering institutions as of this date include the Tomaquag Indian Memorial Museum (Rhode Island), the Passamaquoddy Cultural Preservation Office (Maine), and the Indigenous Resources Collective (Massachusetts).
9. For a more detailed account of the pedagogical stakes in this assignment, including how students were prepared for the work, see Siobhan Senier, "Indigenizing Wikipedia." In *Web Writing: Why & How for Liberal Arts Teaching & Learning*, ed. Jack Dougherty (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, forthcoming). Open access: <http://epress.trincoll.edu/webwriting/chapter/senier/>
10. A more detailed version of these next few paragraphs was previously published as "Digitizing Indigenous History: Trends and Challenges." *Journal of Victorian Culture* 19.3 (2014): 396–402.
11. Timothy Powell and Larry Aitken, "Encoding Culture: Building a Digital Archive Based on Traditional Ojibwe Teachings." In *The American Literature Scholar in the Digital Age*, ed. Amy E. Earhart and Andrew Jewell (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2010), 250–274.
12. Paul Grant-Costa, Tobias Glaza, and Michael Sletcher, "The Common Pot: Editing Native American Materials." *Scholarly Editing* 33 (2012). <http://www.scholarlyediting.org/2012/essays/essay.commonpot.html>
13. Kimberly Christen, "Gone Digital: Aboriginal Remix and the Cultural Commons." *International Journal of Cultural Property* 12.3 (2005): 317.
14. <http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5459/>
15. <http://www.panorama.co.zw/index.php/archives/121-crossing-borders/202-african-liberation-heritage-project>
16. World Heritage Centre, *Roads to Independence: The African Liberation Heritage Programme* (New York: United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, 2009), 3.
17. Cultural Heritage Development and Communication Section, Division of Antiquities, *Identification and Documentation of African Liberation Heritage Sites in Tanzania* (Dar es Salaam, Tanzania: Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism, 2010), 1.
18. <http://www.lesbianherstoryarchives.org/>
19. Sean Brown Maaba Morrow and Lyiso Pulumani, *Education in Exile: SOMAFSCO, the ANC School in Tanzania, 1978 to 1992* (Cape Town, South Africa: HSRC Press, 2004), 157.
20. *Ibid.*
21. Allen Feldman, "Memory Theaters, Virtual Witnessing, and the Trauma-Aesthetic." *Biography* 27.1 (2004): 164.



22. Chela Sandoval, *Methodology of the Oppressed* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 176.
23. Deborah Posel, "History as Confession: The Case of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission." *Public Culture* 20.1 (2008): 119.
24. <http://blackstudies.org/workshop/manifesto.html>
25. Sneja Gunew, "Feminist Knowledge: Critique and Construct." In *Feminist Knowledge: Critique and Construct*, ed. Sneja Gunew (New York: Routledge, 1990), 23.
26. Marla Jaksch, "Mapping Differential Geographies: Women's Contributions to the Liberation Struggle in Tanzania." In *Global Perspectives on Gender and Space: Engaging Feminism and Development*, ed. Ann M. Oberhauser and Ibiyo Johnston-Anumonwo (New York: Routledge, 2014), 155.
27. See, for instance, *The Nordic Documentation on the Liberation Struggle in South Africa* at <http://www.liberationafrica.se/> and *South Africa: Overcoming Apartheid, Building Democracy* at <http://overcomingapartheid.msu.edu/index.php>. Two additional sites – the *Digital Innovation South Africa Project* (DISA) (<http://www.disa.ukzn.ac.za/>) at the University of KwaZulu Natal and *Aluka* (<http://www.aluka.org/>), now a part of JSTOR – do not provide the media-rich content, interactive mapping, and the "nested spatial narratives" we are working to develop with our community collaborators.
28. Edward Gonzalez-Tennant, "New Heritage and Dark Tourism: A Mixed Methods Approach to Social Justice in Rosewood, Florida." *Heritage & Society* 6.1 (2013): 62.
29. <http://chineseenglishmen.adelinekoh.org/>; <http://reco.calpoly.edu/>; <http://braceroarchive.org/>
30. Keith Breckenridge, "The Politics of the Parallel Archive: Digital Imperialism and the Future of Record-Keeping in the Age of Digital Reproduction." *Journal of Southern African Studies* 40.3 (2014): 499.
31. Amy Earhart, "Can Information Be Unfettered? Race and the New Digital Humanities Canon." In *Debates in the Digital Humanities*, ed. Matt Gold (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012), 309–318. <http://dhdebates.gc.cuny.edu/>
32. In Alondra Nelson, Thuy Linh N. Tu, and Alicia Headlam Hines, eds., *Technicolor: Race, Technology, and Everyday Life* (New York: New York University Press, 2001), 3.
33. An argument that has been made repeatedly. See, for instance, Verne Harris, "The Archival Sliver: Power, Memory and Archives in South Africa." *Archival Science* 2 (2002): 63–86; and Ann Laura Stoler, "Colonial Archives and the Arts of Governance: On the Content in the Form." In *Refiguring the Archive*, ed. Carolyn Hamilton, Verne Harris, Michele Pickover, Graeme Reid, Raziah Saleh, and Jane Taylor (Cape Town: David Philip, 2002), 83–100.
34. Antoinette Burton, *Archive Stories: Facts, Fictions, and the Writing of History* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005), 2.

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