

**SLAVES, FISH, AND OIL  
IN THE  
JAPANESE AND DANISH  
INVOLVEMENT IN THE TRANSFORMATION OF  
TWO PORTS OF GHANA**



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# MAIN POINT

Why have Japan and Denmark both participated actively in the development of two ports in Ghana?

The answer is partly the natural resources: slaves, fish, and oil.

My research shows how 300 years of changing seascapes, shipping routes, technology, and markets have brought some people from the three present countries of Ghana, Japan, and Denmark together on the coast of present Ghana to build ports.



# GHANA

## Tema

- British port construction 1950s-
- Shipping lines
- Markets in Burkina Faso

## Takoradi

- Fishing
- Oil shipments



# JAPAN

1957-

## Ghana-Japan Diplomatic Relations

- Official Development Assistance (JICA)
- Global fish market

2011-

## Ghana Japan Oil

- Investment in export/import, airport and port construction related to exploration, development, excavation, production, management and distribution of petroleum, natural gas and any other mineral resources.



# DENMARK

## Sugar og rom production

- Sugar plantations in the Virgin Islands
  - The Danish West India - Guinea Company 1659-
    - Annexed Sct. Thomas 1672, Sct. John 1675, and Sct. Croix 1733. Sold 1917.
- Sugar beets – local production
  - 1747 new process; Danish Sugar Factories on Lolland 1872 -

## Shipping

- Atlantic slave trade, 1650s-
- Indian Ocean spice and tea trade
  - Trankebar 1620-1845
- Steamship Company Svendborg, 1904
- A.P. Møller – Mærsk, largest container shipping company in the world -  
30 % of all import to Ghana



# SLAVES

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## The function of slaves

- Muslim advisors to the Malian King
- Concubines to the Asian and Muslim courts
- Agricultural crops

## Labour history

- The 'stavnsbånd' in Denmark, the indentured servants in Japan
- The plantations in the Americas

## Markets for labour intensive goods



# FISH

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## Local consumption

- Preservation
- Transportation
- Pollution

## Overseas consumption

- Preservation: Freezer containers
- Transportation: Shipping



# OIL

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Whale oil until 1850s

- Lamps, margarine, and soap

Petroleum to electricity (1849, 1865, 1879)

- Lamps
- Abraham Gesner, John D. Rockefeller and Thomas Edison

Crude oil

- Heavy industry

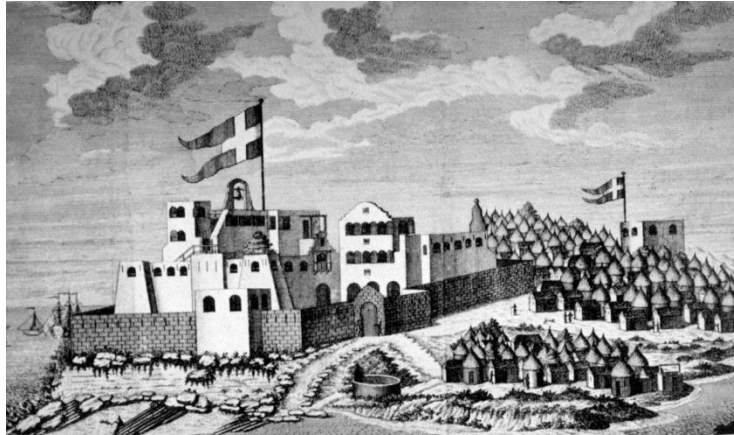




# JAPAN AND DENMARK AT TEMA PORT

## Japan

- Human Resource Development related to Port management
- Landlord port



## Denmark

- Maersk Line
- APM Terminals and Bolloré MSP terminal



# JAPAN AND DENMARK AT TAKORADI PORT

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## Japan

- JICA Fishing projects financed by Japanese official development assistance (ODA)
- Ghanajapanoil

## Denmark

- Maersk Drilling



# PORTS AS DOORWAYS

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Tema and Takoradi are both gateways bringing together people and their companies that are shipping goods

Markets and consumption decides what is shipped from where to where

Seascapes have connected ports globally – Indian Ocean, Atlantic Ocean, and Pacific Ocean histories have been written separately, but they are all connected and shipping history connects the seascapes to the ports.





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