

Course Title: Global Connections: Accra
Course Number: V18.9634005
Instructor: Nat Nuno-Amarteifio
Department: Metropolitan Studies
Credit Hours: 4
Time: Mondays, 3:00-6:00pm
Office Hours: By appointment
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Course Description

Urbanization in Africa and the Shaping of the City: Accra, Ghana

Counter to the prevailing view of a rural African living in traditional communities practicing subsistence farming, the majority of Africans are rapidly becoming urban dwellers. The course will introduce various approaches to understanding the city and link those approaches to the city in Africa. This course examines those factors that have shaped Accra throughout the historical periods of pre-colonial, colonial, post-independence and more recent globalization. Students will be challenged to consider a number of key questions: Do theories on urbanization and the city apply to the African context? What are the limitations of the theories? Can African cities be described as global cities? How were African cities organized and managed prior to colonialism and European trade? How did colonialism shape and change the urban space in Africa? What impact did independence have on the spatial organization of the city in Africa? What urban dynamics, including external connections, influenced the architecture and the arts of the African city? How has migration altered the organization and culture of the city of Accra? How do people contest urban policy, and how does this shape the city?

The course provides the opportunity for students to visit various parts of Accra through fieldtrips. However, students are also expected to keep up with assigned readings, which may be heavy some weeks to allow for guided visits in Accra. In addition, the course seeks to challenge students to utilize primary resources to address some of the questions being posed by the growth of Ghana's capital city. It will introduce students to available resources for primary research in Africa, such as national archives, special collection libraries, maps, and various cultural resources. Some class time will be devoted to guiding students to successfully navigate these resources.

Course Requirements

1. Attendance: I expect all students to be present and on time for class. If you must be absent or late, please contact me beforehand.
2. Weekly readings: I expect you to complete all of the readings for each class. About half of the readings will be posted on "Blackboard"; the remainder will come from five books.
3. Weekly essay: Each week, you will submit a SHORT (3 pages minimum, 4 page maximum excluding citations) response to a question that appears on the syllabus. Use assigned readings, lecture material, and fieldtrips. You must cite from the readings and properly identify the citations using APA style (see handout). Please note: I do not accept late papers.
4. You will be assigned a final paper, the theme and requirements TBA.

Week 1. (A) Overview of the course.

A Preview of the topics to be treated through the semester.

Rules of grading- Class participation 20%

-Weekly papers 40%

-Final paper 40%

Rules for late submission.

Rules for rewrites.

Citation of sources for submission.

Reading:

Parker, John (2000) Chapter 1, “Making the Town”, Oxford: James Currey.

“Urban Africa: Histories in the Making.” Introduction in Africa’s Urban Past, eds. David .M. Anderson and Richard Pathborne (2000), Oxford. P.1-P.17.

S.S. Quarcoopone (1993) “The Impact of Urbanization on the Socio-Political History of the Ga Mashie People of Accra. 1877 -1957. Page 1 -23

Week 2 An Overview: Accra Trade and Politics in 16th & 17th Centuries

Topics:

- a. Indigenous roots of urban Africa
- b. West African trade (pre-European)
- c. Early European trade and missions
- d. The role of castles and forts

Reading:

- ✓ S.S. Quarcoopone (1993) “The Impact of Urbanization on the Socio-Political History of the Ga Mashie People of Accra. 1877 -1957. Doctoral Thesis. Page 32-47
- ✓ Parker, John. (2000) Chapter 2, in *Making the Town*, Oxford: James Currey.

Question: What was the foundation of Accra as an urban center prior to European trade, and how did trade with other African Kingdoms affect it?

Week 3. Sectors of Accra: Guest Lecture and Fieldtrip to Osu and Jamestown

Prof. Wellington, guest lecturer on Danish-Osu.

Visit to the following Houses: Wolfe, Richter and Van der Puye slave house of Ussher Town.

Visit to the National Archives to meet the Archivist and register as a researcher.

Readings:

- ✓ Per Hernaes. A symbol of power: Christianbong Castle.

Question: Explain the significance of the Christianborg Castle, and other European forts to the history of Accra from the 17th century.

Week 4. Slavery and its impact on the economy and politics of Accra.

Topics:

- a. Slavery and its impact on Accra.

Reading:

- ✓ Parker, John. (2000) Chapter 3, in *Making the Town*, Oxford, James Currey.
- ✓ .Quarcoopome, S. S. (1993) “A History of Urban Development of Accra: 1877-1957,” *Institute of African Studies Research Review* 9 (1): 53-85 – Hand out.
- ✓ Akosua Perbi.. *Domestic Slavery in Ghana*.
- ✓ Research, colonial documents stored at the National Archives on slavery and the courts.

Question: How did the British Courts in Accra deal with issues of slavery in the 19th century. Pick two court cases from the National Archives and analyze them to illustrate your argument. Attach photocopies of the court record to your paper.

Week 5. The Colonial City: Fieldtrip

Visit Cantonments, Ridge, Adabraka to see colonial era housing and communities.

Topics: Accra as a colonial city.

In 1877 the British moved the capital of the Gold Coast from Cape Coast to Accra.

Why and how did the colonial government employ the rule of law and medicine to redefine the city.

Readings:

- ✓ King, Anthony. “Colonial Urban Development”: “The bungalow-compound complex as a study in the cultural use of space.” Chapter 6 page 123-155. Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- ✓ John Osei Tutu, “Space and the marking of space in Ga history, culture and politics”. *Transaction of the Historical Society of Ghana* (2000-2001)
- ✓ Thomas Gate “The struggle against disease in the Gold Coast. Early attempts at Urban Sanitation Reform. *Transaction of* (Vol XVI 2) No. 1. 1995.

Question: Why did the British attempt to create a colonial city in Accra and how did their effort affect the city and its residents? What was the response of the non-European resident population to the proposals?

Week 6 Post-independence and Accra

Topics:

- a. National Independence and its aftermath.
- b. Nkrumah's vision for Accra.
- c. Accra as the new center of African nationalism

Reading:

- Nkrumah's plan for Accra.(1957) National Archives.
- Imagining Architecture: The Structure of Nationalism in Accra, Ghana by Janet Berry Hess.
- Accra Survey by Ione Acquah, M.Sc. (Econ.)
- Modernism in Late Imperial British West Africa: The Work of Maxwell Fry and Jane Drew, Published by: Society of Architectural Historians.

Question: How did Nkrumah try to redefine the country and Accra and also establish the city as the center of African pan-nationalism.

Week 7. Contemporary Art and Accra: Fieldtrip

Visit the Artists Alliance gallery.

Topics:

- a. The changing urban dynamic and its reflection in visual arts

Reading:

- ✓ Amarteifio, Nat. (Forthcoming) "Contemporary Art in Ghana."
- ✓ Okwui Enwezor, Chika Okeke-Agulu "Contemporary African Art",Damiani 2009 page 18-22 chapter 2.

Question: How did Ghanaian artists express the emerging cultural values of the country following independence? Discuss the works of 2 Ghanaian artists to illustrate the changes that followed independence.

Week 8. Post-independence Housing: Fieldtrip

Visit the mass housing projects of Nkrumah at Nyaniba and Osu.

Reading:

- ✓ George Nartey: The Role of Government in provision of housing for the people of Ghana. Phd dissertation 1983.

MID- TERM BREAK

Week 10. Political Economy and Urban Space: Military government and the City

Topics:

- a. World War 1 & 2: Impact on Accra
- b. Urban policies of Gen. Acheampong: urban agriculture, low-income estates
- c. Urban policies of Rawlings: paramilitary institutions, rent control and de-urbanization

Reading: TBA.

National Archives, selected news papers from the 1970's

Question: What role did the military play in the evolution of Accra? How did the city reflect this during the period of military domination?

Week 11. The development of slums in Accra (Combine lecture on Migrant Settlement).

Guest Lecturer: Prof. Nicole Lafore.

Topics:

- a. Squatter and slum settlements in Accra
- b. The case of Old Fadama
- c. Development efforts and approaches

Reading:

- ✓ Grant, R. 2006. "Out of Place? Global Citizens in Local Spaces: A Study of the Informal Settlement in the Korle Lagoon Environs in Accra, Ghana." *Urban Forum*. 17 (1): 1-24.
- ✓ Lecture notes "Urbanization and Slums" by Nicole Lafore.

Find at least two news articles online in a Ghanaian newspaper about Old Fadama.

View website that documents Old FADAMA: <http://etude.uoregon.edu/winter2009/angle>

Question:

Week 12. Slum settlement at 'Old FADAMA: Fieldtrip.

Visit to the Old Fadama settlement.

Question: What challenges does the city face in addressing the problem of slums in general and Old Fadama in particular

Week 13. Migrant Communities and the City: Fieldtrip.

Visit to Nima.

Reading: TBA

Question: Accra has a long history of migrations. What contributions have migrant communities made to the development of the city?

Week 14. Politics, Development Aid and the City.

Guest Lecture: Yaw Graham: CEO Third World Forum

Topics:

- a. The African city in the globalised world.
- b. Urban areas: the new target of development assistance.
- c. Diverse approaches and interests to developing the city.

Readings:

- ✓ U.N. Millenium Development Goal 7, Target 11.
- ✓ World Bank, Cities Alliance and UN-Habitat papers on Accra (to be provided).
- ✓ Lindsay Whitfield and Emily Jones: “Ghana: Breaking Out of Aid Dependence? Economic and Political Barriers to Ownership” (2005, Journal of Modern African Studies).

Question: What impact do aid organizations hope to achieve in the African city and in your opinion how successful are they?

Week 15. Sports and Recreation in Accra

Readings: Emmanuel Acheampong (2002) “Bukom and the social history of boxing in Accra
Accra “Warfare and citizenship in pre-colonial Ga society”

Question: TBA

Week 16. Music and urban life in Ghana.

Guest Lecturer: Prof. John Collins

Topics:

- a. Cultural forms and the urban dynamic: Highlife and Hiplife
- b. Cultural venues of Accra

Reading:

- ✓ Collins, J. (2004) “Ghanaian Popular Performance and the Urbanization Process, 1900-1980,” in Transaction of the Historical Society of Ghana. No.8. (2004)page 2003-225
- ✓ John Collins, “A Social History of Ghanaian popular entertainment since independence.”
- ✓ Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana No.9 (2005) page 17-40.
- ✓ Find lyrics and music (on the Internet) for both older highlife and recent hiplife. Compare subjects, imagery, and style.

Question: Since independence, how has music reflected the changing scene in Accra?

Week 17. Summary and Review.

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Final paper due.