

## 12 Castle Brew

### Dreams Realized and Dreams Devastated

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The transatlantic slave trade is the single, largest forced movement of peoples across borders in history for the sole purpose of enslavement. More than 12.5 million people from Africa were displaced into the Americas from the late sixteenth to early nineteenth century. Many studies concentrate on the transatlantic slave trade and its impact on African communities. While some scholars examined the slave experience inside the “slave holes” of European forts, including those built on the former Gold Coast in today’s Ghana,<sup>1</sup> this chapter concentrates on a slave trader’s grand manor house and complex in terms of a space experienced by both trader/patron and enslaved. Lefebvre addresses space as physical, socially produced, and imagined.<sup>2</sup> Spaces created for the transatlantic slave trade are the product of complex social and economic systems directing the capture, containment, transfer, and sale of African people for the economic benefit of Europeans and Euro-Americans. Castle Brew will be analyzed architecturally and spatially to comprehend the multi-sensory experiences of those inhabiting these spaces in the late eighteenth century.

Castle Brew reveals a complicated story of cultural and commercial relationships occurring in the once-bustling metropolis of Anomabo (Figure 12.1). Initial patron, Irishman Richard Brew (c.1725–August 5, 1776), served as Governor of Anomabo fort, built for the London-based Company of Merchants Trading to Africa (The Company), and made his fortune as a slave trader. Brew called his two-story home “Castle Brew,” but it was also known as *aban kakraba* (Little Fort). For Brew, it visualized commercial success, high status in the community, and ties to his Irish homeland. The courtyard and perhaps warehouses behind the manor served as holding cells for overflow prisoners from the fort and Brew’s own purchased captives for sale to European and American ships. Although Castle Brew symbolized Brew’s dreams realized, it also symbolized devastated dreams for those extracted from their homes waiting in limbo for an uncertain future.

#### **Brew Builds Wealth and Presence on the Gold Coast**

Brew is one of the few Europeans to construct a house in Anomabo. Margaret Priestley, who wrote a Brew family history, surmised that Brew came from County Clare in western Ireland that “abounded in castles.” His father, also named Richard, was a vintner who claimed bankruptcy when Brew was a teenager. Following



*Figure 12.1* Castle Brew Complex as viewed from Fort William/Anomabo fort.

*Source:* Photo by author, 2009.

others hoping to acquire wealth, the son left to seek his fortune.<sup>3</sup> Brew arrived on the Gold Coast in 1745, working for the soon-to-be-defunct Royal African Company. He was registrar at Cape Coast Castle in early 1750, then chief factor at the fort in Tantumkweri. Later, he shared command of Dixcove's fort. The Company, founded in 1750, took over the Royal African Company forts. Brew was reappointed to Tantumkweri's fort from 1751 to 1754.<sup>4</sup>

The transatlantic slave trade, a cohesive economic force, involved African consent and involvement and brought European and African cultures together. Key to the eighteenth-century European presence was their dependence on indigenous communities for social and political connections, relying on locals for labor, food, water, wood, and the land they rented. Brew dealt privately in slave trading to the detriment of other traders who depended on assistance from the fort. Brew created a monopoly, consequently driving up prices for competitors and increasing his personal wealth. In November 1753, Brew faced his first of several conflicts with The Company, resigning in early 1754 to establish his private business. However, in July 1756, Brew was reinstated and given the command of a new fort in Anomabo, a city of approximately 20,000 inhabitants.<sup>5</sup>

Brew built contacts among the Fante, a coastal Akan group in the Central Region. The local head chief (omanhen) Eno Besi Kurentsi, known to Europeans as John Currantee, allowed The Company to build their fort.<sup>6</sup> Brew oversaw the completion of the Anomabo fort, designed and begun in 1752 by engineer John Apperley, who died from consumption in 1756. Apperley and his small staff had rented space in Kurentsi's palace, a former Dutch Lodge (c.1640–1642). Likewise, Brew stayed at Kurentsi's and later married his daughter Effua Ansah, securing a strong political union.<sup>7</sup>

Brew moved into the fort in 1757, and it was “near being finished” in 1759. Thomas Trinder, the Overseer of Works, and engineer Captain John Baugh assisted after Apperley died. Governors appointed to trading forts and castles were expected to engage in private trade within limits. Although The Company suspended governors who overstepped the mark, Brew used his position to personal advantage by engaging in private trading to the exclusion of other traders the fort was supposed to support. Due to its location in London, The Company could do relatively little to stop it. Brew held the governorship for two periods: 1756–1760 and 1761–1764. When the fort, which received shipments from Britain only once a year, and the local community were low on stores, the governor was expected to make up differences with his own resources. Thus, overlooking governor engagement in private trade was advantageous to The Company.<sup>8</sup>

Brew left the service of The Company in January of 1760 to return to Britain after almost fifteen years in Africa. While in London, he forged a valuable business partnership with Samuel Smith, who supported him with powerful political backing and credit during his next phase as governor. The Company reappointed Brew as Governor in 1761, with Brew returning to Anomabo in September.<sup>9</sup>

Although Brew was reprimanded occasionally by The Company for disrespect toward other traders, it was not until 1763 that the scale of his private operations caused greater concern. The Company issued a warning to Brew and a suspension in December 1763. Brew discharged himself from service in April 1764 to expand his business. Brew's partnership with Smith allowed Brew to establish factories along the Gold Coast and further east along the so-called Slave Coast in Whydah, Popo, Lagos, Benin, and Cape Lopez. Brew owned schooners, brigs, and sloops to ship cargo, including the enslaved, to the Caribbean and North America.<sup>10</sup> Thus, Brew became a major competitor with The Company with contacts across the West African coastline, England, and the Americas.

### **Castle Brew as a Visual Declaration of Power**

Castle Brew is the finest surviving example of an eighteenth-century European residence on the Gold Coast. In 1763, Brew began construction on his house, located “50 yards” from the fort's northwestern corner.<sup>11</sup> Brew used The Company's 1750 act allowing “any of his Majesty's Subjects trading to Africa, for the Security of their Goods or Slaves, to Erect Houses and Warehouses, under the Protection of the said Forts... for the better carrying on of his or their Trade there.”<sup>12</sup> Second-in-command, Mr. Johnson, complained to the governor of Cape Coast Castle that the fort was

being neglected to concentrate on Brew's own affairs. The "gardener and the rest of the castle slaves were fully employed on the house: for the past fortnight they had been cutting timber in the bush." Trinder and Baugh likely oversaw the construction. Baugh may have designed the manor, wall, and warehouses. This abuse of resources was somewhat overlooked by The Company because of Brew's lucrative partnership with "men of power" in London. Brew continued living in the fort and used its holds.<sup>13</sup> In a 1763 letter, a Company officer noted that 440–450 enslaved people were being held for sale in the Anomabo fort, and all but fifty to sixty belonged to Brew, and half of the fort's warehouses were filled with his trade goods.<sup>14</sup>

While Brew was reprimanded and suffered criticism, it did not sway his business ambition and practices. His connections with the *omanhen* and townspeople made The Company wary of pursuing charges against Brew.<sup>15</sup> However, when Smith filed for bankruptcy in 1774, the Smith and Brew Company, and Brew by extension, fell on hard times.<sup>16</sup>

Brew was not the first individual to build a "fort" next to a European merchant company fort. Thomas Edward Barter's seventeenth-century house set precedence for constructing residences inspired by European fortresses as symbols of both status and power.<sup>17</sup> Barter, a mixed-race merchant, was educated in England at the expense of the Royal African Company in 1690–1693. When he returned, the Company employed him, yet he also worked as a private trader as Brew would years later.<sup>18</sup> Indeed, Castle Brew was a large complex, said to equal the size of the Anomabo fort, with high walls surrounding the manor house and warehouses, armed with "guns," probably cannons.<sup>19</sup>

The complex visually communicated Brew's identity as a major player in the slave trade to the local community and European traders. Brew consciously appropriated the power image of the massive stone forts to visually equate himself with the power of the Fante, British, and Dutch. The name Castle Brew was likely inspired by the grand homes called castles in County Clare; the title was "suggestive of his intention that it should rival the fort in the eyes of the Fanti [Fante] population."<sup>20</sup> To further his display of wealth and status, Brew "sought to create the material conditions appropriate to an eighteenth-century gentleman – house, furnishings, pictures and books."<sup>21</sup>

This is exemplified by the items listed in his will. Brew bequeathed to his wife and their two daughters the Castle Brew house slaves and the proceeds from the sale of the plate, apparel, and furniture.<sup>22</sup> The remainder would settle Brew's extensive debts. Among the first items listed in the inventory are boxes filled with gold, silver, and coral. His bed chamber included a mahogany bedstead, bureau, settee, two armchairs, trunk, and a backgammon table. In the hall was "A Side Board, Mahogany Buffet, 23 Windsor Chairs, 66 pictures of different sizes [no details provided], 2 Settees, 4 Mahogany Tables, A Glass Chandelier, A Looking Glass, 2 Bureau Bookcases, [and] An Organ."<sup>23</sup> His extensive library contained popular British periodicals, novels, poems, and essays. He owned an array of silverware, linens, cookware, knives, beads, fifteen waistcoats, nine coats, sixteen shirts, nine velvet collars, four cravats, patterned black silk breeches, sixteen silk breeches, six worsted breeches, seventy silk stockings, and gold lace.<sup>24</sup>

### An Irish Georgian/Palladian Country Manor

Castle Brew is a prime example of the Palladian style. The original building, conceived as a simple two-story compact mass, used a strict symmetrical plan and minimal exterior decoration, similar to Irish Georgian/Palladian country manors. Palladian architectural style swept through Ireland in the early eighteenth century, becoming the preferred style of the aristocracy. Palladian architecture, deriving from the work of the Italian architect Andrea Palladio, was introduced to Ireland by Florentine architect Alessandro Galilei, who designed Ireland's first Palladian mansion, Castletown House, in 1719 (built in 1722).<sup>25</sup> Palladian style is also known as Georgian, named for the period of reigning British monarchs named George, roughly 1714–1820.<sup>26</sup>

Castle Brew's materials and construction method are similar to County Clare Georgian/Palladian manors, which were usually constructed from "locally-quarried limestone" or bricks made nearby.<sup>27</sup> Palladian stone *nog* construction involved packing small stones, shells, corncobs, broken bricks, and other materials with a lime-based mortar into a wood framework to construct walls in layers. The same technique was used in European commercial forts and homes on the Gold Coast.<sup>28</sup>

Castle Brew, located on the far north section of today's complex, faces east with the fort to its southeast and the omanhen's palace (former Dutch fort) located northeast. Thus, Castle Brew is situated in the corner of a triangle of large European-constructed strongholds. Like these other buildings, Castle Brew is a complex, built in stages with living quarters, warehouses, and, in the case of the fort and Castle Brew, strong walls to fortify the space of a courtyard. While Brew's original manor was begun in 1763, subsequent additions were added in the 1840s by Scotsman Brodie Cruickshank and in the late 1860s by local George Kuntu Blankson. Details regarding Brew's original mansion follow.

#### *Façade and Floor Plan*

The façade incorporates classical features with a central entrance, arched windows, a belt course, two-story pilasters, and elaborate cornice. Four pilasters are spaced across the façade. A belt course divides the two stories. The entrance may have once been surrounded by a portico, pediment, or engaged columns.

This façade is organized similarly to several in County Clare, including a seventeenth-eighteenth-century home in Appleville, with a symmetrical window arrangement and a single central window over the entrance. Windows in Appleville had eight panes, unlike six at Castle Brew, and no arched pediments.<sup>29</sup> County Clare houses from this era also had pitched roofs, slated or thatched.<sup>30</sup> Possibly the original roof of Castle Brew was thatched, as were local Fante homes. By the 1960s, however, the building had a hip roof covered with metal corrugated sheeting.<sup>31</sup>

The façade entrance and upper-story entrance from the courtyard have double doors of sturdy *odom* wood and may be original to the eighteenth century. Long iron hinges, perhaps dating to the eighteenth century, survive only on front doors;

locks on both sets and the hinges on the courtyard doors are recent. The *anse de panier* arch, also known as a three-centered or basket-handle arch, used in Castle Brew for windows and doorways, is seen in Irish Palladian manors. The arches extend beyond the rectangular window's width, acting as an entablature, mimicking pediments in some Irish homes. None of the original glass panes remain. The arched entablatures were cemented, and all of the windows have been reframed for contemporary jalousie windows and screens, most since 2019.<sup>32</sup> Previously, hinged, wavy-glass-paned windows graced part of the residence, perhaps dating to Brew's time.<sup>33</sup>

Floor plans for both stories are similar. Entrance doors open into a large grand hallway with spacious chambers on each side. The upstairs retains its original timber floors. Two rectangular doorways with arched transoms, echoing the shape of the windows, lead from the hall into these chambers. Transoms originally had glass panes. Chambers are roomy and light, thanks to high flat ceilings and large windows. Likely, Brew used the northern room for living quarters and the southern for business, where Brew could view what was happening at the fort, beach, and in his courtyard. Possibly, a door on the right side facing the southern wall once led to a balcony and/or stairway to a lower level. On the ground floor, two wide *anse de panier* arches separate the hall and chambers, dark and likely used for storage.<sup>34</sup>

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### *Courtyard, Warehouses and Repairs*

While visitors may enter from the façade, they may also have been invited through the south entrance into a courtyard and through the upper-story back (west) entrance (Figure 12.2). A grand staircase extends from the courtyard to a veranda.<sup>35</sup> Five *anse de panier* arches spring from half piers spanning the veranda, while arches on each side catch north-south breezes. A checked pattern of black and white marble tiles, placed diagonally, lines the path from steps to double wooden doors, further impressing visitors.<sup>36</sup> The stairway was constructed from stone overlaid with imported brick. The railings with their lancet pattern, likely constructed with imported brick, have, at least since 2008, been plastered over with cement. The same construction materials and lancet pattern were used in the steps leading to the southern-facing wing. Those steps were also covered with alternating black and white tiles. This part of the southern wing was likely constructed during Brew's time.

*Anse de panier* arches were also used on the innermost southern wall and two perpendicular walls leading into the courtyard (Figure 12.3). While the walls are of stone nog, bricks line the arches. Stone nog appears over the arch under the stairway, only on the right side next to the southern wall. It seems likely that the bricks used to build the stairway were a later addition. Another wall, completely made from bricks, was built further west, connecting to the eastern stone nog wall with a staircase (Figure 12.4). This also appears to be a later addition. These walls present a confusing puzzle. Brew and subsequent owners left little written documentation of construction details.



*Figure 12.2* Rear façade of Castle Brew.

*Source:* Photo by author, 2008.

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*Figure 12.3* Courtyard facing south.

*Source:* Photo by author, 2009.



*Figure 12.4* Southwest courtyard.

*Source:* Photo by author, 2009.

Castle Brew had its own warehouses behind the main house (see far right Figure 12.3), where enslaved house servants may have had sleeping quarters (or on the ground floor of the manor). Constructed in stone nog, the one-story building extends across the entire back side of the property from the brick wall toward the



north, ending in line with the northern side of Brew's manor. Bricks lined doorways and windows. However, the upper portions of this building today have reddish stones. Likely, the original buildings suffered and required a later renovation to make them useful. A. D. C. Hyland's drawing of the complex did not complete the northern end of this building. Possibly, the renovation was completed by the Ghana Museums and Monuments Board (GMMB) in the 1960s.

These later renovations are confirmed by aerial photography by Pat Carter published in Priestley's book, showing that prior to the GMMB renovation, the southern wall extended to two stories, but that second story was in ruins. The second-story wall appears to have extended from Brodie Cruickshank's manor addition to the end of the southern wall. The GMMB probably removed the upper story (likely it was unstable), added the brick staircase attached to Cruickshank's extension, and added the brick balustrade with rectangular-shaped cut-outs (not lancets) to the southern wall present in my visits between 2007 and 2014, but removed and replaced with concrete block by 2016. Castle Brew's complex is difficult to understand in Carter's photographs. The brick staircase on the inner wall, with a balustrade made from bricks with lancet openings, was present (see Figure 12.3). The lancet pattern matches those in the original stairways. The inner west wall is present, but no warehouse building appears, though foundations may be visible.

An upper-story ruin on the northern and western walls existed during my visits (2007–2016). In Carter's photograph, these ruins were part of a two-story wall extending over the brick wall connecting to the other side of the staircase. The current brick wall extends higher than the area where the GMMB built their brick balustrade, so it is plausible that a two-story building with stairs leading to it was once present on the southwest side of the complex.

Hyland drew the inner walls to show construction during Brew's eighteenth-century occupation, while the "stores or servants' quarters" and the southernmost building were constructed later. The narrative is more complicated. While brick walls and staircases may date to the nineteenth century, they likely replaced earlier construction. Conceivably, the lower stone nog walls of the warehouse may have been constructed in either century. The southernmost building uses stone nog. In Carter's photographs, the second-story ruins could be understood as original stone nog construction. However, all of these use bricks to fully line the windows and openings, while the anse de panier arches in the courtyard's southern wall, under the western wall, and under the eastern staircase use brick only to outline the arch and not to edge the sides, making it different than the technique used in the southernmost building and on the two-story wall ruins. This assemblage suggests later, likely nineteenth-century, additions. Brew constructed warehouses on the premises, and possibly the change in stonework marks a renovation using part of the old, which were ruinous, structure(s) or the entire structure was built over the general area of Brew's building(s). Brew must have had an upper-story balcony at least, using the courtyard's southern wall, with a stairway for access, for Brew had numerous guns/cannons that would have been placed on the upper story, aimed at the beach.

Other walls exist in the courtyard. Ruins from a previous wall extend into the courtyard, bisecting the space and emanating from the stairs leading into the house (see Figure 12.3). This stone nog wall appears to have been made during Brew's time but does not appear on Hyland's plan. Finally, the courtyard may have been paved with stones in the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries. Today, cement mortars the older flat stones in place.

As further evidence of later construction repairs, rocks uncharacteristically jut out from the northeastern corner of the exterior of the main house. This evinces a poor restoration overseen by Horatio Smith, Brew's assistant in 1769 and Samuel Smith's cousin (see Figure 12.2). Brew and Horatio Smith had strong differences of opinion about money owed to Smith before Brew's death.<sup>37</sup> Horatio got his revenge when he purchased Castle Brew in 1778 for the local balance owed of £115 and the £7,000 owed in London to creditors.<sup>38</sup> He renamed the mansion Smith House and remained in residence as a private trader, eventually working for The Company. The house fell into poor condition; a section collapsed in early November 1778. Governor Miles wrote, "What I've long dreaded is now come to pass: the fall of Castle Brew!"<sup>39</sup> After a visit to the property, The Company officer wrote, "The East Room at the end of the Hall is in part down and carried with it as far as one window of the Hall went: the remaining part of the Hall seems to stand firm."<sup>40</sup>

### Enslaved Labor at Castle Brew

Various parts of the complex served different purposes in social groups that lived and worked there. Brew's life was complicated with family, clerks, cooks, servants, and house slaves working (and many living) within the walls of the main house.<sup>41</sup> According to Evans, "If anything is described by an architectural plan it is the nature of human relationships, since the elements whose trace it records – walls, doors, windows and stairs – are employed first to divide and then selectively to reunite inhabited space."<sup>42</sup>

The upstairs hall and chamber encompassed a reception area, business office, and personal quarters. While relationships between European men and African women on the Gold Coast were common, such marriages may or may not have been based on love or even consent. They were often commercial unions providing benefits to both parties and their mixed-race children.<sup>43</sup> Brew was married twice to local women. He had two sons from his first marriage, and both were educated in England. After they returned in 1768, they worked for their father but did not appear in his will.<sup>44</sup>

While he moved in indigenous elite circles, it is difficult to interpret how Brew related to humans he bought and sold. The courtyard and perhaps warehouses functioned as Brew's holding area for enslaved peoples. Brew, like other private traders then, viewed enslaved peoples no differently than other trade goods. Trade was an economic venture. However, Brew wrote in a 1770 letter that he was "a friend to liberty" and hated "logs and chains."<sup>45</sup>

Priestley states that this comment relates to debts incurred through the Smith partnership.<sup>46</sup> Although "chains" would be understandable in this context, "logs"

seem odd. Possibly, he was referring to the heavy yokes, or coffles, placed between captives who were force-marched to the coast. Yokes bound captives around the neck with two pieces of wood fastened to each other at the ends.<sup>47</sup> Brew's reference to liberty may have concerned ideas circulating in pre-revolutionary New England, where he had contacts. Like other private traders, Brew was caught up in the trade with its economic profits yet was not unaware of the brutality.

It is possible Brew's attitude toward his own enslaved labor was different from those he held for trade. While "an African complement of house slaves" worked in Castle Brew,<sup>48</sup> they may have followed a local or a fort system of enslavement. Larger coastal forts had over 100 enslaved men, women, and children who spent their entire lives in service. The men in English forts were highly skilled, apprenticed from an early age in carpentry. Slave wages were paid in goods and according to age and sex. They were allowed to supplement these wages by taking work, often constructing "European-style houses" outside their official working hours. Strict rules directed their treatment as the best workmen were irreplaceable. They remained in service after the abolition of the slave trade since, according to Lawrence, "they were well paid and cared for, and could look forward to a comfortable retirement."<sup>49</sup>

West African slavery was multifaceted, "highly structured, regulated, and restrictive," in contrast to Anglo-American slavery, which was primarily economic. Intermarriage and periodic, rather than lifetime, service was common. The local enslaved often lived in the same homes with the family they served, usually in a room off the courtyard.<sup>50</sup> The names of Castle Brew's servants, enslaved or not, were not recorded. Likely, these people were of coastal, maybe Anomabo, heritage. Their treatment would have been more like forms of local slavery. Smith noted the "impoverished free would also volunteer to enslave themselves to principal families in a patron/client relationship. During the slaving era this was done to gain protection... A respected domestic slave may be included in family meetings but must consult their master about personal decisions from clothes worn and company kept to independent ventures."<sup>51</sup>

Castle Brew's enslaved domestics were surrounded by an art gallery, fine mahogany furniture, and bookcases filled with almost one hundred books they could not read. Fine dinners served by candlelight on fine china, glassware, linen (probably Irish), and silverware would have seemed curious compared to their backgrounds, yet they may also have felt a certain privilege to work in the manor. Certainly, they witnessed the harsh treatment of people enslaved and brought to the Anomabo fort or held at Castle Brew. They would have desired to separate themselves, as other locals on the coast did, from these *nnonkofo*.

### ***Nnonkofo* – the Enslaved Experience**

Europeans on the coast called northern local peoples by the Akan word for slaves: *nnonkofo* (singular, *odonko*), and considered them uncivilized and worthy of being enslaved. Centuries of commercial contact with Fante led Europeans to view coastal peoples as superior to *nnonkofo*.<sup>52</sup> Scholars have tried examining the history

of trade along the Gold Coast from the victim's perspective. While this essay will not attempt to address all their findings, it is important to understand the victims' journey to the coast and their experience within holding spaces using available first-hand accounts.

Scholars disagree on the source of enslaved labor in West Africa. According to Nelson, individuals sold into slavery in the eighteenth century were largely not war prisoners. Rather, they were the result of kidnapping and sometimes internal legal processes, debt, or famine. Kidnapping was often achieved by raiders setting a village on fire and capturing inhabitants fleeing their homes.<sup>53</sup> In contrast, other historians state that the majority of the enslaved originated as war captives supplied by the Asante, who were expanding their territory. Captives were brought to the fort in Anomabo "by Fante merchants, by small-time bush traders with one slave to sell, by brokers from the interior with coffles of slaves, and by Fante merchants who bought them from inland markets."<sup>54</sup>

The Kasena, Bulsa, Chiana, and Gwollu were some of the northern peoples of present-day Ghana who were captured. Others were forcibly marched from as far away as Timbuktu.<sup>55</sup> Nine major routes directed captives, bound to yokes, to the coastal forts. One route went through Salaga and Assin Manso and then to Cape Coast or Anomabo, two major centers in the slave trade. Some came from villages closer to the coast.<sup>56</sup>

Quobna Ottobah Cugoana (John Stuart), a Fante, described his experience as an enslaved person through his publications to abolish slavery in the 1780s. He and his playmates were tricked by local traders into following them down to Cape Coast, where he "saw several white people, which made me afraid that they would eat me, according to our notion as children in the inland parts of the country." The next morning, he was brought to the castle, where "the horrors I soon saw and felt, cannot be well described; I saw many of my miserable countrymen chained two and two, some hand-cuffed, and some with their hands tied behind." Cugoana was sold for a gun, cloth, and lead. He cried "bitterly" and was led to the prison.<sup>57</sup>

According to Lefebvre, every society and its respective town or city produces a space that holds onto pieces of memories from the individuals inhabiting it. "The preconditions of social space have their own particular way of enduring and remaining actual within that space... The task of architectonics is to describe, analyse and explain this persistence." If, as Lefebvre proposes, a space is filled with "magico-religious entities," rites and rituals, then the spaces with their spiritual essence survive. Thus, the architectonic space within and around the Brew complex is worthy of examining in terms of its historical senses of pride, conflict, subjugation, pain, and misery for the various peoples who inhabited that space. Furthermore, "the social control of space weighs heavy indeed upon all those" within. Social space is codified in terms of hierarchy and modes of conduct.<sup>58</sup> While Brew was the Governor, owner, trader, and master at the top of the hierarchy, others served underneath, including the lowest who were the enslaved, especially those soon to be traded to ship captains.

While individuals experience space differently, the reconstruction of the spatial experience on a physical and sensory level for those within Castle Brew's complex

can be estimated. In a NASA investigation on the effects of space travel on senses, visual perception and touch sensations are greatly altered. The principal investigator noted the study “focuses on the idea of multi-sensory interactions, how our senses combine to give us an understanding of our surroundings and our position in them.”<sup>59</sup> Certainly, equal disorientation happens when a person is forcibly taken from their homeland, made to suffer the tortures of the walk to the coast, and then placed inside a slave hole with a large crowd of other captives. Cugoano stated, “There was nothing to be heard but the rattling of chains, smacking of whips, and the groans and cries of our fellow men.”<sup>60</sup>

NASA scientists believe the body adapts to changed sensory input during long-duration missions, and when the crew returns to Earth and its gravity, they will again experience an “altered perception of motion, orientation, and distance.”<sup>61</sup> In the same way, every time the enslaved person was removed and placed into confined areas in terrifying conditions, they would experience altered perceptions, including when they arrived in a foreign land. Cugoano wrote about this alteration. “All my help was cries and tears, and these could not avail; nor suffered long, till one succeeding woe, and dread, swelled up another. Brought from a state of innocence and freedom, and, in a barbarous and cruel manner, conveyed to a state of horror and slavery.”<sup>62</sup> Spaces with so many suffering individuals would have absorbed this pain, emotional conflict, and disorientation. Pain lessens but does not dissolve completely. As Cugoano noted, “From the time that I was kid-napped and conducted to a factory, and from thence in the brutish, base, but fashionable way of traffic, consigned to Grenada, the grievous thoughts which I then felt, still pant in my heart; though my fears and tears have long since subsided.”<sup>63</sup> Similarly, the architectonic spaces hold onto the fears and pain of those who inhabited them, even from centuries ago.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, or PTSD, in veterans and child abuse victims has been shown by Van der Kolk to be held in the mind and body as trauma.<sup>64</sup> Since space can absorb the essence of this trauma from victims within, something of trauma persists in the architectonic spaces of slave holes and other holding areas. Coupled with the pride of accomplishment his father had not achieved but realized by the son Brew, the architectonic space of Castle Brew would have had a rather schizophrenic sensibility. The senses and experiences of future occupants, including school children in the early twenty-first century when I first encountered the complex, are layered in this architectonic space, resulting in a sensory experience of accumulation, of dreams realized and dreams devastated.

## Conclusion

Through his complex, Brew erected a statement of status and power on the Gold Coast, directly confronting British and other European powers on the coast. While Castle Brew visually challenged these merchant companies, his fort-like complex also stood to remind the local people of his power. Castle Brew was Brew’s dream house, but it was also a place of lost dreams for those held captive.

Understanding the multivalence of Castle Brew's complex as a space for Brew's pride in achieving his dreams of success and as a space for disappointed hopes and terror complicates the context of the eighteenth-century transatlantic slave trade and humanizes these spaces. Such environments were also a part of the larger international trading scheme that provided a large source of income for a few and brought misery to millions. Castle Brew and its spaces will be transformed by successive owners and eventually willed over to the local Blankson family.

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## Notes

- 1 A "slave hole" refers to a chamber used to hold slaves. See Louis P. Nelson, "Architectures of West African Enslavement," *Buildings & Landscapes: Journal of the Vernacular Architecture Forum* 21, no. 1 (Spring 2014): note 2, p. 120; and Arnold Walker Lawrence, *Fortified Trade-Posts: The English in West Africa, 1645–1822* (London: Cape, 1969), 181, 223.
- 2 Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Oxford and Cambridge: Blackwell, 1974. Trans and reprint 1994).
- 3 Margaret Priestley, *West African Trade and Coastal Society: A Family Study* (London: Oxford, UP, 1969), 30–32, 34.
- 4 Eveline C. Martin, *The British West African Settlements 1750–1821: A Study in Local Administration* (London: Longmans, Green and Co. Ltd., 1927; reprint, New York: Negro Universities, 1970), 13–14; and Priestley, *West African Trade and Coastal Society*, 36–37.
- 5 Priestley, *West African Trade and Coastal Society*, 37–38.
- 6 *Ibid.*, 14, 38–39; Newell Flather, "Anomabu: The History of a Fante Town on the Ghana Coast," Master's thesis, Columbia University, New York, 1966, 59–60, 136; and Henry Meredith, *An Account of the Gold Coast of Africa* (London: Thomas Nelson, 1812; reprint, London: Frank Cass, 1967), 152.
- 7 Priestley, *West African Trade and Coastal Society*, 33–34, 42–44.
- 8 *Ibid.*, 5, 43–45, 47, 58.
- 9 *Ibid.*, 49–50.
- 10 *Ibid.*, 47, 51–53, 72, 77.
- 11 *Company of Royal Adventurers of England Trading with Africa and Successors, Records – Detached Papers*, Letter from Richard Brew to Richard Miles, 22 February 1776, National Archives, Kew London [T 70/1534].
- 12 Elizabeth Donnan, *Documents Illustrative of the History of the Slave Trade to America*, vol. 2 (New York: Octagon, 1965), 482; and Randy Sparks, *Where the Negroes Are Masters: An African Port in the Era of the Slave Trade* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 2014), 76.
- 13 *Ibid.*, 58–61.
- 14 *Ibid.*, 75–77; Sparks, *Where the Negroes Are Masters*, 90.
- 15 After Kurentsi passed away, Brew kept in good graces with his successor Amonu Kuma. Kurentsi and Kuma allowed and participated in the slave trade. Priestley, *West African Trade and Coastal Society*, 15.
- 16 The bankruptcy included Castle Brew and all of the property connected to Smith and Brew Company. Brew made an agreement to purchase the house but died on August 5, 1776, before it was carried out. *Ibid.*, 63–64, 80.

- 17 Dutch merchant Willem Bosman described Barter's house as "not unlike a small fort" near Cape Coast Castle. Willem Bosman, *A New and Accurate Description of the Coast of Guinea* (London: Printed for James Knapton . . . and Dan, 1705; reprint, New York: Barnes & Noble, 1967), 104.
- 18 J. D. Fage and Roland Oliver, eds., *The Cambridge History of Africa Volume 4 c. 1600 – c. 1790* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 308.
- 19 Priestley, *West African Trade and Coastal Society*, 57.
- 20 Ibid., 57.
- 21 Ibid., 34–35.
- 22 "Will of Richard Brew, Free Trader of Annamaboe, Africa," National Archives, Kew, London [PROB 11/1077/304].
- 23 Governor Richard Miles and Committee member Jerome Bernard Weuves completed the sale of Castle Brew's effects and the subsidiary factories. *Company of Royal Adventurers of England Trading with Africa and Successors, Records – Detached Papers*, "Inventory of the Effects of Rich Brew . . .," 5 August 1776. National Archives, Kew, London [T 70/1534].
- 24 Ibid.
- 25 Dolores O'Donoghue, "Palladianism in Ireland," *Anthology* 15 (Summer 2021), 44; and Dan Cruickshank, *A Guide to the Georgian Buildings of Britain & Ireland* (London: George Weidenfeld and Nicolson Ltd., 1985), 56.
- 26 "English Neo-Palladian and Georgian," *WordPress*, 8 June 2011. <https://s7hauhe.wordpress.com/2011/06/08/english-neo-palladian-and-georgian/>.
- 27 Hugh Weir, *Houses of Clare* (Whitegate, County Clare: Ballinakella, 1986), introduction, n.p.
- 28 Edward E. Crain, *Historic Architecture in the Caribbean Islands* (Gainesville, FL: University of Florida, 1994), 61–62. Priestley erroneously states that Castle Brew was a "brick structure." Priestley, *West African Trade and Coastal Society*, 57.
- 29 Weir, *Houses of Clare*, 6.
- 30 Weir, *Houses of Clare*, introduction, n.p.
- 31 The hip roof was probably replaced in the early twentieth century when imported sheeting became a popular roofing material. The hip roof can be viewed in an aerial photograph taken by Pat Carter in Priestley, *West African Trade and Coastal Society*, Fig. 2, opposite page 33.
- 32 Castle Brew fell into the hands of the Ghana Museums and Monuments Board during a tourist-oriented renovation in the 1960s. In the twenty-first century, the Blankson family instigated a court case to have ownership and occupation returned to their family. The case was won in c. 2016, and several renovations of the long-neglected property ensued.
- 33 I am grateful to the late Roy E. Graham, Historic Preservation, University of Florida, for his comments on the façade's architectural features on April 17, 2009.
- 34 Arches are denoted on A. D. C. Hyland's ground floor plan.
- 35 In Ireland, Palladian country homes situated stairs to the main entrance on the front façade; Brew chose instead to place stairs on the back of his grand house. He may have been inspired either by the staircases inside the Anomabo fort or by local vernacular architecture that favored stairs into the upper story from the courtyard.
- 36 Similar alternate black and white marble tiles were used for a balcony at Cape Coast Castle and in old homes in Elmina. Arnold Walker Lawrence, *Trade Castles & Forts of West Africa* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1964), 355.
- 37 *Company of Royal Adventurers of England Trading with Africa and Successors, Records – Detached Papers*, Letter from Richard Brew to unknown addressee. 12 March 1776. National Archives, Kew, London [T 70/1534].
- 38 Priestley, *West African Trade and Coastal Society*, 87.
- 39 *Letters to and from Thos. Westgate*, Letter from Richard Miles to Thomas Westgate. 5 November 1778. National Archives, Kew, London [T 70/1480].
- 40 *Letters to and from Thos. Westgate*, Letter from Thomas Westgate to Richard Miles. 6 November 1778. National Archives, Kew, London [T 70/1480].

- 41 It is not clear if Brew had servants separate from those enslaved. For more on the clerks in Brew's employ, see Donnan, vol. 3, 186–187. Priestley, *West African Trade and Coastal Society*, 108.
- 42 Robin Evans, "Figures, Doors and Passages," *Architectural Design* 48, no. 4 (1978): 267.
- 43 Priestley, *West African Trade and Coastal Society*, 106–107; and Sparks, *Where the Negroes Are Masters*, 80–85.
- 44 Priestley, *West African Trade and Coastal Society*, 108.
- 45 *Letters to and from Richard Brew*, Letter from Richard Brew to William Devaynes. 2 May 1770. National Archives, Kew, London [T 70/1531].
- 46 Priestley, *West African Trade and Coastal Society*, 112.
- 47 Nelson, "Architectures of West African Enslavement," 93.
- 48 Priestley, *West African Trade and Coastal Society*, 69.
- 49 See Lawrence, *Trade Castles*, 46–56.
- 50 Anne C. Bailey, *African Voices of the Atlantic Slave Trade: Beyond the Silence and the Shame* (Boston, MA: Beacon, 2006), 157–158.
- 51 Victoria Ellen Smith, "If Walls Had Mouths: Representations of the Anglo-Fante Household and the Domestic Slave in Nineteenth-Century Cape Coast (Ghana)," Ph.D. diss, University of Warwick, Coventry, 2011, 58.
- 52 Bayo Holsey, *Routes of Remembrance: Refashioning the Slave Trade in Ghana* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago, 2008), 47–50.
- 53 Nelson, "Architectures of West African Enslavement," 90–91.
- 54 Sparks, *Where the Negroes Are Masters*, 123, 135–136.
- 55 Nelson, "Architectures of West African Enslavement," 92–93.
- 56 Akosua Perbi, *A History of Indigenous Slavery in Ghana* (Accra, Ghana: Sub-Saharan Publishers, 2004), 40.
- 57 Quobna Ottobah Cugoano, *Thoughts and Sentiments on the Evil of Slavery and Other Writings* (London, 1787; reprint New York: Penguin, 1999; trans. Vincent Carretta), x, 14.
- 58 Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 229–233.
- 59 Melissa Gaskill, "Making Sense of Human Senses in Space," 18 November 2018. NASA. [www.nasa.gov/mission\\_pages/station/research/news/human\\_senses\\_in\\_space](http://www.nasa.gov/mission_pages/station/research/news/human_senses_in_space).
- 60 Cugoano, *Thoughts and Sentiments on the Evil of Slavery and Other Writings*, 15.
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