

Ghana Studies Council Newsletter

Issue 21 (2008)



Chair's Remarks

Dennis Laumann
The University of Memphis



Welcome to a delayed but, I hope you will agree, enhanced Ghana Studies Council (GSC) Newsletter! Since the last issue, the GSC (like Ghana itself) experienced a democratic leadership transition as outgoing Chair Roger Gocking handed over the executive office to me. Roger since has retired from teaching at Mercy College but of course remains an active scholar and graciously contributed an article to the present newsletter in addition to generously offering his advice and assistance to me.

You will notice two major changes to the newsletter. First, I have replaced the "Summer/Fall" dating scheme with an annual format. My goal, unfortunately not met with the present issue, is to publish the newsletter in December or January so I can report on the GSC annual meeting (which usually takes place in October or November) and initiate the new year's membership drive in a timely manner. Second, the newsletter now features color photographs to compliment our articles and reports, particularly those presenting new research (see, for example, the pieces by Ama de-Graft Aikins and Roger Gocking). I welcome your feedback on the newsletter as well as suggestions for future issues.

Our annual meeting at the African Studies Association's (ASA)

51st conference in Chicago in November 2008 was well-attended and as always lively. GSC members approved a number of proposed changes (see box on following page). I announced an initiative, the "Renew plus New" Membership Drive, to substantially increase our numbers. I am asking all GSC members not only to renew their GSC membership, but to recruit a new member to our organization. Many of us have colleagues across campus as well as friends at other institutions who specialize in Ghana yet do not belong to the GSC. Take a look through our 2008 membership directory in this newsletter (beginning on page 19) and if you do not see that colleague or friend listed, please forward the 2009 membership form (back page) and encourage them to join.

The GSC also sponsored two very successful panels at the 2008 ASA under the theme "Ghana @ 50: Celebrating the Nation," organized and chaired by Carola Lentz (Johannes Gutenberg University of Mainz) and Isidore Lobnibe (Western Oregon University). We will continue our tradition of sponsoring two panels at the ASA this November in New Orleans. Johanna Svanikier (University of Oxford) has put together two apt and exciting panels on Ghana's 2008 elections for the ASA's 52nd Annual Meeting.

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Another of our initiatives is to expand our organization's presence at conferences beyond the ASA. The GSC sponsored a panel at this month's Africa-Europe Group for Interdisciplinary Studies' (AEGIS) 3rd European Conference on African Studies in Leipzig, Germany. I chaired the panel entitled "New Research in Ghanaian Colonial History" which featured Gracia Clark (Indiana University), Giancarlo Pichillo (University of Siena), Carina Ray (Fordham University), and Naaborko Sackeyfio (Dartmouth College). And I am pleased to note the current AEGIS President is GSC member Paul Nugent (University of Edinburgh).

A third initiative is to reinstate the GSC Research Grant Program. This year, our organization will award two grants in the amount of \$500 each to support research carried out by Ghana-based faculty, researchers, and graduate students. Please review the Research Grant Program description and application (pages 11-12) and if you qualify, submit an application, or if you do not meet the criteria, forward it to a colleague or student who does.

A final important piece of news to share is the appointment of two new editors for our journal, *Ghana Studies*. After a call for nominations at the 2008 annual meeting and a review of applicants in consultation with the GSC Advisory Board, I am proud to announce Akosua Adomako (University of Ghana) and Stephan Miescher (University of California, Santa Barbara) as the new editors. Akosua and Stephan, like their predecessors, both bring strong records of scholarship, editing, and as importantly, cross-Atlantic collaboration to their positions (see page 15). They will take over the journal after the current editors, Lynne Brydon (University of Birmingham) and Takyiwaa Manuh (University of Ghana), publish their fifth and final issue of *Ghana Studies* (vol. 10, 2007) later this year. The new editors will be assisted at the University of Wisconsin African Studies Program by Lisa Bintrim, replacing Peter Quella, who earned his PhD and moved to South Africa last year. Please join me in welcoming Akosua, Stephan, and Lisa to *Ghana Studies* and extending our appreciation to Lynne, Takyiwaa, and Peter for several years of innovative and engaging research presented in our journal.

Let me use this opportunity to thank Ama de-Graft Aikins and Roger Gocking for contributing their fascinating research reports and photos to this newsletter as well as Ted Maris-Wolf for his conference report. My research assistant, Marissa King, spent many hours designing and formatting this issue and Carina Ray kindly agreed to copy edit. Larry Yarak (Texas A&M University) not only maintains the GSC website, but also is an

invaluable resource whenever a question arises about the organization's history and procedures. Finally, on behalf of all GSC members, I thank the Department of History at The University of Memphis, particularly Karen Bradley, for its generous support of our organization.

I hope you enjoy this expanded newsletter. Please send your short articles, conference reports and announcements, research queries, and photos to us so the GSC Newsletter remains a vital resource for all scholars of Ghana. And, please take a few minutes right now to renew your membership and help us recruit a new member. Let's make our "Renew plus New" 2009 Membership Drive a great success!

Memphis, June 2009

GSC 2008 Annual Meeting

The following changes were approved by GSC members at the 2008 annual meeting in Chicago:

- Raise dues beginning in 2009 to the following, including subscription to *Ghana Studies*:
Graduate students outside Africa: \$15
Africa-based members: dues-exempt
All other members: \$30;
- Increase GSC Newsletter institutional subscription rate from \$20 to \$25;
- Create Advisory Board comprised of former GSC Chairs to assist current Chair in decision-making, especially in relation to expenditures; and
- Reinstate GSC Research Grants for Ghana-based faculty, researchers, and graduate students with two annual awards at \$500 each.

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Reflections on Ghanaian Art in Ghana's Jubilee Year

By Ama de-Graft Aikins

University of Cambridge and the London School of Economics

Art is all around us. Drive through any major town in Ghana. You are bound to see, at some point, a row of signboards bearing the faces of Kwame Nkrumah, John Agyekum Kufour, Otumfuo Osei Tutu II, Jerry John Rawlings, Nelson Mandela, Bill Clinton, and other national and world leaders in uncanny likeness or dismal caricature. Navigate a major roundabout and you might spot a monument – J.B Danquah at Osu, Accra; Komfo Anokye at Bantama, Kumasi; Monica Amekoafia, the first Miss Ghana, at the town centre, Hohoe. Stop for a moment and take in what is around you. The stalls selling multi-coloured batik and tie-dye, the pottery shops, the makeshift galleries for wood carvings and woven baskets, the sculptured vegetable and fruit stands, the mass produced framed portraits of icons, symbols of everyday life and wise sayings. Visit any plush hotel with one or more stars and you cannot fail to notice rows of paintings by local artists, lining the lobby walls, positioned to be appreciated or purchased. In your own home there might be variants of these artefacts: a *Gye Nyame* wood carving, a generic portrait of Jesus Christ, or an abstract oil painting on the wall; batik fabric transformed into a table cloth, cushion covers or curtains; a leather rug or footrest from Tamale on the living room floor; the old Asante *asesegua* sitting in the kitchen corner.

Art means different things to different people: a fundamental source of visual stimulation, the highest form of aesthetic pleasure, a source of income, a form of therapy, a political tool, a resource for development. “Art is about life. Artists are a precious human resource.”¹ However, the complex significance of art is often undervalued and the future prospects of those who produce it in various forms are under increasing threat.

The arts - music, theatre, visual - are generally marginalised in Ghana's development agenda. The visual arts face particularly tough challenges. Over the last few years, the media has highlighted the neglect of the theatre arts and the music industry. Theatre artists bemoan a severe lack of funding to create and produce quality work; musicians castigate a growing counterfeiting culture that denies them the benefit of full sales and a weak administrative body that fails to ensure appropriate payment of royalties. The government has begun to take note. The most recent Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy document (GPRS II) observed:

The music and film industry is fast-growing with unlimited potential. As one of Ghana's most significant pioneer Industries, the...industry is a powerful means of enhancing the country's identity and distinctiveness, while simultaneously creating employment, developing human skills and generating social capital and cohesion. However...it is infused with the perennial problems of lack of access to finance, limited application of modern technology, lack of effective laws and regulations to protect intellectual property rights, low level of awareness on intellectual property rights, lack of enforcement and supervision of laws and regulations, and inade-

quate export promotion services. One of the most devastating aspects of this legacy is that local music and film industry is not developing as fast as it should.²

The visual arts also constitute “a powerful means of enhancing the country's identity and distinctiveness, while simultaneously creating employment, developing human skills and generating social capital and cohesion.” Visual artists also face the range of “perennial problems” attributed to the music and film industries. Yet in media and official accounts their public significance and role rarely feature. This discursive absence works its way into the arena of practical commitment.

The year-long celebration of Ghana@50 highlighted this discrepancy most acutely. The history and contributions of the music industry and the theatre arts to Ghana's national identity and development were woven into official celebrations. Business sponsorship ensured that major cities were treated to a ‘From Highlife to Hiplife’ concert featuring iconic highlife and hiplife artists such as Koo Nimo, Nana Ampadu, C.K. Mann, Kojo Antwi, Amandzeba and Reggie Rockstone. The Ghana@50 secretariat funded Ghana@50 Theatre Classics – an impressive monthly line-up of twelve classic plays from Ama Ata Aidoo, J.B Danquah, Martin Owusu, Kobina Sekyi, Efua Sutherland, and other Ghanaian playwrights showcased at Accra's National Theatre. Compared to these solid public investments, the visual arts fared badly. Old monuments were revamped and new ones commissioned in Accra and other major cities and historic towns. There was official acknowledgement of artists who played specific roles in Ghana's independence – for example Madame Theodosia Okoh, who designed the nation's flag. There was a small exhibition at the National Museum featuring local painters. However, these were minor gestures. Their impact on public consciousness was not as hard hitting as the musical and theatrical events. At times, they appeared as after-thoughts or as by-products of commercial activities. The branding of public monuments with commercial products is a case in point. Driving around revamped circles in Accra one often wonders whether their monuments exist to serve the financial fortunes of Nestle, Unilever, Guinness and other multinational companies or the memories of Ghana's national heroes.³ The editorial of a recent issue of ArtFOCUS, a local art magazine, criticised the official neglect of the visual arts in the Ghana@50 celebrations:

Officials have used art in a functional sense: celebratory monuments, statues, busts and rockeries have been commissioned...visibly sponsored by the business community... Beyond this vivid commercialisation of ‘public art’ official engagement with art has been nil. Many may have noted how the passing of two Ghanaian Art greats - Mrs Grace Kwami last year, Sacka Acquaye this year - went unnoticed in official circles. This and other forms of apathy towards Ghana's art scene compelled the art community to celebrate itself... There was a clear difference between official and art community celebrations: the former tended towards inflict-

ing mass produced mediocrity on the public, the latter towards collective self-reflection of the meaning of independence for artists and the public.

Art was not always marginalised in Ghana. Its low status in official and public consciousness is a product of complex factors. Ghana has a rich art history. Its roots in antiquity have been traced to ninth century West African wall paintings and sculptures. Its 18th century Ewe and Asante ceremonial *kente* was inspired by centuries-old cultural customs. Indigenous Ghanaian art forms have evolved by incorporating external artistic influences from other parts of Africa, Asia and the West into their repertoire. For example, while *kente's* origins are undisputedly Ewe its evolution from a royal cloth in Eweland and then in Asante to a public ceremonial cloth beyond these regions took on foreign elements: specifically the weaving of silk threads, imported from Asia, into the traditional cotton. Ghanaian art and artistic expression, like that elsewhere, has evolved through a dynamic exchange between internal artistic vision and the external demand from changing times and public tastes. Similarly, the livelihoods of Ghanaian artists, like others elsewhere, have always depended on the patronage of local or foreign art lovers and collectors.

At Independence a new phase of Ghanaian artistic expression was born when art schools and colleges were established in Accra (Achimota School), Kumasi (College of Art at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology), and Winneba. Heavily supported by the Nkrumah administration - which used art and artists systematically to forge its project of national unity and enforce the image of Nkrumah as a pan-African leader par excellence - these art institutions were run in the first decade or so by British artists and art theorists. This period nurtured a new vibrant community of Ghanaian artists - for example Kofi Antubam, Oku Ampofo, Vincent Kofi and Ablade Glover - who produced 'formal art' with Afro-European sensibilities. The art community, like several cultural and administrative institutions, was stifled during the 1970s and 1980s era of coups, successive military government rule and structural adjustment. Many prominent formal artists, like doctors, lawyers, and university lecturers, migrated to countries that allowed them to produce art without fear or restrictions. Other artists stayed: some made bold political statements with their art (e.g. the Akwapim Six), some struggled to make a living underground, others abandoned art for more viable careers and vocations. Indigenous art production stalled.

The current situation for Ghanaian art and artists is mixed. There was a resurgence of formal artistic expression in the 1990s led by visionary painters and sculptors who have since fashioned international careers locally (e.g. Wiz Kudowor, Kofi Setordji), in other parts of Africa (e.g. El Anatsui in Nigeria) or in the West (e.g. Kwesi Owusu-Ankomah in Europe). They are among Africa's most renowned artists and often feature in African-centred exhibitions, collections and anthologies, produced on or outside the continent.⁴ But such success belongs to a tiny minority of artists. Many artists - whether self or formally trained - cannot make a living purely from their art. Kobina Nyarko, a promising young artist with Industrial Arts degree from KNUST's College of Art observes: "Industrial art students end up not using their degrees; there is no finance to set up studios or businesses."⁵ Similarly while some indigenous

arts have flourished in the last fifty years (e.g. *kente* weaving, wood carving, bead making⁶), others are dying (e.g. the pottery industry in the Eastern region, a predominantly female domain). Sign painting, the vibrant and most visible genre of commercial art in Ghana and the premier training ground for many young artists, faces imminent demise with the arrival of graphic design technology. And we cannot ignore the power of cheap goods from China and India - portraits, ornaments, soft furnishings - to undermine the livelihoods of local artists financially (by offering cheaper alternatives to a buying public) and symbolically (by transforming lay representations and legitimisation of functional art).



Wooden bowls from the Ashanti Region
(Courtesy of Ama de-Graft Aikins)

The Nkrumah administration strategy of ring-fenced funding for the arts has not been adopted by subsequent governments. Local artists are more likely to be supported by foreign governments, institutions or individuals. Alliance Francaise, Goethe Institut and the British Council regularly hold exhibitions featuring different genres of Ghanaian art. These foreign institutions are also actively involved in development projects that utilise local art and push its functional boundaries. For example, British Council's recent hosting of a conference in February 2008 on art and climate change has led to collaborative projects between local artists and foreign NGOs on waste management in Ghana. But foreign support is a double-edged sword. Over the years the politics of funding and patronage has transformed the very nature of artistic expression and the accessibility of artistic products. Because foreigners support and buy more Ghanaian art than Ghanaians do⁷ artists produce for foreign - and predominantly Euro-American - sensibilities. In the aforementioned issue of ArtFOCUS, a Canadian fine artist observed of her Ghanaian counterparts during a working visit to Accra:

I was surprised at how preoccupied artists were with developing, not ideas, but a marketable style. They were not as concerned with ideas and styles that were being developed by artists in my hometown of Toronto, as they were with whether the artists there were selling well. To me, there were many more questions to ask about art or through art, in Ghana or elsewhere, beyond: '*Do you think they would buy this in America?*'

Even in the realm of indigenous art - from art centre stalls in Accra and Tamale to self-styled galleries and museums springing up across the country — there is a new wave of deliberate

'antiquing' of traditional artefacts to satisfy the western aesthetic palate.



ArtHAUS workshops on batik making and painting
(Courtesy of Kofi Setordji)

Ghanaian art patrons do exist and own formidable collections, but they do not receive the credit and support due them. In March 2007, Mr Seth Dei, a powerful local art collector with an extensive collection of Ghanaian paintings dating back to the early 1960s, signed a deal with New York University to have his collection stored. Mr Dei's decision was influenced in part by a lack of appropriate institutional space in Ghana to hold and maintain his collection. The loss of the Dei family collection to a foreign institution was sad. But even sadder was the absolute silence that met the deal: there was no public discourse on the merits or demerits of the decision. Kwamina Ewusie, co-founder of African Encounters, a San Diego-based art agency that represents Ghanaian and other African artists, captured sentiment in the art community:

In addition to the lack of institutions in Ghana to care and maintain the artwork, I think [Seth Dei] understands that value in the art world is sadly determined by the West. Putting his collection in the trust of NYU in that regards is actually a positive thing for Ghanaian art, in that the western art world will lend Ghanaian art the legitimacy and value it deserves by featuring the work in exhibitions they curate. Overall, I think it was a good move, but I do agree that the move did not trigger discussion in the media, which is another symptom of the media's (and society's) lack of reverence for the arts.

What does the future hold for Ghanaian art? Saka Acquaye, the late great Ghanaian sculptor, playwright and musician argued:

We do not take our own art and culture seriously – that is why Ghanaian and African artists are not encouraged by our own people. We must place our art and culture in a more modern perspective. People must be made aware of these values – because it is from them that we can rediscover ourselves and draw the inspiration to face our national responsibilities.⁸

Many might merely echo this critical observation and recommendation. But a growing number of local artists, art collaborators and patrons are actually doing something. During Ghana's jubilee year it is this community who made the presence of Ghanaian art felt in Ghana and abroad. In Accra in April 2007, "Independence In dependence" – an exhibition of paintings, sculpture and installations reflecting on Ghana's fifty years of independence – was curated at the Artists Alliance Gallery by Odile Agyare who co-founded and manages Nubuke Foundation.⁹ The work of women artists, a marginalised sub-group, was showcased by The Loom, Ghana's oldest gallery, and through the Women Artists Institute's (WAI) art competition titled "Engraving the Achievements of Women: 50 years of Ghana's Development." In San Diego, a year-long exhibition of Ghanaian paintings was curated at the Museum of Man by Kwamina Ewusie's African Encounters. Institutions run by artists, such as Professor Ablade Glover's Artists Alliance Gallery and Kofi Setordji's ArtHAUS, carried on their work of training, nurturing and representing local artists. These groups, like Virginia Ryan and Joe Nkrumah of FCA, believe that "art is about life" and "artists are a precious human resource." They are working to ensure that the art that surrounds us in our everyday lives, and the artists who produce it, flourish. They are nurturing that important minority of visionary artists who imagine beyond culture and produce innovative work that transforms the meanings we ascribe to art and to ourselves through art. They are lobbying to push forward progressive policies for the visual arts. The future of Ghanaian art needs all these elements.

Notes

1. Virginia Ryan and Prof. Joe Nkrumah, Foundation for Contemporary Arts (FCA), Ghana: <http://www.fcaghana.org>
2. Republic of Ghana (2005) Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS II) (2006-2009). National Development Planning Commission. Page 29.
3. A letter to NLO (Vol. 1, No 2) by Emmanuel Y. Ablo described the heavy commercialisation of public monuments thus: "When I drive or walk by these statues I am incensed and deeply offended by the sight of all the billboards that clutter...the statues of our heroes. There are billboards advertising this or that alcoholic or non-alcoholic beverage; or promoting one or the other product or service. In all my travels in South Africa, Zimbabwe, Great Britain, the United States of America and other countries I have never encountered this kind of display of gross disrespect for a nation's heroes. It just would not be tolerated in other countries. So why are we tolerating this?"
4. See for example UK's Africa '95, '05; *Contemporary African Art* (1999), *A History of Art in Africa* (2001), *African Art Now* (2005).
5. Kobina Nyarko Profile: www.african-encounters.com
6. In 2007, for example, Ghanaian bead makers from the Krobo area were flown to Tanzania by a Tanzanian gallerist to teach and train local bead-makers. The rise of *kente* as an iconic cloth for pan-African expression and emancipation supports local kente weavers.
7. For example, the manager of the Artists Alliance Gallery, Lily Sefa-Boa-kye, notes that 80% of buyers are foreigners (mainly Euro-American).
8. James Gibbs (2007). "Saka Acquaye: A talent is gone." *Daily Graphic*, March 31.
9. www.nubukefoundation.org
10. www.african-encounters.com

Researching Dams in Ghana

By Roger Gocking

Mercy College, Past-Chair of the Ghana Studies Council

Recently I have become interested in the history of dams in Africa and Ghana offers more than enough such examples to whet the researcher's appetite. In addition, in Ghana there is significant historical depth to this project as dam-building in Ghana began in the early days of colonialism and continues up to the present with the ongoing construction of the country's third hydroelectric dam on the Volta River at Bui Gorge. Not surprisingly there is considerable variety in the types of dams that do exist and their environments. They vary from small masonry dams like Brimsu on the Kakum River, which is still the main source of water for Cape Coast and was built in 1927, to the far better-known massive rock fill Akosombo Dam on the Volta River built in 1965, which created the largest man-made lake in the world.

Clearly the first step in this project has been to familiarize myself with what these dams look like, and this has taken me outside what has been my normal ambit of operations in Ghana, archival repositories. These dams are all over Ghana and for someone without personal transportation just getting to them can be a challenge. Akosombo is undoubtedly the easiest of all to visit as it is something of a tourist destination in Ghana. Getting to the town of Atimpoku/Akosombo by tro tro is simple, and then the Volta River Authority's (VRA) office is a short walk away from the tro tro station in Akosombo. You pay a small fee and if you have no transport of your own you pay another modest fee for the vehicle that will take you to the dam. It is about five kilometers away and you have to pass through a security gate. On one occasion, a holiday, I waited at the gate for a group of tourists to come by and joined forces with them. It was a reasonable walk in the hot sun, but there was no vehicle fee that way.

The guides vary and some do better than others but from my last visit, which was in December 2008, it seemed as if there had been some attempt to make them better informed and able to answer questions. You walk along the top of the dam and look at the intakes for the dam's six penstocks, and from the water marks on the concrete below you get a good idea of how much the level of the dam has varied. I was there in 2006 when the dam was headed for an all-time low of 234.96 feet (reached in 2007) and again in 2008 when two plentiful rainy seasons had served to raise the level to within ten feet of the top (276 feet). The recently retrofitted generating station and switchyard can also be seen very well from the top of the dam. However, the best overall view of the entire complex is from the deck of the VRA's Volta Hotel. A tour of the power station with its turbines and generators is not part of the general tour but can be arranged. So far I have not done this, but in 2006 I had an extensive tour of the Kpong facility which is about 25 kilometers down river. It is a little different from the Akosombo power plant in that it has Kaplan type turbines rather than Francis turbines but in general there are obvious similarities.

The Akosombo Dam created an enormous lake that stretches for about 400 kilometers all the way to Buiepe on the Tamale/Kintampo road, and provides a major inland waterway from

southern Ghana to the north. To get a sense of what this means I took the overnight ferry, the Yapei Queen, from Akosombo Port to Yeji, a distance of 253 kilometers. There are two first class cabins but for the rest accommodation consists of hard wooden benches, and when the wind does not blow the attention of clouds of hungry mosquitoes. What struck me noticeably was how little lakeside population there was. Particularly was this so in the southern end of the lake. Altogether the ferry made six stops before arriving in Yeji 29 hours later. Kete Krachi was the only town along the way and the rest were small villages. Ironically the boat's main cargo consisted of about eleven skids piled high with bundled packages of drinking water sachets. "Pure water" of this nature has taken Ghana by storm and is available almost everywhere. It generates vast amounts of plastic waste that in urban areas has become a serious environmental problem. However, most of the cargo space on the Yapei Queen was filled with empty crates that were to be filled with yams for the return journey. The savanna area of the north, rather than the rain forest, is the "yam basket" of Ghana. Nevertheless, it remained something of a mystery to me as to where all the yams were going to come from to fill the literally dozens and dozens of large crates.



Sunyani Polytechnic students inspecting diversion channel at the Bui dam site
(Courtesy of Roger Gocking)

The much more challenging dam-visit was to the Bui dam site in western Brong Ahafo. I first did this in 2006 before the construction of the dam had begun so as to get an idea of what the pristine environment looked like. Transportation was more of a challenge than getting to Akosombo. I even made things harder by coming from Bole, a small town to the north on the Wa/Techiman road. It meant hiring a young man with a motorcycle and negotiating kilometers and kilometers of badly rutted, lateritic dirt roads. He assured me that there would be a bridge across the Black Volta near the planned dam site. I failed to see how this could be possible and was proven right. However, what neither of us knew was that there was a small ferry across the river at this location. The ferry man had obviously dealt

with small motorcycles before and was not the least phased by our arrival. It was also very obvious that the dam site would be in the Bui Gorge where the Banda Hills come all the way down to the river. I took lots of pictures of the “before” vista, and then we continued along the old paved road that the Russians had constructed in the 1960s, when they were investigating building this dam, to Bui National Park. It was about three kilometers away and the park’s buildings consist of the wooden bungalows that the Russians constructed as their camp.

The buildings are in various stages of decay and attest to just how much this national park is the stepchild of the Ghana national parks system. Nevertheless, about 2,000 adventurous souls do visit. They don’t come from Bole on motorcycles but from Wenchi, about 85 kilometers to the south. For example, while I was there some Germans showed up in a taxi they had hired in Wenchi. The main attraction is the black hippopotamus population that lives in the Black Volta and on its banks. It is the largest of two such populations in Ghana and one of the largest in West Africa. The best time to see them is in the dry season when the river dries up considerably leaving pools that the hippos frequent. I was there right at the end of the rainy season, a generous one with a very full Black Volta, and it was not an opportune time to go looking for hippos.



Jama settlement with borehole pump in foreground
(Courtesy of Roger Gocking)

In November 2008 I returned to Bui National Park, this time by tro tro from Wenchi. Sinohydro, the Chinese company that has been contracted to build the Bui Dam, was hard at work. The road from Wenchi had undergone major improvement and what had been a four-hour drive from Bui to Wenchi in 2006, and had required pushing the tro tro up one particularly steep and muddy hill, now took less than two hours. It is not yet paved all the way but soon will be to accommodate the heavy trucks bringing in supplies for the dam’s construction.

It was drier than in 2006 and I began with the obligatory hike/canoe paddle to see the hippos. A couple were obliging enough to stick their massive snouts out of the muddy water but National Geographic-quality pictures were hard to come by. These animals will be very much affected by the filling of the dam and their fate has generated considerable international controversy. British biologist, Daniel Bennett, who was studying the flora and fauna of Bui National Park, which will lose 21 percent of its area when flooding is complete, was banned in 2001

by the Ghana government from continuing his research because of his opposition to the dam. What will happen to the hippos no one really knows. Undoubtedly, however, local people will be affected and I spent considerable time discussing with some of them how they felt about the dam which was going to have an enormous impact on their lives. Two of the villages we hiked through were going to be flooded when the lake behind the dam filled. There was considerable apprehension on their part especially since some of them (Ewes) already had unhappy experiences with resettlement when the Akosombo dam filled.

Four villages have already been resettled and about two weeks later I made yet another trip to the Bui dam site to see what this had meant for the over 200 people involved. Their resettlement village, Jama Resettlement Site (see photo left), was on the north bank of the Black Volta and this meant approaching from Bole, and once again getting back on a motorcycle. Luckily most of the main Wa/Techiman road had been paved in the intervening two years. Even the dirt road from the roadside village of Banda Nkwanta to Jama Village was in better shape. Dam building is obviously playing an important role in improving transportation infrastructure in this very underdeveloped area of Brong Ahafo.

There was clearly dissatisfaction with the new arrangement on the part of many of the new residents who seemed to have little to occupy their time. While I was at the site the Bui Power Authority’s environmental officer and some of his staff arrived in a pickup. He was obviously unhappy to see me there and wanted to know what I was doing snooping around and “snapping pictures.” It took a while to set him at ease, but we eventually were able to discuss the challenges he was facing with the resettlement program. The resettlement of the 90,000 people affected by the flooding of the Akosombo and Kpong Dams has come in for considerable criticism. Far less people will be involved in the case of the Bui Dam (1,700), but even so adhering to the World Commission on Dam’s charge that “adversely affected people become the first among beneficiaries” is not going to be an easy task. Building large dams is obviously not as neutral as building roads, stadiums and court houses which Chinese construction companies are now doing in Ghana.

Obviously I also wanted to see the dam site and this required some finagling. At the end of my visit to the hippos I walked with my armed park ranger to the dam site’s main gate, and presented myself as an unexpected visitor. Luckily for me, I arrived at the same time as a bus load of students and their instructors from the Sunyani Polytechnic Institute. Ghanaians are flexible and it was quickly decided that I should join this group of over 60 people (see photo previous page).

For about two hours we were given a tour of the operation. The first phase of construction of what will be a 90 meter high roller, compacted concrete (RCC) gravity dam was just about finished, about a month ahead of schedule. The river diversion channel had been completed, which will eventually be incorporated into the overall construction of the dam and will serve as a release passage. The up stream and downstream coffer dams were just about closed, and pumping out the water enclosed by these structures was about to begin. Indeed, two days later President Kufuor was to visit the dam site formally to close

these coffer dams. Work was pretty much finished as far as the preparation of the abutment area on the right side of the river was concerned and was well advanced on the other side.

The second phase of construction was about to begin and will consist of the dam itself along with two small saddle dams to the southwest of the main dam. The main dam will consist of a spillway with five gates, a water intake on the right side of the river (where the diversion channel has been constructed), a power intake on the other side of the dam which will feed three penstocks and will provide water for three 133 MW vertical shaft Francis-type turbines. Twenty meters downstream will be the powerhouse and switchyard which will transform the power from the dam to 161 kV for transmission to the presently existing 161 kV Techiman-Wa line at the village of Teselima, 15 kilometers away. Finally, there will be a bridge across the river close to the tail race pool.

The main purpose of the dam is to generate electricity, but there are also plans to use it to irrigate 30,000 hectares of land down stream from the dam, to establish fisheries on the lake formed by the dam, to develop eco-tourism in the area and to construct a new city to accommodate 500,000 persons which would make it the third largest city in Ghana today. It is to be designed as a “cosmopolitan” city with a university, other educational and research facilities, high and low density residential areas, factories and an airport. The entire area is to be declared an economic free zone and be part of the Ghana Free Zone Board regime that was set up in 1995. It has been estimated that the city-constructing project will create about 4,000 jobs.

One would have to be a particularly hardcore optimist to think that all of this will materialize. Similar promises were made for Akosombo but the reality was much more modest. To get an idea of what the Bui project might actually look like when all the promised ancillary development takes place I went to Burkina Faso to look at the Bagré Project on the White Volta, known in that country as the Nakambé River. This project consists of a small hydro dam that has an installed capacity of 16 MW and also irrigates 15,000 hectares, much of which is devoted to wetland rice production. There are also cattle-raising, fish hatcheries and ecotourism components of the project. Before the construction of the dam in 1992 the area was basically unpopulated because of black flies and the onchocerciasis that they spread. Now more than 10,000 people live in and around the town of Bagré that has sprung up a few kilometers away from the dam site. To a lesser extent the Bui area also has this problem and before dam building could begin in 2007 there was an extensive spraying campaign to control these insects.

I was lucky to meet one of the agricultural officers who works on the rice farming part of the project and spoke far better English than my inimitable French. He hosted me for two days at his house in Bagré and gave me a red carpet tour of the project including an extensive visit to the generating facility. The overall project encompasses a large area and this meant kilometers and kilometers sitting, once again, on the back of a small motor cycle.

Bagré is hardly “one of Africa’s most livable and cosmopolitan cities of the world” as the BPA’s literature describes the Bui City-to-be. Instead, it is like most recently-established African

townships, much unplanned, dusty and rather ramshackle. Yet it does have several high schools and primary schools, rice husking mills, lots of shops and a health clinic. According to my guide the rice farmers in the project make seven times as much as typical farmers in Burkina Faso. However, people in the area have to contend with high rates of malaria on account of the large amount of stagnant water in the rice paddies that offer mosquitoes excellent breeding grounds.

Bagré represents a realistic picture of what the Bui project may well become, and makes you conscious of the balance between the pros and cons in all dam-building projects. In the 1960s Akosombo was hailed as a “technological triumph and a symbol of modern nationhood.” Recent load-shedding exercises due to insufficient water in the Lake Volta have taken much of the luster off this earlier vision. Dams never live up to what their builders promise. Nevertheless, they are major instruments of economic and social transformation, and with all their long-term complex implications well worthy of serious academic study on the part of historians.

IIAS: A New Accra-based Multidisciplinary Institute

By Ama de-Graft Aikins

The International Institute for the Advanced Study of Cultures, Institutions and Economic Enterprise (hereafter IIAS) was established in Accra in 2006 by three senior Ghanaian academics based in Ghana, the US and Canada: Irene Odotei, a professor of History at the University of Ghana; Emmanuel Akyeampong, a professor of History at Harvard University and Ato Quayson, a professor of English and Literary Studies at the University of Toronto. The Institute has expanded to include five Ghanaian academics based in Ghana (Ernest Aryeetey, professor of Economics, Raymond Atuguba a legal scholar and William Baah-Boateng an economist, all based at University of Ghana, Legon), the UK (Ama de-Graft Aikins, a social psychologist based at Cambridge University) and the Netherlands (Salvador L. d’Souza). Collectively the institute is organised around these eight core fellows who have established careers in history, economics, traditional governance, gender and policy studies, cultural and literary studies, law, new media, social psychology and health.

The aim of the institute is to pursue multi-disciplinary research into African cultures, institutions (legal, social, cultural, political, economic, health), enterprise and everyday life as a platform for institutional reform and the creation of more supple structures to meet new developmental challenges. Through multidisciplinary research fellows aim to develop African solutions to Africa’s complex problems, informed by current international scholarship, best policy practices, and emerging out of dialogue between academic researchers, policy makers, and government officials. These aims are informed by fellows’ belief that the desirable goals of democracy and economic development can be achieved within the framework of indigenous

cultures, as has been demonstrated by Japan and the Asian Tigers. African cultural values, systems and practices must take centre stage in the quest for development and for attaining a better standard of living across the region.

IIAS Launch and Activities

IIAS was officially launched on 21st August 2007 at the International Conference Centre in Accra. Emmanuel Akyeampong gave the inaugural lecture titled '*Slave Routes, Slave Roots and Nation-Building: Ghana, Ghanaians Abroad and the African Diaspora in the 21st Century*'. Akyeampong's lecture reviewed the history of the Atlantic slave trade and New World slavery and its implications for African and Ghanaian development. Given in the year that commemorated the 200th anniversary of the British abolition of the transatlantic slave trade and the 50th anniversary of Ghana's political independence from the British, Akyeampong's lecture provided an important historical context for understanding Ghana's relations with the West, changing relations between Ghanaians and African Americans, and how development projects based on diasporic and transnational partnerships could be envisioned and implemented. The inaugural ceremony and lecture was attended by over 200 individuals drawn from academia, government and non-government institutions, the lay public and the media.

Institute activities after the launch have centred on joint publishing and the organisation of public lectures and workshops.

Emmanuel Akyeampong and Ama de-Graft Aikins co-wrote an article reflecting on Ghana's 50th independence anniversary for *Transition* (April 2008 volume; see website). The article documented the year-long celebration charting the progress of public discourse and debate reported by the mass media and located these contemporary events within Ghana's colonial history and struggle for independence. Raymond Atuguba and William Baah-Boateng have published articles on economics and law in the *New Legon Observer*, Ghana's premier intellectual magazine. Ato Quayson published a topical article in the national newspaper the *Daily Graphic* offering a critical perspective on the sale of the government's ailing telecommunications company, Ghana Telecom, to the international telecommunications company Vodafone.

Ato Quayson also gave the first in a series of planned 'IIAS Summer Public Lectures' on 30th July 2008 at the British Council in Accra. Titled '*Globalization, Urban Growth and Social Inequalities: Interpreting Oxford Street, Accra*' Quayson's lecture documented and interpreted the history of 'Oxford Street' a once quiet residential Accra street that has been transformed into a commercialised street through globalisation processes. It drew from an ongoing interdisciplinary book project by Quayson which takes in insights from urban studies, anthropology, history and political science.

Finally, IIAS hosted an international workshop on African Agricultural Development on 5th and 6th September 2008 at its premises in Oyarifa, Accra. The workshop themed '*Improving African Agriculture for Accelerated Growth*', was developed by fellows Ernest Aryeetey and William Baah-Boateng. The workshop was driven by the premise that agriculture plays an important developmental role in African societies and economies. Agriculture employs over fifty percent of the labour

force, contributes over thirty percent of national income and generates about sixty percent of export earnings in most African countries. Despite its potential the agricultural sectors in many African countries face major challenges. Loss of land productivity through erosion, population pressure, unsustainable application of land resources, food shortages and the increasing importance of food imports and aid constitute some of the major challenges. The problems in this sector, like other African developmental problems, are complex and require complex solutions. The workshop brought together a multidisciplinary group of academics from Africa (Ghana, Kenya, Uganda, Benin), the US and the UK to discuss major challenges facing Africa's agricultural sector and to develop policy-oriented solutions. Topics included:

- The political economy of agricultural pricing policy in Africa (Robert Bates, Harvard University)
- Gendered labour and household incomes in the artisanal marine fishing industry in West Africa (Emmanuel Akyeampong, Harvard University and Irene Odotei, University of Ghana)
- Farming, tenure security, and local governance in contemporary African societies (Sara Berry, Johns Hopkins University)
- GM maize production in South Africa (Colin Thirtle and Jenifer Piesse, Imperial College, London)
- Enhancing agricultural productivity and incomes in Africa (Ernest Aryeetey and William Baah-Boateng, University of Ghana).



IIAS

(Courtesy of www.interias.com)

A range of stakeholders from farming, government, policy and donor communities participated in the workshop. The workshop will have two key outputs. The first output will be a conference report which will be disseminated to key stakeholders in Ghana and represented African countries to aid agricultural policy discussion and development. The second output will be an edited volume of the proceedings which is scheduled to be published by December 2009.

Future Directions

The Institute has seven core goals which inform future directions:

1. to initiate and facilitate original research and to conduct collaborative research with Ghanaian and non-Ghanaian scholars and institutions;
2. to consult for both government and non-government bodies in areas such as economics, law, institutional reform, gender and health;
3. to sponsor a monograph series on Economy and Society in Africa;
4. to create and maintain a public research and reference library that will be open to the public;
5. to assist in the reform and strengthening of tertiary institutions using the institute's convening power;
6. to sponsor public lectures and other forms of intellectual discourse forums (e.g. workshops, symposia, roundtables, panel discussions) on relevant topical information for the general public.
7. to publish occasional papers, maintain an electronic newsletter and website detailing the institute's activities.

At present collaborative research, the establishment of annual seminars and the institution of summer courses are at an advanced stage of development.

Research: The institute has five current research areas which are organised around fellows' disciplines and areas of expertise: (1) Institutions and Governance (Emmanuel Akyeampong and Irene Odotei); (2) Culture, Economic Enterprise and Economic Development (Ernest Aryeetey and William Baah-Boateng); (3) Law and Ethics (Raymond Atuguba); (4) Culture, Technology and Everyday Life (Ato Quayson); and (5) Health and the burden of disease (Ama de-Graft Aikins). Generally each research block begins with an international workshop or roundtable – such as the workshop conceptualised and convened by Ernest Aryeetey and William Baah-Boateng - which generates a set of research questions for fellows to develop projects around. The projects, though framed from the unique perspectives of particular disciplines, are conceptualized as multi-disciplinary and aim to draw on internal expertise and from collaborations with visiting fellows.

Seminars: In addition to the 'IIAS Summer Public Lecture' series, the institute aims to convene seminars on topical issues twice a year at the institute's premises. These seminars will typically bring together experts on the chosen issue to present and discuss research, practice and policy dimensions. The next scheduled seminar will focus on the Ghanaian Family and will take place in April 2009. Professor Christine Oppong (Cambridge and IIAS research fellow) who has conducted longitudinal work on the Ghanaian family, and has donated her research papers on the African family to the IIAS library, will be a keynote speaker. Also planned for the summer of 2009 (June 12-26) is a two-week seminar on Atlantic history organized by the Omohundro Institute of Early American History (William and Mary College, USA) and IIAS. The conveners for the seminar will be Professors Joseph Miller (University of Virginia) and Irene Odotei.

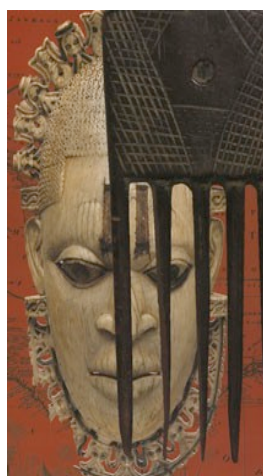
Summer courses: The institute plans to develop and offer summer courses to graduate students, practitioners, government

officials and development workers. Courses will be offered in three areas: (1) research methods; (2) proposal writing; and (3) academic subject areas, focusing on marginalised subjects such as Psychology and English (Literature). The first planned disciplinary course will focus on Psychology and African Development and will be taught by Ama de-Graft Aikins in August 2009.

IIAS actively seeks to affiliate scholars from Ghana and outside Ghana in the category of visiting fellows, who might work independently or collaboratively with the institute's core fellows, and to provide internships for Ghanaian and non-Ghanaian graduate students. A second category of "research fellow" is reserved for senior scholars who affiliate with IIAS in a long-term capacity. The institute offers a range of facilities for visiting and research fellows including rooms, catering, transport, a well-stocked library and research assistance. For further information on the institute visit the institute's website at www.interias.com or contact Emmanuel Akyeampong at akyeamp@fas.harvard.edu.

Omohundro Institute Conferences

By Ted Maris-Wolf
College of William & Mary



In early August 2007, three hundred university teachers from North America, Europe, the Caribbean, Latin America, and Africa, gathered in Accra and Elmina, Ghana, for a conference designed to examine two decisions that exerted a profound influence on the Atlantic world: Great Britain's 1807 decision to outlaw participation in the slave trade and the subsequent action of the United States to discontinue importing slaves in 1808. Organized by the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture in Williamsburg, Virginia, *"The bloody Writing is for ever torn": Domestic*

and International Consequences of the First Governmental Efforts to Abolish the Atlantic Slave Trade was one of the largest pan-African scholarly meetings of historians to be held in Africa in recent years.

The intellectual excitement the proceedings generated raised critical questions about the writing and dissemination of how Atlantic history should be approached in the twenty-first century. Whose voices will be heard? How will advances in academic scholarship and the debates new research inspires reach and be made relevant to students across the globe? Can barriers of language, nationalism, economic deprivation, and political instability be overcome in ways that will meaningfully transform university and secondary education? Is it possible to create lessons, curricula, and publications that transcend previous narratives written for particular language groups and national interests to create a new Atlantic history for a global age?

With the goal of expanding and deepening the connections among scholars from sub-Saharan Africa, Europe, and the Americas begun at the conference in 2007, The Omohundro Institute and the International Institute for the Advanced Study of Cultures, Institutions, and Economic Enterprise in Accra are hosting a two-week workshop, "Africa, Europe, and the Americas, 1500–1700," in Accra 12–26 July 2009. The workshop is sponsored by the Omohundro Institute, the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition at Yale University, and the International Institute for the Advanced Study of Cultures, Institutions, and Economic Enterprise.

Professor Irene K. Odotei of the University of Ghana and Professor Joseph C. Miller of the University of Virginia in the United States will lead the workshop. Professor Ronald Hoffman, Director of the Omohundro Institute and Professor Emmanuel Akyeampong of Harvard University and Senior Fellow, International Institute for the Advanced Study of Cultures, Institutions, and Economic Enterprise will also participate.

Professors Odotei and Miller will chair twice daily discussions of a wide range of current scholarship, based on materials to be circulated and considered in advance by all workshop participants. The first week will be devoted to readings and discussions along two tracks: (1) regional perspectives on the Atlantic

from Africa, Brazil, the Caribbean, and Europe, and (2) African regions' particular histories and cultures. The aim is to acquaint non-Africanist Atlanticists with African regional components of the field, including an emphasis on local sources and issues unfamiliar to non-specialists, and to allow Africa-based scholars to embed their regionally oriented scholarship in broader Atlantic contexts.

The entire proceedings of the 2007 conference are available on the Omohundro Institute's web site at <http://oieahc.wm.edu/conferences/ghana/sessions.html>.

In addition, a two-disc DVD set drawn from the 2007 conference is also available and captures the experience of holding a scholarly meeting on the abolition of the Atlantic slave trade in locations from which tens of thousands of slaves were shipped to the Americas and the West Indies. The first disc, *The bloody Writing is for ever torn*, illuminates the emotion and controversy involved in the memory of the Atlantic slave trade and its aftermath. The second disc, *The Abolition of the Atlantic Slave Trade: Origins, Effects, and Legacies*, is specifically designed for classroom use and highlights several of the major themes that emerged from the conference's papers, commentaries, and discussions. A Teacher's Guide setting the material in context is included. Further details can be found at: <http://oieahc.wm.edu/conferences/ghana/buyvideo.cfm>.

The Ghana Studies Council Research Grant Program

At its 2008 annual meeting, the Ghana Studies Council voted to reinstate and expand its annual research grant program.

The GSC will award two research grants in the amount of \$500 each. Graduate students, faculty, and researchers affiliated with a university department or institute in Ghana are eligible. Applications must consist of the following:

- (1) completed application form (see following page);
- (2) research proposal of approximately 500 words; and
- (3) a letter of recommendation (for graduate students, this should be from your primary advisor).

All documents should be emailed as Word documents to ghanastudiescouncil@gmail.com by 1 September 2009.

Applications will be reviewed by the GSC Research Grants Program Committee and decisions will be announced by early November. Recipients will be required to submit a research report which will be published in a future issue of the GSC newsletter.

Ghana Studies Council Research Grant Program

2009 Application Form

Check the appropriate box: ☐ Graduate Student ☐ Faculty ☐ Researcher

Title (check all that apply): ☐ Mr. ☐ Mrs. ☐ Ms. ☐ Dr. ☐ Rev.

☐ Other _____

Name: _____

Institution Affiliation: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Highest Degree: _____ Year: _____

Institution: _____

If faculty or researcher, list current position: _____

If graduate student, list degree program and anticipated graduation: _____

If graduate student, name and title of advisor: _____

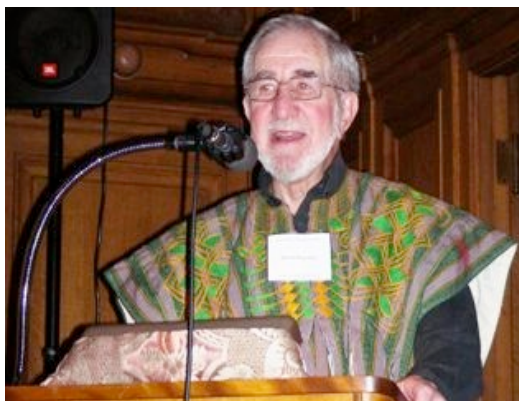
Please provide name, title, affiliation, and email address of the person submitting a recommendation for you:

Title of proposed research project: _____

Completed application form, research proposal, and letter of recommendation due 1 September 2009.

Archaeology Conference in Honor of Merrick Posnansky

By Dennis Laumann



Merrick Posnansky
(Courtesy of Ken Kelly)

The UCLA James S. Coleman African Studies Center organized a special conference in honor of Merrick Posnansky in April 2009 as part of its Mellon Seminar in Black Atlantic Studies.

Dr. Posnansky, Professor Emeritus of History and Anthropology at UCLA, was Head of the Department of Archaeology at the University of Ghana from 1967 to 1976. He led a decades-

long historical archaeological project in the town of Hani in the Brong-Ahafo Region with Ghanaian colleagues and students.

Participants in the conference, entitled "Excavating the Past: Archaeological Perspectives on Black Atlantic Regional Networks, a conference in honor of Merrick Posnansky," featured former students of Posnansky who now are leading archaeologists in African and African diasporic studies, including Dr. E. Kofi Agorsah of Portland State University, who discussed his research on maroon communities in Suriname. Another student mentored by Posnansky, Dr. Chris DeCorse of Syracuse University and author of *An Archaeology of Elmina: Africans and Europeans on the Gold Coast* (Smithsonian Institution Press, 2001) delivered the keynote address.

Posnansky closed the conference with remarks reflecting on his lifetime of work in historical archaeology, highlighting trends in the field, and offering suggestions for future research.

Posnansky's autobiography, *Africa and Archaeology: Empowering an Expatriate Life*, will be published in June 2009 by Radcliffe Press and Palgrave/Macmillan. For information about the book, visit <http://us.macmillan.com/>



Posnansky (center) with faculty, staff, and students of the University of Ghana Department of Archeology in 1975
(Courtesy of Merrick Posnansky)



Agbenyega Adedze and Kofi Argosah
(Courtesy of Ken Kelly)



Chris De Corse
(Courtesy of Ken Kelly)

SHAME!

An Open Letter to the Museums and Monuments Board of Ghana

Chair's Note: Selena Axelrod Winsnes, an independent scholar based in Norway and a GSC member, last year forwarded to our office a copy of the following letter addressed to the Museums and Monuments Board of Ghana. Dr. Winsnes welcomes reactions to her letter from other GSC members. Please email your response to me along with your permission to publish it in the next newsletter: ghanastudiescouncil@gmail.com

On 12th and 13th August, I took two guests, one visiting Ghana for the first time, to visit probably the two most important historical sites in Ghana: Elmina and Cape Coast Castles. Since I myself have lived in Ghana, and visited those places many times, where I have experienced seriously flawed information given out by the guides in the past, I had great hopes of improvement this time. This was far from so.

After being guided through both castles, the tourist is left with the following impressions:

1. One section of each castle was designed exclusively to pander to the sexual needs/desires of the governors – with a private staircase leading to their private chambers;
2. The enslaved Africans were brought the long way to the castles to be tortured and left to die a slow, lingering death ('3 months') in the dungeons;
3. The Europeans continuously 'raped' [the term constantly repeated] African women in the towns. Children, who resulted from these 'rapes,' were brought to the castles occasionally to visit their fathers. The women – victims of 'rape' – always adopted the family name of their 'rapists', and it continued through following generations. Then lists of European family names still extant were read to prove this.
4. And the ultimate image: the enslaved Africans, forced to go to 'The door of no return', had to proceed barefoot over broken glass. Those who made it all the way were taken to the ships; those who failed were returned.

Here - at Ghana's world-renowned historical sites, with guides representing the country as they spoke - here is a direct insult to the intelligence of the listener. I was told that the material is prepared to cater to Americans!! Some Americans have no previous knowledge of the history and workings of the castles; some have studied in advance; some are expert in the field. But, having taken the long trip, and keenly interested, they certainly deserve better. I am American and have studied this material extensively. But even without any background knowledge, I would accept none of this. Pure logic rejects it.

How about countering the above?:

1. The private staircase could obviously be used by the servants to provide meals, handle the laundry, clean the premises of the governors' quarters, etc., instead of their having to go around through the public area for each service.

2. Many of the enslaved, at Elmina, were kept in baracoons on the beach, and made to work. Many were kept privately in the premises of the individual traders, until they could be sold, as soon as possible. The traders, both African and European, were certainly canny enough to want to keep their 'trade goods' in good condition, alive and well – as cheaply as possible - so as to get a good price for them.

3. The Europeans married, or formed liaisons, with African women, by mutual consent. The children were educated by the ministers at schools in the castles. Yes, the European names were adopted, and continued, because these were families – even became dynasties. A number of the children were sent to Europe for education.

4. As for those bloodied feet---any source will describe the careful examination of the captives, and the system of reducing the sale price for each and every flaw; at Christiansborg a missing tooth cut the price by 4 riksdaler out of the total price of 96. Bloodied feet, indeed!

The transatlantic slave trade was a horrible chapter in world history, terrible enough in actual fact. It is a travesty to demean it with absurdities. It must be the domain of the Museums and Monuments Board to assure that the story is told properly, and honestly. For many tourists this may be their only official source of information. There must be constant control of the what the guides say. Their material should be prepared by the scholars readily available at the universities – not, as now, the outpourings of frenzied fantasies.

Selena Axelrod Winsnes, Hon. D. Litt.
swinsnes@c2i.net



Elmina Castle
(Courtesy of Dennis Laumann)

Introducing the New Editors of *Ghana Studies*

Akosua Adomako Ampofo is an Associate Professor at the Institute of African Studies, and Head of the Centre for Gender Studies and Advocacy (CEGENSA) at the University of Ghana. She is also an elected member of the University of Ghana Council. Adomako Ampofo has been a member of Ghana Studies Council since 1995 and guest edited a special issue of *Ghana Studies* in 2003. Her current research interests include race and identity politics, masculinities, and representations of women in popular music. Her recent publications include: "Phallic Competence: Fatherhood and the Making of Men in Ghana," *Culture, Societies and Masculinities* (forthcoming, with Michael P.K. Okyerefo and Michael Perverah); "Collective Activism: The Domestic Violence Bill becoming Law in Ghana," *African and Asian Studies* 7 (2008): 395-421; "Race, Gender and Global Love: Non-Ghanaian Wives, Insiders or Outsiders in Ghana?," *International Journal of the Family* 34 (2) (2008): 187-208 (with Akosua Darkwah); and "My Cocoa Is Between My Legs' - Globalization, Social Change And Sex As Work: Ghanaian Women in Accra, Kumasi And Abidjan," *Women's Labor in the Global Economy: Speaking in Multiple Voices*, edited by Sharon Harley (Rutgers University Press, 2007). Adomako Ampofo has received several grants and awards for her work, and has been a visiting professor, scholar and guest lecturer at several universities in Africa, Europe and North America. In 2004 she was one of 20 women and men selected from outside the US as a Fulbright New Century Scholar where her own work looked at the ways in which the socialisation of children in Ghana is related to the ways in which they challenge or reproduce male privilege. Adomako Ampofo is a UNIFEM Gender evaluation specialist and has consulted for several national and international organisations including the Ghana Statistical Services; Save the Children; UNAIDS; WHO. She is on the board of several journals and organisations and is currently an Advisory Board Member/Reviewer of the African Humanities Fellowship Programme (under the auspices of the American Council of Learned Societies).



Stephan F. Miescher is an Associate Professor of History at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Educated in Switzerland and the US (Ph.D., Northwestern University), he has taught at Northwestern University, the University of Michigan, Bryn Mawr College, UC Santa Barbara, and the University of Basel, Switzerland. His research interests include gender, masculinities, oral history, colonialism, modernization and modernity in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Africa, with a special focus on Ghana, where he has worked and lived for several years over the last two decades. Miescher is the author of *Making Men in Ghana* (Indiana University Press, 2005), and the co-editor of *Africa After Gender?* (Indiana University Press, 2007) with Takyiwaa Manuh and Catherine M. Cole, *Men and Masculinities in Modern Africa* (Heinemann, 2003) with Lisa A. Lindsay, and *African Words, African Voices: Critical Practices in Oral History* (Indiana University Press 2001) with Luise White and David William Cohen. His work has been published in several journals, among them *Men and Masculinities*, *Comparativ: Zeitschrift für Globalgeschichte und vergleichende Gesellschaftsforschung*, *Ghana Studies*, *the Journal of Legal Pluralism and Unofficial Law*, and *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*. Cur-

rently, he is writing a history of the Volta River Project and the Akosombo Dam in Ghana. Miescher's research has been supported by grants from the American Council of Learned Societies, the American Historical Association, the Wenner-Gren Foundation, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, and the Janggen-Pöhn Stiftung. Miescher directs, together with Peter Bloom, the University of California Multi-Campus Research Group in African Studies, which is organizing with Takyiwaa Manuh the "Revisiting Modernization" conference to be held at the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, in July 2009. Miescher serves on the editorial collective of *Gender & History* and is a member of the African Studies Organization, American Historical Association, Ghana Studies Council, Schweizerische Afrika-Gesellschaft, and Southwest Oral History Association.



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Holger Weiss

To order *Ghana Studies*, please email Lisa Bintrim at publications@africa.wisc.edu

Behind the Scenes at the Ghana Studies Council:

Meet Marissa King

Marissa King has been serving as the Administrative Assistant of the Ghana Studies Council since Dennis Laumann became Chair last year.

She primarily is responsible for membership administration, including processing applications and payments, updating our database, and general correspondence. Additionally, she designed and formatted this newsletter.

Ms. King is currently a junior Honors student at The University of Memphis. She is an English major with a concentration in professional writing, and she plans to attend law school after receiving her bachelors degree.

Ms. King's position has been made possible by generous funding from The University of Memphis.



Member Publications and News

Publications

Lloyd G. Adu Amoah

- “A Discourse on Public Sector Reform in Ghana, 1983-2008, as Postmodern Symbolic Politics,” *Ghana Policy Journal*, Vol. 2. (June 2008): 93-110.
- “Letter from Wuhan,” *The African Report*, No. 11. (June-July 2008): 97.

Veit Arlt

- “Changing Constructions of Masculinity in Ghana” Review of Stephan Miescher. *Making Men in Ghana*, *Journal of African History*, Vol. 48, No. 1. (2007): 159-161.

Gareth Austin

- “Oltre l'eurocentrismo. La storia economica dell'Africa e l'approccio comparato,” *Passato e presente*, numero 73, anno 26, (2008): 65-90.
- “Global History and Economic History: A View of the L.S.E. Experience in Research and Graduate Teaching,” *Global Practice in World History: Advances Worldwide*, Ed. Patrick Manning (Princeton: Markus Weiner, (2008): 99-111.
- “Reciprocal comparison and Africa History: Tackling Conceptual Eurocentrism in the Study of Africa's Economic Past,” *African Studies Review*, 50:3 (Dec. 2007): 1-28.
- “Resources, Techniques, and Strategies South of the Sahara: Revising the Factor Endowments Perspective on African Economic Development, 1500-2000,” *Economic History Review*, Online Publication (Nov. 2007)/ Printed version (2008).
- With Chibuike Uche, “Collusion and Competition in Colonial Economies: Banking in British West Africa, 1916-1960,” *Business History Review*, 81 (Spring 2007): 1-26.
- “Labour and Land in Ghana, 1879-1939: A Shifting Ratio and an Institutional Revolution,” *Australian Economic History Review*, (special issue on ‘Factor Prices and the Performance of Less Industrialized Countries’), 47: 1 (March 2007): 95-120.

Sara Berry

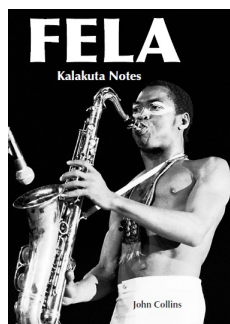
- “Marginal Gains, Market Values, and History,” special issue: “Jane Guyer’s

Marginal Gains,” *African Studies Review*, 50 (2) eds. Peter Geschiere, Mitzi Goheen, and Charles Piot (2007): 57-70.

- “Poverty Counts: Living with Poverty and Poverty Measures,” *The Many Dimensions of Poverty*, eds. Nanak Kakumani & Jacques Silber (Palgrave-Macmillan, 2007).
- “Building for the Future: Investment, Land Reform, and the Contingencies of Ownership in Contemporary Ghana,” *World Development* (forthcoming, 2008).
- “‘Natives’ and ‘Stranger’ on the Outskirts of Kumasi,” *Ghana Studies* vol. 9 (2006).

Esther de Bruijn

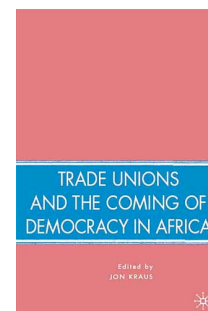
- “Coming to Terms with New Ageist Contamination: Cosmopolitanism in Ben Okri’s *The Famished Road*,” *Research in African Literatures*, 38.4 (2007): 170-186.
- “‘What’s Love’ in an Interconnected World? Ghanaian Market Literature for Youth Responds,” *The Journal of Commonwealth Literature*, 43 (2008): 3-24.



John Collins

- *Fela: Kalakuta Notes* (KIT Publishers, 2009)
- “The Evolution of West African Popular Entertainment,” *New Encyclopedia of Africa*, eds. J. Middleton, J. Taylor, & K. Wachsberger (Charles Scribner and Sons Reference Books, 2007)
- *High On Life* (on Ghana's 50th independence anniversary), Issue 44. ed. Simon Broughton, Songlines, London, (June 2007): 28-32.
- “Nkrumah and Highlife,” *New Legon Observer*, Vol. 2, No. 7. (Ghana Society for Development Dialogue Publication) (24 April 2008): 5-7.
- “The Pan-African Goombay Drum-Dance: Its Ramifications and Development in

Ghana,” *Legon Journal of the Humanities*, Vol.18, eds. Gordon Adika & Kofi Ackah (University of Ghana, Faculty of Arts, 2007).



Jon Kraus

- *Trade Unions and the Coming of Democracy in Africa*. ed. Jon Kraus (Palgrave-Macmillan, 2007).

Carola Lentz

- Gandah, S. W. D. K. *The Silent Rebel: The Missing Years, Life in the Tamale Middle School (1940-47)*, ed. Carola Lentz (Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, Research Review Supplement 18, 2008).
- “Colonial Traditions and Inventions,” *New Encyclopedia of Africa*. eds. John Middleton and Joseph C. Miller (Detroit: Thomson Gale, 2008): 1: 465-7.
- “Ethnicity: Overview,” *New Encyclopedia of Africa*. eds. John Middleton and Joseph C. Miller (Detroit: Thomson Gale, 2008): 2: 313-9.
- “Ghana at 50—Celebrating the Nation,” (with Ian Budnick), *Africa Spectrum*, 42 (3) (2007): 531-41.
- “Ghana at 50—Celebrating the Nation: An Eyewitness Account from Accra,” (with Jan Budnick), Working Papers of the Department of Anthropology and African Studies of the Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, (2007): 83.
- “Oral Traditions: Written Histories and the Politics of Anthropology,” eds. Bierschenk, Thomas et al., *Une anthropologie entre rigueur et engagements. Essais autour de l'oeuvre de Jean-Pierre Olivier de Sardan* (Paris: Karthala, 2007): 475-93.

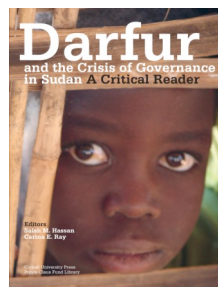
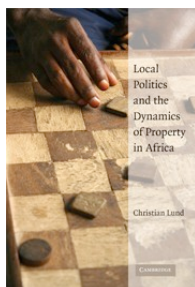
Member Publications and News

Isidore Lobnibe

- “Walking for Land, Drinking Palm Wine: Migrant Farmers and the Historicity of land Conflict in Brong Ahafo, Ghana,” *Trans-Atlantic Migration: The Paradoxes of Exile*, eds. Toyin Falola and Niyi Afolabi (Routledge, 2008).
- “Between Aspirations and Realities: Northern Ghanaian Migrant Women and the Dilemma of Household Re-Production in Southern Ghana,” *Africa Today*, Vol. 55:2 (2009).
- “Of Jong Migrants and Jongsecans: Understanding Contemporary Rural-outmigration from Northwest Ghana,” *Journal of Dagaare Studies* (2008).
- Legitimizing a Contested Boundary: Northern Ghanaian Migrants and the Historicity of Land Conflict in Ahiayem, Brong Ahafo (to appear in 2008, *Ghana Studies*).

Christian Lund

- *Local Politics and the Dynamics of Property in Africa* (Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008).



Wyatt MacGaffey

- “A history of Tamale, 1907-1957 and beyond,” *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, New Series, No.10 (2006-2007): 109-124.

Courtney Micots

- “Of Cloth and Culture,” Exhibition Review, *African Arts* 41 (4 Winter 2008): 82-84.
- “Global Africa: Through the Lens of Visual Culture,” (with Eugenia S. Martinez, Mackenzie Moon and Amy Schwartzott), *African Arts* 41 (1 Spring 2008), 8-11.

Kwamina Panford

- *Ghana's Industrial Relations and Labor Laws*, Labor Law and Industrial Relations

Series (Deventer, The Netherlands: Kluwer Law and Taxation Publisher, 2008).

Carina Ray

- “Social History and the Engendering of African History,” *Power and Nationalism in Modern Africa: Essays in Honor of Don Ohadike*, eds. Toyin Falola and Salah Hassan (Carolina Academic Press, 2008).
- *Darfur and the Crisis of Governance in Sudan: A Critical Reader* (co-edited with Salah Hassan) (Cornell University Press and the Prince Claus Fund, 2009).
- “Lest We Forget,” *New African* Monthly Column.

Rebecca Shumway

- “Abolition of the Slave Trade: Repercussions in Africa,” *Islas: Official Publication of the Afro-Cuban Alliance, Inc.* No. 8. (2007): 35-38.
- Selected Contributions to the *Encyclopedia of the Middle Passage*, eds. Toyin Falola and Amanda Warnock (Greenwood Press, 2007).

News

Veit Arlt

- Coordinator of the Centre for African Studies, Basel.
- Lecturer in the Department of History, University of Basel.

Nina Chachu

- Left British Council Ghana in December 2007. Now works as Head Librarian at the Ashesi University College.

John Collins

- Curator of the African Image Alliance, organized the ‘Ghana 50 Music and Heritage Exhibition.’
- January 2008—Became Ghanaian citizen
- Early 2008— judge for Net 2 TV’s series of classic highlife competitions of youth bands.
- Set up website for BAPMAF for supplying my written material for easy access: www.bapmafafricanmusicinfo.page.tl
- Wrote the sleeve notes on Nigerian popular music for the “Lagos 70” compilation CD released by Strut Records in London in early 2008.

- Jan. 2008— local re-mixed release of Jigga Mofi’s and the Big Beats CD ‘No Condition is Permanent,’ originally recorded by John Collins Bokoor Recording Studio in 1992.

Roger Gocking

- Submitted “Whom Do Men Say That I Look Like? Representing Christ and Christian Persona in Ghana” to *Visual Anthropology* in early 2009.
- Working on project relating to murder and punishment in the Colonial Gold Coast.

Jon Kraus

- Fall 2008— Teaching graduate course on “Democracy & Development in Ghana” in the School of Advanced International Studies, John Hopkins University.

Carola Lentz

- Appointed fellow at the W.E.B. Du Bois Institute for African and African American Research, Harvard University
- Awarded a Fulbright Senior Scholars visiting fellowship.

Isidore Lobnibe

- Co-organizer (with Carola Lentz) of “Ghana @ 50: Celebrating the Nation” panels at the

ASA in Chicago in 2008.

Courtney Micots

- Awarded First Graduate Student Prize for “Did Jesus Build the Posuban?: The Effects of Colonialism and Christianity on Fante Shrines” at the Southeastern Regional Seminar in African Studies, Middle Tennessee State University in March 2008.

Carina Ray

- Joined the History Department at Fordham University, teaching African and Black Atlantic History, 2007.
- Awarded post-doctoral fellowship at Princeton University, 2009-2010

Rebecca Shumway

- New Course Development Grant, African Studies Program, University of Pittsburgh, 2008.
- Third Term Research Stipend, Faculty Grants Committee, University of Pittsburgh, 2007.

Selena Axelrod Winsnes

- Awarded an honorary Litt. D. by University of Ghana, Legon.

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Discipline: Library and information sciences

Research Interests: African studies generally, especially related to Ghana

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<http://bapmafafricanmusicinfo.page.tl>

Discipline: Musicology

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Research Interests: changing conceptions of mothering in the Ghanaian context, labor dynamics

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Research Interests: gender, popular culture, and education

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Research Interests: history of Ghana, cultural heritage, Dutch-Ghanaian relations

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Discipline: History

Research Interests: South Africa (contemporary politics, social movements and mass media), Ghana (history, Dutch-Ghanaian relations, African soldiers in colonial armies)

NORWAY

Selena Axelrod Winsnes

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Discipline: History/ Ethnography

Research Interests: Danish primary sources for Gold Coast history/ slave trade

SOUTH AFRICA

Natalie Swanepoel

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Discipline: Archaeology

Research Interests: Northern Ghana, nineteenth century, Sisaland, impact of slave trade, impact of colonialism

SWITZERLAND

Veit Arlt

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Discipline: History

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Serena Owusu Dankwa

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Discipline: Social Anthropology/ History

Research Interests: same sex relations, women's associations, gender, African feminisms, popular culture, music, postcolonial (theory) perspectives

Erika Eichholzer

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Discipline: Africanistics

Research Interests: Akan languages and linguistics, lexicography in African languages, missionary linguistics in West Africa, African migration to Europe

2008 Membership Directory

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UNITED STATES

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Research Interests: social history, comparative slavery, African diaspora, environment, measles and medicine

Jean Allman

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2008 Membership Directory

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Congratulations to Michel R. Doortmont (University of Groningen), winner of the 2008 Conover-Porter Award for *Sources for the Mutual History of Ghana and the Netherlands* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), co-authored with Jinna Smit. The award was presented by the Africana Librarians Council at the 51st Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association.

Ghana Studies Council

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