

# Chapter 2 Afrocentrism & Ancesterology

In: [Decolonizing Arts-Based Methodologies: Researching the African Diaspora](#)

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When I wrote *I. AM. ARAPI: The Journey of Akan Israelites in the Islamic Slave Trade* I did so from the contextualized framework of a new research methodology I call *Ancesterology*.

The manifestations of white supremacy in the canon, official records, or other symbols and signs of power are not by coincidence. The explicit intent of creating imagery through the use of language or memorials such as statues or images serves the purpose of reifying a belief of androcratic dominance without regard to *Other* truths; therefore, extrapolating the presence of *Others* requires a vigilant, nuanced scientific approach.

*Ancesterology* is concerned with the origins and implications of the African Diaspora. It identifies the causes that triggered power and controlled movements of species--whether or not the species are human, animals or plants, from their places of origin to other areas of the world while subjecting the species to various forms of assimilation, mutation, and other types of change. It is a valuative science that enables the moral judgments and institutionalized emotions are taken into account as elements of various analytical contexts within which condition, processes and their structural implications are to be examined for the development of universal transgenerational theories of diaspora. The implications for the diaspora can be approached from an interdisciplinary orientation

and should include genetics, history, genealogy, linguistics, public policy, ontology, epistemology, and cultural anthropology from an Afrocentric point of view.

As Ancestorology comprises various disciplines, it does so with purposeful intersectionality such that no single discipline and its corresponding methodology functions as individual variables but rather they operate with mutability to create a comprehensive narrative dependent upon the situational and positional relationship to the topic; nowhere is this more evident than researching in the African diaspora.

Colonial and neocolonial constructions of knowledge yield no deference to the history of African peoples. The omnipresent biases that distort, omit, transpose, or otherwise silence the lived experiences of dynamic cultural identities are done so from the perspective of ignorance motivated by the need to sustain the invention of whiteness as an inherited power. This is an important stipulation to make within the framework of Ancestorology for seldom does there exist a transactional relationship between the subject and the object. Indeed, the entire system of dominance requires the sum of its parts to contribute as individual stakeholders to appear as individual contributors of a specific domain but the truth is that each domain has a branch on the same tree rooted in the same philosophy. Think for a moment about the system of dominance. It required observers (history) to travel (cartography) to various African kingdoms to record the state of affairs (politics, governance, economy) and to observe the social structures (cultural anthropology) in order to dominate (colonialization) for the purposes of maintaining whiteness (imperialism). This example demonstrates the fluidity of Ancestorology in relation to the various disciplines that overlap and intersect in active research practices. It also provides a roadmap to the possible resources or areas of expertise needed to conduct a utilitarian project. No

one person can be an expert in all disciplines but having strong foundational methodologies in two or more is essential for Africans Diaspora research to answer fundamental questions about the lifeways of Africans pre- and post-Western contact. Opaque transliterations of narratives that did not exist prior to Western contact conflate what is said to have happened with what actually happened; herein lies the challenge of unmasking the presence of Africans in industrialized societies.