

Centre of Sierra Leone Studies

Literature

The following was written by:

Dr. Siaka Kroma is a graduate of the University of Sierra Leone, University of Edinburgh and the University of Toronto. He taught in secondary schools and universities in Sierra Leone and the United States till retirement. He lives in Nairobi, Kenya and travels regularly to Sierra Leone. He is best known for his works *Gomna's Children*, *A Corner of Time*, *Manners Maketh Man*, *Climbing Lilies* and *Tales from the Fireside: Oral Narratives Retold for Young Readers*

Eustace Palmer is Sierra Leonean by birth. He has taught at the University of Texas at Austin, at Randolph Macon Woman's College, and he as a Professor of English at Fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leone. Currently, he teaches at Georgia College & State University. Palmer is an author and a literary critic. He was President of the African Literature Association (ALA) from 2006 to 2007. He is the recipient of the ALA's Distinguished Member award as well as the Georgia College & State University's Distinguished Professor Award. Palmer has many published books of literary criticism, including *Studies in the English Novel*, *An Introduction to the African Novel*, *The Growth of the African Novel*, *Of War and Women Oppression and Optimism: New Essays on the African Novel* and *Knowledge is More Than Mere Words: A Critical Introduction to Sierra Leonean Literature*. Palmer is also a novelist, the author of the novels *A Hanging is Announced*, *Canfira's Travels*, *A Tale of Three Women* and *A Pillar of the Community*.

Wilfred "Freddy Will" Kanu Jr. is a Sierra Leonean author who is also an American Canadian and a spouse to a Grenadian diplomat in Canada. He was born in Brookfields, Freetown, Sierra Leone the eldest son of Rev. Leroy Wilfred Kabs Kanu, Minister Plenipotentiary of Sierra Leone to the United Nations and publisher of Sierra Leone's widely read Cocorioko Newspaper. Wilfred attended Christ the King College in Bo, Methodist Boys High School and Ansarul Muslim Secondary School in Freetown. He was educated at Raritan Valley Community College where he studied Theater Arts and Edison Job Corps Academy where he studied Accounting and Commerce. He also underwent training in Phlebotomy at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital. Wilfred Kanu Jr. has authored three books - *My Book of Chrymes*, *The Dark Road From Romarong* and *Hip Hop Kurzade...Path of a Legend*. He also writes and publishes a blog.

Karamoh Kabba is another well-known author in Sierra Leone. He founded Sierra Youth Lending Hand as a means to help youth rehabilitate after the war, and he is the organization's President and Chief Executive Officer. Kabba has published three books: *A Mother's Saga: An Account of the Rebel War in Sierra Leone*, *Lion Mountain: A Perilous Evolution of the Dens* and *Morquee: A Political Drama of Wish over Wisdom*. As well as these titles, Kabba has published the poem "Poverty amidst Gold and Diamonds" and has written many other poems on Sierra Leone Web, a site dedicated to publishing poems.

Adelaide Casely Hayford was a writer, a feminist, and a cultural nationalist long before the civil war in Sierra Leone. She started a school for girls in Freetown called the Girls Vocational School, which was devoted to helping prepare girls for their lives as women. Adelaide Casely Hayford was a prominent public speaker and made many addresses in her lifetime. In addition to her vocal spread of ideas, she wrote a number of short stories including "Savages?"; "Mista Courifer"; "Kobina, A Little African Boy"; "Two West African Simpletons"; and "A Black and White Encounter, A Tale of Long Ago". For her work, she is well remembered.

Gladys Casely Hayford was the daughter of Adelaide Casely Hayford and was considered a more prominent writer than her mother. Gladys was not only a writer but was also a musician, a dramatist and a poet. Her most notable poems include "Creation" published in 1926, "Nativity" published in 1927, and "The Serving Girl" later published in 1941. In her lifetime, Gladys taught at the school that her mother founded in Sierra Leone.

Syl Cheney-Coker, born in Freetown, Sierra Leone, was a journalist, an editor and a publisher as well as writing poetry and novels. He was the winner of the 1991 Commonwealth Writers Prize, Africa Region. His poem "Ghetto Woman" is highly discussed for its reflection of the Negritude movement. Cheney-Coker has published three collections of poetry entitled *Concerto for an Exile* published in 1973; *The Graveyard Also Has Teeth with Concerto for an Exile* published in 1980; and *The Blood in the Desert's Eyes* published in 1990. In addition to his poetry, Cheney-Coker has one published novel entitled *The Last Harmattan of Alusine Dunbar* (1990).

Winston Forde was also born in Freetown, Sierra Leone. He was trained as a flight cadet at the Royal Air Force College and began a career as a pilot. During his years of work and after his retirement he was an avid writer. Most of his writing is fiction that he based on real life experiences in an attempt to address some of the taboos of Sierra Leonean culture. Forde's published titles include *Air*

Force Cadet, The Runaway, Airborne Soldiers, Reflections on our Independence and *Aden to Bliss*. In addition to writing stories, he wrote at least one play and, inspired by his schooling in geography, he also wrote *The Story of Mining in Sierra Leone*.

Elvis Gbanabom Hallowell is an established Sierra Leonean poet who has recently branched into storytelling. Aside from his writing, Hallowell is the Founder and Executive Director of the project Save Heritage and Rehabilitate the Environment. He is also the Director-General of The Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation. His works of poetry include *A Little After Dawn; Drumbeats of War; My Immigrant Blood;* and *Manscape in the Sierra: New and Collected Poems 1991-2011*. Hallowell's ventures into storytelling include the publishing of *Tears of the Sweet Peninsula: May 25, 1997; The Sierra Leone Civil Conflict;* and *The Lust of Cain*.

Ambrose Massaquoi's poetry has been published extensively in Sierra Leonean anthologies and international journals, including *Kalashnikov in the Sun, Songs that Pour the Heart, Leoneanthology, The Iowa Review* and *100 Words*. In 1994, he became the third Sierra Leonean after Syl Cheney-Coker and Yulisa Amadu Madi to participate in Iowa University's prestigious International Writing Program. Massaquoi is an alumnus of Christ the King College in Bo, Fourah Bay College in Freetown, and the International Graduate School of Leadership in the Philippines. Apart from poetry, Massaquoi has published stories and was at a time involved in the Sierra Leonean music scene as a multi-instrumentalist, lead singer, and founder/leader of a gospel band. He has also performed in local adaptations of stage plays like *Julius Caesar* and *Volpone* on the platform of his secondary school and university drama groups. Massaquoi presently lives with his family in Nigeria where he heads Africa Centre for Theological Studies. *Along the Peal of Drums* is his first poetry collection.

Lucilda Hunter was born in Freetown, Sierra Leone. She was trained and worked as a librarian for most of her life. After her retirement, she was named a Fellow of the British Library Association, which has since been renamed The Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals. Throughout her life, she wrote under the name Yema Lucilda Hunter. Her novels include *Road to Freedom, Bittersweet, Redemption Song* and *Joy Came in the Morning*. Hunter also published an autobiography entitled *An African Treasure: In Search of Gladys Casely-Hayford*.

Shiekh Umarr Kamarah is both a poet and a linguist. He has worked as a lecturer at Fourah Bay College, the University of Sierra Leone and at the University of Wisconsin at Madison and was a Professor at Virginia State University. He is a Consultant on Language Analysis for the Federal Department of Immigration in Switzerland and is an External Examiner in Linguistics at the University of Sierra Leone. Kamarah is also a member of the Linguistic Society of America, the Association of Forensic Linguistics, the International Language and Law Association and of the African Literature Association. Furthermore, he serves on the editorial board for the Sierra Leonean Writers Series and on the editorial board of the *Africana Bulletin*, Journal of the University of Sierra Leone. Kamarah's poetry is collected in two volumes; the first entitled *The Child of War* was published in 2000 and the second, *Singing in Exile*, was published in 2002.

Other sources of Sierra Leone literature

Contemporary Non-Fiction

Non-fiction literature also plays an important role in the Sierra Leone society. Sierra Leone is home to a number of schools and universities that rely on academic literature in addition to traditional fiction literature. Sierra Leonean non-fiction authors include the following:

Joe A. D. Alie, born in Moyamba, Sierra Leone, is a Professor at Fourah Bay College, the University of Sierra Leone. He has published a number of textbooks, including *A New History of Sierra Leone* and *A Concise Guide to Writing College and Research Papers*.

Osman A. Sankoh was born in Warima, Sierra Leone. He has been awarded the 1987 University of Sierra Leone Prize for Academic Excellence as well as the 1996 German Academic Exchange Service Prize for Academic Excellence and Exceptional Social Engagements by a Foreign Student. In 2007, he became the Executive Director of the INDEPTH Network. He has had work on a variety of topics published in *Tropical Medicine and International Health, Journal of Public Health, Global Health Action, The International Journal of Epidemiology, African Journal of Environmental Assessment and Management, The Journal of Environmental Management* and *Environmental Impact Assessment Review*. Sankoh has also done some work on creative writing in *Hybrid Eyes - Reflections of an African in Europe* and *Beautiful Colours - Reflections on the Problem of Racism*.

Aisha Fofana Ibrahim is a feminist scholar, who is the Director of the Institute for Gender Research and Documentation at Fourah Bay College, the University of Sierra Leone. She is also an executive member of the 50/50 Group, a group in support of women's empowerment. Her published works include her dissertation, entitled "Wars other Voices:

Testimonies by Sierra Leonean Women", along with other works such as her "Introduction: Everyday Life in Postwar Sierra Leone and *The Integration of a Gender Perspective in the Sierra Leone Police*.

<http://www.nathanielturner.com/literaryartsinsierraleone.htm>

Books on various aspects of life in Sierra Leone

The list of publications will always be changing but here on some – you should re-search, and look for new titles.

<https://www.goodreads.com/shelf/show/sierra-leone>

<http://www.mccreadie.com/sierraleone/pages/life/culture.htm>

<http://weavesl.org/ojs/index.php?journal=Weave&page=article&op=view&path%5B%5D=4>

<http://www.everyculture.com/Sa-Th/Sierra-Leone.html>

<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTJUSFORPOOR/Resources/Access2JusticeSierraLeoneLitReview.pdf>

https://www.dmoz.org/Arts/Literature/World_Literature/African/Sierra_Leonean/

http://www.21pw.com/dictionary/Literature-of-Sierra-Leone_520225

<http://www.jamesmurua.com/category/sierra-leone-literature/>

<http://www.sierra-leone.org/Poetry/poetry-davidamadu.html>

https://www.international.gc.ca/cil-cai/country_insights-apercus_pays/ci-ic_sl.aspx?lang=eng

<http://www.sil.si.edu/SILPublications/ModernAfricanArt/maadetail.cfm?subCategory=Sierra%20Leone>

www.theinternationaljournal.org/ojs/index.php?journal=tij&page...

<http://www.cidrap.umn.edu/infectious-disease-topics/64/literature>

<http://litteraturacriola.blogspot.co.uk/2010/10/krio.html>

<http://www.openbookpublishers.com/product/97>

<http://arthistoryteachingresources.org/lessons/arts-of-liberia-and-sierra-leone/>

http://www.switsalone.com/21222_aminatta-forna-on-the-politics-of-otherness-in-literature/

<https://www.amazon.com/Kamakwie-Finding-Peace-Injustice-Sierra/dp/0889954720>

<https://www.cliffsnotes.com/literature/l/a-long-way-gone/book-summary>

<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/africagroundwateratlas/archive.cfm>

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March, 2017.

