

Afropolitans, Heritage Tourists, and Diaspora Returns to Africa

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Using ethnographic and historical examples from my research in Ghana, this lecture will bring the expansive field of heritage tourism studies of African diaspora populations into dialogue with a more recent but just as expansive discourse on “Afropolitanism.” I argue that together, both the diaspora heritage tourist and the African repatriate returns often work to sustain modes of neocolonialism and, ultimately, reify the racial and cultural differences that undergird traditional understandings of Africa’s postcolonial economic and political predicaments. My goal here is to provide a broader contextualization of diaspora returns to Africa that takes seriously not only their localized contours, complexities, and contradictions, but also the continued significance of global white supremacy and neoliberalism in shaping contemporary transnational Black identities.