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Intro to MIAP- Group Project
Gold Coast Builders
October 26, 2010

Gold Coast Builders is an 11-minute film produced by UK's Ministry of Information during British Colonial rule in Ghana, a British colony then referred to as the Gold Coast. The following paper traces the history of Ghana to provide context for both general British Colonial era rule in Ghana and for the history of the film industry at the time, an industry that provided the space for the creation of this film. It will trace the research paths taken to gain insight on the history, ownership, and survival of this film as it made its way into our hands.

The Film, Briefly

Gold Coast Builders is a British-produced exploitation film examining construction practices in the Gold Coast following the founding of Achimota College. It places great emphasis on the influence of British teachers' instruction on how to manufacture and build with new materials, particularly brick, which allows for a much more solid and dependable structure than the huts that served as buildings prior to the introduction of the brick. The film, which was made available to us in DVD form, features a British narrator who describes the process of brick making while Ghanaians on screen are performing the work. While the film is very noticeably told from the British point of view, it is an interesting cultural and historical document as it portrays an important part of Gold Coast history while also documenting labor practices.

The film begins by showing a close-up of a map of Africa highlighting the Gold Coast region and situating the viewer geographically. The narrative is set up with a shot of the construction scene, and then the camera pans across the mud huts that serve as homes to Ghanaians to be replaced by brick homes made with the new knowledge of brick construction.

The viewer is taken step-by-step through the brick making process, and once the narrator has established just how important and beneficial the new construction practice is and will be for the people of the Gold Coast, at the end, he attributes credit to two British instructors. Only one instructor is named. The instructors are shown working alongside Ghanaians on a construction site while the narrator explains that the “expert” instructors are “pioneers” in teaching the indigenous people the building practices. This is not to say that the British filmmakers considered the Gold Coast natives to be inferior or that they did not value them; at one point, the workers are referred to as “artisans”. It is just notable that the film is made by the British with the purpose of glorifying the work they have done to improve what they deemed to be an impoverished community. The only real sense of Ghanaian culture is at the closing of the film, when traditional music is played in the final construction scene. Research suggests that the purpose of this film was not only to use it as ideological propaganda to the indigenous people of Ghana for further civilizing them in the ways of the British, but that it was also used in England and the United States as an educational tool over broadcast to the public and also in schools and libraries.

A Short History of Ghana- a British Colonial context

Present-day Ghana gains its name from the African empire that thrived until the 13th century. While it is known that there were many small African kingdoms in the region, little information is known about them. The region shares its early history with all of West Africa and it is widely thought that the first people in the region settled along the coastline.¹ By the 4th

¹ "Ghana." Encyclopædia Britannica. 2010. Encyclopædia Britannica Online. Retrieved October 18, 2010 from HYPERLINK
“<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/232376/Ghana>”

century, the Kingdom of Ghana was one of the most powerful African empires. At the time it was far more developed than any European country and is known to have used metals, have a stable economy and a set of laws in place.² Ghana was the title of the kings who ruled the kingdom. The Empire was in the Sahel and included most of present-day Senegal and some regions of Mali and Mauritania, but did not reach as far south as Ghana does today. In the 13th Century, the Kingdom of Melle conquered the Kingdom of Ghana. As a result, populations slowly began migrating, and as time passed, the tribes and clans mixed and traditions began to change.³

A transformation in Ghanaian history came when the first Europeans, the Portuguese, arrived on the coast of Guinea in 1471, and by 1482, they had build their first fortress on the coast. Over time, other Europeans arrived attracted by the land's large pockets of ivory, timber, and especially gold, giving the area its name the Gold Coast. However, by the 18th century, the main commodity for trade turned from goods to slaves, trade that was often organized and instituted by tribe leaders in Ghana. During the 19th century, disputes between the indigenous people and the Europeans, in addition to battles among the Europeans, left the British as the dominant power in the region,⁴ and in 1874, the Gold Coast was officially proclaimed a British crown colony; this marks the beginning of British colonial rule in The Gold Coast. The years of British administration of the Gold Coast during the twentieth century were an era of significant progress in social, economic, and educational development; railroads and roads were built, postal

² Ghana Web. Retrieved October 18, 2010 from HYPERLINK
“<http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/history>”

³ “Ghana”. Encyclopædia Britannica. 2010. Encyclopædia Britannica Online. Retrieved October 18, 2010 from HYPERLINK
“<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/232376/Ghana>”

⁴ The Crawford Homepage. Retrieved October 18, 2010 from HYPERLINK
“http://crawfurd.dk/africa/ghana_timeline.htm 18 Oct. 2010”

services were initiated, and new crops were introduced.⁵ Additionally, a school, Achimota College, was founded in the city of Achimota in 1924. Achimota College was an elite secondary school based on the British model of public education.⁶

In the 1950s, British power in the Gold Coast began to wane. In 1952, Kwame Nkrumah became the first African prime minister and government leader. However, he was still forced to share power with the British governor. After numerous protests and riots, Ghana became the first of the colonies in Africa to declare independence on March 6, 1957.⁷

Ghana Film History- An Ideological Purpose

The British Empire, as articulated by its Colonial Office, saw cinema as both a commodity in the market and a tool for propaganda.⁸ After the First World War, American Cinema secured its place in the international market, impinging on the economic and political interest of the British Empire most significantly across its colonies. British concern however was not merely economic; they saw the unsavory image of the white race projected by Hollywood as a threat to the Empire's social and moral hold of its colonies.⁹ Sir Hesketh Bell stressed this concern in his report¹⁰ saying that, “the success of our government of subject races depends almost entirely on the degree of respect which we can inspire”.

Recognizing the power and influence of film, the Empire as early as the 1920s created

⁵ Retrieved October 18, 2010 from HYPERLINK
“<http://www.ghanamma.com/ghana/208-colonial-rule-in-ghana.html>”

⁶ Wallbank, Walter. “Achimota College and Educational Objectives in Africa” *The Journal of Negro Education* Vol. 4, No. 2 (Apr., 1935), pp. 230-245

⁷ *Ghana at a Glance*. Government of Ghana. 24 Oct. 2010. <http://www.ghana.gov.gh/>

⁸ R. Smyth, 'The Development of British Colonial Film Policy, 1927-1939, with Special Reference to East and Central Africa', *The Journal of African History*, Vol. 20, No. 3 (1979), 437.

⁹ R. Donald 'Films and the Empire', *Nineteenth Century*, c, 596 (October 1926), 497.

¹⁰ H. Bell, 'Minority Report', *The Film in National Life*, (London, 1932), 133.

programs and measures to control and censor cinematic activities in its colonies. However, it was only during the late 1930s that the Empire began utilizing the medium, creating films for propaganda disguised as education.¹¹ In these films, a clear juxtaposition is made between the Empire as the harbinger of civilization and the colonies as backward superstitious communities.¹² As such, film was utilized for 'governmental and imperial interests, employed to create loyal subjects.'¹³

In 1935, the Colonial Office of the British Film Institute embarked on a project to test out how to utilize films precisely for imperialistic reasons. The project was called the Bantu Educational Kinema Experiment (BEKE). The program, through the production and distribution of films, aimed "to educate adult Africans to understand and adapt to new conditions."¹⁴ It was "an experiment in production of films for educational and cultural adjustment of Africans to western society".¹⁵

BEKE made films that introduced Western ideas such as the post office, taxes, and progress. There were instructional films as well that aimed to teach better agricultural practices such as growing coffee under a banana shade and marketing coffee. Health issues and concerns

¹¹ B. Meyer, Ghanaian Popular Cinema and the Magic in and of Film, Originally published by The Research Center Religion and Society, a part of the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Amsterdam. Retrieved October 19, 2010 from HYPERLINK "<http://www.africanfilmny.org/network/news/Fmeyer.html>" \l

"_ftn6"http://www.africanfilmny.org/network/news/Fmeyer.html#_ftn6

¹² M. Diawara, African Cinema. Politics & Culture. (1992), 3.

¹³ B. Meyer, Ghanaian Popular Cinema and the Magic in and of Film, Originally published by The Research Center Religion and Society, a part of the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Amsterdam. Retrieved October 19, 2010 from HYPERLINK

"<http://www.africanfilmny.org/network/news/Fmeyer.html>" \l

"_ftn6"http://www.africanfilmny.org/network/news/Fmeyer.html#_ftn6

¹⁴ M. Diawara, African Cinema. Politics & Culture. (1992), 1.

¹⁵ R. Smyth, 'The Development of British Colonial Film Policy, 1927-1939, with Special Reference to East and Central Africa', The Journal of African History, Vol. 20, No. 3 (1979), 450.

were also discussed, such as infant malaria and anesthesia.¹⁶

The project was short lived however given the difficulty to secure funding. It was found that it was easier to garner funds for films in defense of the Empire, to counter criticism of British neglect of the colonies, than it was to find money for films in aid of the development and education of the colonies.¹⁷ In 1937, the BEKE project ended and as the second World War loomed, the Empire found itself needing to explain the war to the Africans to be able to enlist their cooperation for the cause. The power and influence of cinema reasserted itself and it was used precisely for the needs of the Empire during the war.⁷

The Ministry of Information and The Colonial Film Unit

In the 1930s communications activities had become a recognized function of the British government, yet many departments had established their own public relations divisions and were reluctant to give this up to central control. In the years that followed, the British government prepared for a central publicity structure, later known as The Ministry of Information, as it fought against a well-funded and established Nazi machine.¹⁸ Planning for the Ministry of Information (MOI) began in October 1935 under the auspices of the Committee for Imperial Defense, largely conducted in secret due to war activities. Formed on September 4, 1939, the day after Britain declared war, the MOI was the central government department responsible for publicity and propaganda in WWII. Its initial functions were threefold and included news and press censorship, home publicity, and overseas publicity in allied and neutral countries. The

¹⁶ M. Diawara, *African Cinema. Politics & Culture.* (1992), 2.

¹⁷ R. Smyth, 'The Development of British Colonial Film Policy, 1927-1939, with Special Reference to East and Central Africa', *The Journal of African History*, Vol. 20, No. 3 (1979), 449.

¹⁸ Larson, Cedric. "The British Ministry of Information" *The Public Opinion Quarterly* Vol. 5, No. 3 (Autumn, 1941), pp. 412-431

Minister took over the powers of the Home Secretary under defense regulations in respect of press censorship and became responsible for the collection and transmission of war news. The MOI mobilized public opinion through iconic campaigns, such as "Make Do and Mend" and "Dig For Victory".¹⁹

In September 1939, the Ministry assumed certain emergency powers to control the BBC, formerly exercised by the Post Office, and in April 1940, it took over the former Post Office Film Unit. Threatened by censorship, the press reacted negatively to the MOI, and as a result, it underwent many structural changes throughout the war.

Under the Ministry of Information, the British Colonial Film Unit (CFU) was established in 1939 in expedience of the war. It was to provide propaganda for imperial defense purposes directed to Africans and other illiterates. The films contained materials justifying the war, celebrating the heroes, bastardizing the enemies, and ultimately soliciting support from the colonies.²⁰ CFUs were established all over Africa, including one specifically in the Gold Coast.

The first director of CFU, William Sellers, was not fond of the strictly propagandistic nature of the Unit. He continued to rally for the educational development nature exemplified by the early BEKE films. He eventually succeeded in 1945 as the Second World War ended.

After the war, CFU moved away from war propoganda as it played a significant role in the Empire's mass education program. The program, which was aimed at adults, was to provide education towards the betterment of the community and the quality of life. The underlying goal was to “engage the community to become active participants towards citizenship and eventual

¹⁹ “Before COI: 1850s-1946” COI. Retrieved October 20, 2010 from HYPERLINK “<http://coi.gov.uk/aboutcoi.php?page=86>”

²⁰ C. Pike, 'Tales of empire: the colonial film unit in Africa, 1939-1950', *Afterimage*, Vol 17, (1989), 8.

democracy.”²¹

The productions of CFU, echoing that of BEKE, fell into categories such as health films, farming films, and village development films. The topics covered ranged from crafting better pottery to establishing better businesses. Instructional films regarding crop development, shelter construction and health treatment were abundant as much as the presentation of British etiquette.²²

CFU however was as unsuccessful as BEKE. Despite a considerable flow of funds, the films created by the units were not able to influence the colonies as much as they hoped. The didactic and patronizing tone of the films did not engage the Africans that were in the verge of Africanization and eventual democracy.²³ Films produced by CFU were described to be “boring and clumsy”²⁴ that “did not have sufficient understanding of the customs and culture of the people for whom the films were made”²⁵

According to Morton-Williams, these films are basically a “demonstration of the superiority of Western knowledge and of how sticking to traditions not only implies backwardness, but also leads to ill health and poverty.”²⁶ These films aimed to establish authority and righteousness on the basis of the exposure of African culture and beliefs as

²¹ R. Smyth, 'The Post-war Career of the Colonial Film Unit in Africa: 1946-1955', *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, 12:2 (1992), 163

²² B. Meyer, *Ghanaian Popular Cinema and the Magic in and of Film*, Originally published by The Research Center Religion and Society, a part of the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Amsterdam. Retrieved October 19, 2010 from [HYPERLINK "http://www.africanfilmny.org/network/news/Fmeyer.html" \l " ftn6" http://www.africanfilmny.org/network/news/Fmeyer.html# ftn6](http://www.africanfilmny.org/network/news/Fmeyer.html)

²³ R. Smyth, 'The Post-war Career of the Colonial Film Unit in Africa: 1946-1955', *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, 12:2 (1992), 168-169

²⁴ M. Diawara, *African Cinema. Politics & Culture*. (1992), 4.

²⁵ W. Sellers, 'The production and use of films for public informational and educational purposes in British African Territories', *Rencontres Internationales, Le Cinema et l'Afrique au Sud du Sahara*, (1958), 38

²⁶ M. William, 'Cinema in Rural Nigeria. A Field Study of the Impact of Fundamental-Educational Films on Rural Audiences in Nigeria', *West African Institute of Social and Economic Research, University College, Ibadan*. (1953).

backwards and false. To add to this, Manthia Diawara considered CFU as “paternalistic and racist” as the films “turn back film history and develop a different type of cinema for Africans because they considered the African mind too primitive to follow the sophisticated narrative techniques of mainstream cinema.”²⁷

By 1950, CFU slowly ceased to produce instructional films. They once again switched goals, concentrating instead in assisting the establishment of local directors and cinematic movements through film production education and training. By 1955, CFU ceased to exist and African Cinema began to take shape together with the continent's democracy.²⁸ In March 1946, the MOI was dissolved. Its residual functions passed to the Central Office of Information (COI), a central organization providing common and specialist information services.²⁹ After declaring independence, Ghana reinstated a Ministry of Information, whose mission today is still “the attainment of a free, united, informed and prosperous society with good governance through development communication”.³⁰

Researching the Film

The film’s opening credits state that *Gold Coast Builders* is a Ministry of Information (MOI) film with photography by John Page, commentary by R. Bidwell, editor Jim Mellor, and featuring commentator Frank Phillips. The film’s narrator, at the opening of the film, states, “this

²⁷ M. Diawara, *African Cinema. Politics & Culture*. (1992), 4.

²⁸ C. Pike, 'Tales of empire: the colonial film unit in Africa, 1939-1950', *Afterimage*, Vol 17, (1989), 9.

²⁹ “About COI” Retrieved October 20, 2010 from HYPERLINK
“<http://coi.gov.uk/aboutcoi.php> COI”

³⁰ Ghana Government. *Ministry of Information*. Retrieved October 23, 2010 from HYPERLINK

“www.ghana.gov.gh/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=317:ministry-of-information-&catid=74:ministries&Itemid=224”

is one of a series of films about Africa, and shows something of the way of life on the Gold Coast". This information alone gives the viewer some leads into proper film identification, which we followed first by looking up the film and the crewmembers in various film catalogs. The only catalog listing we were able to locate for the film is in the British Film Institute (BFI) catalog. The listing provides the year– 1945 – and the country – Great Britain. The editor and photographer, have a listing on the Internet Movie Database for the film *Here is the Gold Coast* (1947, UK, photography by John Page and editing by Jim Mellor)³¹. The BFI online *Film and TV Database* lists the film release date as 1945, shot on 16mm film, 990 ft long and 11 minutes in length.³² No credits are attributed to any of the film's crew for this entry, but the entry lists transmission dates in England on BBC for January 23rd, 1950 at 3:50pm and again on October 29th, 1952 at 4:05pm.

John Page is listed in the database, with a long filmography, not including *Gold Coast Builders*. We can deduce that the films he directed around the same period, documentaries about the Gold Coast, are possibly part of the series of films made about the Gold Coast and referred to by the narrator at the start of the film. All of the following films were also produced by England's Ministry of Information and the Colonial Film Unit in Ghana; these include *Here is the Gold Coast* (1947)³³, explaining the economic potential of the Gold Coast and rationalizing spending 3 million pounds over ten years on Gold Coast development; *Fight for Life* (1946)³⁴, showing agricultural benefits to rural parts of the northern Gold Coast areas; and *Achimota*

³¹ *Here is the Gold Coast*. IMDb. Retrieved October 20, 2010 from HYPERLINK “<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0039457/>”

³² *Gold Coast Builders*. BFI Film and TV Database. Retrieved October 22, 2010 from HYPERLINK “<http://ftvdb.bfi.org.uk/sift/title/221323>”

³³ *Here is the Gold Coast*. BFI Film and TV Database. Retrieved October 22, 2010 from HYPERLINK “<http://ftvdb.bfi.org.uk/sift/title/12616>”

³⁴ *Fight for Life*. BFI Film and TV Database. Retrieved October 22, 2010 from HYPERLINK “<http://ftvdb.bfi.org.uk/sift/title/206945/?availableLicense=yes>”

(1945)³⁵, documenting the native students at the college. All three of these films were also edited by Jim Mellor. Page is also listed as the director on *A Mamprusi Village* (1945)³⁶, exploring the Gold Coast system of indirect rule where the natives control taxation systems. Upon further research, other films found that were sponsored by the Ministry of Information and the Colonial Film Unit³⁷ around this time and filmed in the Gold Coast (Ghana) that could possibly be a part of this series include *Gold Coast People 1947* (1948)³⁸, an overview of people in the area, *Pottery in the Gold Coast* (1946)³⁹, exploring pottery lessons at Achimota College, and *Accra Market* (1948)⁴⁰, a tour of the Accra marketplace. We can speculate that these films would be part of the ‘series’ referred to by the narrator in the film, and they display a mixture of both propaganda films targeted for the British and for furthering the education of the natives. Most of them were shown in England in the early 50s on BBC channels.⁴¹ Many of these films, although not *Gold Coast Builders*, are available for licensing through BFI’s Archival Footage Sales, accessible through their online catalogue.

According to his BFI entry, John Page was born in John Kingsbury, England on April 22, 1915 and died in 1992.⁴² A search for an obituary was unsuccessful.

³⁵ *Achimota*. BFI Film and TV Database. Retrieved October 22, 2010 from HYPERLINK “<http://ftvdb.bfi.org.uk/sift/title/21270>”

³⁶ *A Mamprusi Village*. BFI Film and TV Database. Retrieved October 22, 2010 from HYPERLINK “<http://ftvdb.bfi.org.uk/sift/title/21260>”

³⁷ Colonial Office. BFI Film and TV Database. Retrieved October 22, 2010 from HYPERLINK “<http://ftvdb.bfi.org.uk/sift/organisation/8476?view=credit>”

³⁸ *Gold Coast People 1947*. BFI Film and TV Database. Retrieved October 22, 2010 from HYPERLINK “<http://ftvdb.bfi.org.uk/sift/title/221325/?availableLicense=yes>”

³⁹ *Pottery in the Gold Coast*. BFI Film and TV Database. Retrieved October 22, 2010 from HYPERLINK “<http://ftvdb.bfi.org.uk/sift/title/23862/?availableLicense=yes>”

⁴⁰ *Accra Market*. BFI Film and TV Database. Retrieved October 22, 2010 from HYPERLINK “<http://ftvdb.bfi.org.uk/sift/title/13284/?availableLicense=yes>”

⁴¹ see separate entries by film on the BFI Film and TV Database.

⁴² John Page. BFI Film and TV Database. Retrieved October 22, 2010 from HYPERLINK “<http://ftvdb.bfi.org.uk/sift/individual/8006?view=credit>”

Upon researching the Ministry of Information (MOI), which sponsored the film, in an effort to learn more about the production and copyright status of the film, the current Ministry of Information department was contacted, but as of yet, we have not gotten a response.

Distribution of *Gold Coast Builders*

From an imprint added to the DVD in the lower right corner of the screen that reads “MacDonald” and a sticker on the front of the DVD case that reads “Dr. J. Fred MacDonald, MacDonald & Associates”, the group discovered that the DVD was acquired by Mona Jimenez from Fred MacDonald, a private film collector in Chicago and a history professor. As a private collector, he started MacDonald & Associates, a company that licenses out stock footage from his collection. He has very recently sold his entire collection to the Library of Congress, so it is likely that when LC has cataloged the collection, information about the film will be more easily accessible. According to Dr. MacDonald, he acquired the film from the now defunct International Film Bureau, a film-rental company that was located in Chicago. The International Film Bureau had a long tradition of renting foreign educational shorts, especially titles from the UK and Canada, including *Gold Coast Builders*. Interestingly, Dr. MacDonald dates the film production to the mid- to late-1930s, while the BFI entry for the film states 1945. After inquiry, MacDonald admits that he dated the film based on the look and the topic of the film, yet speculates that the film was possibly made in the 1930s, postponed due to World War II, and then released in 1945 once money was freed up and national interest turned to internal growth, even in the West African colonies⁴³. Our research cannot confirm this speculation.

A third source dates the film at 1946. The Educational Film Guide, a list of 5041 films

⁴³ Correspondence with Frank MacDonald. 20 October 2010.

available to purchase or rent to screen for educational purposes. This annual guide was started in 1936; the 1947 version includes the *Gold Coast Builders*. The Guide lists a 16mm sound print for sale for \$22 and for rent for \$1. It is possible that other copies of the film exist because of this distribution. The Educational Film Guide was published in the United States and made available to educational organizations across the country for use in libraries and schools. It lists the distributor for the *Gold Coast Builders* at BIS, yet unfortunately provides no key for its acronyms.⁴⁴

Upon further research, the film was also listed on another educational distribution list, called *A first list of films suitable for use in the teaching of building*, published in the 1950 Journal of Vocational Education & Training, and distributed in England to teachers across the country through the Central Film Library in London. Here, the film is stripped of its colonial context and positioned as an educational film to assist in teaching brick making; the text for *Gold Coast Builders* states, “A film of one of the many activities sponsored by Achimota College, showing the making of bricks and the building of houses to replace mud huts. Well photographed, giving a strong impression of activity, this film is well worth showing in the secondary school”.⁴⁵ Released in 1946 as an ideological tool for Ghanaians under colonial rule, by 1950 *Gold Coast Builders* was made available through multiple distribution channels and copies were sent across the US and England for different purposes. It was also publicly broadcast through BBC channels.

⁴⁴ Educational Film Guide. Eds. Dorothy E. Cook, Barbara Borden. Originally published by The H.W. Wilson Company (New York, 1947). Retrieved October 20, 2010 from HYPERLINK

"<http://www.archive.org/stream/47educationalfilmg00hwwirich#page/n3/mode/2up>"

⁴⁵ Richards, A.G.G. 'A first list of films suitable for use in the teaching of building', *Journal of Vocational Education & Training*, (London, 1950) 2: 4, 43 — 48. Retrieved October 20, 2010 from HYPERLINK "<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03057875080000051>"

Currently, the National Archives of the UK does not have a copy in their collection accessible through their online catalogue.⁴⁶

Copyright

Begun in 1709 with the Statute of Anne, current UK copyright law is governed by the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act of 1988 in the UK, with minor revisions and amendments since then, mostly to account for the creation of the European Union. In 1995, the Duration of Copyright and Rights in Performances Regulations extended copyright protection for films to seventy years from the death of the last principal director, author, or composer. If the film's creator is unknown, then the film is protected for seventy years from its creation, unless its release date is known, and then it is protected for seventy years from its first release.⁴⁷

The Gold Coast Builders, as a work created by a UK Government Agency, was subject to Crown Copyright. All works created by the UK Government are owned by the State. Crown Copyright is legally defined under section 163 of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act of 1988 as works made by officers of the Crown while working for the State. All material created by civil servants, ministers, and government departments and agencies are covered under Crown Copyright in the UK.⁴⁸ Crown copyright has a shorter duration than non-Crown Copyright. Films that were made before June 1957 were protected under copyright law as sequences of photographs, since film was not yet specifically protected as a separate medium. As a set of

⁴⁶ National Film Archive catalogue. Accessed October 20, 2010 from HYPERLINK "<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/records>"

⁴⁷ Copyright, Designs and Patents Act. 1988. Section 304. Retrieved October 22, 2010 from HYPERLINK "<http://www.statutelaw.gov.uk/content.aspx?activeTextDocId=2250752>"

⁴⁸ The National Archives. Crown Copyright guidelines. Retrieved October 22, 2010 from HYPERLINK "<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/information-management/our-services/crown-copyright.htm>"

photographs published before June 1957, copyright of works during this period was held for only 50 years.⁴⁹ Thus, the Crown copyright on Gold Coast Builders has expired.

Conclusion and Findings

Gold Coast Builders has an interesting history. Made with Ghana's Colonial Film Unit under the Ministry of Information, an industry set up for political propaganda purposes as a result of World War II tensions, the film is a product of the post-war movement away from nationalist themes and towards a civilizing purpose of the indigenous people. Research suggests that the film was initially created to be shown to the people of Ghana to educate them on best practices for a more 'civilized' life. It is interesting that the film was then included in various educational indexes and made available publicly and as a teaching tool on various subjects across the US and England.

Part of a larger series, it is unclear what other films were a part of this collection and it is unknown exactly where these films would have been screened. Achimota College, run by the British at this time period, has strong connections to the film and the brick making process. They were instrumental in the setup of the brick making system described in detail in the film. It is even suggested that Achimota College sponsored the film in some way.

It is possible that film copies exist across the world; however, it is notable that the film will very shortly enter the Library of Congress as a part of MacDonald's inventory. On October 4th, 2010, Frank MacDonald announced that after 38 years of collecting, his entire archive, including supplementary documents, was sold to the Library of Congress and is currently in the

⁴⁹ National Archives. Copyright and Related Rights. Retrieved October 22, 2010 from HYPERLINK "<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/legal/copyright.htm>"

process of being moved to them.⁵⁰

Copyright laws state that the film is currently in the public domain. Unfortunately, research paths into the English men who were briefly referred to in the film as teachers and inquiries to the Ministry of Information and contemporary scholars in colonial era African studies fell short due to a shortage of resources and time.

⁵⁰ AMIA listserv-L. 22 October 2010.