

# African Histories and Modernities

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John Kwadwo Osei-Tutu  
Victoria Ellen Smith  
Editors

# Shadows of Empire in West Africa

New Perspectives on European Fortifications

palgrave  
macmillan

*Editors*

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*This collection is dedicated to the memory of Dr. Kwabena Adu-Boahen.*

## PREFACE

The book is a product of a project called *Shadows of Empire: a study of European imperial forts and castles from the sixteenth century to the present*. This project applied entangled history approaches to the study of Afro-European relationships in West Africa from the fifteenth century, emphasising the centrality of fortifications as centres of interaction and exchange. “Shadows of Empire” is, in turn, a sub-project under the multi-component *Beyond Borders: Transnational movements through history* project (2010–2012), an institution-based strategic project designed and implemented by the Department of Historical Studies, Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU, Trondheim). The Faculty of Humanities of NTNU and the Norwegian Research Council (NRC) co-funded the project. We are also grateful to the Department of History of the University of Ghana for facilitating and organising the infrastructure for the conference.

On 1st and 2nd August 2012, many of the contributors attended a conference entitled *Shadows of Empire: Studies of European Colonial Fortifications in West Africa from fifteenth Century* at the University of Ghana. They came to share their thinking and put forward their research from the University of Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, University of Cape Coast, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Ashesi University, The Courtauld Institute of Art, University of Basel and Sciences Po (Paris), University of Virginia and University of California (Los Angeles). This publication brings together selected and revised papers from the conference along with

specially commissioned chapters from scholars associated with the University of Warwick, University of Ghana, University of Wisconsin and Norwegian University of Science and Technology to ensure that this book presents a fully rounded and cohesive collection. As such, our aim is to offer multidisciplinary and international approaches through which we explore the meaning, uses and impacts of European fortification systems on the Gold Coast (Ghana). We hope that these studies enrich knowledge about the European-built forts and castles within the West African milieu.

The process from conference to completed book has been a laborious one, but the result is one that we are proud to be able to share with you. We thank Dr. Kofi Baku, who as Head of the History Department at the University of Ghana, accepted in 2012 to host the Conference from which this book has emerged. Thanks also go to Tom McCaskie, Toyin Falola and the team at Palgrave for their support in bringing this project to publication. Regrettably, Dr. Kwabena Adu-Boahen, former Head of the Department of History at the University of Cape Coast (Ghana), and one of the participants of the 2012 conference, did not live to see this volume into print. We dedicate the book to his memory.

Trondheim, Norway  
Legon, Ghana

John Kwadwo Osei-Tutu  
Victoria Ellen Smith

# CONTENTS

- 1 **Introduction: Interpreting West Africa's Forts and Castles** 1  
John Kwadwo Osei-Tutu and Victoria Ellen Smith
- 2 **Grossfriedrichsburg, the First German Colony in Africa?  
Brandenburg-Prussia, Atlantic Entanglements and  
National Memory** 33  
Roberto Zaugg
- 3 **'Far from My Native Land, and Far from You':  
Reimagining the British at Cape Coast Castle in the  
Nineteenth Century** 75  
Victoria Ellen Smith
- 4 **Viewed from a Distance: Eighteenth-Century Images of  
Fortifications on the Coast of West Africa** 107  
Emily Mann
- 5 **Illusions of Grandeur and Protection: Perceptions  
and (Mis)Representations of the Defensive Efficacy  
of European-Built Fortifications on the Gold Coast,  
Seventeenth–Early Nineteenth Centuries** 137  
John Kwadwo Osei-Tutu and Hermann W. von Hesse

<b>6</b>	<b>Female Agency in a Cultural Confluence: Women, Trade and Politics in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Gold Coast</b>	<b>169</b>
	Kwabena Adu-Boahen	
<b>7</b>	<b>Fort Metal Cross: Commercial Epicentre of the British on the Gold Coast</b>	<b>201</b>
	Fritz Biveridge	
<b>8</b>	<b>European Fortifications in West Africa as Architectural Containers and Oppressive Contraptions</b>	<b>239</b>
	Henry Nii Adziri Wellington and Rexford Assasie Oppong	
<b>9</b>	<b>A Theatre of Memory for the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade: Cape Coast Castle and Its Museum</b>	<b>273</b>
	Neelima Jeychandran	
<b>10</b>	<b>Diplomacy, Identity and Appropriation of the “Door of no Return”. President Barack Obama and Family in Ghana and the Cape Coast Castle, 2009</b>	<b>297</b>
	John Kwadwo Osei-Tutu and Ebenezer Ayesu	
<b>11</b>	<b>Recreating Pre-colonial Forts and Castles: Heritage Policies and Restoration Practices in the Gold Coast/ Ghana, 1945 to 1970s</b>	<b>327</b>
	Jon Olav Hove	
	<b>Index</b>	<b>351</b>

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## About the Editors

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## Contributors

**Dr. Kwabena Adu-Boahen** was a Historian and, until his death in 2014, the Head of the Department of History, University of Cape Coast (2011–2014). He gained his DPhil degree from the University of Melbourne, Australia, in 2005. His main area of research was gender issues and women’s history, with a focus on women’s economic activity, women and the slave trade, child trafficking and female education. Other research interests include state and inter-state relations on the Gold Coast, post-abolition slave holding, Europeans and slave trading, history and identity making in the Atlantic world, and local history. He initiated several projects including cultural heritage research; historical heritage: study on the slave castles in Cape Coast and Elmina; and the

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## LIST OF FIGURES

Fig. 1.1	Forts and Castles of Ghana	3
Fig. 2.1	In popular culture, the encounter between O.F. von der Gröben and the inhabitants of Pokesu was represented in terms of dominion and submission	51
Fig. 4.1	Eleven fortifications on the coast of West Africa. Etched by Johannes Kip after plates in Willem Bosman's <i>Naauwkeurige Beschryving van de Guinese Goud-, Tand- en Slave-kust</i> (Utrecht, 1704). Plate 25 in Jean Barbot, <i>A Description of the Coasts of North and South-Guinea</i> (London, 1732, being vol. 5 of <i>A Collection of Voyages and Travels</i> ). Bibliothèque nationale de France	108
Fig. 4.2	Fort Frederiksburgh, Fort Amsterdam and Fort James at Accra. Engraved and etched by Johannes Kip. Plate 14 in Jean Barbot, <i>A Description of the Coasts of North and South-Guinea</i> (London, 1732, being vol. 5 of <i>A Collection of Voyages and Travels</i> , reprint 1746). Bibliothèque nationale de France	111
Fig. 4.3	<i>The South Prospect of Dixcove Fort</i> . Engraved and etched by John Gray after William Smith. Plate 10 in William Smith, <i>Thirty Different Drafts of Guinea</i> (London, 1729)	117
Fig. 4.4	<i>The North Prospect of the English and Dutch Forts at Accra</i> . Engraved and etched by John Gray after William Smith.	

	Plate 25 in William Smith, <i>Thirty Different Drafts of Guinea</i> (London, 1729)	117
Fig. 4.5	A compilation of prospects and plans of Cape Coast Castle and gardens. Engraved and etched by Nathaniel Parr after plates in William Smith, <i>Thirty Different Drafts of Guinea</i> (London, 1729). Plate 65 from <i>A New General Collection of Voyages and Travels</i> , vol. 2 (London, 1745)	118
Fig. 4.6	Dixcove Fort, “after Smith”. Engraved and etched by Frans de Bakker. Plate 2 in Johann Joachim Schwabe, <i>Allgemeine Historie der Reisen zu Wasser und Lande</i> , vol. 4 (Leipzig, 1749). Universitätsbibliothek Heidelberg	121
Fig. 5.1	“Map of the Coast of Ghana, showing the forts and castles in their present condition.” Original in Albert van Dantzig, <i>Forts and Castles of Ghana</i> (Accra: Sedco, 1999), 89	141
Fig. 7.1	Dixcove and neighbouring villages	203
Fig. 7.2	East Wing and courtyard of Fort Metal Cross, Dixcove	207
Fig. 8.1	Development of Christiansborg Castle in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries by Albert van Dantzig in <i>“Forts and Castles of Ghana”</i> (Accra: SEDCO, 1980), 30	243
Fig. 8.2	View of Christiansborg, showing the promontory, the fortification with its curtain walls, bastions, and Flag-tower, flying the oversize Danish Flag, Dannenbrog. Featured in Jean Barbot’s “Trade Castles and Forts of West Africa” ([1682]; 1963 plate 42 a). For a view of Christiansborg from the sea showing the Watch Tower Provesteen, the Belltower, the Flagtower and the fortification on the promontory; see Churchill’s <i>Voyages</i> (Christiansborg at around 1700) in Thorkild Hansen’s <i>Coast of Slaves</i> (1967), 49; For views of the historic courtyard at Christiansborg Castle, showing Governor Engmann’s eighteenth-century Cistern and the staircase leading to the Governor’s Parlour, see Thierry Secretan’s photographs in <i>Castles and Forts of Ghana</i> by J. Kwesi Anquandah (Atlantes: Ghana Museums and Monuments Board, 1999), 24–30	245
Fig. 8.3	Draft of the lower ground floor plan of Cape Coast Castle. Ghana Museum and Monuments Board (GMMB)	258
Fig. 8.4	Scaled sectional plan of male dungeons at Cape Coast Castle. Original draft by GMMB adapted by Henry Nii Adziri Wellington and Rexford Assasie Opong	259

- Fig. 8.5 Scaled sectional plan of female dungeons at Cape Coast Castle. Original draft by GMMB adapted by Henry Nii Adziri Wellington and Rexford Assasie Oppong 260
- Fig. 8.6 Scaled sectional elevation of male dungeons under Dalzel Tower at Cape Coast Castle. Original draft by GMMB adapted by Henry Nii Adziri Wellington and Rexford Assasie Oppong 261

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1	Muster roll, 20 September 1712	38
Table 7.1	Table showing the types and quantum of finds recovered from unit 1	209
Table 7.2	Table showing types and quantum of finds recovered from unit 2	210
Table 7.3	Table showing types and quantum of finds recovered from unit 3	211
Table 7.4	Table showing types and quantum of finds recovered from unit 4	212
Table 7.5	Table showing types and quantum of finds recovered from unit 5	213
Table 7.6	Table showing types and quantum of finds recovered from unit 6	214
Table 7.7	Table showing types and quantum of finds recovered from unit 7	214
Table 7.8	Table showing types and quantum of finds recovered from unit 8	215
Table 7.9	Table showing types and quantum of finds recovered from unit 9	216
Table 7.10	Table showing types and quantum of finds recovered from unit 10	217
Table 7.11	Table showing decreasing quantum of slag recovered at unit 1	225
Table 7.12	Table showing decreasing quantum of slag recovered at unit 2	225

Table 7.13	Table showing decreasing quantum of slag recovered at unit 5	226
Table 7.14	Table showing decreasing quantum of slag recovered at unit 7	226
Table 7.15	Table showing decreasing quantum of slag recovered at unit 8	227
Table 7.16	Table showing decreasing quantum of slag recovered at unit 10	227
Table 8.1	Anthropometrics of the dungeons	261
Table 11.1	Use of the forts and castles in the pre-independence 1950s, listed west to east	332
Table 11.2	Use of the forts and castles in 1972, listed west to east	342