



Reflections

A Ghanaian Anglican Reflection on Transatlantic Engagement

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The Transatlantic Writing Project offered me great insight into academic writing. As an Anglican priest and novice scholar who needed coaching, the webinars and especially the in-person gathering in Cape Coast provided essential and free training. Though I could not participate fully in all of the webinars due to my workload in school, I continued to receive great mentorship from several project leaders. I acquired effective training in writing habits and practices, helpful research and publishing sources, literature review, and methodology, and time management. My greatest takeaway from the online training was from the presentation titled, “Writing as a Spiritual Discipline,” led by Prof Susan Felch. I was encouraged that as a priest and a scholar, I can approach the task of academic writing as part of my Christian vocation and service.

The in-person conference at St Nicholas Seminary, Ghana (July 2024), where we gathered with our mentors, other participants, and several Caribbean colleagues, helped shape my perspective on revisiting the transatlantic slave trade to seek answers to contemporary questions that keep knocking at our doors. My interest is to focus on probing the contributions of West Africans to the Trade. I feel that there is a strong need for natives of West Africa to reassess their varied participation in the Trade as well as their willingness to contribute to the clarion calls for transatlantic reconciliation. I see this as the gap to fill in the slave trade discourse.

My interest in the slave castles and slavery has a history. As a first-year student at the University of Cape Coast some 20 years ago, I took a course that required students to visit the castles and become familiar with the institution of

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slavery, and particularly the transatlantic slave trade. That encounter with the slave castles and the story told about slavery raised this fundamental question for me, which is as relevant then as now: what was our role as West Africans in the building of such a monstrous institution that deracinated some 12 million African brothers and sisters from their homes, families, and socio-cultural setting, creating unending intergenerational trauma to these Africans in the diaspora? I appreciated this trauma afresh during the conference when we gathered for a Service of Reconciliation at Christ Church (Anglican) Cathedral, together with our brothers and sisters from Jamaica and other Caribbean countries, some of whom were visiting Ghana for the first time.² The trauma was telling in all faces. For this reason, I have titled my MPhil thesis, “Reconciling the Past from the Present: The Role of the Anglican Church in Ghana in Repairing the Legacy of the Transatlantic Slave Trade.”

It is my uppermost hope that such writing projects will continue, and identify and support African and Caribbean Christian scholars, whether students or established scholars, to sharpen their skills to write African stories echoing from the shadows.

To the organizers, funders, mentors, and other mentees, and especially those who were able to see their publications through, I say *Ayekoo* (well done)!

² *Editorial note:* For further details of this service, please see “Ecumenical Service of Reconciliation (Christ Church Anglican Cathedral, Cape Coast, July 2024),” pp. 121–128 in this issue, and “Tears in a Bottle Liturgy: Ghana,” adapted by Janice Mclean-Farrell and Anna Kasafi Perkins, pp. 115–120 in this issue.