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Comparative urbanization in Ghana and Kenya in time and space

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Abstract There are few inter-African country urban analyses because of the continent's enormous size and socioeconomic diversity, language barriers, and wide variations in national and regional urban research capacity. Nevertheless, comparative urban studies are critical in understanding contemporary African urbanization. In this comparative spatial and temporal analysis of Ghana and Kenya's urbanization, we find that both countries are urbanizing rapidly and are faced with many common urban problems. Moreover, Ghana is more urbanized than Kenya and has a larger indigenous urban imprint and a more widely dispersed urban pattern. Besides their physiographic and population conditions, we trace these countries' convergent and divergent urban trends to their shared but unique experiences of colonialism, nationalism and globalization.

Keywords Urbanization · Globalization · African Cities · Nairobi · Accra · Ghana · Kenya · Africa

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Introduction

Comparative studies of African urbanization are scarce (Peil 1976; Mabogunje 1990; Simone 2001; Briggs and Yeboah 2001; Mbiba and Huchzermeyer 2002; Grant and Nijman 2002; Beauchemin and Bocquier 2004; Murray 2004; Robinson 2006) because the Eurocentric framework that has dominated African urban analyses since the colonial era is fixated on African urban development relative to the West and is scarcely interested in intra-African urban variation (Myers 1994; Kironde 1992; Briggs and Yeboah 2001; Grant and Nijman 2002). Moreover, this situation exists because (i) language, transport, and communication barriers make it difficult for researchers from different language backgrounds and regions of Africa to share their findings (Mbiba and Huchzermeyer 2002; Rakodi 1997); (ii) the continent's limited urban research capacity and output is regionally imbalanced and is controlled by the western development agencies that fund it (Mbiba and Huchzermeyer 2002); (iii) there is insufficient African urban data (Rakodi 1997) and besides; (iv) it is difficult to make urban generalizations across such a vast and diverse continent (Rakodi 1997). Nevertheless, comparative African urban studies are needed to improve our understanding of the continent's contemporary urbanization and to promote Afrocentric approaches and solutions to its urban challenges.

Although the findings of this historico-spatial comparative urban study of Ghana and Kenya are unlikely to be applicable all over the African continent, we are hopeful that they will spur similar studies on other African countries. In this study, we focus on urbanization in Ghana and Kenya because of certain practical and strategic reasons. First, although both countries are former British colonies that have many urban, cultural, political, and socioeconomic similarities, they also have many differences that warrant in-depth analysis. Second, both countries are relatively well-researched and have enough comparative urban material. Third, this study builds and draws on the authors' previous urban research on Ghana and Kenya (Otiso 2003a, b, 2005a, b; Owusu 2005a, b, 2006).

The rest of the paper consists of a socioeconomic overview of Ghana and Kenya, a theoretical framework for the study, a review of the historico-spatial development of urbanization in Ghana and Kenya and a conclusion.

A brief socioeconomic overview of Ghana and Kenya

A synoptic socioeconomic portrait of Ghana and Kenya is presented in Table 1. As the Table shows, Ghana is about half the size of Kenya in land area and population, has more arable land and a higher population density than Kenya, a longer life expectancy at birth, a lower overall population growth, slightly more than twice Kenya's per capita GDP, a lower proportion of people in poverty, lower commercial energy use and, a lower overall literacy rate than Kenya. Ghana's stronger economic performance since the 1990s has contributed to its higher per capita GDP and lower poverty levels relative to Kenya.

The urban situation in both countries is shown in Tables 2–4. Notably, Ghana is more urbanized than Kenya, has a slightly lower urban population than Kenya given its lower total population, a higher urban growth rate, a higher number of urban areas, a lower total slum population than Kenya, and a lower urban population with access to improved sanitation than Kenya (Table 2). However, both countries have an even percent slum population and, like many other former British colonies in Africa, they both define urban areas as settlements with 5,000 or more people.

The degree of urban change in both countries in the post-independence period can be gleaned from Tables 3 and 4 which respectively present select

Table 1 Socioeconomic conditions in Ghana and Kenya

	Ghana	Kenya
Land		
Land area (sq km)	239,460	582,650
Arable land, hectares per person, 1997	0.16	0.14
Arable land, % of land area, 1997	12.53	7.03
Population		
Population, 2007	22,931,299	36,913,721
Population growth rate (%), 2007	1.9	2.7
Life expectancy at birth, 2007	59	55
Population density, persons per 1000 ha, 2000	888	529
Economic conditions		
GDP per capita (PPP US$), 2006	2,700	1,200
Population (%) below national poverty line, 1987–1997	31.4	42
Commercial energy use (kg of oil equivalent per capita), 1998	392.3	484.4
Motor vehicles per 1,000 people, 1995	7	14
Motor vehicles per kilometer of road, 1995	4	6
Social conditions		
General literacy rate (%)	57.9 (2000 estimate)	85.1 (2003 estimate)
Male literacy (%)	66.4 (2000 estimate)	90.6 (2003 estimate)
Female literacy (%)	49.8 (2000 estimate)	79.7 (2003 estimate)

Source: Derived from (1) UNCHS (2001), *Cities in a Globalizing World: Global Report on Human Settlements 2001*, Earthscan: London, Tables A.1, A.2, A.7, A.8, A.9, A.10, A.11, B.1 on pp. 268–306, (2) United States Central Intelligence Agency 2007, online Ghana and Kenya Fact Sheets, (3) Population Reference Bureau (2006), *2006 World Population Data Sheet*

Table 2 Urban conditions in Ghana and Kenya

	Ghana	Kenya
Urban population		
Urban population, 2006	10,089,771	13,288,939
Percent urban, 2006	44	36
Urban population, 2015	14,247, 000	16,752, 000
Percent urban, 2015	47.8	44.5
Urban growth rate, 2000–2015	4.1	3.5
Major urban agglomeration, 2010	2,873,000 (Accra)	3,346,000 (Nairobi)
Annual growth rate of largest city (%), 2005–2015	3.6 (Accra)	2.8 (Nairobi)
Major city's share (%) of national urban population, 2015	23.9 (Accra)	22.5 (Nairobi)
Number of urban areas, 2000	350	277
Slum population		
Slum population, 2001	4,993,000	7,605,000
Percent slum population, 2001	69.6	70.7
Slum population change, 1990 to 2001	+920,000	+3,647,000
Slum population change (%), 1990–2001	−10	+0.3
Select urban amenities		
Urban population with access to improved water source (%), 2000	87	87
Urban population with access to improved sanitation (%), 2000	62	96

Source: Derived from (1) UNCHS (2001), *Cities in a Globalizing World: Global Report on Human Settlements 2001*, Earthscan: London, Tables A.1, A.2, A.7, A.8, A.9, A.10, A.11, B.1 on pp. 268–306, (2) United States Central Intelligence Agency 2007, online Ghana and Kenya Fact Sheets, (3) Population Reference Bureau (2006), *2006 World Population Data Sheet*

urban data for Ghana and Kenya for the years 1969/1970 and 1999/2000. Data from these two periods is used because it is contemporaneous and comparable—more recent data is unavailable, incomplete, or incomparable. Moreover, the two datasets show urban change in Ghana and Kenya from the *national* to the *global* period (Grant 2006). For example, for reasons that will be explored later, Ghana (Table 3) experienced lower levels of urbanization than Kenya (Table 4) in the 1969–2000 period.

Theoretical framework

Our historico-spatial analysis of urbanization in Ghana and Kenya is broken into the pre-colonial, colonial, national, and global phases because each of these is characterized by distinct historical, economic, political, spatial, social, cultural and urban developments (Grant and Nijman 2002; Grant 2006). Essentially, these four phases "… reflect fundamental changes in the nature and extent of the global political economy and differential external linkages of the city" (Grant and Nijman 2002, p. 323). Thus, in the pre-colonial and national periods, urban development was relatively insulated from the global economy and, as a result, local and national forces were the primary drivers of urban form. In the colonial and global periods, urban development was/is relatively well connected to the global economy and global forces had/have a major imprint on urban form (Grant and Nijman 2002). Although many urban areas in Ghana and Kenya were founded in the colonial period, with a few dating to the pre-colonial era, much of their growth has occurred since independence i.e., in the national and global periods.

It is also noteworthy that while urban development in Ghana and Kenya in the colonial and national periods was largely informed by the *modernization paradigm*, their contemporary urban growth is heavily influenced by the neo-liberal *global cities* and *postmodern urbanism paradigms* even though the empirical work that underlies both of the latter approaches is largely drawn from cities in the developed world. Consequently, this paper has the added benefit of highlighting the operation of global forces in cities "well below the top" of the global urban hierarchy (Murray 2004, p. 2).

Table 3 Urbanization in Ghana and population growth in major town/cities 1970–2000

Town/city	1970 population	2000 population	Absolute change 1970–2000	% Change 1970–2000
Nkawkaw	23,219	43,703	20,484	88
Agona Swedru	21,522	45,614	24,092	112
Bawku	20,567	51,379	30,812	150
Ho	24,199	61,658	37,459	155
Sunyani	23780	61,992	38,212	161
Cape Coast	56,601	82,291	25,690	45
Koforidua	46,235	87,315	41,080	89
Obuasi	31,005	115,564	84,559	273
Ashiaman	22,549	150,312	127,763	567
Tema municipality	60,767	141,479	80,712	133
Sekondi sub-metropolis	63,673	114,157	50,484	79
Takoradi sub-metropolis	80,309	175,436	95,127	118
Tamale metropolis	83,623	202,317	118,694	142
Kumasi metropolis	346,336	1,170,270	823,934	238
Accra metropolis	624,091	1,658,937	1,034,846	166
Total	1,528,506	4,162,424	2,633,918	172
Ghana’s total population	8,559,313	18,912,079	10,352,766	121
Total urban population	2,473,641	8,283,491	5,809,850	235
Percent urban population	28.9	43.8	15	52

Source: Derived from Ghana Statistical Service (2005). *Ghana Population Data Analysis Report: Socio-Economic and Demographic Trends*, Vol. 1, Accra: GSS, p. 130

Historico-spatial development of urbanization in Ghana and Kenya

Pre-colonial urbanization

Despite the general dearth of knowledge on pre-colonial African urbanization, there is convincing archaeological and documentary support for its authentic existence and indigenous origin (Dickson 1971; Anderson and Rathbone 2000; Mabogunje 1990; Myers 1994; Coquery-Vidrovitch 1991). The rise of pre-colonial African urbanization is attributed to the advent of agriculture, regional and long distance trade within Africa and with other regions, and the creation of religious and administrative centers by powerful traditional chiefs (Coquery-Vidrovitch 1991; Nyakaana 1996). The emergence of long distance trade across several regions of Africa between the fifth and sixth centuries greatly aided pre-colonial African urbanization by creating the wealth that encouraged the growth of settlements into towns and states. Some of the pre-colonial long-distance trading centers had diverse populations and products and controlled extensive trade networks (Christopher and Tarver 1994; Anderson and Rathbone 2000; Gugler and Flanagan 1978).

In Ghana, the Trans-Saharan Caravan Trade between states in West Africa and North Africa greatly benefited the growth of towns like Salaga, Begho, and Bono Manso (Anderson and Rathbone 2000). In southern Ghana, there were major pre-colonial urban centers like Kumasi, the capital of the Ashanti kingdom that is noted for its multi-centered urban networks, a sophisticated polity, and well-organized social and political systems. At its peak, Kumasi was a complex multi-functional town as well as a spiritual and ritual center, and an important commercial entrepôt that had diverse technologies in iron smelting, stone building, coarse-mud architecture, brass working, gold mining, and glass smelting (Brand 1972; Anderson and Rathbone 2000).

In Kenya, pre-colonial urbanization mainly developed in the coastal zone as a result of triangular trade between East Africa, India, and Arabia; trade that led to the development of cities like Mombasa, Gedi, Lamu, and Malindi. Of these, Gedi is probably the

Table 4 Urbanization in Kenya and population growth in major town/cities 1969–1999

Town/city	1969 population	1999 population	Absolute change 1969–1999	% Change 1969–1999
Voi	5,313	33,077	27,764	522
Nanyuki	11,624	49,330	37,706	324
Embu	3,928	52,446	48,518	1,235
Kisii	6,080	65,235	59,155	1,848
Kakamega	6,244	74,115	67,871	2,326
Kitale	11,573	86,282	74,709	992
Kericho	10,144	93,213	83,069	1,145
Nyeri	10,004	101,238	91,234	1,461
Thika	18,387	106,707	88,320	679
Malindi	10,757	118,428	107,671	918
Meru	4,475	126,427	121,952	3,446
Machakos	6,312	143,274	136,962	3,028
Naivasha	6,920	158,678	151,758	1,483
Eldoret	18,196	197,449	179,253	889
Nakuru	47,151	231,262	184,111	390
Kisumu	32,431	322,734	290,303	895
Mombasa	247,073	665,018	417,945	169
Nairobi	509,286	2,143,254	1,633,968	321
Total	965,898	4,768,167	3,802, 269	394
Kenya's total population	10,942,705	28,686,607	17,743,902	162
Total urban population	1,079,908	5,429,790	4,349,882	402
Percent urban population	10	34.8	25	248

Source: Derived from (1) Kenya (1996a), *Kenya Population Census 1989, Analytical Report Vol. VI: Migration and Urbanization*, Central Bureau of Statistics, Ministry of Planning and National Development. Government Printer, Nairobi, Kenya; (2) Kenya (2001), *1999 Population and Housing Census*, Vol. 1, Central Bureau of Statistics, Ministry of Finance and Planning. Government Printer, Nairobi, Kenya

oldest having been founded in the thirteenth century by a Swahili culture that was urban, mercantile, literate, and Islamic. The city had well designed walls, palaces, mosques and homes. Its technological achievements included coin minting, copper works, building craftsmanship, boat building, and the spinning and weaving of cotton. It had very active external trade links involving the exchange of ivory, gold, copper, frankincense, ebony, iron, Chinese porcelain, and glazed wares from the Persian Gulf (Obudho 1983). Although there were inland urban places like Mumias, which started as a traditional administrative center, Kenya's early coastal pre-colonial urbanization did not spread inland until the mid-1800s when Arabs and Swahili traders started settling along the inland caravan trade routes (Obudho 1983; Nyakaana 1996).

Overall, unlike Kenya, Ghana has a longer history of widespread pre-colonial urbanization that still gives its urban areas a pronounced indigenous imprint. For example, the city of Accra developed from a sixteenth century indigenous settlement of the Ga people whose traditions and customs are still evident in the city's core area. Ghana's prominent indigenous urban imprint is also attributable to the country's fairly limited colonial European settlement (Brand 1972).

Colonial urbanization

The fairly limited scale of urbanization in Ghana and Kenya in the pre-colonial period gained new impetus and dynamism during the European colonial period because of the introduction of Western market-based economic enterprise that favored urban concentration (Little 1974). Consequently, the colonial era witnessed the creation of sustained urban settlements in 26 of contemporary sub-Saharan African countries

(Christopher and Tarver 1994). Even before the colonial era, European maritime trade had by the fifteenth century started to influence African urbanization by economically re-orienting the continent, especially in West Africa, to the coasts which soon became the centers of trade and wealth (Christopher and Tarver 1994).

In Ghana, this re-orientation severely undermined the growth of interior northern pre-colonial towns such as Salaga, Begho, and Yendi; all of which had developed as a result of the long-distance trade between pre-colonial southern Ghanian and other West African states and those in the Sahelian and Mediterranean regions of Africa (Songsore 2003). As these towns declined, numerous old and new towns along the coast blossomed, more so those that were connected to European maritime trade. A few of the pre-colonial northern Ghanaian urban centers such as Wa and Tamale also prospered as colonial administrative centers.

Because of Ghana's unattractiveness to large scale European settlement owing to its moist tropical climate, strong chieftain-centered political organization, relatively dense population, and well-developed indigenous farming systems; the country was indirectly colonized and integrated into the British Commonwealth through the African smallholder farm production system. Specifically, positive and negative incentives such as access to wealth and manufactured goods and the need for cash to pay taxes were used to co-opt and coerce African farmers to produce cash crops for export. In the process, an urban system that mostly served European colonial needs emerged (Mabogunje 1990; Owusu 2005a).

As in Ghana, the spatial framework of Kenya's current urban system was laid during the colonial period, especially after completion of the Kenya-Uganda railway in the early 1900s (Obudho and Aduwo 1990). Unlike Ghana, Kenya experienced large-scale colonial European settlement and commercial cash crop farming in the fertile and temperate central highlands region. As a result, towns such as Eldoret, Kitale, Nakuru, and Nyahururu were established to serve as agricultural collection and distribution centers and as bases for European settlement and administration of the Kenya colony (Nyakaana 1996). Since many of these towns were on the railway, it was to prove central in the urbanization of Kenya and in shaping its emerging colonial urban spatial structure. As in Ghana, the emerging urban centers grew at varying rates depending on their location, accessibility, resource base, level of economic activity in their hinterlands, and the population of Europeans and Indians in the surrounding regions (Obudho 1983; Nyakaana 1996). With respect to these factors, no colonial Kenyan town was as favored as Nairobi. Consequently, it quickly rose to and remains at the top of Kenya's urban hierarchy.

From the start, colonial Europeans were in the process of fashioning Ghanaian and Kenyan urban areas in their own image. Per the wisdom of the day, racial segregation for "hygienic" reasons was central in the development of the internal structure of colonial urban centers in both countries—though the process was more widespread in Kenya because of its larger European population. In Nairobi, for instance, Africans, Europeans and Asians were occupationally and residentially segregated; with Europeans controlling most of the economic and administrative resources and living in the best areas of the city e.g., Westlands, Lavington, and Karen. The Asians worked as merchants and artisans and mostly lived in the slightly better-off area of Pangani. The Africans were generally unwelcome in the city unless they had gainful employment skills and were mostly relegated to domestic, menial, and clerical jobs and confined to marginal and unserviced living areas in the eastern side of the city (Obudho 1997; Murunga 2005; Oyugi and K'Akumu 2007). As a result, few Africans ever considered Nairobi to be their permanent home during the colonial period and this is one of the reasons why Kenya is currently less urbanized than Ghana (Otiso 2005a, Table 2). Similarly, in Ghana, Accra's colonial white population lived in exclusive areas like Victoriaborg while the indigenous population was concentrated in separate but sub-standard housing areas (Hess 2000). Although racial residential segregation was abolished in both countries at independence, it was quickly replaced by segregation along income, ethnic, and religious lines, with former European residential areas such as Victoriaborg (Accra) and Lavington (Nairobi) being taken over by the post-independence elite (Hall 1988).

Moreover, many Ghanaian and Kenyan colonial cities developed enduring ethnic and religious enclaves—e.g., Accra's Hausa ethnic and Islamic enclaves of Accra New Town, Nima, Abeka, Adabraka, and Darkuman and Nairobi's Kibera

Nubian ethnic and Islamic enclave (Brand 1972; Harding 2002)—because many African groups seldom lived together prior to colonial rule.

The colonial period is also significant in these countries' urban development because it introduced them to the British urban planning, architectural designs, and building standards that continue to dominate their urban landscapes. These instruments were introduced as they were either used in the construction of new colonial urban centers like Nairobi or superimposed on preexisting indigenous cities like Accra (Hess 2000; Otiso 2005a). Anyhow, these instruments were to constrain the urban development of both countries in the post-independence era because they were ill-suited to local socioeconomic conditions (Otiso 2005a).

Overall, British colonial hegemony in both Ghana and Kenya led to a new form of urban and economic spatial structure that was anchored in maritime ports as well as inland areas with exploitable and exportable mineral, agricultural, and forestry resources (Mabogunje 1990). To facilitate economic growth in these resource-rich areas, the British colonial authorities provided them with critical infrastructure such as roads. They also established many administrative and bulking centers that soon became urban areas thereby boosting the urbanization of the resource-rich areas. In contrast, the resource-poor and peripheral areas of Ghana and Kenya—i.e., most of northern Ghana and virtually all areas outside of Kenya's fertile central highlands—mainly served as cheap labor reserves and were generally starved of colonial government investments. As a result, these areas are still much less urbanized today (Mabogunje 1989).

By the end of the colonial period in the late 1950s and early 1960s, Ghana had an urbanization level of about 23% compared to Kenya's level of only 8% (Ghana Statistical Service 2002; Kenya 1991); this partly being the result of colonial Kenya's more stringent restrictions on the indigenous population's urbanization and the country's lower level of pre-colonial urbanization (Otiso 2005a). Thus, although colonialism helped advance urbanization in both countries, their contemporary urban patterns and conditions are also attributable to their respective pre-colonial history, colonial experience and investments, and physiographic and population conditions.

In terms of urban patterns, both countries have a north-south increase in urbanization due to higher amounts of rainfall, quality of soils, and population densities in the south. Besides, both of their capital cities are in the south although Accra is on the coast while Nairobi is in the interior and more centrally located. While both countries have primate urban systems, Ghana has a dual-city primate system that is centered on Accra and Kumasi while Kenya has a classical single-city structure that is anchored in Nairobi.

Nevertheless, Ghana has a more widely dispersed urban system as well as a more uniform decrease in urbanization with increasing distance from the coast because of its relatively large ecumene or inhabitable territory. Conversely, Kenya has a more complex urban pattern due to its more diverse physiographic and population landscape. Thus, its urbanization is high in the coastal zone, low in the savanna and semi-arid region between the coast and the central highlands, and highest in the agriculturally productive central highlands to the north and west of Nairobi. Moreover, differences in physiographic and population distribution have given Ghana two major Atlantic ports, Accra and Takoradi, compared to Kenya's only major Indian Ocean port of Mombasa. Cities in both countries are also socio-economically segregated by income, ethnicity, and religion and Ghana's cities have a more pronounced indigenous imprint.

While cities in both countries are faced with the challenge of shanty settlements, this has traditionally been a bigger problem in Kenya than Ghana. This is because of Ghana's limited colonial displacement of the indigenous population, its greater official tolerance for substandard housing and, its communal and more equitable land tenure situation that makes it easier for rural-urban migrants to obtain land legally. Besides, since many Ghanaian rural-urban migrants also tend to return home eventually, they prefer renting to squatting thereby lowering the country's shanty problem (Peil 1976). The country's relatively higher per capita income also enables many more Ghanaians than Kenyans to access better housing (Table 1).

Post-independence urbanization: national and global periods

Post-independence urbanization in Ghana and Kenya can be divided into the *national* (independence to 1980s) and *global* (from the 1980s to the present) periods because of the major urban changes that both countries have experienced in response to national and global political and economic forces (Grant and Nijman 2002). Notably, both countries have since independence witnessed explosive urban growth,[1] a substantial increase in the number and size of their urban centers[2] especially the secondary ones, a greater geographic dispersion of their urbanization and, an increase in the global connectedness of their cities (Owusu 2005a; Otiso 2005b; Grant and Nijman 2002). These urban changes are the result of these countries' high national population growth,[3] their post-independence economic and urban development strategies and, economic globalization (Owusu 2005a; Otiso 2005b; Yeboah 2003, Tables 3, 4). In the next two sub-sections we examine the major urban developments in both countries in the national and global periods.

Urbanization in the national phase (independence to early 1980s)

Urban development in Ghana and Kenya in the national phase was relatively insulated from the global economy and was, therefore, largely influenced by local and national forces, notably the respective national governments' development policies (Grant and Nijman 2002). Soon after independence, Ghana adopted a socialist political and economic path while Kenya chose a laissez-faire path consisting of African capitalism and socialism but with a clear emphasis on economic growth over equity (Nugent 2004). While seemingly different, both economic paths are similar because they put a premium on industrialization, provision of educational and health facilities to the masses and, extension of the country's transport and communications networks. Because the paths were inherently urban-biased, they reinforced these countries' spatially inequitable colonial economic and urban development patterns (Mabogunje 1989).

Simultaneously both countries, more so Kenya, tried to implement equitable spatial development programs but were unsuccessful because of lukewarm implementation, the failure to devolve significant legal and fiscal authority to lower units of government, and political instability in the case of Ghana. Moreover, both countries' weak macro-economic performance for much of the 1970s and 1980s (Grant 1999; Nugent 2004), negatively impacted their urban development and management by, for instance, making it difficult for them to provide sufficient quantities of decent housing, jobs, and basic services to their urban residents. Consequently, their urban environment deteriorated noticeably as slum and squatter settlements proliferated and the maintenance and expansion of urban infrastructure fell behind the rate of population growth (Otiso 2005b; Owusu 2005b).

The provision of housing, basic services, and urban infrastructure also suffered in both countries because of their continued reliance on colonial urban planning regulations, by-laws, architectural styles, and housing standards (Hall 1988). Ideally, these colonial instruments should have been modified at independence to suit the new urban socioeconomic realities e.g., rapid urbanization (Oyugi and K'Akumu 2007). Instead, post-independence urban managers in both countries were slow to make the necessary changes for fear of undermining the 'modern development' of their cities. Moreover, the urban managers quickly got used to the privileged living conditions of the former exclusive white areas and became indifferent to the miserable living conditions of fellow citizens in the rapidly growing shanties. With no proactive measures of dealing with growing urban blight, the managers soon found themselves resorting to futile colonial shanty management strategies such as demolitions and forced evictions (Hall 1988).

Midway through the national period, however, Ghanaian and Kenyan urban managers begun to see the futility of intolerance towards shanties and official attitudes towards these areas began to shift towards acceptance. As a result, slum upgrades and low-income housing initiatives such as subsidized housing developments and site-and-service schemes began to materialize (Hall 1988; UN-Habitat 2006). However, this did not completely end demolitions and forced evictions nor necessarily result in the extension of basic urban services to many shanty areas. On the whole, the national phase is notable for

[1] On average 4% per year; from 1960 to 2000 Ghana and Kenya's respective urbanization grew from 23 to 44% and 8 to 35% (Ghana Statistical Service 2002; Kenya 1991, 2001) though much of their urban population still resides in a few cities (Tables 3 and 4).

[2] There were respectively 350 and 277 urban centers in Ghana and Kenya in 2000.

[3] For instance, Ghana's population rose from 9 to 19 million (111%) while Kenya's grew from 10 to 29 million (190%) between 1970 and 2000.

both countries' rapid urban growth and their inability to cope with it.

Urbanization in the current global phase (early 1980s–present)

Ghana and Kenya's weak macro-economic performance for much of the 1970s and early 1980s, coupled with other changes in the global political economy forced both countries to embrace World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) Economic Reform Programs (ERPs), especially the so-called Structural Adjustment Programs or SAPs (Grant 1999). Among others, SAPs emphasized state expenditure reductions, elimination of subsidies, institutional reforms centered on market liberalization and privatization and promotion of good governance (through promotion of political pluralism, accountability, and rule of law) and participatory approaches to development notably decentralization and local government reforms (Briggs and Yeboah 2001; Owusu 2006). These measures have since impacted Ghana and Kenya's urbanization in manifold ways.

The slight improvement in rural incomes due to the removal of price controls on agriculture and the withdrawal of food subsidies that had hitherto benefited major cities have led to the growth of small and medium-sized towns and some population decline in the major cities of both countries (Owusu 2006). However, population decline in Kenya's major cities is less pronounced because of its lukewarm adoption and implementation of SAPs (Grant 1999). Besides, there has been significant expansion of urban agriculture in both countries as urban households, more so poor ones, try to make ends meet (Maxwell and Armar-Klemesu 2000; Obuobie et al 2004).

Many urban residents in Ghana and Kenya have also been forced to be ever more creative in income generation due to growing levels of poverty and economic uncertainty. Although the informal sector has long been a source of livelihood for many urban Ghanaians and Kenyans, the sector has significantly expanded in the global era due to its absorption of retrenched formal sector workers and growing numbers of school leavers (Xaba et al. 2002; Nyangute 2002; Bocquier 2005; Mitullah 2003). Moreover, because of growing economic uncertainty, many urban Ghanaians and Kenyans, regardless of income, are increasingly engaged in "multiple modes of livelihood" i.e., the simultaneous pursuit of multiple economic activities, often in both the formal and informal sectors of the economy, for purposes of survival, capital accumulation, or simply minimizing economic vulnerability (Owusu 2007, p. 450). For instance, many formal sector workers are increasingly investing in small formal/informal businesses and acquiring additional jobs while growing numbers of urban households are economically diversifying by having various household members participate in diverse urban economic activities (Owusu 2007). Additionally, many urban households in both countries depend on remittances from the Ghanaian and Kenyan Diasporas that have grown significantly since the advent of the neo-liberal economic reforms (Grant 2007).

As the state has continued to withdraw from urban housing and service provision in the post-adjustment era, a variety of private and voluntary sector actors has increasingly taken its place (Otiso 2003b). In particular, the role of non-governmental and community-based organizations in urban governance, shelter, and service provision has increased significantly in both countries; triggering many questions about the service capacity, hidden agendas, effectiveness, local support base, fundraising capacity, accountability, transparency, cultural sensitivity, and financial chastity of many of these organizations (Otiso 2003b; Safo 2003; Sinclair 2003; UN-Habitat 2006).

The liberalization of Ghana and Kenya's investment and foreign currency regulations, as part of their neo-liberal economic reforms, has attracted many foreign companies to their major cities and has intensified and diversified these cities' and countries' links to the global economy (Grant 1999; Grant and Nijmen 2002). For instance, "… over 80% of all foreign companies … active [in Accra in 2002] were established since the initiation of reforms [i.e., SAPs] in 1983" (Grant and Nijmen 2002, p. 327). In Kenya, the recent development of export processing zones near Nairobi and Mombasa has similarly attracted many foreign companies (United Nations 2005).

The globalization of major Ghanaian and Kenyan cities is also evident in their changing urban landscape. Specifically, a post-adjustment spatially delineated foreign corporate presence is discernible in Accra and Nairobi more so in their new global Central Business Districts (CBDs) that link them to the global economy (Grant and Nijman 2002; Grant 2006, Kwama 2007). In Nairobi, the new CBDs have sprung up in Upper Hill, Muthaiga, Lavington, and Hurlingham (Kwama 2007) while Accra has similar developments at Ringway Estate and the Cantonments Road corridor from Osu to the Kotoka International Airport (Grant 2006). The suburban location of the new CBDs is no accident as it is designed to avoid the overcrowding, inadequate infrastructure, high rents, and parking problems of the central city (Grant 2006; Kwama 2007; Kitau 2007).

The increasing globalization of Accra and Nairobi is also driving their growth in the global era. One obvious manifestation of growth are the new large real estate developments of both cities in response to bent-up demand for housing due to many local investors' desire for more inflation-proof assets like homes, the enduring cultural preference for building/owning one's house, and demand for quality housing by foreign expatriates and Ghanaians and Kenyans in the diaspora (Briggs and Yeboah 2001; Grant and Nijman 2002; Kwama 2007; Oyugi and K'Akumu 2007; *Standard Real Estate*, February 8, 2007). Because of the rapid growth of the new real estate developments, they are seldom coordinated and are exacerbating these cities' perennial problem of haphazard expansion (Yeboah 2003; Oyugi and K'Akumu 2007). It is also worth mentioning that Accra and Nairobi's rapid growth in the global era has further entrenched their dominance of Ghana and Kenya's urban hierarchies notwithstanding the impressive growth of these countries' secondary cities (Tables 3, 4). As a result, both countries are even more unlikely to achieve their post-independence quest for balanced spatial urban systems (Otiso 2005b; Owusu 2005b).

Ghana and Kenya's increasing globalization in the neo-liberal era has also intensified pressure on them to raise their urban governance, services, and infrastructure to international standards in order to increase their attractiveness to global capital. Major cities in both countries are therefore (1) decentralizing municipal administration and creating metropolitan authorities to coordinate the governance and development of their major cities (Kitau 2007), (2) promoting greater civic involvement and openness in urban governance, (3) enhancing the marketing of their major cities, (4) privatizing some services to improve efficiency, (5) enhancing revenue collection to finance better service provision and, (6) are making major global capital-friendly infrastructural and capital improvements in the hope of attracting more global businesses (Otenyo 2004; Grant and Nijman 2004). Moreover, major Ghanaian and Kenyan cities are investing in information economy infrastructure (e.g., broadband Internet backbones) and personnel in a bid to become global information economy players (World Bank, 29 October, 2007; Lacey 2005). While all these initiatives are laudable, major Ghanaian and Kenyan cities must be careful not to neglect the needs of their residents (Robinson 2006).

Indeed one of the downsides of Accra and Nairobi's role as the national nerve centers of the global economy is their growing inequalities in wealth, income, and opportunities for socioeconomic advancement between their global elite (i.e., the local and foreign executives of major companies/organizations, and foreign embassy workers) and poor locals; a situation that is engendering high crime levels (Grant 2006; Murray 2004; Brown 2003; Adinkrah 2005; Santini 2007) and the attendant proliferation of gated residential, work, recreation, and shopping enclaves for the local and global elites in both cities (Grant and Nijman 2004; Santini 2007). According to Murray (2004, p. 9):

> The exponential expansion of such fortified enclaves as gated residential communities, enclosed shopping malls, cocooned office complexes and luxury entertainment sites offers a globally tested mechanism for the propertied middle [and upper] classes to insulate themselves from the threats—real or imagined—to their physical security and sense of well-being. This kind of city building not only follows the prescription of the neo-liberal vision of the entrepreneurial city, but is also part-and-parcel of *revanchist* [original emphasis] urbanism where the defense of life style and privilege is governed by the spatial logic of exclusion, intolerance and insularity.

While Accra and Nairobi's growing crime problem can be addressed in the short-term by strengthening law enforcement; a more long-term solution lies in the cities' ability to be more inclusive and "good to live in" (Robinson 2006, p. 113).

As major Ghanaian and Kenyan cities grapple with the challenges of globalization, old problems from the national era persist. Most notable are insufficient quantities of good quality housing, haphazard urban development due to lack of comprehensive land-use planning and management, weak municipal governments and, competing land tenure systems that hamper the orderly operation and development of urban land markets (Yeboah 2003; Otiso 2003a; Oyugi and K'Akumu 2007).

Despite the convergence of urban trends in Ghana and Kenya in the global era, there are also many points of divergence based on each country's unique urban history, socioeconomic circumstances, and degree of connectedness to the global economy (Grant 1999). Since we have already reviewed the first two issues, we now consider Ghana and Kenya's degree of global connectedness and its impact on their urban areas.

Although data limitations make it difficult for us to fully explore these countries' and their major cities' relative global connectedness, existing data from the 1980–2005 period (Table 5) points to a number of important observations. First, Ghana had by the mid-1990s become a global poster child of economic liberalization, following a decade of consistent implementation of World Bank-IMF Structural Adjustment Programs (Grant 1999). Second, whereas Kenya had attracted more foreign direct investment (FDI) than Ghana prior to 1990, Ghana has since had far more FDI inflows than Kenya and had by 2005 also exceeded Kenya's percent merchandise and services trade (Table 5). Third and conversely, Kenya had more gross private capital flows as a percent of GDP, a larger multinational corporation (MNC) presence, and four-times as many international tourists as Ghana in 2005. Nonetheless, Ghana had higher international tourist receipts and revenue per tourist arrival than Kenya in that year (Grant 1999).

While these data would seem to give Ghana the edge over Kenya in current degree of integration into the global economy, this is not necessarily so given Kenya's larger MNC presence (Table 5). Since "MNCs are … the dominant organizational form of the world economy … [and] they … control a majority of foreign trade" (Bornschier 1984, p. 157), their relative presence in a country significantly influences its comparative integration into the global economy. Thus, even though Kenya had lower FDI inflows than Ghana in the 1991–2005 period, it still maintained a higher degree of integration into the global economy than Ghana because it had taken an insurmountable lead in FDI and MNC presence by 1990, having enjoyed more political and economic stability since independence. Besides, Kenya's attractiveness to FDI and MNC activity has long been enhanced by its role as the dominant economy and undisputed gateway to East Africa. In contrast, Ghana is neither the dominant economy nor the undisputed gateway to West Africa and must compete for FDI and MNC headquartering/affiliate activity with Nigeria, Côte D'Ivoire, and Senegal. Thus, Ghana's greater scale of economic liberalization and FDI in the 1991–2005 period did not necessarily give its cities an edge over their Kenyan counterparts in degree of integration into the global economy. It is clear, however, that Accra's global connectedness grew substantially relative to that of other Ghanaian and, possibly, West African cities in that period (Grant and Nijman 2004).

It is also evident that Nairobi is more globally connected than Accra because it has the bulk of Kenya's larger MNC presence (Table 5). Moreover, Nairobi is home to the global headquarters of the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) and the United Nations Human Settlements Program (UNHABITAT) and these UN bodies have enabled Nairobi to amass one of the highest concentrations of secretariats of international organizations in Africa, if not the world. In 1993, for instance, Nairobi had 127 such secretariats compared to Accra's 31 (Simon 1997). Nairobi also hosts the highest number of non-governmental organizations (NGO) in the world (Robinson 2006) and is a major African international conference center besides being the commercial, industrial, financial, educational, and communication hub for Eastern and Central Africa (Wekesa 2006; Oyugi and K'Akumu 2007; Santini 2007). Along with Dakar and Johannesburg, Nairobi is also one of the major international air transport hubs in Sub-Saharan Africa (Otenyo 2004; Santini 2007).

Another indication of Nairobi's higher global standing relative to Accra is that it is listed in the global urban cost of living indexes that serve many international organizations and global businesses. Accordingly, Nairobi was ranked as the 63rd most expensive city in the world in 2006 (City Mayors 2008a) and the 148th richest city in the world in 2005 (City Mayors 2008b). Although 15 other African cities were ranked in 2005 and 2006, Accra was not ranked in either year (City Mayors 2008a; City

Table 5 Ghana and Kenya: integration with the global economy, 1990–2005

Globalization index		Period/year	Ghana	Kenya
FDI inflows (US$ millions)		1980–1985	58	170
		1986–1990	44	191
		1991–1995	508	64
		1996–2000	668	200
		2001–2005	580	182
		1980–2005	1,858	807
Foreign direct investment (% of GDP)	Net inflows	1990	0.3	0.7
		2005	1.0	0.1
	Net outflows	1990	0.0	0.0
		2005	0.0	0.0
Gross private capital flows (% of GDP)		1990	2.9	3.5
		2005	5.2	6.3
Merchandise trade (% of GDP)		1990	35.7	37.9
		2005	69.9	50.4
Trade in services (% of GDP)		1990	6.6	21.4
		2005	21.7	16.1
Growth in real trade less growth in real GDP (percentage points)		1990–2005	2.9	2.2
Multinational corporation (MNC) investment	MNC Headquarters	2005	3	18
	MNC affiliates in country	2005	82	199
Tourism	International tourist arrivals (1000)	1990	146	814
		2000	399	899
		2005	429	1536
		Change 1990–2005	283 (193%)	722 (89%)
	International tourism receipts (US$ million)	1990	81	443
		2000	335	283
		2005	796	579
		Change 1990–2005	715 (882%)	136 (31%)
		Receipts per arrival (US$)	800	405

Source: Derived from various data sources: *Tourism data*: (1) World Tourism Organization (2006), *Tourism Market trends, 2006 Edition*, (2) World Tourism Organization (2007), *Tourism Highlights 2007 Edition*; *Trade Data*: World Bank (2007), *2007 World Development Indicators*, Table 6.1: Integration with the Global Economy; *FDI Data*: (1) United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) (1999), *Foreign Direct Investment in Africa: Performance and Potential*, pp. 53, (2) United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (2006), *World Investment Report 2006: FDI from Developing and Transition Economies: Implications for Development*, (3) UNCTAD (2004) FDI Profile: Kenya, and (4) UNCTAD (2006) FDI Profile: Ghana

Mayors 2008b). Lastly, Nairobi's history of large-scale colonial European settlement and large current European population has also aided its global connectedness relative to Accra (Obudho 1997).

Conclusion

In this comparative review of urban development in Ghana and Kenya, we have traced these countries' urbanization from the pre-colonial, to the colonial, and post-independence (national and global) periods. Although the scale of pre-colonial urban development in these countries was small, it was more widespread in Ghana. This is a major reason for Ghana's larger indigenous imprint on its contemporary cities.

Ghana and Kenya's urban development benefited significantly from British colonial rule because the British (i) founded many of these countries' contemporary cities, (ii) laid the foundation for their modern economies, transport systems, and urban spatial framework, (iii) introduced the urban planning, building standards, and architectural designs that still dominate their cities and, (iv) initiated the modern global economic links that continue to transform these countries' cities. As a result of their shared colonial experience, Ghana and Kenya have similar urban development patterns, primate urban systems, and socioeconomically segregated cities. Yet, these countries have divergent urban distributions, levels of urbanization, and degree of indigenous influence on their cities because of differences in their pre-colonial urbanization, sociopolitical and economic history, and physical and population conditions.

In the national era (i.e., independence to the 1980s), Ghana and Kenya's socioeconomic policies—e.g., the elimination of colonial race-based restrictions on African mobility and the promotion of equitable urban and regional development—played a key role in their urban development. But on the whole these policies accentuated colonial urban development patterns even as they hastened overall urbanization in both countries. Because of rapid population growth, poor planning, and adverse economic conditions, both countries had lost control of their urban development by the end of the national phase. As a result, problems such as haphazard urban growth, massive slums, environmental pollution, and unemployment became part and parcel of Ghanaian and Kenyan cities. Yet, Ghanaian and Kenyan cities experience these problems to varying degrees. For instance, Ghanaian cities have a smaller slum problem than their Kenyan counterparts because of their more accessible and just urban land situation.

The global phase of Ghana and Kenya's urban development started when both adopted neo-liberal economic reforms (SAPs) in the 1980s. Since then their cities have been significantly influenced and integrated into the global economy. In the global era, Ghanaian and Kenyan urban areas have witnessed significant (i) expansion of the informal sector, adoption of "multiple modes of livelihoods" and, rising crime levels due to increases in poverty, economic vulnerability, and the widening of income/opportunity gaps among various social classes; (ii) growth in the role of civil society organizations in urban service provision following the state's withdrawal from this activity; (iii) intensification and diversification of their links to the global economy; (iv) inflows of global business investments and the attendant changes in their urban form e.g., the creation of new "global" CBDs that house most of these global businesses; (v) sprawl due to rapid real estate development in response to pent-up demand for housing and investment property; (vi) increased infrastructural development and; (vii) marketing in order to attract more global businesses.

Although the impact of globalization is being felt in all Ghanaian and Kenyan cities, it is most evident in Accra and Nairobi because these cities are their respective nations' global economy command centers. Even so, these two cities are differentially connected to and affected by the global economy; with Nairobi being more globally connected and exposed to the positive and negative effects of globalization.

Overall, while Ghana and Kenya have many common urban spatial, structural, and socioeconomic characteristics, they also have many urban differences that are rooted in their respective pre-colonial history, colonial experience, physiography, demographic and socioeconomic conditions, and degree of connectedness to the global economy. These similarities and differences are likely to influence Ghana and Kenya's urban future in ways that are beyond the scope of this paper. In the meantime, we hope that this spatial and temporal analysis of urbanization in Ghana and Kenya will spur many comparative urban studies of other African countries.

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