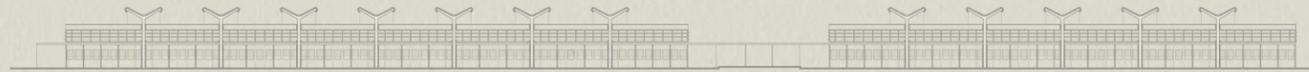




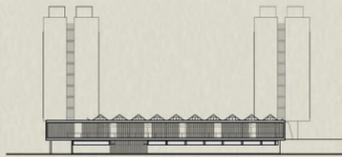
Kenneth Scott Residence
Kenneth Scott, 1961 | Accra



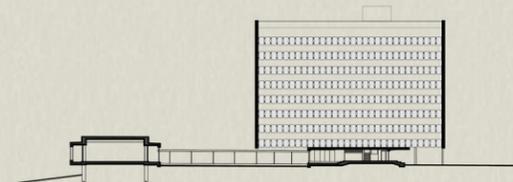
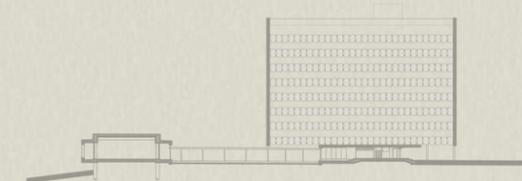
Black Star Gate
Public Works Department, 1961 | Accra



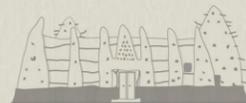
Jamestown Lighthouse
British Public Works Department, 1930 | Accra



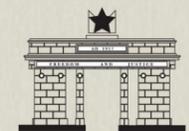
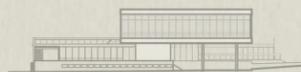
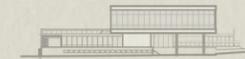
Unity Hall of Residence, KNUST
Prof. John Oweusu Addo, 1968 | Kumasi



Africa Hall of Residence, KNUST
Nikso Ciko, 1963 | Kumasi



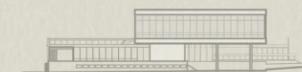
Black Star Square & Independence Arch
Public Works Department, 1961 | Accra



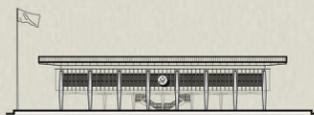
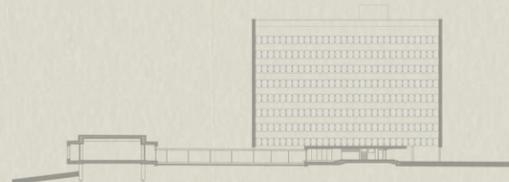
Black Star Gate
Public Works Department, 1961 | Accra



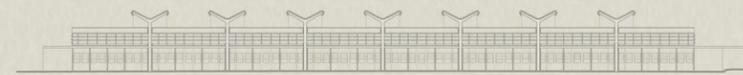
Cape Coast Castle
Hendrik Coetjff, 1630 | Cape Coast



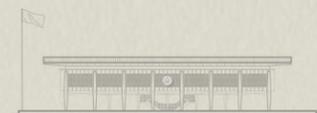
Larabanga Mosque
Ibrahim Braimah, 1421 | Larabanga, Northern Region



Former United States Embassy
Harry Wese, 1958 | Accra



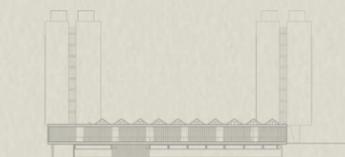
Tourism in the Ghanaian Tropics
Farouk Kwaning | fak2123 | M.Arch III
Columbia University GSAPP



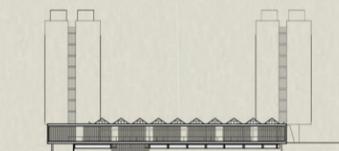
Kwame Nkrumah Mausoleum
Don Arthur, 1992 | Accra



Senior Staff Clubhouse, KNUST
Prof. John Oweusu Addo + Nikso Ciko 1965 | Kumasi



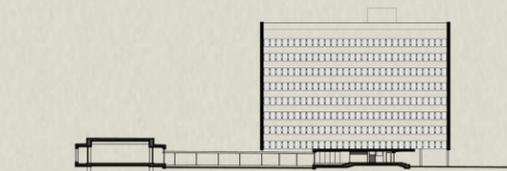
Senior Staff Clubhouse, KNUST
Prof. John Oweusu Addo + Nikso Ciko 1965 | Kumasi



Unity Hall of Residence, KNUST
Prof. John Oweusu Addo, 1968 | Kumasi



Kwame Nkrumah Mausoleum
Don Arthur, 1992 | Accra



Africa Hall of Residence, KNUST
Nikso Ciko, 1963 | Kumasi



School of Engineering Workshops, KNUST
James Cubbitt, Scott & Partners, 1939 | Kumasi



Larabanga Mosque
Ibrahim Braimah, 1421 | Larabanga, Northern Region





Fig.1 Entry and Front View of the Ambassador Hotel, Accra completed May 1961.

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- 03_ -Commodification of the Tropics after the abolishment of slavery and the slave trade

04_ ARCHITECTURE OF HOSPITALITY IN GHANA / GOLD COAST

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Tourism in Ghana and the Gold Coast became a lucrative function after the main ideologies of religion, goods trade, slave trade and colonialism run its course. The coasts of Ghana formerly known as the Gold Coast provided suitable geographic points for the situation of forts, castles and lighthouses which the European travellers used in naval navigation, trade and security from pirates and rival empires.

Throughout the course of colonial history and the pre-independence of Ghana more than 60 castles, forts, lighthouses, ruins were constructed. Many of which are still in use (though not for their primary colonial function) while others have been listed and protected as UNESCO World Heritage Sites. These sites which are some of the rarest examples of European Medieval Architecture have been preserved because of their roles in history and their complicity in the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade.

Out of the over 60 structures of colonial heritage and history, the Ghana Museums & Monuments Board identifies only three as castles. These are the Cape Coast Castle (built by the Swedish in 1653), the Elmina Castle (built by the Portuguese in 1482) and the Osu Castle (also known as the Christianborg Castle built by the Danish in 1661).

As the plantation system and industry expanded in the Caribbean, North & South America with companies like the United Fruit Company, so did their demand for enslaved labour. The Royal African Company which monopolized the trading of enslaved people lost its monopoly and eventually was dissolved in 1752. After the dissolution of the RAC, the ACM (African Company of Merchants) was formed in 1768 to expand slave trade operations in the Cape Coast Castle.

The British presence on the coast of West Africa spanning from a trading enterprise to becoming a colonial power lasted almost 300 years. The impact of the Trans-Atlantic Slave trade on West African countries continues to be felt to this day, and will take some time to erase and undo.

With regards to tourism and popularity, the Cape Coast and Elmina Castles are the most famous of these structures receiving tens and thousands of visitors from around the world yearly (including a number of US Presidents; i.e Barack Obama and Bill Clinton). Cape Coast, the capital of the Central Region of Ghana, and Elmina are about 16km from one another. The proximity to one another and to the coastal front enabled their popularity and function as postcolonial tourist sites.

As a result of the popularity of these sites over the decades, many other tourist attractions such as hotels and beach resorts have sprung up as a way to capture the growing tourist traffic that generates around these tourist sites. In 2014, Sir David Adjaye was commissioned to design the Ghana National Museum on Slavery and Freedom (GNM-SaF) which was intended to be the first of its kind in Africa. It was designed to be a oratory, visual techniques to share the history and global impact of the slave trade centuries. The development which includes a museum, hotel, archiving areas, and event centre was designed to enhance the tourist experience while serving as an advocate for the erasure of all forms of slavery around the world. "The museum will house multiple exhibitions that will display the grandeur of West Africa both prior to/post slave trade, the global experiences and accomplishments of the African Diaspora as well as those around the globe who fought and stood for freedom."

The Cape Coast museum poses a question raised many times in the course where we discuss the line between architecture of exploitation which enhances the tourist gaze and the use of architecture in preservation and restoration of cultural and institutional memory



Fig.2 Christiansborg (Osu) Castle was built in 1659 and located in Osu, Accra



Fig.3 President Obama and his family visiting the Cape Coast Castle in July 2009

Commodification of the Ghanaian Tropics and Coastlines

After the abolishment of slave trade globally, the colonial powers focussed attention to another avenue of power and financial gain. The extraction of natural resources. During the decades leading to independence, the British became concerned with expanding the financial prowess of the Empire. They set up industries and warehouses, infrastructure to expand textile production, raw minerals extraction of gold, bauxite, diamonds as well as rubber, fruit and cocoa/ coffee plantations.

The sudden injection of these complex industries into a nation where under 5% of its population has received Western education at the time. This meant the importation of engineers, architects, planners, scientists, manufacturers, accountants and expertise to expedite the industries for financial gain.

The influx of these British, American, Soviet and East Asians into the country meant they and their families needed the social and leisure amenities alongside the educational, healthcare and housing structures. These buildings include Ambassador Hotel (Built by the British), Volta Hotel (Built to serve the higher level workers and visitors of the Akosombo Dam), the Meridian Hotel built to serve the workers and visitors of the Tema Harbour and the Meridian Hotel designed in the 1960s was part of a master-planning project of the newly formed Harbour City of Tema by the first president Dr. Nkrumah. The hotel was built to house and serve the many engineers, planners and foreigners working on the Tema Harbour Project.

The following paragraphs will focus on buildings dedicated to hospitality and tourism and others which became spaces of tourist gaze and extraction due to sentimentality, time and their role in the struggle for Ghana's independence.



Fig.4 , Fig 5. Ambassador Hotel - Accra, Color Photography by Ghana Information Services

Hotels & Resorts of Pre-Independence Ghana

The Ambassador Hotel Accra was originally developed by the United Kingdom and presented to the government of Ghana as a gift on the attainment of independence in 1957.

Once a national heritage, the building degenerated over the years until it was disposed of by the state after a series of Political unrests and exodus of foreigners (the main patrons of hotels in Ghana at the time)

The Ambassador was given a new lease on life in 2006, when the old establishment was demolished to give way to a modern five-star luxury hotel.

The reconstructed hotel was developed by KHI Ghana Limited, a subsidiary of Kingdom Hotels Investments (KHI), a leading global hotel and resort investment company with operations in emerging and frontier markets across Asia, the Middle East, North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa.

KHI Ghana agreed under a 50-year concession to invest \$104million in rebuilding the Ambassador Hotel into a five-star luxury hotel under the management of the upscale Mövenpick brand with space for offices and retail.

The location of the hotel in the heart of Accra enabled its refurbishment which kept its primary use. With regards to income flow and lucrativity of the hotel, it is hard to quantify the spending of a guest outside the hotel in tourism.

Estimates based on economic modelling and guest interviews suggest that the total spending of guests in the local economy ranges between \$3 and \$10 million.

The hotel similar to the 1960s commissions local artists in recreating pieces from the old Ambassador Hotel, as well as producing original artwork, the Mövenpick established "Art Academy." Today, the Mövenpick Hotel contains more than 800 pieces of Ghanaian art including wood carving, textile weaving, and paintings.

The Meridian Hotel located in the satellite harbour city of Tema was established by Dr. Nkrumah as a venue to host and house high level social events and dignitaries. The hotel building sits directly under the Greenwich Prime Meridian (Longitude 0°). The characteristics of and conditions around the Meridian Hotel are similar to that of other hospitality buildings of the period. The Hotel was managed by State Hotel Corporation, the same institution that once managed the Golden Tulip Hotel (Accra), Ambassador Hotel, Atlantic Hotel (Takoradi), and City Hotel (Kumasi). A number of these hotels and spaces for tourism and hospitality fell out of use during the years of power shifts and coups.

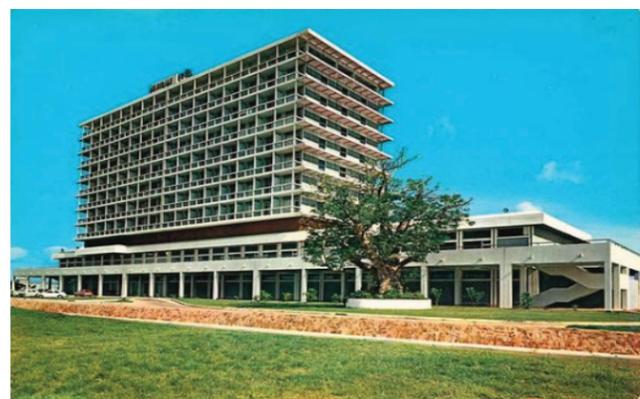


Fig.6. Postcard of the Meridian Hotel Reception, Tema, Issued by the Ghana Tourist Corporation

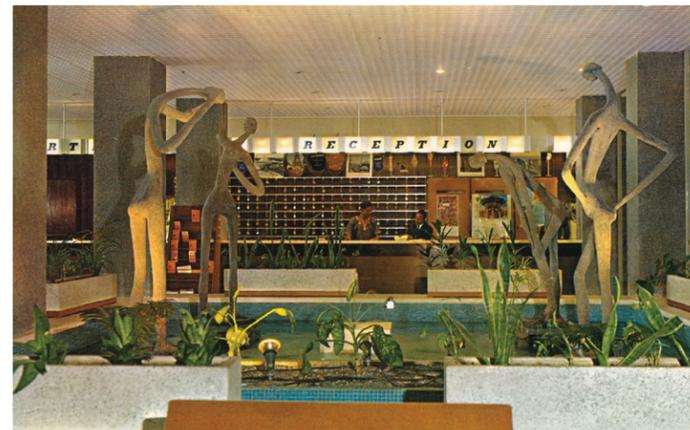


Fig.7. Postcard of the Meridian Hotel Reception, Tema, Issued by the Ghana Tourist Corporation

Due to the reduced presence of specific infrastructure to house visual art; paintings and sculpture, artworks were often commissioned and displayed in hotels, mostly to the benefit of their bourgeoisie clientele as well as visiting tourists. The collection of photographs by the Ghana Tourist Corporation includes photographs of lobbies of large corporations like the Pioneer Tobacco Company (PTC) and the Volta River Company (VRA) exhibiting large murals and sculptures by many Ghanaian artists and designers.

In the context of a series of Pan-Africanist cultural acquisitions and a tradition of statutory public art, several Ghanaian artists undertook state commissions pre and post 1957. State-led hotels, and government institutions were enriched by statutory interventions coeval with state-building efforts and the dissemination of the Nkrumah-ist agenda for total Africanization and Pan-Africanism. Some of the artist who received commissions were Dr. Oku Ampofo and his apprentice J.C. Okyere. Ampofo's art was identified as the "first home-grown modern art of the new Ghanaian society". His freestanding sculptures of larger-than-life scale can be found in the 1960s postcards below from the Ambassador Hotel. Okyere on the other hand after studying under Dr. Ampofo became dominant in 20th Century art and art education. He was commissioned for artworks on the KNUST Campus as well as the Meridian Hotel. This period in art, architecture and tourism has carefully situated public buildings as containers for art.



5 Fig.8. Postcard of Ambassador Hotel

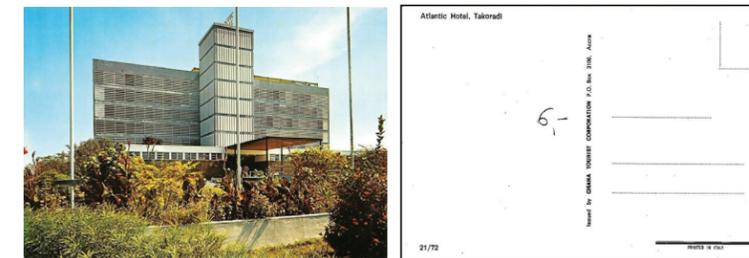


Fig.9 Atlantic Hotel - Takoradi, post card issued by Ghana Tourist Corporation

Fig.10 Atlantic Hotel - Takoradi, post card issued by Ghana Tourist Corporation

Another prominent hospitality product where many foreigners gathered and used was the Atlantic Hotel. Situated in Takoradi where the beaches are comparatively cleaner with astounding flora was a perfect tourist location for this hotel. The area from photography could easily be mistaken for that of the Caribbean. Built by Russian architects and contractors in 1962, the hotel is a distinctive modernist structure with 2 wings expanding behind a thicker central monolith. The porte cochere and facade are reminiscent of Miesian qualities in its use of concrete and glass and exposed steel beams. It fell into disuse and partial decay in 2009 when it was bought and refurbished into the Best Western Hotel. The Hotel was commissioned by President Nkrumah's government during the era of "state activism" - a period of Ghana's socialism where the state was an entrepreneur. This was a part of a series of reforms that influenced the trajectory of tourism development in Ghana. In 1962 the State Hotels and Tourism Corporation was instituted to take charge of the nascent tourism industry in the country. Three years later it was split into 2 entities, the State Hotels Corporation, and the Ghana Tourist Corporation due to some conflicts of interest.

The main proponents of Takoradi's urban development and the catalyst for tourism extraction from Takoradi were of course the beautiful landscape but also the construction of the Takoradi Harbour and the improvement of the Takoradi train station in the 1920. The Market Circle built in 1936 helped in attracting more trade and investors to the then small town. Post colonial reforms enabled several buildings for tourism and entertainment in the 1950s -1960s. Some of these buildings were the Atlantic Hotel, Avenida Hotel, City Hotel (Kumasi), Zenith Hotel, Embassy Hotel, Harbour View Hotel, Prempeh Cinema & Liberty Cinema.



Fig.11. Avenida Hotel, Boundary Road, Accra, Kenneth Scott Associates, 1958



Fig.12 . Kwame Nkrumah Mausoleum, Don Arthur, 1992



Fig.13 . Black Star Gate, Public Works Department, 1961



Fig.16. Kakum National Park, Central Region, Ghana



Fig.17. Larabanga Mosque, Ibrahim Braimah, 1421

Architecture and the Gaze of Non-Hospitality Spaces

Tourism since the late 1990s has changed in Ghana. The spaces which suffer or enjoy (depending on your standpoint) the tourist gaze have become places of beautiful landscape, historical and popular sites in the country's social fabric. Popular nightclubs, bars or experiences are also sold as must-see and must-experience locations outside of those purposely designed for tourism and foreign capital. As a matter of fact, for the best patronage, organisers would create an event around a popular monument or landmark for twice the effect and patronage. With the advent of mobile technology and social media, events like the Year of Return organised by the Tourism Industry of Ghana in 2019 were fuelled by social media which propelled tourists to see all or most of the things they could enjoy when they arrived in the country. One of the very first things most tourist do when they arrive in the country is whip out their phones to record a video or take a photo, buy a souvenir and search for the "Authentic Ghanaian Experience"



Fig.14. Black Star Square with the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and the Presidential Stand, Public Works Department, 1961



Fig.15. National Theatre of Ghana, Hangzhou Institute of Architectural Design, 1992

I remain on the fence as a designer and pan-African who is very aware about my complicity in gentrification and erasure of what is authentically Ghanaian. Then again what is authentically Ghanaian? or authentically Nigerian? or authentically Barbadian or authentically British? Is it my task as an architect to preserve what is rapidly being changed or mutated? The food, the culture, the music, the art and even the architecture cannot escape the gaze and influence of the global east and west.

I believe once we begin to identify and preserve all these spaces both tangible and intangible, we can begin to discourse what they really mean and their importance to the fabric of Ghanaian society. Coming from an education system that has romanticized colonial rule and adores British and American Culture, the system that named the main international airport after General Kotoka who overthrew the first President Nkrumah the man who ironically commissioned the very airport in the first place.



Fig.18. Zaina Lodge, Northern Region, Ghana



Fig.19. Chale Wote Street Festival culminates at the Jamestown Lighthouse, 2018

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