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THE DISAPPEARING OF HANNAH KUDJOE

Nationalism, Feminism, and the Tyrannies of History

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Hannah Kudjoe was Ghana's leading woman nationalist in the struggle for independence from British colonial rule in the 1940s and 1950s. As Ghana celebrated a half century of independence in 2007 and the heroes of that struggle were publicly honored by street naming ceremonies, the unveiling of statues, and historical reenactments, Hannah Kudjoe's name was nowhere to be found. Who was Hannah Kudjoe and how could such a high-profile, formidable, and well-connected nationalist leader be forgotten so quickly? Employing an agnotological approach to women's history that interrogates the construction of ignorance and sanctioned forgetting, this article traces the processes by which Hannah Kudjoe "got disappeared," and the ways in which feminist and nationalist histories have conspired in her disappearing.

On 6 March 2007, the West African nation of Ghana, with all due pomp and circumstance, celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of its independence from British colonial rule, achieved under the leadership of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah and the Convention People's Party (CPP). The government's Ghana@50 secretariat orchestrated an extraordinary schedule of events around the theme "Championing African Excellence," as Ghanaian jubilants, visitors, and dignitaries were treated to music festivals, parades, fashion shows, beauty pageants, fireworks, and historical reenactments.¹ The so-called "Big Six"—Kwame Nkrumah, William Ofori-Atta, J. B. Danquah, Ako Adjei, Obetsebi Lamptey, and Edward Akufo Addo—long heralded as galvanizing the masses in the postwar struggle against British imperialism because of their arrest in the wake of the 1948 riots, won pride of place in the Ghana@50 commemorations, as statues were unveiled and streets and roundabouts renamed in their honor.² Yet nowhere among those commemorated was the name of a single woman. Nowhere, indeed, was the name of Hannah Kudjoe, or "Convention Hannah," as she was once known—the only woman to participate in the founding meeting of Ghana's first mass nationalist party, the woman who single-handedly mobilized rallies (often illegally assembled) up and down the country, as she led the massive petition drive for the release of that very same "Big Six." Two days after the Independence Jubilee, on 8 March 2007, Ghana celebrated International Women's Day with the opening of a large photographic exhibit dedicated to the great women of Ghana's past and present. While many "firsts" found

pride of place in that exhibit—the first woman member of parliament, the first woman minister, etc.—simply being married to a military head of state qualified some for their hallowed places among Ghana's national heroines. Again, Hannah Kudjoe was nowhere to be found.

That women, by and large, are a casualty of history—that they are marginalized, diminished, and forgotten—is no revelation. It is the foundational premise of women's history, the primary aim of which has been and still remains the retrieving, the recapturing, and the reconstructing of women's lives, whether they be the lives of "women worthies" (as Natalie Zemon Davis termed them in the mid-1970s as she pushed us toward a "worthier craft") or the lives of ordinary women, whose names have been obliterated by the dust of the colonial archive.³ As a social historian of African women—women whose histories are often located, not unexpectedly, on the margins of the margins—I have grown quite accustomed (perhaps too accustomed) to working with anonymous actors, unnamed historical subjects, and collective biographies, to operating outside of conventional archives, to "reading between the lines," and to reconstructing life histories through a range of oral history techniques aimed at understanding the daily lives of ordinary African women in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.⁴ As I worked on the life stories of the first generation of Asante women to come of age under British colonial rule, for example, and as I sought to reconstruct the impact of cash, cocoa, and colonialism on women's lives as farmers, traders, mothers, sisters, and wives, I never expected the specificities of those life stories to be directly corroborated in newspapers or in the colonial archive. Indeed, with only two exceptions (a medical doctor and the widow of the Asante king), none of the names of the elderly women whom I interviewed in the late 1980s and early 1990s ever appeared in a single archival document that I accessed in Ghana or in Great Britain.

But after Hannah Kudjoe slipped into my scholarly world via a chance encounter with a few fragments of her past buried in a regional archive far to the north of Ghana's capital, Accra, the anonymity of African women in the colonial archive and their disappearance in African colonial and national histories seemed not so straightforward and not so readily palatable. Hannah Kudjoe first surfaced for me through a set of reports she wrote as head of what was termed in the 1950s "the anti-nudity campaigns," which were aimed at encouraging women in the new nation's underdeveloped north to don "appropriate dress."⁵ As I became more and more intrigued by Hannah Kudjoe's life, however, all but its general contours seemed to elude me at every research turn, including at the Ghana@50 celebrations and the 2007 International Women's Day festivities. Let me be clear: Hannah Kudjoe was no anonymous, faceless, rank-and-file activist whose name is simply and

inevitably irretrievable to the historian fifty years after the fact. As I have since come to appreciate, she was arguably *the* leading woman nationalist in post-World War II Ghana, and certainly the first to assume a prominent and sustained public role in the struggle for independence. Indeed, if the fragments of the past that we do have at hand tell us anything, it is that this was a woman who resisted being written out of history, a woman not easily forgotten. And yet for all intents and purposes, she has been.

It is generally from this point (the point of disappearance) that women's historians *begin* their work of recuperation—from the foundational premise that women are marginalized or absent in the archives and then disappeared by a discipline whose grand narratives have proven stubbornly male-focused and male-centered. As Susan Geiger has so eloquently described for Tanzania, “The marginalization of women in this historiography reflects a now-familiar pattern: the accumulation of androcentric bias in the written record—both primary (produced by colonial officials, missionaries and travelers) and, more recently, secondary (produced by Western as well as African scholars). Women’s political actions and history are ‘disappeared’ in a cumulative process whereby successive written accounts reinforce and echo the silence of previous ones.”⁶ Hannah Kudjoe’s very rapid disappearing from Ghana’s short nation-state history certainly exemplifies the cumulative processes that Geiger describes. But does it not also demand of us, I ask, that the foundational premise—the ignorance and the forgetting—be opened to questioning and reconstruction? By what processes, over the course of only half a century, did an extremely high-profile nationalist leader, a “woman worthy,” get disappeared? In posing such questions, we can turn for guidance to some exciting recent work in the history of science. Robert Proctor first coined the word “agnotology” (from agnosis, or “not knowing”) to describe what he termed the “cultural production of ignorance.” Agnotology has been further refined as a methodological tool by the feminist historian of science, Londa Schiebinger, in her important work on abortifacients and colonial science.⁷ As “a counterweight to more traditional concerns for epistemology,” writes Schiebinger, “[a]gnotology refocuses questions about ‘how we know’ to include questions about what we do not know, and why not. Ignorance is often not merely the absence of knowledge but an outcome of cultural and political struggle. . . . What we know or do not know at any one time or place is shaped by particular histories, local and global priorities, funding patterns, institutional and disciplinary hierarchies, personal and professional myopia, and much else.”⁸ What I propose here, then, is very much an agnotological approach to women’s history—an approach that does not *assume* disappearance and marginalization (launching us, therefore, directly into reconstruction and

recuperation), but rather insists that we first interrogate that foundational assumption of disappearance with a battery of how's, why's, and when's, and then consider what those agnotological fissures might tell us about the nation, the postcolonial state, and the disciplinary urges of history and of feminist inquiry.⁹

Hannah Kudjoe in Brief

From the elaborate funeral program put together by her family shortly after her death in 1986, a few family photographs, interviews with family members and political contemporaries, as well as two short biographical entries appearing in volumes published in Ghana—K. Budu-Acquah's *Toll for the Brave* (1988) and Kojo T. Vieta's *The Flagbearers of Ghana* (1999), both of which rely heavily on the funeral program—we can reconstruct some of the details of Hannah Kudjoe's life.¹⁰ Born in 1918 in the town of Busua, along the Atlantic coast west of Accra, to a prominent Gold Coast family, she was the tenth child of Mr. and Mrs. John Peter Dadson. She was given the vernacular name Esi Badu, though in political circles after the Second World War she was known as Hannah. After completing Standard 7, she trained as a seamstress and, according to one family member, "earned her living sewing padded covers to keep the contents of teapots warm."¹¹ After a brief marriage to J. C. Kudjoe, who was a manager at Abontiako gold mines in Tarkwa, Hannah went to stay with her brother, E. K. Dadson, who ran a printing press in Tarkwa. It was while living with her brother that she met Kwame Nkrumah, shortly after he returned in 1947 from a decade of studying abroad in the United States and Britain in order to take up the position of general secretary of the United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC). Dadson was a strong UGCC activist and when Nkrumah came to Tarkwa, he lodged at the Dadson house. As recorded by Vieta, at Hannah Kudjoe's last public speaking engagement—on International Women's Day in 1986, which was two days before her death—she told a symposium at the Accra Community Center about her entry into politics:

Somewhere in June 1947, we received a charming gentleman, he was introduced to me by my brother as Kwame Nkrumah, General-Secretary of the UGCC. During the day, my brother went out with Nkrumah to address various meetings of the local UGCC branch in town. . . . One day, as they came back and I was serving Kwame Nkrumah, he asked me why I have not been attending the UGCC meetings in town. I was amazed by his question and I honestly told him I thought politics was only men's business. For the next twenty or so minutes, Kwame Nkrumah explained to me all they were doing and the importance of everybody, especially

women, to get involved. By the time Kwame Nkrumah left. . . my interest was aroused in politics. At work, I began explaining issues to my colleague seamstresses and customers. Whenever I was traveling to visit my dressmaking clients, I talked on trains about the need for our liberation and urging people to join the Tarkwa branch of the UGCC and summoning people together to hear news of the campaign for self-government.¹²

In the coming years, as the nationalist struggle intensified, Hannah Kudjoe would play an absolutely pivotal role as a Convention People's Party organizer and propaganda secretary—present and participating in what became the iconic moments in Ghana's early national history. In the wake of the 1948 boycott of European stores and the riots that followed the shooting of ex-soldiers at the Christiansborg crossroads, the UGCC "Big Six" were arrested, and Kudjoe led a petition drive for their release. She was also actively involved in the founding of the Committee on Youth Organization (CYO) within the UGCC. When the CYO grew increasingly critical of the Convention's elitism and slow progress toward independence, and the UGCC leadership was debating the removal of Nkrumah from his post, Kudjoe was one of seven CYO signatories to an April 1949 document that threatened a full split from the UGCC unless Nkrumah were reinstated as the general secretary.¹³ When the decision was finally made in Tarkwa in June 1949 for the CYO to break away from the UGCC and form a new, mass-based political party—the CPP—it is impossible to imagine that Hannah Kudjoe was not there given the date and the location, although documentary proof is not at hand. In the following year, the Positive Action campaign, the mass civil disobedience movement that would ultimately force the British to negotiate an end to colonial rule, found Hannah Kudjoe moving around the country, usually clandestinely, evading police detection, organizing rallies, and "[t]hrilling audiences at party conferences and meetings with songs and slogans in praise of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah."¹⁴

After the 1951 election, which saw the CPP win an overwhelming victory and Nkrumah become Leader of Government Business, Hannah Kudjoe focused her efforts on being a propaganda secretary and building party support. We know that with independence in 1957, she founded the All-African Women's League, which in name and substance reflected the Pan-Africanist agenda of the CPP in its early years—an agenda enacted in such momentous gatherings as the Conference of Independent African States (1958) and the All-African People's Conference (1958). In 1960, the All-African Women's League became the Ghana Women's League with Hannah Kudjoe still at the helm. Kudjoe was also active in the early 1960s in the Department of Social Welfare and Community Development, where

she championed the development of day nurseries throughout the country and continued to focus her energies on improving the lot of women in northern Ghana, especially in terms of health and child welfare. After Nkrumah was overthrown in February 1966, Hannah Kudjoe disappears, almost completely, from any documentary record. We know from the funeral program (and from discussions with her family) that she remained active with her philanthropic work in the North, but we do not know much else. On International Women's Day, 8 March 1986, Hannah Kudjoe was invited by the New Democratic Movement in Ghana (a pro-democracy movement struggling for a return to civilian rule against an entrenched military government) to reminisce about her CPP days. This would be the last time that Hannah Kudjoe's central role in Ghana's nationalist struggle was publicly recognized. Two decades later, as Ghana prepared to celebrate its fiftieth anniversary, the name Hannah Kudjoe had virtually disappeared.

In Search of Hannah Kudjoe

So, what documentary fragments do we have of Hannah Kudjoe's life and what might they tell us about the anatomical fissures that subsequently led to her disappearance, to her sanctioned forgetting? Historians often begin the biographical reconstruction of an individual's life, especially an individual of the profile of Hannah Kudjoe, with an examination of her own writings, memoirs, letters, or personal papers. As Megan Marshall recently observed in a *New York Times* book review, "Most biographers work from the inside out. Diaries, private letters and interviews (when possible) provide the substance of a portrait that comes to life through a recounting of events that touched—or were touched off by—the person in question."¹⁵ In Kudjoe's case, however, there are few personal papers and certainly no autobiography or memoir; in other words, there is no "inside" from which to work "out." In this regard, Hannah Kudjoe does not stand alone. While there is a strong tradition of men writing memoirs and what might be termed male autobiographical subjectivity in West Africa, women by and large have not, and do not, share in that tradition.¹⁶ Indeed, in the introduction to Constance Agatha Cummings-John's memoir, which she recorded and edited, LaRay Denzer has rightly pointed out that "West African women nationalists have refrained from offering extensive published accounts of their careers and personal philosophies."¹⁷ The only two published autobiographies from this era are from Francophone West Africa.¹⁸ Today, Kudjoe's family is in possession of some letters and photographs, but other personal material vanished in the military coup that swept the CPP from power in 1966. Then twenty years later, as her nephew recounts, when Kudjoe was

summoned to the Castle, the seat of the military government, she apparently brought some of her personal papers and photographs with her, and her family was unsuccessful in recovering them after she died.¹⁹ In short, we do not have what most historians—feminist and otherwise—would consider the most obvious “inside” sources of documentary evidence for recuperating and reconstructing Hannah Kudjoe’s life. Moving outward, as it were, in concentric research circles from Kudjoe as historical center and subject, where next might we turn?

Much of the material we have at hand dates from the period in which Hannah Kudjoe was the most active in the national political arena, from 1947 to 1966. At the same time, where she does *not* appear in the documentary record—the sites of primary anatomical fissure—are, as we shall see, as important as where she does appear. Let us turn first to the memoirs of her male contemporaries. One of the first published accounts of Ghana’s post-war nationalist history, *The Gold Coast Revolution*, was penned by the noted Trinidadian Pan-Africanist George Padmore, who was a close confidant of Nkrumah, whom he first met in London in 1947.²⁰ *The Gold Coast Revolution*, appearing in 1953, is one of the very few contemporary published accounts to name Hannah Kudjoe as a leading CPP activist. Padmore includes her in his otherwise all-male list of “enthusiastic lieutenants,” as the “Propaganda Secretary of the Women’s Department,” who “embarked upon a country-wide propaganda tour to popularize the party’s . . . programme” after the CPP split from the UGCC.²¹ He later explains the Party’s success in the 1951 election by offering “special credit . . . to the women who constitute the backbone of the CPP. Working shoulder to shoulder with the men, they have produced some outstanding political propagandists, among them, Mrs. Hannah Cudjoe of Tarkwa, Mrs. Alice Appia of Senchi; Mrs. Essie Mensah of Kumasi; Mrs. Margaret Thompson; Mrs. Letita [*sic*] Quaye and Miss Lilly Appiah of Accra.”²²

Padmore was not the only activist and writer from the Diaspora to chronicle Kudjoe’s central role in the final years of the nationalist struggle. In a fascinating, if somewhat troubling, account in *Black Power*, Richard Wright describes in detail an encounter with Hannah Kudjoe during his visit to Ghana in June 1953. Here, Kudjoe figures prominently in Wright’s attempts to make sense of “Africa” and an “African mentality.”²³ He recounts that Nkrumah suggested that Kudjoe, introduced as “propaganda secretary of the Women’s Division,” visit him at his hotel and speak to him about the work she was doing. Wright describes Kudjoe as a

pleasant, soft-spoken woman, diffident in manner, slow-moving, coy-eyed, short, heavy, black, with a shrewd, placid face. She spoke English with a slight tribal accent . . . She seemed ill at

ease, kept her knees tightly pressed together, and seemed not to know what to do with her hands. Despite her self-consciousness, I felt that in certain circumstances she would know how to throw herself forward, for there slumbered beneath her evasive eyes a restlessness, a superfluity of hard energy. I questioned her about her work and she laughed, fell silent for several moments and sat in an attitude of deep repose, reflecting, staring off.

Wright explains that what he first considered to be Kudjoe's "shyness" was, in fact, her fear of saying something wrong: "she did not completely trust me, did not *know* me." From his observations of Kudjoe during this encounter, Wright develops a quite elaborate argument about "Western" and "Non-Western" ways of knowing. "It was impossible for a European to 'know' somebody in the sense that an African 'knows' somebody," he posited, "'knowing' a person to an African meant possessing a knowledge of his tribe, of his family, of the formation of his habits, of the friends surrounding him, of being privy to the inmost secrets of his culture. While Western 'knowing' was limited to a more rational basis—to knowledge of a man's profession of his ideas, and perhaps some of his interests."²⁴

In many ways, Hannah Kudjoe—as the coy, shy, evasive, restless, tribal, female subject—becomes Wright's access point: the singular subject through which he might begin to apprehend, begin to make sense of, "Africa." "I could feel Mrs. Hannah Cudjoe's distrust of me," he continued, "it came from no specific cause; it was general. I was a stranger, a foreigner, and therefore must be spoken to cautiously, with weighed words. Distrust was in full operation before any objective event had occurred to justify it. . . . This fear, this suspicion of nothing in particular came to be the most predictable hallmark of the African mentality that I met in all the Gold Coast, from the Prime Minister down to the humblest 'mammy' selling kenke on the street corners." Eventually, as Kudjoe began to relax, according to Wright, she told about her work for the CPP—how she had "stood alone and many of the women of the Gold Coast had reviled her for daring to enter the political field. . . . She worked hard, making four or five speeches a day, always on the move." Still, Wright was clearly frustrated by his conversation with Kudjoe: "Her answers were simple, direct, and factual, but she could not grasp abstract ideas and could not give me broad, coherent descriptions."²⁵

As their conversation drew to a close, Wright asked Kudjoe if she might arrange for him to stay in an "African home" as a "paying guest." Her unenthusiastic response to what he considered a simple request left him, again, pondering an elusive "African mentality": "the lame tone of her voice told me that I'd never hear from her about my request, and I never

did. What had been done to these people? That they had had and still had a lot of enemies, I had no doubt; but how could they ever win sympathy of friends if they were afraid to honor a simple, human request, if the most casual questions evoked grave doubts? Or were they so childlike as to imagine that they could hide the entire life of the Gold Coast from strangers?"²⁶

That we learn far more about Richard Wright from this excerpt than we do about Hannah Kudjoe is strikingly evident in an article published in the *Mississippi Quarterly* by Wright-scholar Jack B. Moore in 1988. In the article, he included parts of the text of an interview that he conducted with Kudjoe in 1971, only a few years after the overthrow of Nkrumah.²⁷ Moore originally traveled to Ghana to meet with individuals whom Wright discusses in *Black Power*. Kudjoe was among them, though I have never seen the interview cited outside of scholarship on Wright. "I wanted merely to get closer to the facts of Wright's African experience," Moore writes, "to see better what happened to him in Ghana and thereby more sharply illuminate . . . the contours of his trip back to self and sought-after homeland."²⁸ In a revealing account, Moore describes how he gave Kudjoe a copy of *Black Power* and let her read the sections about herself before he proceeded with his questions. "Well, I have read something here," she remarked with no small hint of irony. Kudjoe then went on to explain to Moore that, first of all, at the time of Wright's visit she was not the propaganda secretary of the Women's Division; she was the "National Propaganda Secretary . . . I was director for the entire party, not the women's group alone. . . I was also National Secretary of Day Nurseries."²⁹ When Moore asked her about Wright's sense that there "were some deep psychological reasons for [her] attitude. . . A division between Africans and outsiders," she responded, "I believe it is simpler . . . I saw him as a reporter. . . I am a politician. As a person perhaps I cook fish for the Prime Minister and he eats it. But as Propaganda Minister I say, 'Kwame Nkrumah has not eaten,' if that is what my leader wants known. . . The reporter should try to get the news, but the politician cannot always give it to him." Later, Kudjoe explained that Wright asked her "peculiar" questions—questions that seemed aimed at determining whether Nkrumah believed in magic and questions that were about the internal workings of the CPP that she could not possibly address.³⁰ Toward the close of the interview, Moore asked why Kudjoe's recollections were so different than Wright's. She responded, "It was so long ago . . . I do not remember exactly what I said. But I did not distrust him or fear him. . . Why? Why should I?" And when Moore pushed her on the question of not arranging for Wright to pay to stay in an "African home," Kudjoe replied, "I said something like, 'Why not? Africans are free.' Even I could accommodate him if I had a room. . . Or he could stay

at my brother's. . . . And paying!' she said with surprise. 'Paying! You do not pay to live in a friend's house.'"³¹

Moore's very telling interview with Hannah Kudjoe is so striking because it is one of the only places in the surviving written historical record where Kudjoe is allowed to speak back to history, speak back to the documentary fragments, and to the historical narratives intent on her displacement or disappearance; she is able to assert her strength and her centrality to Ghana's independence struggle. Unfortunately, the brief excerpts from Moore's 1971 interview, which were not published until two years after Kudjoe's 1986 death, have left no traces in Ghana or in the prevailing nationalist narrative. If they have helped Wright scholars make better sense of the author's controversial account of his time in Ghana, they have not succeeded in reinserting Kudjoe into the central narrative of Ghanaian national history. *Black Power*, rather than Moore's interview with Kudjoe in *Mississippi Quarterly*, has won the judgment of history. Kudjoe remains trapped in Wright's troubled and troubling narrative. She is an elusive presence, in many ways the embodiment of the "Africa" Wright sought to make sense of—an Africa caught between the "tribal" and the "modern," a suspicious, fearful Africa that seemed unwilling to allow him in, even as a "paying guest."

Among contemporary published accounts from the 1950s and 1960s, there is only one other obvious place one might go in search of Hannah Kudjoe—to Kwame Nkrumah's own extensive writings. One of the most famous autobiographies ever written by an African nationalist leader is Nkrumah's own *Ghana: The Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah*, which chronicles his life from childhood through Ghana's independence.³² Because of the destruction of so much documentation relating to the CPP and the struggle for independence in the wake of the 1966 military coup, Nkrumah's autobiography remains one of the most detailed accounts we have of the inner workings of the nationalist struggle. Astonishingly, Kudjoe does not appear by name in either of Nkrumah's published accounts of the period, in *Ghana* or in *I Speak of Freedom* (1961), although his closest male comrades are consistently named. But we know from fleeting references in other sources that Kudjoe was ever-present during the foundational years of the party. When political scientist Dennis Austin visited Ghana in 1960, J. B. Danquah, the doyen of Gold Coast nationalism and founder of the UGCC, allowed Austin to see a "minute book" that chronicled the critical history of the UGCC from 1947 to 1951.³³ The book detailed the various internal divisions within the UGCC, the riots following the shooting at the Christiansborg crossroads, the founding of the CYO, and the debates that ultimately led to the formation of the CPP. It was based on evidence from the minute book that Austin, in a 1961 article in the *Journal of African History*, cites

Kudjoe as one of the seven named signatories to the document described earlier.³⁴ (The signatories are not listed in his 1964 book, *Politics in Ghana, 1946–1960*, and thus Kudjoe's name does not appear, even in a footnote, in the most comprehensive study of the postwar struggle for independence in Ghana.) Yet early in June 1949, the CYO held a "special conference," as Nkrumah recounts, "which was attended by all the youth organizations in the country." It is difficult to imagine that Kudjoe was not at the June 1949 meetings in Tarkwa when the final decision was made to break from the UGCC and establish the CPP, especially given the meeting's location in Tarkwa, Kudjoe's signature on the April document, and her increasingly prominent position within the movement.³⁵

Between June and July 1949, the new CPP and the Working Committee of the UGCC struggled to decide if they could maintain any kind of relationship, but the split ran too deep and negotiations deadlocked. In his account of the final meeting with the Working Committee at Saltpond, Nkrumah writes that he stepped outside the conference room and was met by a large crowd shouting, "Resign!" Nkrumah returned to the conference room and announced he was resigning both as a member and as the UGCC's general secretary. In his own words: "Standing on the platform surrounded by an expectant crowd, I asked for a pen and a piece of paper and, using somebody's back as a support, I wrote out my official resignation and then read it to the people. The reaction was immediate and their cheers deafening. Then one of the women supporters jumped up on the platform and led the singing of the hymn 'Lead Kindly Light,' a hymn which from that time onwards has been sung at most CPP rallies."³⁶ The woman who seized the stage on that momentous day and whose voice launched the CPP's march to independence was Hannah Kudjoe. Her dramatic entrance was recounted in an article in the *Gold Coast Observer* in February 1951, and from there made its way into political scientist David Apter's 1955 account of Ghana's struggle for independence, *Ghana in Transition*. Kudjoe is described there as "one of [Nkrumah's] most devoted followers and now a propaganda secretary and organizer of the women's branch of the Convention People's Party," who "is supposed to have climbed onto the platform and led the crowd in singing 'Lead Kindly Light.'"³⁷ The wording here is telling. Not only is Kudjoe named as a propaganda secretary of the women's branch—a title she herself disputed in her 1971 interview with Moore—but barely five years after the CPP's founding, her role, her subject position in the nationalist narrative, is already in question and unverifiable. She is "supposed to have" mounted the stage, but we can already not *really* know. Indeed, in the most authoritative account of the period—that is, in Nkrumah's own writings upon which all secondary sources so heavily relied and continue to rely—Hannah Kudjoe is conspicuous by her absence. She remains un-

named, a "woman supporter" who emerges briefly from the swelling mass of supporters before returning to obscurity. Two pages later, Nkrumah acknowledges that "much of the success of the Convention People's Party has been due to the efforts of women members. From the very beginning women have been the chief field organizers. They have traveled through innumerable towns and villages in the role of propaganda secretaries and have been responsible for the most part in bringing about the solidarity and cohesion of the Party." But clearly, before the Union Jack was lowered and the Black Star raised, Kudjoe's disappearance, her sanctioned forgetting, had already begun.³⁸

What can we make of these agnotological fissures in the few published accounts of Kudjoe's contemporaries—accounts which at their best see her listed as a loyal "lieutenant" and at their worst embed her in a troubling binary of "tribal v. modern" or invisibilize her completely? What is most intriguing about the accounts, I would suggest, is that the nearer their initial composition to the approach of independence the more likely they are to invisibilize Kudjoe, to leave her unnamed. As the CPP's struggle moved from success to success, as the struggle for independence transformed into a struggle to consolidate the new nation-state, Hannah Kudjoe began to slip from the narrative. In other words, there seems to be a direct correlation between Hannah Kudjoe's *disappearance* and the *appearance* of the state with its hegemonic imperative. In many ways, then, the publication of Nkrumah's autobiography in 1957, coinciding as it did with the inauguration of the nation-state, signaled the onset of Hannah Kudjoe's disappearing.³⁹

Women's history tends to assume that such erasure is inevitable, but by not tracing the paths toward ignorance, I would argue, we end up treating erasure not only as expected but as natural: "that's just what patriarchy does." But as feminist historians have discovered all too many times, simply recovering and recuperating stories of women's agency "post-erasure" does not shift, much less overturn, the master narrative, especially entrenched androcentric nationalist narratives. If we do not take up the issue of disappearance, if we do not trace the histories of forgetting, and if we do not locate the agnotological fissures, we end up complicit, I would suggest, in the reproduction of sanctioned ignorance.

That Hannah Kudjoe was disappeared by a consolidating nation-state to which she was quite visible at the time is perhaps best evidenced in Tawia Adamafio's *By Nkrumah's Side: The Labour and the Wounds*. Up until he was accused of involvement in an attempt to assassinate Nkrumah in 1962, Adamafio was one of Nkrumah's closest confidantes and served as Minister of Information.⁴⁰ In the later pages of his memoirs, he describes being given the "unfortunate" task by Nkrumah of bringing all women's groups into one organization and placing that organization under the party.

Adamafo recounts that Nkrumah called him to his office one afternoon and, after offering him a gin and campari, let him know what he expected him to do: "go ahead and organize the women and form them into one great organization . . . Our women must take over completely as private secretaries, stenographers and copy typists. They should branch into engineering services, pharmacy, bus and taxi driving, law and medicine and all the other fields. They should go shoulder to shoulder with our men." At the time, and as Adamafo explains, there were two large women's groups in the country, one led by Dr. Evelyn Amarteifio and the other, the Ghana Women's League, led by Hannah Kudjoe. Nkrumah wanted all women's groups in one organization: "We must organize the women . . . as a distinct identity and keep them under our wings."⁴¹ That women activists, especially women like Hannah Kudjoe, operated with a great deal of power and autonomy and therefore needed to be brought more fully under the party's control is strikingly evident throughout Adamafo's account. Of all of the tasks he was given, Adamafo "dreaded most" organizing the women's section:

The Party women's solidarity was so all-inclusive when organized, that nothing could escape its steam-roller pressure. The Party women could not be bullied into submission by any party leader including Nkrumah himself on any matter . . . If necessary the women did not hesitate to boo me or any other leader for that matter, and cause severe embarrassment and confusion to achieve their objective. . . . No, I cannot adequately convey to you an expression of the actual difficulty involved in organizing women, but if you could imagine their gossip, bitter quarrels and bickerings and the acrimony of the lashing tongues, you would be getting nearer the truth than I could describe. I did not cherish this new task at all.

In his account, Adamafo describes being tricked into taking on this task. "All of us knew," he writes, "how really onerous and disgusting a duty it was to be involved in dealing with our party women . . . I said: 'Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, Leader of the CPP, you are a vicious man, do you know that?' Nkrumah said that he was being kind to me, he was putting me among the women to be crowned king of the ladies! I replied that I was most grateful for the honour. I would emerge in a glorious condition with my shirt torn into shreds and my face all scratched and criss-crossed with women's fingernails like an architect's plan!"⁴²

According to Adamafo's account there was some disagreement among the male leaders of the party about the wisdom of bringing all women under a single organization. He recalls discussing the plan in detail with the

head of the Trades Union Congress, John Tettegah. His account warrants quotation in full:

We foresaw a situation where this NCGW [National Council of Ghana Women] would grow so monolithic and powerful that the party could lose control of it. When you had its leadership bristling with dynamic women intellectuals and revolutionaries and the organization had become conscious of its strength, it could break off in rebellion, form a party by itself and sweep everything before it at the polls. The ratio of women voters to men then was about three or more to one and the position could well arise, where Ghana would be ruled by a woman President and an all-woman cabinet and the principal secretaries and Regional Commissioners were all women and men would be relegated to the back room! It would be disastrous for Ghana, for, I could see men being ridden like horses! A male tyrant could be twisted round a woman's little finger. An Amazonian tyrant could only probably be subdued by a battery of artillery!⁴³

Adamafio goes on to describe endless meetings between Kudjoe and Amarteifio "locked in wordy combat . . . These two tough, intelligent women were active and dauntless and both of them had been organizing their sisters for a long time."⁴⁴ In the end, the new organization—the National Association of Ghana Women—was inaugurated and neither Kudjoe nor Amarteifio held leadership roles. While Kudjoe's League, as Takyiwaa Manuh has written, "seems to have been very political and concerned itself with local, nationalist and continental issues,"⁴⁵ the new Council became "the only recognized body under which all Ghanaian women were to be organized" and appointments to the Council's leadership could only be made directly by the Party's executive.⁴⁶

The State and the Archiving of Hannah Kudjoe

That the processes that consolidated and centralized the Ghanaian state, including control over women's autonomous organizations, were among the same processes responsible for the disappearing of Hannah Kudjoe finds substance in the few traces left in the official archive. Journalistic coverage of the nationalist struggle demonstrates Kudjoe's prominence in the emerging body politic up through independence. She is described on multiple occasions launching rallies, speaking to vast crowds, and mobilizing CPP members in the early 1950s.⁴⁷ An Accra *Evening News* headline on 8 May 1951 was not atypical: "Mrs. Hannah Cudjoe Spell-bound her Audience."⁴⁸ Notably, *West Africa*, a London magazine which began publication in 1917 and circulated widely throughout Anglophone West Africa, ran a

full-page, double-columned profile of Kudjoe in its 8 August 1953 edition entitled "Portrait: Nkrumah Changed her Career." In the "Portrait," she is given credit for mobilizing support for the CPP by traveling up and down the country, sometimes two thousand miles in a month. The article describes her petition drive in support of the arrested UGCC leaders and her presence as the only woman "at a memorable meeting which Nkrumah and ten other UGCC members decided to found the CPP." She is characterized as a "born political tactician." After detailing her work in the Northern Territories, the *West Africa* correspondent concluded, "These are among the ways in which Hannah Kudjoe has made her mark on Gold Coast politics. Her achievement answers those who complain of lack of political initiative among African women, while those who complain of unfeminine stridency in women politicians have their answer in her generous, unassuming and attractive personality."⁴⁹

Kudjoe's leadership role in the All-African Women's League also garnered widespread press attention in the first few years of independence, before the league was disbanded, but as we move into the period after 1960 and Ghana's emergence as a republic, it is much more difficult to trace Kudjoe.⁵⁰ While this may be due in part to the horrific state of the archives—the gaps and silences caused by the willful destruction of documents during the course of military upheavals and the inevitable deterioration of the archives that accompanied the downturn in the economy after 1960—the state of the archives tells only part of the story.⁵¹ Men activists who played central roles in the CPP, virtually without exception, ended up standing for Parliament, serving as ministers, or heading departments. Despite her central role in the party from its founding, Kudjoe was never asked to stand for a parliamentary seat, something she expected, according to her nephew, especially after Ghana became a republic in 1960.⁵² Historian LaRay Denzer, in her 1992 article on West African women in public life, expresses puzzlement at the fact that Mabel Dove was chosen to stand in 1954: "Hannah Kudjoe would have seemed the more logical choice for nomination"—a more logical choice in terms of prominence and recognition perhaps, but those characteristics were clearly not the only ones motivating the decision-making process.⁵³ In 1960, the general secretary of the party sent out a request to regional commissioners throughout the country asking for recommendations of women who might stand for Parliament. In the national archive file, there are a number of handwritten notes by Nkrumah and others regarding which women should stand for which region. On several of the worksheets, women are graded either with letter grades (A, B, C, etc.) or with rankings (good, fair, and poor). Hannah Kudjoe's name appears on the back of one of those typed sheets as "fair." By 1960, she was

not considered parliamentary material. So, what was to be the role of this nationalist leader in the new republic?

Throughout the late 1950s, in addition to being propaganda secretary and organizer, Kudjoe continued to undertake social welfare work in the country's northern regions, focusing on teaching women hygiene, dress, and child-rearing techniques. By 1959, her more or less autonomous work was causing some concern among those in seats of power. As one government official wrote to the Department of Social Welfare, "As I believe you are aware, the Prime Minister sometime ago indicated uneasiness about the publicity being given to the anti-nudity campaign which has been carried on by Mrs. Hannah Kudjoe in a largely independent role. He expressed the view that arrangement should be under the supervision of the Regional Commissioner and that if Mrs. Hannah Kudjoe should continue to work in this Region she should work within a suitable programme run by the Regional Office and your Department."⁵⁴ In 1960, Kudjoe was brought into the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare as the National Organiser/Secretary of Ghana Day Nurseries, though she continued her welfare work in the northern regions. By 1962, that work warranted discussion in the cabinet where "doubt was expressed as regards the proper role of Mrs. Hannah Kudjoe in her capacity as Secretary/Organiser of Day Nurseries. It was agreed that Mrs. Hannah Kudjoe should be under the full control of the Minister of Labor and Social Welfare and should be employed on field work in the implementation of approved policies in respect of the operation and organization of the Day Nurseries."⁵⁵ Implicit in this minute, as well as in others, is an ongoing concern regarding Kudjoe's independence of action and her inability, or perhaps unwillingness, to work within emerging bureaucratic structures. In 1964, the government placed her "anti-nudity operations" under the auspices of a National Committee for Social Advancement within the ministry, and all operations were placed under a "policy of 'no-publicity'" because of the government's concern about its international image.⁵⁶ Thus, by 1965, "Convention Hannah"—a woman who by all accounts was a force to be reckoned with, a central player in the early politics of the nation who in so many ways resisted being written out of history—was all but disappeared from the government record, buried under layers of centralizing bureaucracy, and marginalized from the processes of state building.⁵⁷ Her disappearance from the government archive would be complete with the overthrow of Nkrumah in a military coup in February 1966.

Hannah Kudjoe did enjoy a brief return to the national stage in 1986, when she addressed the symposium organized by the New Democratic Movement at the Accra Community Centre on March 8th, which marked International Women's Day. But with the harsh and heavy control of the

media by the military government, newspaper coverage of the event was minimal, and in the one brief account of the symposium in the *Ghanaian Times*, Kudjoe's name is not even mentioned.⁵⁸ As is not uncommon in Ghana, where funeral preparations can often take months to organize, news of Kudjoe's death the following night—on March 9th—did not appear in the papers until 8 May 1986, when the same account appeared in both the *Times* and the *Daily Graphic*. After recounting her active role in the founding of the CPP, the article concluded:

In all these determinations of the leader to change the economic and political life of the Gold Coast into one befitting a real independent state, Mrs. Hannah Kudjoe did not stand aloof, but prosecuted the struggle with all the zeal at her disposal to win a following for the Party (CPP), and the leader. After the crisis within the Party, as a result of the coup d'état in 1966, Mrs. Hannah Kudjoe was not deterred, but continued to lift the banner high for Ghana to remain the undisputed Torch-bearer of Africa's independence.

Hannah was a great fighter and died fighting as evidenced in the last days of her life at the Accra Arts Centre. She was a priceless gem who in no small measure contributed to the political emancipation of Ghana from the clutches of imperialism. The vacuum created by her demise in spiritual terms though temporary, will be difficult to fill.

May She REST IN PEACE.⁵⁹

Indeed, the last documentary fragment that we have at hand for reconstructing Kudjoe's life is the funeral program assembled by her family and friends for her memorial service and last rites, which occurred at the Calvary Methodist Church in Accra on 6 July 1986. There, in many ways, the public archiving of Hannah Kudjoe ended. At the time of her death in 1986, the surviving documentary fragments of Kudjoe's public life were few, ephemeral, and often contradictory; nowhere was there a first-person subject voice—a memoir, an autobiography. And none of the fragments left behind, taken separately or together, were of the mass or wielded the command to intervene in, much less challenge, the totalizing, androcentric narrative of Ghanaian national history—the narrative that would ultimately animate the celebrations of Ghana@50.

Lessons from the Disappeared

And thus we are left with an odd assortment of fragments—brief mentionings, surprising absences, uneven newspaper accounts, an exoticized exposé, a report card on parliamentary suitability, bureaucratic handwring-

ings, a few family photos, and a funeral program—fragments that become fewer, more fleeting, and more frustratingly enigmatic as we move forward in time from 1947. If we cannot reconstruct Hannah Kudjoe's life from the documentary fragments left behind, if we cannot construct an alternative national narrative, are we locked into the "cumulative process," as Geiger terms it, of "echoing the silences"? Or are there lessons to be learned and critical perspectives to be gleaned from Kudjoe's disappearance, from the agnotological fissures we have sought to trace here—about history, about feminist inquiry, about female subjects moving through time and space, about our own disciplinary urges, and about nations, their states, and the consolidation of state power in the postcolonial world?

Kudjoe's disappearing points us in a number of critical directions, I would suggest, that warrant further consideration. First of all, it should encourage us to puzzle, comparatively and transnationally, about how constructions of the "self" through autobiographical- and memoir-writing have shaped or animated nation-writing, especially in Africa. We need to consider the specific implications for gendered postcolonial histories of the almost complete absence of African women's autobiographies or memoirs/diaries. (I am intrigued by the fact that where this writing does exist, it generally emerges in the context of colonial settler states like South Africa and Kenya.) Rather than confront the powerful implications of this absence, feminist scholars of Africa's past have tended to turn to (perhaps seek refuge in) social history writing, avoiding the very real political implications of women's namelessness and thus reproducing, however inadvertently, the accumulated silences of history's metanarratives. What are the connections, for example, between the content and constructions of Ghana's national history and the fact that there is not a single autobiography or published memoir of a woman nationalist?

We might also consider the broader disciplinary implications of such silences for comparative women's history more generally. As Judith Bennett has recently noted in *History Matters*, there has been a "tilt back" in women's history scholarship toward women worthies or at least to those "privileged, articulate people who left archives deemed worthy of preservation."⁶⁰ If nominations for the American Historical Association's Joan Kelly Prize for the best book in women's history are any indication (I served on this committee for the past three years), then a good percentage of recently published women's history books—between about 25 and 30 percent—are biographical or build from the particularities of the biographical. My concern is that women's history may be guilty of placing African women outside the bounds of "feminist historical knowledge" by insisting on a certain kind of historical subjectivity that then must be recovered and recounted. Is women's history framed in such a way, I ask, or are its

foundingsuppositions such that Hannah Kudjoe's disappearance can go unmarked or unquestioned? Is her silencing reproduced by the imperatives of women's history?

And if Hannah Kudjoe's disappearance forces us to reflect critically about women's history and its disciplinary urges, it should also encourage us to think about the fate of women, especially women nationalist activists, in the context of the consolidation and centralization of state power in the postcolonial era. The work of LaRay Denzer, Susan Geiger, Cheryl Johnson-Odim, Nina Mba, Elizabeth Schmidt, and others has shown the multiple ways in which women activists played powerful, leading roles in nationalist struggles for independence, especially as organizers, cultural translators, and "performers of nation."⁶¹ But what is the fate of these women leaders in the postcolonial state? The story of Hannah Kudjoe suggests that there can be a significant disjuncture between women's often high-profile roles as nation builders and their very limited roles in the consolidation of the postcolonial state. I suspect in Hannah Kudjoe's case that what made her such a powerful force for nationalist mobilization in the 1940s and early 1950s is precisely what made her a liability for the party and thereby the state in the years after independence in 1957. An "Amazonian tyrant," a woman who could "ride men like horses," was best buried deep beneath the accumulating layers of postcolonial bureaucracy.

I expect we will never be able to "recover" or "retrieve" Hannah Kudjoe, to bring her within the limits of historical knowledge as it has come to be defined within the western academy. We can blame the primary written record and the biases of the colonial archive, but women's history, feminist biography, nationalist metanarratives, and state and diaspora histories have all conspired, sometimes unwittingly, in the erasure of women like Hannah Kudjoe, in the disappearance of African women as named historical subjects. But by tracing disappearance and by reconstructing the agnotological fissures that lead to sanctioned forgetting, I have sought to suggest here that we can at least begin to construct different, alternative forms of feminist historical knowledge. We can begin to imagine histories in which the disappeared are not always and forever silenced.

NOTES

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¹See <http://www.ghana50.gov.gh/>.

²For accounts of the riots and their aftermath, see David Apter, *Ghana in Transition*, 2nd ed. (1955; repr. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1972), 169–74; Dennis Austin, *Politics in Ghana, 1946-1960* (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), 49–102; Kofi Nyidevu Awoonor, *Ghana: A Political History* (Accra: SEDCO and Woeli, 1990), 133–50; Basil Davidson, *Black Star: A View of the Life and Times of Kwame Nkrumah* (New York: Praeger, 1974), 59–83; and Kwame Nkrumah, *Ghana: The Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah* (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1957), 64–109.

³Natalie Zemon Davis, "'Women's History' in Transition: The European Case," *Feminist Studies* 3, no. 3 / 4 (1976): 83–103. See also Judith M. Bennett, *History Matters: Patriarchy and the Challenge of Feminism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), 23–25. For a wonderfully engaging discussion of dust and the archive, see Carolyn Steedman, *Dust: The Archive and Cultural History* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2002).

⁴See, for example, Jean Allman, "Rounding Up Spinsters: Unmarried Women and Gender Chaos in Colonial Asante," *Journal of African History* 37, no. 2 (1996): 195–214; and Jean Allman and Victoria Tashjian, "*I Will Not Eat Stone*": *A Women's History of Colonial Asante* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Press, 2000).

⁵See Jean Allman, "'Let Your Fashion Be in Line with Our Ghanaian Costume': Nation, Gender, and the Politics of Clothing in Nkrumah's Ghana," in *Fashioning Power: Power and the Politics of Dress*, ed. Jean Allman (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), 144–65.

⁶Susan Geiger, *TANU Women: Gender and Culture in the Making of Tanganyikan Nationalism, 1955–1965* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1997), 10.

⁷See Londa Schiebinger, "Feminist History of Colonial Science," *Hypatia* 19, no. 1 (2004): 233–54. See, also, Schiebinger, *Plants and Empire: Colonial Bioprospecting in the Atlantic World* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004). Schiebinger, along with Barbara D. Finberg and Robert Proctor, organized a conference at Stanford on "Agnotology: The Cultural Production of Ignorance" in October 2005, <http://www.stanford.edu/dept/HPST/AgnotologyConference.html>.

⁸Schiebinger, *Plants and Empire*, 3.

⁹I borrow the notion of "agnotological fissure" from Schiebinger, "Feminist History," 246.

¹⁰"The Memorial Service of Mrs. Hannah Kudjoe (Alias Hannah Esi Badu Dadson)," Accra, 1986; K. Budu-Acquah, *Toll for the Brave: Tributes to Fallen Comrades*, part one (Accra: by author, 1988); Kojo T. Vieta, *The Flagbearers of Ghana: Profiles of One Hundred Distinguished Ghanaians*, vol. 1 (Accra: Ena Publications, 1999), 130–33.

¹¹"Memorial Service," 2.

¹²Vieta, *Flagbearers*, 130–31.

¹³See Dennis Austin, "The Working Committee of the United Gold Coast Convention," *Journal of African History* 2, no. 2 (1961): 289–90.

¹⁴Vieta, *Flagbearers*, 132.

¹⁵Megan Marshall, "A Life Less Ordinary," review of *The Ordeal of Elizabeth Marsh: A Woman in World History*, by Linda Colley, Book Review, *The New York Times*, 16 September 2007.

¹⁶See Kwaku Larbi Korang, *Writing Ghana, Imagining Africa: Nation and African Modernity* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2004); and Stephan F. Miescher, *Making Men in Ghana* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005). Note the absence of autobiography in Esi Sutherland-Addy and Aminata Diaw, eds., *Women Writing Africa: West Africa and the Sahel* (New York: Feminist Press, 2005).

¹⁷LaRay Denzer, ed., *Constance Agatha Cummings-John: Memoirs of a Krio Leader* (Ibadan, Nigeria: Sam Bookman, 1995), xvii.

¹⁸Denzer notes the cases of Aoua Keita (Mali) and Andree Blouin (Guinea). Mabel Dove, the first woman to enter Ghana's parliament, also wrote an autobiography, but it has not been published. See Denzer, ed., *Constance Agatha Cummings-John*, xvii–xx. See, also, Denzer, "Gender and Decolonization: A Study of Three Women in West African Public Life," in *People and Empires in African History: Essays in Memory of Michael Crowder*, ed. J. D. Ade Ajayi and J. D. Y. Peel (London: Longman, 1992), 117–39. The dearth of West African women's autobiographical writing in the colonial and nationalist eras contrasts starkly with the literature produced by Indian women. See, for a start, Susie Tharu and K. Lalita, eds., *Women Writing in India*, vol. 1, *600 B.C. to the Early Twentieth Century* (New York: Feminist Press, 1991).

¹⁹John Peter Dadson, interview by Jean Allman, Kaneshie Estate, Accra, 27 July 2002.

²⁰After Ghanaian independence, he relocated to Ghana and worked as Nkrumah's key advisor on African Affairs.

²¹See George Padmore, *The Gold Coast Revolution: The Struggle of an African People from Slavery to Freedom* (London: D. Dobson, 1953), 71.

²²*Ibid.*, 115.

²³See Richard Wright, *Black Power: An American Negro Views the African Gold Coast* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1954), 101–5. Because Ghana was such a central focus of radical black internationalism in the 1950s and 1960s, it is not surprising that Kudjoe appears in such accounts. For a detailed account of African Americans in Ghana during this period, see Kevin Gaines's superb, *American Africans in Ghana: Black Expatriates and the Civil Rights Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006). Gaines provides a reconsideration of Wright's *Black Power* on p. 68.

²⁴Wright, *Black Power*, 101.

²⁵Ibid., 101–2.

²⁶Ibid., 104.

²⁷Jack B. Moore, "Black Power Revisited: In Search of Richard Wright," *Mississippi Quarterly* 41 (Spring 1988): 161–86.

²⁸Ibid., 164.

²⁹Ibid., 172.

³⁰Ibid., 173–74.

³¹Ibid., 174–75.

³²For a fascinating discussion of what he terms the "self-nation," see "Prometheus Unbound" (chap.), in Korang, *Writing Ghana*, 248–75.

³³Austin, "The Working Committee."

³⁴Ibid., 289–90. The petition was signed by K. A. Gbedemah, Kojo Botsio, Dzenkle Dzewu, Eben Adam, K. W. Asaam, Bart Plange, Hannah Kudjoe, and Sapa Williams and "fourteen others representing Youth Organisations in the Colony, Ashanti, NTs and Transvolta" (290).

³⁵See Austin, *Politics in Ghana*, 84–85. See, also, Nkrumah, *Ghana*, 100.

³⁶Nkrumah, *Ghana*, 107.

³⁷Apter, *Ghana in Transition*, 171.

³⁸Nkrumah, *Ghana*, 98–101; and Austin, *Politics in Ghana*, 83–85.

³⁹Susan Geiger describes a very similar process in "Tanganyikan Nationalism as 'Women's Work': Life Histories, Collective Biography and Changing Historiography," *Journal of African History* 37, no. 3 (1996): 4.

⁴⁰See Awoonor, *Ghana*, 201. Adamafo was arrested, tried, and acquitted, and then retried and sentenced to death. Nkrumah commuted the sentence to life in prison. Adamafo was released after the coup that toppled Nkrumah in 1966.

⁴¹Tawia Adamafo, *By Nkrumah's Side: The Labour and the Wounds* (Accra: Westcoast Publishing House, 1982), 115.

⁴²Ibid., 116–17.

⁴³Ibid., 117–18.

⁴⁴Ibid., 119.

⁴⁵Takyiwaa Manuh, "Women and Their Organizations During the Convention People's Party Period," in *The Life and Work of Kwame Nkrumah*, ed. Kwame Arhin (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 1993), 117.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, 119.

⁴⁷See, for example, *Evening News*, 22 January 1954.

⁴⁸*Evening News*, 23 May 1951; also, 8 May 1951.

⁴⁹*West Africa* (London), 8 August 1953, 725.

⁵⁰See *Daily Graphic*, 30 November 1959, 5 and 7 December 1959, 4 February 1960, and 9 March 1960.

⁵¹Cletus Azangweo, the Director of the Public Records and Archives Administration Department, which oversees the National Archives, has written and presented extensively on this topic. See "The Ghana National Archives Today and Tomorrow" (presentation to International Monetary Fund, Washington DC, September 2006).

⁵²Dadson interview.

⁵³Denzer, "Gender and Decolonization," 225.

⁵⁴E. S. Packham, Secretary to the Regional Commissioner to Principal Community Development Officer, Department of Social Welfare and Community Development, Tamale, 3 October 1959, Regional Archives of Ghana, Tamale (RAGT), NRG 9/3/6.

⁵⁵Cabinet Minutes, 13 March 1962, National Archives of Ghana, ADM 13/1/31.

⁵⁶The Northern Region was divided into a Northern and Upper Region in 1960. Principal Secretary, Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare to Secretary to the Regional Commissioner, Upper Region, Accra, 27 January 1964, RAGT, NRG 9/2/6.

⁵⁷See, for example, Monthly Progress Report on Nudity, 1964–73, RAGT, NRG 8/3/260.

⁵⁸*Ghanaian Times*, 10 March 1986.

⁵⁹It is common for families not to announce the death of a loved one until arrangements for the funeral and final rites are completed. The same article appeared in the *Ghanaian Times* and *Daily Graphic* on 8 May 1986. For a discussion of funeral preparations in Ghana, see Marleen de Witte, "Money and Death: Funeral Business in Asante, Ghana," *Africa* 73, no. 4 (2003): 531–59.

⁶⁰Bennett, *History Matters*, 24.

⁶¹See Geiger, *TANU Women*; and Kelly Askew, *Performing the Nation: Swahili Music and Cultural Politics in Tanzania* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002).
