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NEOLIBERALISM IN GHANA — HISTORIC AFRICAN DIASPORA RELATIONS

Author(s): Kwaku Nti

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“UNITING THE AFRICAN FAMILY:” MONUMENTS, TOURISM, DEVELOPMENT, AND NEOLIBERALISM IN GHANA – HISTORIC AFRICAN DIASPORA RELATIONS

By Kwaku Nti*

INTRODUCTION

Ghana's many extant European castles and forts have made the country a port of call for people of the historic African Diaspora, especially those from the Americas.¹ Consequently, an ambivalent system has emerged around these history-laden monuments. While some such people seek reconnection with their ancestral past, Ghanaian authorities see opportunities to expand development strategies. This article examines the policies and programs outlined to make the country an attractive place to the historic African Diaspora. Additionally, the article looks at the current uses of these European castles and forts and evaluates the extent to which the explicitly stated purposes meet or do not meet individual and collective historic African Diaspora aspirations. To what extent do these programs cast visiting people of the historic African Diaspora as tourists? How does this description square with their genetic and historic relationship with Africa? After going through ceremonies for indigenous names and honorary indigenous leadership positions, ostensibly to re-connect and re-establish relationships, people of the historic African Diaspora are constantly confronted with an outsider status in Ghana, while the authorities, neglecting to remedy the situation, claim revenue for development. In view of this focus on development, the interplay of the factors of revenue and relations often create frustrations and unfulfilled expectations. People of the historic African Diaspora expect the continent to develop, but their quest for filial relationships supersedes all other considerations. The article argues that with authorities paying mere lip service to these aspirations, the emphasis on revenue for development renders the

*Kwaku Nti, Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor, Department of History, Armstrong Atlantic State University, Savannah, GA. Please direct all correspondence to: kwaku.nti@armstrong.edu

Diaspora Project heavily commoditized to the neglect of meaningful and enduring kinship connections. To this end, the present situation amounts to a manifestation of the Neoliberal imperative. The absurdity is even more apparent, especially when the Diaspora Project in Ghana is cast under themes such as “uniting the African Family.” This article contributes to the critical study of the relations between Africa and its Diaspora, and accentuates the prognosis that the celebration of the continent’s glories cannot be meaningful without coming to terms with inherent challenges.

The Diaspora Project—an array of expressive programs and activities meant to welcome and make people of the historic African Diaspora feel at home in Ghana—gravitates more towards a development strategy than a commitment to the realistic nurturing of Pan-African culture. This situation and many other considerations raise the need to interrogate the very meaning and search for Africa’s hold in the imaginations of its New World descendants who are either not associated with generally accepted conventions of Pan-Africanism or whose relationship with Africa has been oversimplified by previous scholarship.²

Ghana took a spot in the limelight of African Diaspora and Pan African expressions under interesting circumstances. As the first country in colonial Africa to regain its independence from Britain on March 6, 1957, Ghana became a symbol of hope for not only colonial Africa, but also people of African descent. Kevin Gaines, a historian, writes:

For the people of African descent the world over, Ghana’s independence lent momentum to rising demands for freedom and self-determination. Occurring as African Americans accelerated their demands for an end to segregation, Ghana’s triumph over British rule was widely celebrated by people of African descent in and beyond the new nation ... The birth of Ghana signaled the emergence not just of a new Africa but of a new world.³

African Americans out of a general commitment to the Pan African ideology, on one hand, and disappointment with unfulfilled promises and expectations during the Civil Rights era in the United States, on the other hand, found a new political space in Ghana. The country managed to endear itself to continental Africans and people of African descent all over the world, both highly placed and the ordinary individuals, who in the face of everyday life challenges endeavored to follow African affairs. Yet Ghana’s special place in the hearts and minds of the people of the historic African Diaspora hinged on other factors among which included the many architectural remains from centuries of European commercial and political activities that still stand in the country.

MONUMENTS, SLAVE TRADE, AND ANCESTRAL EXPERIENCES

To people of the historic African Diaspora, the European castles and forts in Ghana are reminiscent of the experiences of their ancestors who were enslaved. This country had more of these European constructions than any other in West Africa. The Ghanaian shoreline of about three hundred miles had thirty or so castles and forts built by different European nations.⁴ Fluttering flags of the Portuguese, Dutch, Danes, Swedes, Brandenburgers, and the English identified the territorial acquisitions of the respective European trading companies.

The extent to which these companies obtained and maintained castles and forts in Ghana accentuated the country's economic importance. Before Ghana became enmeshed in the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade in 1650, the country was best known for its abundant supply of gold. The name Gold Coast — and others such as Ivory Coast, Grain Coast, and Slave Coast — originated from the tendency of European traders to designate African shorelines according to the principal commodities obtained in those places; and in many ways these designations also served as "European Traders' Guide."⁵ However, these convenient designations did not preclude trade in commodities other than the principal ones for which those places were largely known. The Gold Coast, for instance, also supplied ivory, pepper, salt, and lime juice.⁶

Ghana's abundant gold introduces yet another important aspect of the history of the African Diaspora that is not commonly known. The country served as a destination for captive Africans in the same way as other ports of the Americas. The Portuguese brought captives from the Kingdom of Benin and other places in West Central Africa to Ghana in response to the heavy labor requirements of Luso gold mining operations. It was after 1650 that Ghana began to supply captive Africans to the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade. The country accounted for 11 percent of the total number exported during the entire duration of the trade, a majority of which ended up in Jamaica and the British West Indies rather than the United States of America.⁷ Apparently Ghana was more significant in the commodity trade than in the slave trade. Of the thirty or so castles and forts that the Europeans constructed in the country, as many as sixteen still remain in appreciable conditions. The extant ones included the Christianborg Castle (Accra), Fort Good Hope (Senya Beraku), Fort Patience (Apam), Fort Amsterdam (Kromantse and Abandze), Fort William (Anomabu), Cape Coast Castle (Cape Coast), Castle St. Jorge (Elmina), Fort St. Jago (Elmina), Fort St. Sebastian (Shama), Fort Orange (Sekondi), Fort Batenstein (Butre), Fort Metal Cross (Discove), Gross Friedrichsburg (Princess Town), Fort St. Anthony (Axim) and Fort Appolonia (Beyin).⁸ The use of these castles and forts during the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade rendered them an inextricable part of the history of the African Diaspora; thus enhancing Ghana's significance in the narrative of this past.

Powerful images of Africa became dominant themes in African Diaspora literature and songs. For some men of the historic African Diaspora a return to Africa was a reconnection with a necessary ancestry, reassurance of masculinity, and a sense

of belongingness; with the gamut of these experiences being indispensable for the protection of their women. For some women of the historic Diaspora memory of Africa bequeathed strength, pride, and identity.⁹ African kings, queens, and chiefs reminisced a long history of royalty and dignity that any person of the historic Diaspora could meaningfully identify with. This imagery resonated powerfully in historic African Diaspora imagination.¹⁰ The imposing castles and forts also symbolized European power, control, dominance, and oppression. The dark, damp, dank, and dumb dungeons spoke loudly of cruelty and dehumanization with concomitant agony, pain, suffering, rejection, loneliness, and uncertainty. Any wonder then that some people of the historic African Diaspora who visited these monuments experienced emotionally intense moments as they imagined the conditions of captives forced into the dungeons for days awaiting destinies shrouded in uncertainty? And for the many more that have yet to see these castles and forts with the hope of having a sense of what it was like for their enslaved ancestors, the need to visit Ghana than any other African country remained paramount.

POLITICS, NEOLIBERALISM, AND TOURISM

Ghana developed a track record of introducing policy attractive to people of African descent, especially the historic Diaspora, and apparently also conducive to the Pan-African cause. The country's foreign policy obviously did not begin in 1957 without precedent.¹¹ Even though Kwame Nkrumah loomed large in African affairs during the 1950s and 1960s, Ghana's strong bias toward Africa and people of African descent started long before him. There were enthusiastic efforts in that direction on the part of first generation Ghanaian scholars who worked in conjunction with their colleagues in all of the British colonies in West Africa. Some of these scholars even envisaged an expanded operation in working with people of African descent in the Americas. J. E. Casely-Hayford, for instance, held out hope of an African racial redemption. Through the writing and activities of such scholars, Ghana long identified with the early Pan-African movement among the African Diaspora in the Americas and Europe. These first generation scholars supported the Back to Africa Movement and also espoused other ideas reflecting the aspirations of Africa and Africans everywhere. With the British colonial administration checkmating the activities of this generation of Ghanaian scholars, Nkrumah's personality and circumstances in the closing stages of colonialism became crucial.

Nkrumah applied himself to Pan-Africanism at the end of which he transmogrified into its veritable apostle after so many years of discipleship. Altogether, he lived in the United States and Britain for twelve years, from 1935 to 1947. Nkrumah spent more of these years in the former than in the latter. As a student in the United States, he studied in Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) and spent some vacations in Harlem. Nkrumah experienced an immersion in African American Studies and life with enduring outcomes. For instance, during a visit to the United States in 1958, he declared himself a son of Harlem, where he learned politics.¹² Between 1951

and 1960 Nkrumah became Leader of Government Business, Prime Minister, and eventually President of Ghana. In concert with a few inner circle African Diaspora expatriates, he espoused a forceful foreign policy with a commitment to working towards the total liberation of the entire continent of Africa. As much as that sounded ambitious and herculean, Nkrumah was able to proceed because he had an impressive reserve in monetary and human resources. In the early days when he assumed the reins of government, the country's economy was in fairly good shape. Scott Thompson observes:

Ghana supplied one-third of the world's cocoa and was the fifth exporter of gold. Its reserves in 1957 were over half a billion dollars, more than India had at the time; the government had no pressing need to seek aid anywhere. Ghana also possessed the best civil service in Africa.¹³

Even though the country's early foreign policy statements had the expressed intent of aiding the African everywhere, there was no pragmatic mechanism through which Ghana could provide that anticipated help.¹⁴ However, a two-fold system became obvious. On the one hand the policy was governed by the principle of Pan-Africanism that Nkrumah adopted during his years abroad; on the other hand, the policy emphasized a peculiarly African political maneuver for a continental union capable of speaking with one voice at the level of international diplomacy.¹⁵

Despite any discrepancy such a two-fold policy fostered, what was clear and unambiguous was Ghana's growing reputation as a country friendly to the African Diaspora. Nkrumah on several occasions extended a sincere invitation to African Americans to help build the new state. During his visit to the United States in 1958, Nkrumah appealed to teachers, doctors and dentists to go to Ghana and assist their African brethren, in a sense portending a predominantly parasitic relationship with African Americans. However, some form of political asylum in Ghana materialized for many people of African descent from the United States and the Caribbean in view of prevalent difficult social and political conditions in their respective countries. For instance, in addition to St. Clair Drake, C. L. R. James, Julian Mayfield, Bill Sutherland, Robert Lee, Maya Angelou, W. Alphaeus Hunton, Alice Windom, Shirley Graham Du Bois, Sylvia Boone, and others, Gaines indicates that:

From the early 1950s until 1966, a number of prominent African Americans and West Indian advisers and heads of state visited or resided in the West African nation ... Richard Wright, Martinique-born intellectual and activist Frantz Fanon, West Indian economist W. Arthur Lewis; Jamaican novelist Neville Davies, Trinidad's Prime Minister, Eric Williams, African American civil rights leader James Farmer, newly crowned heavy-weight boxing champion Mohamed Ali and numerous others.¹⁶

The most powerful personalities whose association with Ghana made the country a must-visit-place included Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X, and W. E. B. Du Bois. Du Bois, for instance, died a citizen of Ghana and was interred in the grounds of his residence. As a museum the Du Bois Memorial Center undoubtedly remained one of the key sites in the country for many African Americans and other people of the historic African Diaspora.

In the 1990s, Ghana's attractiveness to the African Diaspora received a new boost with a strong emphasis on tourism as a viable, reliable and productive source of revenue for national development within the framework of the neoliberal regime. The country's economic, social, and political policies in the twentieth century, by and large, harbored manifestations of the neoliberal imperative — the aggressive implementation of the free market economy that stressed subsidy removal, privatization of state owned businesses, private property, privatization of social resources, private enterprise, spending cuts, free global movement of capital, etc. Powerful international donor and lending agencies, as well as the Bretton Woods twin institutions of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund imposed such free market and pro-business conditions on developing countries, if they were serious about securing much-needed loans.¹⁷ The ultimate objective in all of these stipulations hinged on making business good along the lines of profit maximization for both the public and the private sectors. In other words, the neoliberal economy amounted to the expression of the rights of individuals to participate in the markets, as well as that of the markets themselves to function or operate beyond governmental hindrance or regulation.

The emphasis on tourism was a strand of the neoliberal regime to expand not only the market but also the revenue base of the economy. The new tourism policy essentially targeted the massive patronage of the historic African Diaspora, particularly those from the United States, as effective partners in development, within the framework of Pan-African issues as well as the history and legacy of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade to draw what officials described as "40 million strong middle-income African Americans" to the country.¹⁸ In addition to the castles and forts, Ghana had an irresistible package of rich cultural heritage, rainforests, arts and craft centers, festivals, former slave markets, slave trade routes, slave burial places, and other instant cultural productions attractive to visitors. The country's ten administrative regions possessed respective attractions, with a concentration of the most popular ones in the south.

Tourism in Ghana lagged behind cocoa and gold as the promising mainstay of the economy. The sector grew exponentially, especially when it received serious consideration and investment in the 1990s that placed the country in high contention as one of the most preferred destinations in West Africa.¹⁹ Prior to 1993 tourism was a sub-sector, in ministries such as trade and information, that made marginal contributions to the national economy. Upon its creation, the full-fledged Ministry of Tourism acquired responsibility for policy making while the Ghana Tourist Board and other ancillary agencies took charge of policy implementation. The functions of the ministry, among

others, included formulation of policy towards sustainable growth and development of tourism to ensure that sector's substantial contribution to the GDP. This potential would be achieved through effective and efficient use of requisite strategies, corporate planning, programs, projects, as well as private and public enterprise partnerships. The Ministry of Tourism had an additional objective of building a sustainable relationship with the African Diaspora, especially the historic African Diaspora, for resource mobilization and investment. In light of these plans and projections, the ministry anticipated a maximization of net foreign exchange generated from the tourism sector.²⁰

After years of planning, negotiations, and strategizing, Ghanaian authorities, in conjunction with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), propped up Ghana's tourism attractiveness in 1993. The implementation of the 10 million dollar Central Regional Natural Resources Conservation and Historic Preservation Project became a major step in that direction. Specifications of this project included the development of the Kakum National Park, which boasted Africa's first canopy walkway and the renovation of the Cape Coast and Elmina Castles, as well as Fort St. Jago, also in Elmina. In support of this project, the UNDP further declared these castles and fort World Heritage Monuments furnished with new museums and other interpretative facilities. This component of the project was not without controversy as questions arose over ownership and propriety of restoration or renovation work on the castles and forts. African Americans living in Ghana, as well as those who visited occasionally, claimed ownership on account of the experiences of their enslaved ancestors in these monuments. Furthermore, the indigenous authorities, on whose lands these structures stood, and the UNDP World Heritage Project, both made legitimate claims of ownership. In addition, some historic African Diaspora pressure groups challenged the propriety of restoration, beautification, and installation of facilities, insisting that these structures remained in the very state in which the Europeans used them. Yet, these pressure groups were not oblivious to the reality that without these occasional restorative works the castles and forts would be ruined.²¹ The complex nature of the issues at stake in that latent controversy presented architectural, cultural and historical conundrums.

As part of the tourism package and the effort to attract people of African descent, especially the historic African Diaspora, the Ministry of Tourism became re-designated as the Ministry of Tourism and Diaspora Relations, accentuating the indispensable patronage of the African Diaspora to the success of the project. The ministry embarked upon massive cultural and festival productions, in furtherance of which ceremonies such as Unification, Emancipation, and PANAFEST, were introduced over the years.²² These ceremonies served as institutionalized festivals produced specifically for the eyes and convenience of the historic African Diaspora. Marketing strategies and commercial campaigns took place in the United States and other places in the Americas as well as Europe. To entrench the already powerful attractiveness of Ghana to the historic African Diaspora, and also to solemnize the idea of the country being "home," the remains of two former slaves, Crystal (a Jamaican) and Samuel

Carson (an African American), were reinterred in August 1998 at Assin Manso, located in the Central Region of Ghana, and significantly within the network of former slave trade routes; the town also boasted a disused slave market and burial place.

Further facilitations to get the historic African Diaspora to visit Ghana included the consideration to award Ghanaian citizenships with the view to eliminating cumbersome visa regulations. Promises of land and other business incentives to the historic African Diaspora were strongly proposed and implemented with the objective of encouraging diverse investment in the various sectors of the economy. The sectors into which most people of the historic African Diaspora entered and did brisk business were travel and tourism. Those with the requisite resources and expertise competed with their Ghanaian counterparts, bringing the historic African Diaspora to the country in large numbers. Others were involved in the hotel and beach resort enterprise, both essential business services in the travel and tourism sector.

AFRICAN ROOTS, COMMUNITIES, AND DEVELOPMENT

The unprecedented wave of visiting historic African Diaspora also proffered hopes and expectations of accelerated local development for Ghanaian communities, villages, and towns. The realization of local development manifested through several means, namely, the awarding of *Nkosuo* or *Mpuntu* titles and honorary leadership roles in popular indigenous institutions. In all of these instances, some people of the historic African Diaspora expressed personal interests while others were approached and coaxed into becoming participants through the efforts of a network of contact groups with the appropriate and requisite connections.²³

Public development projects such as schools, clinics, road construction, etc., in communities, villages, and towns of Ghana were under normal circumstances implemented under the auspices of the Ministry of Local Government and executed through District Assemblies. Being few and far between, these development projects were, in most cases, abandoned for lack of funds. In some instances local development projects became rewards for support demonstrated through election results as a feature of Ghanaian political patronage, in which perceived politically unfriendly communities, villages, and towns were ignored. Given the generally slow and virtually non-existent local development projects, chiefs and their people had to rely on their own ingenuity, local resources, and citizen groups. The most productive means of exploiting their ingenuity was reliance on the historic African Diaspora through the awarding of titles and honorary leadership roles in popular indigenous institutions.²⁴

The appointment of *Nkosuohin* or *Mpuntuhin*, as honorary offices, remained the prerogative of the substantive royal chief or king, in consultation with the elders. To this end the historic African Diaspora became the most promising target group, especially those either known or perceived to be wealthy and generous. In some cases these honorary positions were offered to get support for the intended development of local communities; alternatively, these appointments came as rewards for individuals of

the historic African Diaspora who embarked upon local development projects in pursuit of private business enterprise.²⁵

Naming ceremonies also became private and informal components of the Diaspora Project. Individuals of the historic African Diaspora who felt so strongly about identifying with various Ghanaian cultures, and by implication the larger African roots, took bold decisions to acquire indigenous names. Name acquisition ceremonies were normally officiated under the auspices of individual Ghanaians with demonstrable knowledge of local cultures, who not unusually charged fees for their services. These individuals poured libations calling upon the ancestors to honor the occasion as returnee sons or daughters took names to signify their African roots. Choices ranged from simple Akan name derivatives from days of the week on which people were born to complex combinations with other indigenous ones. Individuals of the historic African Diaspora who knew the days on which they were born chose the corresponding names in addition to last names mostly determined by the ingenuity of the officiating elder. Depending on the conduct and demeanor of the individual, the officiating elder discerned the particular ancestor whose last name must be used. More often than not individuals of the historic African Diaspora settled for names of celebrated kings, queens, and distinguished political leaders.²⁶

PEACE, HOSPITALITY, AND ISSUES EMERGING

Besides consciously crafted policy, the nature of the people also mattered in making Ghana attractive. The country received enormous commendation for being relatively peaceful and friendly in a sub-region with a history of occasional political eruptions. Ghana had its difficult times, but these were contained due to the strong influence of the extended family on the individual. This influence encouraged a generally pacific attitude preventing many potential disruptions. In pre-colonial times the different ethnic groups had their own bouts of confrontations emanating from the exigencies of indigenous state formations.²⁷ During the struggle for independence, Ghana like almost all countries in West Africa had a relatively peaceful transition; although some people unfortunately perished in the attempt by the colonial authorities to clamp down on demonstrations and boycotts. Ghana had its experience of military adventurism that plagued the West African sub-region in the post-independence era. Between 1966 and 1992, the country underwent just four years of democratic governance with the rest being military regimes that survived intermittent counter coup attempts. In 1992 the people of Ghana gave their assent in a referendum to a restoration of democratic governance. Since the fourth Republic there have been four democratic elections and the people seem determined to keep this system of governance. In spite of the difficulties, challenges, and problems of democratic governance, the relatively high sense of patience and perseverance among Ghanaians and, again, the generally strong influence of the extended family prevailed during critical times. Crime and violence generally controlled

by the security forces also boosted Ghana's relatively peaceful image.

The much touted Ghanaian hospitality served as one of the dominant characteristic appeals to attract visitors. Ghanaians were generally perceived to be kind with most of them disposed to being always ready to ensure that visitors are happy and comfortable as much as circumstances permitted. Authors such as Pauli Murray, James Baldwin, Era Bell Thompson, and Richard Wright intimated that African Americans and Africans were strangers to each other with insurmountable differences. The fact that these two groups of Africans for generations lived apart from each other (one in a predominantly western culture and the other in a typically diverse African cultural setting) in many ways produced differences and alienation from each other. This situation notwithstanding, many Ghanaians reciprocated an attitude of commitment, respect, and readiness on the part of the historic African Diaspora to acknowledge them as siblings on equal terms. This Ghanaian reciprocity undoubtedly hinged on the historic African Diaspora accepting themselves as Africans in pragmatic ways. On a more general level, the ordinary Ghanaian would see the historic African Diaspora as "foreigners." But that attitude changed upon demonstrable receptivity of the latter to Ghanaian cultures or ways of life. Most of these scenarios might vary depending on the individual Ghanaian and the circumstances involved. In the case of the younger generation, for instance, relatively under the sway of western culture through music, films, ideas, and fashion, the very presence of African Americans or the historic Diaspora would evoke a sense of oneness.²⁸

Yet there was no denying the fact that the historic African Diaspora generally had to endure being casually regarded as foreigners in spite of the fact that the maiden program to attract them was held under the sub-theme of "uniting the African family." In the same vein most Ghanaians consistently referred to people of the historic African Diaspora as tourists, much to the dismay and disappointment of the latter, many of whom considered their visit as a home coming of sorts. The Diaspora Project, devoid of any pragmatic and enduring public educational programs on the history of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade, neglected to address these issues. As a practical first step in uniting the African family, educational campaigns of that nature would make the Ghanaian public appreciably sensitive to issues regarding the hopes, expectations, and aspirations of the historic African Diaspora. Instead the Emancipation, Unification, and PANAFEST ceremonies were done with the significant participation and facilitation of numerous local and foreign travel and tourism companies. Furthermore, during these ceremonies the main means of local transportation for the historic African Diaspora were tour buses, boldly designated as such. All of these logistics of the Diaspora Project either confirmed or entrench latent Ghanaian perceptions that with the exception of local residents, others who come to see the castles and forts were tourists. The managers and promoters of the program, oblivious to these pertinent issues, rather focused on strategic tourism revenue with the expectation of increasing earnings from a million to the billion dollar mark.²⁹

CONCLUSION

The numerous European castles and forts in Ghana remained powerful attractions to the historic African Diaspora, and the steady stream of visitors was not without the encouragement of the authorities who envisaged great potentials for national development. Ghana's attractiveness to the historic African Diaspora dated back to the immediate post-independence era when Kwame Nkrumah invited them to help build the new nation. The emphasis on tourism in the 1990s under the neoliberal sway took Ghana's relations with the historic African Diaspora to a new level; and the introduction of the Diaspora Project, initial programs of which were organized under themes such as "uniting the African family," exposed some of the operational challenges. Nevertheless, Ghanaian managers and promoters, either because of a skin-deep understanding of the identity aspirations of the historic African Diaspora and or a blinding commitment to the development mandate, relegated "uniting the African family" to the background. The Ministry of Tourism, succumbing to the pressures of the neoliberal economic regime, sought to increase its revenue quota to national development by pushing the quest for profit. Communities, villages, and towns followed suit in the bid to get local development projects through the patronage of the historic African Diaspora. Consequently, some people of the historic African Diaspora accepted honorary indigenous positions, titles, and names, and still operated on the periphery of the "family" as they claimed kin. The authorities, yet to show any commitment to effectively "uniting the African family," continued to claim kitty for national development. To this end many communities, villages, and towns also perceived the historic African Diaspora as tourists whose generosity could and should be harnessed towards local development. The correlation between tourism and revenue generation as a universal principle might obliterate a full appreciation of the critical nature of the issues at stake; but although the historic African Diaspora would wish to see Africa develop, their overtures to the continent were not motivated by touristic tendencies. These overtures amounted to both psychological and physical outreaches to a land conceptualized as home; and in so far as concrete efforts are not being made to meet these aspirations, the emphasis on revenue for development rendered the Diaspora Project heavily commoditized to the neglect of other meaningful historic and filial relationships. The apparent conundrum, to all intents and purposes, assumed the characteristic manifestations of neoliberalism that possessed the capacity to transform the behaviors of persons and the relationships among individuals, the market, and the state.

NOTES

1. The historic Diaspora is also referred to as the Diaspora of enslavement and this definition includes all peoples of African descent whose ancestors were captured and taken to the Americas as a consequence of the labor imperative.

2. Sidney Lemelle and Robin D. G. Kelley (eds.), *Imaging Home: Class, Culture, and Nationalism in the African Diaspora* (London: Verso, 1994), pp. 1 – 2.
3. Kevin K. Gaines, *American Africans in Ghana: Black Expatriates in the Civil Rights Era* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2006), p. 2.
4. Kwame Y. Daaku, *Trade and Politics on the Gold Coast 1600 – 1792* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1970), p. 48. See also Gwendolyn M. Hall, *Slavery and African Ethnicities in the Americas: Restoring the Links* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2005), p. 102. While historian Gwendolyn M. Hall's account confirms that of historian Kwame Y. Daaku regarding the origins of the Europeans who erected those castles and forts, they disagree on the total number. The former puts it on the higher side than the latter, that is, thirty-two.
5. Daaku, *Trade and Politics on the Gold Coast 1600 – 1792*, p. 21.
6. Ghana was known as the Gold Coast. The latter was dropped for the former when the country attained independence on March 6, 1957.
7. Michael M. Gomez, *Reversing Sail: A History of the African Diaspora* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 65. In view of the fact that Ghana had the greatest number of European castles and forts, the relatively small percentage of its supply of captives to the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade is as curious as it is intriguing.
8. James Kwesi Anquandah, *Castles and Forts of Ghana* (Atlante: Ghana Museums and Monuments Board, 1999).
9. Yaa Asantewaa and Seestah Imahkus, Personal Interviews, July 9, 2009.
10. Edward M. Debruner, "Tourism in Ghana: The Representation of Slavery and the Return of Black Diaspora," *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 98, No. 2, (1996), p. 293.
11. W.S. Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy, 1957 – 1966: Diplomacy, Ideology, and the New State* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1969), p. 6.
12. Gaines, *American Africans in Ghana: Black Expatriates in the Civil Rights Era*, p. 90. Gaines argues that Harlem may well have exerted a much greater impact on Nkrumah than his autobiography discloses.
13. Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy, 1957 – 1966: Diplomacy, Ideology, and the New State*, p. xvii.
14. *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8.
15. A. Adu Boahen, *Ghana: Evolution and Change in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (London: Longman Group Ltd., 1975).
16. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
17. For a detailed discussion of Neoliberalism see Catherine Kingfisher and Jeff Maskovsky, "Introduction: The Limits of Neoliberalism," *Critique of Anthropology*, Vol. 28 (2008). See also Robert W. Strayer, *Ways of the World: A Brief Global History with Sources Volume 2 Since 1500* (Boston: Bedford/St.

- Martin's, 2011), pp. 1133 – 1166. See also Manfred B. Steger and Ravi K. Roy, *Neoliberalism: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).
18. Osei-Tutu Brempong, "The African American Factor in the Commodification of Ghana's Slave Castles," A Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Historical Society of Ghana, July 25 – 28, 2002. The number of potential middle-income African Americans quoted here is interesting. It seems inconsistent with the facts on the ground regarding the population of African Americans and their economic status. Be that as it may, it still speaks to the issue that most Ghanaians know that a good number of African Americans are of better economic circumstances than most Africans.
 19. Taking documented transits into consideration Ghana is the third most important travel and tourism destination in West Africa after Senegal and Nigeria. See Euro-monitor International, 2000, p. 1.
 20. Foreign exchange earnings from Tourism came in the form of transportation fares (airlines, bus, taxi, and other forms of public or mass transportation), spending on food and beverages, hotel and hostel accommodation, leisure, entertainment, shopping, etc.
 21. See Debrunner, "Tourism in Ghana: The Representation of Slavery and the Return of Black Diaspora," and Brempong, "The African American Factor in the Commodification of Ghana's Slave Castles," for a detailed account of these issues.
 22. PANAFEST is the acronym for the Pan African Historical Theatre Festival.
 23. *Nkosuo* and *Mpuntu* are Akan words for development, progress, and success, *hin* means chief or king; thus an *Nkosuohin* or *Mpuntuhin* refers either to a development or progress chief / king. The existence of these indigenous positions shows that Akan communities, like all others, appreciate the beneficence of development in assuring the betterment of life.
 24. Yaa Asantewaa and Seestah Imahkus, Personal Interviews, July 9, 2009.
 25. These projects have included but not limited to school buildings, beach resorts, clinics and health posts, road construction, etc.
 26. Daniel Spence and Kwame Cooper, Personal Interviews, July 9, 2009.
 27. Stephon Shabaaz, Personal Interview July 10, 2009.
 28. Supi Kobina Minah, Personal Interview July 10, 2009.
 29. Jake Obetsebi Lamptey, Minister of Tourism and Diaspora Relations, 2006.