Mapping Black London in World War II: A Staged Approach to Digital Spatial History

Race and space matter: that much has been well-established in fields straddling urban, labour and black history since the 1980s. Scholars now have a rich understanding of the shifting patterns of segregation in the USA in its regional and chronological varieties, as well as the myriad ways black groups formed communities and organized politically in response (Hirsch 2000; Trotter, Hunter and Lewis 2004; Sugrue 2014). For this reason – added to the enduring contemporary salience of these historical questions – it follows that mapping racial segregation and black community development have been at the forefront of growth in digital mapping projects. In particular, the last ten years have seen numerous attempts to map the long-range 'redlining' of African American communities.[i]

Yet the use of digital methods to probe racial and spatial questions has been slower to take hold across the Atlantic, despite an outpouring of work emphasizing the global dimensions of black protest politics and international crosscurrents of race and racism. There are several reasons for this, including divergent levels of funding and scholarly interest in digital humanities. Another factor relates to data: whereas US-focused projects rely wholly or in part on evidence captured in the decennial census, there is no equivalent source in many European nations. In the UK, for example, ethnicity was only included as an official category in 1991, leaving historians interested in formative earlier periods with a substantial challenge. In response, those interested in the connections between race and urban settings – both historically important topics with acute contemporary interest – have most often relied on traditional techniques of source-based analysis. This article, however, suggests some ways scholars may be able to deploy digital techniques in contexts without readily available quantitative data. Using the Mapping Black London in World War II (MBL) project as a case study, the article proposes ways scholars can 'reverse engineer' qualitative information – in the form of primary and secondary sources – in order to generate the data needed to make interpretively meaningful digital maps.

The challenges of this task should not be downplayed. Even historical evidence *with* quantitative spatial components prompts debates among scholars about how it can or should be used digitally, especially through the use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS). GIS's inbuilt preference for the numerical world of binaries shines a spotlight on the intrinsic problems of quantitative historical data. Patchy or incomplete evidence is the norm and the preponderance of

'official' sources of quantitative material (government statistics, census data etc.) raises familiar but important questions of evidential legitimacy and archival power. It has been clear since the early days of historical GIS that questions of how to fit the square peg of qualitative information – which constitutes the bulk of historical evidence in many periods and places – into the round quantitative holes of the digital world would constitute thorny obstacles (Knowles *et al*. 2000; Knowles and Hillier 2008; Boonstra 2009; Wilson 2009; Campbell 2018; Kemp 2009; Griffiths and von Lünen 2016; Withers 2009; Lefebvre 1991; Travis and von Lunen 2003; Tally 2019).

Attempts to respond to these challenges have endured for several decades and have recently included shifts toward 'spatial humanities' and 'digital spatial history'. A range of approaches are housed under these umbrella terms, including an effort to position digital maps within humanities traditions where landscapes are conceptualised as both real-world places and imagined spaces.[ii] Historians have some useful tools in this regard, well-versed as they are in the contingent nature of source material and the limitations of evidence. Above all, for humanities scholars deploying digital mapping techniques, maintaining realistic expectations is essential: maps, or other more complex computer-driven representations, often pose questions rather than provide clear-cut answers. Further, there is an unavoidable tension, as Alexander Von Lünen puts it, between the diachronic nature of historical scholarship and the synchronic real-time world of digital technology that runs through the digital humanities-at-large (Lünen 2016b). At the same time, this article contends that digital maps can help examine the relationship between race and space if they are conceived as one part of a larger investigative toolkit, and deployed as starting points of the research process rather than as final goals in and of themselves.

The MBL project used these principles to conduct a staged approach to digitally map the black presence in London during World War II. In contrast to other phased approaches where work typically begins with a lengthy stage of database construction and data entry followed by 'traditional' analysis toward the end, MBL sought to minimize the lengthy (and oftentimes costly) lead times common to many HGIS projects. Uncertainties over precisely where the 'data' was located and how it could or should be reconstructed meant the work on the project had a self-consciously experimental quality. As a result, work progressed through three alternative 'stages' where the MBL team first 'mapped the topic', before creating more focused maps of the secondary literature and primary evidence. These stages also offered a launch-pad to secure funding for a fourth '2.0' phase which remains ongoing.

Stage One involved building a preliminary database by extracting spatial data from select primary and secondary sources. This data was then employed to create indicative visualizations, to help refine the categories used to ‘capture’ the evidence. These visualizations generated numerous leads for additional research and offered opportunities for sharing findings with wider audiences at a comparatively early stage. The initial mapping of the topic also revealed routes to address the limitations of evidence in two subsequent stages, by geoparsing a corpus of the secondary literature and a geolocating a selected range of primary sources. These two additional stages of work were conducted in parallel and in dialogue with each other and stemmed from leads generated in earlier work. In other words, MBL’s approach was designed to work with the grain of more familiar processes of historical research rather than against it. ‘Traditional’ research techniques were embedded throughout, from the consideration of the interplay between historians and their sources to the continued reflection on the relationship between the investigative methods and overarching historical objectives. In this article we discuss the benefits of this staged approach, as well as some limitations, before suggesting some parameters where similar methods might be deployed usefully by others.

Mapping the Topic

MBL had a straightforward historical question and historiographical goal at its core. Britain’s history of multiculturalism has often been considered as a post-war phenomenon, and the British encounter with race and racism something that happened far away from home shores. The arrival of the SS Windrush at Tilbury Docks in 1948 is often positioned as year zero in popular accounts, signalling the start of large-scale migration from the Caribbean. Yet without denying the importance of these events, scholarly work has made it clear for some time that there is more to the story. Digital methods, moreover, have had their part to play in this collective endeavour: the multi-year Legacies of British Slaveholding (2021) project, for example, had database construction, digital storage and representation at its core and constitutes an example of how traditional archival work can be combined productively with digital tools in this timely field of study.

There were, however, four reasons that prompted the use of digital tools to investigate black London during the Second World War. The first was that the existing research on the black presence in wartime London was scattered across a number of disparate topics. These topics included the histories of west African students in London and West Indian jazz musicians in Soho. A logical next task was to probe in more depth how these stories were connected and, in a second related reason, to deploy mapping techniques to consider the social geography of the city itself as part of the historical process rather than as a mere backdrop (Mapping Black London 2021).

Third, the scholarly spotlight on 1930s and 40s black London has, understandably enough, been trained mostly on high profile activist-intellectuals. Yet while scholars know increasing amounts about figures like Trinidadian writer-activists like George Padmore and CLR James and Jamaican pan-Africanists like Amy Ashwood Garvey, there is more work to be done to situate their lives within larger contexts. It felt a timely moment to bring more 'everyday' black Londoners into the picture, and to revisit the topic of African American and Caribbean service personnel's experiences in the city. Constructing a database with spatial components stood out as a way of casting the net as wide as possible and making sense of the connections between different historical crosscurrents (ibid).

Fourth, despite the growing scholarly interest in pre-Windrush history, digital mapping techniques held out the prospect of engaging the public in this important historical moment. Maps, after all, are fundamentally about 'seeing', and here the goal was to visualize this historical moment in various overlapping ways: to explore in greater depth how place mattered in this history, and to see London as the centre of empire, as a centre of racial protest, and as a centre of the war effort. In other words, making a digital map was a way of showing clearly to everyone that *this history happened* – an important task given the contemporary salience of questions surrounding Britain's multiracial history.

The MBL team, at the time led by Dr Oliver Ayers, supported by archival assistant William Whitworth, and with infrastructural help from Northeastern University's Digital Scholarship Group, began embarking on the first stage of its investigation in January 2020. The purpose of Stage One was two-fold; on the one hand the team sought to identify research questions for deeper analysis and on the other it set out to create a database and indicative visualizations to share with scholars and the public in a comparatively short-time frame (approximately five months). The team's work in Stage One proceeded along a familiar process undertaken by historians when initiating a new project: conducting an expansive general reading of the secondary literature, assessing key extant works in detail, as well as undertaking preliminary visits to archival holdings.

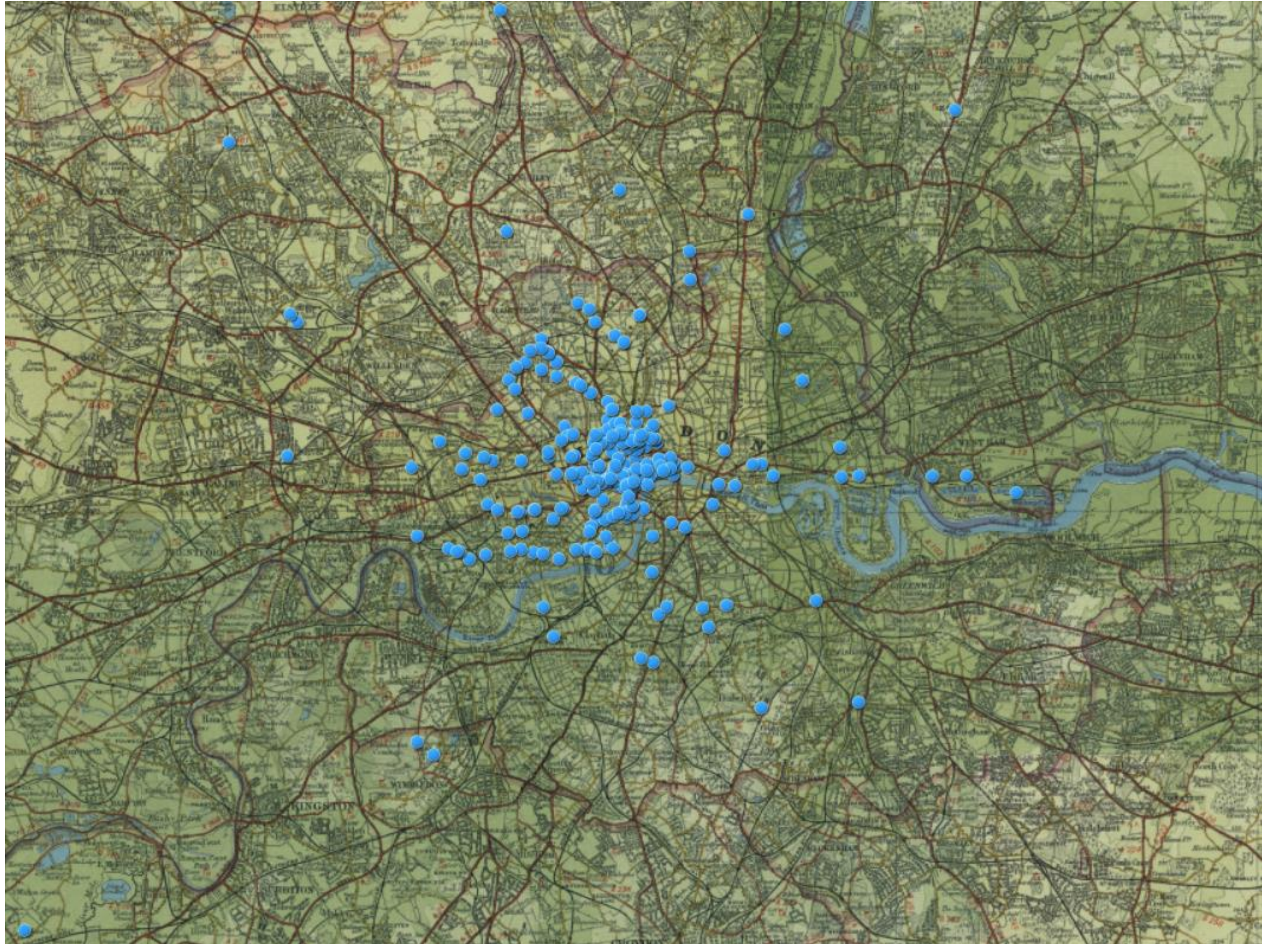
Team members extracted spatial data from a select corpus of previous historians' work, reading seventy-eight different books and articles across numerous subfields. Whilst

most of these works were meant for a scholarly audience, some, such as Constantine FitzGibbon's *The Blitz* (1970), were written to appeal to the general public. Some were micro-histories, focusing on London itself (or even a borough or neighbourhood in the city) whilst others, such as Lake and Reynold's *Drawing the Global Colour Line* (2008), offered a global scale of analysis. Most works, whilst being anchored in London, wove into their narrative global issues of war and empire - the archetypal example being Marc Matera's *Black London* (2015). A guiding principle of the team's reading was breadth: collating and visualizing such a diverse range of works held immense value, offering indicative visualizations of the nature of the black experience in wartime London.

The project team also investigated several primary sources. Efforts were targeted on source material that was most likely to produce useful findings- such as Colonial Office files, the 1939 National Register and autobiographical accounts. The Colonial Office reported on the black population of London, filing their reports under the classification of 'colonial welfare' in the U.K.[iii] The 1939 National Register, although it did not record race or national origin, offered a large list of addresses which researchers could cross reference with names encountered elsewhere. Autobiographies often contained remembered meetings between friends that had slipped the notice of previous historians (Goode and Cotterrell 2002).

Questions of periodization were also to the fore in this experimental first phase. The decision to define the Second World War as an event lasting from 1935 to 1947 may seem unusual, but for many Africans and black Londoners, the war began in 1935, when fascist Italy invaded Ethiopia. The subsequent war was traumatic for many black Londoners who identified with Ethiopia due to its status as the last independent African nation (Liberia excepted) and thus resulted in a notable rise in black activism in the city. The project's closing year, 1947, was chosen both to include the immediate post-war years in which many of the wartime hardships continued (food shortages, the refugee crisis etc.) and to neatly bookend the period of the study with the subsequent arrival of the *Empire Windrush* in Tilbury Docks in 1948 (Hedinger 2017; Phillips and Phillips 1998).

[Figure 1: Blue dots indicate all locations in World War II London visited by a black Londoner, as researched by the MBL team in Stage One.]



Over a five-month period, the project team created a database in which they recorded spatial data for every single activity undertaken by a black Londoner between the years 1935 and 1947 they encountered. Researchers then used this database to create digital maps using the GIS system *ArcGIS Online.* Creating indicative visualizations represented, from the outset, a departure from some GIS projects with lengthy initial stages of database construction. The ever-changing visualizations allowed team members to see - in a quite literal sense - the shape of the ongoing project. The visualizations produced reflected important realities: residential addresses in Bloomsbury and Camden and social spaces in the West End stood out as central to the black wartime experience. At the same time, these early visualizations were also constructed representations of where previous work had focused and which people and groups had found homes in archival spaces. Both the realities *and* representations revealed in these early stages mattered, as they both informed subsequent decisions.

The process was self-consciously experimental: the extant ‘data’ was considered in the raw, which generated leads for new insights while also bringing interpretive challenges into sharp

focus. One of the most pointed was how to define the central object of study: black London. The project took time to explore and delineate a definition of its category of a 'black Londoner'. The creation of this category ran the risk of dehumanizing the people whose stories the project was unearthing. Race was, and is, a nebulous category which constantly undergoes transformations and is never divorced from ever-shifting dynamics of power. The 1930s and 40s, moreover, were times of rapid change in the construction of racial identities facilitated by increasing collaboration and exchanges between black people of all social classes. The middle decades of the twentieth century were also a time of increasing imperial weakness and black assertiveness, as can be seen in large uprisings in the Caribbean and West Africa (Snyder 2018; Corbould 2009; Warnecke-Berger 2018).

The MBL project team chose to define a black Londoner in the broadest way possible. This decision was taken because black residents in Second World War London came from a variety of places around the world. In each of these places, race was construed in different ways: 'black' meant something different in Jamaica than in Harlem. The MBL team thus sought to create a common denominator that would define 'black' in a way that would include as many people as possible. There was a significant limitation in this approach - namely, that it overlooked personal identification and agency. To address this problem, the MBL team created multiple sub-categories in the database to account for self-identification in other fields such as nationality. Activist Ras T. Makonnnen, for example, was born in Guyana but identified strongly with Ethiopia, the (probable) country of his paternal grandfather. Moreover, Makonnen, despite his South American birth, was one of the foremost advocates of Pan-Africanism in interwar London's black community, as was the New Jersey-born Paul Robeson (Munro 2017; Swindall 2013). The use of digital formatting allowed team researchers to capture nuances such as these, as well as to record the family origin of the second and third generation British black Londoners, another vital part of an individual's identity.[iv]

The team also sought to cast a net as far as possible and record every single action undertaken by groups of black Londoners with a precise associated location. For example, researchers would record that an African American GI visited a specific tourist sight, even though, by itself, this event might not have appeared historically significant. Seemingly minor stories were included to highlight lived experiences and larger patterns of places where people lived, shopped and ate. Stories that did not find much importance in historical accounts were brought back to life on a macro level.

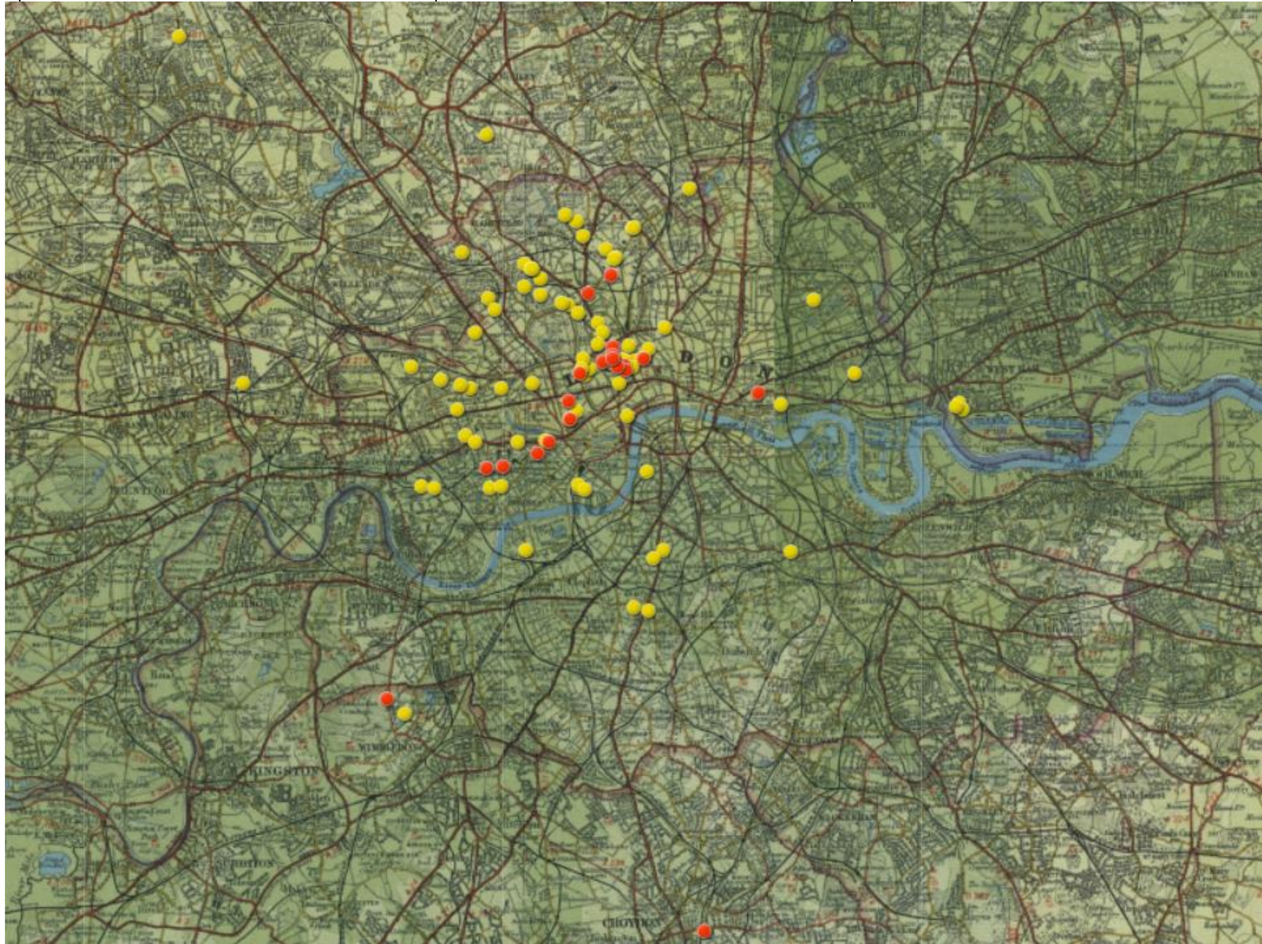
The database was built self-consciously with the problems of sources centred on wartime black London in mind. The project team created two different databases: one for plotting locations, the other for noting individuals. The locations database included a short description of the location

(written with the public in mind), date ranges for the time span the location was visited, and attribute categories sorting the location into type (residential, social, political protest etc). This database allowed researchers to record spatial data even when they were not certain of specific individuals involved, something that proved invaluable when researching the black East End. The individuals' database, meanwhile, was connected to the locations sheet and had short descriptions and date ranges of its own, but also contained the country and region of origin for all individuals recorded.

The Stage One process raised numerous methodological problems. For example, as the team was working with the most readily accessible source material, many narratives centred upon famous individuals or trends. Accounts of the jazz scene in Second World War London and biographies of jazz musicians were particularly prevalent, pulling the spatial 'centre of gravity' towards London's West End. At the very same time, digital tools helped the MBL team to appraise the 'constructed' nature of the evidence that they were considering. It allowed team members to see, quite literally, where the gaze of *historians* was falling and which areas the most prominent primary sources were covering. Notably, a significant disparity was gradually became apparent between both.

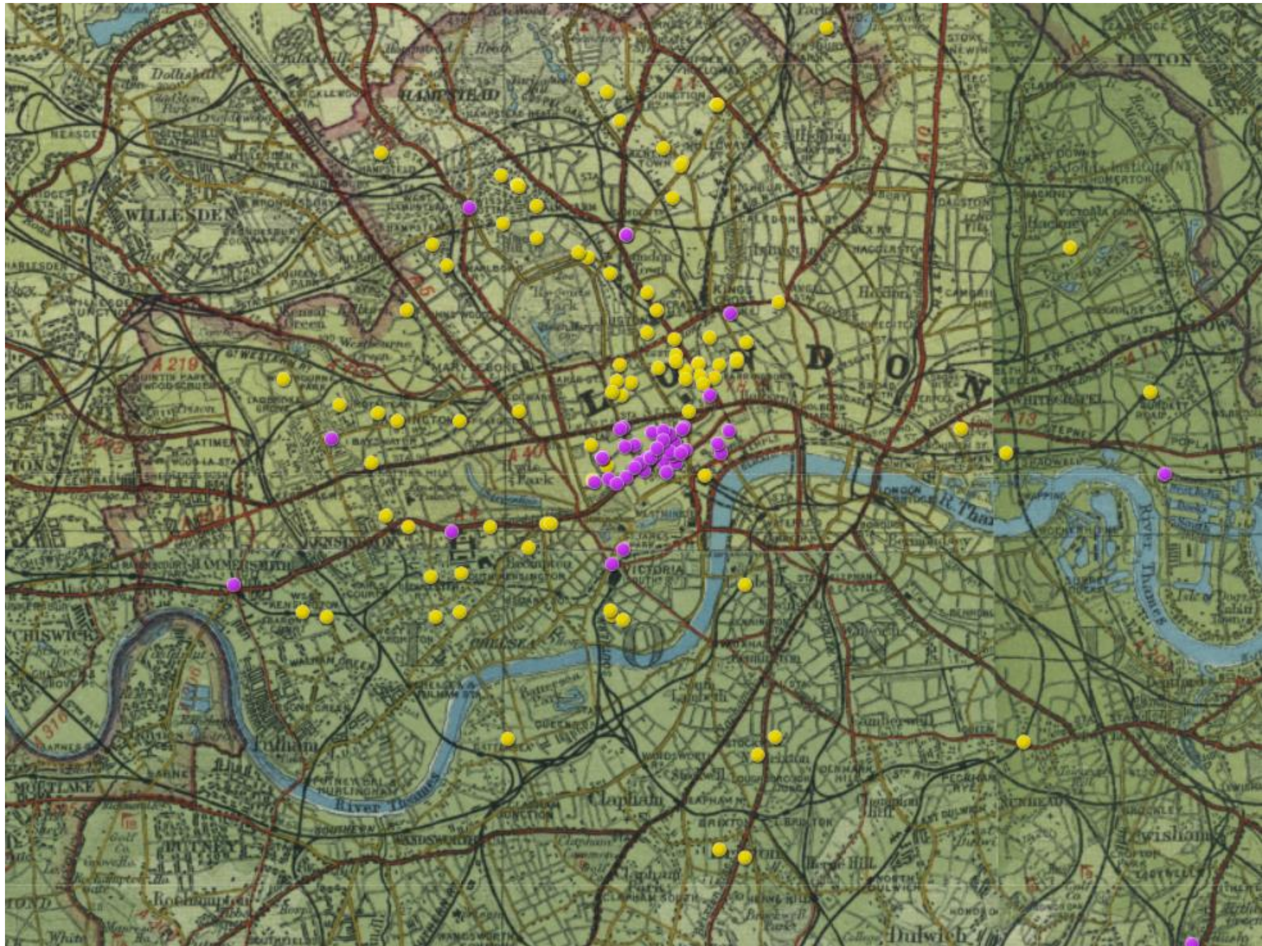
Stage One produced a variety of significant results and leads for further investigation. The main map of all locations displayed a Camden-Bloomsbury-Soho corridor of vibrant activity: political activism, residential settlement, social life and cultural expression were all connected and visible, especially in the activities of students' groups like West African Students Union (WASU) and protest groups like the International African Friends of Ethiopia (IAFE) formed in 1935 and the International Africa Service Bureau (IASB) formed in 1937. It was clear this north-south corridor was both representation *and* reality: these groups were focal points for numerous short and long term visitors to the city from Africa and the Americas and, by virtue of having educated and historically literate leaders and engaging with British officialdom (especially through the Colonial Office), they made an understandable dent in the primary source record and constituted popular objects of study subsequently for historians.

[Figure 2: Yellow dots indicate all permanent/semi-permanent residential locations; red dots indicate short-term residences occupied by black Londoners in the period of study.]



At the same time, the map offered a visual demonstration that these activities were part of something bigger. Central London was a hub of activity, but these clusters of activity could be seen spreading out in numerous directions, partly like spokes on a wheel following the city's transport routes. Particularly important in that regard was the visualization of a previously unacknowledged black presence in Notting Hill to the west and Brixton to the south. Settlement here was revealed by using the large database of names gathered from all other sources (for example copies of the WASU newsletter in the Colonial Office files) and cross-checking these with the searchable online copy of the 1939 Register of British residents. The historical significance of this finding, which provided tantalizing and important evidence of pre-Windrush era settlement in parts of the city that became central to the post-war black experience, was discussed in an accompanying blog post on the project website. A separate map showing residential life was included as a tab on the project's master map.

[Figure 3: Purple dots indicate all nightlife locations visited by a black Londoner during World War II, mapped alongside known residential settlement as indicated by yellow dots.]



Stage One also posed important questions about movement. Broad-brush categories distinguishing between residential and social life might have been crude in some respects, but they reinforced the clear distinctions between Soho as a centre of cultural activity and nightlife (not in itself surprising) that nestled within areas of temporary settlement (hostels, hotels, rented accommodation) in Bloomsbury and butted up against the centre of governmental power and anti-imperial protest in Westminster. Delineating these types of activity, and visualizing the different geographical relationships between them, offered a stimulating and useful prompt to consider movement within different zones in the city. A band through the city through Oxford Street and New Oxford Street emerged clearly, providing thought-provoking inspiration to consider further how the social geography of this particular 'transition' zone was part of this history – both a real world place and an imagined space where crossing the road represented a shift from the residential and intellectual milieu of Bloomsbury, to the world of Soho: an area that was politically-engaged and socially and culturally vibrant, with well-understood connotations of more subversive cultures centred on vice, exotism and erotism (Walkowitz 2012; Mort 2010).

Finally, the first stage provided a powerful reminder of what was missing. Most notably, this

was the case for the East End of London around the city's docks, where contemporary accounts recorded a strong black, multi-racial and multi-ethnic presence stretching back into the nineteenth century. It was apparent that this presence was not captured adequately in the map, reliant as it was on concrete places to assign coordinates to rather than generalized observations about the character of certain areas such as the famous 'Draughtboard Alley' in Canning Town. This obvious gap provided both a powerful stimulation for further investigation, alongside another reminder of the importance of maps as question generators that can be deployed at the start of a research process rather than as the sole endpoint in themselves.

Put simply, MBL was able to show in a comparatively short period of time (c. five months) that *this history happened:* black people were central, not peripheral, to the wartime experience of London and Britain more broadly. This alone was an important intervention to make in the oftentimes fraught debates over the UK's multiracial history. In addition, the maps also revealed the presence of discrimination as something central to black London in World War II.

The team presented a selection of these findings on a Wordpress site. Wary of overwhelming a visitor to the site with data, it was decided to split the early findings into three distinct maps. The first map a user came across when accessing the site contained every location from the locations database, with significant locations highlighted to help them to find their way around wartime London. Examples of key locations chosen included the International Afro Restaurant on Oxford Street and the Peckham home of Dr. Harold Moody, leader of the League of Coloured Peoples. Historical background to the project maps was provided with blog posts. Project blogs came in two varieties: first, methodology pieces, where researchers discussed the process of conducting their work as digital historians and second, more traditional blogs which analysed specific historical figures and important locations.

The MBL team's experiences in Stage One highlight the ways in which scholars without expertise in coding or multi-year funding can synthesize data from disparate sources and – in the face of archival omissions - 'reverse engineer' it to create useful and meaningful indicative visualizations. In one sense, this technique has analogues across the digital humanities domain where non-digital materials have to repurposed or repackaged for analysis, but here the label connoted an especially hands-on and self-reflective approach geared to the particular evidential challenges of resuscitating the non-white presence in wartime Britain. The visualizations produced in Stage One were accurate and engaging enough to share with a public audience and provided revealing routes for further research around more tightly delineated research questions.

Mapping the Secondary Literature

The first stage of the MBL project lasted for five months and produced numerous insights and leads; its end opened up possibilities for using a more expansive array of digital investigative techniques. The use of secondary sources in the first stage provided some 'quick wins', for example by identifying hotspots of activity like Harold Moody's house in Peckham, the Jamaica-born leader of the League of Coloured Peoples(LCP) who hosted numerous other political activists through the period. Yet the maps that resulted, as discussed, provided a useful window onto the 'shape' – or, more to the point, some of the distortions – of the historiographical landscape more broadly. This finding warranted further digital investigation.

Embarking on Stage Two, the team analysed the corpus of secondary literature by dividing it into historiographical subfields, for example creating two categories for works focusing on micro and macro levels of scale. The question then arose as to whether to 'zoom in' and focus on specific literatures of London or to 'zoom out' and examine the ways in which historians pictured black Londoners' place in the wider world.[v] The latter route was considered more fruitful, as it allowed for the creation of a global map that considered London's relation to the rest of the world: something difficult to represent with a map focused on just the city itself. To achieve this, the literature also had to be defined more rigidly by selecting intellectual histories and biographies to explore the ways historians synergised the London-based activities of historical figures with the global setting they operated within. The goal was to examine which aspects of a black intellectual's life previous historians had given most attention to, including the comparative weights given to their personal lives, ideologies and activism.

Finding ways of digitally mapping texts has been a popular and stimulating line of enquiry in recent digital humanities work. It has, however, been carried out almost exclusively on *primary* sources, especially literary texts with a strong geographical 'flavour' such as travelogues (Gregory et al 2009). The strategy of 'geoparsing' has seen particular growth, a multi-stage process that begins by creating or identifying a machine-readable corpus, typically in XML format, with some inbuilt spatial information. Natural language processing techniques, for instance Named Entity Recognition (NER), are then used to read, recognize and extract this locational data from within the corpus. The extracts, typically the names of town, streets, cities and countries, are then matched up by geoparsing software to a digital gazetteer that itself has been georeferenced. Through these stages, many of which are automated and connected in a geoparsing package, the locations in a text can be plotted on a digital map.

Mapping secondary literature to create historiographic visualizations remains a relatively novel avenue of historical research, yet some examples exist. In one, a research team created a series of visualizations to map locations referenced by historians who wrote in the Florida Historical

Quarterly (FHQ). Alongside word clouds, this team produced a global-scale heat map of referenced locations. This map showed Florida glowing hot in an otherwise-cold world. In other words, articles published in the FHQ mostly discussed Florida, an understandable result given the journal's focus (Staley *et al.*, 2013). Further research into mapping secondary literatures has been facilitated by the existence of an increasing number of open source geoparsing solutions, such as the Edinburgh Geoparser (2016-2020), and several useful digital gazetteers, are available 'off the shelf' (Voyant Tools 2020).

The MBL team decided the most appropriate software to employ in their project was the Clavin online geoparsing webtool by Berico Systems. The online sample web tool does not require coding expertise like the full version. It works in two separate stages by extracting place names which then have to be manually placed into a separate 'box' to match up with a digital gazetteer. The fact that texts can simply be entered and analysed made it a good option for a 'quick win' with no software downloads required. Also attractive about the Clavin geoparsing tool was the ease with which results could be sifted through and checked for historical inaccuracies. A key principle throughout, after all, was to deploy digital tools to enable and facilitate historical research questions. Clavin, in short, was an easy to use, publicly available tool that helped further that goal.

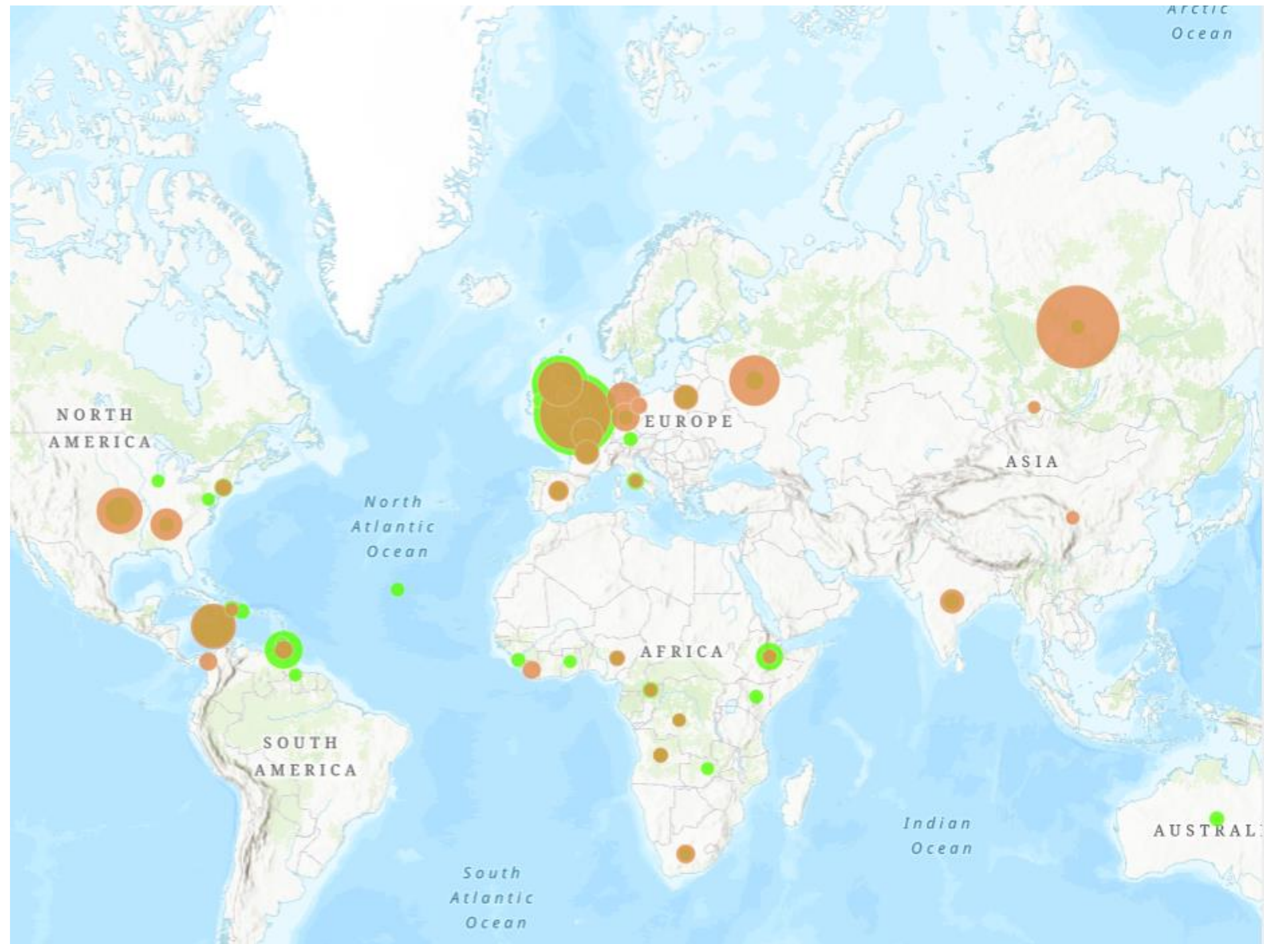
The MLB team extracted global-level spatial data from secondary works which studied two black intellectuals in London: George Padmore, who lived in London between 1934 and 1957, and CLR James, who resided in the city between 1933 and 1938. Both men had featured prominently in Stage One, having received detailed biographical treatment of the time when both were at the heart of a larger network of activist-intellectuals in London. During this period, Padmore and James were stirred by overseas events to attack the ills of empire from its metropolitan heart. Both were useful figures to examine the local and global levels of analysis as they had a presence both inside *and* outside of London.

The team collected a sample of works analyzing Padmore and James' years in London. The pieces chosen for this new corpus consisted of a mixture of books and articles, based upon two factors: first, they had to concentrate on either Padmore or James to a close extent and second, they had to concentrate – as much as possible – on the period of the 1930s, specifically the years 1934-8. Two notable examples were the book chapter 'George Padmore and London' by Susan D. Pennybacker (2009) and *C. L. R. James in Imperial Britain* by Christian Høgsbjerg (2014).[vi]

Researchers fed these thousands of words into the CLAVIN geoparser, which ran a textual analysis and returned geographic locations. Then team members combed through this geographic data to remove any incorrect results.[vii] Checks were also completed to ensure different-language versions of the same word (Italy, Italia) were entered as the same location. Any place which was

mentioned by historians fewer than five times was also discarded, so as not to skew the project map with locations that may have been referenced only in passing.

[Figure 4: Map comparing scholarly references to C.L.R. James and Geroge Padmore constructed from a geoparsed corpus of secondary literature covering the lives of both activists. Green circles correspond to frequency of mentions in works concerning C.L.R. James; brown circles correspond to frequency of mentions in works concerning George Padmore.]



The findings were revealing. Africa was mentioned surprisingly infrequently by historians covering the lives of Padmore and James. Where is was given attention, moreover, this focused on Ethiopia-understandable given the Italian invasion. Asia was also barely mentioned, somewhat surprising given the close connections that Padmore and James had to Indian nationalists in London, and also given that this suggested a historiographical neglect of the Japanese invasion of China in 1937, an event that both Padmore and James (as Stage Three revealed in striking fashion) observed with interest. The map showed scholarly work on Padmore focused closely on the activist's Soviet connection, bringing up Moscow as much as they did London itself. The maps illustrated that historians appeared to be writing about the background and wider stories of both men rather than the immediate events of the 1930s, with the two notable exceptions of Ethiopia and Scottsboro, Alabama.

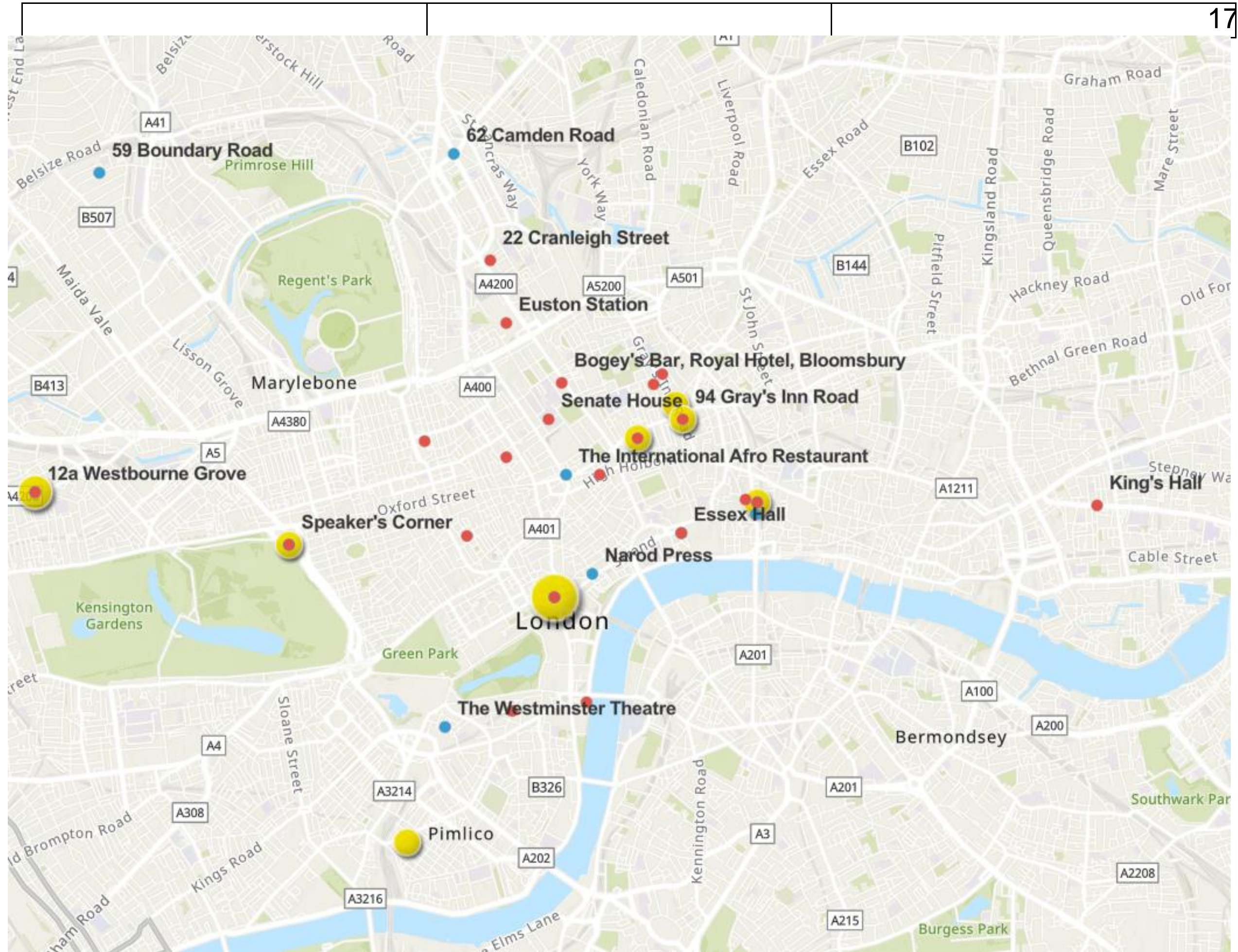
Stage Two represents an example of the experimental ways the MBL team sought to work *with* the problems of their earlier research. The research material in Stage One had been constructed from a motley corpus of various secondary literatures. In Stage Two, researchers sought to analyze where the focus of the historical literature had been to illuminate the perspectives and skews in existing scholarship. The visualizations produced in Stage Two opened up exciting new questions based on primary evidence in Stage Three.

Mapping the Primary Evidence

The principle of working with the grain of historical research meant that MBL's third stage was to analyze primary source material in depth. Focusing directly on primary evidence has often, quite reasonably, been the first and only goal of HGIS and associated projects. Particularly when there is quantitative evidence 'ready to go' like census data, scholars have created digital maps to shed light on things like patterns of settlement and change over time. Yet this project was one of many cases where there was no one single 'off the shelf' archival source to use. By 'reverse engineering' the evidence to build a database in Stage One, however, it was possible to identify patterns that warranted using digital tools to address more tightly delineated research questions.

As a consequence, a third tranche of primary-focused work was conducted in tandem with the historiographical mapping undertaken in Stage Two. Having visually examined the scholarly explorations of Padmore and James and some of their limitations, the primary source material offered opportunities for further analysis by comparing – through overlapping on a map – the places they operated in London, where they discussed in their political writings, as well as how a concerned officialdom surveilled their activities. Stage Three, therefore, involved geoparsing and geolocating a selection of James and Padmore's political writings as well as a selection of reports made by the Metropolitan Police's Special Branch on the activities of the IASB in 1937- 38 (MEPO 38/91), which offered a topographical window onto the 'official' perspective of Padmore and James' radical circle. All three elements were combined as layers on a map that could be toggled on and off in order to analyze the connections and divergences between these three varied perspectives.

[Figure 5: Map of London activities associated with C.L.R. James (blue dots) and George Padmore (red dots), overlaid on frequency of references to activities of IASB in MEPO 38/91 (yellow circles).]


62 Camden Road
59 Boundary Road
Primrose Hill
22 Cranleigh Street
Regent's Park
Euston Station
Bogey's Bar, Royal Hotel, Bloomsbury
Marylebone
Senate House
94 Gray's Inn Road
The International Afro Restaurant
12a Westbourne Grove
King's Hall
Oxford Street
Essex Hall
Speaker's Corner
Narod Press
London
Kensington Gardens
Green Park
The Westminster Theatre
Bermondsey
Pimlico
Cable Street
Graham Road
Hackney Road
Bethnal Green Road
Kingsland Road
Caledonian Road
Liverpool Road
Essex Road
York Way
Maida Vale
Lisson Grove
Sloane Street
Kings Road
Kennington Road
Burgess Park

The map showed 34 documented locations associated with James and Padmore's time in London (between 1935 and 1947 in Padmore's case, and between 1935 and 1938 in James'). These places were set alongside locations documented in MEPO 38/91. At first glance, this appeared to do the classic thing that can go wrong in historical GIS: showing what we already know. Bloomsbury, the well-established centre of London literary life and black intellectual endeavour loomed large, with traces up into Camden at the home of the already acknowledged heart of west African student life and south toward the heart of government in Westminster.

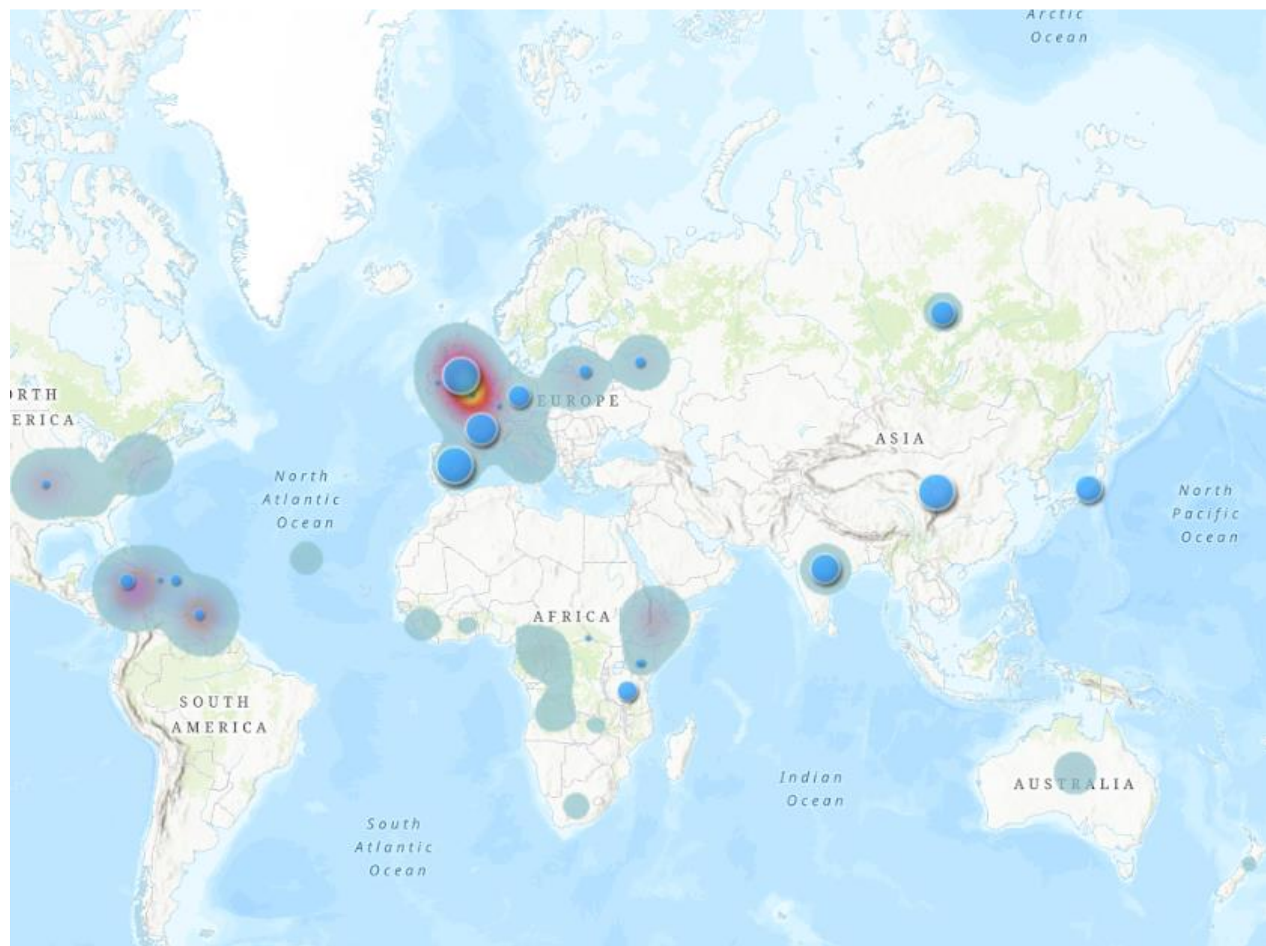
Yet the map showed activities beyond Bloomsbury too, including in a west to east corridor down the Strand and Fleet Street where Padmore and James made their presence known in the International African Service Bureau (IASB) and its close relationship with the headquarters of the Independent Labour Party (ILP). The importance of newspaper and print culture is of well-established importance to both men's politics, but the map suggested fresh attention should be paid to the importance of Fleet Street alongside Bloomsbury as a setting that shaped anti-colonial political expression.

The map also drew attention to the social-geographic settings of both men's residences. The flat shared by Padmore and his partner Dorothy Pizer on Cranleigh Street has rightly been afforded a central place in the larger political networks of the time, with Winston James (2006) giving it the memorable moniker of the 'workshop of the African anti-colonial struggle'.[viii] But mapping Cranleigh Street posed questions about how the residence operated as a geographical expression of larger insider-outsider ambiguities in Padmore's life. It lies, after all, just above the northern border of Bloomsbury and in close proximity to WASU in Camden. It was, and is, both a backstreet set back from the bustle of Euston Road but located in the best-connected part of the city between Euston and King's Cross. The map encourages similar observations about CLR James' more temporary home a little to the north and west, just the other side of the Primrose Hill area home to several other black intellectuals. The name itself – Boundary Road – conjures the key themes of CLR James' life later expressed so memorably in his cricket-focused but deeply political memoir *Beyond a Boundary*. This mapping work, therefore, opened up lines of enquiry on familiar but important questions of belonging, identity and marginality in reference to specific geographical spaces.[ix]

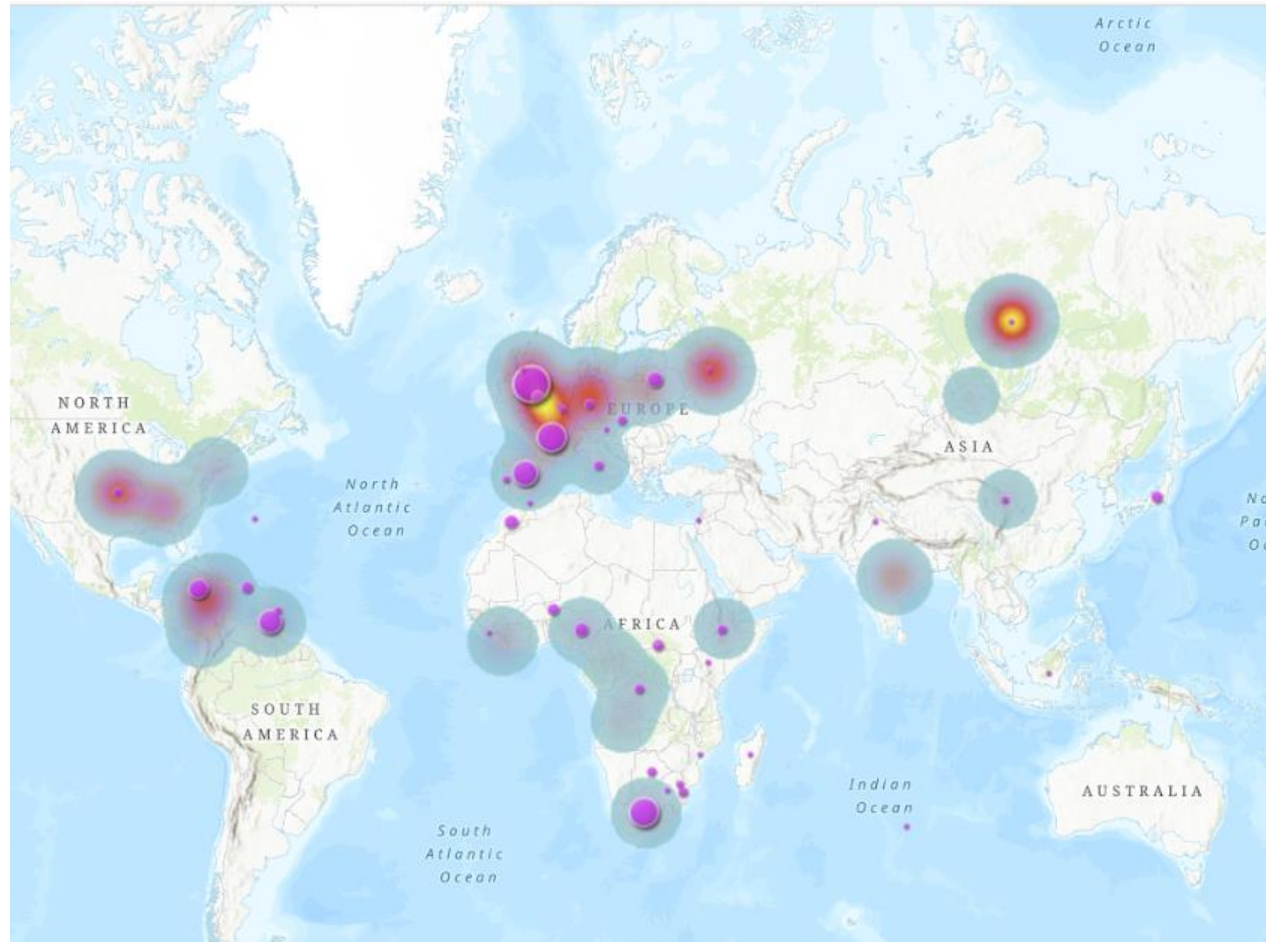
The map also enabled comparisons to be made between James and Padmore's activities and how officialdom surveilled – quite literally – their behaviour at a key moment through 1937-38.

The Met Police's Special Branch was especially focused on Trafalgar Square, with the IASB's several rallies there a topic of special interest and official concern. The central London concentration was especially pronounced, with government surveillance most focused on 'subversive' activities near its heart in Westminster. This was also, on the surface, somewhat unsurprising but layering the official perspective behind James and Padmore's own activities reinforced an important point: their intellectual, political *and* geographical lives in the city can all be considered as part of the 'insider-outsider' dualities whereby they were embedded within, but also in some ways apart from, life in the imperial metropolis (Høgsbjerg 2016).

[Figure 6: Map of places mentioned in political writings of CLR James in 1938 (blue dots), overlaid on a heat map constructed from a geoparsed corpus of secondary literature on James.]



[Figure 7: Map of places mentioned in political writings of George Padmore in 1938 (purple dots), overlaid on a heat map constructed from a geoparsed corpus of secondary literature on Padmore.]



Finally, digital mapping also offered ways of exploring the international worldviews of James and Padmore by comparing parts of the world that they discussed with those previously given attention by other scholars. Layering historiographical maps produced in Stage Two alongside the places mentioned in their own published writing demonstrated that both's writing and political outlooks were strongly international in character, with tumultuous events such as the Italian invasion of Ethiopia, anti-colonial unrest in the Caribbean and war in the Far East all falling within their purview. The Soviet Union also featured, a logical finding given both's turbulent relationship with the official Communist Party line as decided by Moscow. Yet the scholarly attention afforded to the Soviet Union was not necessarily matched in the published writings of Padmore. Conversely, the attention paid to events in the Far East by Padmore following the Japanese invasion of China did not correspond with historiographical attention. The maps suggested, therefore, that new

projects could break new ground by examining transnational black activism in Asian-Pacific contexts. In this way, the layered maps produced by a phased process of work enabled an illuminating visual approach to a more familiar historical research method, namely promoting dialogues between historian and evidence and between secondary and primary sources to push our historical understanding in new directions.

Mapping Black London in World War II, 2.0

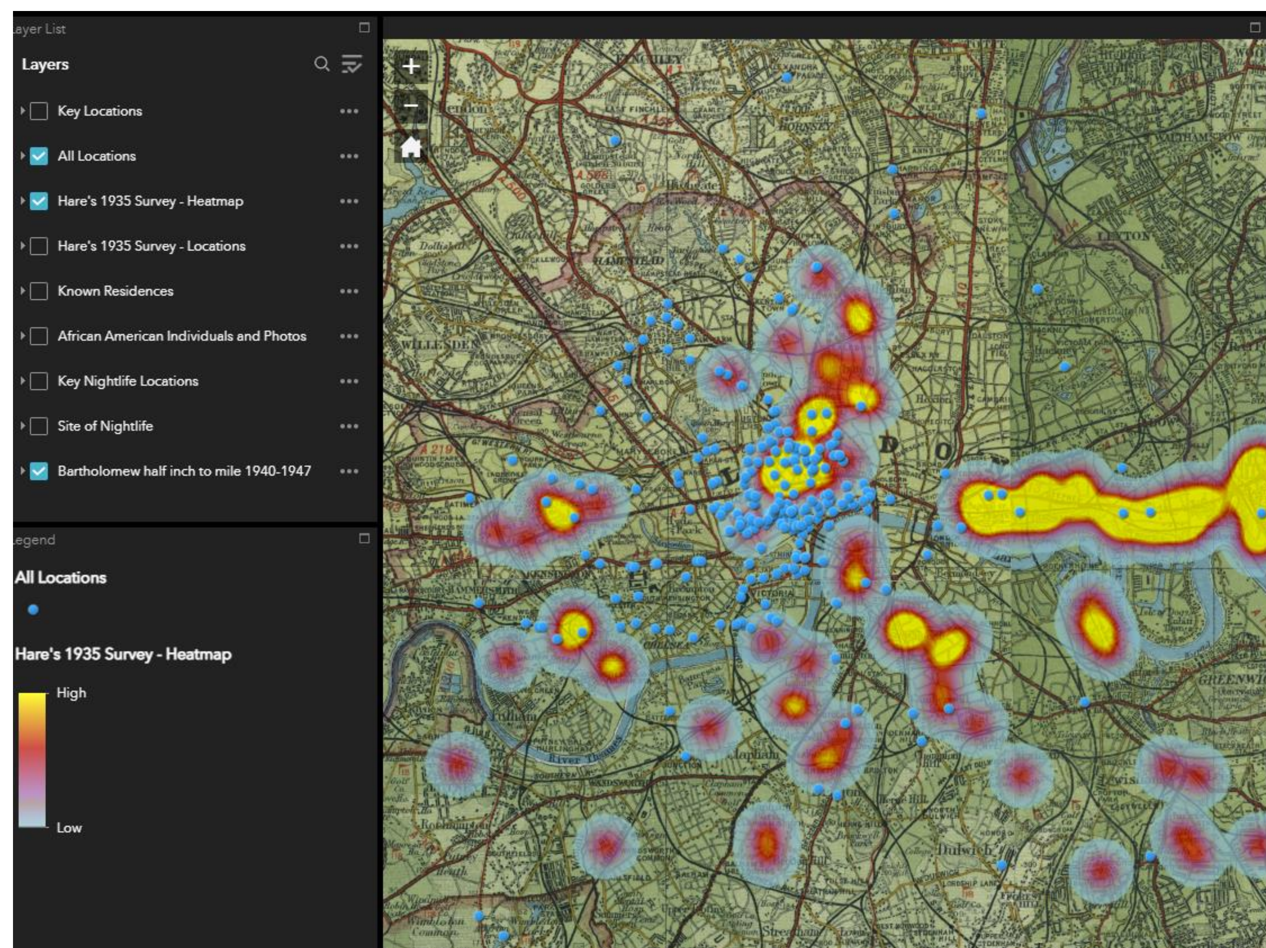
No historical enquiry is ever finished definitively, although publication usually forces work to completion. In digital mapping, the publication of the website represented a conclusion of sorts, but the ease of adding additional data to the pre-existing system offered additional opportunities – or perhaps temptations – to continue. There can come a point when additional research might offer diminishing returns, but in this case the richness of novel leads in the city's centre and the importance of addressing the ongoing lack of information about the black East End offered particular motivations to continue. With support from Northeastern's TIER-1 seed-funding scheme, work on the 2.0 site was conducted from autumn 2020 until spring 2021 and focused on three areas: mapping the presence of African American service personnel in the city, digitizing Nancie Hare's 1935 map of black settlement, and making the data available for others' use.

The subject of the African American experience in wartime London has been discussed in other publications (Ayers 2020). Here it is worth noting that honing in on this topic offered one way of displaying additional data form the heavily populated individuals database. The size of this database was one of the successes of the '1.0' project but, for the same reason, representing it in a visually accessible way was challenging. Focusing on one key constituency of the database and including them as a distinct layer on an updated interface – and including pictures of key figures like Adelaide Hall and Paul Robeson where possible – was one attempt to strike a balance between showcasing the richness of data without overwhelming users.

Nancie Hare's 1935 map, meanwhile, offered a tantalizing glimpse of a black presence clustered around the Port of London. Little is known about Hare, other than she was a white philanthropist associated with the League of Coloured Peoples whose original research on black London can no longer be located – save for a hand-drawn map purporting to represent black habitation in the capital. Given the source's uncertain provenance, it raised questions of accuracy and reliability that the '1.0' strand of work did not have time to interrogate fully. However, with additional time lead investigator Ayers was able to use a series of overlaid transparencies of Hare's map set against contemporary Ordnance Survey records to determine that Hare's document corresponded to some locations documented by the MBL project. Overlaying maps in this way,

moreover, revealed new data with clear correlations between Hare's locations and key thoroughfares such as Commercial Road and East India Dock Road and within the borders of Canning Town. Confidence grew that Hare's map likely offered a reasonable (albeit imperfect) reflection of actual patterns of black settlement. The points on Hare's map were geolocated manually using MapWarper to produce a heatmap layer on the 2.0 interface that offered an important counterpoint to the dominance of the West End in evidence since the project's inception. Finally, to facilitate future lines of enquiry on this topic and many others, the data compiled through the project was uploaded to Github and made accessible as a link from the project's homepage. This 2.0 phase remains ongoing as of May 2021.

[Figure 8: Screenshot of Mapping Black London webpage interface as of May 2021. The layers displayed represent the 'All Locations' data captured in Stage One, and a heatmap drawn from data gathered from Nancie Hare's 1935 survey. Users also have the option of toggling on and off layers representing residential settlement, nightlife and African American movements in the city. Available at: https://dcrn.northeastern.edu/home/mapping-black-london-in-world-war-ii/]



Conclusion

There is much that makes the Mapping Black London in World War II case-study distinctive; the extent to which these specific tools can be replicated usefully on other projects will vary, not least because of the fast-moving pace at which they are being developed. Yet a key part of this article has been to suggest ways in which others can benefit from thinking about digital spatial history as part of this type of staged process more broadly, where each phase is designed to relate to an analogue in more familiar historical research processes. To recap, these include: identifying and understanding a topic, acquiring a thorough knowledge of the secondary literature and adopting a critical position within it, and finding new and innovative ways of interpreting primary source material to advance our understanding of the past. These stages can also offer a launch-pad for '2.0' work which uses pre-existing work and insights to secure funding to continue. Experiences on this project suggest there are at least four criteria where others might consider adopting a similar staged approach:

The topic has a bounded geographic area that 'matters'

The use of digital mapping techniques will be most useful where the research questions have a strong geographic component. This rather obvious but fundamental point is worth dwelling on, because it reminds us that it is not the scale of enquiry that matters, but the extent to which space and or place are central to the organizing questions of the research. That is to say, the scope of the work can vary from small-scale village and towns, to cities, regions, nations, continents or even across the globe (the latter likely to continue to be a growth area under the rubric of 'Big History') but if the place where past events are unfolding is merely in the background, a backdrop subordinated in large part to other historical concerns, then a digital map is only likely to serve illustrative rather than analytical purposes.

The topic has received disparate or disconnected treatment in the secondary literature

There are two reasons for this. First, using digital maps in a field where there has been some coverage by other scholars already means taking time to gather and analyze a selection of this data becomes a lower risk strategy. It removes the possibility that there is simply no spatially relevant primary evidence available for the topic, and offers some quick and analytically useful routes into understanding both the historical topic and how other academics have conceived it. In addition, where the topic has been approached by different groups with varied perspectives and interests, gathering, plotting and mapping it constitutes a useful form of synthesis. The very act of

bringing together different approaches to a topic that may not have been in direct conversation before can *in itself* point towards novel findings and further avenues of investigation.

The primary source material has a geographical component, but no 'off the shelf' source

Related to the points above, it follows that any digital mapping project will, of course, need some primary evidence with spatial data of one sort or another. Yet it is worth stressing here that recent developments in archival digitization and the fields of natural language processing have meant the definition of what falls under this category has expanded. It is no longer necessarily true that large caches of pre-existing quantitative data like census returns or governmental statistics are a prerequisite, including when mapping the intersections between race and space. Painstaking processes of 'reverse engineering' disparate forms of evidence to create a database might not create the comprehensive coverage of sources like the US census, but they can capture activities like social spaces and political protests that fall beyond the purview of official sources. In addition, political writings that have traditionally fallen in the domain of political and intellectual history can also have their geographical components extracted using geoparsing to supply additional lines of enquiry, albeit ones that can and should be used in tandem with other investigative techniques.

The public interest in the topic justifies a degree of extra effort

It is important to remain frank about the well-established pitfalls inherent even in well-conceived digital mapping projects. One important thing to consider is that topics with substantial degrees of pre-existing interest offer an extra incentive to embark on additional work like database design and construction, training investigators on their use, data entry and analysis, and website construction. This does not remove the risk that digital projects lie unseen on a corner of the internet or, even worse, unfinished in the construction phase having run out of money, but it does offer an important extra incentive that scholars should be attentive to at the outset.

A staged approach also allows individual scholars or larger team to be experimental, to constantly reassess, and even to stop when they run out of time, money, or encounter insurmountable methodological constraints. This democratizes the field of digital history, allowing academics to gain quick, insightful findings from digital tools even without the backing of large research grants or a teams of research assistants in support. A phased approach also gives historians tangible results to show to a public audience at an early stage, hopefully gaining

increased engagement with their work as a result. A sceptic could point to the cost of the proprietary software tools, yet open access tools such as QGIS are available, and improving every year. Above all, this article contends that staged approaches can help by focusing on practical as well as theoretical questions that centre on the art of the possible: they do not set out to allow historians to create perfect visualizations, but rather solid, accurate tools that aid in research projects. Staged approaches promise to be useful in other contexts where datasets remain scarce and data for digital projects needs to be sourced from a variety of disparate locations.

References

Online Sources

'Digital Harlem', available at: http://digitalharlem.org/ Accessed 19 November 2020.

'Edinburgh Geoparser', available at: https://www.ltg.ed.ac.uk/software/geoparser/ Accessed 19 November 2020.

'Legacies of British Slaveholding', available at: https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/ Accessed 19November 2020.

'Mapping Black London in World War II', available at: https://dcrn.northeastern.edu/home/mapping-black-london-in-world-war-ii/ Accessed 27 April 2021.

'Mapping Decline: St. Louis and the American City', available at: http://mappingdecline.lib.uiowa.edu/ Accessed 19 November 2020

'Mapping Inequality: Redlining in New Deal America', available at: https://dsl.richmond.edu/panorama/redlining/#loc=5/39.1/-94.58 Accessed 19 November 2020.

'Mapping Prejudice', available at: https://mappingprejudice.umn.edu/index.html Accessed 19 November 2020.

'Mapping Segregation in Washington D.C.', available at: http://www.mappingsegregationdc.org/#about Accessed 19 November 2020.

'The Legacy of Redlining', available at: http://www.wenfeixu.com/redliningmap/ Accessed 19 November 2020.

'Urban Transition Historical GIS Project', available at: https://s4.ad.brown.edu/Projects/UTP2/index.htm Accessed 19 November 2020.

'Voyant Tools (Dreamscape)', available at: https://voyant-tools.org/docs/#!/guide/dreamscape Accessed 19 November 2020.

Secondary Sources

Ayers, O. (2020). 'Jim Crow and John Bull in London: Transatlantic Encounters with Race and Nation in the Second World War'. *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism.* 20:3, pp. 244-266.

Baldwin, D.L. and Makalani, M. (2013). *Escape from New York: The New Renaissance beyond Harlem*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press

Bodenhammer, C, Corrigan, J. and Harris, T.M. eds. (2010). *Spatial Humanities: GIS and the Future of Humanities Scholarship*. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana Uni Press.

Boonstra, O. (2010). 'Barriers Between Historical Scholarship and GIS'. *International Journal of Humanities and Arts Computing*. 3, pp. 3-7.

Bouges, A. (2011). 'C.L.R. James, Pan-Africanism and the Black Radical Tradition.' *Critical Arts: Communicating Pan-Africanism: Caribbean leadership and global impact*, 25 (4), pp.484-499.

Campbell, C. (2018). 'Space, Place and Scale: Human Geography and Spatial History'. *Past and Present [Special Edition].*

Chrisman, N.R. (2002). 'What does 'GIS' Mean?'. *Transactions in GIS.* 3(2), pp.175-186.
Coomans, T., Cattoor, B., & De Jonge, K. eds. (2019). Leuven: Leuven University Press.

Corbould, C. (2009). *Becoming African Americans*: *Black Public Life in Harlem, 1919–1939.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Earley-Spadoni, Tiffany. (2017). 'Spatial History, Deep Mapping and Digital Storytelling: Archaeology's Future Imagined Through an Engagement with the Digital Humanities'. *Journal of Archaeological Science.* 84, pp. 95-102.

Finnegan, D. A. (2008). 'The Spatial Turn: Geographical Approaches in the History of Science'. *Journal of the History of Biology*. 41, pp. 369-388.

FitzGibbon, C. (1970). *The Blitz.* London: Macdonald.

Goode, C. and Cotterrell, R. (2002). Bass Lines: A Life in Jazz. London, UK: Northway.

Gregory, I, Donaldson C and Taylor J. E. (2019). 'Landscape Appreciation in the English Lake District: A GIS Approach' (pp. 277-300). Chapter in Coomans, T., Cattoor, B., & De Jonge, K. eds. Leuven: Leuven University Press.

Gregory, I. N. and Geddes, A (2014). *Toward Spatial Humanities: Historical GIS and Spatial History.* Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.

Griffiths, S. & von Lünen, A. (2016). *Spatial Cultures: Towards a New Social Morphology of Cities Past and Present.* London, UK: Routledge.

Guldi, J. (n.d.). 'What is the Spatial Turn?', available at: https://spatial.scholarslab.org/spatial-turn/ Accessed 19 November 2020.

Hedinger, D. (2017). 'The Imperial Nexus: the Second World War and the Axis in Global Perspective'. *Journal of Global History*. 12(2), pp.184-205.

Hirsch, A. (2000). 'The Race Space Race'. *Journal of Urban History*. 26(4), pp. 519–529.

Høgsbjerg, C. (2014). *C.L.R. James in Imperial Britain.* Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Høgsbjerg, C. (2016). ''The Fever and the Fret': C.L.R. James, the Spanish Civil War and the Writing of *The Black Jacobins'. Critique: The Journal of Socialist Theory*. 44:1-2, pp. 161-177.

Howe, S. (2003). 'C. L. R. James: visions of history, visions of Britain', chapter in B. Schwarzed. (2003). *West Indian Intellectuals in Britain.* Manchester: Manchester University Press.

James, L. (2015). *George Padmore and Decolonization from Below: Pan-Africanism, the ColdWar, and the End of Empire.* London: Palgrave Macmillan.

James, W. (2006). 'The Black Experience in Twentieth Century Britain', chapter in P. D. Morgan and S. Hawkins, *Black Experience and Empire.* New York and London: Oxford University Press.

Kemp, K.K. (2009). 'What Can GIS Offer History?'. *International Journal of Humanities and Arts Computing*. 3, pp.15–19.

Knowles, A.K. (2002). 'Historical GIS: The Spatial Turn in Social Science History'. *SocialScience History.* 24 (3), pp.451-470.

Knowles, A.K. and Hillier, A. (eds). (2008). *Placing History: How Maps, Spatial Data, and gisAre Changing Historical Scholarship.* Redlands, CA: ESRI.

Lake, M. and Reynolds, H. (2008). *Drawing the Global Colour Line: White Men's Countries and the International Challenge of Racial Equality.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Lefebvre, H. (1991). *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith. Cambridge,Mass: Blackwell.

Makalani, M. (2011). *In the Cause of Freedom: Radical Black Internationalism from Harlem to London, 1917-1939.* Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, pp. 165-194

Matera, M. (2015). *Black London: The Imperial Metropolis and Decolonization in the Twentieth Century.* Oakland, CA: University of California Press.

Mort, F. (2010). *Capital Affairs: London and the Making of the Permissive Society*. New Haven,CT: Yale University Press.

Munro, J. (2017). *The Anticolonial Front: The African American Freedom Struggle and Global Decolonization, 1945–1960.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Nasta S. and M. Stein (2002). 'Global Locals: Making Tracks at the Heart of Empire', chapter in S. Nasta & M. Stein eds*. The Cambridge History of Black and Asian British Writing* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (pp. 97-192).

Pennybacker, S.D. (2009). *From Scottsboro to Munich: Race and Political Culture in 1930sBritain.* Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Phillips and Phillips (1999). *Windrush: The Irresistible Rise of Multi-Racial Britain*. London: HarperCollins.

Schwarz, B. (2003). 'George Padmore', chapter in B. Schwarz ed. (2003). *West Indian Intellectuals in Britain.* Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Snyder, J.A. (2018). *Making Black History: The Color Line, Culture, and Race in the Age of Jim Crow.* Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press.

Staley, D.J., French, S. A. and Ferster, B. (2013). Poster at DHA: Visual Historiography:Visualizing "The Literature of a Field".

Sugrue, T. J. (2014) *Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit[Updated Edition].* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Swindall, L.R. (2013). *Paul Robeson: A Life of Activism and Art*. Lanham, MD: Rowman &Littlefield.

Tally, R.T. (2019) *Topophrenia: Place, Narrative, and the Spatial Imagination*. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press.

Travis C. and von Lünen, A. eds. (2013). *History and GIS: Epistemologies, Considerations and Reflections.* Heidelburg, Netherlands: Springer.

Trotter, J., Lewis, E., Hunter, T. eds. (2004). *The African American Urban Experience:Perspectives from the Colonial Period to the Present.* New York: Palgrave.

Von Lünen, A. (2016b). "Beuys Don't Cry: From Social Sculptures to Social Media." *The Digital Arts and Humanities*. Cham: Springer International. pp. 23-45.

Walkowitz, J. (2012). *Nights Out: Life in Cosmopolitan London*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

White, R. (2010). 'What is Spatial History?', available at: https://web.stanford.edu/group/spatialhistory/cgi-bin/site/pub.php?id=29. Accessed 19 November 2020.

Warnecke-Berger, H. (2018). *Politics and Violence in Central America and the Caribbean.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan

Williams, T. (2019). "George Padmore and the Soviet Model of the British Commonwealth," *Modern Intellectual History*, 16 (2), pp.531-9

Wilson, J.W. (2009). 'GIS and Historical Scholarship: A Question of Scale'. *International Journalof Humanities and Arts Computing*. 3, pp. 9-13.

Withers, C.W.J. (2009). 'Place and the 'Spatial Turn' in Geography and in History'. *Journal of the History of Ideas*. 70, pp. 637–58.

Endnotes

[i] See, for example: 'Mapping Inequality: Redlining in New Deal America': https://dsl.richmond.edu/panorama/redlining/#loc=5/39.1/-94.58; 'The Legacy of Redlining': http://www.wenfeixu.com/redliningmap/; 'Mapping Decline: St. Louis and the American City': http://mappingdecline.lib.uiowa.edu/; 'Digital Harlem': http://digitalharlem.org/; 'Mapping Segregation in Washington D.C.': http://www.mappingsegregationdc.org/#about ; 'Mapping Prejudice': https://mappingprejudice.umn.edu/index.html ; 'Urban Transition Historical GIS Project': https://s4.ad.brown.edu/Projects/UTP2/index.htm

[ii] As Gregory and Geddes (2014) point out, humanities scholars should by now be well-versed in the slippery, incomplete and contingent nature of historical evidence and familiar with the need to balance representation and reality. For a survey of these multidisciplinary debates, which span spatial humanities,history and neighbouring disciplines like geography, see also: (Bodenhammer, Corrigan and Harris 2010), (White 2010), (Campbell 2008), (Ethington 2007), (Guldi n.d.), (Coomans, Cattoor & De Jonge 2019); (Finnegan 2008), (Withers 2009), (Earley-Spadoni 2017).

[iii] See, for example CO 981, at the National Archives, a series that 'contains selected personal files of colonial students in the United Kingdom dealing with their welfare, education and training'.

[iv] Sexuality was another category where the binary demands of the GIS system, quite literally, did not capture the complex realities of people's lives. At the same time, sexual contacts and queer/homosexual experiences were important parts of this history, despite the fact that many in 1940s Britain kept these relationships secret. The partial solution adopted in the MBL project was to use the short descriptions that accompanied each location to try and reflect these diverse experiences, with subsequent written publications (e.g. Ayers 2020) reflecting in more depth on the larger questions of race and sexual contact in the wartime city.

[v] On the one hand, reading and recording works specifically concentrating on London allowed the team to refine its analysis on the ways in which different types of history focused on different areas of the city. An analysis of literature discussing global issues, in contrast, offered the possibility of capturing the international nature of the historiography and the way in which historians linked London intellectuals to the outside world.

[vi] The other works in the corpus were Baldwin & Makalani 2013; Makalani 2011; Bouges 2011; and Williams 2019.

[vii] For example, researchers had to be careful to remove many publishing centres from the geo-parsed data, such as Harlow, Essex. CLAVIN is entering data not only from the body of the secondary literature texts but also from their *footnotes*- Harlow for example being the location where many books from the publishing company Pearson Longman were produced.

[viii] Schwarz (2003: 140) also suggests its location near Euston might also have related to that station's status as a terminus for the boat-train for overseas arrivals, while Padmore himself reported acquiring the place after being discriminated against elsewhere.

[ix] As Schwarz has written, Padmore's 1930s London career represented a moment when, following his abandonment of the official Soviet line of the Communist Party, he fused Marxist and pan-African ideas, but within a 'double existence': namely he brought with him a thoroughly 'un-English' trenchant opposition to empire where he consciously disengaged from Westminster-oriented politics, but while retaining noticeable mannerisms that testified to his British-inspired upbringing

in Trinidad. In comparing the two, meanwhile, Leslie James (2015: 11) notes how Padmore's forensic and report-based style of writing compared to other more theoretical writers like James, while many recognized – including James himself – the influence Padmore had on other activists. Understanding someone like James also requires considering local milieus as well as global diasporic ones, with Stephen Howe (2003) rightly inviting us to consider James not as a simple 'outsider insider' within British society but as someone actively involved in negotiating and shaping identities that traversed Trinidadian, West Indian and British contexts.