

Decolonizing Education in Post-Independence Sub-Saharan Africa:
The Case of Ghana

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This thesis titled
Decolonizing Education in Post-Independence Sub-Saharan Africa: The Case of Ghana

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Abstract

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Decolonizing Education in Post-Independence Sub-Saharan Africa: The Case of Ghana

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The research focuses on Ghana, as a case study to investigate the history of education in Sub-Saharan Africa. It claims that African education (Ghanaian education in particular) has had a long history of colonization that the post-independence period has not yet been able to subvert. Ghanaian education is still under Western dominance, leading many scholars to denounce the mere “copy paste” and “mimicry” of Western curricula in Ghanaian schools. This research advocates a decolonization of African education in order to align African education with the African context and challenges. This research is based on secondary data analysis to gauge the evolution of Ghanaian education from pre-colonial to post-colonial and the efforts towards decolonization. The research reaches the conclusion that, despite the domination of Ghanaian education by Western models and the negligence of African/Ghanaian indigenous knowledge, the Government of Ghana displays much devotion to adapting education to national needs. The significance of indigenous knowledge is also acknowledged; but it has much more prominence in Basic school than in Secondary school.

Dedication

To my mother, Marième Thiam, who inculcated me with African cultural values and morality through songs, stories, and proverbial wisdom and who, despite never attending school, also understood the value of Western education.

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Chapter One: Introduction

Background of the Study

This research started in the classroom, especially after taking a class in research methods in the spring of 2012. During those courses, the researcher was not only initiated to research techniques but also to research ethics. At some point, the researcher and his classmates critically discussed the works of early anthropologists who, they and the instructor argued, were blinded by the bias of Western supremacist ideology. They agreed that their perspectives failed to give voice or to “hear” the point of view of the native. The systematic silencing of the native produced anthropological works that elevated Western culture while negating “others”. As a case in point, they watched Bateson and Mead’s (1951) ethnographic study of “Bathing Babies in Three Cultures”. This ethnographic medium offers a cross-cultural comparison of bathing between mother and child in three (3) different communities and cultures: a Sepik River Community in New Guinea, a Balinese mountain village in Indonesia, and an American home (Bateson & Mead, 1951).

Echoing the views of many of his classmates, the researcher argued the narrative discourse elevated American culture at a higher pedestal over the New Guinean, regarding their ways of bathing babies. In the American home, the baby was carefully bathed in a clean European bathtub with toys. In the New Guinean community, the baby was precariously held by the hand and bathed in a muddy river. As they watched the performance, the researcher and his classmates worried about the threat of a crocodile attack lurking in the murky waters. The bias in that comparison was that it positioned

Western culture at a higher pinnacle, a framework of reference from which the Sepik River community was understood as less civilized, less loving and wild compared to Western culture of bathing babies. However, despite the Eurocentrism of Mead and Bateson's (1951) ethnographic comparison of American and New Guinean cultures of bathing babies and despite the controversy over the legitimacy of Mead's work as acknowledged by Shankman (2009), Mead has made significant contribution in more ethical Anthropology.

Indeed, Mead (1943) acknowledges that ethnocentrism and the "dogma of superiority" emphasize one culture as superior to another. Thus, in the context of culture contact, one group or civilization assign themselves the duty to "teach", "convert", "colonize" or "assimilate" others (p. 633). This hierarchy has effects on education as a tool to mold others, especially "primitive" communities according to the dominant civilization. The "dogma of superiority", according to her, constitutes a major obstacle to a more effectively synthesized form of education and knowledge production because of its focus on creating "new" knowledge and burying "old" (or traditional) ways. According to Mead (1943), it is in the abolition of this dogma where lays the possibility for a space for symbiosis and synthesis of both the "primitive" and the "modern" (p. 633). One can infer from Mead's (1943) arguments that, concerning the relationship between Western knowledge and knowledge from other communities, the validity of "new" (Western) knowledge does not necessarily mean insignificance of "old", "primitive" or "traditional" epistemology.

Anthropology has performed an instrumental role in developing an understanding of the non-Western world from the vantage point of Eurocentric standards. This reference to Western standards as “center” leads Lewis (1973, p. 582) to argue that Anthropological science was the discipline through which Westerners could understand themselves (self-understanding) by denying and silencing the civilization and cultural worth of the “primitive”. In the United States, criticism of Anthropology was salient in the latter half of the 1960s for its contribution in the production of what Lewis (1973) labels “science of the savages” (p. 586). Criticism of the discipline culminated in the foundation of a Committee on Ethics by the American Anthropological Association in 1969 (Lewis, 1973) and a flourishing literature on the ethical and humanistic responsibility of Anthropologists (Lewis, 1973). Anthropology, according to Lewis (1973), provided field “knowledge” about “primitive” societies which served to legitimate the negation of the colonized, their cultures, histories and indigenous ways of knowing. However, Lewis (1973) does not center her critique of Anthropology on hopeless arguments. Indeed, she acknowledges the importance of Anthropology and argues for a decolonizing methodology in anthropological inquiry whereby Third World Anthropologists study their cultures to provide more objective insider perspectives. Lewis (1973) recommends collaboration between Anthropologists from the Western world and those from other societies in order to evenly distribute power (avoid monopoly of power) between Western researchers and other communities studied.

The decolonization of the social sciences to encourage insiders to study their own communities in their own terms would provide different perspectives on reality and truth

and promote “perspectivism” as a methodology and “activism” as a goal in the study of human phenomena (Stavenhagen, 1971; Lewis, 1973, p. 590). Therefore, unlike colonial anthropology, social sciences should aim for social transformation and progress rather than construct confrontational relationship between the West and an “objectified” non-Western world because in the end, such epistemology only subjugates both colonizer and colonized or dominant and dominated civilizations. Indeed, the alienation of “other” communities by anthropologists and colonizers is the dehumanization of both colonizer and colonized. As Memmi (1967) observes, the colonized, “at the end of this stubborn effort to dehumanize him [the colonized] is hardly a human being. He tends rapidly toward becoming an object” (cited by Lewis, 1973, p. 585). This analysis of the effects of colonization echoes Frantz Fanon’s (1963) argument that in the process of dehumanizing the colonized, the colonizer is also dehumanized.

In the necessity to acknowledge other forms of knowledge and civilizations, the course on “Research Methodologies” at Ohio University emphasized a significant topic: “The Decolonization of Research” to shift from traditional tendencies of speaking for the natives from a Western perspective (as was the case with Anthropology, especially during colonization) to simply allowing the natives themselves to speak of their own experiences (Lewis, 1973). This approach the researcher considered to represent a more legitimate approach to avoid blinding effects of prescriptivism and the imposition of standards from dominant cultures as sole framework of reference. Allowing the native to speak their world represents a more ethical approach to learning and data collection than the “fly on the wall”.

In another seminar on African literature and subaltern studies the researcher examined the condition of the subaltern and discussed a significant topic or question rather: “Can the subaltern speak?” The seminar was an occasion to critique the condition of the colonized, an ordeal that warrants the need for subaltern studies for militant scholarship the decolonization of knowledge production. The researcher argues that such processes of decolonization of knowledge and research methods must start with education itself as a cradle of knowledge production and dissemination.

The importance and meaningfulness of Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKSs) cannot be dissociated from the contextual cradle within which they operate. This explains Le Grange’s (2004) consideration of “*localness*” as “the common element of all knowledge systems” [emphasis added] (p. 87). At the same time, the concept of “localness” de-centers Western science and creates the space for more equitable appreciation of different types of knowledge. In this perspective, Western scientific knowledge can be referred to as “indigenous” or “local” knowledge because it is grounded in a specific culture and context (Western). Yet “indigenous” as a concept and reference is not usually applied to the West because Western science has been imposed as of superior standards in comparison to other forms of knowledge considered non-science or indigenous (Le Grange, 2004; Depelchin, 2005). So Indigenous Knowledge is often used to mark the divide between Western knowledge system as “valid” and “indigenous” knowledge from the colonized world as “invalid”, “archaic”, or “obsolete”.

According to Perry (2006, p. 59), “culturelessness” or “non-ethnicity” functions as a measure of white superiority. Thus, Western epistemology establishes a paradigmatic

and racial relationship between the “rational” and the “cultural”. Within this context of clashing epistemologies, some African and Africanist scholars challenge the status quo by advocating the inclusion of Indigenous Knowledge Systems in African education and Western institutions so as to decolonize academic institutions and Western sites of knowledge production (Dei, 2002a; Depelchin, 2005). So this research could be perceived as an epistemological activism that supports the significance and relevance of local knowledge or IKS in Africa, especially in Ghana. This thesis is also about social justice to challenge the “oppressive ideologies and structures that permeate schools” and knowledge production and deny “school as a democratic space” of interaction of different forms of epistemology.

Statement of the Problem

African traditional forms of education have been losing more and more grounds, supplanted by imported Western forms. Thanks to formal education and schools as media for the spread of Western knowledge, the West has firmly planted the roots of its ideology from the missionaries’ “civilizing” mission to colonialism. These colonial structures endure even after independence, especially in the field of education. The vestiges of colonial education continue to influence education in Sub-Saharan Africa and to alienate young Africans from native traditions (Malinowski, 1943). This chronic influence from the West supports Clifford’s (1994) observation that “there are no post-colonial cultures or places; *post* is always shadowed by *neo*” (p. 328). Indeed, old structures of colonial education are reproduced in post-independence structures that fail to promote and empower local forms of knowledge.

According to Nyamnjoh (2012), “education in Africa is victim of a resilient colonial and colonizing epistemology” (p. 130) that has contributed in silencing of African creativity and weakening African agency and value systems. He further notes that education in Africa has become a mere reproduction or mimicry of Western systems of knowledge. According to Nyamnjoh (2012), this preference toward Western knowledge contributes in the “epistemicide” of African Indigenous Knowledge (AIK). Thus, one can speak of the colonization of education in Africa, which begs the need for de-colonization. Much of the education system in Africa is a copy paste of Western models without adaptation to local context (Shizha, 2010, Godwyll, 2008). This further deepens the gap between education and domestic context and challenges.

This research paper claims that Africa’s schooling and education system have been dominated by Euro-American canon, worldviews, and epistemology from colonialism to post-independence. It suggests the need to decolonize education in Sub-Saharan Africa in order to promote an African centered epistemology that takes into account African realities and rehabilitates indigenous knowledge to make the processes of teaching and learning relevant to social context. However, it is worth to clarify that such initiative to decolonize does not constitute a total rejection of Western epistemology. In the contrary, it seeks first to promote an education that is reflective of the “local” in combination with the “foreign” or imported forms. It is clear that Africa cannot be guided only by its past because, in the context of globalization, no civilization can manage to develop and prosper in isolation from others (Maila & Loubser, 2003).

Indeed, indigenous knowledges do not exist in “pristine fashion outside of the effects of other knowledges” (Dei, 2002a, p. 113). But, as Le Grange (2000, cited by Maila & Loubser, 2003) cautions, Africa should resist the homogenizing forces of material and cultural globalization and internationalization in order to construct processes of knowledge that enable Africans to address their own unique problems and challenges first. In this regard, the significance of Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) and their inclusion in African schools should no longer be delayed. As a matter of fact, a growing number of African intellectuals are acknowledging that it is quite time for the recognition of African knowledge in schools (Msila, 2009; Dei, 2002a, 2002b).

Research for this paper has been influenced by the pioneering scholarship about the significance of other forms of knowledge dubbed “indigenous”. It is also much inspired by the militancy of African scholars and Africanists asking for the redefinition of the place of indigenous knowledge in the lives of non-Western communities as valid knowledge and the ethical necessity for its inclusion in academia (Dei, 2002a; Le Grange 2004). In “Rethinking the Role of Indigenous Knowledge in the Academy”, Dei (2002a) denounces the complacency in approaches to knowledge production, interrogation, validation, and dissemination in Euro-American educational institutions. He advocates a decolonization of Euro-American academies so as to acknowledge the significance and legitimacy of other forms of knowledge or Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS). Dei’s (2002a) invitation to decolonize the “academy” and the processes of delivering education is addressed to schools, colleges, and universities.

Le Grange (2004) observes that if Indigenous Knowledge (IK) has an instrumental role to play in Africa's development and reconstruction, education has to be at the center. The significance of Le Grange's (2004) argument is that it clearly shows that the effects of the dominance of African education by Euro-American epistemologies are not benign. They have many implications for Africa's development. Thus education in Africa should not merely be geared towards Western education models but based on Africa's context and then extending to take into account the rest of the world (Msila, 2009).

The work of Depelchin's *Silences in African History* (2005) has also whetted the researcher's interest in participating in the "struggle" to veto what he dubs an "epistemic apartheid" that elevates Western knowledge while negating other forms as irrelevant/invalid ways of knowing. The paradigm, *us/them*, especially in the academic arena, gainsays the significance of schools and institutions of higher learning as ethical sites of knowledge production. It also reinforces the "intolerance of Western traditions of knowing to other traditions of knowing" (Maila & Loubser, 2003, p. 278). Heeding other works, such as Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1993) and "People Speak their Word" (1981), he advocates a pragmatic context-bound teaching and learning in order to make theory relevant to daily lives. In "people Speak their Word", Freire (1981) supports a theory and practice that link reading the word to "reading" the context so that the act of reading is actually an act of understanding the environment and local experience.

Western theoretical education often fails to provide pragmatic knowledge to be used outside classroom settings in order to transform or develop African societies. So,

because the issue of development is context-bound, it requires context appropriate expertise. The more that expertise is detached from the local space, the more inadequate it will be in meeting Africa's development challenges. Thus many scholars add their voices to the pressing need for an epistemological paradigm shift (Higgs, 2012; Nyamnjoh, 2012; Dei, 2000; Depelchin, 2005; Yamada, 2004; Shizha, 2010; Mfum-Mensah, 2005; Mason, Arnove, & Sutton, 2001; and Odora-Hoppers, 2000).

Research Questions

The research questions that guide this study are the following:

- 1- How has education evolved from the colonial period to the post-independence era in Ghana?
- 2- What are the influences of Euro-American epistemology on Ghanaian Education system?
- 3- What are the efforts/strategies implemented in order to decolonize education in Ghana?

These are the major sections of the research questions that inform this study. There are sub-sections under these questions designed to provide a detailed inquiry on Ghanaian education system, the inclusion/non-inclusion of African Indigenous Knowledge (AIK) or Ghanaian Indigenous Knowledge (GIK) in school curricula and the decolonization efforts (see appendix A).

Purpose/Significance of the Study

The purpose of the study is to examine the structural issues of education in Ghana and especially the place of Indigenous Knowledge in Ghanaian education. The research

also seeks to investigate how the Ghanaian post-independence education system—like many Sub-Saharan African countries—can still be regarded as victim of colonizing tides. The research reviews the literature on African education, especially on the evolution of Ghanaian pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial education. Using Ghana as a case study, this research seeks to determine whether teachers’ instructional practices, the national education policies, education reforms, and curricula reproduce Western education models while neglecting or negating Ghanaian Indigenous Knowledge (GIK). The research also investigates whether there are some decolonization efforts in Ghanaian education in order to incorporate Ghanaian Indigenous Knowledge (GIK) in particular or African Indigenous Knowledge (AIK) in general in the Ghanaian education system.

This research identifies and examines the effects of the epistemic colonization of education in Africa. It especially focuses on the case of Ghana’s education system in order to raise awareness about the exclusion of African Indigenous Knowledge (AIK) from African education and the danger such negation of the “local” represents to Africa’s history, epistemology, and development. In so doing, the research invites Africans, teachers, students, African scholars and policy makers to heed the Freirean wisdom that “the reality of oppression” does not constitute “a closed world from which there is no exit”; and that it is simply “a limiting situation” that the colonized “can transform” (Freire, 1993, p. 31). Until AIK finds its place in modern education, Western knowledge as the dominant epistemology in African education will continue to be more oppressive and alienating than liberating.

This research adds to the literature about the legitimacy of Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) and their adequacy within local African contexts and other communities. It seeks to contribute, however much, to the debate on the decolonization of African education, to the rehabilitation of AIK and its inclusion in the academia. So this research does not only aim at decolonizing education in Africa, or in Ghana; it also targets the decolonization of Western sites of knowledge production in order to pave the ground for a more “ethical space”, an all-inclusive and bicultural body of knowledge (Hammersmith, 2007; Le Grange 2004; Dei 2002a).

This study bears a transcendent significance for its advocacy for the rehabilitation or introduction of AIK in African education in combination with other forms of knowledge, such as Western knowledge. Thus, this research makes a contribution to the body of scholarship on the validity of IKSs and the necessary establishment of some space for interaction, influence, and borrowing between different traditions of knowledge. Such an inclusive space of knowledge production and consumption would allow Western knowledge and other forms, such as AIK to draw upon their differences not as hindering or exclusive but complementary (Le Grange, 2004). So this research calls for the need for cooperation rather than “apartheid” where each knowledge system claims and clings to the legitimacy of its own knowledge. The significance of the research is also that it claims that in an ever increasingly globalizing world, the inclusion of all knowledge systems constitutes a sine qua non condition for a more harmonious integration of people, cultures and knowledge forms. The failure of inclusion results in the privilege and dominance of one tradition (Western knowledge and culture) to the

detriment of others. It is for these reasons that this study focuses on education as a privileged domain of knowledge production where different ways of knowing can be woven together. Indigenous knowledge is simply knowledge of place which is necessary to meet local challenges.

This research argues for decolonizing education so that it becomes context-appropriate by integrating AIK as relevant knowledge of place in African education. It establishes a link between knowledge of place (as should be promoted in education) and development. The disconnection between education and local space explains some of Africa's chronic challenges of underdevelopment. The independence of Sub-Saharan Africa promised a brighter future for the region, a shift from Western processes of subjugation, oppression, and exploitation. However, the post-independence era marked a harsh reality of disillusionment as effective development, economic growth and appropriate education have since been an ideal yet to be achieved. Africa is the poorest continent in the world. This failure to come up with an effective comprehensive development plan has often been blamed on Western institutions, such as the World Bank and the IMF. In the 1980s the so-called Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) from these institutions further impoverished and indebted African countries because these programs or imported development policies were developed in European context by Western institutions; they were detached from the concrete, endogenous challenges affecting Africa. The SAPs loans were conditional upon the adoption of free market policies.

The pertinence of this experience to the topic in question is that African countries, such as Ghana, have been the followers of Western development programs that failed to deliver on economic growth even with the injection of foreign aid into African economies (Moyo, 2009). This proves that development does not function as one-fits-all template that could be imported from Western countries and implanted in African countries without considering the peculiarity of context. Similarly, the failure and dissociation of education in Africa from concrete domestic challenges come from the fact that African education system, like Ghana's, are based on Western models (Godwyll, 2008). So context-appropriateness in terms of education and curriculum relevance in Africa and Ghana in particular continue to be a chronic issue (Godwyll, 2008).

Delimitation and Limitation

Delimitation. Addressing the issue of colonization of education in Africa, this research is limited to the case of Ghana. The research questions are only designed to get an in-depth understanding of the evolution of Ghanaian education from the colonial to post-colonial periods.

Limitation. The target population is limited to Ghana and its education system. So the research could have been much wider to include a variety of African countries in order to be more representative of the African continent. The research could have also been based on concrete field work and a sample representative of Ghanaian schools and education in order to provide generalizable data. The collection of such data would have allowed some comparison with the literature about Ghanaian education in particular and African education in general as “colonized” and based on Euro-American epistemologies.

Definitions

Indigenous Knowledge. According to Dei (2002a, 2002b), Indigenous knowledge represents an endogenous epistemology necessary for human survival. It epitomizes the “common good sense” and knowledges of local communities about their cultural milieu, their histories, traditional epistemology, cultural values, beliefs and perceptions of the world. Dei (2002a, p. 5) regards such knowledge as an “informed epistemology” that governs indigenous communities’ understanding of the world and their relationship with their cultural milieu. Indigenous knowledge is a product of the expertise acquired from long term exposure in a given milieu that allows the survival of a particular community from one generation to another (Dei, 2002a, 2002b; Maila & Loubser, 2003). Elders play a significant role in the transmission of indigenous knowledge to posterity or the youth.

Roberts (1998) conceptualizes indigenous knowledge as “knowledge accumulated by a group of people, not necessarily indigenous who by centuries of unbroken residence develop an in-depth understanding of their particular place in their particular world” (cited by Dei, 2002a, p. 5). Maila & Loubser (2003) consider indigenous knowledge a sine qua non necessity for any community to become civilized. Citing Ntuli (1999) and Vilakazi (1999), they argue that, among other factors, a civilization consists of a particular a knowledge system. It is a depository of the communities’ experiences, successes and challenges. Invoking Vilakazi (1999), Maila & Loubser (2003) define civilization as a rich body of knowledge and culture of a given community characterized by the following knowledge “complex”:

A complex culture; language or languages; a certain technology; an identifiable pattern in art, music, architecture, poetry, literature and dance; a certain body of knowledge, science, medicine, and values; a certain cuisine, manner of dress and general habits; and so forth, [and that] a civilisation is generally so massive and of such power that it acts like a magnet, drawing outsiders to it, influencing others and being influenced by others (cited by Maila & Loubser, 2003, p. 276)

Maila & Loubser (2003) argue that indigenous knowledge, like other forms of knowledge, is a socially produced phenomenon, a cultural activity which is in a constant state of transformation as it influences and is influenced by other forms of knowledge. For these reasons, Gergen (2001) considers knowledge “a byproduct of communal relations” (cited by Maila & Loubser, 2003, p. 276). Chavanduka (1995) and Masuku-van Damme (1997) also refer to indigenous knowledge as “local” and “traditional” knowledge because it is grounded in a particular place and geared toward domestic challenges (cited by Maila & Loubser, 2003, p. 277).

The concept “indigenous” also expresses power relations and oppositional views on the validity of some forms of knowledge (Dei, 2002). The standards of validity are dictated by the relationship between civilizations which, according to Mead (1943) and Dei (2002a), is governed by power dynamics grafted in knowledge production and validation. The concept “indigenous” knowledge also signals the existence of a variety of knowledge forms that makes the interpretation and perception of reality different from one tradition to another tradition (Dei, 2002a). The multiplicity of knowledge forms also operates within indigenous knowledge itself where one can identify “traditional”

(generational knowledge transmitted by elders to the youth), “empirical” (based on observed reality from nature, culture, society), and “revealed” knowledge (derived from dreams, vision and the supernatural) (Castellano, 1999, cited by Dei, 2002a, p. 5). Indigenous knowledges are holistic epistemologies that bridge the material, the spiritual, and the metaphysical worlds (Dei, 2002a).

According to Dei (2002a) indigenous knowledges, unlike Western knowledge, do not claim possession of universal truths. They are catered to the needs of the group and the environment. As a matter of fact, indigenous knowledges are group knowledge and knowledges of place. Shizha (2010) also grounds all forms of knowledge in culture and cultural identities and identifies “localness” as a shared characteristic of epistemologies. Thus, he considers each knowledge form as “indigenous science” because it is rooted in a specific culture. Indigenous knowledge comprises the local science of a particular community and the skills proper to the group which are often transmitted outside formal schooling. According to Shizha (2010), African indigenous knowledge system represents sacred knowledge and knowledge expressed in daily experiences and ceremonial activities. Orality, according to Shizha (2010) is often the primary medium for the transmission of indigenous knowledge to younger generations. Other media of expression and transmission of Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) are through proverbs, fables and tales (Dei, 2002a).

The challenges of African Indigenous Knowledge systems, according to Shizha (2010), stem from lack of written (since it is mostly based on orality) and ownership records and the weakness of African economies that facilitate the silencing of AIK. These

shortcomings leave a void for Western science to plug and impose itself as a privileged and dominant epistemology. As a consequence there is preference for Western knowledge, “empirical laboratory science” in African formal education which silences African traditional epistemologies as irrational and subaltern sciences (Shizha, 2010, p. 32). Therefore follows a systematic colonization of African knowledge space by Western science. This domination of global knowledge space by Euro-American epistemologies pushes African traditional education and indigenous knowledge to the periphery as secondary and inadequate knowledge (Shizha, 2010).

African communities also participated in the silencing and “peripheralization” of their own indigenous knowledge in their readiness to send their children to Western schools because of the privilege such type of education granted (Adeyemi & Adeyinka, 2003). So the colonization of education in Africa is also characterized by the participation of Africans in the colonial project. But the performance of Africans regarding the colonial imposition of foreign epistemologies was informed by the way colonial, political economy (how colonies were managed, considering political and economic factors) was set up. Indeed, participation within the structures established by the colonizer guaranteed upward mobility. And education was the primary medium for achieving the privileges Western education and the colonial system offered (Adeyemi & Adeyinka, 2003).

Indigenous Education. In “The Principles and Content of African Traditional Education”, Adeyemi & Adeyinka (2003) define education as a significant part of enculturation where elders assume a gerontocratic function by ensuring the initiation of children to community’s ways of life and belief systems. As mentioned earlier, Vilakazi

(1999, cited by Maila & Loubser, 2003) considers indigenous knowledge as part of civilization. Maila & Loubser (2003) also conceive knowledge as a “byproduct of communal relations” (p. 276), which makes knowledge a significant part of culture. Indeed, there is close intimacy between people and culture which provides the unwritten code for an organized co-existence between members of a particular society. Culture encompasses all the spheres of human life; it shapes social performance and the way one perceives the world. According to Tylor (1871, cited by Kottak, 1987), the cultural complex includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and skills “acquired” by members of a society. The significance of culture to the issue of education is that the latter represents the medium through which cultural capitals are transmitted to the community.

Education plays a central function in the redefinition of the relationship between the Western world and Third World societies and the development of ethical methods of inquiry, as well as context-appropriate knowledge (or knowledge of place). Education may be regarded as the cement to societies because it guarantees the transmission of cultures and the rules of social interaction that make one a full member of a given society. It is a medium through which people get initiated to ways of knowing and understanding their environment in order to improve their living conditions (Maila & Loubser, 2003). Education does not only operate in classroom settings; it does not represent a modern phenomenon either, or a product of Western “enlightened” or “civilizing” initiative.

Malinowski (1943, p. 649) considers education as “much wider and more comprehensive than schooling”. Adeyemi & Adeyinka (2003) also agree that education transcends formal institutions, such as schools and colleges to become an activity of teaching and learning from daily social experiences. Indigenous African communities have always made good use of both formal and informal indigenous modes of education—such as circumcision/excision ceremonies or other rites of passage—in the processes of enculturation of the youths (Rodney, 1972, Malinowski, 1943; Dei, 2000; Stambach, 2000). Indigenous people make use of traditional media, such as songs, stories, legends and dreams as part of their cultural arsenal and for the transmission of elements of traditional knowledge. These elements are sometimes preserved in artifacts and passed on to younger generations to ensure the survival of non-Western societies (Hammersmith, 2007). Not surprisingly, African traditional education was prevalent among various communities before the advent of Western civilization. These education forms served to prepare its recipients to be useful members of their communities and instilled in the youths an appreciation of their history, customs, languages, and values.

According to Adeyemi & Adeyinka, (2003), African traditional education contrasts with Western education which alienated Africans from their own cultural heritage. African traditional education makes learning relevant to the needs of local communities and the challenges of their direct environment. As Le Grange (2004) observes, indigenous communities use their knowledge of nature (fauna and flora), cultural beliefs, and history to develop their environment and improve their living conditions. Quoting Snelson (1974) and Lane (1976), Adeyemi & Adeyinka (2003)

respectively describe education as “a condition of human survival, the means whereby one generation transmits the wisdom, knowledge and experience which prepares the next generation for life’s duties and pleasures” and as “the transmission of wisdom, knowledge, experience and skills” (p. 427). Thus, education has a transformative purpose, to instill in both children and adults the skills to face the challenges of their environment (Akani, 2012). Akani (2012) regards African indigenous education as informal and guided by utility function. Through the family and other media for enculturation, such as ceremonies, age grade, rites of passage, indigenous education in Africa served as an ongoing process of transmission of values and skills and preparation for adulthood. Fafunwa (1982) refers to these rites as occasions for children and adolescents to engage in participatory education.

Fafunwa (1982, p. 9) also considers African indigenous education as primarily characterized by “functionalism”. According to him, in traditional African societies, education stood as a means for guidance toward adulthood and transmission of social values, skills, behavior and communal participation expected from members of the society. Thus, learning was embedded into practical daily activities and closely connected with the environment. These practical activities are an open list that includes farming, fishing, weaving, cooking, carving and knitting, as well as recreational practices, such as dancing, wrestling and other athletic activities.

Education could be perceived in this situation as a process of “learning by doing”. However, this concept of “learning by doing” should not be confounded with that promoted in the vocationalization of education in the colonial period when education for

the colonized was reduced to the “use of the hands” (Emudong, 1997; Yamada 2004; Omolewa, 2006). For the intellectual aspect of African traditional education, the latter promoted knowledge of local history, legend, environment (geography, fauna and flora), poetry, riddles, proverbs, story-telling. For all these characteristics of African traditional education, Fafunwa (1982, p. 10) regards this form of education as an “integrated experience” that plays a significant function associating physical activities with character development and manual labor with intellectual reasoning. Citing Moumouni’s *Education in Africa* (1968), Fafunwa (1982, p. 10) clearly lays down some of the major characteristics of African traditional education in the following description that captures its social function and distinguishes it from Western educational model:

- (1) The great importance attached to it, and its collective and social nature.
- (2) Its intimate tie with social life, both in a material and spiritual sense.
- (3) Its multivalent character, both in terms of its goals and the means employed.
- (4) Its gradual and progressive achievements, in conformity with the successive stages of physical, emotional and mental development of the child.

However, according to Akani (2012) the introduction of foreign [Western] modes of education has had disruptive consequences on African education. The domination of the education sector by Western epistemologies has also led to the narrow conception of “education” in Africa as referring to formal education in Western schools. As a matter of fact, Africans who have been to European schools are considered “educated” while those who have not had such “privilege” are simply regarded as “uneducated” (Graham, 1971, p. ix). Fafunwa (1982) critiques this bias for the fact that African traditional education

also has a vocational aspect. Indeed, indigenous African may be educated in 3 major vocational domains that are agriculture (farming, fishing, animal rearing), trades and craft (weaving, sculpting, drumming, smithing, pottery-making, dyeing, hair plaiting) and professions (priesthood, medicine, justice, hunting, military, chieftaincy, kinship).

Use of Abbreviations/Acronyms

Abbreviations and acronyms in reference Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) are gaining more and more prominence because of an increasing interest in indigenous epistemologies. This research also makes intentional use of those abbreviations as a way of acknowledging the significance of the scholarship on the subject and the development of an area-based (indigenous knowledge) jargon. Other abbreviations refer to Ghanaian education councils, or ministries as shown below:

AIK: African Indigenous Knowledge

GoG: Government of Ghana

MOE: Ghana Ministry of Education

MOEC: Ministry of Education and Culture

MOESS: Ministry of Education Science, and Sports

MOEYS: Ministry of Education Youths and Science

JHS: Junior High School

SHS: Senior High School

GIK: Ghanaian Indigenous Knowledge (coined by the author for convenience)

IKS: Indigenous Knowledge System

WAEC: West Africa Examination Council

Organization

This research is structured into 5 chapters. Chapter 1 constitutes an introductory chapter which contains the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the research questions, the purpose and significance of the research, the delimitation and limitation. Finally, the same chapter provides a definition of concepts (indigenous knowledge and indigenous education); and abbreviations used in the study are also listed.

Chapter 2 presents a review of the related literature dealing with pre-colonial education which focuses on the Arab influence on African indigenous education, and later the Christian missionary education, the advent of merchants or European traders and their respective impacts on pre-colonial Africa, especially on its education system. The review also addresses colonial education in Africa which also deals with the establishment of Achimota as a controversial model vocational school in Ghana. Chapter 2 proceeds to deal with the independence period in order evaluate the evolution of African, especially Ghanaian education in the post-colony. The same chapter also investigates how the West functions as a standard bearer in knowledge production, validity, and the basis for the negation of other “subaltern” epistemologies. Then, it further deals with the paradigm shift which contains the challenge of the status-quo and Afrocentricity as a decolonizing strategy in the process of affirming and rehabilitating African Indigenous Knowledge.

Chapter 3 describes the research methodology. It embodies the research design, the population, the research instruments, the data collection procedure and the tools for

data analysis. Chapter 4 presents the results and discussion of the data. Chapter 5 contains the concluding remarks, the theoretical implications and recommendations.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Pre-Colonial Education: The Religious and Trade Factors

Islam and Christianity have been influential in African societies and education before even the mid-1880s referred as the colonial period. Religion plays a significant social function; it supplements people's basic understanding, especially when science has failed to provide answers. As a social phenomenon, religion expresses the existential need of mankind to transcend the empirical realm in order to engage the metaphysical domain about human existence and the after-life. In terms of human phenomenology, religion has been difficult to define, even for anthropologists because, like culture, religion is dynamic; it creates and re-creates itself in time, and in space. An understanding of the canvas of meanings of African education requires deeper acquaintance with Africa's history as affected by the continent's encounter with Islam and Christianity (Saul, 2006; Graham, 1971). It is in this respect that this section focuses on the impacts of Islam and Christianity on education and literacy in Africa, especially in the Gold Coast (Ghana).

These considerations are relevant to the issue of colonization of education because Islam and Christianity, like any religion, are "cultural systems" and social phenomena that convey cultural understanding of the universe (Geertz, 1993). Durkheim (1995, p. 34) also argues that religion as a complex cannot be reduced to some mere illogical Tylorian "belief in supernatural Beings". He further observes that philosophy and the sciences are products of religious thoughts since religion represents the earliest method of man's inquiry about the universe. This understanding of philosophy and

sciences as embedded in religion in “primitive” societies (read “primitive” as reference to less advanced and sophisticated evolutionary stage of society) supports the Durkheimian perspective that human societies are characterized by evolutionary processes as they go from primary to more sophisticated stages of transformation (Durkheim, 1995).

Therefore, the imposition of foreign beliefs (Islam and Christianity) may have cheated African societies from going through such significant evolutionary stages as African indigenous beliefs and African Traditional Religion (ATR) were supplanted by foreign religious models. Western formal schooling was closely associated with conversion to Christianity as it praised the Gospel and undermined ATR and its related “heathen” practices. Thus, the link school-faith and the peripherization of ATR became clearly institutionalized. Berman (1974) puts it in cruder terms in his argument that the missionaries utilized “schools as inducements to lure Africans into the missionary orbit” (p. 527).

In the Gold Coast, such institutionalization was also aided by the spread of the Christian missions, such as the Wesleyans and, much so, the Basel mission from the coast to the Akwapem Ridge (Eastern region). By the mid-19th century the Basel mission had boarding schools at Christianborg on the coast and in the Akwapem Ridge where they also established a girl school at Aburi and a Teacher Training College at Akropong to empower mission activities. The Basel also produced a basic grammar and dictionary in local Akan language to further spread the Gospel (Owusu-Ansah, Iddrisu & Sey, 2013).

Education as a site for knowledge production was used by Arab traders and Christian missionaries to impose their proselytizing, religious ideologies. Putting African

education in perspective and raising an important question about what constitutes “African education”, Fafunwa (1982) observes that a thorough understanding of the history of education in Africa requires repositioning African education or indigenous educational system prior to the advent of Islam and Christianity. Christian missionaries, like early anthropologists, have participated in the colonial project by providing an ideological rationalization of colonial rule and the necessity for bringing “faith” to the so-perceived “heathen” tribes. The same also held true of Islam for which the concepts of “Dar al Islam” and “Dar al Harb” justified the itinerary of Islamic influence and also the slave pool. The concepts respectively denote the land where the inhabitants have made submission to Islam (Dar al Islam) and the land of the “heathen” or those Muslims could enslave, conquer and integrate into the Dar al Islam. Thus, from the desert of North Africa, the frontiers of the Dar al Harb were pushed further southward; and in the 12th to 13th century they reached West Africa (“Bilad es Sudan” or the land of the blacks). Muslim trade posts also existed (8th century AD) on the Coast of Somalia, Kenya, Tanzania and Mozambique and even Madagascar (Alexander, 2001).

The Arab Influence: Islamic Education. Nast (1996) links the introduction of Islam to North and parts of West Africa to the migration of Islamic scholars, traders, and missionaries to these regions in quest for gold and salt. According to him these activities took place between A.D. 1000 and 1600. The interaction of religious and commercial activities resulted in the islamization of parts of West Africa (Nast, 1996). In Northern and Western Africa and parts of Eastern and Central Africa, Islam preceded Christianity and colonialism (Fafunwa, 1982).

Indeed, prior to the arrival of Christian missionaries, Islam had already established itself in the Northern territories of most countries in West Africa, such as in Ghana. This penetration of Islam in West Africa happened a century before the missionaries (Godwyll, 2008). The Portuguese, known for being the first missionaries to introduce Christianity in Sub-Saharan Africa, avoided the trans-Saharan trade routes controlled by Berbers and other Muslims. However, despite the avoidance of areas under Islamic dominance, Portugal, as a Christian country, sought to minimize the sphere of Islamic influence in the Western Sudan in order to gain access to the trade in the region and make converts into the Christian faith (Buah, 1998).

As Islam spread from the Middle East to Asia and Africa, it kept its primary feature of an education model based on the Quran at first and other Islamic religious texts, Arabic, grammar, and numeracy (Boyle, 2006). Diallo (2011) also observes that in most West African countries literacy and numeracy based on modified Arabic scripts in African languages (called “Ajami”) and the acquisition of knowledge through Quranic education were widespread. However, in the colonial period, the progress of the Islamic education model in Africa, especially in French speaking West Africa, was not without encountering any outside belligerence. Indeed, in order to curb the spread of Islam, impose its education model in Africa and overshadow African cultures and languages, the French colonial power required Quranic teachers or “marabouts” to register their schools with the colonial authorities and to teach French in their schools. As a result Western education gained supremacy to the detriment of indigenous knowledge and Quranic centers (Diallo, 2011).

The same effects were also achieved in English Speaking West Africa, such as the Gold Coast and Nigeria, where the introduction of British colonial administration undermined all previous scholarship and Islam-based education that predated Christian and Western education. The colonial imposition of European languages, mostly French and English, rendered Islamic education obsolete and those educated in the Islamic tradition illiterate (Owusu-Ansah, Iddrisu & Sey, 2013). In spite of the Westernization of education, the acquisition of knowledge and education through Quranic schools remains significant in Sub-Saharan Africa (Diallo, 2011).

Despite the rivalry between Islamic and Christianity in the Gold Coast, the meeting ground between both religious traditions in pre-colonial Africa is their emphasis on morality and character building as guiding principles of their “civilizing” mission. Indeed, if Christian missionaries taught “how to be good Christians”, Islamic education also held “Islamic laws and good Islamic conduct” as determinant principles for social order and success (Diallo, 2011, p. 144).

Religion was the primary vehicle for literacy in Africa. As a matter of fact, Quranic education was prevalent in countries where Islam had penetrated, while in countries under Christianity, education was designed to train priests and monks. Muslim education was particularly extensive at the primary level, and it was also available at the secondary and university levels (Rodney, 1973). The Al-Azhar University in Egypt, the University of Fez in Morocco and the University of Timbuktu in Mali, according to Rodney (1973), prove the high standard of education achieved in Africa before colonial intrusion. However, while these institutional artifacts may express high standards of

education in pre-colonial Africa, they also demonstrate that education in Africa has long been hostage of foreign powers. It is clear that Islam, like Christianity, was a foreign import that through Islamic laws and principles had undermined indigenous beliefs and practices in order to police knowledge and impose Islam as the norm. Thus, these religions also had colonizing effects on African Indigenous Knowledge (AIK).

If early Western “mission” schools were located in castles in the Gold Coast, Quranic schools were also integrated parts of mosques, like Al-Azhar. The same still applies in modern Africa even though Quranic premises have expanded outside the bounds of mosques to private buildings (Fafunwa, 1982). Quranic education, according to Fafunwa (1982), is based on rote memorization of Quranic verses and chapters through instruction from the “mallam” (or Quranic teacher) who recites verses and commands pupils to repeat after him. Through repetition and constant practice, pupils memorize verses which together make full chapters.

In his attempt to describe Quranic education, Fafunwa (1982) identifies “primary”, “secondary” and “post-secondary” stages in Islamic education system. In the primary level, pupils are expected to memorize 2 parts or “esus” of the Quran (each part contains a number of chapters) starting with shorter chapters of the Book necessary for daily prayers. Then, the “mallam” initiates pupils to the Arabic alphabet, reading, and later writing. Fafunwa (1982) considers the curriculum at the secondary level as more complex in that students start learning the meaning of memorized verses. At this stage, they are also initiated to the “hadith” (a body of knowledge about Prophet Mohamed’s practices as reported by his disciples). This stage merges with the post-secondary to

include learning of grammar, logic, arithmetic, algebra, rhetoric, versification, jurisprudence, scholastic theology and the interpretation of Islamic laws. For the complexity of this curriculum at this higher stage, pupils have different “mallams” for Islamic instruction. This stage may be equated with the university level as students specialize in specific areas of Islamic education. It is worth mentioning that in Western Africa the different stages of Quranic education are not rigidly delineated as in Western education system or other Muslim institutions of higher learning as in the universities of Algiers, Lybia, Rabat, and Cairo (Fafunwa, 1982).

After the advent of Islam—thanks to West Africa’s contact with Arab traders from Northern Africa and the subsequent influence of the Quran on education—came Christian missionaries who, like Muslim traders, also brought their religion (Christianity) to achieve the same effect on the education system of the region. Because of the complexity of Africa’s religious encounter, Quist (2001) talks about the “triple heritage” of education in Africa (sketched on figure 1) to refer to indigenous African education and the later advent of Islam and Christianity.

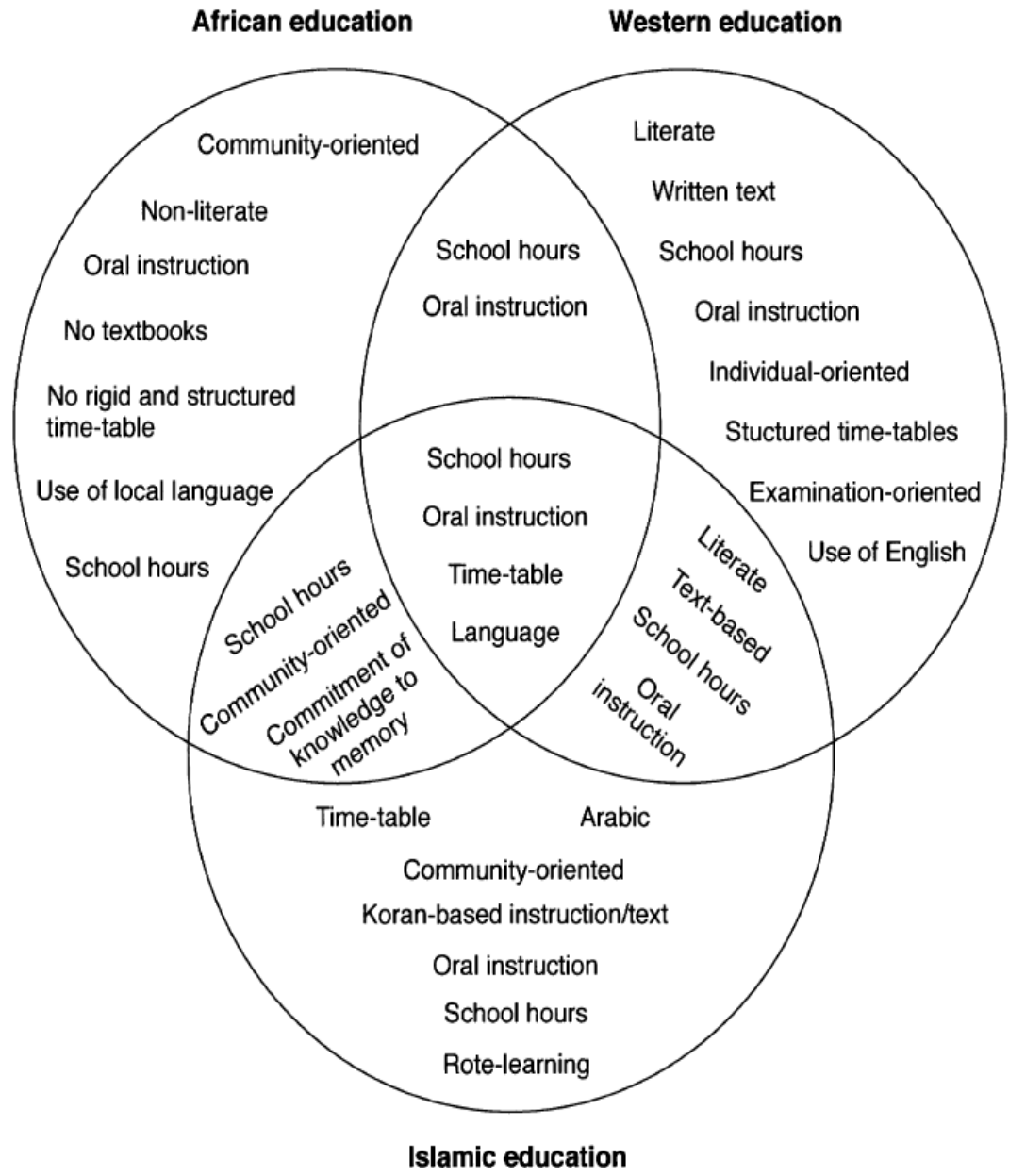


Fig. 1. The 'triple heritage' and its secondary educational features.

(Quist, 2001, p. 304)

The Christian Missionary Education. Portuguese explorers set foot on the coast of modern Ghana, then Gold Coast, in 1471 (Decorse, 1992). They settled on the coast for about two centuries, mainly for trading purposes with the people of Edina whom they named El Mina (the gold mine) because of the abundance of gold in Edina and the surrounding areas. For trading prospects on the rich coast of Ghana, the Portuguese erected a fortress in 1482 near the River Benya to secure their trade and store goods. The fortress, Sao Jaogo da Mina, and the surrounding settlement would later come to be known as “El Mina” (Buah, 1998; Decorse, 1992). However, the coast of Ghana was not the total monopoly of the Portuguese. Like many Sub-Saharan African countries, the Gold Coast was the arena of rivalry between Portuguese, Dutch, Danes, Swedes, English, and French as each group aimed at strengthening their mercantile operations on the West Coast.

According to Buah (1998), the Portuguese sowed the first seeds of Christian faith in the Gold Coast. Buah (1998) also argues that the 20th January 1482 marks the first public mass at El Mina and the following conversion to the new religion among the people of El Mina. In 1503 the King of Efutu (in the central region, Cape Coast) and about 1,300 of his subjects accepted Christianity. Martin (1976) advances the year 1529 marks the conversion of the settlement of Elmina to the Catholic faith. Obeng (1996) nuances the conversion of the King of Efutu by echoing the view of scholars, such as Sanneh (1983) who rationalize the acceptance of the new faith as a political and economic strategy for ensuring protection of the European power from invasion from other rival states.

Even though the Roman Catholic Church was the first to be introduced in the Gold Coast, it was later followed by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (S.P.G) (the Anglican Church), the Presbyterian Church introduced by the Basel Missionary Society and the Bremen Mission, and the Wesleyan (Methodist) Church. Christian missionaries laid the foundational ground of Western education in Africa. The introduction of education by these Christian denominations would later become a significant tool in the accomplishment of their evangelical mission (Buah, 1998).

According to Graham (1971), the King of Portugal, King John III commanded the Governor at Elmina “to provide reading, writing, and religious teaching for African children” (p. 1). So from 1529, Elmina was the laboratory for the early schools known as “Castle Schools” whose curriculum focused on “Reading”, “Writing”, and “Scriptures”; and the maximum number of pupils was set at 15. The teacher in those schools received an annual salary of 240 grains of gold for each pupil (Graham, 1971, p. 1). The small quota of pupils in the castle schools implied that education was not accessible to the ordinary population (Martin, 1976). It was an elitist activity, a privilege only granted to the few who could afford it. According to Godwyll (2008), this socio-economic bias would later have a noticeable effect in widening the gap between the rich who could afford education, and the poor, especially from the North.

The Gold Coast was under the total control of foreign powers who kept defying one another for the control of strategic castles. As a consequence of this rivalry, castles would swing back and forth from one European power to another (Richards, 2005). Even though the Portuguese missionaries were the first to arrive on the Guinea Coast, the

Dutch are credited to be the first to have established schools for Africans after the Dutch West India Company (the Protestant Dutch) ceased Elmina Castle in 1637 (Graham, 1971; Owusu-Ansah, Iddrisu & Sey, 2013). There were no more Catholic schools on the Gold Coast until 1880 (Martin, 1976; Graham, 1971; Godwyll, 2008). It is for this reason that Godwyll (2008) refers to the year 1880 as a hallmark in terms of education in Ghana as it coincides with the colonial period and the introduction of Western schooling by Portuguese, Danish, and English missionaries.

As early as 1621, the “Dutch Charter” recommended the establishment of Christian schools in order to teach reading and writing and provide education in the tradition of the Dutch Reformed Church (Graham, 1971; Owusu-Ansah, Iddrisu & Sey, 2013). Similar to the Portuguese, the Dutch educational objectives were catered to educate children along the religious principles of Christian faith (Graham, 1971). Dutch was imposed as the sole medium of instruction. According to Graham (1971), the agenda was that children from Elmina would possess the communicative skills (the Dutch language) and would be much devoted to Dutch authorities.

Also, according to Martin (1976), the Danes have had a short but significant influence on Ghanaian education. Missionaries from the Moravian Protestant Church came to Christianborg (in Osu near Accra) in 1737 and continued the tradition of castle schools (Asiedu-Akrofi, 1982). The Danish governor, Major de Richelieu (governor from 1822 to 1825) demonstrated much interest in the development of educational and missionary activities at Christianborg. This interest in educational development culminated in the arrival of the Basel and Methodist missions in the Gold Coast in 1828

and 1835 respectively (Asiedu-Akrofi, 1982). The instrumental impacts of these missions, especially the Basel mission, on the landscape of education in Ghana would later be acknowledged by Gov. Guggisberg (Cape Coast Governor from 1919 to 1927). Education, as promoted by the Basel Mission, included technical education which, to this day, is a significant component of Ghanaian education. It also offered vocational courses to train joiners, wheelwrights, carpenters, lock-smiths, blacksmiths, shoemakers and book-binders (Martin, 1976).

If evangelization may appear to be the driving force behind European presence in the Gold Coast, Graham (1971) refutes such consideration as the key reason for European settlement in the Gold Coast prior to early 19th century. Indeed, trade and commerce were at the center of European operations in the Gold Coast (Graham, 1971; Adu-Boahen, 2013). Asiedu-Akrofi (1982, p. 98) also argues that the umbrella of European activities in the Gold Coast, which encompassed Christian mission and the establishment of schools, were minor “footnotes” compared to the wider commercial operations.

The European Merchants and Traders. The British were not the only traders in the Gold Coast from the earliest European settlement to the early eighteenth century. Indeed, the Normans, Portuguese, Spaniards, French and the Dutch were active in trading (rubber, pepper, gold, ivory and even slaves) with the Fanti of Cape Coast (Graham, 1971). According to Graham (1971), this chapter of Gold Coast history tends to be ignored, whereas it constitutes a significant period in Anglo-Fanti interactions. This phase that marks an era of trade and commercial activities in Fantiland provides the

context within which to understand educational philosophies and the nature of African jobs in the trading posts.

The Royal African Company of the British merchants established a school at Cape Coast Castle in 1694 to feed the urgent need for interpreters and catechists (Graham, 1971). Clearly, the coastal forts were put in place to serve a reductionist purpose: to preserve the interests of officials and merchants who were “less interested in the education of pure African pupils” (Martin, 1976, p. 46). It is worth mentioning that “castle schools”, as established by the early missions in Portuguese settlements, were also primarily geared to serve “mulattoes”. This was a defining characteristic of early educational practice in the Gold Coast (Asiedu-Akrofi, 1982; Graham, 1971).

Foster (1962) also notes that pupils in the coastal schools were peripheral to the indigenous population; those were the children of farmers and traders and "castle mulattoes" (children born of Portuguese and African women). This discrimination, based on socio-economic status, leads Ampiah to remark, during a talk on the history of education in Ghana (delivered in August 2012 at the University of Cape Coast), that the country still bears the scarred legacy of colonial education as privileged groups could afford the cost of education for their children while ordinary Ghanaian indigenous population, like those in the North, were simply excluded:

Rich chiefs from the coastal areas and the Ashanti region (the Middle Belts) were able to bring their children to Elmina, while those from the North were not. Thus, to this day, the North still lags behind the South (Ampiah, 2012).

Godwyll (2008) corroborates this observation and the colonial legacy of a deeply rooted “dichotomy between the fortunes of the people from the southern to middle belt and those in the northern extremities” (p. 113). Dei (2005) also notes that colonization promoted regional and ethnic biases because “the concentration of schools in the south has favored the Akan while other ethnic minorities in the north have struggled to catch up” (p. 269). Rodney (1973) rationalizes such negligence of the North for its lack of utility in terms of providing resources for export to feed the colonial project and enrich the metropole. Thus, the North, in the eye of colonial officials, was an unprofitable region.

Amin (1972, cited by Gordon & Gordon, 1992) also supports Rodney’s (1973) analysis by corroborating that regional political and economic policies were dependent upon available resources. Echoing the arguments of Morel, a British historian, Graham (1971) denounces the British presence in Sub-Saharan Africa as “neither due to a desire to mend the ways of priestly theocracies, nor to alter the tyranny of the strong over the weak...but the belief that West Africa constituted a vast outlet for the free and unfettered development of British trade, and an equally vast field for the cultivation of products of economic necessity” (p. 2). The systematic exploitation of African colonies for raw materials, as farmlands and for trade supports Rodney’s (1973) argument that “Europe underdeveloped Africa”. Buah (1998) also supports Rodney’s claim in arguing that Europe and Great Britain’s prosperity received some significant boost from the gold and slave trade from Ghana and other parts of the Guinea Coast.

Education in the 17th and 18th centuries was designed to meet the demand of the Merchant Companies to create a pool of interpreters, clerks and soldiers to assist colonial officials and ensure the security of the forts (Graham, 1971). The mutual relationship between European mercantile operations in the Gold Coast and the schools explains the Royal African Company's support of the Cape Coast Castle and its educational programs. The curriculum focused on the 3Rs—(a)'rithmetic, reading and (w)'riting (Graham, 1971; Godwyll, 2008). This was because the merchants wanted to create trained indigenous elite to help in their commerce (Godwyll, 2008, Obiakor, 2004). The merchants' interest in trade created more incentives for clerical forms of employment to the detriment of industrial skills (due to lack of industrial institutions) and the fact that other forms of craft or manual labor provided lower wages.

Owusu-Ansah, Iddrisu and Sey (2013) highlight that the majority of children in European Castle Schools in the 18th century were “mulattoes” who were educated for employment in the trading posts. Apart from the mulattoes, sons of African merchants and important local chiefs also had access to Castle Schools. The privilege granted to sons of Europeans and African women (the mulattoes) led to the establishment of the “Mulatto Fund” to support the Cape Coast Castle School (Owusu-Ansah, Iddrisu & Sey, 2013).

By the end of the nineteenth century, the British annexation of the coast of southern Ghana, later renamed the Gold Coast Colony in 1874 consolidated British rule and the administration of education in the coastal forts (Foster, 1962; Buah, 1998). In the 1880s the partnership between churches and government culminated in the Education

Ordinance of 1882 which provided government grants for harmonious educational development. The basic Education Ordinance of 1887 is considered to have been more successful in applying coherent rules throughout the Gold Coast. Access to education to all children regardless of race or religion was established as a conditionality to receive government grants. The curriculum included the traditional 3Rs and “needlework” as an examinable subject for girls. However, subjects, such as “history” and “geography” were considered “optional” (Graham, 1971, p. 111; Martin, 1976). The Ordinance also advocated improved school curricula, teacher certification and practical education in schools still dominantly led by Christian denominations (Owusu-Ansah, Iddrisu & Sey, 2013).

It was only in the period 1919-1927 (which coincides with the administration of Governor Guggisberg) that the partnership between government and church in education affairs became more coherent. Under this government-church system there were four types of schools: government, assisted, mission and private (Asiedu-Akrofi, 1982; Godwyll, 2008). In the colonial period, the expansion of education was not just limited to the inclusion of all genders. Indeed, it also involved infrastructural development, especially during the administration of Governor Guggisberg. However, it is worth mentioning that Christian missionaries and missionary schools remained highly visible in the provision of education in the Gold Coast. Table 1 below shows different types of schools in the Gold Coast between the period of 1925 and 1927. The significant number of government assisted schools reveals the involvement of the colonial administration in educational affairs and the partnership between church and state in education matters.

Table 1

Government and Assisted Schools in the Gold Coast from 1925-1927

Denominations	Periods		
	1925	1926	1927
AME	7	7	7
English Church	6	6	6
Ewe Presbyterian	22	31	36
Roman Catholic	29	29	32
Mission			
Presbyterian Mission	98	98	99
Wesleyan Mission	47	47	49
Undenominational	1	1	1
Secondary	2	2	2
Muslim	--	1	1
Total Assisted Schools	212	221	234
Government Schools	17	17	18

(Asiedu-Akrofi, 1982, p. 99)

Colonial Education

Evangelical and trade activities in pre-colonial Africa culminated in the later “scramble for Africa” in the 1880s and the imposition of colonial rule to most parts of the African continent (Fafunwa, 1982). The major world colonial powers were France and Britain. The latter ruled the Gold Coast as part of its share from the partitioning of the continent at the Berlin Conference (1884-1885). As mentioned earlier, Christian “mission” education was geared towards spreading the words of the Gospel to “win African souls for Christ” (Fafunwa, 1982, p. 21). In the colonial period, the goal of education remained the same except on its emphasis on a semi-secular type and the use of colonial education as a strategy to defend and secure the interests of the metropole. Thus, education was an instrumental medium to maintain the status-quo (Fafunwa, 1982).

Education in the late colonial period has attracted much interest from indigenous Africans and chiefs who saw in the achievement of Western education an effective pathway towards upward social mobility. As matter of fact, Africans under colonialism were not simply passive recipients of Western education; they exerted much pressure on colonial administrations and politicians for more schools and better education (Yamada, 2004). As early as the 1870s, the Liberian, Edward Wilmot Blyden (1832-1912) expressed the need for a university in West Africa. This call was further amplified in the 20th century by Blyden’s pan-Africanist disciples who advocated the establishment of a West African University to create the intellectual conditions for a greater pan-African collaboration. Thus, the 1920 Accra National Congress of British West Africa proclaimed the Pan-African necessity "to found a British West African university on such lines as

would preserve in the students a sense of African identity" (Colonial Office, 1945a, quoted by Emudong, 1997, p. 137).

Nationalists from the Gold Coast were also calling for the establishment of such institution of higher education for the whole West African region, including Francophone West Africa and the American neocolonial Liberia. Even though this idea was not much welcomed by the colonial governors for their perception of educated Africans as threat to colonial rule, agitations in the late 1930s and the Second World War led the British colonial authorities to consider the creation of an elite class to which political power could be transferred. But the later establishment of institutions of higher education in colonial British West Africa should be understood as part of a colonial policy of "planned decolonization" or "planned neocolonialism" (Emudong, 1997, p. 138).

The academic field constitutes a significant arena in the process of decolonization of knowledge production and the affirmation of indigenous forms. Aronowitz and Giroux (1985 cited by Maila & Loubser, 2003) argue that schools play a particularly important role in legitimizing and producing dominant cultural capital through the hierarchically arranged bodies of school knowledge. Certain forms of knowledge (hegemonic western forms particularly) might continue to be granted high status in school curricula. In the Gold Coast, Euro-(British)-American traditions were to constitute the framework of reference for an adequate education system thought relevant to the local needs and challenges. Sir Gordon Guggisberg (Governor of the Gold Coast from 1919 to 1927) acknowledged the importance of establishing an "adapted" form of education that would not alienate Africans from their cultures and national identity and would be adequate to

educate African leaders. The latter developed comprehensive 16 principles for the expansion of education in colonial Gold Coast that, according to Ampiah (2012), continue to inform Ghanaian Education in Ghana. Guggisberg's famous 16 Principles are later shown in table 2.

The instrumentality of Guggisberg in the development of Ghanaian education is also supported by Martin (1976) for whom Guggisberg's recommendations were still considered relevant in 1969 and 1970. However, despite such revolutionary approach to education, the latter was limited to the South. Ampiah (2012) explains that the Governor believed that wider expansion of schools to other areas would impede the quality of education. Guggisberg's policy (as shown in table 2) emphasized practical and vocational education, equality, equal opportunity and universal access to education for all sexes, context relevance and government provision of teacher training in order to fulfill the 16th principle of establishing "trade schools with a technical and literary education that will fit young men to become skilled craftsmen and useful citizens" (Yamada, 2004, p. 73).

Similar to some of the recommendations from the basic Education Ordinance of 1887 for more practical education (Owusu-Ansah, Iddrisu & Sey, 2013), the Education Committee created by Guggisberg advocated woodwork, metal work, and clay work to shift from the "mere bookishness" of education and the type of education provided by Christian missions and merchants (Yamada 2004, p. 73) (see table 2 for Guggisberg's recommendations). Thus, Achimota vocational secondary school was established in 1927 (Yamada 2004).

Table 2

Guggisberg's Sixteen Recommendations to the Legislative Council in 1925

1. Primary education must be thorough and be from the bottom to the top.
2. The provision of secondary schools with an educational standard that will fit young men and women to enter a university.
3. The provision of a university.
4. Equal opportunities to those given to boys should be provided for the education of girls.
5. Co-education is desirable during certain stages of education.
6. The staff of teachers must be of the highest possible quality.
7. Character training must take an important place in education.
8. Religious teaching should form part of school life.
9. Organized games should form part of school life.
10. The course in every school should include special references to the health, welfare and industries of the locality.
11. A sufficient staff of efficient African inspectors of schools must be trained and maintained.
12. Whilst an English education must be given, it must be based solidly on the vernacular.
13. Education cannot be compulsory nor free.
14. There should be cooperation between the Government and the Missions; and the latter should be subsidized for educational purposes.
15. The Government must have the ultimate control of education through-out the Gold Coast.
16. The provision of trade schools with a technical and literary education that will fit young men to become skilled craftsmen and useful citizens.

Source: (Martin, 1976)

Despite these developments in the education sector and the relative diversity of the curriculum with vocationalism, the colonial period failed to encourage an African-centered education. The education system, as implemented by the colonial masters, aligned with selfish, Eurocentric purposes. Indeed, African people had little control on school curricula and development (Obiakor, 2004). Similar to the merchants' use of education to create native clerks to help run their mercantile operations, schools were established to produce a labor force of interpreters, catechists, and clerks for the colonial administration (Omolewa, 2006; Godwyll, 2008).

The British colonizers provided education for the production of subservient elite. They developed a peripheral type of British education system in African colonies so as to educate the indigenous population to perform lower administrative and clerical functions (Mfum-Mensah, 2005; Omolewa, 2006). This reductionist and limiting type of education was not just operating under British rule. Indeed, similarly in the AOF (Colonial French West Africa) the education system aimed essentially at forming male auxiliaries necessary for colonial administration.

The education of girls was neglected by the "ministère des colonies" [the Colonial Office] and was left to the responsibility of religious missions. Thus, in 1903 the female population in school in the AOF was 1 girl for 5 boys. The bias intensified between 1919-1920 when the female population in school became 1 girl for 45 boys. It is only in 1937 that the situation improves in favor of the education of girls—1 girl for 10 boys—(Barthélémy, 2003, p. 372). The bias and politicization of colonial education was also visible in Achimota which was to be a model secondary school to train a new generation

of Africans with the “technical”, theoretical or “literary” knowledge and “character” necessary to be useful citizens and “leaders” that could transform their nations (Yamada, 2009; 2004).

The Establishment of Achimota: Vocationalism and Character Building. The establishment of Achimota in 1927 was a product of the discourse on leadership in British Africa, a discourse that acknowledged the failure of colonial education and the need for a context-based education system in harmony with African environment and cultural values. This discourse could be positioned further back in 1910 when the education of the African was a significant question in the British colonies and the metropole. In this same period the World Missionary Conference held at Edinburgh considered the inclusion of Protestant missions’ ideas on education. In the inter-war period, these interests in colonial education culminated in some hallmark actions from the Phelps-Stokes Fund (New York-based American philanthropic organization specialized in education) and the British Colonial Office. The former dispatched two commissions to diagnose the state of education in Africa and the possibility for a transfer of post-Civil War African American education model (Yamada, 2004). The latter created the Advisory Committee on Native Education in British Tropical Africa (ACNEBTA) in 1923 that produced a report that was to constitute the “guiding principles for colonial education policies” in 1925 (Yamada, 2009, p. 29).

ACNEBTA, missionaries, colonial officials, African intellectuals and chiefs gathered in London expressed demands for educational institutions for “leadership” that materialized with the establishment of Achimota in the Gold Coast (Yamada, 2009).

Africans who expected much from European education were disenchanted and both Africans and Europeans acknowledged the failure of Western “imported” education system which had proven “too European” and therefore irrelevant to African needs and expectations (Omolewa, 2006). So in the Gold Coast, Achimota was to represent an institution one could refer to as a syncretic school in its attempt at grafting together the Euro and the Afro in order to produce students and African leaders “Western in intellectual attitude” and “African in sympathy” (Yamada, 2009, p. 29). Coe (2002, p. 29) captures these syncretic ideals in his report of the objectives of Achimota’s mission as described in the Achimota College Report of 1932:

Achimota hopes to produce a type of student who is "Western" in his intellectual attitudes towards life, with a respect for science and capacity for systematic thought, but who remains African in sympathy and desirous of preserving and developing what is deserving of respect in tribal life, custom, rule and law (Coe, 2002, p. 29)

Despite its theoretical mission to simultaneously adapt European education to African socio-cultural landscape, Achimota was primarily based on Victorian moralism—or character development—as promoted at British public schools and the Hampton Tuskegee model (industrial education) from the United States (Quist, 2003; Yamada 2004; 2009). The former model, according to Quist (2003) was “elitist” and aimed to replicate some British character values, such as the “gentleman, the statesman, and the accomplished politician of England” (p. 420). The latter, more practical, was

based on the idea of transferring knowledge about African American education in the United States, especially in Tuskegee and Hampton Institutes (Coe 2002; Quist, 2003).

The vocationalization of education was also influenced by the theory of “learning by doing” advocated by John Dewey and other American progressive educationists (Yamada, 2004, p. 77). Yet, because colonial administrators perceived educated Africans as a “threat to European control” (Emudong, 1997, p. 137; Yamada 2004), they narrowed “practical education” to manual labor as means to maintain the status quo and to oppress Africans through the provision of inferior education (Yamada, 2004; Emudong, 1997). Analyzing this “Negro industrial education” promoted by the British, Omolewa (2006) quotes the British historian, Zachernuk, to criticize the bias of this type of education that insisted on the use of the hands in order to confine Africans to a subaltern position. The same confinement is also reflective of White Americans’ perception and exclusion of Black Americans as an “underclass”. According to Zachernuk, “colonial education policy hoped to create loyal Africans who knew their place in gendered colonial and racial hierarchies” (Omolewa, 2006, p. 277).

Analyzing mission education in Africa, Berman (1974) acknowledges that the reduction of African education to mere manual labor was already an issue earlier by the turn of the 19th century under missionary education. According to him, the missionaries’ participated in promoting European racism through their attempt to reduce African education to vocationalism and basic level work in the vernacular.

Achimota represented a clear example of the complexity of adapting foreign British educational models into the African colonies because in the context of

colonization, “adaptation” meant a “transfer” of Western socio-cultural values as embedded in their education models in Britain and America. The adoption of Euro-American standards of vocationalism and socio-moralism also illustrates that the West remained the center and framework of reference that informed the vocationalization policy that governed Ghanaian education from the 1920s to 1930s.

Gov. Guggisberg considered vocational education as “the first and foremost step in the progress of the races of the Gold Coast” (Colonial Office, quoted by Yamada, 2004, p. 73). Only the discourse on the vocationalization of education was understood differently by colonial officials and the indigenes due to the fact that, as Yamada (2004) puts it, “local discourse has its own dynamic, highly independent of international ones” (p. 72). The complexity of meaning and expectation from such education model has led to the politicization of education which has persisted from the colonial Gold Coast to present-day Ghana.

It is worth mentioning that the outside influential factors of vocationalism had opposing social functions. Indeed, while Victorian moralism and the African-American industrial education intended to maintain the racial hierarchy between colonial officials and local Africans, the educational philosophy of “learning by doing” as advocated by American progressive educationists, like John Dewey, aimed at developing a transformative education model that trained African leaders to meet the challenges of their societies. These models, despite their different purposes shared an acute insistence on character development and their use of the Gold Coast as an experimental laboratory

for the “adaptation” or “transfer” of these foreign educational models that opposed the theoretical or “literary” against the “practical”.

Europeans as well as local Africans perceived literary education as emancipatory and the so-called practical counterpart or vocationalism as means for the “oppression” and “containment” of Africans in order to preserve the existing racial hierarchy and White privilege (Yamada, 2004, p. 78). The Guggisberg administration sought to redefine the equation of “practical” education from a moral perspective in order to dissolve the negative perception associated with the use of the hands and promote some social appreciation of the “dignity of labor” (Yamada, 2004, p. 77). The vocational bias continued in the post-colony in the late 1950s and early 1960s when international organizations, such as the World Bank implemented widespread loan programs supporting vocational secondary education (Yamada, 2004).

The Era of Independence: Breaking away from the Past

The education of native Africans, as shown in the preceding chapters, has been administered by European missionaries and merchants in order to gain new adherents to Christianity and to perform clerical functions. The colonial period and the scramble for Africa also continued the pre-colonial legacy and reproduced the same state of political and economic monopoly of African affairs (Gordon & Gordon, 1992). European control of African education, content and philosophy were simply some of the visible parts of the iceberg. Others domains, such as African economies were also brought to kneel to the colonizer because of the shift in agricultural emphasis from subsistence to cash crop farming. The introduction of cash crops (coffee, rubber, palm oil, cotton, peanuts and

cocoa) was not to benefit African agricultural industry, economies and social welfare, but to feed European markets and industries (Gordon & Gordon, 1992; Amin, 1972, cited by Gordon & Gordon, 1992).

Western-educated African elites also participated in the colonial administration in both the British and the French colonies in the early 20th century. However, performance within colonial and colonizing structures led to abuses of the privileges granted to local elites who were mainly concerned with upward mobility within the colonial administration (Meredith, 2011). Therefore, reform movements burgeoned in the 1920s championed by educated populations, youths and African newspapers from urban cities, like Accra and Lagos (Gordon & Gordon, 1992; Meredith, 2011). These protests that signaled African political consciousness gained much more maturity after the Second World War which provided the altar for the demystification of White supremacy and the urgency of total sovereignty (Gordon & Gordon, 1992). New constitutions were introduced in the Gold Coast to inform the election of a handful of Africans as members of legislative councils. The Gold Coast was, thus, making some political achievements that were to be instrumental in the walk toward freedom or independence (Meredith, 2011).

However, history has proven that Africa's *Long Walk to Freedom* (to borrow the title of Nelson Mandela's autobiography, 1995) has been riddled with many hurdles even in the post-colony. These hurdles make breaking the vicious cycle of colonialism and neo-colonialism a challenging task, especially when African nations, like Ghana, continue to be much dependent on foreign aid which is characterized by "conditionality"

in the form of policy recommendations. Policies play important functions as they constitute the driving philosophy that define the nature of a political system or institution.

Addressing the education system of African countries, Yamada (2004) highlights some common characteristic that the education policies of highly aid-dependent countries are more strongly influenced by external forces than less-aid-dependent countries. This makes the issue of decolonization of education in Africa a political problem whose solutions also need to be political (among others). So education remained in the center of political protest and local agenda in the Gold Coast. The African majority government in the Gold Coast (elected in 1951) pushed for the satisfaction of popular demands for the provision of “education for every child of school going age”. These objectives culminated in the Accelerated Development Plan of 1951 whose implementation doubled the primary school population to 132,000 (Osei, 2009, p. 34). The newly established public education system was comprised of primary, lower and upper secondary schools, technical schools—which included crafts schools, other three types of technical education institutes and teacher training colleges—and some tertiary institutions.

At independence in 1957, Ghana refused that the majority of the ordinary population be kept in the dark by an exclusive education system. Thus, the newly independent country developed a more accessible education system that included indigenous values and reflective of domestic concerns. The father of African nationalism, President Nkrumah understood education as the means for reducing the gap between the rich and the poor through increased access to school. Thus, the 1957 Constitution supports that “every citizen has the right to obtain an education” (Osei, 2009, p. 34).

Along the same vein, the Ministry of Education and Culture (MOEC) was established and a committee of the nationalist government produced a document that, officially, determined the new trajectory of Ghanaian education and discarded the Western, colonial system. The project aimed at creating national cohesion by widening access to education from “anti-elitist”, “anti-discriminatory” and “anti-capitalist” perspectives. Patriotic values were assigned “special place and proper attention” in Ghanaian schools (Osei, 2009, p. 34). The transformation of Ghanaian education or at least the attempts at adaptation led to the conversion and domestication of the British schools into public institutions under the supervision of MOEC officials (Osei, 2009).

Ghanaian leaders, especially, under Nkrumah, stepped outside the colonial bubble to consciously rethink the objectives of Western education and its relevance to national development. In the 1950s, Nyerere critically denounced the passivity of African education policies that encouraged an emulation of Western materialism and that, in the process, only produced estranged “Black Europeans” (Osei, 2010, p. 15). However, despite the significance and symbolism of Nkrumah’s initiative to break away from colonialism and develop a uniquely national form of education, there were overwhelming challenges.

Indeed, such kind of education required, as Osei (2009) argues, “building an education system from scratch” (p. 35). The task was made much more daunting due to the “uselessness of the instructional materials” (p. 35) inherited from European colonials. Added to the domestic problems, caused by lack of experienced Ghanaian school leaders and trained teachers to concretize Nkrumah’s vision, were international shocks that

would later affect the economies, educational and development policies of African countries, like Ghana (Osei, 2009). Indeed, the IMF and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD, later the World Bank) as institutions for the implementation of the Marshall Plan for the reconstruction of post-WWII Europe would later shift their focus towards developing countries with conditional aid and policy recommendations (Lamb, 2007; Moyo, 2009).

Addressing the political economy of development and late century shocks to the global system, and corroborating much of the literature about the 1980s Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs), Bates (2001) attributes part of the collapse of Third World economies to the content of the development policies imposed by Western institutions—namely the IMF, and the World Bank. The UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) acknowledges that SAPs "have resulted in a devastating impact on human development, with health and *education* the hardest hit sectors" [emphasis added] (Logan & Mengisteab, 1993, p. 5). In fact, under the ERP (Economic Recovery Programs), the IMF austerity measures forced Ghana to reduce spending on education—and social welfare programs (Jeong, 1998). These austerity measures were aided by Africa's crippling indebtedness and reliance on the IMF seal of approval for access to foreign exchange and other financial resources from the World Bank and donor countries (Jeong, 1998; Bates 2001). So Western colonization and dictatorship over education policies in Africa also operated through policy recommendation from the IMF and the World Bank, institutions that Moyo (2009) labels the "Siamese twin".

According to Shizha (2010), most curriculum changes in African countries are a mere importation, a “copycat” of Western curriculum forms without effective adaptation to the local contexts or inclusion of indigenous knowledge. Science curriculum innovations became a significant issue in the post-independence period because African governments were expected to subvert Western science curricula by integrating a socio-cultural dimension reflective of local values (Shizha, 2010). Unfortunately, according to Shizha (2010), the chronic “colonization of African knowledge spaces by Western knowledge” (p 32) still constitutes a harsh reality. Such colonization leads Mfum-Mensah (2005) to cast some wide and bleak observation that the present systems of education in many formerly colonized nations continue to be mere inheritance from colonialism. Mason, Arnove, & Sutton (2001) also explain that thanks to technical assistance and policy conditionality from European financial agencies, Western universities represent the “center” that dictates education policies of colleges in the Third World or “periphery”. The imposition of Western policies to Africa’s young, developing nations pins the West and Western knowledge as the ultimate exemplar for the rest of the world, especially for the formerly colonized nations.

The West as “Center” or Standard Bearer

From slavery to colonization the West has sown the seeds of domination in the slave plantations, and later in the African colonies. These seeds blossomed to the imposition of Western ideals as sole normative framework of thought and action, even in the post-colony. Thus, anything outside the realm of Western “civilized” world has been dubbed “indigenous” or “savage” (Depechin, 2005). It is clear that the negation of

“other” indigenous cultures contributes in the empowerment of Western civilization. Depelchin (2005) observes that the cultural environment of imperialism imposes ways of thinking and perceiving the world through the framework of Western standards. Such cultural environment also affects the relationship between European scholars and the so-called “discovered” (colonized) societies and the production of knowledge about these communities considered peripheral to Western high traditions. Lewis (1973) labels the dichotomy between North and South as “European privileges and colonized deprivation” (p. 582).

As an illustration of the perceived superiority of Western culture, Depelchin (2005, p. 6) argues that the use of Turner’s “frontier thesis” (which proposes the study of less advanced cultures of “incipient polities” through a “backward” analysis of mature societies) suggests the adoption of the West as a societal model for understanding the evolution of human society from primitive state to more modern and industrialized state. This understanding and peripherization of “incipient” societies reminds the Darwinian “survival of the fittest”. Thus, according to Depelchin (2005), indigenous cultures from the colonized world are regarded as throwbacks of the civilized world and cultural polities that have failed to follow the natural course of evolution. This attitude further favors the reproduction of Western ideologies and assumptions about the “other”. As a matter of fact, the production of knowledge from these societies is constructed on the basis of Western standards that represent the ultimate lens through which to understand the “other”, produce and validate knowledge.

This approach towards knowledge production and dissemination, according to Depelchin (2005), constitutes a significant part of Western strategy of “policing knowledge” (p.1). In other words, the production of knowledge about Africa and African civilization/history is thought dependable on European pronouncement as to what really constitutes “valid” history. The danger of such forms of historiography resides in its production of knowledge based on the dominant Western ideology. In this context, the West constitutes an active agent in the process of negation of African worth and in the affirmation and imposition of Western values as normative perspectives (Depelchin, 2005). Higgs (2012) denounces the arbitrary ensconcement of Western civilization at the top of the sociocultural and ideological hierarchy and the prescriptive nature of Western knowledge that contribute in silencing African cultures and history. The processes of silencing African cultures and history also operate in the field of education as shown in Higgs’ (2012) observation that:

The African voice in education at the end of the twentieth century is the voice of the radical witness of the pain and inhumanity of history, the arrogance of modernization and the conspiracy of silence in academic disciplines towards what is organic and alive in Africa (p. 38).

The dominance of Western cultural standards urge Falola & Jennings (2002) to suggest the need for “innovative methods” to study and present Africa on its own terms without it always being understood through comparison or parallelism with the West. According to Falola and Jennings (2002), the "autonomy" of the African scholar in the production of African history and epistemology constitutes a necessary approach to the

development of an African philosophy of history. Both Depelchin (2005) and Falola & Jennings (2002) express the concern that the most prominent areas of production of African epistemology are outside Africa, and calls for the dismantlement of such “oppressive” status quo that sacrifices African history and indigenous knowledge at the altar of Western civilization.

Addressing the place of African indigenous knowledge, Dei (2002a) claims that a local orientation in knowledge production represents a necessary step in the affirmation of African indigenous knowledge. So one of the key means of challenging Western processes of knowledge production for the colonized societies is an epistemological shift from “the paradigm of the conqueror” (Nyamjoh, 2012, p. 130). According to Dei (2002a), such emancipatory form of resistance historiography, in order to be effective, must start with a decolonization of education as site of epistemic production. Depelchin (2005) also supports this ideological and epistemic revolution for a redefinition of Africa’s subaltern position in world history and a transformation of the legacy of Europe’s encounter with Africa. The latter has constructed narratives of otherness and depiction of the continent as uncivilized and historically a “tabula rasa” (Depelchin, 2005). This perception was also supported by Hegel, who, in his *Geographical Basis of World History* (1856, cited by Eze, 1997) viewed Africa as a frozen part of the universe, insulated from any forms of progress:

From the earliest historical times, Africa has remained cut off from all contacts with the rest of the world; it is the land of gold, forever pressing in upon itself,

and the land of childhood, removed from the light of self-conscious history and wrapped in the dark mantle of night (Eze, 1997, p. 124).

Similarly, Trevor-Roper (1963, quoted by Depelchin, 2005), influenced by forces of Western superiority complex, reproduces the Hegelian denial of Africa's worth in world history by claiming that: "Perhaps, in the future, there will be some African history to teach. But at present there is none: there is only the history of Europeans in Africa" (p. 13). Such Western condescending discourses on Africa as a "tabula rasa" negated the continent's civilization, culture, and philosophy. Clearly, European civilization functions as normative and Africa as deviant.

These processes of negation of African history established paradigms and "paradigmatic silences" that, according to Depelchin (2005), produced and reproduced a cycle of new paradigms and silences to legitimate Western hegemonic ideologies and civilization. Depelchin (2005) understands and situates Roper's argument about African history as part of an attempt to prevent the emergence of an empowering history of Africa that would challenge the frozen order of power relations and subvert the cultural environment of imperialism.

Through a discourse of subjugation, and imposition of Western supremacist ideology, Western civilization, as "winner of histories", establishes the rules of historical research methods and operates as a lens through which to judge other cultures and histories (Depelchin, 2005, p. 1). It also functions as a normative frame on the basis of which Africa has been voted out of the picture of world history (Depelchin, 2005). According to Grinker, Lubkemann and Steiner (2010), cultural perspectives distort true

reality and affect the representation of other cultures because “our views are largely determined by the structures of observation” (p. 3). According to them “there is no vision without purpose, for the world is clothed in our systems of representation” (p. 3).

The implication in the context of knowledge production is that the disciplines or sciences that produce knowledge bear Western default setting. Colonial Anthropology, for instance, as a Western science, has set the foundations through which African scholars also view the cultures and people of the African continent. Most theories and anthropological studies about Africa are Western perspectives on the production of knowledge about people dubbed “without history” (Depelchin, 2005). Depelchin (2005) further observes that this reproduction of African history, as molded by the structures of domination, comes from the fact that the latter discipline of African history is itself produced by actors and institutions whose interests lie in maintaining the hierarchical order of histories.

The adoption of Western research tools and methodologies also contributes in facilitating such production and reproduction (Depelchin, 2005). Thus, the points of view of the natives and the significance of their history or cultures are simply ignored. According to Bankole (2006), the study of African people and cultures was not objectively carried out by early Europeans, but based on some abstract “idea” of Africans: “early Americans were interested in the study of their own idea of Africa as an exotic, foreign land that produced the Africans in bondage” (p. 664). It is worth mentioning that the negation of African history did not just operate in Africa, it also

affected other colonies, such as India where issues of rehabilitation of indigenous knowledge are also major concerns to Indian scholarship (Guha, 2002).

Guha (2002) addresses the different mechanisms through which Western ideology has been imposed in India—political institution, legal systems, language, and education. He addresses the silences of Indian historiography by the introduction of Western forms of narratology that has disrupted traditional forms. According to him, the intrusion of modern forms of narratology has caused “statism” in Indian historiography. Similarly, because of the introduction of new Western forms of historiography that favor written forms, African orature also lost its significance in Africa. The griot’s function as a genealogist, orator, and especially as depository of history or a “vessel of speech” was cast aside (Niane, 1965, p. 1), leading Niane (to denounce the suffocation and invalidation of African oral history and oral form of narratology by foreign Western written forms:

Unfortunately the West has taught us to scorn oral sources in matters of history, all that is not written in black and white being considered without foundation. Thus, even among African intellectuals, there are those who are sufficiently narrow-minded to regard ‘speaking documents’, which the griots are, with disdain, and to believe that we know nothing of our past for want of written documents. These men simply prove that they do not know their country except through the eyes of Whites (p. xxiv).

Dei (2002a) argues that discussing the notions of tradition, authenticity, orality or oral traditions, as well as indigenous identity represents a sine qua non condition for the

decolonization of world knowledge and the affirmation of indigenous knowledge in Euro-American educational spheres (Western sites of knowledge production). Depelchin (2005) also posits that one of the key means of challenging Western processes of knowledge production for the colonized societies is by writing from the periphery of world-history as forms of resistance historiography to reclaim the true history of the “discovered” or colonized societies and redefine their legitimate place in the world and world history.

Paradigm Shift: Decolonization

Challenging the Status Quo. The Black continent’s relationship with the West is still that of master and subaltern as it rests on the uneven altar of power relations (Depelchin, 2005). It is in this respect that African scholars and Africanists seek to challenge the status quo by presenting different lenses and concepts through which to affirm African history, cultures and identities. For instance, Lowe (1997) rejects the reductionist use of the word “tribe” that fails to fully capture the diversity and experiences of people from the African continent and their cultures.

According to Lowe, interpreting African experiences from the perspective of “tribe” reinforces the image of “timelessness” that conveys European stereotypical pronouncement on Africa’s “primitiveness” and the projection of an image that Africans have gone through centuries unchanged. The use of “tribe”—as a term and a concept— even in the modern West implies “primitive savagery”, “backwardness”, “irrationality”, and “superstition”, a vision that conveys the imagined stagnation of Africa (Lowe, 1997). To ensure more clarity on modern African ethnicity, cultures and political events, he

advocates the use of “ethnicity”, “people”, “nation”, or “community” instead of “tribe” which constitutes a colonial legacy of a racist categorization between “civilized” Europeans and “tribal” Africans (Lowe, 1997). This battle, according to Lowe (1997), could be perceived as an ethical and intellectual necessity to provide more accurate perspectives and understanding of the complexity of Africa in general and the true factors undergirding ethnic divisions and conflicts, especially as these often relate to the world economy and politics. Such understanding would prevent an appreciation of events, such as the Rwandan genocide as a merely caused by inherent violence that characterize African “tribes”: “the idea of tribe particularly shapes Western views of ethnicity and ethnic conflict in Africa [...] conflicts are interpreted as atavistic irruption of irrational violence which have always characterized Africa” (Lowe, 1997)

Depelchin’s (2005) deconstruction of Western relationship with Africa can be situated within an intellectual challenge of the new world order as established through “silence syndromes” and Western prescriptive discourses on world history. Thus, he advocates an epistemological revolution to confront Western “embedded practices of policing knowledge and the sterilization of knowledge” (p. 1) in order to redefine Africa’s subaltern position in world history and sustain the “emancipatory” function of knowledge. Cheikh Anta Diop (1974) subscribes within that framework of challenge towards Western dominance of knowledge, knowledge production and world history. He produced some of the most important research, and contributions to the subversion of the status quo.

In *The African Origin of Civilization: Myth or Reality* (1974), which draws from Diop's *Nations Nègres et Culture* and *Antériorité des Civilisations Nègres*, Diop (1974) adopts a scientific approach to debunk the ideas presented by Western Egyptologists, anthropologists, archeologists, linguists and historians in an effort to rewrite African history long distorted by colonialism. According to Diop (1974), the establishment of the African origin of Egyptian civilization would redefine African history and bring to light its significant contribution to world history as "mankind's pioneer guide on the road to civilization" (p. 43). The importance of Egypt in the work of Diop comes from that Egyptian civilization was accepted as the mother of world civilization. However, Western imperialism considered distanced Egyptian civilization from Africa in an attempted to establish Egypt as of White origin in order to further negate its African origin. Therefore, from Diop's (1974) perspective, it is a sine qua non condition that this major falsification of world/African history be corrected so that Africa can begin a true process of rewriting its own history. According to him, "the history of Black Africa will remain suspended in the air and cannot be written correctly until African historians dare to connect it with the history of Egypt" (p. xiv). Diop (1974) equates the significance of Egypt in the process of rewriting African collective history with the centrality of Greco-Latin antiquity in the history of Europe. According to Hilliard (1978), the falsification of Europe and Africa's history and the establishment of the West as standard bearer stemmed from European domination of Africa, and the European colonization of scholarship, general information, and belief system (Hilliard III, 1978).

O'Toole (cited by Gordon & Gordon, 1992) also supports Diop's arguments about the anteriority of Black civilization as proven by the presence in Africa of earliest forms of Homo sapiens between 200,000 and 100,000 years ago before the population of other parts of the world. These significant scientific findings challenge old discourses on world history and Western power that magnifies Western civilization through processes of negation of African civilization and suffocation of scientific facts that contradict the established order. Thus the visibility of Africa and its place in world history and even better as the cradle of humanity requires militant discourses to subvert the status quo and silences of Africa's past (Depelchin, 2005). Similar to Depelchin's (2005) scholarly activism, Akurang-Parry (2004) argues that the mission of African scholarship in the sites of knowledge production should be the exploration of muted areas of African studies that reveal African agency and the role of African intellectuals in the context of hegemonic histories.

Akurang-Parry (2004) points at the contribution of African intelligentsia in the development of anti-slavery and anti-colonial ideologies to amplify subaltern voices long silenced by Eurocentrism. He denounces continuing Eurocentric influence on studies about Africa and African history and observes that 18th and 19th century abolition studies, for instance, center on Euro-American abolition efforts rather than on the domestic agency of Africans and intellectuals of the continent as if the abolition of slavery was uniquely the culmination of Western generosity (see Depelchin, 2005). Depelchin (2005) refers to such Western monopoly of credits for abolition efforts as "abolition syndrome".

In the field of education, Emudong (1997) deplores the obscurantism that surround the role of African nationalists' pressure on colonial education policy. Despite their instrumental influence in the direction of education in West Africa, and especially in the establishment of institutions of higher education, African nationalists' role and advocacy for Black education are often ignored, even by African scholars. Hammersmith (2007) also argues that there is a growing need to appreciate the contributions that indigenous knowledge can make to contemporary understanding in areas such as the management of the environmental, resources and wildlife, meteorology, biology and medicine, as well as in basic human behavior and educational practices.

Indeed, although knowledge is produced and utilized locally, it bears a transcendent potential for global appreciation (Maila & Loubser, 2003). Thus, Dei (2002a) considers the redefinition of knowledge outside the static dichotomy between Western knowledge and "indigenous" (or traditional) knowledge a necessary step in the project for academic decolonization. Such decolonization, according to him, would rupture the biased categorization between "valid" (conventional) knowledge and "invalid" (indigenous) knowledge and thus curb imperial ideologies and colonial relations of knowledge production that continue to govern academic practices. A revolution in knowledge production in Euro-American academies to acknowledge the relevance of "other" forms of knowledge is crucial to avoid the [re]colonization of knowledges and cultures in local environments and contexts (Dei, 2002a; Le Grange, 2004).

In an ever increasingly globalizing world, the necessity for inclusion and acknowledgement of “indigenous” knowledge is more and more evident in order for academic knowledge to consider the heterogeneity of histories, events, and experiences that shape human development. Hammersmith (2007), and Dei (2002a) remark that an understanding of the difference between Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Western knowledge systems enables the creation of an “ethical space” of complementarity, diversity and creativity.

The decolonization project to rescue “other” knowledges from phagocytizing Western conventional knowledge, leads Dei (2002a, p. 6) to address trends in post-modern and post-colonial discourses that, according to him, constitute a paradigmatic shift in their consciousness of the complexity of social phenomena or realities which cannot be reduced to “universal essentialism”. The latter negates and sacrifices “lived experience” in favor of broad standardization of human experience. Thus, post-modernism argues for contextualizing knowledge as specific to a given “locale”, its cultures and histories as more legitimate and representative than generalized knowledge. Yet Dei (2002a) contests the same discourse for its focus on individual and private experience and its failure to acknowledge the world as also characterized by shared and unified experiences, especially as one speaks of decolonization.

Similarly, post-coloniality, while focusing on relationship between the colonial and the colonized histories, neglects the indigenous histories of the colonized. Post-colonial discourse de-centers the experiences of the colonized people to create a neutral domain that blurs the interplay between victim and victimizer. Dei (2002a) supports the

critique against post-colonial theory and argues that “if the focus of our work is anti-oppression, then the understanding of colonization must be grounded to the colonized” (p. 6) (also see Freire, 1993).

Filling the lacunae left by these theories, Dei (2002a) adopts an anti-colonial discursive approach to dismantle the producing and reproducing structures of inequality that veto the relevance of indigenous knowledge forms. He views indigenous systems as alternative paradigms to resist the status-quo as counter-hegemonic knowledge forms. Yet Dei (2002a) also acknowledges the contention that post-colonial intellectuals immersed in Western ideologies through education also participate in reproducing the cycle of exoticizing indigenous cultures. This proves that the mission of African scholars in the decolonization project is as complex and complicated as the condition of the colonized: a nervous condition (Fanon, 1963; Dangaremba, 2004).

As if heeding African scholars’ call for decolonization of the sites of knowledge production and research practices, Ross (2003) embodies this epistemic shift from ideologically driven research to a more holistic perspective that lends a good listening ear to the native’s experiences and voices. She illustrates that the process of decolonization does not only imply a shift from Western standards of knowledge production to the “local” but it challenges the local itself and its often gendered discourse (Dei, 2002a).

Investigating the Truth and Reconciliation Commissions in South Africa, Ross (2003) reveals that the TRC (Truth and Reconciliation Commission) reduces women to secondary witness as if their testimonies and experiences held less significance than male accounts. Thus men’s experiences have more visibility than women’s—just like the

epistemic bias between Western and indigenous knowledge— which concurs to create a gender bias. She brings to the surface the complexity of women’s experience, suffering, and reconciliation that cannot be oversimplified in “human rights” discourse. Another complexity that Ross (2003) highlights and that is more relevant to this study is the particularity of women’s traditional forms of narrative (African orature) characterized by a rich cultural repertoire (including native languages accompanied by performative gestures). She observes that the true essence of women’s use of local vernaculars is often lost in the TRC’s translation into English. Therefore, she points at the need for the TRC to be educated about the cultural repertoire of these African women in order to make sense of the nonlinear and non-chronological aspects of their narratives. The necessity for such cultural awareness illustrates the importance of different knowledge forms.

In her ethnographic study, *Lessons from Mount Kilimanjaro*, Stambach (2000) insists that Western civilization should not represent the sole yardstick in terms of education because locals from “other” cultures are educated in their own ways even while lacking modern institutions of education—especially for older generations. Analyzing the cultural practices of the Chagga people in East Africa, Stambach (2000) argue that rituals and initiations represent a significant part of the locals’ strategies in knowledge transmission. According to her, concepts such as “graduation ceremonies” and “diplomas” function to demonstrate the existence of traditional forms of education that govern the principles and moral code of the community. The “curricula” in these traditional milieus are part of an unwritten text; yet they are implemented through ceremonies, rituals, or passage rites. Stambach (2000) even speaks of the Chagga’s

initiation rituals in terms of “lessons”, “schoolbooks” and “tests” as practices embedded in the rites of passage or initiation to unwritten social norms/codes. So the concept of education is not foreign African communities. During these initiation ceremonies, elders play significant roles as initiation instructors or simply as educators. Therefore for a better appropriation of modern schooling/education, these traditional structures should be acknowledged and incorporated as an already familiar system (Stambach, 2000; Dei 2002a).

In *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Freire (1993) produces a significant theory of the oppressed and lays the blueprint for the liberation of the colonized from their oppressive and de-humanizing condition. He affirms that in order for the oppressed to be able to free themselves from the shackles of oppression and make their agency prevail, they must perceive their experience not as an end and a defining reality, but as a “limiting situation they can transform” (p. 31). The relevance of such argument is that the lack of autonomy in Western-centered African education (Shizha, 2010; Godwyll 2008; Yamada, 2004) creates an oppressive and alienating state of conformity due to what Freire refers to as alienation to the “prescriber’s consciousness” (p. 27). Indeed, such alienation, according to Freire (1993), blurs the consciousness of the colonized of his bondage because of their submersion into their new reality created by the oppressor.

From the Freirean perspective, education should not constitute a mere act of “transmission” and “transference” of knowledge. Freire (1993, p. 53) criticizes traditional forms of education as oppressive and comparable to a “banking” system that negates education and knowledge as processes of inquiry. In this mode the students are listening

objects and passive depositories to whom the teacher makes knowledge “deposits”. This dependency, passivity, and alienation, according to Freire, inhibit “authentic free thinking and real consciousness [of action]” (cited by Walters 1989, p. 87). Praxis (or conscious action) must govern education as it binds together thought and action in order to transform the natural and social environment (Freire, 1993). Thus, in “The People Speak their Word”, Freire (1981) advocates an education theory and practice that puts the community at the center and whose end result targets the achievement of the right of the community to transform their conditions and history instead of being some purely mechanical, alienating and abstract rhetoric (Freire, 1993).

Afrocentricity could be regarded as an application of the Freirean wisdom and an emancipatory discourse that seeks to operate a radical shift from Western standards. It de-centers Western paradigm and re-centers Africa, its cultures, histories and philosophies in the lives of Africans and the African diaspora (Asante, 1980). Ghana has also taken significant leadership steps to promote an emancipatory education model. These efforts can also be situated as part of an Afrocentric strategy for decolonization.

Afrocentricity. The failure of Western education in Africa—to provide sound and transformative education model that takes into account African realities and is relevant to its contexts—has urged some African scholars to advocate an alternative Afro-centered model (Asante, 1980; Shockley, 2007; Bankole, 2006). According to Afrocentric education scholars, European-centered education keeps Blacks in a position of world consumer to maintain the status quo. They regard Afrocentric education as a comprehensive methodology in challenging the “cultural mismatch” (Black culture vs.

Western school culture) and the miseducation of Blacks. They call for a reconceptualization of Black education in order to provide a suitable model that makes them productive members of society who are able to build a nation (Shockley, 2007; Asante, 1980).

Addressing the American situation, Anderson (2001, quoted by Shockley, 2007) considers the education provided to Blacks as “not uplifting” as it is purposefully designed to “keep them in a position of world consumer” and “maintain the current social order” (p. 104). Carter G. Woodson (1933, cited by Shockley, 2007), another Afrocentric educationist scholar, also makes similar observation that such type of education for Blacks only promotes servitude to an oppressive system and the participation of Blacks in their own subjugation.

Analyzing Afrocentric research and the discipline of Africalogy, Bankole (2006) highlights some key events in 20th century American history, such as the Harlem Renaissance (or New Negro Movement), Marcus Garvey’s Universal Negro improvement Association movement (UNIA), and the Black Power and Black arts movement. These events were instrumental in the development of the Afrocentric approach or Afrocentricity as they supported the need for African autonomy and agency. Thus, by the late 1970s, there was significant discourse and curriculum development calling for an African-American or “Black perspective” (Bankole, 2006, p. 666).

The publication of Asante's *Afrocentricity: The Theory of Social Change* (1980) is also regarded as an important pillar in the initiation of an African epistemic paradigm shift. Bankole (2006, p. 667-668) lists some of the major contributions of Afrocentricity

to the academic arena of knowledge production and the transformation of the perception of Africa from a victim to an active agent that re-appropriates its own history:

- 1- [Scholars and researchers have been able to] move beyond the repetitive narratives and analysis that falsified Africana history and culture;
- 2- add to the discussion on power imbalances in all areas of intellectual studies;
- 3- produce various sources in the discipline of Africalogy that attempt to move away from victimization studies;
- 4- emphasize the importance of African agency in all spheres of human existence;
- 5- critically engage racist scholarship and bodies of knowledge that have previously influenced generations of people dedicated to the study of people of African descent;
- 6- provide, within the inception of the model, the necessity for the critical examination of the Afrocentric theoretical paradigm;
- 7- allow scholars, students, intellectuals, educators, and activists an additional original framework in the academy;
- 8- mount a stimulating discourse of the descriptor, Afrocentric, which includes the lived (cultural) aspect of Afrocentricity;
- 9- offer innovative developments for other frameworks and meta-theories in which to observe and analyze the African world experience; and
- 10- hypothesize and posit numerous queries regarding the multi-dimensional ways of knowing about the African world experience.

The independence of Ghana in 1957 and the formation of the African Studies Association (ASA) in the United States are major breakthroughs in the process of political and epistemic decolonization. They also constitute symbolic hallmarks in Africa's repositioning in the international scene and in the site of knowledge production (Zeleza, 2009). Zeleza (2009) also acknowledges the progress of Africa's higher education which has evolved to become more diverse than ever since independence as illustrated by the presence of a continuum of institutions ranging from public to private, secular, and religious, comprehensive, and specialized. This diversity also applies to the staff of African higher education in terms of gender and other social categories.

The Ghanaian government has been leading Africa on several fronts to attain the Millennium Development Goals' related to education development, and the achievement of universal access to education and gender equity (Casely-Hayford, 2011). Casely-Hayford (2011) remarks that Nkrumah's leadership, which championed anti-colonialism (Jeong, 1998), has made significant contribution in the area of Ghanaian education. Indeed, the Nkrumah government in the 1950s education policy has been a key factor in the social and political life of the country with teachers playing a significant function as agents of change and nation building. This policy continued, at least up to the 1970s (Casely-Hayford, 2011).

Analyzing education in Ghana, the Ghanaian Ministry of Education (1999) observes that all nationalist governments, such as Nkrumah's, placed education at the center of development policies. These concerns led to the 1974 education reform, and most significantly the 1987 New Structure of Education reform that is considered a

hallmark in Ghana's education. Despite the educational ailments afflicting many African countries, Ghana has made many achievements in the sector. Its position in education reflects the transformations that took place in other African countries, such as the establishment of the West African Examination Council (WAEC) which guarantees an interconnection of educational systems in Anglophone West Africa and offers unified examination standards throughout the region (Sawyerr, 2012).

Also, part of Ghana's Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS), the Ghanaian government targets achieving UNESCO Education For All and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by the year 2015 (GoG, 2002, cited by Ampiah, 2008). Thus, according to Ghana's Ministry of Education Youths and Sports (MOEYS, 2004, cited by Ampiah, 2008), Ghana has demonstrated serious commitment to improving quality and equal access to education, educational management, and investment in science and technology. Another development is also in the area of girls' education as proven by a steady increase in the ratio of female to male literacy that accounts for improved Gender Parity Indicator (GPI) (Ampiah, 2008). These achievements were possible thanks to the establishment of the Education Strategic Plan (ESP) in 2003 by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sports' (MOESS).

Ghana's efforts to establish a relevant education system that would meet national challenges have been acknowledged by the international community who commend the "comprehensive nature of Ghana's education strategy" (Ampiah, 2008, p. 19). Dealing with Africa's education challenges of the 21st century, Sawyerr, former Minister of Education in Ghana (1993-1997), acknowledges some major achievements in higher

education. Indeed, African countries boast a rapid expansion of post-secondary institutions (universities) (Banya & Elu, 2001). Easterly (2006) also congratulates the steady expansion of education in Africa and the leap in adult literacy rates from 1970 to 2000.

Other major achievements in Africa's educational sector include the establishment of the Association of African Universities (AAU) in 1967 which represents a major factor in Africa's attempt to shift its education system from the paradigm of the "conqueror". The AAU brings universities together to create a platform for the advancement of higher education and enhance the role of the university in national development (Sawyerr, 2012; "About AAU", 2013). Headquartered in Accra, Ghana, the Association was founded in Rabat, Morocco on November 12, 1967 as an implementation of UNESCO recommendations in Antananarivo, Madagascar in 1962. The Association which started with 34 institutions grew to 199 members from 45 African countries ("About AAU", 2013). African scholars' realization of the necessity to unite and create an academic platform for national development also transpires in their perception of the place and role of AIK in African societies.

Adeyemi & Adeyinka (2003) observe that the legitimacy of AIK as valid and useful knowledge explains the interest in most African countries in a return to an indigenous education system adapted to the changes of the modern world. The rationale, according to Adeyemi & Adeyinka (2003), is the need for an education system that affects and is impacted by the community and which would inculcate skills and knowledge for specific professions or activities. Adeyemi & Adeyinka (2003) further

observe that developing African countries, such as Ghana, Malawi, Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia, appear to possess an education system vested in national unity and international understanding. Some of the aims in African education also target the eradication of the oppressive forces of poverty, hunger, disease, squalor, illiteracy, ignorance (Nyerere, 1980, cited by Mosha, 1986; Adeyemi & Adeyinka, 2003). Combatting electoral malpractice, providing education for citizenship, vocational skills, adult literacy, improving health, industrial and commercial development, inculcating moral standards and developing human resources for economic development also represent some of the aims of African education (Adeyemi & Adeyinka, 2003).

However, Adeyemi & Adeyinka (2003) also acknowledge that science and technology and the management of education to reflect international development in the field constitute Africa's major "challenges of the 21st century" (p. 431). Therefore, they recommend that the future domain of emphasis of education in Africa should be on the development and utilization of knowledge and pragmatic skills required to induce national economic recovery and progress. Nabudere (2005, cited by Higgs, 2012) also argues that the re-appropriation of African education to meet local challenges of development should consider another significant factor that is the building of cultural identity. Indeed, Nabudere considers that "the struggle for African authentic development is about an epistemological revolution and struggle for knowledge production that satisfies the demands for cultural identity" (Higgs, 2012, p. 39).

Despite major political and academic achievements, Africa's struggle for the decolonization of its political and knowledge economies is still far from complete

(Zezeza, 2009; Godwyll, 2008). Ghana has still a long way to go to meet the challenges of its education (Godwyll, 2008). Godwyll (2008) analyzes the various reforms of education in Ghana as an ongoing cycle that reproduces the British model. As a matter of fact, “content relevance” still constitutes a major concern (Godwyll, 2008); and the plethora of educational reforms—1967, 1969, 1972, 1974, 1980, 1987, and 2004—has been ineffective in shifting the paradigm (Godwyll, 2008; Tonah, 2009). Sawyerr (2012), former Minister of education in Ghana (1993-1997) and Tonah (2009) denounce the politicization of Ghanaian education and the phenomenon that change of Government often involves change in the educational policy. Thus, in order to conjure the endless cycle of unsuccessful reforms, Sawyerr (2012) recommends a framework for long term commitment that transcends party politics for a more effective and sustainable education system.

Akani (2012) regards Africa’s educational challenges as rooted in the nature of colonialism and colonial education more precisely which did not equip its recipients to face and surmount the challenges of nation building, but to serve the single function of facilitating the colonial exploitation of resources and people. Colonialism, as an exploitative project, urged African nationalists, such as Nkrumah to wrestle the vertical North/South relationships. In *Towards Colonial Freedom*, Nkrumah (1947, quoted by Akani, 2008, p. 13) refuses Africa to be a mere source of “raw material and cheap labor, and dumping ground” for Western metropolises.

Summary of Chapter Two

This chapter provided an overview of the main issues at play in such a complex topic as the decolonization of education in Sub-Saharan Africa. As illustrated, education in Sub-Saharan Africa has been under the principalship of foreigners. From Islamic to missionary Christian education, the region had been target of Islamization from Muslim traders from North Africa and Western evangelization missions. Thus, the chapter presented a review of education in the Gold Coast (Ghana) from the auspices of these foreign religious powers. Both Islam and Christianity held education as an instrumental medium for conversion and dissemination of their respective religious ideologies and undermining African Traditional Religion (ATR).

The advent of these religious powers would affect the nature of African education as these religions became institutionalized. Thus, with the Arab influence, African education was based on the Quran, other religious texts, Arabic, grammar and numeracy. The use of modified Arabic scripts in African languages (Ajami) was also a popular expression of literacy. Islamic education emphasized Islamic laws and morality as essential principles. Similarly, Christian education also held morality and character building at the center of its model.

This chapter also described how, in the pre-colonial era, the Gold Coast was the coastal ground for intensive rivalry between European settlers (Portuguese, Dutch, Danes, Swedes, English, and French) who were competing for the strategic monopoly of the Ghanaian coast and the coastal forts. The Portuguese planted the first vestiges of Catholicism in Elmina and the earlier schools called “castle schools” in which the

curriculum focused on reading, writing, and the scriptures. However, education was limited to the sons of rich farmers and mulattoes. This contributed in the creation of a disparity between the privileged South and the impoverished and neglected North that still bears the scars of colonial legacy. Prior to the arrival of Western missionaries and merchants, the Arab also imposed a Quran based education, Arabic, grammar and numeracy.

The curriculum of colonial education in Africa focused on producing a labor force of subservient clerical elite to support the colonial, mercantile and extractive operations. Despite the establishment of Achimota—which, in theory, was to align African education with its own local realities—vocationalism also failed to deliver because educated Africans were regarded as threat to the colonial monopoly. Thus, African education was reduced to primary manual work.

The independence period did not coincide with the anti-colonial discourse that promised a divorce from Western subjugation in order to express the total sovereignty of the continent. Indeed, the colonial structures continued to reproduce themselves, especially through economic and educational policy recommendations from Western institutions (IMF/World Bank). The imposition of Western policies ensured a chronic dependency and reliance of the African “periphery” on the West as “center”. As argued, in this long literature review chapter, this status-quo establishes the West as the arbitrary standard bearer and continues to feed the monopoly of knowledge production and the silencing of African history and knowledge. However, African and Africanist scholars challenge Western monopoly of scholarship and knowledge production in order to make

a more legitimate depiction of Africa and its contribution to world history. They also seek to redefine the academic sphere in order to create some space for the expression of “other” forms of knowledge. The advocacy for Afrocentrism or an African-centered model for education subscribes within that decolonization framework.

Chapter Three: Research Methodology

This chapter explains the design and the specific procedure adopted for data collection and analysis in order to provide clear understanding of the findings. The research objective was to investigate the colonization of education in Ghana while positioning the research in a wider Sub-Saharan Africa scope. It aimed at analyzing the evolution of Ghana's education system from the pre-colonial to the post-colonial periods in order to determine whether Ghana's education could still be regarded as "colonized" and identify the national efforts at providing sound education in harmony with the local environment and that shifts from the British colonial prototype. This methodology chapter contains the traditional sections of a qualitative research: Research design, participants, instrumentation, data collection procedures, and data analysis (Roberts, 2010).

Design

The research adopted a qualitative approach and secondary data analysis to study the colonization of education in Sub-Saharan Africa. The study focused on Ghana as a case study to review existing literature on the colonization of African knowledge space and education. The review of the literature provided a broad view of education in Africa, particularly Ghana from the pre-colonial to post-independence in order to diagnose the evolution of Ghanaian education system. The secondary data collected were informed by the research questions (RQs). The latter RQs were designed to investigate the nature and evolutionary trajectory of Ghanaian education, its colonization by Western epistemologies and the efforts by Ghanaian leaders to reclaim their national educational

system. The pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial phases were designed to have a more holistic appreciation of the evolution of Ghanaian education. The issue of colonization of Ghanaian education was also placed within a wider framework of silences and negation of African history, cultural worth and African reactions to Western domination.

Population

Even though Ghanaian schools were the ideal focus of this study, lack of personal field data from schools and the Ghanaian Education System (GES) motivated the reliance on secondary data sources. However, despite this limitation, this research makes a significant contribution to scholarship on decolonization research, Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) and African Indigenous Knowledge (AIK). The research identified 2 different levels, the Basic level (Primary school and Junior High School) and the Senior High School level. The Basic school also includes Kindergarten, but the focus was only on Primary and Junior High School to gain understanding of educational content in terms of indigenous knowledge from one level to the other.

There was a significant reason behind the selection of the Basic school (Primary School and JHS) and the Senior High School (SHS). Indeed, the fact that Ghanaian Basics Schools (Kindergarten, Primary, JHS) are all under the control of Ghana Education Service, a branch of the Ministry of Education (MOE), responsible for the implementation of pre-tertiary educational policies. The Ghana Education Service is, among others, characterized by the “Basic Education Division” and the “Secondary Education Division” respectively in charge of Basic and secondary education (GES, 2012). This ensures certain homogeneity at the JHS and SHS that operate on their

respective curricula (GES, 2012). For these reasons, the researcher chose to focus on the Basic and the Secondary levels to better understand the school curricula and the inclusion or absence of indigenous knowledge (AIK/GIK) in academic programs. The choice of the JHS and SHS represented a strategy for creating a context to evaluate the literature and their application to Ghanaian primary and secondary schools.

Research Instruments

This investigative case study about the colonization of education in Sub-Saharan Africa was based on secondary data analysis and used Ghana as a case study. The data collection was performed using the following 4 major instruments:

- 1) Research Questions (RQs)
- 2) Ohio University Alden Library search for secondary data sources (articles, books, theses, dissertations) using ArticlesPlus search tool from EBSCOhost databases.
- 3) Lessons from personal teaching/learning experience in Ghana
- 4) Documents review (policy, reports, and textbooks)

Data Collection Procedure

Secondary data collection for this research started in March 2013 at Ohio University. As mentioned in the background of the study, the research started in the classrooms where courses, such as history, cultural Anthropology, African literature, African politics, geography of development, all addressed issues of indigenous knowledge, colonization, silences in African history, and the “international causes and cures” to “Africa’s stalled development” (Leonard & Strauss, 2003). Thus, the researcher was immersed in discussions of African indigenous knowledge and the place of Africa in

world history with classmates, professors and members of African Students' Union (ASU) at Ohio University. These exchanges were the starting points of deeper interests in indigenous knowledge and somehow functioned as sources of some unstructured data collection. These interactions would later contribute in the formulation of specific research questions that were to constitute the guiding template for this study. The research questions (RQs) were designed not to be administered to any participants but to guide in the secondary data collection and later the analysis of the literature.

According to Roberts (2010), in formulating research questions, the researcher must avoid “how” or “why” and short “yes” or “no” answers. While these types of questions may be adequate for certain studies, the questionnaire for this research begged deeper and more systematic answers from the literature. The length and depth of the answers from the literature allowed the researcher to learn more about the issue of education in Ghana, its evolution, influence by foreign epistemologies and the efforts at re-adapting the national education system to local needs.

A more formal procedure in data collection was later adopted with the use of Ohio University Alden Library's EBSCOhost databases which played a significant function in the data gathering process. The significance of Alden Library in this study came from the fact that it offered access to other libraries in the United States thanks to its embedded “Inter-library loan” option. This option made the data collection much easier and successful as the researcher was able to request books (on indigenous knowledge, African history, African and Ghanaian education) from all over the US and download articles

relevant to the study. So the collection of data from Alden Library at Ohio University started in March 2013 and was completed in October 2013.

Data Analysis

The analysis of the literature was organized into an overarching theme, the “evolution of Ghanaian education from colonial to post-colonial periods”. This major theme provided a ground to critically analyze sub-themes, such as “Ghanaian cultures in Ghanaian education”, the “colonial education philosophies at Achimota”, the “place of Ghanaian languages and history in Ghanaian public primary and secondary schools”. It also provided the opportunity to draw lessons from teaching and learning experience, especially as far as the issue of local and foreign language use in Ghanaian schools was concerned. Data from the literature on the place and role of local languages, such as Fante and Twi at the Basic and secondary schools served to compare Ghanaian languages with English in Ghanaian education. The significance of these questions led Owu-Ewie (2003) from the College of Arts and Sciences at Ohio University to carry a field research for a thesis on “improving mother tongue education in Ghana”, which already gives a hint that mother tongue education in Ghana faces many obstacles.

The review of selected Ghanaian education policies, reports and textbooks was also performed to ascertain the challenges of Ghanaian educational environment and the place of indigenous knowledge related subjects in JHS/SHS curricula. The rationale for the analysis was that it focused on specific areas (education policies and reforms) of Ghanaian education to corroborate the overwhelming finding from the literature about the

ailments and colonized nature of Ghanaian education system and the Ghanaian governments' initiatives in the process of redefining the national education system.

Through its qualitative approach, this study functions as descriptive and interpretive research. Smythe (2012) considers descriptive interpretive research ideal to a piece of research limited in time and that requires an analysis of themes and presentation of results. This constitutes the agenda of the study in its description and interpretation of secondary data. The multiplicity of sources represented a major advantage as it allowed the researcher to provide a broad literature review and analysis according to the subsections of the overarching theme that captured the essence of the research objective. The objective of this research was to determine the ways in which Ghanaian education could be regarded as “colonized”.

The open-ended nature of the RQs allowed the researcher to let the literature carry him to the data. In so doing the researcher actually learned more from the RQs because the literature—on colonization of education in Sub-Saharan Africa and Ghana in particular—addressed issues unknown to the researcher before, which illustrates the fact that qualitative research allows exploration and discovery.

Chapter Four: Findings and Discussions

This section of the study presents the findings from the literature and the researcher's own experience as a teacher and student in Cape Coast. First of all, the results are presented and then they are followed by a discussion. The study investigated the "colonization of education in Sub-Saharan Africa" by western epistemologies to the detriment of African Indigenous Knowledge (AIK). Because the research project was guided by the research questions (RQs), the presentation of results and analysis also fall back to these RQs as a framework to present and critique/interpret the data.

The first part of the RQs was labeled as the following, "how has education evolved from colonialism to post-independence in Ghana?" This question (like all the rest) was designed not to assume from the outset that education in Ghana was "colonized" but to offer a diagnosis of Ghana's educational evolution from the colonial to the post-independence on the basis of which an informed conclusion could be drawn. Indeed, the rationale for this epistemic "verification" was that, as demonstrated in the review, many scholars have claimed that education during colonization cared less about educating and training Africans than providing second class education for subservience. Education then had a pragmatic purpose to solely empower the metropole. Therefore, it would be expected that the post-independence period would dismantle such form of education in favor of one vested in national development and the acknowledgement of the relevance of indigenous epistemologies (local knowledge) or local ways of knowing.

The second part of the RQs focuses on the influence of Euro-American epistemologies on the education system in Ghana. The third part addresses the strategies

implemented in order to re-appropriate Ghanaian national education so as to make it suitable to the domestic context. The RQs in each of the 3 major nomenclatures mentioned above also possess sub-questions that constitute different significant themes that this study critically entertains. Even though this secondary data based research does not seek to achieve generalizability, it needs, however, to be mentioned that Ghana, as a micro-context, simply represents a pretext to analyze the dichotomy between “center” and “periphery” in power relationship, especially between the “colonizer” and the “colonized”. The research findings speak to these effects. Indeed, the data reveal that Ghanaian education since colonization has been staggering. In the post-colony, Ghanaian education still pains to find a stable footing. These difficulties are more clearly expressed in the following presentation and analysis of the thematic literature.

Evolution of Ghanaian Education from Colonial to Post-colonial

The literature has yielded that Ghanaian education was under the early monopoly and influence of religious powers, first Islam then Christianity. Later, colonial powers also claimed their share of the country and represented the mastermind of the education system that insisted on religion and the formation of catechists, clerks, and soldiers for the colonial enterprise. This monopoly of African education and Ghanaian education, in particular, preceded the colonial era and continued in the colonial period. The independence era or the post-colony reproduces the same colonial structures in the education sector. However, despite Ghana’s educational challenges, there are clear national efforts at re-appropriation of education post-independence.

Inclusion of Ghanaian Culture in Ghanaian Education. On the introductory arguments, this research observed that Anthropology had been a helping hand to colonialism in its ethnocentric approach to understanding the non-Western world and their cultures. These attitudes towards the “other” validate Levi-Strauss’s conception of Anthropology as the “science of culture as seen from the outside” (Lewis, 1973, p. 581). The position of anthropologists in the colonial context was based on selfish interests and the preservation of the colonial system that benefitted them by ensuring access to better jobs, higher wages, low taxes, cheaper labor and tax-free research grants (Lewis, 1976).

In this situation, the dichotomy between the West and the so-perceived “primitive” colonial subjects represented a lucrative divide that guaranteed Western political and economic domination (Lewis, 1973). Gatlung (1967, cited by Lewis, 1973) also establishes some similarity between the exploitation of indigenous informants by social scientists during data collection with the extractive agenda of the colonial power. Both, respectively, claimed ownership rights to data and resources. Gatlung also notes that the syphoning of data from the colonized and the extraction of resources from the colony both bear similar exploitative characteristics in data and resource processing:

To export data about the country to one’s home country for processing into “manufactured” goods, such as books and articles...is essentially similar to what happens when raw materials are exported at a low price (Lewis, 1973, p. 584)

It is in this context of exploitation that colonial education should be situated to understand that the inclusion of Ghanaian cultures in Ghanaian education was not perceived profitable to the colonial mission and hence not a focus. From the missionaries’

evangelical education to colonial education, African cultures were simply silenced in African education. The educational system was designed not to profit native African children (Graham, 1971). According to Graham (1971), early education was designed exclusively for “mulattoes” who were perceived to have more legitimate rights to education than ordinary African children. As a matter of fact, the “Mulatto Fund” was established at the Cape Coast Castle to collect financial contributions from Europeans for the education of mixed marriage children (Graham, 1971; Owusu-Ansah, Iddrisu & Sey, 2013). The preferential attitudes towards children of mixed races over ordinary African children were more common in the Castle School in Accra than in the Cape Coast Castle School which was less discriminatory (Graham, 1971). Yet, even when education was open to African children, the financial burden implied that education was only accessible to those, such as the children of farmers and chiefs, who could afford the cost (Ampiah, 2012).

This dichotomy proves that the colonials not only maintained a divide between them and the indigenous African population in Ghana, but also implemented a rift within the indigenous population based on “mixed” heritage (the mulattoes) and socio-economic status (farmers, chiefs). So if early Anthropology, as mentioned, played an instrumental function in feeding the “us vs. them” antagonism, colonial education took it further as the ground for the application of Western ideology—racial and cultural superiority—in the colony. These beliefs led to the silences of African cultures in colonial education. As a matter of fact, colonial education in Ghana (and Africa by extension) was disconnected from the socio-economic realities and needs of the country because it was simply

disconnected from the native, local communities and based on a mechanic importation of British culture (Godwyll, 2008). The failure of colonial education to closely take into account the Ghanaian context is also witnessed in Achimota and Mfantsipim. Both secondary schools provide contexts to the educational philosophy and practices in the Gold Coast as well as how the cultural dimension was dealt with in these schools. This research will only focus on Achimota for an in-depth critique later in the analysis.

In their introductory remarks to their annotated bibliography on “Education and Colonialism” Kay and Nystrom (1971) recognize that the literature on colonial education bears two (2) major characteristics that express the unilateral authority and dictatorship of colonial officials in program planning and the non-consideration of African views. Obiakor (2004) also acknowledges that colonization has failed to empower the cultural heritage of pre-colonial Africa as illustrated by Achimota and Mfantsipim secondary schools’ philosophies under colonial administration. These institutions are clear examples of missionary (Wesleyan) and colonial education models in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Christian missionaries laid the foundations of Western education in African colonies. Through the medium of education, Western missionaries disseminated Christian beliefs to make converts and catechists. Merchants and traders also invested in the education of native Africans for the development of indigenous personnel to assist them in their commercial activities (Omolewa, 2006; Godwyll, 2008). For both missionaries and merchants, the cultural factor was an intrinsic part of their endeavors because Western education was the primary tool in the “hammering” of African pupils (students) to fit the Western character “mold”. The missionaries’ focus on religion does not

constitute a neutral factor because religion, indeed, constitutes a “cultural system” that bears implications in the way people perceive the world and carry their thoughts (Geertz, 1973).

Theorizing on the significance of religion as a socio-cultural phenomenon, Geertz, through an interpretive anthropological approach, provides a description of how cultural systems function. He makes a significant contribution to the theory of religion as part of a complex cultural system. While many anthropologists disagree on the meaning and function of religion, Geertz formulates a definitional framework for understanding religion as the following:

(1) a system of symbols which acts to (2) establish powerful, pervasive, and long-lasting moods and motivations in men by (3) formulating conceptions of a general order of existence and (4) clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that (5) the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic (Geertz, 1973, p. 90)

Geertz’s definitional provision supports the argument that Christian missions (education), as part of Western cultural system, contributed in the indoctrination of African subjects in the colonies. They have had significant impacts on the “psyche” of the colonized. According to Geertz (1973), religion, as a complex of symbols, provides people a model for understanding the realities of their world and gives guidance to their social performance. Symbols do not merely constitute conventional signs in human interaction, they are, according to Durkheim (1995) the vehicles through which human beings think and perceive the world. So Christianity, as a religious import, functioned as a medium to

convey Western ideology and Western sense of the world. In so doing, it provided a foreign framework from which the colonized would confront the Weberian “Problem of Meaning” (Geertz, 1973, p. 104). As Geertz (1973) observes, culture—religion as part of this cultural system—represents "a historically transmitted pattern of meanings...by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life" (p. 89).

The implication—in the context of colonization and colonial education—is that the colonized in Africa were conditioned to think and act according to Western epistemology and religious philosophy. As Comaroff and Comaroff (1992) and Geertz (1973) mention, there is a significant interaction between cultural patterns and human behavior. These patterns police human performance to be in alignment with the dominant culture (Western Christian tradition here). Cultural systems, from a Geertzian perspective, are repositories for social reality as well as guiding principles for human performance. It is for this reason that Geertz (1973, p. 92) compares culture to a genetic code, a “blueprint” for pragmatic social behavior.

In “The Colonization of Consciousness”, Comaroff & Comaroff (1992, p. 493) argue that while missionary activities should be regarded as merely “religious”, they have redefined “sociality”, “personhood”, and daily experiences which were at the origin of the forced conformity of Africans to the new world and the new place then assigned them. Christian missionaries in colonial Africa as cultural agents for the import of Christian values and Western culture chose the terms and concepts of interactions between them and the natives. The results, according to Comaroff & Comaroff (1992),

were the colonization of the consciousness of the colonized with symbols, socio-cultural practices, cultural logic and aesthetics of a foreign culture.

These alienating factors raise intellectual questions on the educational philosophies of the pre-colonial and colonial period. They also call for domestic actions to (re)tailor Africa's education and shift its foundations from the essentially foreign to the endogenous fabric in order to bring Africa's education on a par with its environment, challenges, beliefs, cultures and histories. The disconnection of Western educational and religious philosophies from Africa's so-called traditional religions (ATR), indigenous education and epistemologies engendered the irrelevance and failure of colonial education.

Ghana constitutes a clear application case where a combination of these forces caused the failure of Achimota (founded in 1927) and Mfantsipim (initially, the Wesleyan High School established in 1876) that were to be exemplary model secondary institutions that would consider African values determinant factors in their educational philosophies (Quist, 2001, 2003; Yamada, 2009).

Colonial Education in Achimota: The Cultural Dimension. Mfantsipim and Achimota provide clear examples for the failure of colonial education administrators to take into account the views and needs of Africans and to consider the specificity of the African/Ghanaian context. The curricula in both schools were transferred models from England and the United States. These far-fetched models in colonial Ghana and the rest of Africa failed to be context-appropriate. This leads Omolewa (2004) to advocate a shift

in focus towards an African-centered education to counter the irrelevance of the colonial educational system to local needs.

Colonial education in the Gold Coast was much concerned with the transmission of Western values or “character training” (Yamada, 2009; Godwyll, 2008), which posed problems of adaptation (Quist, 2009). However, it is worth mentioning that colonial education, especially in the early 20th century, has tried to adapt Western British public education to the socio-cultural heritage of Africans. The educational philosophies of the 20th century seemed to shift from early education promoted by the missionaries (especially the S.P.G and the Wesleyan Methodist Mission), merchants and traders (who laid the foundational ground of education in the Gold Coast) (Graham, 1971; Omolewa, 2004; Godwyll, 2008) to the development of native capacity by the formation of elite African leaders.

As argued earlier in the review, education as advocated by the missionaries and later merchants and traders focused on different objectives. Indeed, Mission education insisted on the inculcation of Christian scriptures to Africans to make converts (Graham, 1976), train messengers, and other functions needed for the social transformation intended by Western missionaries (Omolewa, 2004; Graham, 1971). The Merchant Companies used education to develop a native capacity that could partake in the colonial administration (Godwyll, 2008; Graham, 1971). Thus, according to Godwyll (2008), the curriculum was “very narrow” (p. 113) and primarily based on the 3Rs model (arithmetic, reading and writing). As a consequence, early education in Ghana simply promoted the development of subservient elite in the service of the colonial administration. Yet this

elite group of Africans was not educated as “leaders” capable of meeting domestic challenges and developing a nation, even though Achimota was bragged about as embodying a transformation in educational philosophy vested in the promotion of “leadership education” (Yamada, 2009, p. 29-30).

As mentioned in the literature review, the establishment of the Advisory Committee on Native Education in British Tropical Africa (ACNEBTA or ACNE) in 1923 led to the guiding principles for colonial education (Memorandum of Education in Africa, 1925) (Yamada, 2009). The Phelps-Stokes Fund, an American philanthropic organization, also formed a commission to plumb the nature of education in colonial Africa in 1920 and 1923. These efforts, combined with inputs from missionaries, colonial officials, African intellectuals and traditional chiefs, culminated in the establishment of Achimota (Yamada, 2009) as a government Secondary School.

Governor Gusggisberg (Gold Coast Governor, 1919-1927) also played an instrumental role in the development of Achimota as an experimental ground for the new philosophy of colonial education. Coe (2002) presents the guiding principles of Achimota—published in Achimota College Report of 1932—as the following:

Achimota hopes to produce a type of student who is "Western" in his intellectual attitudes towards life, with a respect for science and capacity for systematic thought, but who remains African in sympathy and desirous of preserving and developing what is deserving of respect in tribal life, custom, rule and law (p. 29)

The establishment of Achimota could be understood as a form of recognition of the alienating effects of both mission and colonial education on African elites in the Gold

Coast, an estrangement from traditional customs and ways of life that culminated in a Huntingtonian “clash of civilization” (Huntington, 1993) or conflicts between “modernity” (Western) and “tradition” (African) (Coe, 2002, p. 30).

The Huntingtonian hypothesis that modern civilizational conflicts will be fought on the culture front in the post-Cold War era (Huntington, 1993) is actually not a prediction because Western colonialism already created an environment of cultural antagonism by imposing Western culture and education as models and bases for subjugation of Africa’s “primitive” cultures (Mead, 1943; Lewis, 1973). This “clash of civilization” rather marks continuity in the evolution of modern societies or North/South affairs. Achimota represents a case in point. It was to curb the threat of “denationalization” and “irreverence” for traditional life, as reflected on the institution’s philosophy. The school was to create educated individuals that would serve as native mediators to mend the tensions between “intellectuals” and traditional “chiefs”, Western “civilization” and African “traditions”.

Despite the significance of the rhetoric, however, Achimota’s progressive philosophy was hampered by inherent contradictions (Coe, 2002) that reminded the messiness of colonization. The contradictions of the “transfer and adaptation philosophy” (Quist, 2003; Yamada, 2009, 2004) that informed the establishment of Achimota as an elite leadership school have to be re-situated in time and space to better understand the politics of such change. The Gold Coast, during colonization was used as a laboratory for experimentation of the applicability of British public school and Black American education models. However, these models failed to really focus on the Gold Coast as

more than a mere experimental ground for the colonial administration. The models, Western (British and American) in character, were instrumentalized for the satisfaction of the interests of the metropole and avoid the development of some true native capacity, especially for nationalist intellectuals who would be then gifted with the intellectual and political arsenal to critique and subvert the status-quo (Yamada, 2009).

It was common belief from the colonials that the exposure of African intellectuals to literature or theoretical knowledge would represent a threat to the perennity of the colonial administration, as was the case in colonial India where the so-called “Babu” class, an intellectual elite educated in Western culture, challenged colonialism and the British administration. The same also held true of British colonizers in the Gold Coast and their perception of the educated class. Indeed, in the early 20th century, groups of educated professionals, lawyers, medical doctors in the Gold Coast, pushing for political and social transformations, were considered as “alienated”, “deracinated”, estranged from subject masses and, therefore, a menace to colonial activities in the Gold Coast (Yamada, 2009; Yamada, 2004; Emudong, 1997, Coe, 2002). As a matter of fact, the focus devolved from forming operational African intellectual elite for leadership to a threat-curbing implementation of the British “Indirect Rule” and the institutionalization of chieftaincy (Coe, 2002) to undermine and quarantine educated locals through the empowerment of traditional chiefs.

The consolidation of colonialism and Indirect Rule in the 1920s led to an institutionalization of chieftaincy as new interlocutor and agent of modernization. Thus, the 1924 constitution guaranteed the representation of traditional rulers and the exclusion

of intellectuals from the local government system. Adu-Boahen captures the tensions between African intellectual elite and chiefs as results of the new policy and constitutional change which were not to stay without consequences in the interactions between local chiefs and educated elite:

The immediate consequences of this change were, first, the enhancement of the position of the traditional rulers in the colonial political set-up in the country, and, secondly and consequently, the direct conflict between the educated elite, who saw themselves as better qualified to play that role, and the traditional rulers, who insisted that they were the natural rulers of the country (Adu-Boahen, 1996, cited by Coe, 2002, p. 26).

So colonial education instead of reconciling African colonies with their Western and traditional heritage caused more fissures in African societies and in the Gold Coast, in particular. It is in this context of frustration and antagonism that colonial education aimed to create a new class through the sons of chiefs who they expected to be intellectuals and at the same time sympathetic to African indigenous culture (Coe, 2002). These concerns to control the masses and the nature of their education were implemented in school curricula, especially in Achimota.

A significant component of the curriculum at Achimota was industrial and manual training with focus on “vocationalism” and “technical skills” (Coe, 2002, p. 420). The idea of adaptation among Western promoters of colonial education was partly informed by the Hampton Tuskegee model for African-American industrial education (recommended by the Phelps-Stokes Fund) which advocates “vocationalism” and

“technical skills” (Quist, 2003, p. 420). The educational philosophy was also influenced by Victorian ideals of character development as common in British public schools (Yamada, 2009). So vocationalization of Ghanaian education has to be regarded as a colonial solution to the fear of educated natives (or African educated elite). The use of the hands represented a safer alternative to not only maintain the status quo but also to meet British colonial administrators' "preferred ideal of a peasant community, happily producing commodities for sale abroad” (Phillips, 1989, quoted by Coe, 2002, p. 26).

Indigenous African masses became suspicious of colonial intention in educational commissions' “adaptation” strategies which they believed would simply produce second class intellectuals unfit for the world of higher learning (universities) (Omolewa, 2006) . The failure of this model stems from that it was regarded as an attempt to reduce African education to “nsano adzuma” (or “manual labor” in Fanti), a fear also supported by the DuBoisian critique of the American vocational model for Black education that reminded that “the object of all education is not to make men carpenters, it is to make carpenters men” (Alridge, 1999, p. 190). Omolewa (2006, p. 277) also showed that the DuBoisian fear was justified in Africa because colonial education policy attempted to create “loyal Africans” accepting of their subaltern place and “racial hierarchies” in the new world. The colonial educational philosophy also failed to consider Africans as equal partners and to successfully graft African culture to Western civilization (Omolewa, 2006) in order to provide an ideal type of education in harmony with the local and the foreign.

These conflicts and tensions created by colonial education did require transformative measures from the post-colony to subvert alienating colonial structures in

order to promote effective political, social, economic and cultural development. However, as Obiakor (2004) observes, like the pre-colonial and colonial eras, the postcolonial is also characterized by persistent crises of leadership. Post-colonial African leaders, according to Obiakor (2004) have reproduced the same effects of colonialism and have even had more detrimental impacts on Africa's cultural, socio-economic, and political stocks. So it comes to no surprise that post-independence Ghana still struggles with its colonial legacy.

In Ghanaian schools, “content relevance” continue to be a chronic issue that the many education reforms from Independence to the present has been unable to effectively transform into a type of education catered to the local context and needs (Godwyll, 2008, p. 113; Tonah, 2009) while also drawing lessons from worldwide educational and technological achievements. From pre-colonial, colonial to post-independence, African countries, in the image of Ghana, have lacked solid foundational structures necessary for nation building and development (Omolewa, 2006). The lack of solid footing on what is local and indigenous is reflected in the place of Ghanaian languages and history in school curricula.

National Languages and History in Ghanaian Schools. The language of instruction from the mission to colonial and post-colonial education has been a significant issue for language policy planners. Ghana constitutes a concrete example for the politics behind the difficulty of promoting indigenous languages in the national education system and the use of L1 as language of instruction. Ghana’s policies on the role of indigenous languages in the national education system is analogous to a “swing set” that keeps

rocking back and forth, as illustrated by the plethora of endless education reforms and reports that also address the role of Ghanaian indigenous languages in Ghanaian education. Other factors that complicate the issue of choosing local languages as media of instruction are the highly multilingual and ethnically diverse nature of African societies (Ouadaogo, 2000).

The language policy in Ghanaian schools reflects the complexity of its colonial history concerning the same issue of the place/role of indigenous languages in education in the Gold Coast. More than half a century after independence, the tough kernel of what language to use for instruction, especially in the lower primary (grade 1-3/basic 1-3), has still not been effectively cracked. This tough kernel of medium of instruction in the basic level can be traced back to the “Castle school” and missionary era. As shown in the literature review, the different actors involved in the control of castle schools (Portuguese, Dutch, Danish, and English) imposed the languages of their respective metropolises as media of instruction (Owu-Ewie, 2006). So the language of instruction in the Gold Coast kept changing as different colonial powers implemented different education policies. However, despite the inconsistencies, European languages occupied a privileged place as media of instruction in the education of native Africans.

The arrival of the missionaries initiated a change in the “value” conferred upon local languages. During this period (1529-1925), much emphasis was exerted upon Ghanaian indigenous languages, especially by the Basel and Bremen missionaries (Owu-Ewie, 2006). However, the significance of local languages for mission education has to be understood within the agenda of the time. Indeed, the main objective for the

missionaries was not to promote African cultures, languages or build some native capacity in order to contribute in the socio-cultural and political empowerment of the natives. As Berman (1974) observes, the use of the vernaculars was only informed by the missionaries' strategy to train catechists who would spread the message of the Christian gospels to the illiterate masses in their own languages (Yamada, 2009). This agenda explains the rationale for the use of African vernaculars in pre-colonial missionary education up to 1925.

The colonial period, especially with the advent of Sir Guggisberg (Cape Coast Governor, 1919-1927), represents a turning point in Gold Coast history and educational legislations. In this period, the legislation of the role of local languages in education held a central position in the colonial administration of the sector and in policy development. Guggisberg and the Education Committee supported an education policy that defended African cultures and languages and denounced the "denationalization" of African children (Martin, 1976, p. 51), a denationalization effect that oblivion to the importance of the cultural heritage and identity of the colonized would induce. Even though Guggisberg and the Education Committee agreed that English should be introduced as early possible as a subject, they maintained that the vernacular should constitute the language of instruction (Martin, 1976). Thus, a Ghanaian language was to be the medium of instruction in the lower primary (Primary 1-3) (Owu-Ewie, 2006). However, if the period between 1920 and 1950 favored the used of the vernacular as medium of instruction, at independence (1957) the education Ordinance of 1925 was revised and the medium of instruction was reversed to English from Primary one (now Basic 1) (Owu-

Ewie, 2003). From then onwards there has been many reforms of Ghanaian education (e.g., 1967, 1969, 1972, 1974, 1980, 1987, 2004 and 2007) (Godwyll, 2008). These reforms have all fallen short in operating a shift from the paradigm of the conqueror. The processes of trial and fail in Ghanaian education reforms have also been reflected on the use of local Ghanaian languages as media of instruction. Thus, Owu-Ewie (2003) considers the use of Ghanaian language as medium of instruction in the lower primary as characterized by a “checkered history” (p. 77). This checkered history is later shown in table 3.

The table illustrates the inconsistency of language policies in the Gold Coast from the period of early Castle Schools to the Guggisberg administration. Owu-Ewie (2006) considers to this broad chapter (1529 to 1925) as the pre-colonial era as it refers to Castle schools under changing hands of Portuguese, Dutch, Danes and English who imposed their respective metropolitan languages as medium of instruction. However, with the missionaries’ arrival, the focus was the development of local languages in education and the propagation of the Gospel. From 1925 to 1951 the language policy supports the use of Ghanaian language as medium of instruction in lower Primary before the policy was reversed.

Table 3

Use of a Ghanaian Language as Media of Instruction from 1529 to Present

Period	1st YEAR	2nd YEAR	3rd YEAR	4th YEAR +
1529-1925				
a. Castle Schools Era	-	-	-	-
b. Missionary Era	+	+	+	-
1925-1951	+	+	+	-
1951-1955	+	-	-	-
1956- 1966	-	-	-	-
1967- 1969	+	-	-	-
1970- 1973	+	+	+	+
1974-2002 (Sept)	+	+	+	-
Sept 2002-2007	-	-	-	-
Sept 2007-2013	+	+	+	-
+ = Ghanaian language used as medium of instruction				
- = Ghanaian language not used as medium of instruction				
National Education Reform Implementation Committee (NERIC)				

Adapted from Owu-Ewie (2006, p. 77), NERIC (2007), Godwyll (2008)

As illustrated above (in table 3), in the period between 1951-1955, Ghanaian language use was only for Primary 1. Most ironically, from 1956 to 1966, which coincides with independence, the use of Ghanaian language in primary education was simply abandoned. Ghanaian language as medium of instruction was reintroduced again from 1967 to 1969; but it was only for the first year of primary school education. Between 1970 and 1973 was reinstated as medium of instruction for primary 1 through 3 and wherever possible in upper primary (primary 4 through primary 6). From 1974 to 2002 the policy only applied to the first 3 years of lower primary. Yet in September of 2002, the government launched a new policy following the promulgation of a law in May 2002 that prescribed the use of English from primary 1 onwards instead of the mother tongue as medium of instruction in lower primary and English only from the fourth year of primary education. Thus, 2002 through September 2007 was a chapter where Ghanaian language was simply voted out as a linguistic instructional medium in favor of English (Owu-Ewie, 2003, 2006).

As mentioned earlier, Ghanaian education policy regarding the medium of instruction is, metaphorically, a “swing set” gone wild or out of control as illustrated by its feud of cascading reforms. In September 2007, the policy, as described in number 2 of the “Major Highlights” of “Education Reform 2007 at a Glance” (NERIC, 2007), mandates that “the medium of instruction in Kindergarten and Lower Primary will be a Ghanaian language and English, where necessary” (see appendix C for further details) . These changes started in April 2007 under the auspices of President Agyekum Kufuor

who also changed the 1987 structure of education to include 2 year of Kindergarten (for children aged 4) as part of Basic school structure (NERIC, 2007; Godwyll, 2008).

It is worth mentioning that the language policy about introducing Ghanaian language as medium of instruction in Ghanaian schools has, so far, only targeted the Basic level (Kindergarten and lower primary). Even the upper primary is not affected by the policy as English consistently represents the medium of instruction from that stage onwards. It also needs to be observed that the Ghanaian public Primary School and Junior High School have a major lead over the Secondary School (SHS) on matters of Indigenous Knowledge in their curricula. Indeed, “Ghanaian cultures” are offered as a course in the Ghanaian language subject at the JHS. A Ghanaian language is also used as medium of instruction in the lower primary (see appendix C for a snippet Ghana education reform 2007).

As a reminder, the 2007 education reform stipulates that: “The medium of instruction in Kindergarten and Lower Primary will be a Ghanaian language and English, where necessary” (NERIC, 2007). This policy assigns a significant place to Ghanaian language in basic education. However, the choice of the local language to be used is dependent on the region and the most widely spoken language of the locality. In Cape Coast, for instance, the dominant language of the locality is Fante; therefore Fante is the language of instruction in the lower primary. This policy represents a significant step in the promotion of indigenous issues in Ghana because language constitutes a significant part of culture and its use as media of instruction and as subject ensures the empowerment of indigenous Ghanaian cultures and epistemology by acquainting students

with their own cultures. These factors are important in nation building and the formation of national identity and cultural pride necessary for young African nations to effectively meet the challenges of harmonious development, one that is whole and concerned with the well-being of the whole community rather than a development that solely focuses on the economic aspect.

The Basic school (Kindergarten, Primary school and JHS) leads over the SHS in the provision of courses on indigenous cultures and languages as informed by the curriculum of basic education. In fact, the curriculum was designed to promote not only the achievement of literacy and numeracy, but to also inculcate “sound moral attitudes and appreciation of one’s cultural heritage and identity”, civic values or “good citizenship” (MOE, 2002, p. 27). As a matter of fact, the basic school curriculum makes the use of the predominant language of the locality as medium of instruction from P1 to P3 and “Ghanaian languages and culture as compulsory subjects up to the end of basic education” (MOE, 2001, p. 24, NERIC, 2007).

However, at the Senior High School, the focus remains on science. As the 2007 Education reform document stipulates, “at the Senior High School the core subjects shall be English, Mathematics, Integrated Science, Social Studies and ICT (Information Communication Technology). Ghanaian cultures are taught in “Social Studies” as a core subject at the SHS. However, subjects, such as “Religious and Moral Education” (RME), and “History” are electives, even though they represent significant subjects in the defense and promotion of indigenous knowledge. This illustrates that Ghanaian Indigenous Knowledge (GIK) has a more significant place at the basic level (kindergarten, primary

school and JHS) where subjects relevant to the issue of indigenous knowledge are required subjects. Among those subjects at the primary level, one can mention “Ghanaian Language”, “Integrated Science” (including agricultural science), “Citizenship Education” and “Religious & Moral Education”. “Music and Dance” and “Creative Arts” (including arts and craft) are taught as practical subjects, even though they are not examinable externally (MOE, 2007).

Other subjects, such as “Basic Design and Technology” (BDT) which combines Vocational skills (Home Economics (including food nutrition, clothing, textiles) and Visual Arts (including ceramics, leatherwork, sculpture, basketry) and Pre-technical skills (metal, clay, plastic, and woodwork) represent significant subjects about indigenous knowledge and the making of context-based artifacts and communicative Ghanaian art forms to sensitize the community on issues or solve national problems (Tetey, Offei, & Seidu, 2008). However, at the Senior High School level, apart from “Social Studies” which is a core subject, many of the subjects dealing with indigenous issues are categorized as electives. Subjects, such as “Ghanaian language”, “History” are for students in the Arts program. Even then, they are not compulsory courses, students only pick 3 subjects of their choices in addition to the core subjects (English, Mathematics, Integrated Science, Social Studies) (MOE, 2002).

In a nutshell, one can argue that indigenous knowledge in Ghanaian education is like a pyramid whose base is rooted in the Basic level (Kindergarten, Primary School & JHS). As one goes from the Basic to the Secondary school the presence of indigenous knowledge in the curriculum wanes because of preference towards science and

technology (MOE, 2001). The chart below captures the decline of indigenous knowledge subjects from the Primary to the JHS and SHS.

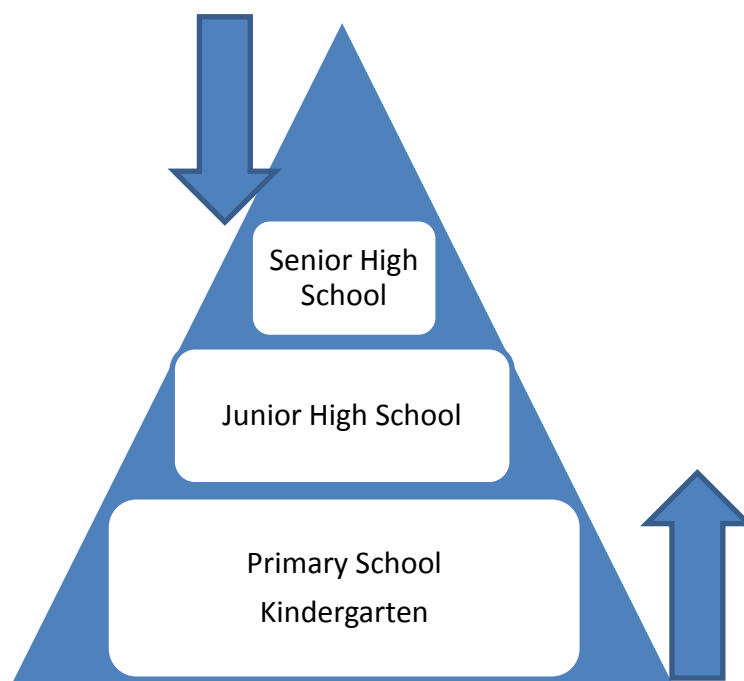


Figure 2. Evolution of Indigenous Knowledge from Basic Level to SHS

Despite the significance of the establishment of Ghanaian languages as media of instruction in Kindergarten and Lower Primary and the inclusion of indigenous subjects—such as Ghanaian languages, Citizenship Education, Religious & Moral Education (RME), Music, Dance, Creative Arts, Clothing, Textiles, Ceramics, Leatherwork, Sculpture, and Basketry—the significance of these indigenous knowledge-relevant subjects declines at the SHS level where the sciences hold a much privileged bias. Davis and Agbenyega (2012) express some caution that the establishment of policy

does not always mean implementation, as is the case in Ghanaian primary schools. They observe that the policy on the Ghanaian language of instruction policy in the lower primary does not really coincide with effective practice. Teachers do not fully adhere to the medium of instruction policy at the lower primary where English still continues to conquer and represent the prestige language of instruction. Thus, they denounce what they refer to as “language policy and instructional practice dichotomy” (p. 341). Another problem in Ghanaian education is the place of history at the Senior High School.

Addressing the evolution of “History” as a subject from the colonial to post-colonial era, Owusu-Ansah (2011) blows the whistle on the rapid decline of History at the JHS and SHS in Ghana. Citing Dwarko (2007), she remarks that History had a significant place in Ghana’s education curriculum in the 20th century and that from 1920 through 1987, History was taught as a core and examinable subject. At the SHS, it was one of the most significant subjects; its diversity waxed to include areas, such as “Ghana and West Africa”, “Egypt and the Nile Valley”, “Economic History”, “English History”, “European History”, “Tropical Africa and World History”. Yet in the 21st century the subject has waned and lost its lustre in Ghanaian education.

According to Awusu-Ansah (2011), with the suppression of the middle school system, History was supplanted by Social Studies at the JHS. At the SHS level, government and education reformers failed to acknowledge the importance of History as a subject and simply relegated it to a mere elective subject for Arts students. If during colonial times, history performed a central function in Ghanaian education, then its present negligence in post-colonial African schools constitutes a contradiction and a

detriment to the nation building agenda that characterizes many Sub-Saharan African post-independence states (Owusu-Ansah, 2011).

The project of decolonization of Western “centers” of knowledge production and the decolonization of education (from Western diktat in order to create an inclusive and “ethical space” for different epistemologies) cannot be achieved if the relevance of History as a subject is not acknowledged. This is because the “silences” of African history can only be challenged by an informed historiography (Depelchin, 2005), a task in which history, as a subject, has a determinant role to play. So at the basic level, schools should participate in educating the youths to be good citizens, conscious of Africa’s place and contribution to the world (Owusu-Ansah, 2011) and how it has been affected by major political and historical events, such as slavery and colonization in order to promote social consciousness. Such learning requires an “Afrocentric place” which Reviere (2002) uses as a concept to allude to an “inclusive philosophy” thanks to which political and cultural awareness and the values of a community of learners represent the center. However, this philosophy does not exclude other centers which are also relevant to learning in a multi-racial, multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-national world. This approach only seeks to serve the “individual” and empower communities by focusing on their interests and their own center. In this respect, Ghanaian schools (African schools by extension) should consider their own African values, history, and the challenges of their immediate environment first for consciousness and relevance.

Reviere (2002) understands the Afrocentric perspective in learning as characterized by “consciousness of oppression” and “consciousness of victory”. The

former is much more relevant to the experience of formerly colonized communities broken by colonization and slavery. The latter and seeks to link learning and practice or what Freire (1993) calls “praxis” as conscious action. In both forms, values and experience perform a significant function. Through this approach to learning and interaction of different actors involved in the process, African Indigenous Knowledge (as knowledge supplanted by Western forms) could be acknowledged and the process of its rehabilitation among African communities be effectively started.

The history of indigenous communities plays a key role in this process. Again, as the researcher highlighted earlier in this research, the re-affirmation of AIK cannot be equated with a systematic dismantlement of Western epistemology. Indeed, the project of decolonization seeks to rupture the definition of African realities and experiences from the perspective of dominant Western cultures or ideology as the dominant lens. The paradigm shift contributes in the establishment of harmonious synthesis of different epistemological systems (Dei, 2002a) by bridging both the local and the foreign (Dei, 2002b). The researcher believes it is only through such a symbiosis that a more ethical and inclusive “global space” could be created.

The researcher’s teaching and learning experience in Ghana constitute a testimony that reflects some of the effects of colonial structures addressed in the literature review.

Lessons from Personal Teaching and Learning Experience. The researcher’s teaching and learning experience in Ghana constitutes relevant qualitative data to the issue of decolonization of education in Sub-Saharan Africa. The researcher’s visit to Ghana, as both a tourist and a teacher, was the culmination of efforts to experience

different African countries and cultures in order to be better acquainted with his own identity as an African. Only, that identity transcends the artificial boundaries created by colonization and the 1884 Berlin Conference.

In visiting Ghana, the researcher was already creating that “global space” from a personal perspective in accepting what Ghana had to give for the development of the researcher’s own socio-cultural identity that refused to be confined to the geographical boundaries of Senegal. Senghor, the first Senegalese president and co-pioneer of the Negritude movement, understood “Negritude” as consciousness of one’s “*Africanité*” (“African-ness”). He also established a close interconnection between culture and politics in his affirmation that “cultural liberation is the sine qua non of political liberation” (Berkday, 2010, p. 208). It is such consciousness of the researcher’s own *Africanité* that informs his visit to Ghana as an African who had never been to any other African country outside his own native Senegal.

In many African countries, the medium of instruction is the language of the colonizer, especially English and French. In Ghana, there is much preference for English as medium of instruction (Davis & Agbenyega, 2012). As a teacher at a Ghanaian JHS, English constitutes the medium of instruction for all subjects, except “Fante”. As a student from Senegal, a French speaking country, the researcher was welcome at the Ghanaian JHS where students could not take French classes because of lack of French teachers. It may seem ironic that a researcher that advocates epistemological decolonization in Africa winds up teaching a European language. However, this does not go against the objective of this research which is not to deny the significance of Western

knowledge, but to create a “syncretic space” for different epistemologies. As a teacher of French, the researcher also would host after-school English classes for students with low English comprehension skills so that they would be able to participate in an academic environment where all communication was carried in English (with exception at Kindergarten and Lower Primary), according to the national education policy (MOE, 2007).

If the purpose of teaching is “learning”, then the system and instructors have failed students at the JHS who cannot understand much English. This illustrates the significance of local languages in education, even though the latter only have nascent visibility in Ghanaian education system. This state of affairs provides a basis for Davis and Agbenyega’s (2012) concluding remarks to their field research on language policy and instructional practice in Ghana that “Ghanaian teachers are still colonized and thus have more faith in English than Ghanaian languages” (p. 346). They denounce the sudden move from Ghanaian language to English as medium of instruction from Primary 4 (or Basic Stage 4) instead of a gradual change. They also point at the advantages of the use of mother tongue in education on children’s cognitive abilities. Ampiah (2008) also considers the extensive use of English as medium of instruction in both private and public Ghanaian schools as an impeding factor on quality education. The negligence of indigenous languages is not only common in ex-British colonies, like Ghana; former French colonies, such as Senegal, also experience the same reality where African languages function as an “inferior type” in education.

European languages do not only monopolize the medium of instruction in Ghanaian schools, they also constitute the privileged languages in the school grounds. At the Ghanaian JHS where the researcher taught French, English was the only language allowed in the school grounds. Thus, communication in the vernaculars was not only forbidden but also severely punishable. As a matter of fact, students are more motivated to learn English and French to the detriment of local languages. Even if some students show interest in local languages, the fact that these are not encouraged in the school grounds deters them from showing more interest in the study of local languages even in class. The first time, some students heard the researcher speak a little Fante in class, they all burst laughing because to them it was both funny and unusual in their schools, especially from a teacher who is expected to enforce the “ban”. Thus, not surprisingly, students often develop less interest and enthusiasm in learning their local languages and find more comfortable and profitable speaking the “prestigious” language, English, even during Fante class periods. The practice of banning African languages in African school grounds is very popular.

The researcher can remember that, as a pupil at the primary school in Senegal, a French speaking country, it was forbidden to speak local languages in class or during recreation or recess. In fact, there was what was referred to as “le symbol” (or the symbol), a piece of bone attached to a string that students caught in violation of the “code” (by speaking Wolof, the wider national language or other local languages) were sentenced to wear around their neck as a “necklace of shame and guilt”. Offenders would also receive “coups de cravache” (lashes) that teachers were so willing to perform in

order to enforce the ban on local languages. As Ndura (2006) puts it, talking about her own experience as a school girl in Burundi: “Learning and speaking French became a necessary strategy to avoid painful and humiliating lashes on the young legs hardened by the daily twelve or so kilometers of bare-footed walk from the modest villages to the gates of civilization” (p. 90).

Despite the ban, students would still “smuggle” the language in school though conscious of the risk involved and the price to pay should they get caught communicating in vernaculars. The purpose behind the prohibition was to urge students to assimilate French. So, one can realize that the French assimilation policy was still reproduced in the post-colony. In Senegal, French still represents the only medium of instruction, while local languages simply do not bear any recognition (Bamgbose, 2004). The same reality also operates in the Ghanaian schools from the upper primary to the secondary school where students are not allowed to speak vernaculars either in the classroom or the schoolyard. The violation of the rule is often sentenced with corporal punishment.

One could safely argue that African cultures and languages are in peril because of the increasing preference towards Western ways of life, languages and epistemology, which undermines the place and role of Africa and its cultures in a globalizing world that pushes for homogenization along the lines of the Western model. The acknowledgement of the significance of European languages and the negligence of African languages in African schools support Ndura’s (2006) perspective that Western education and African identity constitute a clear case of “failed globalization”.

If colonization represented a “nervous condition” for the colonized, Western education also constitutes a nervous experience for African pupils in both English and French speaking Africa. Ndura captures the nightmare of many African students who had to leave their cultural baggage and identities at the gate of Western schools, which results in assimilation and serious identity crisis: “Throughout history, schools have been used to assimilate dominated groups into the cultural landscape of the dominators, often leading to cultural loss and disempowerment” (p. 91). Thus, Ndura (2006) considers the conditions of Africans in Western schools an academic, psychological, and social colonization that promotes cultural racism through the imposition of Western culture and belief system as superior reference.

At a recent pre-conference themed “Contemporary Relevance of Pan Africanism and the Youth” held in October 23rd at the University of Ghana in Legon, Accra, the defender and protector of African cultures, Ngugi Wa Thiong’o denounced the negligence of African languages. He also considers African governments’ policies on African languages as “outrageous” and that these languages should not be sidelined as “electives” in African education. According to him the decolonization of Africa and its imposition to the rest of the world as an equal partner must start at home in Africa: “originality begins from where we are and should contribute to the world from our own base. It is very important we realized that we can reach the world from wherever we are and languages, our names and our bodies are really our starting point” (GoG, 2013).

One of the most significant highlights at this pre-conference was that it was held with Ghanaian Senior High School youths, Pan-Africanists, university students,

researchers, academics and the media as if to remind that African renaissance and the promotion of African languages are a shared African responsibility. Talking about African literature, Wa Thiong'o also reminded that the problem is not European languages or writing in these media but that much attention should also be paid to African languages as national linguistic resources (GoG, 2013) necessary for the affirmation and expression of African identities. The pre-conference was in celebration of the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the Institute of African Studies (IAS) in 1963 by Kwame Nkrumah to encourage a study of the African continent and its people (Public Agenda, 2013).

Review of Ghanaian Education Policies and Reports. Besides Ghana being a very hospitable country, another aspect of the society that does not go unnoticed is the centrality of politics in Ghanaian daily life. The 2012 presidential elections were the occasion for Ghanaians to pronounce on the issue they held dear. It would be safe to mention that “education” was among the most debated topics, especially when of the presidential candidates, Akufo-Addo from the New Patriotic Party (NPP) almost made it his campaign slogan and offered to make secondary education free (Ghana News Agency, 2012). “Free Secondary Education” was not just a political catch concept for the NPP but it was also a pamphlet against the National Democratic Congress (NDC) of President Mahama in power. The NPP’s vow to deliver on free secondary education re-centered the debate from other issues to education as the hot-topic during the 2012 Presidential elections. The NPP extended their agenda to closing the funding gap in

education and making it possible for over 600,000 JHS graduates to have access to the SHS (Ghana News Agency, 2012).

The problem of accommodating JHS graduates can be regarded as a chronic issue hampering Ghanaian education. Godwyll (2008, p. 115) acknowledges that because apprenticeship schools are not fully developed in Ghana, 60% of ninth grade or JHS graduates have nothing to do. In its 1987 statistical projection, the Ghanaian Ministry of Education (MOE) recognized that only 30% of JHS graduates could get into SHS. These shortcomings continue to impede Ghanaian education as the Ghanaian MOE illustrates with statistical data. Indeed, since the 1990s Ghanaian schools regurgitate 158,000 JHS graduate teenagers with no placement. Out of the average of 240,000 graduates, only 72,000 gain admission into the SHS and 10,000 into technical and vocational institutes (MOE, 2002, cited by Godwyll, 2008, p. 115).

The problems with Ghanaian education since independence have also been expressed in an endless cycle of reforms and a succession of review committees and production of review documents. Among these documents, one can mention “A Decade of Educational Reforms: Preparation for the Challenges of a New Millennium” (MOE, 1999), “Policies and Strategic Plans for the Education Sector” (MOE, 2001), *Meeting the Challenges of Education in the Twenty-First Century* (MOE, 2002).

In this research, the analysis of these policies and education sector reviews is in order to have a closer look at the evolution of the education sector in Ghana and to fully gauge the challenges of Ghanaian education and the efforts of the national government in implementing effective reforms in order to re-appropriate the national education. By

scrutinizing these documents, the research also reveals some of the problems affecting Ghanaian education since independence, especially as far as indigenous knowledge is concerned. Many scholars have acknowledged the inadequacy of Ghanaian education (Godwyll, 2008; Owusu-Ansah, 2003). In this context of educational crises, the reports on Ghanaian education constitute significant resources in documenting these ailments.

The deterioration of the national education also justify the need for these reports as a diagnosis of the sector and support for the development of an “effective national education system”, “assess achievements and shortcomings so as to map the way forward” (MOE, 1999, p. v) and “meet the challenges of education in the twenty-first century” (MOE, 2002). Professor Djangmah, Chairman of the Forum Technical Committee and Writing, who authored the report, “A Decade of Educational Reforms” (MOE, 1999), recognizes that relevant education plays a significant function in providing the knowledge and skills necessary for the survival of a community, developing a national identity for integration and nation building.

This analysis, clearly, suggests that, for education to be effective, it needs to be context-bound in order to be a transformative activity. This necessity is the basis of this research which, through decolonization, advocates a type of education informed by Africa’s domestic challenges first. Rootedness into home does not negate openness to the world. Indeed, the same chairman of the review committee, Pr. Djangmah, also considers exposure to different “worldviews” as an intrinsic part of transformative education and a determining factor in the performance of a country in the international arena.

Some of the major education reports and policies on Ghanaian education are mentioned in this review in order to depict the evolutionary itinerary of Ghanaian education and the efforts to reclaim the national education.

The Accelerated Development Plan (ADP) may be perceived as Ghana's strategy for re-claiming its national education even prior to independence when schools were owned by missions and community. These schools functioned as private institutions in which children had to pay to attend (Osei, 2009). Thanks to the "limited self-rule" allowed by the British colonial government, the Convention People's Party (CPP), under Nkrumah's leadership, issued a legislation in 1951 to promote equal opportunities and the expansion of access to education by making primary education free. The implementation followed a year later in 1952 (MOE, 1999; Thompson & Casely-Hayford, 2008). A decline in education standards in both primary and secondary schools led to the establishment and expansion of teacher-training colleges and the provision of in-service training (Thompson & Casely-Hayford, 2008). Like primary school enrolment under the ADP, admission to Teacher Training Colleges increased by 1,000 between 1951 and 1953. The graduating population also went from 420 to 1,108). Table 4 illustrates the increase in school enrolment from the period 1951 to 1961 under the leadership of Nkrumah.

Table 4

School Enrollment from 1951 to 1961

Table 1: School enrolment levels (1951-1961)	1951	1961	% change
Primary schools	154,360	481,500	211.9
Middle schools	66,175	160,000	141.8
Secondary and technical schools	3,559	19,143	437.9
Teacher training colleges	1,916	4,552	137.6
University students	208	1,204	478.8

Source: Nkrumah (1967; cited by Thompson and Casely-Hayford, 2008)

The 1961 Education Act also supplemented the ADP initiative by extending free education to middle school (JHS) (Osei, 2009; MOE, 1999). Later in the 1960s, the program for free education would attempt to expand to the secondary school. Indeed, under the “7 year Development Plan” (1963-1970), among others, recommended free secondary education. Other areas of interest included continuing education, secondary technical schools, teacher training, technical education, clerical and commercial

education, university education, adult education, and education research (Thompson & Casely-Hayford, 2008). This plan for the transformation of Ghanaian education was designed to meet the challenges of modernity, a vision set in the CPP's Plan that would be aborted after the military coup over Nkrumah's government.

In 1966, the National Liberation Council (NLC) that succeeded the CPP of Nkrumah blamed the problems of Ghanaian education on "fallen educational standards" (Thompson & Casely-Hayford, 2008, p. 9). Thus, from 1966 the Kwarpong Committee was set to undertake a comprehensive review of the national education system. They made extensive recommendations which were very influential on the 1987 reform. The Committee recommended 10 years of elementary education comprising 2 years of pre-vocational "continuation" classes for students not able to make it to the secondary level. Similarly, at the secondary level, it was recommended a 5 year system with the option for students to proceed to do 2 more additional years of advanced secondary education (or Sixth Form) leading to an advanced General Certificate of Education (MOE, 1999; Thompson & Casely-Hayford, 2008).

As far as indigenous knowledge was concerned, the later Busia administration, which came to power in 1969, launched a "One-Year Development Plan". The administration focused on the diversification of the curriculum and the introduction of practical, non-traditional subjects, such as agriculture, metalwork and domestic science (Osei, 2010). Also, the Busia government approved the Kwarpong Committee's recommendation for the use of Ghanaian language as medium of instruction for the first 3 years of primary school (MOE, 1970, cited by Owu-Ewie, 2003).

In 1972, following another coup, the National Redemption Council (NRC) led by Colonel Acheampong succeeded the Busia administration (MOE, 1999). The NRC also made significant contribution in terms of educational reforms. The military administration drew from its support base from universities, secondary schools and training colleges to realize domestic initiatives, such as building irrigation dams, and sugarcane harvest. Thus, the government focused on practical education and the creation of the skills needed for national development. As a matter of fact, the NRC produced a decree (NRC 208) to establish a link between education/training and practice (Osei, 2010).

Like its predecessors, the NRC also installed its own review group, the Dzobo Committee (1973). In their review of the limiting factors impeding Ghanaian education system, the Dzobo Committee denounced Ghanaian education as too elitist and divisive as a consequence of the nature of the educational system. The Committee observed that in this system some students had access to secondary schools and liberal grammar schools and were educated to be leaders, while others “less academically gifted” were simply perceived as “uneducable” and were only provided with a vocational option (MOE, 1999, p. 7). Also, the Common Entrance Examination for entry into the secondary school (which was allowed as early as class 6) was considered discriminatory against students who did not have the time to intellectually grow and make it to the secondary school (MOE, 1999). The former administrations’ focus on mental (theoretical) education was considered to have produced some disdain of manual labor and preference towards academic types.

In 1974 the recommendations of the Dzobo Committee were endorsed in a government White Paper entitled “New Structure and Content of Education for Ghana”. The “New Structure of Education” is regarded as a significant policy document in Ghanaian education that would later influence other reforms, such as the 1987. It reduced the duration of the old pre-university system from 17 years to 13. The New Structure laid emphasis on the development of practical and manual skills, leadership qualities, self-reliance, creativity, science, and mathematics. It also emphasized the study of Ghanaian languages, which were to be the media of instruction in the first 3 years of primary school (Osei, 2010; MOE, 1999).

The New Structure advocated the introduction of pre-technical and prevocational subjects at both the Junior Secondary School (SSS/JHS) and the Senior Secondary School (SSS/SHS) curricula. Among the technical and vocational subjects in the Junior Secondary School (JSS/JHS) curriculum relevant to matters of indigenous knowledge, one can mention woodwork, metalwork, and pottery. To implement the New Structure, Ghanaian Education Service was created to be the implementing body of the Ministry of Education.

By a series of coups, the Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC) came to power in 1981. Just two years after they seized power and promised a redistribution of educational resources in order to raise the standards of public schools, Ghanaian education deteriorated for economic and political reasons. It is worth mentioning that this was the period of Adjustment Programs imposed by Western financial institutions (IMF/World Bank). This downfall of Ghanaian education lowered teaching standards and

also caused massive “brain-drain”. Thus, the 1987 educational reforms came to induce some recovery (MOE, 1999); its objectives included the expansion of access to education, the provision of improved quality education and context relevance by considering Ghanaian socio-economic conditions. In basic education, the reforms acknowledged the right of every Ghanaian child to literacy and to be a useful member of society and to participate in national development. They also recognized the necessity for creating the conditions for Ghanaian children to be in tune with the scientific and technological world.

The reforms promoted a diversification of the curriculum with the introduction of technical and vocational subjects to shift from an “elitist” type of education system and to rehabilitate practical, technical and vocational education (Osei, 2010). They also placed much emphasis on cultural identity and dignity (MOE, 1990, cited by Osei, 2010). The 1987 reforms implemented the “1974 New Structure of Education” recommendations from the Dzobo Committee. As a matter of fact the latter is considered a precursor of the 1987 reforms (Osei, 2010). However, the latter reduced pre-university education from 17 to 12 years by shortening the duration of Junior Secondary School (now JHS) to 3 year course instead of 4 as recommended by the Dzobo Committee, and maintaining the 6 years of primary school (Thompson & Casely-Hayford, 2008).

The Free Compulsory and Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) program, which focused on basic education, constitutes a significant step for Ghanaian education policy makers to decentralize and expand access to education. Started in 1996, the program complements the reforms. It also fulfills the vision expressed in article 39 (2) of the 1992

Ghanaian constitution which mandates that: “the government shall...draw up a program for implementation for the provision of free, compulsory and universal education” (MOE, 1999, p. 10; Osei, 2010, p. 35). The objectives of the program were aligned with the 1990 World Declaration on Education For All (EFA) promoted by the World Bank and the United Nations. The objectives of the program include the provision of girls’ education to reduce the gender gap at the basic level, the improvement of the quality of teaching and education through curriculum review and the development of teaching material, as well as the provision of incentives for teacher motivation (Thompson & Casely-Hayford, 2008; Osei, 2010).

More recent, the 2007 education reform reaffirms the goals of the 1987 reforms, the FCUBE and EFA programs to further support expand access to education, build/improve facilities, improve teaching and learning outcomes and adapting education to be more relevant to national goals and needs by emphasizing vocational and technical education (NERIC, 2007). The insistence of Ghanaian reform committees on educational relevance and adaptation to national challenges represents an acknowledgement of major discrepancies between the nature of Ghanaian education and national needs.

The plethora of committees for the review of the education system and the sector’s ailments illustrates that Ghana has been battling at many fronts to undertake the challenges of transformative education for national development. However, since shortly before independence and after, the efforts to improve the education sector have been highly politicized. Economic factors also contributed in the deterioration of the national education system. Despite large scale reforms in 1987 to address the chronic problems of

access, curriculum relevance, teacher training, infrastructures, and funding, Ghana's education has not yet been able to effectively operate a shift towards an adequate education (Godwyll, 2008). The focus of Ghanaian education on science, technical and vocational education makes indigenous issues secondary in Ghanaian education, despite some efforts for the inclusion of Ghanaian languages as subjects and media of instruction, especially at the basic level where the Ghanaian MOE seems to implement its concerns and policies about the cultural identity and dignity of student communities.

The promotion of GIK in Ghanaian school constitutes a domain of many complications because it is a field that almost has to be created from scratch. It is for this reason that the MOE (2002) blame some of the problems of indigenous knowledge in Ghanaian education on the lack of teaching materials in the local languages, inadequate number of local language teachers. All these limitations bear consequences on the implementation of local languages as medium of instruction in Basic education. However, the Government of Ghana (GoG) makes significant efforts in fighting the penury of textbooks. These are supplied by the government free of charge to both public and private Basic schools (MOE, 2001).

Textbooks Review. In the investigation of the efforts towards the decolonization of education in Ghana, this research also scrutinizes the contents of textbook materials in order to plumb their degree of inclusion of AIK (African Indigenous Knowledge) or GIK (Ghanaian Indigenous Knowledge). This analysis is relevant, especially as textbook materials were a significant concern to 1987 reforms which also laid emphasis on the review and development of textbooks (Godwyll, 2008; Thompson & Casely-Hayford, 2008; Osei, 2010). Among the textbooks in Ghanaian schools that address indigenous knowledge, one can mention the following:

Ghana Kasasua na Amambra (Bosiwah, 2009), *Basic Design and Technology for Junior High Schools 1* (Tetey, Offei, & Seidu, 2008), *Religious and Moral Education in Scope for Junior High Schools 1-3* (Twumasi & Adade, 2012), *Social Studies in Scope for Junior High Schools 1-3* (Twumasi & Adade, 2012), *Social Studies for Senior High Schools* (Boateng, 2011).

Citing Mingat (2005), Ampiah (2008), argues that textbooks perform a significant function in the improvement of learning. However, according to Freire (1981; 1993), in the context of decolonization and re-appropriation of education, the process of “learning” must include the learners’ immediate environment (Freire, 1981; 1993). Thus, the teaching of African realities to African learners should be central in the teaching and learning process. And the selection of textbooks should also be mindful of the need for local relevance. Godwyll (2008) also identifies availability and effectiveness of textbooks as significant parameters (among others, such as teacher quality, and maximum use of instructional time) to consider in order to improve pupils’ achievement. The Ghanaian

Ministry of Education or MOE (2001) views textbooks as teachers' guides, instrumental in the provision of the structure, methodologies and objectives of teaching and learning. Table 5 presents some selected textbooks on indigenous knowledge issues at the JHS and SHS.

Table 5

Indigenous Knowledge Related Ghanaian Textbooks

Textbooks JHS/SHS	Subjects	JHS/SHS Levels
Ghana Kasasua na Amambra (Bosiwah & Kofuwa, 2009)	Ghanaian Language	JHS 1
Basic Design and Technology for JHSs 1 (Tetey, Offei, & Seidu, 2008)	BDT	JHS 1
Religious and Moral Education in Scope for JHSs 1-3 (Twumasi & Adade, 2012)	RME	JHS 1-3
Social Studies in Scope for JHSs 1-3 (Twumasi & Adade, 2012)	Social Studies	JHS 1-3
Social Studies for SHSs (Boateng, 2011)	Social Studies	SHS 1-3

Ghana Kasasua na Amambra. The Fante language textbook, *Ghana Kasasua na Amambra*, is organized in many chapters that deal with different aspects of Ghanaian society that often seem to be missing in Ghanaian education. So the Basic Level, as mentioned earlier in the analysis, constitutes the last bastion (especially if compared to the secondary level) where GIK (Ghanaian Indigenous Knowledge) finds expression in the classroom. According to the authors, the textbook seeks to create all-round pupils who understand their environment, its people and different cultures. Some of the chapters in the textbook include significant topics, such as the “different languages in Ghana”, “different dresses in Ghana”, “kingship”, the place of “elders in Ghanaian society”, and “oral and written literature”. Another important characteristic to mention is that the textbook also insists on critical thinking in order to get the pupils to critically think about national issues or phenomena using Ghanaian indigenous languages.

A short surmise of *Ghana Kasasua na Amambra* shows that there are some efforts from Ghanaian education policy makers to make sure that at the Basic level Ghanaian society, cultures, identities are given prominence in the educational system. However, the problem, as far as Indigenous Ghanaian/African issues are concerned, is the pyramidal evolution of Ghanaian education from the basic to the secondary level. Indeed, as one moves from the basic level to the secondary, indigenous knowledge subjects are no longer prominent or considered relevant because of the science oriented curriculum of the SHS. This seems to convey the idea that indigenous knowledge in Ghanaian education blooms in basic education only to fade in the secondary stage.

The authors, Bosiwah and Kofuwa (2009) define the objectives of the Ghanaian Language subject as designed to help students to achieve the following:

1. Develop cultural and linguistic awareness.
2. Attain competency in speaking, reading and writing their language.
3. Appreciate the historical and cultural heritage of their linguistic community.
4. Acquire the socio-cultural values in the literature of their language.

Clearly, one can realize that the community and the society at large are at the center of these objectives. As a matter of fact, the Ghanaian Language subject is much rooted in the Ghanaian socio-cultural, historical, and linguistic values. This reality is even more pronounced at the Primary level where Ghanaian local languages are media of instruction from Basic Stage 1 through 3. Ghanaian languages were made compulsory subjects from the Primary through JSS (MOE, 2001) as is still the case at present, even though, in the meantime there has been quakes of changes in the policy that voted out local languages as media of instruction in favor for an English-Only (Owu-Ewie, 2006). This places Ghanaian and its educational policies on quicksands of unstable policies as one government succeeds another and attempts to recreate the wheel of its education policies.

Basic Design and Technology for Junior High Schools 1. BDT subject is composed of Home Economics, Pre-technical skills and Visual Arts. According to the authors of the BDT textbook, the design process initiates pupils to identifying a problem, visualizing solutions to the issue (pre-image) and developing artifacts to solve given challenges. The technology aspect involves the use of tools and materials in the production of artifacts. However, for the purpose of this study, Visual Arts constitutes the

most significant subject area in BDT that addresses the question of “indigenous knowledge, art and technology”. Indeed, in Visual Arts, courses, such as “weaving” and “stitching”, create a platform for the education of Ghanaian pupils about some indigenous “technologies” and their cultural significance. Figure 3 displays weaved Kente cloths as part of Ghanaian indigenous knowledge.



Figure 3. Kente Weaving in Ghana (retrieved from <http://gotravelghana.com>)

The Ghanaian authors, Tetey, Offei, and Seidu (2008), on the socio-cultural importance of weaving and stitching, observe that “culturally, articles produced from weaving and stitching techniques are used to maintain the values and ideas of society and to sell these values to the outside world” (p. 298). The significance of weaving and stitching, as indigenous African technologies, transcend the artifacts to assume a function

of preservation of African indigenous knowledge and values that the rest of the world can also learn from. An example of a woven fabric is the indigenous Ghanaian “Kente” cloth. The researcher has had the chance to be at Bonwire Kente Weaving Village in Bonwire (Ashanti Region in South Ghana) and got the chance to be initiated to the techniques of weaving, using no modern tools but hands, threads, and an “archaic” wooden weaving instrument. The simplicity of the machine and the complexity and colorful intricacies of the “kente” design attract tourists all over the world. Each kente serves a purpose and has specific socio-cultural significance. Woven fabrics bearing specific indigenous designs, colors, talismans or other patterns, as seen in the dresses of chiefs and queen mothers, symbolize status, tolerance, standards, and cultural concepts of the people (Tetey, Offei, & Seidu, 2008).

Basketry is also another art craft that plays a useful social function. The authors of the textbook informs that basketry uses traditional materials from nature, such as reed, cane, rush, sisal fiber, palm rachis, palm raffia. Natural materials are also used to produce straw baskets, mats, bags, woven stools, rugs, and hats. According to Tetey, Offei, and Seidu (2008), “Artifacts in the form of baskets, hats, wallets are useful in preserving and promoting [Ghanaian] cultural practices” (p. 300). Carving is another form of indigenous art that conveys “messages about norms and values of the society through artifacts” (p. 311). So Visual Arts represent an important subject on indigenous art and technologies as taught in Ghanaian schools. All students at the JHS study this subject as part of BDT. However at the SHS, Visual Arts is offered as an elective. A significant factor, however, is that, in addition to the core subjects at the SHS, students must chose to specialize in

one of the following course programs (see appendix B for more details): Agriculture, Business, Technical, Vocational (Home Economics and Visual Arts), and General (Arts and Science) (MOE, 2002).

Some of the courses (Ceramics, Leatherwork, Sculpture, Basketry, Textiles, Jewelry, Foods and Nutrition, Clothing and Textiles, Management in Living, Metalwork, Woodwork, Crop Husbandry and Horticulture, Animal Husbandry/Fisheries/Forestry, General Knowledge in Art, Music, Geography, History, Christian Religious Studies/Islamic Religious Studies/Traditional African Religion) are significant subjects in raising consciousness about indigenous knowledge issues and bear the potential to contribute in the development of epistemologies on African indigenous knowledge in general and Ghanaian indigenous knowledge in particular.

However, even though these aspects of Ghanaian education look promising, Ghana, like many Sub-Saharan African countries, does not appear to be in full control of its education (Osei, 2010). This leads Barbosa (2010) to speak of an “intellectual re-colonization” in Africa as driven by Western international agencies and financial investors who, according to Federici (2000), “influence what is written, studied, and voiced in communities” (quoted by Barbosa, 2010, p. 34). Such lack of autonomy in decision-making from the Ghanaian government may explain the on-going education reforms and the chronic issue of “content relevance” that Godwyll (2008) has pointed out.

Religious and Moral Education for JHS 1-3. As a subject, Religious and Moral Education is offered at the SHS as part of the General program for Arts’ students (MOE,

2002) (see appendix B for more details). However, at the JHS it is a significant part of the curriculum which comprises: English, Mathematics, Social Studies, Integrated Science (including Agricultural Science), a Ghanaian Language, Basic Design and Technology (BDT) (including Vocational and Pre-technical skills), Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Physical Education (PE), *Religious and Moral Education* (RME), French (optional) (Italics for emphasis). All these subjects, except French (which depends on availability of teachers), are offered by all students at the JHS.

RME focuses on religious issues as its title suggests; but, as one moves from the JHS 1, 2 and 3, it includes issues of good ethics, morality, responsibility, human rights, corruption, bribery and substance abuse. It is worth mentioning the JHS 1 chapters focus more on indigenous issues. Twumasi and Adade (2012) define RME as “an aspect of education which reinforces the informal, religious and moral training that people acquire from their various homes” (p. 2). The rationale for RME, according to them is that it inculcates discipline or good behavior necessary for making “informed decisions” and becoming “responsible citizens” (p. 2) who participate in nation building. This analysis will focus only on where indigenous knowledge seems relevant.

At the JHS 1 level, Twumasi and Adade (2012), in their introduction to RME, deal with the different religions of Ghana, especially Christianity, Islam and Traditional religion. African Traditional Religion (ATR) is described as an indigenous and the oldest religion in Africa before the advent of other beliefs, such as Christianity and Islam. While there may be no document on ATR, its principles have been passed on from generation to generation. It makes a significant part of African tradition and indigenous concepts of

“Nyame” as the Akans call the supreme God and “Mawu” for the Ewes. So in the context of affirmation of indigenous knowledge, teaching ATR contributes in developing deeper understanding of the evolution of religion in Africa from indigenous or traditional to the advent of Islam and Christianity as foreign imports. The RME textbook also deals with African traditional concepts of creation, such as the Akan myth on creation, the Ewe and the Dagombas.

Dei (2002b) conceives education as the various ways people come to know themselves and their immediate world and act to transform it. As such education constitutes a place of intersection of indigenous knowledge forms, spirituality, culture and identity. Thus he advocates a transformation of schooling and education in Africa in order to acknowledge the legitimacy of different epistemologies or ways of knowing. The natural environment, animals, plants, rivers, sea, land, and environmental conservation also have a significant place in RME. And for the purpose of this research, these issues also bear much relevance to African indigenous knowledge. Other issues include the Western nuclear and African extended family systems, life skills to be in harmony with family and community, obedience, cultural factors that determine the form of greetings and their socio-cultural significance.

Social Studies in Scope for Junior High School 1-3. The Social Studies textbook by Twumasi and Adade (2012) confirms the arguments that in terms of indigenous knowledge, Ghanaian education could be likened to a “pyramid” whose base is the Basic school. The authors precise that most of the examples in the book are “local” so that students can identify with and thus feel more connected to the subject. Freire (1981) has

theorized that literacy and effective learning happen when they are made relevant to the communities' lived experience and environment. So knowledge and local context are important factors in the process of teaching and learning. As matter of fact, education should take into account these realities in order to be a transformative tool for development. Social Studies for both JHS and SHS could be regarded as expressive of domestic knowledge and the importance of promoting an autonomous type of education rooted in domestic cultures and realities and at the same time open to the rest of world.

Owusu-Ansah (2011) who carried a research on the declining significance of history as a subject in the Ghanaian SHS, wonders how Ghanaian citizens could know their nation's past and present without "history". According to Owusu-Ansah (2011), history plays an instrumental function in African societies as they engage in nation building. History also participates in identity formation and the development of consciousness relevant to the understanding of the evolution of the world and the place of Africa within the concert of nations. As a subject, Social Studies plays the similar function. Indeed, while there is no history subject as such in the JHS curriculum, social studies performs similar function as a subject.

In *Social Studies for JHS 1-3*, Twumasi and Adade (2012) address topics such as "colonization and national development", "measures to correct the negative effects of colonization in Africa" and "important personalities and their contribution to education in Ghana". These topics, clearly, show that the concern of the textbook is to raise awareness and consciousness of Ghanaian students of their history and historical events that transformed the nation. On the lesson about colonization, the 19th century Gold Coast is

described as characterized by “inter-ethnic rivalry”, “wars” and “conflicts”. As a matter of fact, the Fante established their own “Fante Confederation council” to defend themselves against the Ashanti. The latter are said to have been in conflict with other ethnic group from the North, such as the Gas, Dangmes, and Ewes. The significance of such lesson to Ghanaian pupils is that it shows the evolution of Ghanaian society from ethnic wars and rivalry to the nation that it is now. This means that matter of indigenous knowledge do not necessarily have to be pleasant chapters of romanticized African history or cultural legacy simply to induce pride. Indigenous knowledge is about reality, lived experience, adaptation, evolution, ways of knowing, culture, technology, history. It is the cascading events about people’s interaction with nature, their past and present ways of existence, as well as the different epistemologies that inform their understanding of their environment and the world.

In *Social Studies for JHS 1-3*, the traditional leaders in pre-colonial Ghana are shown to be elders organized in “council of elders” to support the chief in the administration of a community. The traditional leaders and the council of elders also had their own court and legal system to arbitrate on issues and prosecute individuals for the violation of certain norms. This demonstrates to students that pre-colonial Africa was not a “tabula rasa”, a place without history. Communities in pre-colonial Africa, like in Ghana, were highly organized authorities, as displayed in their various kingdoms. Other lessons include “Ghanaian cultures”, “Ghanaian festivals” “cultural change”, and “female genital mutilation”. Culture is described as “dynamic” due to the fact that societies are in constant state of change. It is also regarded as a unifying factor, important to the

development of national identity, cohesion and cultural pride. Also, the fact that culture is said to be progressive would also lead Ghanaian pupils to question certain unchanged and harmful cultural practices, such as “female genital mutilation”, a cultural phenomenon described as “outmoded” and associated with many health complications. Clearly, it would be safe to argue that the textbook proves instrumental in constructing local cultures as not frozen in time and space. Indeed, cultures need to be dynamic, transformable and transformed in order to be aligned with new realities of place and changes around the world. *Social Studies for Senior High Schools* (Boateng, 2011) is also designed to play similar function among senior high school students.

Social Studies for Senior High Schools. Boateng (2011) defines the main objective of the subject as “citizenship” education to enable students to gain knowledge, develop skills and attitudes necessary to participate in transforming their societies. The textbook deals with issues, such as “self-identity”, “national independence” and “self-reliance”, “peace building” and “conflict resolution”. The author, Boateng (2011), establishes a parallel between consciousness and alienation. She describes that failure to know oneself and one’s capabilities may lead to assuming another identity as an “ideal” type that really does not coincide with reality. In the context of indigenous knowledge, one can say the same about Africa which is desperately trying to fit in the world economy and clash of civilizations.

Most of the time, African identities and peoples have been at the periphery, victimized by its past experience and present challenges. As a consequence, Africa has been a consumer of foreign epistemologies and influenced by the environment created by

Western imperialism that ensconced Western standards, identities and ways of life as models. Thus, Western knowledge represents the privileged type in African and Ghanaian education. Appiah supports such analysis through his argument in “Europe Upside Down” that Western scholarship positions European history, intellectual life, and social institutions as a superior framework of reference and that such Eurocentric approach to the world negates the cultural worth and histories of the colonized (cited by Grinker et al., 2010).

The issues of independence and self-reliance speak to the agenda of this research as they, respectively, represent a major turning point in African history and a liberating attitude that de-centers the West and its legacy to focus on writing new chapters of African and Ghanaian history that start with investment in the consciousness of educated youths about their identities and their role in social transformation.

The short review of these textbooks show that there are some subjects in the Junior High School and Senior High School curricula that deal with important issues of indigenous knowledge that are necessary and important steps in the promotion of African Indigenous Knowledge (AIK) and the process of decolonization of Africa’s educational sector.

Summary of Chapter Four

In the outset, the chapter highlights the contribution of Anthropology in the colonial enterprise and the construction of African communities as “primitive”, providing a justification for colonization. Both anthropologists and colonials participated in the systematic exploitation of the colonized for resources. So colonial education was

established in a manner not to undermine the exploitative agenda of colonialism. Access to education was limited to “mulatto” children and later to children of chiefs and farmers who could afford the cost of Western education. British, colonial authorities had full control of program content. Prior to the colonial period, European merchants, traders and missionaries provided education to assist in their commerce and to make converts. Religion, as a cultural system, played a determinant role in the alienation of the colonized masses as shown in chapter two. Achimota is given as an example for failed British educational model in the Gold Coast as transferred, context-inappropriate educational philosophies from British public school and the United States’ Black education model.

20th century British colonial education’s emphasis on leadership and African traditions, failed to provide transformative and liberating education out of fear that educated African elite represented a threat to colonialism. Thus, the focus was on “vocationalism” and “technical skills” in Achimota’s curriculum. The institutionalization of chieftaincy was also to weaken African educated elite.

This chapter confirms that the post-colony in Ghana reproduces the same colonial educational structures and the crises of leadership. Ghana’s failure to fully control its education system is also illustrated in the place of local languages in Ghanaian schools. If from the 1920s to 1950 Ghanaian languages had been used as a media of instruction, at independence the policy would go through a series of changes that would assign inconsistent roles to Ghanaian languages. Courses on indigenous knowledge are more prominent in Basic School where subjects, such as Ghanaian languages and cultures are compulsory while at the SHS the curriculum emphasizes science. Basic School

curriculum is also designed to educate learners to be good citizens with “sound moral attitudes and appreciation of one’s cultural heritage and identity” (MOE, 2002, p. 27). However, the decline of History, as a subject, at both the JHS and SHS represents a major concern to matters of indigenous knowledge and the education of learners about African and Ghanaian history. It also defies the purpose and significance of an Afrocentric place where learners’ cultures, history and environmental challenges constitute the center of learning (Reviere, 2002).

The researcher’s experience, teaching French and learning Fante, at a Junior High School support many arguments from the literature about the colonization of Ghanaian/African education as Western epistemologies and languages, such as English have higher prestige. Thus, English is preferred medium over African languages in Ghanaian education.

The review of Ghanaian education policy, reports, and textbook materials unveils many of the problems of Ghanaian education as illustrated in endless cycle of reforms since the 1950s and the penury of textbook materials relevant to issues of indigenous knowledge. From Nkrumah’s administration in the 1950s to the following governments after series of coups, major policies and reforms would be initiated to correct the declining education standards. Among those reforms were the 1974 and 1987 that represent significant hallmarks in terms of Ghana’s educational sector reforms. They introduced a diversified curriculum with technical and vocational subjects, expansion of access to education, context and content relevance, teacher education, etc.

The review and analysis of textbooks also yield that some subjects at both the JHS and SHS deal with significant issues of indigenous knowledge, despite the crisis in the sector and the lack of textbooks on indigenous knowledge.

Chapter Five: Conclusion, Implications for Theory and Recommendations

Conclusion

This study has provided a wide review of the problems of education in Sub-Saharan Africa, especially in Ghana to reach the conclusion that the ailments of African education and Ghanaian education in particular find their source in pre-colonialism and the nervous colonial history of the region. Ghana's encounter with colonialism and its corollaries of failed educational adaptation philosophies may be considered illustrative of Sub-Saharan Africa's colonial experience. The review allowed to answer the questions that guided this research and to gain an in-depth understanding of the "evolution of Ghanaian education from the colonial period to the post-independence era", the "influences of Euro-American epistemology on Ghanaian Education system" and the "efforts/strategies implemented in Ghana for the decolonization of the national education".

Colonization, according to Asher (2009), represents the occupation and monopoly of a nation by another that results in the colonized communities' loss of home. Colonization also leads to the exploitation of and control of the material resources and labor of the colonized to benefit the metropolises. The review revealed that, indeed, colonization in Africa and Ghana has achieved both exploitative and alienating outcomes. The colonization of the educational sector in Africa only proves that colonization should not simply be narrowly understood in terms of invasion of a nation by another and the syphoning of resources of subjugated societies; indeed, it has had wider reach and has operated through the spread of the ideology of the dominant power, knowledge

production and dissemination, negation of the histories of colonized and the imposition of European languages.

Foreign religions, Islam and Christianity have been instrumental in imposing new religious values in Sub-Saharan Africa that undermined the significance of indigenous religion or African Traditional Religion (ATR). Indeed, Africa has had a long history of colonization even prior to the time officially referred to as the colonial period or the 1884 Berlin Conference. Contact with Islamic scholars and traders from North Africa brought West Africa in contact with Islam and a Quran-based education that emphasized Islamic moral and ethical discipline. Christianity in the Gold Coast also held religious and moral values as significant principles in their proselytizing mission. It is worth mentioning that both Islamic and Christian education played pioneer roles in terms of literacy in African education in general and Ghanaian education in particular. They have also been instrumental forces in the imposition of foreign ideologies and ways of knowing that shelved African epistemologies at the periphery. Through schooling, the link school/faith was established in Islamic education (though informally) and Western mission education. So Africa's education is characterized by its complex "triple heritage" with strata of Islamic education, Western education and indigenous African education (Quist, 2001).

The Gold Coast has had a hectic history of rivalry between Portuguese, Dutch, Danish and English competing for the control of castles and early schools known as "castle school". A defining feature of early education in the Gold Coast was the so-called "castle schools" that were primarily established for "mulattoes" (children born Portuguese castle staff and African women) and sons of rich farmers and chiefs. These

pre-colonial powers also imposed their languages as media of instruction as they gained control of the castles. However, from 1529 to 1925, Christian missionaries would give much attention to African languages in order to form native African catechists that would expand the sphere of the gospel among the uneducated masses.

In the 17th and 18th century merchants and traders also imposed their own mercantile philosophies in Gold Coast education to train natives as interpreters, clerks and soldiers to assist in commerce and in ensuring the security of the forts (Graham, 1971). The curriculum was based on the 3Rs (arithmetic, reading and writing) to develop clerical skills instead of industrial, craft or manual labor. A partnership between Church and State was established in the 1880s with the Education Ordinance of 1882 and later the basic Education Ordinance that would impose coherent education rules in the Gold Coast and the democratization of access to education and a diversification of school curricula, teacher training and practical education in Christian missionary schools.

African chiefs and scholars did not remain passive consumers of Western education; they saw in the educational system an opportunity for upward mobility and social transformation. Thus, in 1870 African scholars, such as the Liberian Edward Wilmot Blyden, expressed the need for a West African University to promote pan-African values and preserve African identity. Nationalists in the Gold Coast also expressed the same need for a university platform for the whole West African region (Emudong, 1997; Yamada, 2004). This illustrates an understanding from African scholars and nationalists of the significance of education in preserving African cultures, identity and challenging Western colonizing tides and knowledge production about Africa.

The establishment of Achimota represents an acknowledgement of the failure of colonial education and the need to respect African heritage and to create a new generation of leaders. However, perception of African scholars as a threat and the importation of Victorian and Black American educational model led to the failure of adaptation philosophies at Achimota which promised a syncretic type. However, vocationalism and the use of the hands were emphasized to maintain the status quo and African subservience.

The gong of independence failed to signal a clear rupture with Western colonizing education as African countries, such as Ghana, continue to be much dependent of foreign aid and aid-conditionalities (Rapley, 2007; Lamb, 2007; Moyo, 2009; Yamada, 2004). However, many efforts would be made to reclaim and re-adapt education to meet domestic challenges. In the Gold Coast, Nkrumah's nationalist administration took the lead to initiate a paradigm shift by increasing access to education for all children of school-going age and including African cultures and values for more content relevance in school curricula. Patriotism was also promoted in schools to mend a Ghanaian nation fragmented by colonization. Other African heads of States, such as Nyerere from Tanzania, also warned against the reproduction of the colonial legacy and called for much more agency in African leadership (Osei, 2009, 2010).

Despite these initiatives, Western educational and developmental policies continue to impede Africa's autonomy in educational delivery, thus reproducing the "colonization of African knowledge spaces by Western knowledge" (Shizha, 2010, p. 32). Therefore, the West still functions as the yardstick of "valid" knowledge from

formerly colonized societies and a civilizational basis on which old Hegelian discourses have discarded the continent as irrelevant. However, African scholars do not leave the silences in African history and experience unchallenged to rehabilitate African history, indigenous knowledge, cultures and Africa's contribution to world civilization (Depelchin, 2005; Diop, 1974; Lowe, 1997; Akurang-Parry, 2004; Emudong, 1997; Hammersmith, 2007; Dei, 2002a).

“Afrocentricity” and the “Afrocentric place” also represent an alternative to European standards in their re-positioning of Africa as its own center in order to create a school culture rooted in immediate African experience. However the models are transcendent in the fact that they acknowledge the relevance of other cultures and epistemologies, such as Western knowledge in the purpose of social change (Asante, 1980; Shockley, 2007; Bankole, 2006; Reviere, 2002).

The literature supports the fact that if in the pre-colonial and colonial periods, Ghanaian education was guided and dominated by Western epistemologies and ideologies, the post-colonial reproduced the same alienating structures that positioned the West as “center” of learning. Thus, in the post-colony, Ghanaian education continues to be based on the British model and imported Western curricula (Godwyll, 2008). The preference of European languages or English over Ghanaian languages also supports self-inflicted silences that negate the value of the “local”.

The efforts of African leaders to domesticate their national education system have been inconsistent. The plethora of reforms in Ghanaian education illustrates the issue of consistency as change of government often causes change in the education system, which

keeps Ghanaian education in a constant state of repair. The problem of Ghanaian educational reforms also stemmed from political instability and coup d'états that characterized the period after independence from 1966 to 1981 and the recurrent changes of governments and political ideologies (Tonah, 2009; Godwyll, 2008). Despite these issues, Ghanaian leaders have demonstrated much agency and interest in the transformation of the national education system as shown in the review of Ghanaian education policies and reports on education reforms. The analysis of textbook materials also reveals some significant support of indigenous knowledge in Ghanaian school curricula, even though these efforts are more visible in basic education sector where subjects relevant to African/Ghanaian Indigenous Knowledge (AIK/GIK) are offered as required subjects instead of as electives at the secondary level.

Implications for Theory and Recommendations

This secondary data based research about the colonization of Education in Sub-Saharan Africa focused on the Ghanaian example to add to the growing literature on decolonization and the ethical necessity for preserving indigenous knowledge from the colonized world or less dominant forms of knowledge. The literature has clearly established the fact that African Indigenous Knowledge (AIK) constitutes valid epistemologies necessary for the survival of African communities and that, as such, it cannot be differentiated from so-proclaimed “higher” forms to knowledge, such as Western science. Indeed, indigenous knowledge simply represents an epistemology of place that demonstrates the various methods and strategies of human societies to understand the world and transform it. It is for these reasons that African and Africanist

scholars join the battle for the creation of a global space that acknowledges the relevance of knowledge from the “discovered” societies and the decolonization of Western institutions in order to create a syncretic body of knowledge and harness the expertise of different knowledge forms. Indeed, the strength of Western knowledge also stems from its hybridity or syncretism of different epistemic traditions, a reality that often goes ignored (Dei, 2002a). The creation of an interactive global space or at least the rehabilitation of indigenous knowledge forms in their respective communities constitutes a moral imperative that may need to start in schools, colleges or other sites of knowledge production. The colonization of African knowledge space calls for decolonization as a moral imperative and a necessity in order to allow AIK to be emancipatory. But this requires addressing first the crisis of leadership that ails African countries and impedes the success of African economies, politics and education.

The review of the literature and the challenges of Ghanaian education supports many theories on the interaction between colonizer/colonized and the nervous conditions that arise from this dichotomy. Freire’s (1993) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* deals with the alienating effect of colonization as an oppressive and de-humanizing system that requires subversion from militant colonized masses to recover their humanity. Freire also argues that in the oppressive “reality” created by colonization, the oppressors who control the destiny of the colonized strive to maintain the status quo upon which depends their dominance and power. This domination, as observed in this review, is often achieved through the negation of the cultural worth of the colonized, their languages and religion among others.

Education has been a significant tool for ensuring the perennity of the colonial system and the alienation of the colonized masses to the culture and epistemology of the colonizer. According to Freire (1993), the true liberation of both oppressor and oppressed or colonizer and colonized rests upon the power and leadership of the oppressed. Similarly, Dei (2002a) in a critique of post-coloniality also argues that an anti-oppression approach and understanding of colonization must be grounded in the experience of the colonized. The scholarship on colonization, the negation of African history, the colonization of education reviewed in this research subscribe within this framework of re-centering the experiences of the colonized in an attempt to free both colonizer and subaltern. Thus, this research has to be understood as one rooted in progressive thought that does not advocate a radical Afrocentric approach to education in Africa that would negate the undeniable worth of Western knowledge. Indeed, the latter has much relevance to the development of African societies. As a matter of fact, this study advocates the creation of an education system guided by the histories, pragmatic needs and challenges of place (see Freire, 1981) and extending to include other forms of epistemologies. In this respect, it supports, as mentioned earlier, the establishment of an interactive global space instead of a clash of epistemologies.

Freire's (1993) *Pedagogy* is geared towards "praxis" as it seeks to create that very space where the causes of oppression are object of *reflection* for grounded *action* for the liberation of oppressed/oppressor. Therefore, as product of dynamic thoughts and actions, such pedagogy constitutes an endless process of creation and recreation. However, oppression constructs hallucinative "reality" that alienates the consciousness of the

colonized and therefore delays subversive action. This “reality” and the internalization of the consciousness of the colonizer often lead the oppressed to reproduce the same structures of domination. The review of the Gold Coast educational history supports the Freirean perspective about power relations between the colonizer and the colonized, the de-humanizing effects of colonization and the reproduction of alienating educational structures in the Ghanaian post-colony as if to give reason to Clifford’s reminder that “there are no *post*-colonial cultures or places; *post* is always shadowed by *neo*” (1994, p. 328) [emphasis added].

Krishnamurti’s *Education and the Significance of Life* (1953) could be likened to Freire’s *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1993) as they both encourage an epistemological activism to systematically redefine education and the condition of the colonized. The transformation of education to meet learners’ experience, environment and challenges, according to both activists, represents a moral imperative to curb the dictatorship and homogenizing forces of Western capitalism that transforms education into a “straight-jacket” of conformity along the needs of capitalism. Thus, Krishnamurti (1953) regards education as a mold that creates homogenous individuals. Indeed, capitalism dictates the context within which learning operates; to be educated thus means to be part of the capitalist market in order to have access to the “safety” and “success” such system offers. Krishnamurti criticizes such “conformity” which he argues transforms people into programmed automata that follow the path to “success” that requires from them “little thought as possible” (p. 9). This form of education, according to Krishnamurti, prevents genuine creativity, understanding of the world and of learning as a dynamic activity

whose end result must be the improvement of the conditions of mankind and understanding of life rather than “competition” and “mutual destruction” (p. 13).

If in the *Moral Imperative of School Leadership*, Fullan (2003) reminds that the mission of schools is to promote success, the well-being of students and faculty, and the development of skills and qualities in the youths to be conscious citizens able to change a nation, Krishnamurti (1953) remarks that the failure of education stems from its insistence on “authority” to the detriment of free inquiry or independent thoughts (autonomy/agency). Thus, modern education creates a culture of “copy-pasting”, “mimicry” and subservience (Godwyll, 2008; Nyamnjoh, 2012; Dei, 2012) instead of “helping find individual vocation” (Krishnamurti, 1953, p. 54). Like Freire (1993), Krishnamurti (1953) advocates a “revolution” in order to dismantle the limiting and oppressive structures of modern education. If the target of education, according to Krishnamurti, is mankind and the significance of life, self-knowledge constitutes the primary step towards mankind’s liberation. Krishnamurti’s (1953) understanding of education supports the fact that education has to be invented and re-invented based on context and experience. It functions as a customized and customizable endeavor grounded in mankind and their emancipation. Thus, the decolonization of education simply stands as a natural need for adaptation of educational content and philosophies to the local environment, its cultural values, challenges and histories.

The decolonization of education in Africa and the affirmation of AIK in African schools require what Freire refers as “conscientização” or consciousness of the reality of oppression and taking action to meet the challenges of the milieu through transformative

education. It is also worth understanding that the difficulty in promoting AIK in African education is very much due to the fact that Africans also seek to be part of the world economy and to ensure their survival in an increasingly globalizing world driven by Western capitalist forces and education model. Therefore finding jobs is much easier with Western education as the latter is closely connected with the labor market. Thus, Western education represents pragmatic knowledge form that ensures the possibility for upward mobility and success, while, on the other side, AIK fails to be competitive. Therefore, the redefinition of the place of AIK in African education and Ghanaian education in particular and its rehabilitation as valid knowledge have to operate from a pragmatic perspective. African countries have to design their education models to provide relevant connection between indigenous knowledges and the labor market. In so doing, AIK would play determinant roles not just in education or academia but in the professions and careers of African populations.

The following inexhaustive or open-list of recommendations are offered to rehabilitate some aspects of AIK in African/Ghanaian education.

- African countries, such as Ghana should first deal with their problem of leadership in order to establish a peaceful environment and long-lasting democracy without which any educational reform would not be sustainable.
- Inclusion of the achievement of Africans and African knowledge forms and their contribution to world history and civilizations as part of primary and secondary school curricula.

- Engaging the community in school affairs so that learning can extend to families and society at large and the success of schools be considered shared responsibility.
- Visits to historical sites, such as slave castles and other physical colonial legacies as part of primary and secondary school programs.
- The involvement of indigenous guest speakers to teach indigenous languages, myths, philosophies, oral tradition, traditional medicine, plant science in order to preserve African indigenous capital in order to subvert African “cultural estrangement” with “cultural engagement” (Dei, 2012)
- More effective cooperation between African institutions of higher learning to allow the AAU (Association of African Universities) to meet its mission of involving African universities in national development. This cooperation would also create different centers within the continent and curb the phenomenon of “brain-drain” from Africa to European centers.
- Collaboration of African countries, education ministries, policy makers, education and development experts (local and international) in order to develop a framework of connecting AIK as relevant knowledge to the world of work, a function that so far has been monopolized by Western knowledge forms.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Research Questions

Part I – Education in Ghana from Colonial to Post Colonial

- 1- What is the place of Ghanaian Cultures in JHS/SHS curriculum?
- 2- What courses are offered on Ghanaian Indigenous knowledge in JHS/SHS?
- 3- What is the place of local languages in JHS/SHS?
- 4- What place holds the teaching of Africa/Ghanaian history in JHS/SHS?
- 5- What are the barriers that impede the inclusion of indigenous knowledge in JHS/SHS?
- 6- What are the textbooks used in JHS/SHS that emphasize local knowledge?

Part II: Influences of Euro-American epistemology on Ghanaian Education system?

- 1- What is/are the language(s) used as a medium of instruction in JHS/SHS?
- 2- What role plays local language(s), such as Fante in instruction in JHS/?
- 3- What is the perception of teachers of students speaking Fante on the school ground (JHS/SHS)?
- 4- What is/are the language(s) that students are more motivated to learn (JHS/SHS)?
- 5- What are students' behaviors when it comes to studying local languages, such as Fante (JHS/SHS)?

Part III: Strategies in the process of re-appropriation of national education

- 1- What are the actions initiated since independence for Ghana to reclaim its education?

- 2- What are the impacts of education reforms on the quality of learning and teaching in Ghanaian education?
- 3- Inclusion of oral traditions in JHS/SHS curriculum?
- 4- What courses are included in the curriculum to address Ghanaian socio-cultural realities in JHS/SHS?

Appendix B: Senior Secondary School (SHS) Curriculum

Details of the Existing Curricula of the SSS (SHS) (MOE, 2002)	
1) Core Subjects	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - English - Integrated Science - Mathematics - Social Studies 	
2) Programs	
In addition to the core subjects, students must offer one of the following course programs:	
<p>1) <u>Agriculture</u>: (required)</p> <p>Two or three of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Crop Husbandry and Horticulture</i> - <i>Animal Husbandry/Fisheries/Forestry</i> - Chemistry - Physics - Mathematics (elective) - French or Music 	<p>2) <u>Business</u>:</p> <p>A) Accounting Option</p> <p>Students are required to study:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction to Business Management - Accounting <p>Any one or two of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Business Mathematics and Principles of Costing - Economics - Mathematics (elective) - Typewriting - French or Music

<p>B) Secretarial Option</p> <p>Students are required to study:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction to Business Management - Typewriting <p>Any one or two of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Accounting - Business Mathematics and Principles of Costing - Economics - Literature-in-English - French or Music 	<p>3) <u>Technical Program:</u></p> <p>Student are required to study:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Technical Drawing <p>Two or three of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Metalwork</i> - <i>Woodwork</i> - Applied Electricity - Electronics - Auto Mechanics - Building Construction - Physics
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<p>4) <u>Vocational Program:</u></p> <p>A) Home Economics</p> <p>Students are required to study:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Management in Living</i> <p>Students choose 1 of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Foods and Nutrition</i> - <i>Clothing and Textiles</i> <p>Students may select any 1 or 2 of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Textiles</i> - <i>General Knowledge in Art</i> - Economics - French 	<p>B) Visual Arts Option:</p> <p>Students are required to study:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - General Knowledge in Art (requirement) <p>Students select 1 of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Graphic Design - Picture Making <p>Students select 1 of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Ceramics</i> - <i>Leatherwork</i> - <i>Sculpture</i> - <i>Basketry</i> - <i>Textiles</i> - <i>Jewelry</i> <p>In addition, any one of the following subjects may be selected:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - French - Music - Economics - Literature in English
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<p>5) General Program:</p> <p>A) Arts</p> <p>Students are required to study any three or four of the following subjects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Literature-in-English - French - <i>Ghanaian Language</i> (elective) - Christian religious Studies/Islamic Religious Studies/Traditional African Religion - Music - Economics - <i>Geography</i> - History - Governments - Mathematics (elective) - General Knowledge in Art 	<p>B) Science</p> <p>Students are required to study:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mathematics (elective) <p>Two or three of the following subjects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Physics - Chemistry - Biology - Technical Drawing - <i>Geography</i> - French or Music
<p>NB: Choice of subject will however depend on the subject being offered in the school.</p>	

Appendix C: Education Reform 2007 at a Glance

MAJOR HIGHLIGHTS

1. Universal Basic Education shall now be 11 years, made up of:
 - 2 years of Kindergarten
 - 6 years of Primary School
 - 3 years of Junior High School
2. The medium of instruction in Kindergarten and Lower Primary will be a Ghanaian language and English, where necessary.
3. At the basic level, emphasis shall be on literacy, Numeracy, Creative Arts and problem Solving Skills
4. After JHS, students may choose to go into different streams at Senior High School (SHS), comprising General Education and Technical, Vocational and Agricultural Education and Training (TVET) or enter into an apprenticeship scheme with some support from the government.
5. A new 4year SHS will offer General Education with electives in General, Business, Technical, Vocational and Agriculture options for entry into a tertiary institution or the job market.
6. Technical, Vocational and Agricultural Institutions will also offer 4 year courses including the core SHS subjects.
7. Teacher Training Colleges will be upgraded and conditions of service for teachers improved, with special incentives for teachers in rural areas.

8. Metropolitan, Municipal and district Assemblies (MMDAs) shall be responsible for the infrastructure, supervision and monitoring of Basic and Senior Schools.
9. A new National Inspectorate Board (NIB) outside the Ghana Education Service (*GERS) but under the Ministry of Education, Science and Sports (MOESS) shall be responsible for periodic inspection of Basic and Secondary Schools to ensure quality education.
10. Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FUBE) and cost sharing at Senior High and tertiary levels shall be maintained.
11. Educational services will be widened to include Library and Information, Guidance and counseling and Distance Education.
12. The Private Sector will be encouraged to increase its participation in the provision of educational services.
13. Greater emphasis will be put on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Science and Technology.
14. Special Needs Education will be improved at all levels.

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

1. At Kindergarten level, lessons will be learnt through play with emphasis on Numeracy and Creative Arts.
2. At lower Primary English, Basic Mathematical Skills,, Natural Science and dominant Ghanaian language of the area shall be taught.

3. At lower Primary the teaching of English and Ghanaian languages shall incorporate concepts of Religious and Moral Education, Science and Hygiene, Life Skills, Integrated Science and Citizenship Education.
4. At Upper Primary, subjects shall be the dominant Ghanaian language, English, Basic Mathematical Skills, Integrated Science and citizenship Education.
5. At the Primary level, Physical Education, Music, Dance and other Creative Arts shall be taught as practical subjects.
6. At junior High School, English, Mathematics, Social Studies, Integrated Science including Agricultural Science, a Ghanaian language, Technical , Vocational and Agricultural Education and Training (pre technical vocational) and French shall be taught.
7. Guidance and Counseling shall be offered to students at the JHS to enable them choose the right programmes to suit their interest and skills.
8. After JHS, there will be two parallel streams made up of General Education and Technical Education.
9. At the Senior High School (SHS) the core subjects shall be English Mathematics, Integrated Science, Social Studies and ICT.
10. In addition to the Core Subject at SHS, every school candidate must offer one of the following course programmes: Agriculture, Business, Technical, Vocational (Home Economics or Visual Arts), or General (Arts or Science).

11. For the Technical /Vocational/ Agriculture Education stream of SHS the following broad elective areas shall be offered; Building Trades, Business Studies, Electrical Engineering, Hospitality Trades, Mechanical Engineering and Agriculture.

12. Curriculum shall be developed to meet the needs of children and youth with special educational needs.

TEACHER EDUCATION

1. A National Teaching Council (NTC) shall coordinate and regulate teacher Education and Training programmes.

2. Education oriented universities shall be responsible for the certification of teachers.

3. Untrained teachers in Basic Schools will have access to remedial Courses through Distance Education.

4. Continues teacher development will be undertaken to upgrade and update the competencies and skills of serving teachers

5. Special attention will be given to the training of teachers in technical, Vocational, Agricultural, Special Needs Education, Guidance and Counseling, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and French.

6. Teacher training programmes for kindergarten teachers shall be developed

7. Conditions of service for teachers shall be improved

8. Open universities and distance learning colleges shall be established to trained and retrained teachers.

9. Curriculum on special needs education in teacher training colleges shall be enhanced to ensure early identification and effective management of children with special educational needs

EXTERNAL INSPECTORATE OF SCHOOLS

1. There shall be an independent national Inspectorate Board (NIB) to formulate, set and enforce standards in all pretertiary schools.

2. The NIB shall operate under the Ministry responsible for Education, and shall undertake an external evaluation of all first and second cycle institutions.

3. The NIB Secretariat shall be headed by a Chief Inspector of Schools

4. The NIB shall ensure that schools are inspected at least once every three years by trained Inspection Panels to ensure quality standards

5. The Inspection panels will liaise with Regional and District Directorates of Education, which will be responsible for all routine internal inspection and supervision.

6. The NIB shall make recommendations to the Minister on issues of quality assurance and set up mechanisms to enforce its recommendations.

7. The Board shall submit annual reports to the Minister and advise on the formulation and review of policy on quality education issues

8. The board will make public its annual findings on the state of education in the country.

TECHNICAL, VOCATIONAL AND AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (TVET)

1. TVET shall provide employment skills through and informal Apprenticeship, Vocational, Technical and Agricultural Institutes; Polytechnic and Universities.

2. PreTertiary TVET shall be provided at the following levels: technical Institutes (Agricultural Institutes, Vocational Institutes and Apprenticeship (formal and Informal).

It shall also be offered at the basic education and as elective subjects in secondary schools.

3. The council for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (COTVET) shall be established to develop policy coordinate and regulate all aspects of TVET.

4. Industry shall play a major role in all aspects of TVET

5. Technical Institute training shall produce craftsmen at intermediate and advanced levels, as well as technician levels of VOTVET qualification for the job market.

Interested graduates could further education at the Polytechnic level to take higher courses.

6. Vocational Institutes shall offer courses which will lead to tradesman, artisan and master crafts person levels of COTVET qualification for the job market.

Vocational Institute graduates could continue their education at technical Institutes level to take higher courses.

7. Agricultural Institutes shall offer courses which will lead to COTVET level qualification for the job market. Agricultural institute graduates could continue their education at higher level Agricultural Institutes.

8. There shall be two types of Apprenticeship training regulated by the national Apprenticeship Training Board:

a. formal scheme, to be made up of classroom and on the job training

b. On the job training (informal) under traditional master crafts person.

9. All TVET institutes, both public and private, shall be registered and accredited in order to operate.
10. The Competency Based Training (CBT) curriculum delivery methodology has been adopted for the TVET system. In this approach strong emphasis will be placed on students acquiring practical skills for employment.
11. The service conditions for TVET teachers shall be improved to attract qualified and experienced teachers from industry.
12. TVET shall be resourced and promoted as a viable alternative to general education.



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