

Orality In Ghanaian Newspaper Narratives:

An Analysis of Yankah's Woes of a Kwatriot



BY NATHANIEL GLOVER-MENI

ABSTRACT

The study explores the influence of orality on Ghanaian prose by explicating the verbal art strategies utilized by Yankah (1990) in his newspaper writing, *Woes of a Kwatriot*, and, by so doing, illustrating how the interaction between literature and journalism help in bringing about a vector of expression that reveals indigenous literary values. Yankah foregrounds tensions in the Ghanaian society using the medium of orality in a newspaper format, showcasing how indigenous literary modes can facilitate and enhance the quality of the journalism prose. In other words, Yankah saw the emergence of experimental writing as crucial in bringing Ghana, at the margin, to the centre of not only literary production but to the global arena where the writer can play a big role in shaping the fortunes of the people. Yankah is making the case that the African writer should not only mimic what obtains in the established Western canons. Rather, he or she must consciously facilitate the creation of new forms, an example being combining African elements with the Western long form such as lodging orality in journalism prose in a bid to mediate “the forces of modernity”.

Keywords: *Yankah, the African verbal art, journalism, Ghanaian literature, orality, kwatriot*



Introduction - fusing literature with journalism:

Experimentation by Ghanaian writers, such as fusing indigenous communicative elements in the journalism narrative, is not a new development. There is evidence that suggests that this approach has a long tradition, starting somewhere in the nineteenth century (1886) as seen in the writing of the pseudonym author of *Marita or the Folly of Love* (2002). Thus, the work of Yankah should be seen as a revival of what was previously practiced but has lost its luster among the new crop of writers. This is why orature is considered in some circles as the only "true" literature of Africa. Irele (2001), for example, feels that oral literature should be granted a special status in recognition of the medium's central role as "the most fundamental and organic aspect of African imagination", with "unlimited creative potentials", thus making it the "true literature of Africa" (p. 9).

What is more, orality, he says, is the literature that the vast majority of Africans, even today, are in constant touch with. This means that it is the main form of expression which African sensibilities are readily attuned to. In view of the above stated viewpoints, orality is often seen as the fundamental reference of discourse in African literature: "Orality functions as the matrix of an African mode of discourse, and where literature is concerned, the griot is its embodiment in every sense of the word. In other words, *oral literature represents the basic intertext of the African imagination*" [emphasis retained]:

Orality is still the dominant mode of communication on the continent, and it determines a particular disposition of the imagination of a different order from that conditioned by literacy ... orality proposes a dynamic conception of literature, one that envisages literature as a text in situation ... it is no longer, then, a question of considering oral literature as verbal art but as a totality that conjoins communication and participation in the affective field of a communal event (p. 31).

Variouly labelled as African orature, African verbal art, and African folk literature, Booker (1996) describes the genre as a cultural phenomenon, while Taiwo (1985) sees it as the main vector through which African customs, beliefs, and values are transmitted. Ansu-Kyeremeh (2005), on the other hand, believes that blending orature with journalism is indicative of the ability of orality to adapt to modern narrative trends, enabling the incorporation of short stories in the content of the newspaper narratives, the same way Bame (2005) describes the development as representing the transformation of the oral genre into the written format (p. 252), reflecting the "catalytic potential of folk media such as drama, theatre, and folk plays, oral tradition, in brief, folk entertainment in promoting self-reliant development".

With specific reference to Ghana, Newell (2006) points out how two of the country's writers in the 1970s, Ayi Kwei Armah and Kofi Awoonor, upheld the unproblematized dichotomy between orality and writing, suggesting in their printed texts that African cultures are essentially oral. Finnegan (1998) even believes that the distinction between oral and written literatures may not be so rigid as is often implied. He noted that the two genres can draw on the products of the other, as in the case of orally transmitted forms, which have frequently been adopted in written literature.

To this interplay we can now add the fact that when looked at comparatively, the two forms, oral and written, are not so mutually exclusive as is sometimes imagined. Even if we picture them as two independent extremes we can see that in practice there are many possibilities and many different stages between the two poles and that the facile assumption of a profound and unbridgeable chasm between oral and written forms is a misleading one (p. 20).

Against this backdrop, it is therefore not surprising that quite a number of African writers like to infuse elements of orality in their narratives. Thus,

in Yankah's work under study, we see the writer engaging in a similar endeavour, trying to take on the yoke of the community as reflected in the title of his write-ups, "Woes of a Kwatriot". Perhaps doing so affords him (the writer) the opportunity to design home-grown creative strategies that enable him to tackle the "woes" he sees in society, utilizing verbal art elements, even sometimes turning the original usage on its head as reflected in the ironic use of the song of praise, typically meant to honour but Yankah using it as a tool to attack lewdness in the Ghanaian society.

Among devices used by Yankah in the work include strategies of incorporation. The strategy of incorporation entails combining or integrating the verbal art form into the Western long form, an example being the approximation of African speech into the English Language. In the case of strategy of accommodation, it entails modification and adjusting the English language to the nuances of the African verbal art. Sometimes, this means direct transliteration of sonic devices into the narrative. In this case, however, what is being integrated is made to agree with the conventions of the foreign language. It must be pointed out that oftentimes, these devices are mixed-up, making it difficult to do a neat delineation of one strategy from the other. For instance, the abuse narratives are sometimes embedded into other devices such as transposition. Therefore, we see interplay of devices instead of single devices standing on their own. An example of the use of the strategy of incorporation is the direct transliteration of African speech into the European language. According to Newell (2006), this approach involves a modification of material to accommodate the immediate, contemporary audience. In some instances, the insertion involves un-translated words into the English language. For example, "I ate koko and bofrot this morning" (Yankah, 1990: 48). Examples like this demonstrate the commitment of Yankah to make his work fit into the cultural experience of his reader.

I dashed to the other entrance ignoring several invitation calls. "Krakiye, I have good nkontomire ... I will give you a good deal ... come over, please; my cassava is latest ... latest cassava", etc., etc. Then came another feminine voice, "Me kunu, me kunu, I have garden eggs". I slowed down my pace and answered favourably to this one, for I was particularly interested in the new name the young lady had composed for me – "Me kunu, me kunu, me kunu. I obeyed the call" (Yankah, 1990: pp. 9-10).

As noted by Chachu (2014), mixing languages, in this case English Language and Akan, can be used as "a tool for promoting national peace and unity as we get to understand that although we are from different tribes and ethnic groups who speak different languages, we are all one people" (p. 95). This approach, Chachu adds, will bridge the gap between the educated elite who may feel comfortable expressing themselves solely in English and the uneducated who may not be too comfortable with a programme that is run using the English Language (p. 95). The shortcoming with Chachu's position has to do with the potential reader who does not understand the language that is incorporated into the English language. Against this background, one can argue that Yankah has in mind specific readers; which are those who are able to speak the two languages. In other words, the text is highly particularized. That is to say that it is meant for those who can listen, understand, and evaluate the multiplicity of languages being used, specially so when he does not translate the foreign words that are lodged into the English language.

Perhaps Yankah uses examples like "Me kunu" or "my husband" to open our eyes to other vistas in gender relations, allowing men to take more expansive roles without altering their biological make up. The possessive "me" in the Akan language is an oblique critique of a society that refuses to realize the need to tap the collective energies of both sexes. Here, Yankah can be said to be employing cognitive development techniques dating back to Plato's Allegory of the Cave, showing

that if people believe a situation to be real, they will act as though it is real. Explicating Plato's allegory, DeFleur et al (1998) said it shows how beliefs can be altered: "the reason that altering beliefs is so often sought as a goal of psychodynamic persuasion is that beliefs – both factual and affective – are fundamental to us as guides to our actions". Thus in the mould of Plato, Lippman (1922) who asserted that the pictures in head guide our actions towards things in the world outside, Yankah creates conscious pictures in our heads with his incisive description in a bid to re-write gender perceptions in Ghana, perhaps to cause a revolution in the domestic sphere, shaping the role men are expected to play in the family. By making the young man the shopper instead of a woman, Yankah helps to dismantle the rigid segmentation of gender roles, allowing for hybridity.

Yankah refuses to rehash stereotypes regarding gender roles and, by so doing, demanding that the reader unlearn all gender type casts learned through cultural priming. In this narrative, we see a young man taking a position normally reserved for women in a patriarchal society and playing this role with a lot of finesse and, as a result, earning the stranger traders as "mekunu" or my husband or my own husband. By making the character to be free of social constraints, Yankah is demanding recognition and approval for the choice. He wants people to recognize with such behaviors as positive. Thus, the market women found him to be worthy of emulation and have adopted him as "me nu", a communal husband.

Yankah (1990) also has the ability to introduce in the narrative indigenous words without doing violence to the integrity of the English syntax as in "as for the people of Burkina Faso, they don't know how to make a 'kuuu' at all" (p. 82). In the excerpt, Yankah feels that the crude nature of coup d'état making in Ghana's neighbouring country, Burkina Faso, means that its military is hopeless at making good "kuus", assuming there is anything like a good coup d'état. The word "kuuu" can be considered a coinage or even a calque that allows the user of the language to make sense of foreign

words in his cultural context, reflecting Yankah's mission of experimenting and breaking the frontiers of creativity. Yankah also culls words from the Ghanaian cultural scene as in the following examples: "Charlie wote" [local coinage for bathroom slippers]; "dzomi" [specially flavoured palm-oil found in Ghana]; "pekyee" [something without shape or form]; "Keta school boys" [tiny herrings found in the Volta Region of Ghana] (p. 7); "Akpeteshie" [locally brewed gin]; "kenkey" [popular local staple food made from corn dough] (p. 87); "Ampe game" [local game, typically played by teenage girls] (p. 5), and nikaboka [over-sized knickers] (p. 50).

Another oral element that one can trace in *Woes of a Kwatriot* is the strategy of transposition, which, as Newell explains, refers to the recuperation of African materials and forms into a European language. Transposition involves alteration and recasting. Encarta ⁵¹ defines transposition as doing something new or the attempt to do something new. In this context, transposition means recasting oral forms such as drum beats, songs and other sonic elements and altering that mode so as to fix it in a text format. The essence is to flavor the writing as it allows for creativity. Besides, it enables the writer to experiment with oral forms in the written medium, seeking a medley of the two. Transposition includes recasting sonic values into a text, demonstrating the primacy of living speech. Examples include the use of appellations or references to drum beat. Drum beats are typically seen as the junction between orality and narration or recitation (performance), helping to give the reader a sense of history and providing forecast into the future. Yankah dramatizes the significance of the talking drum or surrogates of drums in analyzing the place of the arts in the making of the nation: "Fontomfrom drums that spoke a Ghanaian language; ... engages them in ritual dialogues, dramatizes political themes" (p. 1990, p. 61). The rhythm or music generated by the drums is sonic, and the writer must find a way of replicating this cadence in text. Sackey (2010) explains sonic devices exemplify the link between literature and music (p. 7), while Agyekum (2007)

says sonic devices demonstrate the premium value of sound in oral literature, especially their ability to appeal to our imagination and emotions. A negative aspect of this development, Agyekum noted, has been the fact that sometimes “nonsense sounds may be tolerated as a form of entertainment” (p. 20). Okpewho (1990) corroborates Agyekum’s view, noting that “priority is given to sound” in “oral literature” (p. 252).

Therefore, writers who deploy sonic devices in their works must find appropriate substitutes or surrogates for the drum beats in delivering their work. Repetition is one such surrogate sonic device that is used to engage the reader. Explaining the relevance of repetition, Okpewho says it has the capacity to help set up “a protagonist on one pole and antagonist on the opposite pole” (252), enhancing the flow of the narrative. Thus, repetition can be used to spur some form of change in the audience. In *Woes of a Kwatriot*, Yankah hangs on a number of repetitive devices to craft his narrative.

I know Kofi Mensah very well, even though he may not know me. The other day at the tro-tro station, taflatse, I was holding a pair of charliewote I had bought. All of a sudden, somebody snatched my charliewote We searched the whole station, but we never found the charliewote, and we never found Kofi Mensah. Whether the Charliewote disappeared with him or the two disappeared separately, that I cannot tell (p. 20).

In the example above, Yankah spins the narrative around a number of phrases and through the euphonic effect (sound) adduced as a result of the repetition, castigates a rising incident of petty theft and robbery in the Ghanaian society. We see Yankah setting a binary between the sacred and the profane in society, and the eagerness of the corrupt to despoil the sanctity of that society. The use of the etiquette phrase “taflatse” cautions the reader about the unpleasantness of the news that follows. What holds the text together is the alternation of various contrasting repetitive

forms that extend the binary between the good and the bad choices available to the reader. For instance, “I know Kofi Mensah” contrasts with “he may not know me”. Criminals often assume that their ugly behaviours might never be known. It is this shallowness that makes them assume that their illicit behavior should be accepted. This tale, therefore, debugs the brazen tactics being adopted by the raiders for not so important things like “charliewote” or bathroom sandals. It follows that if they can use bare-faced tactics in getting or stealing non-valuable items, then they will be more daring, and probably spill violence in grabbing items of greater worth. This is precisely the reason behind the use of the custom word “taflatse”. It is this state of disjunction that Yankah despondently communicates at the end of excerpt leaving more questions begging for answers when he says “I cannot tell”. Although he cannot, it is safe to say that he expects the reader to be able to tell, based on the insights he has given. In this context, one can say that Yankah leaves some of the thinking and evaluation to be done by the active listener who is able to understand the message.

Apart from repetitive devices, Yankah also deploys other verbal art techniques, namely the praise narrative, analogous to songs of praise or praise recitations. These recitations are used to praise salient qualities in a person and delineate same as worthy of emulation and are typically part of or included into the drum beat, appellation, recitations and performances. However, in *Woes of a Kwatriot* the praise narrative is used ironically to jab and mock some foibles in his society. In the excerpt that follows, for example, what was supposed to eulogize the late Mr. Ankonam turns out to be a condemnation of his not-so-glorious life, listing various acts of infamy committed by him.

*In honour of Mr. Ankonam
In 1955 while Manager of Ohiakrom
Commercial Bank,
He squandered three million cedis.
Five years after that he became the
accountant
Of Ohiakrom Groundnut Industries and*

embezzled 5.3 million cedis. Finally when we appointed him catechist of the local spiritual church, he stole 500,000 cedis being proceeds from the church harvest. Here he lies, and here we stand, not laughing and not crying (p. 21).

The attack is to be found in the very first line; the surname “Ankonam”, the loner or rather selfish man who becomes the manager of Ohiakrom (poverty stricken community) bank. It is no crime that a selfish person will spend whatever he has accumulated; but as a manager of a poverty-stricken society, he had no business to “squander”, “embezzle”, and “steal” resources entrusted to his care. Perhaps, Mr Ankonam is the charatonym of a poor Ghanaian behavior, which is, why do we entrust power, resources, and positions of authority into the hands of known criminals? Is it because the people are too gullible to realize this or the fact they do not have any reasoning capacity to question such actions? Thus, instead of images of social ideals typically elaborated in such chants from which children could learn proper behaviour, Mr. Ankonam becomes an object of ridicule for his lack of compunction. Yankah feels that Ghanaians are now too desirous of seeking the limelight for things of no substance, ignoring the key indicators that will spur national development. The significance of the abuse narratives should be seen in the role they play as moral dials in society, with the capacity to spur change.

The word ‘accommodation’ has diverse denotations or connotations. However, for this study, we adopt the usage in the Encarta dictionary, which describes it as a form of modification and flexibility. In this wise, we look at how Yankah allows his journalism prose to accommodate verbal art involvement strategies. This is because Yankah approximates oral techniques in varied ways such as inserting into the journalistic narrative oral strategies as part of his declared experimentation ethos. In other words, the strategy of accommodation allows Yankah’s creative impulse to bloom and blossom. In addition, the art enables him to create new realities

and new realms, offering the people opportunities not available in other Ghanaian writing formats. Aside the intended aesthete goals, the strategy also enables him to achieve his social intentions; he is a voice for social change and reformation in the public sphere. However, he knows that these changes will not happen by chance. Thus, the strategy is used to awaken the reader to certain issues that require urgent redress. He marries literary and media communication conventions to enlist the reader’s attention, with the aim of blowing the whistle on some happenings in society. For example, by using phrases such as “dear reader”, Yankah is able to make an emotional demand on the reader, creating immediacy between the narrator and the reader. In normal journalism prose, the third-person pronoun is preferred, indicative of an objective distancing between the writer, the audience, and the subject that one is writing about. However, in Yankah’s work, the text goes beyond phatic communion whereby such emotion-laden communication is accepted as an entrée for a more substantive talk.

This example can also be seen as an overt communicative strategy which has as its object altering the beliefs and behaviours of the targeted recipients of the message. The use of “dear reader” signals a linear type of communication where results are expected immediately. Yankah couches the text as interchange a transaction involving various people stating the varied facts on an issue. The intention is probably to arouse the feelings of the reader, providing him or her with a reasoned argument that will be so persuasive enough to enable him or her to adopt the option proposed by the writer. DeFleur et al (1998) believe that people often comply with reasoned narratives on account of the fact that “a persuasive message changes the way people think” (p. 280).

As in other examples to follow, Yankah kicks off a dialogue with “dear reader” regarding some “woes” bedeviling his beloved Ghana for which he Kwesi Yankah as a patriot or “Kwatriot” or rather Kwesi the Patriot is obliged to seek answers to. He is doing so because he is seeking to effect a certain

kind of change through the reader. By influencing the reader through trenchant articulation of the issues at stake, the individual is expected to experience a cognitive impulse, which is most likely to result in a change of behavior. As DeFleur et al further observe, "mind controls action", meaning that "carefully designed messages can change the way people believe or feel about a topic and that such changes will affect the way they act towards the object of communication" (p. 280). In this case, the expected alteration is to achieve behavioural change, a transformation in character. Here, the intention is to promote solidarity in the face of extortion. The vocative, "dear reader", can thus be considered a leitmotif in Yankah's work and it is often used together with other devices to express indignation. As in the example below, the use of the persuasive technique is intended to promote some mental growth or change on the part of the reader. As DeFleur et al note, one important way in which cognitive aspect of the reader can be influenced is by providing people with meanings for objects, situations and events for which they have to interpret and react or respond to, adding that such a measure is easily accomplished with the use of symbols that can have a powerful influence in determining what they will do. Consider the below example:

Dear reader, the next time you are turned away by a Ghana Commercial Bank cashier for attempting to withdraw for the second time in a week from your savings, rush to the bank manager's office (without knocking) and cry yourself hoarse ... Dear reader, to tell you the truth, I can't think of one frivolous reason for withdrawing from your savings. Do people withdraw from their savings to go and buy kebab and roasted groundnuts? (Yankah, 1990, p. 73)

Although some of the issues raised in the excerpt may sound innocuous, a careful examination reveals a deeper malaise at the heart of Ghana's public sector. Institutions established to provide service and which depend on public support for their success are rather taking the same public

they are designed and recruited to serve for a ride and Yankah will have none of that. By calling into question the ineptitude of these service providers, Yankah expects the public to take a resolute action against them. He expects people in authority to work towards seeking solutions to problems rather than creating new problems. In effect, Yankah uses orality to enforce social change by instigating action as denoted in the substantive message. As DeFleur (1998), using a meaning-construction strategy to attract and hold attention of the reader as Yankah does enables the writer to gain the reader's sympathetic support. Thus, the affective technique 'dear reader' as used by Yankah goes beyond its phatic strategy to embolden the reader to be assertive, that is, to appreciate that people have rights. As such, they should not be subservient to domineering, bullying attitudes. Yankah is thinking beyond one reader. He wants a community of change agents.

To enable the reader to grasp the message, Yankah uses a local idiom to ask pointed questions, which though benign, reveal upon scrutiny the contempt with which such service providers hold their clients as in the example that follows: "Do people withdraw from their savings to go and buy kebab and roasted groundnuts?" In other words, do the bank managers assume that people who save with them are so insane to the extent that when they come to the banks to withdraw their savings they do so because they want to engage in frivolities? Extending the argument, one can say that Yankah uses orature as a medium through which to instigate some form of insurrection. True - he is not calling for civil disobedience. Rather, he is urging an organization change which, he hopes, can affect the nation both qualitatively and economically. By shelling such misfits, Yankah makes wholesome what was noxious while, at the same time, seeking to create some form of camaraderie among the people in redressing the wrongs. In this wise, we can even say that Yankah is urging people power in dealing with the corporate snub, stripping the managers of any assumed powers they had. By the same token, the tactic can be used to place the reader at the heart of the story. In this instant

case, Yankah uses the conversational technique to demonstrate the power of the written word to be used for good causes as well as for evil purposes, warning that an eye ailment he had contracted could unwittingly infect readers: "This eye disease, I am told, is highly contagious, and I presume, readers who are reading this at the moment are doing so at their own risk" (Yankah, 1990, p. 108). Yankah probes subtle ways of effecting change. For instance, gender typecasts dissolve in the narration, allowing for an overlap of roles, as seen in 'The Day My Mother Sent Me' episode whereby a young lad took up a role normally played by women, executing the task with such acumen to the extent that market women proclaimed him their husband: "kunu".

In addition, he deploys "message sidedness" (that is the use of a communicative message that includes both sides of an argument or to use both sides and refute the opposing arguments as well as) to demand changes in the ordering of society: "the very word electricity displays an open bias for the city. Its constituents appear to suggest electricity is for the CITY man, not the villager [emphasis retained]" (p. 54). As far as Yankah is concerned, Ghana can only be seen as a just society when her resources are distributed fairly. This appears not to be the case for as he evaluates, there is a deliberate policy on the part of our leaders not to focus on the needs of those living in the peri-urban and rural areas. Obviously this can lead to centre-margin confrontations, if the situation is not addressed.

An issue of great concern to Yankah is the rising incidence of hypocrisy and lewdness in the Ghanaian society. By and large, orature should be seen as the gold standard if development

strategies are to work. It must also be seen as the most influential communicative medium in Ghana. In this regard, it will be expected that any attempt at development must include these oral strategies; otherwise the overall impact of such efforts will be minimal. This indicates clearly that what makes one government succeed as against the other, what makes one a good communicator compared to the other, or what makes one development project succeed as against the other is the ability of the initiator to adapt whatever knowledge one has in a local context and what better way to do that than through the means of oral literature.

A particular area that he canvasses for recognition is the role that writers play in society and their capacity to turn round a gloomy situation into a bright spot as seen in his retelling of the eye infection incident. What the works of Yankah indicates is that real change must go beyond economic change to unravel the other areas of national life that inhibit economic performance. Yankah, for instance, reveals gaps in development strategies between the urban centres and the peripheral areas, which constitute the largest cohort of the population. By neglecting the poor, society unwittingly creates a conflict situation, which inhibits economic performance. By failing to attend to the needs of the majority poor, we hyphenate the growth prospects of the country. If the needs of the poor, such as the lack of electricity, are addressed, they would be empowered to contribute to development. Yankah foregrounds tensions in the Ghanaian society using the medium of orality in a journalistic format, showcasing how indigenous literary modes can facilitate and enhance the quality of the journalism prose.

Conclusion

Yankah has helped to extend the frontiers of artistic experimentation of the long-form in Ghana, flavouring the English language with Akan resources. Yankah's composition shows that non-fiction has unlimited potentials, illustrating the ways in which a writer can generate excitement for his work by making it fresh and crisp. Yankah's work can be classified as a home-grown strategy aimed at contributing to expanding the edge of Ghana's literary heritage, bringing it to the realm of the global creative enterprise. This process enabled him not just to create with the language; importantly, it offered him a platform to initiate dialogue with the people over a number of woes that need to be addressed. Crucially too, the experimentation enabled him to seek a revival of an art form that has almost died off, revitalizing it. In a way, this could be deemed as a message by Yankah to African writers not to abandon the good aspects of their native culture but work towards integrating that experience into the European language. In this regard, Yankah can be considered as an exporter of 'Ghana made' English.

References

- Agyekum, K. (2007). *Introduction to Literature*. Accra: Media Design.
- Angmor, C. (1996). *Contemporary literature in Ghana (1911-1978): A Critical Evaluation*. Accra: Woeli Publishing Services.
- Ansu-Kyeremeh, K. (2005). *Indigenous Communication in Africa*. Accra: Ghana Universities Press.
- Bame, K. N. (2005). The Use of Indigenous Communication in Africa. In Kwesi Ansu-Kyeremeh (Ed.). *Indigenous Communication in Africa*. Accra: Ghana Universities Press.
- Booker, K.M. (1996). *A Practical Introduction to Literary Theory and Criticism*. New York: Longman.
- Chachu, S. (2014). Code switching as a Type of Language Use in the Context of Unity in Diversity. In H. Lauer et al (Eds.). *The One in the Many: Nation Building Through Cultural Diversity*. Accra: Sub-Saharan Publishers
- DeFleur, M. et al. (1998). *Fundamentals of Human Communication*. London: Mayfield Publishing Company.
- Encarta Dictionary (2009). Washington: Microsoft Corporation.
- Finnegan, R. (1998). *Oral Literature in Africa*. Nairobi: Oxford University Press.
- Irele, A.F. (2001). *The African Imagination: Literature of Africa and the Black Diaspora*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Lippman, W. (1922). *Public Opinion*. New York: Macmillan.
- Native, A. (2002). *Marita or the Folly of Love*. S. Newell (Ed.). Leiden: Brill.
- Newell, S. (2006). *West African Literatures*. New York, Oxford University Press.
- Okpewho, I. (1990). *The Oral Performance in Africa*. Ibadan: Spectrum Books.
- Sackey, A. A. (2010). *Dimensions of Comparative Literature*. Accra: Sylva Press.
- Taiwo, O. (1985). *An Introduction to West African Literature*. Lagos: Nelson.
- Yankah, K. (1990). *Woes of a Kwatriot*. Accra: Woeli Publishing Services.
- Yankah, K. (1995). *Speaking for the Chief*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Yankah, K. (1985). *The Proverb in the Context of Akan Rhetoric*. New York: P. Lang.
- Yankah, K. (2004). *Language, the Mass Media and Democracy in Ghana*. Accra: GAAS.
- Yankah, K (1998). *Free Speech in Traditional Society: the Cultural Foundations of Communication in Contemporary Ghana*. Accra: Ghana Universities Press.

MAIN ARTICLES

Yankah, K. (2006). *Education, Literacy and Governance: A Linguistic Inquiry into Ghana's Burgeoning Democracy*. Accra: GAAS.

Yankah, K. (2012). The Saga of the Broken Trumpet. In Anne V. Adams (Ed.). *Essays*

in Honour of Ama Ata Aidoo. Oxfordshire: Ayebia Clark Publishing Company.

Phillip, P. & Yankah, K. (2004). *African Folklore: An Encyclopaedia*. New York: Routledge.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Nathaniel Glover-Meni

He has worked variously as university lecturer, communications specialist and journalist over the last seventeen years. Currently, he lectures at the University of Health and Allied Sciences, Ho, in the Volta Region. Before then, he had worked with Nestlé Central & West Africa as Communications/Media Specialist and, lately, as Communications Manager with Stratcomm Africa, a total/strategic media communication concern in Accra.

He was formerly the Public Relations Officer of Takoradi Polytechnic and, before then, worked with the Johns Hopkins University's Centre for Communication Programmes in Accra as Programme Officer in charge of Documentations, Publications and Media. Nathaniel spent more than 10 years with the Ghana News Agency, where he rose through the ranks to the position of Chief Reporter/Presidential Correspondent attached to the then Vice-President and later President of Ghana, John Dramani Mahama.

Nathaniel earned his M.Phil in English from the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi, where he also obtained an honour's Bachelor degree in English and Sociology and, at the moment, completing his doctoral degree.

He is a former student of the Ghana Institute of Journalism, earning a Diploma in Journalism. He also attended the International Institute for Journalism, Germany, obtaining a certificate in Economic & Financial Journalism.

Nathaniel is a member of the Association for the Study of Literature and the Environment, Keene (New Hampshire), USA, member of the International Association of Literary Journalism Studies, the University Teachers Association of Ghana and the Ghana Journalists Association.