INTERNATIONAL WASTE CHAINS IN GHANA: SCRAPYARDS, COMPANIES, AND FINANCIAL INFRASTRUCTURES

DAGNA RAMS (UNIVERSITÉ DE LAUSANNE)
Agbogbloshie: the world's largest e-waste dump - in pictures
A Global Graveyard for Dead Computers in Ghana
Africa

From soot to gold: Finding opportunity among hardship in Africa's largest e-waste site

Published 2039 GMT (0439 HKT) February 25, 2021
Illegal mines tarnish gold from Ghana

Afua Hirsch  26 Apr 2013
URBAN MINING EXTRACTION
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scrapyards</th>
<th>Companies that buy from scrapyards</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spaces of life, work, and socialising</td>
<td>International conferences, interventions</td>
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EXTRACTION VERSUS RECYCLING

Primary raw material – from extraction

Secondary raw material - recyclate – from waste

Demand: Industrial or Export
‘URBAN MINING SYSTEM’ – ECONOMIES OF SCALE

- Companies
  - Payment and credit
  - Scrap
  - Scrap dealers
  - Scrap collectors

- Households
- Businesses
- Government institutions

+ Own capital
COMPETITION AND COMMODIFICATION

Competition for scrap waste

Scrap metal is easier to locate than to collect

« It’s a try and luck business »

« I don’t have money to work »
FINANCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE IN SCRAPYARDS

Financial markets – ensuring liquidity and managing temporal risks (credit, price differentials)

‘Urbanity’ of urban mining – social inequalities, slumlording, patrimonial ties, political entrepreneurship
CONCLUSION

Scrap metal – harbinger of commodification of waste

Economies of scale and the valorisation of informal labour

Hazard and financial risk - individual or socialised