Promoting Excellence in Knowledge

GHANA ACADEMY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
EPHRAIM AMU MEMORIAL LECTURE 2024

TOPIC

The Significance of Ephraim Amu's Defiance of Cultural Imperialism.

SPEAKER

PROF. KOFI AGYEKUM, *FGA*
Professor of Linguistics

CHAIRPERSON:
PROF. JOSEPH R. A. AYEE, FGA
Vice President, Arts Section, GAAS

DATE: THURSDAY 16 MAY 2024 | TIME: 5:30 PM

VENUE: KWAME NKRUMAH AUDITORIUM, GAAS

#3 Research Crescent, Casely Hayford Road, Airport Residential Area, Accra

LIVE ON

zoom MEETING ID 832-2062-7551

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PROGRAMME

- **5:30 PM**
- **Welcome Address and Introduction of Chairman**
  Prof. Joshua Y. Abor, *FGA,*
  Assistant Honorary Secretary, GAAS
- **Chairman's Remarks and Introduction of Speaker**
  Prof. Joseph R. A. Ayee, *FGA*
  Vice President, Arts Section, GAAS
- **Song Ministration by Choir**
- **Lecture Begins**
- **Song Ministration by Choir**
- **Chairman's Closing Remarks**
- **Honorary Secretary's Remarks**
- **Refreshments**

IN ATTENDANCE:
IMMANUEL CHOIR, MADINA-ACCRA

ABOUT THE CHAIRMAN

PROF. JOSEPH ROLAND ATSU AYEE, FGA

VICE PRESIDENT, ARTS SECTION, GAAS

Prof. Joseph Roland Atsu Ayee is the Vice President for the Arts Section of the Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences. He was elected a Fellow of the Academy in 2005 and served as Assistant Honorary Secretary (Arts Section), 2014-2016, and Honorary Treasurer, 2016-2017.

He was the occupant of the UNESCO/United Nations University Leadership Academy (UNULA) Chair in Leadership Studies, University of Jordan in 2001 and the Emeka Anyaoku Visiting Chair of Commonwealth Studies, Institute of Commonwealth Studies, University of London in 2013.

He served as a member of a team of experts that drafted Ghana's National Decentralization Policy Framework and Action Plan, 2015-2019, and the National Decentralization Policy and Strategy, 2020-2024.

He has over 200 publications in several areas of Political Science, Public Policy and Administration.

His current research interests include higher education governance and management, policy and institutional responses to COVID-19, and political institutions and public sector management in Ghana's Fourth Republic.

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

PROF. KOFI AGYEKUM, FGA

PROFESSOR OF LINGUISTICS

A Ghanaian Professor of Linguistics in the University of Ghana, Legon. Prof Kofi Agyekum was born on 21st March 1954. He is married with 3 young adults, one male and two females.

He was the Acting Dean of School of Performing Arts, University of Ghana from 2014-2021, Ag. Director, University of Ghana in 2015, School of Performing Arts, University of Ghana from 2013-2014, Co-coordinator, English-Akan Science Dictionary Project, Head of Department of Linguistics, University of Ghana from 2010-2013 and Co-coordinator, Akan Dictionary Project, University of Ghana from 1997-2007.

His areas of Research are Ethnography of Communication, Linguistic Anthropology, Pragmatics, Discourse Analysis, Language and Politics, Mother Tongue Education, Sociolinguistics, Stylistics, Semantics, Cognitive Semantics (Body Part Expressions) Translation, Terminology, Lexicology, Lexicography and Oral Literature.

Prof. Agyekum has published in many renowned international and local journals such as *Pragmatics, Pragmatics and Cognition, Journal of Pragmatics Discourse Studies, Language and Dialogue, Journal of Language and Politics, Anthropological Research, Language and Society, International Journal of Language and Culture, International Journal of Language and Communication RASK, Metaphor and the Social World, Cognitive Linguistics Science, etc.*

His latest books are ***Akan Kasadwini*** and ***Akan Body Part Expressions.*** He is an internationally recognised Akan and Ethnography of Communication scholar and has been quoted and consulted by several scholars and institutions at both local and international levels. Prof Agyekum has 87 journal articles and book chapters and 16 books. He has also written 5 modules in linguistics for the Institute of Continuing and Distance Education, University of Ghana, Legon. He has reviewed 5 books and many journal articles.

Prof. Kofi Agyekum taught Akan and Linguistics at the former School of Languages, Ajumako from 1982-1985 and also at the

University of Ghana, University of Cape Coast and the University of Education, Winneba. He has been teaching Akan-Twi to American students in Ghana since 1997. He was a visiting scholar at the University of Athens –Ohio in the summer of 2004.

Prof. Agyekum has done a lot of consultancy work on Akan Media and Translation for (CRIA) GIMPA, ISSER, NALAP, UN QUIPS-USAID, DOVVSU, APRM, GPRS II, Ashanti Gold, UNESCO Charter on Culture, UNESCO Ghana, Woman's Mortality, Panos Institute West Africa, Dakar, Senegal, ASTEP, Ghana RIING Project, CDD, Accra, Attorney General's Department, Unimax Publishers, Expert facilitator for media and politicians towards peaceful elections in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Nigeria, organised by ECOWAS.

He has been a member of various Boards and Committees at the University of Ghana and at the National Level. These include National Peace Council, National Film and Television Institute (NAFTI), National Theatre, Ghana Institute of Languages and Presbyterian University College of Ghana. He is a Fellow, Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences (GAAS), Member International Pragmatics Association IPrA, Member, African Pragmatics Association and Member, Linguistics Association of Ghana (LAG).

Prof. Kofi Agyekum has received Special Awards; Humanitarian Awards Ghana (Honorary Division) in 2020, Kwame Nkrumah Genius Award for the Use of Mother Tongue in the Media in 2017, National Award, the Order of the Volta for Public Education and the Media in 2008 and University of Ghana's Best Teacher Award for the Humanities in 2007. Apart from these special and national awards, he has received others from churches, institutions, agencies and traditional societies.

Prof. Kofi Agyekum was the first to introduce Newspaper Review in Akan at Radio Univers in April 1997. The programme was titled Afisem and it is still aired on Radio Univers, Legon. He was the host of Afisem and Obiara Nka Bi programmes on Radio Univers and has trained many students' trainee journalists. He is a regular panelist on Peace FM's ***Kookurokoo*** Show.

SYNOPSIS OF LECTURE:

The Significance of Ephraim Amu's Defiance of Cultural Imperialism

The presentation examines *The Significance of Ephraim Amu's Defiance of Cultural Imperialism* using his profile and what he stood for. I shall operate with Boyd-Barret's (2018) definition:

> *"central to the many definitions of the term cultural imperialism is the idea of the culture of one powerful civilization, country, or institution having great unreciprocated influence on that of another less powerful entity to a degree that one may speak of a measure of cultural domination."*

Dr. Ephraim Amu, the famous pioneering contributor to ethnomusicology in Ghana, embarked on defiance of cultural imperialism in defence of our cultural identity and dignity. Note that whoever has no identity has no dignity and whoever has no dignity has no identity.

Today, unlike the colonial days of Amu, when the European colonizers or their Christian missionaries physically dictated what to wear, what music to play, and what language to speak at public or institutional events; there is a substitute called, ***cultural globalization***, deadlier than *physical colonization.* The quiet, faceless and seemingly impersonal features of cultural globalization tend to hide its potential for endless social penetration, scope of influence, and erosion of weaker cultures. Our cultural identity and dignity are under a more serious threat now than before. In this tidal onslaught, a lot of vigilance and energy are needed. We must engage in an ideological fight *at all material times* as Amu did to protect and preserve our cultural identity and dignity.

This presentation is divided into five sections. **Section One** gives a brief account of Amu's biography. **Section Two** teases out of Amu's biography the scope and meaning of his defiance of **cultural imperialism**. **Section Three** takes a brief look at the Post-Amu Age, namely, the **Age of Globalization**. **Section Four** examines the pragmatics of Article 39 of the 1992 Constitution and the National Commission on Culture's policy on culture. In the final section, **Section Five**, conclusions are drawn and recommendations are made for the way forward.

EPHRAIM AMU IN BRIEF

He was born on 13 September 1899 at Peki-Avetile (also called Abenase) in the Peki traditional area of the Volta Region and as a male child born on a Wednesday, he was called Kwaku. His father was Stephen Amuyaa, a wood carver who was popularly called Papa Stefano. His mother was Sarah Akoram Ama. Ephraim Kɔku Amu was baptised by the Rev. Rudolf Mallet on 22 October 1899.

Amu first went to school in May 1906 and at about age 12 he entered the Peki Blengo E.P. Boarding Middle School, where he showed much interest in and love for music and agriculture.

Amu passed the standard 7 School Leaving Certificate examination and the Abetifi Teachers Seminary Examination. In 1916 he and two other colleagues had to walk 150 miles from Peki to Abetifi with their boxes on their heads to start teacher training education.

Dr. Ephraim Amu (later Tata Amu) attained national stature very early in life as a creative artist and an intellectual. He combined the role of musician with that of an educator, social critic and cultural activist.

Tata Amu was concerned not only with the theory and practice of music and related arts, but also with larger issues of tradition and innovation, change and progress, the role of patriotism in nation building and the moral code of civil society. He always had something inspiring or thought-provoking to say in his songs and reflections.

GENESIS OF EPHRAIM AMU MEMORIAL LECTURES

The Ephraim Amu Memorial Lecture was instituted in the Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences through the initiative of Emeritus Prof. J.H. Kwabena Nketia in 1999. The maiden lecture was delivered the same year by Emeritus Prof. J.H. Kwabena Nketia on the topic: Synoptic Portrait of Amu.

Subsequently, the Amu Memorial Lecture Series has been delivered by eminent scholars, most of whom are themselves Fellows of the Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Ephraim Amu Memorial Lectures delivered since 1999 are as follows:

1999 Synoptic Portrait of Amu,
Prof. Emeritus J. H. Kwabena Nketia, FGA

2000 The Legacy of Ephraim Amu,
Prof. Kofi Agawu, FGA

2001 Ephraim Amu: A Portrait of Cultured Patriotism,
Dr. Letitia E. Obeng, FGA

2002 Music in Worship: Aid or Hindrance,
Most Rev. Prof. Emeritus Kwesi Dickson, FGA

2003 Music and Moral Philosophy: Ephraim Amu's Compositions Revisited,
Prof. R. F. Amonoo, FGA

2004 The Poetry of Ephraim Amu,
Prof. L. A. Boadi, FGA

2005 Theological Landmarks in the Life and Thought of Ephraim Amu,
Rev. Philip Laryea

2006 Bridging the Gap between Tradition and Modernity: Ephraim Amu as Music Educator,
Dr. A. A. Agordoh

2007 In Search of A Lifelong Learning Education Programme for Ghana: Lessons from the Life- Work of a Farmer, Artist and Teacher,
Prof. James Flolu

2010 Discoveries and New Insights in Tonal Linguistics Facilitate reading of Mother Tongue: Introducing the Ephraim Amu Principle,
Dr. F.I.D. Konotey-Ahulu, FGA

2011 The Dr. Ephraim Amu Phenomenon: Import and Relevance for this Generation,
Prof. Ablade Glover, FGA

2012 Medicine, Music and the Mind: Implications of Ephraim Amu's Music for Ghanaians,
Prof. S.K. Owusu, FGA

2016 Colonial Legacy and the Challenge of Self-Naming,
Prof. Kofi Anyidoho,FGA

2017 "O'er Heathen Lands Afar': Missionary Hymnody, Ephraim Amu's Musings and Christianity as a Non-Western Endeavour"
Very Rev. Prof. J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu

2018 *The Musings of a Chief in Contemporary Ghana*
Nana Professor S.K.B. Asante, FGA

2019 Re-imagining Us the Role of Popular Music in Self-actualization:
M.anifest [Kwame Ametepee Tsikata]

2021 Unlocking Music Mirage - Inspiration From Amu's Musicology
Prof. Paul K. Buah-Bassuah, FGA

2022 The Performing Arts, Morality And The Ghanaian Identity
Most Rev. P. K. Sarpong, FGA

2023 The Ethics of Nation-building: Perspectives from the Legon Tradition of Philosophy
Prof. Martin Odei Ajei, FGA

The Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences is Ghana's Premier Learned Society. It was founded in November 1959 by Government Instrument of Incorporation. Its aim is to bring together the highest level of intellectuals, experts and professionals in the country to constitute a 'Think Tank' in the Arts and Sciences to enable it advise government and other relevant bodies on issues of importance to national development.

Mission

The mission of the Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences is to encourage the creation, acquisition, dissemination and utilization of knowledge for national development through the promotion of learning.

Objectives

The Academy's objectives partly reviewed over the years are to:

- Promote the study, extension and dissemination of knowledge of Arts and Sciences.
- Establish and maintain proper standards of endeavour in all fields of the Arts and Sciences.
- Recognize outstanding contributions to the advancement of the Arts and Sciences in Ghana.
- Contribute actively to the development of Ghana and Africa generally by examining and addressing critical issues of development.
- Do such things as are conducive or incidental to the attainment of all or any of the foregoing objectives.

NOTES

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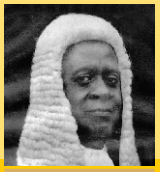

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