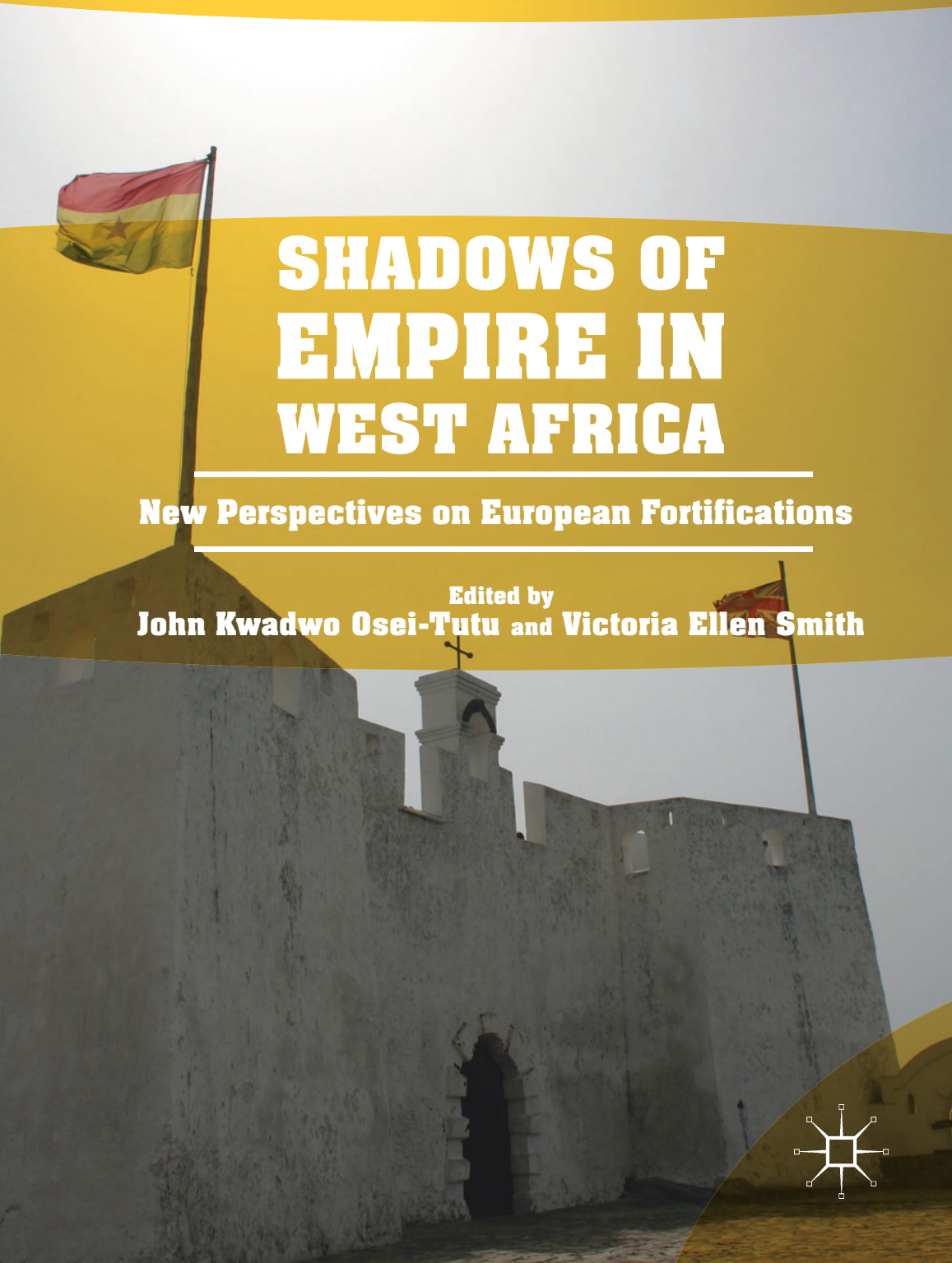
AFRICAN HISTORIES AND MODERNITIES

SHADOWS OF EMPIRE IN WEST AFRICA

New Perspectives on European Fortifications

Edited by
John Kwadwo Osei-Tutu and Victoria Ellen Smith



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Victoria Ellen Smith
Editors

Shadows of Empire in West Africa

New Perspectives on European Fortifications

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This collection is dedicated to the memory of Dr. Kwabena Adu-Boahen.

Preface

The book is a product of a project called *Shadows of Empire: a study of European imperial forts and castles from the sixteenth century to the present.* This project applied entangled history approaches to the study of Afro-European relationships in West Africa from the fifteenth century, emphasising the centrality of fortifications as centres of interaction and exchange. "Shadows of Empire" is, in turn, a sub-project under the multi-component *Beyond Borders: Transnational movements through history* project (2010–2012), an institution-based strategic project designed and implemented by the Department of Historical Studies, Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU, Trondheim). The Faculty of Humanities of NTNU and the Norwegian Research Council (NRC) co-funded the project. We are also grateful to the Department of History of the University of Ghana for facilitating and organising the infrastructure for the conference.

On 1st and 2nd August 2012, many of the contributors attended a conference entitled *Shadows of Empire: Studies of European Colonial Fortifications in West Africa from fifteenth Century* at the University of Ghana. They came to share their thinking and put forward their research from the University of Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, University of Cape Coast, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Ashesi University, The Courtauld Institute of Art, University of Basel and Sciences Po (Paris), University of Virginia and University of California (Los Angeles). This publication brings together selected and revised papers from the conference along with

specially commissioned chapters from scholars associated with the University of Warwick, University of Ghana, University of Wisconsin and Norwegian University of Science and Technology to ensure that this book presents a fully rounded and cohesive collection. As such, our aim is to offer multidisciplinary and international approaches through which we explore the meaning, uses and impacts of European fortification systems on the Gold Coast (Ghana). We hope that these studies enrich knowledge about the European-built forts and castles within the West African milieu.

The process from conference to completed book has been a laborious one, but the result is one that we are proud to be able to share with you. We thank Dr. Kofi Baku, who as Head of the History Department at the University of Ghana, accepted in 2012 to host the Conference from which this book has emerged. Thanks also go to Tom McCaskie, Toyin Falola and the team at Palgrave for their support in bringing this project to publication. Regrettably, Dr. Kwabena Adu-Boahen, former Head of the Department of History at the University of Cape Coast (Ghana), and one of the participants of the 2012 conference, did not live to see this volume into print. We dedicate the book to his memory.

Trondheim, Norway — John Kwadwo Osei-Tutu
Legon, Ghana — Victoria Ellen Smith

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Editors and Contributors

About the Editors

Prof. John Kwadwo Osei-Tutu is a Professor of History and currently Head of the History Program at the Institute of Historical Studies, Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU). He became a Visiting Scholar at the Department of History at the University of Ghana in 2013–2014. His specialties are African and World/Global histories. The articles in this anthology are products of the conference, Shadows of Empire: Studies of European Colonial Fortifications in West Africa from fifteenth Century, which was held in Accra in 2012. His teaching and research interests include African-European encounters in West Africa from the fifteenth century; colonisation, colonial rule and popular encounters with British colonial rule; history of natural resources regulation; oil and development in West Africa. He has been involved in multidisciplinary and collaborative projects including the Asafo History (documentation) Project; NKOSOO 2015: development of sustainable oil industry for Ghana (under the Norwegian Petroleum Directorate's "Oil for Development (OfD)" program); and the "Beyond Borders: Transnational movements through history project". Currently, he is involved in the "Political Regulation of Natural Resources 1890–2010, Global Experiences, project that is funded by the Norwegian Research Council", and is the project coordinator for "NORPART-2016/10009: Inter-cultural historical studies", a mobility project funded by the Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Education.

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Contributors

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Dr. Emily Mann studied art history at the Courtauld Institute in London, where she completed her Ph.D. in 2015 and has been appointed Early Career Lecturer in Early Modern Art. Focusing on architecture and its representation in English and other European colonial and commercial settlements from the late sixteenth to the mid-eighteenth century, her research investigates the meanings of building and buildings in the emerging empires and in the broader context of inter-imperial competition and conflict over territory and trade. As Research Associate with the Centre for the Political Economies of International Commerce (PEIC) at the University of Kent, she further investigated the architectural enterprises of early modern trading corporations such as the English and Dutch East India companies and the Royal African Company. Her publications include "To Build and Fortify: Defensive Architecture in the Early Atlantic Colonies" in *Building the British Atlantic World: Spaces, Places and Material Culture, 1600–1850*, ed. by Daniel Maudlin and Bernard L. Herman (University of North Carolina Press, 2016).

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Prof. Henry Nii-Adziri Wellington FGA, studied at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) for the B.Sc. in Design (1967) and M.Sc. in Architecture (1969) degrees. He obtained the Dipl. Ing. in Urban Design (1972) and Dr. Ing in

Architecture and Development Planning (1981) at the Rheinisch-Westfälische Technische Hochschule (RWTH), Aachen, and the Technische Universität Braunschweig (TUBS), Braunschweig, respectively. From 1972 to 2006, he researched in and taught architecture at KNUST. Since 2009, on post-retirement contract in the Department of Archaeology and Heritage Studies at the University of Ghana, he teaches and conducts research in Heritage Issues and Monuments Conservation. Among his publications have been the anthology *Fortresses, Compounds and Plantations—Danish cultural Heritage shared with Ghana* published by Vandkunsten and the Danish National Museum, Copenhagen, Denmark (2014), and a book titled *Stones Tell Stories at Osu—Memories of a Host community of the Danish TransAtlantic Slave Trade* (2011).

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction: Interpreting West Africa's Forts and Castles

John Kwadwo Osei-Tutu and Victoria Ellen Smith

Fortresses are a universal phenomenon: they dominated the landscapes and societies of civilisations and empires such as Mesopotamia, Assyria, Egypt, China, Greece; Rome, and became ubiquitous features of European spaces from the Middle Ages.[1] As old as they may be, some of these buildings have endured the tides of time and the vagaries of the weather, becoming the inheritances of contemporary societies that often had nothing to do with their construction. Paul Erdmann Isert, a German surgeon and naturalist who worked for the Danish establishment at Christiansborg Castle on the Gold Coast (now Ghana) in the 1780s, observed that a fortress is not like a mushroom that springs up and withers overnight.[2] The enduring architectural relics of European activity and interactions with the societies in West Africa support Isert's truism. From 1445 to the 1870s, trading companies of core European

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nations introduced congeries of European-type fortification systems to West Africa, where these buildings became essential geo-strategic tools of inter-European commercial competition, components in the intricate networks of the Atlantic Basin trade and instruments of enslavement and colonisation.

As pioneers of the European-African trade, the Portuguese were the first to build fortified trading stations or factories (*feitoria*) in Africa. They built their first fort on Mauritania's Arguin Island in 1445 and followed up with a string of forts at important trading points along the West African coastline, including the infamous São Jorge da Mina—now known as Ghana's Elmina Castle—in 1482.[3] Over a period of four centuries, fortified trading stations grew in number and purpose as the respective chartered companies of Holland, Sweden, Denmark-Norway, Brandenburg and England (later, the UK) embarked on coastal fortification projects comprising a string of castle-like structures, sparsely defended lodges and small secondary forts that served as company outposts.[4]

Questions remain regarding how many fortified and non-fortified structures the competing European companies erected in West Africa. Figures based on the physical evidence in the form of structural remnants do not give a complete picture of the numbers built over the years, as they do not account for those that have disappeared entirely: plundered for building materials, eaten up by the Atlantic Ocean or simply left to crumble and turn into dust. Through long and painstaking research into the archives of the various trading companies, some scholars have, however, provided estimates of their numbers. A. W. Lawrence lists forty-three extant principal fortified trading stations in West Africa from Arguin Island to Ouidah, with the majority—thirty-two, to be precise—located in Ghana.[5] Other sources list between forty-eight and sixty fortified edifices in Ghana alone, comprising large structures—commonly designated as castles—medium-sized forts and trading lodges (see Fig. 1.1).[6] The apparent quantitative discrepancies in the literature are somewhat bridgeable through further research; and an increased scholarly and popular interest is now bringing more knowledge to light.

Currently, what is clear from attempts to quantify fortresses in West Africa is that the Gold Coast had the largest concentration of European fortresses in the non-European world. Ghana's 500-kilometre-long coastline was so densely built upon in certain areas that many of the fortresses are in close proximity and rivalling trading companies stood side

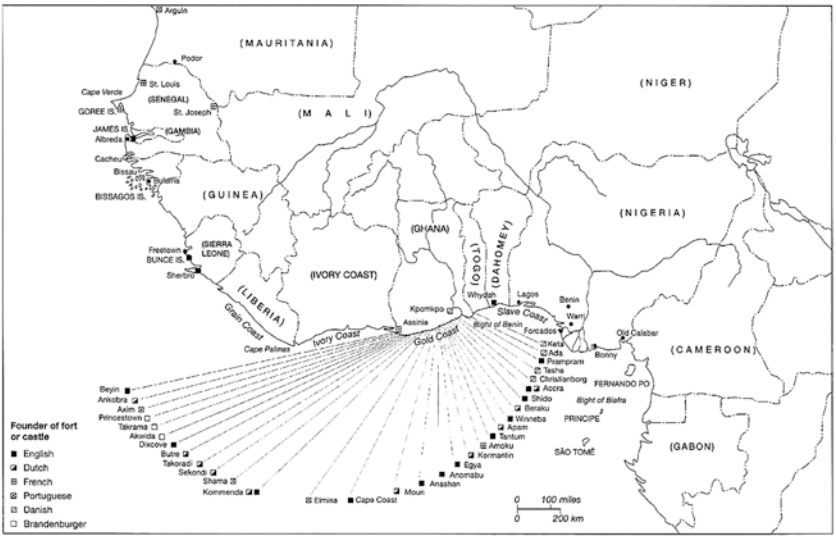

Fig. 1.1 Forts and Castles of Ghana. *Source* 'Atlas of Slavery', Edition 1e by J. Walvin (ISBN/ASIN0582437806, 9780582437807) Copyright © 2005, Pearson and Longman. Reproduced by permission of Taylor & Francis books UK

by side.[7] This concentration of European fortified trading posts underscores the important historical position of the Gold Coast as a site of intense activity within the Atlantic economic and social systems from the fifteenth to the nineteenth centuries.

As the largest stone structures on the West African coast, the fortresses functioned as claims of authority, defensive installations, trading markets, warehouses, accommodation and administrative centres.[8] Their primary military purpose was to safeguard the commercial monopolies of resident European trading companies within negotiated geographical spheres under the jurisdictions of friendly African potentates. The designs, positioning, weaponry and garrisoning accentuated their defensive roles in the context of the European overseas competition. Though each of the buildings was unique in design, all of them shared the same basic features. Their individual uniqueness comes out through differences ranging in design from rectangular and triangular to concentric and star shaped.[9] Overwhelmingly, they were littoral and placed strategically on rocky promontories with the Atlantic forming a natural exterior

protection to one side. The landward façades were oriented towards the neighbouring settlements of established African territories, with the reach of European guns and cannons dictating the parameters of defence. Some, like Arguin Fort and Gorée Fort, were built on islands and were relatively secure from inland attacks. Fewer still were located on inland waterways, like the Portuguese Fort Duma erected on the bank of Ghana's Ankobra River in 1623.

The fortresses varied in structure, but generally they featured curtain walls; massive battlements made of imported material and indigenous raw materials such as limestone and granite; watchtowers; central courtyards; and gun slits (referred to as 'peep holes' by tour guides) through which the garrison soldiers could shoot at enemies approaching from sea or land. Some, like Elmina Castle, had adjoining moats and were reachable by drawbridges. Certainly, these replicas of medieval and early modern European fortifications must have looked discordantly humongous within West Africa's contemporary fifteenth and sixteenth century vernacular architectural settings. Depending on the size and strength of their battlements, some were capable of carrying canons ranging from four pounders to twenty-four pounders and of withstanding the ricochet of firing such weaponry. The smaller poundage were generally trained inland to ward off African enemies who were probably seen as a lesser threat, whilst the larger poundage were poised to intimidate and potentially destroy the approaching ships of belligerent European competitors. Today, remnants of the forts and castles appear to be losing a centuries-long war of attrition meted out by an unwavering 'enemy': the forces of nature, particularly the mighty waves of the Atlantic Ocean, which bombard mud and stone foundations with their unceasing saltwater artillery. It will require massive inflows of expensive technology and masonry to save the remnants; otherwise, in the next 50 years, only a handful will remain.[10]

Some scholars have suggested that there were European states that embarked on the practice of building fortifications overseas partly to dominate territories.[11] However, our research indicates that claims of fortresses functioning as bases for territorial domination before the late nineteenth century are tenuous, if not impossible to substantiate. More realistically, during the period of commerce, the positioning of these fortified trading warehouses enabled the representatives of European nations to achieve exclusive political, defensive and commercial alliances with African sovereigns from whom they leased the land on which they

built. As a result, Europeans—such as the British, Dutch and Danish on the Gold Coast (now Ghana) —established a permanent presence in West Africa. Over the years, some European traders and company agents also gained political influence in African affairs as a result of their mediatory role in local disputes (either by invitation or intimidation), which led to some Europeans defining the territories in which they were located as protectorates. It was not until the late nineteenth century—when the British became the dominant power on the Gold Coast and adopted Christiansborg Castle as headquarters for the newly formed Gold Coast Colony and as residence for its Governor—that history tells of Europeans translating their informal interventions to territorial jurisdictions.[12]

Beyond their defensive role, the buildings were primarily used as trading centres, complete with storerooms for goods and prisons for holding Africans as captives prior to their transportation to the Americas during the trans-Atlantic slave trade. Above all, the larger fortresses such as Elmina Castle, Cape Coast Castle and Christiansborg Castle served as administrative headquarters for their respective national companies, residences for the principal trading agents, barracks for soldiers and sites for diplomatic negotiations. Each company kept smaller (out-) forts as posts where commodities and enslaved Africans were kept until their departure through the major forts or exit ports.

Prior to the late nineteenth century, ownership of many of the fortresses changed, some several times, through purchase and legal appropriation by rival European companies, as well as through forced seizure by Europeans and expanding Akan imperial states.[13] New European owners often adjusted the original designs of the buildings to suit their specific purposes, as well as brokering new alliances with the reigning local or regional African power. Currently, the forts and castles are the property of independent African nations, and it is to their history that they speak, for their encounters that they are remembered and for their purposes that these memorials of entangled histories are now used. Yet, the governments and peoples of West African countries have different attitudes towards and uses for these monuments to the mounting histories of enslavement and empire. Though many committed to UNESCO's World Heritage Convention goal (1972) of protecting the world's cultural and natural heritage, West African governments are nevertheless attempting to capitalise on the economic worth of the buildings as various types of tourist sites from historical monuments to guest houses. Their strategies for increasing tourist visitations have great prospects

for adding to the national purse and maintaining the remaining structures. Thus, whereas Europeans built the edifices as part of their infrastructure of commerce and slave trading, West African governments are identifying ways of maintaining them through the exploitation of their emotive legacies of trade and oppression. In doing so, many sites are attracting the descendants of enslaved Africans through pilgrimage tourism, as well as achieving national economic gain and educational development. In Ghana, state organisations such as the Ghana Museum and Monuments Board (GMMB) with the support of the UNESCO World Heritage Centre have adopted some forts and castles to create heritage and memorial sites for a broad spectrum of visitors.

At various times in the past, both colonial and independent governments have converted some of the fortresses for government offices. An important case is that of Christiansborg Castle, which has served at the centre of power for successive pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial administrations. It was trading headquarters for the Danish enterprise on the Gold Coast until 1850, Britain's seat of colonial rule from 1877 until 1957 and Ghana's official government house until 2008.[14] Others have been variously used as prisons, lunatic asylums, rest houses and youth centres. In some cases, private investors have shown interest in translating smaller forts, like Fort Metal Cross at Dixcove, into unique accommodation or dining experiences for commercial gain. Elsewhere along the Ghanaian coast, forts are in various stages of decay or have crumbled into dust. It is for the intellectual preservation of those that continue to cast their shadow literally and those that only do so metaphorically on the history of West Africa, as well as America and the Caribbean, that this collection of essays contributes. In doing so, the authors ask questions about what the fortresses have meant, what they now mean and to whom. What connections, interactions, exchanges, networks and flows they have facilitated. What impacts they had on the history and everyday lives of West Africans, particularly those living in their localities. Moreover, what the contemporary appropriations and uses are for the remnants of these edifices in West Africa.

Forts and Castles Research: Perspectives and Sources

Globally, there is a growing fascination with historic buildings. As a result, incidents of the desecration of buildings, monuments and other significant cultural places, such as the dramatic demolition of monuments

by the *Daesh* (Islamic State) in the Middle East, have been widely condemned.[15] Despite the scholarly and popular turn to preservation, the active destruction and passive abandonment of heritage sites continue worldwide. One of the geographically ubiquitous architectural forms that excites scholarly interest and calls for active preservation at the local, national and international level are forts and castles. In his work on the place of castles in European Medieval Society published in 2003, Charles Coulson lamented a lack of authoritative literature on the subject to match the popular interest and imaginings about the roles of fortresses in European society.[16] Coulson's call for cutting-edge research on fortresses notwithstanding, more work is being done on the fortifications in European countries such as the UK, France and Germany. Furthermore, this scholarly interest has been institutionalised through societies such as the UK's Castle Studies Group with its journal of popular and scholarly research.[17]

In comparison, there is yet to be the equivalent scholarly and organisational interest dedicated to the sustained, rigorous study of the political and social impact of European-built fortresses in West Africa. The financial and intellectual support being given to their preservation is also limited. From the 1950s, a number of important scholarly texts emerged on the subject and have become standard references in the scholarship on the forts and castles in West Africa. However, many of the works on West Africa's fortresses are limited to offering descriptive and illustrated accounts detailing their numbers, locations, origins, ownership and role within the European slave trade.[18] Notable among them are J.D. Fage et al.'s 'A New Checklist of the Forts and Castles of Ghana' (1959), which provides a 'more complete and less inaccurate' list as a corrective for lists previously published.[19] In addition, Isaac S. Ephson's 1970 work is a social history of the individual forts as sites of entangled Afro-European histories;[20] and Albert van Dantzig's 1980 book offers readers an introductory historical overview of the forts and castles along Ghana's coastline.[21] Two recent social histories of the forts, from 2006 and 2011 respectively, are William St Clair's detailed account of life within and outside the walls of Cape Coast Castle,[22] and Rebecca Shumway's account of the Fante people (of Ghana's Central Region) as both victims and brokers in the trade.[23]

Archaeologists, particularly archaeological historians, notably A.W. Lawrence,[24] J.K. Anquandah[25] and C.R. DeCorse,[26] have published authoritative works on the fortresses, seeing them as representing part of

the material culture of the African-European encounter and colonialism. To date, Lawrence's history of the buildings published in 1963 remains a seminal work as it does not see the fortresses only in military terms, but also as social and cultural arenas.[27]

In addition, some staff of the Ghana Museum and Monuments Board (GMMB) have published ethnographic narratives on guided tours of the castles at Elmina and Cape Coast.[28] In terms of memoirs and archival evidence, the writings of various European travellers, adventurers and residents of West Africa's forts and castles have also been published.[29]

Irrespective of their purposes and uses in the past, fortresses everywhere appear to attract a negative image as forbidding places. Significantly, this focus on the fortresses' negative reputation is not consigned to current popular thinking only, but is also reflected in the scholarly corpus to the exclusion of other modes of seeing them. Coulson, for instance, laments how the literature on medieval castles focuses on their 'brutal technology' and has led to the neglect of their political, social and cultural aspects.[30] Similarly, though the West African fortresses were central to the everyday lives of coastal peoples—both African and European—as well as to the economic and strategic engagements of interior states with the coast, their negative reputation as 'oppressive' architecture has stifled studies of the impact that these buildings had locally and regionally. This collection, which is dedicated to the cultural and sociopolitical context of the forts, is therefore timely.

Most commonly, the forts and castles elicit intellectual and popular scientific conversations within narratives of the trans-Atlantic slave trade in which they are often tagged as 'slave castles' or 'slave forts', with 'dungeon' also serving as a metonym for 'fort'. These conceptualisations emphasise the fact that the European companies erected the majority of fortresses in the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries to facilitate the Atlantic slave trade. Generally, too, contemporary observers overwhelmingly perceive the remnants of the fortresses as relics of oppression, tout court: as tools of exploitation, dominance and enslavement. Indeed, the open, whitewashed and 'civilized spaces' occupied by European officials (with their schools, churches, harvested rain water, fresh and clean air, etc.) functioned alongside the eerie and suffocating slave holding dungeons. This poignant juxtaposition evokes all manner of emotive responses from all manner of visitors to these monuments. For many visitors, the forts and castles in West Africa become meaningful as 'sites' of memory in the capture-captive tension between the European and African slave

traders and the imprisoned Africans, who were kept there to be shipped into a life of slavery in the Americas and beyond. During his 2009 tour of Ghana, US President Barrack Obama visited Cape Coast Castle and remarked that 'it is here where the journey of much of the African American experience began'.[31] It is the historic function of the fortresses as slave trading and holding edifices that gives significance to his words.

However, whilst the use of West Africa's fortresses in the Atlantic slave trade is a true element of their purpose and of great significance to global history, the horrendous reputation assigned to them stifles study of their other utilities and impacts in the West African social and spatial contexts.[32] Indeed, to see them as the main 'culprits' in the Atlantic slave trade is to assign to them the power of agency, with the danger of emotively shifting attention away from the real human perpetrators of the slave trade. Indeed, the archival and other material records of the Atlantic slave trade period are awash with the names, associations and enterprises of the human beings who drove the trade. Therefore, would it not be proper to see and study both the African captives and the architecture used to enslave them as somewhat 'victims' abused by powerful slavers? Will seeing the fortresses for what they are—buildings—not open up research on their other uses and impacts in West Africa? Significantly, a few works within the Atlantic slave trade corpus do attempt to give a broader picture of the position of the fortresses in the Atlantic set-up. One example is Edmund Abaka's study, which deals with the role of the fortresses in the trans-Atlantic slave trade, but also tells their broader story as architectural structures, as sites of economic and cultural exchanges, and as important sites of memory.[33] It is alongside innovative works such as Abaka's that this collection sits as a platform for new thinking.

There are compelling scholarly reasons for sustained critical multi- and interdisciplinary studies of the forts and castles that interrogate them in their own right as meritorious, though contentious, architectural environments that embody different styles and functions; historicity; monumentality; memories and heritage. First, despite their grim image in the public eye, some of the West African forts and castles are architectural masterpieces. Significantly, São Jorge da Mina (Elmina Castle) and Cape Coast Castle are listed as two of the 'seven amazing fortresses and castles in Africa'[34] alongside the Saladin Citadel (Cairo Citadel) and Citadel of Qaitbay;[35] the Fasil Ghebbi Castle;[36] Fort Jesus; and the Castle of Good Hope.[37] Indeed, as architectural pieces, their designs, aesthetic features, materiality, functionality and spatial delineations are worth studying by

architectural historians to bring out the capacity of humans to coalesce beauty with pain in one piece of architecture. In addition, the alterations made to the buildings over the years reflect changes in function and need. Study of these modifications will speak to the changing motives and missions of successive European and African owners. Also worth investigating are questions relating to how these alien architectural styles fitted, disproportionately, within the vernacular landscape and how they influenced the building styles and environs in the region.

The second scholarly reason for studying the fortresses is their historicity. For centuries, these buildings provided concrete footholds for the human actions and processes that entangled the histories of Africa, Europe and the Americas, and led to the emergence of an Atlantic world based on networks of trade, culture and politics. For, wherever they existed, the forts and castles developed a life of their own, so to speak, as nodal points of activity and interaction that shaped physical landscapes and social spaces. Their impact on urbanising trends along the coast is important. As spaces for mediating Afro-European entanglement, these historical buildings had both local and global significance in historical, sociopolitical and economic interaction as well as in intercultural dialogues of dominance and appropriation. The emphasis is on their position as 'permanent' sites within and around which human actors transacted business, competed for control, and spawned 'creolised' spaces and identities within emerging 'portals of globalization'.[38] Thus, fortresses should not be an obscure subject for military, political, economic, social and cultural historians and archaeologists. Although archaeologists have made enormous efforts through excavations and academic publications to document and unravel the multifaceted aspects of life in and around the forts and castles in West Africa, there is still enormous research potential particularly in the field of maritime archaeology.

Thirdly, the appropriation of forts and castles by contemporary African states as 'national heritage' and by UNESCO as World Heritage Sites validates their place among human kind's collective history.[39] Their position as monuments and heritage sites has opened them up to be used as museums and other tourist destinations. This makes them important subjects to study in the fields of heritage research and management; memory studies; diaspora and tourism studies; and post-colonial studies. The question of how different groups of people—Africans on the

continent; African and European descendants of slave traders; Africans in the diaspora; Europeans from former slave-trading nations—relate to and use these visual relics still needs to be fully explored so that their role within the first modern transcontinental and transnational intersections of African and European histories may be fully articulated.[40]

Fourthly, the sources available for embarking on academic enquiry into the nature, position and impacts of the West African fortress as architecture, as history and as heritage are plentiful, diverse and geographically dispersed primarily in Africa and Europe. The physical and related material remains of the fortresses constitute primary frontline sources. In addition, the document trails made up of company and colonial government records (official correspondences and reports, architectural plans of the buildings, plates and maps, the private papers of company employees, etc.) are locatable in the archives and libraries of major European cities (Basel, Berlin, Copenhagen, Den Haag, London and Lisbon) and in the archives of Ghana. In addition, representations of the forts and castles found in the familiar travel corpus, including texts (like biographies and memoires), images and cartography by historic European visitors and administrators on the West African coast, are a valuable source.[41] Furthermore, oral history testimonies, images, literature, theatrical performances, etc. gathered through the fieldwork method and the historiography of African and European encounter are valuable complementary resources.

Cumulatively, the studies in this collection show that it is in reviewing how the whole gamut of sources may represent societies and individuals that we can comparatively appreciate how Europeans wished to represent themselves and the local communities. In making the case for the potential of underexploited sources, the authors grant particular legitimacy to literary and other artistic representations of the past. We see these important sources not as validators of truth, but as historic representations that afford us important insight into how their European and African creators represented their histories of interaction, exchange and empire in the cultural milieu of the time. It is to these monuments, archival documents, material remains and oral records as well as the methodologies of disciplines such as African studies, global/world history, archaeology, heritage studies, memory studies, architecture, comparative cultural studies, art history and world arts that the writers of this collection have turned to consider West Africa's European fortifications.

This Collection: Thematic, Theoretical and Empirical Common Grounds

This section introduces the founding concept of this book. We will address the thematic, theoretical and empirical linkages that connect the chapters, whilst emphasising the uniqueness of each one in turn. The driving idea behind this collection is the need for new academic and popular understanding of the network of fortresses so as to emphasise the impact of the forts and castles on society and space within West Africa. Whilst this is intended to open up discussions of the fortresses' varied sociopolitical, economic and cultural contexts, it is not intended to underrate the uses to which the buildings were put during the dastardly business of enslavement and forced deportation of captured Africans to work in the cotton, tobacco and sugar cane fields of the Americas and Caribbean. We do not seek in any way to marginalise the importance of slavery studies. Surely, the story of the trans-Atlantic slave trade must be told through reference to the forts and castles. However, the buildings ought to be seen as tools used by people, European and African alike, to make wealth for themselves, families and nations. And, when visitors go to the 'dungeons' and pass through the 'door of no return', they must not only be thinking of what horrific places these were and how haunting they still feel. They ought to also see and think of these places as reminders of the capacity of nameable people and groups to contrive and use devices to oppress and visit cruelty on others for profit and for political gain. Furthermore, the scholarship in this collection invites readers to think about the centuries of activity that took place in and around these buildings both before and after the trans-Atlantic slave trade took place.

With explicit and not so explicit focus on particular forts and castles, the authors in this volume investigate and analyse how the fortresses affected society and space in the Gold Coast (now Ghana). Generally, the chapters approach their themes and analysis by considering particular forts or castles as nodes in competing historical and cultural spaces, where West African history connects to a multitude of global histories. They also emphasise the historicity of the fortifications as sites of memory and examine the buildings as edifices with a collective focus on the lives lived inside and beyond; the Euro-African societies created; the impact on demographic, socioculture, political and economic change; as well as the continued use and preservation of material artefacts and intellectual preservation—the place forts and castles hold in our global

collective memory. Research that takes these buildings as the starting point of multifaceted studies is innovative, and their approaches are capable of taking account for analysis, interaction and change in African settings.

One of the strengths of the collection comes from the diverse perspectives that manifest through a framework of transnational and entangled histories. This not only allows new discussions of how scholars may interpret the forts and castles of Ghana through various theoretical and disciplinary perspectives, but also challenges expectations of which methods researchers may employ in conducting similar studies. Above all, the essays enable greater understanding—at local, state and international levels—of the contemporary positions of the forts and castles as heritage sites where the separate but connected Euro-African and African-American experiences are narrated through guided tours, museums exhibitions and dramatisation. In taking this approach to study the positions and impacts of the forts and castles, the authors seek to generate new conversations about the African-European encounter on the Gold Coast and in West Africa, without, in any way, demeaning the status of these edifices as symbols of oppression and memorial sites of the slave trade.

Beyond the broadly binding idea that underpins the collection, there are thematic, conceptual and empirical linkages between some of the chapters. One cross-cutting theme in the first three chapters concerns how the forts and castles were exploited for constructing and perpetuating European national myths of heroism, power and sovereignty through cultural enactments, narratives, artistic impressions and museum exhibitions. In the age of overseas European competition, the different contexts of the public imaginings of and myths about their nations' presence in West Africa served to rally national and patriotic feelings for empire. This theme is apparent in the way that the first three chapters analyse aspects of periodic reimagining through public commemorations of the colonial culture in Europe. This is achieved in relation to how the Germans and British understood their connection to the fortresses and people of West Africa.

In Chap. 2, Roberto Zaugg problematises a German myth that celebrates Fort Grossfriedrichsburg at Pokesu in the western part of the Gold Coast as the first 'German colony'. Furthermore, applying the metaphor of performance,[42] the chapter argues that the celebration in German culture (from the late nineteenth century) of a Brandenburg

military expedition to Pokesu constituted an act of imaginary appropriation that refashioned the present in response to an imagined past. Conceptually, the strength of the analysis derives from how it draws on perspectives on the relationship between cultural memory (associated with place, monument, artefact, document, performative act, occasion and national heroes) and the use of history in the invention of traditions, which syncs with the theoretical positioning of influential works by Pierre Nora, Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger.[43]

Looking at the British case in Chap. 3, Victoria Ellen Smith explores how images of West Africa and narratives of heroics and honour were projected to Britain in the nineteenth century to entice all manner of British men and women from various professions to travel to Cape Coast, and how those who came related to the African communities politically, economically and culturally. Furthermore, it interrogates how the British myths of the nineteenth century contributed to the imposition of British colonial rule. It concludes that establishing their 'Britishness' in West Africa and creating an enduring collective identity for the Anglo-Fante society at Cape Coast was as much, if not more, about creating a reality for themselves as it was about defining that which they encountered.

In Chap. 4, Emily Mann offers a detailed and critical study of eighteenth-century topographical views and plans of fortresses on the Ghanaian coast. Narratives about the dissemination of these images are woven together with a history of the 1707 Act of Union, commercial and cultural encounters between Africans and Europeans, and the end of the Royal African Company's trade monopoly in West Africa.[44] The chapter cautions against using such images as straightforward sources for the fortresses, and argues that the artists sought to use them to persuade their audiences that the buildings represented and that the artists sought to use them to persuade the British public that the buildings represented Britain's greatness as well as having potential in terms of settlement and control.[45] The chapter concludes, perceptively, that as much as the artists and audiences used the drawings as evidence of the shape and scale of European military and economic dominance in the seventeenth and eighteenth century, they elicit a similar effect today. In addition, in opening the analysis with a description of a gallery space at the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich (England) when the museum reopened a display to mark the 2007 bicentenary of the Act for the Abolition of the Slave Trade, Chap. 4 immediately speaks to Chap. 3, which considers how the triumph of abolition became the dominant memory of British activity in West Africa, and to Chap. 9,

which addresses how the museum spaces at Cape Coast Castle simultaneously represent the history of the former British trading headquarters, the culture of the Fante host community, the trans-Atlantic slave trade and the African-American legacy. This reflects the general theme of how museum exhibitions are used to project histories of different actors from different standpoints.[46]

The important theme of European military and economic dominance in the West African milieu prior to the 1850s is broached in Chaps. 2, 3 and 4. This theme is further elaborated on in the fifth chapter by John Kwadwo Osei-Tutu and Hermann von Hesse, which concurs with the observation made in Chap. 4 regarding the contrast between the image of British power on the Gold Coast (as projected by draughtsmen in their drawings of the fortresses) and the tenuous reality of European power in the period. Chapter 5 illustrates through different empirical scenarios that whilst the forts and castles were monumental in comparison to the local vernacular architecture, they projected only illusions of power and protection. Indeed, relatively, the fortresses provided little protection to either European residents or their local allies during periods when the region was volatile due to vicious inter-European competition, slave raids and waves of expansion wars being waged by the forest Akan states as they attempted to dominate the coast.

The theme of gendered political, economic, social and cultural West African spaces is elaborated on in several chapters that deal with how men and women actively carved niches for themselves amidst African-European interactions. Generally, in the period, men dominated both politics and trade, two complimentary activities that accorded them influence and power. The case then, as it is now, was that men and women rarely had equal access to opportunities in the social space. Whilst both men and women functioned as the ruling elite of West African polities, there arose on the Gold Coast a class of African male merchants, known in the Akan Twi language of Ghana as *abirempɔŋ* (sing.: *ɔbirempɔŋ*[47]). These men grew wealthy due to their role as facilitators of the Atlantic trade, and thereby became shaping forces in the Gold Coast economic, military and sociopolitical milieu of the eighteenth century. Chapters 2, 5 and 6 describe, with degrees of emphasis, the activities and influence of some of the *abirempɔŋ*, particularly Asameni of Akwamu and Jan Conny (Kɔne Kpole), who challenged the monopolistic tendencies of the Danish and Dutch trading companies. The daring nature of these men was manifest in Asameni's seizure and occupation of the Danish

Christiansborg Castle for a year (1693–1694) and Conny's occupation of the Brandenburg's Fort Grossfriedrichsburg for 6 years (1718–1724). The relative ease with which these *abirempɔŋ* appropriated the forts underscores the argument that the buildings were vulnerable despite their intimidating appearance.

Though men dominated trade and politics in West Africa in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, some women exercised remarkable economic, political and cultural agency in the context of an economy broadly restructured in response to the integration of West Africa into the Atlantic capitalist economic system. In Chap. 6, Kwabena Adu-Boahen expatiates on the agency of Gold Coast women—whether they were positioned through British interference or an authority that was deeply rooted in legitimate structures of trade and inheritance. The chapter locates their influence in the histories of the forts and castles and recognises that women both with and without a personal relationship to a European man—be that as father, husband or patron—became influential in economic and political spheres. It explains how the women used their roles as political and cultural actors to exploit external influences and accumulate new resources that facilitated their upward mobility and enhanced their prestige. The achievement of this chapter, therefore, is to firmly locate women who live in the locality of the fortifications within their economic history via the elucidation of female political influence in Gold Coast society, thus contributing to a relatively neglected theme in West African history. In cases where women moved beyond the domestic sphere through 'sexual allegiance' with European men as wives or concubines, new households bearing European names rose alongside (and, at times, surpassed) traditional rulers to become the Euro-African elite of the nineteenth century. In making these claims, the chapter is a useful addition to the established feminist scholarship as it considers ideologies of a public-private binary that locates women of Africa in the domestic sphere and enables men to control the political and economic spheres.[48] Similarly, on the European side, perception of the European overseas presence as a masculinist domain is being confronted by descriptions of European women of empire, like Letitia Elizabeth Landon who—as explained in Chap. 3—lived, died and was entombed at Cape Coast Castle.[49]

The next two Chaps. 7 and 8, are archaeological and architectural studies that engage with the material remains, physical design and structural development of some of the forts and castles in order to study the

connected histories of West Africans and Europeans in selected localities. Employing archaeological data derived from surface surveys and excavations at various locations, Chap. 7 documents Fritz Biveridge's investigation of the impact of commercial and social exchanges in and around Fort Metal Cross on the host Ahanta communities. The chapter avers that though Dixcove did not function as a major hub of the trans-Atlantic slave trading network, a large quantity of European remains—jewellery and household materials—were found, which suggests that the presence of the fort as a British out-base greatly transformed the material preferences of Dixcove society.

In Chap. 8, Henry Nii Adziri Wellington and Rexford Assasie Oppong's analysis of some Danish and British castles is structured in two parts. Part one establishes the spatial historical context of Christiansborg Castle to illustrate how forts and castles in West Africa reflect European philosophies and conceptions of space. Part two focuses on the architectural configuration of the dungeon spaces to consider them as contraptions of oppression. The analysis considers how the architecture replicates and modifies the established designs and materials used for fortified structures, as well as how their cores grew both horizontally and vertically with an eclectic ensemble of organically chosen architectural elements to become imposing edifices. In doing so, the chapter argues that the physical expressions of European presence in West Africa, as found in the forts and castles, can be used to interpret how the structures shaped interactions between various players and the people they represented. Of particular importance to the first part of this chapter are the curtain walls, gateways and windows because of their physical expression of territoriality (conveying by whom the building is controlled), filters (controlling the movement of people, information, goods and fresh air) and boundaries (demarcating the restrictions on cultural contact). Part two of this architectural study responds to global perception of the forts and castles as slave holding facilities (dungeons). In considering the fortifications of Ghana's Central Region, scale drawings of the ground plans are employed to gain a nuanced understanding of the experience of African captives by conducting architectural analysis to reconstruct the atmosphere that might have existed in spaces referred to by the authors as architectural contraptions of oppression. The aim here is to provide not only scholars but also tour guides and other heritage interpreters working in sites such as these in West Africa with new data for application in their respective fields.

The theme of engaging with the fortresses as heritage sites and sites of memory for enacting a variety of visitor experiences—as elucidated in many of the chapters—is addressed more closely in Chap. 9 by Neelima Jeychandran and Chap. 10 by John Kwadwo Osei-Tutu and Ebenezer Ayesu. Respectively, the chapters analyse visitor experiences at Cape Coast Castle and President Barack Obama's momentous visit to the same site in 2009. Chapter 9 describes Cape Coast Castle as a theatre of memory,[50] which, as previously mentioned, aligns it theoretically with aspects of the Chaps. 2, 3 and 4 in its deployment of Pierre Nora's concept of *lieux de mémoire* to argue that the memory scape of the Castle gains increasing significance through the various experiences that visitors have whilst within its spaces. This assertion is illustrated through analysis of the site-specific nature of visitors' encounters with the Castle as well as the experiences they gained within its museum spaces, as tourist engaging in the rituals of taking photographs and purchasing souvenirs, and as members of the audience for re-enactment performances. Furthermore, this chapter, like many of the others in the volume, gives attention to the international effort led by the GMMB and UNESCO to salvage and preserve the forts and castles as Heritage for human kind. They collectively became a World Heritage Site in 1979; in the early 1990s, new museum spaces were curated; tour guide narratives have become standardised over the last decade; and events such as the biennial Pan-African Historical Theatre Festival (PANAFEST) are dedicated to the contextualisation of European fortification within Ghanaian history, the culture of the Fante states, and the African-American legacy of enslavement and forced exile.

An affinity between Chaps. 9 and 10 is obvious when it comes to consideration of contemporary visitors' experiences at the fortresses. Chapter 10 hinges on an analysis of Obama's 2009 presidential visit to Ghana with his family and their tour of Cape Coast Castle within the broad frameworks of America's political agenda towards sub-Saharan Africa and the culture of pilgrimage ('Roots' or 'Diaspora') tourism. Arguing that the visit was in many ways a journey that fused political motivations, historical meanings, symbolisms and paradoxes, the chapter interrogates the historical and political authorities behind the visit and questions whether in walking through the infamous 'Door of No Return', Obama could claim legitimacy as a true representative of the African-American experience derived from ancestral enslavement.

Chapter 11 by Jon Olav Hove is a fitting conclusion to the volume by virtue of its multidisciplinary position within history and heritage studies.

By looking at the heritage policies and restoration practices of successive colonial and post-colonial governments of Ghana since 1945, the chapter argues that the forts and castles have survived due to the commitment of political officials to preserving them for posterity. Though other chapters mention the point, a strength of this chapter is its in-depth tracing of how transition of purpose and adaptation of use fulfil new functions in changing situations and periods. Furthermore, in touching on the theme of restoration and heritage policy, Chap. 11 raises an issue that runs through several of the chapters: the various political and private initiatives to use the forts and castles not only to educate future generations of Ghanaian and international visitors—as elucidated in Chap. 8—but also to rake in economic dividends from African-American tourists. Attempts to make economic capital from grief appear cynical, especially considering that—as explored in Chaps. 8, 9 and 10—the fortresses do not seem to hold any emotional significance or sentimental attraction for Ghanaians, or, indeed, for West Africans in general.

Concluding Suggestions

The chapters in this collection seek to contribute to new ways of seeing forts and castles in the social, cultural, economic and political contexts of West Africa. Thus, the core idea of the collection is that though the vast majority of European fortifications in West Africa were conceived in the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries to facilitate the trans-Atlantic slave trade, the contemporary focus on them as 'culprits' in the dastardly trade potentially deflects the scholarly gaze away from the trade's human participants, European and African alike. Yes, the story must be told of how the fortresses were used to imprison Africans prior to their transportation and exploitation in chattel slavery. However, as the various studies in this volume show, it is possible to employ multi- and interdisciplinary approaches to interrogate the various roles and impacts of the buildings on society and space in West Africa as well as to explore how European groups sought to use them in their own intra-European status contests. In all these, the fortresses are seen implicitly or explicitly as nodal points of entanglement within the sociopolitical spaces, where various forms of local and global connections, interactions, perspectives, networks of exchanges, flows (of goods, people, cultures and ideals) and memories have originated.

Rather paradoxically, the history of the slave trade from West Africa has been kept alive today, with the associated contemporary rituals of

remembrance and enactment remaining poignant, largely due to the resilient, physical presence of the stone and brick remnants of the fortresses. Moreover, the post-slavery appropriation and conversion of the buildings to other oppressive and civil uses is testimony to the malleability of architecture to human caprices. Through this collection, it is intended that the forts and castles may be seen not only for the shadow cast by one of their historic uses, but for the position they occupy in numerous narratives of West African history from pre-colonial trade and interactions to the seat of recent governments via various African and European imperial dominations.

Notes

1. Charles L.H. Coulson, *Castles in Medieval Society: Fortresses in England, France and Ireland in the Central Middle Ages* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 15.
2. Paul Erdmann Isert, *Letters on West Africa and the Slave Trade: Paul Erdmann Isert's Journey to Guinea and the Caribbean Islands in Columbia* (1788) ed. by Selena Axelrod Winsnes (Accra: Sub-Saharan Publ., 2007), 96.
3. A.W. Lawrence, *Trade Castles and Forts of West Africa* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1963), 25. The Portuguese built forts at many places from the Mauritanian island of Arguin in the 1440s, to the Gold Coast in 1482, on to Mozambique, East Africa, India and Malacca by 1511, to Indonesia's Jakarta (Batavia) in 1521 and Macau (Macao) in China by 1524. See Marco Ramerini, 'Arguin: A Portuguese Fortress in Mauritania, 1445–1633'. *Source* http://www.colonialvoyage.com/arguin-portuguese-fortress-mauritania/#.
4. For definitions of the terminologies of 'castle', 'fort' and 'lodge', see A.W. Lawrence, *Trade Castles and Forts of West Africa* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1963), 70; Lise E. Hull, *Britain's Medieval Castles* (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2006), xiii–xxvi and 173–188; Coulson, 1–14.
5. Lawrence (1963), 14 –15. Perhaps the most sustained attempt since 1998 to build a comprehensive and up to date Internet database of European colonial forts worldwide is Marco Rameniri's ongoing effort at http://www.colonialvoyage.com. The site includes continental and national (original ownership) overviews and bibliographies.
6. See Albert Van Dantzig, *Forts and Castles of Ghana* (Accra: Sedco Publishing, 1980, Reprinted 1999), viii–xii; J.D. Fage, *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana (*formerly *Transaction of the Gold Coast and Togoland Historical Society*), vol. 4 (1959, 57–68); and Gold Coast

Survey Department, *Atlas of the Gold Coast* (Accra: 1949), 19–20. For definitions of 'castle', see http://www.castlesandmanorhouses.com/castles.htm.

7. The distance between the fortifications ranges from 500 m to 15 km.
8. J.R. Hale, 'Trade Castles and Forts of West Africa by A.W. Lawrence. London: Jonathan Cape, 1963'. *Antiquity*, 39: 155, 1965, 231–232.
9. For a description of the types of forts and castles built in West Africa, see Lawrence, 1963, Chap. 6.
10. For the impact of climatic change on coastal erosion, see 'Osu Castle could sink into the sea' GNA, 3/12/2009. See http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/printnews.php?ID=172879.
11. See Peter Francopan, *The Silk Roads: A New History of the World* (London and New York: Bloomsbury, 2015), 260.
12. See H.M. Feinberg, 'Palaver on the Gold Coast: Elmina-Dutch Cooperation during the Eighteenth Century' and René Baesjou, 'Dutch "irregular" Jurisdiction on the Nineteenth Century Gold Coast' in René Baesjou and Robert Ross (Eds.), *Palaver-European Interference in African Dispute Settlement*, African Perspectives 1979/2 (Leiden: Afrika-Studiersentrum, 1979) 11–20 and 21–66; Rebecca Shumway, *The Fante and the Transatlantic Slave Trade* (Rochester, NY: Rochester University Press, 2011), 61–62.
13. For instance, the Dutch displaced the Portuguese on the Gold Coast after capturing all their forts from 1637; and the British became the dominant force on the Gold Coast by purchasing Danish forts in 1850 and taking over the Dutch forts in 1872.
14. The official inauguration of Flagstaff House (originally named Golden Jubilee House) as the residence and seat of power for the Ghanaian president happened in 2008. However, the actual transfer of The Presidency (full-scale government business) from Christiansborg Castle to Flagstaff House happened in 2012/2013. Prior to this transfer, the edifice served sporadically as a reception site for visiting foreign presidents and diplomats. At the time of writing, Christiansborg Castle continues to house auxiliary government offices, with President Nana Akufo-Addo having used the occasion of Ghana's 60th anniversary of Independence (6 March, 2017) to launch the initiative that will transform Christiansborg Castle into a Presidential Museum.
15. Historically, the destruction and desecration of monuments span different time periods and geographical expanses. War is the most obvious destructive force of monuments. Institutions, organisations and organised events like tourism as well as individual action are alleged to be culprits. On NATO's alleged culpability in destruction of historical monuments, see Nina Posidelow and Athanasia Mantzouranis, 'Chapter 9. Destruction

of Cultural and Historic Sites in Yugoslavia' (Independent Commission of Inquiry to Investigate U.S./NATO War Crimes Against the People of Yugoslavia). See http://iacenter.org/warcrime/9_cultur.htm.

16. Coulson, 1.
17. See http://www.castlestudiesgroup.org.uk/.
18. See for instance: A.W. Lawrence, *Trade Castles and Forts of West Africa* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1963); J. Kwesi Anquandah, *Castles and Forts of Ghana* (Paris:, Atlante, 1999); I.S. Ephson, *Ancient Forts and Castles of the Gold Coast (Ghana)* (Accra: Ilen Publications, 1970); Michel Doortmont and Michel Van den Nieuwenhof, *Ancient Forts and Castles in Ghana* (1999); Albert Van Dantzig, *Forts and Castles of Ghana* (Accra: Sedco, 1980); and Albert van Dantzig and Barbara Priddy, *A Short History of the Forts and Castles of Ghana* (Accra: Liberty Press, 1971).
19. See *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana (*formerly *Transaction of the Gold Coast and Togoland Historical Society*), vol. 4 (1959, 57–68); also Gold Coast Survey Department, *Atlas of the Gold Coast* (1949); W.E.F. Ward, *A History of the Gold Coast* (1948); and W.W. Claridge, *A History of the Gold Coast and Ashanti* (1915).
20. *Ancient Forts and Castles of the Gold Coast (Ghana)* (Accra: Ghana Institute of Art and Culture, 1970).
21. *Forts and Castles of Ghana* (Accra: Sedco, 1980).
22. *The Grand Slave Emporium*: Cape Coast Castle and the British slave trade (London: Profile Books, 2006).
23. *The Fante and the Trans-atlantic Slave Trade* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2011).
24. *Trade Castles and Forts of West Africa* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1963).
25. *Castles and Forts of Ghana* (Accra: Ghana Museum and Monuments Board, 1999).
26. 'Early Trade Posts and Forts of West Africa' in Eric Klingelhofer (ed.), *First Forts: Essays on the Archaeology of Proto-colonial Fortifications* (Leiden: Brill, 2010).
27. A.W. Lawrence, 'Some Source Books for West African History', *The Journal of African History,* (1961) 227–234, 2; E. Kofi Agorsah, 'Archaeological Perspectives on Colonial Slavery: placing Africa in African Diaspora Studies in the Caribbean' in Paul J. lane and Kevin C. Macdonald (Ed.), *Proceedings of the British Academy 168* Oxford 2011), 199–221.
28. An example is K.E. Blankson, *Cape Coast Castle Tour: a concise interpretation of the Cape Coast Castle* (Cape Coast: Nyakod, 2009).
29. Examples are as follows: Brodie Cruickshank's *Eighteen Years on the Gold Coast of Africa: including an account of the native tribes, and*

their intercourse with Europeans, vols. 1 & 2 (1853; 1966; New York: Elibron Classics, 2007); J.J. Crooks' *Records Relating to the Gold Coast Settlements from 1750 to 1874* (Psychology Press, 1923); João de Barros's, *Asia* (1552) translated and edited by G. R. Crome (Hakluyt Society, No. LXXXVI, 2nd ser., 1937); Ruy de Pina's *Chronicle of John II.* [ca 1500], translated and edited by J. W. Blake (Hakluyt Society, No. LXXXVI, 2nd ser., 1941); and George Nørregård's *Danish Settlements in West Africa, 1658–1850,* translated by Sigurd Mammen (Boston, 1966). Others include George Macdonald's *The Gold Coast: Past and Present - a short description of the country and its people* (London, 1898); *Closing the Books: Governor Edward Carstensen on Danish Guinea 1842–1850*, translated by T. Storsveen (Accra: Sub-Saharan, 2010). Thorkild Hansen's *Coast of Slaves,* translated by Kari Dako (Accra: Sub-Saharan, 2009), also deals with memoirs and archival evidence, but through the form of the didactic novel.

30. Charles L.H. Coulson, *Castles in Medieval Society: Fortresses in England, France and Ireland in the Central Middle Ages* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 1.
31. The White House, Office of the Press Secretary: *Remarks by the President at Cape Coast Castle* (11 July 2009) www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-cape-coast-castle [Accessed: 06/08/2009]; also see 'President Obama's African journey', Interview with Anderson Cooper at Cape Coast Castle, Ghana, CNN 360 Special Edition. www.youtube.com/watch?v=0gmDoon_yC.
32. Rebecca Shumway's work is in this vein: 'Of particular interest [to visitors from the Western Hemisphere] … are Africa's largest collection of forts and castles used during the transatlantic slave trade … [which] offer vivid reminders of the horrific trade that gave birth to the black population of the Americas. Visitors come to Ghana's Castles to experience … where many Americans' ancestors spent their last days …' and 'in search of a connection with their own African ancestors' (p. 3).
33. *House of Slaves and 'Door of no Return': Gold Coast/Ghana Slave Forts, Castles and Dungeons and the Atlantic Slave Trade* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2012).
34. Style-wise, the two in Egypt are uniquely Arabic; the one in Ethiopia is a blend of Arabic, Nubian and Gothic; and four are medieval and Early Modern European. See http://historylists.org/architecture/7-amazing-forts-fortresses-and-castles-in-africa.html. See also 'Latest History Lists', http://historylists.org/index.html.
35. The Saladin Citadel (Cairo Citadel), built by Sultan Saladin of Egypt and Syria (from 1174 to 1193); and the Citadel of Qaitbay (Alexandria,

Egypt), built during the rule of the Mamluk Sultan Qaitbay (1468–1496).

36. Fasil Ghebbi Castle (Gondar, Ethiopia), built during the era of Ethiopian Emperor Fasilides (1632–1667).
37. Fort Jesus in Mombasa, Kenya was built by the Portuguese between 1593 and 1596; and Good Hope Castle (originally Fort de Goede Hoop) in Cape Town, South Africa was erected by the Dutch between 1666 and 1679.
38. Holger Weiss, 'The Entangled Spaces of Edena, Oguaa and Osu: A Survey of Three early Modern African Atlantic Towns, ca. 1650–1850' in Holger Weiss (ed.), *Ports of Globalisation, Places of Creolisation: Nordic Possessions in the Atlantic World during the Era of the Slave Trade* (Leiden: Brill, 2016) 23.
39. See www.ghanamuseums.org/forts/forts-castles.php.
40. W.J. Varley, 'Castles of the Gold Coast', *West Africa*, 21 June 1952, 555–556.
41. Jean Barbot, Williem Bosman, Pieter de Marees, Paul Erdman Isert, H.C. Monrad, Johannes Rask, William Smith, Wilhelm Johann Müller, Edward Carstensen Henry Meredith and G.E. Metcalfe. More contemporary works like Barbara Priddy, Albert van Dantzig, Margaret Priestley, J.K. Anquandah and A.W. Lawrence have been useful.
42. For the notion of 'metaphor of performance' see Tim Edensor, *National Identity, Popular Culture and Everyday Life* (New York: oxford International Publishers Ltd, 2002), 69–102.
43. See Pierre Nora, *Realms of Memory: Rethinking the French Past* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996); 'Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire', *Representations*, no. 26 (1989): 7–24; 'Introduction: Inventing Traditions' Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (eds.), *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000): 1–14; Terance Ranger, 'The Invention of Tradition in Colonial Africa', *The Invention of Tradition*: 211–262.
44. The chapter supports Geoff Quilley's argument in 'The Lie of the Land: slavery and the aesthetics of imperial landscape in eighteenth-century British art', *Representing Slavery: Art, Artefacts and Archives in the Collections of the National Maritime Museum* ed. by Douglas Hamilton and Robert J. Blyth (Aldershot, Hampshire: Lund Humphries, 2007) 120–35, 124.
45. Thomas Astley, who published a number of the images in 1745, expressed a similar view on the importance of the forts for the British-African trade. See Thomas Astley [collector and publisher], *A New General Collection of Voyages and Travels*, vol. 2 (London, 1745), vii.

46. See Sigrid Lien and Hilde Wallem Nielssen, *Museums-fortellingar: vi og die andre i kulturhistoriske museum* (Viborg: Det Norske Samlaget, 2016), 15 (11–24). See also Ivan Karp and Steven D. Lavine (eds.), Exhibiting Cultures. The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Books, 1991).
47. J.G. Christaller's dictionary of Akan and Fante languages translates 'brepon', 'o̱-birempo̱n', 'o̱bire̱mpo̱n' as 'obarima' (male/man); 'ohene' (king/chief). The suffix '-po̱n' is translated as 'large' or 'great'. Thus, *ɔbirempɔŋ* would mean influential male or male person with rank or prestige. See J.G. Christaller, *A Dictionary of the Asante and Fante Language called Tshi (Chwee, Twi)* (Basel: Reinhardt, 1881) 16, 47, 348, 384.
48. A recent work on female political agency on the Gold Coast is Henry N.K. Odamtten, 'Dode Akabi: A Re-examination of the Oral and Textual Narrative of a "Wicked" Female King', *Journal of Women's History*, 27: 3, Fall 2015 (61–85). The growing feminist literature includes earlier works like Alicia C. Decker and Andrea L. Arrington (eds.), *Africanizing Democracies: 1980-Present* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), particularly pages 56–76; Jean Allman, Susan Geiger and Nakanyike Musisi (eds.), *Women in African Colonial Histories* (Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2002), particularly Holly Hansen, 'Queen Mothers and Good Government in Buganda: the loss of women's political power in nineteenth century East Africa' (pages 219–232); and Nancy J. Hafkin and Edna G. Bay (eds.), *Women in Africa: Studies in Social and Economic Change* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1976), particularly Judith Van Allen, ''Aba riots' or Igbo 'Women's War'? Ideology, Stratification, and the invisibility of women' (pages 59–85); Gisela Geisler, 'Troubled Sisterhood: Women and Politics in Southern Africa: Case Studies from Zambia, Zimbabwe and Botswana', *African Affairs*, 94: 377, 1995, 545–578; Claire Robertson 'Developing Economic Awareness: Changing Perspectives in Studies of African Women, 1976–1985', *Feminist Studies*, 13: 1, 1987, 97–128; E. Frances White, 'Creole Women Traders in the Nineteenth Century', *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 14: 4, 1981, 626–642; Judith van Allen, '"Sitting on a Man": Colonialism and the Lost Political Institutions of Igbo Women', *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, 6: 2, 1972; and David Anderson and Richard Rathbone (eds.), *Africa's Urban Past* (Oxford: James Currey Publishers, 2000), 210.
49. Julie Watt, *Poisoned Lives: the Regency Poet Letitia Elizabeth Landon (L.E.L.) and British Gold Coast Administrator George Maclean* (Eastbourne: Sussex Academic Press, 2010). On women and empire generally, see Elisa Camiscioli, 'Women, Gender, Intimacy, and Empire. '*Journal of Women's History* 25, no. 4 (2013): 138–148. https://

muse.jhu.edu/; James Buzard, 'Victorian Women and the Implications of Empire', *Victorian Studies* 36:4 (1993): 443–453, http://www.jstor.org/stable/3828645; Margaret Strobel, *European Women and the Second British Empire* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1991); and Helen Callaway, *Gender, Culture and Empire: European Women in Colonial Nigeria* (Oxford: Palgrave Macmillan UK: 1987). For female travel accounts, see 'Colonial Discourses: Women, Travel & Empire, 16601914. Early travel accounts by women, and women's experiences in India, Africa, Australasia and Canada' (Mathew Adams Publications. http://www.ampltd.co.uk/index.aspx. Also, see the online biography of 'Women and the British Empire': http://www.britishempire.co.uk/biography/women.htm.

50. The term 'Theatre of Memory' and the title of this chapter are borrowed from Raphael Samuel's 2012 book of the same name.

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CHAPTER 2

Grossfriedrichsburg, the First German Colony in Africa? Brandenburg-Prussia, Atlantic Entanglements and National Memory

Roberto Zaugg

The Foundation of Grossfriedrichsburg: A Small Niche for a Weak Newcomer (1681–1683)

On 30 December 1682, Major Otto Friedrich von der Gröben (1657–1728) went ashore at Pokesu (now Princes Town), a Nzema-speaking settlement of Little Inkassa country in the Cape Three Points region of contemporary south-western Ghana.[1] Prince-Elector Frederick

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William of Brandenburg (r. 1640–1688), the sovereign of one of the many territorial states of the Holy Roman Empire sent him there.[2] Inspired by the successes of the Dutch chartered companies and more generally by a mercantilist vision that recognised external commerce as the principal motor of economic development, Frederick William created the *Brandenburgische Africanische Compagnie* (BAC) in 1682 with the hope of launching the poor Baltic principality of Brandenburg as a new player in the Atlantic markets.[3] The main actor of this project was Benjamin Raule (1634–1707), a merchant and ship owner from the Dutch province of Zeeland whom Frederick William had appointed as General Director of his Navy. In May 1681, a private venture organised by Raule and led by Zeeland seamen had established the first contacts between Brandenburg and the Gold Coast. The hill of Manfro, near the settlement of Pokesu, was identified as a suitable place for building a fortress, and a preliminary agreement had been signed with the local caboceers Pregatte, Sophonije and Apanij.[4]

When von der Gröben arrived in late 1682, however, Pokesu was destroyed by a recent attack by Adom, a state further inland. At first, the officer who came to plant the Brandenburg flag on this piece of land did not find anyone to confront with his claims. There was also no one to trade with and no one to help him to build the fort. Von der Gröben—who is often celebrated as the first German conqueror in Africa—was quite puzzled by what he saw for there was no one to deal with, let alone to "conquer". Only a few hours later, he wrote in his travelogue, "about eighteen blacks armed with muskets came down the hill [Manfro] with their wives", and established contact with the Brandenburg expedition.[5] Thanks to new negotiations, five canons as well as a flag of the Prince-Elector were placed on top of the hill on 1 January 1683 and a new treaty was signed on 5 January with 14 caboceers who agreed to offer logistical support to the Brandenburgers and promised to trade exclusively with their company.[6] The construction of the fortress of Grossfriedrichsburg—agreed in the treaty of 1681 and confirmed by the new agreement of 1683—could start. It was dedicated to the "Great Elector" Frederick William, planned and supervised by Carl Constantin von Schnitter (1657–1721) and achieved thanks to the manpower of the population of Pokesu.[7]

The fact that the BAC founded its main factory in Little Inkassa was not a coincidence. After the Dutch conquest of the Portuguese strongholds of Elmina, Shama and Axim (1637–1642), the Gold Coast had

rapidly become the stage of an intense rivalry competition between different European powers.[8] By the second half of the seventeenth century—when the Dutch, Danes, English (and temporarily also the Swedes) had established their castles, forts and lodges between the mouths of the rivers Ankobra in the west and Volta in the east—the shores of the Gold Coast were a crowded and fiercely disputed area.[9] As a newcomer with only a very modest naval power at its disposal, the BAC was not able to attack its much stronger competitors with a frontal offensive in order to impose its presence in the central area of the coast, where the European forts were often a very short distance from one another. By contrast, in the western part of the coast, the European bases were distributed less densely. As successors of the Portuguese, the Dutch West India Company (WIC) pretended to possess the political "jurisdiction" and the exclusive right to trade in the Cape Three Points region. However, between Fort Saint Anthony in Axim and Fort Batenstein in Butre, they did not have a permanent and fortified base and were having great difficulties in establishing an effective commercial monopoly on the Atlantic commerce. The Dutch claims were all the more difficult to implement considering that the populations of that coastal area were not organised into a centralised monarchic state, but rather into small polities connected by flexible alignments.

During the late Portuguese period, Little Inkassa was tied economically to the Atlantic trade based at Saint Anthony and it seemed to be politically "devoted" to Axim.[10] In order to sustain their monopolistic claims in the 1650s, the WIC still depicted Little Inkassa as well as the neighbouring coastal territory of Ahanta as provinces of the "commonwealth" of Axim.[11] In reality, the substitution of the Portuguese by the Dutch and the failure of the WIC to satisfy the commercial interests of the local elites had loosened the bonds between Axim and the WIC on one side and Little Inkassa on the other.[12] Thus, when the first Brandenburg ships appeared on the coast looking to connect themselves to the increasingly dynamic markets of the Gold Coast trade, the elites of Little Inkassa and of some Ahanta communities[13]—who had already started a flourishing trade with Dutch interloper ships—perceived their coming as an opportunity for "diverting trade from Axim".[14] This would consolidate their territories as an exchange zone for the export of the Ankobra Valley gold and the import of European and Asian commodities. There was also an opportunity to gain a more effective military ally against the inland state of Adom, with whom both Little Inkassa

and Ahanta had been at war for a long time. In this sense, it was thanks to the active support of local political authorities that the remote Baltic principality of Brandenburg could find a circumscribed niche on the margins of the Akan world and on a coastal strip where the grip of competing European companies was weak.

Pokesu: A Hub of Atlantic Entanglements (Seventeenth to Eighteenth Centuries)

From the nineteenth century until today, Grossfriedrichsburg has been frequently defined as a "colony" or, even more emphatically, as the "first German colony".[15] This conceptualisation is so widespread that even the German Wikipedia page classifies the BAC/BAAC trading base as a German colony.[16] Nonetheless, both of the terms that constitute this label—"German" and "colony"—are highly problematic.

At first glance, it seems to be legitimate to define the BAC/BAAC as a "German" enterprise. After all, Frederick William was Prince-Elector of the Holy Roman Empireof the German Nation and the language of his administration was German. Moreover, it was the Hohenzollern dynasty, to which Frederick William also belonged, that created the modern German nation state in 1871 and would provide its emperors. However, this retrospective perspective is misleading. Most modern German territories were outside Brandenburg-Prussia and many territories of ancient Brandenburg-Prussia lay outside of contemporary Germany. Brandenburg-Prussia not only cannot be equated with modern Germany but, more importantly, many of the driving forces of the BAC did not come from German-speaking areas. Its chief architect was the above-mentioned Dutchman Benjamin Raule. On a financial level, apart from Raule, the Prince-Elector himself and some noblemen from his entourage, the main investors were merchants from Rotterdam.[17] Consequently, the African enterprise was not supported by the mercantile capital of a German bourgeoisie, but rather by an alliance between Dutch merchants, who aimed to bypass the official monopoly of the WIC that dominated Dutch trade with West Africa,[18] and a sovereign of a hinterland country, who dreamed of being recognised as a maritime power. Not surprisingly, a good deal of the internal correspondence and administration of the company was written in Dutch.[19] Overall, in the BAC/BAAC home port of Emden, in East Frisia, Dutch was as common

as German. In short: business connections were not shaped by linguistic spaces and the latter did not correspond to political territories.

The interregional entanglements, on which the BAC/BAAC was based, were reflected as well in the recruitment of the company's employees serving on the Gold Coast. In Grossfriedrichsburg, as well as at the minor bases of Akwida and Tacrama, many of the soldiers, officers, mercantile employees and artisans did not come from German-speaking areas. A muster roll from 20 September 1712 offers an interesting overview of the impressively heterogeneous makeup of the forts' inhabitants (Table 2.1).[20]

This muster roll excluded both free African employees, who worked for the forts but lived outside of them, and the numerous "castle slaves".[21] It reflects far-reaching migratory entanglements within the Atlantic world and even beyond it. Of the 26 employees mentioned for the BAAC forts on the Gold Coast, nine were born in the Dutch Republic and nine in different German states. One soldier was born in Bordeaux, a major French port city that was deeply involved in the trade with West Africa and the Americas. The Germans themselves came from quite different territories. Three were born in Brandenburg-Prussia, four came from East Frisia (the coastal region near the Netherlands, where the BAC home port of Emden was located), one came from the fluvial port city of Hamburg, which had tight connections with the Atlantic markets, and one from Hannover.[22] Significantly, all the employees from Brandenburg-Prussia were soldiers or officers: they had not arrived on the Gold Coast because of maritime work but through military recruitment. The Dutch occupied very different positions in Grossfriedrichsburg (general director, upper factor, bookkeeper, carpenter, mason, midshipman and soldier), and they came from various provinces of the country.

Six employees of Grossfriedrichsburg came from outside Europe. Two were born in Pokesu itself and one came from Moree, a settlement near the Dutch fortress of Nassau in the Akan polity of Asebu. Their European names suggest that they were the sons of German or Dutch employees and local women. Notably, persons of Euro-African descent were a quite common presence on the coast. Already by 1634 in Moree—the first Dutch factory in the region (1611)—the children of European fathers had been so numerous that the WIC had planned to establish a school for them.[23] The three African-born employees in

Table 2.1 Muster roll, 20 September 1712

Name	*Birthplace*	*Function*	*Year of recruitment*	*Salary in guilders*
Grossfriedrichsburg				
Nicolaas Du Bois	Gorcum [Gornichem, Dutch Republic]	General Director	1711	135
Abrahaam ter Beek	Middelburg [Dutch Republic]	Upper Factor	1710	32
Cornelis de Goijer	Amsterdam [Dutch Republic]	Bookkeeper	1712	20
Michiel Dijchman[a]	Hannover [Electorate of Brunswick-Lüneburg]	Upper Master	1712	36
Jan Nunus Freden[b]	Brazil [Portuguese colony]	Under Master	1712	18
Jan Popelaar	Bergen op Zoom [Dutch Republic]	Carpenter	1709	18
Dirck Bisjan	Maastricht [Dutch Republic]	Mason	1709	18
Jan Vaake	Belgard [Brandenburg-Prussia; today: Białogarda, Poland]	Gunner	1709	15
Anthon Gunter van der Meede	Esens [County of East Frisia]	Sergeant	1709	21.12.–
Martijn Baak[c]	Berlin [Brandenburg-Prussia]	Corporal	1700	16
Pieter Jansen	Gorcum [Gornichem, Dutch Republic]	Midshipman	1710	13.10.–
Jan Muller[d]	Grossfriedrichsburg [Little Inkassa, Gold Coast]	Soldier	1710	12
Manuel Swoer	Brazil [Portuguese colony]	Trumpeter	1708	12
Anthonij Insan[e]	Bordeaux [France]	Soldier	1709	12
Joseph Rodrigo	Bengal [Mughal Empire]	Soldier	1709	12
Hendrik Craan[f]	Wesel [Brandenburg-Prussia]	Soldier	1712	12

(continued)

Table 2.1 (continued)

Name	*Birthplace*	*Function*	*Year of recruitment*	*Salary in guilders*
Jan Rijkborm	Middelburg [Dutch Republic]	Soldier	1712	12
Thomas Luijten	Moree [Asebu, Gold Coast]	Soldier	1712	For the food
Manuel Manuelze	Grossfriedrichsburg [Little Inkassa, Gold Coast]	Soldier	1712	For the same
Jan Bul	Emden [City-State, Holy Roman Empire]	Drummer	1709	12
Hendrik Brand[g]	Hulst [Dutch Republic]	Soldier	1709	12
Accoda [*Akwida*]				
Geert Tam	Emden [City-State, Holy Roman Empire]	Midshipman	1709	13.10.–
Jurgen Hanzen	Deventer [Dutch Republic][h]	Midshipman	1709	12
Taccrama				
Jan Sijmons	Hamburg [City-State, Holy Roman Empire]	Assistant	1709	18
Egbert Staal	Emden [City-State, Holy Roman Empire]	Midshipman	1700	13
Monthly				496.2.–

Notes
[a]The original German spelling is probably "Michael Deichmann". In the muster roll of December 1712, he is said to be the Upper Surgeon
[b]The name seems to be Portuguese ("João Nunes"). In the muster roll of December 1712, the surname is mentioned as "Frederik" and he is said to be a soldier
[c]The original German spelling of the Christian name is certainly "Martin"
[d]The name was probably of German origin ("Johann Müller")
[e]The original French spelling of the Christian name was certainly "Antoine"
[f]The original German spelling of the Christian name was most probably "Heinrich"
[g]In the muster roll of December 1712, he is said to be in Tacrama
[h]In the muster roll of December 1712, his birthplace is said to be Hulst (Dutch Republic)
Source Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preussischer Kulturbesitz (GStA PK), HA I., Rep. 65, Marine und Afrikanische Kompaniesachen, 101, fol. 207r

Grossfriedrichsburg were serving as soldiers, the most humble category listed in the muster rolls. Two of them, Thomas Luijten and Manuel Manuelze, were working just "for the food". It is not clear if this was due to a racial discrimination. The fact that the third African-born soldier, Jan Muller, was paid the same amount as the other soldiers seems to contradict this hypothesis.[24] One might reasonably suppose that Luijten and Manuelze's situation could have related to a need to pay back some outstanding debts. At the same time, their poverty (and hypothetical debts) could have been caused by a racially determined restriction on hiring for better-remunerated positions in the fort hierarchy. Beyond a few success stories of individuals such as Edward Barter in Cape Coast who attained significant wealth and political influence, most Euro-Africans remained confined to minor positions.[25] This was a general trend on the Gold Coast around 1700 and the situation at Grossfriedrichsburg seems to reflect this.

Two employees—a trumpeter and an under master/soldier—were born across the Atlantic in Brazil. Although the Dutch had expelled the Portuguese from their Gold Coast factories and tried to exclude them completely from the coastal trade, ships coming from Brazil continued to visit the region and, from the 1680s onwards, the WIC actually tolerated them importing Brazilian tobacco.[26] One can thus conjecture that the two Brazilian-born employees had arrived in the Cape Three Points area through these ongoing commercial relations.[27]

Another employee, who bores the Portuguese name of Joseph Rodrigo, came from the Mughal Empire's province of Bengal. Concerning the migratory paths, which lead him from India to West Africa, the available evidence does not permit a conclusion beyond hypotheses. Most probably, he was born in one of the Portuguese settlements in the Bay of Bengal, which was founded during the sixteenth century.[28] Quite possibly, he was of Luso-Indian descent.[29] Hence, he might have been one of the numerous Lusophone "mestiços" who, in the context of the seventeenth-century crisis of Portuguese trade in Bengal, was "all too happy to apply for jobs […] as soldiers and clerks" with the English and Dutch trading companies.[30] A previous employment for Dutch or English companies—although highly hypothetical—would help to explain how the Indian-born Joseph Rodrigo ended up serving a remote Baltic state on the western Gold Coast, considering that at the time there were no direct relations between the BAAC and Asia.

Overall, the muster roll gives a glimpse of the interregional entanglements connecting Grossfriedrichsburg to the Atlantic world. In the single case of Joseph Rodrigo, the connection goes even further. Thanks to the fortress—and to traders from Wassa and Asante who linked the Cape Three Points area to the inland markets—Pokesu became a small but significant hub of transcontinental relations, both in terms of human mobility and exchanged commodities. Grossfriedrichsburg was certainly a Brandenburg-Prussian base, as it derived its legal status from the official protection granted by the sovereigns of this principality. However, the trading company that managed it and the people who worked in it neither were the bearers of a common German culture nor were they tied together by a common national sense of belonging. To label Grossfriedrichsburg as a "German" colony is therefore anachronistic.

Moreover, what about the term "colony"? Can Grossfriedrichsburg be defined—as it often is—as a "colonial" base? I argue that this expression is rather misleading. Even if we specify that it was neither a settlement nor a plantation colony with a large territorial hinterland, but a spatially circumscribed trading colony, the word insinuates that the relationships between the BAC/BAAC and the local Akan society should be described in terms of dominion and exploitation. To be sure, the Brandenburg-Prussian monarchy sometimes tried to represent their forts on the Gold Coast as sovereign possessions. For example, when "His Serene Highness" the Prince-Elector of Brandenburg promised the caboceers of Pokesu that he would "protect them all", he used an expression which clearly indicated an asymmetric relationship and the submission of the local population under his sovereignty.[31] Nevertheless, the daily interactions, which took place in Pokesu, were much more characterised by cooperation than by unilateral rule. In this context, the written treaties served more as legal instruments to sustain Brandenburg-Prussia's claims against their Dutch rivals than to solidify political dominion over the population of Little Inkassa and Ahanta. During the existence of the BAC/BAAC, the term "colony" itself was rarely applied to Brandenburg-Prussia's forts on the Gold Coast. Significantly, one of very few occurrences of this expression can be found in a diplomatic memorandum sent in 1712 from Reinhardt von Hymmen (1651–1722), the Prussian envoy in Den Haag, to the States General of the Dutch Republic following an Anglo-Dutch attack against the BAAC fort of Akwida.[32] Imagining the trading bases in Africa as sovereign "possessions" and "colonies" was a tool for European diplomats to fight their

paper wars, but this proves wholly inadequate for understanding the patterns of interaction that developed on-site.

In asserting that relations between the BAC/BAAC and the Akan elites in Pokesu should be conceptualised in terms of cooperation and bilateral negotiations, rather than perceived through the lens of colonial dominion, our attention is shifted to transcultural exchanges and global entanglements.[33] This perspective allows us to "provincialise" European actions and to integrate African agency into the analytical framework. Of course, this should not obliterate the structural violence of the slave trade, which played a fundamental role in the BAC/BAAC's African commerce, or the economic asymmetries on which it was based. Grossfriedrichsburg was built and functioned as a European infrastructure for the transatlantic slave trade.[34] Putting cooperation and negotiation at the centre of analysis enables one to examine the patterns of interaction on which this trade was based. These interactions included two moments: one of converging interests—as illustrated by the case of bypassing the factories of the Dutch WIC and the English Royal African Company (RAC) on the western Gold Coast—and another of conflict between specific European and African actors.

As elsewhere on the Gold Coast, tensions in Pokesu had developed during the Brandenburg period. In 1686, for example, "the Negroes" took up "arms in rebellion" against the fortress of Grossfriedrichsburg and its hated director general, Johan Brouw.[35] The ostensible reason for this uprising was the killing of an African who had been accused of theft. Brouw had given the order to "shoot dead" the man "who, having served the cook in the cook house [of the fort], had […] stolen from the [white] people a few old cloths (such as an old shirt, an old coat, a hat and similar rags) and had therefore been driven away by the people, and who had occasionally come back to see if there was any chance for him". In order to fulfil Brouw's order, the soldiers took an old coat, "tied it firmly to the palisades [outside the fortress]" and "went behind the palisades to lie down and keep watch until the Negro should come". Finally, when "this Negro came and was engaged in pushing the coat off the palisades with a stick, he was shot dead by the smith, named Philip Steinder". The BAC directors, who feared that this "incident" could disturb the trade relations with the locals and lower the company's profits, blamed Brouw. In his defence, Brouw justified his methods by maintaining that the shooting "was done lawfully": "martial law", he argued, "does not permit any Negro to come" within reach

of "the canon at night". In practice, the brutal killing of the cook seems to have been caused by the failure to impose an effective jurisdictional power over the inhabitants of Pokesu and the consequent willingness to punish a servant accused of theft extrajudicially. The invocation of an alleged Brandenburg martial law concerning the relations between the "Negroes" and the fortress was not much more than an apologetic strategy by a director general who had not arrived to manage the tensions between the garrison and the local population. Nevertheless, on a formal level, the argument is highly significant: the man had been killed for violating Brandenburg martial law, which—according to this argument—also applied in Pokesu. Brouw's discourse effectively suggested that Pokesu was a kind of colony under Brandenburg sovereignty. However, the beginning of an uprising shows that the local society and its elites did not accept this perspective. For them, the shooting was an illegitimate act of violence and it had to be sanctioned according to the legal customs of the Akan culture. Pokesu was clearly not, in their opinion, a colony: in spite of the fortified factory and the military alliance with the BAC, it remained an independent polity. In order to cease the hostilities against the garrison, the caboceers demanded "blood money" (*atitɔdeɛ*), a material compensation "which buys the dead".[36] In the end, the fortress was not stormed. The conflict was solved through negotiation, and the demand of the caboceers was satisfied. In other words, Akan customs prevailed over Brandenburg martial law.

There were also clashes in the economic sphere. The above-mentioned director general Brouw provides a good example of this. In 1686, when the BAC directors interrogated the former director and factor of Grossfriedrichsburg after their return to Emden, their suspicion was confirmed that Brouw had traded extensively on his own account, selling his own commodities before the company's and using his private profits in order to buy new trading goods from Dutch interlopers. This was, of course, a very common practice among the companies' employees on the Gold Coast and, in principle, the Akan traders could profit from the augmented supply and the competition between official and unofficial European sellers. However, Brouw not only defrauded the BAC's shareholders in Europe, but also tried to alter local custom by imposing a tribute of three benda of gold on the caboceers as well as manipulating the standardised coral threads in order to augment his gains.[37] This conduct provoked political tensions with the authorities of Pokesu and resulted in a loss of trust from the traders operating in the Cape Three Points region.

The Akan merchants let other BAC employees know that they were very "discontent", "they would not accept the corals in this manner", and in the end, "the trade on Grossfriedrichsburg would certainly be ruined". In this case, the Akan actors who were negatively impacted by Brouw's behaviour did not attack him directly. Instead, the authorities of Pokesu communicated their dissatisfaction to other BAC employees. This was most likely because they were hoping that the company would solve the problem internally. Since Brouw also acted in a manner that was contrary to the company's interests, this goal was soon achieved through his dismissal and the appointment of a new director general, Johan Nieman. This case highlights that—far from being dictated unilaterally by the BAC/BAAC leadership in Emden or by its representatives in Grossfriedrichsburg—the conditions of economic interaction were defined by a multilateral negotiation in which different alliances were actually possible.

In the early eighteenth century, the dependence of Grossfriedrichsburg on the Akan elites became even stronger. On the one hand, the French naval attacks during the War of the Spanish Succession (1701–1714) made it impossible for the BAAC to furnish its African bases with trading goods. Consequently, the factories of Pokesu, Tacrama and Akwida had to rely largely on Dutch interlopers and English private vessels (the so-called 10% ships) in order to obtain the stocks demanded by their Akan partners.[38] On the other hand, mounting pressure due to the expanding Asante—victors over the once powerful Denkyera in 1701—resulted in a growing concentration of power in the western part of the Gold Coast. In this context, the famous Akan "merchant prince" Kɔne Kpole ("Conny the Great") alias Jan Conny arrived on the scene around 1710.[39] Having grown rich by trading, managing a canoe fleet and producing maize for the garrison and the transiting slave ships, Conny succeeded in developing a transversal system of alliances throughout the region. He affirmed himself as the major intermediary between the inland traders and the interloper ships, seriously undermining the business of the RAC in Dixcove and the WIC in Axim. Under Conny, the BAAC forts not only consolidated their connections to the gold traders from Wassa but also became the favoured commercial partners of the Asante merchants on the western Gold Coast for many years. They offered the Asante firearms for their ongoing wars of expansion under Osei Tutu I. and Opoku Ware I.[40] According to a report, gold dust, ivory and slaves were the principal commodities sold to Dutch interlopers and English "ten percent ships".[41] Although German sources and German

historiography have sometimes referred to Conny as a simple "broker of the Prussians",[42] he was obviously much more than that. In Pokesu, the balance of power had clearly tipped in favour of the new *ɔbirɛmpɔn* ("big man") Jan Conny. He entertained diplomatic relations with other states on the Gold Coast and waged wars against rival Akan powers and their European allies. When a BAAC director at Grossfriedrichsburg did not accommodate his requests, such as occurred with Frans de Lange in 1710, Conny imposed his removal and substitution.[43] The last vestige of the asserted Brandenburg-Prussian protection over the people of Little Inkassa and Ahanta had disappeared. If the BAAC still held its forts on the Gold Coast, it was due to Conny's protection.

When the Prussian king, Frederick William I (r. 1688–1740), decided in 1717 to liquidate the overseas enterprise launched by his grandfather and sell the African forts to the Dutch, Conny did not recognise the validity of this transfer. As a French memorandum recalled, "Jean Connain" told the Dutch in April 1718 "that he did not know all these kinds of agreements which had been made between this and that party" and "that if the King of Prussia was not intentioned to come and live in his fort, he was not entitled anymore to dispose of it in favour of any person, considering that he did not possess the land" on which it was built.[44] Conny stated that he was the "master of the country" and that only he could choose which nation used the fort.[45] The Dutch met this refusal by trying to conquer Grossfriedrichsburg militarily, but their attack in 1718 ended in a humiliating bloody defeat. As a result, Grossfriedrichsburg became "well known by the Name of *Conny*'s castle".[46] From his court, the "merchant prince" of Pokesu pursued for some years an open port policy, giving access to interloper and company ships of different countries.[47] Only in November 1724, when Wassa and other former allies declared war on Conny, he was forced to retreat inland and the Dutch were finally able to take over Grossfriedrichsburg, which was then renamed "Fort Hollandia".

The Invention of a Tradition: Grossfriedrichsburg as "The First German Colony" (Nineteenth to Twentieth Centuries)

The final failure of the BAAC and the thwarting of Brandenburg-Prussia's naval ambitions consigned their former African bases to a long oblivion. For about one-and-half centuries, their presence in German

historiography and literature remained quite sporadic. By the end of the nineteenth century, however, Grossfriedrichsburg was "rediscovered", experiencing a sudden flourishing of interest among a broader audience.

On 27 January 1884, the German corvette-cruiser "Sophie", commanded by Captain Wilhelm Stubenrauch, arrived at Pokesu. Its destination was Little Popo (Aného), where the Hamburg Chamber of Commerce had asked the government to protect the interests of some German firms complaining about growing hostilities perpetrated by the Lawson clan.[48] The expedition of the "Sophie" constituted the first military intervention in West Africa of the German Empire. It opened the way for the establishment of the political dominion, achieved in July 1884, over the territories that would later become the German colony of Togo. Though Germany had hitherto been very reluctant to intervene directly in the imperial "scramble" to govern Africa, Stubenrauch's mission marked a crucial turning point in its overseas politics. Significantly, in the very moment in which the government of the Hohenzollern monarchy decided to claim its area of influence south of the Sahara, the old mercantile enterprises of the Prince-Elector Frederick William were thought of again. The orders given by the Chief of the Admiralty, Leo von Caprivi, did not actually mention a visit to Cape Three Points.[49] Indeed, it was an independent initiative of Stubenrauch. He had met the crown prince Frederick in the port of Genoa in December 1883, and the latter had inspired him to undertake the mission in order to "learn more" about "this very interesting aspect of Brandenburg's history".[50]

Once they had landed in Pokesu, Stubenrauch and his officers were brought to the local "chief", who received them along with about one hundred of his men.[51] After exchanging their greetings, the "chief" brought the Germans to the old fortress. In his own account, which he published after returning to Germany, Stubenrauch fashioned himself as an explorer, discovering the relics of a remote past.

> Immediately after leaving the village, the path led up the hill on the peninsula. We passed through banana bushes, corn stalks and palm trees and encountered some stone ruins, until after about ten minutes we arrived in front of an opening in the decayed walls of the fort. The remains of the wall on both sides, as well as a kind of gateway, suggested that this was the entrance.[52]

The walk on the top of the hill was represented as a kind of time travel. Much more than this, it was also an act of imaginary re-appropriation in

which a group of German men salvaged the material traces of a German past, which had been obscured by timeless and ahistorical African nature, for the sake of the historical present. Now, the space of the fortress had to be wrested from the "dense creepers" which had wrapped it in a chaotic web of vegetation, causing it to fall into a deep slumber. In order to re-appropriate this past and to make sense of these weed-enmeshed stones, the remains of the fort were subjected to precise measurement.

> The length of the front is 40 [meters], the two flanks measure 35 meters each, the bastion is 16 meters long and 7 meters deep. The outer wall is 0.9 meters thick, [and] built of rough granite blocks. It is 5.2 meters high, lying about 15 meters above sea level. […] The rampart, on which the canons were positioned, is 3 meters wide, the parapet is 1 meters high; the gunports are located 3 meters apart.[53]

Finally, before continuing his voyage to Little Popo, Stubenrauch bartered some goods for one of the old canons found inside the fort. A piece of the Hohenzollern's African past was to be brought back to Germany. The court appreciated Stubenrauch's initiative. As soon as the emperor knew of it, he ordered the canon—which at that time was still aboard the "Sophie" in the middle of the Atlantic—to be exhibited in the Hall of Fame in Berlin.[54] As the German Empire was becoming a colonial empire, Brandenburg-Prussia's overseas enterprises were gloriously integrated into the national history.

Frederick William's overseas deeds suddenly became a major historiographical issue and the German state itself started promoting publications (particularly the editions of historical sources) dealing with the BAC/BAAC.[55] Military officers and civil servants played a major role in this work. In 1885, the General Staff of the German Armed Forces published a first collection of archival records.[56] In 1889, Court Assessor Richard Schück prepared a larger and more accurate edition under the patronage of Paul Kayser, the future director of the Colonial Office.[57] This operation of historical memory was directly linked to ongoing colonial ambitions.

> The lively interest, which the nation has recently shown for the pioneering enterprises initiated by a powerful and purposeful statecraft in overseas territories, has drawn the memory to those times, in which Brandenburg-Prussia's flag was flying on the ramparts of imposing fortresses on the

> west coast of Africa. The historical sense […], connecting the past with the present, finds in those [past] enterprises […] a promising exhortation [for the future].[58]

Travelogues also became a means of propagating historical memory. In 1886, the Prussian officer Paul Oettinger published *Unter Kurbrandenburgischer Flagge. Deutsche Kolonialerfahrungen vor 200 Jahren* (Under the flag of the Electorate of Brandenburg. German colonial experiences 200 years ago), a kind of colonial novel based on the journal of his ancestor Johann Peter Oettinger, who had worked as a barber–surgeon on a Brandenburg slave vessel.[59] In addition, the travel account of Otto Friedrich von der Gröben—who a riverside road in Berlin was named after in 1895, following an explicit order of the emperor William II[60]—was republished several times, between the early twentieth century and the Nazi period.

These texts were not only read by academic scholars. On the contrary, they were absorbed by a wide readership fascinated with a fast expanding colonial culture that permitted German society to imagine itself as a colonising nation.[61] The "legitimation of political ambitions and actions in the present" was achieved by recalling "old beginnings and models".[62] The BAC/BAAC and the "colony" of Grossfriedrichsburg "were elevated to a myth" and integrated into an imagined "genealogy", leading from early modern overseas trade to the plantation and settlement colonies of the late nineteenth century.[63] Grossfriedrichsburg, and (some of) the many stories linked to it, became the building blocks of an "invented tradition" of German colonialism. During the colonial period (1884–1918), the construction of this tradition—suggesting that Germany had been a colonising nation for centuries—functioned as a counterweight to the latecomer complex that informed the self-perception of German colonial actors. After the loss of the colonies during World War I, it was upheld by revisionist propaganda asking for a reconstitution of the colonial empire: the failure of the BAAC—determined by the "envy" of the English, French and Dutch—was then read as a precedent of the confiscation of the German colonies sanctioned by the Treaty of Versailles.[64]

In these decades, Grossfriedrichsburg became a widespread "site of memory".[65] For example, the meeting room of the Berlin section of the German Colonial Society—the major organisation of the colonial movement in Germany and as such an important political lobby—was named "Grossfriedrichsburg".[66] The bourgeois gentlemen,

who met to drink coffee and discuss the latest political news concerning Germany's overseas territories, liked to fashion themselves as the descendants and torchbearers of the company employees who had traded and lived in the old fortress above Pokesu. In January 1902, the Berlin Philharmonic gave a concert to mark the 220th anniversary of the foundation of Grossfriedrichsburg. The event was entitled *Fetisie. Volksfest in Togo* (Fetish. Folk Festival in Togo).[67] Togo, the organisers suggested, was Germany's new Grossfriedrichsburg. Another striking connection between the early modern mercantile enterprises of Brandenburg-Prussia and Germany's modern colonial empire was established with the monument dedicated to Heinrich von Wissmann (1853–1905), a German explorer and colonial administrator.[68] The Wissmann monument by the Berlin sculptor Adolf Kürle was inaugurated in Dar es Salaam in 1909. The sculpture of the triumphant explorer, at whose feet an Askari soldier with a German flag and a dead lion were represented, was placed upon a pedestal with the form of Grossfriedrichsburg's ground plan. The new explorers and conquerors, this monument evoked, had literally carried out their deeds on the historical foundation of Frederick William's overseas policies.

The myth of Grossfriedrichsburg was further elaborated and disseminated through the literature.[69] In this way, Otto Friedrich von der Gröben, Jan Conny and other historical figures became the heroes of a German colonial epic. As far as we know, authors such as Wilhelm Jensen, Emil Steurich and Wilhelm Henzen never travelled to Africa. They drew their inspiration from historiographical works and from edited sources—and at the same time altered them considerably.

In Steurich's novel *Johann Kuny, der erste brandenburgisch-preussische Negerfürst* (Jan Conny, the first Brandenburg-Prussian Negro prince), Conny's refusal to come to terms with the Dutch was reinterpreted as an extreme sign of loyalty towards the Prussian King. "We, the people of Ahanta have just one heart", Conny told the Dutch Admiral asking him to hand over the fortress. "We cannot take it off like a dress and put on another one. Go, we cannot live in common with you Dutchmen, because you were always unfaithful to us poor Negroes".[70] Thus, Conny was conflated diachronically with those late nineteenth-century African elites who had chosen to ally themselves with the German Empire and with the "faithful Askari soldiers" who were idealised in colonial propaganda as devoted subordinates acknowledging the benevolent character of Germany's "protection".[71] The manipulation of the historical person

of the "merchant prince" of Pokesu, who had himself been the powerful protector of Brandenburg-Prussia's factories, could not have been greater.[72]

Colonial novels and plays on Grossfriedrichsburg were informed by asymmetric hierarchies between the Brandenburgers and "their" Africans, by stereotypical discourses of racial superiority as well as by images of dominion and submission (Fig. 2.1). In Henzen's play *Grossfriedrichsburg. Ein deutsches Kolonialfestspiel in vier Aufzügen* (Grossfriedrichsburg. A German colonial play in four acts), for example, the story of von der Gröben's arrival in Pokesu was radically altered. In this plot, the major was not received by the 18 men armed with muskets mentioned in the original account, but by a small "mulatto" girl called Dia. Von der Gröben found her while she was mourning the death of her father, an East Frisian seaman, who had served the Dutch on the Gold Coast and who had been killed during the recent Adom attack. In this play, Africa was introduced in the form of a defenceless girl—weak, feminine, infantile and therefore incapable of caring for herself. Falling to von der Gröben's feet, the girl cried:

> Oh white Man, you're German,
>
> Like good Father was, you're good like him.
>
> Give protection to poor Dia! She afraid, she afraid![73]

As the spectators would see soon, Dia (Africa) was not only asking for the powerful male and adult protection of von der Gröben (Germany), but once he had accepted her demand, she in turn offered herself to him. Following a common colonial discourse, the play staged Africa as a "virgin" continent whose "untouched", "wild", "uncivilized" and therefore "free" nature presented its male conquerors with its voluptuous fruits.[74]

The myth of Brandenburg-Prussia's African adventures had one significant blemish. They had been undertaken—not exclusively, but certainly to a good extent—in order to participate in the growing business of the slave trade. Considering that one of the main moral arguments used by European powers to justify their colonial dominion in Africa was the fight against slavery, this fact potentially limited the usefulness of the BAC epic as a tool of historical legitimation for Germany's imperial

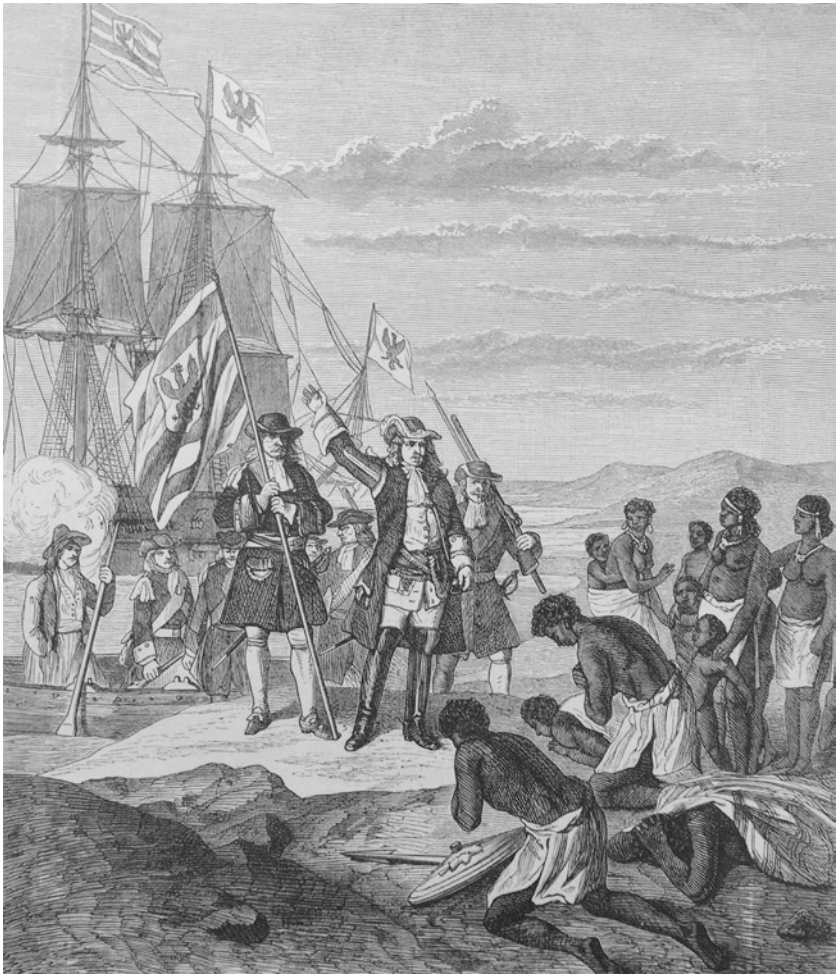

Fig. 2.1 In popular culture, the encounter between O.F. von der Gröben and the inhabitants of Pokesu was represented in terms of dominion and submission. Drawing by Ludwig Burger, in *Schorers Familienblatt*, vol. VI, 1885, n. 9, p. 137

policies. Nevertheless, this evident contradiction was generally resolved in both fiction and non-fiction through the narrative marginalisation of the slave trade or through other exculpatory strategies.

Slavery and the slave trade are not mentioned at all in Henzen's play. By contrast, in Wilhelm Jensen's novel *Brandenburg'scher Pavillon hoch! Eine Geschichte aus Kurbrandenburgs Kolonialzeit* (Hoist the Brandenburg flag! A story from the colonial era of the Electorate of Brandenburg), the moral question of slavery is raised. However, this was mainly done to give the novel's main characters, Didde and Cirk, the chance to prove their noble spirits by helping an enslaved woman to flee.[75] To be sure, the condemnation of the slave trade did not involve a critique of racism. In his depiction of the Africans, for instance, Jensen constantly uses demeaning language such as comparing their houses to termite mounds, labelling their language as "gibberish" and insulting them as "pigs".[76] This attitude is summarised by Cirk's exclamation after freeing the enslaved (and very beautiful) girl: "I have never seen such a Negress, in her case it's really a pity that she's not white".[77] As often in colonial discourse, the moral condemnation of slavery went hand-in-hand with the racial denigration of the Africans.

Postcolonial Echoes

Nowadays, celebrative statements about Grossfriedrichsburg and the BAC/BAAC still survive in reactionary milieus such as the *Traditionsverband ehemaliger Schutz – und Überseetruppen*, a small association devoted to colonial nostalgia.[78] In the popular literature, one may still find veiled expressions of admiration concerning the ancient deeds of von der Gröben and Frederick William.[79] However, today in general the tendency prevails to associate Grossfriedrichsburg with the slave business. Frequently, the interest concerning the BAC/BAAC is neatly connected with an explicit moral condemnation of its role in the triangular trade. Insofar, Grossfriedrichsburg has become a symbol for German participation in this "shame for humanity".[80] Significantly, after a controversial debate that divided both public opinion and academic scholars, in 2010 anti-racist associations backed by local left-wing politicians were able to rename the Berlin riverside road that had been dedicated to von der Gröben.[81] As the founder of the fortress of Grossfriedrichsburg who had "created the material conditions for the Electorate of Brandenburg's slave trade" and who "during the German Empire and the Nazi period was honoured as colonial pioneer", von der Gröben was no longer considered "worthy to be honoured". Thus, the riverside road has been renamed in memory of May Ayim (1960–1996), a poet and anti-racist activist of German–Ghanaian descent. Through this act of symbolic

decolonisation, the public sphere is meant to reflect in a more appropriate manner the democratic values of modern Germany and the "transnational lives" of Berlin's migrant population.[82]

Interestingly, even today's critical memories on Grossfriedrichsburg are (at least partially) linked to the conceptual frames of nineteenth-century colonial discourse. The old triumphant rhetoric has certainly been substituted by severe moral judgements, but the idea of Grossfriedrichsburg as "German" and a "colony" is frequently repeated.[83] Furthermore, the founding place of the fortress in the imaginary genealogy of German colonialism is often validated.[84]

The opinion that the old fortress is to be considered foremost as a "monument of German-African relations" is deeply rooted in modern German cultural memory.[85] Furthermore, current memorial practices enacted at Grossfriedrichsburg are visibly influenced by it.[86] Since the end of the twentieth century, Princes Town has been repeatedly targeted by small German "development aid" initiatives.[87] For example, the city of Havelberg—where some of the (slave) vessels of the BAC/BAAC were built—launched a fundraising campaign in 2013 to finance a new football ground for the children of Princes Town.[88] On an academic level, exchange initiatives between German, Togolese and Ghanaian universities are set up to disseminate knowledge of "this dark chapter of German history".[89] In addition, German cultural memory concerning Grossfriedrichsburg has influenced tourism in the Cape Three Points area. Unlike Elmina and Cape Coast—which starting in the 1990s became integrated into circuits of international tourism and are now important sites of memory for African American visitors—Grossfriedrichsburg is, generally speaking, a second-rank attraction in Ghana's sightseeing agenda.[90] Despite the fortress being owned by the Dutch for much longer than by Brandenburg-Prussia, it does not seem to represent a site of specific interest for Dutch tourists nor does it seem to be a place of particular attraction for African Americans.[91] Significantly, the major tourist group is represented by Germans aiming to discover the vestiges of "their" history.[92]

Notes

1. *Brandenburg Sources for West African History 1680–1700*, ed. by Adam Jones (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1985), doc. 6.
2. The principality of Brandenburg was ruled by the Hohenzollern dynasty, which assumed the crown of Prussia in 1701. This state is therefore commonly referred to as Brandenburg-Prussia. In 1871, the Hohenzollern

became the sovereigns of the newly united German Empire. For an overview on the political history, see Christopher Clark, *Iron Kingdom. The Rise and Fall of Prussia, 1600–1947* (London: Penguin, 2006).

3. In 1692, the company was renamed Brandenburgische Africanisch-Americanische Compagnie (BAAC). On the BAC/BAAC, see Richard Schück, *Brandenburg-Preussens Kolonial-Politik unter dem Grossen Kurfürsten und seinen Nachfolgern (1647–1721)* (Leipzig: Grunow 1889); Hermann Kellenbenz, "Die Brandenburger auf St. Thomas", *Jahrbuch für Geschichte von Staat, Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft Lateinamerikas*, vol. 2 (1965), 196–217; *Brandenburg Sources*; Adam Jones, "Brandenburg-Prussia and the Atlantic Slave Trade", *De la traite à l'esclavage*, ed. by Serge Daget (Paris: Société française d'histoire d'outre-mer, 1988), vol. 1, 283–98; Nils Brübach, "Seefahrt und Handel sind die fürnembsten Säulen eines Estats. Brandenburg-Preussen und der transatlantische Sklavenhandel im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert", *Amerikaner wider Willen. Beiträge zu Sklaverei in Lateinamerika*, ed. by Rüdiger Zoller (Frankfurt a.M: Vervuert, 1994), 11–42, Jürgen G. Nagel, "Die Brandenburgisch-Africanische Compagnie. Ein Handelsunternehmen", *Scripta Mercaturae*, vol. 30 (1996), 44–94; Till Philip Koltermann, "Zur brandenburgischen Kolonialgeschichte. Die Insel Arguin vor der Küste Mauretaniens", *Brandenburgische Entwicklungspolitische Hefte*, vol. 28 (1999), 8–31; Ulrich van der Heyden, *Rote Adler an Afrikas Küste. Die brandenburgisch-preussische Kolonie Grossfriedrichsburg in Westafrika* (Berlin: Selignow, 2001); Andrea Weindl, "Die Kurbrandenburger im atlantischen System, 1650–1720", *Arbeitspapiere zur Lateinamerikaforschung*, vol. 2, no. 3 (2001), http://lateinamerika.phil-fak.uni-koeln.de/fileadmin/sites/aspla/bilder/arbeitspapiere/weindl.pdf; Sven Klosa, *Die Brandenburgische-Africanische Compagnie in Emden. Eine Handelscompagnie des ausgehenden 17. Jahrhunderts zwischen Protektionismus und unternehmerischer Freiheit* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2011); Malte Stamm, "Das koloniale Experiment. Der Sklavenhandel Brandenburg-Preussens im transatlantischen Raum 1680–1718" (PhD diss., University of Düsseldorf, 2011).
4. *Brandenburg Sources*, doc. 2. In early modern European sources, the Portuguese-based term "caboceer" is used to label, in a rather generic way, African political authorities. It is a rough equivalent to the later (and equally generic) term "chief". The Brandenburg sources do not allow us to establish on what basis these caboceers actually acted as representatives of their community.
5. *Brandenburg Sources*, doc. 6, 47.
6. *Brandenburg Sources*, doc. 7. Whereas Pregatte and Sophonije had died during the war against Adom, the treaty of 1683 still mentioned Apani.

7. Von Schnitter was the future son-in-law of the famous jurist, philosopher and historian Samuel von Pufendorf (1632–1694); cf. Peter Bahl, *Der Hof des Grossen Kurfürsten. Studien zur höheren Amtsträgerschaft Brandenburg-Preussens* (Köln: Böhlau, 2001), 558.
8. Kwame Yeboa Daaku, *Trade and Politics on the Gold Coast 1600 to 1720. A Study of the African Reaction to European Trade* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1970).
9. For an overview, see Arnold Walter Lawrence, *Trade Castles and Forts of West Africa* (London: Cape, 1963); Albert van Dantzig, *Forts and Castles of Ghana* (Accra: Sedco, 1980); Jean-Michel Deveau, *L'or et les esclaves. Histoire des forts du Ghana du XVIe au XVIIIe siècle,* (Paris: UNESCO/Karthala, 2005). For an illustrated catalogue see Kwesi James Anquandah, *Castles & Forts of Ghana* (Paris: Atalante, 1999).
10. Cf. the map attributed to Hans Propheet (1629), in Daaku, 182.
11. Pierluigi Valsecchi, *Power and State Formation in West Africa. Appolonia from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 89.
12. Valsecchi, 132–136 and 173.
13. Apart from Pokesu, the BAC established fortified lodges in Tacrama (Little Inkassa), Akwida (Ahanta) and temporarily also in Takoradi (Ahanta); *Brandenburg Sources*, 3–4. Pokesu and the whole Cape Three Points area are sometimes described as a part of Ahanta; cf. for ex. Daaku, 127, and Kouamé René Allou, *Les royaumes akan du sud-ouest de la Côte de l'Or du XVIe siècle à 1734* (Paris: Harmattan, 2013), 12. As far as the seventeenth century is concerned, this view does not seem to be sufficiently supported by empiric evidence, considering that in contemporary maps and commercial correspondences Little Inkassa/Cape Three Points is frequently distinguished from Ahanta. See the letter sent in 1686 from the RAC factory at Sekondi to Cape Coast (*The English in West Africa. The Local Correspondence of the Royal African Company of England, 1681–1699*, ed. by Robin Law, vol. 2, *1685–1688*, (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2001), doc. 28); Jean Barbot, *Barbot on Guinea. The writings of Jean Barbot on West Africa 1678–1712*, ed. by P.E.H. Hair, Adam Jones and Robin Law (London: Hakluyt Society, 1992), 333, 339 and 344; *Brandenburg Sources*, 4; René Baesjou, "Historiae oculus geographia. Essai sur un corpus de cartes anciennes du sud-ouest du pays akan", *Journal des africanistes*, vol. 75, no. 2 (2005), http://africanistes.revues.org/125.
14. Cf. the treaty with the caboceers of Cape Three Points (1681), in *Brandenburg Sources*, doc. 2. On interloper trade cf. Ruud Paesie, *Lorrendrayen op Africa. De illegale goederen- en slavenhandel op West-Afrika tijdens het achttiende-eeuwse handelsmonopolie van de West-Indische Compagnie 1700–1734* (Amsterdam: De Bataafse Leeuw, 2008).

15. This quite common label was used, for example, in the subtitle of the novel by Josef Günther Lettenmair, *Roter Adler auf weissem Feld. Roman der ersten deutschen Kolonie 1683–1717* (Berlin: Zeitgeschichte-Verlag Wilhelm Andermann, 1938).
16. See the voices "Gross Friedrichsburg (Kolonie)" and "Deutsche Kolonien und Schutzgebiete" on http://de.wikipedia.org (20 February 2014).
17. Nagel, 49–50; Klosa, 151–152.
18. On the WIC, see at least Johannes Postma, *The Dutch in the Atlantic Slave Trade 1600–1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1990), Henk J. den Heijer, *Goud, ivoor en slaven. Scheepvaart en handel van de Tweede Westindische Compagnie op Afrika, 1674–1740* (Zutphen: Walburg Pers); Pieter C. Emmer, *The Dutch Slave Trade 1500–1850* (Oxford: Berghahn, 2006).
19. See, for example, the letter books of the company direction (1692–1694), in Stadtarchiv Emden, Protokoll XIII, 1–5.
20. Another, slightly different muster roll, dated 31 December 1712, is to be found in GStAPK, HA I, Rep. 65, Marine und Afrikanische Kompaniesachen, 101, fol. 212r. The original documents are in Dutch. An earlier list of 1686 (*Brandenburg Sources*, doc. 57) mentions employees coming from different states of the Holy Roman Empire, Prussia, the Dutch Republic, Poland, Scotland, Lithuania and Courland (in modern Latvia). Other similar lists (e.g. *Brandenburg Sources*, doc. 83) do not specify the birthplaces of the employees and thus do not allow us to reconstruct the geographic heterogeneity of the fort garrison.
21. The existence of African employees is attested to by *Brandenburg Sources*, doc. 33 and 38. An inventory of the goods kept at Grossfriedrichsburg (1 March 1709) listed 168 slaves (72 women, 47 men, 22 boys, 20 girls and 7 babies) "belonging to the fortress, which have to work and may not be sold"; cf. GStAPK, HA I., Rep. 65, Marine und Afrikanische Kompaniesachen, 30, ff. 424–429, (original in Dutch). I would like to thank Adam Jones for sharing his transcription of this record with me. On the specific status of castle slaves cf. Per Oluf Hernaes, "'Fort Slavery' at Christiansborg on the Gold Coast. Wage Labour in the Making?", *Slavery across Time and Space. Studies in Slavery in Medieval Europe and Africa*, ed. by Per Oluf Hernaes and Tore Iversen (Trondheim: Department of History NTNU, 2002), 197–229; Rebecca Shumway, "Castle Slaves of the Eighteenth-Century Gold Coast", *Slavery & Abolition*, vol. 35, no. 1 (2014), 84–98. Quantitatively, the case of Grossfriedrichsburg is comparable to the one of the Danish fortress of Christiansborg in Accra (100–200 castle slaves), whereas the (more numerous) Dutch and English fortresses owned a larger number of such slaves (respectively 350 and 500). On the one hand, the significant

presence of castle slaves at Pokesu contradicts the assumption that castle slavery on the Gold Coast was nearly exclusively concentrated on the coastal strip between Elmina and Accra (Shumway, 85). On the other, the clear preponderance of female castle slaves at Grossfriedrichsburg confirms the crucial role of women in eighteenth-century castle slavery (Shumway, 90–94).

22. Klaus Weber, "Deutschland, der atlantische Sklavenhandel und die Plantagenwirtschaft der Neuen Welt", *Journal of Modern European History*, vol. 7 (2009), 37–67.
23. Daaku, 100 f.
24. Jan Muller may have been the son of Friedrich Müller, Gerhard Müller or Johann Adam Müller. Friedrich Müller is said to have served as a sergeant in Grossfriedrichsburg at least since February 1684 (*Brandenburg Sources*, doc. 16); in January 1686, he appears to have been demoted to the rank of private (GStAPK, HA I., Rep. 65, Marine und Afrikanische Kompaniesachen, 40, fol. 55v); and in March 1686, he was "declared incapable of ever serving His Highness the Elector again by His Honour the General and leading members of the Military Council [of Grossfriedrichsburg]" (*Brandenburg Sources*, doc. 57) and was ordered to leave for Europe. Gerhard Müller (from Aurich, East Frisia) and Johann Adam Müller (from Esens, East Frisia) were respectively attested to as surgeon and deputy surgeon in Grossfriedrichsburg in March 1686 (*Brandenburg Sources*, doc. 57).
25. Daaku, 99. On the gradual improvement of the Euro-Africans' position during the second half of the eighteenth century—and on some cases of descendants of German WIC employees in Elmina—cf. Michel R. Doortmont, "An Overview of Dutch Relations with the Gold Coast in the Light of David van Nyendael's Mission to Ashanti in 1701–02", *Merchants, Missionaries & Migrants. 300 Years of Dutch-Ghanaian Relations*, ed. by Ineke van Kessel (Amsterdam: KIT, 2002), 19–31, 23. The presence of Dutch-Africans and German-Africans on the early modern Gold Coast is also addressed, on a literary level, in the novel written by the historian Mathias Ullmann, *Ottos Berg* (Mainz: VAT, 2010).
26. Pierre Verger, *Flux et reflux de la traite des nègres entre le Golfe de Bénin et Bahia de Todos os Santos du XVIIe au XIXe siècle* (Paris: Mouton, 1968), 41 ff.
27. Portuguese ships from Brazil regularly traded in the Cape Three Points area during the whole Brandenburg period; cf. for example, the letter dispatched from the RAC factory at Anomabo to Cape Coast (1683), in *The English in West Africa. The Local Correspondence of the Royal African Company of England, 1681–1699,* ed. by Robin Law, vol. 1, *1681–1683* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1997), doc. 370, and the report from Elmina

addressed to the WIC directors in Amsterdam (1708), in Balme Library (BL, University of Ghana, Accra), Furley Collection, N 38, 64–65 (ARA, WIC, 100).

28. For an overview cf. Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Improvising Empire. Portuguese Trade and Settlement in the Bay of Bengal, 1500–1700* (Delhi: Oxford UP, 1990).
29. During the "Conny war" of 1711, the Anglo-Dutch and their Akan allies captured "two whites and an Indian" at Akwida (Daaku, 130). Likely, the latter was Joseph Rodrigo. The fact that he was clearly distinguished from the "whites" suggests that he was not of purely European descent.
30. George Winius, "The 'Shadow-Empire' of Goa in the Bay of Bengal", *Itinerario*, vol. 7, no. 2 (1983), 83–101, 96. More generally on Luso-Indian "mestiços" cf. João Teles e Cunha, "De puro-sangue e fraco rocim. A miscigenação na Índia portuguesa entre a realidade social e as suas representações (1500–1700)", *Mestiçagem e identidades intercontinentais nos espaços lusophonos*, ed. by Manuel Lobato and Maria de Deus Manso (Braga: NICPRI, 2013), 63–90.
31. Treaty with 21 caboceers from the neighbourhood of Grossfriedrichsburg (12 February 1684), in *Brandenburg Sources*, doc. 13, 80–81.
32. Von Hymmen to the States-General (26 August 1712), in GStAPK, HA I., Rep. 65, Marine und Afrikanische Kompaniesachen, 101, fol. 193rv, (original in French). In his memorandum, the Prussian envoy asked the States-General to condemn the "insult committed against the Colony of a good Ally". (In Europe, the Dutch Republic and the King of Prussia were at that time allied against France.) The same day, van Hymmen informed the Prussian King that he had intervened on behalf of the "hostilities" perpetrated against "Your Royal Majesty's Colony"; see GStAPK, HA I., Rep. 65, Marine und Afrikanische Kompaniesachen, 101, fol. 192r, (original in German).
33. John Thornton, *Africa and the Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998); Mark Meuwese, *Brothers in Arms, Partners in Trade. Dutch-Indigenous Alliances in the Atlantic World, 1595–1674* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), Chap. 6; Christina Brauner, *Kompanien, Könige und caboceers. Interkulturelle Diplomatie an Gold- und Sklavenküste im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert* (Köln: Böhlau, 2015).
34. According to the most recent calculations, the BAC/BAAC embarked 23'583 slaves in West Africa and sold 19'240 in the Americas; Stamm, 401.
35. *Brandenburg Sources*, doc. 61.
36. *Brandenburg Sources*, 153 n.
37. GStAPK, HA I., Rep. 65, Marine und Afrikanische Kompaniesachen, 42, fol. 8r-22v, examination of Joost van Colster und Daniel Reindermann

(Emden, 9 March 1686). Mediterranean coral was a highly valued commodity on the West African coast, especially in the Kingdom of Benin but also in the Akan region. Significantly, in 1686, the RAC factory at Sekondi (Ahanta) informed the director in Cape Coast that the merchants from the inland state of Adom were insistently asking for coral; cf. *The English in West Africa*, vol. 1, *1681–1699* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1997), doc. 3.

38. Daaku, 128–129.
39. On Jan Conny, see Charles W. Welman, *The Native States of the Gold Coast. History and Constitution*, vol. 2, Ahanta (London: Dawson, 1930), 33–40; Daaku, 128–143; Valsecchi, Chap. 6.
40. Valsecchi, 145.
41. The captain of the English vessel "Scarborough" to the Admiralty (9 June 1710), in BL, Furley Collection, N 38, 113 (PRO, Adm. 1/1878).
42. Schück, vol. 1, 343.
43. Valsecchi, 253, n. 6.
44. "Mémoire pour servir à faire l'établissement du Fort des Trois Pointes" (Lisbon, 21 March 1719), in Archives Nationales d'Outre-Mer (ANOM, Aix-en-Provence) Secrétariat d'État à la Marine, Correspondence à l'arrivée, C^6, Sénégal et Côtes occidentales d'Afrique, 25, piece 39, (original in French).
45. According to this record, Conny offered the fort to the French, with whom he had regular trading relations and whom he must have known to be both powerful at sea and permanently at war with both the Dutch and the English who were allied with Conny's enemies in Axim and Dixcove. These negotiations between Conny and the French are also supported by a previous document written from Savi by Mr. Bouchel, the director of the French lodge in the kingdom of Hueda: "Cape Three Points, which once was inhabited by the Hamburgers [*sic*!], has now been abandoned by this Nation, and the Captain Jean Conil [Jan Conny], which is the chief of this country, would like to have the French there and he would be glad to give them the fort […], rumour has it that the Dutch want to buy this fort. If this won't have happened at the moment of the reception of this letter, it would be very important for the [French] trade on the [West African] Coast to have this Fort"; see Bouchel to the Conseil de Marine (Savi, Kingdom of Hueda, 16 September 1717), in ANOM, Secrétariat d'État à la Marine, Correspondence à l'arrivée, C^6, Sénégal et Côtes occidentales d'Afrique, 25, piece 34, (original in French).
46. William Smith, *A New Voyage to Guinea* (London: John Nourse, 1744), 117.
47. Both the negotiations between France and the RAC and the agreement with the WIC (signed in 1722 but never actually respected by Conny)

can be considered as mere tactical manoeuvres. In general, Conny's open port policy in Little Inkassa/Ahanta can be compared with the short-lived experience of Asomani in Accra (Akwamu) and the shifting alliances of John Kabes in Komenda (Eguafo); cf. Daaku, 112 and 115–127; David Heninge D, "John Kabes of Komenda. An Early African Entrepreneur and State Builder", *The Journal of African History*, vol. 18, no. 1 (1977), 1–19; Robin Law, "The Komenda Wars, 1694–1700. A Revised Narrative", *History in Africa*, vol. 34 (2007), 133–168. However, these attempts were never consolidated into an institutionalised free port as they were in Ouidah; Robin Law, *Ouidah. The Social History of a West African Slaving Port 1727–1892* (Athens: Ohio UP, 1992).

48. On Stubenrauch's mission, see Woulamatou Gbadamassi and Adjaï Paulin Oloukpona-Yinnon, *Stubenrauchs Berichte aus Westafrika (Januar bis Februar 1884). Dokumente zur Geschichte Togos/ Aneho en janvier-février 1884 selon les rapports du Capitaine W. Stubenrauch, Commandant de la S.M.S. "Sophie"* (Lomé: Presses de l'UL, 2012), 10–11. On the Lawson family of Little Popo see *An African Family Archive. The Lawsons of Little Popo/Aneho (Togo) 1841–1938*, ed. by Adam Jones and Peter Sebald (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2005).
49. See Caprivi's order to the "Sophie" (Berlin, 1. October 1883), in Bundesarchiv Deutschland/Militärarchiv Freiburg (BAD/MAFr), RM 1, 2713, fol. 21r–23v.
50. Stubenrauch to the Chief of the German Admiralty (Little Popo, 30 January 1884), in BAD/MAFr, RM 1, 2713, fol. 107r–113v.
51. Wilhelm Stubenrauch, *Das Kurbrandenburgische Fort Gross-Friedrichsburg in Guinea. Bericht über den Besuch desselben durch die Offiziere S.M. Schiff "Sophie" erstattet an den Chef der Kaiserlichen Marine* (Berlin: Mittler, 1884), 3.
52. Stubenrauch, 4.
53. Stubenrauch, 5. Stubenrauch's observations were much less careful from a naturalistic point of view, considering that on page 4, he pretended to have seen an armadillo in Pokesu—an animal that notably lives in the Americas, not in West Africa.
54. The Chief of the Admiralty to the Minister of War (Berlin, 19 March 1884), in BAD/MAFr, RM 1, 2713, fol. 68rv. Another visit to Grossfriedrichsburg was undertaken in 1910 by the crew of H.M.S. "Sperber"; cf. BAD/MAFr, RM 3, 3027, fol. 190r–192v. The role of Grossfriedrichsburg in the memories nurtured by the German navy is further attested to by some nautical maps of the Nazi period, in which Grossfriedrichsburg is highlighted; cf. the map of the North Atlantic Ocean (1939) in BAD/MAFr, Kart. 950–1, 990, and the equatorial area of the Atlantic Ocean (1941), in BAD/MAFr, Kart. 952–2, 1905.

55. For a critical historiographical overview cf. the seminal article by Klaus-Jürgen Matz, "Das Kolonialexperiment des Großen Kurfürsten in der Geschichtsschreibung des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts", *Ein sonderbares Licht in Teutschland. Beiträge zur Geschichte des Grossen Kurfürsten von Brandenburg (1640–1688),* ed. by Gerd Heinrich (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1990), 191–202, 194.
56. Grosser Generalstab, *Brandenburg-Preussen auf der Westküste von Afrika. 1681–1721* (Berlin: Mittler, 1885).
57. Schück.
58. Grosser Generalstab, 7.
59. Paul Oettinger, *Unter kurbrandenburgischer Flagge. Deutsche Kolonialerfahrungen vor zweihundert Jahren. Nach dem Tagebuch des Chirurgen Johann Peter Oettinger* (Berlin: Eisenschmidt, 1886). On this seventeenth-century travel journal and its nineteenth-century literary manipulation cf. Craig Koslofsky and Roberto Zaugg, "Ship's Surgeon Johann Peter Oettinger. A Hinterlander in the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1682–1696", *Slavery Hinterland. Transatlantic Slavery and Continental Europe, 1680–1850*, ed. by Felix Brahm and Eve Rosenhaft (Suffolk: Boydell and Brewer, 2016), 27–44.
60. Clara Ervedosa, "Das May-Ayim-Ufer in Berlin", *Kein Platz an der Sonne. Erinnerungsorte der deutschen Kolonialgeschichte*, ed. Jürgen Zimmerer (Frankfurt a.M.: Campus, 2013), 424–441, 434.
61. See at least *Kolonialismus als Kultur. Literatur, Medien, Wissenschaft in der deutschen Gründerzeit des Fremden*, ed. by Alexander Honold and Oliver Simons (Tübingen: Francke, 2002); *Phantasiereiche. Zur Kulturgeschichte des deutschen Kolonialismus*, ed. by Birthe Kundrus (Frankfurt a.M.: Campus, 2003); Joachim Zeller, *Weisse Blicke—Schwarze Körper. Afrikaner im Spiegel westlicher Alltagskultur* (Berlin: Sutton, 2010); Wolfgang Struck, *Die Eroberung der Phantasie. Kolonialismus, Literatur und Film zwischen deutschem Kaiserreich und Weimarer Republik* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2010).
62. Matz, 195.
63. Adjaï Paulin Oloukpona-Yinnon, *Unter deutschen Palmen. Die "Musterkolonie" Togo im Spiegel deutscher Kolonialliteratur (1884–1944)* (Frankfurt a.M: IKO, 1998), 69; Sebastian Conrad, *Deutsche Kolonialgeschichte* (München: Beck, 2012), 19.
64. In the afterword to a 1928 re-edition of von der Gröben's travelogue, Gertrud Siemens stated that the "early Brandenburg colonisation ended under similar circumstances as 200 years later the one of the German Empire: due to the envy of the great colonial powers"; *Grossfriedrichsburg, die Kolonie des Grossen Kurfürsten an der Küste Westafrikas, nach der "Guineischen Reisebeschreibung" des Otto*

Friedrich v.d. Gröben, ed. by Gertrud Siemens (Köln: Schaffstein, 1928), 77. Another striking example is provided by the book on the former German colony of Cameroon by the planter Wilhelm Kemner. Writing about the Dutch overtake in the 1720s, the author—who had visited the old Brandenburg fortress on the Gold Coast and celebrated Grossfriedrichsburg as prelude of nineteenth-century German colonialism in Africa—affirmed emphatically: "The first German […] colony was lost. But the spirit, from which it had been born, was not dead. It strongly revived two centuries later and pervaded the German people"; Wilhelm Kemner, *Kamerun* (Berlin: Freiheitsverlag, 1941), 11. Likewise, "the great German colonial empire" was destined to rise again after the desired victory in World War II (Kemner, 6).

65. On this concept, see *Les lieux de mémoire*, ed. by Pierre Nora (Paris: Gallimard, 1984–1992); cf. also *Deutsche Erinnerungsorte*, ed. by Étienne François and Hagen Schulze (München: Beck, 2001) on Germany in general and *Kein Platz an der Sonne* on German colonialism.
66. *Deutsche Kolonialzeitung*, no. 26 (30 June 1888), 206.
67. Oloukpona-Yinnon, *Unter deutschen Palmen*, 70.
68. Joachim Zeller,"'Deutschlands grösster Afrikaner'. Zur Geschichte der Denkmäler für Hermann von Wissmann", *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft*, vol. 44 (1996), 1089–1111.
69. Struck, 72–86.
70. Emil Steurich, *Johann Kuny, der erste brandenburgisch-preussische Negerfürst* (München: Lehmann, 1900), 416. The assertion that the people of Ahanta was united in its loyalty to Prussia is all the more risible if one considers that in Conny's time the Ahanta territory hosted simultaneously Dutch, Brandenburg and English factories.
71. On black colonial troops in the German Empire cf. Stefanie Michels, *Schwarze deutsche Kolonialsoldaten. Mehrdeutige Repräsentationsräume und früher Kosmopolitismus in Afrika* (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2009).
72. An alternative literary interpretation of the historical figure of Conny has been elaborated by the anthropologist Julius Lipps in *Heiden vor Afrika. Ein Negerspiel* (Heathens in front of Africa. A Negro play), published in 1930 under the pseudonym Palan Kárani. In this play, Conny is represented as "an apostle coming from an ancient time to mobilise and raise the consciousness of the Blacks"; Adjaï Paulin Oloukpona-Yinnon, "Vous les Blancs, vous nous avez apporté les vêtements et le mensonge. Les vêtements cachent le corps, le mensonge cache l'âme". Réflexions sur un "discours par procuration", *Le Blanc du Noir. Représentations de l'Europe et des Européens dans les littératures africaines*, ed. by Susanne Gehrmann and János Riesz (Münster: LIT, 2004), 59–77, 73. Actually, stories about Conny as a "black hero" had even spread across the Atlantic much earlier,

thanks to those slaves deported from the Gold Coast to the Caribbean during the early eighteenth century who gave birth to the so-called John Kanoe festivals; Eileen Southern, *The Music of Black Americans. A History* (New York: Norton, 1997), 138 f.

73. Wilhelm Henzen, *Grossfriedrichsburg. Ein deutsches Kolonialfestspiel in vier Aufzügen* (Essen-Ruhr: Baedecker, 1908), 45.
74. Henzen, 80. This scene is clearly inspired by the original account of von der Gröben, who was offered by the caboceers of Pokesu a 9-year-old "bride" (*Brandenburg Sources*, doc. 6, 52). But while the original von der Gröben neither confirmed nor denied any sexual intercourse with this girl (*Brandenburg Sources*, doc. 6, 86), leaving it to the readers' imagination, Henzen's von der Gröben did not trespass the border of interracial sex, which in the context of early twentieth-century racism had become ideologically stigmatized: so, after a moment of carnal weakness, the Prussian officer remembered his beloved girl in Germany and rejected the "niggerish" Dia.
75. Wilhelm Jensen, *Brandenburg'scher Pavillon hoch! Eine Geschichte aus Kurbrandenburgs Kolonialzeit* (Berlin: Felber, 1902), Chap. 2.
76. Jensen, 19, 38 and 60.
77. Jensen, 87.
78. Cf. their homepage http://traditionsverband.de, as well as the articles by Markus Felten, "Geschichte der Marine-Tradition", *Traditionsverband ehemaliger Schutz- und Überseetruppen. Mitteilungsblatt*, no. 83 (1998), 21–38; Wolfgang Reith, "'Seiner Churfürstlichen Durchlaucht Mohren'. Aus den Anfängen brandenburgischer Kolonialpolitik an der Küste Westafrikas", *Traditionsverband ehemaliger Schutz- und Überseetruppen. Mitteilungsblatt*, no. 96 (2001), 63–75. In 2011 the *Traditionsverband* had even an official "consultant" on "Brandenburg/Prussia in West Africa"; cf. the member list of this association (*Traditionsverband ehemaliger Schutz- und Überseetruppen. Mitgliederverzeichnis 2011—Stand 21.12.2010*), consulted at the Basler Afrika Bibliographien.
79. Cf., for example, Alexander Emmerich, *Die Geschichte der Deutschen in Afrika*, (Köln: Edition Fackelträger, 2013), Chap. 1. In this recent book, drawings from the late nineteenth century about the foundation of Grossfriedrichsburg—staging von der Gröben as a triumphant hero taking possession of Pokesu in front of submissive Africans—are presented by the author as objective illustrations of historical facts. These heavily manipulated images, elaborated in the context of nineteenth-century colonial culture, thus still influence contemporary German memories about the Brandenburg mercantile enterprise.
80. Van der Heyden, "Sklavenfestungen", 103. Cf. also the documentary *Deutsche Kolonien* (first episode*: Vom Entdecker zum Eroberer*) by Gisela

Graichen and Peter Prestel, produced in 2005 by the German public-service television broadcaster ZDF.

81. Ervedosa.
82. These quotations are taken from a speech given by the green politician Elvira Pichler at the inauguration ceremony of the renamed May-Ayim-Ufer; Elvira Pichler, "Rede zur Umbenennung des Gröbenufers", 27 February 2010, http://gruene-xhain.de/de/themen/rede-von-elvira-pichler-zur-umbenennung-grobenufer/ (28 February 2014). On such campaigns cf. Christian Kopp and Marius Krohn, "Blues in Schwarzweiss. Die Black Community im Widerstand gegen kolonial-rassistische Strassennamen in Berlin-Mitte", *Black Berlin. Die deutsche Metropole und ihre afrikanische Diaspora in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, ed. by Oumar Diallo and Joachim Zeller (Berlin: Metropol, 2013), 219–231. Generally speaking, in the last 15 years, there has been a growing effort, by both local activist groups and scholars, to submit colonial legacies in the public space to a critical debate; cf. *Branntwein, Bibeln und Bananen. Der deutsche Kolonialismus in Afrika. Eine Spurensuche in Hamburg*, ed. by Heiko Möhle (Hamburg: Libertäre Assoziation, 1999); *Kolonialmetropole Berlin. Eine Spurensuche*, ed. by Ulrich van der Heyden and Joachim Zeller (Berlin: Berlin Edition, 2002); *Köln und der deutsche Kolonialismus. Eine Spurensuche*, ed. by Marianne Bechhaus-Gerst and Anne-Kathrin Horstmann (Köln: Böhlau, 2013); as well as the websites of networks such as http://berlin-postkolonial.de, http://kopfwelten.org, http://freiburg-postkolonial.de, http://leipzig-postkolonial.de, http://schwarzweiss-hd.de and http://hamburg-postkolonial.de (28 February 2014).
83. This approach is expressed in a particularly explicit manner by Ulrich van der Heyden, who stresses the colonial and exploitative nature of Grossfriedrichsburg. On the one hand, he suggests that the Federal Republic of Germany should be considered as the moral successor of Brandenburg-Prussia and should assume its guilt connected to the Atlantic slave trade (Van der Heyden, "Sklavenfestungen", 106). On the other hand, he expresses some surprise about those local memories in Princes Town (Pokesu)—anchored in oral "narratives […], myths, dances and legends" (Van der Heyden, "Sklavenfestungen", 108)—recalling the Brandenburgers as "simple merchants", as "partners and allies" (van der Heyden 2005, 114) and thus diverging from his own point of view. This position is, however, not shared by all historians working on the BAC/BAAC. After the pioneering editorial work by Jones, allowing to appreciate the strong African agency *vis-à-vis* the BAC/BAAC, also Nagel and Klosa have explicitly distanced themselves from this colonial framing.

84. Significantly, the 2005 documentary on German colonialism—shot with the scholarly advices of the historian Horst Gründer—begins with the recurrent topos of the hoisting of the Brandenburg flag at Pokesu, presented as an "early prelude to Germany's short colonial history"; Graichen and Prestel, 1' 24''.
85. Ulrich van der Heyden, "Sklavenfestungen an der Küste Ghanas. Das Beispiel Grossfriedrichsburg. Ein Denkmal deutsch-afrikanischer Beziehungen", *Kommunikationsräume—Erinnerungsräume. Beiträge zur transkulturellen Begegnung in Afrika*, ed. by Winfried Speitkamp (München: Meidenbauer, 2005), 101–118.
86. On this concept cf. Jan Assmann, *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis. Schrift, Erinnerung und politische Identität in frühen Hochkulturen* (München: Beck) and Aleida Assmann, *Erinnerungsräume. Formen und Wandlungen des kulturellen Gedächtnisses* (München: Beck, 1999).
87. http://grossfriedrichsburg.de/princess-town/ (28 February 2014).
88. Klosa, 86; Dieter Haase, "Spendenaktion. Ein Sportplatz für Princess Town", *Die Volksstimme*, 1.06.2013, http://www.volksstimme.de/nachrichten/lokal/havelberg/1085002_Spendenaktion-Ein-Sportplatz-fuer-Princess-Town.html (28 February 2014).
89. Bea Lundt, "Introduction", *Germany and its West African Colonies. "Excavations" of German Colonialism in Post-Colonial Times,* ed. by Bea Lundt and Wazi Apoh (Münster: LIT, 2013), 9–25, 16.
90. On this topic see at least Edward M. Bruner, "Tourism in Ghana. The Representation of Slavery and the Return of the Black Diaspora", *American Anthropologist,* vol. 98, no. 2 (1996), 290–304; Theresa A. Singleton, "The Slave Trade Remembered on the Former Gold and Slave Coasts", *Slavery & Abolition*, vol. 20, no. 1 (1999), 150–169; Brempong Osei-Tutu, "Contested Monuments. African-Americans and the Commoditisation of Ghana's 'Slave Castles'", *African Re-Genesis. Confronting Social Issues in the African Diaspora,* ed. by Jay B. Haviser and Kevin C. MacDonald (Walnut Creek: Left Coast Press, 2006), 9–19; Bayo Holsey, *Routes of Remembrance. Refashioning the Slave Trade in Ghana* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008); Katharina Schramm, *African Homecoming. Pan-African Ideology and Contested Heritage* (Walnut Creek: Left Coast Press, 2010).
91. Information provided by the guide working at Grossfriedrichsburg in January 2012.
92. This impression is clearly underpinned by the guest books kept in Grossfriedrichsburg and at the lighthouse of Cape Three Points (consulted in January 2012). In nowadays, Grossfriedrichsburg functions as a guesthouse, as it had already been used during the British colonial time; cf. Kemner, 11. Another guest house in Princes Town is run by two Germans: http://yellow-rose.bplaced.net (28 February 2014).

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CHAPTER 3

'Far from My Native Land, and Far from You': Reimagining the British at Cape Coast Castle in the Nineteenth Century

Victoria Ellen Smith

The very stars are strangers, as I catch them
Athwart the shadowy sails that swell above;
I cannot hope that other eyes will watch them
At the same moment with a mutual love.
They shine not there, as here they are now shining;
The very hours are changed.—Ah, do ye sleep?
O'er each home pillow midnight is declining—
May some kind dream at least my image keep!
My friends, my absent friends!
Do you think of me, as I think of you?
Letitia Elizabeth Landon, Night at Sea (1838)

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Introduction

Cape Coast Castle stands on the Ghanaian coastline as a lasting reminder of its years as a fortified trading warehouse, British residence, slave hold and courthouse. The building occupies a rocky peninsula of approximately 3900 m^2 and is many times larger than the earliest European construction on the site: a small, wooden Portuguese trading lodge built in 1555.[1] From this time and for more than 100 years, tenancy of the Fante land passed through different hands, both African and European, before it was taken by the British in 1665 and retained for almost 300 years. The site at Oguaa was known to European merchants as Cabo Corso meaning 'short cape' in Portuguese. Through Anglicisation it was renamed Cape Coast and the structure upon it grew to be known as a Castle. From 1750 until the abolition of the slave trade in 1807, the building and all trade that passed through it was managed by the Company of Merchants; during the nineteenth century, it moved between merchant and crown control; and in 1874, it became the Gold Coast Colony's first seat of power, until the capital moved to Accra in 1877. Through independence in 1957 it became Ghanaian property, and since 1979 it has formed a significant structure of the World Heritage Site comprising all of Ghana's forts and castles.[2]

This chapter considers Cape Coast Castle during the nineteenth century through its British residents and those in Britain who played a part in its history: slave traders and abolitionists, merchants and missionaries, governors and politicians, scientists and writers. In doing so, it looks at how the British formed their identities in West Africa, projected their chosen reality back to Britain and wrote accounts of Cape Coast that were useable rather than necessarily truthful. It is a history of justificatory narratives, myths of romantic possibility and of how the British reimagined themselves as the gentlemen of empire.

In Edward Said's seminal text, *Orientalism*, he explores how early visitors to the Orient projected Western presuppositions of an unfamiliar culture onto their experience of it, which in turn they documented and transmitted back to the West where their written accounts confirmed expectations of distant lands. Said goes on to suggest that by the nineteenth century the myth of the Other was so engrained in British society that knowledge was no longer required in the creation of reality and imperial rhetoric dictated the imaginative space of the Orient by giving it 'shape, identity, definition with full recognition of its place in memory,

its importance to imperial strategy, and its "natural" role as an appendage to Europe'.[3] In creating this reality for a distant place and its people, Western travellers 'plotted Oriental history, character, and destiny for hundreds of years'.[4] This pattern can also be identified in West Africa. The concept of culture here is a comparative one. It is not a consideration of the unfamiliar for its own unique characteristics, but for its ability or inability to provide a familiar sense of Britishness. Andrew Porter supports this comparative dynamic by suggesting that culture was 'the ideas, values, social habits, and institutions which were felt to distinguish the British and their colonial subjects from each other, and which gave both their sense of identity, purpose and achievement'.[5] Therefore, Western travellers who wrote accounts of people and place are equally assessing their own identity, purpose and achievement. This chapter takes as its starting point the argument that for the British resident at Cape Coast seeking the familiar in the unfamiliar it was as much, if not more, about creating a reality for themselves as it was about defining that which they encountered.

If all history is, as Claude Lévi-Strauss argues, 'history for', then British written histories of Cape Coast have been histories for the literate, histories for the stranger, histories for the present. As readers encounter the transatlantic slave trade, nineteenth-century merchant communities or colonial rule via new historiography, the narrative is cast and recast in grades of self and other, ally and opposition, victor and loser, hero and villain. For these histories to be renegotiated so that established understanding may be modified, new narratives must provide a useable past that can function in the present and be accepted by a new generation of intended reader. James Walvin and Paul Edwards provide a relevant example.

> While it is true that the more grotesque views about the blacks came from the pens of the slavery lobby, there were many writers markedly anti-slavery, who nonetheless conveyed highly unfavourable impressions of blacks. This is not perhaps surprising when we consider how exposed educated society had been to the earlier and generally unfavourable literary stereotypes about the blacks.[6]

This demonstrates how a text intended to challenge existing beliefs will still conform to certain expectations as 'history for'—in this case history for the British during the early nineteenth century. Each narrative is of its time and ripe for reconsideration, including Walvin and Edwards work

of the 1980s. Furthermore, the example indicates that a preconceived image of an author is not necessarily sufficient information for interpreting authorial motive or the reality that they may create.

The perceived authority of the text has a long history of serving British agenda. At Cape Coast Castle, the ability to record events became synonymous with the control of knowledge as the written word provided verifiable evidence that could be used to discredit oral testimony. William St Clair's research into the archives pertaining to Cape Coast Castle confirms that,

> In a palaver between the men in the Castle and the men outside, that is, between members of a culture of written records and one dependent on orality and memory, the men with books were at an advantage.[7]

Memoirs, literature, historiography, archival documents, monuments and other texts provide representations of experience that can become sites of memory when they are validated through incorporation into collective memory. Despite, or perhaps because, text is seen as a 'privileged object', it is important to also incorporate other cultural forms such as buildings, oral testimonies, textiles, and cultural and bodily practices.[8] When perceived as a perspective amongst perspectives, a history amongst histories, each text can enable understanding. The concern is that an invented reality can, as Said argues, be 'passed on silently, without comment, from one text to another'.[9] If a text contains myth that is accepted as reality, each engagement with it and citation of it can increase its authority; an imaginative space can gain a metaphysical presence that supersedes direct observation; and a mythical memory can be read as being more real than truth. As such, the myths of Cape Coast that reached Britain in the nineteenth century, created preconceptions for those who would travel there, influenced the identity they assumed when in Cape Coast and, even when proven to be false, were often retransmitted to Britain as justificatory narratives. This is not intended as a history of actual British encounter at Cape Coast or of the role they played in Cape Coast's history. It is a study of the texts that the British created and adopted to shape themselves, and of the process that must be gone through to demythologise the realities presented by those texts.

This chapter is organised in four parts. Part 1 explores narratives of heroics and honour that enticed young British men to Cape Coast and gave them the tools to perceive of themselves when involved in the

slave trade. Part 2 is located in Britain in the period immediately after the abolition of the slave trade to consider how the triumph of abolition became the dominant memory of British activity in West Africa. Part 3 looks at how the image of West Africa that was projected to Britain began to entice professional men and women—merchants, scientists and missionaries—to travel to Cape Coast. Part 4 focuses on the English poet Letitia Elizabeth Landon's personal experience of living at Cape Coast Castle as described in her letters and poetry. Finally, the conclusion deals with the contributions of how the myths of the nineteenth century contributed to the imposition of British colonial rule.

Narratives of Heroics and Honour

Dominant narratives of the slaving era at Cape Coast Castle were of a flourishing sense of British national identity combined with a discreet discourse on trading activities. The mythology which surrounds the British collective memory of slavery has been caused by the creation of false heroes who provide an honourable history. As William St Clair has identified, justificatory narratives of national pride were created as part of the recruitment and seasoning of young officers into the African Service.[10] St Clair argues that during the slaving era, British residents of Cape Coast formed their identity based on gentlemanly heroics and honourable agency, which they projected both onto new recruits and back to colleagues and family at home. For young British men, life at Cape Coast was one of confinement within the Castle where they worked in blistering heat or thunderous rain and humidity levels as choking as the annual harmattan. Their health was constantly threatened by malaria, yellow fever and other diseases which took so many lives that the Gold Coast became known as the White Man's Grave. Those who survived were adopted into a British community of long-term residents known self-referentially as 'old coasters'. For them, 'identity was held together by intertwined strands of institutional silences, hypocrisies, and self-deception'.[11] Through their seniors, the young men learnt a euphemistic discourse that mirrored the way slavery was spoken of at home. The slave dungeons were rarely mentioned in correspondence and the men created their identity by conforming to precedence. They were encouraged to emplot their lives with the narratives of heroics and honour so as to carry a sense of pride in their work on behalf of Britain. They were taught to act out of patriotic commitment to an absent British culture that had

been central to their formative sense of identity. William St Clair suggests that the narratives not only instilled pride in representing Britain, but also encouraged an elevated sense of purpose that did not depend on them acknowledging that the slave trade was real and so was their involvement in it.

The first narrative—heroism—was 'of the British nation seen as a united community with all ranks of society sharing the burdens and the benefits, a nation that proclaimed its uniqueness with crowns, flags, and other national symbols'.[12] Living in a remote corner of the world, this sense of serving Britannia as part of an elite group suggests a romantic and patriotic emplotment dependent on constructing ones identity around a sense of Britishness. Embodied by the wearing of the scarlet British uniforms, St Clair argues that 'the ethos that they allegedly symbolised was part of the romance that drew many young men to their shivering early death'.[13] Therefore, heroism provided a useable and perversely romantic image of a united community belonging to the unique nation of Britain, whether one was situated at its core in Britain or its periphery in West Africa.

The second narrative—honour—was 'a story of talented individual entrepreneurs, often in later writings praised for "toughness" (a euphemism for criminality), gaining their just rewards' for carrying out tasks of national importance.[14] The young men were encouraged to see their work as a cornerstone of British commercial enterprise and yet their trading activities involved embezzlement, swearing false oaths and breaking anti-slavery laws. The honour of the narrative may be better articulated by John Wisehammer, a convict sent to the first Australian penal colony as portrayed in Timberlake Wertenbaker's *Our Country's Good*: 'True patriots all; for be it understood, We left our country for our country's good'.[15] This sense of external positioning within the British territories may also have rung true for the criminals, outcasts and misfits of British families who were sent to populate the Castle, although whether the justificatory narratives allowed for Wisehammer's sense of irony is difficult to ascertain. Regardless of wit, a reality was created within the small community of one hundred or so men living in the British forts and castles. Heroics and honour were celebrated so that patriotic and 'tough' young men would carry out tasks of national importance for their country's good.

Through his in-depth exploration of the British archives pertaining to Cape Coast Castle, St Clair's convictions are interpreted from documents

largely created by merchants, officers and council members that are biased towards a justification of their commercial activities, requests for changes in policy and the need for greater financial support. This written evidence holds value as eyewitness accounts of conduct within the Castle and the surrounding Fante settlement. St Clair described the documents as a unique collection:

> Composed without any thought that they would survive, unmediated by hindsight, and free of any wider agenda, these papers are, as historical documents, not only amazingly full and revealing but are also essentially different from all other writings on the slave trade, plentiful and informative though these are.[16]

Offering valuable insight into the cultural history of the Castle and communication between Cape Coast and London, the documents show that the narratives were adopted so convincingly into British identity at Cape Coast that they also manifested as fact in official despatches. Britain rarely made direct mention of slavery, and the reading public only wanted useable narratives of their fellow countrymen in overseas territories. Equally, despite the Company's purpose being the trade in slaves, the dungeons were rarely mentioned, the discourse is not explicit regarding slavery and a sense of gentlemanly heroics and honourable endeavour has prevailed. As a result, a mutually agreeable image of Cape Coast was created, one that did not ask the British at home to look too closely at what was taking place within the Castle's whitewashed walls.

The idea that Britain may have encouraged the distancing of truth is reasoned by the concept of a useable history. Slavery was the inconvenient truth for the sweet-toothed men and women of Britain, and, as will be discussed in Part 2, British history has, until recently, chosen to celebrate the abolitionists rather than recognising the British slave trading headquarters at Cape Coast and those who were victims to its purpose. Said purports that 'texts can create not only knowledge but also the very reality they appear to describe'. Therefore, the written documents were not only used to ensure victory in contemporary disputes (regardless of the factuality of their content), but they could also create reality as a written authority of life on the coast. As Britain did not converse openly about its slaving activities and wished to see its people as men and women of sensibility, it was convenient that recognition was not given to the dungeon's captives. This made it possible for Cape Coast and

other trading forts in West Africa to be viewed as distant communities of Britain,

> Transplanted to the palm-treed edges of the tropical ocean, wealthy, enterprising, and institutionally cruel, but asserting at every opportunity that they were members of a polite, civilised, enlightened European society in the age of sensibility.[17]

By presenting narratives of heroic and honourable gentlemen upholding British values in a distant land, it was possible to imagine an unfamiliar Cape Coast through its familiar elements to allow the authority of the text to go unquestioned and to entice more young men to sign up with the African Service.

Memories of Abolition

Vast bodies of works have been written about the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade and slavery and of actions taken to ensure that illegal trading and holding of men, women and children no longer takes place. It had been suggested that between 11 and 15 million people were forcibly removed from Africa into slavery between the late seventeenth and early nineteenth century. Scholars now argue that the numbers were considerably more. Of those transported, it has also been estimated that around 28% were sold to British ships and almost 16% were taken via the Gold Coast.[18] The Ghanaian archaeologist, James Kwesi Anquandah, has reported that in the early eighteenth century the British were exporting around 70,000 slaves per year from their headquarters at Cape Coast.[19] Despite these numbers, British collective memory has, until recently, populated this history not with victims but with abolitionist heroes. Furthermore, these heroes did not include former slaves such as Quobna Ottobah Cugoano who was born in the Fante village of Ajumako near Winneba, enslaved in a chain-gang in Grenada and, having gained his freedom in England, wrote and self-published *Thoughts and Sentiments on the Evil and Wicked Traffic of the Slavery and Commerce of the Human Species, humbly submitted to the inhabitants of Great Britain* (1787). As Vincent Carretta states:

> Cugoano raised the most overt and extended challenge to slavery ever made by a person of African descent. He was also the first English speaking

> African historian of slavery and the slave trade, and the first to criticize European imperialism in the Americas.[20]

Nor does British history sufficiently celebrate women such as the Quaker Elizabeth Heyrick who organised Leicester's sugar boycott and wrote the controversial pamphlet *Immediate not Gradual Abolition,* which she printed and distributed without the support of the Anti-Slavery Society because her argument opposed the Society's official position. It was Heyrick's pamphlet that reportedly convinced the Sheffield Female Society in 1827 to lead the call for immediate emancipation of slaves in the British colonies.

Dominant voices of the slave trading era and its abolition dictated British collective memory of slavery and influenced national understanding until the end of the British Empire. Locating victims within this history began through the second half of the twentieth century, but it was not until the 2007 bicentenary of the Act of Abolition that Britain's involvement in the transatlantic slave trade was reimagined more truthfully. International dialogues of reconsideration developed and new scholarly attention produced works such as Michael Jordan's *The Great Abolition Sham,* which is presented as a narrative of abolition 'as it really was, not as popular history has painted it'.[21] Texts such as this remember not only white, male abolitionists but also the unsung heroes of the abolitionist struggle and the Africans who were its victims. J.R. Oldfield reconsiders how public monuments in Britain remember the slave trade and argues that collective memory of slavery is encased in mythology.[22] Marika Sherwood argues that the majority of 'historians of British involvement in the trade in slaves and in slavery laud the Acts of 1807 and 1833… and do not ask the obvious question: were the Acts obeyed?'[23] And, Bernard Edwards states that his intention was not 'to rewrite history, but to clear away the fog of accusations and recriminations that surround the slave trade'.[24] It is through works such as these that major consideration has been given to a British history of abolition, which necessarily also calls for a reimagining of the British trading headquarters on the Gold Coast.

J.R. Oldfield's text reconsiders the question of who the heroes of the British abolition campaign were. He supports the theory that a 'key choice made in the case of transatlantic slavery was to memorialise not the victims (that is, black slaves) but rather their "friends" and "liberators" (that is, white abolitionists)'.[25] As such, slavery is viewed through

the moral triumph of abolition. In exploring this conscious construction of historical memory, Oldfield studies the case of Thomas Clarkson and William Wilberforce. Clarkson founded the London Committee of the Society for Effecting the Abolition of the Slave Trade and became a driving force in gathering evidence for the parliamentary campaign by touring the country and lobbying communities for their support. Meanwhile, Wilberforce was an independent MP for Hull who joined the London Committee and worked for many years as the voice of the abolition campaign in the House of Commons where he saw the 1807 Act of Abolition through parliament despite influential objection. Oldfield argues that the literature that remembers their relative achievements as abolitionists celebrates Wilberforce as *the Liberator* whilst Clarkson has been marginalised as a lesser hero. He assigns cause to how the British reading public received Clarkson's autobiography and Wilberforce's biography.

Immediately after the passing of the act to abolish the slave trade, Clarkson published his autobiography, *History of the Rise, Progress and Accomplishment of the Abolition of the Slave Trade by the British Parliament* (1808). This was criticised by Wilberforce's sons who argued that their father was portrayed as the political figurehead of Clarkson's philanthropic endeavours. After Wilberforce's death in 1833, his sons responded with a five volume counter-narrative to position their father as the protagonist. Oldfield states that *The Life of William Wilberforce. By His Sons, Robert Isaac Wilberforce and Samuel Wilberforce* (1838) became 'the standard source for all subsequent biographies of Wilberforce, but it also helped to shape perceptions of Clarkson'.[26] As a result, the abolitionists were positioned as rivals with Wilberforce being promoted to the status of national hero. To illustrate the different locations that they held in British collective memory, Oldfield references the memorial to Wilberforce that was commissioned for Westminster Abbey in 1840 and compares it to the fact that Clarkson was not memorialised in British history until more than 150 years later when a monument to him was unveiled in 1996. Oldfield concludes that a national desire for heroes can provide a past which functions in the present. He also emphasises the need to engage in a balanced understanding of history, one which recognises a noble history of abolition, includes complicity with inhumanity for economic gain and identifies the victims of slavery.

Marika Sherwood's text is a written site of memory for the victims of slavery. She echoes Toni Morrison's dedication of *Beloved* to 'sixty

million and more' by stating that her work is in memoriam for 'the nameless ones'. In doing so, she encourages the reader to engage with her work of mourning for those whose spectres cannot be conjured by name. Sherwood argues that *after* the abolition of the trade an estimated further 16 million people were transported from Africa and that slaves were held in British territories after the emancipation process was completed. In doing so, she remembers those who were not only nameless but also denied recognition even as a number in the merchant's log. Sherwood's text asks that British histories of slavery recognise that once anti-slavery laws were passed they were not fully observed. For example, she states that 80% of Africans reaching Brazil in 1821 were transported on British ships.[27] Building ships for human cargo was illegal in Britain and yet the 1842 *Annual Report* mentions ships being built and prepared for the slave trade in British harbours.[28] Furthermore, as discussed by Sherwood and expanded below, in the British colonies of the Gold Coast and Nigeria, even the law did not fully address slavery until well into the twentieth century.

Slave holding by the British old coasters continued throughout the nineteenth century and was known to continue in the Gold Coast well into the colonial period. The Gold Coast's last Act of Abolition was passed in 1928 following a 19-page memorandum about the continuation of slavery published in October 1927 by the Assistant Secretary for Native Affairs.[29] Despite the Ordinance declaring free all persons in or entering the Gold Coast and British Togoland, evidence suggests that the British were aware that domestic slavery continued to exist even after 1928. For example, in 1939, a draft despatch to the Secretary of State for the Colonies documents the voice of an unnamed British colonial administrator making reference to the illegal continuation of slavery on the Gold Coast:

> The Cocoa Commission have let a very troublesome cat out of the bag which we have kept firmly tied up for a long time. The evidence given by the artless farmer seems to bear out Mr Quashie Idun's statement, quoted in (M57), that "pledging" is a common offence in this colony. It is difficult to see how we can devise a reply that will satisfy the two organizations whose letters are enclosed with (D64), for they are unlikely to agree that we are justified in sitting back and waiting for the practice of domestic slavery to "die a natural death". They would no doubt contend that it is our duty to inaugurate forthwith a holy crusade against any vestiges of slavery (harmless though they may be) which remain in the Gold Coast.[30]

'This is "pawning", a different thing, but in the same category. Need we worry about those busybodies?' adds a hand-written note in the margin. In Nigeria, '"pawning" was made illegal in 1938, [but] court prosecutions were noted as late as 1949'.[31] Evidence such as this goes beyond the established history of the British in West Africa and of the abolition of slavery to offer both richly personal experiences and something of the failure of abolition laws. In doing so, it demonstrates how reality is distorted by the passage of time; the multiplicity and subjectivity of experience and its memory; and the level of contradiction that occurs in archival evidence to be variously interpreted as history.

Whilst Sherwood and others were reimagining a British history of slavery that goes beyond the triumph of abolition to incorporate nameless and forgotten victims, Bernard Edwards was arguing that the truly forgotten victims are white seamen. Statistically, Edwards states that between 1808 and 1898 an average of 5% of the Royal Navy's African Squadron died in the Gulf of Guinea whilst policing the waters for pirate slave ships. 'Another 10% were invalided home, badly injured or too sick to survive in Africa any longer'.[32] More than half of Edwards' chapters begin with inscriptions to the seamen that appear on headstones and tablets at churches across Britain, as well as one in a British hospital and another in Tanzania. By transferring this written practice from stone to printed text, Edwards has maintained the established literary tradition of British history and allowed the seamen to possess additional space within collective memory. In doing so, he has further disseminated the headstones as sites of mourning and encouraged their incorporation into societal understanding of the abolition process on the West African coast. For example, the following memorial appears at St. Mary of the Virgin Church, Nottingham:

> Sacred to the Memory of Lieutenant James Still R. N. who in the 22nd year of his age, fell victim to the ravages of Yellow Fever, on board His Majesty's Ship, The Pheasant, while stationed off Sierra Leone, on the 12th October 1821. For four successive years he had been employed in the fatal service of enforcing obedience to the sacred Law, which to the honour of his Country and in the spirit of Christian Love, forbade the traffic in human blood.[33]

In many ways, this young man's life and death can be paralleled with that of new recruits to the African Service. Lieutenant James Still is

positioned as both 'victim' and hero in a narrative that presents his dealings with the slave trade as being for his country's good. However, his sacrifice was not for the honour of British financial gain from the trade, but for the honour of preventing others from claiming the same once Britain had proudly declared its intolerance to the trade that had made the nation wealthy.

Oldfield concludes his reconsideration of British abolitionist rhetoric by suggesting that the '"truth" or validity of such "histories" is not at issue here. Rather, historical narratives should be understood as part of an ongoing process of re-writing and revising the past in order to meet the demands of the present'.[34] As such, it is argued that narratives are accepted into collective memory if they offer society a useable history and may be discredited over time, as has happened to earlier representations, if a convincing alternative is presented. Written history is, then, as subjective and unstable as oral history. A reimagining of collective memory should not be limited to written sources, but should be part of a global discussion. It is then possible to access new historical understanding of the British at Cape Coast despite our innate tendency to create meaning based on a recognised lexicon of terms and an established image of the past.

Myths of Romantic Possibility

The beginning of the nineteenth century in Cape Coast was characterised by naval battles in the oceanic roads and the Asante-Fante wars. A major cause of the land wars was the Asante claim to sovereignty over the Fante based on their historic unity as people of the Akan. As T.C. McCaskie argues this was 'a claim that struck at the very root of Britons' construction of their own role, image, and prestige'.[35] In insisting that the status of landlord and advantages of direct trade with the British should be theirs, the Asante travelled 200 miles south to invade the Fante states causing the Fante to turn to the British for protection. Each time one of the Akan nations claimed victory over the other they also took possession of the Notes of ownership for the land on which Cape Coast Castle stands, making the British their paying tenants. The British sent peace missions to Kumasi in 1817 and 1820 but these had limited success.[36] A victory came in 1827 for the Fante and their allies: the British, Danish, Denkyera, Akyem and Akwamu. Peace was formerly agreed on 10th December with the signing of a tripartite treaty with the

British. In thanks for their allegiance, the Fante gave the Notes to their tenants of 162 years. This changed the dynamic between the British and their Fante hosts, arguably meaning that the British no longer depended on the Fante for their existence at Cape Coast.

Despite strengthening their position, the British did not experience significant improvements in the legitimate goods trade. Successive Governors blundered their way through terms with little understanding of unfamiliar cultures, and the 1820s was characterised by poor management of coastal affairs and great losses in war. As a result, the Crown decided to abandon the Gold Coast, but the old coasters voiced their opposition as they continued to see avenues for profit in peaceful trade. Unlike the slaving era when the British were confined to the Castle, British men in the nineteenth century finished work at the Castle and travelled to town where Fante wives, children and domestic slaves populated their European-style homes. The precedent set during the slave trading era was that governors acted in favour of what they believed to be their, the British, the Castle and Cape Coast's best interests with little regard for London. Following this, the merchant old coasters rarely adopted British anti-slavery sensibilities. Instead, they enabled the Anglo-Fante community to become an autonomous slave-owning society governed by Fante customary law. As Andrew Porter suggests, the acquisition of African territories was 'unplanned and opportunistic'.[37] At Cape Coast, this depended on the resident merchants' commitment to being part of a British overseas community where they could invent themselves without the constraints of expectation from home. Had they not valued their West African identities, they would not have campaigned to remain and both British and Ghanaian history would have developed quite differently.

The British settlement at Cape Coast passed into merchant hands once again when the Committee of Merchants was formed in 1828 and Captain George Maclean arrived as President of the Committee's Council of Merchants in 1830. Maclean was not a seasoned coaster and yet he was soon influential in Cape Coast society where he became popular with the Fante by learning their language, developing an understanding of custom and further stabilising the peace process through the 1831 treaty with the Asante which lasted until 1863. He was initially praised in London for increasing the legitimate export trade and limiting the practice of human sacrifice amongst the Fante. However, British attitudes changed as rumours reached the Colonial Office and members of the public that

Maclean was aiding and abetting the slave trade. This accusation resulted in the British government sending Dr Richard Robert Madden as Commissioner of Inquiry to investigate in 1841. According to Madden's *Report on the Gold Coast and its Dependencies* (1842), there were twelve British merchants, six missionaries and twelve other white residents in Cape Coast living amongst five thousand Fante.[38] Presiding over them was Maclean, who was found in possession of and allowing other British subjects to own domestic slaves. Furthermore, despite being instructed in 1830 to submit all criminal cases to the courts in Sierra Leone, Maclean served as judge and jury in British and Fante cases by employing a dual-judicial system of his own making.[39] His rulings returned runaway slaves to their owners, sold the slaves of the deceased to settle the debts of their estates and sanctioned floggings, unlawful imprisonment and remorseless pawning. Maclean is located in Fante collective memory as the founder of a modern judiciary system, deserving the trust of those who sought his council and mourned by both Fante and Asante upon his death in 1847.[40] In contrast, British history remembers a merchant who invented himself as Governor, acted far beyond his position and jurisdiction, and conducted a benign dictatorship from Cape Coast Castle.

The British at Cape Coast vehemently defended Maclean by arguing that British law was not suitable in indigenous affairs, that the chiefs' punishments were far less merciful and that it was because the Fante people came to him that Maclean heard their palavers. They also defended their right to live by Fante custom by stating that it was compatible with their reality and that of their Anglo-Fante households. Meanwhile, Madden concluded that 'the old colonial notions of uncontrolled authority had taken too deep root in this British settlement to be easily eradicated'.[41] He had found Maclean perhaps as Marlow may have discovered Kurtz or Klobb encountered Voulet.[42] The fort was not hidden in the heart of the jungle, nor was Madden met by a show of hostile arms. Rather Cape Coast Castle stood, as it still stands, bold and visible from sea and land with its thick-set lime-white walls and rows of black cannons set like teeth in a gentlemanly smile. But as Kurtz appeared to have appointed himself king and Voulet was a self-confessed chief, so Maclean, the President of the Council, invented himself as Governor of a Colony. Madden was outraged that Maclean had been allowed to exercise extraordinary judicial powers far beyond the Castle walls that designated British jurisdiction and called for Maclean's removal from Cape Coast. Madden may not have entered the African settlement as Marlow

or Klobb armed with Maclean's letter of dismissal or an order to remove him to Europe, but he was sent to discover whether there were grounds for such action. As a result of his report and further findings, control was taken from the old coasters and the crown re-established possession of all British territories in the region. Although Maclean was removed from post his wealth of knowledge about the Fante enabled him to stay in Cape Coast as Judicial Assessor. Under Governor Hill, he facilitated the signing of the Bond of 1844 that made the Fante states a British protectorate and which some scholars—notably the Gold Coast lawyer and politician J.B. Danquah—believe to have been the first step towards colonial rule.

It is evident that the reality old coasters created for themselves were very different from that which they presented back to Britain in memoirs, letters and official documents. As historians such as Margaret Priestley, John Parker and David Cannadine have variously argued, British perception of the growing Empire was 'first and foremost a class act where individual social ordering often took precedence over collective racial othering'.[43] The anti-slavery campaign convinced the British of a common humanity with black men and women living *in* Britain. Furthermore, the distant West African also began to be reimagined *from* Britain. As a result, the next generation of white men and women imagined themselves as Cape Coast's new aristocracy who would gain riches by trading luxury goods for gold with Africans. Those inspired by this new romantic possibility were not only merchants, but also missionaries, scientists and writers who mapped out their destinies at Cape Coast Castle.

Some who came continued the British trend of sending overseas their *difficult* family member—a euphemism for a number of embarrassments, failures or misdemeanours. Others chose to follow their fathers to Cape Coast and trade on the family name to build new lives in a distant land, as those before them were perceived as having done. For example, the first Swanzy to arrive from Ireland in 1789 was 'a fairly typical example of the penniless youth of middle-class education'.[44] An ambitious young man, James Swanzy, became surgeon to the African Company and, by the nineteenth century, his success had inspired two of his brothers and his four sons to follow him to Cape Coast. His sons married influential women, such as Ewuraba Ketsi (or Catherine Swanzy) who inherited her mother's royal stool and became the wealthiest woman in Cape Coast during the mid-nineteenth century. The sons engaged in successful trade,

with the youngest, Francis and Andrew, establishing the famous trading company F. & A. Swanzy Ltd.[45] By the time Francis and Catherine's sons moved to England, they were heirs to the family business with a wealth in shares, gold and land that spoke of Cape Coast as the land of opportunity.

Whilst the Swanzy story is one of success, others suffered worse fates in following romantic possibility to Cape Coast. Botanist and writer Sarah Lee followed her first husband, Thomas Edward Bowdich, to Cape Coast after he was appointed Writer with the Company of Merchants. Arriving in 1815, Bowdich was greeted by his uncle, John Hope Smith, who would become Governor at Cape Coast Castle the following year. Smith had provided Bowdich with an opportunity to leave his father's Bristol-based hat manufacturing business, Bowdich, Son and Luce. Accompanying her husband gave Lee—who was then Mrs. Sarah Bowdich—an opportunity to further her career as a botanist. In this sense, possibility became certainty as 18 months in Africa established her as the first European woman to collect plants systematically in tropical West Africa.[46] However, Lee's story is also one of tragedy. Her young daughter died of fever within a year of arriving at Cape Coast, and when returning to West Africa in 1824 her husband also died. In 1826, she married Robert Lee, but having established herself professionally as Sarah Bowdich, it was not until 1829 that she changed her name. In 1856, she published *Sir Thomas; or, the Adventures of a Cornish Baronet in North-Western Africa* as Sarah Lee. When read with historical knowledge of the British at Cape Coast during the nineteenth century, it may be argued that Lee borrowed both character and event from history to give her fiction the possibility of truth. More specifically, the parallels that unfold between the tragedy of Sir Thomas in Cape Coast and Lee's own experience suggest that she mapped personal trauma onto her characters' lives.

Lee's novel of Cape Coast opens with a preface that instils her fiction with the authority of direct experience. She narrates that whilst walking in Cape Coast with her uncle, Governor Smith, they came across a folly. In answer to her question of how the ruins came to be, Smith is said to have explained that

> a Sir Thomas somebody, for even his name was forgotten, had come some years before his time to Cape Coast, and was, with his servants and four-footed animals, swept away by the unsparing climate. Nothing more was

> known of him; but a tradition still existed in the minds of the present generation, that he had been an outlaw, and had come to that country in utter ignorance of its climate and inhabitants, and with an exaggerated idea of its freedom and resources.[47]

From these beginnings, Lee's novel follows the story of a Cornish Baronet who embodies a history of 'indebted and scandal-blighted aristocrats shipped off and out of the way'.[48] Upon the death of his wife and in fear of financial ruin, Sir Thomas Fiztosbourne takes his children to begin a new life at Cape Coast where he believes they will be answerable to no one and able to make their own laws. In the novel, the folly of Lee's preface is built as the family's home. Sir Thomas refuses to pay tribute to the Fante for the land as he believes that the British are superior to them, but trouble is averted by the Governor who abides by custom and secretly pays. Disillusionment sets in as those who travelled with him from England began to die in rapid succession: servants, livestock and his son. Finally, as Sir Thomas dies of fever, his daughter regains her health, inherits the family estate and returns to Cornwall with her new husband, the Governor. Somehow, despite representing the process of disillusionment that history testifies to, Lee manages to keep the myth of romantic possibility alive by providing Sir Thomas's daughter, and the novel as a whole, with a happy ending.

The history of early missionaries in Cape Coast also speaks to the myth of romantic possibility and to the mortality of man. When the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society heard that the Castle school's Bible classes were capturing the interest of the children of wealthy Fante traders, chiefs and old coasters, they perceived of an opportunity and encouraged missionaries to travel to Cape Coast. The 1830s saw Rev. and Mrs. Dunwell, Rev. and Mrs. Wrigley, and Rev. and Mrs. Harrop arrive with a romanticised image of the possibility of conversion. They died in rapid succession and were buried under the pulpit of the new Wesleyan Chapel. It was not until the 'Fourth Missionary', Thomas Birch Freeman, arrived that greater impact was had. Born in England to a British mother and African father, Freeman reached Cape Coast with his English wife, Elizabeth Boot, in 1838. The *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* describes Freeman as being adept at developing relationships with African rulers and remembers him as 'one of the most successful Christian missionaries of his age'.[49] Within a year he had baptised more than three hundred people, conducted nearly forty marriages

and buried Elizabeth. Freeman's second wife Lucinda Cowan also died, this time whilst pregnant. It was not until he married the Fante woman Rebecca Morgan that he fathered his first born, Thomas Birch Freeman Jnr., and found companionship that lasted until his death in West Africa in 1890. Freeman's memoirs of his missions to Kumasi in 1839 and 1841 and other travels within West Africa in 1842 were first published in the *Wesleyan Missionary Notices* (no. 13, n.s., January 1840; no. 47, n.s, Nov. 1842). These resulted in further funding and instilled in his fellow missionaries the romantic possibility of converting more of the Fante people. Despite the devastating mortality rate amongst the British at Cape Coast, writing such as Freeman's was evidently able to project an image of life that was sufficiently romantic to maintain the myth and attract the British to West Africa.

The Letters of Letty Landon

In 1895, the Victorian explorer Mary Kingsley reached Cape Coast as an unaccompanied female and commented that it took 'some mental effort to grasp the fact that Cape Coast has been in European hands for centuries'.[50] Until then, British conventions of womanhood had not allowed daughters, wives and mothers to embark on voyages to distant lands. From the beginning of the nineteenth century, it had, however, become possible for women to travel to West Africa when accompanying their husbands, as illustrated by Sarah Lee and the wives of missionaries. This opportunity also became available to the English poet and novelist, Letitia Elizabeth Landon (better known as L.E.L.). Landon was a popular figure in London's literary society, particularly for her contributions to and editorial work on publications such as the *Literary Gazette* and *Fisher's Drawing Room Scrap Book*. In addition, various claims have been made about her private life and the lovers she took, such as the *Literary Gazette* editor William Jerdan. However, having met George Maclean in 1836 at the home of their mutual friend and merchant, Matthew Forster, she chose to abandon her life for the romantic possibility of married life with a Scottish Captain in a British Castle on West Africa's palm-lined shores. As the trail of evidence in her poems and letters testify, Landon would soon become disillusioned as her preconceived image of life within the Anglo-Fante community at Cape Coast was replaced by feelings of loneliness, ostracism and betrayal.

According to her biographer, F.J. Sypher, Landon was so impressed by Maclean's reputation as a courageous man who dealt with unruly African chiefs involved in the slave trade, human sacrifice and corruption that she arrived at Forster's party wearing a sash of Maclean tartan 'resolved on thus complimenting the hero'.[51] Maclean's biographer, G.E. Metcalfe, suggests that whilst Landon's freedom with male companions may have damaged her reputation in polite society it also attracted Maclean as it enabled her to talk confidently with him about life in Africa. Maclean was sufficiently attracted to Landon to propose marriage shortly after their initial meeting. Landon immediately accepted and then Maclean wrote to Forster cursing his haste.

> I have had an opportunity of reflecting more seriously upon various matters to which I before paid perhaps but too little attention. What the devil I am *now* to do is another matter. I suppose, as you say, that I must pay the penalty of my own folly and precipitations, and marry the girl.[52]

Despite his concern, Maclean took Forster's advice and married Landon on 7th June, 1838. Following a swift tour of farewells with her family and friends from London's thriving literary society Landon wrote, 'I am hurried out of my life'.[53] On 5th July they set sail to his life in West Africa. The archives do not reveal the exact 'matters' Maclean had given 'too little attention' to, but it has been purported that his 'acknowledged wench' was Catherine Bannerman.[54] Furthermore, Fante oral history supports that they shared his private quarters at the castle with at least one child, Ellen. Madden suggests that Catherine Bannerman was 'a half sister, I think, of a man of colour, of respectability, living in Accra, (a Mr. Bannerman)'.[55] Catherine Bannerman's association with the British would have been accompanied by the freedom of belonging and the support of a matrilineal social structure. Landon, on the other hand, was soon to be confined within the Castle and the social expectations of being a British wife.

It was around 2 o'clock in the morning of 15th August when the new Mr. and Mrs. Maclean's vessel anchored near Cape Coast. This was the moment in which the life that Maclean had presented in Britain and the one he actually lived in West Africa were to collide. He risked a canoe ride at that dangerous hour across the turbulent roads to the Castle having insisted that his wife stay behind to be brought ashore once day had dawned. As she waited, Landon wrote the poem 'Night at Sea'. It is in the tenth stanza that Landon breaks convention and replaces the previous

refrain of 'My friends, my absent friends! Do you think of me, as I think of you?' with 'Far from my native land, and far from you'. At the time of writing, she was distanced from her friends and had not yet come into contact with the residents of Cape Coast. With the ocean separating her from her past and the night from her future, the poem and its author are suspended between one world and the next. Situated as such, everything appears unfamiliar and in opposition to her former reality. This is emphasised by the idea that she is not even kept company by a familiar sky for the 'very stars are strangers'. As a whole, the poem suggests that Landon's process of disillusionment began during that final night at sea.

Imagining the wonders of travel and the unknown world of the Other was quickly replaced by Landon's longing for the familiarity of home. As Jerome McGann and Daniel Riess suggest, the fate of the poet was tragically similar to that of the heroines who had travelled the world in her imagination. 'Landon's poetry and its related illustrations play out tales of disastered love across a world-map of exotic places'.[56] The reality of Landon's life in a distant land was not as she had imagined it when surrounded by her friends at home and on the morning of 15th October, exactly 2 months after she arrived at Cape Coast Castle, her body was discovered in her room. Landon was buried in the Castle's courtyard as the tropical rain poured. The old coaster Brodie Cruickshank was the only mourner and so his 'eyes were the last to rest upon those rigid features so recently beaming with all the animating glow of a fine intelligence'.[57] No post-mortem was conducted. The official verdict was death by accidental overdose of prussic acid, which Landon possessed for medical reasons. Today, tour guides memorialise her time at Cape Coast Castle by gathering visitors around her grave to hear the following lines: 'It was alleged that because she suspected the husband was having an extra marital affair with a black mistress in town, as they used to do, she took an overdose of her medicine and committed suicide'.[58] On the morning of her death, Landon had penned a letter to her friend, Marie Fagan. It speaks of life far from her native land and from her confidant, but gives no firm indication as to whether the overdose was accidental or intended. Rumour soon reached Britain that Landon had been murdered by her husband's mistress. This elevated her death and the distant land in which it took place to mythical status and further shaped British perceptions of Cape Coast.

Landon's letters home suggest that her time at Cape Coast was overwhelmed by feelings of loneliness as the 'solitude is absolute'.[59]

Dismissed from her husband's chambers at 7 a.m., she would write her poetry and letters, wander the Castle's bastions or busy herself instructing domestic workers. At 7 p.m., Maclean closed his court and ate dinner with his wife. As Landon explains, 'when that is over, he plays the violin until ten o'clock, when I go to bed'.[60] It seems no wonder that she lamented her absent friends and questioned the actions of the man she had followed to his adopted land. On 27th September, she wrote to her brother, Whittington:

> Now he gave me not one real idea of what I was coming to – half the time bestowed in fancying unreal horrors, would have made me mistress of all I needed to know. I do not know what Scotch girls may do, but I am quite sure any English girl would be puzzled.[61]

After a month she had come to realise that life at Cape Coast was neither the place she had imagined when reading and writing travellers' tales, nor was it the reality that Maclean presented to her when they were courting. In the same letter to Whittington, she gave substance to rumours of Maclean's continued relationship with Catherine Bannerman: 'I can scarcely make even you understand how perfectly ludicrous the idea of jealousy of a native woman really is'.[62] It is her need to confide in her brother and to dismiss feelings of jealousy as irrational that betrays the truth of Landon's new life—far from her native land and far from her brother.

Collectively, Landon's letters demonstrate the effort she made to project a positive image of a life she had set sail for. In attempting to maintain this myth, she romanticised her situation as 'enact[ing] the part of a feminine Robinson Crusoe', whilst, in truth, only embodying the solitude of Defoe's character.[63] Furthermore, Landon often made efforts to present Maclean in a positive light. She wrote about how fond the Fante were of his council and the civilised splendour of his library,

> fitted up with bookcases of African mahogany, and portraits of distinguished authors; I, however, never approached it without due preparation and humility, so crowded is it with scientific instruments, telescopes, chronometers, barometers, gasometers, &c., none of which may be touched by hands profane.[64]

As this suggests, Landon's was a thin veneer of positivity in which she praised the ability of old coasters to make that which was unfamiliar

to her something familiar to them. In other words, she praised their 'domestication of the exotic', which David Cannadine presents as a contributing factor to the imperial impulse of men seeking to become gentlemen by restructuring social hierarchy and judging themselves as the elite.[65] To her brother, Landon wrote candidly of Maclean's efforts to lower her self-esteem. 'He says he will never cease correcting me until he has broken my spirit', she wrote shortly before her death, 'and complains of my temper, which you know was never, even under heavy trials, bad'.[66] Yet to most, her husband was characterised by an 'enthusiastic devotion to his duties', whilst her life was romanticised through popular fiction of the exotic, if not as a 'Robinson Crusoe-ish' solitude then 'like living in Arabian Nights'.[67]

Landon may have undergone a personal reimagining of the British at Cape Coast Castle, but she did little to encourage readers of her poetry or letters to significantly remap the history, character, and destiny of the Anglo-Fante community beyond it being distant and unfamiliar. Instead, she attempted to divert her reader's attention by presenting the castle as 'a very noble building, and all the rooms large and cool, while some would be pretty even in England'.[68] In doing so, she followed the tradition established by men of the African Service in denying the presence of the Castle's lower floors with its soldiers' barracks, condemned cell and slave dungeon. She may not have reshaped her identity, purpose and achievement to validate the old coasters' reality, but equally it is evident that disillusionment is not limited to the hindsight of historical study. Having romanticised her life as Mrs. Maclean in a British community of brave men, Landon found herself ever the outsider in a closed-community where the myths of honour, heroics and romantic possibility created some and destroyed others. For the British who survived at Cape Coast, their justificatory narratives began by supporting Fante allies whom they did not abandon when their government wanted to withdraw; they were motivated by Gold, Glory and God; and found a final impulse in imperialism.[69]

Conclusion: More Real Than Truth

This chapter began by discussing how the British wrote about the slave trade in the records of the time and how they projected an image of themselves from West Africa back to Britain. Many were 'paupers, social misfits and political malcontents' who were adopted into the community

of long-term European residents.[70] The old coasters taught the new recruits how to create an identity that only recognised the slave trade euphemistically, as would be acceptable at home. I then discussed how Britain—a major slave-trading and slave-holding nation—was recast as a philanthropic nation of abolitionist heroes whose memory took precedence over the mourning of victims until reconsideration was brought about by the 200th anniversary of the British abolition of the slave trade. In looking at the nineteenth-century post-slave trade generation, I have explored the myth of romantic possibility as a catalyst in the formation of British identity in the Gold Coast and the reality that they projected back to Britain. This was extended in the study of Letitia Elizabeth Landon's portrayal of how the myth that led her to the Gold Coast turned to disillusionment and took her to the grave. The conclusion will now argue that the myths of honour, heroics and romanticised possibility contributed to the imposition of colonial rule by establishing a British culture of falsely celebrating individual and national contributions to Cape Coast and enabling white men to elevate themselves to the status of ruling class.

Mark Freeman suggests that 'the *history* one tells, via *memory*, assumes the form of a *narrative* of the past that charts the trajectory of how one's self came to be'.[71] Narratives of the British at Cape Coast Castle went virtually unquestioned in British history for hundreds of years as *useable* rather than necessarily truthful or complete tales of the course taken by a people and their empire. Myths have been incorporated into British national identity and allowed to create a reality that prevented 'other' histories—particularly those passed down orally through generations in West Africa—from receiving validity. As each generation encounters its history, established collective memory is employed to consider new evidence and reimagine the past in terms of the present. Due to the authority of the written word, historiography is less able to be gradually reimagined than oral tradition. Instead, it must be usurped with a significant counter-narrative. Despite the established authority of the text, Edward Said's 'argument is that history is made by men and women, just as it can also be unmade and re-written'.[72] It has been the aim of this chapter to evidence the subjectivity of historical understanding where authorial motive drove the reality that was projected from Britain's perceived periphery to its core. It takes increasingly universal histories and a wide range of source material to effectively credit or discredit a long-standing British narrative. In the present, this is always possible, but new histories of Cape Coast and beyond *must* renegotiate collective

understanding; provide new written sites of memory; and redress the dominance of the British narrative.

By the time the act of slave emancipation was passed in 1833, the British at home had reimagined their fellow countrymen overseas. The residents of Cape Coast Castle were no longer misfits, better off far away handling the inconvenient truth of slave trading than causing their families embarrassment at home. They had been recast as courageous men who dealt with unruly African chiefs, prevented slavery and spread the word of the gospel. Narratives of Gold, Glory and God reframed the realities they projected back to Britain and repopulated fortified trading warehouses with the sons and daughters of the slave trading generation who arrived at Cape Coast brimming with a sense of romantic possibility. They were soon confronted with the unfamiliar cultures of the coast, the foreboding forest from which the Asante armies emerged, and the constant threat of disease. For those who survived and committed to the Anglo-Fante community, being British at Cape Coast involved a sense of autonomy from British governance; consanguine and camaraderie connection with old coasters; and, Fante chiefs and an educated elite with whom to trade, marry and have children. This Anglo-Fante community was built on 'a relative absence of racial or religious superiority' and would close ranks when exposed through the presence of outsiders.[73]

By the latter part of the nineteenth century, personal relationships—particularly those with West African women—were widely considered in Britain to be the most embarrassing aspect of colonial history.[74] Meanwhile, West African history, character and destiny continued to be remapped and conveyed to Britain in ways that justified further presence of British men and women, and, crucially, led to Cape Coast becoming the first capital of the Gold Coast Colony in 1874. As the British Empire reached West Africa, the history of the British at Cape Coast entered its final chapter of the nineteenth century: the establishment of colonial rule. This became possible, in part, because of how the British had invented themselves at Cape Coast and what they had chosen to project back to Britain. In Britain, the expansion of Empire fitted the dominant image of Imperial Britannia and an accepted narrative of the British overseas. The final myth of the British in the nineteenth century was of superiority, one which sought to 'turn the whites into a convincing ruling class', create the gentlemen of empire and secure colonial rule.[75] Cape Coast Castle stands where it always has been, on a rocky outcrop

of Fante land; but perceptions of its former inhabitants and understanding of its history are changing as established truths are demythologised through the extension of knowledge, diversity of evidence and interdisciplinary perspectives.

Notes

1. Kwesi James Anquandah, 'Cape Coast Castle – Cape Coast', *Castles and Forts of Ghana* (Accra: Ghana Museum and Monuments Board, 1999), 46–50.
2. See www.whc.unesco.org/en/list/34 for more information on Ghana's World Heritage Sites.
3. Edward Said, *Orientalism* (Penguin: London, 2003), 35.
4. Said, 95.
5. Andrew Porter, 'Introduction: Britain and the Empire in the Nineteenth Century', *The Oxford History of the British Empire, Volume 3 The Nineteenth Century* edited by Andrew Porter (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 19.
6. James Walvin with Paul Edwards, *Black Personalities in the Era of the Slave Trade* (London: Macmillan, 1983), 41.
7. William St Clair, *The Grand Slave Emporium: Cape Coast Castle and the British slave trade* (London: Profile Books, 2006), 69.
8. Paul Connerton, *How Societies Remember* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 4.
9. Said, 116.
10. St Clair's text was original published in the U.K. in 2006 as *The Grand Slave Emporium: Cape Coast Castle and the British slave trade*. In 2009 it was published in the U.S. as *The Door of No Return: the History of Cape Coast Castle and the Atlantic Slave Trade*.
11. St Clair, 127.
12. St Clair, 109.
13. St Clair, 110.
14. St Clair, 111.
15. Reportedly spoken by the Irish-born pickpocket George Barrington in his 'Prologue' at the opening of Botany Bay Theatre, Sydney. Some records suggest it was written by Henry Carter rather than Barrington. Published in *The Annual Register, or a View of the History, Politics, and Literature for the Year 1801* (London: F.C. & J. Rivington, 1801).
16. St Clair, 9.
17. St Clair, 66.
18. David Eltis, 'The Volume and Structure of the Transatlantic Slave Trade: a reassessment', *William and Mary Quarterly,* 3rd ser., vol. 58, no. 1, (Jan., 2001) 17–46, 43–44.

19. MS from the Private Collection of James Anquandah, *Cape Coast Castle and Fort St. Jago, Elmina Ghana* (1997), 49.
20. Vincent Carretta, 'Introduction', *Thoughts and Sentiments on the Evil of Slavery* by Quobna OttobahCugoano (London: Penguin, 1999), xx.
21. Michael Jordan, *The Great Abolition Sham: the true story of the end of the British slave trade* (Stroud, Gloucs.: Sutton Publishing, 2005), x.
22. J.R. Oldfield, *'Chords of Freedom': commemoration, ritual and British transatlantic slavery* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007).
23. Marika Sherwood, *After Abolition: Britain and the slave trade since 1807* (London: Taurus, 2007), 19.
24. Bernard Edwards, *Royal Navy Versus the Slave Traders: enforcing abolition at sea 1808–1898* (Barnsley, Yorks.: Pen and Sword, 2007), vi.
25. Oldfield, 7.
26. Oldfield, 42.
27. Sherwood, 103.
28. Sherwood, 181.
29. See Public Records and Archives Administration Department (PRAAD) in Accra (ADM 11/975), Kumasi (735C) and Tamale (RAT/1/23) for more details.
30. PRAAD, Cape Coast: CSO21/17/1.
31. Sherwood, 130.
32. Edwards, 185.
33. Edwards, 76. Edwards' italics.
34. Oldfield, 166.
35. T.C. McCaskie, "On Mouri Beach in 1821: The British and Empire in the Gold Coast", *Africa, Empire and Globalization: Essays in Honor of A.G. Hopkins*, ed. by Toyin Falola and Emily Brownell (Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press, 2011) 253–272, 254.
36. See Victoria Ellen Smith, 'The Smith Household: Cultural Politics, Trade and Slavery in a Nineteenth-Century Euro-African Family', *Replenishing History: New Directions to Historical Research in the 21st Century in Ghana,* ed. by Nana Yaw B. Sapong and J. Otto Pohl (Banbury: Ayebia, 2014).
37. Porter, 'Introduction', 15.
38. The National Archive (TNA), Kew: CO267/171 *Dr. Madden's Report on the Gold Coast and its Dependencies,* 1842.
39. 'H.C. papers, No. 57, 1830', *Records Relating to the Gold Coast Settlement from 1750–1874* ed. by J.J. Crooks (London: Frank Cass, 1973), 252 [author's italics].
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41. TNA: CO267/171 *Dr. Madden's Report.*

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51. F.J. Sypher, *Letitia Elizabeth Landon: a biography* (Ann Arbor, MI: Scholars Facsimilies & Reprints,2004), 168.
52. Maclean to Forster, 9/5 and 7/6/1837, M.P. as quoted in *Maclean of the Gold Coast: the life and times of George Maclean, 1801–1847* by G.E. Metcalfe (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), 212.
53. Letter to T. Crofton Croker, c. 28 June, 1838, *Letters* by Letitia Elizabeth Landon, ed. by F.J. Sypher (Ann Arbour, MI: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 2001), 183.
54. St Clair, 174.
55. Dr. Richard R. Madden's summary of Catherine Bannerman as reported by F.J. Sypher in *Letitia Elizabeth Landon: a biography* (Ann Arbour, MI: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 2004), 252. Research suggests that Catherine Bannerman had the same Scottish father as His Excellency James Bannerman. He was the only African to have served as Governor of a British fort (James Fort, Accra).
56. Letitia Elizabeth Landon, *Letitia Elizabeth Landon: selected writings,* ed. by Jerome McGann andDaniel Riess (Peterborough, ON: Broadview Literary Texts, 1997), 26.

57. Brodie Cruickshank, *Eighteen Years on the Gold Coast of Africa,* vol. 1 (1853; New York: Elibron Classics, 2007), 210.
58. Kwesi Essel Blankson, *Cape Coast Castle Tour: a concise interpretation of the Cape Coast Castle* (Cape Coast: Nyakod Printing Works, 2009), 22.
59. Landon to Laman Blanchard, after 15 August, 1838, *Letters*, 189.
60. Landon to Whittington Landon, perhaps circa October 15, 1838', *Letters*, 197.
61. Landon to Whittington Landon, 27 September, 1838, *Letters*, 192.
62. *Letters*, 192.
63. Landon to Marie Fagan, 15 October, 1838, *Letters*, 198.
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CHAPTER 4

Viewed from a Distance: Eighteenth-Century Images of Fortifications on the Coast of West Africa

Emily Mann

Introduction

Behind glass in a dimly lit gallery at the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich, England, hangs an early eighteenth-century copperplate engraving of eleven European fortifications on the coast of West Africa (Fig. 4.1). Part of a display on the Atlantic world that was opened in November 2007 to mark the bicentenary of the Act for the Abolition of the Slave Trade, the print provides a backdrop to a selection of later eighteenth- and nineteenth-century artefacts.[1] Another engraving shows an African "person of rank" being carried by his slaves. A Yombe carved figure on bended knee, dressed in European-style jacket and hat, targets the museum visitor with a flintlock gun. Sharing the same cabinet are two metal manillas, a cowrie shell necklace and an ivory bracelet—trade currency that doubled as personal ornaments.

There is an ornamental quality to the image of castles and forts, too. Measuring less than 30 cm high and 45 cm wide, the composite of views

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DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-39282-0_4

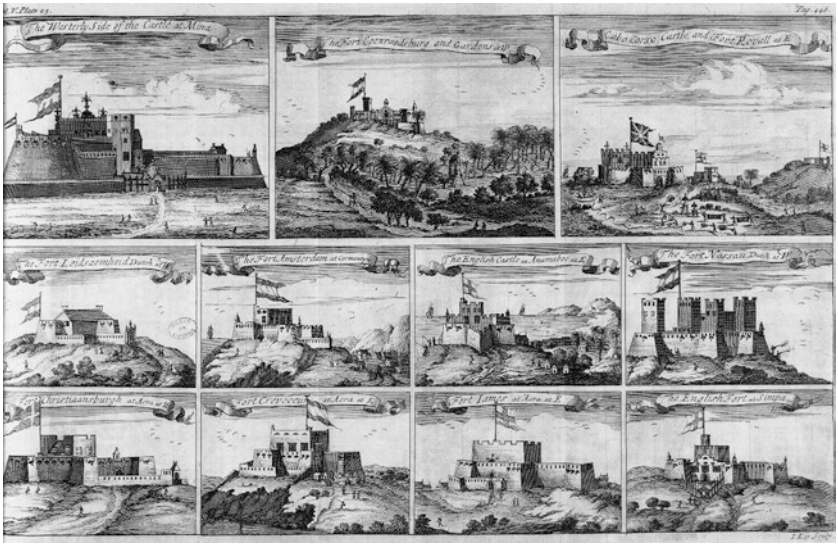

Fig. 4.1 Eleven fortifications on the coast of West Africa. Etched by Johannes Kip after plates in Willem Bosman's *Nauwkeurige Beschryving van de Guinese Goud-, Tand- en Slave-kust* (Utrecht, 1704). Plate 25 in Jean Barbot, *A Description of the Coasts of North and South-Guinea* (London, 1732, being vol. 5 of *A Collection of Voyages and Travels*). Bibliothèque nationale de France

appears to act as a background to events. The diminutive, doll's house scale of the depictions denies the significant, specific agency of each fortification. The print is used to illustrate the building of more than 50 fortified posts along a 300-mile stretch of coastline; the accompanying text is too brief to shed much light on their construction and complex history as sites that both staged and shaped encounters and exchanges, commercial and cultural, between African and European people. They are essentially presented as tools of the trade—first in gold and then slaves. The past tense used in the caption obscures the survival of a large number of the structures along the coast of present-day Ghana and beyond, having remained in European hands long after the end of the Atlantic slave trade and allowed to stay standing in postcolonial times through preservation, adaptation or neglect. Moreover, the dating and attribution of the engraving are wrong. These details and the circumstances surrounding the print's production and publication take some explaining,

but the clarification offered in the following paragraphs serves to introduce a more general point about using such images as representations of or sources for the forts.

An Englishman, a Frenchman and a Dutchman…

Dated "about 1660", the engraving is stated to be "after William Smith", who surveyed the fortifications belonging to the English Royal African Company and produced a series of prospects and plans almost 70 years after that date, in the late 1720s. The composite of views appeared in print after Smith's *Thirty Different Drafts of Guinea* (1729), forming plate 25 in volume five (as noted top left in Fig. 4.1) of *A Collection of Voyages and Travels* (1732). This volume comprised the first publication of Jean Barbot's *Description of the Coasts of North and South-Guinea*, the manuscript for which Barbot had begun to prepare half a century earlier following two voyages to Africa as a commercial agent on French slave ships (1678–1679 and 1681–1682), and which he subsequently translated into English as a Huguenot exile from France.[2] Yet, the eleven views composed in England as an accompaniment to Barbot's account are not derived from his own drawings, which appeared in engraved form elsewhere in the volume, or indeed from Smith's *Thirty Different Drafts.*

Rather, the engraver, identified in the lower-right corner as the Amsterdam-born, London-based printmaker Johannes Kip, reworked a selection of the views of Dutch, English and Danish forts found in Willem Bosman's *Nauwkeurige Beschryving van de Guinese Goud-, Tand- en Slave-kust*, which was first published in Dutch in 1704 and released in English as *A New and Accurate Description of the Coast of Guinea* in 1705.[3] Bosman had served the Dutch West India Company in Africa from 1688 to 1701; he was appointed chief merchant (second only to the director general) in 1698 and began work on his book while on the coast. For some time, he was troubled "that there was not a man on the coast that could draw and design", so as soon as one "versed in that art" arrived, Bosman set him immediately to work.[4] The English translation of 1705 contained modified versions of the unidentified artist's work, but close comparison indicates that Kip referred directly to the plates in Bosman's first edition rather than further adapting the English adaptations (for Kip, of course, there was no language barrier to the original

Dutch edition).[5] The print's knotty origins are indicative of the entanglement of European interests in West Africa.[6]

With the exception of the Dutch Fort Leidsaemheid (or Leydsaemheyt, Fort Patience) at Apam and the English fort at Simpa (Winneba), the sites covered by Kip's composite also appear in the engravings he made from Barbot's drawings (see e.g. Fig. 4.2). They include the Dutch and English headquarters at Elmina and Cape Coast, respectively, as well as the Danish, Dutch and English forts at Accra, giving a sense of the close and competitive proximity of different European nations along the coast. The images from both Barbot and Bosman place the fortifications in a commanding position centre stage; the built forms are presented as a dominant yet benign presence, the focal point of "exquisite scenery".[7]

A distinctive feature of the images in Bosman's book is the direction of the view, which largely presents the fortifications from the land looking east or west—the gentle slopes between viewer and fort speckled with people and huts—in contrast to Barbot's more distanced coastal prospects. Given that Bosman accompanied and closely supervised the draughtsman, this vantage point may reflect familiarity with each place through his relatively long residency on the coast, as opposed to what was for Barbot and most others a passing visit spent mainly on board a ship, yet it might also have been a deliberate artistic strategy to appear to provide a close-up "insider view".[8] The view extended only so far, however, as the artist died before drawing any of the forts west of Elmina. "In a few days' time he was well and dead", Bosman wrote, "and so left me provided only with the half of what I designed, there being no other draughtsman on the coast".[9]

Thus, Kip's composite, while seemingly comprehensive, is compromised; an image cropped by a life cut short in Africa—a country where, as one English agent put it, "great mortality happens".[10] These circumstances suggest a fragility to European claims over trade and territory that undermines the apparent strength and tranquillity of the forts.

The speedy and sizeable success of Bosman's account of Guinea—an immediate bestseller, translated into French as well as English and subsequently reprinted in successive Dutch editions—may have encouraged Awnsham and John Churchill in planning the publication of Barbot's account as the next instalment of their *Collection of Voyages and Travels*, the initial four volumes of which coincided with the release of Bosman's first edition in 1704. Kip was probably commissioned to make the

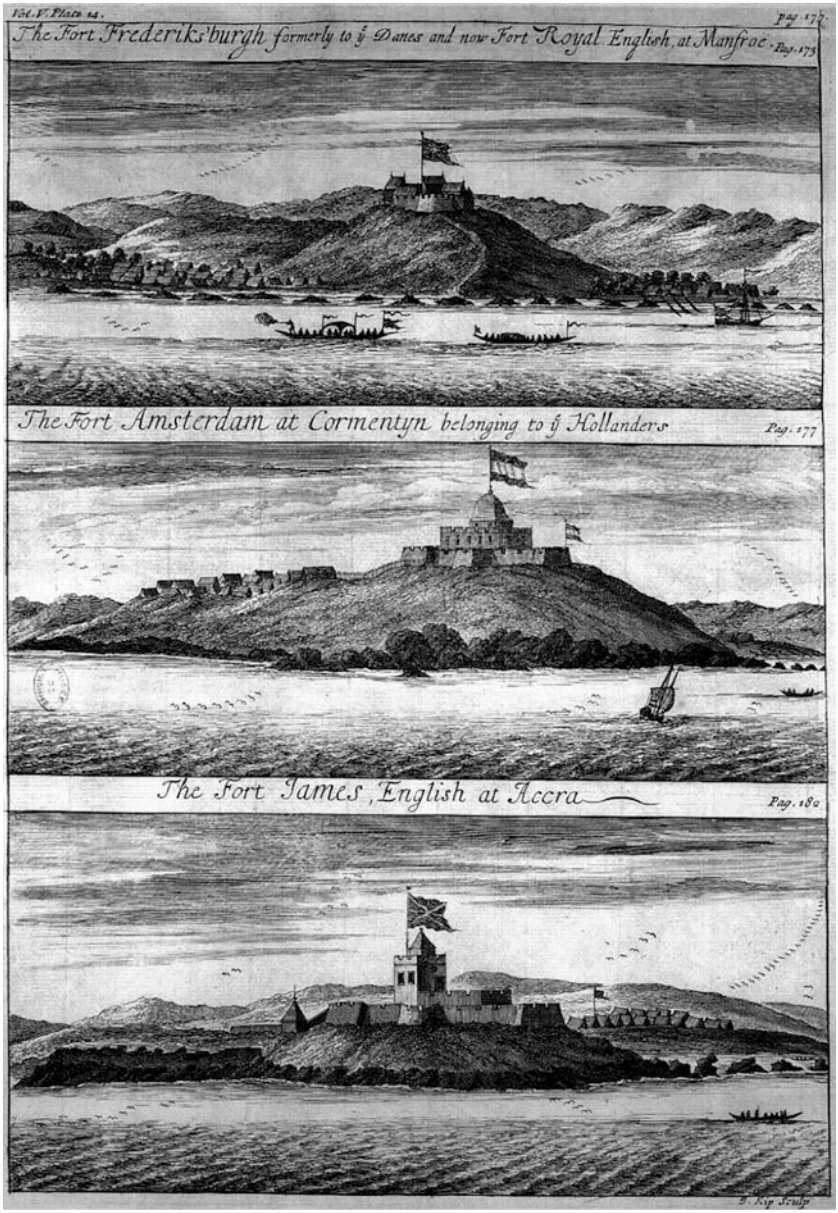

Fig. 4.2 Fort Frederiksburgh, Fort Amsterdam and Fort James at Accra. Engraved and etched by Johannes Kip. Plate 14 in Jean Barbot, *A Description of the Coasts of North and South-Guinea* (London, 1732, being vol. 5 of *A Collection of Voyages and Travels*, reprint 1746). Bibliothèque nationale de France

engravings for volume five after that date and worked on them in the years leading up to Barbot's death in 1712, a decade before Kip himself died. Kip is best known for his collaboration with Leonard Knyff on *Britannia Illustrata*, a collection of high-quality engraved and etched bird's-eye prospects of palaces and country house estates sold on single sheets from around 1700 and then issued together in one volume in 1707. Kip may well have been commissioned by the Churchills on the basis of the powerful expression of property in these topographical views, and there is certainly a hint that he produced the composite of fortifications following the prestigious and commercially successful 1707 publication.[11] His alteration of a flag flying above the English headquarters at Cape Coast Castle, from the St. George's Cross to the Union Jack, suggests that his reworking dates from around or shortly after the Act of Union in 1707—the Union flag was in use before the Act (as indicated by Barbot's own images of the English forts, which all feature it), but the passing of such landmark legislation would have provided a spur for this small but notable change to the plate from Bosman's book that featured the nation's principal base.[12] Kip had his home and business near the parliament buildings in Westminster, after all, and the publisher Awnsham Churchill was then serving as an MP, mixing in whiggish circles where support for the Union was strong.[13] It is also interesting to note that Churchill was a publisher, financial agent and close friend to John Locke, who had invested in the Royal African Company and helped gather material for Churchill's *Collection of Voyages and Travels*, perhaps having instigated the series in the first place.[14]

The commission of Kip to make engravings for a fifth volume signals the high ambition behind the project, as well as a high level of investment. So why was the volume not published until 1732? As much as Bosman's international popularity may have persuaded Barbot's prospective publishers of the saleability of another eyewitness account of West Africa, it also challenged Barbot to update his manuscript. While Kip conjured Bosman's plates into the composite, Barbot worked long passages from Bosman's *Description* (in the English translation) into his own. The release in 1709 of a second Dutch edition of Bosman's *Nauwkeurige Beschryving*, "improved, purified of many mistakes and illustrated with many new copper engravings" (now including forts west of Elmina in artistically rather more refined views), is likely to have frustrated Barbot and his publishers, even though no English translation was released.[15] It does not appear that Barbot made any further revisions to

his text based on Bosman's "improvements" and corrections, and Kip referred only to plates in Bosman's first edition (supporting the dating of his engravings to before 1709). The debates over property in books that led to the passing of the Act for the Encouragement of Learning in 1710, which vested copyright in authors rather than publishers and prescribed a copyright term of 21 years for books published before the Act (14 years for any published after), may also have given Barbot's publishers pause for thought about the nature and extent of his borrowings.[16] Plagiarism might have been unlikely to be treated as an indictable offence, but it was increasingly seen as a literary crime.[17] Probably, Barbot died before a decision had been made about what to do with his increasingly mangled manuscript, which was consequently set to one side.

That is a possible commercial explanation for the delayed publication, but there is also a political one. With the Act to Settle the Trade to Africa in 1698, which ended the Royal African Company's monopoly by legalising independent slave trading on payment of a 10% duty to finance the forts, the company became increasingly mired in difficulties and debt. Its role—indeed, its very right to exist—was the subject of intensifying parliamentary and public deliberation, at the very time that Barbot translated his French manuscript into English and set about editing and making additions. In the years leading up to 1712, when the 1698 Act was due to expire, the question dominated the nation's political and economic discussions, with the Board of Trade launching a public inquiry into the organisation of the transatlantic slave trade in 1708. According to one pamphleteer writing in 1710, the matter was "the daily occasion of our coffee-house contests and debates".[18] A proliferating number of pamphlets took opposing sides, fairly evenly divided between those defending the company and the supporters of separate, or private, traders who argued for a free and open trade. The issue generated as much literature as, if not more than, any other economic controversy during the period, and the company's record of commerce and construction on the African coast over four decades was under constant scrutiny.[19]

Heated discussion of the company's performance and affairs extended far beyond parliamentary circles and coffee houses in Britain. The French company's director general from 1697, André Brüe, remarked that the English company had clearly hoped opening up the trade would serve to ruin the French company, "without reflecting, that, while they hurt them but a little, they ruined themselves entirely". Brüe observed: "Nothing

could be more imprudent than the conduct of the English company, who had better have received nothing from the parliament for the reparation of their fort, than have accepted this benevolence of ten percent".[20] From 1705, the company campaigned for the restoration of its monopoly, arguing that the duty (frequently evaded anyway) did not cover the cost of maintaining the forts, but the expanding interest group of separate traders and their supporters held sway. The expiration of the 1698 Act in 1712 left the trade entirely deregulated, with far-reaching implications for the nation's economic and political affairs.[21] The image and future direction of both company and country were at stake. Amid the ongoing controversy, and with so many witness statements on the African trade appearing in print, the politician-publisher Awnsham Churchill might understandably have grown uneasy about releasing a decades-old account of the territory written and illustrated by a one-time servant of the French company, and updated with passages and images borrowed from a former chief agent of the Dutch company, whose men on the coast were doing what they could to make a bad situation even worse for their English neighbours. It is hard not to notice that Kip's composite gives precedence to the Dutch headquarters at Elmina—the first prospect shows the castle, the next the adjacent Fort Coenraadsburg, along with its summer house and gardens—over the English fortifications at Cape Coast, which are reduced to a single view.[22]

Bosman had used his book to criticise the governance and business strategy of the Dutch West India Company, addressing the directors directly, but he was hardly complimentary about its English counterpart either: one agent at Cape Coast accused the author of "disingenuity, partiality, and malice against the English" and suggested that the company should publish a refutation.[23] Indeed, Bosman commented in his second edition that he had "received informations from the coast that the English are greatly disturbed about the first edition […] and that they are now engaged in the writing of a book to disprove mine, I must say that I am looking forward to it, and I wish it were already in print".[24] Yet, this refutation seems not to have made it into book form, quite likely because the company had become so entrenched in a battle for survival on the home front. That Barbot "thought fit" to add as a supplement a section and summary of *Reflections Upon the Constitution and Management of the Trade to Africa*, printed in 1709 and presented by the Royal African Company to the House of Commons, indicates a perceived need to rebalance his text with a contemporary voice that

was firmly in favour of the English company.[25] Constituting a vigorous defence of the company's past and present progress, this new addition noted that agents of other nations took any opportunity to foment "divisions in the British interest on the coast of Guinea" and that the Dutch in particular cajoled the private traders and instigated the "natives" against the Royal African Company.[26]

The debate over the company, its fortifications and the trade still raged two decades later when Barbot's account with Kip's engravings eventually made it into print. But the publishers were not the Churchills. Awnsham had died in 1728, and the copyright for six volumes of *Voyages and Travels*—the first four printed in 1704, the fifth with Barbot's *Description* and a sixth containing other assorted travel accounts—was now in the hands of a group of London publishers.[27] They took subscriptions for a complete set of six folios, or for volumes five and six alone, so that existing owners of one to four could simply add the newly published volumes to their shelves. The concern of these booksellers was clearly to maximise the commercial rather than editorial value of the material they had acquired. Shortly after their *Collection* was reprinted in 1744, the rival publisher Thomas Astley responded with a significantly more critical approach in his purposefully titled *New General Collection of Voyages and Travels*, released in four volumes from 1745 to 1747.[28] In the preface to volume one, Astley and his editor were quick to dismiss the Churchill collection as "no more than an assemblage of the travels of about fifty particular authors to a few parts of the world, and therefore we do not place it among the general collections". They went on: "Besides this essential defect, the authors made use of are, for the most part, of very little esteem. They seem to have been gathered without judgment or care; and chosen (if there was any choice made at all) rather for their imperfections than merit".[29] The scathing critique extended to another paragraph. The preface to the second volume, relating wholly to Africa, drew the reader's attention to the "piratical" behaviour of authors, especially travel writers, and stated it was the "business of a collector, or editor, to discover the fraud to his readers, and strip them of their pilfered dress". Astley (as a collector) and his editor remarked that Barbot had copied from many authors, Bosman in particular, without mentioning their names: "This is a sort of literary robbery, which ought to be below an author of any credit". The effect of this "theft" was to impose on the public "stale observations for new" and to "revive long exploded falsities by giving them a new sanction".[30]

Astley and his editor were likewise wary of the images they included—understandably so, in the shadow of the 1735 Engravers' Copyright Act. This gave artists similar rights to those granted authors by the 1710 Act, placing value in the design and execution of engraved images (i.e. in an artist's particular representation of a subject).[31] They made a general point of marking "the author from whence our draughts have been taken" and were also anxious not to repeat the "sorry trash that help to swell the bulk and price of former collections".[32] There is no sign here of the fortifications as depicted in Bosman.[33] The images of the English forts were almost entirely derived from Smith's *Thirty Different Drafts of Guinea*—"elegant draughts" which were, as the preface to Astley's third volume reminds the reader, "not long since taken by order of the Royal African Company".[34]

Astley's second volume includes a list of the thirty plates before a summary of Smith's account of his voyage, which was posthumously published in 1744.[35] Having been judged by the company to be "fitly qualified" to take "exact plans, draughts and prospects", Smith was commissioned to survey the English forts and settlements, as well as the principal rivers, harbours and "other places of trade" along the coast, in 1726.[36] While at Cape Coast he engineered a visit to the Dutch headquarters at Elmina and, insisting to the director general that he had not come as a spy, was shown some "prettily begun" but unfinished plans by a team of Dutch surveyors who—just like Bosman's man—had died on the job.[37] Smith was lucky and lived to tell the tale. On his return to London, he found "few or no true draughts of those remote parts extant, except his own" (Barbot's *Description* had yet to make it into print), and his drawings gave such satisfaction to the company and all others who had seen them that he was encouraged to publish them for the benefit of a wider audience.[38] His plans and prospects showing English and nearby Dutch settlements (see e.g. Figs. 4.3 and 4.4) were engraved and published as a set in 1729.[39] Beneath each prospect is a brief description of the fort's position, defences, local surroundings and inhabitants and trading benefits, but the image is the lead act.

The plates in Astley's volume are sometimes attributed directly to Smith, but were in fact reworked to combine his individual prospects and plans on one plate for each fort, without the text. For example, plate 65 (Fig. 4.5) combines four of Smith's images relating to Cape Coast Castle: two prospects and two plans, one of the fortification and another of the adjacent gardens.[40] In the case of James Fort in the River Gambia,

Fig. 4.3 *The South Prospect of Dixcove Fort.* Engraved and etched by John Gray after William Smith. Plate 10 in William Smith, *Thirty Different Drafts of Guinea* (London, 1729). Harvard Map Collection, Harvard College Library

Fig. 4.4 *The North Prospect of the English and Dutch Forts at Accra.* Engraved and etched by John Gray after William Smith. Plate 25 in William Smith, *Thirty Different Drafts of Guinea* (London, 1729). Harvard Map Collection, Harvard College Library

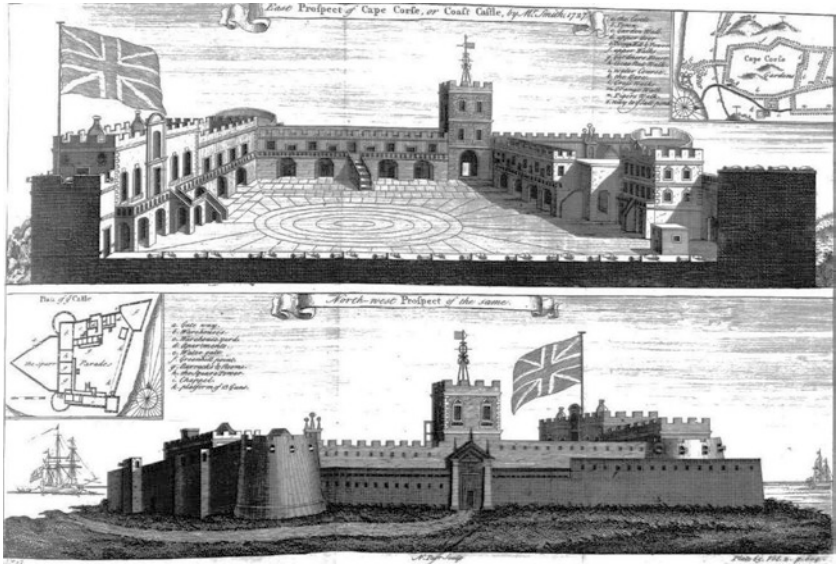

Fig. 4.5 A compilation of prospects and plans of Cape Coast Castle and gardens. Engraved and etched by Nathaniel Parr after plates in William Smith, *Thirty Different Drafts of Guinea* (London, 1729). Plate 65 from *A New General Collection of Voyages and Travels*, vol. 2 (London, 1745). Special Collections, University of Virginia, Charlottesville

the updated plan and prospects printed in Francis Moore's *Travels into the Inland Parts of Africa* (1738) were used in place of Smith's (Moore having served the company as a writer and later factor in Gambia during the early 1730s).[41] For the forts belonging to other nations, Kip's engravings of Barbot's drawings—the drawings now 60 or so years old—were reworked and attributed to Barbot rather than Kip. Regarding their choice of maps and "cuts", Astley and his editor wrote that they had "resolved to select from the travellers of any note, all those that were valuable, both for their accuracy and the things they represented".[42] Their judgement of what was "valuable" was not strictly impartial, however. The editorial policy had a political purpose as much as a commercial one, so that "the reader will be the better able to judge of the importance of the African trade, and the necessity of supporting the forts and

settlements of the company; a matter which of late has been much the subject of enquiry and conversation".[43]

The matter had by now been the subject of much enquiry for almost half a century. Barely a debate was heard or an essay published on the trade that did not assert or question the necessity, cost and condition of the Royal African Company's forts. In the "war" (as Daniel Defoe called it) between the company and the separate traders, the forts had become "the subject of some people's jest", while others (Defoe included) suspected that the private traders denigrated them purely with the intention of seizing ownership for themselves.[44] Smith's survey was precipitated by the Board of Trade's repeated requests for an account of the nature, number, strength and situation of the company's forts and settlements. The translation of his drawings to print was clearly aimed at influencing the government inquiry and wider debate in the company's favour. The initial advert for subscriptions targeted "all who use the Guinea trade", and the advert announcing publication marketed the set of prints as being "at this time very proper for all members of parliament".[45] An impressive-looking prospectus of the Royal African Company's property on the African coast, *Thirty Different Drafts* served as a visual refutation of Bosman's criticisms—albeit about two decades overdue.

The images, as Geoff Quilley has pointed out, "present the forts as neat, clean, efficient and impersonal structures within an overall commercial system marked by its clarity and order".[46] In effect, the forts stand for the company (Defoe employed this metaphor, eulogising the company as "a noble fabrick").[47] The reassuringly pleasant and fertile backdrops—the calm coastal waters and clouds, the local villages "under shelter of the fort guns", the gentle hills and cultivation of clearings, gardens and trees (in Quilley's view, the imposition of the English countryside upon the African terrain)—draw a veil not only over the coastal trade in slaves, but over the vast unknown territory beyond the shoreline, where the relationship between the company and the African people it relied on for trade was volatile and often aggressive.[48] Contemporary publications urged the company to extend the trade inland, and Smith's images (not least his plan of the cultivated yet boundless gardens at Cape Coast) constituted a visual argument for colonial ambition and appropriation.[49] The existence of the forts may have depended in reality on careful and continuous diplomacy with African leaders, but their visualisation in print served to persuade an interested British public of uncontested ownership and the potential for expanded settlement and control.

Did Smith's images have their desired effect? In 1730, shortly after the release of *Thirty Different Drafts*, the government gave the company a lifeline with an annual subsidy of £10,000 to maintain and administer the forts and passed a resolution that defined them as "marks of the possessions of Great Britain in those parts".[50] In 1744—the year before the publication of Astley's first two volumes—that subsidy was doubled, only to be reduced again in 1745. The following year, it was removed altogether. The company was doomed and finally dissolved in 1752. The same year saw the final reprint of Kip's composite of Bosman's forts in the *Collection of Voyages and Travels.* The images of Barbot, Smith and Moore had a more extended life and reach, being reworked yet again with the translation of Astley's volumes into French as part of Antoine François Prévost's *Histoire générale des voyages* (Paris, from 1746) and into German in Johann Joachim Schwabe's *Allgemeine Historie der Reisen* (Leipzig, from 1748, based on both Astley's *New General Collection* and Prévost's *Histoire générale*). Here, Smith's forts appear artistically aged (Fig. 4.6), with vegetation sprouting from the soft-edged masonry so that the structures blend harmoniously, almost romantically, with the surrounding landscape, becoming a part of nature. It is as though the forts had always been there. Some of them still are.

Critical Distance

The publishing, political and artistic context of the copperplate engraving hanging behind glass in the museum demonstrates some of the complexity and questions that can surround a seemingly straightforward image. There is more to it than meets the eye. The timing and circumstances of its production and consumption are crucial to consider in attempting to understand what it does (and does not) show and in judging what kind of evidence it may provide. Isolated in the gallery, Kip's composite should be read in relation to corresponding contemporary images and in conjunction with the text alongside which it appeared in print—not just Barbot's, but Bosman's too. Over the past few decades, these texts and others have been the subject of rigorous and rewarding scholarly criticism, which has disentangled their multilayered borrowings and reassessed their status and value as historical sources. Working on the translation and critical edition of Barbot's 1688 French manuscript under the general editorship of Paul Hair in the early 1980s, Robin Law pointed out the complications caused by the "composite

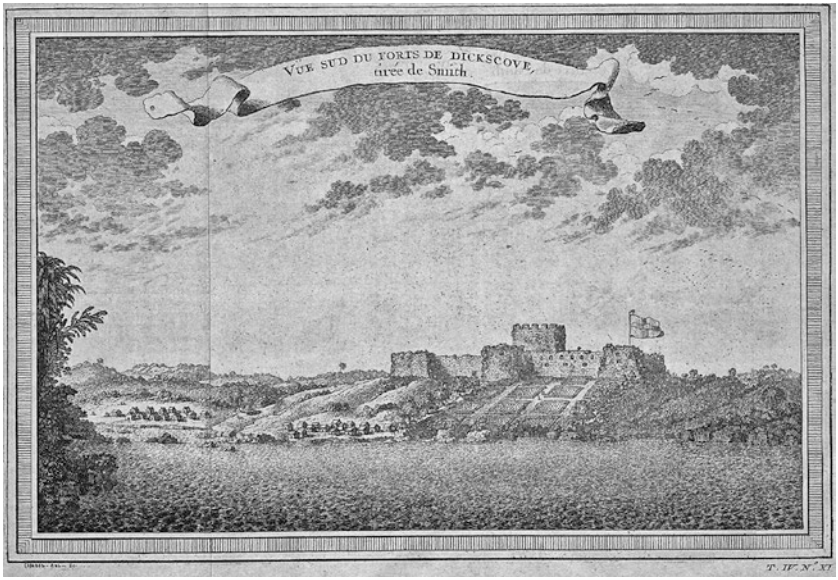

Fig. 4.6 Dixcove Fort, "after Smith". Engraved and etched by Frans de Bakker. Plate 2 in Johann Joachim Schwabe, *Allgemeine Historie der Reisen zu Wasser und Lande*, vol. 4 (Leipzig, 1749). Universitätsbibliothek Heidelberg

nature of Barbot's description, based in part on personal observation but in part on published accounts of varying dates".[51] The composite nature of Kip's engraving, based on Bosman's plates but made for Barbot's description and published after every one of the people involved in its construction had died, provides an example of how images need to be deciphered and interpreted just as carefully as words, and how their reuse and adaptation can present similar problems to textual translations. The rigorous criticism that has been demanded for texts is necessary for images too.[52]

The images in Bosman's and Barbot's books deserve critical attention not least because the authors attached great importance to them.[53] Bosman was vexed by the lack of draughtsmen on the coast and then by the inconvenient death of the one man he had found to employ. In the first Dutch edition, he prayed the reader "be satisfied with what I got", and the second edition was enhanced with engravings of the missing forts.[54] For Barbot, who "only learned to draw any subject on earth

by my own efforts", images were essential.[55] "I consider illustrations so necessary for the understanding of a text", he wrote in 1688, "that I regard those in this volume as being like the great seal on a patent, guaranteeing its authenticity. For any written account of a country is always imperfect and unclear unless there are added to it visual illustrations of whatever one is trying to explain".[56] In the English translation, he remarked: "By the help of drawing, the traveller will be enabled to render the account of his travels the most useful and acceptable; since it is certain, that the most accurate description cannot represent any thing to the reader so lively as a draught or cut, which, as it were, shows the thing itself that is described".[57] Barbot's words echo Locke's in *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, published by Awnsham and John Churchill in 1693. Drawing is, Locke wrote:

> a thing very useful to a gentleman in several occasions; but especially if he travel, as that which helps a man often to express, in a few lines well put together, what a whole sheet of paper in writing, would not be able to represent, and make intelligible. How many buildings may a man see, how many machines and habits meet with, the ideas whereof would be easily retained and communicated, by a little skill in drawing; which being committed to words, are in danger to be lost, or at best but ill retained in the most exact descriptions?[58]

Astley and his editor later agreed that "representations give the most lively ideas of things, far beyond the minutest descriptions".[59]

Barbot expressed satisfaction that his pencil had "made amends for the defects of my pen and want of literature" and his draughts being "exact and lively representations of the things themselves, as near as my skill could reach".[60] Historians have admired his skill. In the critical edition of his account, Hair described Barbot as a competent artist and concluded he was "correct in thinking that his drawings represented his finest memorial".[61] Hair devoted a section of the introduction to the "illustrations"—Barbot used such words as *vues*, *profils*, *desseins* and *planches*—and an appendix provided an "analytic table" that traces the repetition or development of the images from the author's journal of 1679 through to the English printed edition of 1732.[62] Yet, the draughts were apparently not deemed wholly integral or indispensable, even in this hugely comprehensive publication: of the 120 or so drawings listed as part of the manuscript, fewer than half are reproduced across the two edited volumes, and those included are mixed with earlier journal drawings and later prints and not always in the order of their appearance

in the manuscript.[63] The costs of printing are presumably to blame for the reduced number, just as they were for Barbot's failure to secure the publication of his French manuscript three hundred years earlier. An Amsterdam publisher lost interest in the project in 1689 because of the high price put on engraving the drawings. Barbot preferred not to cut down on the images—"I am committed to supplying illustrations of the most important items I describe", he had written in the introductory discourse to his French manuscript, even though it kept him "so long under way before I reached my goal"—and he considered etching the drawings and plans himself to reduce the expense.[64]

The critical edition of Barbot, based as it is on the 1688 French manuscript, understandably privileges the drawings included with that version over the prints published in 1732. Yet, it is also the case that the drawings, rather than the engravings, have been favoured by historians. Kip's work was "markedly inferior to Barbot's drawings", according to Hair, who suggested that changes in fine detail between the draughts of 1688 and the prints of 1732 might be explained by a "lack of appreciation of the evidential value of detail on the part of the engraver".[65] Reviewing Hair's edition, John Donnelly Fage agreed that the drawings "are appreciably more alive than the engravings made from them for the 1732 publication", giving the manuscript a "relative immediacy".[66] Historians have thus taken Barbot's word that his images, "very exactly drawn upon the place", endorse the eyewitness status of his account (that, as Barbot put it, they guarantee its authenticity), and have consequently deemed them useful as primary sources. Engravings, in this view, constitute a secondary source—or even, if considered equivalent to the translation of a text, ought not to be used as a source at all.[67]

Of the drawings of the forts, Hair argued that they "supplement the documentary and archaeological record", as no one before Barbot had surveyed virtually all the forts on the coast. The sparseness of manuscript information for the study of the forts in the period, noted by Law in his work on the correspondence of the Royal African Company, has encouraged the use of images to fill the gaps.[68] A.W. Lawrence drew on images from Barbot, Bosman and Smith, along with several others, in writing *Trade Castles and Forts of West Africa* (1963) and, it may be presumed, in directing the repair and restoration of some of the monuments he studied during the 1950s.[69] He scrutinised the images for clues to the built form and development of the forts over time. Addressing the extent to which "any old representation may be trusted", he was of the

opinion that the faithfulness of the "eminent" engraver Kip could not be questioned, but he assumed mistakes on the part of Bosman's engraver, working from "childishly crude originals" (not known to have survived), and found a frustrating level of discrepancy between drawings thought to be by Smith and the engravings made from them for the publication of *Thirty Different Drafts*.[70] Hair included a cautionary note in response to Lawrence's acceptance of variant details in engravings as evidence of architectural changes: more care is required, he argued, in interpreting what may be the result of the engraver's incompetence.[71] Thus, the problem of using these images as sources has principally been located in the process of translation from drawing to print, and the potential corruption of the original through careless copying, rather than in the original image's careful construction.

Yet, there are problems with "preferring" the drawings to the prints; as primary sources, they are just as complicated as the manuscript text. For a start, as Hair observed, few, if any, of the drawings that survive were those sketched on the spot, and so a process of copying and possibly editing had already taken place. Hair also suggested it was likely that Barbot had a hand in the preparation of the engravings.[72] Though Barbot wrote about travelling equipped with "all sorts of watercolours", the drawings that remain are all worked in dark ink and grey wash with a fine black border, as if designed precisely to be reworked in engraved form.[73] The scroll inscriptions and occasional keys likewise anticipate the conventions of print.

There is a reason to approach Barbot's drawings of the European fortifications with particular care (the critical edition largely reproduces those from the author's 1679 journal, rather than the 1688 versions). While claiming in his French manuscript that he "always kept in mind that nothing should derive from my imagination", for "a traveller should be a partisan for the truth, and trustworthy", Barbot admitted: "If I extrapolate in the [topographical] drawings, it is because the distance between myself and what I drew did not permit me to examine them at close quarters or in detail".[74] He went on to note how "difficult it is to approach the places on the coasts where Europeans live, particularly those belonging to the Dutch". In the English translation, he remarked that any inquiry into the state or condition of fortified places "may give umbrage or jealousy to Europeans, and particularly to the Dutch, who are, above all others, suspicious and unwilling to let strangers into any secrets".[75] It is perhaps Barbot's enforced distance from many of the

forts, compared with Bosman's insider view, that motivated the addition of Kip's composite of images from Bosman to Barbot's account. Moreover, Barbot's description of European jealousy, suspicion and secrecy makes clear that there was too much partisanship along the coast for anyone to be truly a "partisan for the truth"; there were simply too many sides. The author's claims to authenticity, accuracy, truth and so on mask his agency—most obviously as an agent of the French company, but also as a self-taught artist who made choices as to the "most important items" that he would draw and how he would represent them.

The artistic modes of representation that Barbot taught himself—and in which Bosman's short-lived draughtsman was "versed" and Smith was judged "fitly qualified"—produced meaning and therefore require interpretation like any of the European languages Barbot recommended to the traveller. Indeed, Barbot aligns spoken and visual languages: "In the first place, it is requisite for the person that designs to travel into those parts to learn languages, as English, French, Low-Dutch, Portuguese and Lingua Franca. Secondly, he ought to have some skill in drawing and colouring…"[76] Foremost among the subjects Barbot then listed as worthy of representation were "prospects, landskips, structures". Locke had put buildings first, proposing that images could communicate the "ideas" of them better than words. The communication of ideas supposes an audience, and this raises another problem of "preferring" drawings to their subsequent engraved form: it was the printed image that was designed for and distributed to the widest contemporary audience. As for the ideas that were communicated, they cannot be separated from the world which that audience inhabited and imagined.

The reading public grew rapidly in Britain and across Europe in the first half of the eighteenth century, and their view of the world expanded with their country's widening sphere of commercial and colonial activity. The public's reading interests can be seen to reflect the nation's interests in acquiring knowledge and objects from around the world that would enrich people, intellectually and economically, at home. In 1708, the popular historian-bookseller Nathaniel Crouch sought to capitalise on these interests with the publication of *The English Acquisitions in Guinea and East India, Containing the Several Forts and Castles of the Royal African Company… [and] the Forts and Factories of the Honourable East India Company.*[77] Updating a book first published in 1686 and building on other works that covered the British Isles and dominions in America, this new edition gave stronger emphasis to the forts erected by

the chartered companies as markers of English acquisitions in Africa and Asia. Amid the debate over the Royal African Company's role as custodian of the forts, Crouch characterised a fort as a stamp of ownership and authority, and the "grandeur of the English monarchy". The paired prospects in Bosman's book had the appearance of stamps—or seals, to borrow Barbot's written imagery, on the companies' patents—an effect emphasised by Kip's composite. Indeed, the repetition of views of the forts across publications over several decades gave the structures—as well as the structures of interaction and exchange in and around them—an apparent immutability in print that denied the frequent and often deep disruptions on the ground. The fantastical images recycled from one edition to the next of Crouch's book, including monstrous man-eating serpents, make manifest the great distance between England and the African coast, in terms of both geography and knowledge. As the English edition of Bosman had pointed out, "the coast of Guinea, which is part of Africa, is for the most part unknown, not only to the Dutch, but to all Europeans, and no particular description of it is yet come to light; nor indeed anything but a few scraps scattered in books written upon other subjects, most of which are contrary to truth, and afford but a sorry sketch of Guinea".[78] Bosman, Barbot and Smith aimed to revise and refine that sketch with their first-hand observations, yet their images were as much creations of the European imagination as were Crouch's mythical flying and multi-headed beasts.

Conclusion

Early modern images of the fortifications are much less useful for what they may reveal about construction history than for what they betray about how Europeans viewed and imagined the forts' function and future. Lawrence approached the images as an archaeologist who confessed to being "only indirectly concerned with the history, political or economic, of European endeavour".[79] He risked being disappointed. The images are inextricable from that history: not merely reflecting European endeavour in Africa, as Lawrence politely described the scramble, but directly shaping its course.

Notes

1. Both the gallery and the museum have been restyled since 2007, and what opened as the "Atlantic Worlds" gallery is now "The Atlantic: Slavery, Trade, Empire". The objects mentioned in this paragraph can be viewed by searching the museum's online catalogue at http://www.rmg.co.uk/researchers/collections (Accessed: 10 June 2017): items PAH2826, ZBA2785, AAA2818, AAA3072 and ZBA2961.
2. Jean (or John) Barbot, *A Description of the Coasts of North and South-Guinea* (London, 1732), vol. 5 of *A Collection of Voyages and Travels* (vols 1–4, London, 1704). This essay also refers to the modern critical edition of Barbot's French manuscript: P.E.H. Hair, Adam Jones and Robin Law, eds, *Barbot on Guinea: The Writings of Jean Barbot on West Africa, 1678–1712*, 2 vols (London: Hakluyt Society, 1992).
3. The online catalogue entry for Kip's print in the collection of UK National Maritime Museum notes his authorship, but does not identify its publication in the *Collection of Voyages and Travels*, nor the original source of the views: http://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/142773.html (Accessed: 10 June 2017). See also Douglas Hamilton and Robert J. Blyth, eds, *Representing Slavery: Art, Artefacts and Archives in the Collections of the National Maritime Museum* (Aldershot, Hampshire: Lund Humphries, 2007), 243. The first Dutch edition of Willem Bosman's *Nauwkeurige Beschryving van de Guinese Goud-, Tand- en Slave-kust* (Utrecht, 1704) can be read online at https://archive.org/stream/nauwkeurigebesch00bosm#page/n9/mode/2up (Accessed: 10 June 2017). The English edition, *A New and Accurate Description of the Coast of Guinea* (London, 1705), was reprinted in 1721. Citations in this essay from the English translation have been checked against Albert van Dantzig's series of articles comparing the English and Dutch texts: see "Willem Bosman's *New and Accurate Description of the Coast of Guinea*: How Accurate Is It?", *History in Africa* 1 (1974), 101–108; "English Bosman and Dutch Bosman: A Comparison of Texts", *History in Africa* 2 (1975), 185–216; and subsequent volumes of the same journal. See also David Henige, "Translated Bosman Finally Corrected", *History in Africa* 40 (2013), s7–s9.
4. Bosman, *New and Accurate Description*, iv.
5. The analytic table of illustrations in Hair, Jones and Law, eds, *Barbot on Guinea* (vol. 2, Appendix C, 822), acknowledges that the views in Kip's composite image were copied from Bosman, though it suggests either the first Dutch edition or English edition as the source and provides page numbers for the plates in the latter (page 45 should read 46). Oddly, it is stated that the image contains nine views rather than eleven. The

reference to a "plate illustrating a Gold Coast fort wholly copied from Bosman" on page xlix (vol. 1) presumably means "Gold Coast forts".

6. As Albert van Dantzig noted, by the end of the 1600s there were at least twenty-six fortified trade posts belonging to the chartered companies of five nations ("Willem Bosman's *New and Accurate Description*", 101).
7. John E. Crowley, *Imperial Landscapes: Britain's Global Visual Culture* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2011), 36.
8. In his preface, Bosman claimed there were "few or scarce any places upon the coast, where I have not stayed for some time, and can now speak of with experience" (*New and Accurate Description*, preface, n. p.).
9. Bosman, *New and Accurate Description*, preface (n. p.).
10. John Snow, letter to the Royal African Company, 31 July 1705 (The National Archives, Kew, London, T70/102, 47–50), printed as Appendix 5 in K.G. Davies, *The Royal African Company* (London: Longmans, Green and Co, 1957), 367–71 (368).
11. For Kip's background and career, see Nicholas Grindle, "Kip, Johannes (*b.* before 1653, *d.* 1721?)", *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); online ed., doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/15640, October 2006 (Accessed: 10 June 2017).
12. Perhaps for the same reason, the UK National Maritime Museum online catalogue entry gives the date 1707, though it is not explained: http://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/142773 (Accessed: 10 June 2017). *Representing Slavery* (ed. Hamilton and Blyth) gives c.1700. As Hair noted in *Barbot on Guinea* (vol. 1, xcv, fn. 161), the flag, though suggestive, cannot be taken as proof of the date and Kip may instead have been conforming to Barbot's own drawings of English forts.
13. For Awnsham Churchill's political career, see Mark Knights, "Churchill, Awnsham (1658–1728), of the Black Swan, Paternoster Row, London and Henbury, Dorset", in *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons, 1690–1715*, ed. Eveline Cruickshanks, Stuart Handley and D.W. Hayton (Martlesham, Suffolk: Boydell and Brewer, 2002), http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1690-1715/member/churchill-awnsham-1658-1728 (Accessed: 10 June 2017).
14. Locke's biographer H.R. Fox Bourne wrote of how the philosopher amused himself during illness in the last years of life seeking out material for a large "Collection of Voyages and Travels": H.R. Fox Bourne, *The Life of John Locke* (London: Henry S. King and Co, 1876), vol. 2, 481. A list of books printed for Awnsham and John Churchill in around 1707 includes 17 works by Locke, followed by several defences of Locke's arguments by Samuel Bold and then the four-volume *Collection of Voyages and Travels*. Bourne did not believe that Locke was the author of the

introduction to the published *Collection*, on the history of navigation, as was suggested in later editions.

15. The claim made for the second Dutch edition, which was reprinted several times between 1709 and 1737, appears on the title page; the English translation is from van Dantzig, "English Bosman and Dutch Bosman", 186. The 1721 English edition appears not to have taken account of the Dutch revisions.
16. For a summary and analysis of the legislation, see Ronan Deazley, "Commentary on the Statute of Anne 1710", in *Primary Sources on Copyright (1450–1900)*, ed. L. Bently and M. Kretschmer (2008), http://www.copyrighthistory.org/record/uk_1710 (Accessed: 20 June 2017). As Locke's publisher, Awnsham Churchill was involved in the writer's campaign against the prohibitive Licensing Act in the early 1690s (Locke cited his publisher's troubles with the Company of Stationers in his 1693 memorandum on the 1662 Act), yet Churchill does not appear to have participated in the passage of the 1710 Act, even though he was a member of parliament at the time (see Knights, "Churchill, Awnsham"). Perhaps he was unsure whether all of its provisions would work in his favour.
17. Nick Groom, "Unoriginal Genius: Plagiarism and the Construction of 'Romantic' authorship", in *Copyright and Piracy: An Interdisciplinary Critique*, ed. Lionel Bently, Jennifer Davis and Jane C. Ginsburg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 279. Barbot's unreliable citation of sources might be taken as evidence of anxiety about the extent of his reliance on other texts. Hair points out that Barbot removed from his English account references to sources which he had supplied in his French text, yet inserted references in one part of the supplement "in almost adequate detail" (*Barbot on Guinea*, vol. 1, liii).
18. *A True State of the Present Difference Between the Royal African Company and the Separate Traders* (London, 1710), 3.
19. See Tim Keirn, "Monopoly, Economic Thought and the Royal African Company", in *Early Modern Conceptions of Property*, ed. John Brewer and Susan Staves (Oxford: Routledge, 1996), 427–66. Keirn's study into the economic debates surrounding the company revealed that, between 1689 and 1714, parliament debated legislation or inquired into the state of the commercial organisation of the English trade to Africa in fifteen different sessions, and around 200 pamphlets were published on the subject (430 and 434). See his Appendix 2 for a bibliography of economic literature on the African trade from 1689 to 1714 (458–66).
20. Cited by Jean-Baptiste Labat in *Nouvelle relation de l'Afrique occidentale* (Paris, 1728) and translated from the French in Thomas Astley

[publisher], *A New General Collection of Voyages and Travels*, vol. 2 (London, 1745), 78.

21. For a detailed study of the implications for the slave trade, see William A. Pettigrew, *Freedom's Debt: The Royal African Company and the Politics of the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1672–1752* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2013).
22. Only in the top line of Kip's composite are the images arranged left to right as they were located on the coast from west to east; in the next two lines west to east works from right to left.
23. Cited by A.W. Lawrence, "Some Source Books for West African History", *Journal of African History* 2, no. 2 (1961), 227–34 (230). See also van Dantzig, "Willem Bosman's *New and Accurate Description*", 105 and 108, fn. 9.
24. Van Dantzig, "English Bosman and Dutch Bosman", 208 and 215, fn. 52.
25. Barbot, *Description of the Coasts of North and South-Guinea*, 664–68. *Reflections Upon the Constitution and Management of the Trade to Africa* was written anonymously by the economist, politician and pamphleteer Charles Davenant: see David Waddell, "Charles Davenant (1656–1714)—A Biographical Sketch", *Economic History Review*, New Series, 11, no. 2 (1958), 279–88.
26. Barbot, *Description of the Coasts of North and South-Guinea*, 667. Waddell commented that, in *Reflections*, Davenant took a position of "outright hostility towards the Dutch" ("Charles Davenant", 286).
27. John Walthoe, Thomas Wotton, Samuel Birt, Daniel Browne, Thomas Osborne, John Shuckburgh and Henry Lintot advertised six volumes in folio "being near finished" in the *London Evening Post*, 25 January 1732 (issue 649). The publication was announced in June the same year (issue 708).
28. Hair observed that Astley's collection was "outstanding and ahead of its time" in respect of critical analysis (*Barbot on Guinea*, vol. 1, xcviii, fn. 172).
29. Astley, *New General Collection*, vol. 1 (London, 1745), v.
30. Astley, *New General Collection*, vol. 2, vii.
31. See Deazley, "Commentary on the Engravers' Act (1735)", in *Primary Sources on Copyright (1450–1900)*, ed. L. Bently and M. Kretschmer (2008), http://www.copyrighthistory.org/record/uk_1735 (Accessed: 27 June 2017).
32. Astley, *New General Collection*, vol. 2, vii.
33. Astley's vol. 2 does, however, draw on Bosman's birds and animals: see plates 70–72 (720, 721, 724).
34. Astley, *New General Collection*, vol. 3 (London, 1746), v.

35. Astley, *New General Collection*, vol. 2, 464–85. William Smith, *A New Voyage to Guinea* (London, 1744).
36. For details of Smith's commission from the Royal African Company, see *New Voyage*, 2–6.
37. Smith, *New Voyage*, 130–31.
38. See the advert for subscriptions to "Thirty Different Pieces after the drawings of William Smith, Surveyor to the Royal African Company of England" in the *Daily Journal*, 18 March 1728.
39. The publication was advertised in the *Daily Journal*, 5 February 1730: "Printed for and sold only by J. Clark, engraver and printseller in Gray's-Inn".
40. Astley, *New General Collection*, vol. 2, 604.
41. Francis Moore, *Travels into the Inland Parts of Africa* (London, 1738). This book can be read online or downloaded from the World Digital Library at http://www.wdl.org/en/item/650 (Accessed: 20 June 2017). The plates showing James Fort appear at pages 13, 14 and 16. On Moore's original publication and subsequent variants, see Matthew H. Hill, "Towards a Chronology of the Publications of Francis Moore's 'Travels into the Inland Parts of Africa …'", *History in Africa* 19 (1992), 353–68.
42. Astley, *New General Collection*, vol. 2, viii.
43. Astley, *New General Collection*, vol. 2, vii.
44. Daniel Defoe, *An Essay Upon the Trade to Africa* (London, 1711), 5, 7.
45. *Daily Journal*, 18 March 1728 and 5 February 1730.
46. Geoff Quilley, "The Lie of the Land: Slavery and the Aesthetics of Imperial Landscape in Eighteenth-Century British Art", in *Representing Slavery*, ed. Hamilton and Blyth, 120–35 (124).
47. See *Atlas Maritimus & Commercialis; or, A General View of the World, so far as relates to Trade and Navigation* (London, 1728), 251. Defoe is thought to have written parts of the *Atlas* and certainly seems the likely author of the pages dealing with the Royal African Company.
48. Quilley, "The Lie of the Land", 124.
49. *Atlas Maritimus & Commercialis*, 251.
50. 26 March 1730, *Journal of the House of Commons*, vol. 21, 522. See also The National Archives Kew, London, T70/172, 104.
51. Robin Law, "Jean Barbot as a Source for the Slave Coast of West Africa", *History in Africa* 9 (1982), 155–73 (156). More than a decade later, following publication of *Barbot in Guinea*, Adam Jones commented that Barbot's work was "perhaps the most complicated challenge presented by an early source": "Drink Deep, or Taste Not: Thoughts on the Use of Early European Records in the Study of African Material Culture", *History in Africa* 21 (1994), 349–70 (355).

52. For textual source criticism beyond Barbot, see Beatrix Heintze and Adam Jones, eds, *European Sources for Sub-Saharan Africa before 1900: Use and Abuse*, *Paideuma: Mitteilungen zur Kulturkunde* 33 (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1987). Jones elsewhere suggested that images such as those that make up Smith's *Thirty Different Drafts* deserve the same level of critical and contextual analysis as text: see "William Smith the Plagiarist: A Rejoinder", *History in Africa* 7 (1980), 327–28, written in response to H.M. Feinberg, "An Eighteenth-Century Case of Plagiarism: William Smith's *A New Voyage to Guinea*", *History in Africa* 6 (1979), 45–50.
53. Elizabeth Sutton makes this point about the plates in Pieter de Marees's *Description and Historical Account of the Gold Kingdom of Guinea* (originally published in 1602), a book from which both Barbot and Bosman borrowed, and which is used as a primary source by modern historians: see *Early Modern Dutch Prints of Africa* (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2012), 2.
54. Van Dantzig, "English Bosman and Dutch Bosman", 189 and 212, fn. 4.
55. Hair, Jones and Law, eds, *Barbot on Guinea*, vol. 1, 2.
56. Hair, Jones and Law, eds, *Barbot on Guinea*, vol. 1, 2.
57. Hair, Jones and Law, eds, *Barbot on Guinea*, vol. 1, 7.
58. John Locke, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (London, 1693), 191.
59. Astley, *New General Collection*, vol. 2, viii.
60. Hair, Jones and Law, eds, *Barbot on Guinea*, vol. 1, 5.
61. Hair, Jones and Law, eds, *Barbot on Guinea*, vol. 1, li. For Hair's analysis and appreciation of Barbot's images, see also "'An Accomplish'd Traveller Will Take Draughts': Barbot's Illustrations of Guinea", *Hakluyt Society Annual Report* (1991), 12–20.
62. Hair, Jones and Law, eds, *Barbot on Guinea*, vol. 1, xlvi–li and cix–cxv; vol. 2, 801–37. On Barbot's terminology in the French account and English translation, see vol. 1, xcvii, fn. 169.
63. In his article on the process and decisions made in editing Barbot, Hair does not address the illustrations in detail, though he does comment that they "skimped on the ichthyology, preferring the ethnology, and thus there is scope too for more piscine study": "On Editing Barbot", *History in Africa* 20 (1993), 53–59.
64. Hair, Jones and Law, eds, *Barbot on Guinea*, vol. 1, 2 and xxv–xxvi. As noted by Hair, there is no evidence that Barbot prepared any of his illustrations for print, though an undated and apparently unpublished set of engravings in the British Library (Maps C.22.bb.10, formerly Maps 3.c.37), all depicting fortifications, could be the product of work undertaken at Barbot's request following his disappointment in 1689.
65. Hair, Jones and Law, eds, *Barbot on Guinea*, vol. 1, xlvi–xlvii.

66. J.D. Fage, "'Good Red Herring': The Definitive Barbot", *Journal of African History* 34, no. 2 (1993), 315–20 (319). Fage added: "Indeed it seems likely that Barbot's drawings could well be the most substantial and lifelike collection of illustrations made of the West African scene until William Allen went up the River Niger in the 1830s".
67. On the problems of translations as sources, see Beatrix Heintze, "Translations as Sources for African History", *History in Africa* 11 (1984), 131–61.
68. Robin Law, "The RAC of England's West African Correspondence, 1681–1699", *History in Africa* 20 (1993), 173–84.
69. A.W. Lawrence, *Trade Castles and Forts of West Africa* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1963). See also Lawrence, *Fortified Trade-Posts: The English in West Africa, 1645–1822* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1969). For Lawrence's brief chapter on images as evidence, "Early Draughtsmen", see 96–99 and 91–94, respectively.
70. Lawrence, *Trade Castles*, 96–97. The drawings, bound in a single volume, were then (c.1960) the property of the United Africa Company. They are now held by Unilever Archives & Records. Lawrence privileged drawings to the extent that he "referred to engravings by the date of the original drawing, if known; when that is not known, I have normally cited the date of the engraving, without repeating in every instance the obvious fact that the evidence may have already become obsolete by the year of issue" (19).
71. Hair, Jones and Law, eds, *Barbot on Guinea*, vol. 1, xcvii, fn. 165.
72. Hair, Jones and Law, eds, *Barbot on Guinea*, vol. 1, xlviii.
73. Hair, Jones and Law, eds, *Barbot on Guinea*, vol. 1, 9. The same could be argued for Smith's drawn prospects and plans.
74. Hair, Jones and Law, eds, *Barbot on Guinea*, vol. 1, 2.
75. Hair, Jones and Law, eds, *Barbot on Guinea*, vol. 1, 8. It is interesting to note that the British Admiralty warned its draughtsmen to take "particular care, when in foreign parts, not to do anything to give umbrage or offence to the governors, or inhabitants, of places in friendship with the king" (cited by Bernard Smith in *European Vision and the South Pacific* 2nd ed. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1989), 10.
76. Hair, Jones and Law, eds, *Barbot on Guinea*, vol. 1, 7.
77. R.B. [pseudonym of Nathaniel Crouch], *The English Acquisitions in Guinea and East India, Containing the Several Forts and Castles of the Royal African Company... [and] the Forts and Factories of the Honourable East India Company* (London, 1708). For more on Crouch, see Robert Mayer, "Nathaniel Crouch, Bookseller and Historian: Popular Historiography and Cultural Power in Late Seventeenth-Century England", *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 27, no. 3 (1994), 391–419.

78. In the Dutch edition, Bosman deemed it necessary to clarify: "the Coast of Guinea is part of Africa and not of the West Indies, as some think (because the West Indies are in America, and therefore in an entirely different part of the world)…" See van Dantzig, "English Bosman and Dutch Bosman", 188.
79. Lawrence, *Trade Castles*, 17.

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CHAPTER 5

Illusions of Grandeur and Protection: Perceptions and (Mis)Representations of the Defensive Efficacy of European-Built Fortifications on the Gold Coast, Seventeenth–Early Nineteenth Centuries

John Kwadwo Osei-Tutu and Hermann W. von Hesse

Introduction

Established trends in African Atlantic history have emphasised urbanism, trade, politics and the emergence of Atlantic creoles, African and Euro-African commercial and cultural intermediaries and power brokers who straddled both European and African worlds along the Gold Coast and West African littoral.[1] Others explore the architectural history and evolution of Ghana's forts and castles as centres of European and African trade and cultural interactions during and after the Atlantic slave trade.[2] However,

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there are still scholarly gaps in the social and cultural history of the fortification systems on the Gold Coast. Particularly, how their presence shaped the social cognition of the inhabitants in the region; how the littoral states of the Gold Coast utilised their respective relationships with the European settlements to make political claims relative to each other; and how the activities generated in and around the forts influenced the sociocultural and political dynamics of the region. Scholars give even less attention to littoral African imaginings of the protective capabilities of the fortifications, the commitments of their respective European allies to defend them in times of war.

This Study: Theme and Background

The general aim of this paper is to contribute primary research that throws light on how the fortresses featured in the intra-European commercial competition, the Afro-European interaction as well as in shaping the relationship among the indigenous states in the region in times of peace and of war. Conceptually framed, we explore the social cognition of both the African communities and European residents of the military efficacy of the fortifications in the volatile conditions of the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries. In this study, social cognition refers to both African and European perceptions and (mis)understandings of the sociopolitical conditions of the Gold Coast as well as how they envisaged the place of the fortresses in the strategies they used to confront and contain the volatility.

Three contemporaneous views from eighteenth and nineteenth century sources pretty sum up the broad themes and framework of this chapter. Paul Erdmann Isert, a German surgeon and naturalist in the employ of the Danes at Christiansborg Castle (Osu), noted perceptively in the 1780s, "a fortress, after all, is not a mushroom, which appears 1 day and disappears the next!"[3] Indeed, the forts and castles were neither ad hoc establishments nor were they built in a day; some took 6 or more years to build[4]; and many of them have outlived their original owners and their purposes. The enduring presence—some in (almost) pristine form—and historical importance of remnants of these buildings today render Isert's observation almost visionary. The second view by Edward Carstensen, the last Governor of the Danish establishment on

Gold Coast, insisted in the 1840s that "fort [Prinsensten] must show that it is capable by its own strength, to carry through its own commands and those of the King of Denmark."[5] Carstensen was expressing a sentiment held by several European company agents concerning the capability of the fortresses to project European power in West Africa prior to the late nineteenth century. The third view was by Nɔte Tsiɛ, a Gã lumɔ ('priest-ruler') and *Mãŋkrɑlo* or trade broker, who noted with gratitude in the 1740s, "If [I] had not at that time had the friendship of the Danes, who protected and pleaded for me, how would I have fared [against the Asante forces]?"[6] As the European fortresses were tenuous and equally vulnerable during the period of Akan states' expansion to the coast (1680–1820s), Nɔte Tsiɛ's remarks recall European recourse to diplomacy and appeasement to renegotiate their own presence as well as to shield their African coastal allies during wartime.

There were three main causes of instability and endemic warfare[7] in the Gold Coast region from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century. First, the vicious and often violent competition—of which the installation of forts and castles was a central strategy—embroiled the coastal allies of the rivalling Europeans. The turmoil caused by the competition was at its peak in the century after 1680.[8] The second cause of instability was the warfare and violence associated with the slave raids that fed the Atlantic slave trade. Paradoxically, dynamics of this trade immersed the West African region in the Atlantic economy, shaped socio-spatial formations and led to the emergence of cosmopolitan economies on the Gold Coast. The third was the growing militarism and coastward expansion drive of the Akan states of Akwamu, Akyem and Asante between 1680 and 1826 contributed immensely to the instability.

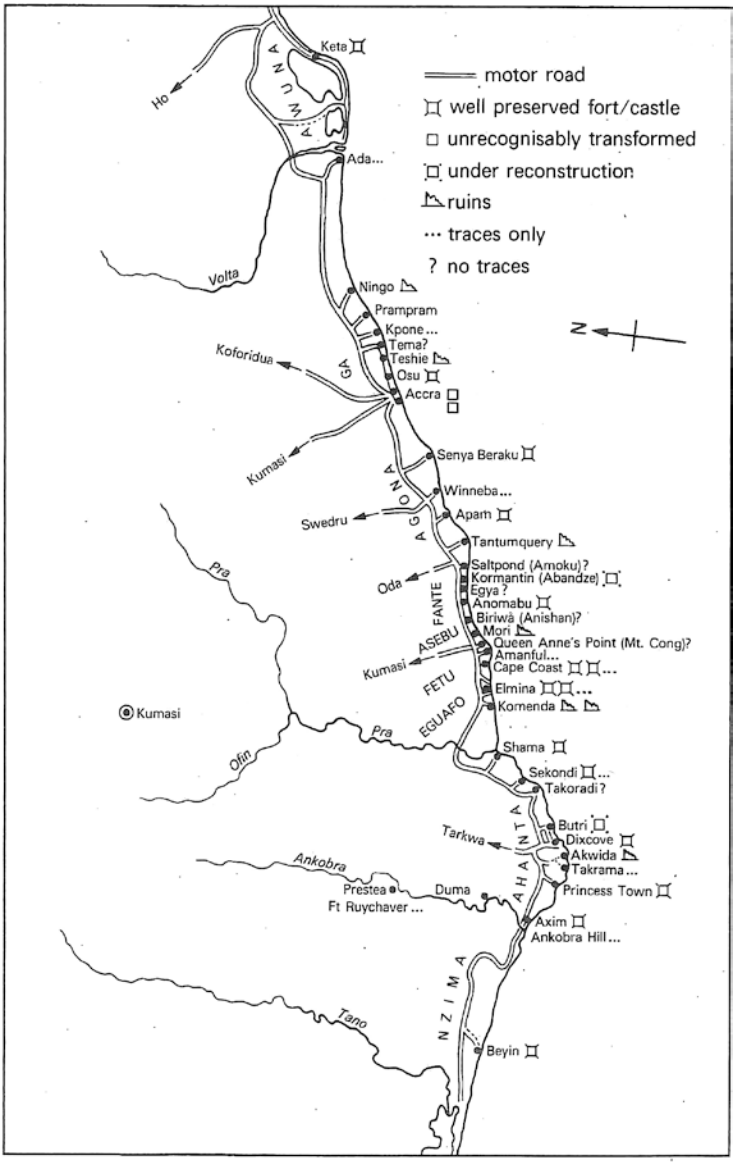
The main sources for this work are the contemporaneous material—archival records and printed travel accounts—of Europeans that, for a variety of reasons, came to West Africa. Though these sources focus largely on the exploits of the Europeans and largely depict African action as disruptive, it is possible through critical analysis of these sources to retrieve sketches voices, lives, thoughts and motives behind the actions of the depicted Africans that interacted with the Europeans. In other words, we try to transcend the Eurocentrism of the contemporaneous European sources by seeing the invisible as well as represented Africans in these accounts as purposeful actors in the social space.

Historical and Spatial Setting: Fortifications, Spheres of Interest and Security

Forts and castles were important strategic tools of European overseas competition for the trade in gold and slaves on the Gold Coast.[9] This commercial competition also manifested as political rivalry as each European establishment sought to institute and maintain alliance pacts with Gold Coast littoral states. For both European companies and their African host, the presence of the fortifications was a basis for forging treaty-based alliances and friendships, which also implied a commitment of mutual support and protection against enemies.[10]

There was an understanding among Europeans that the possession of a fort or a castle on the coast formed the basis for establishing mutually exclusive, albeit informal, spheres of commercial interest in the purlieu of such fortified establishments. As a rule, the European companies either persuaded or compelled the host African nations and allies to observe their sole rights to trade per the formal treaties signed prior to the building of fortifications. To the best of their militarily abilities, the garrison proceeded to enforce their unilateral commercial monopolies against smugglers and to defend their possessions against being captured by rival Europeans. However, as shown in Fig. 5.1, the spheres of interest were not always contiguous.

The sandwiched spatial arrangements of rivalling fortifications on the littoral led to the emergence of an intertwined system of spheres of interest and influence on the Gold Coast. By the 1650s, the Danes had a contiguous sphere of interest in the Gã-Daŋme-Aŋlɔ area. This stretched from Christiansborg Castle in Osu (1659) to Fort Prinsensten at Keta (1784) on the east bank of the River Volta, with smaller forts and redoubts in-between. This contiguity of Danish possessions was broken by a singular British fort at Prampram. Accra, the principal Gã town, hosted both Dutch Fort Crèvecœur and English James Fort within canon range of each other. The notion of "canon shot" gives a good idea of how close rivalling forts were to each other in some places. Westward from Accra was a sandwiched pattern of rivalling European fortified settlements in the coastal Akan—particularly the Agona, Fante and Ahanta—territories in the central and western parts of the Gold Coast. The respective headquarters of the European nations' slave emporia were equally sandwiched geographically. The Danish headquarters was at Christiansborg in the Gã territory, while both Cape Coast Castle and São Jorge da Mina (*St. George of the Mine*/Elmina Castle), which were the British and the Dutch headquarters, respectively, were in Fante



Map of the coast of Ghana, showing the forts and castles in their present condition

Fig. 5.1 "Map of the Coast of Ghana, showing the forts and castles in their present condition." Original in Albert van Dantzig, *Forts and Castles of Ghana* (Accra: Sedco, 1999), 89. Reproduced by Permission of Sedco Publishing Limited, Accra

territory. Until they left the Gold Coast at the beginning of the eighteenth century, the Brandenburg Company managed its Guinea trade from Grossfredrichsburg Fort at Pokesu (called Princes Town by the Dutch) in Ahanta territory.[11]

On their part, the Gã, Fante and Ahanta state that hosted these fortified European settlements were also motivated by the strategic, military, economic and political advantages the European commercial presence brought to their territory and people. Particularly, the Gã-Dãŋme states that were dominant within the Danish sphere utilised their relations with three competing European trading companies to great advantage. In Accra and Osu, which were loci of three rival European forts—the Dutch Fort Crèvecœur (1649), the Danish Fort Christiansborg (1660–1661) and the English James Fort (1673–1674)—the Gã monopolised and became important middlemen and brokers in the trade in gold, slaves and European luxury goods. At the same time, however, the dynamics of inter-European rivalry created conditions for a fragmented Gã-European alliance system in which vying Gã subgroups consolidated alliances with different European forts and companies, and thereby created and internalised sub-identities based on their relationships with European allies. Thus, those allied with the English fort were designated as *Ɔleshi*, those with the Dutch as *Kinkã*, and the Danish allies near Christiansborg Castle referred to themselves as *Dãnbii*.[12] Significantly, then, the Gã-Daŋme, Fante and Ahanta polities did become tangled not only in this spatial dynamic of the European fort systems, but also in the flux created by both the European competition and the coastward expansion of the forest Akan states such as Asante.[13] The urgent need for security thus compelled the coastal polities to forge mutual alliances of protection with the Dutch, British and Danish establishments.[14]

Illusions of Grandeur and Power

In what follows, we look at how the coastal Gã-Daŋme, Fante and Ahanta peoples appropriated the fortifications in discourse and in practice to manage their respective political and economic interests, their relations with rivalling Europeans companies, and the increasing militarism and successive coastward expansionism of the forest Akan states—Akwamu, Akyem and Asante—between 1680 and 1830. How did the fort trade and associated violence on the Gold Coast during the period shape the social cognition of the political and economic elite (trade

brokers and local rulers) and ordinary inhabitants of the major coastal slave trading entrepots? What expectations did Gold Coast (littoral) African societies have about the defensive and protective capacities of the fortifications as well as the commitments of their respective European allies to defend them during war? How did the littoral polities utilise their positions as Landlords (granters of land for erection) of the fortifications in their mutual dealings on the one hand, and in shaping and sustaining their respective relationships with the Europeans and the interior Akan states on the other hand? To what extent did fortifications act as deterrent against the coastward expansion of Akan imperial powers?

A.W. Lawrence described Christiansborg "as an example of aggrandizement" unparalleled in West Africa.[15] Monumental and intimidating as they might have appeared to be among the vernacular architecture of the period, the question is whether the buildings constituted real military power in the immediate vicinities as well as in the region. How capable were they of protecting the European settlements and adjacent allied African territories? Notably, forts and castles varied in size, design, quality of materials used to build them and their organisational strength in terms of command, garrison and armament. As such, their defensive and protective capabilities were various and relative. In addition, their state of repair and the nature of the relationship they kept with both African allies and enemies were important.

William Bosman, a Dutch employee of the Dutch West India Company in West Africa from 1688–1702, gave an account in his letters of the state of the fortifications and settlements of the rivalling European nations of the period. The general impression from Bosman's account is that the state of the fortifications and their defences varied from formidable to the dilapidated. For instance, the English fort at *Wimba* or *Simpa* (Winneba) was built in 1694 and described with a large measure of irony as being "so large that a Man may easily leap over them without a stick; and the Guns are of a proportionable [sic]bigness, one of them discharging a half Pound Ball". While comparing the English fort to some Dutch and other forts, Bosman wrote, "In short, it is like our Forts at Boutry [Butre], Zaconde [Sekondi], Chama [Shama] and Apam, and theirs at Dickjefchoft [Dixcove], a Fort which wants another to defend it". Indeed, he noted, many of the forts "hardly deserved the name of a fort". Moreover, there were many forts and castles that were in good shape, structurally, but poorly garrisoned. Bosman considered the English, Danish and Dutch forts in Accra to be among "the best

forts on the Coast". However, Fort James "like all the *English* Forts, is very meanly garrisoned, as if it were sufficient to build Forts, furnish them with Cannon and necessary Provisions, without Men: In which the *English* are everywhere deficient". In contrast, Bosman argued that the Danish Christiansborg was the most "beautiful", strongest and best defended, "too strong for the united force" of both the *English* and Dutch forts.[16]

Without proper care, however, even the best-looking and well-equipped establishments, such as Christiansborg, could deteriorate as Edward Carstensen (the last Governor of the Danish Gold Coast) observed in the 1840s about the dilapidated state of Danish forts such as Prinsensten in Quitta (Keta).[17] The size of the garrisons of the various forts fluctuated, which affected their defences and made them vulnerable against attack by both African and European rivals. The Portuguese were the first to experience the consequences of such vulnerability in the sixteenth. This culminated in their final expulsion from the Gold Coast by the Dutch in 1642, while the Danes sacked the Swedish African Company from the commercial competition by 1659.[18] Much later, in the nineteenth century, the Danish Governor also complained to his employers in Copenhagen that Fort Prinsensten at Keta and other out-forts were in bad shape and incapable by their "own strength [of carrying through] their own as well as the commands … of the King of Denmark" on the Gold Coast.[19]

Clearly, the fortifications, particularly the out-forts, were generally incapable of offering adequate protection to either the European residents or the African allies during much of the period under survey. Moreover, as many European observers of the status of European fortified settlements noted, "[European] Authority is very small, and confined within our own Walls: So that the Forts only serve to defend ourselves; for if we should make any Attempts on the *Negroes,* they would certainly end in our Destruction".[20] Under the circumstances, as Carstensen noted, though the relationships between European companies were tense, they generally helped each other.[21]

Treaties and Architectures of Protection

Despite the general awareness of the weak state of the fortifications as defensive devices, both the European company officials and their respective allied coastal African polities visualised them as the architectural manifestations of mutual protection. The Danes, for example,

acknowledged that though their authority over their allies was informal and weak, they were committed as "protectorate" powers "to protect the negro tribes who are under Danish protection". In fact, the idea of mutual protection against rivals and enemies was written into the treaties and agreements between Gold Coast authorities and European companies, with some having implications for the sovereignty of the former. In fact, attempts by the allied states to exercise sovereignty in their territories often led to tension and, sometimes, open conflict with their European counterparts who often (mis)interpreted formal treaties of friendship as "protectorate". The Dutch were particularly certain about their authority and economic monopoly in the territories in which they had forts. They demanded recognition as such and were ruthless against polities that sought to assert their independence and right to decide which European to engage with as well as to control the trade and other economic activity in their territories. Moreover, an Englishman who witnessed the situation on the Gold Coast wrote with some bias: "The Dutch … never forgive a negro caboceer, who does any service, or shews any civility, to an Englishman".[22]

By the terms of the Gã-Danish treaty of 18 August 1661 written in Danish, the Gã ruler who exercised his sovereignty to let the Danes build Christiansborg Castle also swore, "to help and protect the said Danish Company … against all hostile attacks and nuisances, whether committed by the inhabitants and natives or other white nations, whosoever they might be".[23] In contrast, the contents of the "Treaty between WIC and Ahanta and Butre", or the Butre Treaty of 27 August 1656, are presumptuous in content and incredible for its employment of the language of European medieval feudal social hierarchies in respect of their relationship with Africans. According to Michel Doortmont's translated version of the Dutch text, the Ahanta chiefs who signed the treaty virtually handed over their sovereignty to Dutch authorities "whose orders from this day we will submit to absolutely". In addition, they agreed to "bind our persons and possessions, as well as all our dependents and dependencies, in case we may ever be found to have done something against the good faith and contrary to the behaviour of good vassals." In return, the Dutch would undertake "to fortify and make the same defendable, in order to keep us safe and free from the dangers of war, as vassals" of the Dutch state and the Company.[24] The Ahanta chiefs may have willingly accepted Dutch promise of "protection", but they would on their own understanding hardly refer to themselves as "vassals" of a foreign

power. Given that the Butre Treaty was originally in Dutch and transmitted through local interpreters to the Ahanta signatories, the question is whether the translator represented the true contents and the Dutch officials' vision of the relationship to the chiefs.

In the years that they held commercial monopoly, the Dutch reportedly "treated the Blacks of *Mina,* and the rest of the Coast, very gently, caressing and presenting the Chief of them". However, when the English joined the competition and sought to strike alliances with the coastal polities in the second half of the seventeenth century, "the *Dutch* changed their former Civility into Severity to deter them from favouring their new Rivals".[25] In fact, the English incessantly complained of Dutch harassment or encouragement of their coastal allies to do so in the western Gold Coast. Reportedly, the "violences committed by the Dutch, even in time of full peace" included seizure of a "vast number of the English shipping", seizure or destruction of English fortifications (at "Kormentin" in 1666,[26] "Succondee" in 1698, and "Taccorary" in 1706), as well as the killing of some English staff.[27] There was strong suspicion that in cases when the Dutch did not directly engage in violence against their rivals, they nevertheless clandestinely promoted or encouraged their African allies to do it. The most dramatic of such alleged Dutch proxy attacks was the "siege of Dixcove" by Ahanta forces in 1750. The English account is that the Dutch "raised a war at Dixcove against the English, and avowedly supplied our enemies with ammunition from their fort of Boutry, …; seized our canoes going with supplies; imprisoned our people, and murdered one white man, at least looked on whilst the negroes did it. Had it not been for the providential arrival of a French vessel from Nantes, commanded by one captain Hall, the fort would inevitably have been taken, and every man massacred."[28]

Though quite dramatically rendered and speculative, it is clear that the other European nations lived in fear of the Dutch at this time.[29] Sometimes, such accusations appear unfounded as in the 1698 attack on the English fort at Sekondi. Though the English protested and accused the Dutch of instigating the Ahanta to attack them, the Ahanta action was independent of the Dutch. Indeed, it turned out that the Ahanta had also attacked both Dutch Fort Orange and a Dutch vessel anchored in the roads.[30] The Dutch used all means at their disposal, including military force, to maintain control in the western Gold Coast until the 1830s, when they had to contend with one of the most determined oppositions to their usurpation of power in Ahanta. The opposition,

which culminated in the so-called Ahanta–Dutch War in 1837–1839, illustrates how successive rulers of Ahanta understood and accepted the terms of their treaty-based relationship with the Dutch. According to Dutch accounts, the "war started with the killing of the young and inexperienced Acting Commander (governor) Tonneboeijer" and ended with the death of King Bonsu II of Ahanta that resulted in the break-up of the Ahanta kingdom. To quell the 'insurrection', the Dutch "sent an expeditionary force from the Netherlands, under the command of General Jan Verveer … [who] died towards the end of the expedition and was buried at sea."[31]

The current *Ahantaman* (Ahanta state) narrative of the Ahanta–Dutch War, however, portrays King Badu Bonsu II in heroic terms as "a courageous King who by his confrontation with the Dutch authorities, booked his place in the history of Ghana as one of the great African Chiefs who resisted the domination, exploitation and under-development of Africa by the European powers. … He rebelled against the Dutch colonialists and killed several Dutch officers, including the acting Governor, Tonneboejer".[32]

The context of the war relates to an economic dispute over the regulation of the flow of weapons and ammunition. In trying to control weapons flow in Ahanta to other parts of the region, the Ahanta King Badu Bonsu II seized a shipment of gunpowder from an Amsterdam trader meant for Wassa, the neighbouring kingdom.[33] It took the full force of a Dutch military expedition force from Holland to subdue the Ahanta independence forces under Badu Bonsu II, for whom the total subjugation of Ahanta in the Butre Treaty of 1656 might have seemed unreasonable if he were aware of it. Clearly, the immediate cause of war and show of Dutch military superiority was to punish and put the Ahanta in their place as defined by Dutch hierarchy of powers. The remote cause, however, was Badu Bonsu II's effort to exercise Ahanta's rights of autonomy as an independent economic actor against what the king might have seen as overbearing Dutch assumptions and intrusions. For forcefully insisting on his right to rule and be landlord of the European forts in his territory, Badu Bonsu II was arrested, court-marshalled in a Dutch military court and sentenced to death by hanging on 26 July 1838. Worse still, the Dutch displayed their revenge by decapitating Badu Bonsu II's head from his cold body and taking it as an ornamental trophy to the Netherlands. The Dutch, by force of superior military power imported from Europe, re-established control over the obviously subdued and

awe-stricken Ahanta State and recalling the Butre Treaty, they reorganized the state, appointing the Chief of Butre as regent. On 23 July 2009, 171 years after the event, the Dutch Government agreed to release the head of the king to *Ahantaman*. An Ahanta funeral delegation went to The Hague bring the head of Badu Bonsu II "home", to a heroic welcome and for proper traditional royal burial.[34] Badu Bonsu II's fate was not unique in Afro-European relationships in the period, though the approach of each European power might have been different.

Maximising Profit: Intermediaries in the Militarised Economic Space

The militarised and competitive economic space of Atlantic commerce produced an elite wealthy African merchant class called *abirempɔŋ* or *Makelaar* (Merchant Princes/trade brokers/intermediaries) in the major coastal towns of the Gold Coast.[35] The *abirempɔŋ* grew politically influential due to wealth accumulated through the moderating role they played in the gold and slave trades between the coast and the forest. Many of them became important military and commercial actors who seized every opportunity, peaceful or otherwise, to maximise their profits. Thus, they positioned themselves as rivals, often challenging the monopolistic structure of European commerce. Their political and commercial strategies involved relating to multiple European allies as well as trading with any European companies that offered better profit, but in "violation" of unilateral European edicts on monopoly. They included a large number of Euro-African, a mixed race of urban dwellers who enjoyed the privileges of both European and African pedigrees. For example, Edward Barter was an English-educated man of Anglo-Fante parentage who became an important trader and the de facto ruler of Cape Coast in the 1690s. By 1700, he had monopolised the Atlantic trade in that town. As a sign of his wealth and "aristocratic way of life," Barter built a miniature fort-shaped house on which he hoisted the English flag and mounted cannons.[36] It would appear that the most powerful and aggressive *abirempɔŋ* were those of pure African stock who, with the backing of their state, defended their commercial privileges militarily, including seizure of forts. Two episodes serve to illustrate the point. The first concerned the famous seizure of Christiansborg Castle by a certain Asameni of Akwamu in 1693, and the second is the exploits of John Conny (Gyan Kɔne/Kpole) of Ahanta in 1717–1724.

To both Europeans and Africans alike, one famous and dreaded *ɔbirempɔn* on the eastern Gold Coast was Asameni, an Akwamu royal and a "notable Akwamu trader."[37] Little is known about his early life beyond the general narrative from the collective memory that he was a "company slave"[38] at Fort Christiansborg. Captain Philips notes in 1693 that Asameni had served as a cook to "one of the English Factories".[39] While the Danish Governor, Fensman, noted in 1688 that Asameni was "the instigator between me and the King of Quamboe [Akwamu] and the Negroes here all along".[40] What is certain is that he became a powerful trade intermediary in the eastern Gold Coast, and the Danes "had great Confidence" in him because of his "great Interest in that Country" and ability to "procure them much Trade".[41] Contemporaneous European sources place varied emphasis on Asameni's capture of the castle and his brief tenure as Akwamu Governor of Christiansborg Castle. Generally, the embarrassed Danish establishment of the period represented Asameni's takeover of Christiansborg as a personal and treacherous feat. Other sources presented his one-year long administration of the fort as a comical sideshow in Akwamu–Danish relations.[42]

However, the events of 1693–1694 had a broader historical background. The Akwamu had been looking for an opportunity to punish the Danes for "some Insults on the King of *Akkra*".[43] Knowing the weak state of the garrison at that time, the Akwamu decided to employ the Trojan horse tactic, whereby their men would gain access to the fort under the pretext of buying wares and ammunition and then overpower the garrison through carefully planned military deception.[44] Their relative, Asameni, was a perfect "Trojan horse"; he had intricate knowledge of Christiansborg, while the Danes trusted him and relied on his business mediation skills to attract trade for themselves. We cite Barbot's plausible account of the episode *in extenso* for its detail.

> Accordingly, Assemmi [sic] made the Danish Governor believe be would bring him a considerable Number of Merchants at once to buy Firearms, advising him to raise the Price. On the Day appointed, Assemmi brought with him eighty bold Blacks, whom the *Danes* admitted into the Fort, suspecting no Treachery. When the Blacks bad agreed for the Arms and paid the Price in. Gold, they loaded their muskets with Powder and Ball, as if to try them; but suddenly fell on the Garrisons, which consisted of twenty-five or thirty *Danes,* who presently yielded the Fort. They immediately dispersed the *Danes* up the Country; after which the King of and the Blacks stripped the Fort; taking a Booty of about seven thousand Pound.

> *The fort was given to Assemmi, who garrisoned it with his Blacks, settling in it, and trading with all European ships, which come there to great profit* [our italics].[45]

Asameni commanded Christiansborg for nearly 1 year, "trading with the *Dutch* Interlopers, whom he supplied with Water and other Necessaries" and entertaining Europeans he cared to invite.[46] After intense negotiations between Danish officials from Copenhagen and the "King of Quamboe", the fort was returned to the Danes "against the payment in goods worth at a price of 3000 rdl".[47]

Clearly, the events of 1693–1694 show that Asameni was an Akwamu patriot and opportunistic business person who exploited the strained relationship between the Akwamu and the Danes as well as his close relations with the latter to gain personal economic and political advantage. Asameni continuously defied Danish trade restrictions in the Danish-allied town of Labadi after the return of the fort to the Danes, who still feared that he was instigating a new Akwamu takeover in the 1710s.[48] Right up until his death in auspicious circumstances, the Danes and other Europeans in Accra saw Asameni as a lawless "rogue" who could not even be restrained by the Akwamuhene.[49] Among the booty taken away by the Akwamu were the keys of the Castle, which they added to the war trophy. The keys are still displayed on sacred days of the Akwamu calendar.[50]

The second notable episode concerned the cession of the possessions of the Brandenburg Africa Company to the Dutch. The Brandenburg Company had gained permission to establish in Ahanta and Nzema on the western Gold Coast from 1683 to 1717. In 1717, the Company decided to cede its possessions to the Dutch without consulting the Ahanta rulers or the politically influential broker, John Konny (or Conny) . Meanwhile, while preparing for their departure in 1716, the Brandenburgers had appointed Konny as caretaker of Grossfredrichsburg. He used this opportunity to drive a most advantageous and competitive trade in gold and slaves to the chagrin of the Dutch and other European companies. Until 1724, Konny and the Ahanta forces successfully defended the fort and the trade against successive attempts by the Dutch to take it firstly through negotiations in 1722 and secondly by force of arms. This brief standoff against Dutch—and, more broadly, European—unilateralism has reverberated around the African Diaspora and is celebrated all over the black Caribbean since the late eighteenth century

as the "'John Canoe' Festivals". Admirers of John Konny's feat have sometimes referred commemoratively to Grossfredrichsburg as "Conny's Castle" and to Konny as "the last Prussian Negro Prince".[51] This episode, like that of Badu Bonsu II's struggle, underscores how some Ahanta rulers sought to contain European political and economic ambitions and maintain sovereign control over Ahantaman.[52]

Akan Militarism and Expansionism: Motives Nature and Expanse

Akan conquest and domination of the Gold Coast occurred in waves, starting with the Akwamu conquest and control of the states within the Danish sphere of interest, particularly the Gã-Daŋme territory, Akwapim and up to Ouidah from 1677 to 1730. Asante was an ally of Akwamu, whereas Akyem was their enemy. From 1730, a coalition of Akyem and the Gã overthrew Akwamu, with Akyem becoming the new coastal overlord until 1742, when the Asante army, which was at its imperial peak, overran and dominated the entire coast from 1742–1826. This constellation of powers and alliances among the Akan powers and between them and the coastal states defined the nature of Akan expansionist terrain for a long time.[53]

An outline of the motives of Akan coastward expansionism from the seventeenth century will help us understand the variations of impacts of the successive invasions at different parts of the Gold Coast at different times. Importantly, despite the violence associated with the imperial wars, the focus was not on uprooting the established European settlements or annihilating the coastal polities. That said, they did not spare those that sought to obstruct their advances and goals. The main reason for conquering the coastal states was an economic one: to gain direct control of the African side of the Atlantic trade to which they were the main suppliers of commodities and enslaved Africans sought by Europeans. This southward gaze to the Atlantic coast was a major consequence of the de-emphasis on the old Sudanic trade and a preference for the maritime trade at the forts.[54] Tribute or costume payments, taxation of the trade and other fees paid by the Europeans added revenue to their treasuries.[55] The second motive was imperial: to conquer territories and expand their influence. However, significantly though each of the successive Akan overlords placed governors in the conquered territories, their

control did not lead to the obliteration of the social and political structures and practices of the coastal societies. In fact, the evolving coastal systems continued to develop a unique character, albeit under significant influence from the Akan social and cultural forms.

Geographically, the Gã-Dãŋme area was probably the worst casualty in the early stages of the inland Akan expansion due to its location at the centre of the fort-based trading system run by three competing European companies. The Gã leadership lamented Akwamu's 1677 destruction of the original Gã state (Great Accra) and its inland capital, Ayawaso, in apocalyptic and Gã cosmological terms, as when "all the world was spoilt".[56] Apart from the violence of the wars of conquests and of state-sponsored slave raiding, the actions of marauding bands heightened insecurity and caused trepidation among Africans and Europeans in the region. Reportedly, in December 1732, Akwamu "poachers … entirely spoilt the Dutch lodge of Oppercommies Elet at Tema and chased away the whites from it", at the same time as "some Akimse [Akyem] Negroes … robbed and killed quite recently all the inhabitants of a village called Injan [Enyan], near the Dutch Fort at Senya Bereku". These actions dissuaded the Dutch from rebuilding their lodge at Tema.[57] The Dutch, the Danes and their respective coastal allies felt insecure due to the Asante threat to come down with Opoku Ware and "win the whole country" of the Gã-Dãŋme people. Indeed, the Asante did not hesitate in taking punitive action against the Danish Fort Fredensborg and the allied town, Ningo, due to the Commandant Christian Glob Dorf's insults of the Asante forces as "thieves and vagabonds".[58]

The Fante coast, which was further to the west of Accra, did not experience similar attacks until the first two decades of the nineteenth century. L.F. Rømer observed that the "Fante is the only known coastal nation on the entire Coast that has never been unlucky in war. That is to say, their enemies have never gained power over them in a violent manner".[59] Rømer's attribution of Fante freedom from Asante's subjugation prior to 1807 to mere luck as well as the Kingdom's preoccupation with conquests in the northern savannah polities of Gonja and Dagbon is simplistic. In 1807, despite still strong British presence at Cape Coast Castle, the Asante army overran the Fante territory and occupied all the major towns except Anomabu.[60] In contrast to the English who until 1807 had managed to prevent Asante occupation of Fanteland, the Dutch and Danish appeared to be variegate and evasive when it comes to the occupation of the eastern parts of Gold Coast by the Akan imperial

forces. For instance, in February 1730, the Dutch commandant at Crèvecœur in Accra justified the fort's inability to ward off an Akwamu siege of Kinkã (Dutch Accra), saying: "at night he did not see the difference between friend and foe".[61]

African Expectations of Protection and European Self-Preservation in the East

The successive coastward expansion of the forest Akan states from the 1670s constituted a test of the principles of mutual alliance for protection would work in real war situations. What were the expectations of the coastal polities regarding protection by their European allies against the Akan offensives? How did the Europeans relate to the Akan expansionists for the preservation of their interests and for the good of their traditional coastal allies? The contemporaneously published European records indicate that the turmoil that accompanied the invasions and the capture of people for sale as slaves created anxiety among the coastal populations, many of whom, particularly the Danish allies, expected the forts to provide refuge.

The respective European forts made efforts to help distressed allies in some cases. Writing about Europeans the commitment to assisting the coastal allies during Asante's invasions of the coast in the 1740s, Rømer reported: "The Dutch Nation normally protects its subjects, and does not leave them a prey to their enemies".[62] As we have established elsewhere in this chapter, though many of the fortifications were not adequately equipped to act as deterrents against determined competitors and enemies, some forts, such as Christiansborg, were equipped with protective outworks (strong wall built around main fort) and provided security to large numbers of refugees. On the contrary, the Danish fort Fredensborg (at Ningo[63]) lacked defensive outworks and could only take in a few refugees. Thus, in 1742 when an Asante contingent of 3000–4000 men besieged Fredensborg, "more than one hundred Negroes" were captured while only a few "escaped into the fort".[64]

Nevertheless, even if the Europeans were committed to defending their allies militarily against the Akan imperial states, they were incapable of doing so because of the generally weak defences of the forts and castles. Another dissuading reason was that they shared economic goals with the forest Akan states to engage in free flowing and mutually profitable trade. As long as slave trading remained the fundamental commercial

focus–as it was until the first decades of the nineteenth century–it would have been counter-productive for the main Europeans states to court antagonism of the forest Akan powers who were the main suppliers of the slaves and commodities that were crucial to the Atlantic trade. In other words, permanent European economic and strategic interest gained precedence over a desire to keep permanent friends on the coast.

European pragmatism and self-preservation during the Akan imperial period were manifest in ways that reflected both the competitive spirit of the West African Atlantic commercial space and the dilemmas of negotiating the interests of traditional coastal allies. Reality dictated European reaction, as appeasement and diplomacy informed their course of engagements with both the conqueror and the conquered. First, there was a general clamour to recognise, form friendships with and gain favours from each of the successive conquering Akan states, with transference of allegiance from one power to another as the imperial situation changed. Second, there was strong effort to intercede on behalf of allies who had offended the new suzerains.

Initial reactions of the Danes, Dutch and English to the forest Akan militarism and expansionism were complicated, ambivalent and dilemmatic. During the Akwamu period (1677–1730s), for instance, the staff of the Danish Gold Coast administration was divided as to whether to recognise the new suzerain or not. One faction, led by a top Danish Privy Council member who was married to the daughter of a Gã chief, recommended Danish opposition. The Governor, leading another faction, recognised Akwamu suzerainty but preferred Danish neutrality. The Governor's reason was that "this war did not concern the forts, but the Negroes who live below the forts".[65] Orders from the Directors of the Danish company in Copenhagen were unambiguous: the Danish officials were to respect the authority of the Akwamu kings and to preserve order in the Danish commercial sphere.[66] Later, in January 1730, the Danish Governor even requested Akwamu military action to neutralise an imminent coalition of rebellious Gã and their English and Dutch supporters.[67] On their part, the Dutch consolidated their long friendship with Akwamu via a treaty of mutual dealings in 1703.[68] Reporting the flux on the Gold Coast and dilemmas of the Europeans to London in 1709, the Chief English Factor at James Fort noted, "Sir Dalby is for peace, & is for ye King of Quomboe [Akwamu], who is like to obtain ye Better & who promises great things in our Favour".[69]

Having gained friendships influence through recognition of the successive Akan imperial powers, the three major European players in the imperial drama could apply diplomacy and intermediation on behalf of their allies. Some coastal leaders were grateful to the European allies for interceding on their behalf in the aftermath of the Asante army's occupation of the Gã-Dãŋme region in 1742. For instance, Nɔte Tsiɛ, a priest-ruler and *Mãŋkralo* (trade broker), told Rømer:

> Did you not see how keen the Assiantees [Asante] were to harm me after they had won a victory over the Akims [Akyem] and how they made their way to us instead of to our neighbours? If [I] had not at that time had the friendship of the Danes, who protected and pleaded for me how would I have fared?[70]

Similarly, Dutch negotiation ensured protection for the people of Kinkã (Dutch Accra) generally and the family of *Makelaar* Dako, who assisted the Akyem to overthrow Akwamu in 1730. Akwamu bands subsequently killed him during a mission to negotiate with the Akyem rulers. Though the sources do not explain why, it would appear that Dako had also incurred the displeasure of the Asante. Thus following their invasions in 1742, Asante's negotiators demanded "anything that could be got from the deceased's household, wives and slaves to the old Assiantyn [Asante] ambassador".[71]

Asante, the Fante and the Europeans

Though the pattern of proactive diplomacy was similar across the Gold Coast, it played out in a slightly different context in the western parts of the Gold Coast, where Asante's long-standing interests in Edena (Elmina) as well as Dutch and British competition for pre-eminence produced different dynamics with the same results as in the east. Edena hosted São Jorge da Mina, the headquarters of the Dutch enterprise, while Oguaa (Cape Coast), which lay barely three miles or five kilometres to the east, was the headquarters of the British company. Thus, two key Fante trading towns were forced into alliance with two of the competing European nations from forts that were within a canon shot of each other. A further complication to the equation of alliance systems was that Asante—an enemy of Oguaa and other Anglo-Fante allies—had

always had access to the western coastal trade due to its alliance with Edena and the Dutch. In addition, in 1807 the Asante defied the British presence and occupied the Fante polities except Anomabo, whose rulers often exploited British apprehensions about the Dutch-Elmina-Asante alliance much to their own economic advantage.[72] Thus, the Asante conquest added another dimension to the already complicated permutations of power and alliance structures in the area.

Our presentation of what transpired after the Asante victory and during the peace negotiations is based on the records generated by the Dutch officials at Elmina, which show some biases in presenting particularly the actions of the English. The English, who hitherto had been a sort of buffering forts against the extension of Asante's influence beyond Edena, made belated overtures of appeasement by sending the "English flag and staff" to the victors. However, as van Neck, the Dutch negotiator reported with obvious glee and exaggeration, the victorious Asante rejected these tokens of British friendship and dominance because they "had no other masters but Hollanders".[73] The Dutch penchant for using descriptive subordinating words, in this case "masters", to describe their relation with Africans is apparent here. Paradoxically, even though the Dutch regarded Asante as a formidable ally, they were unsure of Asante's intensions regarding other Dutch allied towns. In 1816, H.W. Daendels, Director-General of the Dutch Headquarters at Elmina, warned that "we should have to expect the same disasters [Asante occupation] if this town [Edena] was not included in the peace, and its tranquillity guaranteed by the king of Ashantee". True to Dutch fears, a division of the Asante army occupied the Dutch-allied village, "Quow Myzang" (Kwaw Mensa) near Elmina, whose inhabitants fled to São Jorge da Mina. The commander of the Asante occupation force apologized to Daendels later.[74]

In the midst of the volatility and insecurity, the Dutch and the English competed to boost their diplomatic and commercial influence and prestige among the victorious Asante and the vanquished Fante people. In this respect, during the peace meetings, the representatives of the English and the Dutch were alert in ensuring that the translation of their submissions into the Twi language for the benefit of the Asante delegation was accurate. Thus, the Dutch negotiator, van Neck, protested strongly when he discovered that David Mill Graves, the Anglo-Fanti translator, had translated his speech to mean that the "Hollanders" were subordinate to the English and that Cape Coast Castle had more "[trade] goods and stores" than the Dutch São Jorge da Mina had.[75]

The episode indicates both the intensity of rivalry and a pragmatic, but self-serving, tendency among Europeans to reap political and economic capital out of a volatile political situation. It also suggests the influence that translators as intermediaries had in imposing meanings in the discourse of power.

Besides, in this diplomatic jinx the European officials were willing to put pressure on their allies to accede to the demands of the victors when interceding on behalf of their Fante allies. For instance, in order to appease the Asantehene, Osei Bonsu, the British Governor, White, impressed upon some Fante *ahenfo* (rulers) to hand over three of the King's "slaves" who were under their protection, otherwise the English "would no longer protect them". Obviously, Governor White was concerned about the security and commercial implications of not handing the men over to the Asantehene who had instructed his generals to "find these men; if they have jumped into the sea, you must swim after them. If they are under a fort, which will not give them up, you must fight against it and take, and bring these renegades to me".[76]

Osei Bonsu's orders are historically significant as they are indicative of a cognitive process of Asante's adaptation to Atlantic commerce and politics at close hold. Asante's cautiousness towards the sea and the littoral was proverbial. In Asante's world view prior to the conquest, the littoral represented a liminal world with a dreadful and fearsome unending body of water. Rømer's recollections from the 1740s reveal that Asantehene Opoku Ware I entreated Nɔi (a Gã emissary of the Danes) to help Asante traders steer away from the "sea-devils" (*sasabonsam*) on the shore "so that I may not lose too many [of them]".[77] Apparently, Gã, Fante and Elmina intermediaries manipulated Asante traders' fear of "sea-devils" and in some cases even sold them to the European forts or interlopers as Atlantic slaves.[78] By the eighteenth century, Asante's quest to control the coastal trade and accumulate wealth and power appeared to have erased the sense of awe and wonder among Asante officialdom. Following his suppression of a Fante rebellion in 1811, Asantehene Osei Bonsu waded into the sea at Winneba, and adopted as title *bonsu*, the Akan name for the whale, which the coastal fishermen considered to be the largest mammal in the sea. By these singular acts, Asantehene Osei Bonsu demystified prior Asante suspicion of the sea bordering the territory they had conquered. These developments point to an evolving Asante social cognition influenced and shaped by Atlantic trade and politics. In 1826, a coalition of coastal states mobilised and with the

support of the British and the Danes decisively defeated the Asante forces at Katamaso on the Accra plains, thus ending the spree of imperial Akan dominance of the coastal trade and politics.

Conclusion

Erected purposely to protect those who administered the trade of the competing European companies, the European-built forts and castles of Ghana had and still have significant roles in the political, economic and social-cultural histories of both West Africa and the Atlantic world. Indeed, right from the start, the fortifications played tangible roles in the everyday lived experiences as well as in symbolic representations of the people in the region from the fifteenth to the nineteenth centuries. This chapter examined the extent to which the forts and castles met the expectations of both the Africans and Europeans who perceived the forts as grand protective military architectures and made the following findings. First, monumental and intimidating as they appeared to be within the vernacular architecture of the Gold Coast, both Europeans and African allies discovered that these edifices were not deterrents against enemy attacks and seizure during the volatile periods of the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries. Second, the forts and castles-centred trade attracted the forest Akan states—Akwamu, Akyem and Asante—to turn their imperial and commercial gaze away from the Sudanic and towards the maritime routes leading to and from the Gold Coast. Third, unwilling and in fact unable to engage the expansionist militarism of the Akan states between 1670s and the 1820s, the Danes, Dutch and the English adopted pragmatic approaches—diplomacy and intercession—to assuage the victors, to further their respective interest and to protect their vulnerable allies.

Chronologically, our chapter ends with the defeat of Asante's imperialism on the coast in 1826, but the events leading to the rise of the British as the dominant European nation and hegemon from 1840s to 1870s were continuously shaped by the historical alliance systems associated with European commercial rivalry and the indigenous power constellations. Thus, when the British began to enforce a new colonial hierarchy and hegemonic power after they bought out the Danish and Dutch forts and establishments in 1850 and 1872, respectively, the former allies of the Danes and the Dutch felt betrayed. Unhappy with their new status as "Ŋleshi/British-bii" (British allies) rather than Dãnbii (Danish allies)

and Dutch allies, the people of Osu and Elmina took up arms against the British in 1854 and 1873, respectively.[79] The British quelled these rebellions by using navy ships to bombard the rebellious towns. Though not central to British colonial policy, the acquired forts and castles became part of the infrastructure of the British colonialism on the Gold Coast, particularly as administrative centres, which shows a continuity with their past role as commercial headquarters of the companies. In both popular Gold Coast and contemporary Ghanaian discourses and imagination about power, the forts and castles were/are imagined as *aban* or *amralo* (government). Unlike the Dutch and particularly the Danes, the new British colonial regime showed that it was capable by its own strength, to carry through its own commands and those of the British Monarch. The proclamation of the Gold Coast Colony and Protectorates in 1874 finally gave Britain legal backing to what had hitherto been an informal colony since the mid-nineteenth century.[80]

Notes

1. K.Y. Daaku, *Trade and politics on the Gold Coast, 1600–1720: a study of the African reaction to European trade* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970); M. Priestly, West African Trade and Coast Society: A Family Study (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969); Odotei, "Ga and their Neighbours"; R. Law, *Ouidah: The Social History Of West African Slaving 'Port', 1727–1892* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2004); R.A. Kea, *A Cultural and Social History of Ghana from the Seventeenth to the Nineteenth Century: The Gold Coast in the Age of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade* (New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 2012).
2. See A.W. Lawrence, *Trade Castles and Forts*; van Dantzig, *Forts and Castles of Ghana*; J.K. Anquandah, *Castles and Forts of Ghana* (Paris: Atalante, 1999); A.D.C Hyland, "Architectural History of Cape Coast," *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, New Series, 1, no.2 (1995); W. St. Clair, *The Grand Slave Emporium: Cape Coast Castle and the British Slave Trade* (London: Profile Books, 2006).
3. Paul Erdmann Isert, *Letters on West Africa and the Slave Trade: Paul Erdmann Isert's Journey to Guinea and the Caribbean Islands in Columbia* (1788) ed. by Selena Axelrod Winsnes (Accra: Sub-Saharan Publishers, 2007), 96.
4. William Bosman, *A New and Accurate Description of the Coast of Guinea* (Cambridge Library Collections: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 14. Accessed at: http://ebooks.cambridge.org/ebook.jsf?bid=CBO9781139034555.

5. Edward Carstensen, *Closing the Books: Governor Edward Carstensen on Danish Guinea, 1842–1850*. Translated from the Danish by Tove Storsveen (Accra: Sub-Saharan Publishers, 2010), 93.
6. Reported in Ludewig Ferdinand Rømer, *A Reliable Account of the Coast of Guinea (1760)* ed. by Selena Axelrod Winsnes (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 93–94.
7. A.M Howard and R.M. Shane, "Introduction: African History and Social Space in Africa" in *The Spatial Factor in African History: The Relationship of the Social, Material, and the Perceptual*, ed. Allen M. Howard and Richard Shane (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2005), 99–100; J. Thornton, *Warfare in Atlantic Africa, 1500–1800* (London: UCL Press, London 1999), 57.
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9. For more details on intra-European and African and European and intra-European commercial and political alliances, rivalries and on "Merchant Princes" in particular see K.Y. Daaku, *Trade and politics*, 127–128.
10. "*Treaty between Gã Mantse Okaikoi with King of Denmark and the Danish Africa Company*". Reproduced in Ole Justesen (ed.) and James Manley (trans.), *Danish Sources for the History of Ghana, 1657–1754*, Vol. 1: 1657–1735 (Copenhagen: historisk-filosofiske Skrifter 30), 12–13.
11. See *Atlas of the Gold Coast* (Accra: Gold Coast Survey Department, 1949), 20.
12. H.W. von Hesse, "Euro-Africans, Afro-Brazilians and the Evolution of Social Space in Nineteenth-Century Accra" (M.Phil. diss., University of Ghana, 2014), 1.
13. J. Thornton, *Warfare in Atlantic Africa, 1500–1800*, 73.
14. J. Parker, *Making the Town*, 211.
15. Lawrence, 199. For the narrative about the aggrandisement, see Romer, 211.
16. Bosman, 14–15 and 63–64.
17. Carstensen, 207–228.
18. For a general account of Portuguese vulnerability in West Africa, see Blake, 100–101.
19. *Closing the Books*, 96.
20. Bosman 66–69.
21. *Closing the Books,* 174.
22. John Hippisley, Essays. I. On the Populousness of Africa. (London, 1764). Accessed at Eighteenth Century Collections Online; Gale, 39–42.
23. "*Treaty with King of Denmark and the Danish Africa Company*." See Ole Justesen, *Danish Sources for the History of Ghana,* 12–13.
24. Michel R. Doortmont & Jinna Smit, *Sources for the Mutual History of Ghana and the Netherlands: An annotated guide to the Dutch archives*

relating to Ghana and West Africa in the Nationaal Archief, 1593–1960s, (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2007), 280–281.

25. Barbot, 166, also cited in Thomas Astley, 572.
26. Barbot, 166, Thomas Astley, 572.
27. Hippisley, Essays, 35–37.
28. Hippisley, 39–42.
29. What is missing though is the Dutch version of events which future research will help to enlighten.
30. A.B Ellis, *A History of the Gold Coast of West Africa* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1893), 91–92; Hippisley, 39–32.
31. Michel R. Doortmont and Jinna Smit, 275.
32. "Ahanta King To Be Buried After 174 Years", General News 2012-011, http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/AhantaKingToBeBuriedAfter174Years235592.
33. See Ineke van Kessel, "Driehonderd jaar Nederlands-Ghanese handelsbetrekkingen", *Historisch Nieuwsblad*, (2001), 4. "Dutch-Ahanta War": http://research.omicsgroup.org/index.php/Dutch%E2%80%93Ahanta.
34. "Ahanta King to be buried after 174 Years", General News 2012011", http://www.ghanaweb.com; "Badu Bonsu II", http://www.worldlibrary.org/articles/badu_bonsu_ii; Dutch to return Ghana king's head". BBC News. 20 March 2009; "Dutch return head of Ghana king". *BBC News.* 23 July 2009.
35. *Abirempɔŋ* Akan, plural; *ɔbirempɔn*, singular. Adopted in the Gã as *oblempɔŋ*.
36. See Daaku,*Trade and Politics*, 98.
37. Anquandah, 27.
38. This suggests that he was given probably to the Danes as guarantee for debt.
39. Captain Thomas Phillips. See *Abstract of Voyages along the Coast of Guinea to Whidaw, the Island of St. Thomas, and thence to Barbadoes, in 1693.* Thomas Asley Collections, 403.
40. See Friday 21 September 1688, Governor Fensman, Christiansborg in Daybook kept by Governor Fensman, Christiansborg, 23 June 1688–7 April 1689 in Justesen, *Danish Sources for the History of Ghana*, 1091.
41. Barbot, 447–448, also in Thomas Astley, *Voyages*, 618.
42. Bosman, 67–68.
43. The reference must be to the Akwamu rulers, probably Basua, as the Gã-Daŋme area was at this time under Akwamu rule. Up to 1699, the Akwamu operated a "double hierarchy" comprising a regent, Basua, and his nephew, the minor Akonno who was backed by his mother. See Bosman, 65–66; Barbot, 447.
44. Phillips, 402.

45. Barbot, 447–448, also in Thomas Astley, 618; For Captain Thomas Phillips' account of the Asameni episode, see Thomas Asley Collections, 402–403. Rask, 18.
46. Phillips in Thomas Astley, 42.
47. Ole Justesen, ed., *Danish Sources for the History of Ghana,* 107–109. G. Nørregård, *Danish Settlements in West Africa: 1658–1850*, trans. and ed. by Sigurd Mammon (Boston: Boston University Press, 1966), 55. This was not be the first time that the Danes lost and regained Christiansborg Castle. In 1679, the fort's Greek deputy commandant seized and sold it to the Portuguese who renamed it São Francisco Xavier. It was resold to the Danes in 1683. See Barbot, 617; Anquandah, 26–27. Rdl. (*rixdollars)* was the Danish currency unit.
48. Gov Lygaard, Christiansborg, to the Directors of the West India and Guinea Company, Copenhagen, 6 March 1711 in Ole Justesen, *Danish Sources,* 313.
49. Asameni's death was reported in the Danish correspondences on 10 November 1705: "Asmuny, who had shot the Caboceer Akanta's (Okanta) brother dead, whereupon this Akanta's people had in turn shot Asmuny dead…." See Journal kept at Fort Christiansborg, 12 September 1703 until 25 May 1705 in Ole Justesen, *Danish Sources*, 187.
50. Walter C. Rucker, *Gold Coast Diasporas: Identity, Culture, and Power* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2015, e-Book), 49.
51. See Anquandah, 24, 88. For the context of the inter-African political contestations and context of Konny's opposition to Dutch over lordship, see van Dantzig, 50–52, Daaku (1970) and Feinberg (1967). For Dutch sources on Brandenburg-Dutch relations on the Gold Coast see Doortmont, 256–257.
52. See Ellis, 91–92; K.Y. Daaku, *Trade and politics*, 127–128.
53. Ivor Wilks, *Akwamu, 1640–1750: A Study of the Rise and fall of a West African Empire* (Trondheim: Norwegian University of Science and Technology, African Series No. 5, 2001), 32. R. Addo-Fening, *Akyem Abuakwa, 1700–1943: Ofori Panin to Sir Ofori Atta* (Trondheim: Norwegian University of Science and Technology, African Series No. 1, 1997), 5.
54. R. Shumway, *The Fante and the Transatlantic Slave Trade* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2014).
55. Justesen, ed., *Danish Sources*, 109. Fredrik H. Svensli, "'A Fine Flintlock, a Pair of Ditto Pistols and a Hat with a Gold Galloon': Danish Political and Commercial Strategies on the Gold Coast in the Early 18th Century", Holger Weiss (ed.) *Ports of Globalisation, Places of Creolisation: Nordic Possessions in the Atlantic World during the Era of the Slave Trade*(Leiden: Brill Publishers, 2015).

56. See Field, *Social Organisation*; von Hesse, "Euro-Africans, 11. Quarcoopome, "Impact of Urbanisation," 36–38.
57. L.F. Rømer, *A Reliable Account*, 93–94.
58. 13 May 1742, Accra Correspondence, in Albert van Dantzig, ed., *The Dutch and the Guinea Coast, 1674–1742: A Collection of Documents from the General State Archive at The Hague*, (Accra: Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1978), 357.
59. Rømer, 170.
60. A. Adu Boahen, *Topics in West African History*, (London: Longman/ Richard Clay, 1966), 68. Shumway, *The Fante and the Transatlantic Slave Trade*, 70.
61. 16 May 1730, Gov. Wærøe et al., Christiansborg to the Directors of the West India and Guinea Company, Copenhagen in Justesen, *Danish Sources*, 404.
62. Rømer, 211–212. The Dutch use of the word "subjects" is misleading. The people of Kinkã were never subjects in the strict sense of the word but rather commercial and political allies of the Dutch.
63. Ningo is 40 kilometres to the east of Osu (Christiansborg).
64. Rømer, 211–212.
65. Letters from Lygaard to the Directors in Copenhagen, dd. 23 February 1710, 6 June 1711 and Boye to the Directors in Copenhagen, dd. 27 November 1711, in Justesen 2005, pp. 232–33, 235–38. For a description of these episodes see for instance Nørregaard *Guldkysten*; and Justesen, *Kolonierne i Afrika*.
66. Letter from the Directors to Lygaard and the Privy Council, dd. 4 August 1708, in V-gK 54: Amerikanske og Afrikanske kopiebog 1703–1717, Danish National Archives (DNA).
67. See Rømer, 129.
68. See Wilks, *Akwamu,* 32–35; John Kwadwo Osei-Tutu 2000, *Asafoi (socio-military groups) in the History and Politics of Accra (Ghana) from the 17th to the mid-twentieth Century* (Trondheim: Norwegian University of Science and Technology, African Series No. 3), 23–25.
69. Sir Dalby Thomas, James Fort, Accra, to R.A.C., London, dd. 4 January [o.s] 1709, in T70/5 (1705–1714). Sir Dalby Thomas, Cape Coast Castle, to R.A.C., London, dd. 31 January 1708/09, in T70/5 (1705–1714).
70. L.F. Rømer, *A Reliable Account*, 93–94.
71. Dutch correspondences from Accra on 10 April 1742. See 10 April 1742, Accra Correspondence, in Dantzig, ed., *The Dutch and the Guinea Coast,* 356.
72. R. Shumway, 70.
73. Mr. van Neck's Report, Head Castle, St. George d' Elmina, 25 March 1816 in *Journal and Correspondence of H.W. Daendels: Governor-General*

of the Netherlands Settlements on the Coast of Guinea, Part One, November 1815 to January 1817 (Mimeographed at the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, Legon, 1964), 61.

74. Meeting of [Elmina] Council, 13 March 1816, in *Journal and Correspondence,* 53.
75. Mr. van Neck's Report, Head Castle, St. George d' Elmina, 25 March 1816, in Ibid, 61.
76. Mr. van Neck's Report, Head Castle, St. George d' Elmina, 25 March 1816 in *Journal and Correspondence,* 59.
77. Rømer, 159.
78. In Akan thought, *sasabonsam* is a mischievous forest monster who was not necessarily good nor evil. However, nineteenth century missionaries translated *Sasabonsam* or *bonsam* as devil. See J.G. Christaller, *A Dictionary of the Asante and Fante language called Tshi (Chwee, Twi)* (Basel: Evangelical Missionary Society, 1881) 31, 109, and 224. Accessed at file https://archive.org/details/dictionaryofasan00chriuoft.
79. Extract from a Dispatch from Governor Winniet to Earl Grey (Colonial Records, No. 96) Cape Coast Castle, 30 March, 1850 in *Records Relating to the Gold Coast Settlements,* ed. Crooks, 322. Rebellion of Natives at Christiansborg: Extract from a Dispatch from Governor Hill to the Secretary of State, James Fort, 1st October 1854 in *Military Report on the Gold Coast, Ashanti and the Northern Territories. General Staff,* (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1912), 338–340.
80. Following the pacification of Asante by British forces, (including coastal state armies) from 1896 to 1901, Asante became a Protectorate in 1902 a series of between. The savannah states north of Asante were included as the Northern Territories in the nascent British Gold Coast Colony through a series of treaties beginning in 1897 also led to the extension of British rule to that area.

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CHAPTER 6

Female Agency in a Cultural Confluence: Women, Trade and Politics in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Gold Coast

Kwabena Adu-Boahen

Introduction

Before European contact with Africans on the Atlantic coast of Africa, women in indigenous African societies were prominent in the economy—predominantly at a subsistence level—and politics. The political positions African women could occupy, however, varied extensively across a vast range of ethnic and cultural domains. Pre-colonial West African women are also well-known for their active involvement in trade. The European penetration of the indigenous West African economy from the late fifteenth century and the consequent incorporation of that economy into the Atlantic economic system meant not only a change in the pattern of gendered economic roles, but also the necessity for women's agency in coping with or initiating a gender-based change.

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This chapter examines the impact on Gold Coast women's capacity for economic and political initiatives of the pervasive change in West Africa in response to the dynamics of the forces inherent in expanding European mercantile activities. I will argue that although radical changes in the Atlantic economy in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries generally consigned Gold Coast women to the periphery of the African-European commercial exchanges, some women found their niches in that male-controlled system. I also argue that Gold Coast women not only continued in their traditional political roles, but some of them used their roles as political actors to exploit external influences and accumulate new resources that facilitated their upward mobility and enhanced their prestige.

Literature on Gender, Politics and Economic Activities

Early feminist scholarship paid a great deal of attention to women's engagement with politics and the economy. Although these texts are generally ahistorical, they provide some useful material for elucidating a historical study on women. Some groundbreaking studies compartmentalize male and female roles, assigning women to the domestic sphere and men to the public, political and mainstream economic sphere. Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo put forward in her classic 1974 essay, 'Women, Culture and Society', the theory that women naturally 'become primarily absorbed in domestic activities because of their role as mothers' and nurturers. Rearing children and focusing attention on children and the home imposed restrictions on women's entry into political and major economic roles, leaving men with exclusive control over the two domains'.[1] But, this public–private binary does not 'provide a universal framework for conceptualizing the activities of the sexes', as Rosaldo admits. Women in many cultures had the capacity to devise strategies for mitigating the effects of male domination often by helping their sons against the interests of their brothers. They, of course, not only acknowledged the authority of men, but could also direct this authority towards their own interests. Rosaldo reflects that women's power to influence men in critical choices and decision-making could be very considerable in many instances.[2] Jane Collier observes that women's involvement in politics has been regarded as disruptive of political functioning, the stereotyped role of men, in some societies. She argues, at any rate, that 'women everywhere have been interested in "political" decisions and have rationally sought to influence outcomes'.[3]

Non-Western writers such as Chandra Talpade Mohanty take issue with some Western feminist theorists over their 'production of the Third World Woman as a singular, monolithic subject'. In her influential essay, 'Under Western Eyes', she rejects 'the assumption of women as an already constituted, coherent group with identical interests and desires, regardless of class, ethnic, or racial location or contradictions' seeing this as implying the notion of gender difference that can have a universal, cross-cultural application. Mohanty draws attention to the aspect of the Western feminist scholarship which privileges a particular group as the norm-referent category or the 'yardstick by which to encode and represent cultural others'. Such a framework constructs the 'average Third World Woman' as sexually controlled, ignorant, poor, uneducated, tradition-bound, domestic, family-oriented and victimized in contrast to the educated, modern, sexually self-controlled Western woman. In the light of these shortcomings in sections of Western feminist discourse, Mohanty suggests an approach which would be 'geographically, historically and culturally grounded' and, as such, suitable for the study of women in any particular African cultural environment.[4]

Georgina Waylen's *Gender in Third World Politics* studies the nature of women's political power in a wide range of societies in the developing world. She discusses the non-static character of gender relations in the context of a great diversity and variety of social, political and economic organizational domains in pre-colonial Africa. The African societies that Waylen refers to range from the relatively simple mainly subsistence communities in East Africa to the 'surplus producing', more 'sophisticated, hierarchically organized kingdoms' and imperial systems of West Africa. Although she notes the inequality in gender relations and access to farming land, particularly in patrilineal societies, she acknowledges that African women often exerted a considerable degree of 'autonomy and control over their lives'. Importantly and rightly, she notes that West African women played a very active part in trade in addition to their basic role in the agricultural sector and West African women 'were both market traders and organizers of local and long range trading networks'.[5]

Women's economic activities have claimed considerable attention from scholars. Ester Boserup's seminal and influential work on women's critical roles in economic development, although not written from a historical perspective, is important in this respect. In her 1970 work, *Woman's Role in Economic Development*, which provided an intellectual basis for the early Women in Development discourse, Boserup evaluates division of labour

between men and women and the types of work that qualified as productive labour. Boserup argues that women's labour, both in the household and paid employment, constituted a major contribution to national economies. She also points out that economic development, particularly with the imposition of colonial rule, tended to be disadvantageous to women and lowered their economic and sociocultural status. Ester Boserup, however, relies on her Western understanding of the division of sex roles in her analysis. In Africa, for example, she concentrates on agriculture to the exclusion of trade in which women have for centuries played a vital role, especially in West Africa, and which constituted a major contribution to economic development during and after the pre-colonial times.[6]

A 2001 collection on market women, *Women Traders in Cross-Cultural Perspective,* which Linda Seligman edited, examines the ways in which women seek economic mobility and political power through commerce in nine societies in Africa and elsewhere. Various essays in this collection construct a close relationship between women's economic and political activities. Those works argue that drawing a distinction between the 'private' and 'public' in discussing women's engagement with the economy is unhelpful since ideologies of separate gender spheres of labour can 'clash with the actual economic activities that both men and women perform'. In many societies, women interweave the economic dynamics of the household and the market.[7] A synthesis of the arguments from the various studies reviewed here provides a broad framework within which a study of women's agency and subjectivity in Africa from the historical perspective can be pursued.

Studies on the Gold Coast

There is considerable literature on economic, political and social changes in pre-nineteenth-century Gold Coast within the context of the establishment of European settlements and the incorporation of West Africa into the Atlantic economic system. The growth of the Atlantic system was somewhat related to 'mercantilism', a dominant 'economic thought and practice in Europe from about 1500 to 1750', which celebrated the link between politics and economics. Mercantilists believed that there was a fundamental link between wealth and power and that any state's power was dependent on 'the amount of gold and silver it could accumulate in its public treasury'. This wealth could be used to build a state's military power and exert influence on its enemies.[8] From the sixteenth century, the increasing competition in gold trading among European

nations on the Gold Coast may have gained impetus from the influence of the mercantilist doctrine in the context of what some scholars regard as the early phase of globalization or, in Immanuel Wallerstein's words, the 'capitalist world economy'.[9]

Of the scholarly writings on the economic expansion of Europeans to the Gold Coast and the response of indigenes to the European-initiated trans-Atlantic commerce, K.Y. Daaku's seminal work, *Trade and Politics on the Gold Coast,* and R.A Kea's *Trade, Polities and Settlements in Seventeenth-Century Gold Coast* provide the most exhaustive analyses for the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. These examine the impact of European presence on the Gold Coast, in terms of the interrelationship among African participation in trade; the accumulation of wealth and emergence of a new influential social stratum comprising a rich and powerful African merchant group; and the diffusion and redistribution of political power in the restructuring of political hierarchies. Daaku's study focuses essentially on the coastal region, but Kea incorporates as much of the interior as possible into his analyses. Daaku's study lays some emphasis on the emergence of a new social category whose source of power and influence derived from their success in exploiting the novel opportunities which the Atlantic trade offered. The wealth acquired became a source of considerable political power and influence.

Like much of Daaku's work, J. Brookman-Amissah's 1972 essay, 'Some Observations on Trade and Politics on the Fanti Coast during the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', discusses the origins of the wealthy merchant class, arguing also that the power and influence acquired by this class, whom he refers to as a *parvenu*, practically excelled those of the hereditary aristocracy.[10] Kea examines the ways in which trade became a centripetal force that stimulated the growth of centres not only of commerce but also of political formations. These processes, as Kea shows, echoing Daaku and Brookman-Amissah, were generative of class differentiation and political hierarchies with wealth becoming a key index of power.

Other important works such as Harvey Feinberg's 'Elmina, Ghana: a history of its development and relations with the Dutch in the eighteenth century' and *Africans and Europeans in West Africa: Elminans and Dutchmen on the Gold Coast during the eighteenth century* as well as Robert Porter's *European Activities on the Gold Coast, 1620-1667*, examine economic, political and cultural relations in the Gold Coast, in the context of the specific perspectives of their analyses. Except for Feinberg, who provides some descriptive account of a woman of consequence in the economic sense, and Daaku, who gives a similar narrative in political

terms, studies of economic and political change generally adopt, by assumption, a gender-neutral approach. Yet, these works see men as the actors in all change.

In a 2002 collection, *Merchants, Missionaries & Migrants: 300 years of Dutch-Ghanaian relations,* Michel Doortmont's essay, 'An overview of Dutch relations with the Gold Coast' discusses the economic and political interests which underpinned the social relations between European traders and African women in the eighteenth century. In the same collection, Natalie Everts provides a similar analysis using the lives of two Elmina women of African-Dutch descent. Generally, then, women have received scanty attention and been largely excluded as subjects in the literature on economic and political change in the Gold Coast during the period before the nineteenth century. This work, therefore, contributes to this relatively neglected theme.

Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Gold Coast

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Gold Coast witnessed significant changes in the development of settlements and polities as well as the growth of population and changes in social organization and structures. These changes were partly the result of the inherent, natural processes of cultural change, but to a great extent, the impact of the presence of Europeans on the coast contributed tremendously to this. The changes had gender implications and a conflicting impact on the fortunes of Gold Coast women. First, let us explore the transformational context in which the very significant social, economic and political developments took place.

When the Portuguese made the landfall on the stretch of Atlantic coast which they named *Mina de Ouro* (Mine of Gold), or *Costa d'Ouro* (Gold Coast), they found settlements of various sizes although they do not describe the ethnic identities of the inhabitants of those settlements. In *Esmeraldo de Situ Orbis*, published in about 1505, a Portuguese traveller named Duarte Pacheco Pereira made reference to four small villages which the French trader, Jean Barbot—who travelled to West Africa between 1678 and 1682—also described. These villages, as Barbot described them, were 'Samma [Shama], Great Fante, Little Fante and Little Sabou [Asebu]'.[11] It is evident that the peoples of Fetu (Efutu) and Comani (Komenda?) were inhabiting locations close to Elmina by the early sixteenth century (about 1503).[12]

In the early sixteenth century, the Gold Coast, stretching from Axim in the west to the area immediately east of Accra, contained small and scattered settlements. The number of settlements increased rapidly with several of the older ones growing into large towns and becoming substantially populous. Three early European cartographic representations, which Ray Kea describes, illustrate the increase of settlements, urbanization and growth and densification of population in the Gold Coast and its hinterland. The earliest map, which Luis Teixera published in 1602, shows the territory of the Gold Coast as that land situated between the Comoe and Volta Rivers. This map also shows about thirty inland settlements.[13] The other two maps, the Dutchman Hans Propheet's of 1629 and a cartographic drawing accompanying a navigational chart of 1746, show forty settlements with Asebu, Afutu (Efutu), Great Accra, Mankessim, and Great Komenda described as state capitals. The coastal stretch as shown in the last map was extended from Axim in the west to Ningo in the east.[14] The northern extent of the Gold Coast hardly determinate, but the accounts of Europeans, based on information gathered from local inhabitants and interior traders, provides some rough definition. It appears the northernmost frontier of Denkyira marked by the east–west stretch of the Pra River and the upper reaches of the Birim River near Kyebi were roughly the furthest inland that the territory of the Gold Coast had extended by about 1730.[15]

A significant feature of change in the organization of settlements and polities which occurred in the Gold Coast during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was the development of communities peripheral to the urbanized, political/administrative and commercial centres. The peripheries usually consisted of hamlet- and village-based peasant/slave-farming communities which produced food to support urban populations.[16] The major coastal urban centres of the Gold Coast included Elmina, Shama, Mouri, Cape Coast, Anomabo, Kormantse, Axim and, later, Accra in the coastal belt and Mankessim, Asebu, Yabiew, Great Komenda, Afutu, Great Accra, Ladoku and Agona Asafo in the sub-coastal zone.[17] As stated earlier, the political capitals of virtually all the coastal polities were situated in the immediate coastal hinterland with peripheral settlements in between from the sixteenth to eighteenth century. The prominent seaboard towns served as outlets for international trade. By the eighteenth century, six polities—Efutu, Asebu, Eguafo, Fante, Agona, Accra and La—had become very well-organized polities. As Williem Bosman observed at the beginning of the eighteenth century, polities in

the Gold Coast were ill-defined in political organization, but he identified two forms: centralized monarchies and commonwealths of a republican nature and occupying an intermediate position between the centralized forest kingdoms and the very loose organizations found on the coast.[18]

Lying behind the sub-coastal polities were states such as Adanse, Assin, Denkyira, Akwamu, Akyem and, by the early eighteenth century, Asante which maintained close commercial relations with the coast. The coastal dwellers brokered the trade between these inland states and European merchants residing on the coast. With time, the Akanni (Assin) established themselves as a trading people. They created their own residential communities in some coastal settlements, of which the European traders in the forts took particular note. In the 1640s, the main coastal community of the Akanni seemed to be at Kormantse, but a large number of them were also in Efutu. Dutch sources give the name of the head of the Kormantse Akanni community in 1645 as Bediacon [Bediako].[19]

Kea has tried to make some sense of the guesstimation of European traders and reports of archaeological research to provide a rough pattern of the population ranges of Gold Coast settlements and polities. According to his analyses, the smallest towns had an average of three to four hundred inhabitants, while the largest exceeded ten thousand. From the mid- to the late-seventeenth century, many coastal towns had an average of four thousand or less inhabitants, while those of some fifteen sub-coastal settlements situated between Apollonia and the Volta River averaged four to five thousand. Exceptionally, Elmina had between fifteen and twenty thousand inhabitants in around 1682. Before 1700, however, Elmina's population fell drastically. This was partly due to a smallpox pandemic and partly to wars with its neighbours.[20] As Kea estimates, the sub-coastal polities may have had total populations of between sixty and seventy-five thousand inhabitants, but Accra probably had more than one hundred and twenty thousand by about 1681. The interior states and towns appeared more populous and, as de Marees observed in 1602, they were richer than the *Frontier plaetsen*, (possibly, 'seafront places').[21] Akwamu, for instance, had at least one hundred thousand people while Akyem's population exceeded one hundred and twenty thousand in the seventeenth to the early eighteenth century.[22]

Kea's analysis of the settlement pattern and political configuration of the Gold Coast combined with population estimates to provide us with some good image of the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Gold Coast that we are concerned with.

Gold Coast Society and Occupational Structure

Economic and political changes in the Gold Coast in the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries inevitably altered the social structure and patterns of production. The urban populations of the coastal and sub-coastal districts consisted of different social categories and groups which performed a wide range of activities. They were involved in trade, administration, artisanal crafts and religion or belonged to a variety of professional, proprietary and/or occupational classes represented in roles such as political and military figures, aristocrats, merchants, landlord brokers, priests and priestesses, fishermen, salt producers, canoemen and, as Kea found, free-day labourers.[23] Crafts such as gold and iron working, pottery, mat making and ivory trumpet making were certainly of indigenous African origin, but others such as carpentry and masonry/bricklaying appear to have been introduced from Europe with the construction of castles and forts. The latter were diffused in the maritime region with time.

Although there were no sharp social distinctions in the Gold Coast society, families which stood out as upper class or aristocratic were identifiable. These prominent families were usually composed of men in political and military authority and wealthy merchants. The Akan term *abrempɔn* (sing. *ɔbrempɔn*), 'great' or 'prominent' man, captures the sense of men of the upper class in society.[24] The high-ranking or aristocratic families had under their control ménages of clients, slaves and commoners bonded by debt or some obligation. Some of these households were substantial and could consist of over a hundred and fifty dependents.[25] The social structure of the Gold Coast, therefore, consisted of high-ranking families, free commoners engaged in various occupations and slaves who were either cultivators or providers of household labour.[26] This is a concise construction of the Gold Coast in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in which women of various categories engaged in the trade and politics profoundly influenced and sometimes dictated by European economic activities and interests.

Women, Trade and Politics on the Gold Coast

In examining the responses of the indigenous people of the Gold Coast to the expansion as well as social and political impact of European trading activities, Daaku shows the ways in which the benefits of the

European trade led to the creation of a visible new social stratum of elite merchants which came to parallel the ruling aristocracy in rank although the former became more powerful and influential particularly in African-European relations.[27] Daaku called the wealthy merchants, or *abrimpɔn*, 'Merchant Princes'. He gives much space to a discussion of the ways in which the European traders' intrusion into indigenous politics caused some shift in the power structures of coastal polities, but he pays little attention to the gender dimension of the social and political changes.

Before the advent of Europeans, the Gold Coast had become part of a wider international economic system through its incorporation into the trans-Saharan trade network which was aligned northwards, joining the trade centred on the Mediterranean region. The coming of Europeans and rise of the Atlantic-world mercantile system drew the Gold Coast deeper into the world economic system. A large-scale change with trade as the central activity in the economy opened avenues for Gold Coast women to engage in profitable commercial activities although men overwhelmingly controlled the tide of the most remunerative trade.

Gold Coast women became active in the changing economy. They played an important role in local spatial markets which grew up in the large coastal towns and participated in long-distance trade between the coast and inland. Seventeenth-century European accounts describe the sprightly roles women played in those organized markets. It is a hard task to trace the origins of the organized coastal markets—structured economic spaces where women were guaranteed full freedom to trade. Such markets were evidently in existence by the end of the sixteenth century and the presence of Europeans trading presence aided their growth. In 1602, the Dutch trader Pieter de Marees noted the existence of markets in the important towns on the Gold Coast littoral, providing some detailed accounts of the organizational structure of the Cape Coast market which he considered the finest.

The coastal markets appeared to have been a system of 'market rings' in which villages in close proximity agreed to maintain market-days by some rota so that no two villages held their markets on the same day of the week. In de Marees' words: 'They also keep fixed Market-days, on which one finds more for sales there than other days. If one Town has its great Market-day on one day another Town has its Market on another day. Thus they keep their Market-days on separate days'.[28] Spatial markets could have been in existence before the Europeans arrived. The concept could have spread to the Gold Coast through the operations

of traders from the Western Sudan. Market towns came into existence very early in the Western Sudan beginning with the gold-rich kingdom of Ghana which became prosperous through trans-Saharan trade well before the eleventh century.[29] By the mid-fifteenth century, a trans-Saharan trade route had been extended southward to the Gold Coast littoral with Sudanese traders carrying their trade along it. The route was a further extension originating from Begho, a large market town which Western Sudanese traders founded just north of the forest belt about the beginning of the fifteenth century.[30]

According to de Marees, the Cape Coast market was a meeting place for African traders of the coast and coastal hinterland as well as European fort residents. In a plate of a painting, he shows the specific spaces on the marketplace apportioned for the sale of particular items. There were separate sites for fruits, meat, palm wine, chicken, fish, wood, rice, fresh water, sugar cane, kenkey (boiled maize dough) and imported textiles.[31] De Marees also describes the key role both the coastal and interior women played to give the markets vibrancy. According to him, women from the coastal hinterland walked long distances, bringing to the markets commodities such as oranges, limes, bananas, livestock (chicken), eggs, bread (baked from maize), rice and millet. These were sold to the coastal inhabitants and European residents. Women traders of the coast, on their part, brought to the market manufactured European items previously bought or bartered from European ships. These included linen or other cloth, polished beads, mirrors, pins, bangles and knives. They also brought fish. For the active role of women on the coastal markets, de Marees observed, 'these women are very eager traders: they are so industrious in their trade that they come here every day, walking five, some of them even six miles to the place where they do their trade'. Women's involvement in long-distance trade did not escape the notice of de Marees. In the early 1600s, however, the main commodity involved in this aspect of commerce, according to him, was fish. 'These women and Peasants' wives', de Marees observed, 'very often buy fish and carry it to towns in other Countries [in the interior] in order to make profit: thus the Fish caught in the Sea [preserved by smoking or salting] is carried well over 100 or 200 miles into the Interior'.[32]

In the 1660s, Wilhelm Johann Müller, a German Lutheran pastor and employee of the Glückstadt (Danish) African Company who came to reside on the Gold Coast for 7 years, made observations much similar to those of de Marees. Müller says women controlled the market spaces on

the Gold Coast. He notes, 'apart from the peasants who bring palm wine and sugar-cane to the market everyday, there are no men who stand in public markets to trade, but only women'. The women's merchandise he mentions includes most that de Marees listed, but he adds others such as palm oil, fish fried in palm oil, locally grown and cured tobacco and large locally made tobacco pipes.[33] It seems trade in salt had become very important by the latter half of the seventeenth century and the commodity constituted a large proportion of merchandise for long-distance trade with the interior. Müller stated, 'Besides the aforementioned trade in livestock, the Fetu people conduct a great trade in salt'. Women not only sold salt daily on the coastal markets, but they also carried large quantities to the interior 'in special baskets for sale' to make profit.[34]

I do not assume that Gold Coast women constituted a monolithic category although seventeenth-century European accounts suggest that the female traders who thronged the coastal markets were 'commoner' or 'ordinary' women. Wilhem Müller's observation that seventeenth-century Gold Coast society was not rigidly stratified needs to be borne in mind in any classification of women of that period.[35] de Marees described the inland traders as 'Peasant women' and those of the coast simply as women of the coast. There were also women who belonged to prominent or 'elite' families, such as the wives and daughters the *ahemfo* or *abrafo*, rulers and *abrempɔn*. These generally had access to slave attendants and may not have appeared at the marketplaces personally or, if they did, very sparingly. De Marees' descriptions of the majestic manner in which the favoured wives of kings carried themselves about, leaning on their slaves when they went out, presupposes that it was unlikely that these women would carry commodities to the market place. Such royal ladies may have used their slaves or servants as trading agents to transact any business on their behalf on the markets.[36] There is the example of late seventeenth-century Agona, to the east of Fanteland, where the queen never visited the market, but always sent her servants to complete trade transactions on her behalf.[37]

Gold Coast women's trading activities on the spatial markets illustrate the merger of the private and public spheres of life, as noted earlier. It represented 'merging unpaid domestic services with earning income…and the accumulation' of wealth and property. In the case of both peasants from the coastal hinterland and the fish and salt traders of the coast, trading at organized market sites and long-distance trade reflected the transfer of the surplus products of their labour in the typically household domain and the agricultural field to the markets for commercial transactions.[38]

Influence of African-European Social Relations on Women's Trading Activity

Intercultural or social relations between European traders and indigenous Gold Coast inhabitants brought some transformation into the type and scale of women's trading activities. The aspect of these relations which so significantly affected women's commercial fortunes was sexual alliances between European men and African women. One of the earliest outcomes of these sexual unions was the appearance of the mixed-race social category described variously as *Euro-African*, *Eurafrican* and *mulatto.* Margaret Priestly asserts that few European men, who found themselves as part of the garrisons in the forts in West Africa but without the company of European women, refrained from sexual alliance with African women.[39] Writing about the Senegambia area, George Brooks Jr. says European men cohabited with African women not for escape from their lascivious desires, but rather many of them found African women attractive and lovely. As a result of this, many European men made permanent homes with African women and enjoyed real family life and true affection from their partner.[40] By the eighteenth century, Euro-Africans had become prominent in the commercial trading relations between Africans and Europeans not only as intermediaries, but also as entrepreneurs. This development was found in many areas of the West African coast, particularly in Senegambia, Portuguese Guinea, the Sherbro coast in Sierra Leone and the Gold Coast. In the seventeenth century, Euro-African women in the Upper Guinea region called *Signares* in Senegal, *Senora* in the Gambia and *Nhara* in Portuguese Guinea (all from the Portuguese root word *senhora*) gained very remarkable economic power and social standing, controlling European access to trade or serving as the main agents of trade with interior rulers. By the eighteenth century, *Signares* in Saint Louis and Goree were pre-eminent in society as the richest property-owning group and commercial entrepreneurs.[41]

Coastal West African women generally benefitted from the process by which European commercial adventurers negotiated their way into trading partnerships with Africans. According to Carol MacCormack who studied slave-trading activities in Sherbro, this process involved three stages. First, European traders struck multi-stranded acquaintances with Africans who became middlemen. Next, they secured acceptance as clients of their intermediaries in trade, who became their patrons, through gift-giving and the grant of generous credit terms for the supply of European goods. These patrons were usually local rulers. Finally,

the European men elevated their status from clients to affines by entering into marriage contracts with women closely related to or belonging to the descent groups of their patrons. These African wives of the Europeans, usually of aristocratic blood, became the 'prime mediators' between their husbands and their patrons (with their extensive kinship networks).[42]

In the Gold Coast, women traders did not attain the stature of the *Senhora* category. But, significantly, it had become possible, by the eighteenth century, for a few women of wholly African descent to achieve the status of traders whose scope of operations far exceeded that of the small-scale market women. They became involved in slave and gold trading, an economic activity which was associated with political power. Some of these more enterprising women traders exploited their sexual relationships with resident European traders, but others exercised agency in other contexts.

Women, Political Influence and Trade

As noted elsewhere in this paper, most of the African women who entered into viable capital-intensive trading relations with European companies belonged to aristocratic houses. The case of the Queen of Agona mentioned earlier is a good illustration of the relationship between political power and access to opportunities for profitable, large-scale trade by women. In 1681, that queen was the sovereign ruler of her state. Europeans such as William Bosman, a Dutch factor resident in the Elmina Castle in the late seventeenth century, and, later, Lieutenant-Colonel A.B. Ellis, a British military officer on the Gold Coast in the late nineteenth century, provide descriptions of Agona which give it a portrait of a *matriarchy* or queendom (with a female ruling dynasty).[43] Agona was a state which supplied slaves (not gold) to European slave traders and its queen often sent her agents with slaves to exchange for gunpowder at Winneba, an important outlet for slave exports in her state.[44] In the 1700s, another woman, Aqua Brafo, became queen of the state of Efutu. The British encouraged and actually assisted Queen Brafo to participate actively, as a leading middlewoman, in the trade in gold and slaves which she procured from Akanni, a major interior source of those commodities.[45] Efutu controlled the main transit route between Akanni and the coast.

Gold and slaves involved heavy capital investment and the supply was often the monopoly of the ruling classes or states which had greater capacity to generate the means to invest in their purveyance. But the ruling aristocracies restricted their subjects' access to gold in order to control liquidity and enhance their own authority and power. The acquisition of larger quantities of that precious metal also enabled the rulers to maintain and constantly reproduce their positions. State 'monopoly' excluded large sections of the Gold Coast society from the gold and slave trades and the only women who could engage in these were those who held some political power and influence, such as the female rulers of Agona and Efutu. The majority of women were restricted to trade in commodities which were products of their own or family labour, although there seemed not to have been any ideological constraints on women's acquisition or sale of slaves and gold.

The slave-trading activities of another Gold Coast woman fit well into the three-stage process of European men's strategic penetration of indigenous African economic structures. A brief account of the woman, Afodua, and her involvement in the slave trade is given in Michel R. Doortmont's essay, 'An overview of Dutch relations with the Gold Coast'. According to Doortmont, Afodua belonged to a prominent family, perhaps the ruling house, in Jumba, a village near Apam where the Dutch had established a fort. In 1741, a Dutch trader, Pieter Woortmann of the West India Company (WIC) who had become a commandant of the Apam fort met Afodua and married her. Afodua and her husband jointly ran a very successful and profitable slave-trading business in the Apam area. The Afodua-Woortmann slave-trading business flourished and lasted until their children came of age and joined it.

The success of Woortmann and Afodua's slave-trading venture depended on the critical resources that each of them brought into it. The former 'carefully used his WIC position to build up his own business'. He used the Apam fort and its slave-trading facilities to promote the business. Afodua's contribution was as critical as Woortmann's. She 'and her family', as Doortmont says, 'provided the hinterland contacts and organized access to local infrastructure'. Thus, Afodua played a dual role as co-proprietor and intermediary between her business entity and her extended family network reaching the coastal hinterland. This was a critical resource for the success of any slave-trading business. Thus, Afodua and her Dutch husband made their fortunes from slave trading.[46]

Women and Ancillary Entrepreneurial Businesses

During the eighteenth century, some Gold Coast women demonstrated the entrepreneurial acumen by which they created viable and lucrative businesses that thrived on the dominant trading regimes. This represented the efforts of women of non-royal status to create niches in response to their exclusion from the slave trade. Such ancillary businesses were essentially service-oriented and involved the supply of certain commodities in high demand in the forts and for the Atlantic slave trade. But suppliers of those commodities also became agents in the sale of imported European goods. The number of women who recognized their opportunities in the supply business was small in the eighteenth century, but some of them became very prominent and amassed substantial wealth from it. Women who lived near the Dutch forts were very enterprising and many of these were in Elmina, the Dutch headquarters. Some of the notable ones were Maay Accoma and Betje Hamilton. Maay Accoma had been in a sexual relationship with the WIC governor, Butler, who seems to have drawn her into the European–African trade.[47] As a woman of Euro-African descent, Hamilton had a more profound relationship with Europeans. Her European ancestry obviously positioned her advantageously in the pursuit of her trading interests. The most outstanding and prosperous of these women traders was Coffiba about whom Harvey Feinberg provides relevant information. By the 1710s, Coffiba had accumulated considerable wealth. She built a reputation as a rich woman with her influence reaching the court of the *Asantehene* (King of Asante).

The significance of Coffiba's commercial success is that she, unlike most other successful non-aristocratic African women traders, does not seem to have entered into a mixed-race sexual relationship or *calisaren* (marriage) with a European. But, according to Feinberg, she was a very wealthy woman who was known to the Asantehene Opoku Ware I. It is not clear what kind of relationship existed between Coffiba and the Asantehene in view of the fact that, as Feinberg says, 'when the Asantehene sent fourteen children to Elmina for education in 1744, they were lodged with her'.[48]

If there were any others, then, Coffiba was one of the extremely few women with whom the WIC dealt with as a major trading partner. She supplied the Dutch with large quantities of corn or maize and palm oil in exchange for equally large quantities of cloth and other imported

European manufactured goods which she sold to consumers and traders in Elmina and the interior. Coffiba proved very enterprising and made a fortune out of her business which involved the important role of supplying food items to the forts to meet the needs of a section of fort residents, as well as slaves awaiting shipment and onboard during the middle passage. Her business grew to make her a provider of a critical service necessary for the provisioning of Dutch fort establishments and the success of the slave-trading business. It also enabled her to build a prosperous imported commodities trading network.

African-European Politics: Involvement of Gold Coast Women

Women in many societies in the Gold Coast and its hinterland traditionally played important leadership roles alongside men in indigenous politics, but male political leaders usually exerted greater political power, authority and influence than their female counterparts. Consequently, women were virtually invisible in the top echelons of the political hierarchies in most Gold Coast societies at the time of the advent of Europeans. European traders operating on the Gold Coast, therefore, found male dominance in local, indigenous politics, which ideologically accorded with their own political culture back home as the natural order. To this extent, the European officials in charge of the forts tended to deal only with men in the political negotiations that traded on the coast demanded.

African-European political exchanges in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were, in fact, governed by trade relations. From the fourth decade of the sixteenth century—when the English and the French began to challenge the more than 60-year Portuguese monopoly of the West African gold trade—European trading activities on the Gold Coast came to involve much competition. The competition intensified during the seventeenth century after the Dutch dislodged the Portuguese between 1637 and 1642 and trading companies from several European countries entered the West African trade. The competition led to the building of dozens of trading posts by the Dutch, Swedish, Danish, English and Brandenburgers, all of whom constructed forts, castles and lodges which, by the end of the century, dotted most of the Gold Coast shoreline. The propinquity to one another of a dense

cluster of forts in a relatively short coastline occupied by trading companies from different European nations symbolized the intense competition which characterized European trading activities on the Gold Coast.

The fierce competition between European traders for commercial advantages necessitated the conduct of strategic, trade-centred politics with African rulers. In this kind of politics, officials of European trading companies, who tended to believe in the power of local African rulers to compel their subjects to channel all their trade to a particular company, used all kinds of inducements and methods to win the favour of particular rulers. The important objective in European merchants' political exchanges with the local rulers was to win the most favoured trading nation status. This would entitle any particular company to the right of 'sole traders' in a polity. In the context of this, European trading companies sometimes signed with Gold Coast states agreements which they construed as binding those polities to trade with them alone and compelling the local rulers who endorsed them to exclude all trading companies belonging to different European nations from operating in their states.

European–African trade-oriented politics involved a great deal of tension and conflict because the interests of the European traders and Africans at once diverged and collided. Particular European companies interpreted agreements as entitling them not only to exclusive trading rights, but also to political control over local rulers and their subjects. As a result, the companies tried to restrict the trading activities of Africans within a state and the rulers, princes and captains of any such state naturally resisted the attempts by foreigners to infringe on their birthright and freedom. They insisted on their sovereign right to untrammelled political self-determination and free trade with all European trading nations. Obviously, African political leaders of the Gold Coast and their people saw European residents' claims of authority and, often, jurisdiction, over local communities in terms of what may be interpreted as cultural imperialism. The collision of the interests of Africans and European traders was the source of many frictions and sometimes even led to large-scale military confrontations as occurred between the Komenda and the Dutch in the 1690s.

Tensions and confrontations were unavoidable as European companies struggled for the control of all trade in particular polities and each tried to elbow out all competitors. In the course of the seventeenth century and up to about the 1680s, each of the rival trading companies tried to gain a firm hold on particular areas on the Gold Coast,

which it considered its preserve for commercial purposes. The Europeans even intervened directly in local politics to promote their trading interests by manipulating the traditional mechanisms for the choice of successors to political office in certain states. This was particularly the case in Komenda and, to a lesser extent, Efutu. As a result, there were some Gold Coast rulers who could only rule with the backing of the power of European trading companies, particularly the Dutch WIC and English Royal African Company (RAC). These puppet rulers committed themselves to serving the interest of their European patrons. The trading companies also tried, through bribery, to build alliances with local states on both the seaboard and inland to provide 'ready support' in the event of conflict with their rivals. Sometimes, the European companies manipulated their alliance systems in ways which had bloody consequences. For instance, in 1693, the Dutch incited their allies—Twifo, Fetu, Elmina and Ahanta—to block the trade routes to all traders sending their merchandise to the forts of companies from other European nations and not theirs. The allies of the English, Fante, Komenda, Asebu, Adom and others strongly resisted the closure of roads and the result was a war between the opposing allied groups, the Dutch and the English themselves keeping out of the hostilities.[49] It is in this economic and political context that female rulers of the Gold Coast, like their male counterparts, conducted their relations with officials of European merchant companies during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

An Exception to the Rule

Women are almost completely invisible as rulers in archival sources on seventeenth- and eighteenth-century political relations with Europeans on the Gold Coast. This suggests that the field of African-European political engagement, in the context of commerce, often tension laden and frequently conflictual was an exclusive masculine terrain. It is, however, possible to show, using the rather scanty data obtainable about the female rulers of Agona and Efutu mentioned earlier, that women were involved in the African-European trade politics and to construct the nature of their relations from their activities. In the Upper Guinea instances referred to earlier, women were much in control of the tide of trade-related diplomacy with Europeans during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but these women generally had the advantage of Euro-African descent and sometimes literacy. In the Gold Coast,

Euro-African women did not exert any significant economic and political influence until the nineteenth century. By foil to the Upper Guinea (notably Senegal) situation, the Gold Coast women who demonstrated the ability to engage European officials in political exchanges were of absolute African descent and lacked any European education.

Queen Aqua (Aguaaba) Brafo and the English-Pawn in African-European Politics

As already noted, Aqua Brafo was installed as queen of Efutu in the 1700s. The king that Aqua Brafo succeeded in April 1704 had come to the stool of Efutu in 1693 through the intrigues and conflicts by which English officials at Cape Coast Castle successfully got the pro-Dutch ruler ousted. Significantly, it was the General of the English trading establishment in the Gold Coast and governor of Cape Coast Castle, Sir Dalby Thomas, who named Aqua Brafo ruler of Efutu and enabled her instalment with the support of the King of Asebu and John Cabes, wealthy and politically influential merchant in the Cape Coast-Elmina-Komenda area.[50] This illustrates how European traders became involved in local politics on the Gold Coast in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. As three officials of the Royal African Company—Charles Hayes, John Chaignau and William Hickes—noted in a correspondence, Sir Thomas' intrusion in local political affairs of Efutu went 'contrary to the custom of that country and usage of the people'.[51] In European patriarchal culture, the breach in custom here would principally refer to the choice of a woman to succeed a male king where primogeniture was not a consideration. It is not clear whether Aqua Brafo was a princess of the ruling house or whether female rule existed in Efutu political tradition up to that time. At all events, the appropriation of the power to choose and install a ruler in Efutu by Sir Thomas, a foreigner of non-African origin, was an outrageous violation of the established tradition. The choice was an imposition, which a section of the ruling house naturally rejected and it, thus, undermined the authority of the ruler from the very beginning. Consequently, tension and factional conflicts came to characterize Efutu politics in the 1700s.

Before Aqua Brafo's installation as queen of Efutu, she had been a friend of Sir Thomas. However, it is difficult to figure out the nature of their friendship or—considering the social status of Brafo at the time—how she became acquainted with Sir Thomas. Once she became queen

and gained power, she acquired the means to participate in the major business of her time. However, while Brafo was the head ruler of her state, she was in reality only a tool in the hands of the English officials in Cape Coast. Thus, she could not exercise any real power without deferring to those officials. She was a filter of male power and had to, as Jane Collier argues, 'latch onto a man and try to control the world through him'. She was a passive political actor who the English officials were using to pursue and achieve their commercial objectives in the Gold Coast.[52]

The circumstances by which Aqua Brafo became queen made her dependent on the English not only in the exercise of her authority as ruler, but also in the maintenance of her security and that of her state as well as the conduct of her relations with other states and European traders. The inability of the queen to independently take any major political decisions can be seen in an English reprimand of an aspect of her relations with Anomabo in 1705. In October that year, Governor Thomas sent a messenger to the queen to express his displeasure at a quarrel between Efutu and Anomabo, and particularly the panyarring of some Anomabo people, which she had ordered without first seeking his advice.[53] The English took measures to ensure the security of Queen Brafo and Efutu against threats from external sources. These threats included efforts of self-exiled Efutu dissidents trying to depose the queen with outside assistance.[54] To counter all these, the English periodically issued stern warnings to neighbouring states to deter them from making war on Queen Aqua Brafo and Efutu. By this, the English were trying to protect their protégé from hostile forces, although they did not have any strong force to carry out their threats. However, Sir Dalby Thomas succeeded, largely, in maintaining Aqua Brafo in charge of Efutu for several years.

The English provided Queen Brafo with all the assistance she needed in prosecuting a profitable 'middleman' trade between the Akanni country and Cape Coast Castle. Nevertheless, she and the part of her state that supported her were restricted to trading with the English. The queen was thus a powerless ruler who could not take independent action as far as trade relations with other Europeans on the coast were concerned. She owed her position as queen to the English and the continuity of her reign was tied to English support. Queen Brafo's position in relation to the English was one of a pawn and not a sovereign ruler possessing the highest authority. Her political decisions were, therefore,

subject to ratification by an authority located outside the context of legitimate Efutu traditional institutions.

The documents are silent on Aqua Brafo after 1708. She seemed to have lost her position after the sudden death of Governor Thomas. Thomas' successors may not have had the same interest and zeal to continue supporting her as head ruler. As a result of Aqua Brafo's weak constitutional position, drawing her authority and power from an external source rather than from the collective will and undivided allegiance of her subjects, her actions in the African-European trade and political relations as a ruler of one of the important trading states on the Gold Coast was passive. Unlike some popularly elected rulers, she was unable to exploit benefits from the commercial rivalry of several trading companies. She was helplessly bound to the trade policy of only one company. Although Aqua Brafo lacked the capacity for agency in making independent choices in trade relations for herself and her state in a competitive commercial environment, she was considered competent and possessing adequate leadership qualities to rule above her male candidates.

Queen of Agona and Anglo-Dutch Rivalry

Owing to limited relevant data, it is difficult to ascertain the origins of the female sovereign power in Agona, which Bosman and Ellis describe in separate accounts in different centuries. Nonetheless, it is possible to confirm female rule from fragments of information in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century European sources. Albert van Dantzig, reputed for his extensive study of archival records in various European languages, identified the queen of Agona who was reigning in the early 1680s as Tituba . In 1680, the queen was estimated to be about 38 years old.[55] Tituba may obviously have been the same Queen of Agona who sent her trading agents with slaves to exchange for weapons at the English fort at Winneba in 1681 and to whom an English official at James Fort in Accra sent a small *dashey* or gift payment in 1682.[56] Tituba evidently had a long reign for, the Director General of the Dutch WIC in the early 1700s, William de la Palma, mentioned a Queen Tuteba [Tituba] in a correspondence of 10 September 1704 to his company headquarters in Amsterdam.[57]

The queen of Agona was a powerful monarch whose authority was deeply rooted in the legitimate political institutions of her state.

The queen arguably commanded the respect and the full allegiance of her male subordinate chiefs as well as of all her subjects. For instance, it is recorded in a Danish official journal kept at the Christiansborg Castle in 1688 that the people of Agona were always on their guard to protect their monarchy and state against external attacks 'from the love of their queen' and even women took up arms to defend her.[58] The queen was capable of carrying her state with her in dealing effectively with hostile neighbours, particularly Akwamu. In the late 1680s, for example, the Akwamu engaged the Agona in several skirmishes in which the latter were always victorious. In November 1688, therefore, the Akwamu king, Ansa Sasraku, was compelled to sue for peace and reconciliation through an envoy he sent to the queen.[59]

Queen Tituba proved to be strong and firm in her relations with European traders. During the early eighteenth century, her state became the bone of contention between the English RAC and the Dutch WIC with regard to trading rights. The two companies staked rival claims of entitlement to exclusive trade with the people of Agona and the right to construct trading stations along its coast. The English had already built a fort at Winneba on the western section of the Agona coast with the permission of the queen and were involved in commercial exchanges with Agona traders. The queen wanted another trading fort built on the eastern section of the Agona coast at the village of Senya Bereku. The acquisition of the right to build a fort and establish at this, presumably, commercially strategic village, generated intense and bitter rivalry between the English and the Dutch. In the context of the Anglo-Dutch rivalry in the Agona State, its queen assumed her sovereign role as the final arbiter in the issue of which company would secure the authority to build a fort at Senya Bereku. Apparently, the queen did not favour the situation where any European trading company would gain a trade monopoly in Agona, but rather preferred freedom of trade involving multiple companies so that she could obtain the greatest benefits for the traders of her state. However, monopoly was exactly what the English wanted. They felt they were more favourably placed than the Dutch to receive the queen's approval because of the fort they had earlier built at Simpa (Winneba) with her consent. They created the impression that the agreement giving them the authority to build a fort at Winneba had conferred on them the exclusive entitlement to 'establish castles, forts and lodges' in Agona.[60]

The Dutch vigorously disputed any English claim of legitimate monopoly of European trade in Agona. WIC officials claimed the right

to a substantial share of the trade between the people of Agona and European traders since, according to them, Queen Tituba had granted the company the permission to get some of its agents to send some merchandise to the disputed village, Senya Bereku, to settle there and trade with the local traders and later build a fort.[61] The Dutch generally conducted their relations with the queen of Agona by relatively peaceful diplomatic methods, which included the regular payment of royalty entitlements, in order to gain her favour and goodwill. But the English tried to exact privileges through the use of threats and intimidation. The principal aim of the English in their relations with the queen of Agona was to get her to expel the Dutch from Senya Bereku. As part of the English coercive plans, they enlisted, through bribery, the support of the Fante and the old enemy of Agona, Akwamu, to constantly threaten the Agona with an invasion in order to frighten Queen Tituba and force her to throw out the Dutch. Queen Tituba was, however, undaunted in the face of the English threats of war and intimidation. Supported by her principal chiefs, she courageously defied the British, declaring she neither cared about nor feared the threats of attack and that she would even help the Dutch to construct a fort at Senya Bereku.[62]

The strategy of European traders to coerce some local rulers on the Gold Coast to surrender their sovereignty and economic freedom thus failed in the case of the queen of Agona to the chagrin of the English. The queen was not distracted from her own trade policy, which she deemed fit and best for the well-being of herself and that of her state. She maintained her capacity to deal with the trading companies as she considered expedient and advantageous. As this illustrates, the female rulers of Agona were strong and self-determining rulers capable of independent action in their commercial relations with European trading companies. Unlike the female ruler of Efutu, the queen of Agona determined the fortune of European companies as far as trading in her state was concerned.

Conclusion

Forts and castles on the West African coast symbolized European intervention in the traditional processes of development in various host societies. Two main areas in which European fort residents in the Gold Coast made great impact were the economy and African-European political relations, which were conducted within the context of trade. The

principal feature of change in the Gold Coast in response to European economic activities was the transformation of the traditional economy in the direction of increased production of commodities in high demand and expansion of exchange. Significant too was the incorporation of the Gold Coast into the relatively new Atlantic economy. The expansion of the economy in response to European presence restructured the Gold Coast society through the emergence of new social categories and especially the creation of a novel, parallel social rank composed of a new class of wealthy, prominent men. Generally, producing and trading in the most valuable Gold Coast commodities—gold and slaves—were restricted to men. By the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, however, the increasing complexity of the expanding Atlantic trading network had necessitated the creation or expansion of open spatial markets for locally produced commodities for the consumption of both indigenous inhabitants and fort garrisons. These local markets became female-controlled economic spaces. Unavoidable intercultural African-European social relations created profitable commercial openings for Gold Coast women who entered into sexual liaisons with European men and this enabled them to penetrate male-controlled economic spaces. However, some women also achieved commercial prosperity by exploiting their occupancy of high political office, thus reflecting the close reciprocal relationship between the possession of political power and access to capital-intensive and lucrative trade during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Like large-scale commerce, women in the Gold Coast in the seventeenth and eighteenth century were generally invisible in the political relations that developed in the context of trade between Africans and officials of European trading companies. Men appeared to be more suitable for the conduct of these relations, which were often characterized by tension and tempestuousness. Nonetheless, a few women became involved in those relations because of their headship of the governments of their polities. Nominal rule in some cases compelled female political heads to assume only a passive role in African-European relations. However, other female rulers demonstrated remarkable agency in exercising swaying power and independent action in the conduct of the affairs of their states in the context of African-European trade politics. Seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Gold Coast women, whenever they found the opportunity, played very active roles in African-European trade and political exchanges even though, in terms of gender proportion, they were relatively few.

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CHAPTER 7

Fort Metal Cross: Commercial Epicentre of the British on the Gold Coast

Fritz Biveridge

Introduction

This paper presents the results of historical archaeological investigations undertaken at Dixcove, located thirty-five kilometres west of Takoradi, the capital of Ghana's Western Region. This followed the successful submission of a proposal to the University of Ghana's *Faculty Development Fund*, which financed the research. The study began in the summer of the 2011/2012 academic year, spanned 3 years and was undertaken in three phases. Each phase covered ten days, during which final-year students in the Department of Archaeology and Heritage Studies at the University of Ghana assisted in my excavations.

Prior to the coming of Europeans, Dixcove was called *Efiema* (also *Nfuma*). It is inhabited by the Ahanta, one of seven ethno-linguistic groups settled along Ghana's expansive coastline. During the early phase of the Anglo–Ahanta encounter, the British called the area "Dick's Cove" (also "Dickie's cove") after an Englishman called Dick (a British short form for Richard) who is said to have been one of the earliest

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Europeans to have traded and interacted with the indigenes there. It was later abbreviated to Dixcove in the late eighteenth century. Before the construction of Fort Metal Cross in 1692 and its completion 6 years later, the cove was the social epicentre and commercial hotbed of Anglo–Ahanta trade.

Archaeological data derived from surface surveys and excavation of ten units at various locations in Dixcove constituted the primary data source used for the study. Five of the units were located around the environs of Fort Metal Cross, *Ntwarkro* (Upper Dixcove) and another five at the ancient settlement quarter of *Daazikessie* (Lower Dixcove). The other data sources include early European records documented by traders and mariners some of whom visited Dixcove and interacted with the indigenes; archival data derived from The National Archive, Kew, London; and ethno-historical narratives gathered from some notable persons at Dixcove (Fig. 7.1).

A Brief Historical Antecedent of Fort Metal Cross

The Royal Africa Company, one of the earliest national charter companies of England, is credited with the construction of Dixcove's fort (later named Fort Metal Cross). The original structure built on a flat rocky promontory which jutted into the sea consisted of "rubble thickly laid in mud and coated with lime plaster to keep out moisture with a water tight roof".[1]

William Bosman also described it in the early eighteenth century as "so inconsiderable and slight that it hardly deserved the name of fort".[2] William Smith who was contracted by the *Royal Africa Company* in February 1727 to survey the fort and its environs observed that there was a "slaves' village" made up of several huts spread north of the fort along the water edge close to it. He further noted that close to the immediate vicinity of the fort were two "handsome gardens belonging to the fort which supplied their table with several sorts of fruits, roots and salads".[3] However, Jean Barbot, who visited the fort in the late seventeenth century, described it as "a large and square fort built of stone and lime with two round flankers and two square bastions with twelve guns mounted in very good working order and a suitable basin to contain rain water".[4] Prior to its construction, European traders and interloper mariners from England, the Netherlands, France and Brandenburg traded

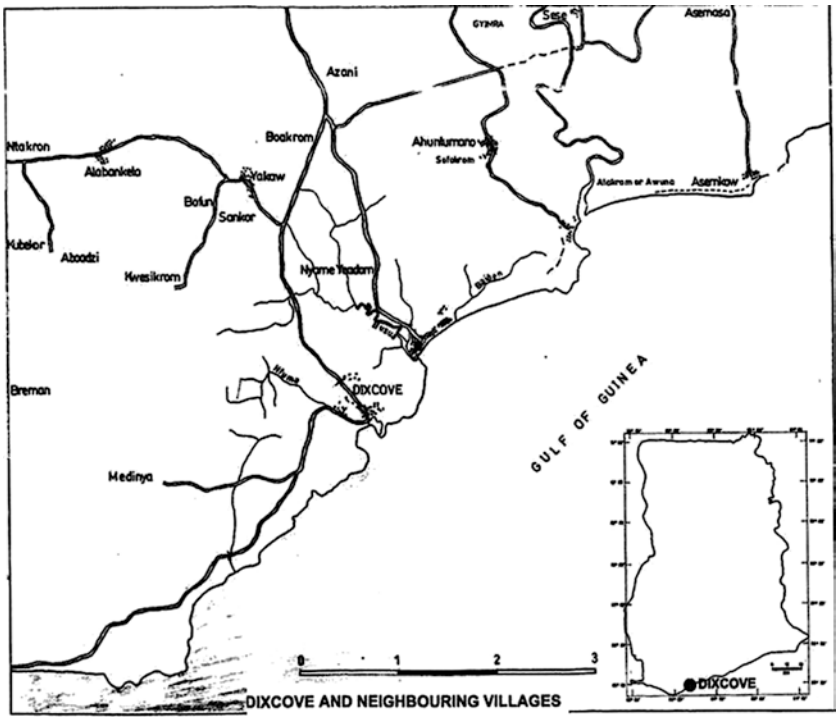

Fig. 7.1 Dixcove and neighbouring villages. (Source/copyright: Author)

with the indigenes from rented huts onshore and sometimes during high tide from anchored shipboards along the cove. [5]

The British built a fort at Dixcove for seven reasons. The first and most important was to permanently secure trade with the indigenes by countering the activities of the national charter companies of the Dutch and Brandenburgers, as well as interloper captains who were briskly conducting trade there to their detriment. The second was to secure permanent accommodation for traders of the Royal Africa Company. The third was the relatively calm waters of the cove which provided safe berthing for ships to embark and disembark cargo and for repair.[6] The fourth was Dixcove's strategic geographical location: it was linked directly by pathways to rich goldfields in the interior (especially Wassa-land) which the British wanted to control to afford them regular supply.[7] Its proximity

to Akyuma and Busua villages was the fifth reason as they had substantial reserves of timber from which planks and beams for the repair of ships and British fortifications on the Gold Coast was readily obtained.[8] The sixth reason was that Dixcove was endowed with abundant reserves of limestone, granite and gneiss—important raw materials required for the construction and upkeep of British forts.[9] Lastly, Ahanta-land had become an important commercial entrepot from where traditional African export commodities such as gold, ivory and palm oil were channelled to Europe.[10]

Historical sources posit that trade along the Dixcove coastline was vibrant and profitable during the early phase of the Anglo–Ahanta contact period (circa 1520–1560). According to Bosman and Barbot, this was because quality gold was easily obtainable at Dixcove.[11] John Lok, one of the earliest British men to have voyaged there in 1555, described the Ahanta as

> very wary people in their bargaining and will not lose one sparke of golde of any value. They use weights and measures and are very circumspect in occupying the same. They that shall have to doe with them must use them gently; for they will not trafique or bring in any wares, if they be evill used.[12]

Lok commandeered a fleet of three ships and 2 pinnaces on that occasion and for four days conducted trade with the indigenes there. According to A.W. Lawrence, trade inside the fort was administered by two officers, a writer, a sergeant, a gunner, four soldiers and a master sawyer, all full-time employees of the Royal Africa Company.[13] They were assisted by forty-one slaves and three free canoe men.

Commercial activities dipped dramatically from the late eighteenth century onwards primarily because the indigenes had begun adulterating gold exported from the Dixcove coastline.[14] This situation caused many European traders to call Dixcove "the fake mint of the Gold Coast".[15] Bosman also posits that trade at Dixcove during this period had become "inconsiderable and slight" because the "Negroes there were so intractable, fraudulent, villainous and obstinate that the English cannot deal with them".[16] He noted that the total annual export from Ahanta-land excluding those of interlopers was only 2700 marks. He gave the breakdown as follows: The West India Company—1500 marks; The Royal Africa Company—1200 marks. Another factor which impacted negatively on trade at Dixcove was the abolition of slavery in 1807. An 1817

British Parliamentary report described trade profitability there as "a laughing stock", and exports became limited to small quantities of gold, ivory and palm oil, in exchange for India and Manchester cloths and to a lesser value rum, gunpowder, iron and lead bars.

Dixcove fort underwent several major architectural transformations to its original structural design due mainly to severe bombardments and sieges from the Dutch and occasionally the Brandenburgers arising mainly from trade disputes. Some of the severest included the 1712 New Year attack by John Couny, the 1750 Ahanta siege and the 1780 bombardment by the Dutch.[17] Political antagonism and differences between the paramount chiefs of Dixcove and the Nzema—who were earning from British and Dutch companies, respectively—also helped fuel these conflicts. Meanwhile, wars between Britain and the Netherlands, such as those which broke out in 1780, were also desultorily prosecuted on the Gold Coast. As a result, the fort and other trade factories belonging to the two nations became enemy targets. The British were thus constantly hard pressed to modify the fort's structure so as to improve security because the Dutch and Brandenburgers were constantly challenging trade monopoly. The bastions and curtain walls were also continually being transformed into formidable defence structures to enable them to withstand increasingly heavy onslaughts.

In spite of its poor commercial viability in the late eighteenth century, the fort was not abandoned as it constituted an indispensable service station for the British on the Gold Coast. Lawrence assigns four reasons for this. First, Dixcove produced a substantial quantity and quality of palm oil which had become an important raw material in the production of margarine in England. Second, Dixcove was naturally endowed with abundant shellfish resources from which lime was derived. Third, nearby Akyuma and Bushwa villages had abundant reserves of hardwood timber for making planks and beams, essential for the upkeep and repair of British ships and forts on the Gold Coast. Fourth, the calm cove was a preferred point for the procurement of potable water and provisions not only for British ships but also for ships of other nations during the outbound journey to Europe.[18] In addition, according to the Ghanain archaeologist James Anquandah, the cove and its landing bay was always calm which made it safe for ships to embark and disembark cargo.[19] Small ships also anchored at the bay to undergo repairs.

In 1867, an inter-governmental agreement between Britain and the Netherlands transferred Dixcove's fort and other British-protected areas

and forts located west of the Gold Coast to Dutch suzerainty. The fort was subsequently renamed *Metalen Kruis* (Brass Cross) after a Dutch warship of that name.[20] The people of Dixcove had always been suspicious of the Dutch because of their alliance with the people of Butre, who for decades had been their bitter enemies. Due to their suspicions, the Ahanta resisted the exchange. At first, they rebelled, and then, they rioted by attacking staff of the West India Company inside the fort and destroying Dutch property.[21] Dutch gun boats from Holland and from other Dutch fortifications on the Gold Coast were hurriedly dispatched and were successful in quelling the rebellion.

The Dutch occupation, however, was short-lived because trade between them and the Ahanta was becoming increasingly inconsequential. In 1872, the fort reverted to British possession when the Dutch government sold all of their holdings. The name was anglicized to Fort Metal Cross and continues to be known as such. With the proclamation of the Gold Coast as a British colony in 1874, the fort became a British administrative centre. In 1954, the Monuments and Relics Commission was tasked to restore it, and this culminated in several alterations to the original superstructure to suit its new status as the administrative hub of the British. It housed the District Commissioner and his staff. Part of the building was used as the State Council and later as a rest house for visiting dignitaries. Another part has been used intermittently as a police station, library and post office.[22]

In 1958, the Ghana Museums and Monuments Board (GMMB) renovated and refurbished the fort. No major alterations were undertaken on the fort's superstructure, and the renovation work only involved minor maintenance and painting of the existing structure. The grounds lying immediately north and east of the fort were paved with concrete. This was done primarily to curb erosion and beautify its frontage. Unfortunately, the paving exercise has impacted negatively on the archaeology of the fort because recovering cultural materials lying under that area will be extremely difficult and financially exorbitant on account of the thickness of the concrete pavement. Planting green grass would have served a better archaeological purpose, curbed erosion and beautified the fort's environs.

When research was conducted in 2011, the fort had seventeen rooms arranged around a central courtyard. They include a kitchen, four soldier's quarters, a male dungeon, a female dungeon, the Commander's quarter, a slave prison (for recalcitrant slaves), an auction room (where

Fig. 7.2 East Wing and courtyard of Fort Metal Cross, Dixcove. photograph by Fritz Biveridge

slaves were inspected and traded), an open workshop, storeroom, armoury, three bathrooms, two toilets and two rooms each for administrative and commercial staff of the defunct Royal African Company. Other facilities include a large underground water cistern, embrasures, spurs, 32 derelict light and heavy canons facing all directions and bastions, the Governor's tower and an overhanging metal bell to announce and regulate work and leisure schedules of the fort workers.

There are two ancient burials inside the main courtyard of the fort (see Fig. 7.2): that of Nana Hima Derchie I, one of the rulers of Ntwarkro (Upper Dixcove), and that of an unnamed virgin maiden from the royal house of Ntwarkro. Local traditions indicate that the site where the British chose to erect the fort in 1690s was originally the town's burial ground, a place considered by the townspeople as hallowed. In spite of protestations by the people, the British, who insisted that the site was securest and most appropriate to establish their activities, persevered and following negotiations, they had their way. However, before they were allowed to erect the fort at the location, rituals—including the burial of a live virgin maiden in the compound of

the fort—were performed by the town to appease the deities of the land and souls of persons already buried there. The internment of the dead chief and a live virgin maiden on the site of the fort had political, sacrificial and ritualistic significance that still underscores the local politics of Dixcove today.

Besides, the Ghanaian authorities have not lost sight of the economic potential of the presence of the fort in the area. In 2001, the fort was leased to a foreign investor who is converting the facility into a hotel/leisure complex to promote historical tourism. This has caused extensive damage to the on-site archaeological record. For instance, the original dark-grey clayey soils on the grounds lying south and east of the fort have been removed and replaced with red laterite to facilitate construction of two large swimming pools and several chalets to accommodate tourists who will be visiting the facility in the future. According to Lawrence, vegetable gardens and homes of several of the company slaves were located in this area.[23]

The Archaeological Investigation

The archaeological research was undertaken in two phases. The first involved conducting reconnaissance surveys on foot, one at each of the ancient settlement quarters of *Daazikessie* and *Ntwarkro*. Permission to conduct archaeological investigations inside the fort's large open forecourt was denied by the Ghana Museums and Monuments Board, caretaker of the fort and the Dixcove Traditional Council. This was because of the two burials there, and an excavation was considered a taboo customarily.

No cultural materials were retrieved at *Daazikessie* because the original settlement quarter has been heavily built upon by the people. The situation was further exacerbated by the very convoluted settlement pattern, which precluded the recovery of any archaeological data. The settlement pattern at *Ntwarkro,* however, was less dense, and cultural materials were recovered. The following constituted the total quanta discovered during the reconnaissance survey: European ceramics 13, local pottery—26, bones—6, mollusc remains—35, and lithic grinders—5.

The second phase involved the excavation of ten units at different locations at Dixcove. Five were opened at *Ntwarkro* and another five at *Daazikessie*. Cultural materials of local origin retrieved from the excavations comprised the following: pottery of local manufacture, querns,

Table 7.1 Table showing the types and quantum of finds recovered from unit 1

Types of Finds	*Level 1*	*Level 2*	*Level 3*	*Level 4*	*Level 5*	*Total*	*Percentage of total by strata level (%)*
Smoking pipes	8	8	13	–	–	29	3.23
Bottles	7	25	40	4	–	76	8.48
Red bricks	2	4	1	–	–	7	0.78
Bones	1	36	9	17	5	68	7.58
Mollusc shells	16	92	119	124	13	364	40.62
European ceramics	37	33	–	1	–	71	7.92
Tiles	4	–	–	–	–	4	0.44
Beads	1	4	1	–	–	6	0.66
Metal objects	5	8	8	2	2	25	2.79
Palm kernel shells	–	–	–	1	26	27	3.01
Local pottery	9	37	42	85	24	197	21.98
Slate boards/slate pencils	–	–	1	–	–	1	0.11
Iron Slag	–	3	–	7	10	20	1.34
Tar	1	–	–	–	–	1	2.23
Total	91	250	234	241	80	896	
Percentage of finds by artefact type (%)	10.15	27.90	26.11	26.89	8.92	100	100

molluscs remains, lithic grinders, floral remains, copious quantities of slag, tuyeres and bones.

Items of European origin that were retrieved comprised the following: European ceramics, metal hammers, door hinges, fragments of roofing slates, imported screws, nails and red bricks. Other recovered items include fragments of imported alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverage bottles, imported smoking pipes, inkwells, slate pencils and boards, illuminants, metal knives, blades, glass beads, health care and beauty product containers, metal bangles and anklets. The tables below show the types and quantum of cultural materials recovered according to units and stratigraphy levels (Tables 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4, 7.5, 7.6, 7.7, 7.8, 7.9, 7.10).

Discussion

The combined evidence clearly indicates that three trade systems operated simultaneously along the Dixcove coastline during the period covered by the study. The first was an intra-regional trade network with

Table 7.2 Table showing types and quantum of finds recovered from unit 2

Types of finds	*Level 1*	*L. 2*	*L. 3.*	*L. 4.*	*L. 5.*	*L. 6.*	*L. 7.*	*L. 8.*	*L. 9.*	*L. 10.*	*L. 11.*	*L. 12.*	*Total*	*Percentage of finds by strata level (%)*
Bottles	69	67	263	166	184	199	237	148	56	60	28	–	1477	12.64
Bones	25	42	19	33	78	213	164	138	124	45	15	–	896	7.67
Imported ceramics	26	39	72	57	43	43	89	166	185	115	16	–	851	7.28
Smoking pipes	2	3	14	13	10	2	23	28	23	49	4	–	171	1.46
Mollusc shells	442	341	178	427	706	594	898	298	341	408	185	23	4841	41.44
Glass beads	81	166	131	44	104	98	52	61	37	16	12	–	802	6.86
Writing slate	1	2	–	9	1	–	–	2	2	1	–	–	18	0.15
Red bricks	–	–	–	–	2	–	–	3	2	–	–	–	7	0.05
Metal objects	44	71	146	161	168	193	215	142	102	29	29	–	1300	11.13
Palm kernel shells	2	–	9	11	13	11	21	15	–	2	–	–	84	0.71
Local pottery	11	32	66	52	85	125	147	113	140	220	126	12	1129	9.66
Tiles	1	3	1	–	–	11	–	12	–	–	–	–	28	0.23
Grinding stones	1	3	–	1	–	1	–	3	–	–	–		9	0.07
Coin	–	–	–	–	–	1	–		–	–	–	–	1	0.008
Iron slag	–	–	–	–	1	2	1	–	4	3	9	13	23	0.19
Buttons	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	1	–	–	–	–	2	0.017
Tar	–	–	–	2	5	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	7	0.05
Burnt daub	–	–	–	2	2	5	3	2	1	4	2	12	33	0.28
Tuyeres	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	1	0.008
Total	705	769	899	978	1322	1498	1851	1132	1017	952	426	61	11680	
Percentage of finds by artefact type (%)	6.03	6.58	7.69	8.37	11.31	12.82	15.84	9.69	8.70	8.15	3.64	0.52		100

Table 7.3 Table showing types and quantum of finds recovered from unit 3

Types of finds	*Level 1*	*Level 2*	*Level 3*	*Level 4*	*Level 5*	*Total*	*Percentage of total finds according to strata level (%)*
Metal objects	–	1	2	–	–	3	15.78
Mollusc shells	–	2	3	1	2	8	42.10
Imported ceramics	–	–	1	–	–	1	5.26
Bottles	–	–	2	–	–	2	10.52
Bones	–	1	4	–	–	5	26.31
Total	–	4	12	1	2	19	100
Percentage of finds according to artefact type (%)	0	21.05	63.15	5.26	10.52		

neighbouring coastal and inland communities such as Wassa, Ncassa Fante and Nzema. This network predated the arrival of Europeans and involved the exchange of a variety of local products such as dried salted fish, salt, *quaqua* cloth (also called *Adra* or Benin cloth), *cori* beads, leopard skins, local pottery, staples and shellfish.[24] Local pottery was undoubtedly one such product imported by the people of ancient Dixcove because mineralogical analysis undertaken at the Department of Earth Science, University of Ghana, on ten potsherds randomly selected from recovered Dixcove pottery reveals that the principal mineral constituents were hornblende, quartz and plagioclase feldspars. These minerals are not found in the Dixcove area which supports the assertion that they were imported from elsewhere.

The second trade system was with polities on the Atlantic seaboard such as Benin, Ivory Coast and Whydah. According to Kwame Yeboa Daaku, J.W. Blake and Christopher DeCorse, early European traders exploited the ready market for *quaqua* cloth and *cori* beads on the Gold Coast by procuring large quantities from the Ivory Coast and Benin—where they were produced en masse—and reselling them on the Gold Coast for profit.[25] For example, during 1633–1634, Dutch traders brought 12,641 pieces of *quaqua* cloth to the Gold Coast.[26] According to Daaku, European active involvement in the intra-regional trade network caused frequent tensions between them and local traders which occasionally erupted into clashes because local traders considered European involvement in this trade network as impinging on their activities.[27] In the Colonial Office records, an

Table 7.4 Table showing types and quantum of finds recovered from unit 4

Types of finds	*Level 1*	*Level 2*	*Level 3*	*Level4*	*Level 5*	*Level 6*	*Level 7*	*Level8*	*Total*	*Percentage of finds according to strata level (%)*
Smoking pipes	–	1	3	4	2	–	1	–	11	0.53
Button	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	1	0.04
Local pottery	11	27	29	45	32	21	9	2	176	8.60
Imported ceramics	–	6	4	25	33	16	19	–	103	5.03
Glass bottles	2	4	9	10	17	18	9	–	69	3.37
Metal objects	14	21	23	24	23	43	20	–	168	8.21
Mollusc shells	2	59	83	288	293	453	199	2	1379	67.43
Bones	–	9	7	16	22	17	7	2	80	3.91
Glass beads	–	–	10	19	13	9	4	–	55	2.68
Canon	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	2	0.09
Slate boards/ pencils	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	1	0.04
Total	31	127	169	431	436	577	268	6	2045	100
Percentage of finds according to artefact type (%)	1.51	6.21	8.26	21.07	21.32	28.21	13.10	0.29	100	

individual named as "Leupen" notes that a substantial proportion of *quaqua* cloth and *cori* beads were re-exported to big inland markets such as Waankyi, Incassa and Nsoko by local traders who played important roles as middlemen in this trade network.[28] Contact with European traders along the Dixcove coastline not only increased the volume of goods traded through this network but also diversified. This created new vistas of trade in Europe and the New World. For instance, in 1686, staff of the Royal Africa Company at Barbados bitterly complained that some *ardra* cloth on board their vessels—the *Prosperous* and the *Orange Tree*, which had arrived from the Gold Coast—were "short by several pieces".[29]

The uniqueness of the intra-regional trade system made possible the transfer of items readily available in one area to less endowed areas with demand for them. Except for mollusc remains and pottery which were recovered in veritable quantities (11,428 and 5569 respectively), the paucity of the other commodities in the archaeological record can be attributed to their highly perishable nature and vagaries of tropical weather conditions which generally hinder the preservation of organic materials in the soil.

Table 7.5 Table showing types and quantum of finds recovered from unit 5

Types of finds	*L.1.*	*L.2.*	*L.3.*	*L.4.*	*L.5.*	*L.6.*	*L.7.*	*L.8.*	*L..9*	*L.10.*	*L.11.*	*Total*	*Percentage of finds according to strata level (%)*
Smoking pipes	14	31	18	16	34	21	21	27	12	2	–	196	2.69
Buttons	3	1	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	6	0.08
Local pottery	51	61	84	5	111	135	257	229	167	43	19	1162	15.99
Imported Ceramics	13	42	52	122	143	94	42	26	2	1	–	537	7.39
Bottles	11	33	41	92	117	163	27	19	2	4	–	509	7.00
Metal objects	16	74	167	184	136	368	42	29	7	2	–	1025	14.11
Mollusc shell	786	132	294	22	176	90	79	126	31	26	15	1777	24.46
Tuyeres	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	3	–	4	0.05
Bones	6	11	99	112	149	118	39	72	2	–	3	611	8.41
Beads	275	90	96	125	97	41	23	10	–	–	–	757	10.42
Slate pencils	–	–	–	–	8	1	2	–	–	–	–	11	0.15
Palm kernel shells	3	6	11	91	131	171	111	73	4	3	2	606	8.34
Roof tiles	–	–	1	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	2	0.02
Querns	–	–	1	–	–	2	1	–	1	–	–	5	0.06
Iron slag	–	–	–	1	1	3	2	2	7	7	24	47	0.64
Stone grinders	–	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	2	0.02
Coins	–	–	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	2	0.02
Red bricks		1	2	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	4	0.05
Total	1178	484	870	772	1103	1207	646	618	238	97	50	7263	
percentage of total finds according to artefact type	17.52	7.22	12.97	1.8	14.36	16.66	7.54	8.17	3.61	1.41	0.71		100

Table 7.6 Table showing the types and quantum of finds recovered from unit 6

Types of cultural materials	*Stratigraphy levels*						*Percentage of total finds according to strata levels (%)*
	Level 1	*Level 2*	*Level 3*	*Level 4*	*Level 5*	*Total*	
Local pottery	26	128	193	26	11	384	23.83
Glass beads	–	1	–	–	–	1	0.06
Slate boards/ pencils	5	10	2	–	–	17	1.05
Glass bottles	12	48	75	12	–	147	9.12
Palm kernel shells	–	6	19	13	3	41	2.54
Mollusc shells	19	47	126	427	32	651	40.40
Imported ceramics	9	13	3	–	–	25	1.55
Metal objects	2	29	127	–	–	158	9.80
Bones	120	35	28	3	–	186	11.54
Smoking pipes	–	1	–	–	–	1	0.06
Total	193	318	573	481	46	1611	100
Percentage of total finds according to artefact type (%)	11.98	19.73	35.56	29.85	2.85		

Table 7.7 Table showing types and quantum of finds recovered from unit 7

Types of cultural finds	*Stratigraphy levels*					*Total*	*Percentage of total finds according to strata levels (%)*
	Level 1	*Level 2*	*Level 3*	*Level 4*	*Level 5*		
Local pottery	164	324	249	130	19	886	65.14
Imported ceramics	1	–	–	–	–	1	0.07
Glass bottles	–	2	–	–	–	2	0.14
Iron slag	–	–	5	10	28	43	3.16
Smoking pipes	–	1	–	–	–	1	0.07
Palm kernel shell	12	3	39	110	50	214	15.73
Mollusc shells	14	32	39	71	13	169	12.42
Metal objects	3	–	1	–	–	4	0.29
Daub	–	12	10	9	7	38	2.79
Red Bricks	2	–	–	–	–	2	0.14
Total	196	374	343	330	117	1360	100
Percentage of total finds according to artefact type (%)	14.41	27.5	25.22	24.26	8.60		

Table 7.8 Table showing types and quantum of finds recovered from unit 8

Types of cultural materials/ecofacts	*Stratigraphy levels*					*Total*	*Percentage of total finds according to strata levels (%)*
	Level 1	*Level 2*	*Level 3*	*Level 4*	*Level 5*		
Local pottery	78	39	150	110	43	420	30.90
Mollusc shell	12	66	112	133	91	414	30.46
Palm kernel shells	21	110	115	127	89	462	33.99
Glass bottles	1	–	–	–	–	1	0.07
Iron slag	–	–	2	10	17	29	2.13
Imported ceramic	–	1	–	1	–	2	0.14
Daub	1	3	5	13	9	31	2.28
Total	113	219	384	394	249	1359	100
Percentage of total finds according to artefact type (%)	8.31	16.11	28.25	28.99	18.32	100	

The third trade system was the transatlantic trade network with European companies and interloper traders. As to which one of the three took precedence over the other is a matter of debate. However, all were integral and contributed significantly to the growth and development of the economy of Ahanta-land. It is uncertain when the transatlantic trade system between the indigenes of Dixcove and the British began. According to Lawrence, its genesis preceded the construction of Fort Metal Cross by about 200 years and the British began settling the Dixcove coastline only towards the end of 1684.[30] During this period, merchandise was transferred onto small canoes to be ferried onshore to the beachfront via the cove. Barter and the use of gold weights constituted the main methods used to facilitate these exchanges. In 1602, Pieter de Marees asserted that "they do not use any money or coins to pay each other and when they buy anything, they pay each other with gold using weights".[31] This system of exchange appears to have changed in the late nineteenth century when coin usage became integral and widespread on the Gold Coast.[32]

The volume of trade during the early Euro-Ahanta contact era (1520–1680) was small, inconsistent and unorganized. However, this changed under James 1st of England who granted charters to The Company of Adventurers of London and The Company of Royal Adventurers, which were specifically tasked to search for and exploit the gold resources of

Table 7.9 Table showing types and quantum of finds recovered from unit 9

Types of finds	*Stratigraphy levels*								*Percentage of total finds according to strata levels (%)*
	Level 1	*Level 2*	*Level 3*	*Level 4*	*Level 5*	*Level 6*	*Level 7*	*Total*	
Local pottery	8	4	11	127	199	123	13	485	42.58
Mollusc shells	22	27	33	10	19	5	5	121	10.62
Iron slag	–	–	1	1	11	10	24	47	4.12
Metal objects	10	2	7	10	–	–	–	29	2.54
Palm kernel shells	–	55	126	110	9	11	7	318	27.19
Smoking pipes	3	1	–	–	–	–	–	4	0.35
Bones	13	21	41	19	13	2	–	109	9.56
Imported ceramics	8	1	–	–	–	–	–	9	0.79
Glass bottles	13	1	3	–	–	–	–	17	1.49
Total	77	112	222	277	251	151	49	1139	100
Percentage of total finds according to artefact type (%)	6.76	9.83	19.4	24.3	22.0	13.2	4.30		

Guinea. The latter, which lasted only 13 years, exported £200,000 lb of gold to England and transported about £100,000 worth of slaves to the colonies.[33] In spite of these seemingly large volumes of gold and slaves exported, its profits did not meet its shareholders expectations because it was unimpressive in comparison with Dutch trade on the Gold Coast. The companies generally uncoordinated relations with the indigenes and activities of interloper captains and traders accounted for their low profits. In 1672, the Stuarts liquidated the Company of Royal Adventurers and by another royal charter established the Royal African Company which had James, the Duke of York, as its first executive head.

Table 7.10 Table showing types and quantum of finds recovered from unit 10

Types of finds	*Stratigraphy levels*									*Percentage of total finds according to strata levels (%)*
	Level 1	*Level 2*	*Level 3*	*Level 4*	*Level 5*	*Level 6*	*Level 7*	*Level 8*	*Total*	
Local pottery	18	40	110	199	167	112	73	11	730	19.77
Mollusc shells	132	381	468	472	121	93	34	3	1704	46.15
Metal objects	63	29	115	23	19	8	–	–	257	6.96
Iron slag	–	–	–	–	–	–	14	10	24	0.65
Smoking pipes	–	–	2	–	–	–	–	–	2	0.05
Slate pencils	1	62	30	4	3	–	–	–	100	2.70
Bones	88	118	117	188	91	3	–	–	605	16.38
Imported ceramics	5	2	19	10	3	5	–	–	44	1.19
Bottles	8	45	82	80	7	4	–	–	226	6.12%
Total	315	677	943	976	411	225	121	24	3692	100
Percentage of total finds according to artefact type (%)	19.77	46.15	6.96	0.65	0.05	2.70	16.38	1.190	6.12	

Headquartered at Cape Coast Castle, operational monopoly of the new company extended over 5000 miles stretching from Cape Sallee in Morocco to the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa. Its core duty was trading in gold, ivory, timber and slaves; it was also licensed to build forts and trade factories on the Gold Coast, The Gambia, Sierra Leone and the coastline of the Bight of Benin known as the Slave Coast. Its mandate included the recruitment of troops and the exercitation of martial law in its operative areas.[34]

Brisk and organized trade along the Dixcove coastline began with the incorporation of the Royal African Company and its construction of Fort Metal Cross. From 1674 to 1714, the company minted

approximately 548,327 guinea gold coins all of which were derived from the Gold Coast.[35] According to George Francis Dow, the quantum of gold sourced from the Gold Coast (including the Dixcove coastline) to England was so much that "forty to fifty thousand *guinea* could be minted at a time".[36] The exported gold was not only phenomenal in quantity but also exceptionally pure. A missive sent in August 1811 by Samuel Swan, captain of the *Eliza,* to his brothers in America stated, among other things, that "the gold dust collected from Cape Lahou down to 'Dix Cove' is thought to be the purest on the whole coast".[37] According to Thomas Phillips, Captain of the *Hannbal*, other commodities in high demand on the Gold Coast during the period included

> blue and red perpetuanoes, pewter basins of several sizes, from one to four pound weight, old sheets, large Flemish knives, iron bars, cases of spirits, blue says, if well dyed, and coral, if large and of good colour. These goods will seldom or never fail of a good market. I also carried there on account of the African company, muskets, niconees, tapseals, baysadoes, brass kettles, English carpets, Welsh plains, lead bars, firkins of tallow, powder.[38]

Other notable imports documented by early European writers included perishable consumables such as cotton sails, leather gloves, old and new dresses, hats, flour, tea, molasses, sugar, tobacco, soap and military supplies like gun powder.[39]

The Royal African Company sponsored 249 voyages to Africa from 1680 to 1688.[40] Apart from playing a central role in the facilitation and transportation of millions of slaves to Europe and the New World, the Royal African Company and its successor company, the Committee of Merchants Trading to Africa (established 1768), should also be credited for making Britain one of the most successful slave trading nations. From 1640 to 1800, the two companies safely transported about 2.7 million African "slaves" out of 3.1 million purchased from the Guinea Coast (including the Dixcove coastline) to various destinations worldwide.

The importance, extensive and vibrant nature of the coastal trade is proven archaeologically with the recovery of a wide array of exotic trade goods of local and foreign origins. Their quantum and variety is phenomenal and bears testimony to Dixcove's inclusion in the broader global economic system. For example, out of 15,083 artefacts recovered, 9,488 constituted items of European origin (representing 71.57%). They included the following:

a. Dress and body adornment materials (such as glass beads, metal bracelets, bangles and rings)—1,640 (representing 10.8%).
b. Household items (such as forks, metal basins, cauldrons, pewters and knives)—11 (representing 0.07%).
c. Hardware, building and construction materials (nails, roofing slates, glass window panes, screws, mattocks and door hinges)—2,696 (representing 17.8%).
d. Entertainment, leisure and lifestyle items (alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, perfume containers, scented oil bottles and smoking pipes)—2,972 (representing 19.7%).
e. European ceramics (plates, bowls, jars and mugs)—1,657 (representing 10.9%).
f. Pharmaceutical repositories (such as medicinal vials, pomade containers and poisons)—315 (representing 12.3%).

Unlike these non-perishables (which are visibly represented in the archaeological record), there was paucity and limited archaeological visibility of some of the above-named items at Dixcove. It was thus difficult to scientifically analyse and assess quantitatively and qualitatively their impact on the indigenous populace and the local economy. However, archival records c.1600–1880 indicate that textiles (mainly cloth), finished metal implements (hoes, mattocks, hammers etc.), raw metal products (brass, iron and copper bars, wires and ingots), firearms and alcoholic beverages accounted for about 70% of the total European export to the Gold Coast, while body ornamentation items (glass beads, bangles, anklets), old and new clothing (dresses, hats, leather materials, wigs) and consumables (flour, sugar, tobacco) accounted for the remaining 30%.[41]

Notable exports from the research area included gold, palm oil, salt, ivory, indigo dyes, animal skins and wood products of which gold, palm oil and salt were considered the most important.[42] Reporting on British trade at Dixcove on 1 April 1815, James Mollan corroborated the above assertion in a missive in which he intimated that "the trade consists of gold, ivory and palm oil for which you give in exchange, India and Manchester goods, also rum, gunpowder, iron and lead bars & c. There has been no material change since the last state and condition was rendered in".[43]

Historical records assert that access to traditional export commodities such as gold and ivory was tied to conditions prevailing inland from

where they were sourced. Wars and the insecurities it generated negatively constrained gold production and plunged the trade into a perpetual state of flux, abetting it to the detriment of all the parties involved. Three such wars which brought the gold and ivory trade to a standstill at Dixcove included the 1701–1702 Asante war with Denkyira and Akyem Kotoku, the 1702 Akwamu conquest of the Ewe of Krepi and the 1707 Akwamu campaign against Kwahu.[44]

These insecurities notwithstanding, the gold trade generally boomed along the Dixcove coastline because much of the gold exported from there was sourced from Wassa and Aowin, rather than Asante. During the early sixteenth century, for instance, total annual exports from the Guinea Coast were estimated at about 24,000 oz (then worth about £10,000) with much of this supply coming from the Gold Coast.[45] According to J.W. Blake and J.D. Fage, this was equivalent to about a tenth of total world supply during the period.[46] Trade entries of both the West India Company and the Royal African Company support the above assertion. For instance, total cargo of the *Opmer*, a Dutch-registered vessel that docked at Accra from Benin in 1705, contained only 72 *ackies* (4 marks, 6 oz) of gold as against 15,015 lb of rice, 17,925 lb of ivory and 4,000 lb of wax. Another Dutch vessel, the *Valk*, which arrived from Congo the same year, also had only 10 ackies (7 oz). This was against 651 oz of gold exported from the Gold Coast to the United Provinces by the same companies that year.[47]

Other examples which clearly support the above assertion are instructions given to the Masters of the West India Company's vessels *Neptune* and the *Anna and Jacoba*, prior to being dispatched to the Gold, Grain and Ivory coasts. The former was instructed specifically to exchange its cargo of firearms for gold and ivory, while the latter was instructed to buy only grain and ivory.[48] Apart from England and the Netherland, who actively operated in the research area, other notable players were the Danes, French and Brandenburgers. It has been estimated that between them, a total of 7000 marks (equivalent to about £224,000 at the time) in gold receipts alone were exported from the Gold Coast annually during the early seventeenth century.[49]

Although several historical records posit that the trade in slaves was highly profitable and dominated European interest on the Guinea Coast, the evidence from ancient Dixcove was counter-supportive of this view.[50] Two reasons appear to have accounted for this. The first was that the architectural drawings of Fort Metal Cross executed before 1750 did not

incorporate slave dungeons. According to Lawrence, the fort's two slave dungeons only became an integral part of its design in the mid-eighteenth century.[51] St Clair also notes that until 1700, the primary interest of the Atlantic slave trading nations was to obtain gold and to a lesser extent ivory but not slaves.[52] The second reason is that the fort's two slave dungeons are very small measuring only 4 × 6 metres. An experiment to determine its maximum holding capacity revealed each could hold only 15 persons tightly cramped together in a squatting position. This suggests that the trade in slaves at Dixcove was small and probably inconsequential to the local economy when compared to other slave holding entities such as Fort St. Jago (Elmina), Fort St. Anthony (Axim) and Cape Coast Castle.

Analysis of the artefactual assemblages retrieved indicates two things. Firstly, the British did not enjoy a trade monopoly at Dixcove despite documentary evidence positing that they tried tenuously to prevent traders of other nations from directly conducting trade there.[53] Secondly, the British procured some supplies from other nations to sell at Dixcove. That several of the imports were identified as originating from outside England bears testimony to this. For example, the glass beads were identified as *millifiori* and *mosaic* beads originating from Venice and Bohemia, while the bulk of the smoking pipes came from the Netherlands.[54] DeCorse notes that it was not uncommon during the era of the transatlantic trade for goods from different distribution points to circulate freely elsewhere and that occasionally entire ship cargoes were smuggled ashore.[55] Portugal, for example, sourced much of its textile supplies from Flanders and the Netherland, while the Dutch procured Rhenish stonewares and Venetian glass beads from Venice to sell on the Gold Coast.[56]

It is also not improbable that "free traders" and unsanctioned interloper captains of other nations traded freely, albeit secretly, alongside the British at Dixcove. The ease with which gold, palm oil and timber were obtained there coupled with the relative calmness of the cove even at high tide would have attracted these groups of traders to conduct trade there. The close proximity of two Dutch possessions, namely Fort St. Anthony at Axim and Fort Batensteyn at Butre, which are situated only a few kilometres to the west and east respectively, may have also facilitated the availability and circulation at Dixcove of goods from the Netherlands.

There is overwhelming documentary evidence to suggest that trade along the Dixcove coastline was not limited to British traders and

mariners but that ships from the New World—particularly the bustling American ports of New England, New York, New Orleans, Charleston, Newburyport and Boston—also regularly docked there and traded with the indigenes. American trade on the Gold Coast blossomed after the American War of Independence until about 1812 when much of Europe was itself embroiled in war, a situation which many New World merchants exploited to their advantage. A report dated 20 August 1809 from the American trader Samuel Swan (aboard the *R.I. Love & Unity*) to Jacob Tidd (at Elmina) serves as an example:

> I have been offered at 17 Gall pr oz to take all my rum, but as I know there is no American on the coast & that all my rum is in demand, I have determined not to sell at less than 15 & I expect by the time I return from 'Dix Cove' (which place I am now under weight for) to get an oz for 14 or 13 Gall. The rum is so good that Davison could not sell at 18 pr Oz while I would give 16G. My rum is now my principal object having 74 hhd still on hand, 60 Bar flour, 50 cases of Gin & most of the cloth & some of the small articles. The Amt sales are at present 16,139 Doll. & the Amt Invoice on hand is 12,725 dollars. I shall go no further up than 'Dix Cove' and shall touch at every place from that to Accra, by which time I expect I will have no more on board than I shall want to carry over to Prince Island with me. [57]

Another report intimating American presence at Dixcove is contained in Alfred Beckett's 14 December 1835 report on trade along the West Guinea Coast. Beckett worked as Log Officer on the *Gleaner* which was captained by Thomas D. Hunt. The log read:

> December 14, 1835. At 8 A.M. weighed anchor and sailed, and at 4 o'clock P.M. came too at Dix Cove. December 15, 1835. Went on shore-landed samples. Dined at Mr Brace (coloured). Gov Swansey absent on a visit to Cape Coast. The British have a strong fortification here; and brought on board 19 sacks of peppers. December 16, 1835. Dix Cove. Went on shore in the morning saw a lot of peppers weighed. Dined at Mr Brace in afternoon. My time was occupied the same as in morning came on board at 5 o'clock. December 17, 1835. Dix Cove. In the morning went on shore. Took acct of wgt of peppers. Dined at Mr Brace. Sent pepper on board & also took what articles remaining unsold with us and got the Brig underweigh at 5 o'clock and sailed. At 7 o'clock P.M. came to anchor off Boutry.[58]

While both European and American traders and mariners frequently docked at Dixcove, archival records indicate that items demanded by the latter at Dixcove were more varied and to a large extent different from those demanded by the former. American traders purchased gum copal, gum myrrh, aloes, tallow, barwood, Colombo root, ivory, tortoise shell, rhinoceros horns, hides, bees wax, coconut oil, rice, millet, ghee, camwood and a great variety of drugs in addition to the traditional gold and ivory.[59] Exports from the Dixcove coastline were similar to those supplied by Europeans and included textiles, firearms, gunpowder, tobacco, rum, gin and flour.

The material inventory provided valuable insights into how the transatlantic trade system operated at Dixcove. It was essentially a very profitable enterprise for Europeans (especially the British and Dutch) and the indigenous populace. A 1772 document titled *A Treatise upon the Trade from Great Britain to Africa* published in London evaluated British trade on the Gold Coast. It described trade "as the first principle and foundation of all the rest; the main spring of the machine which sets every wheel in motion".[60] Commenting on Britain's overseas commerce on the Guinea Coast, Margaret Priestley asserts that trade "was the bedrock of her national power".[61] Another report by R. Hallett in the *Journal of Africa History* also described British trade as "essentially necessary to the well-being" of Britain's New World colonies.[62] According to Douglas Coombs, British trade on the Guinea Coast was very profitable. He estimates its total value in the 1850s to be about five times that of the Dutch.[63] The trade in gold and slaves particularly buoyed the economies of England and the Netherlands. Their competitive zeal to build trade factories on the Gold Coast to facilitate their exploitation of the Gold Coast's natural and human resources is testament to its profitability.

Admittedly, the quantum of gold, ivory and slaves exported from the Dixcove coastline will never be exactly known because of extensive time gaps and other lapses in the records. However, the combined data from archaeological study, historical sources and oral tradition suggest that Dixcove was an important commercial entrepot for the Royal African Company. Those two natives of Dixcove in 1710 were able to sell a very large amount of gold reputed to have been worth £1700 to two British traders attests to its importance as an economic enclave. The Company of Royal Adventurers also claimed it shipped £200,000 and £100,000 worth of gold and slaves, respectively, during its relatively short

existence. Meanwhile, its successor company then reported that between 1674 and 1714, it minted 548,327 Guinea coins from gold sourced mainly from the Gold Coast and shipped 5000 slaves annually to British colonies in the New World.[64] Conversely, the Gold Coast (including the Dixcove coastline) provided a ready market for British-manufactured goods which was reported to be worth approximately £130,000 in 1720 and £866,000 in 1775.[65]

Trade along the Dixcove coastline impacted positively and negatively on the local economy. The main positive effect was that it swamped the local market with an assortment of imported novelties such as European clothing, ceramics, tobacco, military hardware, glass beads and metal products. Another positive effect was the creation of new employment avenues for the indigenous populace. Local "gold takers" and brokers were tasked to market European goods and induce inland traders to trade with their employers. Most combined their commercial duties with political roles as ambassadors and peace negotiators for the company. These were highly ranked individuals being paid high wages, some as much as £1.00 a month (about 4 ackies, sometimes with bonuses and presents).[66] This guaranteed the recipients economic and social positions in the community.[67] Those who were engaged as masons, carpenters, porters, canoe men, bricklayers and interpreters were permanently accommodated in the forts on account of their trustworthiness, local influence and fluency in English.[68]

The research, however, revealed that the mass importation of a wide variety of finished European metal products facilitated the disintegration and demise of the traditional iron smelting and forging industries at ancient Dixcove. Archaeological evidence indicates that the technological know-how of smelting and forging iron was widespread, thriving and well established among the people. This is attested to by the recovery of copious quantities of slag (a by-product of the iron smelting process) and fragments of tuyeres at the pre-European contact levels of the stratigraphy (See Tables 7.11, 7.12, 7.13, 7.14, 7.15, 7.16).

It is worth noting that the period following the arrival of Europeans to the Dixcove coastline witnessed a gradual decrease in the quantum of slag recovered from all the excavated units. This indicates that there was a gradual decline in iron smelting and forging till about stratigraphy levels 2 and 3 when its recovery ceased altogether in the archaeological record. The industry probably demised during the period represented by stratigraphy levels 2 and 3.[69]

Table 7.11 Table showing decreasing quantum of slag recovered at unit 1

Unit 1			
Post-Atlantic contact cultural levels	Strata levels	Quantum of slag recovered	Tuyeres
	1	–	–
	2	3	–
	3	–	–
	4	7	–
Pre-Atlantic contact cultural level	5	10	–
Total		20	0
Percentage of total (%)		9.43	0

Table 7.12 Table showing decreasing quantum of slag recovered at unit 2

Unit 2			
Post-Atlantic contact cultural levels	Strata levels	Quantum of slag recovered	Tuyeres
	1	–	–
	2	–	–
	3	–	–
	4	–	–
	5	1	–
	6	2	–
	7	1	–
	8	–	–
	9	4	–
	10	3	–
	11	9	–
Pre-Atlantic contact	12	13	–
cultural levels	13	16	–
Total		49	0
Percentage of total (%)		23.11	0

While the archaeological data provided ample evidence of declining production levels during the post-Anglo–Ahanta contact period, it did not provide any veritable evidence to explain why this occurred. However, several historical sources posit that a wide array of imported finished metal products such as knives, pewter basins, bells, metal cauldrons, brass pots, hoes, cutlasses and mattocks constituted major items in high demand on the Gold Coast during this period.[70] Aside from the above finished products, Europeans also brought in large quantities of

Table 7.13 Table showing decreasing quantum of slag recovered at unit 5

Unit 5			
Post-Atlantic contact cultural levels	Strata levels	Quantum of slag recovered	Tuyeres
	1	–	–
	2	–	–
	3	–	–
	4	1	–
	5	1	–
	6	3	–
	7	2	–
	8	7	–
	9	9	–
Pre-Atlantic contact cultural levels	10	13	–
	11	11	–
Total		47	0
Percentage of total (%)		22.16	0

Table 7.14 Table showing decreasing quantum of slag recovered at unit 7

Unit 7			
Post-Atlantic contact cultural levels	Strata levels	Quantum of slag recovered	Tuyeres
	1	–	–
	2	–	–
	3	5	–
	4	10	–
Pre-Atlantic contact cultural level	5	28	–
Total		43	0
Percentage of total (%)		20.28	0

iron ingots, brass and copper bars, rods, wires and bracelets (manilas) in variable lengths which were melted down and recast by local smiths into a variety of finished household products such as hatchets, rings, bracelets, anklets and knives. W.C. Aitken, for example, noted that:

> A considerable quantity of the brass wire made in Birmingham finds its way to the Gold Coast, to Old Calabar, in the form of what are called "guinea rods", one hundred of which, each three feet in length, of Nos. 4 and 5 gauge in thickness, packed up in deal cases, and being at their destinations, sold in exchange for palm oil. Large numbers of rings made of solid brass wire, about seven-sixteenths thick and three and a quarter

Table 7.15 Table showing decreasing quantum of slag recovered at unit 8

Unit 8			
Post-Atlantic contact cultural levels	Strata levels	Quantum of slag recovered	Tuyeres
	1	–	
	2	–	
	3	2	
	4	10	
Pre-Atlantic contact cultural level	5	17	
Total		29	0
Percentage of total (%)		13.67	0

Table 7.16 Table showing decreasing quantum of slag recovered at unit 10

Unit 10			
Post-Atlantic contact cultural levels	Strata levels	Quantum of slag recovered	Tuyeres
	1	–	–
	2	–	–
	3	–	–
	4	–	–
	5	–	–
	6	–	–
Pre-Atlantic contact cultural levels	7	10	–
	8	14	–
Total		24	0
Percentage of total (%)		11.32	0

> inches diameter, made of wire, are also sent to the Gold Coast. A smaller size of brass wire (a little thicker than ordinary pin wire) is converted by being wound around spits into spirals like an ordinary check bell spring, and is also exported to the locality for purposes of ornament and personal decoration.[71]

C.L. Goucher also noted that by exporting iron bars, wires and ingots, the European nations controlled markets on the Guinea Coast by flooding them with iron produced with sulphur.[72] This drastically reduced their production cost and made imported finished metal products cheaper than those produced locally. It is thus not improbable that imported iron wares became cheaper, easily available and were procured with relative ease. This situation would have reduced demand for locally

produced blooms and locally produced metal wares which were of better quality but commanded higher equitable prices. According to Goucher, indigenous iron production also required a high level of skill and time.[73] Thus, where the market value was not sufficient to compensate labour, there would have been little incentive to continue production. This situation may have contributed to declining production levels, leading to the collapse and demise of the local iron working industry at Dixcove.

The relevance of Fort Metal Cross in the socio-economic and political history of ancient Dixcove cannot be overemphasized. This is because trade and the benefits it generated added political, economic and social impetus to the Dixcove state, transforming the balance of power and its settlement relations with neighbouring polities like Butre.[74] The fort was indispensable to the British and was never abandoned, even during the early nineteenth century when trade dipped. This was primarily because the fort functioned as a service/supply station for the British from where they procured vital raw materials such as timber and lime necessary for the repair and refurbishment of their other fortifications on the Gold Coast. On 29th December 1792, for example, orders were issued from Cape Coast "to burn and send down lime from Dixcove" for the repair of the British fort in Accra.[75]

That the Royal African Company and its successor company, The Company of Merchants Trading to Africa, continued to received annual grants and subsidies (sometimes as high as £10,000 and £15,000 respectively) from the British government bears testimony to its indispensability.[76] The Royal African Company also owned "most of the watering places" in addition to a very deep cistern which supplied not only the residents of the fort with fresh water but also ships which called at Dixcove. Lawrence observed that "being in English hands, they can obtain fresh water before the outbound journey across the Atlantic without paying for it, the other nations on the other hand must pay dearly and at times can obtain none, not even for payment".[77]

That the majority of the town's folk settled around the immediate precincts of Fort Metal Cross appears to suggest that it was central to the security of the two Dixcove states in ancient times. This is manifested archaeologically by remains of the foundations and floors of several houses, the majority of which lay closely aggregated to each other. It is worth noting, however, that this dense and convoluted settlement pattern around the fort was not the situation in 1694 when the fort was under construction. This was because in March of that year the captain

of a British slaving ship which called at Dixcove reported that he saw the commander of the fort "building a small fort on a great flat rock about half a mile east of the town".[78] Relocation to the fort's precincts was primarily because British support was almost always guaranteed during crisis periods since the fort was well fortified with canons of various sizes. History is replete with accounts of British assistance. Examples of two of the earliest include the 1704 war with Butre and the 1712 New Year invasion of Dixcove by John Conny's (also spelt Konny and Couny) . On the latter occasion, the British allowed over 300 non-combatant natives to seek refuge inside the fort after which they bombarded Conny's forces forcing them to retreat.

Several early historical records posit that prior to European advent in the early sixteenth century Dixcove was a small fishing village.[79] However, by the late nineteenth century, it had evolved into a relatively large urban commercial epicentre attested to archaeologically with the recovery of 22,604 cultural materials around the environs of Fort Metal Cross out of a total of 31,765. Lawrence amply corroborated this fact when he referred to *Ntwarkro* as "Greater Dixcove".[80] Urbanization may have been facilitated at Dixcove by migration of neighbouring ethno-linguistic groups intent on exploiting new openings for commercial, political and social advancement created by the transatlantic trade. Daaku, for example, notes that flourishing trade around the forts and castles helped propel many coastal villages with forts to cosmopolitan status.[81] Trade also promoted cross-cultural interactions between the indigenous populace and the British, a situation which would have further enhanced socio-economic growth and urbanization at ancient Dixcove.

Conclusion

The *raison d'être* for building Fort Metal Cross was its strategic geographical location and abundant natural resources. From the mid-eighteenth century, it developed further to become the fountainhead of British mercantile interests (especially along the western coastal belt of the Gold Coast), a commercial hub, and the nerve centre for the facilitation and success of Anglo–Ahanta trade. It probably vied with other trade fortifications such as Fort St. Anthony, Fort Battenstein and Fort Sao Jorge da Mina for primacy in the political economy of the mid- and western coastal belt of the Gold Coast. The quantum and wide variety of trade goods retrieved during the excavations bears testament to this.

After the abolition of the slave trade, legitimate trade also declined significantly on the Gold Coast, but the British did not abandon Fort Metal Cross. Instead, they transformed it into an important service station for the procurement of potable water, ship supplies and other merchandise for European ships doing the outbound journey to Europe and America, and for the supply of lime, timber and granite for the renovation of British trade factories on the Gold Coast.

Fort Metal Cross also played a primal role in the ascendancy of the political economy of Ahanta-land, serving not only as the principal catalysts which boosted trade in the area but also tilting the balance of power in the region to her advantage. The coastal trade was probably the single most important factor which facilitated the rise of the two Dixcove states (*Ntwsakro* and *Daazikessie*) from small fishing village status to a large cosmopolitan centre directly connected to the global economy via bustling ports such as Bristol and Liverpool (England), Rotterdam (The Netherlands), Boston and Charleston (America). Intra-regional trade with states on the Atlantic seaboard and the multiplicity of economic opportunities and incentives created by trade at Dixcove probably served as additional impetus to urbanization.

Trade along the Dixcove coastline had a two-way impact on the local economy. On the one hand, it led to diminutive interest, and later the gradual decline and collapse of the local iron smelting and forging industries due primarily to swamping of the local market with finished imported varieties. This undercut local industries producing similar products, thereby facilitating their disintegration and collapse. Increased earnings from the coastal trade also attracted local entrepreneurs engaged in iron smelting and forging to the more profitable trade sector. On the other hand, it impacted positively on aspects of the local economy by providing a wide variety of inputs necessary for the facilitation of those industries. One area where this was glaringly evident in the archaeological record was in the fishing industry. The large quantum of sealife pisces and mollusc remains recovered at stratigraphy levels which corresponded with the post-Anglo–Ahanta contact period, compared to stratigraphy levels which corresponded with the pre-Anglo–Ahanta contact period amply proved that novel introductions such as imported cotton sails, nylon ropes and seine nets boosted growth in that sector of the economy.

Another positive consequence of the coastal trade at Dixcove was the modification and diversification of the intra-regional trade network. It led not only to increased volumes and array of goods traded but also to

its diversification with European goods now dominating the exchanges. Anglo–Ahanta trade also had social implications for the locals. The development of new contractual obligations regarding employment and social services, multi-culturalism and acculturation patterns some of which were manifested in the archaeological record was perhaps the most outstanding. Archaeological evidence indicated that the coastal trade also promoted growth of new social strata of wealthy property owning indigenous people.

Cultural diffusion was particularly apparent from the mid-eighteenth century onwards and appeared to have occurred in a commercial setting. The building of several large two-storied European-style houses using imported building materials (bricks, metal hinges and glass windows), consumption of imported alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages and the smoking of tobacco through pipes is overwhelming attestation of acculturation and an expanded African elitist class.

Trade also appears to have constituted the single most important factor which facilitated cross-cultural contacts between the British and Ahanta. The recovery of veritable quantities of imported cultural materials at the latter phase of the post-Anglo–Ahanta contact era (1740–1850) compared to the pre-Anglo–Ahanta contact period attests not only to bustling economic activity but also to enhanced socio-cultural contact. The transatlantic trade propelled economic growth in England and the Netherlands, the two nations actively involved at ancient Dixcove. Their purchase of gold and ivory, along with the production of cash crops in the Americas using slave labour, made significant contributions to the expansion of their economies and colonies in the New World.

While the quantum of archaeological data retrieved was sizable and significant enough to answer the research questions, further archaeological investigations using earth probing equipment like a proton magnetometer on concreted areas around the fort and the central courtyard is necessary to yield more data. This can shed light on aspects of their interactions which are not readily evident in this study.

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1. A W. Lawrence, Trade Castles and Forts of West Africa (London: Jonathan Cape, 1963), 293.
2. William Bosman, A New and Accurate Description of the Coast of Guinea (London: Frank Cass, 1705), 433.

3. Smith, as quoted in Lawrence, 294.
4. Jean Barbot, *Barbot on Guinea: The Writings of Jean Barbot on West Africa, 1678–1712* ed. by P.E.H. Hair, Adam Jones, and Robin Law. (London: Hakluyt Society, 1732), 47. This text is a translation of Barbot's original French text, showing comparisons with and annotations regarding Barbot's 1732 English translation.
5. Lawrence, 293.
6. Lawrence, 292; K. B. Dickson, *A Historical Geography of Ghana* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1969), 136–137.
7. Lawrence, 292.
8. Bosman, 12–13; Ole Justesen, *Danish Sources for the History of Ghana 1657–1754.* vol. 1 & 2 (Copenhagen: The Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters, 2005), 439; Lawrence. 292.
9. Lawrence, 298.
10. Justeen, 478; Barbot, 151; Dickson, 122.
11. Bosman, 12–13; Barbot, 151.
12. J. D. Fage, *The History of West Africa* (London: Routledge. 1967), 289.
13. Lawrence, 298.
14. James Kwesi Anquandah, *Castles and Forts of Ghana* (Paris: Atalante, 1999) 82.
15. Lawrence, 297; Bosman, 65; Albert van Dantzig, *Forts and Castles of Ghana* (Accra: Sedco, 1980), 45.
16. Bosman, 12.
17. Lawrence, 295.
18. Lawrence, 298.
19. Anquandah, 78 & 82.
20. Lawrence, 311.
21. The West Indian Company is the national charter company of the Dutch.
22. Lawrence, 311.
23. Lawrence, 298.
24. Kwame Yeboa Daaku. *Trade and Politics on the Gold Coast 1600–1720: A Study of the African Reaction to European Trade* (London: Clarendon Press, 1970), 5–7; Barbot, 433; Fage, 42.
25. Daaku, 6; J.W. Blake. *Europeans in West Africa 1450–1560.* vol 1. (Wiesbaden: Hakluyt Society, 1967), 93; Christopher DeCorse, *An Archaeology of Elmina: Africans and Europeans on the Gold Coast, 1400–1900* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 2001), 142.
26. The National Archive (Kew): T. 70/3 and T. 70/146.
27. Daaku, 6.
28. Records from the Colonial Office. C.O. 1/20.
29. The National Archive (Kew): T. 70/1433/7. (Correspondence from Barbados to the RAC, 14 August, 1686).

30. Lawrence, 292, 297.
31. Pieter de Marees, *Description and Historical Account of the Gold Kingdom of Guinea* (1602), Translated and annotated by Albert van Dantzig and Adam Jones (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 65.
32. Timothy F. Garrard, *Akan Weights and the Gold Trade* (New York: Longman, 1980), 301.
33. Records from the Colonial Office. 1/20 (1668).
34. See www.blackpast.org.
35. Daaku, 23.
36. George Francis Dow, *Slave Ships and Slaving* (Salem, MA: Marine Research Society, 1927) 4.
37. Samuel Swan quoted in Norman R. Bennett and George E. Brooks, "New England Merchants in Africa: A History through Documents 1802–1865", Boston University African Research Studies. vol. 7. (1965) 92–109, 50.
38. Thomas Phillips quoted in Dow, 51.
39. Barbot, 41; Bosman, 265; de Marees, 36; Justesen, 54; Henry Meredith, *An Account of the Gold Coast of Guinea* (London: Frank Cass, 1812), 55.
40. See www.pbs.org.
41. The National Archives (Kew): T. 70/5/31 (12 July–1 August, 1707).
42. Justesen, 478; Lawrence, 292–295; Daaku, 47.
43. Mollan, quoted in G.E. Metcalfe, *Great Britain and Ghana, Documents of Ghana History: 1807–1957* (London: Thomas Nelson & Sons., 1964), 30.
44. David Owusu-Ansah, *Historical Dictionary of Ghana* (Toronto: Scarecrow Press, 1995), xxiii.
45. Daaku, 21.
46. Blake, 92–93; Fage 41–43.
47. Records from the Colonial Office.1/20 (1668).
48. The National Archives (Kew): T. 70/640; T. 70/1463/10. Cape Coast Castle Memo, 12 February, 1703.
49. Bosman, 85, 298.
50. Bosman,304; DeCorse, 10–11.
51. Lawrence, 31.
52. William St. Clair, *The Grand Slave Emporium: Cape Coast and the British Slave Trade* (London: Profile Books, 2006), 37.
53. DeCorse, 146; Christopher DeCorse, "The Europeans in West Africa: Culture Contact, Continuity and Change", *Transformations in West Africa: Essays on Africa's Later Past*, edited by Graham Connah (London: Leicester University Press, 1998) 219–244; Lawrence, 293–295; van Dantzig, 33–45.
54. Francis, Peter. Beads of the World. Alglen P.A: Schiffer Publishing, 1995. 27–39.

55. DeCorse, 147.
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57. Samuel Swan quoted in Bennett & Brooks, 28.
58. Beckett quoted in Bennett & Brooks, 168.
59. Bennett & Brooks, 157, 222, 247, 281.
60. The National Archives (Kew): T. 70/1455. F.1. (Entry by Richard Miles to Gilbert Petrie. 28 Sept, 1778).
61. Margaret Priestley, *West African Trade and Coast Society* (London: Oxford University Press. 1969), 3.
62. R. Hallett, "The European Approach to the Interior of Africa in the Eighteenth Century", Journal of African History. Vol. IV. No. 2. (1963) 196–207, 196.
63. Douglas Coombs, *The Gold Coast, Britain and the Netherlands 1850–1874* (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), 4.
64. The National Archives (Kew): T. 70/378. (Correspondence from Cape Coast to RAC to London, 9 February, 1703).
65. Hallett, 196.
66. The National Archives (Kew): T. 70/368. (Cape Coast Castle Journal, 23 June, 1683).
67. The National Archives (Kew): T. 70/1463/10. (Cape Coast Castle Memo, 12 February, 1703).
68. The National Archives (Kew): T. 70/378. (Correspondence from Cape Coast to RAC to London, 9 February, 1703).
69. An arbitrary level of 20 cm was used to control vertical provenience during the excavation at Dixcove. Level 1 thus refers to: 0–20 cm below ground level, Level 2 refers to 20–40 cm below ground level, Level 3 refers to 40–60 cm below ground level, and so on.
70. Daaku 38; DeCorse, 6, 134, 174; F. Kense and Ako J. Okoro, "Changing Perspectives on Traditional Iron Production in West Africa", *The Archaeology of Africa: Food, Metals and Towns* ed. by Thurstan Shaw, Paul Sinclair, Bassey Andah & Alex Okpoko (London: Routledge, 1993) 449–458; van Dantzig, 26.
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72. C.L. Goucher, "Iron is Iron 'til it is rust: Trade and Ecology in the decline of West African Iron Smelting", *Journal of African History*, 22 (1981) 179–189.

73. Goucher, 76.
74. Lawrence, 293–297.
75. The National Archives (Kew): T. 70/153.23, 92 (1792).
76. Lawrence, 26.
77. Lawrence, 293.
78. The National Archives (Kew): T. 70/1130 (1750).
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80. Lawrence, 292.
81. Daaku, 96.

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CHAPTER 8

European Fortifications in West Africa as Architectural Containers and Oppressive Contraptions

Henry Nii Adziri Wellington and Rexford Assasie Oppong

This chapter has two distinct parts. Part I looks in broad functional terms at the European fortifications in West Africa as architectural designs reflecting European philosophy and spatial conceptualisation. Part II then presents a detailed discussion of a key component of the fortifications, namely the dungeons, as architectural configurations used not only to hold goods but also as a contraption for oppression.

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DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-39282-0_8

Territoriality, Boundaries and Filters: The Power of Architectural Design in Christiansborg, Osu

Like European fortifications elsewhere in West Africa, Christiansborg Castle (also known as Osu Castle after the name of the structure's host community in Accra) is an architectural entity whose design features can be understood through the framework for analysing architectural design features. Essentially, all architecture is a creative response to the challenge of providing space and shelter to meet diverse human needs such as living in families and communities, working to create products for survival, convenience and comfort and for undertaking activities such as recreation, education, worship, movement and meditation.[1]

Vitruvius Pallio, the ancient scholar, developed a framework to describe the dynamics of Classical Latin architecture that is still relevant. The Vitruvius' model identifies three characteristics of classical architecture: *Firmitas* (strength or "structural integrity"), *Utilitas* (commodity or "spatial provision and arrangement") and *Venustas* (delight or "aesthetic values"). The combination of these three dynamics in classical architecture is known as the Vitruvian Triad.[2] In line with other scholars, the Ghanaian scholar (and co-author of this chapter) Henry Nii Adziri Wellington has identified a fourth architectural dimension. This fourth dimension is *Sentimentas*, which refers to "what goes beyond the obvious" and represents the idea of "spirituality". In this chapter, we apply this four-level analytical framework of the architectural dynamics in analysing the design features of Christiansborg Castle and recognise it as the "Wellingtonian Quarternon".[3]

Of the European fortifications or slave emporiums in West Africa, Christiansborg Castle experienced the most aggrandisement in its form and structure.[4] The Castle started as a Danish Lodge, which was built in 1661 on the foundations of an earlier lodge built by the Swedes in 1657 and adapted by the Portuguese.[5] To all intents and purposes, the initial Danish construction could not be regarded as a piece of architecture since it was devoid of the classical architectural dynamics identified by the Wellingtonian Quarternon. It was a shelter and a spatial entity, very much similar to the "container architecture" of Ghana's present-day kiosk.[6] As asserted by A.W. Lawrence, the original lodge was typical of the European "trading-post of the least important type".[7] Thus, the Danish lodge was a transient and transitory makeshift structure, intended not to be of any significance architecturally, apart from the fact

that it was intentionally built to provide a fortified space for basic trading activities and living quarters for sojourning Danes on the Guinea Coast. Apart from a description of the structure as "a small trading Lodge" in Barbara Priddy's *Christiansborg Castle—Osu* (1970), there appears to be no indication in Danish historical records to inform us about what this convenient structure looked like or how it was constructed.[8] The records do, however, contain architectural designs for making a permanent structure that could secure both the dominance of the Danish West India Company on the eastward coast (from Osu to the River Volta) and, above all, facilitate the Danish transatlantic slave trade. The envisioned slave emporium was to bear architectural semblance to Late Medieval and Early Modern fortifications in Europe and was to be located on the rocky promontory at Osu, the most apparent secured place to ensure permanence on the Guinea Coast. It is likely that these architectural designs originated in the mind of the architect/engineer and builder, Christen Cornelisson, who was commissioned by the Danish Factor, Jost Cramer, once he had obtained the right of access from the king of the Ga people to use the outcrop of land on the Atlantic Coast.

A Brief Architectural History of Christiansborg

In his research on the fortifications of Ghana, the Ghanaian professor of Archaeology J.K. Anquandah describes "Christiansborg Castle [as] unique among the castles and forts".[9] This was because of its association with the European trading competition in West Africa, its role in the Atlantic slave trade and its use as Government House from the 1880s to 2011. Though it was included in the UNESCO list of World Heritage Sites in the 1970s, it is not easily accessible to the public because of its status as a centre of governmental activity and "security zone".[10]

A number of publications document the history and design features of Christiansborg Castle.[11] Particularly useful in this respect are A. W. Lawrence's *Trade Castles and Forts of West Africa* and Johannes Rask's *Two Views from Christiansborg Castle*, which provide rich accounts of the Castle's architectural history. From these accounts and Wellington's ongoing research, it seems likely that Christiansborg was initially designed in 1661 as a small generically purposed fortification modelled after the Dutch Fort São Jorge de Mina at Elmina.[12] The design of the latter, largely known as Elmina Castle, was based on Italian Renaissance

fortification systems, though simplified in forms and style, to suit the available local materials and geographical position.

The plan for Christiansborg Castle details a rectilinear and symmetrical structure with four bastions/batteries at its corners, which were interconnected by immense monolithic curtain walls that surrounded an open courtyard and three-tier lodgings with a guardroom and a flag-tower as shown in Fig. 8.1. The building's entrance was distinctly marked out in the curtain wall but without a spur as found in the generic fortifications. The entrance was orientated inland towards the small settlement of Osu, which was largely occupied by Dangme migrants along with families uprooted from Allada on the Slave Coast and brought to Osu by the Portuguese as forced labour to build the first European lodge on the Gold Coast.[13]

Below the elevated floors on the east and south sides of Christiansborg Castle, the vaulted dungeons sat just above sea level along the walls of the foundation structure that backed onto the Atlantic Ocean. The curtain walls and bastions that framed the vaulted dungeons and other walled rooms were built from a mixture of imported Danish bricks and ballast stones with locally quarried sandstones from Osu.[14] Danish builders, local artisans, and unskilled slave labour executed the construction works.[15] The other building components—metal doors and gates, windows, sealant chemicals such as *tarra*—largely came on European ships that brought European goods into the Gold Coast and took slaves, gold, ivory and timber to the Caribbean, America and Europe.[16] In the designed spaces of Christiansborg, the Danes—under Fort Commander Jost Cramer and subsequent Governors—conducted trade with coastal and inland African merchants, exchanging European goods such as flintlocks, gunpowder, rum and silk for the Gold Coast's gold, ivory and slaves.

The European staff within the walls of the fort included a governor or Chief Factor; a chief assistant normally responsible for the warehouse and slave holding dungeons; and a works supervisor responsible for the works yard. Others were a chaplain; a surgeon, a teacher, soldiers, so-called fort slaves and enslaved Africans held in transit in the dungeons in lieu of shipment across the Atlantic. As the Danes widened the volume of their trade in gold and slaves from the eighteenth century, the modest fortification at Osu grew rather organically out of the confines of its original symmetrically arranged structure. In addition to the Portuguese Catholic chapel erected in 1683, subsequent owners of the edifice added

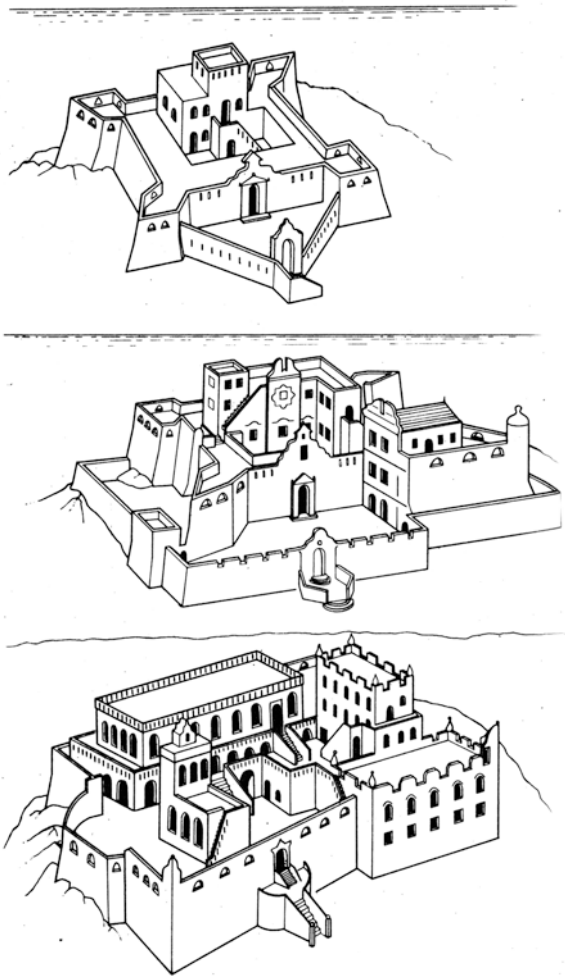

Fig. 8.1 Development of Christiansborg Castle in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries by Albert van Dantzig in *"Forts and Castles of Ghana"* (Accra: SEDCO, 1980), 30

other architectural entities. The additions included quarters for soldiers and fort staff, an underground water cistern, warehouses, magazine and a spur at the north entrance gate. Other functional structures included

slave-holding outworks on the north side of the battlements, a bell tower on the west and a three-tier watchtower, named Provesteen, beyond the west outworks towards the Dutch Fort at Accra.

Various documented visual representations of Christiansborg Castle over the centuries indicate that the building grew horizontally and vertically, to become a towering fortification and slave emporium by the eighteenth century. A.W. Lawrence commented on its uniqueness: "As an example of aggrandisement, Christiansborg is unparallel in West Africa".[17] According to van Dantzig's illustrations, the features of Christiansborg are seen in the following:

A. The four bastions on the corners of the square-shaped fort located on a promontory; the battlement; the flag-tower; the celebrated entrance gate in the curtain wall and the spur.
B. The installed bell-tower; the small size watchtower and the outworks on the east, north and west of the curtain walls; and the reduced-size spur.
C. The impressive Governor's Parlour with ceremonial staircases; the increase in the height of the walls enclosing the outworks; the ceremonial spur and the battlements with parapets over the double-storey buildings to the north-west and south-west.[18]

These noted features of growth and aggrandisement affirm the observation that Christiansborg Castle evolved out of simplified generic fortification into relatively complex and sophisticated architectural form and phenomenal militarised installation.

As a building complex, Christiansborg Castle has had a chequered architectural history since the seventeenth century. As seen in Figs. 8.1 and 8.2, Christiansborg Castle—the Danish slave emporium and headquarters of the Danish transatlantic slave trade—evolved architecturally into a building ensemble of eclectic architectural elements. The British government chose to use the building as the headquarters of colonial operations on the Gold Coast. Significantly, the post-colonial government of Ghana also found it suitable for the business of modern governance and official ceremonial receptions (in the old Governor's Parlour), making modifications and extensions from the 1950s to suit the purpose.

Notwithstanding the functional modifications, the Castle's design integrity—rooted in its historical core structure and form—has remained intact. From the 1660s, the castle experienced significant events

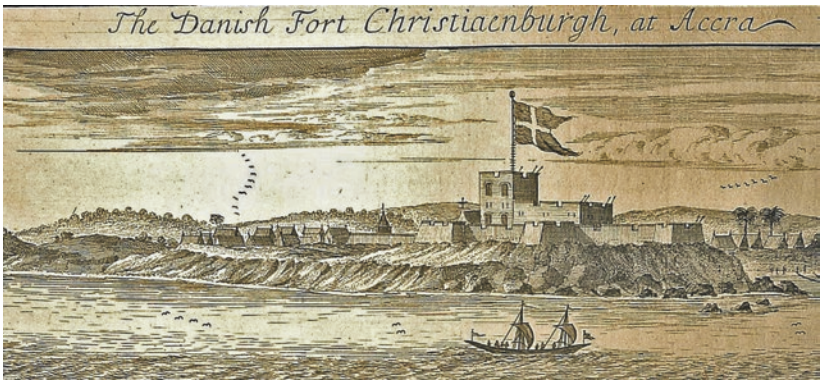

Fig. 8.2 View of Christiansborg, showing the promontory, the fortification with its curtain walls, bastions, and Flag-tower, flying the oversize Danish Flag, Dannenbrog. Featured in Jean Barbot's "Trade Castles and Forts of West Africa" ([1682]; 1963 plate 42 a). For a view of Christiansborg from the sea showing the Watch Tower Provesteen, the Belltower, the Flagtower and the fortification on the promontory; see Churchill's Voyages (Christiansborg at around 1700) in Thorkild Hansen's *Coast of Slaves* (1967), 49; For views of the historic courtyard at Christiansborg Castle, showing Governor Engmann's eighteenth-century Cistern and the staircase leading to the Governor's Parlour, see Thierry Secretan's photographs in *Castles and Forts of Ghana* by J. Kwesi Anquandah (Atlantes: Ghana Museums and Monuments Board, 1999), 24–30. King's College London, Foyle Special Collections Library

and developments in terms of ownership, changes to its structural arrangement and appropriation by the African host community. The major landmarks in this history are tenfold:

1. The Portuguese possessed Christiansborg briefly in 1679–1680. They named it Fort St Francis Xavier, extended its curtain walls by three feet and installed a chapel on the north-east side next to the bastion.
2. The Danish regained possession in 1689 but lost it again to the local Akan kingdom of Akwamu who seized and occupied the castle in 1693–1694. The Akwamu sold the castle back to the Danes for "50 marks of gold" , but their leader, Asameni, kept the keys as a "war" trophy to add to the Akwamu stool regalia for esoteric effect.

3. This esoteric dimension of the Castle (or parts of it) also reflects in its appropriation by the adjacent community of Osu for mystical purposes as a shrine and a haunted site.[19]
4. The British acquired Christiansborg through purchase agreement together with other Danish possessions in 1850 for £10,000.00. The lowering of the Danish flag and the hoisting of the Union Jack were epochal in the European imperial sense as it marked the beginning of British ascendancy to colonial power on the Gold Coast.
5. An earthquake hit the coastal belt of Accra in 1862, which inflicted extensive destruction on the physical walls.
6. It appears that after the earthquake damage, the Castle deteriorated as it ceased to be a functional seat of government. Nevertheless, the usable part became a constabulary mess and later, in 1873, a lunatic asylum.
7. When the British colonial administration was moved from Cape Coast to Accra in 1877, Christiansborg provided some support for the administrative facilities located at Victoriaborg on the west.
8. The next major development was the renovation and reversion of Christiansborg to function as a seat of government in 1902. The British colonial administration subsequently carried out a total restoration of the Castle based on drawings from the state archives in Copenhagen.
9. It retained its location and function as the official headquarters of the British administration until 6 March 1957, when the Union Jack, hoisted over it, was lowered down finally to be replaced by the Ghanaian National Flag to mark the attainment of independence from British colonial rule by Ghanaians under the leadership of Dr Kwame Nkrumah.
10. Finally, in 1979, it gained status as a national monument when it was included (together with 80 other forts and castles) on the UNESCO list of World Heritage Sites.

Following the forgoing points, the next section presents Christiansborg Castle in its architectural and spatial context.

Physical Expressions of the Architectural Design of Christainsborg Castle

Christiansborg was used by the Danes to pursue their economic objectives and trade interests and as a place of habitation. In appreciating the space in terms of its architectural design, we will identify architectural features that reflect expressions of "territoriality", "boundaries" and "filters" in its historical core form and character. These notions are derived from Amos Rappaport (1969) and Kevin Lynch (1960/1992) who employed principles of built environmental and ecological determinism to analyse the influence of culture and history on house forms and cities.[20] The physical expressions that underlined the unique features of Christiansborg lent strength and power to its intended purpose and perception as a fortification and slave emporium. The created environment shaped, determined, influenced and facilitated the geopolitical, sociocultural and economic dynamics that played out in the other European fortifications and in the surrounding communities at the time.[21]

Against the background of the Vitruvian Triad and the Wellingtonian Quarternon, this chapter applies principles of architectural appreciation and criticism coupled with the historical theory of post-occupancy study. In doing so, we will now tentatively explore the meaning and significance of the physical expressions of "territoriality", "boundaries" and "filters" as found in the architectural design of Christiansborg. In addition, this chapter will explore how these physical expressions influenced the environment and shaped lives of various groups of people who lived in and passed through the walls of Christiansborg through the centuries. The historical post-occupancy study was employed by subjecting the Christiansborg environment—via the historical drawings—to a hypothetical review adduced from statements and views of selected individuals who once sojourned in that environment. Although the experiences that can be deduced from the records may be limited by their selectivity, they can help build a body of knowledge that provides insight into how Christiansborg's built environment influenced the lives of those who lived, worked and died within its curtain walls. Various experiences ascertained thereby underscore the architectural design's power to shape the living and working space. The historical figures selected for the study included Frederich Petersen Svane, Christian Jacobus Protten and his wife Rebecca, Ludewig Ferdinand Rome, Paul Erdman Isert

and an unnamed enslaved person, all of the eighteenth century, and Wulff Joseph Wulff of the nineteenth century.

Physical Expression of "Territoriality" in Christiansborg's Architectural Design

The physical expression of territoriality encompasses ideas of ownership and the control of space and its contents. This phenomenon manifests in all cultures and human experiences. In the case of Christiansborg, it is expressed in the military architecture that was erected on the Osu promontory, and it is articulated by the white-painted high-stone curtain walls that link bastions, spur, outworks, flag-tower, bell-tower and a watch-tower to create a replica of the Kingdom of Denmark. This expression of Danish "territoriality" was to communicate the presence of Denmark to the local Osu community as well as to any non-Danish that may approach from either the sea or the land.[22]

Per Hernaes has aptly alluded to this expression of "territoriality" —as epitomised in the architecture of Christiansborg—in his introduction to Governor Carstensen's *Closing the Books*.[23] In referring to a draft document on instructions for the management of the Danish properties in the Gold Coast, Carstensen stated:

> No 1: The management of the Guinean Establishment shall have its seat in the Chief Fort Christiansborg - it consists of the Governor and the second closer administration officers as councillors. No 2: The main objectives of the Establishment shall be: To guard the territorial rights of His Majesty over the regions and places whose inhabitants fly the Danish flag…[24]

In a similar vein, the physical expression of "territoriality" at Christiansborg persisted into the nineteenth century when it became the seat of the British administration and into Ghana's independence when it continued to be the seat of Government. This has made the Castle synonymous with the power to control, initially in the immediate confines of Osu but later with resonance across Ghana.

The notion of "Filters" becomes relevant in architectural design when there is a need, for example, to control the flow of information (questions of privacy), breeze circulation (questions of ventilation), and the movement of people and items (questions of security). In the case of Christiansborg, a number of "filters" can be identified, and these are

shown in Figs. 8.1 and 8.2.[25] Besides, this, other "filters" include the fort's chapel and gates, the doors and windows, ventilation holes, the courtyard and the service yards. The impact that these "filters" had on the various people who sojourned within Christiansborg was seen in the responses that arose under the different situations and circumstances that prevailed there as expressed in the records.[26]

The example of the Governor's Parlour is illustrative. It served as a "filter" in that it functioned as the meeting place of the fort's governing council where only the Governor, Commanders of other Danish forts and senior assistants could gather. They would hold important meetings to discuss matters pertaining to the administration and management of the Danish Company in the Gold Coast. The key "filter" location was the Council Chamber in which major decisions were made that affected the destiny of enslaved persons and local communities as well as the fortunes of the local Danish Administration. The Governor's Parlour was also the "filter" through which special persons who entered the Fort would experience the milieu in Christiansborg. Carstensen describes a luncheon reception for a visiting French dignitary that took place in the Parlour, where the attendants included a gathering of Danish senior personnel, other French guests and sparsely clad Osu women who waited on the men in this August banquet. The fort chapel not only existed as a place of worship, but also functioned as a "filter" in Christiansborg. It was outside the reach of ordinary fort dwellers such as the fort's slaves and casually employed local labourers. Only the Danish personnel could enter on a weekly basis to exercise their devotions. Outside the times of worship, the children of Danish men and African women from Osu were permitted entry to the chapel to be schooled by Danish teachers.[27]

The Fort Gate was also significant as a "filter" in that it controlled the entry and exit of European and non-European visitors, as well as goods. Such visitors included Danish residents of the fort who often went out to interact with the local community of Osu. Conversely, the Gate also "filtered" the inflow of the people of Osu and inland Akan traders who wished to enter Christiansborg to undertake all kinds of commercial, social and cultural endeavours. This in and out "filtering" resulted in cultural contacts that mutually influenced and transformed the outlooks of the Danish community inside Christiansborg as well as the African communities outside the Castle's walls. Cultural products of the Afro–European intercourse include the emergence of an Afro–European population: the direct offspring of European and African parents, and those

closely associated with the Danish community. The prevalence of Danish (and other European) family names among the Africans in contemporary Osu and Accra stands as testament to this intercourse. The Castle's courtyard was also a place where "fetish eating" (oath swearing according to African practices) took place and where the enslaved Africans were prepared (made ready for inspection) and sold as "cargo" for shipment.[28] A number of palavers between Danish administrators and local community leaders were also played out in this "filter".

The forgoing consideration of the physical expressions in the architectural design of Christiansborg is intended to add an important interpretative dimension to its architectural history as a Danish trading fort. Presentation of the defining features of the spatial context of Christiansborg offers a more complete picture of the tragedy contained in a building that represents a history of the transatlantic slave trade and of the Danish interaction with the people of Osu.

Conclusion

This study is intended to add to the rich history of Christiansborg as an architectural edifice that played a pivotal role in history as a Danish slave emporium, making it a monument of global significance. The power of its design—as both a fortification to protect Danish interests and to facilitate the transatlantic trade in slaves—has shaped and influenced the life, work and death of a diverse range of individuals and groups over the centuries. As a World Heritage Site, UNESCO has already recognised Christiansborg's unique and universal value together with the other forts and castles along the length and breadth of Ghana's coast.

In concluding the first part of this chapter, we argue that Christiansborg is a site of cultural heritage for humanity. Notwithstanding the ugly role it played in history, the fort holds a universal lesson for humanity, especially for the youth. Because of its value, significance and meaning, Christiansborg should be made visible and accessible to enrich our collective experience and understanding. As a heritage site, it has the potential to inform visitors, especially those interested in tangible immoveable cultural heritage and scholars researching Thanatourism or grief tourism.[29] Furthermore, it must be emphasised that the centuries-long evolution of the architecture of Christiansborg holds a lot of research information relevant to students and scholars of architecture, especially those interested in material performance

and design optimisation in buildings. When this happens, Christiansborg will fulfil the aspirations of a notable scholar of European Fortifications in Ghana, the late Professor Albert van Dantzig, who wrote this closing section to *Forts and Castles of Ghana*: "We hope that the visitor to Ghana will be interested to see something of these monuments to a critical period in Ghana's history, and that the native Ghanaian will look with fresh eyes on these familiar landmarks".[30]

Architecture of Oppression: Uses of the Dungeons in the Forts and Castles of Ghana

"Architecture, an art so disposes and adorns the edifices raised by man, for whatever uses, that the sight of them may contribute to man's mental health, power, and pleasure".[31] In contrast to this statement by John Ruskin, scholars may see the historic castles and forts in Ghana as edifices of architectural and cultural heritage, but they do not seem to hold significance or sentimental attraction for Ghanaians. At the state level, efforts were made to use Ghana's forts and castles as cultural resources for economic development. This is confirmed by legislation put in place in 1969, further refined in 1972, and elaborated on in Executive Instrument No. 29 of 1973.[32] In conjunction with the Ghana Museums and Monuments Board (GMMB), the National Commission on Culture (NCC) then began "fashioning new laws to redefine and improve the management of Ghana's cultural resources" from the 1990s with the aim of decentralising the GMMB and of nurturing local communities' support and participation in the preservation of Ghanaian archaeological/cultural heritages.[33] Unfortunately, these attempts to institutionalise the importance of the edifices as national cultural resources have not generated any strong sentiment in the Ghanaian national ethos or significantly altered perception of the forts. As a result, they have not been fully utilised in tourism development.[34]

The observed lack of positive attitude from Ghanaians may stem from the perception that most people in Ghana have towards the castles and forts as relics associated with shame, oppression and rejection. On the other hand, the diasporan Africans who visit these castles and forts to venerate their ancestors are often of the impression that the manner in which these relics of the transatlantic slave trade are interpreted does not present enough of the negative history that the fortifications represent.

Against these conflicting readings of the edifices, this chapter contends that the forts and castles in Ghana present distinctive and admirable architectural qualities, as well as conjuring images of fear, brutality and oppression by means of the pervasive slave holdings modulated and articulated to serve the interests of the managers of the sordid trade in slaves.[35]

Approach and Expected Outcome

The second part of this chapter seeks to demonstrate how three fortifications in Ghana's Central Region were used as architectural contraptions of oppression. Whilst West Africa is noted for the presence of forts and castles, it is specifically along the Ghanaian coast that the densest concentration of European fortifications is located. As with all fortified trading-posts along the former Gold Coast, Fort Amsterdam at Kormantin/Abandze and the castles at Elmina and Cape Coast served as functional spaces to hold the European trade goods, which included human cargo, arms and ammunition, gold and ivory. Through analysis of the scaled architectural plans for these buildings, this chapter will explore, for example, the thickness of walls, slits (windows) and sizes of rooms (especially the dungeons). In doing so, the overall plans and critical sections thereof will be interpreted to achieve a hypothetical post-occupancy study of the slave holding facilities within the forts and castles referred to as dungeons. Kwesi DeGraft-Hanson argues that "the castles and forts are symbolic possessions of the past with political, cultural and economic (mis)interpretation and (mis)representation".[36] With this in mind, studying sections of their design through scale drawings can enable understanding of the dimensions of rooms and architectural features of the dungeons. Furthermore, studying sections of their design through plans and photographs can help illustrate character, and emphasise certain features such as the darkness in the dungeons and enable interpretation of the features they represent.[37]

The aim in undertaking this analysis is to extract a greater depth of meaning than architectural design is often expected to elucidate to understand the intangible stories associated with Ghana's castles and forts. This study gives greatest emphasis to the dungeons and to the suffering experienced there by the enslaved Africans who were held in these architectural contraptions of oppression to await transportation by slave ships to the Caribbean and the Americas from the fifteenth to the

nineteenth century.[38] By conducting architectural analysis to reconstruct the atmosphere during the Atlantic slave trade period, this study brings to the fore information on the nuances of the plight of the enslaved people so that interpreters and tour guides for these historic sites will be able to tell more truthful and appropriate stories. In doing so, this chapter aims to provide not only scholars but also heritage interpreters and managers with more authentic data on the castles and forts as the architecture of oppression.

A Snapshot of the "Passage to the New World"

Following the discovery by Christopher Columbus of the New World and the consequent establishment of plantations by European capitalists and settlers from 1492, millions of enslaved Africans were shipped to America and the Caribbean to provide cheap labour on sugar, cotton and tobacco plantations and in the industry.[39] Significantly, many West African states were complicit in the slave trade. For example, in the eighteenth century, the Asante became an expansionist power with agrarian order firmly established as the basis of the subsistence economy. This required a substantial labour army, which was gained through war captives, tribute and raiding. Asante's military success often created a considerable surplus of captive labour. To regulate the slave population in the Asante Kingdom, the chiefs would trade slaves into the European transatlantic slave trading system in exchange for guns and other imported goods.[40]

Before departure to the New World, the slaves were cramped together in the dungeons of the castles and forts. The conditions were appalling. Whilst the slave traders benefitted from large windows that bathed their quarters in light and allowed the cool breeze to enter from the sea, the slaves were locked in dark, damp and ill-ventilated holds before they were taken to the same in the slave ships. Both in the dungeons and on the ships' holds, they succumbed to a variety of illnesses which ranged from dysentery, small pox, yellow fever and malaria, to sleeping sickness, lock jaw and "despondency"—in others words, the loss of will to live.[41] The castles and forts followed the architectural design of the medieval period.[42] As they developed into slave emporiums, they became the oppressive sites of not only illness but also the heinous crimes associated with capture and enslavement such as debauchery, rape and battery. We may live, work, worship and die without conscious awareness

of architecture, but we cannot remember histories such as these without her. In light of this assertion, the next sections present the architectural design and spatial exegesis of selected castles and fort with an emphasis on the dungeons.

The massive forced migration and settlement of enslaved Africans fundamentally changed the demographic composition of America and the Caribbean. It is estimated that at least three-quarters of the present population of the Caribbean are people of African descent.[43]

Architectural Design and Spatial Exegesis of the Castles and Forts in Ghana

In *Trade Castles and Forts of West Africa,* A.W. Lawrence states that nine European countries—or their national Chartered Companies—kept trading posts in West Africa to protect and expand the trade of each country and exclude competitors.[44] The first to do so were the Portuguese who encountered settled farmers wearing garments dyed with indigo and in possession of gold and ivory, all of which were in demand in Europe.[45] Convinced of the opportunities for trade, construction of fortified trading warehouses began. Having built a trading post off the western coast of Mauritania on the Island of Arguin, the Portuguese founded the first European Fort on the Ghanaian Coast in 1482 at the Village of Edina on the mouth of the River Benya.[46]

São Jorge de Mina (now known as Elmina Castle) initiated the unique system of commercial forts, unsurpassed in Africa in terms of size.[47] It consisted of two fortified enclosures, one within the other, which contained residential quarters, offices and storerooms for goods to be traded either with the local communities and African traders or with visiting European ships seeking provisions. The construction of Elmina Castle enabled the Portuguese to keep permanently both a military and a naval force stationed in Africa due to the abundance of gold and dense population, which offered economic prosperity to the ships that came in significant numbers. This led to other European nations—most significantly the Dutch, Danish and British—setting up fortified trading posts along Ghana's coast. Consequently, a number of the internal African trade route reoriented to be directed towards the coast. This ensured a constant exchange of the goods in and out of the capacious storerooms and the movement of captives into the dungeons and out across the

Atlantic. It is estimated that around one hundred trading posts—including the castles of Osu, Elmina and Cape Coast, as well as forts like Fort Amsterdam at Abandze and lesser trading post—existed at one time or another on the coast of Ghana to aid European economic development.

Spatial Nomenclature: The Semantics of Horror in the Castles and Forts

In *Castles in Medieval Society* (2003), Charles Coulson asserts that there is a scholarly attempt to dispel many of the traditional assumptions that castles and forts were overwhelmingly military in their function.[48] He places castles in the context of medieval culture and society, as ancient walled post-Roman towns, prestigious religious enclaves and transitory campaign forts. Of all the monuments of medieval European civilisation, castles are probably the most familiar (rivalled only by parish churches and great cathedrals). However, the spatial descriptions and uses of the castles and forts make them "ignominious" and difficult to appreciate.[49] In 1958, John Gloag noted that castles were placed strategically throughout the European countryside and that in general they borrowed from Roman legionaries and had curtain walls, moats, gateways, drawbridges, towering bells with battlements and a tall central keep (tower).[50] In and beyond Europe, castles and forts are perceived through a mixture of ideas about colonialism, medieval and aristocratic culture, faith and strife. These ideas are metaphorically illustrated in the building of enormous walls to encompass the usable spaces, including the dungeons or slave prisons.

Purpose-built prison chambers became evident in castles after the twelfth century, when they were built into gatehouses or mural towers. Prisons became dungeons as the practice of locating them underground became common in medieval castles. Partly because of this architectural decision, they would become synonymous with torture during the Renaissance period. The word Dungeon—derived from the Old French *donjon*—was first recorded in English near the beginning of the fourteenth century to infer "an underground prison cell beneath the castle keep" that was accessible only from a hatch in their high ceiling or a small entrance passage.[51]

Many English castles contained prisons, but they were more common in Scotland. In both cases, long-term imprisonment was not a usual

punishment in the European Middle Ages as most prisoners were kept pending trial, awaiting penalty or for political reasons. Noble prisoners generally lived in some comfort in castle apartments rather than being held in dungeons. Some castles had larger provision for prisoners, such as the prison tower at Caernarvon Castle in Scotland. Alnwick Castle and Cockermouth Castle, both in the Borders region between England and Scotland, had prisons in the gatehouse with dungeons beneath them.[52] Over time, many European "dungeons" simply referred to a room with a heavy door or with access only from a hatchway or trapdoor in the floor of the room above. The use of dungeons for torture—along with the association human fear of being trapped underground—made dungeons a powerful metaphor in a variety of contexts. Dungeons, in the plural, have come to be associated with underground complexes of cells and torture chambers. Many basement chambers described as dungeons were in fact storerooms, water cisterns or even latrines.

Narratives presented to visitors at Cape Coast Castle about its dungeons are exaggerated by tour guides to fit the perception that has developed about them based on European architecture and associated accounts. This has been done to attract and repel tourists who are told during guided tours that the floor finish of the dungeons is made up of an accumulation of human blood, faeces and hair. In 1996, Anquandah's excavations at Cape Coast Castle actually unearth structural remains of the seventeenth and eighteenth century Swedish and English brick fortress under the modern castle, as well as "European pottery, glass beads, liquor, perfume and ointment bottles, gun parts, local pottery, indigenous milling stones, bones of cattle, sheep, fish, birds, molluscs and graves of English officers".[53] A careful reading of A.W. Lawrence's account of the Cape Coast Castle reveals that the floors of the Castle's rooms including the dungeons were accumulations of building materials debris of mud, lime mortar and tarras that resulted from the bombardments of competing European trading forces along the West African coast as well as unsatisfactory maintenance practices of the Castle.[54] It is asserted that, in 1708, there were "great defects in the walls and vaults, and there was never a dry room to lie in the Castle due to the leakages in the roofs of the Castle".[55] Dungeons are commonly perceived as symbols of European cruelty and tyrannical power, as well as social vices such as rape and battery, on African soil. However, Ghana's fortifications have more to offer researchers of architecture, building material technology and engineering than common perception enable.

Spaces of Horror: Anthropometrics of the Dungeons

There is a growing body of literature concerned with the architectural characteristic of the dungeons within Ghana's castles and forts of Ghana.[56] In these works, authors often seek to reveal how unsuitable the dungeons were for human habitation. In this section, we shall use the example of Cape Coast Castle to present an anthropometric study of these spaces of horror to consider this issue further. In terms of the position that European slave trading edifices held in the minds of Ghanaian communities, Cape Coast Castle is overwhelming compared to nearby structures such as the Forts Amsterdam at Kormantin/Abandze. The local people at Abandze had largely ignored Fort Amsterdam as they had little knowledge of its historic role in the global slave economy.[57] Throughout most of the twentieth century, the structure served as a prison and later housed Ghana's governmental offices, such as the branch of the Ghana Museums and Monuments Board (GMMB). It entered the local community's perception of their history in 1787 when it became a citadel of western education and religion. Moreover, according to Anquandah, the castle had been a tourist attraction since the 1750s.[58]

Cape Coast Castle has held an especially prominent position in the African–American cultural imagination as an architectural memorial that inspired diverse cultural productions including memorial ceremonies, slave narratives, novels, graphic art, museum exhibitions, documentaries and feature films. For example, the Castle appears in the 1970 documentary, 'Soul to Soul', a concert film in which African–American soul and R&B musicians visited and performed in Ghana and were depicted confronting their ancestral past. Befitting its history and international importance, Cape Coast Castle is a hybrid of materials, styles and periods. For lack of detailed architectural working drawings, the authors have used and scaled the graphic lower-ground floor plan of Cape Coast Castle for analysis and discussions (Fig. 8.3).

Analysis shows that, on average, a dungeon in Cape Coast Castle had spatial dimension of 9.2 m by 4.0 m with very few window slits, which ranged from 30 cm to 45 cm in width and averaged 45 cm in height running through walls 2.8 m thickness (Figs. 8.4, 8.5). Furthermore, the male dungeon in Cape Coast Castle has a total floor area of 231 m^2 (Fig. 8.4) and the female dungeons floor areas were 79.9 m^2 for B3 and 69 m^2 for B6 (Fig. 8.5). The dungeons have a floor to ceiling height

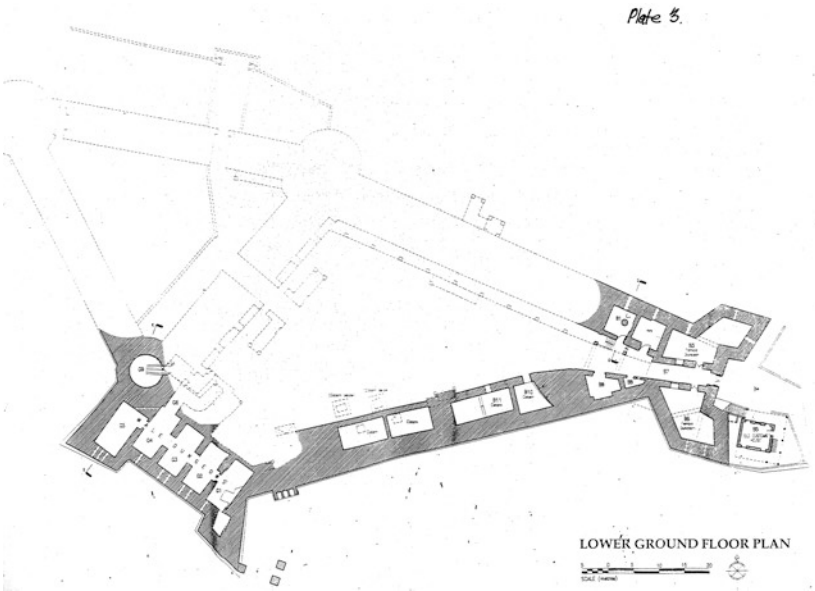

Fig. 8.3 Draft of the lower ground floor plan of Cape Coast Castle. Ghana Museum and Monuments Board (GMMB)

of about 5.5 m and the ceilings served as roofs and bastions (Fig. 8.6). The spaces at Cape Coast Castle include underground storage spaces (converted into slave dungeons) and ground floor storage spaces, small ground floor and first-floor rooms connected by long corridors, larger meeting chambers, a Governor's Parlour, magazine and space for worship.

Ernst and Peter Neufert assert that "the oldest known code of dimensional relationships of man was found in a burial chamber of the pyramids near Memphis and are estimated to date back to roughly 3000 B.C".[59] Since then, scientists and artists have been trying to refine human proportional systems of the Empire of the Pharaohs, of the Ptolemy, the Greeks and the Romans, and even the system of Polycletes, which for a long time was applied as the standard. Studies of this kind have also taken into account details given by the great masters of architecture and art such as Leon Battista Alberti, Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo. Furthermore, Albrecht Dürer's work on anthropometrics has been highly regarded.[60]

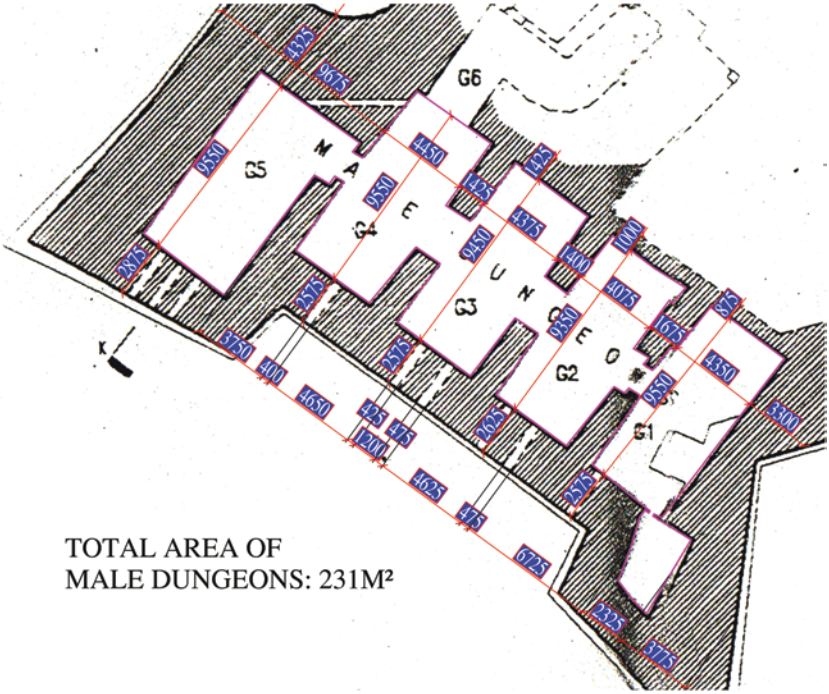

Fig. 8.4 Scaled sectional plan of male dungeons at Cape Coast Castle. Original draft by GMMB adapted by Henry Nii Adziri Wellington and Rexford Assasie Oppong

By applying anthropometric data to the scaled drawings of Cape Coast Castle's dungeons, interesting revelations have been achieved. Arbitrarily, we have adopted the dimensions of an adult at prayer in a mosque to analyse how many people the dungeons could have accommodated under universal standards. According to Neufert, a person at prayer in an enclosed mosque requires between 0.36 and 0.85 m^2.[61] By adopting 0.36 m^2, as our measurement the following calculations were made to discover that 1056 adults could be held in the dungeons at Cape Coast Castle at any one time (Table 8.1):

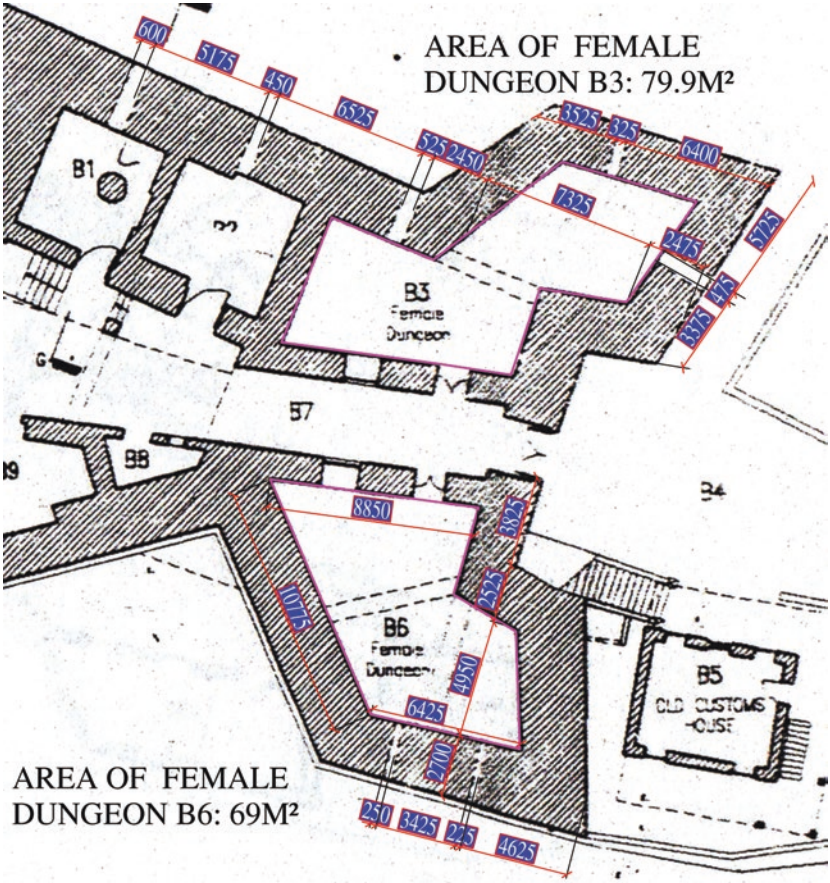

Fig. 8.5 Scaled sectional plan of female dungeons at Cape Coast Castle. Original draft by GMMB adapted by Henry Nii Adziri Wellington and Rexford Assasie Oppong

Spaces of Horror: The Need for Air and Light in the Dungeons

It is common knowledge that man breathes in oxygen with air and expels carbon dioxide and water vapour when he exhales. These vary

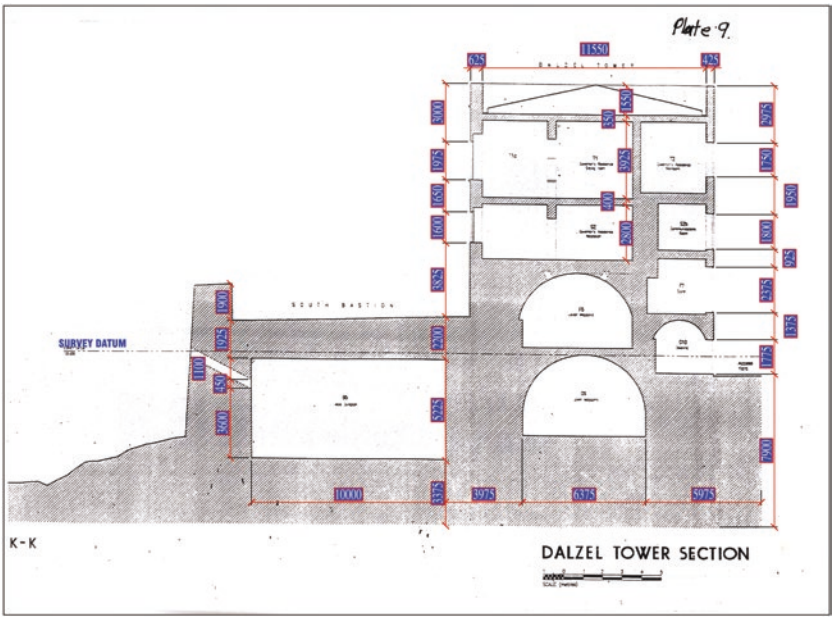

Fig. 8.6 Scaled sectional elevation of male dungeons under Dalzel Tower at Cape Coast Castle. Original draft by GMMB adapted by Henry Nii Adziri Wellington and Rexford Assasie Oppong

Table 8.1 Anthropometrics of the dungeons

Area of the Male Dungeon	231 m
Therefore: 231/0.36	642 people (A)
Area of the Female Dungeon (B3)	79.9 m^2
Therefore: 79.9/0.36	221 people (B)
Area of the Female Dungeon (B6)	69 m^2
Therefore: 69/0.36	192 people (C)
Total number of people (A + B + C)	1056

in quantity depending on the individual's weight, food intake, activity and surrounding environment.[62] It has been calculated that on average human beings produce 020 m^3/h of carbon and 40 g/h of water vapour. Carbon dioxide content varies between 1 and 3%. At the upper limit, deeper breathing will be stimulated so that the air in the dwelling should not, as far as is possible, contain more than 1%. This means, with a single

change of air per hour, the requirement for an air space of 32 m^3 per adult and 15 m^3 per child is very necessary. Where air quality in enclosed spaces such as the dungeons is likely to deteriorate because of vapour and other pollutants, the rate of exchange of air must be artificially boosted in order to provide oxygen and remove harmful substances.[63] The dungeons did not meet these standards. The enslaved adults and children were cramped into dark and damp spaces against the required universal standards. Meanwhile, the Governor and his castle personnel occupied the handsomely outfitted and well-lit quarters, "under … [which was] a spacious mansion [dungeon], or place to keep the slaves". The "mansion" was "cut out of the rocky ground, arched and divided into several rooms below ground level; so that it will conveniently contain a thousand blacks, let down at an opening made for the purpose".[64]

Due to the poor building materials and construction technology, the roofs of the dungeons in forts such as Elmina Castle often leaked. The dungeons were buried into the ground and backed against the curtain wall between the courtyards and the ocean. The slit windows admitted limited air and salted ocean spray, whilst rainwater frequently seeped through the leaky roofs of the dungeons. These factors—along with the cramped conditions—caused the slaves to be in poor health. Lack of cross ventilation, dampness and vitiated air made illnesses such as asthma, skin rashes, dysentery and small pox, yellow fever, malaria, sleeping sickness, lock jaw and ultimately death prevalent in the dungeons. Where ventilators were provided, there were inward along batteries. Poor maintenance of the castles exacerbated these conditions. Roofs throughout Elmina Castle, by example, were generally tiled and the wood of the roofs and floors constantly needed replacement. This involved an immense amount of labour because the timber had first to be cut at Shama or Axim in the Western Region of Ghana and shipped along the Coast to Elmina.[65] Unskilled slaves were used for this work and they had not been trained with the necessary skills to conduct large-scale repairs. It is ironic to read from European sources that building the forts and castles were for the protection of the indigenous Africans.[66] The gates to those edifices did permit cattle and peasants from nearby villages to enter during times of war with non-allied African people. However, they also trapped African men, women and children inside squalid dungeons for sale into the transatlantic slave trade whilst European residents benefitted from spacious sleeping chambers, the great halls, chapels for worship, freedom of movement and quality quarters in terms of air and light.[67]

Stephen Whitaker states that there is a practical re-radiation when two black surfaces exist in an enclosure.[68] The very small apertures (30 cm by 45 cm by 45 cm) running through of 2.8 m of thick, hard and unbroken dungeon walls made from dark brown rock and stone could not provide adequate lighting for eye comfort or quality of air for healthy human habitation. This suggests that the Europeans protected the local community only when they sought to sell "European wares like metal bars, knives, enamel bowls, guns, ammunitions, spirituous liquor, cloths, clothing, mirrors and cheap colourful jewellery",[69] whilst the architecture of the fortifications indicates that maintaining the health of slaves kept in the dungeons was not a priority.

Conclusion

John Gloag asserts that "history comes alive in architecture and it has been well named 'the Mistress Art', for it creates the opportunity for the visual arts to flourish".[70] Architecture is also a veracious record of the ways and beliefs of all manner of people, of their habits, tastes and circumstances of life and of the social aspiration and abilities—artistic, military or commercial—of a whole people. We could not agree more with Gloag's assertion and argue that the castles and forts of Ghana reveal far more than has been documented by previous scholars. To interpret the castle and forts fully, there is the need for more studies of their architecture, a study to which this chapter has tried to contribute.

Nuances in the story of the dungeons in the castles and forts in Ghana can go ad infinitum and, when authenticated through scholarship, the resultant interpretations can be presented via heritage managers to site visitors. This chapter advocates that more empirical architectural research should be carried out on these dungeons in Ghana to enable more factual knowledge about the conditions that prevailed in the dungeons to be unearthed for the education of tour guides and tour operators. In doing so, the site interpreters—who continue to commodify these heritage sites by the presentation of exaggerated information to visitors seeking experiences of Thanatourism—can be advised on the presentation of more objective narratives that present more truthful rather than sensationalised histories.[71]

A.V. Seaton asserts that Thanatourism, or grief tourism, incorporates a politics of remembrance and recognises that controlling heritage and collective memory is important to ethnic and national identities.[72]

In spite of the oppressive environment created by the dungeons, the European slave traders did not intend for captives to die in the castles and forts. Rather, they intended to make significant profits when selling them to slave ships. Hence, it is recommended that an architectural re-thinking of the fortified trading posts should, as heritage sites for tourism, be founded on Foucault's theory of *heterotopias.* As such, it should include localisable places, mixtures of idealised, socialised, complex and contradictory spaces.[73] It is worth noting that architectural re-thinking of the fortified trading posts should not erase the emotive and cultural significance of the dungeons. However, based on the theory of heterotopias, sound technologies could be introduced in the dungeons to simulate and recapture the groaning, wailing, pains and clinging and clanging of the chains fitted to the arms and feet of the slaves to enhance the *genus loci* of the dungeons.

The use of Foucauldian heterotopia to enhance knowledge in dungeons of European structures is new to the study of fortifications in Ghana, but has been employed in Europe. During the latter part of the Middle Ages, France transformed large castles and they agreeably and conveniently became appointed dwelling houses; additional storeys/floors rose above the levels of the battlements, and more windows were pierced in the walls to subordinate the military quality of the castle building to civilised usage.[74] "Again, Sir John Vanbrugh, a playwright and dramatist turned architect, was influenced by the architectural transformation in France during the latter part of the Middle Ages, learned the rules of architecture and by the power and freedom of his imagination designed Castle Howard for Earl of Carlisle from points he jotted down from fine conceptions of country housed, which grew into masterpieces of radiant stateliness".[75] Moreover, "governmental power, which today accounts for the presence of democratic and cultural institutions associated with a capital city function in the United Kingdom".[76] In the light of this, Ghana's castles, forts and their immediate surroundings should be positively regenerated to reduce the emotive feelings they exude.

Notes

1. Henry Nii Adziri Wellington, *Stones Tell Stories at Osu: Memories of a Host Community of the Danish TransAtlantic Slave Trade* (Accra: Sub-Saharan Publishers, 2011).

2. For a discussion of "The Vitruvian Triad" see Morris Hicky Morgan's English translation of *De Architectura* by Vitruvius Pallio: *The Ten Books on Architecture*, "Book 1: The Education of an Architect" (Harvard University Press, 1914).
3. The "Wellingtonian Quarternon" as a notion was first explored in Wellington's undergraduate seminars on Research Methods in Architecture at the Department of Architecture, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi. Theoretical exposition of the notion was then documented in the Departmental Handbook prepared for the Commonwealth Association of Architects (CAA) Accreditation Visitation in November 2002.
4. Refer to Isert's remarks on this aggrandizement, as found in "Letters on West Africa and the Slave Trade: Paul Erdman Isert's Journey to Guinea and the Caribbean Islands in Columbia (1788)". See, Paul Erdmann Isert, *Die Schimmelmanns: Im Atlantischen Dreieckshandel, Wachholtz Verlag Neumuenster*, trans. by S.A. Winsnes (2000) 29 and 30. See also: A.W. Lawrence, *Trade Castles and Forts of West Africa*, (London: Jonathan Cape, 1963), 199; James Kwesi Anquandah, *Castles and Forts of Ghana* (Atlantes: Ghana Museums and Monuments Board, 1999), 24; Albert van Dantzig and Barbara Priddy, *Forts and Castles* (Accra: Sedco Publishing Ltd. 1980), 29–32; Christian Degn, *A Short History of the Forts and Castles of Ghana* (Accra: Ghana Museums and Monuments Board-Series No 2, 1971).
5. The ownership or control of the site and edifice changed several times after Swedish construction in 1657: Portuguese (1679–80), Danish (1682–85), English (1685–89), Akwamu (1693–94), Danes Headquarters (1694–1850) and British (1850–1957).
6. In the Ghanaian context, the kiosk is a roadside "wooden booth" and has lately seen the addition of shipping containers.
7. Lawrence, *Trade Castles and Forts of West Africa*, 199.
8. Barbara Priddy, *Christianborg Castle-Osu* (Accra: Ghana Museums and Monument Board, 1970), 1.
9. Aquandah, *Castles and Forts of Ghana*, 24.
10. The Presidency of Ghana has now been moved to a new presidential installation, Flagstaff House. However, the Castle continues to house auxiliary government offices. Currently, the debate is about whether to transform the edifice into a Museum (like Cape Coast and Elmina castles).
11. Lawrence, Anquandah, van Dantzig, Priddy, Deng, Wulff, Romer, Isert, Monrad and Rask.
12. Lawrence, 116.

13. Editors' Note: Histories of the forts and castles along Ghana's coast often make reference to this "lodge" without providing a name. It has also been said that the lodge was raised to the ground by the Ga because of their disapproval of Portuguese activities. The source may be Jean Barbot, Book III, Chap. VI. The lodge is also referred to in J.W, Blake's "European Beginnings in West Africa": "Two additional strong houses were built [by the Portuguese] on the Gold *Coast:* Samma and Accra. Unfortunately, we cannot be sure when these two lodges were first fortified" (101–102).
14. H.C. Monrad, *Two Views from Christianborg Castle,* vol. 2 (1805–1809), trans. by S.A. Winsnes (Legon-Accra: Sub-Saharan Publishers, 2008), 165.
15. Johannes Rask, *Two Views from Christiansborg Castle,* vol. 1 (1708–1713), trans. by S.A. Winsnes (Legon-Accra: Sub-Saharan Publishers, 2008), 154.
16. Rask, *Two Views from Christiansborg Castle*, 154; Edward Carstensen, *Closing the Books: Governor Edward Carstensen on Danish Guinea 1842–50*, trans. by Tove Storsveen (Legon-Accra: Sub-Saharan Publishers, 2010), 81 and 82.
17. A.W. Lawrence, *Trade Castles and Forts of West Africa*, 199; also see the detailed narrative of the aggrandizement of this time in Ludewig Ferdinand Romer, *A Reliable Account of the Coast of Guinea (1760),* trans. by S.A. Winsnes, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 211.
18. Dantzig's illustrations; see, van Dantzig and Priddy, *Forts and Castles,* 30.
19. Refer, for example, the annual Homowo Festival celebration by the Osu Alata community at the Osu Castle grounds in "*Yesu, Homowo Nuntso:* Nikasemo nikoo boni Kristofoi naa Yesu ye Gamei akusumfeemo ke blema Saji amli", by P.T. Laryea, Akropong, Regnum, 2004.
20. See, for example, Kevin Lynch, *The Image of the City,* (Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1992).
21. van Dantzig and Priddy, *Forts and Castles* (1980), 32.
22. van Dantzig and Priddy, *Forts and Castles*, 1980, 8.
23. Per Hernaes, "Introduction" in *Closing the Books: Governor Edward Carstensen on Danish Guinea 1842–50,* xii–xxii.
24. Carstensen, 101.
25. An illustration of the Governor's parlour can be found in *Koko's Daughters* by Pernille Ipsen, an unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation from Det Humanistiske Fakultet Københavns Universitet (2008), ix.
26. Lawrence, *Trade Castles and Forts of West Africa*, 212, 213, 363; Degn *Die Schimmelsmanns*, 134, 137.

27. Castle schools, as they are known, were also established within the British and Dutch trading headquarters at Cape Coast and Elmina castles, respectively.
28. Christian Degn, *Die Schimmelsmanns: Im Atlantischen Dreieckshandel* (Neumuenster: Wachholtz Verlag 2000), 134, 137.
29. See, for example, Choong-Ki, Bendle, Yoon and Kim's "Thanatourism or Peace Tourism: perceived Value at a North Korean Resort from an Indigenous Perspective" in *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 14, (2012), 71–90; A.V. Seaton's "War and Thanatourism: Waterloo 1815–1914" in *Annals of Tourism Research*, 26: 1 (1999), 130–158.
30. van Dantzig and Priddy, *Forts and Castles* (1980), 58.
31. John Ruskin, *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (London: Elibron Classics, 2011), 13.
32. Benjamin W. Kankpeyeng and Christopher R. DeCorse, "Ghana's Vanishing Past: Development, Antiquities, and the Destruction of the Archaeological Record", *The African Archaeological Review,* 21:2 (2004), 96.
33. Kankpeyeng and DeCorse, "Ghana's Vanishing Past".
34. Ercan Sirakaya, Victor Teye, and Sevil Sönmez, "Understanding Residents' Support for Tourism Development in the Central Region of Ghana", *Journal of Travel Research,* 41:1 (2002), 57.
35. Elizabeth MacGonagle, "From Dungeons to Dance Parties: Contested Histories of Ghana's Slave Forts", *Journal of Contemporary African Studies,* 24:2 (2006), 249.
36. Kwesi DeGraft-Hanson, "The Cultural Landscape of Slavery at Kormantsin, Ghana", *Landscape Research,* 30:4 (2005), 462.
37. Timothy Brittain-Catlin, *Need to know? How to read a Building* (London: Harper Collins, 2007), 33; Robin Wilson, "Images, Text, Architecture—The presence that 'WAS HERE'", in *Critical Architecture*, eds. Jane Rendell, Jonathan Hill, Murray Fraser and Mark Dorrian (London: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, 2007), 129–134; Carolin Duttlinge, "Visions of the New World: Photography in Kafka's Der Verschollene", *German Life & Letters.* 59 Issue 3 (2006), 23.
38. Wellington, *Stones Tell Stories at Osu: Memories of a Host Community of the Danish TransAtlantic Slave Trade,* (Accra: Sub-Saharan Publishers, 2011), 15.
39. A.W. Lawrence, *Trade Castles and Forts of West Africa* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1963), 43; Hebdige, *CUT "N" MIX: Culture, Identity and Caribbean Music*, 38; Wellington, *Stones Tell Stories at Osu*, 15; Emmanuel Akyeampong, "History, Memory, Slave-Trade and Slavery in Anlo (Ghana)", *Slavery and Abolition*, 22:3 (2001) 1–24.

40. Lawrence, *Trade Castles and Forts of West Africa,* 39; Tom C. McCaskie, *State and Society in Pre-Colonial Asante* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 26; Wellington, *Stones Tell Stories at Osu,* 71.
41. Hebdige, *CUT "N" MIX: Culture, Identity and Caribbean Music*, 29–34; J.K. Aquandah, *Castles and Forts of Ghana*, (Atalante: Ghana Museums and Monuments Board, 1999), 12.
42. Charles L.H. Coulson. *Castles in Medieval Society: fortresses in England, France, and Ireland in the central Middle Ages* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 1–11.
43. Dick Hebdige, *CUT "N" MIX: Culture, Identity and Caribbean Music* (London: Methuen & Co., 1987), 23.
44. Lawrence, *Trade Castles and Forts of West Africa*, 42.
45. Lawrence, *Trade Castles and Forts of West Africa*, 42.
46. Edina has become known as Elmina—the mine—so used by the Portuguese due to the abundance of gold that they reportedly saw in the Benya River when they arrived.
47. Lawrence, *Trade Castles and Forts of West Africa*, 103.
48. Coulson, *Castles in Medieval Society,* 1–11.
49. Wellington, *Stones Tell Stories at Osu*, 15.
50. John Gloag, *Guide to Western Architecture* (New York: Grove Press, 1958), 6.
51. Steven Isaac, "Medieval fortifications" *Salem Press Encyclopedia,* (2015), 7.
52. Dana Huntley, "stone BY stone", *British Heritage*, 34:2 (2013), 34.
53. Anquandah, 49.
54. Lawrence, *Trade Castles and Forts of West Africa,* 188–189; It is instructive to note that tarras, also known as Dutch tarras, is a building material of German origin from Andernach near the Rhine River. Tarras had pozzolanic properties and that rendered it cementitious when reduced to powder and mixed with lime.
55. Lawrence, *Trade Castles and Forts of West Africa,* 188–189.
56. It is interesting to note, however, that the index of A.W. Lawrence's classic and authoritative *Trade Castles and Forts of West Africa* does not include the word "dungeon".
57. Coleman A. Jordan, "Rhizomorphics of Race and Space", *Journal Architectural Education,* 6:4, ACSA, *48–59.*
58. Anquandah, *Castles and Forts of Ghana*, 50.
59. Ernst Neufert and Peter Neufert, *Architects' Data* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), 15.
60. Tessa Morrison "Albrecht Dürer and the Ideal City", *Journal of the Australian and New Zealand Association for Medieval and Early Modern Studies (ParergonJ)* 31:1 (2014), 137–160; Gary D. Rosenberg, "The proper measure of man: the anthropomorphic landscape in Renaissance

art and the origin of paleobiology", *Geological Society of America,* 35:6 (2003), 205.

61. Neufert and Neufert, 585.
62. Baruch Givoni, *Man, Climate and Architecture* (Essex: Elsevier Publishing, 1969), 27; Peter Burberry, *Environmental and Services*, (London: White Friars Press, 1970), 28–30; Neufert and Neufert, *Architects' Data*, 19.
63. Stephen Whitaker, *Fundamental Principles of Heat Transfer* (New York: Pergamon Press Inc., 1977), 10.
64. Lawrence, *Trade Castles and Forts of West Africa,* 185.
65. Lawrence, *Trade Castles and Forts of West Africa*, 34.
66. See William St. Clair, "Outside" in *The Grand Slave Emporium: Cape Coast Castle and the British slave trade* (London: Profile Books, 2006) 30–64.
67. Gloag, *Guide to Western Architecture,* 162.
68. Whitaker, *Fundamental Principles of Heat Transfer*, 9.
69. G. T. Stride and Caroline Ifeka, *Peoples and the Empires of West Africa* (Surrey: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1971), 212–223.
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74. Gloag, *Guide to Western Architecture,* 162.
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76. The Academy of Urbanism, *Learning from Place 1*, (London: RIBA Publishing, 2007), 28.

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CHAPTER 9

A Theatre of Memory for the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade: Cape Coast Castle and Its Museum

Neelima Jeychandran

While conducting research in the coastal town of Cape Coast in Ghana in 2012, I made frequent trips to Cape Coast Castle to use the library and speak with museum educators, tour guides and other staff of the Ghana Museums and Monuments Board (GMMB) who work at the castle.[1] During my seven months at Cape Coast, I had the opportunity to observe the ways in which various groups of visitors approached the complex history of the castle and reacted to the different spaces within it. I also joined visitors from the African diaspora who were visiting the castle as part of what is known as a roots or homeland tour. Since the castles were the final exit points for hundreds of thousands of enslaved Africans, they became the most important memorials for African Americans and Africans in the diaspora to reconnect with their roots through pilgrimage tourism. With the towns of Cape Coast and neighbouring Elmina both boasting architecturally impressive structures, these castles have become iconic sites for understanding the history of the slave trade in Ghana. Besides foreign tourists, Cape Coast Castle is often thronged by

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schoolchildren since visiting became a mandatory history lesson for junior high school students. During my trips, I also met students from the United States of America (USA) participating in the Semester at Sea program, during which classes are conducted on cruise ships.

This study approaches the castle with an interest in how museums and heritage sites served as discursive spatial texts in narrating contested histories of the trans-Atlantic slave trade.[2] To consider this, I examined how the museum display and performative practices become key components in (re)creating frames of memory for different social groups at Cape Coast Castle. This chapter presents my findings by, firstly, looking at the transformation of Cape Coast Castle into a heritage destination and theatre of memory, where narratives of the past are continuously reproduced in the context of the exhibition space and choreographed for tourists from the African diaspora. Secondly, I discuss how expatriate and local tourist agents, tour guides and theatrical impresarios contribute to the castle's perpetual invention, even as they make their livings from the devices of heritage production. Finally, I examine the performances organized and enacted by local theatrical and musical groups that range from very personal and sombre commemoration of the slave trade to more dramatic performative interpretations leading to an exuberant sense of survival.

Cape Coast Castle and Its Museum

Along the Ghanaian coast, Portuguese, Dutch, Danish and English forts stand as testimony to European occupation. Established for maritime trade, these forts served as warehouses and bastions for safeguarding the vessels and commerce of European chartered companies. Soon they became hubs of the companies' social and political activities and served as administrative centres during colonial rule. In the eighteenth century during the peak of the trans-Atlantic slave trade, they became the holding places and final exit point for millions of Africans before they were shipped to the Americas. In the post-colonial phase, many of these buildings found new purpose as government offices, hotels, schools, hospitals and orphanages, for example. Several colonial buildings were left in despair before 1979, when the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) named the forts and castles of coastal Ghana a World Heritage Site, because of their nomination by

Ghanaian Museum professional Kwesi Myles.[3] With this recognition, the fortifications gained importance as heritage sites that represented the memories of the trans-Atlantic slave trade. However, these fortifications are palimpsest builtscapes that concurrently exhibit remnants of colonial culture, modernity, local culture and transnational linkages. The proposal to create museums inside the forts was spurred by UNESCO's Slave Route Heritage Programme, initiated in 1994. UNESCO's Slave Route Heritage Programme mapped the castles as significant destinations along itineraries such as "Roots Route".[4] As a result, site museums were established inside several fortresses such as Fort Ussher (Accra), Cape Coast Castle (Cape Coast) and Elmina Castle (Elmina) to visually narrate the history of the trans-Atlantic slave trade.

The castle at Cape Coast has a chequered history, as it changed hands several times. It was built by a Swedish trading company in 1653 and then passed to Danish hands for a year before the English occupied it in 1664. The colonial British Government expanded the castle and made it their administrative centre on the Gold Coast from 1700 to 1877. It was also the headquarters for The Royal African Company, the president of the Committee of Merchants and British Governors.[5] As one of the biggest fortresses on the Guinea Coast, it served as a major exit post for the transportation of millions of enslaved Africans during the slave-trading era. Once the British administrative office had moved to Accra in 1877, the building served as a prison. This continued for most of the earlier twentieth century until Ghana's independence, when it housed several government offices. Although it was declared a World Heritage Site in 1979, most parts of the castle were left in disrepair until the 1990s. Today, the castle also houses the regional headquarters of the Ghana Museums and Monuments Board (GMMB).

In the early 1990s, GMMB carried out major restoration work at Elmina and Cape Coast Castles, with the involvement of number of international organizations like the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Shell Oil, the Midwest Universities Consortium for International Activities and the Smithsonian Institution. The project also oversaw the establishment of museums at Elmina and Cape Coast. In 2007, UNESCO, in collaboration with the GMMB, conducted comparable restoration and museum work at Fort Ussher. The thematic content and display strategies of all these museums were similarly formulated to narrate the history of the slave trade. All these exhibitions present the

European torture of native Africans by displaying objects associated with the slave trade such as shackles and branding irons, alongside narrative paintings and dioramas of slave capture and transportation. Although Ussher Fort and Elmina Castle are significant historical sites, it is the Cape Coast castle and its museum that receive the largest influx of visitors.

Several factors have played key roles in transforming Cape Coast Castle into the preferred place for tourists to visit and experience histories of the slave trade. Cape Coast's heritage-scape is promoted and popularized as a place of return by various agencies through media such as newspapers, television, travel books and travel websites. Along with the Ghanaian state and UNESCO, commercial enterprises such as the aviation and cruise-ship industries also play crucial roles in repurposing Cape Coast as a Slave Route Heritage destination. During my six months stay in Cape Coast in 2012, I frequently encountered tourist groups from cruise ships docked at Tema Port visiting Cape Coast Castle. Local commercial and cultural interests, combined with the African Americans' common desire to undertake pilgrimage to the slave castles of West Africa all contribute to such avid interest. At the castle museum, memories of the slave trade and colonialism are recounted from and for the transnational African diaspora, and not so obviously from or for Ghanaian perspectives.

Located on the first floor of the castle overlooking the ocean is a small museum, which aims to educate visitors about the culture of the Central Region of Ghana and the history of the trans-Atlantic slave trade. A permanent exhibition called *Crossroads of People, Crossroads of Cultures* (hereafter referred to as *Crossroads*) was created in 1994 with the help of the Smithsonian Institution and other agencies as part of the Central Region development program. The conceptualization and design of the museum was carried out by the GMMB with USAID, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the Smithsonian Institution. A team of Ghanaian and international experts worked for over 2 years, creating a new exhibition at the space that formerly housed the West African Historical Museum, which was established in 1971. While the idea was to design an exhibition that presented the contemporary culture of the Central Region, the narrative of the exhibition turned out to focus more on the history of the slave trade and Middle Passage. Christine Mullen Kreamer, the chief consultant of the project, notes that in the exhibition "the voices of the African diaspora have diminished the

voices of the Ghanaian in the representation of this site".[6] There have been extensive discussions by Edward M. Brunner, Sandra L. Richards, Christine Mullen Kreamer and Brempong Osei-Tutu about African American concerns for the heritage transformation and commoditization of the castles, but it is difficult to state particular reasons since these matters are far more complex once one is in situ.[7] The physical appearance of the castles has been subjected to great controversy as a few African Americans found the whitewashing and regular maintenance of castles atrocious.[8]

The exhibition, *Crossroads,* presents a linear narrative history of the town and fortress through five galleries displayed in three rooms. At the entrance is a space designated for visitors to watch an orientation film directed by the renowned Ghanaian filmmaker Kwaw Ansah, which is meant to contextualize the theme of the exhibition. The forty-five-minute film covers a range of subjects and is melodramatic with a highly emotive voice-over narration. The film, however, is not played regularly and is often skipped by most of the visitors. The first room is a large space divided into three small galleries that present the history of the region. This section showcases glimpses of the local life before European contact through an array of objects such as early stone technology, terracotta figures and gold weights from the region. After this, a few objects such as iron chains, shackles and a branding iron mounted on the wall, along with interpretive texts, narrate the details of the larger apparatus of the trans-Atlantic slave trade and the forced trafficking of Africans. A series of large black and white photomurals illustrate the capture, transportation and harsh treatment of Africans by slave traders. Christine Kreamer notes that the murals were chosen less for their historical accuracy in documenting the slave trade and more for their emotional content in conveying horror and inhumanity.[9] Such visualizations function as an indexical tool that references the larger narrative of the trans-Atlantic slave trade.

In the two small galleries that follow, one can see spaces simulated to represent a slave hold and a market for the visitors to witness the journey of the enslaved Africans. The lower deck of a slave ship where the enslaved Africans were forcefully held is reconstructed in the first section. Further, large photo-prints are used against the backdrop of a dark wooden interior to represent the holds of European slave ships. Also featured in the room are wooden berths alongside which ropes and shackles hang from the wall. In addition to these objects, mounted on the wall

is a large photo-print of *The Brookes* diagram, which portrayed the stifling hold of a slave ship.[10] Such schematic visuals are among the most powerfully critical imageries of the trans-Atlantic slave trade and were used by abolitionists to campaign against the horrifically inhumane practices of slavery. Following this display is a small room in which a slave auction block in the Americas is recreated through the display of floor-to-ceiling black and white photographs on either sides of the wall. The exhibition space is transformed into an auction site with posters and banners announcing the sale of slaves. As the visitors enter this space, they step onto a wooden platform to experience the view from a typical auction block where the Africans were sold in the Americas. A copy of the auction notice from J. Blucher slaves advertises the sale of male and female slaves along with other commodities such as needles, pins, ribbons, rice and muslin, presenting a grave reminder of the atrocities against Africans amidst the plantation economy.

These two galleries are the most visually powerful spaces of the museum as they present a phantasmagoric image of the past. Diasporic African visitors are particularly moved as they view the images of auction and read the panel texts. This display moves beyond mere representation to a realm of deeper significance that silently, yet powerfully reminds the audience that the shadows of empire are still visible in the present social labyrinth, and that there are still large issues with which we have yet to deal. In analysing the performative nature of the *Crossroads* exhibition, arguably the gallery that shows the deck and the dock function as a phantasmorgic space that projects the gory images of the slave trade and evokes a powerful re-imagination of the miseries of the enslaved Africans and the inhumane conditions in which they were unwillingly held. These visual simulations are so powerful that many of the African diasporic visitors experience emotional outbursts, at times becoming overwhelmed by feelings of rage as they encounter the museum's spaces.

In the next gallery, a photograph wall presents Africans in plantations in the USA and images of men and women who fought for the liberation of Africans and led the movement against racial discrimination. Among them are also famous African American entertainers, sports personalities and leaders such as Martin Luther King, Malcolm X., Muhammad Ali, Angela Davis, Jesse Jackson, Duke Ellington, Billie Holiday and Stevie Wonder. Here, the Ghanaian freedom struggle against British colonialism—represented by a photograph of the "Big Six" of Kwame Nkrumah, E. Obetsebi Lamptey, J.B. Danquah, William Ofori-Atta, Ebenezer

Ako-Adjei and Edward Akufo-Addo—becomes a smaller chapter in the larger presentation of the historical memory of the African diaspora. Although the master narrative of the exhibition *Crossroads* may be designed from a diasporic African perspective, the last space focuses on the performances and cultural lives of the people of the Central Region. This is the most colourful section of the exhibition, as it features a range of objects from a brightly painted fishing boat, the regalia of chiefs such as staffs and stools and other cultural items such as pots, pans, beads and drums. Large coloured photographs and text panels showcase local ceremonies such as the durbars, funerals and other rituals. Also displayed in the gallery are visual representations of the Asafo military companies' *posuban* shrines, which are elaborate structures with dynamic cement figures presented in complex proverbial and historical configurations. *Posuban* are erected by Fante Asafo companies at their base to serve as a meeting point, a place to house and worship their gods and ancestors, and as a means by which they compete with rival companies through lavish displays of prowess, wealth and purpose.

The *Crossroads* exhibition is part of the regular tour of Cape Coast Castle, and most visitors view the exhibition before or after the guided tour of the castle. The exhibition therefore plays a crucial role in contextualizing the role of the castle as an exit port during the trans-Atlantic slave trade. The photographs and objects thus offer an index to absent things and people within the empty spaces of the many rooms, dungeons and cells of the castle. Scholars of memory have shown how museums are sites of memory that function as dynamic spaces for public interactions and recollections of the past. The exhibition, *Crossroads,* functions as a *mise-en-scène* that aids in visualizing and reimagining the history of the trans-Atlantic slave trade, while also serving as a site of memory or, to use Pierre Nora's term, *lieux de mémoire*.[11] While *Crossroads* functions as mnemonic space, that is instrumental in preserving memories of the trans-Atlantic slave trade, at the castle histories of the slave trade are also retold, recalled, reconciled and re-enacted through a diverse range of performances.

A Performative Memoryscape

The mere ascription of Cape Coast Castle as a slave heritage site is not the root cause of its transformation into a memoryscape that is meaningful to different persons and communities, including those seeking

to benefit financially. Rather, an array of memory-making and memorialization processes have galvanized Cape Coast as an important *lieux de mémoire*. According to Pierre Nora, memory takes root in the concrete, in spaces, images and objects such as museums, memorials, archives, cemeteries, etc. As Nora puts it, "the fundamental purpose of *lieu de mémoire* is to stop time, to block the work of forgetting".[12] The subject of succeeding sections will be how *lieu de mémoire* and the memoryscapes of Cape Coast Castle gain significance through various performances. Performances—whether organized by the Ghanaian state or choreographed by tour guides and local actors—play vital roles in defining the ritual significance of the castle and its adjacent town as a meaningful memorial for the slave trade.

Cape Coast's historical association with the trans-Atlantic slave trade and the projection of this narrative by various state and non-state actors is the primary reason why African Americans and Africans from the diaspora consider the castle as a site of "return". Through a range of choreographed acts, visitors from the African diaspora engage in a place of memory like Cape Coast Castle in order to remember, retain and embody memories of their visit. Such acts also ascribe new meanings both for visitors and for the memory place. In analysing the efficacious nature of a memory place, Edward Casey notes that by "moving in or through a given place, the body imports its own implaced past into its present experience".[13] At Cape Coast Castle, the dungeons and "Door of No Return" are symbolic spaces for the African diaspora to emplace memories through choreographed acts of memory-making. One of the most common forms of retaining memories is the act of taking photographs in front of the Door of No Return, which is the exit door of the castle that leads to the harbour where canoes transported captives to waiting slave ships. Taking photographs in front of the door for Africans from the diaspora suggests the opportunity to return to a homeland and re-enter their ancestral space. The Door of No Return has become a trope of roots catharsis, whether or not the door so designated ever served the function, at least to the degree now emphasized, in the buildings being visited. This is strikingly the point at *Gorée* in Senegal, where it is not at all clear whether the door was used as now understood, but in many ways it makes no difference because the greater "truth" is served in the performances of loss and capturing of memories that roots tourists' achieve by taking photographs.

Feeling connections to the pasts and emotions experienced by visitors at sites of memory like Cape Coast Castle is similar to the concepts of "postmemory" or "vicarious witnessing" that Marianne Hirsch discusses. Postmemory is the connection that descendants of the survivors of traumatic events experience when they encounter vestiges of lives they have not lived but that are nonetheless dear to them and is a structure of inter- and trans-generational transmission of traumatic knowledge and experience.[14] Susannah Radstone and Katherine Hodgkin note that painful memories either of the self or others that are directly experienced or not, witnessed or not, leave their mark on the mind as traumatic embodied memory. At a place of dire torment like Cape Coast Castle, intergenerationally transmitted body memories influence how the castle is experienced by diasporic African visitors. For roots tourists, visiting the castle is a most solemn pilgrimage, and the symbolic performative act of exiting and re-entering through the Door of No Return are ways to reconcile the impact of traumatic postmemories. The fundamental function of Cape Coast Castle as a *lieux de mémoire*, then, resides in how it invites people to interact with its various features in order to create their own memoryscape.

As we have seen, in the castle, the series of performances in which visitors from the African diaspora participate transforms the place into a theatre of memory of the trans-Atlantic slave trade. In the foreword of Raphael Samuel's significant work, *Theatres of Memory,* Bill Schwarz illustrates how memory is a sustained effort to study alternative forms of knowledge in visual presentation and the practices of popular performance, through which pasts are dramatized to meet present needs.[15] For Raphael Samuel, popular memory is a realm of knowledge that falls within unofficial knowledge of the past. According to Samuel, memory is "history's nether-world, where memory and myth intermingle, and the imaginary rubs shoulders with the real".[16] Other than collective and individual acts of remembering and mourning, visitors from the African diaspora participate in choreographed acts of mourning for the horrid afflictions and losses of the trans-Atlantic slave trade.

Performances vary from very individual acts of posing for photographs in certain places to more complex group rituals and festivals performed inside the courtyards and outside of the castle. Indeed, Cape Coast has been used for staging local rituals, and festivals commemorating the slave trade such as PANAFEST (Pan African Historical Theatre Festival) and Emancipation Day celebrations. Cape Coast and its castle

are closely associated with the biennial cultural event PANAFEST that is primarily organized to attract African diasporic visitors. According to the PANAFEST foundation, the festival aims to celebrate the strengths and resilience of Africans and applaud the achievements of Africans in spite of their traumatic sociocultural histories. It is designed to help Africans to reconnect with their strengths and thus inspire eternal vigilance so that such important events may never be forgotten, even as visitors rededicate themselves to fully assuming their own destinies in recognition of the lessons of shared histories.

When PANAFEST was founded, it was fully funded by the government of Ghana, then the National Democratic Congress (NDC). However, after 1999 support from the government declined significantly and now the PANAFEST Foundation is dependent on corporate gifts to host the festival. The foundation faces constant challenges in raising funds for their events, and the list of festivities has been reduced as a consequence. From 1998, an Emancipation celebration held on the 31st of July to mark the abolition of slavery was added to annual events sanctioned by the Ghanaian government. Anthropologist Jennifer Hasty points out that Emancipation Day is based on a similar Jamaican festival, which Ghanaian ministers felt could contribute to the Pan-Africanist sentiment.[17] The program begins with a candlelight march through the town of Cape Coast leading to the castle, followed by cultural programs culminating in a re-enactment performance of the slave trade at midnight. As the clock strikes midnight, the Emancipation Proclamation is read and a fire is lit in the courtyard of the castle to symbolize the dawning of a new phase of liberated histories.

The PANAFEST festival hosts a sequence of events that span 10 days, ranging from conferences for youth and women to more ritualistic events. Cape Coast, Elmina and Accra are the main locations of the events. Scholars like Bayo Holsey, Jennifer Hasty, Jemima Pierre and Sandra L. Richards have discussed performances featured in PANAFEST through which ritual is employed as a main medium to "reintegrate" tourists back into African society, following Pan-Africanist ideals. While these authors have analysed larger celebrations and the theatre and dance performances that are highlights of the festival, less-obvious ritualistic performances organized by the PANAFEST Foundation also help visitors to experience aspects of the Middle Passage and mark their own glorious returns to the Homeland. For instance, the Symbolic Boat Ride is a ceremonial ritual organized for African American visitors through

which they are transported to Elmina Castle from Cape Coast by boat. The trip serves as a brief corporeal and symbolic experience to assist in understanding the travails of the slave trade. When visitors disembark at Elmina Castle, they receive a ceremonious welcome by the elders and the traditional council and are graced with white ash. The elders also wash the feet of the pilgrims to seek forgiveness for their own ancestors participating in the slave trade. It is through these symbolic gestures that atonement is enacted. Rabbi Cohen, the secretary of PANAFEST, explains that African Americans who visit Elmina and Cape Coast's castles hold a sense of reverence for the resilience of their ancestors who survived the Middle Passage and mourn those who lost their lives in European fortifications on African soil. As he adds, it is just such a feeling of triumph in overcoming the troubles experienced by their ancestors that exhilarates most of the visitors from the African diaspora as they visit the castle.

Choreographed rituals and performances organized during PANAFEST have contributed to the popularity of the castle as a site of return for the African diaspora. Currently, Cape Coast Castle has attained more prominence as a place of return than Elmina Castle as a result of Barack Obama's family visit in 2009 during his Ghana tour, although this phenomenon may be short-lived. The President's visit generated large-scale coverage in American media, especially with The Cable News Network (CNN) ace reporter Anderson Cooper's program that inquired into the history of the slave trade, and his long interview with President Obama inside the castle in which he questioned the importance of his visit.

Before plans were officially announced, a major conflict erupted between the local councils of Elmina and Cape Coast, about which castle the US President should visit. Residents of Elmina were angry when it was declared that the Obamas would only be visiting Cape Coast, despite Elmina being the earliest European building on the Guinea Coast and the site of first contact between Europeans and those whose descendants would become Ghanaians. People in Elmina made an appeal to President John Evans Atta Mills to reschedule Obama's itinerary to include a visit to Elmina. According to museum officials, a visit to Cape Coast Castle was preferred due to security reasons. It would have been very difficult to regulate traffic and commerce at Elmina, because it was an old town with congested roads, with the people performing community activities at the very foot of the castle. Since the Obamas visit, Cape Coast Castle

has become the preferred site for commemorative rituals for roots tourists who hope to experience what the President and his family so eloquently described. Evidently, an event like the visit of the first African American president of the USA can have a significant impact in shaping the heritage of slave castles and associated memoryscapes.

Enactment Performances

If the museum at Cape Coast Castle is a visual archive through which histories of the slave trade are presented, then what characterizes the place as a theatre of memories is a sequence of choreographed performances that are organized and performed for tourists. Borrowing Diana Taylor's arguments, performance repertoires play significant roles in articulating historical knowledge.[18] In this section, I will consider enactment of aspects of the slave trade performed by local theatre and dance groups within Cape Coast Castle. These are mostly performed for roots tourists or foreign delegates visiting Ghana. Enactment performances are scripted, rehearsed and meticulously choreographed performance repertoires.

Elolo Kwame John Gharbin and his theatre company, Central Resurgents, are based in Cape Coast and regularly perform three different theatrical enactments of the slave trade for roots tourists either inside the castle at Cape Coast or Elmina. The three enactments are *The Plain Truth*, *The Slave* and *Solemn Homage*. With the global economic crisis of 2008, Gharbin's group started receiving fewer and fewer requests for such performances. In 2012, when I met Gharbin, his troupe had received two bookings when in the past during the same season he had received an average of fifteen to twenty requests. Mostly performing for African Americans and other Africans from the diaspora, Central Resurgents tailors its performances to the size of the group and its preferences.

Central Resurgents started performing their enactments in 1993. During the early days, they staged *The Truth* as an adaptation of a poem of the same title written by Efo Kodo Mawugbe. Gharbin reflects that *The Truth* was a simple performance that presented the arrival of Europeans on the Gold Coast and how they forged friendships with local people.[19] The performance depicted how Europeans became ruthless rulers who began enslaving and trading humans to meet the fast-paced needs of plantation economies of the Americas, and especially

those associated with sugar production. After a few showings, Gharbin revised the script and changed the title to *The Plain Truth*. The new script offered more detailed theatrical representation of the slave trade and included stage directions for the actors. About sixty minutes in duration, *The Plain Truth* has music, dances, songs and narrative segments all woven together. Although fashioned like musical theatre, Gharbin reflects that incorporating music and dance into theatrical enactments of the slave trade shows the audience the richness of Akan culture in which drumming and dancing are integral to ceremonies.[20] Further reference is made to popular performance idioms, locally known as Concert Party.[21] Vignettes portraying idealized Akan cultural life are built into the play, as a scene in which local chiefs in full splendour accompanied by their retinues of drummers and dancers welcome the first Europeans to the Ghanaian coast.

The narratives of Central Resurgents' performances are largely based on the scripted histories recounted by tour guides at Elmina and Cape Coast castles. Gharbin remarks that he did not rely upon local oral histories, as Fante elders did not want to talk about their ancestors' possible roles in the slave trade.[22] In enactments, Gharbin recounts events after the arrival of Europeans, beginning with the construction of the castle at Elmina by the Portuguese, then the arrival of Dutch and other Europeans and the development of the slave trade industry. Gharbin ends the performance by narrating how racism and racial indifference continue today in many ways. About twenty-five actors usually take part in the performance, which is bilingual with a sparing use of Fante words, perhaps as a gauge of "authenticity" for non-Fante-speaking expatriate tourists. Styled as a period drama, Central Resurgents uses elaborate costumes and props to evoke the ambience of the era, and because they perform in the courtyard of the castle, the very architecture provides a powerful backdrop. Gharbin also weaves local dance forms such as Kete into the enactment. Moreover, he also has a "dance of anger" choreographic sequence, in which a flag-thrower from a local Asafo Company performs the art of flag throwing, as a ritualistic feat performed by trained members of such a company.[23]

The second performance in Central Resurgents' repertoire is *The Slave*, which was written and directed by Gharbin as multiple scenes and acts. This elaborate play was staged for the first time at Cape Coast Castle in 2001, and since then it has been performed several times at both Elmina and Cape Coast castles from 2006 to 2008. *The Slave* is

usually performed for the reverential night celebrations of 31st July at Cape Coast Castle.[24] The playwright explains that he wrote the *The Slave* to present a detailed history of the slave trade for his audience. This performance is rarely staged now as the production is too costly due to the number of actors and props required. While performing inside Cape Coast Castle, Central Resurgents uses the courtyard, the rampart and the flight of steep stairs that leads from the courtyard to the former European quarters as locations for his troupe to enact each episode. Towards the end of the play, for example, enslaved persons are dragged to the dungeon, and the audience follows as the play depicts the enslaved passing through the Door of No Return. The third scene depicts the Middle Passage. Gharbin notes that three possible endings are available depending on the requests they get from tour operators.[25] In a full-length performance, Central Resurgents employs elaborate props such as wooden guns, whips, shackles and chains, ornate umbrellas and chairs. A drum ensemble renders the background musical and sound scores.

The third performance in the repertoire is *Solemn Homage*. This is a choreographed ritual that permits visitors to feel that they are remembering traumatic histories of the slave trade while paying tribute to the ancestors. Gharbin explains that his troupe creates an environment for visitors to experience collective recall, mourning and release. A pious environment is choreographed so that people from the diaspora can pray to the ancestors who lost their lives, but also to the brave souls who survived the trans-Atlantic journey. Gharbin explains that after a tour of the castle, visitors assemble outside the men's dungeon where the performance unfolds.[26] Visitors are asked to enter the dungeon barefooted, and the performance begins with the tour guide narrating the history of the dungeon. Next, Gharbin joins the group to narrate the history of the trans-Atlantic slave trade. In his narration, Gharbin mentions how the Europeans still seek to hide the oppressive past.

Gharbin then prays with the visitors and observes a moment's silence in memory of people who suffered from the trans-Atlantic slave trade. Then, a flute is played while the group stands in a circle holding hands and praying. Other rituals follow. A local fetish priest arrives and sits in the dungeon with a clay pot or gourd with white clay to ritually anoint visitors with white marks. As the white clay mark is a sign of spiritual victory, two lines are rubbed onto the wrist to mark symbolic triumph. Gharbin notes that he included white chalk to indicate African diaspora visitors that they have been successful in returning to their Homeland.[27]

Visitors then pay a tribute and usually offer money to the priest. Gharbin states that this ceremony started as a single person's narrative and developed into a more elaborate performance with musicians and a priest.

Solemn Homage is a twenty-minute performance, and Gharbin remarks that unlike *The Plain Truth* and *The Slave*, it is a means for African Americans to remember their ancestors as well as to establish a connection with the dungeon, as it bears traces of the slave trade and was the only part of the castle occupied by Africans, as the rest was occupied by Europeans. The rough walls, uneven ground and darkness contribute to creating a ritual environment. Gharbin notes that *Solemn Homage* is a highly moving act, and most times, visitors participating are overwhelmed by emotions.[28] Heritage purposes are well served, then, including the political economies of performance.

Like Gharbin, the *Odomankoma-Kyerema* (divine master drummer) Kwamena Pra and his troupe also perform choreographed enactments of the slave trade for tourists. Unlike Gharbin who is a theatre director, Pra is a musician with his own band and teaches drumming to local and international students. Pra has incorporated several dances and drumming sequences into his performances in Elmina and Cape Coast castles. Being a divine master drummer, Pra is frequently invited to play for very important rituals, festivals and other ceremonies. He notes that he is known as a divine drummer because of his ability to summon spirits of deceased people and also to communicate with them during ritual ceremonies.[29] Pra often leads the drumming ensemble when important chiefs from Ghana and other parts of Africa visit Cape Coast.

Kwamena Pra and his troupe started performing enactments of the slave trade in 1985. At the time, the director of the Centre for National Culture (CNC) at Cape Coast, Efo Kojo Mawujbe, requested that Pra organize a performance for visitors from the African diaspora. Unlike Gharbin, Pra has only one piece that lasts about forty-five minutes. The ceremony is bilingual in Akan and English and consists of twenty to thirty actors most of whom also play in his drumming group. Pra asserts that his script is based on events narrated in historical texts as well as incidents that are retained in oral traditions.[30] Being a drummer, his performances include elaborate drumming sequences and his actor's mime, deliver dialogues and dance. A full-length enactment staged by Pra's group includes six scenes. The performance begins with a village in which actors present local lives before the arrival of Europeans as people engaged in cultivation, fishing and other activities. In a second scene, the

arrival of Europeans is dramatized. An actor sights a ship and informs the community. Although Pra is not the narrator of the story, he inserts himself into the performance now and then by playing the role of the master drummer who summons people and informs situations. A third scene depicts Europeans gifting mirrors, rum and other goods to the Fante and requesting land to construct a fort. Next, Europeans construct the castle with local help. A quick shift follows as the violent capture of Africans and the enslavement process is depicted. Drumming accentuates the intensity. In the last scene, enslaved Africans are taken into the castle's dungeons and then to board cargo vessels. Although a minimum of props such as wooden guns, chains and shackles are employed, elaborate period costumes are worn to great effect.

Kwamena Pra stages most of his work in the main courtyard of Cape Coast Castle. Towards the end of the performance, actors direct audiences towards the dungeons. Men and women are separated like enslaved people, along with actors portraying slaves. Once inside the dungeons, the actors and their audience sit on the floor for a few minutes. Next, audiences are led out of the dungeons towards the Door of No Return. Usually after their exit through the Door of No Return, visitors from the diaspora pray and pay homage to their ancestors. After this brief ritual, they pass back through the Door of No Return, and drummers and dancers welcome them with vibrant numbers to celebrate their return and lead them back to the courtyard where they sing and dance. Pra holds that these activities mark the emancipation of the souls of diaspora visitors.[31]

During the enactment, a code of conduct is observed. Drums are not played in the dungeons as they are places filled with spirits and he does not want to call to or disturb them with the drumming. Pra remarks that being a spiritual drummer, he has the responsibility of seeking permission from the spirits who reside in the castle and also to appease them before a performance. Some spirits are very angry, aggrieved and still in pain, so he plays an appellation for them before the commencement of the performance. Although he never mentions this to his audience, he pays homage before the enactment through a sequence of rhythmic drumbeats. Pra maintains that unlike other theatrical representations of the slave trade, his performance is more palpable as his African American audiences undergo deeply emotional experiences. In recent years, there have been fewer bookings as the number of tour groups visiting Ghana has been considerably reduced due to Ghana's economic difficulties.[32]

Both Elolo Kwame John Gharbin and Kwamena Pra's performance repertoires are deemed to be historical enactments, but are also instances of memory-making acts. Diana Taylor states that "performances function as vital acts of transfer, transmitting social knowledge, memory and a sense of identity through act of reiterated, or what Richard Schechner has called 'twice-behaved behaviour'".[33] Enactments of the slave trade performed for roots tourists evoke memories of the slave trade and remind stake-holding audiences of violent histories of subjugation. Moreover, the enactments of troubled histories within fortifications offer opportunities for audience participation. In discussing the relationship between memory, performance, repertoire and the body, Davesh Soneji notes that knowledge can be made present through acts dramatizing subaltern or marginalized experience.[34] Expanding on Taylor and Soneji, I suggest that the repertoire of slave trade enactments constitutes a substantial yet unexplored archive of the slave trade as understood by and performed for contemporary audiences, even as "heritage" actors make their livings from these same dramatizations of collective imaginaries.

In writing of US Civil War enactments, Rebecca Schneider points out that the performance of re-presenting, re-producing, and re-telling histories through artistic productions produces "living histories" or histories in action. She adds that such productions are popular in the twenty-first century because of the rampant commoditization of memory.[35] According to Schneider, actors and audiences connect with the past through temporal slippages. Visitors from the diaspora slip into a different temporal zone at Elmina or Cape Coast's castle, and it is through this "slippage" that they experience something of the period. As Schneider argues, "the physical collapse of time" plays a significant role in envisioning and establishing direct links with historical moments facilitated through well-choreographed performances.

As a final insight with which to view Cape Coast Castle as a theatre of memory, the theory of surrogation proposed by Joseph Roach may be called upon. Surrogation is a process through which societies compensate for loss of cultural memories in the absence of individuals who can narrate first-hand experiences.[36] According to Roach, for communities suffering from consequences of violent loss such surrogates can serve healing functions. Diasporic Africans are intergenerationally far removed from living memory of the slave trade, and in many ways particular knowledge is irretrievable. Dramatic enactments at the castles may substitute as processes of collective catharsis. Here, the work

of surrogation provokes a rethinking of the slave trade that can serve as a reference point to address deep wounds of slavery and ongoing racial oppression. Enactment performances construct visual and tactile imaginative response to the slave trade by embodying history. Cape Coast Castle emerges as a sacred site for those seeking its release, while for others (mostly local) the same production of heritage provides much-needed income. Discussing ways in which visuality plays a central role in the tourism industry, David Crouch and Nina Lubbren argue that tourism is all about visual consumption.[37] In the case of Cape Coast Castle, image-making activities created by the tourist industry and by roots tourists themselves generate very particular imaginaries of sites of memory to the trans-Atlantic slave trade. This is especially achieved through choreographic productions—like those discussed here—that make a place spectacular. Souvenir photographs of cathartic events at Cape Coast Castle abound on tourist websites and travel blogs. If enactment performances aid in constructing surrogate imaginations of the slave trade, visual cultures are responsible for spreading the image.

Conclusion

This paper illustrates the workings of Cape Coast Castle as a theatre of memory and shows how several constituencies and actors have played crucial roles in transforming the museum and the built space of the castle into a significant place for roots tourists to visit and experience memories of the slave trade. African identities and histories are reviewed at the castle, thus transforming them into a dynamic field of cultural production where Africanism, Pan-Africanism and traumatic memories of the past are revived even as "heritage" is inexorably invented to meet contemporary felt needs. The central argument is that choreographed acts make identity politics a viable enterprise for people to undo and reshape official histories to their own advantage. Corporeal connections with chosen locations within the castle not only enable tourists to conceive the enormity and gravity of the trans-Atlantic slave trade, but also play important roles in grasping how ruthlessly exploitative forces of colonialism operated in the past even as those of neocolonialism do in our own days. While most roots tourists participate in some kind of performance as an act of connecting with memoryscapes (however fantasized they may be), visitors also engage in creating and capturing memories of places through the touristic ritual of taking photographs. Tourists also

visit shops inside the castle to buy souvenirs such as books, postcards, beads and other items. These souvenirs function, then, as centrepieces of the narratives they will create around their experiences in far-off Cape Coast. The objects live on as focal points for memory, pride, and stories of reminiscence. Cape Coast is a theatre of memory, where an array of dramatizations through museum spaces, guided tours, enactments, commemorative rituals, and the mega-events of the PANAFEST festival play significant roles in *producing* Cape Coast as an important site of memory for the people of the African diaspora.

Notes

1. Although they are called "castles" in Ghana, they are European forts with ramparts, bastions, gunnery, warehouses, and residences for colonial officers. While being a contested term, I use it is since that is the official and the commonly used term to refer the Cape Coast Castle.
2. I am indebted to Dr. Christine Mullen Kreamer, Deputy Director/Chief Curator of the National Museum of African Art (NMAfA), Smithsonian at Washington DC for her guidance and for sharing details of the process of establishing the permanent exhibition *Crossroads of People, Crossroads of Cultures* inside the Cape Coast Castle.
3. Bayo Holsey, *Routes of Remembrance: Refashioning the Slave Trade in Ghana* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 160.
4. See James Clifford, *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997).
5. Coleman Jordan, "Rhizomorphics of Race and Space: Ghana's Slave Castles and the Roots of African Diaspora Identity", *Journal of Architectural Education*, 60: 4 (2007), 53.
6. Christine Mullen Kreamer, "Crossroads of People, Crossroads of Trade: The Shared Heritage and Contested Terrain of Ghana's Cape Coast Castle Museum", *Museum Frictions: Public Culture/ Global Transformations*, eds. Ivan Karp, Corinne Kratz, Lynn Szwaja and Tomas Ybarra-Frausto (London: Duke University Press, 2006), 462.
7. See Brempong Osei-Tutu's "The African American Factors in the Commodification of Ghana's Slave Castles", *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana,* New Series, no. 6 (2002).
8. See Cheryl Finley, "Authenticating Dungeons, Whitewashing Castles: The Former Sites of Slave Trade on the Ghanaian Coast", *Architecture and Tourism: Perception, Performance and Place*, ed. by Medina Lasansky and Brian McLaren (Oxford; New York: Berg, 2004).
9. Kreamer, 442.

10. The Brookes was a late-eighteenth-century slave ship that sailed from Liverpool to the Gold Coast and on to Jamaica in the infamous triangular trade. The visual representation of the stifling hold of The Brookes is among the most powerful images that revealed the inhumane conditions of the Middle Passage journey. The image of how slaves were packed inside this slave ship became important evidence in the abolition campaign.
11. See Pierre Nora, "Between Memory and History: *Les Lieux des Memoire*", *Representations*, No. 26, Special Issue: Memory and Counter-Memory (1989).
12. Nora, 19.
13. Edward Casey, *Remembering: A Phenomenological Study* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 194.
14. Marianne Hirsch, "The Generation of Postmemory", *Poetics Today*, Spring Issue, 29:1 (2008), 106.
15. Bill Schwarz, "Foreword", *Theatres of Memory: Past and Present in Contemporary Culture* by Raphael Samuel (London: Verso Books, 2012) vii–xix.
16. Raphael Samuel, *Theatres of Memory: Past and Present in Contemporary Culture* (London: Verso Books, 2012), 6.
17. Jennifer Hasty, "Rites of Passage, Routes of Redemption: Emancipation Tourism and the Wealth of Culture", *Africa Today*, 49:3 (Autumn 2002): 47-76, 48.
18. See Diana Taylor's *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas,* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003).
19. Interview with Elolo Kwame John Gharbin, Director of Central Resurgents Theatre Company, Cape Coast, November 2012.
20. Interview with Gharbin, November 2012.
21. See Catherine M. Cole, *Ghana's Concert Party Theatre* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001).
22. Interview with Gharbin, November 2012.
23. Asafo military companies are traditional voluntary groups responsible for the defence of their town against invaders. Leadership positions are patrilineally inherited. These companies were politically engaged in the selection of chiefs and identified religiously with their *posuban* shrines.
24. Reverential night is organized at Cape Coast Castle as part of the Emancipation Day celebration on 31 July. It was Ghanaian President Jerry John Rawlings' idea to organize a yearly schedule of events to attract African Americans and Afro-Caribbean tourists to Ghana.
25. Interview with Gharbin, November 2012.
26. Interview with Gharbin, November 2012.
27. Interview with Gharbin, November 2012.

28. Interview with Gharbin, November 2012.
29. Interview with Kwamena Pra, Divine Master Drummer, Cape Coast, November 2012.
30. Interview with Pra, November 2012.
31. Interview with Pra, November 2012.
32. Interview with Pra, November 2012.
33. Taylor, 2.
34. Davesh Soneji, *Unfinished Gestures: Devadasis, Memory, and Modernity in South India* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 18.
35. Rebecca Schneider, *Performing Remains: Art and War in Times of Theatrical Reenactment* (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2011), 2.
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CHAPTER 10

Diplomacy, Identity and Appropriation of the "Door of no Return". President Barack Obama and Family in Ghana and the Cape Coast Castle, 2009

John Kwadwo Osei-Tutu and Ebenezer Ayesu

Introduction

In July 2009, Barack Hussein Obama, the first African American and the 44th president of the USA, paid a one-day state visit to Ghana,[1] his first to sub-Saharan Africa.[2] His entourage included close members of his family: his wife Michelle Obama, their daughters Malia and Sasha, Michelle's mother, "Madam K" (the Godmother of their children), and their niece Leslie. Like the official visits to Ghana by Bill Clinton in 1998 and George Walker Bush in 2008, President Obama's trip in 2009 was

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primarily a foreign policy act, undertaken to shore up relations with African countries as well as to promote and preserve American interests in Africa. However, President Obama's trip was uniquely a "journey that encompasses both the politics of today and painful memories of the past".[3] Indeed, the visit of the Obama family was a journey that fused high-level diplomacy with the deeply personal attachment of the first African American first family (of the USA) to Africa. In fact, Ghana provided the perfect political and historical setting for them to enact this fusion of high politics and the quest for heritage.

This chapter explores the meanings of President Obama's official visit to Ghana in general and his tour of the Cape Coast Castle with his family in particular. To explain how President Obama's first trip to Africa fused the current politics of America and the heritage of the Atlantic slave trade, we disaggregate the two aspects of the visit: the public and the private. This distinction is consistent with the president's role as a public figure doing diplomacy as an American President, and as a private person carrying out a pilgrimage with his family to their ancestral continent.

The chapter is in three parts. The first describes the public aspect of the visit: the euphoria and great expectations in Africa about the first African American president of the USA, and the political and foreign policy purpose of President Obama's visit to Ghana. Generally, the second and third parts examine the more personal aspects of the trip in the context of African American identities and affinities, experiential dichotomies and a quest for heritage. Particularly, the second part examines the visit by the Obama family to the Cape Coast Castle within the broad conceptual framework of "Roots" travels, bearing in mind the different historical and experiential backgrounds of the members of the African American first family of the USA. In part three, we interrogate President Obama's media-focussed walk through the infamous "Door of No Return" at Cape Coast Castle, raising issues about historical authenticity and representations of the African American experience. We ask whether the media focus on Obama instead of his wife (and to some extent their daughters) during the visit to Cape Coast Castle, constituted an appropriation of the experiences of descendants of the enslaved Africans by President Obama. What end did the mediatization of President Obama's walk through the "Door of No Return" at Cape Coast Castle achieve?

Meanings of Obama's Presidency to Africa: Optimism, Great Expectations and Realpolitik

Many people all around the world went euphoric when Barack Hussein Obama, an African American, became the 44th president of the USA in 2009. Beyond his personal appeal as an erudite, eloquent and focused candidate, much of the euphoria around the world had to do with the fact that his election defied the racialized trend of white-male dominance of the American political space since 1789. For Africans and African Americans alike, the reality of a black president at the White House, the nerve centre of global power, was overwhelming. From the historical perspective, Barack Obama's presidency from 2009 appeared to be a culmination of Civil Rights struggles, a materialization of Martin Luther King Jr.'s hopeful "Dream". As a blogger put it, "The social meaning [of Obama's victory] is obvious. When Barack and Michelle Obama and their two girls walked into the White House on January 20, it marked an event that few if any Black American of the civil rights era thought possible".[4] Obama's electoral victory and subsequent presidency offer opportunity for academic inquiry in several directions. Within the USA, they re-galvanize the debate about race relations, race and politics, and the possibilities of the "American Dream". Obama's electoral victory was also historically significant in the context of race relations in USA as well as for black pride generally. Blacks generally, particularly in Africa, could display "a new spring in their walk".[5]

However, many realist African Americans were aware that Obama's election and presidency did not mean that USA had become a post-racial society. On the contrary, inequality, bigotry and institutional racism persist. Yet it did not matter whether or not Obama's victory was the answer to "racism and Black self-determination". For some, the symbolism was more important: "Obama's election is first and foremost an unprecedented victory—a blow against 400 years of Black slavery, legal segregation and institutional racism … the highest electoral point of the post-civil rights revolution". In fact, that "A Black man had won" and was to become the boss in the White House, an edifice of (globe-wide) power built by the labour of anonymized black men and women, mostly slaves, was exhilarating. In addition, Obama's ascension to the White House was likely to encourage minorities in whatever fields they pursue in USA "to believe more is possible".[6]

Outside the USA, the prospects of this presidency for charting a new, refreshing course of American foreign policy towards the non-Western world were topical. Africans were not only celebratory, but also particularly optimistic and expectant that Obama's presidency (2009–2016) would positively influence the politics and economy of African countries. Archbishop emeritus Desmond Tutu seemed to have summed up the African expectation when he noted:

> A new era has dawned for Africa and for the entire world. It is almost like what happened in South Africa after Nelson Mandela became the first democratically elected President of that land. Then, as now, people of colour everywhere—in Africa, in the U.S., everywhere in the world—had a new spring in their walk. They held their heads high, and their shoulders were straighter. … Obama's election has given hope to people everywhere that change is possible, that this debilitating status quo of a polarized world of *them* and *us* can change.[7]

Desmond Tutu expected President Obama's African policy to be a departure from the earlier focus by American presidents on the promotion of Western interest.[8]

While the election of Obama brought much hope and racial pride to a majority of Africans,[9] there were a few pragmatic voices too. Dumisani Mbambo, a teacher from Zimbabwe, cautioned against exaggerated optimism among sub-Saharan Africans. He noted,

> It is just a change of face in the White House. People have been excited, saying he might bring something good for black Americans and Africa, but as far as I am concerned, there are enough problems in the United States. He will provide an inspiration to people that they too can make a difference, but in the short term, he is not going to be able to change the politics of Africa.[10]

The diplomatic calculations behind President Obama's choice of Ghana for his first official visit to sub-Saharan Africa confirmed Dumisani Mbambo's realist and historically grounded perspective on the relationship between the USA and African countries. A brief general outline of the historical trajectory of the evolving relationship will serve as a backdrop for appreciating President Obama's message to Africans and their leaders during his visit to Ghana. Connections between Ghana and USA span centuries and were established through the Atlantic slave trade

from the sixteenth century and through the building of direct diplomatic ties immediately after Ghana attained independence from British colonial rule. The presence of Richard Milhous Nixon (Vice President, 1953–1961) at Ghana's independence ceremony in 1957 attested to the importance that the USA attached to building political links with African countries that were emerging from colonialism so they may not be attracted to Soviet Communism.[11] Since 1957, leaders and high-ranking officials of the two countries have made reciprocal visits, except for periods of strained relations during the Cold War when President Kwame Nkrumah adopted an anti-imperialist stance, and when the military government of Ghana between 1972 and 1978 repudiated Ghana debts to the USA and other Western countries.[12] After the end of the Cold War[13] and the establishment of firm foundations for democratic rule from 1992, successive reigning US presidents have visited Ghana to carry out state business: Bill Clinton visited in March 1998 and George Walker Bush visited in February 2008. In addition, they carried out side engagements of both public and personal character. Both President Clinton and Bush's itineraries included a meeting with US Peace Corps in Ghana, while Bush also held a meeting with students of the Ghana International School, a school attended by the children of diplomats and the wealthy class in Ghana.[14] Reciprocally, Ghanaian leaders have made various kinds (state, official, private) of visits to the USA.[15] This trend towards increased US political engagement with sub-Saharan Africa from the 1990s, and deepened by President Obama's visit, also "reflected the lobbying efforts of the congressional Black Caucus and other African-American groups".[16]

Since the 1990s, US foreign policy towards Africa has included a strong developmental aid component, gearing towards poverty alleviation, building of infrastructure as well as encouragement of liberal political and economic stability. Both the Clinton (1993–2001) and George W. Bush (2001–2009) administrations seemed to have given attention to economic and social developmental issues of Africa by instituting concrete programmes. President Bill Clinton concretized his "Trade Not Aid" programme through the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA)[17], and George Walker Bush introduced the "President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief" (PEPFAR). Laura Bush also initiated the pro-poor "Textbooks and Learning Materials Program".[18] Many Africans, influential as well as ordinary, expected President Obama, a 'son' of Africa, to use his Presidency among other things "to bolster [the] good Bush project" and to take real notice of

development problems of Africa and "other developing parts of our global village".[19] Some ordinary Africans even waxed Biblical noting, "Obama is the Messiah of Africa".[20] Given the expectations in Africa about the immediate economic inputs by the Obama presidency to Africa, his focus on political consolidation and security as a means to long-term socio-economic progress may have been disappointing for many Africans. However, the doctrine of economic mutuality in President Clinton's slogan "Trade Not Aid" (1998)[21] and the idea of African initiative expressed in President Obama's slogan "Africa's future is up to Africans" (2009)[22] are not opposites. The former focussed on economic relations, and the latter focussed on a more holistic and determined African-initiated political approach to development, in partnership with USA.

President Obama's choice of Ghana over the heavyweight Nigeria and his paternal Kenya as the site for outlining his presidency's Africa policy was appropriate because of Ghana's "democratic commitment" since the 1990s.[23] Speaking to the Ghanaian lawmakers on 11 June 2009, he noted, "I've come here, to Ghana, for a simple reason: The 21st century will be shaped by what happens not just in Rome or Moscow or Washington, but by what happens in Accra, as well". He talked about four themes that he said were critical to Africa's future and are the focus on his presidency's strategy for sub-Saharan Africa: democracy, opportunity, health and peaceful resolution of conflict. Emphasizing the African initiative Obama counselled a departure from the situation where "the West has always approached as a patron or as a source of resources rather than a partner".[24] For Obama, "partnership" should be the fundament of future US policy towards and relations with Africa and the rest of developing world.

In other words, President Barack Obama went to Ghana in 2009 to dampen the exaggerated economic expectations about his presidency and to tell Africans bluntly that they should not expect a continuation of the traditional-type aid system that turned African states into clients or gatekeeper states. Rather, he was looking forward to use American power to encourage African nations to empower themselves and take up central roles in the increasingly interconnected world order. Nevertheless, while he was emphasizing the importance of good governance practices and civil society for sustainable development in African countries, the president had put in proposals to the American Congress to approve 63 million dollars to tackle the health challenges in Africa and globally.[25]

Interestingly, some African leaders appreciated President Obama's forthright admonishment. Raila Odinga, the Prime Minister of Kenya, reportedly accepted African responsibility when he noted that Africans "should stop blaming colonialism for our under-development. We really need to address issues of governance, because I believe it is the mediocrity with which Africa has been governed that is responsible for our backwardness today".[26] Is this a case of a "father" appreciating a "son's" dilemmas?

Ironically, the European-built castles were the sites for the renewal and consolidation of Ghana–USA relations. Indeed, the respective diplomatic engagements, side meetings and entertainments for the three successive US presidents since the 1990s were done at the Christiansborg Castle, the former headquarters of the Danish slave trade on the Gold Coast up to 1850. From 1872, the Christiansborg Castle superseded the Cape Coast Castle as the powerhouse of the British colonial establishment and remained the seat of post-colonial governments in Ghana from 1957 to 2013.[27] Whereas the political use of Christiansborg Castle since 1870s appears to have blurred its role in the Atlantic slave trade, the Cape Coast and Elmina castles occupy a big place in the public imagination as sites of oppression and memorial. In the context of developmental needs, Ghanaians see the fortresses in general as economic assets and objects of the evolving tourismification process.[28] While presidents Clinton and George W. Bush (with their families) were aware of the role of the fortresses in the historical dynamics of the Atlantic connections, the experiential meanings of the fortresses appeared to be more personal to the Obamas, and particularly Michelle and her mother due to their slave heritage.[29] This explains why the first Black family to occupy the White House poignantly visited the Cape Coast Castle, which like the House of Slaves on Gorée Island in Dakar, Senegal, stands as a memorial of the transatlantic slave trade.

An "Extraordinary Experience": Castles, Dungeons, Heritage and Tourism

Anderson Cooper: As you walk around this [Cape Coast] castle what goes on in your mind.
President Obama: Obviously, it is a powerful moment for not just myself, but I think for Michel
and the girls.[30]

Like most forts and castles in Ghana, the Cape Coast Castle has a chequered history in terms of its development and changing national ownership. It is located in the Fante town of Oguaa, in a place the Portuguese named "Cabo Corço" ("short cape"; anglicized as Cape Coast) and built a trading lodge at in 1555. We note, in passing, that the adoption of the Portuguese (and English) nomenclature as the official name of the original Fante settlement of Oguaa constituted both an erasure of the indigenous cultural forms and a demonstration of the cultural impact of the European presence in west Africa. The Fante people still maintain the original name, Oguaa. The Swedes established the first real fortress (Carolusburg) in Oguaa between 1650 and 1658, which was captured in turn by the Danes (1658–1659), the local Fetu state (1659–1660) and the Dutch (1659; 1663–1664). The English/British acquired and developed it into a castle in 1664 and held it until 1957 when it became the property of the new state of Ghana. Cape Coast Castle "was the headquarters in Africa of the entire British involvement in the transatlantic slave trade" from 1664 to 1807, and the headquarters of the British colonial establishment of the Gold Coast from 1807 to 1877. Prior to the British appropriation, the other European nations listed above also used it as centres of the slave trade. From 1877 to the present, the Cape Coast Castle has been used variously as a schoolhouse, government offices, museum, arts and crafts and gifts centre and regional headquarters of Ghana Museums and Monuments Board.[31]

The title of William St Clair's book, *The Grand Slave Emporium: Cape Coast Castle and the British Slave Trade*[32], is an apt description of the dastardly use during the Atlantic slave trade of an otherwise grand architectural piece.[33] Yet, to say that "the grand emporium of the British slave trade" would be an understatement. For, today this castle, like the other fortresses of Ghana, "epitomize torture, pain, and death on an unimaginable scale"[34] perpetrated by those who erected and/or used them for the purposes of the slave trade. The paradox of the Cape Coast Castle derives from the fact that it combines both monumentality and vestiges of oppression in ways that excite varied emotions among different groups of visitors. Echoing the sentiments of most visitors to the castles and forts in Ghana, President Obama described his tour of the Cape Coast Castle as "an extraordinary experience".[35] Indeed, anyone who, without prior knowledge of its role in the slave trade, viewed the building from a distance might be impressed by its architectural simplicity and white washed aesthetics. However, a tour of its substructure of oppression—the dark and suffocating dungeons, rusted chains, shackles and narrow

exits—would most certainly excite overbearing feelings of horror that overshadow the aura of white washed "innocence" of its exterior.

How may we interpret President Obama's tour, with his family, of the Cape Coast Castle in the context of African American roots travel? To all intents and purposes, their tour of the castle was a "deeply personal" and an "emotional" journey.[36] However, it was also a journey that assumed a semi-official character due to the personalities involved, the circumstances under which it occurred, the media focus on it, the elaborate protocol and security measures put in place by the two governments and the "traditional" fanfare organized by Mfantseman (Fante State) in honour of the Obamas. Obama received a similar hero's welcome when he travelled to his family's ancestral village in western Kenya in 2006 while still a senator.[37]

During his tour of the castle, President Obama made an important distinction between African Americans, like himself, whose identities are firmly rooted in particular places in Africa and other African Americans, like Michelle Obama, whose ancestry is linked to the transatlantic heritage.

> *Anderson Cooper*: They say this is the "door of return" for African-American tourers visiting Ghana and I talked to one of the lady yesterday who said that coming here is such a powerful experience that she actually decided to move here. … Many African-Americans who decided to move here … say there is a sense of coming home. Do you understand that feeling?
>
> *President Obama*: Well, I will tell you about the first time that I travelled to Africa. I think that there is a special sense for African-Americans of somehow connecting with a part of yourself you might not have been aware was there. Now, obviously for me it was different because I was directly meeting relatives and learning about a father I did not know. But, I do think there is a sense for a lot of African-Americans that it is a profound life-changing experience. … There is a powerful sense of tapping into something very elemental.[38]

We shall explore the categories of African Americanness and African American experiences later in the next section, which looks at the symbolism and implications of President Obama's passage through the "Door of No Return" . Meanwhile, this dialogue captures the essentials of diasporic travel to places of origin, which is described in the tourism and heritage literature as "roots tourism", "an umbrella term covering

many overlapping types of travel in search of cultural and historical 'roots'",[39] undertaken by "groups whose histories are marked by migration, separation, and discrimination".[40] "Roots tourism" and "Diaspora tourism" are used interchangeably in the literature.[41] Roots travellers are different from recreational travellers: the former travel to look for the "same", ethnically and culturally, while the latter travel in search of "difference" and the exotic.[42] Related forms of roots tourism include heritage tourism, genealogy tourism, legacy tourism, personal heritage tourism and birthright tourism.[43] Though not unique to them, the roots travel became associated with African Americans who increasingly travelled to different places within the Atlantic World and particularly Africa in order to connect to their heritage socially, culturally and spiritually. A World Bank report in 2013 noted rather mechanically, "This market is predominantly comprised of middle-income, African American adults between the ages of 30 and 70, who wish to learn about their own cultural heritage by visiting the countries and regions of their ancestors".[44]

What factors influence the choice of destinations by African American roots tourists and how do we situate the tour of the Obamas in the scale of factors? Patricia de Santana Pinho's conceptual insight on "roots tourism" to Brazil is useful for explaining the rise in African American roots tourism in general and the reasons why they visit west African countries. Useful for our purposes are Pinho's notions of "imaginary map of Africanness" and system of "hierarchies" within the choice of tourist destinations. These concepts describe the different but complementary meanings that the African Americans attach to countries they visit and the motives behind their choice of one destination over another. Generally, Pinho's "map of Africanness" contains only destinations that tourists visit "with the explicit purpose of heightening their sense of black identity".[45] Meanings attached to destinations may relate to the kind of feelings (for instance, pride and jubilation or pain and anger) that tourists want to experience. Thus, African Americans may visit Egypt, the "place of black pride", because it contains proof of the "existence of a magnificent black civilization" prior to the Roman and the Greek civilizations. In the context of knowledge and power relations, this idea of classical black Egyptian and Nile Valley civilizations is both a counterhegemonic practice and epistemological foundation of African and Afrocentric knowledge.[46] From the late 1970s, roots-searching African Americans turned their gaze southwards towards the black cultural and

religious enclave of Bahia in Brazil, a place to find "preserved [African] traditions" and to cultivate their sense of Africanness.[47]

The significance of Ghana on the Obama family's "map of Africanness" should be understood within the general context of African American roots travel. From the 1970s, African Americans who were seeking to reconnect to their ancestral continent were increasingly travelling to African countries, particularly Senegal, the Gambia, Ghana, Benin and Nigeria. The escalation in such travels was inspired largely by Alex Hailey's epic quest for his roots Juffureh in The Gambia in the 1960s and the consequent publication in 1976 of his influential masterpiece, *Roots*.[48] However, travels by African Americans to Africa has a longer historical trajectory, manifested politically in movements and ideas like pan-Africanism that emphasized the affinities of Africans and the black diaspora. We identify two complementary strands of African American engagement with Africa. The first is Marcus Garvey's "Back to Africa" project in the nineteenth century that sought to encourage descendants of enslaved Africans to resettle in Africa. The second strand is Malcolm X's admonishment in the 1960s that African Americans needed not to relocate but rather "migrate to Africa culturally, philosophically, and spiritually".[49] President Obama seemed to echo Malcolm X's stay-in-America idea when answering a question about African Americans who decide to resettle in Ghana after visiting the dungeons at the fortresses.

> The only thing I would say though is that there is a flip side to this, which is, I know an awful lot of African-Americans who come to Africa are profoundly moved but also realize how American they are when they are here. And, you know, [they] recognize that they could never live here and that is part of the African-American experience. You are in some ways connected to the system or land but on the other end you are about as American as it gets.[50]

Ghana appears to have a special meaning on the map of Africanness for three reasons. First, with it 40 to 60 fortresses, remnants of which still dot its coastline, the country was the site of intense slave trading. The fortresses are a powerful pull factor for African Americans who travel to Ghana in search of their roots and to experience the places from which their ancestors began the torturous journey to the great unknown. For some African Americans, "the castles are sacred ground"[51] that imbues visiting African Americans with a "special sense … of connecting with a part of [themselves]".[52]

Secondly, as a pioneer of African liberation in sub-Saharan Africa, Ghana was a magnet for anti-colonial activists, revolutionaries, civil rights champions, trade unionists, intellectuals and professionals, entrepreneurs and sports personalities. During the 1950s to 1960, American civil rights leaders, sing affinities between their struggle and the anti-colonial struggles in Ghana (and other African countries), established intellectual, political and emotional connections with African leaders and peoples. Thus, Martin Luther King Jr.'s attendance, with other prominent African Americans,[53] at Ghana's independence celebration was both to show solidarity and to gain inspiration for their own civil rights struggles.[54] In 1964, Muhammed Ali, "The Greatest" heavyweight boxer, who appeared to be on a "spiritual quest to find himself", visited Ghana to see "Africa and meet my brothers and sisters". He declared his admiration for Kwame Nkrumah, whom he saw as the "hero" of black liberation. Ali then went to Kumasi, the capital of the Asante Kingdom where he, among other engagements, tried in vain to pull out from the ground the famous "Okomfo Anokye Sword", the symbol of the Asante kingdom's invincibility and unity. The sword has remained at the spot where Okomfo Anokye, the Chief Priest and spiritual founder of the Asante nation, planted it in the eighteenth century.[55] In many ways, these earlier political bonding of African American intellectuals with Ghana constituted an acknowledgement of their African roots. Significantly, the USA remains the top source tourist market for Ghana.[56]

Thirdly, Ghana appears to be an attractive destination for roots tourists because of the institutional and legal frameworks put in place by the Government of Ghana to facilitate the visit of those who do not intend to stay as well as for those that settle permanently. On the request of President Kwame Nkrumah, a number of prominent intellectuals from the USA and the Caribbean, like W.E.B. DuBois and George Padmore, resettled in Ghana in the 1950s and 1960s. The institutional and legal apparatus include the "Right of Abode Law" of 2000, the Diaspora Affairs Bureau under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Pan African Historical Theatre Festival (PANAFEST) and the Emancipation Day celebrations.[57]

Clearly, these special meanings of Ghana on the map of Africanness as well as its maturing democracy informed the Obama family's choice of Ghana for their first sub-Saharan Africa visit in 2009. It is not so simple, however, to draw a clear line between the official and the private aspects of the family's tour of the Cape Coast Castle in general and President Obama's media limelighted walk through the "Door of No Return".

The "Door of no Return": Invisibilities, Identities and Appropriation?

Under the southern bastion of the Cape Coast Castle is to be found a thick wooden gate hinged onto an arched doorway that leads from the main courtyard to the seashore. This door was the main portal through which trade goods and passengers passed to and from European ships berthed in the roads. Undoubtedly, it was through this door that millions of enslaved Africans were shepherded to the slave ships during the Atlantic slave trade. Similar doors—and associated slave dungeons and narrow passageways—are a common feature of European-built Atlantic slave trade fortresses in west Africa.

Whereas the existence of the doors of exit and the dungeons represent real historical facts of the slave trade, inscriptions like "Door of No Return", "Gates of No Return", "Female Dungeon" and "Male Dungeon" are recent. Ghana's Ministry of Tourism and Diasporan Relations have put them there apparently to mark the actual contrivances of the slave trade and to evoke emotional responses among tourers, particularly the millions of slave descendants who begin the quest for their origins and identities from the forts and castles.[58] However, the current tourismification of the fortresses generally is a central strategy in the effort of the government to exploit the infrastructures of enslavement for economic gains. Thus, though the inscriptions may evoke emotive responses from visitors, economically, they constitute part of the tools for developing the tourism potential of Ghana for the purpose of revenue generation. Similar patterns of tourismification of slave fortresses occur in other West African countries, notably in Senegal and Benin.

Another striking aspect of the Obama family's tour of Cape Coast Castle, namely the "invisibility" of the women and girls—Michelle, Marian, Malia and Sasha—who are descendants of slaves from South Carolina, in the international media coverage of President Obama's tour and ritual of "exit" and "re-entry" at the "Door of No Return".[59] In fact, the entire 8.17 min of the televised CNN special edition interview during the tour focussed on President Obama's impressions about the castle, its dungeons, portals of no return and reflections on the wider implications of the utilization of the fortresses in the slave trade era. The "invisibility" of the women of the Obama family from the mediatized tour by the president may be analysed at three levels, in relation to African American identities and experiences; the motives and interests

of the Ghanaian authorities; and the purpose and implications of the media séance.[60]

With the CNN's cameras focussed on him while he was approaching the portal (of no return) at Cape Coast Castle, President Obama noted solemnly, "It is through this door the journey of the African-American experience begins. Michelle and her family like me draw incredible inspiration and strength from that African American journey".[61] President Obama's powerful and emotional observation underscored a painful historical truth, but it also leads us to raise questions about the nature of African Americanness: the varied experiences of its constituent groups as well as who their spokespersons are or ought to be.

Specifically, we ask, do the fortresses of Africa mean the same for all African Americans? Was President Obama qualified, experientially, to speak for all categories of African Americans? To answer these questions satisfactorily, we disaggregate the categories of African Americanness and the foundations of their particular experiences. Currently, the term African American encompasses all people living in the USA who claim to have African ancestry.[62] For our purposes in this chapter, we distinguish between African Americans, like Michelle Obama, who are descendants of enslaved Africans and recent African migrants like Barack Obama's father who started life "in [a] tiny village in Kenya before voluntarily travelling to the United States".[63] Another category of African American identities is the mixed race African Americans, like President Obama, one of whose parents has African roots either as a descendant of slaves or as a recent voluntary migrant. In any case, the African Americans whose experiences form the context of our analysis of the Obamas' Cape Coast Castle tour are those whose lives, successes, failures and contributions to the American common wealth originate from and are shaped by their slave ancestry. Their experiences cover the broad history of the Atlantic slave trade, their current contributions to all facets of life in the USA and their yearnings to reconnect to their origins in Africa in order to make sense of their identity.[64]

Clearly, though individuals and groups within the categories of Africa Americanness may experience lingering racism and exclusion in contemporary American society, their experiences still differ historically and experientially. Thus, recent voluntary African immigrants to the USA may be fascinated about the history of the emancipation struggles by slaves in USA; but they would insist that slavery "had nothing to do with them".[65] This seeming nonchalance of the recently migrated African Americans towards slavery and the experiences of slave descendants

appears to be a carry-over from the mother continent. In fact, many recent African migrants admit that they knew nothing about the African American slave experience until they got to USA.[66] Some Ghanaians, for instance, believe that African Americans of slave heritage who visit the fortresses in Ghana become "almost too emotional", an attitude which suggests that Ghanaians probably neither understand the feelings of, nor share the experience of visiting "diaspora blacks".[67] However, many of them feel frustrated about the tendency of Ghanaians to refer to them as "obroni" incorrectly interpreted to mean, "white man" or "stranger"[68] because though black in skin colour, they "sound like the white man!"[69]

Nevertheless, during his media-focussed interview with Anderson Cooper, President Obama displayed an extraordinary capacity for empathy for slave descendants as well as deep insight of and relations between slavery and other contemporary forms of human cruelty. In reflecting about this relationship, Obama said, "I'm reminded of the same feeling I got when I went to a Buchenwald … you almost feel as if the walls can speak. You try to project yourself into these incredibly harrowing moments that people go through". Significantly, President Obama's emotional experience of the castle and the dungeons is consistent with similar expressions of raw and long suppressed emotions by African Americans who see their visit as a "spiritual pilgrimage". Seestah IMAHKUS Njinja, an African American Returnee Activist who moved to Ghana in 1980s, described her first experience of Cape Coast Castle:

> When I went into the castle dungeons, I knew when I came out that I would never be the same person again. It was emotional. I remember crying and hearing people screaming … women laying all over the ground … and I was in that, and then it was as if I could feel all these hands, people touching me, embracing me you know, telling me not to cry and that it was alright, that everything is gonna be fine."[70]

Njinja's eerie experience is similar to that described by Henry Louis Gates Jr. when he visited Gorée Island.[71] Apparently, this feeling appears to be common among slave descendants who tour places that are hallowed by history of the slave trade.

Of course, President Obama's transnational situation as well as his political stature separates him from the average recent African immigrant. He is an African American born to a black Kenyan father by a white mother from the US state of Kansas, and he is married to and has children with a slave descendant. Above all, his role at "Door of No

Return" performance during the Cape Coast tour seemed to transcend that of the average tourist. However, he also acknowledged the marked historical and experiential gulf between his experience of the contraptions of oppression in the fortress and that of his wife (and others with slave ancestry).[72] In his speech to the Parliament of Ghana, President Obama emphasized the common roots of his family in Africa, saying, "After all, I have the blood of Africa within me, and my family's own story encompasses both the tragedies and triumphs of the larger African story".[73]

Yet, the question remains whether the mediatization (media highlight) of President Obama's tour of the Cape Coast Castle constituted an act of appropriation of the experiences of African American descendants of slaves, particularly when Michelle Obama was present at the castle. We proffer two answers: "yes" and "yes, but". Yes, because though those who identify themselves as African Americans share African ancestries, as explained above they have varied experiential connections to the mother continent and the fortresses. For African American visitors in general, and those like Seestah IMAHKUS Njinja whose "spiritual" experiences of the dungeons motivated them to settle in Ghana, the fortresses and the dungeons have deep historical and emotional meanings, while their performances of the rituals of "return" at the "Doors of No Return" become highly symbolic and even liberating. Seen from historical and experiential perspectives, it is plausible to conclude that the exclusion of Michelle (and the other slave descendants in the Obama family) from President Obama's media narrative of the slave experience and his performance of the "return" at Cape Coast Castle certainly constitutes an appropriation of a painful experience of slave descendants.

To answer the "Yes, but" aspect, we must evaluate President Obama's Cape Coast Castle tour from the broad context of the purpose and expected impact of the mediatization of the tour on the one hand, and how the Ghanaian Government used the trip to spotlight Ghana as a tourism destination on the other. It would appear, firstly, that the media focus on President Obama was a purposive attempt to exploit political stature and African identity of the most powerful man in the world to draw attention to the salience of the history of the Atlantic slave trade in generalizing and teaching lessons about the global inequalities, injustice, the human capacity for cruelty. Therefore, since the slave trade "still has a resonance" in not only USA, but also globally, "you try", Obama noted, "to use these kinds of extraordinary moments to widen the lens and make sure the world is reflecting on how we are treating each

other".[74] The way to confront the slave trade is not to try to forget, but to emphasise its instructional value for humankind.

> President Obama: I think the … experience of slavery is like the experience of the Holocaust. … It is one of those things you do not forget about. I think it is important that the way we think about it and the way it is taught is not one in which there is simply a victim and a victimizer and that is the end of the story. I think … the reason it is relevant is because [Citing events in Darfur, the Congo and] "in too many places around the world", the capacity for cruelty still exist, that the capacity for discrimination still exist. The capacity to think that people are different not just on the basis of race but religion or the bases of sexual orientation or gender still exist. I think it is something that I want my kids to think about and I want every child to think about.[75]

President Obama's reflections and observations about the slave trade are not unique, as they resonate with the sentiments of others who, without media attention, visit dungeons of Ghana's (and indeed West Africa's) fortresses either on "ancestral pilgrimage" or to have personal experience of a significant bit of the history of human cruelty. Michelle Obama like others in the Obama entourage with slave roots was "invisible" only because they were out of the media spotlight during the tour of Cape Coast Castle. Conversely, President Obama appeared to have "appropriated" the African American slave experience and ritual narratives at Cape Coast largely because of the coverage that it received on the major international (particularly CNN) and local media networks. Importantly, the presidential command of the media space enabled Obama not only to refocus world attention on the injustice of the transatlantic slave trade, but also to highlight contemporary forms of violence and injustice. Thus, despite his limited historical and experiential connections to the slave trade, President Obama had both the political advantage and wide media coverage to project the African American experience than Michelle and other descendants of slaves.

Questions remain as to why President Obama, the first African American president of a country whose economy is built on the foundations of slave labour, did not use the occasion of his official visit to Ghana and his family's "private" tour of the Cape Coast Castle to apologise for the role of the USA in the Atlantic slave trade. During the raging debate on apology, the *New York Times* columnist Timothy Egan made a forceful case for an Obama apology, arguing that despite earlier

apologies by President Bill Clinton in 1998 and by the US Congress in 2009,[76] "no man could make a stronger statement about America's original sin than the first African-American President".[77] However, prominent African Americans like the Reverend Jesse Jackson II "dismissed the value of an apology" following President Clinton's admission in Uganda in 1998 that "European Americans received the fruits the slave trade".[78] The debate on apology and reparation is ongoing.

The second reason why President Obama appeared to have "appropriated" the experiences of slave descendants during the Cape Coast Castle tour relates to how the Ghanaian Government wanted to use the trip to spotlight Ghana as a memorable tourism destination as well as to accord "legitimacy" to the "return" of African Americans to the motherland.[79] The intention by the Ghanaian Government to use President Obama's visit to project the country's tourism potential was apparent from the beginning to the end. Thus, the Obamas were welcomed with a carnival normally reserved for royals, warriors and distinguished sons and daughters of the land.[80] The pomp and pageantry associated with the "welcome" included displays of Ghana's rich cultural repertoire of characterised by assemblies of chiefs and queen mothers dressed in kente, smocks and other indigenous attire to reflect the diversity. The proverbial "Ghanaian hospitality" was apparent through the throngs of Ghanaians who lined up along the street bearing and waving US and Ghanaian flags and other memorabilia. However, as noted earlier on in this paper, some Ghanaians cannot fathom why African American visitors to the fortresses become "almost too emotional".[81] It would appear then that for Ghanaians the paramount motive for maintaining the memorials of the transatlantic slave trade and as sites for African American roots tourist visitations derives from calculations of their potential as economic objects.[82] Unsurprisingly, the World Bank's 2013 report on *Tourism in Africa* identifies Diaspora tourism to the slave trade memorials as one of the growing market and reports that "… Ghana has marketed itself as a heritage destination by making its slave trade monuments into tourist destinations".[83] Without reliable official statistics to rely on, estimates of African American arrivals and resettlement in Ghana vary. General estimates show that about 10,000 African Americans visit Ghana annually and that between 1000 and 5000 have settled permanently.[84] In addition, World Bank data shows significant increases in Ghana's international tourism receipts between 2011 and 2015 from 797 million (2011) to over 1 billion (2015) US Dollars.[85]

Conclusion

Africans were euphoric and expectant about the election of Barack Hussein Obama, a son of Africa, as president of the USA. This chapter explored the underlying political and historical calculations behind President Barack Hussein Obama's first state visit to sub-Saharan Africa with his family in July 2009. The study is contextualized within the broad frameworks of interstate diplomacy and "Roots" or "Diaspora" tourism. The main conclusion is that compared to the purely politically motivated state visits of presidents Bill Clinton in 1998 and George W. Bush in 2008, President Obama's trip to Ghana opportunely fused political engagements with deeply private interests.

Politically, the visit was a routine diplomatic act to consolidate US relations with African countries. The choice of Ghana as an appropriate place to outline his Presidency's sub-Saharan Africa policy was justified due to its relatively consistent democratic and economic progress. Obama's message at the Parliament of Ghana about forging partnerships with rather than aid giving to African countries seemed to have resonated well in African political circles. The private and deeply emotional aspect of the trip to Ghana manifested through the family's tour of the Cape Coast Castle, a hallowed place that imbues all visiting African Americans with a special sense of connecting with a part of themselves.[86] Thus, the visit of the Obamas to Ghana can be situated in the practice of African American roots travels to slave trade memorial sites in West Africa. In this context, Ghana was a choice emotive destination for the Obama family because of the special meaning they attached to it on their "imaginary map of Africanness", as a destination that heightens their sense of black identity.[87]

Nevertheless, the media's focus on Obama's walk through the infamous "Door of No Return" was symbolic and controversial, as it raised the question about the historical authenticity, namely, whether President Obama, who has no known slave roots, was the appropriate representative voice of the African American experience of slavery. The conclusion is that President Obama's walk through the "Door of No Return" may seem to be an appropriation of the experiences of African Americans like Michelle Obama who are authentic descendants of former slaves. However, the mediatization of the event provided a platform for him, as president, to combine his political stature with his command of media attention and capacity for empathy (with the authentic slave descendants) to refocus attention on the salience of the lessons of the Atlantic slave trade.

Notes

1. A number of countries including Kenya, Obama's paternal home country protested against the choice of Ghana. In Nigeria, some top politicians felt slighted by Obama's choice of Ghana ahead of Nigeria, the "heavy weight" of Africa. See Muttaqa Yusha'u Abdulra'uf, "Obama's Visit to Ghana: Reflections on Nigeria", Research Department, Nigeria Labour Congress (Nlc), Abuja. www.gamji.com/article8000/NEWS8688.htm.
2. Obama's first trip to Africa was to Egypt on 4 June 2009. www.history.state.gov/departmenthistory/travels/president/obama-barack.
3. "President Obama's African journey", Interview with Anderson Cooper at Cape Coast Castle, Ghana, CNN 360 Special Edition. www.youtube.com/watch?v=0gmDoon_yC.
4. See Malik Miah, "What Obama's Victory Means About Race and Class", *Solidarity*: ATC 138, January–February 2009. Source URL: www.solidarity-us.org/site/node/2026 (Accessed: 30.10.2015).
5. See Stephan J. Gould, *The Mismeasure of Man* (Revised and Expanded), New York: Norton, 1996). For a more simplified discussion on the perceived inferiority of black people, see Erik Gilbert and Jonathan T. Reynolds, *Africa in World History: From Prehistory to Present* (Third Edition), Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2008.
6. Malik Miah.
7. *Time*, "The World's View of Obama's Win", 05 November 2008 www.content.time.com/time/specials/packages/article/0,28804,1856584_1856586_1856595,00.html.
8. During the Second World War, North African was a theatre of war and Liberia was strategically as a potential site for US military bases and as a source of natural rubber. During the Cold War (1945–1989), the entire continent was a proxy front in the ideological clash between the West and the East. For a good overview of US policy towards Africa, see Robert G. Patman, "US foreign policy in Africa" in Michael Cox and Doug Stokes (eds.), *US Foreign Policy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, Second edition 2012), 297–314.
9. For discussions of race ranking in history, see Stephan J. Gould, *The Mismeasure of Man* (New York: Norton, 1996). Erik Gilbert and Jonathan T. Reynolds, *Africa in World History: From Prehistory to Present* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall), 2008.
10. David Smith (Africa Correspondent), interview with Dumisani Mbambo, *The Guardian*, 10 July 2009.
11. www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/1999/winter/us-and-ghana-1957-1966-1.html.
12. Former CIA operatives and US embassy staff confirmed the organisation's involvement in the overthrow of Nkrumah's government. See Paul

Lee, "Document Exposes United States Role in Nkrumah's Overthrow," www.seeingblack.com/x060702/Nkrumah.shrml; For more on Ghana's foreign policy towards the USA, see Yao Boni Gebe, "Ghana's Foreign Policy at Independence and Implications for the 1966 Coup D'état," *The Journal of Pan-African Studies*, 2/3, (March 2008). Mike Oquaye, *Politics in Ghana: Rawlings, Revolution, and Populist Democracy* (Accra, Ghana: Tornado Publications, 2004); Elizabeth Ohene, *Thinking Aloud: A Collection of Articles on Events in Ghana, 1978–1981*, Accra, Ghana: Blue Savana, 2006; Elizabeth Ohene, *Stand Out and Be Counted: A Collection of Editorials that Redefined the 4 June 1979 Revolution in Ghana* (Accra: Blue Savana, 2006); Mike Adjei, *Death and Pain, Rawlings' Ghana: The Inside Story* (London: Black Line Publishers, 1994).

13. See Clinton's Speech in Ghana, www.cbsnews.com/stories/1998/03/23/world/main5639.shtml.
14. US Department of State, Office of the Historian, "Travels of President William J. Clinton"; Embassy of the USA, Accra, "President George W. Bush and Mrs Laura Bush Visit Ghana," 19 February 2008 www.ghana.usembassy.gov/pe021908.html; http://www.modernghana.com/news/93344/1/laura-bush-visits-ghana.html.
15. All the civilian Prime Minister(s) and President(s), except Hilla Limann, made both official and informal visits. Two of Ghana's five military rulers visited the USA: Joseph A. Ankrah (1976) and John J. Rawlings (1995 and 1999). US Department of State; Office of the Historian, "Visits by Leaders of Ghana". www.history.state.gov/departmenthistory/visits/ghana.
16. Robert G. Patman, 305.
17. "Travels of President William J. Clinton".
18. For Laura Bush's project, see www.modernghana.com/news/93344/1/laura-bush-visits-ghana.html.
19. Prakash Singh, "The World's View of Obama's Win", AFP. www.content.time.com/time/specials/packages/article/0,28804,1856584_1856586_1856595,00.html.
20. **Sfiso Buthelezi (Age 26, Customer Service Assistant from Soweto, South Africa), interviewed by** David Smith, Africa Correspondent for *The Guardian*, 10 July 2009, www.theguardian.com/world/2009/jul/10/obama-ghana-visit-africans-vox-pop.
21. "Travels of President William J. Clinton".
22. "Remarks by the President to the Ghanaian Parliament". Also see "Remarks by President Obama to the People of Africa", (Addis Ababa: African Union Headquarters, 28 July 2015). www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2015/07/28/remarks-president-obama-people-africa.

23. www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/CNN-Obama-s-trip-causes-excitement-envy-165179.
24. *AllAfrica*, "U.S. Wants to Spotlight 'Successful Models' And Be an Effective Partner'", President Barak Obama's interviews with Charles Cobs, Jr., Blue Room, White House, 2 July 2009.
25. General News of Sunday, 17 May 2009: "Whitehouse confirms Obama's Ghana Trip". www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/WhiteHouseConfirmsObamasGhanaTrip162228.
26. *BBC*, 11/07/2009: www.news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/africa/8145762.stm.
27. The Ghana Government is now located at the Flagstaff House—the new presidential palace containing the residence and administrative offices for the head of government in Ghana.
28. Defined here as the development of a touristic culture. For how this process goes on, see Noel B. Salazar, "Imaged or Imagined? Cultural Representations and the "Tourismification" of Peoples and Places", *Cahiers d'Études Africaines*, Vol. 49, Cahier 193/194 (2009), 49–71.
29. President Obama's African journey". Also see "Tracking Michelle Obama's slave roots": www.edition.cnn.com/2009/LIVING/07/16/michelle.obama.slaveroots/index.html.
30. "President Obama's African journey."
31. Different authors attribute different dates for the changing nationality of the Cape Coast Castle. See *The Grand Slave Emporium: Cape Coast Castle and the British Slave Trade* (London: Profile Books Ltd, 2006), 1; G. Nørregård, *Danish Settlements on West Africa, 1658–1850* (Boston: Boston University Press, 1966); A.W. Lawrence, *Trade Forts and Castles of West Africa* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1963); Kwesi J. Anquandah, *Castles and Forts of Ghana* (Atalante: GMMB, 1999), 49; Albert van Dantzig, *Forts and Castles of Ghana* (Accra: Sedco Publishing Ltd., 1999), v–vi; Ana Lucia Araujo, *Shadows of the Slave Past: Memory Heritage and Slavery* (New York: Routledge, 2014).
32. London: Profile Books Limited, 2006.
33. Also see Edmund Abaka, *House of Slaves and "Door of No Return": Gold Coast/Ghana Slave Forts, Castles, Dungeons, and the Atlantic Slave Trade* (Trenton: Africa World Press, 2012).
34. Abaka, 2.
35. "President Obama's African journey."
36. "President Obama's African journey."
37. "Whitehouse confirms Obama's trip to Ghana".
38. "President Obama's African journey."
39. Sabine Marschall, "Homesick tourism": memory, identity and (be)longing, *Current Issues in Tourism* (18:9, 2015), 876–892.

40. Patricia de Santana Pinho, "African-American Roots Tourism in Brazil", *Latin American Perspectives*, Vol. 35, No. 3, The Impact of Tourism in Latin America (May, 2008), 71.
41. Iain Christie, Eneida Fernades, Hannah Messerli, and Louise Twining-Ward, *Tourism in Africa: Harnessing Tourism for Growth and Improved Livelihoods* (Washington, DC: The World Bank, 2013), 57–58.
42. Pinho, 72.
43. For an overview of variants of roots tourism, see Sabine Marschall, "'Homesick tourism': memory, identity, and (be)longing", *Current Issues in Tourism*, 18:9, 876–892.
44. *Tourism in Africa*, 57–58.
45. Pinho, 76.
46. Pinho, 75–80. On the importance of the civilization of classical Egypt in Africa history, see Cheikh Anta Diop. *The African Origins of Civilization: Myth or Reality*, Edited and tranl. Mercer Cook (Chicago: Lawrence Hill Books, 1974). Molefi Kete Asante is perhaps the most erudite writer and spokesperson on Afrocentricity, having published 40 books and 70 articles on the subject: See www.asante.net/books/.
47. Pinho, 72, 70–86.
48. See Alice Bellagamba, "Back to the Land of Roots. African American Tourism and the Cultural Heritage of the River Gambia, *Cahiers d'Études Africaines*, Vol. 49, Cahier 193/194, 2009, 453–476. Pinho, 72.
49. Cited from Kevin K. Gaines, *American Africans in Ghana: Black Expatriates and the Civil Rights Era* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 205.
50. "President Obama's African journey."
51. Edward M. Bruner, "Tourism in Ghana: The Representation of Slavery and the Return of the Black Diaspora", *American Anthropologist, New Series*, Vol 98, No. 2 (June 1996), 291. See "President Obama's African journey."
52. "President Obama's African journey."
53. King's delegation included prominent activists, politicians, and educators like Congressman Adam Clayton Powell and Senator Charles Diggs. Other prominent personalities to visit are George Padmore, Malcolm X, Maya Angelou, Richard Wright and C.L.R James.
54. Kevin K. Gaines, 6–7.
55. Gary Al-Smith, "When Muhammad Ali came to Ghana in 1964: the kente, the propaganda and the girls". Source: Ghana Joy Sports, 06/04/2016. www.myjoyonline.com/sports/2016/June-4th/when-muhammad-ali-came-to-ghana-in-1964-the-kente-the-propaganda-and-the-girls.php#.
56. Iain Christie, Eneida Fernades, Hannah Messerli, and Louise Twining-Ward, *Tourism in Africa: Harnessing Tourism for Growth and Improved*

Livelihoods (Washington DC: The World Bank, 2013), see Fig. 3.2 (p. 41) and 57–58.

57. See Ghana Tourism Authority: www.ghana.travel/.
58. See Christopher Vourlias, "Going back to roots: Ghana's ghosts and graces", *The Washington Post*, 01/10/2011 www.buenosairesherald.com/article/81153/ghanas-ghosts-and-graces.
59. The official Whitehouse Travelling Press Corps accompanying the President included CNN, CBS, NBC, Fox News, The New York Times, The Washington Post, and Africa.com. See *New African*, August/September 2013, 44–46.
60. "President Obama's African journey".
61. "President Obama's African journey".
62. For controversial and interesting views on the African roots of African Americans see U-Tube: "2016 African Americans Ain't African": www.youtube.com/watch?v=sORqQnwKY6M.
63. "Remarks by the President to the Ghanaian Parliament," 11 July 2009.
64. Resource on the African American experience: www.ebscohost.com/us-high-schools/the-african-american-experience.
65. See Ira Berlin, "The changing definition of African-American" (Smithsonian Magazine, February 2010): www.smithsonianmag.com/history/the-changing-definition-of-african-american-4905887/?no-ist.
66. "2016 African Americans Ain't African", www.youtube.com/watch?v=sORqQnwKY6M.
67. Edward M. Bruner, "Tourism in Ghana: The Representation of Slavery and the Return of the Black Diaspora", American Anthropologist, New Series, Vol 98, No. 2 (June 1996), 293. For a good view on the differences between the African and diaspora understandings race and the impact of race on the African American experience, see Kwame Anthony Appiah, *In My Father's House: Africa in the Philosophy of Culture* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992). Also, Paul Giroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (London and New York: Verso, 1999).
68. Authentically, *obroni* in Twi means a "person from beyond the corn farm". It is therefore a mental and philosophical measure of distant places and to some extent "otherness" within both known and unknown geographical scopes.
69. Anderson Cooper interview with Seestah Imahkus Njinja, an African American Returnee Activist and owner of "One Africa Guest House" near Cape Coast. Originally from New York, Seestah in now living in Ghana which she describes as "one of the most incredible places in Africa and the world". CNN AC 360 www.youtube.com/watch?v=0gmDoon_yC0.
70. Interviewed by Mimi Novasta, "African Americans Repatriate to Ghana", www.youtube.com/watch?v=e0VDLPkq0vE. "President Obama's African journey" www.youtube.com/watch?v=pSfgjGBR6kQ.

71. See Salamishah Tillet, "In the Shadow of the Castle: (Trans) Nationalism, African American Tourism, and Gorée Island," *Research in African Literatures* (40, 4, 2009), 122–123.
72. "President Obama's African journey."
73. Remarks by the President to the Ghanaian Parliament.
74. "President Obama in Ghana at the Cape Coast Dungeons, Pt 1–2", www.youtube.com/watch?v=0gmDoon_yC0.
75. "President Obama in Ghana at the Cape Coast Dungeons, Pt 1.
76. "Senate approves resolution apologizing for slavery", CNN, 18 June 2009. www.edition.cnn.com/2009/POLITICS/06/18/senate.slavery/index.html.
77. "Apologize for Slavery", 19 June 2015. www.nytimes.com/2015/06/19/opinion/an-apology-for-slavery.html?_r=2.
78. Tillet, 123.
79. The choice of Cape Coast and the Cape Coast Castle as the site for the Obama family's "return" to its roots feeds into the perceived ethno-politics of hierarchies of cultural and slavery memorial places in Ghana, featuring the main castles at Osu, Cape Coast and Elmina, and the Manhyia Palace (Kumasi). This ethno-politics of hierarchies of place relates to perceptions about how sitting presidents of Ghana deliberately choose particular cultural or memorial sites in the country to "show" to visiting heads of state. Two recent cases seem to fuel the perception. Many people believe that President J.A. Kufuor (2000–2008) who is an Asante showcase Asante culture by taking visiting heads of state and foreign dignitaries to pay courtesy to the Asantehene at the Manhyia Palace in Kumasi. Similarly, many believe, Cape Coast Castle was chosen over Elmina Castle, the oldest slavery related fort in Ghana, for the Obama family tour because Cape Coast is the hometown of President Evans Atta Mills. Banal as this perception may sound, it relates to the polarised ethno-politics of Ghana.
80. BBC Mobile News, "Excitement Builds for Obama," July 10 2009, www.news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/8143018.stm. Meanwhile, the events were understandably covered by several newspapers (privately and state owned) in Ghana. These included the *Daily Graphic*, 13 July 2009; *Ghanaian Times*, 13 July 2009; Ghanaian Chronicle, July 13, 2009; *The Statesman*, 13 July 2009. In addition, radio stations, including the state owned Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC); and the privately owned radio stations like Peace FM and Adom FM.
81. Edward M. Bruner, "Tourism in Ghana: The Representation of Slavery and the Return of the Black Diaspora", American Anthropologist, New Series, Vol 98, No. 2 (June 1996), 293. For a perspective on the differences between the African and diaspora understandings of the impact of

race on the African American experience, see Kwame Anthony Appiah, *In My Father's House: Africa in the Philosophy of Culture* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992). Also, Paul Giroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (London and New York: Verso, 1999).

82. Edward M. Bruner, "Tourism in Ghana"; Bayo Holsey, *Routes of Remembrance: Refashioning the Slave Trade in Ghana* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2008), 151–195. See General News, GNA, "Obama's visit to boost economic growth says Minister", 27 June 2009. www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/Obamasvisittoboosteconomicgrowth Minister164428.
83. Iain Christie, Eneida Fernades, Hannah Messerli, and Louise Twining-Ward, *Tourism in Africa: Harnessing Tourism for Growth and Improved Livelihoods* (Washington DC: The World Bank, 2013), 57–58. Also, the Ghana Tourism Authority, which has oversight over tourism development lists the fortresses and dungeons as major attraction: www.ghana.travel/visiting_ghana/.
84. Ann Reed, Pilgrimage Tourism of Diaspora Africans to Ghana (New York and London: Routledge, 2015), 42; Efam Dovi, "African-American resettle in Africa", *Africa Renewal*, 22 April 2015. http://www.un.org/africarenewal/magazine/april-2015/african-americans-resettle-africa.
85. http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/ST.INT.RCPT.CD.
86. "President Obama's African journey".
87. Pinho, 76.

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CHAPTER 11

Recreating Pre-colonial Forts and Castles: Heritage Policies and Restoration Practices in the Gold Coast/Ghana, 1945 to 1970s

Jon Olav Hove

Between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries, a number of trading companies from several European countries vied for trade on the Gold Coast (the present-day Republic of Ghana). They built several fortifications to facilitate the trade in general, but particularly the trade in enslaved Africans. Later, during the establishment of the British Gold Coast Colony in 1874, some fortifications were abandoned, while others were put to new uses. Cape Coast Castle, for instance, was the main administrative centre of the new colony. When the capital was moved to Accra in 1877, the administrative centre was located in another coastal fortification, namely Christiansborg Castle (also known as Osu Castle). At the same time, seven other forts and castles were used to enforce colonial rule, as either prisons or garrisons.[1]

Throughout the colonial period, the use of fortifications varied. In 1949, the *Gold Coast Atlas* listed 38 coastal fortifications, 17 of which were

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in use as offices, prisons, post offices and rest houses, or administrative centres, while the remaining were either classified as ruins or disappeared.[2] Prior to the Second World War, the preservation of these forts and castles was on an ad hoc basis. The department using them maintained those in use by the government. Meanwhile, abandoned fortifications were generally not maintained and therefore deteriorated slowly and in some instances disappeared. Yet, daily use was not a sufficient guarantee for preservation as experienced at Cape Coast Castle. In 1943, a report prepared by the District Engineer concluded that if the castle was to be "preserved for posterity a considerable sum of money will be required".[3] Other fortifications were equally deteriorating. In 1944, Governor Sir Alan Burns visited Fort San Sebastian in the western region town of Shama. As the Regional Commissioner later noted, the governor "adversely commented on its [the fort's] state of repair".[4] The state of Cape Coast Castle, Fort Sebastian and others compelled colonial officials to contemplate whether to initiate a systematic heritage policy before it was too late.[5]

In 1945, the Gold Coast Legislative Council passed the Monuments and Relics Ordinance.[6] This was a first step towards a systematic heritage management policy for the colony. In order to enforce the new ordinance, the government established the Monuments and Relics Commission (MRC) in 1947. This became the institution where discussions of heritage policies as well as principles of preservation and restoration practices for the many coastal fortifications took place. In 1957, the year of independence, the Ghana Museum and Monuments Board (GMMB), which assumed its functions and authority, replaced it. By employing material collected from the Public Records and Archives Administration Department (PRAAD) in Accra, this article analyses official heritage management in Ghana: the activities of the MRC and the GMMB with a focus on discussions of principles for preservation and restoration.[7]

As this chapter will show, forts and castles exist in Ghana today because they have been preserved through use by the colonial government and post-colonial regimes. They played important roles in the establishment of colonial rule as administrative centres and disciplinary institutions. These functions were carried on after independence, and only in the 1970s were the ancient fortifications vacated and transformed into museums.[8] The fortifications that exist today are in other words dynamic structures that have been adapted to fulfil new functions in new situations.

In 1979, the forts and castles of Ghana were included on UNESCO's World Heritage list. When nominated, emphasis was placed on their pre-colonial architectural structures and histories. This focus remains today: visitors to the forts and castles are primarily told their pre-colonial history and shown what are perceived to be their original structures. Even at Ussher Fort in Accra where little remains of the pre-colonial structure, the museum opened in 2007 concentrates on pre-colonial histories of European expansion and the transatlantic slave trade. Histories from the colonial and post-colonial periods are, despite the important role these forts has played in these periods, practically non-existent.[9]

This chapter argues that the valuation of the pre-colonial period at the cost of both colonial and post-colonial physical structures and narratives stems from heritage policies and practices established by the MRC during the late colonial period. Among heritage workers, some historical periods were considered more valuable than others. Rather than seeing the buildings as dynamic structures adapting to new usages over time, heritage workers wanted to recreate the imagined "original" or "genuine" structures by removing additions that were more recent. These policies and practices were not abandoned but rather enhanced after independence. Consequently, the physical vestiges of colonial rule and post-colonial regimes, in the form of verandas, offices, etc. that were added for administrative or other purposes, have in many instances been erased. The appearance of the forts and castles today is largely the result of post-war heritage management and perceptions of "genuineness". This recreation of a certain physical appearance has also affected understandings of these forts and castles. Rather than being monuments reflecting several periods, heritage managers have cultivated a specific understanding of the forts and castles that associates them largely with the pre-colonial period.

The Establishment of Colonial Heritage Policies and Restoration Practices

The Monuments and Relics Commission (MRC) met for the first time in 1947. It consisted of 17 members, representing all the regions of the colony. The chairperson, Justice Leslie E.W. McCarthy, was a Sierra Leonean lawyer and judge who had been working in the Gold Coast since the 1920s.[10] Other prominent African members included the

Omanhene (Paramount ruler) of Western Nzima, Nana Annor Adjae II, and Justice Kobbina Arku Korsah (later Sir).[11] Nevertheless, the majority of members were British officials nominated by Chief Commissioners or serving in official capacities, such as the Chief Architect and the Director of Geological Survey. The minutes of the first meetings furthermore reveal that the British members formed the early priorities of the MRC. The initial priority was to preserve coastal forts and castles, as reflected in the early establishment of a separate subcommittee of two British members to deal specifically with "forts and historic buildings".[12] This committee compiled a list of 16 "scheduled sites" to be protected by the 1945 ordinance, which consisted exclusively of coastal fortifications. A second list prepared by the subcommittee of buildings and sites to be considered for future protection consisted of 14 coastal fortifications and the so-called slave market in Accra, a building originally built by the Richter family, a Danish-African family in the early nineteenth century.[13] However, when asked whether to put the slave market on the "scheduled list" since it "was the only such building existing and […] worth preserving for that reason", the subcommittee turned it down because "the Commission's energies and money would be better spent on more urgent work elsewhere", meaning on the forts and castles.[14]

The heritage value of the forts and castles, which made them worthy of priority, was based on three factors: their age, their historical significance and their aesthetic qualities. The latter, in particular, was regularly emphasised. For example, the subcommittee on forts and historic buildings selected Fort Amsterdam at Abandze for immediate preservation because of its "outstanding site" and "imposing appearance".[15] Also, discussions about the restoration plan of Fort St. Antonio in Axim in the early 1950s, officials emphasised that the aesthetic features of some historic periods were of more value. The Portuguese originally built the fort in the early sixteenth century, and it was captured and enlarged by the Dutch in the mid-seventeenth century and in the twentieth century; it was incorporated into the colonial infrastructure as a regional and local administrative centre.[16] In this manner, it was representative of several historic periods, something the building reflected through the many structural additions in the form of offices, storage rooms and living quarters. In June 1950, lighting struck the fort, resulting in severe damages to inner and outer walls. As the Chief Commissioner in the area noted, repairs were urgently needed or else the fort would "join the other crumbling relics of the Colony's older

history".[17] The MRC subsequently commissioned the architect, Jane Drew, to assess the damages and make recommendations for repairs and restoration.[18] Her report, its reception and realisation, shows the leading understandings and actual application of heritage management in the late colonial period.

In the report, Drew argued for a restoration that sought to recreate the fort according to an idea of how it was originally. This, in her opinion, would revive its architectural harmony and beauty:

> It is a beautiful castle but its appearance both within and without the castle walls is marred by erections in the form of sheds, latrines and so on, which have been added to it, including a monstrous clock (apparently no longer in working condition). Original openings and stairways have been blocked, and additions in the form of stairs and columns have been added which detract from the appearance of the castle.[19]

Drew therefore suggested that the fort should be restored "to its original form by removing the more recent additions" dating from the nineteenth century and after. Yet, she did not propose a rebuilding of the "original" fort. Instead, she suggested that the building should be "approached with respect to genuineness, and that those parts of the castle walls that have already crumbled should be cleared up, but not rebuilt […] Where possible old features should be left even though worn, and preserved".[20] This approach was endorsed by the MRC and became the principle for later restoration works.

Furthermore, Drew suggested that the "genuineness" of Fort St. Antonio would best be preserved if it was not used as a "Police Post, Post Office, etc." since "such occupations bring with them incongruous notices, and detract from the beauty and significance of the structures".[21] This suggestion was immediately rejected because of its financial implications. From its inception, members of the MRC had bemoaned the "minute funds" available that made it difficult to keep monuments in "good repair".[22] In this context, Drew's suggestion was considered "too idealistic". Instead, McCarthy and others were of the opinion that the use of the forts and castles by different government departments had helped to preserve the structures in the past and that it was the best way to ensure future preservation.[23] Thus, as Table 11.1 below shows, in the 1950s, different government departments used 18 forts, some serving several purposes.

Table 11.1 Use of the forts and castles in the pre-independence 1950s, listed west to east[a]

Place	*Fort/Castle*	*Use*	*Remarks*
Axim	Fort St. Antonio	Local council Police office	Restored 1951–56
Princestown	Gross-Friedrichsburg	Rest house	Mostly ruin
Dixcove	Fort Metal Cross	Rest house Post office	Restored 1954–56
Sekondi	Fort Orange	Light house	–
Shama	Fort St. Sebastian	Post office Local council Clinic	Restored 1954–57
Komenda	English Fort	Omanhene's house in s.w. bastion	Mostly ruin
Elmina	Fort St. Jago	Residence, offices and storage for Inspector of monuments	Restored 1951–54
	St. George Castle	Police training depot	–
Cape Coast	Cape Coast Castle	Local government offices Forestry department Customs and excise department Gold coast legion regional headquarters District magistrate's court Prison Public works office Post office Health department	–
	Fort William	Light house	–
Anomabu	Fort William	Youth centre Post office Native court Rest house	Restored 1952–55
Kormantin/Abandze	Fort Amsterdam	Landmark, ruin	Restored as ruin 1951–53
Apam	Fort Leydsamheid	Police Rest house	–
Senya Beraku	Fort Good Hope	Rest house	Partly ruin

(continued)

Table 11.1 (continued)

Place	*Fort/Castle*	*Use*	*Remarks*
Accra	James Fort	Prison	–
	Ussher Fort	Prison	–
	Christiansborg Castle	Residence of the governor	–
Keta	Fort Prinzenstein	Government agent offices Customs and excise department Education department Prison department District magistrate's court	–

[a]List of forts and castles under PWD Maintenance, 1952–53 (RG 11/1/261, Accra: PRAAD); list prepared by J.R. Lander, Honourary Assistant Secretary, Monuments and Relics Commission, 24 January 1955 (RG 3/6/802, Accra: PRAAD) and; J.D. Fage et al., "A new check list of the forts and castles of Ghana" (*Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana* 4: 1, 1959).
Source Table compiled by author

While the daily use of the fortification ensured some degree of maintenance, it could also result in tensions between the occupants of the forts and the MRC. In the late 1940s, for instance, tension arouse in connection with Elmina Castle which was used by the police as barracks for the mobile police force. The police wanted to build new barracks in proximity to the castle and use the latter as offices and storehouse. In 1948, the Commissioner of the Gold Coast Police sought permission to use the open space immediately to the west of the castle for the new barracks. The Site Board subsequently convened reported in favour of the proposed site, concluding that the barracks would "not interfere with the architectural features of Elmina Castle".[24] Others, however, were strongly opposed to the building of the new barracks in the immediate vicinity of the castle. According to the Acting Commissioner of Lands, it required "little imagination to envisage the damaging effect of a modern barracks upon this magnificent architectural feature [i.e. Elmina Castle]".[25] The Chief Architect of the Public Works Department and member of the MRC, A.F.D. Seale, opined that the plans would "cause the utter ruin of the finest Castle in the Gold Coast".[26] Action was also taken by others in the MRC, such as Nana Anoor Adjaye II

who asked several questions on the subject in the Legislative Council.[27] Even the Ministry of Works in Britain got in touch with the British Colonial Office, emphasising that Elmina Castle was "probably the earliest European building along the coast, and deserves every case" and enquired whether "an alternative site" could be found.[28] Due to the opposition to the site, the building was postponed and in 1951 an alternative site was found for the barracks in Elmina.[29]

In addition to a general lack of funds, there was also little knowledge of the existing forts and castles in the late 1940s, particularly about their present state and prospects for preservation. Therefore, in 1951, the colonial government brought the Chief Inspector of Ancient Monuments in Britain, B.H. St. John O'Neil, to the colony to survey the fortifications and make recommendations for preservation. This report is significant because it authorised existing practices and laid the foundation for future activities.

O'Neil was aware of the many functions the fortifications had served since their construction, including the slave trade and the establishment of colonial rule. He furthermore stated that it was the responsibility of a people to "take note of everything that has happened in their territory, even if it was unpleasant or worse, and […] bestir themselves to preserve the best examples of the historical buildings or ancient sites which illustrate those happenings".[30] Yet, O'Neil did not suggest the preservation of the structural additions to the fortifications dating from the colonial period. On the contrary, he applauded the ongoing restoration of the fort in Axim, noting that "Much good work of demolition of recent eyesores and of repair is being done […], which it is a delight to see".[31] In order to carry on restoration works at other locations, O'Neil recommended the creation of a separate specialised organisation tasked with repairing and restoring ancient forts and castles. Shortly after, an Inspector of Monuments was employed with headquarters at Fort St. Jago in Elmina.[32] As shown in Table 11.1, several restorations were started in the 1950s by the Inspector of Monuments and his staff.

Furthermore, O'Neil was in favour of keeping the fortifications in use since "use for modern needs presupposes some care for the building in question". But, he noted, use was no guarantee for proper maintenance, as exemplified by several buildings in the Gold Coast. Fortifications that had already become ruins should not be reconstructed and made available for use but be preserved as ruins.[33]

At the start of the 1950s, therefore, two principles had been established that laid the foundations for the management and preservation of the forts and castles. First, the forts and castles should look as "original" as possible, original meaning representative of the period prior to the nineteenth century. This was mainly justified by their perceived aesthetic qualities but also because this historic period was considered more significant than later periods. Secondly, when possible, the fortifications should be kept in modern use by government departments in order to ensure maintenance. However, these two principles were not always easily compatible since modern usage often required structural adjustments. Also, modern use led to a division of responsibility for maintenance that could be at the cost of original features. The Public Works Department was generally responsible for maintaining the forts and castles in use, but this often entailed repairs that required special techniques and knowledge in which the Inspector of Monuments was trained. Therefore, maintenance in many cases demanded close cooperation between officials in the Public Works Department and the Inspector of Monuments. However, rapid turnover of local personnel in the Public Works Department left successive officials unaware of the need to involve the Inspector of Monuments. As a result, alterations were "inadvertently made to buildings without the [Monuments and Relics] Commission's knowledge, and some of this work the Commission's officers have felt to be unsuitable or unjustified".[34] Clearly, the division of responsibility between the MRC and the Public Works Department did not facilitate effective enforcement of the Monuments and Relics Ordinance.

Forts and castles occupied by more than one department created even more disorderly division of responsibility for maintenance. As shown in Table 11.1, Cape Coast served several purposes, being among other things an administrative centre, a prison and a storehouse for the local Public Works Department. This, as the Conservator of Monuments and Professor of Archaeology, A.W. Lawrence noted, led to the erection of "numerous open or closed verandahs, or even additional rooms […] From my observation and information the upkeep of these excrescences will soon become absurdly expensive in relation to their utility, which in most instances is negligible". In addition, he complained that the inner courtyard had been used by the Public Works Department as a "dump for barrels (both full and empty), for empty water-tanks, and even for rubbish; two rusty safes, which I understand have stood there

for approximately ten years, must have decayed till they can justly be described as rubbish". But since many departments used the castle at the same time, no one of them took responsibility for its upkeep. Lawrence therefore concluded that it would be "far preferable" if the castle was occupied by a single department.[35] This would place responsibility for undertaking necessary maintenance work in the hands of one department and prevent the situation in Cape Coast Castle to continue or spread to other ancient buildings.

In December, 1954, the use of the fortifications by different departments was discussed at an informal meeting of the Gold Coast Cabinet. The ministers of the Convention People's Party headed by the Prime Minister Kwame Nkrumah agreed that it was problematic to combine modern usage with the preservation of ancient monuments. The practice was not considered to be "an appropriate use of the castles" or to "provide suitable departmental office accommodation". Yet, it was acknowledged that use ensured funds for maintenance, and no alternative financial sources were suggested. Instead, the Ministers responsible for Education who had responsibility for the MRC and the Minister responsible for Public Works were instructed to consider the matter and discuss solutions.[36] By the time of independence in 1957, no solution had been found, and the forts and castles remained in use as departmental offices.

As the date for independence came closer, the need for a restructuring of the organisation of Gold Coast heritage management became necessary. During the 1950s, interest in different types of African heritage was increasing and the MRC started inspecting and surveying other types of buildings in Asante and the areas of the colony known as the Northern Territories.[37] The government also built a new National Museum to house and display an expanding collection of ancient relics.[38] However, the Monuments Division of the MRC was, as one official noted, "not a very lively body". All the actual work of restoring and overseeing the maintenance of ancient buildings was undertaken by Professor Lawrence and his staff which consisted of an Inspector of Monuments, his assistant and the daily paid workers.[39] Rather than creating two understaffed organisations, one for the museum responsible for relics and one for monuments responsible for ancient buildings and sites, the government decided in 1957 to establish one organisation that combined these responsibilities. As a result, independence saw the MRC replaced by the Ghana Museum and Monuments Board (GMMB) under the Directorship of A.W. Lawrence.

Heritage Management After Independence

Independence and the creation of the GMMB did not bring about any immediate changes to heritage management. Although the majority of the members of the newly created board were Africans, those responsible for the day-to-day heritage work remained the same as during colonial rule. Also, when A.W. Lawrence retired as Director after independence in 1957, he was replaced by his British assistant, H.D. Collings, who continued the policy of preserving the perceived "original" structures and removing newer additions from the nineteenth century and later. Additionally, while the board's policy previously had been confined to remove structural elements considered "unoriginal", it now accepted that additions were made to the ancient buildings in order to recreate the perceived original structure. As Collings, in 1960, informed the Minister of Education, C.T. Nylander, the policy of the GMMB was:

> In conformity with the usual practice throughout the world, […] to preserve from further decay those buildings that are too ruinous to be successfully restored, to reconstruct these [sic] that have enough architectural and historic merit to make the considerable cost worthwhile [sic] and to conserve and make use of such buildings that are of great historic importance not only to Ghana but to the world [underlining in original].[40]

Furthermore, in a later elaboration of his understanding of the term restoration, Collings defined it to mean "an approximate reconstruction in the original shape where old detailed plans are available".[41] This policy was also put into practice as exemplified in the plans for the restoration of Fort Appolonia in Beyin in the 1960s. This included "Rebuilding of walls on discovered foundations […] Rebuilding of demolished walls […] Reconstruction of demolished arches and aroways [sic] […] Re-roofing of reconstructed rooms".[42] Evidently, the GMMB was planning to rebuild Fort Appolonia rather than preserving or restoring the ruin. This was not in conformity with heritage management throughout the world: in 1964, the International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites, also known as the Venice Charter, established unequivocally that "All reconstruction work should […] be ruled out a priori". Replacements of missing parts could be tolerated, but only as long as the reassembled parts were "distinguishable from the original so that restoration does not falsify the artistic or

historic evidence".[43] This principle did not harmonise with what Collings described as "approximate reconstruction" or the restoration plans for Fort Appolonia.

The GMMB also carried on the policy of preserving forts and castles through modern usage. But as previously, use was no guarantee for adequate maintenance. In 1958, for instance, the state of Cape Coast Castle had not improved but rather, in the opinion of the Inspector of Ancient Monuments, W.L.K. Obuabisa, deteriorated to a "Public Disgrace". The castle was still occupied by several departments, none of which seemed to take responsibility for its maintenance. The rubbish that Lawrence had noted a few years previously had yet to be cleaned up. Still in the words of Obuobisa:

> The most serious and unpardonable offence […] is the fact that elementary sanitation is ignored by occupies [sic] of the Castle, and it is now a dumping place for all types of rubbish. […] There is no reason why used and discarded latrine pans should be stored in the inner courtyard, they should do very well in the dust bin.[44]

In the longer term, however, the government's policy was increasingly to relocate occupiers of the forts and castles in order to facilitate the gradual conversion of the old buildings into museums and tourist centres. This reflects a shift from seeing the old monuments largely as a drain on government funds to seeing them as potential tourist attractions and an untapped economic resource.

Tourism and Heritage Management in Ghana

The government of the Convention People's Party had already identified the forts and castles as potential tourist sites in the early 1950s. In order to realise this potential, the Gold Coast government had appointed two men of business experience and a publicity officer on the colonial MRC in 1952.[45] However, besides these additions, no active steps were taken until the end of the decade. In 1958, the Minister for Education, C.T. Nylander, asked what plans the GMMB had for taking over and renovating forts and castles for tourism, arguing that "if we renovate them some of our Old Castles could well-nigh become places not only of historical interest but also for provender & shelter & so help Tourism in the country".[46] In the same year, the Ghana Tourist Advisory Board was

established. This board immediately incorporated the forts and castles into the overall tourist policy of the government.

Among the many aspirations of the Tourist Advisory Board was the desire to turn selected forts and castles into tourist sites and hotels. However, it had to account for the current users of the fortifications. The Ministry of Works and Housing proposed, for instance, as part of a larger tourist project, to redevelop Elmina harbour and area around the castle, provide beach facilities for visitors and construct a hotel, the "ultimate ideal" being to turn Elmina Castle into a hotel since it was thought that "tourists very much appreciate actually living in historic monuments". But this, it was noted, depended on the relocation of the reserve police force which still occupied the castle.[47]

The Director of the GMMB, H.D. Collings, became a member of the Ghana Tourist Board and was not averse to plans to turn the forts and castles into guest houses and hotels. In his opinion, both Cape Coast and Elmina Castles were exceptionally suitable for this purpose, especially parts of the latter which he argued would "be a very suitable and romantic site for a tourist resthouse [sic]" with modern facilities.[48] However, other members of the GMMB strongly opposed these plans such as Peter Shinne, Professor at the Archaeology Department at the University of Ghana, who opined that "a mediaeval building could not be altered into a modern Hotel without prejudicing its ancient splendour". In other words, he thought it impossible to combine the original character of the castle with the requirements necessary to turn it into a modern hotel. Yet, he was not opposed to exploiting the castle as a tourist site, he only wanted the castles to "stand as they are without being tampered with", while the Tourist Board built hotels in the vicinity of the fortifications.[49] Shinne was supported by the rest of the Museum and Monuments Board. While this put an end to immediate plans for converting fortifications into hotels, the ancient buildings were still understood as a potential economic resource and key to the development of the country's tourism industry.

In 1962, Collings retired as Director of the GMMB. His successor, Richard Nunoo, became the first Ghanaian to be appointed Director of the Board. Yet, economic difficulties effectively curbed the new director's abilities to introduce initiatives or changes to existing policies. The divided responsibility for maintaining the many forts and castles increased existing economic difficulties. Already, the Public Works Department was responsible for financing a large part of the maintenance

of ancient buildings. In the 1960s, this responsibility was transferred to the Ghana National Construction Corporation. This corporation had little interest in the ancient buildings, and funds for their upkeep became erratic. On one occasion, the Ministry of Communications and Works reprimanded the Ghana National Construction Company for causing "considerable embarrassment" to the GMMB, which due to lack of funds, had been unable to meet their financial obligations.[50] This intervention resulted in an immediate payment, but it did not provide a lasting solution as the Board received funds for only one-quarter of a year and shortly returned to the financial status quo three months later. The economic difficulties experienced in the 1960s were not unique to the GMMB. Since the 1950s, the government had spent considerable funds on development projects aiming to diversify and industrialise the economy of the country. However, at the start of the 1960s, it was clear that the many investments undertaken were failing to bring the envisaged return, and the government was forced to exercise increasing stringency and economise in order to be able to afford new development projects. Government cutbacks also affected the GMMB which in 1963 had its annual budget cut by a fourth, while the grant towards the maintenance of forts and castles was reduced by half.[51] In this context, it was forced to look for alternative funds for maintaining and restoring the many forts and castles in the country. This also spurred renewed efforts to turn the ancient buildings into financially self-sufficient tourist attractions.

By 1970, it had become government policy to turn the coastal fortifications into museums and tourist attractions, particularly the two castles in Cape Coast and Elmina. Steps were therefore taken to release the castles from present utilisation "so that they can be restored and modernized for tourist purposes".[52] This constituted a departure from previous heritage management in Ghana which had preferred to let various governmental departments use the old buildings in exchange of maintenance. Steps were also taken to attract funds from alternative sources to finance the development of museums in some of the fortifications. As Katharina Schramm has shown, the African Descendants Association Foundation (ADAF) was given a lease on Fort Amsterdam in Abandze in order to turn it into a "shrine" or "Mecca" for African descendants in America in the early 1970s.[53] At the same time, the Director of the GMMB, Richard Nunoo, was seeking funds to turn Cape Coast Castle into a West African Historical Museum. This idea had first been pitched in the 1960s by the American Ambassador to Ghana, Franklin Williams.

The focus of this museum was originally supposed to be the slave trade, and Nunoo clearly had the impression that American funds would be forthcoming either through the US Government or alternatively, with American support, from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).[54] When it became evident that the American support was a mirage, Nunoo and his colleagues started approaching other alternative sources of funding, including the Danish, Dutch and British governments.[55] And, while the new museum's planned focus on the slave trade became less prominent, it retained its focus on the pre-colonial period, particularly pre-colonial African-European interaction. Yet, the policy to turn fortifications into museums was not easily translated into practice.

As Table 11.2 below illustrates, the ancient fortifications had not only been part of the colonial infrastructure but were actively used by the post-independence government. In fact, in 1972, 22 forts and castles were in modern use as compared to 18 in the 1950s. Usage ranged from administration to rest houses to post office, and five forts were used as prisons after independence: Cape Coast Castle; Fort William in Anomabu; James Fort and Ussher Fort in Accra; and Fort Printzensten in Keta. The different uses of the forts and castles complicated their transformation into museums, such as the plans for the West African History Museum. In 1970, prior to the establishment of the museum, it housed a prison, the Customs and Excise Department, the Forestry Department and the Health Department. Additionally, it functioned as a temporary shelter for flood victims and it housed the Ghana Legion, an organisation for Ghanaian First and Second World War veterans.[56] The flood victims and the legion could not easily be expelled, the former because they had nowhere to go and the latter because it had invested in and felt a strong sense of ownership of its rooms. The legion also had powerful friends such as the Minister of Defence, J. Kwesi Lamptey, who in 1970 wrote to the Minister of Education, Culture and Sports, William Ofori Atta, urging him to assist the legion. Interestingly, Lamptey argued that the presence of the legion would add rather than detract from the heritage value of the castle: "I am informed that the Castle is considered as a Monument to be viewed by local residents and tourists. What could be more monumental than these human relics of the two World Wars and their insignia, arms, etc.?"[57]

The plea of the Minister of Defence was not heeded, however. In a meeting between representatives of the GMMB, the Ministry of Defence and Ghana Legion, it was pointed out that the legion had to move so

Table 11.2 Use of the forts and castles in 1972, listed west to east[a]

Place	*Fort/Castle*	*Use*	*Remarks*
Beyin	Fort Apollonia	Rest house Post office	–
Axim	Fort St. Antonio	Post office Magistrate Court	–
Princesstown	Fort Gross-Friedrichsburg	Health post	Run by German voluntary service
Dixcove	Fort Metal Cross	Rest house Post office	–
Butre	Fort Batenstein	Social welfare youth project	Under restoration
Sekondi	Fort Orange	Light house	–
Shama	Fort St. Sebastian	Local authority offices Post office	–
Komenda	English Fort	Labour authority office	–
Elmina	St. George Castle	Police training depot	–
	Fort St. Jago	Rest house Regional office GMMB	–
Cape Coast	Cape Coast Castle	Historical museum Prison	–
	Fort William	Light house	–
Anomabu	Fort William	Prison	–
	Little Fort	Social welfare youth project	Also known as Blakeson House, under restoration
Kormantine/ Abandze	Fort Amsterdam	Museum	Used by ADAF, under restoration
Apam	Fort Leydsamheid	Rest house	Under restoration
Senya Beraku	Fort Good Hope	Rest house	Under restoration
Accra	James Fort	Prison	–
	Ussher Fort	Prison	–
	Christiansborg Castle	Seat of government	–
Prampram	Fort Vernon	Rest house	–
Keta	Fort Prinzensten	Prison Magistrate court District administration office	–

[a]List based on list of National Monuments and their use attached to letter from Richard Nunoo to G.N. Nutsugah, Ag. Principal Secretary, National Council for Higher Education, 1 August 1972 (RG 11/1/280, Accra: PRAAD).

that the castle could be "converted into a Historical Museum where materials and exhibits on the Slave Trade would be assembled under one roof".[58] There was, literally, no room under this roof for alternative histories from the colonial or post-colonial periods in the planned pre-colonial museum. According to the opening address given by the Commission for Education and Culture, Lt.-Col. P.K. Nkegbe, when inaugurated in 1974, the West African Historical Museum exhibition reflected, "the period of European contact with West Africa—from about the 15th to the late 19th century".[59] The museum focused on the pre-colonial period, while neglecting later periods in Ghanaian history.[60] This focus was also reflected in restoration works carried out on the physical structure of Cape Coast Castle. In connection with the creation of the West African Historical Museum, restoration works were carried out with the view to supplement the museum exhibition. Among other things, plans were afoot to restore the second and third floors of the Dalziel tower in order to "illustrate a typical Governor's residence of the 17th and 18th centuries".[61] Ideas also existed for restoring the old slave dungeons where it was thought that "the atmosphere exists […] for an extremely impressive 'son et lumiere' type of exposition on slavery".[62] No plans existed to illustrate later historical periods either in the museum or to preserve vestiges of the colonial or post-colonial periods in restoration works.

In 1978, the GMMB nominated the forts and castles of Ghana to UNESCO's World Heritage list. The nomination focused exclusively on the history and architectural features that predated the colonial and post-colonial periods. The nomination claimed that the structures were "among the most characteristic examples of European fortified trade-ports [sic] in the tropics". Furthermore, they served as historical monuments in two ways: on the one hand to the evils of the slave trade and on the other hand to "nearly four centuries of pre-colonial afro-european [sic] commerce on basis of equality rather than on that of the colonial basis of inequality". No mention was made of their later functions as administrative and disciplinary centres during the colonial and post-colonial eras. The history of the fortifications was summed up accordingly: "The forts and castles were built to serve the trade of European chartered Companies, mainly that in gold, but later they also played an important role in the slave trade, and int eh 19th century in the suppression of that trade". Yet, it was indirectly acknowledged that the colonial and post-colonial use had bee,n of crucial importance to their

preservation. The two castles in Cape Coast and Elmina that had recently been vacated to give room for museums were "partly or entirely unoccupied and consequently in rapid decay".[63] Ironically, therefore, when the forts and castles were turned into museums, funds for their maintenance from the national government were no longer guaranteed. By making the dynamic structures into static museums, they were deteriorating and in danger of disappearing.

Conclusion

As this chapter has shown, two principles have guided the management of the coastal forts and castles in Ghana before and after independence. First, restoration policies and practices have aimed to recreate the original pre-colonial forts and castles, partly because of their perceived architectural beauty and partly for their historical significance. This has been done by removing additions dating from later periods and by rebuilding architectural features according to ideas of how the structures looked originally. Secondly, in order to ensure necessary maintenance, forts and castles have been kept or put in use, as administrative centres, rest houses or disciplinary institutions, among other things. However, it has at times proved problematic to reconcile the recreation of original structures with the facilitation of modern use. Also, modern usage and maintenance work have at times threatened or ruined original features. Thus, efforts have increasingly been made to vacate the forts and castles and turn them into museums and tourist attractions to better be able to illustrate the pre-colonial architectural structures and history.

Today, the forts and castles are acknowledged monuments to the evils of the transatlantic trade in enslaved Africans and pre-colonial African-European interaction on the basis of equality rather than colonial inequality and racism. While this is laudable, it has so far been at the cost of other historic periods and memories. The forts and castles in Ghana have a long history and are representative of several periods, including the colonial and post-colonial periods. Yet, the continuation of post-Second World War British restoration policies and practices by Ghanaian bodies after independence has to a considerable extent erased the structural vestiges of these later periods. These policies and practices have not only been caused by a singular understanding of the historical significance of the fortifications but also curtailed future possibilities for a polygonal understanding of their historical worth and their potential as

sites for commemoration and remembrance of colonial and post-colonial histories.

Notes

1. Government Publications Relating to Africa, *Annual Departmental Reports Relating to the Gold Coast and British Togoland, 1943–1956*, Official Report on the Gold Coast Colony by Governor Freeling, 30 May 1877.
2. Gold Coast Survey Department, *Atlas of the Gold Coast* (Accra: Gold Coast Survey Department, 1949), 20.
3. Report of the District Engineer, Cape Coast Castle, 1943 (RG 3/6/802 Accra: PRAAD).
4. D.A. Sutherland, Acting Regional Commissioner to the Public Works Department, Takoradi, 8 May 1944 (CSO 14/3/357, Accra: PRAAD).
5. Director of Public Works to the Acting Colonial Secretary, 16 May 1944 (CSO 14/3/357, Accra: PRAAD).
6. Government Publications Relating to Africa, n.d. *Annual Departmental Reports Relating to the Gold Coast and British Togoland, 1943–1956,* Gold Coast Colony Legislative Council Debates, Session 1945, Issue No. 2, p. 52; and The Monuments and Relics Ordinance, 1945 (CO 927/31/6, London: The National Archives).
7. Unfortunately, the GMMB in Accra was unable to locate files relating to the period in question during my fieldtrips in January and August 2015. Also, it can be pointed out that our knowledge of unofficial management and uses of the forts and castles is very restricted, and while it has not been possible to include this aspect of heritage in this article, it should be the object for future studies.
8. This does not imply that the fortifications did not function as museum prior to the 1970s. For instance, school excursions to Christiansborg Castle were organised as early as the 1940s (RG 3/1/390 Accra: PRAAD).
9. For a presentation of the museum in Ussher Fort, see www.ghanamuseums.org/ussher-fort-museum.php. Accessed 5 November, 2015. It should be noted, however, that tours at the fort includes the prison cells and stories of famous inmates and the use of the prison as a refugee camp for Sudanese asylum seekers in 2005.
10. As had his father, James McCarthy. See Charles Francis Hutchinson, *The Pen-Pictures of Modern Africans and African Celebrities: a collective biography of elite society in the Gold Coast Colony,* ed. by Michel Doortmont ([the author, 1928]; Leiden: Brill, 2005).
11. Both Nana Annor Adjae II and Justice Kobbina Arku Korsah have entries in Hutchinson, 2005.

12. They were the Director of Geological Survey, T. Hirst and the Chief Architect in the Public Works Department, A.F.D. Seale.
13. The building is located near Osu Castle in Accra. For a description of the building from the 1950s, see Richard Wright, *Black Power* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1954) and A.W. Lawrence, *Trade Castles & Forts of West Africa* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1963). For a new historical and architectural description (in Danish), see Anne Mette Jørgensen (ed.), *Danskernes Huse på Guldkysten 1659–1850* (København: Forlaget Vandkunsten, 2014).
14. Minutes of the Monuments and Relics Commission, 2 March 1949 (RG 11/1/247, Accra: PRAAD).
15. Report of the Forts Sub-Committee, May 1949 (RG 11/1/247, Accra: PRAAD).
16. Kwesi J. Anquandah, *Castles & Forts of Ghana* (Atalante: Ghana Museum & Monuments Board, 1999), and Albert van Dantzig, *Forts and Castles of Ghana* (Accra: Sedco Pub., 1980).
17. A.C. Russel, Chief Commissioner Cape Coast to Colonial Secretary, 5 July 1950 (RG 11/1/255, Accra: PRAAD).
18. The modernist architects Maxwell Fry and Jane Drew of Fry, Drew and Partners did a considerable amount of work in West Africa in the post-war years. See Rhodri Windsor Liscombe, "Modernism in Late Imperial British West Africa: The Work of Maxwell Fry and Jane Drew, 1946–56" (*Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 65:2, 2006).
19. Jane Drew to P. Wilkins, 31 July 1950 (RG 11/1/255, Accra: PRAAD).
20. Jane Drew to P. Wilkins, 31 July 1950 (RG 11/1/255, Accra: PRAAD).
21. Jane Drew to P. Wilkins, 31 July 1950 (RG 11/1/255, Accra: PRAAD).
22. Minutes of the Monuments and Relics Commission, 19 June 1947 (RG11/1/247, Accra: PRAAD).
23. Note by P. Wilkins, Ministry of Education, 9 August 1950 (RG 11/1/255, Accra: PRAAD).
24. The board consisted of the District Commissioner of Cape Coast, the Officer in Command for the Elmina Police Detachment, the Medical Officer of Health, District Engineer and Assistant Commissioner of Lands, Sekondi. See Minutes of a Site Board appointed to select a site for Police Mobile Force Barracks, 3 August 1948 (RG 5/1/24, Accra: PRAAD).
25. Minute by the Acting Commissioner of Lands, 12 September 1948 (RG 5/1/24, Accra: PRAAD).
26. Chief Architect quoted in letter from Director of Public Works to the Colonial Secretary, 2 November 1948 (RG 5/1/24, Accra: PRAAD).
27. Nana Annor Adjaye II raised this subject several times during the March-April Session of the Legislative Council, 1949. Extracts can be found in RG 5/1/24, Accra: PRAAD.

28. Letter from K. Waite, Ministry of Works, to the Under Secretary of State, Colonial Office, 19 May 1949 (RG 5/1/24, Accra: PRAAD). The involvement of the British Ministry of Works might have been orchestrated by Dr V.J. Varley, Professor at the Geography Department at the Gold Coast University and member of the MRC. During a meeting of the MRC, he proposes to engineer an "explosion of protest" from learned societies in England, Portugal and the United States. See Minutes of the Monuments and Relics Commission, 2 March 1949 (RG 5/1/24, Accra: PRAAD).
29. See letter from the Director of Public Works to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Communications and Works, 22 June 1951 (RG 5/1/24, Accra: PRAAD).
30. B.H. St. J.O'Neil, *Report on Forts and Castles of Ghana, October 1951* (published by the Ghana Museum and Monuments Board, no date) page 2.
31. O'Neil, *Report on Forts and Castles of Ghana*: p. 54.
32. The first inspector was Harry A. Peters, formerly chief inspector of Works in the Public Works Department. He had been involved in the restoration of Fort St. Antonio at Axim and after his appointment he undertook a course of training with the Inspectorate of Ancient Monuments of the Ministry of Works in Britain. Part of his brief was to train Africans in the care and maintenance of ancient buildings. See Annual Report of the Monuments and Relics Commission for the Year 1952 (RG 11/1/247, Accra: PRAAD).
33. O'Neil, *Report on Forts and Castles of Ghana*, p. 3 and 4.
34. Memorandum on the occupation and maintenance of the forts, May 1954; and note by A.W. Lawrence and J.R. Lander, Monuments and Relics Commission, undated (RG 11/1/247, Accra: PRAAD).
35. A.W. Lawrence, Report on Cape Coast Castle, 12 August 1954 (RG 5/1/31, Accra: PRAAD).
36. Note of an informal meeting of the Cabinet, December 1954 (RG 3/6/777, Accra: PRAAD).
37. Monuments and Relics Commission, Annual Report for 1953 (RG 11/1/248, Accra: PRAAD).
38. For the history of the Ghana National Museum, see Arianna Fogelman, "Colonial Legacy in African Museology: The Case of the Ghana National Museum" (*Museum Anthropology* 31: 1, 2008), and; Mark Crinson, "Nation-building, collecting and the politics of display" (*Journal of the History of Collections* 13: 2, 2001).
39. F. St. M. Gerrard, Ministry of Education, 14 June 1955 (RG 11/1/261).
40. H.D. Collings to the Principal Secretary, Ministry of Education, 12 November 1960 (RG 11/1/272, Accra: PRAAD).
41. H.D. Collings to the Principal Secretary, Ministry of Education, 25 November 1960 (RG 11/1/272, Accra: PRAAD).

42. Executive Secretary, Ghana Museum and Monuments Board to the Managing Director, Ghana National Construction Corporation, 29 May 1965 (RG 5/1/73, Accra: PRAAD).
43. Venice Charter, 1964, quoted in Frank Hassard, "Towards a new vision of restoration in the context of global change" (*Journal of the Institute of Conservation* 31: 2, 2009), 153.
44. Circular letter from W.L.K. Obuobisa, Inspector of Ancient Monuments, 27 September 1958 (RG 13/1/31, Accra: PRAAD).
45. The two business men were Morgan Ghansa from Cape Coast and Sylvester Mensah Dogbe from Keta. The publicity officer was J.G. Quansah of the Ministry of Agricultural and Natural Resources. See Minutes of the Executive Council, 11 January 1952; letters from P. Wilkins, Acting Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education and Social Welfare, inviting Ghansa and Dogbe to serve on the commission, 25 January 1952; and minutes of a Meeting of the Cabinet, 10 April 1954 (RG 11/1/264, Accra: PRAAD).
46. C.T. Nylander, 10 September 1958 (RG 11/1/272, Accra: PRAAD).
47. Principal Secretary, Ministry of Works and Housing to Principal Secretary, Development Secretariat, 31 October 1960 (RG 7/1/1134, Accra: PRAAD).
48. H.D. Collings to Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, 9 January 1959 (RG 11/1/272, Accra: PRAAD).
49. Meeting of the Ghana Museum and Monuments Board, 9 June 1961 (RG 13/1/33, Accra: PRAAD).
50. L.K. Apaloo to C.Y. Odoi, Managing Director, Ghana National Construction Corporation, 12 November 1962 (RG 5/1/73, Accra: PRAAD).
51. Meeting of the Ghana Museum and Monuments Board, 12 February 1963 (RG 13/1/32, Accra: PRAAD).
52. J.H. Mensah, Minister Responsible for Trade and Industries to S.D. Dombo, Regional Chief Executive, Central Region, Cape Coast, 17 November 1970 (RG 5/1/73, Accra: PRAAD).
53. Katharina Scramm, *African Homecoming* (Walnut Creek, California: Left Coast Press, 2010).
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60. See description of the museum in Guilbert Amegatcher, "West African Historical Museum, Cape Coast" (*Museum* 29: 2/3, 1977).
61. These plans are still under consideration for Cape Coast Castle. In 2009, Victoria Ellen Smith (then of the University of Warwick, now of the University of Ghana) was invited to work with the Central Region division of the GMMB to develop the Governor's residence to appear as it would have in the latter years of the eighteenth century and to develop a new museum in the Governor's Reception to explore the history British residents and governors of the Castle. The project is yet to find funding.
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