


8-17-2019

## Chapter 9: Looking Ahead

Julius A. Amin

*University of Dayton*, [jamin1@udayton.edu](mailto:jamin1@udayton.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: [https://ecommons.udayton.edu/cip\\_ges\\_2019](https://ecommons.udayton.edu/cip_ges_2019)

 Part of the [Bilingual, Multilingual, and Multicultural Education Commons](#), [Language and Literacy Education Commons](#), and the [Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Amin, Julius A., "Chapter 9: Looking Ahead" (2019). *Myth and Reality: Reflections on Our Travels through West Africa*. 13.  
[https://ecommons.udayton.edu/cip\\_ges\\_2019/13](https://ecommons.udayton.edu/cip_ges_2019/13)

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Center for International Programs at eCommons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Myth and Reality: Reflections on Our Travels through West Africa by an authorized administrator of eCommons. For more information, please contact [frice1@udayton.edu](mailto:frice1@udayton.edu), [mschlangen1@udayton.edu](mailto:mschlangen1@udayton.edu).

## CHAPTER 9

# Looking Ahead

---

*Julius A. Amin*  
*Professor, Department of History*  
*Alumni Chair in Humanities*

The essays in this volume focus on community, education, race, resilience, traditions, and social justice. All members of the cohort interpreted those themes through their respective disciplinary lens. Visits to the slave castles, the W.E.B. Du Bois Centre, Kakum National Park, Manhyia Palace Museum, Togoville, Buka Restaurant, and many other sites pointed to the complexities of both Togo and Ghana. The slaves castles confirmed the excesses of human brutality even at a time when modernity was celebrated as the age of reform and reason. On the other hand, in Ghana and Togo, the national parks, outdoor recreational facilities, business and educational institutions pointed to nations on the move.

All the participants' essays, contextualized within a history of slavery, colonialism, and neocolonialism, rightly emphasize the resilience of the African people. People in Africa do not sit around reflecting on the evils that outsiders committed in their society and continent. They are reflective, yes. But they are also hardworking, and they continue to do the best with the best they have. It is this spirit of ingenuity that keeps them going. They own businesses, pilot their planes, run their educational institutions, run their governments, celebrate victories of their soccer teams, desire success for their

children in school. Simply put, they aspire to be better at whatever they do. They are ordinary human beings doing the same ordinary things as others do all over the world. This is extraordinary. The essays gathered here thus challenge stale perceptions of African incapability. “Community” means being inclusive in the human family.

It’s clear that few things bothered the cohort more than the visits to slave castles. Each essay expanded on how and why Elmina and Cape Coast Castles were so impactful. The past can be messy. Painful. And each article argues the necessity for being vocal to injustice. Each insinuates or states outright that, in times of a moral crisis, it is not acceptable to look the other way. Slavery lasted hundreds of years *because good people looked the other way*.

As a result of the GES Africa experience, the participants are emboldened to promote global consciousness and awareness on campus and beyond. The cohorts can never again speak about Africa in the same manner. They “discovered” the African people, became their friends, hung out with them, danced with them, and by so doing expanded their horizons and their sense of what it means to be human. The cohorts learned about each individual, about their various strengths and vulnerabilities in an unfamiliar environment. Having experienced why and how it feels to be a minority, they gained a new awareness on how better to promote diversity and how to create inclusive communities. They learned to respect rather than tolerate difference. Everyone is a member of the human family and therefore entitled to the same human decency and respect. These cohorts will now serve as a vanguard for global consciousness and intercultural education and awareness on campus. Their African experience confirmed that “the world is a book and those who do not travel read only one page.”