HIS 115A: West African History
The History and Memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade

Lecture 5 – Overview of Diaspora Tourism in Ghana (Tue. 2-19)
The Transatlantic Slave Trade has a long history in Ghana, but diasporic tourism has a history of its own.

That history begins with transatlantic upheavals of the 1950s and 1960s.

1) African Decolonization

2) Black Civil Rights Movements

3) The Growth of Pan-Africanism

4) The Development of African History
D.T. Niane’s *Sundiata: An Epic of Old Mali* (1960)

I.A. Akinjogbin’s *Dahomey and its Neighbours* (1708-1818) (1967)

John Mbiti’s *African Religions and Philosophy* (1969)
“She was led toward those narrow, dank steps that guided her to the tunnel that directed her feet to the waiting ship that would bear her across the heaving, mist-shrouded Atlantic.”

Richard Wright’s *Black Power* (1954)

“We will scream and cry, murder, run through the streets in agony, if it means some soul will be moved, moved to actual understanding of what the world is, and what it ought to be.”

Amiri Baraka’s *Slave Ship* (1967)
Thus she had lain
sugarcane sweet
deserts her hair
golden her feet
mountains her breasts
two Niles her tears.
Thus she has lain
Black through the years.

Now she is rising
remember her pain
remember the losses
her screams loud and vain
remember her riches
her history slain
now she is striding
although she has lain.

Maya Angelou’s “Africa,” in *Oh Pray My Wings Are Gonna Fit Me Well* (1974)

Over the white seas
rime white and cold
brigands ungentled
icicle bold
took her young daughters
sold her strong sons
churched her with Jesus
bled her with guns.
Thus she has lain.
Preserving Historical Sites

The Example of Cape Coast, Ghana
Overview of Diaspora Tourism in Ghana

- **1950s-1960s**: African-Americans making pilgrimages to Ghana
- **1957**: Ghana becomes first African nation to win independence
- **1960**: Kwame Nkrumah becomes the first president of Ghana
- **1980s**: Playwright Efua Sutherland advocates for diaspora event
- **1991**: Jerry Rawlings starts a national diaspora tourism campaign
- **1992**: PANAFEST holds its first bi-annual event in Accra in 1992
- **1998**: Rawlings starts Emancipation Day celebrations in Ghana
- **1999**: Gates visits sites in Ghana for *Wonders of the African World*
- **2009**: Obama visits Cape Coast Castle, memorialized with plaque
- **2019**: Ghanaian government creates “Year of Return, Ghana 2019”
“Are flowers being planted in the ovens at Auschwitz where million of Jews perished? Have the Death Chambers of horror been brightly painted to somehow camouflage or silence the cries and screams of people who were brutally tortured and murdered? Think about that and then think about the Cape Coast and Elmina Castle/Dungeons on the Gold Coast of West Africa, where you can still hear and feel the presence of our African Ancestors when you enter the dark Dungeons and tunnels. But will this still be true when they finish renovating the Castles and painting inside the Dungeons?

Imahküs Njinga Okofu’s article “Is the Black Man’s History Being ‘White Washed’” in Uhuru (1994)
Video on the context of Elmina Castle in Ghana
THIS PLAQUE WAS UNVEILED BY
PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA
AND THE
FIRST LADY MICHELLE OBAMA
OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
ON THE OCCASION OF THEIR
VISIT TO THE CAPE COAST CASTLE
ON THE 11TH DAY OF JULY 2009
Anthropologist Bayo Holsey

Routes of Remembrance
REFASHIONING THE SLAVE TRADE IN GHANA ~ Bayo Holsey