Incorporating Diaspora: Blurring Distinctions of Race and Nationality through Heritage Tourism in Ghana

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ABSTRACT

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This dissertation project examines the Ghanaian state's role in developing a heritage tourism industry that actively manipulates commemorative practices surrounding the legacy of the slave trade to redefine and institutionalize the ambiguous relationship Ghana holds with communities of African descent abroad. Developed in response to the renewed interest in African ancestry following the 1976 release of Alex Haley's novel *Roots* and its popular television adaptation, Ghana and other states in the region have since sought to incorporate African-Americans into their economic planning by providing them with opportunities to recover their lost heritage through tourism experiences. Not limited to the creation of heritage sites, monuments and museums dedicated to the legacy of slavery and dispersal from Africa, these states have also tailored investment opportunities to reflect a renewed spirit of Pan-Africanism and validate African-Americans' membership within a re-envisioned *diasporic* African community.
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Introduction: Bridging the Atlantic Divide: Race, Memory & Heritage Tourism

This dissertation project examines the Ghanaian state’s role in developing a heritage tourism industry that actively manipulates commemorative practices surrounding the legacy of the slave trade to redefine and institutionalize the ambiguous relationship Ghana holds with communities of African descent abroad. Developed in response to the renewed interest in African ancestry following the 1976 release of Alex Haley’s novel Roots and its popular television adaptation, Ghana and other states in the region have since sought to incorporate African-Americans into their economic planning by providing them with opportunities to recover their lost heritage through tourism experiences. Not limited to the creation of heritage sites, monuments and museums dedicated to the legacy of slavery and dispersal from Africa, these states have also tailored investment opportunities to reflect a renewed spirit of Pan-Africanism and validate African-Americans’ membership within a re-envisioned diasporic African community.

This study will reveal how state sanctioned tourism initiatives and related commemorative practices convey specific historical narratives and political ideologies that alter the horizons of identity-motivated action for communities of African descent. It will argue that although Ghana’s state tourism initiative is just one case of such a racial project, it is indicative of the roles state and non-state actors take up in the maintenance of racial, ethnic, and national boundaries embedded within the collective memory of deep historical traumas and events (Omi & Winant, 1994). The project will rely on a mixed method approach to examine the creation and manipulation of the boundary
objects states and non-state actors manipulate to reshape the identity horizons of tourists of African descent (Brubaker, 2009, 2004; Patterson, 2006). These objects and physical spaces hold sufficient meaning to two or more communities and allow for communication and exchanges across otherwise rigid boundaries of difference and opposing interests (Lainer-Vos, 2012). The project relies on the analysis of state-produced tourism and investment materials as well as media coverage of the direct marketing of these initiatives to African descendant communities in the United States, Europe and Caribbean. In doing so, the project reveals how Ghana and other West African states draw from and adapt the history of the slave trade to forge new solidarities that bridge national and ethnic boundaries.

The project, Incorporating Diaspora: Blurring Distinctions of Race and Nationality through Heritage Tourism in Ghana, brings together concepts and concerns from the field of race and ethnicity and the scholarship on social boundaries and collective memory to explore the formation of homeland-diaspora relations between communities of African descent and the Ghanaian state (Lainer-Vos, 2012). The project poses the question: how might collective representations of the slave trade affect the possibility for the construction of a Pan-African identity, which transcends state, continental, and ethnic boundaries along racial lines? Using the case of the Ghanaian heritage tourism industry, this project builds on the rather vast literature exploring the formation of ethnic, national, and racial boundaries to better understand how a state establishes homeland-diaspora relations with a foreign group and manages difference within a re-imagined national community (Anderson, 2006; Gomez, 2005; Tilly, 2005; Appadurai, 1996; Calhoun, 1993). In pursuing these goals, this dissertation project seeks to advance the
scholarship on race, collective memory and commemorative practices by examining how the Ghanaian state manipulates social boundaries and categories of identity through representations of historical events relating to the Atlantic slave trade (Autry, 2013; Lebow, 2008; Halbwachs, 1992). Using these literatures as a foundation, the project examines how the construction and manipulation of boundary objects that embody significant historical events, personages, and cultural practices related to the Atlantic slave trade create the impression that Ghana is the homeland to communities of African descent.

As suggested, this dissertation project traces the development of a tourism industry in Ghana, West Africa that specializes in commemorating the history of the Atlantic slave trade and the lasting social traumas resulting from forced dispersal from Africa. More specifically, the project looks to the Ghanaian case to uncover how the state institutions responsible for organizing Ghana’s “heritage” industry rely on tourism offerings to construct homeland-diaspora relations with communities of African descent abroad and forge new channels for economic and social development. As such the museums, monuments, slave castles, festivals, and associated social networking events organized by the state are introduced in detail to uncover how the legacy of the slave trade and notions of African ancestry are assembled into tourism experiences that bridge categories of race, ethnicity, and nationality while redefining the guidelines of civic engagement. Not limited to the Ghanaian case or the communities constituting the African Diaspora, this dissertation seeks to elaborate a new approach to integrating heritage/ancestry and commemorative practices into the shifting criteria associated with the emergence and politicization of national, ethnic and racial identities. In doing so,
this dissertation reinterprets the mechanisms and categorization schema influencing the constitution of racial, ethnic, and national communities while maintaining a focus on state-level actors.

While non-state actors have and continue to impact the exact presentation of slavery in many of Ghana’s heritage tourism sites, a majority of the tourism offerings advertised as part of the heritage tourism industry are state initiatives, often originating directly from the Office of the President. The role of non-state actors and tourists will nonetheless be a recurring, although at times secondary, focus of the dissertation project as many of the major tourism offerings rely on non-state agents to organize, advertise, and add legitimacy to the state’s project. For instance, the Ghanaian Ministry of Tourism (MoT) entered into a longtime partnership with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in order to have the coastal slave castles and associated sites listed on the distinguished list of World Heritage Sites. In exchange for recognition as well as funding for restoration and advertising, the MoT has agreed to adhere to UNESCO guidelines laying out standardized procedures for preserving the physical integrity of the sites for future generations (UNESCO, 1979).

Even though the individual experiences of tourists visiting heritage sites in Ghana lay beyond the immediate scope of the project, interactive tourism offerings such as lectures, business and social networking events, festivals and the diaspora-development initiatives are critical to the overall dissertation. Many of these tourism offerings were designed to promote a sense of civic engagement and present opportunities for communities of African descent to contribute to the development of their newfound homeland and simply to meet one another. Often relying on the very
same histories and legacies on display in the slave castles and museums, these offerings work to politicize the homeland-diaspora relationship and redefine the horizons of Pan-African political action for the 21st century.

As a work of cultural and historical sociology, the project relies on a combination of the analysis of state tourism policies and participation records, tourism guidebooks produced by the state and privately owned publishers, archival research and fieldwork conducted in Ghana to examine the formation of homeland-diaspora relations through state-sanctioned commemorative practices. Building on this combination of sources, this dissertation turns to examine a wide selection of tourism offerings attached to the heritage tourism development initiative (e.g. museums/monuments, festivals, commemorations/memorializations, and diaspora-led development projects) to explore how the legacy of the slave trade is presented to tourists. At the same time, the combination of sources allows the project to bring into relief sites of conflict emerging in response to the state’s active manipulation of existing commemorative practices in pursuit of the attention and patronage of communities of African descent. As will be discussed in the chapter exploring the social life of Ghana’s slave castle museums, the state’s willingness to establish regular relations with a diverse foreign community with which it holds often ambiguous or absent ties, led it to amend established commemorative practices so that they better represent the interests of communities abroad. Not without consequence, these changes can disrupt the often-tenuous balance within Ghana’s own diverse ethnic landscape and reinvigorate rivalries born out of earlier colonial-era conflicts. Even further, the combination of sources point to a key distinction between the Ghanaian case and related heritage tourism projects operating
elsewhere. Counter to initiatives designed to solidify homeland-diaspora relationships between Ireland and Israel and their respective overseas diasporas as described by Lainer-Vos (2012), the Ghanaian case presents a heritage tourism industry that actively seeks to enter into a contentious negotiation of the terms of membership and the nature of civic duty as the state takes a leadership role in advocating on the diaspora’s behalf in regional and continental politics.

Dissertation Outline

The first chapter of the dissertation will introduce the reader to the case by first exploring the local history of the slave trade in Ghana as well as the lasting demographic shifts it produced in both Africa and the slave economies prospering in the Americas. Importantly, this chapter will address the cultural impact of the trade through the lens of the cultural trauma literature in order to account for the processes that ruptured the continuity of identities and cultural practices between Africa and the receiving states (Eyerman, 2004, 2001). In doing so, this chapter demonstrates how the ambiguities surrounding African ancestry came to be and create a framework for the creative assemblage of homeland-diaspora relationships between diverse communities of African descent and those in Africa. Finally, the chapter will close with an overview of the development of Ghana’s heritage tourism industry and strategies for uncovering the lost and obscured history connecting Ghana to communities of African descent abroad. Commonly referred to as the Joseph Project, the heritage tourism initiative entails a wide reaching policy framework that strives to build institutional consensus regarding the state’s idealized relationship with communities of African descent within the
Ghanaian state bureaucracy and develop novel tourism offerings that build ties between groups and individuals in the diaspora and the Ghanaian state. Divided into ten separate activities, the organizers of the Joseph Project envisioned a tourism environment that allows tourists to validate their diasporic claims to African heritage through redemptive practices, genetic heritage testing, symbolic representation in Ghanaian and continental politics, and even the memorialization of political and cultural figureheads from communities of African descent.

The second chapter examines the centerpiece of Ghana’s heritage tourism industry and site of much contestation, the slave castle museum. Tracing the social life of the very sites once critical to the operation of the slave trade from literal dungeons to internationally recognized World Heritage Sites and tourism destinations, the chapter reveals the actions taken by the Ghanaian state to lay claim to and commodify the history of slavery and dispersal from Africa. Records and artifacts exhibited in the museums and heritages sites further embellish the state’s claim; and when combined, these tourism offerings work to create an impression that Ghana, as opposed to any of its regional neighbors, is the singular “homeland” of communities of African descent. In addition to the castles, this chapter also examines related heritage exhibits such as the Assin Manso Slave River Project, Salaga Slave Market, and Kumasi Royal Palace as they relate to both the Atlantic and Saharan slave trade. These sites and the castles are the locus for much debate surrounding local participation in the slave trade and reveal multiple and contending legacies to communities in Ghana and abroad. Looking beyond the legacy of the Atlantic slave trade, the castles and related sites embody contending histories of oppression, traditions of resistance, and in some instances
symbols of progress that are equally embedded in remnants each space. Related yet distinct colonial, religious, ethnic, and even academic legacies overlap in many of the sites and create palpable tensions and conflict during tours over the state’s current presentation of diasporic heritage and national history.

The third chapter of the dissertation focuses on the now annual Pan-African Historical Theatre Festival (PANAFEST) and investigates how Ghana’s heritage tourism industry came to co-opt the festival in order to develop homeland-diaspora relations along more contemporary vectors than the Atlantic slave trade. In doing so, the chapter examines how the state deploys PANAFEST to make sense of the diversity of communities of African descent and bring the aspirations, cultural formations, and political actions of community in line with the economic and social concerns set forth by the state. The chapter focuses on the ceremonies, lectures, and cultural performances the state organizes to demonstrate and elaborate the commonality and continuity of expressive practices and beliefs developed by communities of African descent. Additionally, this chapter examines the evolution of PANAFEST from a festival planned by a local theatre group into an internationally celebrated expression of Pan-Africanism and dialogue across the boundaries of nationality and ethnicity. While the primary focus of the chapter will be the PANAFEST celebration, general festival life in Ghana will be discussed as well to illuminate commonalities between the state’s maintenance of difference within in its own multiethnic national landscape and ongoing initiatives to expand the national community to encompass communities of African descent.

Finally, a brief methodological appendix will elaborate on the strategies employed during the data collection and analysis phases of the project. In addition to
detailing the process of identifying and collecting the tourism guides, state policies, travel narratives, and tourism participation records, the appendix will allow me to shed light on the experience of conducting fieldwork in Ghana. Through a recounting of these experiences and unexpected setbacks stemming from the death of then sitting president, John Atta Mills, during a research trip and issues relating to perceptions of my own person and identity, I plan to demonstrate how it is I came to my conclusions regarding Ghana’s heritage tourism industry.

**Heritage Tourism, Commemorative Practices and Identity**

The sociology of race and racial identity is at its core an investigation into group formation processes—through fracturing, mergers, and exclusion—and the coinciding socialization schema and structures that validate and come to rely on these categories of identity (Calhoun, 1997; Stoler, 1995; Omi & Winant, 1994). Although most scholars recognize the similarities between these major forms of identification, they often focus on the key sites of action that maintain their separation in everyday and political use. In turn, many investigations rely on historical methods to trace the emergence and shifts in racial and national classification schema in order to elaborate theories of group action, identity and identification, and power (Bonilla-Silva, 2010, 2001; Anderson, 2006; Dawson, 2001; Calhoun, 1997; Balibar & Wallerstein, 1991). Alternatively, studies relying on modeling social interactions and exchanges produce generalized theories of collective behaviors as they related to social outcomes and boundary maintenance to describe the interactions surrounding social barriers (White, 2008; Qian & Lichter, 2007; Zerubavel; 2003; Barth, 1969;). The spectrum of social organization identified by these literatures, broadly termed *imagined communities* by Anderson (2006), highlights the
parties, processes and material culture that create and sustain these social boundaries as opposed to taking their emergence and coherence for granted (Brubaker, 2006; Tilly, 2006; Calhoun, 1997; Gilroy, 1996).

The scholarship of Anderson (2006), Brubaker (2006), and Zerubavel (2003) in particular, reinforces the centrality of material culture and its capacity to influence membership criteria for imagined communities. These authors and others suggest that state-sanctioned material culture and related practices of commemorating specific historical events, personages, and perspectives work to bind potentially diverse individuals into more coherent mnemonic communities—often nationalities, but also ethnicities and races as well (Anderson, 2006; Zerubavel, 2003; Halbwachs, 1980). The significance of this consideration is two-fold. On the one hand, the consumption of these historical narratives and artifacts/material culture produces a community of consumption that loosely binds a group in terms of shared experiences and perceptions of past events and contemporary social arrangements (Anderson, 2006; Zerubavel, 2003; Appadurai, 1996). This is not to say that members of a mnemonic community share the same beliefs or moral assessments about how a society came to be organized or the nature of social relations. Rather, it suggests that there is consensus on the ontological base of such a history—a common recognition of places, identity-groups, and to a lesser extent, interests. On the other hand, this approach treats seriously the components and content of the historical narratives and material culture states privilege in the presentation of their national heritage (Brubaker et. al., 2004; Bourdieu, 1984). From this second perspective, membership in national or racial communities becomes, in part, a matter of inclusion or representation in official
discourses and presentations of the origins and contributors to the contemporary state and framing of the national community. As such, the politics of membership in national and comparable communities of race and ethnicity subsumes the active pursuits to manipulate and influence the institutions responsible for these commemorative practices and discourses of community (Johnson, 2005; Trouillot, 1995). Socially diverse actors, status-groups, and collective interests coalesce together in this contentious process racial and national historiography over the definition of community ties and agendas.

Debates surrounding the presentation of Ghana’s role in the slave trade attract the attention and input from professionally trained historians and archeologists, government administrators and policy makers, community activists, artist collectives and even the tourists themselves. The resulting discursive formations enable actors to locate themselves within broader social conflicts and even set the terms of social engagement between and within groups (Polletta, 2008; White, 2008; DiMaggio, 1997). However, we know less about the factors that influence the distribution and consumption patterns of these narratives following the conclusion of these debates and the establishment of durable mnemonic regimes.

Tourism, as one particular staging ground for the display and consumption of these commemorative practices and origin narratives, is just one possible social venue for the proceedings of the aforementioned discursive debates and the generation and/or reification of mnemonic communities. For tourists participating in tourism environments and activities designed to commemorate or illuminate national and other forms of community heritage, the travel experiences and artifacts on display illuminate the terms,
limits, and conditions for membership in particular communities. In other words, cultural and heritage tourism offers potential validation for practices and beliefs, and perhaps most importantly, perceptions of social boundaries for members of the communities on display. Even more, these arrangements potentially determine the extent to which sentiments of regret, shame, pride, empathy, and solidarity influence the terms of engagement within and between groups and provide deep meaning to social relationships and boundaries (Jones, 2011; Polletta, 2008). For tourists from different backgrounds, the experience holds the potential to diffuse emergent and official discourses; and similarly define the criteria for membership, while establishing the individual and group-level actors in a given national, ethnic, or racial context (Johnson, 2005; Ebron, 2002, 1999).

**Heritage Tourism in West Africa**

Recent increases in the revenues generated by global tourist flows have sparked a proliferation of state and privately owned tourism initiatives around the developed and developing world (UNWTO, 2012). This trend has forced a reevaluation of ecological resources, historical legacies, and cultural products that states possess and may promote to increase their ability to extract revenue from this particularly durable market (UNWTO, 2012; Regnault, 2011; Wherry, 2007, 2006; GRRS II, 2005; GPRS I, 2003; Canan & Hennessy, 1989;). Additionally, international organizations dedicated to the preservation of ecological resources and historical landmarks have influenced the expansion of ecological and cultural-heritage tourism offerings globally. Programs financing tourist awareness, site preservation and restoration initiatives add further credence to the perception that tourism is a viable avenue for promoting development.
(UNESCO, 2012; Boswell & O’Kane, 2011). Within this context, states competing in the market for tourist arrivals and spending must develop strategies to design new tourism experiences, attain distinction in specialized markets, and at times address the legacy of past tragedies and lasting stigmas to repair or bolster a particular market’s reputation (Rivera, 2008; Olick, 2007; GPRS II, 2005). These developments and the related phenomenon of “place branding” have reinvigorated discussions of the role of the state in the economy, but also inquiries into the capacity of the state to alter their perception and reputations in the global market and political arenas through tourism (van Ham, 2008; Cohen, 1984).

See Table I.I: International Tourist Arrivals, 1990-2011

For sociologists, these developments speak to existing inquiries into the origins of markets, the creation of value and brand recognition, as well as strategies for managing national reputations (Sassen, 2012; Centeno et. al, 2011; van Ham, 2008; Zukin & Maguire, 2004; Spillman, 1999; White, 1981;). In this light, the actions states take to raise or maintain tourist flows entail a process of assessing and evaluating the value of local resources, identifying a target consumer population, and finally signaling to this consumer population that the local offerings converge with their particular interests in a tourism destination (Van der Duim et. al, 2011; Law, 2009). Guidebooks and related advertising materials produced by the state put on display the state’s intended portrayal of historical events and corresponding tourism offerings for those seeking out potential heritage experiences. Additionally, scholars have also addressed

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1 This is not to say that each state necessarily follows or is able to follow this progression of actions. As White (1981) shows, many markets form without the firms ever directly assessing the interests or preferences of consumers. Rather, firms are shown to determine the value of their products and in turn what to market through comparisons with comparable firms in their industry.
the effort directed towards the evaluation and promotion of the *authenticity* of a particular destination or offering to enhance their value and perceptions of congruence with the particular interests of the target consumers (Kelner, 2010; Wherry, 2007; Bruner, 1996). This process, which resembles a matching of best fitting products or experiences to a particular national image and consumer target, is often accompanied by conflict spurred on by the disproportionate promotion and value given to products and experiences offered to tourists (Apostopoulos, 1996). As will be discussed below, the venue provided by tourism is subject to the prevailing beliefs and valuations of its hosts and is similarly able to promote or alternatively, neglect particular ecological, cultural, and historical resources as determined by overarching discourses of community and heritage as well as economic incentives.

For scholars of tourism and the interdisciplinary field of African studies, the advent of heritage tourism and heritage management in Ghana and Africa more broadly speak to ongoing discussions of the role of tourism in economic development, the construction and engagement with identity in the post-colonial world, and a re-envisioning of the classification and analysis of tourist behaviors (Arnone, 2011; Boswell & O’kane, 2011, Cohen, 1984). Building off of studies of the economic impact of leisure tourism and ecotourism models, investigations of heritage tourism integrate the analysis of tourism spending and participation records from heritage sites alongside of anthropological concerns for the impact of commercialization on the legacies on display and the *authenticity* of ‘traditionally’ produced goods refashioned into souvenirs and tourist art (Addo, 2011; Hasty, 2002; Osei-Tutu, 2002; Jules-Rosette, 1986). As with other tourism models, heritage tourism similarly bridges barriers between local and
global markets by directing tourists to otherwise isolated communities while drawing international investments in tourism infrastructure (e.g. hotels, restaurants, and hospitality/travel services). In this context, heritage tourism and management are presented as a strategy for mobilizing heritage as a malleable resource and form of symbolic capital to promote social and economic development (Schoeman & Pikirayi, 2011; Boswell & O’Kane, 2011; Witz, 2011). While these studies reveal trends and patterns in the development and expansion of heritage tourism in a number of settings, the focus on heritage as a practice raises questions related to how heritage tourism and management impact patterns of identification and (re)produce existing and emergent social regimes. In this way, tourism scholars and Africanists use heritage tourism as a lens through which to better understand the construction and engagement with identity in explicitly post-colonial context.

In the wake of the end of colonial rule and apartheid in Africa, heritage tourism and initiatives that manage cultural and historical legacies granted scholars the opportunity to pursue inquiries into the processes that forge ethnic, racial, and national boundaries in the context of independence. While not entirely free from colonial framings of identity and the entrenched politics that surround them, scholars have demonstrated ways that post-colonial actors rely on heritage management to reevaluate and at times redefine pre-colonial and colonial framings of identity (Addo, 2011; Boswell, 2011; Witz, 2011; Mamdani, 1996). For instance, the work of Schoeman and Pikirayi (2011) explores the contested efforts to repatriate human remains and cultural artifacts from the Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape (MCL) in South Africa following the end of Apartheid. The case reveals that different ethnic communities struggled over the
question of who was entitled to the artifacts excavated from the MCL because of a contention stemming from numerous overlapping claims to being descended from the historical Mapungubwe kingdom. The nascent post-Apartheid state commissioned new agencies to identify legitimate claimants and establish a framework for adjudicating the claims as an attempt at nation building and forging ties between communities. Even though all of the artifacts have yet to be returned, the state’s efforts to appease the claimants and other parties invested in the debate presented novel approaches to constructing ethnic identity and indigeneity in South Africa. Counter to entrenched apartheid-era classification systems and archeological methods that privilege an imprecise association that links locality of an archeological find and material culture (e.g. pottery techniques and artifacts) to cultural identity, the state relied on a “multivocal” approach that allowed for linguistic similarities, cultural affiliations, and oral histories to validate the multiple claims to the MCL and reframe the claimants as member of a single encompassing Mapungubwe ethnic group. While the claimants continue to maintain attachments to distinct San, Vhangona, and other ethnic identities, the heritage management project surrounding the MCL revealed new strategies for the post-Apartheid state to renegotiate the terms of community boundaries by reassessing and accepting the multiple systems of knowledge that may bind communities to an imprecise past.

While not focused on the role of the state, Arnone (2011) explores how members of the Eritrean diaspora living in Italy embark on summer and holiday trips to Eritrea that straddle desires to maintain links to their homeland and demonstrate their attainment of

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2 The authors’ case study offers a more general warning about the potential for undertheorized research methodologies to negatively influence the politics of identity.
success abroad. Arnone’s interviews reveal that the returnees will often buy cars instead of renting them, stay at exclusive resorts, visit historical sites, and purchase numerous souvenirs in between excursions to rural areas to visit with family to display to friends in Italy. At the same time, the contrast between the elite experiences of returnees touring Eritrea and those of individuals that were unable to flee the war present challenges for travelers attempting to maintain and validate their connections to the communities they left behind by embarking on annual travel to Eritrea. While tourism and travel allow members of the Eritrean diaspora in Italy to reinforce family ties and in rare instances connections to rural communities, their public perception as elite travelers prevents their ready acceptance and earns derision in public in rare instances. Even further, the legacies of Eritrea’s war for independence, the violent conflicts that followed, and the experience of displacement become entwined in the tension between domestic communities and diasporic travelers as the relative successes of the latter disrupt their positioning in the national community.

State organized heritage management in the context of tourism similarly enables the construction of identity and alteration of community boundaries by manipulating perceptions of past events and their contemporary legacies. However, the consumer orientation and frequent association with state building and development initiatives raises the stakes for heritage managers, tourists, and other stakeholders invested in the presentation of historical and cultural heritage (Osei-Tutu, 2014). Addo (2011) discussion of heritage tourism in Ghana engages with questions related to how the state may best mobilize the latent capital derived from readily apparent and lesser known legacies centered in Ghana. Recognizing the economic significance of international
tourist arrivals, Addo’s overview of Ghana’s tourism offerings reveal domestic anxieties over the state prioritizing “European” heritage through the legacies of colonialism and slavery. As will be discussed in later in this project, tensions between domestic tourists, international travelers, and heritage managers inhibit the state’s pursuit of generating homeland-diaspora relations. While Addo (2011) stops short of conceptualizing how domestic and international tourists internalize the presentation of cultural diversity and ‘European heritage’, the analysis opens the path for this investigation to explore how the state and heritage managers rely on tourism to reinterpret the conditions membership in the national community and align the political interests of domestic and diasporic communities by bridging distinct ethno-national and racial legacies.

Building off of the concerns for how contests over ownership of physical and cultural heritage, economic and political objectives, and individual and community pursuits of validation this project engages the Ghanaian case to understand the ‘multivolcal’ negotiation of the legacy of the slave trade. With this mind, consider the following statement from a representative of the Ghanaian Ministry of Tourism following the 1999 celebration of the Pan-African Historical Theatre Festival (PANAFEST):

“But you may ask, why do we want to reunite the African family? This has become necessary in view of the fact that the infamous Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade forcibly took away children, men, and [women] from their families without a word as to their destination and even their period of absence as is traditionally practiced in our society. PANAFEST among other events targeted at the peoples of African descent in the Diaspora, is meant therefore to provide a platform to forge a sense of unity and identity

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Addo (2011) analysis of heritage tourism and conflict engages the issue in a policy orientation and concludes with a call for greater recognition of the cultural diversity of Ghana and the need to expand all tourism offerings equally.
and the need to rediscover our roots with a strong message to work towards the social, cultural, intellectual, political and economic emancipation of Africa.” (Hon. Mike Afedi Gizo, MP Ministry of Tourism for PANAFEST ’99; 7)

As this quote suggests, members of Ghana’s tourism administration envision that the industry possesses the capacity to legitimate the state’s efforts to employ a foreign community towards ends otherwise separate from their own. In other words, the state plans to use the tourism project to create the impression that Ghana’s economic and social development is contingent on the participation of communities of African descent. While just one example of the way the state has framed the utility served by operating a heritage tourism industry as well as the civic responsibilities attached to the homeland-diaspora relationships, we can begin to see the ways social boundaries of race, ethnicity, and nationality become subject to the influence of commemorative practices and active manipulation from the state. As will be discussed in later chapters, discourses embellishing the recovery of lost heritage or “roots”, redemption, cultural renaissance, and emancipation each influence which communities of African descent are granted membership into the national community and to what end they may benefit the state.

In addition to revealing elements of the scope and intent of Ghana's ongoing initiative to build homeland-diaspora relations, the quote from the representative from the Ministry of Tourism leads one to ask why the Ghanaian state, in particular, has decided to pursue homeland-diaspora relations as an instrument of development at this particular time. While the “why” question will be addressed over the course of upcoming
chapters, briefly addressing the question of "why now" will serve as a fitting conclusion to the dissertation’s introduction and add temporal boundaries the case.

**The Roots Moment**

Heritage tourism and the pursuit of homeland-diaspora relations for development concerns may be relatively new phenomena in Ghana; however, the contemporary initiative traces its origins in policy directives emerging from the period of Ghana's return to democracy in the early 1990's. Even though many of the historical sites that have since been incorporated into the tourism initiative were determined to be historically significant and worthy of recognition in UNESCO's World Heritage list in 1979, very little was done to restore the sites or transition them into tourism destinations prior to the early 1990's (UNESCO, 2001; ICOMOS, 1978). Further research into the initial application for the sites to be included on the World Heritage List has been obscured by gaps in historical and institutional records, yet it is possible to reconstruct the discourse surrounding the sites and African ancestry that emerged following the release of Alex Haley's novel *Roots: The Saga of an American Family* and its televised adaption in 1976 and 1977, respectively.

Haley's novel and its television adaptation have been applauded for their ability to bring into relief the legacies of racialized slavery through a multigenerational exploration of a single family's experience of capture and dispersal from Africa, enslavement in the antebellum American South, and sharecropping under *Jim Crow*
While setting numerous records for television viewership in the United States, investigations seeking to evaluate the impact of the novel and series have generally neglected the international and institutional impact of the releases (Wright, 2011). Often focused on how the series shifted perceptions of race relations or the value of Black history, early investigators stopped short of asking how and where these histories should be taught and put on display (Fairchild et al., 1986; Howard, 1978). Even further these studies reveal a tension between respondents wishing to explore their own family history—as demonstrated in Haley’s narrative—and a far less visible interest in exploring a broader history and organization of the slave trade. By shifting attention away from investigators’ concerns for how the series impacted perceptions of racial divides in the United States to a focus that privileges the interplay between African states and the increased salience of the history of slavery and African ancestry we can begin to see how Ghana and its neighboring states came to see the local artifacts of the slave trade as a potential development tool in the post-Roots moment.

As mentioned earlier, Ghana did not begin the process of identifying sites relevant to the slave trade and designating heritage sites until 1979, however, Senegal and the Gambia began the process within months of the television release of the Roots miniseries ("Gambian Tourism Office Building for Growth", Mar 7, 1981; "Senegal Minister Here to Promote Tourism", Aug 6, 1977). Even further, these states relied heavily on media outlets originating within and oriented towards the African-American

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4 Despite the commercial success of the novel, Haley was subjected to great public scrutiny following the revelation that significant portions of his book, which was initially marketed as a historical investigation into the lives of his own family, had plagiarized earlier works of fiction.
community such as the New York Amsterdam News, Los Angeles Sentinel, Philadelphia Tribune and Atlanta Daily World to advertise their tourism initiatives and actively lay claim to the history of the slave trade. The Gambia, in particular, was well positioned to lay claim to the specific sites detailed in the *Roots* narrative—such as Juffre, the home of Kunta Kinte—although the tourism infrastructure remained minimal ("Gambian Tourism Office Building for Growth", Mar 7, 1981). For reasons yet to be determined, Ghana did not join in the initial rush for ICOMOS/UNESCO recognition and similarly, reporting in African-American media outlets focused on Ghana’s relation to the slave trade and homeland-diaspora relations remained minimal until the state began to regularly send envoys on behalf of the government to encourage African-Americans to travel to and invest in Ghana ("Visit Ghana", Jun. 16 1994; "Ghana’s Envoy Urges Africans to Come Home to Help Rebuild", Jun. 5, 1993; "Ghana Welcomes You to PANAFEST ’92", Nov. 7 1992; “Ghana’s King Urges Blacks to Invest in Africa”, Aug 6, 1988).

Importantly, these early instances of the state seeking to establish homeland-diaspora relations reflected a framing of the tie that were almost entirely political in nature and only in rare instances relied on African ancestry as the primary motivation behind bridging national boundaries. Instead, these bridging efforts directly tapped into the legacies of the Civil Rights and Black Power eras and paired them with the legacy of anti-colonial struggles in Africa. Political and religious organizations like the Nation of Islam were included in the development and operation of many of the early initiatives to mobilize interest and participation in what were perceived to be target consumers for the emerging tourism and development projects. The partnership between the Rawlings
administration and the Nation of Islam allowed the Nation of Islam to expand its own influence across the Atlantic and into Ghana after opening a mosque in Accra, the national capital.

The following statement from Nana Akuoko Sarpong\(^5\), an Ashanti paramount chief visiting the United States in 1993 on behalf of former president Jerry Rawlings to the First Baptist Church of Central Harlem, brings to the forefront the budding tension between "Roots" logics and prior mnemonic frameworks that cement contrasting assemblages of culture, ancestry, and political horizons: "When you have sweated to build a society which still remains hesitant about recognizing your contribution and giving you due rewards, you must begin to build a commitment to those roots that give you identity, and these roots are in Africa" (Carrillo, 1993). State produced advertisements and tourism awareness initiatives continued to negotiate contending perceptions of homeland-diaspora relations for the remainder of the Rawlings presidency [1993-2001]\(^6\), years before seeming to coalesce around the "Roots" framework and language of linked-fate seen in the prior statement from the Ministry of Tourism.

While the remaining heritage tourism industries and related development initiatives still taking place in West Africa have seemingly coalesced around emphasizing the legacies of the Atlantic slave trade as the primary motivator for bridging racial, ethnic and national boundaries, this particular valence was not always

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\(^5\) The title, Nana, is reserved forchieftains and older nobility.

\(^6\) Rawlings first served as head of state in 1979 for a brief period of time after organizing a coup that led to the creation of civilian government following 7 years of military rule. Rawlings led a second coup in 1981 and remained head of state during a period of military rule that lasted until the transition to democracy in 1993, when he was elected president.
dominant. As previously mentioned, prior attempts to attract tourists and develop channels for development often deployed political logics that highlighted legacies of mid-20th century Pan-Africanism or alternatively cultural logics, that while related to the *Roots* phenomenon, displayed an inconsistent focus on the slave trade or ancestry as such (Ellis, 1992; "NOI Opens African Center in Ghana", 1990; "Ghana’s Longest Reigning King Urges Blacks to 'Invest in Africa'", 1988). Even going as far to seek out the endorsement of popular entertainers such as Isaac Hayes or Chuck D and Flavor Flav of the rap group Public Enemy, states like Ghana, the Gambia, and Senegal hoped to inspire increased tourism and economic engagement from communities of African descent in the United States ("P.E. Strikes Black in Africa", 1994; "Dionne Warwick and Isaac Hayes Visit the Slave Castles of Ghana", 1992; "Senegal Minister Here to Promote Tourism", 1977). While the slave castles and themes of African heritage were undoubtedly present in these early initiatives, African states framed tourism and contributing to national economies and development initiatives as the ideal way for African Americans to continue the political tradition that led figureheads like W.E.B. Du Bois, Maya Angelou, and Malcolm X to travel to Africa in prior decades (Carrillo, 1993; Washington, 1988).

During these early years of the heritage tourism market in West Africa, tourism agencies and representatives of the states directly advertised their respective opportunities to African American and other communities of African descent—often through highly publicized state visits. In addition to being incorporated into the official visits of heads of state and representatives of local and ethnic communities in Africa, African Americans were also introduced to these opportunities in religious, political and
cultural settings. Further, broader appeals for development assistance from the United States government and corporate America also coincided with the initiatives that took place in Black churches, mosques, and media (Dundee, 1998; "Show Promotes Investing in Africa", 1996; "Panafest '94 Now in Africa", 1994).

Who Visits and When

See Table I.II: Trend in International Tourist Arrivals to Ghana, 1999-2004

See Table I.III: International Tourism Arrivals and Expenditures in Ghana, 2001-2007

Records collected by Ghanaian immigration services and staff at Ghana’s most popular tourism destinations offer a partially obscured representation of the growth in Ghana’s heritage tourism industry since its inception. Between 2001 and 2007 alone, total international arrivals increased from approximately 438,000 to nearly 600,000 annually (GTB). While a majority of these arrivals came to Ghana for reasons other than tourism alone—employment, education, and public service/charity work to name a few—the boost corresponds with tourism industry’s emergence as the fourth largest source of revenue for the state during this period. While heritage tourism does not represent the largest sector of the tourism economy and regularly attracts fewer visitors than many of Ghana’s ecological tourism offerings, heritage sites have similarly experienced a growth in both international and domestic tourists. Even the famed El Mina Castle underperformed relative to the nearby Kakum Forest National Park, which

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7 Record keep protocols employed by the Ministry of Tourism and heritage sites have shifted over time and create incongruent flows of information regarding who is entering the country and why. In particular, the data generally lacks insight on the racial background of travelers, making approximating the exact reach of the heritage project has on tourists of African descent difficult from such data sources.
in 2009 saw 75,000 and 150,000 visitors, respectively. Importantly, the vast majority of visitors is and continues to be Ghanaian residents although there are steady increases in international arrivals. While not conclusive, tourism administrators suggest approximately 10,000 of the international arrivals in 2009 were African Americans or of African descent.

See Table I.IV: Tourist Arrivals to Select Sites, 2009

Several factors influence the flow of tourists to the renowned castles of the Central region and heritage sites elsewhere in Ghana. Domestic tourists arrive at Cape Coast Castle and El Mina generally as part of groups of 15-30 people and family groups of up to eight. During the school year, schoolchildren dominate the sites on weekdays, while on the weekend families and groups organized by churches and similar civic organizations compose a majority of visitors on site. Additionally, non-state actors like the local Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) mission and the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Center operating in Accra, organize opportunities for their members/students to visit the sites as well. These activities in particular, expose many visiting African nationals to the legacy of the trade—often in spite of the existence of comparable offerings and commemoratives practices in their own countries. For Ghana’s youth, the visits to the castles have been incorporated into curriculums of elite secondary schools following the efforts of the PANAFEST Youth Movement. The PANAFEST Youth Movement, a development of the GNTM—exists to distribute information about the castles to Ghana’s schools and attract attention to Ghana’s relationship to the diaspora. Adults on the other hand, are often part of church groups interested in the Ghana’s first churches.
While many Ghanaians travel to the sites as tourists, others depend on them for primarily economic ends. Traveling vendors arrive at the castles throughout the year, but flock to the small coastal towns to sell clothes, jewelry, music and art made elsewhere in Ghana during the highly attended PANAFEST celebrations. For some, the festival produces a sizable portion of their annual income and in the case of poor attendance or the cancelation of festivities—as was the case in 2012 following the death of President John Mills—results in a great financial setback. Permanent vendors operating in and around the sites, however, are granted a bit more financial security by the steadier flow of tourists they receive and service throughout the year. Vendors operating within the castle have established contracts with the Ministry of Tourism as have the local Global Mama’s facility in Cape Coast. Global Mama’s supports and organizes resources for female vendors so that they may establish their own stalls in Cape Coast Castle and elsewhere. Those operating outside construct small stalls to sell their goods and food from while other simply carry what they intend to sell that day.

During the height of tourism “season” a steady stream of international tourists arrive at the site throughout the week and as suggested above do not generally outnumber the domestic arrivals. PANAFEST/Emancipation Day celebrations and comparable activities scheduled during the summer produce temporary increases in international arrivals and align with more general tourist availabilities. Additionally, these major events extend the average day trip that is suggested by both state and private guides to a nearly a full week of activities and spending opportunities.

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8 Vendors will in fact go through great efforts to follow tour groups around Ghana as they travel to the events scheduled in different cities. Additionally, some may pay entrance fees to the more private events so that may have continual access to tourists as they tour Ghana, not to mention the expenses required to cover lodging and meals during their travels.
Nevertheless, the composition of international tourists arriving to the sites at El Mina and Cape Coast varies from day to day.

International tourists also arrive to the sites as part of groups organized outside of Ghana. Missionary groups working in the Central region and elsewhere often take brief detours to the coastal towns to visit the museums on site. While only in town for a day or two, many rush between sites and ecotourism offerings in the area. Groups organized by members of the diaspora, on the other hand, often come to Ghana with the explicit intent to visit the castles and explore their heritage. Community organizations like HABESHA, an Atlanta and Baltimore based group that promotes cultural awareness, brings high school aged children to Ghana each summer to participate in the PANAFEST celebration and explore African heritage. While on-site, many participants in these groups eagerly inquire into the conditions of the trade, who profited most from the export, and the possibility for a bridging of communities. For others, the tours offer the opportunity to lay wreaths and inscribe their names onto memorial walls leaving them with a much more somber experience of the sites and offerings.

Discussion

The current state of the heritage tourism industry in West Africa reflects nearly a half century of incremental developments spurred by the interests of domestic and international communities. Operating very much within a market for a common "tourist base", Ghana has benefitted from its relative socio-economic and political stability, widespread English proficiency, and past ties to African American communities in ways that its neighbors have been unable to exploit. While heritage tourism offerings
continue to be provided in countries like Senegal and to a lesser extent the Gambia, tourism trends and advertising tend to emphasize Ghana’s offerings as distinctive (Lonely Planet, 2013). Only recently, however, has the state been able to take what appears to be an authoritative position in the planning and presentation of the region's historical legacy. The agents of change—including, but not limited to state-level actors—participating in the manipulation of historical narratives and artifacts presented to tourists have sought to redefine and reposition Ghana’s racial and national history to better position Ghana amongst other states in West Africa within the market for heritage tourist of African descent.

From the case of this particular network of heritage tourism offerings, we can see a unique approach to the creation of value and recognition in the market for tourist flows. Reflecting desires for homeland and an authentic presentation to often-disparaged origins, the Ghanaian state and others have been able to generate value and recognition on the international stage for sincere presentations of the legacy of slavery that grants tourists the opportunity to consume and perform a uniquely commercial form of homeland-diaspora relations. Even though the extent to which each state expects participants to contribute to the local economy differ between markets and across time, tourism administrators and development planners continue to align their efforts in the most recent phases of development planning and international engagement. While this project suggests that heritage tourism and similar efforts to impact perceptions of the past are indeed relevant to the formation of homeland-diaspora relations, further research is required to better determine how communities consume these narratives and the subsequent impact of these experiences. At the
same time however, there may be factors that complicate how we might assume these experience impact participants. Most importantly, especially when considering the costs associated with travel to destinations in West Africa, it may be the case that participants in such tourism experiences have already come to accept and/or identify through the historical narratives and subsequent framings of the social world on display prior to arriving. However, for other participants, especially those who reside within the same countries as the heritage industries, existing mnemonic communities might hold contending perceptions of these same events, personages, and landscapes, if they acknowledge them at all. Nonetheless, such conflicts add further credence to the analytic utility of incorporating the analysis of the politics surrounding the presentation of national and group histories as well as the search for ancestry and representation in official narratives of past events into the scholarship on race, ethnicity, and nationality. In doing so, future investigations of such polyvalent modes of identification stand to uncover actors, interests, and social boundaries that may reflect previously unseen terms of social engagement and community organization.

Moving beyond the case of heritage tourism, this investigation suggests that incorporating the analysis of the presentation of historical events and their contemporary legacies into the analysis of racial, ethnic, and national patterns of identification may reveal previously unforeseen components in how groups and individual actors interpret their place in the world through *storied* pasts. As initially noted by Anderson (2006), this study reinforces the significance of historical museum and monuments operated by the state and recast them as central sites in the negotiation of social boundaries. In this light, the state and its commemoritive
practices shape national and community attachments through the inclusion and perhaps more importantly the exclusion of particular actors, settings, and events that link people across time and potentially great distances.

**Table I: International Tourism Arrivals to Ghana, 1990 – 2011**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>World</td>
<td>435.0</td>
<td>528.0</td>
<td>674.0</td>
<td>799.0</td>
<td>883.0</td>
<td>940.0</td>
<td>983.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Economies</td>
<td>296.0</td>
<td>334.0</td>
<td>417.0</td>
<td>455.0</td>
<td>475.0</td>
<td>499.0</td>
<td>523.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emerging Economies</td>
<td>139.0</td>
<td>193.0</td>
<td>256.0</td>
<td>344.0</td>
<td>408.0</td>
<td>441.0</td>
<td>460.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>By UNWTO regions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>261.5</td>
<td>304.0</td>
<td>385.0</td>
<td>440.7</td>
<td>461.7</td>
<td>474.8</td>
<td>504.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia &amp; the Pacific</td>
<td>55.8</td>
<td>82.0</td>
<td>110.1</td>
<td>153.6</td>
<td>181.1</td>
<td>204.4</td>
<td>217.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Americas</td>
<td>92.8</td>
<td>109.0</td>
<td>128.2</td>
<td>133.3</td>
<td>141.7</td>
<td>150.7</td>
<td>156.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>26.2</td>
<td>34.8</td>
<td>45.9</td>
<td>49.7</td>
<td>50.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>36.3</td>
<td>52.8</td>
<td>60.3</td>
<td>55.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Table II: Trends in International Tourist Arrivals to Ghana, 1999-2004**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Origin</th>
<th>Number of Arrivals (x1000)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>24.6</td>
<td>26.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>32.3</td>
<td>34.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overseas Ghanaians</td>
<td>101.4</td>
<td>108.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Ghana Tourism Board*
Table III: International Tourism Arrivals and Expenditures, 2001 - 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Arrivals ('000)</th>
<th>Receipts (US $ million)</th>
<th>Avg. Expenditure (US $)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>438.8</td>
<td>447.8</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>482.6</td>
<td>519.7</td>
<td>1,125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>530.8</td>
<td>602.8</td>
<td>1,344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>583.8</td>
<td>649.4</td>
<td>1,711</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>428.6</td>
<td>836.1</td>
<td>1,950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>497.1</td>
<td>986.8</td>
<td>1,985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>586.6</td>
<td>1172.0</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Ghana Statistical Service. *Ghana in Figures, 2008*

Table IV: Tourism Arrivals to Select Sites, 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SITE</th>
<th>Domestic</th>
<th>International</th>
<th>REVENUE (GH¢)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ELMINA CASTLE</td>
<td>58,463</td>
<td>15,830</td>
<td>92,644.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAPE COAST CASTLE</td>
<td>57,852</td>
<td>18,257</td>
<td>112,316.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DU BOIS CENTER</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>2,322</td>
<td>5,230.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KAKUM NATIONAL PARK</td>
<td>117,686</td>
<td>33,198</td>
<td>259,878.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KWAME NKRUMAH MEMORIAL PARK</td>
<td>30,068</td>
<td>16,479</td>
<td>410,308.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NATIONAL MUSEUM</td>
<td>5,884</td>
<td>6,850</td>
<td>29,680.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Ghana Tourism Board
Chapter 1: Creating Homelands: Uncovering and Repairing Links to the Past

“As every Muslim must visit Mecca at least once in their lifetime so we want to establish a pilgrimage for Ghana, one that every African in the Diaspora must undertake at least once in their lifetime. This pilgrimage will be the re-introduction of the Diasporan African to the homeland.” (Ministry of Tourism, 2006: pp. 160)

“They will also meet ordinary Ghanaians; fisher folk, farmers, traders, teachers, doctors, lawyers, schoolchildren. They will re-establish a kinship with their brothers and sisters in the homeland.” (Ministry of Tourism, 2006: pp. 160; emphasis added)

Introduction

The Ghana Ministry of Tourism (MoT)—formerly the Ministry of Tourism and Diasporan Relations—faces a distinctive problem in developing homeland-diaspora relationships with communities of African descent: it must uncover a ruptured past and repair broken connections in order to forge homeland-diaspora relationships. Unlike comparable heritage tourism projects in destinations in Ireland, Japan, and to a lesser extent Israel, Ghana’s tourism administrators cannot reference an established shared history; they must first create it (Lainer-Vos, 2012; Yamashiro, 2011; Kenny, 2003). In addition, the state’s tourism administration must cautiously negotiate the terms of widely varying racial, national, and even continental discourses in distinguishing itself—as opposed to any of its neighbors—as the homeland for the African diaspora to attach themselves. Both of these unique issues—creating diasporic history and downplaying contending national attachments—emerge from the trauma and social dislocation caused the transatlantic slave trade and proliferation of fractured identities amongst groups with ambiguous and often unexplored ties to Africa (Gomez, 2005; Patterson, 1985). For Ghana, this challenge presents itself as an obstacle to forging the logics and discourses of community that are often available in the Irish and Japanese cases which
depended on religious and explicit ethno-national frameworks of identity as the driving factor in their respective identity projects. In other words, Ghana is unable to simply claim that people of African descent should perceive Ghana as a homeland—on racial or ethnic terms—in the same way that Ireland or Japan might in reaching out to their respective diasporic communities around the world. Ghana must do the work of achieving the impression that it is the homeland to communities of African descent by uncovering and repairing lost and broken ties to Ghana’s physical and cultural landscape (Rivera, 2011); Wherry & Crosby, 2011.

This chapter will address the strategic hurdles Ghana faces in the generation of homeland-diaspora relationships with communities of African descent in the Americas, Europe, and Caribbean: that of presenting itself as the homeland to a vast and diverse community with which it holds ambiguous ties. I describe the strategies developed to present Ghana as the homeland of the African diaspora using its growing heritage tourism industry as a platform to reach its target and broader audiences. In particular, this chapter will discuss the evolution of this market and the accompanying discourses of race and community deployed to cement Ghana within the origin narratives and political aspirations of multiple communities of African descent. The Ghanaian state uses heritage sites, museums, and tourist guide materials to couple itself to this diverse international community in what been called the Joseph Project. I specifically examine instances in which Ghana presents itself as a homeland—both physically and culturally—by inserting itself into various discourses of racial and ethnic identity that share the transatlantic slave trade as a major point of departure. I explore the declaration of Ghana as a homeland in a material sense by investigating the
presentation of the coastal slave forts and castles and related “slave-river” located in the remote village of Assin Manso. Then I turn to examples of how the state’s presentation of cultural legacies seeks to establish cultural-ethnic ties between populations in the diaspora and communities local to Ghana through cultural festivals and entrepreneurial collaborations. Importantly, analyzing both the physical-material and cultural claims Ghana makes will illuminate the distinct strategies it uses to uncover ruptured pasts and build homeland-diaspora relations.

By introducing an examination of how Ghana manipulates public discourses of dispersal and return, this chapter will reveal the ways concepts of origins and homelands enter into discourses of community to impact perceptions of social ties and boundaries. Focusing on the Ghanaian case will illuminate the ability of states to shift the significance of particular physical and cultural sites perceived as central to community identity toward the end of forming homeland-diaspora relations and advancing economic and political interests. Ultimately, this chapter will begin to develop our understanding of how heritage tourism influences categorization schema and activates unique identity options by uncovering and mending the previously inactive bonds bridging the Atlantic. Bringing together the literature on race and ethnicity, cultural trauma, and cognitive sociology, I show how the formation and manipulation of boundary objects such as slave castles and the legacies of transnational community figureheads on display at related museum facilities, is central to Ghana re-forming the identities and agendas of communities of African descent. In this light, this chapter and those that follow will examine how the state tourism and commemoration institutions, cultural producers, and political activists from Ghana and abroad develop new shared
narratives of race and national attachment that links the country to communities of African descent abroad.

Before delving into the strategies developed to first uncover and then repair Ghana’s ties to communities of African descent, it is necessary to address the sequence of events that produced these ambiguities: dispersal from Africa, chattel slavery, and prolonged racial discrimination. The combined effects of these two social ruptures and their enduring legacies will be shown to be cause of the uncertain links between Ghana and the communities of African descent abroad. This section of the chapter will address the conditions that led to the ambiguity and occasional absence of ties linking Ghana to the diaspora as well as lay the foundation for what the state has interpreted as a necessary central narrative to its normative tourism project. Further, by elaborating on the major historical event(s) responsible for the generation of the diasporic community in question, this exercise will illuminate key distinctions between the diasporic claims made in the Ghanaian case from others that have figured centrally in sociological theorizing. Although it is outside the focus of this project, it is important to note that varied assemblages of homeland-diaspora relationships successfully formed between communities in the African diaspora and those in Africa in the past. In most of these instances, Ghana was not considered to be the focal site or homeland that linked community members together. Rather, countries like Liberia and even Haiti served as potential homelands for the African diaspora to attach themselves.
Atlantic Slave Trade—Erasure and Dislocation

The transatlantic slave trade is widely regarded as one of the single largest and enduring forced migrations in modern history (Klein, 2010; Gomez, 2005; Patterson, 1985; Williams, 1966; Du Bois, 1942). Driven by demands for labor amongst expanding colonial empires, the capture and trade of enslaved Africans resulted in the dispersal of numerous communities throughout Africa to the Americas—primarily Brazil—Europe, and other locations in Africa.²⁹ Beginning in the mid-16th century and lasting until the early-19th century, the trade was responsible for displacing millions while simultaneously laying the foundation for the formation of numerous racialized communities and accompanying ideologies of race (Eyerman, 2005; Gomez, 2005; Omi & Winant, 1995; Williams, 1966; Du Bois, 1896).

See Table 1.1: Estimated Total Export of Slave Laborers from West Africa, 1700 – 1810

The most widely accepted estimates suggest that between 9.6 and 10.8 million people were taken from the coast of West Africa as human chattel between the mid 16th and early 19th century (Gomez, 1998; Richardson, 1989; Curtin, 1969). During the height of the trade—roughly spanning the century from 1700 to 1810—as many as 6.6 million people survived capture and transit across the Atlantic.³⁰ Scholars investigating the demographics of the slave trade have designated six major departure zones along

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²⁹ While considerable attention has been dedicated to exploring the outcomes of the forced migration of Africans out of Africa, less attention has been given to the effects of this mass exodus within Africa. Only recently have scholars begun to investigate the demographic effects of such a sizable and lasting population loss on the nations that now encompass many of the major points of departure.

³⁰ There is still debate regarding the mortality rates on the transatlantic crossing. Estimates range to as high as nearly 20% losses in the early years in the trade, but the mortality rate has been shown to decline as the time it took to travel between the coast of Africa and the Caribbean decreased (Hogerzeil & Richardson, 2007; Cohn, 1985).
the western coast of Africa: Senegambia, the Gold Coast, Sierra Leone, the Bight of Biafra, the Bight of Benin, and West Central Africa (W.C Africa) which loosely corresponds to colonial boundaries. These studies reveal the volume and scope of the trade as well as identify areas that suffered the greatest demographic losses as a consequence of the trade. For the period when the trade peaks, W.C. Africa dominates the trade while the Gold Coast—now Ghana—accounts for between 11 and approximately 15 percent of the trade (Gomez, 2005, 1998; Richardson, 1989). However, it is important to remember that surviving records do not account for the true origins of the captives; rather the data represents the number of people who departed from a select number of chartered forts and castles along the coast (Gomez, 1998).

The inland origins of many captives had been all but lost until advances in genealogical testing allowed for individuals to trace their genetic heritage and locate themselves within specific African genetic communities (Nelson, 2012; Wailoo, 2012).

While the record of the slave trade obscures the origins of the lives it touched, there are some means to follow the journeys of select communities as they left Africa and arrived in the West; many of which are employed by the state to validate and embellish their claims. In particular, analyses of colonial shipping and sales records allow tourism officials, museum/monument administrators and scholars to sketch out the broad demographics of slavery in the West and gain an understanding of the major trading points in the global economic system. Prosperous ports emerging in Jamaica and Brazil became major entryways for African communities and at times were left with

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11 Ghana frequently downplays the proportions of the trade that took place within its boundaries. However, other heritage tourism markets in the region—most notably Senegal's—was the site of far fewer departures and likewise makes a more disproportionate claim.
lasting signifiers of African influence. For instance, communities from what is now Ghana have been attributed to founding and naming the town of Mampong, Jamaica after a town of the same name in the Ashanti region of Ghana (Gomez, 1998; Barrett, 1997). Similarly, the Ghanaian state—through the University of Ghana—in the past decade has completed its own research into the outcomes of the lives of those taken from its shores and determined that communities in Guyana are of Ghanaian origin, the Ashanti and Fante specifically. Further, the state has identified linguistic commonalities between the pigeon languages spoken in Guyana and Ashanti Twi—the largest indigenous language used in Ghana. Therefore, Ghana does hold legitimate, if not limited, claim to being the homeland to some communities of African descent.

Through the particular experience of dispersal attributed to the slave trade and the “social death” of attaining slave-status, generations of the enslaved were stripped of their knowledge and ties to their homelands and communities upon arrival in their destinations. While the specific conditions of enslavement and racialized discrimination varied through time and according to context, the combined effects of these two lasting historical processes served to impact global racial formations and shape the criteria for membership in and identification with communities of African and non-African descent (Smith, 2008; Gerteis, 2007; Eyerman, 2004; Kolchin, 2003; Jacobson, 1999; Roedigger, 1999; Patterson, 1985). Language, religion, and social status were lost through these experiences and exchanged with novel identities and practices bridging African, European, and indigenous-American origins (Eyerman, 2004; Gomez, 1998; Du

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12 Representative from Guyana’s diplomatic mission in Ghana are often introduced as distinguished guest at many of Ghana’s larger and more formal events as was the case during the 2012 opening ceremonies held at the Nkrumah Memorial Center in Accra.
Bois; 1989). As Booth (1999) notes, the rupturing of the continuity of such cultural practices and foundations serves to disrupt group: “…identity and a moral narrative of pride, shame, and indebtedness, that ties us across time to our past and the burdens this past imposes simply by virtue of being ours” (Booth, 1999: 254). Additionally, those subjected to these systems experienced at times insurmountable obstacles to liberty and later for the descendants of the enslaved, the denial of equal opportunity and protection under the law. Even today, surviving forms of domestic servitude—not altogether distinct from slave labor—continue to impact social relations in Ghana. As Appiah (2007) notes, the descendents of enslaved laborers continue to hold minimally paid domestic positions, often with the same families that once owned their ancestors. These laborers, while integrated into the major ethnic communities such as the Ashanti, remain severely disadvantaged in labor markets and continue to bear a stigma of slavery. Tourists participating in organized tours are in many ways shielded from the realities of contemporary forms of slavery in Ghana. Tour groups generally avoid many of the settings that would illuminate these relations as such; many tourists may nonetheless encounter individuals bound to Ghana’s elites as they explore the larger open air markets and more rural areas without knowing it.

The legacy of the slave trade served to complicate the homeland-diaspora relationship between Africa (Ghana in this case) and the community of African descent living outside of Africa. Scholars investigating the impact of dispersal and regrouping on patterns of identity and identification for Armenian, Jewish, and Irish diasporic communities have presented a series of definitions and conditions of diaspora claims that while complementary to each other, fail to grasp the unique conditions the slave
trade produced for the African case. In particular, scholarly attention to three factors: dispersion; homeland-orientation; and boundary-maintenance fail to account for the wavering support for and the distribution of identity formations and racial projects that explicitly incorporate African ancestry into the discourse of identity (Brubaker, 2005; Kenny, 2003; Manning, 2003; Safran, 1991). In other words, these conditions fail to account for the temporality of homeland-diaspora relations and identity claims when presented with groups with ambiguous ties to past homelands as well as the potential for the failure of initiatives designed to generate homeland-diaspora ties to take hold. Without the consideration for the temporality and potential for claims to diaspora-status to fall short of success, scholars run the risk of overlooking moments in the histories of communities that differentially emphasize the rhetoric of homeland and diaspora, if at all. For instance, the salience of notions of an African homeland wavers significantly throughout the history of African American political and social thought. At times, major figureheads and social movement organizations expressed great concern for the conditions facing Africans and others in the diaspora, while at other times; little focus was dedicated to linking the fates of communities in Africa with those in the diaspora. 

Habib (2007, 2004) comes to a similar conclusion following her analysis of the experience of Jewish diasporic communities touring Israel. As Habib notes, Israeli state-led efforts to build homeland-diaspora relationships are complicated by tourists being forced to negotiate religious and national attachments that do not necessarily center on the state of Israel. Habib references to the experience of Russian-American tourists highlights how for this particular group, the trauma of dispersal from Russia positions Russia, rather than Israel, as a more immediate homeland for Israeli state
commemorative practices to compete with. While constantly evolving, Israel’s response to this strategic problem has been to emphasize deep historical commonalities and recognizable symbols of community triumph, loss and unity to reach beyond tourists existing national and conflicting diasporic attachments (Schwartz, et. al, 1986).

As defined by Brubaker (2005) and others, the first element of diaspora is the experience of dispersion from a commonly recognized homeland to one or more receiving states. Scholarly definitions of dispersion have remained fluid to account for the experiences of groups that were forced and those that were more willing participants in their own migrations (Cohen, 1997; Safran, 1991). The second factor is homeland-orientation. For scholars focused on the cognitive component of social boundaries, homeland-diaspora orientation has come to represent the collectively held myths, perspectives, narratives, and beliefs that link a community to its distant origins (Kenny, 2003; Safran, 1991). The final element of diaspora, boundary-maintenance, corresponds loosely to the group’s particular experience of integration—or its denial—in the host society (Brubaker, 2005; Gilroy, 1993; Safran, 1991). Although scholars differ on their interpretations of the experience of discrimination and the overall relationship of the diasporic community to its host, many suggest that the experience of prolonged discrimination blocks equal access to membership in broader national communities and simultaneously may drive efforts to build connections to past homelands. Scholars have also discussed alternative elements or configurations of experiences subsumed within claims to diaspora. For instance, some scholars grant additional emphasis to the alliances developed between co-ethnics or co-racists in receiving states while others suggest a diaspora must remain committed to its perceived homeland.
While the conventional framework used by scholars to identify and analyze the claims made by diasporic communities and their homelands does not fully account for the African case, it does allow us to see underlying commonalities between the different cases. Beginning with dispersion, the first and perhaps the most straightforward condition, we can see that the prolonged period of forced migration out of Africa represents a comparable displacement to that experienced by Armenian groups and to a lesser extent the Irish following extended periods of famine (Brubaker, 2005; Kenny, 2003). On the other hand, deeper investigation of the concept and deployment of dispersion in these analyses suggests that during the process of mass or enduring migrations—forced or not—there is a continuity and equivalence in the logic and framework of identity claims made by people remaining in the homeland and those arriving in host societies. This is seen in both the Armenian and Irish cases, as migrant communities retain their ethno-national markers of identity—or rather invoke them in the process of making claims within a diaspora framework—following their arrival in their host societies (Lowe, 2009; Habib, 2004; Kenny, 2003; Waters, 1999, 1990).

This element of the dispersion criteria presents a challenge for the African case due to the incongruity between the levels or forms of identity claims made by communities of African descent—especially as generations are increasingly removed from the trauma itself. In other words, following the traumas of the slave trade, generations of slavery, and de jure discrimination, communities of African descent lost the capacity to make claims based on the identities and ethnic attachments of their

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13 Scholars have debated whether dispersion must be forced to qualify the community in question as a diaspora. As noted by Brubaker (2005), the proliferation of communities making diaspora claims has forced a reevaluation of the necessity of an unwilling dispersal as many groups, despite the reason for leaving their homelands, now make claims to diasporic identity and ties to foreign lands.
ancestors who went through these formative processes. This is further evidenced in the comparative mismatch between the ethno-nationally delimited claims of the Irish diaspora as opposed to continental-level claims made by the African diaspora.

Gomez’s (1998) analysis of Africans and African-Americans enslaved in the Antebellum South presents this transition as part of the acculturation process to American chattel slavery that he terms *exchanging country marks*. Importantly, Gomez is able to demonstrate how pressures from the racialized slave state and established African-American communities compelled newly arriving Africans to exchange previous markers of ethnic identity with those local to the United States. In spite of these pressures, many enslaved Africans were able to preserve elements of their ethnic and religious identities and traditions. Nonetheless, the vast majority of enslaved Africans arriving in the West were unable to maintain claims to Ashanti, Ga, or Islamic ethnic identities; communities of African descent emerging from the slave trade could only forge claims to regional and continental levels of identity as time passed or claims to evolving racial identities (i.e., blackness, Negritude, etc.).

Gomez suggests that similar processes happen in each of the major slave societies; however, differences in the demographics and legal regimes of each setting alter the construction of identity.

14 Gomez (1998) and Gomez (2005) present examples of Africans resisting the exchange of their traditions through both violent and non-violent means. Perhaps the most interesting of these cases are those which the parties involved reworked existing racial and religious systems of meaning to place themselves out of slave status. On one particular occasion, enslaved Africans made use of treaties that prevented the enslavement of specific Islamic communities to ensure their manumission after demonstrating their fluency in Arabic.

15 The development and increasing use of genetic testing has presented members of the African diaspora a unique opportunity previously unavailable to past generations. Through genetic sampling and testing, individuals can now “purchase” an “ethnic” heritage after having their DNA matched to a specific ethnic community in Africa—or elsewhere (Nelson, 2012).
The second element of diaspora claims, homeland-orientation, is the most questionable criteria for assessing the African case and provides an opening to evaluate the conditions that allow groups to make diaspora claims. In particular, homeland-orientation, as conceptualized by Brubaker (2005) and to a lesser extent Safran (1991) and Patterson & Kelly (2000), encapsulates feelings towards and perspectives of real or imagined homelands that provide value, identity, and unity to a particular community. For communities of African descent, this condition seems to fluctuate with time as perceptions of and ties to African homelands move into and out of dominant discourses of community identity and social agendas.

For example, Powell’s (2002) discussion of the Harlem Renaissance suggests that much of the artistic production of the period was inspired by a desire to explore themes tied to community aspirations for possessing an esteemed African homeland. Poetry and visual media in particular, reveals how these artists negotiated their desires, apprehensions, and ignorance of their sought after heritage, while bridging tropes found around the diaspora. At the same time, artists and intellectuals invested in establishing the US-focused “New Negro” identity were able to gain access to the patronage and political support of developing social movements struggling to shift US racial politics to extend protections to communities of African descent (Powell, 2002). Furthermore, communities with ambiguous ties to Africa can shift the particular location of sites recognized as homelands; this fluidity provides them the opportunity to create novel understandings of the terms of community with equally distinct cultural artifacts, political alliances and social agendas emerging alongside (Eyerman, 2005; Mitchell, 2004; Singh, 2004; Von Eschen, 1997; Gilroy, 1993).
Mary Waters’ (1990) work on the *ethnic options* of the children and grandchildren of migrants to the United States was perhaps the first to highlight the difference in the capacity of migrants of European and African descent to selectively ascribe to themselves ethnic identities of their choosing. As Waters shows, the visibility and salience of racial markers in the United States constrained the ethnic options of black migrants so that claims to Jamaican or Trinidadian heritage/ethnicity for example, were made secondary to more “obvious” racial categorization (Waters, 1990). Unlike their European counterparts who Waters describes as having great freedom in choosing how they negotiate their ethnic/national heritage into their American identities, migrants of African descent are ascribed a black racial identity and denied ethnic identification in a manner akin to Gomez (1998) process of exchanging country marks. Waters’ (1999) later work, however, reveals this communities agency in employing their ethnic identifications when representing their ethnic diversity proves to be valued or enabled by more lenient conditions associated with migration (i.e. formation of enclaves). As will be discussed later in this dissertation, the emergence of Ghana’s heritage tourism industry provides communities of African descent the opportunity to claim an ethnic identification—for African Americans in particular—or to supplement existing national attachments—as would be the case for communities in the Caribbean and Latin America. The offering of ethnic identification, in many ways distinguishes Ghana’s project from those of Ireland and Japan that seek to reinforce existing identification options.

In the United States alone, shifting social movement agendas have repositioned the significance of individual nations such as dynastic Egypt, Abyssinia (later Ethiopia),
Zimbabwe, South Africa, Liberia, and Ghana. Each of these nations or historic empires have held significant positions within African-American understandings of the homeland-diaspora relationship and accordingly, produced distinct configurations of alliances, civic responsibilities and identities for communities on either side of the Atlantic (Hall, 2009; Gomez, 2005; Von Eschen, 1997). For instance, Mitchell’s (2004) investigation into African-American racial formations and the perceptions of racial destiny reveals that during the mid-19th century, African-Americans held the development and independence of Liberia as a deeply valued racial accomplishment. Mitchell even describes celebrations of Liberian Independence Day taking place in Savannah, GA as early as 1865. Along these same lines, Booker T. Washington’s Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute went through extraordinary measures to enroll students from Liberia as well as send its advanced students to then-colonial German West Africa in the final decade of the 19th century (Zimmerman, 2012). Speaking nearly a decade later about the endeavor in 1906, Washington described the opportunity to send Tuskegee students to West Africa to aid in its industrial and agricultural development as a fulfillment of the: “…ambition of a great many other Negro students before and since, to go out some day to Africa as a missionary” (Washington, 1969: pp. 36). Inspired by Ethiopianism, an African American religious tradition that utilizes biblical references to Ethiopia, biblical figures of African descent, and other African locations to redeem communities of African descent, Washington and others viewed almost any opportunity to travel and work in Africa as racialized “calling” (Zimmerman, 2012; Weber, 2010; Von Eschen, 1997). However, over a half-century later during Africa’s decade of decolonization, African-American civil rights organizations were placed in a tenuous
position as the community of African leaders swelled with personalities alleged to be Marxists and supported by the Soviet Union (Von Eschen, 1997). Flaring tensions produced by America’s staunch anti-communist position led to the collapse of many political relationships and careers, as was the case for Paul Robeson, who was sanctioned by both the US government and Walter White--then executive director of the NAACP--for his continued support of then stigmatized leaders and political organizations in West Africa. It would not be until the rise of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and Black Power era that major African-American social movements would make significant efforts to once again connect the struggles of communities in Africa with those local to the United States (Carmichael, 1969; Carmichael & Hamilton, 1967). The struggles of the South African Student Organization (SASO), Sekou Toure’s Guinea, and even Khadafi’s Libya entered the focus of African-American politics as perceptions of community ties to Africa shifted (Morrow, 2000). In this light, it may not be necessary to abandon the criteria as a whole; rather our concept of diaspora should be amended to incorporate a perspective of homeland-diaspora as a temporary organizational phenomenon (Brubaker, 2004; Eyerman, 2004; Eyerman & Jamison, 1991). This would also allow us to draw distinctions between the homeland-diaspora relationships developed during the Liberia and Haiti focused antebellum period from those nurtured during the struggle to abolish the Apartheid state; both in terms of the impact differing configurations leave on identity formation as well as the nature of political, social, and economic ties between communities.

The final condition, boundary-maintenance, refers to the experience of discrimination and the related practices and institutions that serve to distinguish and
separate the migrant community in question from those of the host society (Brubaker, 2005). As presented in the diaspora literature and the broader scholarship on identity and discrimination, practices of boundary-maintenance include those that emphasize religious, ethno-racial, and linguistic markers of distinction in order to preserve access to resources and opportunity (White, 2008; Tilly, 2005; Bonilla-Silva, 2001). At the same time, however, boundary-maintenance is a two-sided process in which the migrant communities likewise emphasize—in order to preserve “tradition” or influence policy decisions—their own practices to distinguish themselves from their hosts. As mentioned before, the experience of racialized discrimination and segregation in the Americas served to alienate many communities of African descent from both their host societies as well as their African heritage—from which they held no direct active ties. Du Bois (1999) is best known for providing amongst the clearest of insights into this particular subjectivity in his analysis of the double consciousness of African Americans. In *The Souls of Black Folk*, Du Bois (1999) explored experiences of discrimination and exclusions contributing to a sentiment of alienation from both homeland—through lost ties—and from host society—in this case providing a unique moral perspective on American social politics. Similar studies of the racial attitudes of communities of African descent outside of the United States emphasize comparable subjectivities emerging within their context, but differ noticeably according to the racial demographics and philosophies of each location. For instance, the absence of a “one-drop” rule of hypodescent in much of the Caribbean and Latin America allowed for the proliferation of a variety of racial hierarchies with the flexibility to allow for multiple categories of mixed-racial identity to persist. Further, the politics of sexual interactions across group
boundaries served to limit or expand the visibility and size of many of these mixed-race communities (Gomez, 2005; Stoler, 1995).

While the discussion of boundary-maintenance in reference to diasporic communities typically considers the economic and socio-political effects of discrimination, less focus is directed to the changes produced in the value attributed to particular ethnic/national heritages and in turn efforts to claim those heritages and maintain ties to the respective homeland. However, discussions of the discrimination experienced by early generations of Irish migrants to the United States shines some light onto this issue as this particular migrant community struggled to distance themselves from the negative representations of their ethnic heritage—often contributing to the adopting of a white racial identity (Gerteis, 2007; Jacobson, 1998; Roediger, 1991). Similar to the Irish case, comparable experiences of discrimination and prolific negative representations of African-American life and African culture devalued African heritage, and as presented by Eyerman (2004) led many African-Americans to distance themselves from both negative representations. For instance, at the turn of the 20th century early African-American nationalists engaged in a “politics of respectability” and distributed manuals designed to alter domestic, sexual, and religious practices attributed to African and slave heritage (Mitchell, 2004). Similarly, practices of skin lightening with bleaches and chemical peels seen throughout Africa and the Caribbean today demonstrate the extent to which “blackness” and African heritage remain devalued in standards of beauty (Pierre, 2013).

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16 Kenny (2003) discussion of Irish diasporic identity suggests that Irish migrants faced the additional problem of being “disgraced” at home. For many of the early-Irish migrants to the US, communities remaining in Ireland frequently referred to migrants as being “banished” rather than pursuing economic interests or relief from famine. The “banishment” discourse ultimately complicated this era of migrants’ attempts to maintain positive relations with homeland communities.
In addition to the scholarly attention dedicated to exploring how and when markers of African heritage and culture are devalued, it is important to note the recognition and public discussion of this occurrence during the tours of heritage sites as well as in the promotional materials produced by the Ghanaian tourism administration. While on tour, tourists are informed that African identity and heritage were devalued to the point where if possible, people of African descent would deny their heritage entirely and “pass” to attain opportunities otherwise denied along racial lines. Even before arriving in Ghana, advertising materials inform potential tourists that: “African peoples everywhere have been taught to be self loathing, to see everything African as a negative: Taught to believe that African is the definition of failure and ugliness” (MoT, 2006: pp. 156). Exhibits detailing the experiences of communities living adjacent to the slave castles of El Mina and Cape Coast examine the preferential treatment people with lighter complexion and mixed heritage received in employment opportunities, marriage markets, and substantive aid from the British and Dutch during the height of the trade and afterwards in the colonial period. El Mina’s museum even goes on to detail the distinguished legacies of the town’s mixed-race community, going as far as locating the homes of the oldest and most established families on a map of the town. Just as in El Mina, Cape Coast has comparable list of distinguished families that date back to the era of the slave trade; in both settings, these communities emerged from the children of women held captive in the castles and men stationed there. These children were the first recipients of training and education in Ghana and Africa’s first Western-style school and in some cases went on to pursue careers as interpreters, ministers, educators in Ghana and other regions of the continent (MoT, 2009, 2006). Museum guides describe
in great detail the formalization of sexual assault which occurred at El Mina and Cape Coast Castle. For El Mina, the very architecture of the structure was designed to facilitate the viewing, selection, and access to female captives held in the castle. For instance, the governor’s quarters overlooks the female cells and has private stairwell access to the courtyard and cells below. While it is unclear of how prolific or condemned sexual assault was during the time the castles were in use, museum exhibits suggests enlisted men were punished for assaults committed outside of the castles.

The exhibition of the history of these communities serves two goals for the state; on the one hand, the exhibits showcase the achievements of Ghanaians and pride in the nation’s longstanding commitment to education. On the other hand, the exhibits demonstrate the local legacies of inequality brought on by the slave trade and hierarchies of color that continue to shape life courses (Pierre, 2013; Appiah, 2007; MoT, 2006). In response to this problem, the state commissioned projects to demonstrate the unity of African and African diasporic culture through the biographies and works of artists and intellectuals committed to ending the “self-loathing” that is presented as haunting communities of African descent.

Reggae music and the political culture of Rastafarianism are ubiquitously co-opted in this way and deployed to draw from an established and recognizable Pan-African and “Black pride” tradition. Rastafarians and Rastafarianism occupy an odd and often uncomfortable position in Ghana’s heritage tourism project and cultural landscape more broadly. On the one hand, Rastafarian beliefs that communities of African descent should contribute to the development and redemption of the continent converge
with the state’s current goals and are validated at nearly every opportunity. Rita Marley—Bob Marley’s widow and resident of a rural community in Ghana—has been awarded numerous times for her charitable work in the community of Aburi and has in fact been enstooled, or given a chiefly position—in the region. On the other hand, Rastafarians at times face open discrimination and great suspicion for their religious beliefs and association with Ghana’s drug trade. In spite of this, Rastafarian performers from the diaspora have been integrated into the states project, although mostly through musical performances and promotional events.

For the Ghanaian tourism administration, the legacy of ambiguous and obscured ties to Africa presents itself as an obstacle to the sector’s success and larger state projects to grow the economy with the support of the African diaspora. In turn, many of the experiences offered to tourists visiting Ghana are designed to remedy this issue and rely on the very material remnants of the slave trade to rebuild ties between communities of African descent and those in Ghana. In the following section, I will explore Ghana’s strategies for “healing” or uncovering and repairing the ties lost through the slave trade and generations of practices that devalued African ancestry. Additional examples from the heritage tourism industry operating in Israel to generate similar revivals in the salience of homeland-diaspora relations will be introduced to add further clarity.

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17 Rita Marley was awarded honorary Ghanaian citizenship in 2013 as part of the Emancipation Day celebration,
Forging Ties: Uncovering and Repairing Connections to the Past

The experience and legacy of dispersal from Africa and chattel slavery in the Americas disrupted the continuity of community ties, identity, and ancestry severing linkages between people of African descent and Africa. In the absence of these connections, establishing and preserving homeland-diaspora relations remained a tenuous if not impossible process for those making claims on either side of the Atlantic. Communities of African descent outside of Africa and states and communities in Africa struggled to maintain relations while being subject to shifting interests and alliances on either side of the Atlantic (Hartman, 2007; Mitchell, 2004; Von Eschen, 1997, James, 1977). For Ghana, just as with many other nations in Africa, maintaining positive relations with the communities of African descent proved to be a challenge as political and economic support from the diaspora fluctuated in the years following independence in 1957. At times--especially following the visit of Ghana’s first president, Kwame Nkrumah, to the United States in 1960—Ghana enjoyed the political support and praises from multiple civil rights organizations and African-American political and cultural figureheads.\(^{18}\) Further, during the Nkrumah era (roughly 1955-1966) homeland-diaspora relations developed to a point where many people of African descent from the Caribbean and United States came to reside in Ghana and aid in the young nation’s development (Hartman, 2007; Gaines, 2006). Following the downfall of Nkrumah, many of these connections wavered and in some senses were replaced by interests in and

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\(^{18}\) Nkrumah’s state visit to the United States was in fact a return trip for the new leader. Nearly twenty years prior to this trip, Nkrumah attended Lincoln University and the University of Pennsylvania, where he was an active participant in African and African-American research, political, and religious activities.
ties to the South African anti-Apartheid movement and comparable struggles for independence in the remaining colonies in Africa (Morrow, 2000; Angelou, 1986).

Similar to the temporary alliance of political and social agendas developed during the Nkrumah era, Pan-African initiatives organized by communities of African descent abroad saw varying levels of success. During the early 20th century, the politics of Black Nationalism shifted to employ multi-national calls for self-determination, equal rights, and decolonization. The widespread support for Marcus Garvey and the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) marks a particularly successful effort to align communities of African descent across boundaries of ethnicity and nationality (Esedebe, 1994). While primarily remembered for the grand spectacle of the UNIA parades and Garvey’s orations, the mass movement lacked strong support in continental Africa and held little influence over the political development of the independence movements. Counter to the UNIA, the five Pan-African Congresses held between 1919 and 1945 in the Europe and United States represented a more direct effort to engage figureheads in the developing anti-colonial and civil rights movements. Each of the meetings of social movement and cultural leaders produced resolutions calling for the equal rights globally and the end of minority rule in colonial governance before fully embracing the call for nationhood.¹⁹ These instances reveal successful attempts at bridging national attachments with Pan-Africanist political philosophies and notions of racial destiny that frame the conditions facing communities of African descent.

¹⁹ The 1945 Pan-African Congress in Manchester, UK is remembered for bringing together many of the first heads of African states years before independence. Kwame Nkrumah’s political career in the Gold Coast was launched shortly after he was invited to join the United Gold Coast Convention, the leading organization advocating for majority rule. The presence of W.E.B. Du Bois was also significant as he was involved in the first Pan-African Congress in 1919 as well as the Pan-African Conference in 1900 that inspired the later meetings.
as a singular issue of race, creating the capacity to overlook competing ethnic and national associations. However, these efforts operate within a framework that is primarily grounded within contemporary socio-political relations and aspirations for the future alleviation of racialized oppression; heritage and ancestry remain secondary concerns if raised at all.

The second rise of Flt. Lt. Jerry Rawlings a position of national leadership in 1981 and the advent of the Ghana’s formal tourism industry in the mid-1990’s granted the state an opportunity to once again set out to build homeland-diaspora relationships in the hopes of generating financial and political support from the diaspora; this time by utilizing the remnants of the slave trade to overcome the ambiguities of lost heritage (Bratton et. al, 2001; Ebron, 1999; Bruner, 1996). However, early attempts to draw the attention and capital of the diaspora faced many challenges (Bruner, 1999). In part, Ghana’s efforts suffered from problems that can be attributed in part to its nascence in the tourism industry and minimal tourism infrastructure. Additionally, comparable efforts to engage the diaspora developed by many of Ghana’s regional neighbors generated competition in the pursuit for the attention and flow of target tourist groups and led to the rapid adoption and dismissal of alternative framings of homeland-diaspora relations.

Before the state even decided to rely primarily on tourism, Ghana experimented with different means of engaging the diaspora. In 1988, the Rawlings administration, in partnership with the National Council of Chiefs, supported a multi-city tour linking promotional events in the United States designed to generate interest in African-

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20 Ghana also displays its past relationships with diasporic communities to tourist to build the impression that its current project is firmly situated within an ongoing political struggle. In this way, the homes and final resting places of George Padmore and W.E.B. Du Bois are presented as both monuments to Pan-Africanism and heroes in Ghana’s struggle for independence.
American investment in Ghana. Hon. Kodwo Nana Mbra V of Cape Coast, visited with African-American community leaders, members of churches, and entrepreneurs in the hopes of solidifying investments (Still, 1988). Later, Rawlings would himself travel to the United States and make the highly contentious offering of citizenship as he professed from the White House “You are our kith and kin, I mean, where do you come from? After all, is there any reason why, you know, you should not have the right to enjoy the citizenship of where you come from?” (NRP-ATC 5-23-1999) Rawlings pledges lacked any legal standing in Ghana, as his citizenship initiative did not have the backing of the legislature, but did allow him to elevate his own position and Ghana’s in African-American political culture. At the same time however, these efforts allowed Rawlings to distinguish himself from the religious and apologetic valence of Matthieu Kerekou, then president of Benin, who according to Rawlings overly stressed the spiritual significance of African leaders apologizing for slavery (CM, 2000). Rawlings personal position on the matter, however, would be cast aside as public apologies from the chiefs began to be incorporated into the heritage experiences.

The Joseph Project

The Ghanaian MoT has developed a series of strategies over the nearly twenty-year period the state has organized heritage tourism offerings as suggested by former president John Kufuor [2001-2009], to promote: “…the awareness among African nations and people of African descent of common values, cultures, and language to deepen mutual understanding and strengthening their common identity.” (2007

21 The semi-official delegate was also tasked with reassuring potential investors of the security of their investments from both market collapse and government expropriation.
While the form and reception of tourism offerings continue to change, the state has committed to embellishing the physical and cultural legacies of the slave trade in order to increase tourism flows and spending—by distinguishing itself on tourism markets with these very experiences—economic and infrastructural development, and partnerships between members of the diaspora and local entrepreneurs. In doing so, the state has demonstrated the need for an expanded framework for the analysis of diaspora and heritage to engage claims to identity and social ties as organizational or social movement achievements—however temporary (Tilly, 2005; Eyerman & Jamison, 1991). Although there are exceptions, Ghana’s efforts fall into two categories of strategies for developing commemorative practices to accomplish the task of uncovering and repairing ties to the diaspora. On the one hand, the state uses the museum facilities, historic locations, and designated heritage sites to bring tourists lost ties to Africa into relief while on the other, it utilizes cultural performances to repair broken ties between communities and build new relations in a “…manner to elevate Africa and Africans worldwide” (Ghana MoT, 2006).

Ghana’s “Joseph Project” represents the nation’s effort to make the 21st century the “African Century” and to position Ghana as the “doorway” to the continent for communities of African descent. The creators of the Joseph Project worked under J.O. Obetsebi-Lamptey, the then director of Ghana’s Ministry of Tourism and Diasporan Relations, to organize a series of redemptive events and interactive activities that elevate African—racial—pride and solidarity. The drafters conceptualized a series of tourism offerings that would bring about a discussion of the continued significance of the legacy of slavery and stress the transformative potential for combined development.
efforts between the continent and Diaspora. The project's name evokes the biblical story of Joseph’s return from slavery and adds an air religious legitimacy to the industry. In particular, Ghana hopes to draw an explicit parallel between Joseph’s experience of slavery in a foreign land and triumphant return with the experiences and atmosphere offered to tourists of African descent. The “Joseph Project” campaign entails ten separate tourist activities that when combined are intended to build a durable homeland-diaspora relationship and identity that frames Ghana as the “doorway to Africa” for people of African descent. The ten activities are: (1) the healing; (2) a pilgrimage; (3) education; (4) our culture & tradition; (5) the African Excellence Experience; (6) the “Josephs” of today; (7) the Diasporan Visa; (8) owning land in the homeland; (9) know your roots; (10) the “gene map.”

Importantly, each of the activities seeks to inspire different types of connections to Ghana that differentially engage the tourists in Ghana’s development (Ministry of Tourism and Diasporan Relations, 2006). On the one hand, activities like, “know your roots”, “our culture & tradition”, and the “Josephs of today” aim to inspire affective ties between communities in the aims of manifesting a new imagined community. The “Josephs” of today are generally celebrities from African, Afro-Caribbean, and African-American politics and culture. Although it is not a necessary criterion for recognition, the program often recognizes people who have permanently settled in Ghana. The program also awards other recognitions such as the Harriet Tubman Award, but it is unclear what criteria the state uses when granting these awards. For instance, Rita Marley, the widow of the singer Bob Marley, has lived in Ghana for nearly three decades and actively participates in developing social services in her adopted
community in Aburi. Recently, she was awarded the Harriet Tubman Award, but the logic linking her to the award's title is unclear. On the other hand, activities such as "owning land in the homeland", Diasporic Visa, and "gene map" seek to generate far more concrete social ties established on economic, legal, and genetic basis respectively in hopes of creating a potential lasting source of development funding. These latter connections create a far more binding connection to Africa for tourists, although the former speaks more directly to issues of identity, lost heritage, and community cohesion that drives the tourism industry.

Building off this model, Ghana’s heritage tourism industry advertises that it provides tourists with offerings and experiences that allow them to witness both the tragedies of the Atlantic slave trade and come to terms with the lasting divisions left between communities in Africa and those of African descent abroad. As detailed in subsequent chapters, the MoT has collaborated with a number of related administrative agencies and organizations to restore and reconstruct many of the sites and slave routes lost in the two centuries separating the abolishment of the trade and Ghana’s establishment of what administrators hope become a pilgrimage-like experience. While visiting heritage sites and related museum facilities, tourists are introduced to the Atlantic slave trade through the perspective of both those who were taken and those who were left behind. Memorabilia, ship manifests, birth records, and even the very restraints once used to bind captives en route to the coast and in the castles are displayed to demonstrate the proportions of the trade and shed light onto the contradictory social realities of those occupying the castles. Exquisitely designed tableware, stately governor's quarters, and relatively spacious barracks for enlisted men
stand in stark contrast to the overcrowded and hellish conditions facing those in the dungeons below. The ephemera that the state creates for the tourist market also emplaces the system within Ghana by emphasizing the fact that the country now hosts the most structures remaining from the slave trade in Africa—although by no means are all of the sites restored or even accessible to tourists (Gieryn, 2000).

Additionally, castles, forts, resting stops, trading posts, and foot trodden paths through dense tropic forests and grasslands identified through research sponsored by the University of Ghana and UNCESCO have accordingly been developed into tourist destinations/experiences equipped with museum exhibits and an accompanying informed staff. While the majority of tourists visiting Ghana journey to many of these sites independently of organized tours, the state also offers a series of specialty-guided tours that allow tourists to have the encompassing experience of recreating and reliving elements of capture and passage to the coast. These state-organized tours escort visitors along the long and often seemingly treacherous routes from the inland Sahel to the coast, while making stops at significant waypoints to the journey. Once at the coast, tourists are taken through the partially excavated dungeons of coastal slave castles to recreate the final passage through the “doors of no return”. For a fee, tourists are taken by boat through the “doors of no return” in Cape Coast Castle to the “doors of return” in El Mina Castle. The “doors of no return” are the final set of doors enslaved Africans passed through in Cape Coast castle before being taken to the slave ships for transport to the Caribbean, while the “doors of return” are the corresponding doors at El Mina

22 Museum exhibits and staff rarely acknowledge the comparatively small proportion of the overall Atlantic trade that can be attributed to Ghana; such oversights allow the state to downplay the significance of other departure points on the continent that contributed more exports to the Atlantic trade.
castle which have since been repurposed for the tourism experience. This ceremonial passage through the latter set of doors is designed to mark the participants’ spiritual return to the land of their ancestors and the fulfillment of the dreams of those taken from Ghana. A recent tourism guide describes this experience as “…be[ing] painful. But it will be essential to coming to terms with the past so as to lay it to rest, to the gather strength to deal with the present and future” (Ghana MoT, 2006: 160). Similarly, excursions to the remote village of Assin Manso to bathe in the Nnonkosu—a wading pool in a local river made available for the enslaved to bathe one final time on their march to the coast—imbue tourists’ experience as a strong marker of community membership and connection to the tragedies of the past.

Although the slave castles and stopping points along the slave routes from the “North” are among the most popular destinations in Ghana’s heritage tourism industry, the state has also organized a series of far more participatory and interactive excursions and events to bring communities in Ghana together with those from abroad to reconcile tensions attributed to the legacy of the slave trade and develop strategies for achieving common goals. Dubars—or grand parades—of the chiefs, cultural festivals, and memorial services for the remains of an enslaved African-American woman and Jamaican man are frequently held throughout the country. At these gatherings, the similarities between the experiences and cultures of Ghanaians and various diasporic communities are highlighted, giving those on both side of the Atlantic an opportunity to come together and discuss the legacy of the slave trade. While often potentially contentious, these forums and venues allow communities to work through the painful task of addressing where responsibility for the trade may lie as well as addressing a
more general question of who is or can be a member of the African community. For the chiefs, these reconciliatory performances and stages have granted them the opportunity to make public apologies for the actions of their own predecessors, who are implicated in the capture and trade of other communities from within and outside of what is now Ghana. The Ghanaians in attendance and tourists alike observe these cultural displays; the latter group is given an opportunity to receive a symbolic apology and an official welcome in a fashion suited to returning compatriots. Furthermore, religious, musical, and dance performances designed to emphasize recognizable similarities between cultural productions allows participants from both within Ghana and elsewhere to socialize and make new connections of their own. Building off the work of programs like TransAfrica—an American organization dedicated to integrating African-Americans into continental life and politics through tours and student exchange programs—Ghana began to co-host themed events in Accra’s most popular and vibrant clubs and conference centers. Similarly, events cosponsored by the Diasporan African Forum (DAF), an African Union (AU) sponsored Ghanaian non-profit organization designed to encourage African Americans living in Ghana to engage in Ghanaian and continental politics, bring tourists and diasporic emigrants to the W.E.B. Du Bois Center to network and simply relax. In 2012, the DAF took part in the organizing of the first Yale Club of Ghana meeting in hope of raising Ghanaian awareness of US higher education opportunities.

23 The “chiefs” have recently been praised by members of Ghana’s African American emigrant community for their commitment to nurturing this particular community in their transition to life in Ghana. In select cases, the chiefs have been known to provide land at little to no cost to diasporic migrants who are new to Ghana. One such holding is now a popular hotel and resort that offers guests the opportunity to stay in bungalows dedicated to one of eight Pan-African figureheads.
The state organizes equally performative “political” displays and experiences for tourists to compliment the social and heritage offerings. Often focused on the struggle to achieve “full emancipation” and the biographies of distinguished personages in the struggle for civil rights and independence, these offerings equate the past political traditions of communities of African descent with those in Ghana in hopes of recreating past alliances such as those between Kwame Nkrumah, W.E.B. Du Bois and Kwame Ture—formerly Stokely Carmichael. In this fashion Du Bois, in particular, has become a central figure in Ghana’s attempt to build homeland-diaspora relationships.

W.E.B. Du Bois initially arrived in Ghana in 1960, after being invited to witness the inauguration of Nigeria’s first president just three years before his death. While in Ghana, Du Bois was welcomed by Nkrumah and commissioned to produce an “Afrocentric” Pan-African encyclopedia that integrated him into the forefront of the nation’s developing academy. For the state, the three years Du Bois spent living in Ghana left an example and legacy of a dedication to anti-racism and African independence that the state hopes to instill in tourists of African descent today.24 Tourists now have the opportunity to take a guided tour of his luxurious Cantonments home and presentation of his great body of literature and the prestigious awards Du Bois received from China, Russian and other African nations.

Along this same vein, the Ghanaian state adopted the Caribbean and Canadian holiday, Emancipation Day, in the mid-1990’s as both a sign of solidarity and as a way to lay claim to a common struggle and narrative employed by many communities of

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24 W.E.B Du Bois and his wife Shirley Graham DU Bois—who went onto become a founding member of Ghana’s first television broadcasting organization—are presented in such esteem and intertwined into tourism offerings in such a way that their contributions often overshadow those of Ghanaians.
African descent in British Commonwealth nations. Today, Emancipation Day marks the opening of the state’s annual African diaspora cultural festival, PANAFEST. The celebration of Emancipation Day has been praised by tourists and Pan-African organizations as a sign of Ghana’s commitment and leadership in developing an expanded Pan African politics for the new millennium. Ultimately, the co-optation of diasporic celebrations and personages has worked to situate Ghana within the political discourses and struggles of communities of African-descent abroad. By claiming Du Bois and celebrations like Freedom Day or Juneteenth—a holiday celebrating the abolition of slavery in Galveston, Texas years after its national prohibition—Ghana hopes to position itself as the national body most committed to addressing and alleviating the problems of racism, discrimination, and a limited sense national belonging. (NPR-ATC 5-23-1999).

On top of the activities, ceremonies, and reenactments already mentioned, the MoT in collaboration with what has become the PANAFEST Foundation, hosts annual multi-week celebrations each summer to further develop the perception of Ghana as the homeland to the African diaspora and representative of the interests of communities of African descent. In the opening ceremony of the 2012 PANAFEST celebration, the

25 Interestingly, Ghana’s contribution to the abolition movement and efforts to end the Atlantic slave trade are noticeably absent from much of their tourism advertising and informative materials made available to tourists.

26 HABESHA, an organization dedicated to promoting cultural awareness and education for African-American teens in Baltimore, MD organizes annual trips to Ghana for its advanced members. Participants visit Ghana to explore their heritage and learn the history of the first “Black African” independent nation.

27 The PANAFEST Foundation is a collective of artists, educators, students, and administrators committed to establishing Ghana as a “Doorway” to Africa for the diaspora as well as the base for future Pan Africanist thought. Originally a theatre group, the PANAFEST Foundation has evolved into a major factor in Ghana’s development planning and has a position within the government’s decision-making structures. Additionally, the PANAFEST Foundation does much of the advertising work of reaching out to communities in the diaspora and those in Ghana to increase flows to the heritage sites. For instance, the Youth Movement wing of the
current Minister of Tourism addressed a crowd of nearly fifty tourists from the United States, Jamaica, Trinidad, and Canada in the courtyard of the W.E.B. Du Bois Memorial Centre. Minister Dansua welcomed everyone in attendance and proceeded to encourage everyone to anticipate the joy and relief they would experience during the “healing” activities in the upcoming two weeks of dubars, tours, concerts, dances, lectures, and memorials. Each activity is designed to reconcile conflicting perceptions of the slave trade—legacies, perpetrators, and locations—illuminate cultural and political commonalities, and finally build concrete affective ties between the diaspora and Ghana that can be transformed into tourist dollars and directed towards socio-economic development projects.

In this fashion, Ghana’s tourism environment works to build consensus between communities of African descent as to the centrality of Ghana to diasporic identity and a new vision of racial unity and politics. The deployment of the rhetoric of community and identity seen in the PANAFEST celebrations and alongside the historical recreations of the experience of dispersal serve to further unite the consumers of these particular experiences as is seen in the nationalist projects grounded in historical preservation around the world (Calhoun, 1997; Barthel, 1996; Balibar, 1995). In this light, Ghana’s efforts to utilize tourism to mend the ruptured bonds of the past that previously jeopardized the homeland-diaspora relations that once supplied economic and political

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28 While the 2012 PANAFEST celebration and week of events were cut short just one day later by the abrupt passing of President John Atta Mills, those in attendance and others touring Ghana were still able to experience many of the scheduled events, just scaled back.
support to the developing nation can be equated with strategies developed by social movements to produce similar cognitive changes.

**Discussion**

Ghana’s contemporary efforts to nurture homeland-diaspora relationships with communities of African descent abroad has called into question the ways we as sociologists conceptualize homeland-diaspora relations and claims to diaspora status. In particular, it reveals that the experience and legacy of the Atlantic slave trade served to disrupt the continuity of social ties, cultural practices and language, and identity of those subjected to this unique dispersal; forever leaving a barrier to potential cooperative and coordinated action across the Atlantic. This revelation suggests that the African diaspora may be distinct in this nature, but nonetheless still a viable foil to uncover overlooked aspects of other similarly situated communities’ pursuit of unity and national belonging following dispersals from real or perceived homelands. As a result of the collective loss produced by the experience and legacy of the slave trade and racialized discrimination, new community agendas and identities are left open to be formed through the concerted efforts of state and non-state actors. In this light, claims to diaspora and homeland-diaspora relationships present themselves in a manner akin to an organization dedicated to shifting identity and behaviors—they may produce limited or temporary results or may fail entirely (White, 2008).

From this perspective, Ghana’s desire to utilize and “tap” the resources of the diaspora to generate an “African Renaissance” has guided the state to revisit the very same traumatic experiences responsible for generating the diaspora and reconstruct the
links bridging communities contending national, ethnic, and racial attachments. By manipulating public discourses and media to address the legacy of the slave trade, Ghana and affiliated non-state actors are attempting to shift frameworks such that the state, and to a lesser extent the remainder of Africa, can influence the negotiation of the identities and socio-political agendas of communities of African descent. The pursuit of this cognitive shift has led to the development of a number of strategies to reach out to the diaspora as well as solidify a base community of consumption, which at the very least now shares a common narrative and experience of diaspora explicitly tied to Ghana. Even for tourist who do not have African heritage, visiting Ghana’s heritage sites and viewing the performative displays works to solidify an image of Pan-African unity as alternative configurations of national attachments and periods lacking unity are disproportionately obscured by the state. From this common foundation, Ghana hopes to propel the start of the “African Millennium” and “Renaissance” of culture, politics, and community that will position Ghana and Africa at the forefront of global economic and cultural markets. However, Ghana must first successfully uncover and repair the bonds of race and community and pair a historical stateless community with a homeland.

In the chapters that follow, Ghana’s heritage tourism project will be examined in greater detail in order to unpack the strategies developed to overcome the ambiguous and absent social ties that separate Ghana from communities of African descent abroad. Tourism endeavors introduced in this discussion such as PANAFEST and Emancipation Day will be examined individually alongside offerings that similarly couple Ghana to the diaspora and lay the foundation for new channels of economic and social resources for the developing state. These investigations will examine the development
of each of the offerings and illuminate the ways in which the heritage sites, excursions, and festivals/events manipulate the cognitive processes responsible for ascribing the identities and national attachments for communities of African descent. In the next chapter, I demonstrate this through a discussion of the preservation and conversion of the remains of castles and forts once used to house enslaved Africans awaiting transport to the Caribbean and Americas into museums and tourism destinations.

Table 1.1: Estimated Total Export of Slave Laborers from West Africa, 1700 – 1810

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decade</th>
<th>British</th>
<th>French</th>
<th>Portuguese</th>
<th>Dutch</th>
<th>American</th>
<th>Danish</th>
<th>El Mina</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1700-09</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1710-19</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>336</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1720-29</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>454</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1730-39</td>
<td>276</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>552</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1740-49</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1750-59</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>548</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1760-69</td>
<td>391</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>747</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1770-79</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>688</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1780-89</td>
<td>349</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>764</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1790-99</td>
<td>417</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>708</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1800-09</td>
<td>281</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>540</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“Certain categories of goods with historical associations are frequently invested with meaning or blessed with an aura far beyond their superficial qualities or social purposes. This aura is not intrinsic to the object, but extrinsic, located in the relationships people form with goods that they, individually and collectively, consider special.” (Barthel, 1996: pp.133-134)

Introduction

Nestled between some of Ghana’s most pristine beaches and the lush Kakum Forest National Park, the coastal towns of Cape Coast and El Mina exude a calming aura as you approach from Accra, the sprawling national capital. Vibrant fishing settlements and a tranquil pace of life in these twin communities seem ideally suited for a nation seeking to develop its tourism industry and bring in a larger flow of tourists and tourism dollars to its economy. However, this impression of life along the coast of Ghana’s Central region obscures the history of slavery that has recently brought so much attention to the region. In both towns, fishing boats unload their catch just feet from the same castles the state has come to rely on to attract tourists and simultaneously establish itself as the homeland to the African diaspora. Similarly, the presence of teenage vendors or “hawkers” eager to make a profit from tourists entering and exiting the sites with hand-made wares offsets and demystifies the state’s intended presentation of slavery and dispersal from Africa. The structures remaining from the period of the slave trade and colonial rule—including dungeons, trading posts, military garrisons, and even the one time quarters of a captured Ashantihene (the emperor of the Ashanti)--allow the contemporary state to lay claim to a particular history of dispersal and trauma that binds it to communities of African descent abroad.
The evolution of these sites into tourism attractions and monuments corresponds with the state’s desires to shift perceptions of the past and the collective memory of slavery and dispersal from Africa so that it may extract capital from the diaspora. The state now uses many of these historical sites in tandem with museum facilities located inside to uncover and put on display the unexplored history that links communities in Ghana to those outside of the continent through the racialized legacy of the slave trade. However, the commemorative practices developed to validate Ghana’s claims relative to communities of African descent abroad stand in opposition to existing practices employed elsewhere in the state (MoT, 2009, 2006; Bruner, 1996). Emerging tensions and confusion over the very meaning of sites central to both the slave trade and colonial occupation—systems that produced two related yet distinct subjectivities—complicate the state’s efforts and demand a greater investigation into the presentation of national attachment, diasporic heritage, and collective loss at the sites.

How is it then that the castles of Cape Coast and El Mina have come to be represented as sites central to the formation and identities of communities of African descent abroad—for both the state and those who visit? In what ways do the commemorative practices developed by the state shift perceptions of the coastal castles—and Ghana—so that the symbolic value of the sites is fed by the legacy of the Atlantic slave trade rather than that of the more recent colonial rule? Further, for groups that grant the sites significance for alternative reasons, how are the tensions produced by this transition negotiated? In addressing these questions, this chapter will examine how Ghana manipulates commemorative practices focused on the slave trade and
dispersal from Africa by transitioning the remnants of the trade into heritage sites and tourism destinations.

I will focus on a series of sites located in Cape Coast and El Mina, but the highly visible castles in each town will receive a majority of the chapter's attention as they are in many ways the centerpiece of Ghana's commemorative efforts. Additionally, this chapter will present a fuller history of the sites so that I may highlight the bias that guides the state's commemorative efforts and specific points of mismatch and confusion that emerged from the narratives displayed at the sites following their transition into tourism destinations. Ultimately, this chapter will examine the history, restoration, and development of Ghana's slave castles and forts into internationally recognized tourism destinations to reveal the sequence of actions the state has undertaken to manipulate perceptions of community boundaries and build homeland-diaspora relations.

Additionally, the efforts of non-state actors, primarily organizations representing the interest of diasporic communities residing outside of Ghana as well as those representing Ghanaians will be introduced to shed light onto the contributions of other stakeholders in the heritage tourism industry operating in Ghana today.

Approaching the castles in their capacity as boundary objects—objects that hold alternative or competing significance for two or more communities—will also allow me to explore the negotiation of racial, national, and political identities between groups visiting the sites (Lainer-Vos, 2012). Drawing from Lainer-Vos (2012) discussion of the Israeli and Irish diaspora bonds and their capacity to unite the actions of groups with differing positions on the state of Israel, I will display how the Ghanaian tourism administration works to build consensus and finance state development with tourism offerings that
bridge the multiple significances of the sites to groups with varying attachments. In this light, the sites and the institutions manipulating the displays within can be presented as influencing the perceptions of the continuity and connectedness of the African and diasporic subjectivity and in turn the possibility for a homeland-diaspora relationship and shared identity to take hold (Brubaker, 2004)

Data for this chapter draws from tourism policies produced by Ghana Ministry of Tourism and related state agencies, tourism guidebooks produced by the state and private guidebook publishers, and the literature exploring the history of the Atlantic slave trade and colonial rule in Ghana. Additionally, materials produced by organizations collaborating with the state—such as UNESCO, the African Descendant Association Fund (ADAF), and the Ghana National Theatre Foundation—to fund site restoration and develop tourism programming will be presented as well. Finally, observations collected while touring the sites alone and with groups of tourists will add depth to the discussion of the commemorative practices developed to shift social boundaries national attachments.

**Historical Background**

Construction of the castles and forts located along the coast of Ghana’s Central region began in the mid-15th century following the arrival of European traders in search of rumored gold deposits, ivory and slave laborers. Initially constructed by traders from the Danish, Swedish, British, Portuguese and Dutch empires to provide lodging and storage for goods, a majority of the nearly eighty structures constructed along the coast were smaller wooden buildings—many are no longer recognizable let alone standing
today (Anquandah, 1999). The larger castles and forts however, are associated with the colonial projects of the British, Dutch, and Portuguese—which were far more successful than their Scandinavian counterparts in expanding their influence into the interior of West Africa (Gomez, 2005; Getz, 2004; Anquandah, 1999). Further, following the end of British participation in the slave trade in 1807 many of these sites were repurposed and in some cases upgraded to facilitate the expansion of colonial rule and provide security to the plantations developing along the coast while others were abandoned and fell into disrepair (MoT, 2006; St. Clair, 2006; Feinberg, 1989). Conflicts between colonial powers in what is now Ghana and elsewhere in the colonial world led to the castles and forts being captured, bargained for, and exchanged—often without significant interruption of the flow of enslaved Africans out of the now infamous “doors of no return.” For example, Christiansborg Castle, located just outside of Accra, was initially a lodge built by the Swedish in 1657 that was later transferred to the Danish African Company, the British, and later the independent Ghanaian government. Today, the castle stands as the presidential residence and is typically inaccessible to the public and tourists without special permission (Anquandah, 1999). Prior to his death in 2012, the refusal of late President John Atta Mills to relocate the presidential residence to a newly constructed facility was widely criticized by those in the tourism administration and public who felt the castle was both an edifice of colonial rule and underutilized tourism destination.

Archeological findings on display in the sites and in the National Museum located in Accra, shipping manifests, disciplinary records, and personal narratives reveal that life for Europeans stationed in Castle Sao Jorge and Cape Coast Castle and Africans
held captive stood in stark contrast to each other. Life in the castle was relatively more comfortable for the Europeans, especially ranking officers and the Governor—nonetheless, many succumbed to tropical diseases and waterborne illnesses (St. Clair, 2006; McSheffrey, 1983; Nathan, 1904). Enlisted men stationed at El Mina on the other hand simply encamped in and around the castle and were often left in the open to suffer from exposure. Conditions fared slightly better in the more recently constructed Cape Coast facility; soldiers were housed two to a room (St. Clair, 2006). In spite of these conditions, Europeans etched out semblances of their former lives and even constructed libraries, recreational and church facilities within the courtyard of the two castles. Non-enlisted men—traders, artisans, etc.—settled beyond the castle and often “married” local women—as did men stationed in the castle. St. Clair’s (2006) history of Cape Coast and the neighboring castles and forts reveals that marriage between European enlisted men and local women was common and prevalent amongst all ranks. To the lament of the missionaries hoping to expand Christian influence, however, the developing practices resembled prostitution as the wives were paid monthly to remain married at the discretion of the husband. Further, women able to afford the cost of their monthly “bride price” were able to exit marriage contracts. However, the community of settlers surrounding El Mina and Cape Coast never grew to the size of the one rapidly developing in Accra adjacent to Christianborg castle (Wellington, 2011).

Those held captive faced far worse in the dark and overcrowded dungeons. Hundreds of men and women were corralled into El Mina’s sex-segregated dungeons, often waiting as many as four months before the arrival of ships to take them to their final destinations. Designed to hold prisoners of colonial wars and the enslaved, those
at Cape Coast Castle faced noticeably different conditions with enhanced restrictions. In particular, the primary male dungeon, now the well of the museum facility, was subterranean with only three access points for light, air, water and food. In these conditions, many succumbed to starvation, dehydration, and illness; their bodies left to rot until the arrival of the next group of captives. The female dungeons on the other hand remained above ground, and captives were moved frequently when the castle came under cannon assault from rival Europeans on the coast. Even more, female captives regularly faced the threat of sexual assault from enlisted men and the governor, whose quarters overlooked and had private access to the female dungeon below. While awaiting transport, captives were forced to remain within the dungeons only leaving to be presented to and assessed by prospective buyers; otherwise, only rebellious captives left the dungeons. Both castles relied upon capital punishment to punish rebellion and assaults on the Europeans stationed within. Individuals sentenced to die were simply locked away into a windowless cell adjacent to the courtyard where they were left until they succumbed to exposure, starvation or dehydration. One of the most distinguished captives—although much later -- Ashantihene Prempeh I (1888-1931), was incarcerated in a fully furnished cell overlooking both the courtyard and coast following the capture of Kumasi in the final Ashanti Wars with the British at the close of the 19th century.

Castle Sao Jorge da Mina

The history of European interaction with coastal Fante-Akan communities located in Ghana’s Central region dates back to the late-15th century when the Portuguese arrived in the region in search of gold. Castle Sao Jorge da Mina—popularly known as
“El Mina Castle”—located in what is now the town of El Mina—“the mine”—was constructed in 1482 to house the Portuguese colonial officers and captives awaiting transport to the West Indies.\(^\text{29}\) Despite an effective monopoly on legitimate trade in region, the visibility of Portuguese successes led to the arrival of the British, Dutch, and Swedish competitors in the surrounding regions (Getz, 2004; Feinberg, 1989; Buxton, 1968). Concerns over the encroaching European rivals and local communities displeased with the Portuguese presence led the Portuguese to construct Fort St. Jago on the hill overlooking the coast and forested areas north of El Mina to provide warning in case of approaching European and African armies (Briggs, 2010; Lonely Planet, 2009, Feinberg, 1989). Following years of conflict with Europeans and coastal communities, the Portuguese were finally expelled by the Dutch in 1637; the Dutch would then hold the site as the capital of the Dutch Gold Coast until 1872, when it was sold to the British whom controlled the site until Ghana’s independence in 1957 (Getz, 2004; Anquandah, 1999; Feinberg, 1989; McIntyre, 1962).\(^\text{30}\)

Prior to transitioning to British supervision, the castle at El Mina served as the regional base of operation for the Dutch West India Company in what was then known as the Dutch Gold Coast. From within the castle’s fortifications, the Dutch were able to successfully repel and eventually subdue neighboring communities previously aligned with the Portuguese—thus gaining a modicum of control over the export of slave

\(^{29}\) The Portuguese also imported captives to El Mina so that they may be traded for gold and other valuable goods. Many of these captives came from further south on the coast of West Africa while others came from the Canary Islands.

\(^{30}\) While touring Castle Sao Jorge (El Mina Castle), tourists are informed by their guides of the betrayal that local communities felt following the transition from Portuguese to Dutch operation of the castle. Specifically, the expansion and acceleration of the trade in enslaved Africans following Dutch ascension challenged previous assumptions that the Dutch would slow and possibly stop the trade.
laborers on the coast and bolster the growth of Dutch territories in the Caribbean (St. Clair, 2007; Buxton, 1969). Although the Dutch were able to secure the immediate area surrounding El Mina, they faced near constant threat of open conflict from the British stationed in Cape Coast. However, following the Dutch-Anglo Treaty of 1814, the Dutch ended the flow of captives through its ports, but continued to utilize the facility to direct the almost constant flow of ships hoping to trade into and out of the bay.

After being incorporated into the British colonial structure already in place on the coast, the facility adopted a strategic role for the colonial military and later, in the 20th century was upgraded into a training center for the West African recruits in the British colonial army (Briggs, 2010; MoT, 2006; Anquandah, 1999; Apter, 1963). Former dungeons used to hold captives became storerooms for arms, while others housed trainees in colonial forces. Additionally, iron bars installed along the castle’s embankment reinforcement became the object of a detested training drill that called for soldiers to scale the steep walls. The castle remained a training facility for regional armies until independence when the Nkrumah government transitioned to power. During the immediate post-colonial period the Ghanaian police force organized its training activities within the facility although the site was designated a national monument by 1961 (Republic of Ghana, 1961).

Relations between coastal communities and the series of European occupants of Castle Sao Jorge fluctuated greatly during the period of the slave trade and colonial rule. At times, local community leaders actively supported trading goods and captives with Europeans, even going as far as supporting the expansion of European settlements on the coast (Wellington, 2011; Feinberg, 1989; Cartland, 1947). At others
however, tensions arising in the wake of the rapidly expanding Greater Ashanti-Akan state—centered in Kumasi—reverberated throughout the region, shifting alliances and power dynamics on the coast (Buxton, 1968; Rattay, 1923; Migeod, 1916). Further, displeasure with the Portuguese slave trade produced temporary alliances between local leaders and the Dutch, who at the time professed desires to restrict if not end the trade altogether. However, these alliances quickly fell apart as the Dutch increased the demand for captives (MoT, 2006; Buxton, 1969).

In spite of the conditions of local relations between Europeans and Africans along the Gold Coast, the trade in enslaved Africans advanced and peaked in the 18th century when Castle Sao Jorge contributed to the nearly 650,000 people that departed from the Gold Coast (Getz, 2004; Richardson, 1989; Curtin, 1969). Later, in the early-1870's, as legislation outlining the abolition of slavery in British territories approached ratification, local chiefs, the developing elite mixed-race community, and traders engaged in the domestic-Saharan trade partnered together with European traders residing in El Mina and Accra to petition the governor to delay or halt the impending manumissions (St. Clair, 2006; Akurang-Parry, 2003, 2000; Buxton, 1969). Even representatives of the rapidly expanding Ashanti state sought to delay the legislation as slavery and the Saharan trade offered a means to dispose of dissidents and war captives at a profit; thus further enabling their growth.

_Cape Coast Castle_

31 Fante and Ashanti communities are co-ethnics in a greater Akan speaking linguistic family. This broader Akan community expands beyond the borders of what is now Ghana and reaches into two of the three nations surrounding Ghana—Togo and Cote D’Ivore. In spite of linguistic and cultural commonalities, political alliances and fractures often positioned communities against each other.

32 This betrayal is made reference to while touring both El Mina and Cape Coast Castle.

33 Guides inform tourists as they pass through the male and female slave dungeons that approximately 1,000 persons (approx 60% male to 40% female) would pass through the facility roughly every three months during this period.
Similar to the castle in El Mina, neighboring Cape Coast’s founding and development into a strategic node in the slave trade dates back to 15th century when the Portuguese arrived on the coast. However, unlike El Mina, the structure that would become Cape Coast Castle began as a simple wooden lodge for Portuguese traders and surveyors (St. Clair, 2006; Getz, 2004; Anquandah, 1999). Following the Dutch ascension on the coast, colonial policy shifted so that other seafaring empires could establish trading posts and in turn relieve some of the tensions produced by the previous Portuguese monopoly in the region (St. Clair, 2006; Migeod, 1916). In 1653, Sweden negotiated for control of the site and began construction of what is now Cape Coast castle. Rechristened Fort Carolusburg, the fort provided the Swedish traders with a much-valued sheltered bay on the African coast—although its size and defensive capabilities were significantly less than its current form. In fact, the Swedish briefly lost control of the facility after partially destroying and relocating a shrine enraged communities adjacent to the fort (MoT, 2009). The facility was soon transferred to the British in 1665 and by 1700; demands for slave labor shifted the focus of exports from away from gold, ivory and palm oil to slave laborers (MoT, 2006; Rodney, 1969). Following the excavation of the castles male dungeons during the conversion to a tourism destination, the shrine has since been relocated to its approximate original location. Today, the shrine is presented to tourists as a having continued symbolic value and use amongst members of the Cape Coast community. Small offerings of liquor and gold coins adorn the shrine and stand in stark contrast to the collections of wreaths laid down in the corner of the room by individuals and representatives of African American churches and alumnae associations.
Exhibits detailing the scope of the trade in Accra’s National Museum suggest that by 1700, the British had advanced the trade to nearly 70,000 people per annum from Cape Coast Castle (Anquandah, 1999). Designed with the export of slave labor in mind, British expansions on Fort Carolusburg during the second half of the 18th century facilitated the control and supervision of those held captive within (Anquandah, 1999; Porter, 1970; Migeod, 1916; J. of the Royal Africa Society, 1904). The construction of subterranean dungeons accessible only by a retractable ladder almost guaranteed a minimal risk of insurrection from male captives while the existing dungeons lining the castle’s interior walls were reinforced and expanded to house additional female captives (Getz, 2004; Anquandah, 1999). Additionally, the castle’s defensive capabilities were improved to repel occasional pirate raids and assaults from neighboring forts that followed in the wake of the Portuguese monopoly. The position and size of land and shore entrances as well as cannon barriers were often shifted to better protect the growing community developing at the foot of the castle.

Throughout the late 17th and 18th centuries, the castle’s primary function and resources were undoubtedly directed towards the facilitation of the slave trade. In addition to the castle’s enlisted European staff, “castle slaves” and lowly paid laborers enlisted from the surrounding community were introduced to maintain the facility and its livestock. However, in spite of this great carceral project, the enlisted men and ranked officers were often most concerned with managing and identifying ships lined up to receive captives and goods rather than monitoring their captives. For the men stationed in Cape Coast Castle and El Mina in particular—as a result of their proximity to one

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34 The population of ranking officers and enlisted men stationed in Cape Coast castle remained relatively small throughout the period of the slave trade and afterwards, often numbering less than forty men (St. Clair, 2006).
another—identifying and scheduling the entry of each ship into the port was a challenge fraught with great risk as ships falsely identifying themselves could cause great damage to the facility at a close range. Even during times of peace, tensions between colonial powers operating on the coast remained high; communication and interaction between opposing powers remained limited as well (Journal of Royal African Studies, 1904).

Additionally, missionaries and educators residing in and around the castle produced lasting religious and education institutions that persist today. As with El Mina Castle, Cape Coast Castle served as host to one of the Gold Coast’s and Africa’s first European style schools (Odamtten, 1978; Smith, 1932). The school located above the only of the male-only dungeon accessible to tourists today, served the mixed-race community in the town.35 Graduates from these institutions and others operating in the other coastal castles often left the Gold Coast to pursue careers in education elsewhere in Africa, while a select few traveled to Europe for further study (Smith, 1932). The grave of Philip Quaque, the first of these Ghanaian scholars, has been identified and restored for tourists visiting the castle (Reese, 2004).36

Similar to the schools that emerged within the castle, missionary groups utilized the facility to organize their excursions into the coastal regions. Unlike the Portuguese and Dutch, however, the British never fully reinforced missionary excursions on the coast.37 While more successful than Catholic missionaries, representatives of the

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35 Today, as in the past, the castle hosts one of the region’s largest libraries. The on-site library serves Cape Coast’s primary and secondary schools.

36 The grave of Philip Quaque is one of three gravesites excavated for tourists in the castle to view. The other two graves belong to one of the Castle’s governors and his wife—who died within a month of arriving. While touring the site, tour guides stop to introduce each of the individuals interned in the castle’s courtyard.
Anglican missions were far less successful in Cape Coast than the Basel Mission in and around Accra (St. Clair, 2006; Getz, 2004). The Basel Mission operated out of Christianborg Castle, currently the President’s residence, in Accra. Missionaries from this group made their ways to the Akwypim hills north of Accra to establish schools and church facilities. Like Cape Coast, many of these schools have been expanded upon and in one case developed into the nation’s premier teaching college. Additionally, members of the Basel Mission were amongst the first in Ghana to challenge the legitimacy of the Atlantic trade as well as local institutions of slavery. However, the Anglican missions were adamant supporters of introducing structured religious and technical training to the children of Ghana’s coastal regions (Reese, 2004; Odamttten, 1978).

Following the end of British participation in the slave trade, the castle became a staging ground for ships patrolling West African waters for illegal slave raiding and trading operations, although the export of goods traded with the Ashanti state and further north continued as well (Migeod, 1916). Many illicit slaving ships and their crews were captured by British ships patrolling the coast and faced trial in the castle well into the 19th century. The castle also took on a far more administrative role after the seat of British authority in West Africa was transferred from Sierra Leone to the Gold Coast in 1821 (St. Clair, 2006; MoT, 2006). From Cape Coast Castle, administrators

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37 Compared to its counterparts operating along the same coast, the British colonial project reflected less of a desire to establish or bolster European settler communities. While the British were in many ways just as active in the establishment of schools to serve mixed race communities, there was little support for development commercial farming until the development of the cocoa industry in the late 19th century.

38 There is no mention of the anti-slavery activities that were organized from the castle in guide materials, neither are there any artifacts from this history on display at the heritage site or museum facility within. Instead, exhibits detailing the “Great Emancipators” from England and the US populate the museum and discussion of abolition in exhibits made available to tourists.
developed policies for the incorporation of recently encountered ethnic groups as well as lay out guidelines for the terms of trade. While castle at El Mina remained the primary military installation in the region after the British transfer in 1872, Cape Coast Castle became a target during the four 19th century wars between the British and Ashanti (St. Clair, 2006; Getz, 2004). However, the castle returned to being primarily a port outpost after 1877 when Accra was designated the new capital of the consolidated British Gold Coast Colony. The export of gold from the castle continued until the first decade of 20th century when alluvial deposits in the surrounding region ran dry (Rodney, 1969; Migeod, 1916).

During the first half of the 20th century leading up to decolonization, the use of the castle’s port facility decreased as more modern facilities were constructed elsewhere in the region. After being decommissioned as a military and port facility the castle served as a local house of government and postal office for the Central region. While still home to government offices, police headquarters, and the postal office, the state dedicated a section of the site to become the location for the West Africa Museum (Republic of Ghana, 1961). Early generations of visitors were encouraged to visit the museum to learn about Ghana and West Africa’s pre-colonial history and the diversity of ethnic groups throughout the region. Today, the West Africa Museum has been uprooted and replaced by the Cape Coast Castle Museum and memorials to the slave trade.

Establishing Heritage Sites and Ghana as a Diasporic Homeland

39 During the 19th century, the Gold Coast was divided between the Gold Coast Colony on the coast, Ashanti in the forest interior, and the Northern Territory in the Sahel. Prior to the end of the Ashanti wars, British authority remained limited to the Gold Coast Colony.
As previously mentioned, the castle located on the bay in El Mina remained a training facility for the armed forces following independence in 1957. In 1972, the Ghana Museums and Monuments Board (GMMB) acquired control of the site following a brief period when the Edinaman Secondary School used the facility to hold its classes (Anquandah, 1999). During this period and earlier during the struggle for independence, Ghana received a number of high profile visitors from the African diaspora who, although in Ghana primarily for political ends, came to visit the sites once used in the trade. Writers, activists, and educators—such as Maya Angelou, Richard Wright, W.E.B. and Shirley Graham Du Bois—reflected on many of the sites as both monuments to the slave trade and edifices of colonial domination elsewhere in Africa, long before their transition to official tourism destinations (Gaines, 2006; Padmore, 1957; Wright, 1954). This early flow of celebrity tourist and expatriates signaled to the state the symbolic value of the sites and Ghana as a potential homeland to communities of African descent and began the process of transitioning the sites from operating public facilities to tourism destinations, as was the case for Cape Coast Castle (Morrow, 1999; Angelou, 1989). In many ways, the recent visit of US president Barack Obama in 2009 was presented as a continuation of this trend and marked with great symbolic value and a permanent plaque in the courtyard of Cape Coast Castle (Regusters, 2010).

In addition to the interest inspired by spectacle of high-profile visitors, highly publicized works of fiction and autobiographical explorations of lost heritage, Alex Haley’s *Roots* (1977) in particular, made visible communities of African descent longing for African heritage as well as reveal the potential for communities and states in Africa
to facilitate its achievement. These works and others, while not explicitly linked to growth in tourisms flows in Ghana, were able to shift perceptions of the legacy of the slave trade both in the United States and in Africa (Wright, 2011, 1981; Courlander, 1986; Fairchild, et al., 1986). In particular, the success and wide-distribution of *Roots* allowed readers and viewers of the television adaptation to contemplate the connectedness of communities across the Atlantic, while at the same time highlight the contention surrounding the social memory of slavery—as the works were often labeled as historically inaccurate or in some instances Black Nationalist propaganda by critics (Courlander, 1986; Wright, 1981). While Haley’s *Roots* may not have focused on Ghana, the work nonetheless signaled the possibility for travel in Africa to uncover previously lost heritages and provide an authentic marker of African identity for those seeking it. Later works like the film *Sankofa* (1993) were able to recreate the effects of *Roots* on a smaller scale while incorporating Ghanaian heritage sites into the sets and stories. Similarly, the development of tourism experiences explicitly marketed as “Roots” tours in Gambia and Benin introduced tourists to the sites described in the book and television series signaled that African states were in some ways responding to the recent increased interest in African ancestry and cultural heritage (Brunner, 1996).

*State Policies and Commemorative Practices*

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40 Haley’s *Roots* (1977) and the subsequent television miniseries follows the experience of the middle passage and slavery for Haley’s ancestor, Kunta Kinte. Haley was able to revive his ancestor with the help of Gambian griots—folk oral historians—and in the process attain an African ethnic identity.

41 *Sankofa* (1993) bridges the established “Roots” genre with elements of science fiction and follows the experience of an African-American model participating in a photo shoot in Cape Coast Castle. After being forced to relive the life of an ancestor captured in Ghana and enslaved in the Caribbean, the model is connected to the horrors of slavery and has her previously wavering racial identity bolstered and validated in the process. Even though vistas of Cape Coast only figure centrally into the stories staging, the sites are nonetheless connected to the model’s quest for understanding.
The Ghana Tourism Board (GTB), formed in 1977, initiated Ghana’s entry into the nascent global heritage tourism industry. In 1978, the GTB submitted applications to the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS)—later the UNESCO World Heritage Convention—to have the castles and forts located in Cape Coast and Elmina added to the World Heritage List (ICOMOS 1978). Recognition on this list of sites grants the owners/operators access to funding for restoration, preservation, and research into the architecture and history of the sites.\textsuperscript{42} Even though ICOMOS initially rejected the application for ambiguities over who owned the thirty-six facilities listed in the application, the organization looked favorably on the nomination and eventually chose to admit the loosely connected sites (ICOMOS, 1979A, 1979b). Recognition was ultimately awarded to Ghana for the architectural significance of the sites being the first permanent European constructions in sub-Saharan Africa—a monument to colonial achievement. Admittance under this criteria raised concerns within ICOMOS over the authenticity and state of preservation of the sites as many were remodeled beyond recognition during the colonial period and afterwards (ICOMOS, 1979a). These concerns continue today and in fact, are crux of tension between organizations dedicated to historical preservation and archeological inquiry as such, and those focused on developing commemorative practices that are embellished by the sites’ weathered condition (Bubuama, 2003). Nonetheless, the successful petitioning of ICOMOS and the World Heritage Convention positioned the state, Ministry of Tourism and the Museums and Monuments Board in particular, as the primary agents in the

\textsuperscript{42} In total Ghana has been awarded US$120,000 from UNESCO to rebuild and protect the sites recognized on the World Heritage List. A majority of this funding was requested after 1998 (UNESCO, 2001.)
development of Ghana’s heritage industry and authority determining the narratives and artifacts on display.

More recently, President Rawlings reorganized the Ministry of Tourism (MoT) in 1993 to build a more coherent tourism industry and began to integrate the sites together into the commemorative practices that distinguish Ghana in markets for tourist flows today. Following highly publicized visits from large groups of African Americans, the MoT began to develop museum facilities inside of the castles and began offering guided tours of the sites in recognition of the significance they hold to communities outside of Ghana (Osei-Tutu, 2004; Ohene-Ayeh, 1995; Quainoo, 1993; Graphic Reporter, 1993). Gradually, archeological and archival research conducted by the University of Ghana Cape Coast and University of Ghana Legon, provided artifacts for the museums to display to tourists thus reinventing the sites as monuments to the slave trade (Ghana Information Services Department, 1991; Rodney, 1969). Combined with Rawlings decision to adopt the British Commonwealth holiday of Emancipation Day (August 1st) in 1995, the repurposed castles became the “heart beat” in Ghana’s developing tourism industry (Owusu-Sekyere, 1999).

In the post-2000 era following the political downfall of the Rawlings National Democratic Convention (NDC) government, the MoT underwent a number of shifts in its orientation resulting in it adopting new responsibilities and titles. During its tenure as the Ministry of Tourism and Modernization of the Capital City, the sites located in Elmina and Cape Coast received reduced attention as tourism development privileged initiatives that would bring revenue to Accra, rather than other regions of the country (Mensa, 2000; Daily Graphic, 2000). In spite of these shifts, the state continued to
position itself as a homeland for the diaspora and partner in pursuing political goals. For instance, Ghana was a willing host for the 2nd Historical International Reparations and Repatriation Conference in 2000. This conference brought many tourists to the Du Bois center to discuss the possibility for settlement, investment opportunities and strategies for achieving redress for the slave trade (Graphic Reporter, 2000). Reporters in attendance took note of the mention of Ghana’s relative peace and open market as factors contributing to desires to settle and invest in Ghana as opposed to other nations in West Africa or the continent more broadly. The relocation of the Pan African Theatre Festival (PANAFEST) main events to Accra as well as the incorporation of the Du Bois center into guide materials further served to shift attention away from the sites located in Cape Coast and El Mina (PANAFEST, 2006).

Throughout the early-2000’s Accra was host to a number of conferences and summits dedicated to exploring the ways that the Ghanaian state could advocate for communities of African descent as well as how those communities might aid Ghana. In the year 2000 alone, conferences were organized by Ministry of Tourism and local NGOs to discuss the feasibility of conferring rights of abode to African Americans as well as developing strategies for attaining reparations for slavery and colonialism (Graphic Reporter, 2000; Van-Ess, 2000). Ghanaian representatives in the African Union even went as far as supporting a protocol to amend the constitution of the African Union to recognize the African diaspora as a symbolic extension of the continent and partner in future African Union initiatives (African Union, 2003). Today, the Diaspora
Division of the African Union works to coordinate civic activities between the diaspora and the African Union.  

Counter to the activities in the castles, these tourism offerings engaged concepts of diaspora and homeland-relations on a far more political level than elsewhere in the state and even breached legislative barriers. However, the MoT would again change its orientation and as the Ministry of Tourism and Diasporan Relations and reinvest in the commemorative practices surrounding the castles. From this period to the current day the MoT has maintained its commitment to developing the heritage tourism sector and forging homeland-diaspora relations with communities of African descent abroad as part of larger tourism development strategies.

Events scheduled to coincide with the now famous PANAFEST/EMANCIPATION Day celebrations, enliven the castles with live music and performances each summer while annual mourning practices allow large groups of tourists from the diaspora to experience Ghana as a gateway to accessing their lost ancestry and connection to Africa (Republic of Ghana, 2006). Further, the state began to offer tourists the opportunity to participate in their own recreations of the experience of capture and dispersal from Africa, through the development of the Slave Route Project—which not without conflict concludes at Castle Sao Jorge and Cape Coast Castle (MoT, 2008; Hartman, 2007). Advertised as offering tourists the “embodiment of the interaction that has existed between Africans and Europeans, which resulted in the unfortunate history of Slavery…” participants stop at sites determined to be significant to the operation of

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43 The Diaspora Division defines the African diaspora as: “[C]onsisting of people of African origin living outside the continent, irrespective of their citizenship and nationality and who are willing to contribute to the development of the continent and building of the African Union.”
the trade—trading posts with reconstructed auction blocks, bathing ponds, river crossings (MoT, 2008; Assin Manso brochure). Upon reaching the coast, tourists are given the opportunity to be taken by boat from the Door of No Return in Cape Coast through the recently established “Door of Return” in Castle Sao Jorge. Although a quite expensive tourism offering, the highly symbolic—and in some ways traumatic—activity exposes tourist to the castles and Ghana in a way incommensurate to simply participating in a guided tour of the facility.44

The successes and value seen in Ghana’s heritage tourism industry has drawn significant local attention as well as from international tourists. Exchanges published in Ghanaian print media reveal the extent to which state administrators and everyday observers believed gaining the support of the diaspora through tourism would avert the economic crises facing other countries in the region (Bubuama, 2003, Ahene Nunoo, 2000; Owusu-Sekyere, 1999; Graphic Reporter, 1999). For those following and engaged in these decisions, the expanding the tourism environment represented a more financially and legislatively secure route to generate revenue and provided an opportunity to expand related state run hotel and catering industries. In the section that follows, I will introduce non-state contributors to the presentation of slavery and the commemorative practices developed to establish homeland-diaspora relations between Ghana and communities of African descent.

44 Early PANAFEST celebrations hired local actors to portray the roles of captives en route to the castle leaving tourists as mere observers to the recreation.
Non-State Contributors

While the Ghanaian tourism administration—and occasionally the whims of the president—having been the guiding force behind the pursuit of homeland-diaspora relations and commemorative efforts on display in Ghana’s Central region, many civic associations contribute as well. Most notable amongst these organizations have been the Ghana National Theatre Movement (GNTM), which was responsible for developing and organizing the original PANAFET celebration before the festival was co-opted by the state. Similarly, the African Americans of Ghana Society (AAGS) and the Caribbean Ghana Association have been active organizers and participants in the events held in the Du Bois center and elsewhere in the capital city. Recently, the African Descendants Association Foundation has taken a primary role in hosting and organizing events and in a sense supplanted both organizations. Excluding the GNTM, however, many of these organizations operate in and around the Greater Accra region and are associated with initiatives fostering homeland-diaspora relations based in or addressing racialized political aspirations as opposed to heritage.45

Perhaps more significant to Cape Coast however, is the locally based organization One Africa. Operated by an African American couple that immigrated to Ghana in the early 1990’s, One Africa offers both hotel accommodations and museum exhibits that resemble and complement the state’s larger project. While visiting the museum facilities or staying in one of One Africa’s eight African and diaspora themed bungalows, tourists are given the opportunity to explore the center’s museum dedicated

45 Efforts to identify and organize members of the diaspora residing in Ghana into coherent groups has proved challenging for many researchers and the migrants themselves (Hartman, 2007, Coles, 1999; Murrow, 1999; Angelou, 1989). While estimates to the size of the community suggest it is around 1,000 individuals located mostly in Accra, the conditions of their relation to each other, the state and local communities is less clear.
to African and diasporic history as well as engage either of the owners in a welcomed
discussion about the future of the diaspora in Ghana. However, when pushed on the
matter, the owners will all but condemn the state’s commemorative practices as an
exploitative and insincere offer. Both of the owners arrived in Ghana hoping to receive
financial support and citizenship from the government, but quickly learned that neither
would come easily if at all. In fact, the owners attribute their survival and success to the
charitable efforts of local chiefs and the National Council of Chiefs after they arranged
for them to build on the land they currently occupy.46 In spite of their ongoing
differences with the state, the owners of One Africa are unofficially incorporated in the
broader tourism environment by staff at both Cape Coast and El Mina castles who
readily directs tourists seeking more information or inexpensive lodging to the One
Africa facility. Groups touring Ghana for the specific purpose of learning about African
heritage frequently add One Africa to their itineraries after their questions overwhelm
the guides and museum staff.

**Conflicting and Disjoint Perspectives and Expectations**

While national-level tourism agencies have increasingly supported the
development of the castles at Cape Coast and El Mina into tourism attractions relevant
to the history of the slave trade and its lasting impact on identity formations, regional
heritage management and tourism destinations and offerings advertised alongside the
castles have yet to be aligned in a coherent fashion (MoT, 2006). Most notable

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46 Ghana’s constitution secures the position and rights of the state’s traditional leaders. As such, matters of
land tenure and transfer remain within the bounds of their jurisdiction—often as the expense of the
infrastructural development of the state. In this case, local chiefs—who would later commission a plaque in
Cape Coast and El Mina castle stating their regret and shame for their predecessors—offered the couple aid in
the same spirit. Elsewhere in the state, the Council of Chiefs facilitated the acquisition of land for the Assin
Manso slave river exhibit (Graphic Reporter, 2000).
amongst the conflicting narratives and depictions of Ghanaian history are those spurred by commemorative practices that depict more localized narratives that privilege ethnic politics and the struggle against colonialism with those that are increasingly aligning Ghanaian history to the slave trade narrative valued by international tourists. Even further, these domestically oriented commemorative practices are accompanied their own sets of conflict as is seen in many of the museum and historical facilities located in Kumasi, the former capital of the Ashanti Empire. While touring Kumasi, travelers are given the impression that Ghanaian history is in many ways synonymous with, if not secondary to Ashanti history. Exhibits dedicated to exploring Ashanti culture and architecture, the lineages of the Ashantihene and royal family, and the former kingdom’s spirit of resistance via captured British weapons overshadow national-level initiatives in the region and neglect the diaspora narrative entirely. This particular tension is in many ways a continuation of the symbolic conflicts between the Ghanaian state and vestiges of the former Ashanti Empire. As was the case during the British era of colonial administration, contemporary Ashanti authority—both political and symbolic—often comes into conflict with that of the Ghanaian state. For the Ashanti, the state’s portrayal of the Ashanti’s role in and support for the slave trade stand in contrast to exhibits in the Ashanti Royal Palace Museum and elsewhere in Kumasi that downplay if not deny the Ashanti’s role in the Atlantic trade. Both disparaged and challenged in the arena for historical authenticity, tourism administrators in the Ashanti region have yet to implement the narratives as thoroughly as those in the coastal castles of the Central region. On the other hand, the expansion of the Ashanti state and resistance to it is a central theme that unites many of the diverse ethnic communities in the nation today.
Even more, the castles are incorporated into Kumasi centered Ashanti narrative through exhibits in the Ashanti Royal Palace and the National Culture Center located in Kumasi—although with little mention of slavery. In particular, exhibits detailing the military campaigns that were organized to pursue the captured Ashantihene all the way from Kumasi to Castle Sao Jorge in the late 1890’s figures heavily into framing of Ashanti ethnic heritage and the glorified narrative of the final days of the formal Ashanti Empire and the struggle against the British.

Along these same lines, exhibits in both castles dedicated to the “Great Emancipators” offer no insight into the activities of abolitionists local to Ghana; instead the exhibits examine on the careers of Frederick Douglass, Sojourner Truth, and William Wilberforce. Further, the images and recollections of slavery draw exclusively from the Caribbean and the antebellum American South and obscure the local experience of slavery and efforts to abolish the practice that continue today. In this light, the tension between the presentation of the Ashanti narrative and that of the slave trade—slavery in the antebellum United State in particular—represents a conflict over the state’s obligations to various domestic and international communities and whose narratives should be privileged in the development of commemorative practices.

Similarly, the state’s commitment to reinforcing the slave trade narrative has brought about more empirical issues related to the operation of the trade and communities it influenced. The town of Salaga in Ghana’s Northern Region has been awkwardly, and perhaps incorrectly, incorporated into the Atlantic slavery/diaspora narrative simply because of the once active slave market that operated there. Salaga’s slave market served both the Saharan and Atlantic slave markets, yet the state
downplays the relative dominance and persistence of the former (Salaga brochure). However, estimating the flow and direction of captives passing through the site has proven problematic despite the established positioning of the town relative to the Atlantic diaspora. Hartman (2007) describes the frustration of local leaders and tourism administrators who feel that tourists interested in the slave trade are mistakenly directed towards the coast instead of Salaga, where the trade into the Sahara lasted for nearly a century after the end of the slave trading activities on the coast. As Hartman notes, there exist conflicting diaspora narratives within the same industry.

Conversations with tour guides working in both castles reveal a different sort of tension emerging between the state’s commemorative practices and popular understandings of the slave trade. Guides suggest that domestic tourists will often make light of the conditions of the trade and in some cases joke about the “luck” of being taken across the Atlantic to America. Often startling to others touring the sites, these disruptions reveal that the state’s commemorative practices have not been as successful in educating older generations of Ghanaians about the conditions of slavery in the West or cementing the connectedness of communities linked together through the sites (Brubaker, 2004). At the same time, domestic tourists often question why diasporic visitors take offense and treat the site with such regard. In stark contrast to the schoolchildren and older Ghanaian’s on site, tourists of African descent often can be seen in solitary or group prayer, while others will fall back from the tour group to mourn in private. Similarly, tourists of African descent are often taken aback by the

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47 Guides suggest that domestic tourists consider African Americans to be lucky as a result of perceptions that African Americans have been successful as a result of their time in the United States. Wright (2011) suggests that the viewing of the Roots miniseries in Gambia worked to shift comparable understandings of slavery in the United States.
commercial art galleries that are interspersed through the site and explicitly incorporated into the tour route through both castles in El Mina and Cape Coast.

Discussion

In pursuing the formation of homeland-diaspora relations with communities of African descent abroad, the Ghanaian state has adapted the castle fortifications in Cape Coast and El Mina into tourism destinations and national monuments to the slave trade. Intended to evoke sentiments of pride, regret, and redemption, the state stages these sites to grant travelers the opportunity to explore how this formative experience disrupted communities and to validate their connection to a lost homeland, as was initially popularized by Haley’s *Roots*. In doing so, the state has selectively and unevenly exhibited the sites’ relevance to the transatlantic crossing and the descendents of communities that experienced this unique trauma. While the efforts that state has taken may be directed towards one particular community—however diverse—an equally diverse population of domestic tourists are the primary visitors to the sites and are now meant to share the impression that positions Ghana, via the castles, as the homeland to the diaspora (Rivera, 2008). The tensions emerging in the wake of the state’s entrance into the politics of commemorating the slave trade and related colonial and post-colonial legacies reflect conflicts over control and representation in Ghana’s heritage management structure as well as deeply seeded perceptions of community boundaries and identity.

For sociologists interested in the development of nationalism and homeland-diaspora relations, the Ghanaian case allows us to develop our understanding of the
negotiation of national and racial attachments as well as the mechanisms that bridge social boundaries through the politics of collective memory and alterations to public commemorations the past (Anderson, 2006; Balibar & Wallerstein, 1991). Through the transformation of the castles in Cape Coast and El Mina, we are able to see the ways different communities—determined by their orientation to the sites—may confer and draw meaning from the castles and the artifacts and legacies emplaced within. Following Brubaker (2004) we can see that one of the functions served by the heritage sites enable the state to demonstrate the connectedness of communities in Ghana to those in the diaspora. For communities of African descent abroad, the sites themselves provide a definite and physical anchor for previously elusive attachments to an African homeland. Exhibits exploring the operation of the castles and the dispersal of communities in Ghana to receiving states in the Americas construct a bridge between the origin stories of communities of African descent with legacies of trauma local to Ghana. For domestic tourists, the attachment of the legacies of the slave trade to existing commemorative practices introduces them to a related yet distinct set of racialized diasporic subjectivity.

Commemorative Practices and Boundary Objects

Consensus is developing amongst scholars investigating the development, manipulation and effects of commemorative practices as to how exactly to approach the phenomena as well as gauge their influence on collective memory and community boundaries. As noted by Olick & Robbins (1998) and Zerubavel (1997), the emergence of Social Memory Studies and the analysis of commemorative practices and mnemonic regimes in the field of sociology reflect efforts to wrestle the analysis of memory from
psychological investigations that discount the impact of social forces on how we recall the past and the conditions that shape what we forget. In the context of this transition, commemorative practices represent one avenue through which social forces influence the ways individuals, families, communities, and states maintain links to the past and reinforce attachments to their respective group identity. Practices including, but not limited to historical museums and monuments, annual holidays and days of remembrance, and the professionalization of history and archeology each section off the relevant past from pre-history as well as events to be forgotten. At the same time, the repetition and ritualization of commemorative practices serve to define the cultural and political logics that provide continuity between the individuals and groups that lived through defining moments and the contemporaries that claim them (Zerubavel, 2003, 1997; Eyerman 2001).

For Brubaker (1996), commemorative practices present just one way in which the responsibilities of the state and bonds of race and nationality are negotiated by engaging with concepts of heritage and collective representations of the past. Brubaker (1996) examines the development of post-Soviet nationalisms to merge structural approaches to nationalism with those that draws from constructivist frameworks. In doing so, he is able to distinguish nationalisms emerging from the breakup of larger multinational or supranational predecessors from nationalist policies of earlier eras by the way the nation and nationhood are politically constructed and institutionalized within the state. Although distinct from the case of post-Soviet Europe, Brubaker’s (1996) framework of nationalizing states, national minorities, and national homelands adds some order to the interaction between communities of African descent, the Ghanaian
state and the engagement with legacy and narratives of the slave trade and dispersal from Africa that is on display at the heritage sites.

As previously mentioned, the slave trade produced a number of ambiguities about the bonds of ethnicity, race, and national attachment as dispersal and relocation in the Americas ruptured existing patterns of identification and association for Ghana—Africa more broadly—and the diaspora (Gomez, 2005). Contemporary state initiatives to create heritage sites and monuments in Ghana—the national homeland—are intended to develop homeland diaspora relations and reorient the diaspora towards Ghana and to some extent away from attachments to receiving states like the United States, Jamaica and Brazil—each a nationalizing state. While overtly focused on influencing the national attachments of communities of African descent abroad, the tourism initiative must also alter domestic understandings of the national community so that tourists appear as compatriots. Combined with Ghana’s additional offering of diaspora themed conferences and valorizations of figureheads from communities of African descent, these activities position the Ghanaian state, as opposed to their own as the state most committed to the community of African descent abroad.

Further differences between the post-Soviet case and Ghana’s emerge when considering the formers’ concern for completely supplanting existing national attachments and establishing political states as would be the case for Serbian and other Eastern European groups located outside of their respective national homelands (Brubaker, 2005, 1996). However, similarities remain in the seemingly inevitable resistance to shifting commemorative practices in both the nationalizing state and national homeland that emerge from conflicting or disjoint interpretations of the
commemorative practices and legacies at the center of these engagements. Revealing both malleability and persistence in patterns and practices of remembrance, emergent commemorative practices work against entrenched mnemonic regimes and supplant those that atrophied from demographic shifts, migrations, and time. Further, concerns for whom a state should organize commemorative practices on the behalf of add greater complexity to the competition between domestic and international stakeholders.

Taking a brief aside from the analysis of commemorative practices, Lainer-Vos’ (2012) investigation of the success of the Israel Diaspora Bond and the failure of the Irish Diaspora investment mechanism reveals that earlier scholarship on collective memory and commemorative practice often risk overemphasizing the pursuit of control and the settling of conflicts over engagements with the past. Lainer-Vos reveals that the success of the former bond initiative in cementing homeland-diaspora relations depended on the way the bond allowed Israelis and members of the Jewish diaspora to sidestep longstanding opposition over how members of the diaspora should contribute to the state of Israel (i.e. whether or not emigration is required, and if not, to what extent should the diaspora be able to determine how its financial support and donations are allocated and invested). Revealing an ingenious combination of administrative and advertising initiatives, the Israel Diaspora Bond created a zone of indecision that negated political contention between groups hailed by the state’s efforts. Transferring this consideration to the study of commemorative practices and collective memory, might reveal that emergent efforts to develop commemorative practices and shift the contemporary legacies of the past may benefit from not taking a totalizing approach and leave sites of contestation open to the extent the practices and legacies maintain their
legibility to stakeholders. As was the case in Schoeman & Pikirayi (2011) analysis of the contest over the return of cultural artifacts from the Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape in South Africa, the “mutlivocal” approach employed by the state to recognize multiple systems of knowledge to validate overlapping claims to the cultural artifacts that were unearthed created a analogous zone of indecision surrounding ownership of the site. In both instances, the creation and maintenance of zones of indecision allowed for groups with conflicting stances on how they relate to one another--or to the state--to maintain their respective positions while serving the states goal of economic development or nation building, respectively.

For Anderson (2006), Olick & Robbins (1998), and Brubaker (1996) commemorative practices frame community boundaries and agendas by manipulating material and immaterial boundary objects. These objects reflect great symbolic value to two or more potentially exclusive identity groups defined—in part—by their relation to the boundary object itself (Lainer-Vos, 2012; Barthel, 1996; Waters, 1990). Social boundaries and practices of identity ascription are in turn reinforced or undermined by the state-organized initiatives to manipulate boundary objects and given their distribution and the scale of consumption hold the potential to influence widespread perceptions of imagined communities (Anderson, 2006, Zerubavel, 2003; Olick & Robbins, 1998). Importantly, this standpoint allows us to return to the Ghanaian case and the gradual transformation of the coastal slave castles into distinguished UNESCO World Heritage Sites to reassess how emergent commemorative practices create and reshape existing boundary objects in order to forge homeland-diaspora relationships. By introducing and gradually prioritizing the exploration of the legacies of the slave trade
at sites that equally embody the latent cultural capital of colonial and numerous ethnic heritages, the state grants communities of African descent abroad the opportunity to engage with the physical remnants coupled to foundational elements of previously immaterial collective memories of slavery and dispersal from Africa. Artifacts and exhibits selected and designed by the Museums and Monuments Board in collaboration with the University of Ghana and UNESCO funded archeological research affix historical narratives and practices of remembrance that emerged in the wake of the slave trade to Ghana; and in doing so position Ghana as a tangible homeland. At the same time, domestic tourists are also exposed to the shift in the dominant framing of the slave castles and are likewise introduced to narratives of trauma and redemption from across the Atlantic. For this latter group of tourists, existing commemorative practices and environments designed to provoke the remembrance of colonial and ethno-national legacies are bridged with the slave trade narrative and receive new meaning in the context of racialized legacies of oppression.

Returning to social boundaries, commemorative practices such as the tours and exhibits on display in the slave castle museums and heritage sites provide a structure for how participants engage with the past and in turn, connect them to communities, events, and locations they would otherwise be unable to claim. For communities of African descent and communities in Ghana, the state's commemorative practices clarify previously ambiguous links and bridge racial and national logics of community with mnemonic regimes employed on both sides of the Atlantic. In this way, the legacies of colonialism and the Ashanti Empire are attached to the legacies of slavery in the antebellum American South, for instance, through the castles and portrayal of a natural
continuity between the otherwise disjoint histories. At the same time, the construction of homeland-diaspora relations and engagement with heritage in the context of tourism exists as just one vector through which the relevant past emerges. Advances in genealogical ancestry testing as well as the persistence of existing commemorative practices present alternative framings of community boundaries and ethno-national attachments that may, or may not, compliment the state’s development agenda.

While the commemorative practices centered on Ghana’s slave castles work to emplace the racialized legacies of the slave trade in Ghana, they only provide loose guidelines for how contemporary groups in Ghana and in receiving states share a common heritage and offer little by way of an outline for how they might pursue newly identified goals. Initiatives altogether separate from exploring the castles, are required to negotiate contemporary political goals and social challenges. As will be discussed in the following chapter, Ghana’s co-opting of the Pan-African Historical Theatre Festival (PANAFEST) works to negotiate novel assemblages of material and immaterial culture, political philosophy, and commemorative practices to address concerns for who can be a legitimate member of the re-envisioned Pan African community and determine directions for political and social action.
Chapter 3: The Pan African Historical Theatre Festival: Diasporic Racial Identity, Festival Life, and Tourism in Ghana

“The task ahead is to move the PANAFEST Movement from being just a biennial festival and begin to build permanent structures or institutions which will facilitate or form the trust for realizing the dream of our people; the dream to unite the African Family, as a prerequisite for enhanced development.” - S.S Annobil, Exec. Sec. of PANAFEST Foundation, (PANAFEST ’99)

Introduction

The now annual Pan African Historical Theatre Festival (PANAFEST) brings together performers, politicians and tourists in Ghana to explore and celebrate the commonalities and continuities between the cultural expressions of communities of African descent and those in Africa. As a cornerstone in Ghana’s expanding heritage tourism industry, the Ministry of Tourism state stages PANAFEST alongside of the heritage sites and museums located in the coastal slave castles and capital city to establish homeland-diaspora relations with communities of African descent. However, the work of establishing homeland-diaspora relations is only in-part fulfilled by the commemorative practices organized around Ghana’s slave castles and museums. Such tourism offerings position Ghana as the homeland for communities of African descent abroad by unifying commemorative mnemonic practices into a standardized narrative of dispersal for international and domestic tourists alike. The development of complementary mnemonic practices allows the state to influence perceptions of past events and recast diverse social identities forged though the experience of dispersal from Africa and slavery in the Americas. However, in order for the state to develop homeland-diaspora relations to reorient and mobilize communities of African descent to contribute to the cultural rebirth of the self proclaimed 'African millennium' the state must also develop a framework to account for how the diverse communities hailed by
the tourism initiative relate to the state and to each other. This chapter examines PANAFEST as it relates to the blending of categories of ethnic and racial identity and the formation of contemporary homeland-diaspora relations between communities in Africa and communities of African descent abroad.

This chapter examines the now annual Pan African Historical Theatre Festival—or simply PANAFEST—and the closely associated Emancipation Day celebration as and the framing of contemporary homeland-diaspora relations and the development of a Pan-African theory of cultural and political unity. Unlike the castles and forts along Ghana’s coastlines that work to illuminate a unifying history and racialized subjectivity, tourism offerings now incorporated into and developed for PANAFEST recognize the diversity and contending national attachments of this community and seek to build homeland-diaspora relations along contemporary cultural, political, and economic axes. Tourists visiting Ghana for the PANAFEST festivities are presented with the opportunity to participate in activities designed to highlight continuities between the cultural expressions and political aspirations of diverse communities of African descent and those in Ghana. Music, theatrical and literary traditions, political theory, and even entrepreneurial spirit are put on display to bridge ethno-national boundaries and facilitate a new “renaissance” in Africa. It is through this capacity that now annual PANAFEST celebrations will serve as a case to investigate Ghana’s negotiation of contemporary homeland-diaspora relations and guidance of Pan-African cultural and political activity in a new era.

The chapter is divided into two sections. The first section of the chapter provides an overview of festival life in Ghana and the development of PANAFEST. While distinct
from Ghana’s regional and ethnic festivals, PANAFEST has become entrenched within Ghana’s broader festival culture and now enjoys comparable participation and support from Ghanaians and the state. The overview traces the emergence of the festival and follows its transition from an event staged by a local theater group into an internationally recognized multi-city festival orchestrated by collaborations between the state, Council of Chiefs, and development organizations. Increasingly integrated into a commercial tourism industry, the celebrations gradually shifted away from its original purpose of exhibiting African theatrical traditions to offerings that better meet the needs of tourists visiting Ghana to discover and validate their own African ancestry and connections to the continent. This section introduces the cultural organizations and state agencies that work to expand the festival’s reach as well develop the discursive frameworks that add coherence to the diversity of cultural and political expression emerging in Africa and the diaspora.

The second section of the chapter will explore the way that PANAFEST frames the contemporary connections linking communities in Africa with communities of African descent abroad. In other words, this discussion of PANAFEST will examine the maintenance of boundaries between and within communities of African descent in order to shape a new geography of Pan Africanism and negotiate the contending national attachments of communities in African and abroad (White, 2008: Tilly, 2005). Focusing primarily on the cultural expressions, political traditions and aspirations of these communities, PANAFEST allows the state to selectively lay claim to the accomplishments of diverse communities of African descent abroad and build a unifying narrative of African civilization, renaissance, and destiny (Mitchell, 2004). This section
will examine these framing mechanisms in greater detail to assess how the ethno-national diversity of communities of African descent is addressed through Ghana’s heritage tourism industry and evaluated in terms of its potential relevance to larger development and political initiatives.

**Festival Life in Ghana and the Origins of PANAFEST**

Currently, festivals in Ghana celebrate a range of valued social practices and significant occasions, many originating prior to the colonial era while others are entirely modern phenomena. Festivals and equivalent public ceremonies are accompanied by great pageantry and attract participants from the full spectrum of Ghanaians to perform and celebrate the rites and rituals of Ghana’s indigenous groups. Traditional elites, politicians, musicians and other professional performers, students of all ages, vendors, and tourist travel great distances to invoke ancestral ties, celebrate coronations, sell crafts, launch the cocoa harvest, and even join in on the Central Region’s annual “path-clearing”—maintaining of rural roads—festivities (MoT, 2009, 2006). Because of the assortment of occasions for celebration or public recognition, many of the festivals operate according to widely differing schedules. Events like Kumasi’s Akwasidae festival, for example, repeat as frequently as every six weeks while others follow annual or semi-annual cycles. The varying cycles of the ethnic and regional festivals stands in opposition to the state holidays that occur annually, like Ghana’s Independence Day and now PANAFEST. In spite of the competing “indigenous protocols” for pomp and parade, a number of common themes and practices provide a sense of an overlapping structure and cohesion between the causes for celebration. Most notably are the

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48 Additionally, national holidays are distinguished by their designation as bank and federal holidays.
invocations of ancestors at the opening of festivities as well as dubars—or parades of chiefs and queen-mothers—that mark the end of the day’s celebration. Presented as a testament to Ghanaian’s pride in their heritage and culture, the state positions these traditional representations of Ghanaian life equally alongside of images of modern amenities, safe and organized travel packages, and satisfied tourists in guide materials. The combination of comfort and authenticity is in many ways the backbone Ghana’s ‘Africa for beginners’ and ‘Gateway to Africa’ reputations developed for recent marketing strategies for the wider tourism market (Karlya, et al., 2012; Briggs, 2010).

Festivals and public ceremonies advertised by the Ghanaian state and private tour guide publishers bring ethnic and national identity to the forefront of many tourist offerings as well as public discussions of ethnic group membership, individual and community obligations to the state, regional and ethnic disparities, and Ghana’s political-legal culture. Cultural and regional festivals, chiefly ceremonies and dubars, and events staged for international tourist receive national media attention and reinforce existing patterns of identification and fulfill community desires for recognition from the state (Anderson, 2006; Smith, 2003). Further, as acknowledged by the state tourism administration, such events hold the potential to bring large flows of international tourists to their market and support developing businesses and industries throughout Ghana (GPRS II, 2006; Ghana National Tourism Strategy, 2006; GPRS I, 2003). As such, the state strives to guide cultural policy according to the spirit of Sankofa—in this instance best translated as "roots”—and preserve these lively events for future

As one of many factors deployed in Ghana’s campaign to grow its tourism industry and related sectors of the economy, ethnic diversity and authenticity as represented by the multitude of festivals, features heavily in guide materials made available by Ministry of Tourism at regional tourism offices and information centers. 50

Prior to arriving in Ghana tourists are encouraged to observe and at times participate in as many festivals as possible while visiting—going as far as noting the spectacle of traditional funeral rites (Karlya et al., 2012; MoT, 2009). State produced guide books assert that festivals provide one of the “few opportunities to experience true indigenous Ghanaian culture and tradition at its very best...the opportunity of catching a view of an era that has not changed for generations” (MoT, 2009: 58). Privately produced guide materials similarly emphasize attending festivals, but provide a more discerning evaluation of the events to direct tourists to the festivals that will provide the most authentic experience or are alternatively, the most convenient to attend as travelling to events—especially those in the northern regions of the country—may consume too much of a tourist’s time (Brandt, 2010; Lonely Planet, 200x).

49 Sankofa is one of many Andrinka symbols—idioms or proverbs represented in symbols printed on traditional cloth. Sankofa has multiple symbolic representations, although the most common image associated with the concepts is a long-necked bird reaching backwards. In most instances, although not this particular case, Sankofa is taken as a message to keep the past in mind while moving forward.

50 The Ministry of Tourism often attaches tourist information centers to its regional and local offices. Tourist centers and administrative facilities are generally located within the major tourist destinations as is the case for the Kumasi tourist information center located in the Ashanti Culture Center and the Central Region’s headquarters just opposite Cape Coast Castle. Although generally beyond the gaze of tourists, many national attractions serve as residences for the staff employed there and have small plots of land reserved for farming.
The marketability and social cohesive functions served by Ghana’s festivals were a gradual revelation to the state, although elements of the approach to the nation’s ethnic diversity have their origins in struggles between the immediate post-colonial state and entrenched traditional authorities. As the Gold Coast approached independence, tensions over how Ghana’s traditional authorities—the stool chiefs—would be incorporated into the state positioned many of these leaders in opposition to Nkrumah’s Convention People’s Party (CPP) vision of the state (Berry, 2001; Rathbone, 2000; Firmin-Sellers, 1996). Counter to the British and Dutch, who relied on traditional authorities to administer over customary law—or those relating to succession rights, land tenure, and lesser crimes—the immediate post-colonial state sought to upend the institution and placed many of these responsibilities in the hands of state appointed administrators. However, the institutions of traditional authority and customary law were revived following Nkrumah’s downfall and reinforced through constitutional amendments, permanently securing the position and powers of the chiefs. More recently, the 1992 Constitution included a provision that prevented the state from challenging the “legitimacy and honor” of the chiefs. The ’92 Constitution even granted limited legal authority to the chiefs as well as positions in many of the national governing bodies—often with voting privileges. Within this context, festivals persist today to both fulfill their respective cultural/political functions—such as enstoolment ceremonies—harvest festivals, puberty rites, and remembrance/funeral celebrations—ease tensions

51 Enstoolment, refers to the ceremonial appointment of chiefs from Ghana’s traditional elite. The practice is widespread and common throughout the Akan linguistic family, which encompasses many of Ghana’s ethnic communities. When selected, traditional leaders are given a sacred stool that represents both their legitimacy and authority. These chiefs are known as “stool” chiefs in recognition of the ceremonial stool each receives.
between the state and traditional elite, and demonstrate the cultural wealth of the nation (Centeno et. al, 2011; van Ham, 2008; MoT, 2009, 2006).

**The Pan African Historical Theatre Festival**

Originally conceptualized in the early 1980’s, the Pan African Historical Theatre Festival, now PANAFEST, was first launched in 1991 by the Ghana National Theatre Movement—an artist collective—in Cape Coast and Accra with support from local governing assemblies and chiefs from both regional centers. Although primarily contributing event staff and minor advertising outlets, the state-run National Commission on Culture (NCC) provided assistance in the administration of the festival and proved to be the first national-level institution to take interest in the event. Following in the spirit of the Ghanaian playwright Efua Sutherland’s 1980 essay “Proposal for a historical drama festival in Cape Coast” event organizers set out to construct a “cultural vehicle” to bring Africans and communities of African descent together to examine the “suppressed” legacy of the slave trade (http://www.panafestghana.org/page/?id=9376, accessed 11/30/17; Schramm, 2010). Initially limited to theatrical works, the first PANAFEST exhibited representations of the slave trade and its aftermath from primarily Ghanaian and African-based theatre troupes. Building on Sutherland and the Ghana National Theatre Movement (GNTM) trial-run from the previous year, organizers of the 1992 celebration invited a broader...
range of performers from Ghana, other African nations, and around the diaspora to Ghana to display their interconnected yet distinct expressions of dance, music, and theatre (Holsey, 2008, Adams & Sutherland, 2007; PANAFEST Brochure, 1999). The festival’s planners intended to utilize the display of ethno-national diversity to demonstrate the continuity and vibrancy of African and African descendent culture and organized the festivities around the theme, “Re-Emergence of African Civilization.” Considered a great success, the festival’s organizers quickly began to plan for the second PANAFEST scheduled for December of 1994 (Bruner, 1996; Ofosuhene, 1993).

**See Table 3.1: PANAFEST Themes, 1991 - 2001**

As of 2013, in the decades since the introduction of PANAFEST into Ghana’s festival landscape, the event was scheduled to proceed eleven times, although major setbacks prevented two from taking place and negatively influenced attendance in others. The 1996 and 2012 PANFEST celebrations were cancelled, the latter due to the death of President John Atta Mills during the second day of festivities. Other setbacks have included travel complications preventing performers and tourists from arriving in Ghana on schedule for the 2001 festivities and funding mismanagement derailing the promotional structure and event offerings of the 2005 edition of the festival (Quaicoo, 2001). Further, infrastructural limitations, including but not limited to poor transportation systems and insufficient hotel accommodations, continue to inhibit the state’s desired success for the festival. In spite of these challenges, event organizers continue to expand the festival and encourage participants to explore more of the country (Quainoo, 1993). The 1994 edition of PANAFEST did just so and arranged for tourists to travel to
Tourists visiting Ghana to participate in PANAFEST can expect the festival activities to include numerous theatrical and musical performances, often organized around the general region of the diaspora or Africa that the performers represent. Themed events such as “Blacks in Europe and Friends Night” or “Caribbean Day” for instance, offer a loosely structured alternative to the performances that range from student dance troupes to official celebrations of celebrity birthdays—as has been the case for Jamaican born Rita Marley, widow of reggae star Bob Marley and accomplished musician in her own right (PANAFEST 2005; PANAFEST, 1999). More recently, PANAFEST organizers have established film festivals and award shows for works produced around the diaspora—in particular those relating to African unity and slavery. While the musical performances generally represent PANAFEST’s more jubilant offerings, the theatrical performances and conferences present a more refrained and contemplative set of offerings relating to the legacies of the slave trade.

As initially envisioned by Sutherland and the GNTM, many of the theatrical performances scheduled for PANAFEST explore the legacies of the slave trade in both African and diasporic settings. In the past, vivid recreations of slave marches staged in the former slave castles exhibited the horrors and entrenched hopelessness it left in its wake (Opoku, 1998). Theatrical groups bring to life the often neglected suffering of the enslaved by utilizing the very same dungeons and restraints once used to hold the enslaved captive while awaiting transport to the Americas. At the same time, however,
theatrical performances addressing resistance to slavery and redemption uplift the festival and feed the sense of triumph and redemption that the state seeks to create.

As the festival developed over time, the organizing structure of the event also shifted to accommodate the state’s desire to see the festival become a commercial success and fulfill the ideological positions established in previous years. The PANAFEST Foundation emerged within this context and was staffed by former members of the NCC, Ministry of Tourism, and the GNTM (PANAFEST Brochure, 1999). The Council of the Chiefs has become an active and regular supporter of PANAFEST and the PANAFEST Foundation in recent years. As the heritage tourism industry expanded and drew more attention individual chiefs began to make declarations of their own commitment to the African diaspora. Often taking the form of public apologies and in rare instances material support to repatriates, Ghana’s traditional elite actively use the heritage sites and PANAFEST festivities as a platform to atone for the predecessors. Additionally, international members were recruited while touring Ghana and invited to participate through the International Board. Representatives from the United States, Trinidad, Brazil, and England have and continue to be delegated tasks relating to fundraising, building interest in the festival in their home communities and organizing tours to Ghana (PANAFEST Brochure, 2007; Fosu Jr., 1999).^{54}

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^{54} It is difficult to determine the exact number of tourists, vendors, and participants who travel to Ghana for the PANAFEST festival. Estimates suggest that the more recent festivals are better attended than previous years, but the increasingly organized administration of the festival allows for better accounting of participants than in the past. Additionally, as the activities offered under the umbrella of PANAFEST diversify and increase in number, it becomes increasingly challenging for the state to monitor the tourists traveling to a variety of destinations around the country. The 2001 PANAFEST celebration attracted as many as 3000 people to the multi-week festival. However, that same year, travel complications prevented as many as 700 tourists from
With the expanded political reach of the state and its international members, the PANAFEST Foundation began to organize much larger events for tourists beyond the scope seen in previous years. Perhaps the largest of these endeavors were the costly soccer matches between the Ghana Black Stars and Jamaica’s Reggae Boyz, the two nation’s national football teams, at the close of PANAFEST 1999 (Abayateue, 1999, PANAFEST Brochure, 1999). Tourism administrators based in Kumasi arranged for the Kumasi based Asante-Kotoko team to also play the Jamaican national team. However, unlike the match between national teams, this game positioned the Ashanti ethnic group on equal standing as the national community—as the Kotoko team is very much associated with the Ashanti ethnic group and based out of the former capitol of the Ashanti Empire.\footnote{Kotoko is the Ashanti Twi term for porcupine, which is the emblem of the former Ashanti Empire.}

Even though the PANFAFEST Foundation was criticized for organizing an event that did not explicitly relate thematically to slavery or diasporic identity, overall PANAFEST 1999 was complimented for bringing multiple national bodies together and instituting the PANAFEST Youth Movement—an outcome of that year’s theme, “Re-emergence of African Civilization: Uniting the African Family (Youth-the Agenda for the New Millennium)” (Nyalemegbe, 2000; Domphe-Buadu, 1998). Today, the PANAFEST Youth Movement strives to increase local youth awareness of the goals of PANAFEST and encourages participation in the expressive and political elements of the festival. The PANAFEST Youth Movement accomplishes these tasks by sending representatives to Ghana’s primary and secondary schools to inform students what

\footnote{Kotoko is the Ashanti Twi term for porcupine, which is the emblem of the former Ashanti Empire.}
PANAFEST is and search out potential performers for upcoming festivals. Additionally, representatives work with educators and administrators to establish annual field trips to Ghana’s forts and castles. Collaborations between the PANFEST Youth Movement and the Ministry of Tourism are in many ways responsible for the increased tourism revenues seen at heritage sites in the years following the advent of the youth movement. As Ghanaian students make up a majority of visitors to the sites and museums, organizers interpret this to be a sign of their success in reaching out to Ghana’s schools and introducing a new generation to PANAFEST and Pan-Africanism (Ghana Statistical Service, 2006).

Additionally, PANAFEST 1999 marked the first celebration to coincide with Ghana’s adoption of the British Commonwealth holiday, Emancipation Day (August, 1) (Pierre, 2009; Hasty, 2002). The state adopted Emancipation Day in the mid-1990s after then President, Flt. Lt Jerry Rawlings returned from a state visit to Jamaica where he witnessed the holiday for himself (Brunner, 1996). As both a sign of solidarity and as a way to lay claim to a common struggle and narrative employed by many communities of African descent in British Commonwealth nations, President Rawlings instructed ministers in the tourism administration to “repatriate” the holiday. Interpreted by Ghanaian media as an attempt to “…remove the slur of psychological torture and bondage that blacks have been made to go through as a result of the infamous slave trade”, Emancipation day was quickly integrated into the expanding PANAFEST celebrations (Dompreh-Duadu, 1998). Today, Emancipation Day marks the opening of the annual PANAFEST celebration and is praised by tourists and Pan-African
organizations as a sign of Ghana’s commitment and leadership in molding Pan-Africanism for the new millennium. (Hosley, 2006; NPR-ATC 5-23-1999).

Subsequent celebrations of PANAFEST returned to the initial focus on the legacy of the slave trade and to a lesser extent, the cultural vibrancy and continuity of African and descendent communities. Increasingly tied to the state tourism industry, heritage sites and museums became stopping points along the festival’s route across Ghana and at times served as meetings halls for vast memorials and redemptive ceremonies. Heritage sites and activities located elsewhere in Ghana, like the Assin Manso “Slave River” and Salaga Slave Market were similarly integrated into PANAFEST and during the up to three week-long festival enjoyed increased attendance and revenue from events tailored for each offering. These excursions allow PANAFEST participants to witness and in select cases experience the same traumas and conditions facing the enslaved. For instance, participants who travel to the previously mentioned “slave river” are each given the opportunity to bathe in the same stream once made available to enslaved individuals in route to the coast. Accompanied by the somber apology of Assin Manso Council of the Chiefs for the actions of their predecessors, the excursions truly offer a thoroughly engaging opportunity for communities differentially positioned in relation to the slave trade.

Additionally, PANAFEST organizers were successfully able to create more professional and academic oriented tourism offerings to explore the contemporary geography of Pan-Africanism and the relevancy of the diaspora to Africa and Ghana’s economic and social development. The “Pan Africanism in the Context of Africa’s Political and Social Development” and “Re-birth of the Motherland: The Role of People
of African Descent” themes for the 2007 and 2012 festivities, respectively, called on Ghanaian politicians and delegations from elsewhere in Africa to discuss with academics, activists, and tourists potential outlets for communities of African descent to contribute to Africa’s development. Direct economic aid, professional development initiatives, business partnerships, and political representation in African governing bodies were each evaluated for their likelihood to promote both development and a greater sense of African unity. Newly organized panels hosted by the University of Cape Coast and University of Ghana–Legon, were combined with the Du Bois, Padmore, Nkrumah lecture series hosted by the W.E.B. Du Bois Memorial Center for Pan-African Culture to bring distinguished speakers such as Maya Angelou, Ngugi Wa Thiong and Wole Soyinka to Ghana to explore more cultural expressions of African unity (Nyinah, 2001). The gradual adoption of a development orientations as opposed to the cultural orientation of the previous year’s altered PANAFEST even further so that efforts were made to accommodate and display the entrepreneurialism of Ghanaian and African descendant communities. Ghanaian trade fairs and professional networking opportunities exhibit local and international business building the hope of building ties along a new dimension of homeland-diaspora relations.

**PANAFEST 2012 and the Centrality of the State**

In the early afternoon on July 24, 2012, President John Atta Mills abruptly succumbed to a massive stroke after recently retaining from the United States for medical treatment. In the days leading to his passing, the 2012 PANAFEST

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56 W.E.B. Du Bois lived out the final years of his life in Ghana while conducting research for a comprehensive investigation into Africa and African descendant culture and history. While residing in Ghana, Du Bois also developed a close relationship with Ghana’s first president Kwame Nkrumah.
celebrations proceeded as scheduled; representatives from the Ministry of Tourism, Council of Chiefs, and PANAFEST Foundation had commenced with the opening ceremony welcoming participants from throughout the diaspora and West Africa region. The Emancipation Day wreath laying ceremonies hosted at the W.E.B. Du Bois Center, George Padmore Library, and Kwame Nkrumah Memorial were each well attended by participants still adjusting to Ghana’s climate and televised by local broadcasting agencies. However, the death of President John Atta Mills brought to an abrupt end the PANAFEST celebrations in the summer of 2012. Just three days into the two week festival, Mill’s death initiated an official period of state mourning and quickly shifted media and political attention to questions relating to the upcoming winter election and political viability of the new sitting president, John Mahama.

Even though he was not scheduled to speak again until the following week’s two-day colloquium titled “Development of the Motherland: the Role of People of African Decent”, President Mills featured heavily in the proposed discussions and was expected to ensure that PANAFEST 2012 would receive adequate media attention. Even though the festival and organized tours of the state were cancelled, a number of tourists remained in Ghana to visit the heritage sites where events were scheduled to take place. Due to the state mourning period—initially schedule to last for three days, but quickly extended to three weeks—Ministry of Tourism offices were closed and unable to

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57 Kwame Nkrumah, Ghana’s first President is currently entombed in a sprawling national monument just outside of the city center of Accra, the national capitol. Both the W.E.B. Du Bois Memorial Center and the Padmore Library were founded following the deaths of their namesakes who both spent the final years of their lives in Ghana as well as serving as advisors to the nation’s first president.

58 In the years following the first PANAFEST, each president of Ghana participated in some way to at least one of the festivals occurring during their terms. As Vice-President to Jerry Rawlings, Mills was an active participant in many of the Rawlings-era celebrations (roughly 1994-2000).
inform many tourists that PANAFEST had in fact been cancelled. In the days following Mills death, contradictory information regarding the status of PANAFEST and locations of rescheduled events emerged from varying sources within the Ministry of Tourism, PANAFEST Foundation, and regional tourism offices. Tour guides in both Cape Coast and El Mina Castle were under the impression that the festivities would take place as planned, while the PANAFEST Foundation suggested that the events were to be delayed until the end of the official mourning period—until the period was extended to three weeks. Event staff at the University of Cape Coast as well the guides of the Assin Manso “Slave River Project” reported not being contacted at all by PANAFEST organizers and were unable to confirm whether or not the festivals conferences or purification rituals would even take place. While it may not be surprising that the first instance of the death of a sitting president in Ghana caused the state to withdraw from its commitments to the PANAFEST festivities, it is more revealing of the extent to which the festival had become tied to and in turn, dependent on national institutions and bureaucracies to operate. In particular the primacy of the state in organizing PANAFEST was revealed through the proliferation of confounding information regarding the status of PANAFEST and ensuing confusion and sense of abandonment felt by participants, vendors, and event staff.

In addition to amounting to a financial loss for tourists hoping to participate in the festival, the cancelation and disarray caused by the period of state mourning prevented vendors from being able to accurately predict where the large tourist groups would be as they travelled between events. For this group of seasonal and traveling laborers, major tourism events like PANAFEST account for a sizable portion of their annual
income and their overall success and financial stability is very much dependent on the availability of accurate information regarding the location of tourists and their adherence to a predetermined festival route. With less than ideal attendance at heritage sites and tourism destinations more broadly, and no means to determine the location of tourist groups the vendors and the rural artisans that provide their wood carvings, paintings, and kente took on great losses.  

Contending National Attachments and the Geography of the African Diaspora

Analyses of the diverse cultural productions of communities of African descent have been central to academic discussions of a Black Atlantic, to use Gilroy’s (1993) term, and similar transnational flows of knowledge, cultural practices, and subjectivities (Gomez, 2005, 1998; Hall, 2006, 1993). For these scholars and others, the cultural and political formations of communities of African descent are the product of the lasting migration patterns of the Atlantic world and persistence of racialized discrimination towards communities of African descent producing a set of mutually recognizable symbols linking these communities (Price, 2001). Distinguished by the demographic and political idiosyncrasies of each given context each formation is nonetheless understood as an amalgamation of linked components produced by the flows of information, capital and people around the black world (Gilroy, 2003, 1993; Hall, 2003, Gates, 1988). For states like Ghana and others similarly engaged in the manipulation of homeland-diaspora relations, the diversity of such a heterogeneous diaspora raises far

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59 While many sectors of the Ghanaian economy are undergoing processes of state divestment, the tourism industry remains in the control of the state, and in some instances, this control is increasing (GPRS I, 2002). As stipulated in the 7th Draft of Ghana’s National Tourism Policy, the Government of Ghana is to play five roles in the tourism industry: facilitation, coordination, planning and policy-making, regulation and monitoring, and development promotion (Ghana National Tourism Policy, 2006: 34).
more strategic questions. When linked to nationalist development projects, states must consider how these diverse groups may influence national policy and relate to communities already incorporated within the established political community.

Ong (1999) examines the way that Islamic nationalism affects the patterns of assimilation of different South Asian migrant communities residing in Malaysia and presents a unique insight for the Ghanaian case. For the Malaysian case, the state’s commitment to a religiously inspired nationalism grants Muslim migrants slight advantages in attaining residential status and nominal acceptance in Malaysian society. Perceived as sharing a common culture and possessing valued “family-values” among other traits, the state made itself more accessible to this particular segment of the migrant population. Further, as Ong (1999) demonstrates, ideological positions and frameworks employed by the state restrict the state’s ability and willingness to create equal bridges between itself and the full range of potential communities constituting the diaspora. For the Ghanaian state, efforts to establish homeland-diaspora relations with communities abroad compels them to openly address questions pertaining to the conditions and scope of national membership and recognition for communities otherwise separated from domestic Ghanaians by boundaries of nationality and ethnicity. However, the value and significance of the diversity of these communities is very much understood in terms of the comparative advantage of resources, and skills developed outside of Ghana potentially being directed towards development.

Now an annual celebration, the state has embraced PANAFEST for its ability to generate tourism revenue and demonstrate the state’s ideological commitment to Pan-Africanism in regional and global politics (Hosley, 2008; Patterson, 2006; Bruner, 1996).
Since its establishment, PANAFEST has addressed the contending national attachments and diversity of the diaspora in two ways: the first perspective relies on narratives and legacies of dispersal and slavery comparable to those seen in the heritage sites to establish an adaptive continuity between the cultural productions originating in Africa and those emerging in the diaspora. According to the Cape Coast Metropolitan Assembly: “PANAFEST brings together performing groups (dramatists, musicians, dances, writers, and artists) and different kinds of exhibitors as well as other participants from the African continent and lands beyond the diaspora in one big assemblage of cultural varieties that are mutually fulfilling” (http://archive.ghanadistricts.com/DistrictSublinks.aspx?s=3116&distID=67, accessed 12/01/17). As noted by the Cape Coast Metropolitan Assembly, PANAFEST provides participants from Ghana and abroad the opportunity to contemplate the unity of the diasporic and homeland communities through a celebration of cultural difference. Further, this continuity is deployed in support of a discourse of African “civilization”—or more recently “renaissance”—that both encompasses the diaspora and lays claims to its cultural creations and political accomplishments. While typically focused on musical, theatrical, and visual arts, the organizers of PANAFEST equally value like-minded and internationally distinguished political movements and figureheads in their portrayals of a continuous African civilization. When accompanied by organized tours of the slave castles and reconciliatory offerings from by the chiefs, the first approach to diversity compliments the state’s efforts to embellish its image as the homeland of the diaspora in the minds of participants and onlookers.
The legacies of W.E.B. Du Bois, George Padmore, Kwame Ture (formerly Stokley Carmichael), and Pauli Murray are perhaps the most prominent in the state’s display of ideal models of political and social leadership. Often presented as the intellectual and political predecessors and contemporaries of Ghana’s first head of state, these figureheads are memorialized alongside of the leaders of Ghana’s own struggle against colonial rule. George Hagan, chairperson of the National Commission on Culture, was one of many speakers to connect the struggles of African leaders to those in diaspora when he recently invoked the legacy of Nkrumah and Martin Luther King Jr. while addressing a 2007 PANAFEST gathering. Elsewhere, Hagan goes even further and suggests that Africa and people of African descent will never achieve political equality unless events like PANAFEST “rekindle the flame of freedom” and adapt the strategies of these figureheads to contemporary issues (PANAFEST 2007 Brochure).

The second interpretation of difference however, views the contending national attachments and diversity of the diaspora in terms of the range of accumulated capital and skills the diaspora posses and can potentially contribute to the state’s development. Gaining dominance in years following the state’s recognition of tourism as a tool for development this second view of diversity is less concerned with culture and more attuned to the development needs of the state and communities local to Ghana (GPRS II, 2006; GPRS I, 2003). Once framed as a means of ensuring Africa participates equally in the global economy, this perspective values the diverse origins of communities of African descent and seeks to enlist communities benefiting from the relative advantage of their home communities (Osei-Tutu, 2006; Hasty, 2004; Quaicoo, 2006).
The sub-theme of the 2001 edition of PANAFEST, “Uniting the African Family—Bridging the Gap through Information Technology” demonstrates this desire and sought out educators and skilled professionals to consider dedicating a portion of their time to contribute to professional and technical workshops in Ghana (Mensah, 2000). Additionally, trade fairs and business networking events engage African based and diasporic entrepreneurs in attempts to expand local industries and services. In some ways, this development-oriented view of diversity limits the scope of the diaspora the state is inclined to engage in national development projects

While not explicitly limiting outreach and participation according to national origins, the more recent celebrations privileges elite and highly educated segments of the diaspora on an almost individual basis. Increasingly directed towards participants coming from the United States and Europe, tourism and program administrators’ frame of the role of the diaspora in an increasingly professional development capacity and in some cases explicitly require substantial economic resources. In the extreme, workshops and informative sessions introduce participants to the possibility of owning and developing land, investing in privately and state-operated firms and industries, or alternatively receiving official recognition as Nkosuohene—development chiefs (Pierre, 2009; Osei-Tutu, 2006; Mensah, 2000). The ceremonial Nkosuohene titles are traditionally awarded to individuals based on their commitment to improving their local communities, but are increasing offered to tourists according to their potential to do so. As a result, the ceremonial stool position is not subject to the strict rules of ascendency, which guide traditional positions of leadership and can in fact be awarded to non-Ghanaians.
Discussion

Unlike the commemorative practices that work to uncover deep historical connections to Ghana, PANAFEST establishes homeland-diaspora relations along more contemporary cultural and political axis and lays the foundation for the Ghanaian state to mobilize a Pan-African development initiative. Over the past two decades, PANAFEST evolved from a local theatre festival altogether separate from state development initiatives into one of Ghana’s premiere tourism offerings that allows participants to explore and contribute to increasingly larger swaths of the country. Formerly a collection of theatrical performances organized by a local artist collective, the festival now reflects the state’s desire to bind its economic and social goals to those of communities of African descent abroad. By staging PANAFEST, the state is able to lay claim to recognizable traditions of civil rights and anti-colonial political traditions as well as the theatrical and artistic productions that emerged from within diverse communities of African descent abroad by exhibiting an exaggerated continuity between these formations.

While the contemporary organizers of PANAFEST stage the festival as a means to influence how and where communities of African descent direct their skills and resources, the multifaceted festival also reveals how the state negotiates the contending national attachments of the participants it seeks to include in its broader identity project. For the initial founders of the festival and their contemporaries in the PANAFEST Foundation, the event offered an opportunity to celebrate the unique productions of Jamaican, African American and Ghanaian artists while prioritizing the cultural commonalities between the racialized subjectivities of the different communities.
Through the exploration of different representations of resistance and redemption, early PANAFEST celebrations created an impression of homeland-diaspora relations that reflected an encompassing Pan-African ethno-racial identity akin to that established by the commemorative practices centered in the slave castle museums and monuments. Even though the focus of subsequent festivities shifted away from themes and sub-topics pertinent to the cultural redemption and continuity of African descendant cultures in recent years, PANAFEST remains a celebrated expression of cultural and political Pan-Africanism in the 21st century. From the stage provided by PANAFEST, representatives of the government have been able to lay claim to the past eras of Pan-Africanism and demonstrate the extent to which homeland diaspora-relations can aid Ghana and offer communities of African descent increased representation in continental and global politics.

For scholars of ethnicity, race, and nationality, the now annual PANAFEST celebrations present analysts with an opportunity to explore how distinct ethno-national communities and states negotiate broader racial and geographic frames of identity to pursue political goals. Revealing the assemblage of both cultural and pragmatic Pan-African logics, the festival organizers rely on theatrical performances, political lectures and conferences to celebrate commonalities between groups while simultaneously mobilizing the comparative advantage of each community in aiding the nation. The resulting Pan-African frameworks condense ethic and national markers of identification into a hybrid racialized and continental discourse that simultaneously celebrates the
vibrancy of the different groups. This revelation speaks to existing investigations into the formation and distribution of pan-ethnic and pan-racial identities, perhaps most directly to the case of Pan-Asian ethnic options available for migrants to the United States. As Ong (1999) and Zhou & Lee (2004) note, Pan-Asian ethnic options emerge in response to the illegibility of specific ethno-national ethnic options in the context of the United States’ rigid social landscape. As these authors and others suggest, Pan-Asian ethnic options maintain a distinctly political relevance in the lives of second and later generation migrants, while their specific ethno-national heritage remains a source of individual pride. Even though the incongruence between the two cases and differing experiences of heritage tourists and migrants complicate the direct comparison, evaluating the emergence and politicization of pan-ethnic/pan-racial identities alongside one another creates the opportunity to better understand how states and non-state actors make legible the subjectivities and interests of different communities.

Appendix:

Table 3.1: PANAFEST Themes, 1991 - 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>Emergence of African Civilization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>Re-emergence of African Civilization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>Re-emergence of African Civilization: Re-uniting the African Family</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While the PANAFEST and a majority of Ghana’s heritage tourism industry are undeniably dedicated to exploring central elements of racialized black identities, the organizers maintain enough flexibility to include non-sub Saharan Africans in cultural performances and development initiatives.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>(Canceled)(^{61})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Re-emergence of African Civilization: Uniting the African Family for Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Re-emergence of African Civilization: Uniting the African Family (Youth – the Agenda for the New Millennium)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001(^{62})</td>
<td>Re-emergence of African Civilization: Uniting the African Family (Bridging the Gap Through Information Technology)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Pan-Africanism in the Context of Africa’s Political and Economic Social Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Our heritage, Our Strength</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Re-uniting the African Family—Challenges and Prospects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Rebirth of the Motherland: The Role of People of African Descent (Canceled)(^{63})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Re-uniting the African Family: Pan Africanism and the African Renaissance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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\(^{61}\) The 1996 edition of the PANAFEST festival was cancelled following the death of its creator Efua Sutherland.

\(^{62}\) As many as 700 attendees were unable to attend due to overbooking and complications in travel accommodations (Quaicoo, 2001).

\(^{63}\) Following the death of President John Atta Mills on the third day of the festival, the remaining activities were postponed and later cancelled during the official period of mourning.
Conclusion

Heritage, Social Boundaries and State Battlegrounds

This dissertation project set out to examine how the Ghanaian state organizes a heritage tourism industry that is specialized for exploring the legacy of the Atlantic slave trade and dispersal from Africa. It has examined the development of the commemorative practices presented to tourists as a means to investigate how social boundaries and perceptions of race, ethnicity, and nationality are influenced by notions of heritage reflected in representations of historical events staged by the state. In pursuing these goals, the project evaluated how these tourism offerings grant tourists the opportunity to learn about and contemplate the impact of the Atlantic slave trade on Africa and the communities formed in the receiving states. The previously underexplored nexus of identity formation, ideologies of heritage, and state commemorations reveal novel approaches to making sense of the emergence and politicization of potentially overlapping and contending categories of identity. Even further, this project treats tourism as a meaningful activity that reflects participants desires to validate their identities and perceptions of the world.

The project revealed that organizing the heritage tourism initiative enables development planners, tourism administrators, and executives from the Ghanaian state to support poverty reduction and development strategies that depend in part on contributions from communities of African descent abroad (GPRS II, 2006; Republic of Ghana, 2006; GPRSI, 2003). Tasked with establishing homeland-diaspora relations with communities of African descent, tourism administrators, guides, and associated civic organizations work to create a set of tourism experiences that recast the historical,
social, and political ties linking Ghana to communities of African descent as diasporic national attachments. Through the exhibition of artifacts from the trade alongside dramatic recreations of the experience of life in the dungeons of the coastal slave castles and events staged to demonstrate the continuity of cultural and political expressions the state is able to overlay the history of the slave trade onto its own social and physical landscapes. In doing so, the state positions itself centrally within the otherwise imprecise origin narratives of communities of African descent while simultaneously asserting a position of authority in directing how communities of African descent are encouraged to engage politically and socially with communities and states in Africa.

As presented in the introduction and first chapter of the dissertation, the Ghanaian state must first address the often ambiguous and fractured ties that the slave trade left in its wake to construct broader and more durable ties with communities of African descent before it may reap the benefit of increased tourism revenues and homeland-diaspora relations. Perhaps unique to Ghanaian case and comparable efforts to build homeland-diaspora relations with communities of African descent, the Atlantic slave trade muddled the continuity and connectedness of patterns of identification such that African states and communities outside of Africa were unable to easily reconcile cultural and political differences stemming from contending national and political attachments. As a result, the state must now uncover historical narratives and traditions while also repairing cultural and political ties that once bound earlier generations of Pan-Africanist activists in the struggle for independence and civil rights. Using the very castles once central to the operation of the slave trade in tandem with
sites dedicated to commemorating distinguished personages and political traditions, the state developed boundary objects that bring into alignment the contending attachments of the groups exploring the sites. For scholars of race and ethnicity the examination of Ghana’s heritage tourism industry and the strategic hurdles it faces in forging homeland-diaspora relations with communities abroad suggest that we attune our investigations to better account for how social boundaries and patterns of identification may become influenced by the social legacies and commemorations of historical events. At the same time, this study likewise suggests that we reevaluate how we perceive the conditions and experience of migration as it relates to the capacity for migrants—and their descendents—to make claims to diasporic identities or even patterns of identification legible in their perceived homelands.

The second and third chapters of the dissertation elaborated the specific strategies that the state developed for uncovering and repairing diasporic national attachments that are grounded in the slave castle museums and the cultural festivals offered to tourists, respectively. As the second chapter demonstrates, the designation of heritage sites and the creation of the slave castle museums in Cape Coast and El Mina emplace the legacy of slavery and dispersal from Africa within Ghana and create the impression that Ghana is the homeland to communities abroad (Wherry, 2007). The highly visible castle facilities, museum exhibits and advertising/guide materials are staged to satisfy the aspirations of communities of African descent for recovering heritages and knowledge of ancestral attachments lost through the Atlantic slave trade. However, a majority of visitors to the heritage sites and museum facilities are domestic tourists and their participation in the industry and consumption of the narratives on
display complicate the initiative to shift perceptions of Ghanaian history. Conflicts emerge over the disproportionate promotion of the legacies of the slave trade and even vistas of life in the antebellum American South over those more relevant to Ghanaian social formations and boundaries of domestic categories of identity (i.e. Ghanaian national and ethnic patterns of identification).

For scholars, these conflicts and others reflect two significant revelations about the nature of state organized commemorative practices and their relationship to social boundaries. On one hand, commemorative practices staged by the state validate and reinforce social boundaries and identities embedded in the legacies of past events. In this light, the artifacts on display and framings of settings, events, personages and political ideologies recast contemporary horizons and boundaries for membership in ethnic, racial and nationally delimited mnemonic communities. On the other hand, the state’s capacity to alter the staging and focus of commemorative practices generates a competition for control. Not limited to the exclusive direction from the state, or a single agency within it, numerous organizations advocate for complementary framings of the slave trade in relation to Ghana while others seek to elevate the presentation of colonial legacies and events pertaining to the composition of the post-colonial state. Still, others concerned with archeology and historic preservation as such, engage with the heritage sites and commemorative practices in a professional manner altogether separate from the identity and community driven projects taking place today.

Following the discussion of the slave castle museums and competition for control over the heritage sites in Cape Coast and El Mina, the third chapter introduced the Pan African Historical Theatre Festival (PANAFEST). Initially developed to promote
Ghanaian theatrical traditions and explore the legacy of slavery through the exhibition of the continuity between the artistic productions of communities in Africa and those abroad, the festival has since been shaped into a multifaceted tourism offering with diminished input from the original organizers. Guidebooks and travel literatures promote PANAFEST equally alongside of the many ethnic and regional festivals and further embellish the portrayal of homeland-diaspora relations as both achievable and necessary to the continued development of Ghana’s economy and expansion of the rights and freedoms of communities abroad. In this fashion, staging PANAFEST positions the Ghanaian state as the inheritor to the political and cultural mantel of the politics and culture of Pan Africanism established by W.E.B Du Bois, Kwame Nkrumah, Rita Marley and a multitude of other figureheads that struggled to improve the conditions of communities of African descent. Tourists visiting Ghana for the annual festival are presented with a wide array of cultural productions and political events that work to align their interests with the directives outlined by the state for its own economic development and broader issues in continental and global political arenas.

**Implications and Directions for Future Research**

Reflecting on this investigation into heritage tourism in Ghana demonstrates the need to expand how analyses of racial and ethnic identity/identification account for how states influence the negotiation of overlapping and contending forms of identity through commemorate practices. As the Ghanaian case suggests, the state tourism initiative strives to condense the contending national and ethnic interests of tourist into an encompassing Pan African racial framework that simultaneously positions Ghana into a leadership role. The social boundaries of race, ethnicity, and nationality are each
impacted by the specific assemblage of historical personages, settings, and events in officially recognized commemorative practices centered in the museums and monuments. Through these tourism offerings the state is able to provide tourists with a long sought after heritage and membership within a national community, a status often denied at home.

For scholars of race and ethnicity, this revelation suggests that the state may in fact take on multiple roles in the process of altering the social boundaries of race, ethnicity, and nationality. The first interpretation of the role of the state positions the state and bureaucracies within it among the many actors engaged in the work of identifying historical legacies to promote and those shaping the commemorative practices that reflect them. As the Ghanaian case has shown, administrators and executives from a range of state agencies often coordinate their efforts with civic associations and international non-state actors to develop the tourism offerings. These collaborations, while often temporary, have led to the creation of what have become the centerpieces of the entire heritage industry and serve to distinguish Ghana from its neighbors and direct competitors for tourist dollars. At the same time however, the state’s pursuit of its own interests often put it in opposition to others invested in the presentation of historical events and the preservation of the physical artifacts on display. These instances of both collaborative and unilaterally determined shifts in commemorative practices confirm existing theories about the agentive role of the state in the manipulation and direction of identity motivated action and suggest another way investigators may approach the state.
The second interpretation positions the state and state organized commemorative practices as the canvas over which contending interest groups seek to display their respective framings of historical events and social boundaries. Unlike the first framing of the state, this representation primarily casts the state and its venues as the object over which groups compete for control. As has been the case for the organizations like the African American Association of Ghana, the Ghana National Theatre Association and others influencing the narratives on display and framings of homeland-diaspora relations, the state operated museums and monuments validate their perceptions of the social world. In addition to altering the specific representations of historical events, these groups rely on the stage provided by the state to mobilize actions otherwise restricted by contending ethnic and national attachments. At the same time however, this approach does not limit the state to a passive role. Tensions between tourism administrators based in the capitol with those in the Ashanti region over the extent to which heritage sites convey an Ashanti-centric historiography reveal that opposing forces within the state compete over the very same domains as non-state actors.

In this context, what may seem like insignificant inclusions and exclusions from the displays at state operated museum and monument facilities holds the potential to define widely differing framings of who is and who can become a legitimate member of the national, racial, or ethnic community. While the state and its representatives are able to shift their commitment to supporting particular mnemonic regimes, these decisions seemingly limit the available options presented to participants of African descent. As this case has shown, emphasizing deep historical legacies and previous
incarnations of Pan-Africanism, allowed the state to mobilize race, and to a lesser extent continental identity, to bridge national and ethnic attachments that would otherwise erect boundaries between communities of African descent. In this way, centering analyses on commemorative practices, collective memory and heritage reveal widely differing and at times contending logics of community formation and novel approaches to boundary maintenance. Counter to boundaries hoisted around legal-national borders or pseudo-scientific notions of race, mnemonic regimes offer a more encompassing framing of identity that may bypass many of the factors that are traditionally presented as influencing identity options. Primarily limited by the temporal scope of commemorative practices and secondary political goals, mnemonic regimes upend and reassess the significance of different categories of identity based in part on their inclusion in valued historical narratives.

The incorporation of the analysis of state sanctioned commemorative practices and heritage into the sociology of race and ethnicity also grants us an improved lens through which to examine ongoing tensions stemming from historical legacies and the unresolved mnemonic regimes that represent them. At the same time however, the focus on the state neglects how tourists and passive observers interpret alterations in commemorative practices and serve as a reason to return to the Ghanaian case from a different perspective. As previously mentioned, I anticipate that tourists traveling to Ghana with the specific intent of participating in the heritage tourism offerings may already in some capacity share the state’s framing of racial identity and national attachments. Investigators will have to consider when and where they seek to engage with tourists to work against potential selection biases that may inhibit the effective
identification and assessment of shifts in perceptions of social boundaries. While it remains unclear how investigators might identify and survey individual would-be tourists before they travel to Ghana, it may be possible to document the organization of group-trips to the heritage sites to gain access to potential travelers that may hold competing impressions about the nature of race and national attachment.

The Baltimore-based HABESHA may present an ideal example of such an organization for researchers to explore as a case study. As previously mentioned, the group organizes annual trips to Ghana and Ethiopia for African American at-risk-youths to expand their horizons and develop a deeper sense of pride in their heritage. The 2012 “Black to My Roots” edition of their summer program introduced ten participants to the castles in Ghana and potentially to an unexplored framing of their identity and understanding of their connectedness to other communities of African descent. The annual cycle of HABESHA’s travel program combined with the age of participants offers investigators access to a sample of tourists that may have yet to develop or consider the extent to which African heritage and the slave trade influence their understandings of social boundaries and relationship to communities abroad. Similarly, refocusing the analysis to a more in-depth examination of the experiences of Ghanaian tourists—youth in particular—as they visit the sites and interact with foreign tourists would supplement the discussion of the capacity of the state’s project to recast identity horizons and social boundaries through heritage sites and tourism initiatives. On the other hand, the reactions of older cohorts of domestic tourists may illuminate the limits of the state’s success as sites and museums once dedicated to the legacies of colonialism and the local struggle for independence are upended and recast in the shadow of the slave
trade come in conflict with existing commemorative practices and in many instances are in fact trivialized.

Further, future investigations need not be limited to the Ghanaian case of heritage tourism to further refine our understanding of how states influence patterns of identity and conflict through boundary objects and commemorative practices. As has recently been the case in the United States, the removal and discussion of the potential removal of monuments and symbols commemorating the Confederacy from public grounds in South Carolina, Louisiana, Virginia, and elsewhere sparked widespread protests and counter-protests (Wendland, 2017; McCrummen & Izadi, 2015). Tensions flared at the national, state, and even city-level as advocates for removal made the case that the state should not position such symbols equally alongside monuments and memorials to a more accepting and open interpretation of the United States as a diverse and multiracial society. Opponents to removal often suggest that removing the icons and monuments would amount to a form of historical revisionism and decried the efforts as an affront to Southern heritage; although elements of opposition are undeniably contingent on racist sentiments. As the discussion of heritage tourism in Ghana suggests, this conflict encompasses a tension over how exactly the state should commemorate or even if the state should commemorate institutions and individuals that challenge the sense of inclusion African-Americans experience today. On the other

\[ \text{64} \text{ Importantly, advocates for removal often support the relocation of such flags and monuments to museum facilities and similar sites that emplace the symbol within the context of the Civil War and do not explicitly convey pride in the Confederacy.} \]

\[ \text{65} \text{ The work of Cooper & Knotts (2010) explores the evolution of "Southern" identity and its gradual separation from a pattern of identification that directly references the Confederacy, or the "Dixie" identity. By examining the prevalence of businesses with the words "Dixie" and/or "Southern" in their names, the authors are able to demonstrate a gradual reduction in the prevalence of "Dixie"-named businesses overtime relative to the} \]
hand, the state is faced with prospect of rescinding established commemorative practices and upsetting the mnemonic communities that find validation in extant sanctioned commemorations and displays.

While previous attempts in the early 1990s to remove Confederate symbols and monuments faltered, the renewed initiatives successfully pushed states and larger municipalities to reassess how they displays these symbols, and in an increasing number of cases remove them (Forman Jr., 1991). The most recent wave of challenges to the established mnemonic regime of commemorating the Confederacy stems from the response to the murder of nine African-American parishioners at the Emmanuel AME Church in Charleston, South Carolina in June of 2015. Advocates for the removal of the Battle Flag of the Confederacy from atop the South Carolina state house noted how the killer posed with a photo of the flag and that its frequent association with racial violence and hate should not be actively or tacitly endorsed by the state. With support from both the South Carolina Senate and Governor Nikki Haley, the flag was ultimately removed from the capitol dome and tentatively relocated to the Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum on the capitol grounds. While not entirely independent of the repercussions of Charleston shooting in 2015, the 2017 removal of four Confederate monuments in New Orleans, Louisiana presents a comparable example of how tensions over the display of such memorials reflect veiled contests over membership in the American imagined national community.

stability of the "Southern"-named businesses. Even further, they show how the relative size of local African-American communities influences the likelihood for the "Dixie"-theme to fade, thus linking the "Dixie"-theme to a prior era of racial demographics and residential patterns.
Additionally, this dissertation project presents a significant consideration for how scholars might approach the formation of diasporic identities and the maintenance of homeland-diaspora relations by state and non-state actors. Building on existing theories of diaspora, the examination of heritage tourism in Ghana and reflections on prior eras of widespread or mass Pan African movements present the construction and mobilization of diasporic identities as discrete achievements in the wake of the Atlantic slave trade. While the possibility that specific initiatives to mobilize homeland-diaspora relations might fail is considered in the diaspora literature, these analyses often take for granted the conditions of dispersion and experience of assimilation in receiving states and risk naturalizing the continuity of national attachments that are raised in a diasporic framework.

Counter to theories of diaspora built around the experience of Irish, Japanese, and to lesser extent Jewish communities living outside of their respective national homelands, this consideration challenges the continuity of diasporic identity formations over time (Lainer-Vos, 2012; Brubaker, 1996; Gilroy, 1993). Comparing the often divergent assemblages of communities and states hailed by different Pan African initiatives of the 20th century reveals the extent to which such identity projects might fail to solidify a coherent, widespread and enduring diasporic framing of identity and social relations through political, religious, and cultural vectors. As was the case for the Pan African Congresses in the first half of the 20th century and Marcus Garvey’s Universal Negro Improvement Association, Ghana’s efforts to generate and organize homeland-diaspora relations often run afoul as competing ethnic, national and political interests create irreconcilable ruptures within the movement.
In conclusion, this investigation challenges scholars to reevaluate how theories of action and social organization account for how individuals and communities locate themselves in meaningful categories of identity that enable political action. While often reflecting more visible social boundaries, mnemonic regimes and commemorative practices equally segment the population into categories embedded in historical legacies and reveal previously unexplored social arenas and actors. The integration of this analysis of heritage tourism and theories of diaspora allows scholars of racial identity to make sense of the value and pursuit of positive and celebrated representations of community heritage and the social challenges the group overcame. In part, we are able to witness these mechanisms in the Ghana because the legacy of the slave trade created the necessity to address the rupturing of connections between communities on either side of the Atlantic. At the same time, racial landscapes in the United States and elsewhere systematically devalue the significance of African heritage and equally generate a pursuit to redeem these disparaged subjectivities. For tourists from the diaspora and those domestic to Ghana, these offerings provide both the necessary space and material with which to explore and refine existing claims to diasporic national attachments as well as independent ethnic and cultural associations (Lainer-Vos, 2012). By centering public discourses and commemorative displays on the legacy of the slave trade, Ghana and related non-state actors have shifted mnemonic regimes such that Ghana enters into the collective memories and agendas of communities of African descent.
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Methodology

Overview

The research methodology for the project *Incorporating Diaspora: Blurring Distinctions between Race and Nationality through Heritage Tourism in Ghana* combines strategies from ethnographic field methods, archival research, and the analysis of state produced tourism records and policies to explore the formation of homeland-diaspora relations and the negotiation of social boundaries through heritage tourism. Initially inspired by an interest in the politics of Pan Africanism and a desire to explore how communities of African descent perceive their connections to communities and states in Africa, the dissertation evolved into an investigation into practices that shift collective representations of the past and give new meaning and substance to at times elusive framings of identity and community. In this context, the project engages with the ways that state and non-state actors in Ghana and elsewhere manage the presentation and preservation of distinct historical and cultural legacies to create the impression that Ghana is the homeland to communities of African descent abroad. Bridging insights from scholarship on collective memory, social boundaries, and racial and ethnic identity, the project looks to the Ghanaian case to elaborate on the role of the state in establishing and reinforcing homeland-diaspora relations through commemorative practices that simultaneously equate and present continuity between distinct racial, ethnic, and national subjectivities and legacies of trauma and redemption.

The combination of methods and data sources allows the project to formulate a political economy of heritage tourism in Ghana and excavate the cultural and symbolic significance of heritage tourism and the possibility of traveling to constructed homelands.
to participate in state organized commemorative practices centered in museums, conference centers and heritage sites. This allows for the further examination of the process through which individuals and groups negotiate their place in the world and make use of material and immaterial legacies to reinterpret the bonds of racial, national, ethnic and continental discourses of identity. Expanding beyond the immediate case of heritage tourism in Ghana and efforts to construct homeland-diaspora relations, the dissertation project poses questions to advance our understanding of how social boundaries and identity are constructed through vectors embedded in the past and practices developed to excavate them. More specifically, the project poses the following questions: How are the social boundaries of race, ethnicity, and nationality segmented by commemorative practices and the politics of memory? How are patterns of identification impacted by shifts in established commemorative practices and mnemonic regimes? How do state and non-state heritage managers anticipate and adjust for conflicts emerging from the creation and manipulation of commemorative practices? How do states rely on heritage management and the venue provided by tourism to define the conditions for membership in the national community? And finally, how do states identify and mobilize the latent cultural capital of historical and anthropological legacies to promote economic development and pursue political goals?

In order to investigate the formation of homeland-diaspora relations between communities of African descent abroad and Ghana through heritage tourism, I searched for sources of data that would bring into relief the interplay between commemorative practices, collective memory and social boundaries. As these initiatives are state-led, priority was given to sources that shed light onto how the state stages the tourism
industry and contributes to creating the impression that the local remnants of the slave trade necessarily connect Ghana to communities abroad. At the same time, Ghana’s heritage tourism industry and the range of activities and experiences designed to generate continuity between communities in Ghana with those outside of Africa are dependent on a vast array of funding and operational support from non-state agencies, private companies invested in tourism and travel infrastructure, and in select instances travelers themselves. Data drawn from the records and promotional materials of non-state actors was integrated into the conclusions on collective memory and social boundaries.

Before exploring each of the methods employed in the completion of this dissertation project, it is important to first take a moment to address the data sources and methods that were not employed in the project. Most notably perhaps are the absence of interviews with international and domestic tourists and policy makers. As this dissertation focuses on the state, state-led initiatives, and collective representations of the past, formal interviews with individual tourists were not felt to be useful and would be subject to selection bias. In particular, sampling issues emerge based on whether or not international and domestic travel availabilities coincided with my research trips to Ghana and influence the size, demographic composition, and frequency of travelers to the heritage sites.

While I actively decided not to conduct formal interviews with tourists, I did initially plan to schedule meetings with representatives from state and non-state agents working to influence the management of Ghana’s historical and cultural resources. These meetings were to serve as non-structured interviews to gain insights into policy
and decision making processes that guided the organization and operation of the
heritage sites and related development initiatives. Prior to embarking on both of my
field research trips to Ghana in the summers of 2011 and 2012, I reached out via email
to the national and regional offices of the Ghana Tourism Board, Ministry of Tourism,
the Museums and Monuments Board as well as civic organizations like the PANAFEST
Foundation and African American Association of Ghana to discuss the possibility of
meeting with a representative.¹ While I was able to gain access a select few, such as
the PANAFEST Youth Organization and the Diaspora Africa Foundation, the state
agencies never granted me the access I required and rarely responded to my requests.
Even further, following the death of President Mills in 2012, state agencies were closed
for the remainder of my time abroad and further impeded my efforts to engage with
these administrators and policy makers in these organizations.

Tourism Policies & Participation Records

I collected and analyzed policy statements drafted by state and non-state
agencies responsible for managing Ghana’s tourism offerings and the network of travel
services (e.g., hotels and lodging, transportation, visa/immigration services) to gain
direct insight into the organization and development of Ghana’s heritage tourism
industry. When combined with the public statements of state-level ministers and
regional representatives from the agencies engaged in managing the legacy of the
slave trade, these policy statements provide a lens into the government’s investments
and role in constructing an overarching discourse that connects the slave trade to
Ghana. Policy drafts and public announcements indicate the specific jurisdictions and

¹ I had previously interacted with each of these government agencies/civic organizations in order to acquire
advertising materials as well as tourism participation and spending records.
responsibilities of each state agency, identify attractions and infrastructure in need of increased funding, and establish best practices for preserving the physical integrity of the artifacts and sites at the center of the heritage tourism project. Additionally, tourism and heritage management policies reveal the ways that heritage management and tourism are incorporated into and are impacted by ongoing political contests and the economic demands of the developing nation.

In addition to the policies and official public statements from administrators, I also collected participation records and reports compiled by the Ministry of Tourism and other state agencies that detail the distribution of annual tourism arrivals and spending. These travel and participation records provide a diverse array of information on topics that include the number and type of visa applications applied for and granted each year, domestic and international arrivals to specific tourism sites, and even the approximate number of hotel rooms each region of the country has to offer. While the information provided by the participation records constructs an image of where tourists visit and how much money is generated through their travels, the data is less than ideal for conducting a thorough analysis of the demographics of travelers as their racial and ethnic identities are not consistently reported in the data. In spite of this limitation, the state’s participation data offers the best estimate for assessing who is traveling to Ghana as well as what they are doing while there and reveals the broader economic impact of heritage tourism in terms of dollars spent and in a less direct way the gradual expansion and improvement of tourism infrastructure to more remote areas of the country.

Tour Guidebooks & Promotional Materials
After adjusting the analysis to focus on the role of the state in generating homeland-diaspora relations, I decided to supplement my examination of tourism policies and investigate how the state promotes its tourism offerings and introduces prospective tourists and those already in Ghana to the heritage sites and other travel/tourist activities. While contemporary travelers have access to a vast array of companies offering inclusive travel packages to Ghana’s heritage sites as well as information online and in privately published guidebooks, earlier cohorts relied heavily on information made available at regional tourism offices in Ghana and embassies in the United States and elsewhere.² In this way, the state produced guidebooks and promotional materials represent a source of information that clarifies how the state defines the heritage sites and frames the travel experience as a pilgrimage like journey.

After collecting successive editions of the official state tourism guidebook as well as an early edition of the promotional Directory of the Republic of Ghana published by the Ghana Information Service during the Nkrumah administration, I was able to examine the gradual emergence of a commercial tourism industry in Ghana as new tourism destinations and activities were developed and marketed internationally. Very much a set of products meant to present Ghana as a vibrant tourism destination and potential investment partner; these sources have an undeniable bias that embellishes the travel destinations and potential impact of the offerings. In spite of this bias, collecting and closely investigating state produced tour guides and promotional materials allowed me to explore questions related to the how the state incorporates the

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² The Ghana Tourism Authority currently manages the official Ghana travel website and provides a thorough reference guide for planning visits to the full array of tourism offering as well as information on hotel accommodations and negotiating Ghana’s domestic transportation networks. The Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Creative Arts, the Museums and Monuments Board, and the National Commission on Culture operate complimentary websites that are specialized by the administrative jurisdiction of the agency.
legacies of the slave trade and dispersal from Africa into the image it creates of itself. Along these same lines, I was also able to look to guidebooks to investigate how the state frames the racial subjectivities of communities of African descent abroad in relation to ethnic communities local to Ghana.

As previously mentioned, state produced guidebooks are not the sole source of information tourists may draw from to determine what to see and where to travel while visiting Ghana. Privately owned guidebook publishers like Brandt and Lonely Planet have released editions of travel guides on the full range of opportunities Ghana has to offer. Less concerned with supporting the state’s development initiatives and identity project, these private guides offer a less biased impression of what visitors may see, experience and learn while in Ghana. At the same time however, updated editions of the travel guides will often take note of major planned events that coincide with the year of release and will in turn direct potential travelers to participate in PANAFEST or similar events. In this way, private guidebooks do promote the state’s efforts to generate homeland-diaspora relations, just not in a direct fashion. A select few publishers release highly specified guide materials that in some instances are explicitly marketed towards African American tourists and offer travel recommendations based on how they may draw the most symbolic meaning from traveling in Africa. I also collected promotional pamphlets and informational materials made available for tourists exploring the heritage sites and meeting with state tourism operators in the regional tourism offices. In addition to offering condensed insights into the activities offered in different regions, materials like the PANAFEST Souvenir Brochures printed for each edition of the
PANAFEST celebration include messages from tourism administrators, and politicians ranging from local mayors to the president.

Field Research and Ethnographic Observations

The field research component of the project was introduced to provide me with an opportunity to witness firsthand how the heritage tourism industry engages with the legacy of the slave trade and constructs an environment that enables communities of African descent to envision Ghana as their homeland. During the planning of my initial research excursion to Ghana, I anticipated that I would be able to collect observations at Ghana’s signature heritage sites and museums as well as many of the smaller attractions attached to the heritage project such as the Assin Manso Slave River Project and the W.E.B. Du Bois Center for Pan African Culture. Additional observations were taken during tours and visits to facilities dedicated to exploring contending legacies in Ghana, such as those based in the former Ashanti capital, Kumasi, or the national monuments dedicated to the struggle for independence and more recent historical developments.

Finally, while conducting field research during the summers of 2011 and 2012, I had the opportunity to survey the print journalism archival collection at the George Padmore Research Library of African Affairs in Accra. Established in the former home of the Trinidadian writer in 1991, the George Padmore Institute serves as a research and education center dedicated to exploring issues relating to communities of African descent in the Caribbean, United States and Europe. The library hosts its own collection of the archive of Ghana’s state-owned newspaper, The Daily Graphic, as well as selects issues of international publications focused on the African Diaspora. With the
assistance of the facility archivist, I was able to identify coverage of policy debates, reporting on conventions and celebrations, and even editorials on the shifting of commemorative practices towards legacies relevant to communities abroad. These archival sources were later combined with coverage originating from in the United States.

**Archival Research & Travel Narratives**

The final component of the research project involved the collection and analysis of data drawn from print journalism and media archives in the United States and Ghana. The primary focus of my data collection strategy was to find sources that would shed light on collective responses to efforts to establish homeland-diaspora relations and engage communities of African descent in Ghanaian politics and economic development planning. Primary sources included, but were not limited to publications originating in the African American community and included reporting from outlets such as the *Atlanta Daily World, The Crisis,* and *Ebony* in addition to *The New York Times* and *National Public Radio* to create a more complete representation of the state’s efforts to forge ties with communities of African descent. Data drawn from print media coverage of policy debates in Ghana, the public spectacle of state visits promoting travel and investment opportunities, and the travel experiences of earlier generations of tourists and emigrants reveal the interests of stakeholders while uncovering broader discourses of race, ethnicity and community that are mobilized to cement homeland-diaspora relations. Additionally, the historical depth of the archival sources allowed me to assess the evolution of the state’s approach to establishing connections between
communities in the diaspora and those in Ghana. In this way, my examination of print media presents different iterations of the attempt to create homeland-diaspora relations.

Similar to the collection of print media coverage of Ghana’s heritage industry and efforts to generate homeland diaspora relations, I also sought out published travel narratives detailing visitors’ experiences while traveling in Ghana. As with the data drawn from print media sources, the historicity of the travel narratives reveals key distinctions in the framing of homeland-diaspora relations as they intersect with the politics of decolonization, economic development, and ongoing political struggles in Ghana. A majority of the narratives identified detail the experiences of earlier generations of civil rights activists and celebrity visitors like Maya Angelou and even Richard Wright’s brief time in Kumasi prior to decolonization; a select few reflect the impact traveling to Ghana and visiting the heritage sites has on less distinguished heritage tourists and expatriates. Recollections of the comfort of subsidized lifestyles and state support directed towards expatriates during the Nkrumah years stand in stark contrast to the reflections of contemporary tourists and even researchers investigating Ghana’s presentation of the slave trade that feel abandoned if not exploited by the state’s development project.