

[Who are you calling obruni? A case study of African American Immigration to Ghana.]

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A [minor] dissertation submitted in [*partial*] fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Arts in Social Anthropology

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COMPULSORY DECLARATION

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

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Abstract:

This thesis investigated the migration experiences and subjectivity of belonging of Members of the African American Association of Ghana (AAAG) in obtaining permanent status in Ghana. An estimated three thousand African Americans are living in Ghana (Brown, 2013). Fieldwork was conducted primarily in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana with sixteen Research Participants, including members of AAAG and the African American community at large. Life history interviews were conducted utilizing a twenty-one question instrument that guided the data collection. Participant observation and autoethnography was unique to this study as the Researcher himself; an African American, spent two years living in Ghana prior to submitting this thesis. This thesis offers new data and experiences to the ideas surrounding a “return” migration of the descendants of victims of the Transatlantic Slave Trade to Ghana. Attention was given to the experiences of African Americans being referred to by Ghanaians as obruni, which effectively means “white man and/or foreigner” and what impact, if any, it had on my Research Participants. Necessarily, issues of identity, nationhood, race as well as religion/spirituality was explored with this thesis. Pierre Bourdieu’s cultural capital theory was utilized in looking at the interconnections of cultural capital between my Research Participants and what he describes as the embodied state, objectified state and the institutionalized state (Bourdieu, 1986). The results of this thesis are that the experiences of the Research Participants varied regarding the pursuit of permanent status in Ghana. Moreover, the use of the word obruni had various levels of interpretation and use that were expressed.

Acknowledgements

Who am I? I be.

I be, Ephious Davis III

Son of Ephious Davis Jr. and Rosetta Davis

Who be Son of Ephious Davis Sr. and Dorothy Davis and Daughter of James P. Brown and Bertha Brown respectively

Brother to Marquita Davis Ransom

I stand anchored in these roots that feed me, as I be seeking out knowledge and engagement of self-identity, the telling of we and those to be.

I give thanks for the African American Association of Ghana and all of my Research Participants for their support and participation in this thesis. To my Supervisor Marlon Swai, thank you for your support and advice along this journey. To the host of people who provided support and encouragement, I give thanks.

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Introduction

A native of the State of Delaware, I was reared in a single parent household after the transition of my Father during my early childhood. I received my formative education in the public school system of New Castle County. My elementary school (grade 1-5) was located at the other end of my neighborhood (about eight blocks away from my home), yet I was bused to that school. A member of Generation X, I took part in school integration programs that bused students of color to the outskirts of the school district; to schools with dismal diversity enrollment (Wilmington Education Improvement Commission, 2016:i-ii). This occurred during my middle school years (grade 6-8).

Self-identity and exploration of expression was vivid during those grade periods and throughout my matriculation at the largest high school in the State of Delaware (Niche, 2017). The high school was essentially diverse in its student population. In high school, I was a benefactor and agitator for an ongoing movement to incorporate African and African American history into our school curriculum. The minor win at the time was the establishment of an African American Studies Club. This club met after school periodically and had no academic bearing on our school grades, it was strictly extra-curricular. I reference this because it gives context to how and why I constantly negotiated, assessed, defined and sometimes re-defined; my identity and my sense of being. Personally, I knew to a large degree that the K-12 grade education that I received up to then was skewed with the absence and removal of Africa and the contributions of her people throughout time and space. I challenged my institutionalized state and objectified state to re-define my embodied state. This led me to attend the first Historically Black College and University (HBCU), Lincoln University of Pennsylvania (founded in 1854), alma mater of Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah.

At Lincoln, I was exposed to spaces that encouraged me to think and challenge freely what I knew as fact. It was there that I knew that I would have to visit the country of one of our treasured alumni. In September 2007, I made my first trip to the continent of Africa to celebrate Ghana's 50th year of independence. This was my pilgrimage, it was filled with three months of rich experiences that led me to return to Ghana in 2008 to live and work for two years. Prior to entering the field, I brought with me all of my aforementioned experiences which included my physical appearance. I entered the field as a light skin, African American male who was wearing locs as a hairstyle which were similar physical attributes that I adorned when I first came to Ghana in 2007. An assumption that I took to the field and what helped to shape my research proposal was that majority of my fellow African Americans living in Ghana (regardless of skin pigmentation) had similar experiences that I had, being referred to as obruni (white man/foreigner). Wanlov the Kubolor, a Ghanaian artist stated, "the etymology of the word (obruni) stems from the Akan

phrase “abro nipa” meaning “wicked person” which is what our ancestors generally called Europeans based on their general behavior back then” (Kubolor, 2015) The ascending pages provide a varied outlook that the field and my Research Participants expressed during my fieldwork around migration and belonging.

Background of the Study

Migration cuts to the very heart of who we are and to notions of identity, home and belonging. Migration flows around the world are highly selective, as demonstrated by the fact that about half of all movements across international borders take place between developing nations, a phenomenon known as South-South migration. In other words, people do not simply look around the world and arbitrarily decide where they might like to pick up and relocate. Migration is simply too risky for most people to hazard such a move. Most potential immigrants seek to minimize their risks when they move and consider places where they know other individuals or organizations that can help them to make the trip and settle most easily. Social networks provide the kinds of connections needed to make migration possible (Poros, 2010).

The circumstances historically that led up to an African American individual or family to make a decision to leave their abode in the United States of America and move to the Republic of Ghana has been an interest of mine for some time. Contemporarily, under the current climate in the U.S.A., more Americans in general and African Americans specifically, are looking globally for spaces of refuge where they may imagine the space to be more indicative to fostering inclusiveness and mutual respect for all who live in said space. Therefore, there has been an increase in African Americans researching and ultimately traveling outside of the U.S.A. (Kacungira, 2015) (Ross, 2016) (King, 2015) (Johnson, 2017) and the Republic of Ghana has proven to be a destination of interest. Located in West Africa, Ghana was the first African nation to obtain its independence from colonial rule on March 6, 1957 from Great Britain. There is a population of African Americans who have migrated to Ghana. Historically, African Americans came to Ghana to visit or live around this period and in particular, a significant population of African Americans chose to live in Prampram. Prampram is located in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana, and it is further demarcated within the Ningo-Prampram District. African Americans have asserted soul citizenship (Markowitz, et al., 2003), over time in various nations throughout Africa, particularly West Africa, leaving their lives in the United States of America (Garvey, 1968) (Blyden, 1971) (Fehler, 2011) (Lake, 1995) (Schramm, 2004) (Johnson Jr, 2005) (Kanneh, 1998:49-61) (Gaines, 2006) (Meriwether, 2002:150-180). People in Africa have also traveled the world as innovators pre-colonialism (Van Sertima, 1976) and under more constraints of nation-states thereafter (Addo, 1997) (Lake, 1995:30).

Soul Citizenship provides new perspectives on how citizenship is defined by “invoking soul” (Markowitz, et al., 2003:303), it bypasses many nations’ blood-tied or residence requirements for

citizenship. Thus, African Americans invoke Soul Citizenship in Ghana despite not knowing precisely if they are descendants from Ghana or not. “Soul is widely interpreted as a key signifier of blackness in a white world (e.g., Hannerz 1969:11; Smitherman 1977:55-56; Van Deburg 1992:195)” (Markowitz, et al., 2003:203).

There are other studies that have been done with regards to migration, but they do not look at the African American migration to Ghana or Africa specifically. Those studies primarily dealt with “What is an African and the African diaspora”. Kwesi Kwaa Prah, for example states that, “African identity is not a closed phenomenon cast in stone” (Prah, 2009:61). (Meriwether, 2002) (Kanneh, 1998) (Lake, 1995) (Mazrui, 2009) (Markowitz, et al., 2003) and (Fuller Jr., 1964) provided similar definitions for African and the African diaspora while also providing contextual knowledge that helped in articulating the life histories and events that came up in my research. Alternatively, Ann Reed’s 2006 ethnography, “Gateway to Africa: The Pilgrimage Tourism of Diaspora Africans to Ghana”, posits that, “Ghanaians and African Americans have different frames of reference from which they perceive the history and memory of the slave trade that reveal cultural disjuncture in how they relate to the notion of a shared African identity” (Reed, 2006:xii).

Simon Bekker (2001), John and Jean Comaroff (2009) and Steven Friedman’s (2009) stance on identity helped me in my research by bridging the imagination, life experiences and data received with the academic framework of anthropological ethnographic research. Katharina Schramm (2009) was critical in that she provided ethnographies of knowledge and experiences that illustrated the bridging aforementioned with her research on identity and repatriation of African Americans in Ghana. This allowed me to enter the conversation by way of the differences in her research and my project. For example, subjectivity was interwoven between the aforementioned ethnographies and was useful in my research. My choice of sites was different and my lived experiences and use of autoethnography may produce new data, thus was an entry point for my research. This entry point was rooted in the necessity of understanding the history of African Americans living in Ghana and the networks and organizations that evolved around them. For example, the African American Association of Ghana.

History of the African American Association of Ghana (AAAG)

The African American Association of Ghana (AAAG) was founded in the late 1970s as a fellowship for African Americans living in Ghana to gather and share their experiences and tribulations in the scope of mutual support and socialization. At present, the AAAG is, “...a community of African Americans resident in Ghana, having determined the need to establish a permanent means to promote our cultural, social, and economic well-being and integration into Ghanaian society” (African American Association of Ghana, 2017). The current membership is about one hundred and monthly meetings are held at the W.E.B.

Du Bois center in Accra. These meetings typically attract roughly one third of its members.

I attended the January 2017 meeting, which was critical to my research as it was in that space and platform that I was afforded the opportunity to explain and solicit participation from the members of the AAAG. I invited anyone interested in participating to speak with me after the meeting during the designated snack and fellowship time. The Sergeant at Arms's personality and control of order and flow during the meeting was commendable as she was extremely dedicated to protocol. Thus, while I was introducing myself I stated that I was a student doing research. Haneefa, who is in her 60s and donned in her African wear with head wrap; yelled out, "and what agency are you working for?" (AAAG, 2017) The outburst caused everyone including myself to burst out in laughter as it was seen as a joke, yet a very serious question. The Sergeant at Arms dared not interrupt her as Haneefa is an Elder and has lived in Ghana for over two decades. We all knew the duality in her comment, which was reinforced by her stating, "No seriously, which agency are you from because for those who have been living in Ghana for over ten years have a history of 'visitors' who come under the cloak of 'good' only to 'spy' on the organization and its membership" (AAAG, 2017). So, I responded in laughter and reassurance that I represent no agency and that I am truly a student doing research. Gaining Research Participants, as I suspected, would be a bit of work to allow people to get to know me personally and to see my personality and sincerity in learning more about their experiences living in Ghana. After the meeting was closed, Haneefa was the first person to call me over to her seat and we conversed for a bit and she said that she wanted to participate in my research and we exchanged information. Haneefa played an extremely important role in gaining additional Research Participants who she introduced me to in the days following that meeting. In addition, I joined the Programs Committee, Youth Committee and was absorbed into the Spoken Word committee for the AAAG's upcoming Annual Black History Month celebrations.

AAAG Mission Statement

The mission statement of the AAAG is as follows:

We are committed to facilitate the cultural, social, educational and economic integration of African Americans and other people of African descent returning from the Diaspora into Ghanaian society.

Aims and Objectives of AAAG

This aforementioned is executed by the following Aims and Objectives of African American Association of Ghana, which is a NGO (Non-Government Organization, AKA Non-Profit Organization):

1. Create and uphold a positive image of African Americans in Ghana and throughout the Diaspora;
2. Support the integration of African Americans into Ghanaian culture and society;

3. Encourage respect for basic civil and good will for universal human values;
4. Promote and honor the positive values that evolved from the African American experience in the United States;
5. Encourage transparency and goodwill in all dealings within and outside the African American community especially as it concerns the business of the Association and our interactions with another's;
6. Embrace the ideology of Pan Africanism; and
7. Educate Ghanaians about African American history and the African American experience (African American Association of Ghana, 2017).

Members and Officers of the African American Association of Ghana

The membership options for AAAG are intended to provide access and collaboration with those who share the aims and objectives of the Organization. AAAG has six membership definitions with the majority of members falling into the general member's category; which is, "...open to Americans of African descent i.e., by virtue of birth (in the USA, its territories, or possessions) and persons of African American parentage (one or both parents) (African American Association of Ghana, 2017). The remaining five membership types are:

1. Associate Members—All persons of African descent residing in Ghana
2. Affiliate Members—Individuals residing outside of Ghana who fulfill the designations of General and Affiliate membership)
3. Youth Members—Young people, (under the age of 25) whose parents qualify as General members
4. Organization/Patron—Any group or individual, properly vetted by the Executive board, which endorses the aims and objectives of AAAG and financially supports its programs
5. Honorary—Individuals who by two thirds (2/3) vote of the membership of the AAAG are accorded such designation (African American Association of Ghana, 2017).

The Officers governing over the membership constitute the organization's Executive Board and they are: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, Financial Secretary, Treasurer and two Sergeant at Arms (African American Association of Ghana, 2017:2). This information was extrapolated from the newly ratified amended constitution that was part of a re-synergizing of the organization's engagement with each other and the Ghanaian society at large. Thus, AAAG sought to be for all intended purposes to not just be a distant observer of Ghanaian culture, but to be holistically self engaged in Ghanaian community as an organization. When I asked my Research Participants about their history with AAAG

many mentioned how the organization was moving into a good direction that has resulted in many of them re-engaging with the Association as well as an increase in new memberships.

The African American Association of Ghana was chosen as the foci of this research in part to a few factors. Their membership included persons who lived in Ghana continuously beginning during the leadership of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah to present and posed experiences that may not be expressed by recent Returnees. AAAG also served as a conduit to connect with other African Americans who may have been members in the past and/or were not officially members of AAAG, but live in Ghana and occasionally attended the Association's events. A few other Diaspora groups exist in Ghana like the Caribbean Association of Ghana, Ministry of the Future, Central Region African Ascendant Association of Ghana (CRAAAG) and the Diaspora African Forum. This Researcher's decision to focus on the African American Association of Ghana was further supported because many of the aforementioned group's members also held membership with the AAAG.

Research Participants

The target participation for this research project was 15-20 Research Participants and I was able to work with sixteen respondents as well as numerous interactions with other African Americans. Each research participant was given the option to use their real name and/or a pseudonym name to provide a greater level of anonymity. All participants choose anonymity, therefore, the following names are in fact pseudonyms of my Research Participants:

1. Haneefa

A native of Michigan, a divorced Mother of three children, married a Ghanaian and has lived in Ghana for over twenty years. She has one boy and two girls who were all born in Ghana. She started and operated over 20 different businesses over the years and currently has a motorized tricycle transport business. A devout practitioner of Islam, she is a well-known pillar in her predominately Islamic community just on the edge of Accra.

2. Ida

Born in Los Angeles, California and raised in Compton. She stayed focused on her academics, seeing that as a pathway for her way out of the circumstances that surrounded her. Attended college on a full scholarship and came to Ghana with an education abroad program in 1988 (Ida, 2017). During her first visit to Ghana, she met the man who would later become her husband. A mother of two school age children, she fulfilled her late husband's wish to raise their children in Ghana. Her life is centered around her children as the case for most parents with school age children. A devout practitioner of Islam, she is also an Anthropologist.

3. Bilal

Mr. Bilal is a native of historic Flytown, Ohio, a community in Columbus. He grew up during a time in Ohio where there was a strong sense of community. A retired Custodian in the public school system, Mr. Bilal also had a Black History show on the local public access network. He lives in Kokrobite with his Ghanaian wife near the beach.

4. Josephine

A native of Boston and an educational proprietor, she traveled the world and Africa and has called Ghana home for over twenty years. Her children still live in Europe and the USA and her love of the arts are a forging force in her school. A former Black Panther, her perception of the world has evolved much like that of Malcolm X and Martin Luther King in their later years.

5. Mustapha

A world traveler and a devout practitioner of Islam, Mustapha has lived in numerous countries in Africa. His current interests have led him to live in Ghana. He has chosen to settle in Ghana as his home-base as he continues to do business and explore various cultures throughout Africa.

6. Hotep

Hotep lives in Ghana with his Ghanaian wife and younger children. His older daughter lives in the U.S.A. and has visited Ghana previously. He and his wife own and operate a restaurant in Prampram that has a beautiful ancestral wall and space for community events. He is also an author of a children book series. He considers himself an African (Hotep, 2017).

7. Nana Fashion

A very outgoing Man who has a vivid recollection of his family history and upbringing. A self-proclaimed Nana (King/Chief) of his area. It was validated by some locals in Prampram who jokingly endorse this well dress gentleman. After working for the United States of America's government for years, he moved to Ghana after visiting with his church on vacation.

8. Ella

An educator like her mother Maxine, she lives in Ghana due in part to her previous trips to Ghana to visit her mother. She enjoys living in Ghana and sees herself as an African American. Her experiences with Ghanaians are very enlightening. Ghana is the only country in Africa that she visited thus far (Ella, 2017).

9. Maxine

A native of Milwaukee and a holder of an earned PhD from a New York University. She held various administrative posts in the USA and now lives out her retirement in Prampram, Ghana (Maxine, 2017).

10. Iverson

It was his first trip to Ghana and he came to Ghana to settle. A native of Chicago and the son of a famous civil rights activist father and a Black Panther member mother, he found his voice through the sport of basketball. His entrepreneurial spirit is vibrant in Ghana as he seeks to unapologetically settle in Ghana and “fight white supremacy without handouts from the west” (Iverson, 2017). A fairly young man in his early thirties, he was my youngest Research Participant.

11. Amos

A native of the State of California, he is the youngest of eleven children. He recalls his experience in his k-12 educational years as, “time I think one of the funniest parts of my life is that at the age of probably six or seven I'll never forget being in the class that they're only seven students and I often show my children the picture of my class and they had no grade on it but it had initially “eh” which meant educational handicap so I when I look back over the years I kind of laughed at labels how that when I look at many of the students who were in that class they received that label and lived it out. However my life was quite different, I had the realization even then that no one could tell me what I could or could not do irrespective of what they how they wanted to classify me” (Amos, 2017). Initially, he started his higher education at Oklahoma City Community College University of Oklahoma and eventually attended Howard University on scholarship to study in the health profession. Answering the call to ministry at an early age of seventeen, he is a devout practitioner of Christianity and with his Ghanaian wife who he met at Howard University moved to Ghana to spread the gospel of Jesus the Christ.

12. Makeba

She is a native of Memphis, Tennessee and comes from a household where her mother was strongly engaged in doing her best to make opportunities for her children. Eventually she was in the cosmetology field and she became more “woke” when she was exposed to various scholars and also her husband Sankara. A proud grandmother, she lives in the outskirts of Accra with her husband who are trying to do more each day about reaching out to the children of Ghana. She is married to Sankara (Makeba, 2017).

13. Sankara

He is a native of Memphis, Tennessee and has a very good recollection of events that he experienced in his life. An artist, natural hair technician and martial artist he too is a proud grandfather and is married to Makeba (Sankara, 2017).

14. Ailey

An Art Historian and a Fulbright Fellow, who navigates through social and political systems in Ghana to complete his own research. His viewpoints as an African American and his other important identity affirmations lend a unique perspective on this project (Ailey, 2017).

15. Loretta

A native of New York and a practicing attorney who is also a first generation American brought a very different experience to the table as she did not want to initially move to Ghana, when she first married her Ghanaian husband, they both agreed to make their home in the USA but when a job opportunity availed itself to her husband they made the decision to move to Ghana and to finish rearing their boys there. She is not an outspoken pan Africanist, she didn't return to go back to the "motherland" yet after being in Ghana for a few years now, has grown quite fond of the place even looking for pan African lectures etc. to learn more about that viewpoint and directives (Loretta, 2017).

16. Sankofa

Her parents came to Ghana under the invitation of Nkrumah birth her in Ghana and had to flee the country after the U.S. government funded and assisted Dr. Kofi Busia to execute a "successful" coup d'état (Reed, 2006) (Foreign relations of the United States, 1965) (BBC News, 2016). As a woman over 50 years and a proud grandmother, she decided that she was going to move to Ghana. She came to settle in Ghana in December of 2016. It was interesting to observe her acclimation to Ghanaian life and traditions (Sankofa, 2017).

The Objective of the Study

The objective of this research was to look at the Research Participants' (African Americans) motives for their migration. The journey that brought them to Ghana to seek permanent resident status and the factors that impacted their participation in Ghanaian society. This research supplements existing research on African American "roots tourism" and repatriation efforts (Schramm, 2004) (Schramm, 2009) (Swan, 2012) (Reed, 2006) (McLaren, 2009). The study further examines the experiences of migration and subjectivity of my Research Participants as well as contemporary legislative initiatives for pathways for the African diaspora to settle in Ghana by the African Union and the Government of Ghana. Further consideration was given to autochthony in the context of globalization and its application for belonging and excluding (Appadurai, 1996) (Geschiere & Nyamnjoh, 2000:425). Historically, African Americans are aware that their existence in the United States of America was largely due to the Trans-Atlantic slave trade.

They believe that they had families who lived in the various kingdoms or tribal groupings in Africa. They also believe that the descendants of their original families are alive.

To achieve the goal of this research we have to look at theories of migration which can shed light on African American migration from an advanced industrial country to a developing economy. Migration theories came into a limelight in 2004 when the European Union members were struggling to come up with a policy that would facilitate the inclusion of the eight Central and Eastern European countries into their fold. Before the E.U. expansion policy, great debates took place in the Western European Union, mostly driven by fears of welfare migration from East to West, which were not substantiated in most research which attempted to predict East-West migration dynamics. It became clear that the assumptions that most of the studies were using to quantify extend of migration were faulty. This led to imprecise conclusions. Most of these works were based in the neoclassical theory of migration which proposes wage differentials as the most important determinant of migration (Kurekova, 2011:2). This paper argues that the neoclassical theory of migration missed the point. It did not take into consideration migration from high income countries to developing countries. In other words, from advanced industrial countries to developing economies. While wage and income differentials arguably play a role in affecting migrant decisions, this paper will show that the neoclassical theory of migration struggles to account for significantly different motives for certain out-migrations.

Research Questions and Method of Analysis

Based on the objective of the study and the literature review, the research questions were designed to elicit the motives of the African American migration to Ghana. The method of analysis of data was mostly qualitative. The following are the questions for the study:

1. Can you tell me a little about yourself?
2. What are some of your childhood memories?
3. What is your understanding of your ethnicity and how has it changed if any over time?
4. How did you come to be in Ghana?
5. How long have you been in Ghana?
6. What is your involvement and history with AAAG?
7. Do you aspire to have Ghanaian citizenship?
8. Describe the steps that you have taken to achieve this end.
9. What are some of the challenges you have faced to achieve citizenship?
10. What would citizenship mean to you?
11. What influences the way that you dress?
12. Describe a time when you felt alienated in Ghana.
13. Describe a time when you felt accepted in Ghana.
14. Describe a typical day activities for you in Ghana.
15. Do you travel to U.S.A. if so how often?
16. Describe how you feel when you return to U.S.A. (i.e. visit, home, return)?
17. Prior to coming to Ghana, have you ever visited any other countries in Africa?

18. Describe how you felt when the 34 African Americans obtained Ghanaian citizenship.
19. Why Africa?
20. Why Ghana?
21. What do you consider yourself?
22. What is your experience around being called or being referred to as obruni and has it changed?

Research Method and Analysis

The research method was mostly primary based. I worked directly with sixteen Research Participants with additional interactions with over thirty African American and other African diaspora in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. Those aforementioned individuals that I engaged with indirectly during my fieldwork are referenced primarily in my autoethnography component and frame how my interactions influenced the way I identified and saw myself in that space as an Ethnographer, Research Participant and Activist. My interactions were genuine and my intentions were to be involved and present to the best of my ability. My youngest research participant ended up being thirty-two years old and my oldest ranged beyond my original sixty year projected cap on age. This modification was due to a large population of African Americans in Ghana being of retirement or pension age. The research was conducted at multiple sites in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. The original field site was in the town of Prampram where a number of African Americans reside. However, upon entering the field it became apparent that more African Americans are living in the vicinity of Prampram, in Accra itself and its outer most boundaries of the Greater Accra Region. Therefore, in order to engage with Members of the African American Association of Ghana my sites included:

1. Prampram—a city located about 45 minutes' drive outside of Accra.
2. Accra—the capital city of The Republic of Ghana.
3. Kasoa—a community on the cusp of Accra.
4. W.E.B. Du Bois Centre for Pan African Culture—located in Accra, and
5. Cape Coast Castle (Dungeons)—located in the coastal town of Cape Coast in the Central Region of Ghana.

Methods

The duration of the research was eight weeks and was a combination of homestays and residing in close proximity to the residences of my Research Participants.

Life History Interviews

Life history interviews commenced the first week in the field shortly after attending the January General Meeting of the African Americans Association of Ghana at the W.E.B. Du Bois center on January 15, 2017. As proposed, I presented a brief summary of my research and I was able to procure the assistance of key informants (Haneefa, Auntie Grace) who helped ease me into the field by introducing me to persons they felt were interesting to speak to regarding my research. Thus, I utilized snowball sampling in my interviews. I observed my Research Participants in their interactions with employees (Haneefa, Auntie Grace, AAAG President, Treasurer, Hotep, Maxine, Josephine, Sergeant at Arms). If applicable, at the grocery stores (Auntie Grace, Ailey, Haneefa, Sankofa, Hotep) and local markets, in restaurants (Makeba and Sankara, Auntie Grace, Loretta, Sankofa, Iverson, Ailey, Auntie Soul). In addition, we also attended night clubs (Iverson) and casino (Auntie Fihyankra and Auntie Grace). Subsequent interviews were conducted as needed primarily with Haneefa. The majority of the other data was collected in an extended life history interview and supplemented with subsequent interactions with the exception of Bilal, Makeba and Sankara and Mustapha were executed.

Participant Observation

Participant observation was used to be able to draw from what was observed as well as my experience of participating with my Research Participants. I intended to stay with an African American family in Prampram so that I may be able to engage this methodology in participating in the everyday activities of their household. It was my hope that my residence in Prampram would help me establish enough trust and rapport in Prampram with Research Participants and the community at large in order to aid me in identifying key informants. I observed, immersed and participated in the daily activities of my Research Participants with the intention to collect data (Emerson, et al., 2001) (McDougal III, 2014:262). This included but was not limited to attending to house chores, excursions to markets, immigration meetings, banks, other meetings, places of worship, weddings, funerals, baby naming ceremonies, enstoolments, monthly AAAG meetings in Accra, recreation (night life, beach events, house parties, sporting events, exercise activities) and workplaces as applicable. This helped me to observe experiences where my Research Participants may have been referred to as obruni and assisted me in obtaining data regarding their individual subjectivity as well as their participation in Ghana society. “Participant observation aims to gather the best possible evidence, knowing that rarely is any set of evidence ‘perfect’ or even exhaustive of the meanings people apply to the circumstance of their daily lives” (Jorgensen, 2011:3). Another site was in Accra at the W.E.B. Du Bois Center where the African American Association of Ghana held their monthly meetings. The center also houses AAAG’s office. Observation without participation was also conducted (Haneefa’s meetings with Stella’s parents, Auntie Grace and Enstoolment of Chief Imam).

Autoethnography

I acknowledge that I played both researcher and research participant. It was my intention that this would present additional data that was not already present by previous ethnographies (Schramm, 2009) (Schramm, 2004) (Wallace, 2014) (Swan, 2012) (Reed, 2006) (Lake, 1995) (Fehler, 2011), and was a point of entry for me to add to the body of knowledge production. Autoethnography allowed me to capture my own experiences as I navigated around Prampram and the Greater Accra Region throughout the eight weeks. Similar to accounts of Yaa Gyasi's "Homegoing" and Saidiya Hartman's novel "Lose Your Mother", my autoethnography recorded my accounts, feelings, interactions which provided additional data for my research.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were very critical to me for all who were involved with this project. It was my responsibility to anticipate potential harm, striving to secure the dignity of my Research Participants (respondents) offering them adequate protective measures such as the use of pseudonyms for places and persons as well as to offer anonymity (Anthropology Southern Africa, 2005:142). Therefore, my aim was to do no intentional harm to my Research Participants, individuals or institutions/organizations with whom I engage during this project. I also aim not to cause any harm to myself. I acted to protect my Research Participants and I did not intentionally exploit them. If conflicts of interests arose, the rights of my Research Participants were and remain paramount. Research surrounding legal status in Ghana by my Research Participants may present situations where they may not have legal status in Ghana. Ensured anonymity and used pseudonyms helped to protect my Research Participants in this instance should it present itself.

Informed consent was important and was obtained from each research participant on an on-going basis. Research Participants for this project focused on persons over the legal adult age of eighteen, target age group 25-60. As noted previously, several participants were over 60. Compliance with the University of Cape Town Faculty of Humanities "Guide to research ethics: Research with human participants" was ongoing. The law of Ghana was imperative and any additional ethical considerations outside of the Anthropology Southern Africa and University of Cape Town Faculty of Humanities only assisted me with doing no harm. Reference to the University of Ghana's ethical considerations and forms were referenced on-going.

Subjectivity of Belonging—Enter Ghana

Many of my Research Participants viewed living in Ghana at various legal statuses as a means of validation of their African cultural heritage. They asserted themselves as Africans, African Americans, Ghanaians, Black with cultural ties to the “Motherland”^{al2}. Josephine shared, “...a lot of these things have just life experiences, you know just the absurdity of an imposition or make lite of at the hatefulness of what race has done to this world, especially to African Americans. Their lives have just been shattered into nothing for greed, you know. And I think to coming here [Ghana] and having opportunity you know I have no identity illusions, I’m African American that’s my tribe. I’m not Ga, I’m not Twi, or by post-partum migration doesn’t matter how it happened it happened, okay. I don’t come back and expect everyone to come give me a [high] five, you know. I’m just as strange to them as somebody in Timbuktu is to somebody in Nairobi, okay (Josephine, 2017).” Nana Fashion expressed his identity as follows, “I’m an African born in America [Chuckles] that’s it (Fashion, 2017). Amos, who identifies as African American also makes this clear distinction, “I think that’s something to think about tremendously esteem the fact that I am an American. I have no misgivings about who I am or where I come from and what I believe are the tremendous benefits...” (Amos, 2017). Consciousness of African cultures and traditions for those who were disbursed from the West African shores to the Americas varied as I have yet to come across a source that states that slave merchants made no attempts to suppress or annihilate the African language, spirituality and cultures of their captive human cargo. The African Americans who were my Research Participants came to Ghana for numerous reasons and under various circumstances. Some of them came to live in Ghana after their initial short term visit either for roots tourism, study abroad or volunteer experience.

Entering new spaces may present a range of emotions and anxieties. Try to recall a time when you had to enter a new space. Maybe it was a new school, a new neighborhood, a new hair stylist, a new place of employment or in the case of my Research Participants, a new country. In the case of Nana Fashion, when asked to describe a time when he felt alienated in Ghana, He said that in those spaces he would break the mood by walking up to people and strike up a conversation, besides, “when I walk up in there, I own the room, when I walk on it I feel that sucker [chuckles] (Fashion, 2017).” Ida recalled a time when she felt alienated in Ghana:

“I have felt alienated from my in-laws but I think that's a different dynamic...because it's layered.

but I felt layered but I felt isolated sometimes with language—I feel like they were hiding things from me and as I started to understand the language more, I realized that they were hiding things from me they were doing sneaky things behind my back—taking advantage of me. But, I think that Ghanaians do that shit to each other it's not just not that they're doing it they're not doing it to me because I'm foreign I think that Ghanaians take advantage of any situation where they feel like they can have an upper hand [She clarified, not all Ghanaians] (Ida, 2017).”

Subjectivity of belonging in Ida’s situation was at play because of her role as wife to her in-law’s son and over time, she used her Soul Citizenship to be present in learning more of the language that was once serving as a point of division to present where she now has a stronger battery of the language. Nana Fashion, in similar fashion navigated potentially hostile situations by being himself and opening a space for dialogue.

It is rare to hear of an African American living in Ghana who has not returned to the U.S.A. for one reason or another within a ten-year period³⁴⁵. For some of my Research Participants, returning to the U.S.A. presents some level of trauma and discomfort.

Amos, recalled, “I’ll never forget how overwhelmed I felt upon returning to the United States. When I walked into a Walmart that has a hundred yards or 50 yards I don’t know how long of every kind one aisle designated to every kind of ice cream you could ever imagine. I just had to calm myself. I could handle this. This is home, but it was overwhelming and to look at it from the perspective of how can we not appreciate what we have in America when in other places the only option is A or B. I took a deep breath and I got what I was used to eating some, Haagen-Dazs and got on out of their—but it was a little a moment of crisis, you know and just had that sense of wow, I really used to Africa (Amos, 2017).”

Ida stated, “When I go home I think people see me as a Foreigner[tone changes to more melancholy] people see me as a foreigner for two reasons first I see me as an African maybe by the

³ “I do now when I moved in 2004 I went back in 2005 so I can get my paperwork squared away when I got back here in 2005 and never went back to the States until 2013 and only reason why I did then was because I was sick” (Fashion, 2017).

⁴ “I’ve been every three to four years we’ve had emergency situations where one of us had to go but on a normal tread it is every 3 to 4 years” (Amos, 2017).

⁵ “I don’t go home that often because it’s expensive I’m a single mom I went back in August my last trip was August 2015 so that’s the year and a half.” “Yes,.....we all go it’s the family” (Ida, 2017).

intonation of my English I have Ghanaian “isms” in the way that I talk and maybe my disposition is a bit different and then I think people always also see me as far and in America because I'm a Muslim so I think that adds another layer to it and also to my identity” “before I go back you know of course I'm a little bit nostalgic you know and then you know initially everybody is eager to see you but then after about a week or two reality starts to set in and then I start to feel a little bit anxious and I'm ready to come back to Ghana of course everything runs more efficiently there but I think I've gotten used to the inefficiency in Ghana and I've got used to some of the beauty that comes with the inefficiency there are add some advantages to the end efficiencies yes so I think I would just it probably too much. (Ida, 2017)

I also experienced similar sentiments as well. I had a sense of anxiety in balancing having family, friends, and responsibilities in the U.S.A. as well as friends and families who have incorporated me into their households as well as responsibilities in Ghana. Communication alone was a challenge with technology, difference in time zone and the hectic schedules that many people had in the U.S.A. played a factor in communication.

Pathways to Permanent Legal Status in Ghana

Typically, an African American who wishes to settle in Ghana enter her borders on a visitor visa. Once in Ghana, they inquire and initiates the process to obtain a more permanent visa. Those African Americans who have resident permits spoke of having to renew their permits either once every year or bi-annually. The costs associated with the resident permits continue to go up as Nana Fashion mentioned that his fees have gone from “three hundred per year to four, five, six hundred [U.S.A dollars]⁶ per year. It just doesn't make sense and it hurts” (Fashion, 2017). Amos like Nana Fashion and others were told that their initial permits would have to be renewed yearly before longer durations were issued. In some cases, that occurs, but Amos stated he was told that after five years of annual renewals, it would go to two year renewals. After being in Ghana for about twelve years, he still goes yearly to get his permit renewed (Amos, 2017). The published Ghana Immigration Service residence permit is broken down into three categories: Ghanaians with foreign passport, ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States), and other Nationals (Ghana Immigration Service, 2016). The fees for other Nationals for various residence permits ranged from GHS200.00-\$500.00 (Ghana Immigration Service, 2016).

Those who are married or was married to a Ghanaian citizen often obtained indefinite residence stay visas. These visas essentially provide the recipient with the right to live and work in Ghana without having to seek any type of renewals (Ghana Immigration Service, 2016). It does not allow for the right to

⁶ 1USD=4.39955GHS as reported on xe.com (XE.com, 2017)

vote or run for political office. Many of my Research Participants who have indefinite stays express that they are not too keen on obtaining Ghanaian citizenship as their status in Ghana is sufficient and was fairly easy to obtain. Ida explained her process in getting an indefinite stay visa status in Ghana, “...it was very easy for me. It was straightforward, no corruption, no connection, I walked in the office and said this is what I want and they told me the steps and I came back with my form completed and it was my supporting documentation to Middle it and they called me about six months later, they had it ready before then but it said that they were trying to call me but they could not reach me-- it was very straightforward, I didn’t have any problems.” (Ida, 2017).

When it came to the desire of my Research Participants regarding permanent status in Ghana, the responses varied based on the questions I asked. One question I asked them was “did they aspire to have Ghanaian citizenship?” Many of my respondents mentioned that they acknowledged the benefits and responsibilities of having an American citizenship as descendants of melanated⁷ people who helped to build the U.S.A. Therefore, many of them would not entertain relinquishing their American citizenship. Moreover, they primarily felt that the financial and time consuming factor in renewing non-permanent permits were major reasons why they would consider dual citizenship with Ghana.⁸

Thirty-Four African Diaspora Living in Ghana Gain Ghanaian Citizenship

At the time that I presented my research proposal and received approval to go to the field, a major component of my research was to look at the struggles and at that time; minor success stories of African Americans who received permanent status including citizenship in Ghana. Ghana has had many programs proposed and started that sought to address the complexities that exist in creating efficient pathways for African descendants dispersed around the world as a result of the Transatlantic Slave Trade to settle in Ghana. For example, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah’s direct invitation around the period of Ghana’s independence, the Joseph Project and The right of abode were all initiatives that for whatever reason did not provide a sustaining procedure for the aforementioned to settle in Ghana. In December, 2016, President John Dramani Mahama, the outgoing President of Ghana awarded thirty-four members of the African-Caribbean diaspora Ghanaian citizenship (Andoh, 2016) (Onen, 2017) (Ababio, 2017) (Kambon, 2017). This was

⁷ Melanated people refers to people with enough melanin to produce hues of brown to dark black skin pigmentation—an attribute of people of color.

⁸ AMOS—“that's not a aspiration, if in fact it becomes possible I would never, and I would advise all of my loved ones to never ever ever relinquish American citizenship. If it’s available for us to have both doing be a bad thing so as president I don't have it if the opportunity comes I would.”

received as a major event in the African diaspora and many African Americans on the ground who were knowledgeable about the years of lobbying; individually, and in groups leading up to this event shared their thoughts (Ababio, 2017) (Kambon, 2017). President Mahama’s address at the event included references to the many slave dungeons in Ghana and the Door of No Return which was the last door prior to the enslaved Africans boarding the slave merchant ship to the Americas. He stated, “...today, we are here to turn that door of no return in to a door of return.” (Kambon, 2017)”.

President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo took office in 2017 and he implemented an initiative to move The Diaspora Relations Office to report directly to the Office of the President. He also worked to put together that Ghana Homecoming Summit 2017 that was held July 5-8, 2017 in Accra, Ghana under the theme, *Development, Opportunity, Value; Welcome Home*. The summit was attended by Ghanaians from all over the world as well as a significant representation of African Americans in attendance. In fact, the summit provided an opportunity on day three for the African American Association of Ghana to be panelist; presenting on the topic: *The African American Experience in Ghana—Challenges and Victories*. Thus, an additional example of the growing engagement with the Ghanaian community.

What is the African Union Plan for Creating Pathways for African Diaspora?

“What is a dream deferred? Does it dry up; like a raisin in the sun? Or fester like a sore—and then run” (Hughes, 1990)? The deferred dreams and objectives of numerous African leaders like Kwame Nkrumah (Nkrumah, 1963), Muammar Gaddafi (al-Gaddafi, 1999) (Global Research News, 2017), Thomas Sankara (Sankara, 2007) (Sankara, 2007) and others seemed to be brewing in gustation awaiting a rebirth. One could argue that there is a rebirth of a united Africa, Pan-Africa as seen in the development strategies of the African Union and its plans for the next 20 plus years (Yorke, 2012). The African Union, amended their constitution in 2006, the foci of this section was drawn from article 3(q) (Objectives) of the *Protocol on Amendments to the Constitutive Act of the African Union* which states: “invite and encourage the full participation of the African diaspora as an important part of our continent, in building the African Union (AU)” (Yorke, 2012:79). This broad and inclusive language in this amendment essentially establishes the rites and statehood of the African diaspora in what is now the 6th Region of the African Union. This expansion evolved from the 1976 Organization of African Union (OAU) demarcating Africa into five zones: West Africa, Central Africa, East Africa, Southern Africa and North Africa (Edozie, 2012:269). The African Union defines the African diaspora as “peoples of African descent [and heritage]⁹ living outside

⁹ Ankomah et al, adds “and heritage” to the definition, but source documents do not have this verbiage included.

the continent, irrespective of their citizenship and who remain committed to contribute to the development of the continent and the building of the African Union. (Paul Ankomah, 2012:387) (African Union, 2011:3)” Rita Kiki Edozie, affirmed that, “The African Union (AU) is re-appropriating the idea of Pan Africanism among African and African descendent peoples around the world, and using it creatively to mobilize a reconstruction of a global ‘African World View’” (Edozie, 2012:268). Ghana is in the Western African Region of the African Union and with the support and endorsement of President Nana Akufo Addo and with a sweeping majority of the voting body of the African Union, elected Ambassador Kwesi Quartey as the Deputy Chairperson of the African Union. I was fortunate to meet and hear Ambassador Quartey deliver a public lecture at the University of Legon, where he demonstrated his prowess for research in the African experience with the Transatlantic Slave Trade and some ways forward. Ambassador Quartey has a long political history that spans thirty-five years (The Presidency: Republic of Ghana, 2017). He has a keen understanding of international relations and the social, political, economic and spiritual interconnected responsibility that dwells between the continent of Africa and the African diaspora. My observation from the field was that regardless of the reason that brought African Americans to Ghana, political influences are at play either cognitively or indirectly.

Literature Review

International Migration Review

International migration affects millions of people across the globe every day, as migrants and as non-migrants. It can arise as a result of rupture in people’s lives, it can cause upheavals within communities, and it can reunite families. It can provide much needed resources for sending and receiving countries, or it can put great strain on destinations or shatter the economies and daily lives where migrants leave. It can lead to emotional individual, media and policy responses. It can be with the rhetoric of floods, tides, and influxes, or it can be warmly welcomed.

The research field of migration is multifaceted and offers multiple levels of analysis. Four different questions have been investigated in the field: the origins of migration; the directionality and continuity of migrant flows; the utilization of immigrant labor; and the socio-cultural adaptation of migrants (Portes, 1999). Each of these areas can be analyzed at different levels and with different tools and requires individual attention. ‘Mid-range’ theories targeted on one or two of these areas have been more prevalent than an all- encompassing statement. However, devising a theory which can explain all these four aspects of migration remains the ultimate goal of migration theorizing (Arango, 2000) (Massey, 1999). Most

disciplinary assessments evaluate migration research as lacking theoretical advancement: while the empirical work is abundant, it is often either disconnected from the theories or used to confirm rather than to test, question or refine the existing theoretical propositions. In the area of migration determinants research, there are currently a variety of theoretical models or perspectives which employ varying concepts, assumptions, frames and levels of analysis (Arango, 2000). Because the majority of these theoretical models were developed from specific empirical observations, they often grew in isolation and are separated by disciplinary boundaries (Arango, 2000) (Castles, 2008). Modern migration literature (Massey, et al., 1993) (Todaro & Smith, 2006) (Faist, 2000) (Portes, 1999) contends that although these theoretical approaches offer different hypotheses, they need not be taken as mutually exclusive, but rather as complementary.

At present, the dominant theory in explaining causes of migration is the neoclassical theory with its underlying assumption that migration is stimulated primarily by rational economic considerations of relative benefits and costs, mostly financial but also psychological (Todaro & Smith, 2006:342). The theory has been subjected to criticism on conceptual (Arango, 2000) as well as on empirical grounds (Massey, et al., 1998). However, owing to its analytical rigor and its ability to propose a set of testable hypotheses and useful tools for analyzing not only the causes but also the effects of migration, it occupies a prominent position in current academic and policy-related research. The propositions of the neoclassical theory of migration were also used (almost exclusively) in the research which preceded the 2004 Eastern enlargement of the E.U.

The newer theories of migration which reacted to the neoclassical theory arose as a response to the changing nature of the world. Since the 1960s a new form of post-industrial migration has emerged as a global phenomenon. While previously dominated by emigrants from Europe to former colonies, both the number and variety of sending and receiving countries increased and the global supply of emigration shifted from Europe to the developing world. Theories of migration, therefore, have to account for very complex migration regimes which encompass migration flows from industrializing to mature economies, reduced costs of transportation, cheaper and more rapid communication, increasing governmental intervention and a greater circularity of movements in an era of trade interdependence and globalization (Arango, 2000) (Massey, 1999). Below I review the main propositions of the existing theories of migration determinants with the goal of identifying their basic tenets, problematic aspects and the way that they relate to each other (Kurekova, 2011).

Neoclassical theory of Migration

According to the neoclassical theory migration is driven by differences in returns to labor across markets. The pioneers of the neoclassical theory were Hicks (1932), Lewis (1954) and Harris and Todaro (1970). They asserted that migration results from actual wage differentials across markets. Further, migration is driven by geographic differences in labor supply and demand and the resulting differentials in wages between labor-rich versus capital-rich countries. Similarly, the ability to migrate is associated with costs and therefore it is not the poorest individuals who migrate, nor the poorest countries which send the most labor (Faist, 2000) (Dustmann, et al., 2003) (de Haas, 2008) (Massey, et al., 1998). Sjaadstad in 1962, brought a different slant to the neoclassical theory with human capital theory (Sjaadstad, 1962). He emphasized that the socio-demographic characteristics of the individual is an important determinant of migration at the micro-level. For him, a rational individual migrates with the goal of maximizing his or her benefits and gains. Human capital endowments, skills, age, marital status, gender, occupation, and labor market status as well as preferences and expectations strongly affect who migrates and who does not (Sjaadstad, 1962). It has been shown that the likelihood of migration decreases with age and normally increases with education level (Bauer & Zimmermann, 1999). According to the human capital theory, therefore, migrants tend to be relatively (more) skilled because this, *ceteris paribus*, increases the chances of their success. A study done by Borjas in 1987 on the immigrants in the US labor market which analyzed the relationship between the income distribution and the skills of migrants found that immigrants from countries with a higher income inequality tend to be less skilled than the average worker in both host and source countries (Borjas, 1987).

Some of the major criticisms of the neoclassical theory of migration are as follows. It has been subject to a conceptual critique and rich empirical testing. First, it reduces migration determinants, ignoring market imperfections, homogenizing migrants and migrant societies and being ahistorical and static. Second, it generally ignores the effects of home and host states and leaves out the importance of politics and policies, which are only considered as distortion factors or additional migration costs. Finally, human capital theory presents overly optimistic view of migration which is not always a voluntary process to maximize gains (Kurekova, 2011).

Other Migration Theories

Aforementioned theoretical models pay little attention to inputs of the State in manipulating migration flows (King, 2012:19). The Ghana government has often looked at the African American (African diaspora) community through an economic lens in regulatory legislation and programs for Returnees. As Russell King has indicated, scholarship on migration have tended to emphasize economic imperatives at the expense of apprehending a host of other push and pull factors in determining migration

patterns (King, 2012:19). Jennifer Hasty, “argues that it [the Ghanaian state] attempts to further its hegemonic rule by exploiting African American needs for spiritual and cultural identification with Africa, particularly the group’s ‘trans-Africanist’ logic (2002)” (Pierre, 2013:161). Social capital or social transformation (Castles & Miller, 2009:54) (Castles, 2010) is key in highlighting the way in which Research Participants’ deploy the notion of soul citizenship. Additionally, Castles and Miller acknowledge, “...the way that international migration challenges the hegemony of the state and fundamentally retextures national societies: the growth of ‘transnational societies’ as well as the activities of more historically embedded diasporas has blurred formally distinctive spheres of state authority and decision-making (Castles & Miller, 2009:12)” (King, 2012:20). “Nicholas Van Hear (2010:1535) has written that the appetite for searching for an overreaching theory of migration has waned along with the increasing diversity of migration flows in the new global political economy of the New World Order. He speaks of ‘mixed migration’: the mixed nature of migration flows, and the mixed motivations in many individuals’ embodiment of migration, such as the migrating student/worker, the tourist/migrant, the wandering migrant/trader, and so on (Hear, 2010:1535) (King, 2012).

The new economics of migration theory challenges the neoclassical theory’s migration determinants and it shifted the focus of migration from individual independence to mutual interdependence (Stark, 1991). It argues that migration decisions are not made by isolated individual actors but typically by families or households and that the decisions of migrants are influenced by a comprehensive set of factors which are shaped by conditions in the home country. Further, migrant decisions are not based purely on individual satisfaction but are rather a household response to both income risk and to the failures of a variety of markets (Massey, et al., 1993).

World systems theory developed by Wallenstein in 1974, links the determinants of migration to structural change in world markets and views migration as a function of globalization, the increased interdependence of economies and the emergence of new forms of production (Massey, et al., 1993) (Sassen, 1988) (Skeldon, 1997) (Silver, 2003). Further the increase in export of manufactured goods and export agriculture are linked strongly to foreign direct investment flows from advanced economies to semi-developed or emerging economies. This has led to a disruption in traditional work structures and has mobilized new population segments into regional as well as long- distance migration. In other words, capital mobility has become a crucial factor for the world economic system.

The network theory of migration ignores the factors that initiate migration but looks at what perpetuates migration in time and space (Massey, et al., 1993). According to Vertovec (2002), the network

theory also helps to explain the reasons why migrant networks which often evolve into institutional frameworks help to explain why migration continues even when wage differentials or recruitment policies cease to exist. For example, the existence of a diaspora or networks is likely to influence the decisions of migrants when they choose their destinations (Vertovec, 2002). The network theory also helps to explain the reasons why migration patterns are not evenly distributed across countries, but rather how they tend to form so-called migration regimes (Faist, 2000). “The dominant view of social networks in the migration literature is that they have the positive functions alluded above: by providing information and contacts, they direct migrants to particular destinations where help regarding accommodations, finding a job, financial assistance and other kinds of support are available. Hence migrant networks tend to have a multiplier effect and to perpetuate migration (Arango, 2004)” (King, 2012:22). Russell King goes on to express that social networks can help to “predict future migration” but can be exclusionary and must eventually diminish in strength (King, 2012:21-22). Pierre Jemima engaged social “Afro-diasporic” networks of Ghanaian and diaspora Blacks in the trope of multiple national and cultural identity with the networks as, “ a complex set of overlapping histories that are set within transnational understandings of race and blackness” (Pierre, 2013:157;170-3).

Another theory which is closely aligned to Network theory is closely affiliated called the migration systems theory, pioneered by Magobunje in (1970), assumes that migration alters the social, cultural, economic, and institutional conditions at both the sending and receiving ends and that it forms an entire developmental space within which migration processes operate (de Haas, 2009). With increase in globalization, the migration systems theory concepts have been further developed into the theory of transnational migration which conceptualizes the existence of transnational social spaces. It emphasizes multiple forms of migrant embedding who stay connected and actively participate in both home and host country political, economic, social and cultural environments (Bretell & Hollifield, 2008) (Portes, 2001) (Faist, 2000). Rather than explaining the causes of migration, transnational migration describes a new reality in how migrants are integrating into host societies by proposing an emergence of dense networks across political borders in search of economic and social advancement. It should be emphasized that the concepts of transnational migration have important implications for understanding forms of adaptation among ‘transnational’ migrants as well as the effects of migration on sending and receiving countries. The network theories operate across different levels of analysis.

Scholarly writings around migration of African Americans (African diaspora) as roots/heritage tourism (Bruner, 1996) (Ebron, 1999) (Hasty, 2002) (Reed, 2006) (Swan, 2012) focused extensively on

the visit to Ghana as a pilgrimage. Pierre believes that scholars' "...narrow focus obscures not only the range and history of African-diasporic interactions, but it also reduces them to a very local, and often parochial, discussion of 'Ghanaians versus African Americans,' removed from the broader terrain of national and transnational structure and politics and particular relations of power" (Pierre, 2013:156) Parallel with Pierre, consider the renewed demand from African nations like Nigeria, Benin and Ethiopian that their stolen cultural artifacts be return from their European looters over one hundred years later (Panko, 2017) (Dessalegn, 2018) (Mtshali, 2017) (Lusher, 2018) (Bryant, 2018). These artifacts hold great value and significance to these African nations as well as to the nations who have continued to display them well into the "post-colonial" era. A return of such artifacts may prove unmeasurable benefits to Africa. While people are not artifacts, slavery attempted to reduce humans to the status of things. The problematic of return migration however begs the question of what untold benefits (and complexities) are imbricated in the process of African Americans repatriating to countries like Ghana after hundreds of years being forcibly removed from its shores? I engage with Dustmann and Weiss (2007) who define "return migration" as "a situation where migrants return to their country of origin by their own choice, often after a significant period abroad" (2007:23) (Idowu-Faith, 2014). Additionally, this paper draws on thinkers such as Titilayo Ufomata and Samuel Zalanga (2012) who add to this definition by offering a thorough exploration of the processes of identity formation and adaptation that occur in transnational spheres. Citing that, "No one is born with knowledge of an identity—personal or cultural" (Ufomata et. al, 2012:237) Ufomata and Zalanga enrich my perspective on processes of repatriation by demonstrating that people over time develop a series of identities that cannot be casually changed without the contradictory texture that comes with transnational exposure (Ufomata, 2012:237) (Zalanga, 2012:70). My paper aims to make a small contribution to these debates by excavating some of that contradictory texture in the life worlds of my research participants through an ethnographic study.

Race Politics

Who is an African? G. L. Yorke states, "...for some South Africans including intellectuals and politicians, an African is one who was born on the continent irrespective of the geographical origin of her or his ancestors, her or his ethnic profile or the colour of their skin." (Yorke, 2012:77-78) Yorke goes on to say that, "African identity is not primarily about biology and birthplace but, more fundamentally, about issues of colour, culture and a common existential condition" (Yorke, 2012:88). I am not in total agreement with the language used by Yorke's observation in that it's more complex than mentioned. Unpacking what is indigenous people is key when looking at nationhood, statehood, identity and who is an African. My time at the University of Cape Town (UCT) has been filled with me confronting ideologies that I held and

formed over the years through my education and life experiences in the United States of America. My understanding of race as a social construct was held through the lens of my aforementioned experiences. Race is scrutinized in many fields of study as a social construct and Anthropology is no different in this affirmation. Reference to people who self-identify and subsequently *qualify* as white under the white supremacy system is widely used in The United States and in Europe and makes little, if any, delimitation on who is white and who is not white. Absence here is key, absence of any negro, black, African blood is what is deemed *pure* white (Hickman, 1997). Therefore, under this application of white supremacy there are only two races, white and non-white. Non-whites or as this writer prefers to refer to as people of color as white is not a standard of measure in my theoretical framework. People of color are in the majority, yet they continue to experience hardship. This application of race; and who is categorized as white, is broadened in South Africa.

Duality and pluralism with race classification and culture presents itself with my Research Participants in similar ways. A double consciousness perhaps as employed by Dr. W.E.B. Du Bois in that African Americans living in Ghana; invoke Soul Citizenship by way of domicile, cultural and social engagement in Ghana as well as a varied degree of African lineage (perhaps Ghanaian lineage) while also possessing lived experiences as current/prior citizens of the United States of America. A complex identity that Du Bois himself described as, “the Negro is ...gifted with second-sight in this American world – a world which yields him no true self-consciousness, but only lets him see himself through the revelation of the other world. It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one’s self through the eyes of others, measuring one’s soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity (Du Bois, 1994:4).” Race impacts class and Sabiyha Prince highlights, “Bourdieu, for example, maintains the middle class is an ill-defined concept precisely because the ‘fuzziness of the relationship between practices and positions’ is greatest in the middle stratum (Bourdieu, 1986) (Prince, 2004:29)”. Prince states, “Some scholars, for example, view classes as tangible or objective positions in socioeconomic hierarchies, while others deem the manner in which people form class identities and affiliations to be of more consequence. There is also contention about the number of classes that exist and the specific characteristics persons occupying each category should manifest (Prince, 2004:27).” Du Bois also speaks to a sense of stratification of people based on race where white is situated in a higher position than that of Black people (Du Bois, 1994).

Why is the concept of race relevant to my research? Race and sex are two major perceived presuppositions that influence the normative narrative of how someone is treated by themselves and others (Muhs, 2012) (Ronald G. Ehrenberg, 1995) (Morash, 2006). In America particularly, Race is used on the daily basis and it adversely influences non-white bodies throughout their lives. The media culture in

American depicts black males as over sexualized thugs and black women as sexual commodities through movies, television, hip hop music/videos as well as news houses (Jones, 2005). These images' transmittal is not limited to the U.S.A. but with the increasingly access to the World Wide Web, examples of these negative imagery were found in Ghana. These images are accepted by some Ghanaian youth and adults as credible depictions of African Americans. For example, I have been greeted by Ghanaians on more than one occasion who used the word *nigga*, *hey my nigga* as a salutation. My reaction every time is an opportunity for dialog on why I do not use nor respond to, *nigga*. The typical response from the Ghanaian is that he (It has only been males) meant no harm and just thought that it is the way that African Americans greet each other, it was his attempt to greet me in the affirmative. Here again lies a sort of ignorance to race (based on western definition) and its implications on melanated bodies by Ghanaians who by my observations experience racism and race in similar ways historically, yet manage racism and race quite differently than many African Americans living in America and Ghana. Moreover, if you control the images and media then you control the narrative in the transmission of information or dogma. Howard Zinn discusses the same system in the United States of America but calls it, "machinery of the capitalist class" (Zinn, 1980). Prince references Aronowitz and Roediger in framing, "The assignment of white-skin privilege to EuroAmericans, which has ranged from the differential treatment of white and black bonds-people during the colonial period to whites-only suffrage, has hindered a sustained anti-capitalist, multiracial movement and undermined the formation of shared, transformative working class identities among Americans of different races" (Aronowitz, 1992) (Roediger, 1994) (Prince, 2004).

Research Findings

Who are you calling obruni?

Obruni is a phrase that I rejected as a representation of myself despite over two years living in Ghana prior to this research. My frustration and rejection came from various perspectives. I was appalled to be referred to as a white man, a group history associates with being the architects and perpetrators of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. The very merchants who procured my African ancestors whether by capture or purchase/trade with African Slave traders, systemically stripped their captives of their identity, culture and humanity. Subsequently, packed them on merchant ships, so closely shackled together in various places on their bodies; they were brought to the Americas to recover and build a failing nation into what many scholars consider the United States of America to be a world leader. This does not take into account the millions of enslaved Africans who died in transit or chose to take their own lives rather than to live lives of servitude to "white men" and their families.

This group of Enslaved Africans from the Transatlantic Slave Trade were recently memorialized by a local Ghanaian artist by the name of Kwame Akoto-Bamfo and his exhibition, “In Memoriam: Portraits of the Middle Passage, In Situ”. Over one thousand concrete busts were sculptured by Kwame and his artistic team to depict the experiences of those aforementioned struggle for freedom. At the official opening of the exhibition that was curated by U.S. Fulbright Art Historian Danny Dunson, this event was heavily attended by members of AAAG, Caribbean Diaspora and others including dignitaries from the U.S. Embassy in Ghana. My sentiment for the actions of perpetrators of the Transatlantic Slave Trade resonated with my research participant, Nana Fashion who spoke about his experience visiting the Cape Coast Slave Dungeons, “...I went down there [Cape Town Slave Dungeon] when somebody came and I took them down there and they told me it was going to cost me something like six cedis¹⁰ to get in. I told them I wasn’t paying to get in, and they said well what do you mean sir you’re not paying? I said, you sold my ancestor, which was your ancestor, to the America to be slaves and I come back to see what this is all about and you want me to pay you! I’m not doing it! I went off ...Sir [gestures to move on] go, go [the attendant tells him to go inside] (Fashion, 2017).

So, I feel it was imperative to the narrative that I brought into discussion Africans involvement in selling other Africans into Chattel Slavery (Miers & Kopytoff, 1977). Some Africans did participate in Transatlantic Slave trade on the continent of Africa. Arguably unbeknownst to them that the type of slavery would be chattel slavery; which was not readily practiced in Africa. The tales spoke of rebellion against those white men at a point when those Africans who participated in the sale of other Africans realized the conditions in which they were being sold were inhumane. The term obruni was also a major determinant and assumption that I held prior to entering the field. I assumed that all, or at least the majority of African Americans visiting and/or living in Ghana experienced similar or exact experiences as I. On the contrary, many of my Research Participants had varied experiences and understanding of what obruni meant to them. Some of my Research Participants stated that they rarely were referred to as obruni. They presented various perspectives on this matter. Nana Fashion states:

“I don't like it and they call it, until I found out because I thought they will calling me white and then when I found out that when they said obruni in many instances, it's because of your language, the way you speak. You speak like the whites do, so they'll call you an obruni and if you're fair-skinned like you [Researcher]—then I think they meant white—really but that’s what they did and I will tell him look at me I'm not a whole lot lighter than you, how are you going to call me obruni. Oh oh sir sir, no and then they apologize and somebody's explains they're not talking about

¹⁰ Ghana Cedi is the currency used in Ghana

your complexion they are talking about your diction you know, so I said oh okay I feel better about that [chuckles]. (Fashion, 2017)”

Makeba stated the following:

“When we first got here, they calling us that and when we had we didn't think, we not knowing what it was. And then we found out what it was. it was so insulting to think for somebody to call me white, the people that I hate the most or the actions of the people that I hate the most for somebody to call me obruni, I still have to catch myself that was really rough” (Makeba, 2017).

Her husband, Sankara concurred that, “It still lives but we don't get it as much as we used to nothing like we used to” (Sankara, 2017). He went on to state,

“...because it was to the point where it was like you would stop and you would make the conversation happen. You put your arm next to each other to the one that's calling you obruni like look we the same people and let them touch you and embrace your skin and it's like we are a Black man, Black woman[Referencing his wife, Makeba]” (Sankara, 2017).

Surmising that it is their passion and responsibility to teach Ghanaians and black people in general stating,

“...we know what how the word obruni is used and we know the fact that a lot of our brothers and sisters or not talking about who we are and where we came from. So it's a teaching moment and so for us to really get righteous and be here on the continent we have to take advantage of them teaching moments—especially by us coming from an activist background. Take the time, you know it's going to hurt your feelings at first [grunts] but then you take the time and explain it to them and some get it and some don't it's like you know when you were in the states and some people get it some people don't. (Sankara, 2017).

Makeba also expressed that there are also have “...great relationships with many of the native African brothers and sisters that treat them like family, the genuineness of when you miss people and see them again, its so dynamic and it makes you feel so good that's the balance of it all. (Makeba, 2017).

Ida expressed the following:

“When I was at [University of] Legon, my sister-in-law I remember one day she called me a white lady. In Hausa its called batureeya, white lady. So we were at home and something I think she put too much salt in the food and so my husband was like, you put too much [salt] so we went on and on and was like oh, the white lady said..... and I was hurt and my husband had to go and talk to her and said never call me that again. Then as I was when I came back to live to settle with my kids and I was more open, more mature, I realized that it's just a description. It's a description for if you are light skinned it doesn't matter if you're really white. It's a description if

you're Western. Some Ghanaians call other Ghanaians obruni, so it's not, it's not necessarily a race. It's a description and it's also I think on some levels like a class marker, because wealth is associated with white and it just means Westerner and I am from the West. So it does not bother me. Although the longer I've been here, the less I'm called obruni yes so I rarely get called obruni—now (Ida, 2017).”

Other Research Participants responded that they saw it as a teaching moment, to explain the numerous reasons why African Americans whether dark skin or light skin are not white. It is a challenge but one that can continue to be addressed. Children are taught at an early age about greeting foreigners in English and very little education of distinction is given to let them know the different types of people and the places that they come from. What is problematic about this lack of distinction, if any? Moreover, what would Ghana look like if upon meeting someone that the child identifies as a foreigner, they greeted them in one of the local languages? Would that not bolster pride in Ghanaians and make those visiting more apt to learn more about the people and culture of the country that they are visiting/living?

The Market—Sourcing Food: Groceries in Ghana

The thing that all humans need and what is a common thread amongst us, food. Sustenance. What we put in our body; at the very core, connects our humanity across phenotypical, psychological or social indicators. The marketplace was more than a heartbeat of Ghana; it was perhaps maybe the great equalizer. How practical was it for someone to totally devoid themselves of interacting with her/his environment? African Americans in Ghana can opt to spend exuberant amounts of money shopping only in those supermarkets that cater to expats and the wealthy; affirming to their American identity. Can they negate the Ghanaian air that they breath? Likewise, can African Americans purchase and consume all food purchased at the market and affirm their African identity?

Therefore, the discussion becomes to what degree were those enslaved Africans and their descendants able to retain, practice, and transmit African spirituality, languages and cultures into the everyday workings of life away from Africa? In the United States of America, such cultural practices are often exercised under the auspices of southern black culture and or the African American experience via cuisine, spiritual practices and musicality to name a few. Okra (known in the U.S.A.) or Okro (name in Ghana), was a food that was brought over to the Americas by enslaved Africans and remains a staple in soul food menus of African American meals (Wilson, 1964:116) (Eisnach, 2009:85,182). Corn grits has a gritty, yet smooth texture when cooked. It is often prepared in African American households with variations of crumbled bacon, sausage, sugar, shrimp or fish making this dish, known to the Ga people of the Greater Accra Region of Ghana as *Akwegbemi*, a staple for breakfast and or dinner (Eisnach, 2009:82). During my

interview with Ida she stated, “I was born into a black family in America with heavy Southern Roots: Alabama, Louisiana, Texas it's in me. Check it I ate grits and eggs this morning [Chuckles]. (Ida, 2017).” Thus, it should not come as too much of a surprise that AAAG published a recipe book entitled, *Down South, Up North and Back Home: Recipes and Recollections From the African-American Association of Ghana (AAAG)* (African American Association of Ghana, 2001) as a life line to those AAAG members seeking to adapt recipes to the ingredients that are locally available in Ghana, as well as an educational opportunity to show indigenous community members said intersections. I recall hearing the Founder of Panafest mention at a meeting that he does not refer to African Americans as descendants, rather ascendants because we are moving up from so many things. So in a way, the aforementioned cuisine that was transmitted to the world is returning home in parallel to the African Americans who bring such experiences and creolizing to Africa, in particular for this research, Ghana.

Food consumption in Ghana is done predominantly with fresh ingredients with little or no preservatives. Thus, with the sporadic power outages and accessibility to commercially scaled refrigeration equipment for long storage like in the U.S.A., most of the people in Ghana frequent the local markets daily to fetch fresh ingredients such as tomatoes, onion, peppers, groundnut paste (peanut butter), palm oil and various cuts of meats and seafood (readily available along the coastal towns). In her typical day activities, Ida stops by the market to, “so I stop at the supermarket I stopped at the local market or anywhere to get fresh food fresh fruits and vegetables and whatever we're going to eat that night for dinner” (Ida, 2017). These marketplaces are typically located in large areas that are either partially covered with tin roofing sheets or exposed to the sun depending on the goods being sold and the locale of the market. These spaces are very similar in structure to the communities’ social hierarchies in that the hospitality exhibited by the market women are quite welcoming like that of most Ghanaians to visitors/guests. You usually can enter the market from multiple fluid points of entry. In contrast to the proposed wall that the current occupier of the Office of the President in the United States of America envisages on building (The White House: Office of the Press Secretary, 2017).

You may enter the market and attempt to disengage from the community within, but I suspect that you may quickly be awakened to the vast activities that the markets have to offer by maybe stumbling over rises in the terrain or maybe run into shiny silver caste aluminum pans. For those who do engage the market they understand that it is a place of sustenance, communion, and allegiance and where one perfects her/his art of negotiating. Sustenance in that everything that one may need and possibly want is located within its boundaries. Fresh produce, live or freshly butchered meats (halal or not), traditional equipment used to prepare the foods as well as electronics of convenience that seek to replace those traditional components. Those who refuse to acknowledge the dichotomy of the market often find themselves distant yet near,

evading the potentiality that it holds. A kaleidoscope of printed and stamp fabrics rolled, and presented like colorful bouquets of flowers each possessing vast possibilities for garment design and construction and so much more is available depending on the market. The market is overwhelming operated by independent female sellers¹¹ who operate under cooperative unions who often emulate the traditional titles of Nanadom” (Dissappearing World: Asante Market Women, 1982)¹². The prices are negotiable to some extent and African Americans would be keen to learn the art of negotiation and finesse if she/he expects to get a “fair” price.

It is not uncommon for foreigners or African Americans to be charge in excess of local prices also known as obruni price, simply because of their aesthetic look and/or inability to speak the local language with local intonation. Bilal, made the decision to avoid making purchases in and out of the markets, “Anything I want she [his wife] buys, if an American comes up the price is probably going to be triple [chuckles]” (Bilal, 2017:14m30s). Thus, if African Americans use the tone and diction typically afforded for conversing in the USA, they may be charged in excess. However, communion and allegiance often occurs when African Americans find business women who provide great products at fair prices by developing personal relationships often inquiring about each other’s body or health, family and business in general. These relationships build allegiance in that the merchants are confidant in getting return business from my Research Participants and in kind my Research Participants know that they do not have to haggle to much with a particular product once they have found a business woman with great prices and products. Thus, reiterating the fulfillment of duties associated with being citizens of the market, the larger community and Ghana in general. Note, that despite these communion and allegiance, negotiations may still present itself but is very playful in demeanor and could be seen as a conditioning training session to ensure my Research Participants as well as in my experiences are on point with their skills of bargaining.

For some, all of the ingredients needed to prepare their meals may be found in the aforementioned local markets while others rely on international markets like South African franchised stores ShopRite® and Game®; as well as Lebanese owned companies Koala Supermarket® and Melcom® to obtain processed food items produced largely outside of Ghana. These markets are strategically located in vicinity of communities that can afford their higher prices and whose consumption habits are catered to by these foreign goods. A box of Kellogg’s Frosted Flakes®, or Aunt Jemima® complete pancake mix are available

¹¹ Similarly, the majority of AAAG members and leadership are women.

¹² The Queen Mother of the yam sellers is the most powerful woman in the market. She has punishing and regulating power over all others (Films Media Group, 2017).

amidst the other snacks, toiletries and dairy products that are atypical to most Ghanaian cuisines. For example, cheese is not a staple in Ghanaian foods yet is a major component to such African American dishes as Macaroni and Cheese, pizza, or even the simple grilled cheese sandwich. Therefore, cheese is almost 100% imported from other countries and carry a hefty price tag in comparison to other local ingredients and are almost exclusively consumed by the elite (USDA Foreign Agricultural Service, 2012:18). So being seen entering these markets carries an assumption that one is elite and or rich to be able to peruse their aisles. What is even more convicting is watching foreigners, some locals and African Americans exit the markets with a cart full of merchandise that is swiftly packed into their vehicles for transport. Rarely, African Americans such as myself who do not own a vehicle pack their groceries in backpacks and “Ghana must go bags” (Ekowa, 2017) and whisk away to the nearest trotro¹³ station to transit via public transportation to their abode. I do this for ease of transport as the plastic bags given at the store rarely can withstand the journey home. Moreover, I also do so as a way to hide or blend in with the locals riding the trotro so as to not broadcast louder my perceived wealth or ability to purchase goods from said overpriced supermarkets.

Many African Americans are restaurateurs serving soul food and local dishes. Entrepreneurship was an overwhelming occupation for most of my Research Participants. Hotep owns and operates with his Ghanaian wife, a restaurant that serves Ghanaian dishes on a healthier side in Prampram. Mama Imakaus’s One Africa; boasts a full local and continental menu with a newly developed partnership with General Chicken, an African American owned restaurant chain in Chicago that supplies her with his famous chicken and potato wedges. I met the General, the owner while I was in Cape Coast to meet Imakaus at her health resort in Iture, near Elmina. Auntie Soul is a caterer who specializes in small scale events whose brownies and cupcakes are extremely moist and delectable to the taste buds of what is reminiscent to bakeries in the United States of America. Another African American Pastry Chef’s cakes are identifiable by taste so much that the past President Jerry John Rawlings was quoted as being able to identify her cakes simply by taking a bite. This is to say that the consumption of such American ingredients like shortening are procured by these restaurant owners and the general understanding is that when you see something on the shelf that you want, you better buy it and purchase multiple as said goods are often just a limited shipment received and are not staples. For example, I purchased three bottles of Louisiana style hot sauce to use with some of my dishes because they are hard to find in most stores. These are all examples of daily activities that my Research Participants encountered.

¹³ A major mode of public transportation in Ghana. Typically, a van or mini bus.

Social Engagement in Ghana

Acclimating into a culture and society that is geographically different than a person's upbringing may be aided by their unconscious, inherited or cognitive cues. For my Research Participants, they came to Ghana with lived experiences, memories or what Pierre Bourdieu calls Cultural Capital (Bourdieu, 1986) (Bourdieu, 1986). Adjusting to life in Ghana was seen as relatively easy for some, while others found it challenging or continue to find it challenging. For example, Josephine, after visiting numerous countries in Africa with Stockley Carmichael, Miriam Anderson and her then husband, stated, "Ghana resonates with me. Resonates with me one because I understood the culture, when we lived in communities we were very attentive to how we greeted one another. I don't remember anybody coming to the house [in the U.S.A.] and not offering them something to eat you know" (Josephine, 2017). Maxine has lived and owned her home in Prampram for over ten years, she continues to help children in her district with their educational endeavors by providing financial support. Yet, a land dispute over her property after so many years by some distant members of the family that sold her land, is disheartening for Maxine (Maxine, 2017). Amos, expressed that he is committed to living with and engaging the Ghanaian community and culture, but desires only to gain permanent status in Ghana to alleviate the financial and time burden in renewing his resident permits. He would rather spend that time continuing to do ministry and working with his community, despite having a few break-ins at his home over the years.

Language is a major mode of communication be it verbal or non-verbal. Ghana has eleven government supported languages and numerous other languages and dialects spoken in the country. This does not include the non-verbal forms of communication such as sign language, drums like the talking drum and dances like Adowa or Keta. Language can be inclusive or exclusive in interactions. It is estimated in one survey that about 40% of Ghanaians over the age of eleven can speak at least English and a Ghanaian language. In a survey conducted in the U.S.A. shows that of the 350 languages spoken in the U.S.A., roughly about 20% can hold a conversation in a second language.

Therein lied a common thread of resilience and dedication to engage in Ghanaian society with their cultural capital. Taking a look at, "The continual cultural cycle—produced culture, internalization through socialization, cultural production" (Nash, 1990:433); to see how my Research Respondents and other African diaspora were creating spaces for engaging cultural and social capital in the communities where they lived. Can the produced culture of my Research Participants and those in their communities synergize through internalizing their socialization through engagement to either reject each other or to paradigm shift their collective cultural production? My aforementioned encounters in Ghana with the word nigga for example, was a way that I sought to influence cultural capital. Makeba and Sankara referred to the

commonly used term slave castles as slave dungeons. (Makeba, 2017) (Sankara, 2017). Josephine shares an experience on one of her trips back to the U.S.A.:

“...part of the journey that got me here it was that sensibility that you want to do something I want to do something. So it was very difficult those three years back in the States, and I was at Harvard and it was lovely because you had this incredibly intellectual space with people from around the world it was like a little bubble, and then when I got back I was actually teaching at the academy. I remember distinctly, the first time, because I had been out of the country for so long, that I heard about the Office of Minority Students, the Dean of Minority Students and I was like wait a minute, minority students, that sounds like the Office of the Bantu Affairs! I was like what minority; I mean I was like wow. So that’s what happened to this legitimate struggle for equal access under the law. Now we have Minority Dean Minority Employment Officer, I was like wow, that was heavy. A lot of my friends could not understand that when I was saying it because you know sometimes you know the old adage *you can’t see the forest from the trees*. And so everybody was like ok come on Josephine, relax and I was like wow, that’s heavy and again that also drew me into the power of word and the power of definition” (Josephine, 2017).

Josephine, who was a member of the Black Panther Party Student movement, discussed her approach to life was no longer based on the social construct of Race. So, her understanding of the power of words and definition lends well to the discussion at hand. There is power in words, definition and education (Morrison, 2012) (Basbanes, 2005). Whether it’s changing word associations like Nigga to Sister/Brother, descendants to ascendants, slave castle to slave dungeons, Race to I Be¹⁴ or obruni to African American. As soon as these words were brought into question, it’s identity as, “..structured culture *habitus* is conceived as a grammar making possible the generation of new forms of expression which may alter the structure of the grammar itself (much as speech made possible by grammar itself transform grammar) and this provides the theoretical space for cultural change. (Nash, 1990:433)”

Annual Black History Month Activities

Education remains a very important catalyst for change, albeit for liberation or control. An example were the Jim Crow era’s, separate but equal laws and the legal battles for equal educational opportunities for African Americans (Groves, 1951) (Klarman, 2004). Education is important to AAAG and was included in the organization’s governing objectives because the membership understood the importance and value of education and its global impact to oppress or liberate the minds of students (Meiners, 2002) (Daniel G. Solórzano, 2002). A mechanism for this was an initiative to celebrate black history month in Ghana. The events that I observed were filled with co-educational opportunities for the African American

¹⁴ A term, I first heard used by Dr. God’Man, one of my Professors at the Interdenominational Theological Center

and Ghanaian community at-large. For example, the organization hosted high school children from a local public school to converge at the W.E.B. Du Bois Center for a tour and discussion around Pan-Africanism.

The school children filed into the tree-shaded amphitheater like an ocean current in their blue and white school insignia uniforms. All of the students' hair were cut short and there was three noticeably ways to distinguish between the male and female students. The males were dressed in their school print fabric shirts with shorts and their female classmates donned the school print fabrics in dress form and wore earrings. Female students who attend government schools are required to wear their hair short for what I'm told largely to reduce the expenses of elaborate hairstyles as well as an attempt to desexualize their body to be less attractive to their male classmates and predator men (Ghana Web, 2015) (Ahebla, 2005). They watched a video on perceptions of life in the United States of America and it was followed up by a brief discussion before breaking into groups for the trivia bowl. The categories and questions spanned Pan-African topics ranging from African Heads of State to questions of American civil rights leaders. The students were electrified with excitement as they worked in groups to answer the trivia questions. The exchange of information and culture was felt by all in attendance.

Many of my Research Participants engaged in activities that coincide with object seven of AAAG. Maxine in Prampram, a retired educator provides scholarship for children in her Prampram community to attend Primary, Secondary and even support for tertiary schools (Maxine, 2017). Josephine owns and operates an educational center that supports education, environment, art, design and sustainable development in her community. Sankofa often holds discussions with the ladies in her compound and area about hot topics (Sankofa, 2017). Iverson, an experienced radio and YouTube blogger, has presented talks on radio stations back in the U.S.A. and posted educational and informative videos on YouTube. Hotep, a trained engineer is constructing a wall of Ancestors that will pay homage to the African Ancestors around the globe while duly providing educational opportunity for the community of Prampram and guest who visit his center and restaurant within his family compound. Haneefa also sponsors children to school in her area. Loretta goes beyond the salary she pays the lady who helps her around her house by providing subsidies for her children's education (Loretta, 2017). Pastor offers people in his community musical instruments classes as well as various religious classes within his family compound and worship center. Makeba and Sankara has accumulated a vast library of educational media on the Black experience and offer schedule as well as impromptu opportunities for dialogue and learning. I too, find myself sharing spaces with Ghanaians where the free exchange of experiences and knowledge occur. Many of my discussions were around the African American experience and why it is directly linked to the experiences of Ghanaians and other Africans. Another education event I observed was the Black Keys concert.

The Black Keys Concert

The Black Keys Concert was the culminating night of traditional Negro hymns for the 2017 Black History Month. Black keys were representative of the black keys on the piano. I arrived at the Physicians and Surgeons Hall venue in Accra and entered the metal gates before being met with the cascading staircase



in the open air atrium that resembled a martini glass. I arrived early and inside was a very diverse audience. The hall had two main veins where people could pass for seating to their left or right. The brown wood stage towered slightly over the seating to assist with optimal viewing for the audience. The sounds of smooth jazz instrumentals served as an invocation to what was to be a night to remember. The front row was reserved for dignitaries and special guests which included representatives from the U.S. Embassy. In fact, a lot of white guests were from the U.S. Embassy as well as other embassies. They brought their school-aged children and spouses and the hall was nearly filled to capacity. Also in attendance were the B.A.S.I.C.S. Children's Ensemble (an NGO founded by an African American to provide after school enrichment for students from

poverty stricken area of Accra) who were dressed in colorful African attire were seated a few rows from stage left. I was seated in the middle rows closer to stage right.

The event began with a welcome by the President of AAAG and the upright singing of the Negro National Anthem, *Lift Every Voice and Sing* by James Weldon Johnson which was sung by the audience. This song is held to higher esteem for numerous African Americans including myself over such American pride songs as the Star Spangled Banner and the pledge of allegiance (Shonekan, 2017) (Degregory, 2016) (Membis, 2010). When the latter songs are recited, I stand, but abstain from uttering lyrics that I feel did not include people of color when it was constructed and questionably contemporarily as well. I would be remised if I did not reference the political and social protest that surround one of the National Football League's player, Colin Kaepernick. Kaepernick took to one knee during the playing of the national anthem at the beginning of a football match in protest because, "I am not going to show pride in a flag for a country that oppresses black people and people of color." "To me, this is bigger than football and it would be selfish on my part to look the other way. There are bodies in the street and people getting paid leave and getting away with murder" (Wyche, 2016). The program was presented in three sets that were narrated prior to the exaltation in song. The performance commenced, the singers came from stage left and walked onto the stage. Their colorful gowns and African attire spoke to the breadth of lived experiences and identities present that evening. The first singer, a man who is a member of AAAG stood there with a look

undiscernible on whether he was prepared to sing well or not similar to the looks of such mega stars as Aretha Franklin, the Queen of Soul and Patti LaBelle. He did not disappoint, the first few bars of *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot* were delivered from his soul and by the midpoint of the song he had the audience shouting affirmations of jubilation and praise.

At the end of the first song it was very apparent by most of the African Americans in attendance that the night would be a night of *church*. A quick visual survey of the audience, I could see happy and confused faces from some of the white audience members as they were adjusting to the spirit present in that room. That first song got them swaying left and to the right, a few hand claps and some who were more experienced with such worship services, immediately rose to their feet and clapped and danced. It was extremely refreshing for myself, a seminary trained Theologian and Minister to see and experience such a celebration of Negro hymns. The lineup of songs included: *Wade in the Water, Steal Away, Soon I will be Done, Balm in Gilead, Every Time I Feel the Spirit, His Eyes is on the Sparrow, I Don't Feel No Ways Tired, He's Got the Whole World* (Performed by the B.A.S.I.C.S Children's Ensemble and A female artist), *We Shall Overcome* and to send us home and back into the field, *O Happy Day* which received several jubilant reprises (ovations).

The guests could not get enough and AAAG was asked to ensure that they included this program in the forthcoming Black History Month celebrations. In fact, people approached the event producer to do the show at other venues and locations within the year. This event proved to help illustrate the experiences of African Americans and our Ancestors who had to toil through so much adversity. It was hard for some Ghanaians to see, feel and understand just the brevity of experiences African Americans went through and currently endure; but this event touched the minds and spirit of so many in attendance profoundly through song. An example was Loretta's husband, a member of one of the Royal Ga Families in Accra, Ghana. Loretta expressed that her husband came up to her after the event and whispered to her that he got it now, that he understood just what Africans Americans and his wife faced on the daily basis (Fieldnotes, 2017).

Truly, this event served objective seven of the AAAG constitution and was another example of the impactful, innovative and intentional interactions between Ghanaians and African Americans may foster greater appreciation and collaboration between the two communities. Marcus Josiah Garvey expressed educational sediments, "You can be educated in soul, vision and feeling, as well as in mind. To see your enemy and know him (her) is a part of the complete education of man (woman); to spiritually regulate one's self is another form of the higher education that fits man (woman) for a nobler place in life, and still, to approach your brother (sister) by the feeling of your own humanity, is an education that softens the ills of the world and makes us kind indeed" (Jacques-Garvey, 2009:15). So I am sure that Loretta had prior verbal

conversations with her husband around her experiences, but it was a soul stirring experience that permeated from misunderstanding to understanding. Overall, my observations suggest that the African American Association of Ghana (AAAG) is vested in using education as a conduit for the exchange of ideals and synergies of historical and lived experiences between all stakeholders.

Naming Ceremony--Prampram

I have attended numerous types of events in Ghana ranging from weddings, funerals, festivals, etc.; but prior to this fieldwork, I have only attended one naming ceremony in Teshie Accra, Ghana. For that ceremony, I arrived with my friends after the actual naming portion in time for the jubilant celebratory festivities. So when Auntie Fiyankra invited me to her granddaughters naming ceremony in the home of Auntie Grace in Prampram, I was elated. I enjoyed various dialogues with Auntie Fiyankra and Auntie Grace, so I was honored to attend and wanted to make sure that I was there for it all. On the day of the naming ceremony, I took the necessary trotros to get to Prampram and I arrived in enough time to help with the final decorative finishing for the two large tents that were set up in the backyard of Auntie Grace's compound. After the other guests arrived, Auntie Fiyankra, her Son and Daughter-in-Law came outside holding their precious newborn daughter. An elder male conducted the naming ceremony as he sat in the chair holding the newborn. He spoke to her directly asking her questions and listening for her responses, i.e. connecting with her as he prepared to name her and impart wisdom and positive affirmations over her life. He also charged those in attendance to support her parents in rearing her in the best and conducive manner in order for her to grow up to be a responsible and well respected member of the community. At one point, he asked for a plate that contained honey and some other foods and he introduced her to them with each one coinciding with a life lesson about the world that she will have to endure and change. Auntie Fiyankra, a mother who left the United States of America to come to Ghana, gave birth to all of her children in Ghana. Her Ghanaian son, married another Ghanaian and now the third generation of her family was born and has been dedicated in the traditional religious and cultural practice of the naming ceremony. Could this be an example of a dream deferred now realized?

Enstoolment of Regional Imam

Haneefa invited me as her guest to attend the enstoolment the Gadangme Muslim Council's (GMC) Gadangme Ahlusunnah Chief Imam and personal friend of Haneefa, Alhaji Umar Adam Ibrahim Nawotey Borboji. It was special for me to be able to attend, but more specifically, Haneefa was uber excited to witness her friend be entrusted with such a high honor. When we arrived we were met by an usher who upon hearing Haneefa's name proceeded to seat us in the VIP tent section directly stage right to the high table where the various Chiefs and Queen Mothers aka Nanadom were being seated to our left. At that point it was only about 10-15 people seated in the outdoor canopy tented venue. Trotro after trotro, and

bus after bus filed in unloading its passengers who often offered jubilant songs and rhythmic dancing in linear unison as they found their seats. Then the various Nanadom arrived decked out in their traditional Gadangme royal attire ranging from white tasseled head pieces from the traditional priests to golden crowns with kente and ohenemaa footwear. The arrival of the Chief moderator of the enstoolment arrived in a SUV and the audience stood and unleashed a thunderous round of hand ovations as the voice of the Master of Ceremony announces his arrival. There were several pleasantries and pomp and circumstance prior to the main purpose of the day, the installation of the Gadangme Ahlusunnah Chief Imam and his two deputy Imams. This occurred center stage and people flocked from their seats to snap pictures as the installations was taking place. Nanadom present helped to usher in the enstoolment and were the first to offer congratulatory handshakes. This was followed by the same from those who flocked near Alhaji Borboji and Haneefa wanted to do the same, so she handed TK (Her helper and adopted son) and I her phone and cameras to take pictures of her going to greet the newly installed Imam. After minor adjustments to hear garb to ensure she was well secured she proceeded from the shady covering of the VIP tent and walked over to greet her friend. Her hijab was adorned with reflective discs that glistened in the scorching sun and her black opaque sunglasses shielded her eyes from the elements as well as from any gazes that presented itself. She arrived in front of Alhaji Boborji and awaited her turn to semi prostrate and greet him before gracefully returning to her seat boasting her joy and approval of her friend's new accomplishment. It was apparent that she was well known and respected as an elder within the Muslim community of Gadangme (Greater Accra Region).

Religion and Spirituality

What exactly is religion? Religion is a systematic way to worship a higher power. It is comprised of ritualistic proceedings. In Ghana, the country is predominantly Christian with about 73% of the respondents of a report published by the Ghana Statistical Service (2014). Islam comprises 20.2% of the population and Traditional Practitioners based on this survey is zero percent. Those who identify as practicing no religion account for 6.7%, which is perplexing data. In the Greater Accra region those statistics report 85.3% Christians, 11.6% Islam, Traditional 0%, and No religion at 2.9%” (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014, pp. 10-11). This was troubling to me as a Pan Africanist because, “The religious composition of Ghana in the first post-independence population census of 1960 was 41 percent Christian, 38 percent traditionalist, 12 percent Muslim, and the rest (about 9 percent) no religious affiliation. (Federal Research Division--Library of Congress, 1995:120)” What were the contributing factors in a nation of people who clearly had a strong foundation in traditional religious practices, but in a course of around sixty years, abandoned its practice or at the very least feel compelled to not disclose their traditionalist faith?

Members of the African American Association of Ghana and other African American Research Participants practice Islam, Traditional African Religions, Judaism, Christianity and other religious faiths. Thus, attention was given to their religious practices and how it related to their identity formation and praxis living in Ghana. Ida expressed her identity as influenced by her religion when I asked her what influences her dress:

“What influences my dress is my religion, straight up! I’m a Muslim; I’m unapologetic Muslim so I’m not like; I’m not extreme because I use shorter sleeves because it’s hot, but I keep my head covered you know. I keep my legs covered, things like that so that’s first and foremost what dictates my dress is my faith” (Ida, 2017:7).

Ghana is known for her high degree of religious tolerance as a nation and occurrences of hate crimes based on religious practice are low or hardly reported. Note, culturally, Ghana still to some degree, disperses those who they choose not to engage in by social condemnation to lower caste like roles. For example, Ghana still maintain witch camps like the one located in the Northern Region called the Gambaga Witch Camp (Adinkrah, 2004). Note that the Ghana government is seeking to close witch camps nationwide and are working with aid workers to do so (Dunn, 2015) (Tawiah, 2015). What kind of gaze allows a space for such interpretation and action either physically or felt by those who feel accused? Ida commented that, “...one of the reasons why I stopped going to AAAG meetings, I felt kinda alienated being a Muslim. I feel like most of AAAG members are Christian and they are a bit judgmental of me practicing Islam even though they would never voice it. I can feel it in their energy and their interactions with me (Ida, 2017:8).” She also observed the rapid changes that are occurring under the current leadership of AAAG and she is now actively participating more with the African American Association of Ghana.

I have observed and participated in worship experiences of my Research Participants throughout my fieldwork. Haneefa does most of her prayers in her home and during our many conversations, excused herself from the room in order to go and pray. In that space, I minimized my movements and tried to assist in creating a space conducive for her to do her prayers without distraction¹⁵. TK, would also excuse himself to go and pray at the Masjid; usually returning to Haneefa’s home shortly after if he did not make a few stops along the way. Haneefa also helped in the rearing and transmission of cultural capital within the

¹⁵ Haneefa shared “[the melodic sounds of the Dhuhr/Zuhr (noon prayer) call to prayer begins in the background. [The call is projected from the loud speaker on one of the many nearby Masjids] Is it twelve something already? And that’s another reason about living here you don’t need a watch, just every two or three hours you hear [unspoken but referring to the call to prayer that occurs five times a day in the Islamic religion]” (Haneefa, 2017).

Islamic community to a young girl named Stella. Stella was attending an Islamic primary school who Haneefa supported financially by paying her school and hostel fees to stay on campus. I met Stella on a few of my visits to Haneefa's home and I observed that Stella's personality was beyond her age. On one visit, her father and his second wife (Stella's mother) came to visit her and to speak to Haneefa who demanded the meeting (both parents lived about an hour away in another village) to discuss Stella's behavior and conflicts at the school and Haneefa's home. The result of the meeting was that Stella was to remain under the tutelage of Haneefa with Stella's parents' moral support. Unfortunately, Haneefa had to send Stella back to her parents a few weeks later (Haneefa, 2017).

There was also a time when I was in the home of Auntie Soul who called a meeting of the Spoken Word Committee for Black History Month at her home. At that time, we were a subcommittee of four members Iverson, the guy who performed at the black keys concert, Auntie Soul and myself. It was getting to the early evening and Auntie Soul, an excellent baker and caterer, shared with us some moist chocolate cupcakes with chocolate frostings. We were seated at a table in her living room which was divided by décor as an eating area and a recreational area to watch television on plush couches. It was there that Auntie Soul excused herself to go and pray, but in this instance, we continued our discussions as Auntie Soul insisted and tasked us to continue with the meeting.

Some African Americans have left the Black Church because like Iverson and Sankofa expressed a feeling of disenfranchisement and seeing Christianity as the "white man's religion" (Iverson, 2017) (Sankofa, 2017). Personally, despite being a seminary trained Theologian, I do not regularly attend weekly Church services. However, regardless of the intentions of those who initially purported converting Blacks to Christianity, I see great value in the black church as an institution. It must also go through a similar process where its members can debate, modify and reaffirm its identity, purpose and functionality within the Black community like many African Americans who seek a better understanding of self. The experiences in the U.S.A. often leads African Americans to religion conversions. Be it, transitions between Non-Church goers, African Traditional Religion practitioners, Muslim or Christian, a shift in religious practices were also factors in some of my Research Participants assertion of soul citizenship in Ghana as well as their choice of domicile.

Keeping Up with the Jones'

This section will look at ways African Americans in Ghana engaged or disengage in the political and social news locally and in the United States while living in Ghana. I can imagine that it is hard enough to keep up with what is going on in your community, region and nation but imagine attempting to do so for both your life in Ghana and the family, community and national news back in the U.S.A. Identity, as Ida stated, "I think that identity is a very complex thing of course we have over born into but then I think our

identity is shaped by what we experienced” (Ida, 2017). Ida’s understanding of the complexity of identity is further explained:

“My identity or the base of my identity is largely rooted in the woman that raised me, but I think that going to college made my identity take another shift and let me be able to see myself within a larger framework you know as a Black American, not just a girl from Compton...Ghana has taught me a lot about who I am, probably even more than back home. I see myself as straddling two cultures, I think that maybe it's taking a little bit far, but I think I know understand to a large extent, probably would have feels like to be biracial; because I came to Ghana especially at such a young age and it did shape my adulthood and how I grew to be a woman when I came I was still a girl and Ghana has change me into a full woman. So I don't necessarily see myself anymore it's just a Black American, you know I see myself as somewhere in between a Black American and a Ghanaian now and my family says it too when I go home for a visit, they said that I'm not the same” (Ida, 2017).

Du Bois’ double consciousness was very applicable here in navigating identity and effort or lack thereof, in informing current and future experiences that help to shape one’s identity. Haneefa ensured that she listened to the Ghanaian news as well as news reporting out of the United States of America via her radio. Her television was at the repair man awaiting to be fixed, but she even preferred the radio over the television. She also performed web searches of news on a mini laptop that was purchased by her children as a gift for their Mother. Aside from checking the news, the laptop served to be a game console for her various digital games that she enjoyed playing during the day. In addition, people did visit her for consultation and to share the community news. Haneefa listened and navigated the consultations with a mix of Ghanaian culture, humor and American sass.

I was invited to attend a Super Bowl watch party at the home of an African American employee of the U.S. Embassy in Ghana. Prior to the invitation, I was planning to attend a viewing party at a local night club, Champs Sports Bar & Grill that was being advertised on the radio and social media. I watched the game in his living room with three other African American men who either worked at the U.S. Embassy or had an affiliation with it. The game was being projected on a large screen and the hospitality and décor of the home modelled an estate home doubling as an African art exhibit. I found myself lost in an alter reality; as I forgot in that space and amongst the company, that I was not in the United States of America, but in Ghana. The corn chips and snacks were from the U.S.A and he even served homemade chili bubbling hot in his crock pot. This helped me to see that not everyone is in Ghana to be this Pan Africanist, back to Africa, activist. There were African Americans who lived and worked in Ghana as employees and representatives of the United States of America’s government. Their assignments vary, but in that timespan they were residents of Ghana carrying out their work and living their lives with interactions and involvement in Ghanaian society both work and non-work related. I observed that some African Americans living and working in Ghana as U.S. Embassy employees do not ascribe to certain perceived normative behavior and

it does not negate or devalue their sense of self, blackness, or understanding of their ancestry. What brought them to Ghana was different than most, but they are in Ghana and that was an accomplishment that this research sought to express their experiences as well.

Similar to behavior of persons living in communities practically anywhere in the world, people tend to become *creatures of habit* in that once you find a great restaurant, place of worship, a great produce stand; etc., they tend to frequent them and build a rapport that exemplifies the longevity of their exchange and comradery. For instance, Ida got her Sisterlocks¹⁶ tightened at her favorite salon who know her by name and where the Head Loctician came to her private styling room to greet her. Nana Fashion went to a local restaurant in Prampram where he only has to inform the lady taking his order that he wants the usual. Makeba and Sankara who are vegans, frequent an Ethiopian restaurant in Accra that was about forty minutes from their home. They walked in and the wait staff greeted them as family and seated us next to the owner's husband. Later they were greeted by the owner who asked them how her cooking was that evening, seeking their satisfaction as seasoned guests in her restaurant.

Moreover, hitting the nightlife of trendy Osu with Iverson, who in a very short time I may add, became a name and face in the club scene in a few of the popular bars and nightclubs where he was often dashed (given freely) drinks and bottles of alcohol and VIP seating upon arrival¹⁷. In fact, at one particular club, he was well known by the owner, wait staff and even the bouncers who I met when I went out on the town with him. Engaging in Ghanaian society occurs on a daily basis for African Americans living in Ghana both intentionally and unintentionally. They influence and are influenced by the gaze they cast and the gazes of those who see them. Another star of Osu was Auntie Fiyankra and Auntie Grace who were definitely VIPs at one of Accra's premiere casino. The elaborate setup was lined with slot machines making ringing chime sounds as players won and lost money. The inner circle had numerous card tables and in the rear; near the cashiers, was a small dining area where chrome buffet dishes had a full spread of complimentary food for VIPs and their guests. Therefore, upon my first of many visits to the casino with them, I was afforded VIP treatment via association and enjoyed well-seasoned and served meals at my table. They appreciated Auntie Grace so much that they even threw her a birthday party with food, cake and free slot money for the first twenty-five of her guests.

¹⁶ "Sisterlocks is a trademarked company founded in 1993 by Dr. JoAnne Cornwell." (Sisterlocks, 2017) They are, "...a precision parting grid and a special tool that place the hair into its locking formation." (Clutch, 2017)

¹⁷ After fieldwork, Iverson relocated to a village outside of Accra to pursue business opportunities

Bourdieu's Theory of practice does not include in it, action. Although sometimes refers to his theory of socialization as such with action, thus theory of practice and action. The later leaves room for criticism that Bourdieu understood and welcomed. However, Bourdieu gave a poignant expression of how culture is transmitted or repressed through habitus. "Habitus in Bourdieu's work refers to a system of embodied dispositions which generate practice in accordance with the structural principles of the social world" (Nash, 1990:432). Repetition and practice are essential to this parameter of his theory in that in order for the transmission of cultural capital, it must be practiced in repetition. The dehumanizing practice of chattel slavery reduced the cultural capital of the system's captives. This translated in economic capital from the exertion of the captive human capital institutionalized. Yet in that space, cultural capital of the enslaved Africans was not lost in its totality. Instead, social groups within the Enslaved African societies in the United States of America were able to transmit certain components of their cultural capital. The result was contemporary practices in places around the world of historical practices in Africa. African cultural retention practices such as the cultivation of rice and the consumption of okra as previously mentioned. The call and response of in African American music—Negro spirituals, work songs, hollers (Waterman, 1999) (Talley, 1922) (Folk Music of the United States, 1977:6-7) (Williams-Jones, 1975). Even the pouring of libations at spiritual, teaching, rites of passage programs and memorial gatherings (Scoundrels, 1993) (Aminifu R. Harvey, 2004) (Geoffrey P. Hunt, 1994) (Christmon, 1995). The aforementioned are but a few of the habitus that many of my Research Participants embodied as an identifier of cultural inheritance. Soul Citizenship steps in where Bourdieu's theory describes as action. The action is their assertion, proclamation and selection of Ghana as their nation of abode where they invest their social capital. Could President Mahama's bestowal of citizenship to the thirty four members of the African diaspora or the removal of "obruni price" by the market women to the engaged African America be an illustration of Bourdieu's social capital, "the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to the possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition" (Bourdieu, 1986:248).

Conclusion

In conclusion, what brought my Research Participants to migrate to the Republic of Ghana were multi-faceted. Identity formation for them was in constant negotiation with their surrounding and interactions in Ghana (Ufomata, 2012) (Zalanga, 2012). The African American Association of Ghana as a social network acted as a conduit for the exchange of information and resources for numerous decades. The organization's identity in itself has evolved over time as they sought to remain relevant with the fluidity of ideologies, politics and social changes notwithstanding the constant influx of African American tourist and returnees. Research Participant's experiences provided qualitative data that illustrated that my assumption

that majority of African American who live in Ghana, came from a sort of social protest, a back to Africa incentive (Sidbury, 2007:91, 96). Instead, some came to Ghana for work and some with their families with no intention to forgo their citizenship in United States of America for a Ghanaian citizenship. W.E.B. Du Bois's double consciousness resonated frequently as the navigated social capital, duality in their society in the U.S.A. where they spent formative years and their society of choice in Ghana. The "social differences are not simply given to experience through an already authenticated cultural tradition; they are the signs of the emergence of community envisaged as a project—at once a vision and a construction—that takes you 'beyond' yourself in order to return, in a spirit of revision and reconstruction, to the political conditions of the present (Bhabha, 1994:3).

My Research Participants demonstrated that as "subjects formed 'in-between' (Bhabha, 1994:2)" culture, space, and lived experiences, that their invoked Soul Citizenship transcends physical borders. The scope of this thesis was exhausted. However, some areas for future study may lie in further applying Bourdieu's Theory of Practice and Habitus and Cultural Capital amongst African Americans living in Ghana in additional areas. Examples are, the emotional and behavioral habitus that influences the cultural capital (Bourdieu, et al., 2010:20, 471) of African Americans and Ghanaians acknowledged or not and the spiritual habitus of African Americans to name a few. What defines a family and family member? At what point does one cease to consider another a member of their family? Like Dustmann and Weiss's (2007:23) definition of return migration, African Americans are using DNA testing technology to help in further identifying their specific African identity. In addition, the role of genealogy and the market saturation of DNA genetic ancestry testing has resulted in evolving writing on how it may play a role in transnational and cultural identity formation as well as implications in mobility and nationhood may be explored. Writers like Benedicte Ohrt Fehler (2011) and Margaret R. Somers (Somers, 2008) (Okome & Vaughan, 2012) (Coles & Timothy, 2004) (Timothy, 2008) (Mountain & Guelke, 2008) have written around this topic. Further research into genealogical benefits of genetic testing is encouraged.

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