



Theoretical Analyses

History of Psychology in Ghana Since 989AD

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Abstract

Psychology as taught in Ghanaian universities is largely Eurocentric and imported. Calls have been made to indigenize psychology in Ghana. In response to this call, this paper attempts to construct a history of psychology in Ghana so as to provide a background for the study of the content and process of what psychology would and/or ought to become in Ghana. It does so by going as far back as the University of Sankore, Timbuktu established in 989AD where intellectual development flourished in the ancient Empire of Mali through to the 1700s and 1800s when Black Muslim scholars established Koranic schools, paying particular attention to scholarly works in medicine, theology and philosophy. Attention is then drawn to Anton Wilhelm Amo's dissertation, *De Humanae Mentis "Apatheia" and Disputatio Philosophica Continens Ideam Distinctam* (both written in 1734) as well as some 18th and 19th century Ghanaian scholars. Special mention is also made about the contributions by the Department of Psychology at the University of Ghana (established in May 1967) in postcolonial Ghana as one of the first departments of psychology in Anglophone West Africa. The paper also discusses the challenges associated with the application of psychological knowledge in its current form in Ghana and ends by attempting to formulate the form an indigenous Ghanaian psychology could take.

Keywords: A. W. Amo, University of Sankore, Ghana, Africa, history of Psychology and Philosophy, Black Psychology, Bio-cultural theory of Personality Development

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To the serious study of the rising generation who, ignorant of the intellectual traditions and practice of our beloved country, have not seen the footprints of our great men on the sands of time; and do but faintly hear their "distant footsteps echo through the corridors of time", these brief memoirs are loyally and most affectionately commended.

S. R. B. Attoh Ahuma (1905, p. iii), Author, *Memoirs of West African Celebrities in Europe (1700 - 1850)*

In Africa, the teaching and practice of scientific Psychology by professional psychologists began in the mid-20th century. In Ghana, scientific Psychology evolved during the colonial era in an effort to supply educated Africans to serve colonial interests as it was in other African colonies (Nsamenang, 2007; Oppong, 2016a; Peltzer & Bless, 1989). In most African countries, psychology has been "fragmented and further undermined through incorporation into training service staff in education, health, and social and missionary work instead of developing as a separate professional or academic discipline" (Nsamenang, 2007, pp. 5-6). In British West

Africa, psychology was first introduced as a course in 1949 (Nsamenang, 2007; Oppong Asante & Oppong, 2012) while the first department of psychology was established in the region in 1964. It is reported that the first undergraduate psychology degree was awarded in 1967 and the first Master's degree in 1975 whereas the Doctorate in 1982 (Eze, 1991). The first laboratory of experimental psychology in Sub-Saharan Africa was also established in Zambia in 1965 (Nsamenang, 2007; Oppong Asante & Oppong, 2012).

Psychology in Ghana has since its beginning in 1967 been growing (at least in terms of the number of psychology graduates) to the current state of having three public universities and five private universities offering general psychology education or a branch and many private universities offering psychology as part of their business education curricula. University-level psychology training is offered at public universities such as University of Ghana, University of Cape Coast, and University of Education (Oppong, 2016a). The private universities offering degree programmes in psychology in Ghana include Methodist University College, Central University, Regent University College of Science and Technology, University of Applied Management-Accra Campus, and Lancaster University-Ghana Campus (Oppong, 2016a; Oppong Asante & Oppong, 2012; Oppong, Oppong Asante, & Kumaku, 2014). Notwithstanding this increasing number of universities and psychology students, psychology has had little impact on social and public policies with a number of people not knowing services offered by psychologists (Oppong, 2016a; Oppong Asante & Oppong, 2012; Oppong, Oppong Asante, & Kumaku, 2014).

It is worth noting that a discussion of psychology in Ghana will be inadequate if there is no discussion of the African context in which Ghana exists. Thus, this paper discusses the current zeitgeist in the study and application of psychology in Africa. Additionally, the paper seeks to contribute to the current understanding of the history of psychology in Africa and internationalization of the history of psychology.

There have been several calls on psychologists to indigenize their discipline in Africa in general (Andrews & Okpanachi, 2012; Carpenter & Kooistra, 2014; Nsamenang, 2007) and in Ghana in particular (Oppong Asante & Oppong, 2012; Oppong, Oppong Asante, & Kumaku, 2014; Oppong, 2013, 2016a). Andrews and Okpanachi (2012, p. 85) made the point more strongly when they suggested that "African people should think creatively from within and produce knowledge that is more in tune with an African context rather than depending on books, theories, and approaches from elsewhere". Similarly, it has been said that "across Africa, many psychologists voice a protest that there must be a way to make an African psychology that works from a distinctly African ontology and epistemology" (Carpenter & Kooistra, 2014, p. 23).

A good place to begin the indigenization is to have documented history that enables intellectual continuity. However, publications on the history of psychology hardly include a discussion of the history of psychology in Africa. For instance, Brennan (1998) discusses, in his introductory chapter, Hindu science and philosophies as well as some ancient Chinese philosophers. Murphy and Kovach (1972), on the other hand, exclude all discussions about psychology of non-Europeans but include a discussion of Soviet or Russian psychology. Leahey (1992) does same and even excludes a discussion of Russian psychology. Similarly, Schultz and Schultz (2012) also exclude any discussion of the history of psychology outside Western Europe and the US.

The pattern is not any different even when a non-European discusses the history of psychology. For example, in his text, *Psychology: Systems and Theories*, Mahmud (2007) excludes any discussion about history of African psychology but includes a chapter on Indian and Eastern thought. It may seem that the authors have

not faulted as their intention may have been to discuss the history of psychology within Western civilizations. It is equally possible that little information exists about the history of psychology in Africa.

This view is shared by African scholars in other disciplines. In his critical historiographical study of philosophy, [Chimuka \(2012\)](#) makes a convincing argument about how Africa and Africans are excluded from mainstream history of ideas and of philosophy. Specifically, [Chimuka \(2012, p. 1\)](#) wrote:

History of ideas is an account of the various ideas which have shaped human civilization. History of philosophy is a selective treatment of the genesis, development and transformation of philosophical ideas. Although there are many streams feeding into the History of Ideas, Western culture has been paraded as the nexus of human civilization – a cultural universal towards which the other cultures of the world were supposed to develop. This has resulted in a very narrow and pretentious picture of the history of philosophy. Significant other perspectives from other cultures, particularly from Africa were dismissed, appropriated without acknowledgement or simply held in contempt. In the process, a lot of the intellectual resources belonging to the non-Western world were not maximally utilized for the benefit of human kind.

It has also been pointed out that “a major shift in the writing of philosophy that was accompanied by the exclusion of Africa and Asia and concentration on ancient Greek as the one and only origin of philosophy” can be traced in the texts on history of philosophy produced towards the end of the 18th century, between 1780 and 1830 ([Graness, 2015, p. 82](#)). Indeed, these exclusionary tendencies have resulted in epistemic injustice against Africa and African philosophy ([Graness, 2015](#)), “a wrong done to someone specifically in their capacity as a knower” ([Fricker, 2007, p. 1](#)). “Since epistemic injustice is manifested in patterns of incredulity, misinterpretation, or silencing, the exclusion of a whole continent from the history of philosophy is certainly a profound epistemic injustice which has to be corrected”, argued, the University of Vienna philosopher, [Graness \(2015, p. 80\)](#).

Some historians of psychology have also denied the existence of any formal psychology in non-Western societies. For instance, [Murphy and Kovach \(1972, p. 7\)](#) indicate that Psychology in its more disciplined form “is by no means found in all cultures. In general, *there is not much systematic psychology in pre-literate society* (my emphasis)”. In fact, this denial of Psychology in other cultures enabled the authors to focus on the antiquity of only Western Psychology. This, indeed, is characteristic of David Hume and Immanuel Kant who both denied and ‘deprived’ Africans of *epistemic agency* – the ability to engage in and to create for oneself systematic knowledge to meet one’s needs (see [Oppong, 2015](#)). For instance, in the chapter, Of National Characters, [Hume \(1728/1826, p. 235\)](#) wrote that “And indeed there is some reason to think, that all the nations which live beyond the polar circles or between the tropics (my emphasis), are inferior to the rest of the species, and are incapable of all the higher attainments of the human mind”. [Hume \(1728/1826, p. 236\)](#) further argued that:

I am apt to suspect the Negroes to be naturally inferior to the Whites. There scarcely ever was a civilized nation of that complexion, nor even an individual, eminent either in action or speculation. No ingenious manufactures amongst them, no arts, no sciences...Not to mention our colonies, there are Negro slaves dispersed all over Europe, of whom none discovered any symptoms of ingenuity...In Jamaica, indeed, they talk of one Negro as a man of parts and learning; but it is likely he is admired for slender accomplishments, like a parrot who speaks a few words plainly.

As a result, the cardinal publications on history of psychology, inadvertently, lead to the perception that psychology in Africa only began with the encounter of Africa with Europeans. This is likely to be a false assumption given that every society has its own psychology which may not necessarily be in the form of present-day scientific Psychology. This is because every society has its philosophy and philosophy is psychology by other means (see [Hall, 1879](#)). I will return to this statement later.

[Chimuka \(2012, p. 14\)](#) has argued that “the study of history holds the key to emancipation from the dangers of the past” and that “historians must take up the cause of human emancipation in the way they write it”. Similarly writing on April 20, 1889 (in his preface to his book), Rev. Carl Christian Reindorf (1834-1917), the pioneer Ghanaian historian made similar remarks about the role of history and the purpose of history writing. It is worth noting that Reindorf first wrote the book in 1889 in Ga, one of the Ghanaian languages spoken predominantly in the capital, Akraⁱ (not Accra, as has been spelt wrongly over time, according to Reindorf, over centuries) and later translated and published in English in 1895.

In fact, his *History of the Gold Coast and Asante* also made him the first author of the “first comprehensive history of an important part of Africa written by a native and from the standpoint of a native”, according to J. G. Christaller in a Prefatory Remarks to [Reindorf's \(1889/1895, p. iv\)](#) book. [Reindorf \(1889/1895, p. iii – iv\)](#) wrote:

A history of the Gold Coast written by a foreigner would most probably not be correct in its statements, he not having the means of acquiring the different traditions in the country and of comparing them with those which he may have gathered from a single individual. Unless a foreigner writes what he witnesses personally, his statements will be comparatively worthless, as it is the case with several accounts of the Gold Coast already published. Hence it is most desirable that a history of the Gold Coast and its people should be written by one who has not only studied, but has had the privilege of initiation into the history of its former inhabitants and writes with true native patriotism.

After 121 years, [Reindorf's \(1889/1895\)](#) remarks about history is still true today and true in the specific case of intellectual history of psychology in Ghana. Indeed, he is one of the contributors to the field of historiography, though he has not yet received world acclaim in the history of historiography. However, recently, [Hauser-Renner \(2009, p. 69\)](#) has remarked that “Carl Christian Reindorf's *History of the Gold Coast and Asante* has a special place in West African historiography” and that “Reindorf's *History* is thus a significant source for studying the historiographical ideas of an African intellectual in the colonial situation”.

The purpose of this paper, therefore, is to respond to the call for constructing an African history of Psychology by providing insights into the intellectual history of modern or academic psychology using Ghana as a case. At this point, it is important to state that the history of formal academic psychology in Ghana extends beyond the current disciplinary boundaries and includes institutions (such as the University of Sankore) and practices (such as philosophical reflections on the nature of human soul) in Ghana's antiquity that have or may have influence on the current and future content and practice of psychology. Thus, the inclusion criterion is the focus on the timeless subject matter of human nature, human mind, human soul or human behaviour, regardless of the varying meanings assigned to them at various times in history. It also seeks to present a critical intellectual history as a forerunner to what might become psychology in Ghana and perhaps in the world. In order to achieve the purpose of this paper, I combine both the personalistic (great man) approach/theory and naturalistic (zeitgeist) approach of scientific history. The personalistic theory holds that advancement in science can be

credited to ideas, contributions, and achievements of specific individuals (Brennan, 1998; Leahey, 1992; Schultz & Schultz, 2012).

On the other hand, the naturalistic theory holds that progress in science is attributable to the intellectual climate of the time or the zeitgeist and the cultural context of a given epoch (Brennan, 1998; Leahey, 1992; Schultz & Schultz, 2012). Indeed, Reindorf (1889/1895, p. iii) defined history as

the methodical narration of events in the order in which they successively occurred, exhibiting the origin and progress, the causes and effects, and the auxiliaries and tendencies of that which has occurred in connection with a nation.

It is important to understand that the history of psychology in Ghana is also about the history of Ghana and the history of education in Ghana in a special way. In the ensuing paragraphs, a historical sketch is presented according to three different periods; these include before 1700s, 1700 to 1800s, and 1900s to date. The purpose is to structure the discussions around certain major events that can mark the transition from one period to the other.

Before discussing history of Psychology in Ghana, I will provide some basic information about the country and its location. Ghana is located along the western coast of Africa and bordered by Ivory Coast, Togo, Burkina Faso, and Gulf of Guinea (Atlantic Ocean) to the west, east, north and south respectively. Both longitude 0°(Greenwich Meridian) and latitude 0° (Equator) pass through Ghana's territory; geographically, this makes Africa and Ghana the centre of the Earth. Ghana was also the first sub-Saharan African nation to regain her independence in 1957 from the British. Ghana has a population of about 28 million and is classified as a lower middle-income country. Ghana is an oasis of peace, a beacon of democracy in Africa, and one of the conducive places for doing business in Africa. Ghana is also the home country of the former UN General-Secretary, Kofi Annan (see Oppong, 2013).

Before 1700s

The institutionalization of formal education in Africa, particularly higher education, can be traced to the establishment of the world's first university. Indeed, Africa is the home to the very first institution that can be described as a university. Historical records reveal that there was a world-class university in the old Mali Empire called University of Sankore at Timbuktu; this university was established in 989 AD in an area considered part of modern Mali (Center for African Studies, 2005; Cleaveland, 2008; Hunwick, 2005, 2008; Nicholson, Dezfuli, & Klotter, 2012).

From the 14th to 16th centuries, the University of Sankore is reported to have registered more foreign students than New York University in 2008 and attracted students from all over Africa (Cleaveland, 2008). For instance, it is reported that, in the 12th century, Timbuktu had a population of 100,000 and there were about 25,000 university students (Center for African Studies, 2005). The University of Sankore "acquired a universal reputation as a university of theology, law, philosophy, medicine, history, etcetera" (Windsor, 2003, p. 97). University of Sankore became the center of learning for both Africa and the 'Middle East' and had eminent scholars such as Ahmed Baba who wrote more than forty books on diverse subjects, and owned a 1,600 volume library in the sixteenth century (Zulu, 2006). bin Yahya al-Wangari (2008) also reported that scholars

from as far as Egypt, Morocco, Iraq, and Spain were invited to teach at University of Sankore in the old West African empire.

The university had four levels within its curriculum (Nyanhoga, 2014). These were the "Circle of Knowledge", the "Superior Degree", the "Secondary Degree", and the "Primary Degree". The descriptions of these levels have been summarized in Table 1.

Table 1

Descriptions of Degree Levels at the University of Sankore

Level	Description
Primary Degree: Qur'anic School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Memorization of the Qur'an • Mastering of Arabic grammar • Mastering effective writing • Instruction in basic science
Secondary Degree: General Studies Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advanced studies of Islamic Sciences: grammar, commentaries of the Qur'an, prophetic narrations, jurisprudence, mathematics, geography, history, Islamic schools of thought, physics, astronomy, and chemistry • Learning of a trade and business ethics: business, carpentry, farming, fishing, construction, shoemaking, tailoring, and navigation
Superior Degree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly specialized learning where students were guided by professors and it took about ten years • Supervision of a Sheik (Master) to guide students in this higher stage of learning. • Researching and oral defence of findings in the presence of professors and other students • Graduates were required to serve as good Islamic mentors/models for future generations • It was equivalent to a doctoral degree
Circle of Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students who impressed their teachers were admitted to circle of knowledge and became tenured professors • Comprised a committee made up of scholars and professors • Members demonstrated the deepest understanding of the Qur'an and allied manuscripts • Members deliberated on issues relating to Islam and government • The Circle was frequently consulted by government for advice • Members researched issues and shared their perspectives on the issues with the circle. • The Circle issued a "Fatwa" or a legal Islamic ruling that government must comply with.

Note. Source: Adapted from Center for African Studies (2005) and Nyanhoga (2014).

In other words, the levels within the curriculum of the ancient University of Sankore can be likened to contemporary university education. This is summarized in Table 2. It has also been reported that graduating students were awarded a turban representing the recognition of their divine obligation to assume, with their education, the responsibilities of Islam (Center for African Studies, 2005). This tradition is equivalent to the wearing of gowns/robes and crowning with academic cap. This academic tradition could be traced to this tradition at the University of Sankore. However, others trace it to the 12th century Christian tradition of the clergy wearing religious regalia and that the mortarboard cap is considered a direct descendent of the biretta which was worn by Catholic priests (Padden, 2014). Regardless of the controversy, it can be said that academic regalia has a religious root.

Table 2

Equivalence of University of Sankore and Contemporary University Systems

University of Sankore	Contemporary University System
Primary degree	Bachelor's degree
Secondary degree	Master's degree
Superior degree	Doctoral degree
Circle of knowledge	Postdoctoral fellowship, research productivity and attainment of professorial status

Note. Source: Author's own construct.

It is important to note that psychology in its modern form was not taught at the University of Sankore. However, philosophy and medicine were taught. These subjects have been described as the precursors to modern psychology (Bewaji, 2004; Leahey, 1992; Murphy & Kovach, 1972). Thus, students at the University of Sankore might have been exposed to concepts and ideas similar to what their European counterparts learnt prior to the establishment of an experimental laboratory by Wilhelm Wundt in 1879 (Leahey, 1992; Murphy & Kovach, 1972). It needs to be emphasized here that scientific psychology as taught and practiced today may not have been studied. However, the consensus is that modern Psychology has evolved over time from the ancient through the medieval to the modern period (Brock, 2014a; Vidal, 2014). This is to say that there were intellectual developments that can logically be placed within the historical evolution of psychology in Africa as was the case in Europe. This paper, therefore, seeks to demonstrate that the educational experience at the University of Sankore can be understood as part of the pre-scientific history of psychology just as there is pre-scientific history of Western psychology whose end is often marked by the establishment of Wundt's laboratory (Ettinger & Spires, 2008; Leahey, 1992; Murphy & Kovach, 1972).

The connection between philosophy and psychology and the teaching of these subjects is a complex one. In the late 1800s, Hall (1879) decried that the teaching of psychology had been eliminated from the study of philosophy in the US. He argued that while the method of philosophical indoctrination was predominant, the open questions of psychology and metaphysics were de-emphasized.

Hall (1879) also bemoaned the prestige attached to philosophy without science as opposed to philosophy that encourages experimentation including psychology. This implies that the early psychologists including Hall may have considered their science just another approach to doing philosophy rather than a separate science. This also shows that psychology was only considered as one of the approaches to the study of philosophy. Hatfield (2002) makes this point more clearly. He wrote:

In the literature of the history of psychology there has been considerable examination of the situation in German universities during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, where the philosophers and psychologists were battling over the appointment of experimental psychologists to chairs in philosophy. Such appointments were an outgrowth of the fact that from the late sixteenth century the discipline called 'psychology' had been taught by philosophers (who also taught logic, natural philosophy, moral philosophy, and metaphysics) (p. 219).

Perhaps, it is also important to draw the attention of contemporary psychologists to the forgotten, unknown or unrecognized role of philosophers themselves in driving psychology out of the philosophy departments. Kusch (1995, 2015, 2016) acknowledges that the prevailing anti-psychologicistic arguments in the 1800s as

represented by the ideas of Gottlob Frege and Edmund Husserl played a major role in displacing psychology out of philosophy in Germany. [Kusch \(2015\)](#) summarizes the psychologistic arguments as the position that logic is part of and must be based on psychological science. This gave the psychologists the right to be in the philosophy departments to teach logic. [Kusch \(2016\)](#) argues that the anti-psychologistic arguments of Frege and Husserl were targeted at psychologistic philosophers including Wilhelm Wundt at the time.

Indeed, Wundt's *Outlines of Psychology* published in 1896 argued that psychology is of relevance to philosophy (as cited in [Danziger, 1979](#)). In the case of Australia as well, [Hills \(2016, para. 6\)](#) reports that:

Prior to 1944 Australian psychologists wishing to affiliate with a professional body belonged to the Australian Association of Psychology and Philosophy. Psychology's accelerating move towards a more scientific approach meant that a split with philosophy was inevitable and since both groups felt that the Society was more philosophical than psychological it was psychology that moved out.

Thus, in the case of Australian psychologists, the philosophers also played an active role of the moving out of psychology of the society. This suggests that it cannot simply be true that psychologists by themselves fought for their separation from philosophy; in fact, psychologists were considered nuisance in the philosophy departments. It is quite possible that psychology would have remained part of philosophy for a long time, if there was an accommodating home at the philosophy departments. This is the untold or unknown story. This does not in any way play down the philosophical tussle between Wundt in one camp and Oswald Külpe (a former laboratory assistant to Wundt), Hermann Ebbinghaus and Edward B. Titchener in another camp, inspired by the new philosophy of positivism associated with Ernst Mach and Avenarius (as cited in [Danziger, 1979](#)). The philosophical debates centred around whether psychology should be a natural science (Külpe-Ebbinghaus-Titchener argument) or it should be both a natural science and a social science (Wundtian argument). It is said that the Külpe-Ebbinghaus-Titchener argument won at the time and established psychology as an experimental science (as cited in [Danziger, 1979](#)). However, current developments in psychology today show that Wundtian argument eventually won.

What was the relationship among philosophy, theology, and psychology? [Hall \(1879\)](#) suggested that philosophy and theology are related and united through the philosophers studied and the teachers of philosophy in the 1800s. Specifically, he intimated that the study of theology involved the study of philosophy, as many of the philosophers the students of his era studied had philosophical positions on theology. This suggests that theology is also the study of philosophy with a different philosophical question or focus, faith and God. On the matter of the relationship among psychology, philosophy and theology, [Hatfield \(2002, p. 220\)](#) wrote that

During the course of the [nineteenth] century, and especially after the Civil War, instruction in science in [the United States] had increased at major schools, including Harvard College with its Lawrence Scientific School and the University of Pennsylvania with its Towne School. By contrast, both philosophy and psychology were typically taught by a man with religious credentials (often a reverend), who served as Provost or Vice Provost of the college or university.

That psychology is one of the approaches to the study of philosophy can also be deduced from the fact that there is an overlap between the scope of psychology and philosophy. [Pence \(2000, p. 42\)](#) defines philosophy as "the study of the most abstract and general questions about the world, and how we think, experience and should behave". Put another way, philosophy involves the search for truth about human nature, nature of the world/reality, and human interactions with the world and other humans ([Granness, 2016](#); [Keller, 2006](#)); it

comprises metaphysics (study of the nature of reality, of what exists in the world, what it is like, and its order), epistemology (study of knowledge) and ethics (study of what we ought to do and what would be best to do). On the other hand, psychology is the scientific study of human behaviour or human nature (Ettinger & Spires, 2008; Myers, 2001).

The similarities between philosophy and psychology are summarized in Table 3. Thus, the study of philosophy is necessarily psychology by other means. This also shows that scholars at the University of Sankore studying theology, mathematics, and philosophy also studied psychology by other means. By other means, I refer to the use of arguments rather than experiments to resolve philosophical questions about human nature.

Table 3

Overlap Between the Scope of Psychology and Philosophy

Scope	Philosophy	Psychology
Human nature	Metaphysics, ethics (philosophy of religion, philosophy of mind, etc.)	Sensation, perception, cognition, intelligence, memory, emotions, learning, consciousness, human development, individual differences, biological basis of human behaviour
Nature of the world/reality	Metaphysics; epistemology (philosophy of science, political philosophy, philosophy of the arts, etc.)	Philosophy of science, research methods, parapsychology
Human interactions with the world and other humans	Metaphysics, ethics (philosophy of feminisism, philosophy of law, philosophy of language, etc.)	Social psychology, environmental psychology

Note. Source: Author's own construct.

As noted earlier, psychology existed and was taught in Africa's ancient university. For instance, Yang (2012) distinguishes among folk, philosophical, and scientific psychologies. According to Yang (2012, p. 3), folk psychology refers to "the ordinary psychological views, assumptions, beliefs, concepts, conjectures, theories, preferences, norms, and practices that have been naturally and gradually acquired through socialization and that are commonly held by the general population of a society" while philosophical psychology is "the formal systems of psychological thought as proposed by a society's philosophers". He again defined scientific psychology as "a psychological knowledge system constructed by academic or expert psychologists using scientific methodology" (ibidem). This means that both folk and philosophical psychologies were taught and practised at the University of Sankore.

Leahey (1992) makes an important argument that also shows that psychology has always existed in all societies except that it scientific psychology has not always been universal. He argues that "for thousands of years men and women got along without the benefit of scientific psychology...psychology has flourished without science. People effectively describe, predict, explain and even control their behaviour without knowing any so-called science at all" (p. 30). Leahey (1992) added that scientific psychology encounters rivals such as dualism and folk psychology in its attempts to achieve its goals. In particular, dualist orientation is that there are immaterial beings such as God, gods, angels, and demons which control our behaviour whereas the scientific psychology based on naturalism holds that all human behaviours have natural causes. Leahey (1992, p. 31) defined folk psychology as the explanation of behaviour "in a framework of beliefs and desires".

If the goals of psychology are to describe, explain, predict, and control human behaviour (Ettinger & Spires, 2008) and both folk psychology and religion seek to do the same, then theology (religious studies) and folk psychology, in essence, also involve psychology, at least in terms of its subject matter which is nature of human mind or soul. Perhaps, theology is the study of psychology without science as well. Indeed, Murphy and Kovach (1972, p. 5) were right when they suggested that psychology “as an organized discipline, aimed at understanding experience and behaviour of human beings, is a very late development”. It is worth noting that “although Wundt is considered to have founded psychology, he did not originate it. We have seen that psychology emerged from a long line of creative efforts” (Schultz & Schultz, 2012, p. 67).

Recently, a Vienna-based philosopher, Graness (2016) has suggested that western or Greek philosophy has its antiquity in ancient Egypt in Africa as it was the source of Greek philosophy which later became Western philosophy. Thus, from the Early Kingdom (Dynasty 1-2 circa 3030-2665 BCE) to the Late Kingdom (Dynasty 25-30 circa 664-332 BCE), philosophy existed in ancient Egypt which has been argued to be a Black culture as it predates the arrival of the Arabs in the present-day Egypt (Graness, 2016; James, 1954; Snowden, 1983; Zulu, 2009). For instance, Snowden (1983) reported that “Upon their return to Greece, mercenaries doubtlessly related to friends what they had seen and heard about the history of the Ethiopians, once rulers of Egypt”. It is important to note that the ancient Greeks referred to black people as Aethiopia or Ethiopia (Snowden, 1983). Indeed, Graness’s (2016) discussion of “*The Dialogue of a Man with his Soul*” as one of the three extant philosophical texts from the Middle Kingdom (Dynasty 11-12 circa 2040-1650 BCE) is an indication that the concept of “soul” existed in ancient Black Egypt. This makes Africa the birthplace of the ancient ideas which served as the precursor of modern, scientific psychology’s concept of the mind. There is good reason, therefore, for one to begin a discussion of history of psychology from ancient Black Egypt philosophy in Africa rather than from ancient Greek philosophy.

Philosophy and psychology were not limited to academic exploration. Indeed, the higher level of academic exploration is really an expansion of a more fundamental philosophy and psychology. Evidence of this fundamental philosophical and psychological thought is evident from examination of African proverbs. For instance, Appiah, Appiah, and Agyeman-Duah (2007) have compiled about 7,000 of such proverbs of the Akan people of Ghana which address every aspect of life of the Akan person. These proverbs are as indeed as old as the Akan people. According to Wingo (2008, para. 1), the culture of the Akan people of West Africa

...dates from before the 13th century. Like other long-established cultures the world over, the Akan have developed a rich conceptual system complete with metaphysical, moral, and epistemological aspects. Of particular interest is the Akan conception of *persons*, a conception that informs a variety of social institutions, practices, and judgments about personal identity, moral responsibility, and the proper relationship both among individuals and between individuals and community.

This is an indication that philosophy (and by extension psychology) has also been part of African culture. This also shows that it is scientific psychology which may be considered an imported entity into Africa. Thus, what scientific psychology has done in Africa is to provide systematic methods that African psychologists can employ to resolve their philosophical questions on the nature of human mind and behaviour without resorting to logical arguments. Indeed, this also implies that the study of psychology is the study of philosophy by other means.

The transition from the University of Sankore to the 1700s is also unclear due to incomplete records. However, the first Europeans (Portuguese) arrived in the present-day Ghana in 1471 (Assimeng, 1999; Decorse & Spiers,

2009; Fynn, 1975). Missionary work and trade with the indigenes followed suit until the Bond of 1844 was signed on March 6, 1844 between the coastal states and the Asante kingdom with Commander Hill of the British Empire facilitating it (Fynn, 1975). Indeed, that marked the beginning of British imperial interest in the Gold Coast but it was in 1902 that the Gold Coast effectively became a British colony amid resistance (Fynn, 1975). Until 1902, the British were merely traders fighting other Europeans for monopoly over trade and trying to impose their rule on the unwilling people of the Gold Coast. From 1471 to 1882 when the Gold Coast Education Ordinance was enacted, formal education in the Gold Coast largely involved missionaries and evangelical work (Fynn, 1975).

It is also important to note that religion or theology, healing, and philosophy were and continued to be taught together. This happened at the University of Sankore. To this extent, it is possible to suggest that African scholars and students at the university studied psychology in terms of its subject matter, nature of human mind and behaviour. In a study on the contributions of early Muslim scholars and challenges to contemporary Muslim psychologists, Haque (2004, p. 358) examined “the Muslim contributions to psychology until the 10th century or about 400 years after Prophet's death”. He concluded that “early Muslim scholars wrote extensively in the area of human psychology, although, the term ‘psychology’ did not exist at that time and such endeavors were mostly a part of philosophical writings” (p. 358).

Hall (1879) argued that those who taught philosophy in the US in most part of 1870s were individuals who originally received training in theology. Again, it has also been reported that “most philosophical writers and teachers were clerics, nurtured on church doctrine and subject to church discipline” (Ebenstein, 2002, p. 119). Similarly, *Summa Theologica* written by St. Thomas Aquinas (1225 – 1275) in the 13th century was “prescribed as a text of theology in Catholic universities and academies authorized to grant academic degrees and doctorates in philosophy” (Ebenstein, 2002, p. 127). In a similar vein, St. Augustine's (345 – 322 B.C) *The City of God* has been considered an important introduction to political philosophy (Ebenstein, 2002). This implies theological or religious studies also involved philosophical studies. Indeed, the interaction between philosophy and theology gave birth to scholasticism (Brennan, 1998), a philosophical exercise in which human reason coexists with faith in the search for truth. Aquinas and Augustine are two examples of such scholastic philosophers (see Leahey, 1992). If philosophy is the study of psychology by other means and theology is the study of philosophy by other means, then philosophy and theology or religious studies both involve the study of psychology by other means.

Gyekye (2009, p. 2) summarizes the relationship between science (including psychological science) and religion as follows:

The two enterprises – religion and science – are related in that they both have perspectives on reality, even though their interpretations of reality differ in several ways...

He further adds that “Religion and science are different languages that ultimately express the same reality” (Gyekye, 2009, p. 10).

Ackah (2013) has also demonstrated that the philosophical and scientific works of the pre-Socratics had theological origins. In particular, he showed that rational or natural theology – the arguments about the nature of God and the supernatural derived from the premises of the observed or observable natural phenomena or processes – served as the basis for both Western philosophy and science during the pre-Socratic era. As Lauer

(2013) has also argued, it is entirely a fruitless exercise to demarcate any knowledge tradition by timescale. For instance, the pre-Socratic philosophy is known to have influenced the subsequent post-Socratic era (Lauer, 2013). This implies that theology, philosophy and science (including psychology) have also been related and would continue to be related even if not as directly as before. Again, James (1954) argued that the origin of Greek philosophy, ancient Egypt philosophy, has its origin in ancient Egypt religious practices as the priest of the Secret Order were the teachers of philosophy. Existence of ancient Egypt philosophy has been supported through analysis of ancient Egypt manuscripts by Graness (2016), an Austrian philosopher based at the University of Vienna. He has also alluded indirectly to influence of such philosophy on Greek philosophy.

What deductions can we make in relation to the training of traditional healers in Ghana? Lilford (2010, p. 5) has intimated that “African knowledge systems blur the disciplinary boundaries which have been a feature of European education since Aristotle. Medicine, theology, psychology, music, dance and poetry were all features of healing”. Similarly, Adu-Gyamfi (2010) has suggested that the training of traditional healers involved studies in herbal knowledge and theology or religious studies (studies of the levels and forms of beliefs and practices in African traditional religion as well as ethics). That theology also involved philosophical studies means that the training received by traditional healers also involved the study of the philosophy of their people. Given that philosophy is the study of psychology by other means, it can be concluded that traditional healers were also exposed to psychology of the people, at least in terms of the subject matter of human soul or human nature. An important fact is that traditional medicine or healing predates Africa’s encounter with Europe (Adu-Gyamfi, 2010). This, in itself, suggests that Ghanaians taught philosophy as it related to religion and healing practices. Indeed, this was a similar occurrence in the training of priests in ancient Black Egypt (James, 1954). Regardless of the label used, philosophy and psychology have always been part of the knowledge systems of Africans in general and Ghanaians in particular even before Western style education arrived in Africa.

So what is the connection of University of Sankore to modern-day Ghana? Historical sources indicate that the predecessors (or ancestors) of majority of modern-day Ghanaians migrated southwards to their current settlements from the ancient empires in Western Africa. For instance, the Akan people of modern Ghana migrated southwards from the city of Walata (Windsor, 2003) or Wangara (Ellis, 1887) of old Ghana Empire. Other sources only indicate the Akans migrated from the Sahara Desert in the wake of the collapse of the old Ghana Empire (Reindorf, 1889/1895). Historical records reveal that, in the city of Walata in the old Ghana Empire, “the people did not trace their descent from a paternal head but from the maternal brother. An individual bequeathed this legacy to his sister’s sons” (Windsor, 2003, p. 91). Among the people of modern West Africa, the Akans are the only group of persons who trace their descent to the maternal head (Ellis, 1887; Nukunya, 2003; Reindorf, 1889/1895). Given the consensus that the Akans migrated southwards from the old Ghana Empire and Walata rather than Wangara was a city in the Empire (Davidson & Buah, 1967), it is reasonable to believe that the Akans actually migrated to their current settlement in modern Ghana from Walata. Again, Mali Empire within which the University of Sankore flourished also only came into being after the fall of the Ghana Empire (Windsor, 2003). It is important to note that Akans constitute almost half of the population of modern-day Ghana (Central Intelligence Agency, 2016).

It is, therefore, likely that the Akan people and other ethnic groups of modern Ghana had had encounters with the scholars from the University of Sankore or some of them may have even studied at the university. The Akans or other ethnic groups who travelled to Sankore may have, formally or informally, brought the teachings back to their homeland or because the Malian empire was so influential that its philosophy influenced all of the

peoples around it. Regardless of the nature of encounter, the knowledge produced at the University of Sankore might have influenced the life of the people of Walata and therefore the Akans or the other ethnic groups of modern Ghana.

Another explanation is that of a direct interaction between Timbuktu scholars and the people of Gold Coast (or Ghana) through trade. Historical records suggest that Mande traders (in gold and kola nuts and later slaves) associated with the Mali Empire settled in the Akan forest of Begho, near Wenchi (in the Gold Coast) in the early 15th century (Hiskett, 1984). The growth of Begho resulted in a trade route linking it to Jenne and Timbuktu through to North Africa (Dumbe, 2013). The Mande scholarly community in Timbuktu is reported to have arrived in Dagbon (in northern Ghana) around 1700 C.E. (Dumbe, 2013). In the 1700s, a university town of Moliyili was founded outside Yendi (in Dagbon) “with clerical hierarchy administering educational centres” (Lauer, 2013, p. 168). There also emerged another notable trading centre called the Salaga Market in the Gonjaland (in northern Ghana) through the trading activities of the Hausa Muslims in 1775 (Dumbe, 2013). It became the largest trading centre in West Africa and attracted trades from Timbuktu, Borno and Hausaland. In the wake of the decline of the Salaga Market in 1892, Muslim traders relocated to the newly emerging trading centres of the Gold Coast such as Akra (or Accra), Atebubu, Kete Karachi, Kintampo, Yeji and Techiman (Abass, 2005, as cited in Dumbe, 2013). Besides, some of the scholars among the Muslim traders ended up as administrative bureaucrats (scribes, medical staff, advisors, and ambassadors) in the royal courts of many of the northern kingdoms (especially the Dagbon and Gonja) and forest kingdoms (especially Asante) of the Gold Coast. This practice, indeed, was similar to the Islamic influence in the ancient kingdoms of Ghana and Songhay. For instance, Dumbe (2013, p. 27) reports that “Beginning from 1816–1820, Muslim scholars played roles in Ashanti’s government as court scribes and keeping records on trade and on matters relating to wars”. A *madrasa* (school) is reported to have already been established in the early 1800s at Buna, west of the Black Volta (in the Gold Coast) to train Ashanti civil servants under the stewardship of Abd Allah b. al-Hajj Muhammad al-Watarawi which attracted scholars from as far as Senegambia (Hiskett, 1984).

Given that commerce often leads to cross-fertilization of knowledge and ideas (Brennan, 1998; Dumbe, 2013; Graness, 2016; Murphy, & Kovach, 1972; Reindorf, 1889/1895; Windsor, 2003) which then makes it difficult to talk about distinct knowledge tradition (Lauer, 2013), it is plausible to suggest that Akan philosophy (or ethno-philosophies in the Gold Coast), for example, influenced and was influenced by the knowledge brought from the University of Sankore by the Timbuktu scholars to the Gold Coast (or Ghana). There are still Koranic schools in the present-day Ghana which continue to be influenced by the knowledge practices brought from the University of Sankore. This implies that African philosophy as spearheaded by Kwesi Wiredu and other Ghanaian philosophers could be said to be influenced by Islamic philosophy, science and theology. This is because Akan philosophy which has served as a key source and starting base of African philosophy has been influenced by and also influenced the Islamic philosophy brought from the University of Sankore. Thus, Ghanaian philosophy and folk psychology have been influenced by three forces, namely: indigenous thought including ancient Black Egypt thought, Islamic thought and Christian thought.

In essence, knowledge produced at the University of Sankore arrived in the Gold Coast in the 1400s (Hiskett, 1984) before the first European school was set up in 1529 by the Portuguese and before Anton Wilhelm Amo, the 18th century Ghanaian philosopher-psychologist, was even born. What will be interesting to know is the kind of scholarly interactions (direct or indirect) that may have existed between the returnee scholar (Amo) in

1747 and the travelling Mande Muslim Scholars who, in the 1700s, had created a university town in Dagbon in the northern territories of the Gold Coast.

The nature of the knowledge produced at the University of Sankore can be said to have made both pre-modern and modern contributions to psychology. Brock (2014a, p. 717) has demonstrated that 1500 marked the beginning of modern history and therefore “any psychology that existed after this date can be legitimately described as ‘modern’ ... there was no psychology prior to 1500”. It is important to also note that the pre-Socratics such as Aristotle studied in Africa (Ahuma, 1905; James, 1954; Lauer, 2013); for instance, pre-Socratic Greek philosophers such as Plato, Eudoxus, Aristotle, Archimedes, Euclid, Pythagoras, Proclus, and Herodotus are all known to have studied in Egypt and have made references in their works to their teachers in Africa (Ahuma, 1905; James, 1954; Lauer, 2013). It is worth also noting that it was the Arab Muslims who also ‘preserved the writings of the ancients [pre-Socratic Greek philosophers] at a time when scholarly works were being destroyed by the barbarian aggression in the West’ and even extended the knowledge they borrowed (Brennan, 1998, p. 47).

West African Muslim Scholars participated in the translation of some of the Arabic manuscripts into English in the 1700s. For instance, a West African prince and a Muslim scholar, Job Ben Solliman (the son of the king of Bunda on the Gambia) who was captured as slave in 1730s and sold in the US and later in the UK translated “several manuscripts and inscriptions upon medals into English” (as cited in Ahuma, 1905, p. 41). Indeed, scientific knowledge at any given point in time is cumulative (Lovett, 2006).

Mayr (1990) intimates that “in a succession of theories dealing with the same scientific problem each step benefits from the new insights acquired by the preceding step and builds on it” (p. 302). Given that the University of Sankore attracted scholars from far and near including the Middle East and Egypt, it is not out of place to think that the psychological knowledge (as it relates to the subject matter of human soul or human nature) in the Middle East was also studied at the university and has contributed to psychology as we know it today. It also shows that psychological knowledge (as it relates to human nature) was also produced and transmitted by the Timbuktu and Hausa Muslim scholars from the 1700s in the Gold Coast as it was an integral part of the curriculum at the University of Sankore (see Table 1).

1700 – 1800s

To discuss the intellectual works in Ghana’s antiquity that bordered on philosophical reflections on questions of human mind or soul in the 1700s, a brief biography of the Anton Wilhelm Amo (1703 – 1784) is presented first followed by a discussion of his influence on contemporary Ghanaian scholars (Oppong, 2015). Anton Wilhelm Amo was an Nzema belonging to the Akan people of Ghana (Oppong, 2015); Nzema is sub-group within the Akan ethnic group in Ghana. Amo was born in Awukena in the Axim region of present-day Ghana (Ahuma, 1905; Bemile, 2002; Oppong, 2015). He was taken to Germany as a child, studied at the Universities of Halle (1727 – 1729) and Wittenberg (1730 – 1734) in Germany and later taught at Universities of Wittenberg (1734 – 1736), Halle (1736 – 1739), and Jena (1740 – 1747) in Germany (Ahuma, 1905; Bess, 1989). At the University of Jena, it is reported that he had lecture series titled “Frontiers of Psychology” which was announced in 1739 and returned home to the Gold Coast in 1747 (Rashidi, 2014).

He received his Doctor in Philosophy and Psychology in 1734 at the University of Wittenberg (Abraham, 2004; Ahuma, 1905; Amo, 1734/2012; Bemile, 2002; Bess, 1989; Blakeley, 1997; Jahn, 1968). Emma-Adamah (2015) reported that on the 29th of May 1734, Amo presided over a disputation he wrote and delivered by one of his students, Johannes Theodosius Meiner. The disputation, “*Disputatio Philosophica Continens Ideam Distinctam Eorum Quae Competunt Vel Menti Vel Corpori Nostro Vivo Et Organico Quam Consentiente Amplissimorum Philosophor Ordine*” (A Philosophical Disputation Containing a Distinct Idea of Those Things that Belong Either to the Mind or to Our Living Organic Body, Which is the Consent of the Most Distinguished Order of Philosophers), “evidently builds upon the physiology and conception of mind laid out in the *Humanae Mentis Apatheia*, and focuses on a theory of the mind’s operation in cognition and sensation” (Emma-Adamah, 2015, p. 60).

At the University of Halle, Amo compiled his lectures into his magnum opus “*Tractatus de arte sobrie et accurate philosophandi*” or “*Treatise on the Art of Philosophizing Soberly and Accurately*” which was published in Halle in 1738 (Abraham, 2004; Bemile, 2002; Blakeley, 1997; Jahn, 1968; Oppong, 2015). “This work became the standard in its genre” (Bess, 1989, p. 391). Bemile (2002) reports that Amo’s *Treatise* was a book about the theory of cognition and/or epistemology in which Amo urged that one should take truth for authority rather than authority for truth.

Indeed, Tyson, Jones, and Elcock (2011) have suggested that psychology is not an objective, value-free science but rather a reflexive science in which there is always an ongoing interaction between discipline of psychology and its social context. Tyson et al. (2011) argue that “psychologists’ own psychology influences what they do and what kinds of claims they produce” (p. 27). In other words, the everyday psychology of the psychologist, his/her indigenous knowledge, his/her experiential knowledge and his/her expert psychological knowledge always interact with one another on continuous basis. We can, therefore, argue that everyday psychology is deeply embedded in the indigenous knowledge, experiential knowledge and expert knowledge. This implies that whatever psychology and/or philosophy Amo espoused, it is likely that it was a product of his socio-cultural background as a Ghanaian or an African.

Who is the father of Psychology in Ghana then? Historical records indicate that on October 10, 1730 Amo obtained a magister in philosophy and went on to study, among others disciplines, pneumatology (the study of spiritual beings and soul and which is considered the mother of modern psychology) at the University of Wittenberg, receiving a degree in medicine and science in 1734 (Bemile, 2002; Bewaji, 2004). According to Haque (2004, p. 372),

Earlier, in the 14th century, *psychologia* referred to a branch of *pneumatologia*, the study of spiritual beings and substances and in the 16th century, the term *anthropologia* was coined that branched off into *psychologia*, the study of human mind and *somatologia*, the study of human body. In the 18th century, the influence of empiricism and rationalism paved the way for scientific psychology.

Given that pneumatology is the precursor of modern psychology, Amo ought to be regarded as the “Father of Psychology” in Ghana as well as the “Father of Black Psychology” as Amo’s study in pneumatology predates the award of Ph.D. in psychology in 1920 to Francis Cecil Sumner, the first African American to receive a Ph.D. in psychology (Sawyer, 2000).

Additionally, Amo's doctoral dissertation, *De Humanae Mentis "Apatheia"* (On the Absence of Sensation in the Human Mind and its Presence in our Organic and Living Body) published in 1734, which was a critique of Descartes's dualism (Duodu, 2006; Gordon, 2008; King, 2004; Liukkonen, 2008), present additional evidence that Prof Amo deserves that credit of Father of Psychology in Ghana, Father of Black Psychology and even considered among the founding philosophers of Psychology in general. Indeed, Emma-Adamah (2015) described Amo's *De Humanae Mentis "Apatheia"* and *Disputatio* as reflecting his philosophical psychology.

According to Bemile (2002), Amo drew evidence from the fields of philosophy and medicine in preparing his thesis, the two fields which are considered the roots of modern psychology. Though Amo accepts that there is something we might call a mind, he maintained the argument that it is the body that perceives and feels as opposed to the mind; this is a philosophical view espoused by another Ghanaian philosopher, Kwasi Wiredu, 249 years later. The crux of Amo's (1734/2012) argument is that: *the human mind does not sense material things nor is sensing a faculty of the human mind but rather it is a faculty in our organic and living body*, a thesis that is opposed to theses advanced by other philosophers such as Descartes, Sennert, Jean Le Clerc, and Georg Daniel Coschviz (Amo, 1734/2012, pp. 9-11).

Little wonder Bewaji (2004), commenting on Amo's *On the Apatheia of the Human Mind*, argued that:

His was a treatise that would naturally fall within philosophy of mind today but is also capable of being meaningfully studied in psychology or even a variety of physiology and anatomy (p. 201).

Indeed, if philosophy is the study of psychology by other means, then Amo's PhD was in psychology without the experimentation.

Another source of evidence that Amo's *De Humanae Mentis "Apatheia"* was in psychology can be derived from the fact that other scholars in the 1750s were writing treatise on psychology. For instance, Hatfield (2002, p. 211) reports that:

For reasons that have not been fully explored, calls for a more empirical, physics-emulating psychology came thick and fast around 1750. The Swiss naturalist Charles Bonnet published his *Essai de psychologie* in 1755. Guillaume-Lambert Godart published his *Physique de l'ame*, or 'Physics (i.e., natural philosophy) of the Soul' in 1755, and Johann Gottlob Krüger published his *Experimental-Seelenlehre*, or 'Experimental Psychology', in 1756. Each of them called for application of the empirical attitudes found in other branches of science, whether physiology, botany, entomology, or Newtonian science, to the domain of the mental.

However, Luccio's (2013) account of evolution of the term *psychologia* can help explain Hatfield's (2002) seemingly black box or dilemma. Luccio (2013) reports the term *psychologia* was coined around 1520 by Marcus Marulus (1450 – 1524) and later in 1576, in a publication by Johan Thomas Freig, *psychologia* was presented as one of the 6 subdivisions of Physics. According to Luccio (2013), a lot of treatise appeared under the name *psychologia* or a different neologism with "psyche" as the root which were written by theologians, philosophers and persons from the medical fraternity until Christian von Wolff wrote his *Psychologia Empirica* in 1732. It is said that Wolff's *Psychologia Empirica* attempted to outline the basis of experimental psychology (as cited in Luccio, 2013). Brock (2014a, p. 720) has also remarked that Wolff's *Psychologica Empirica* (1732/1738) and *Psychologica Rationalis* (1734/1737) "did a great deal to promote this new study of the mind". Again, Brock (2014a) has also suggested that 1500 marked the beginning of modern history and as a result, any psychology

that came into being after this date can rightly be recognized as modern. Thus, Amo's *De Humanae Mentis "Apatheia"* and *Disputatio* in 1734 and his lectures on the "Frontiers of Psychology" announced at the University Jena in the 1739 could be seen as significant contributions to the debates of the time on *psychologia*. This also means that the contributions by Amo were, indeed, contributions to modern psychology in its early beginnings. Perhaps, it is time Amo is included in undergraduate psychology textbooks.

Prof Amo's philosophical thoughts, particularly his challenge of Descartes's dualism, can serve as the philosophical root of an indigenous Ghanaian psychology. Indeed, Kwasi Wiredu's or Wireduan (1983) critique of Cartesian dualism is a logical philosophical follow-up of Amo's (1734) critique of the Cartesian dualism; Wireduan critique is that the mind is not a distinct substance that exists independent of the brain. Wiredu (1983), therefore, argues that the seat of thought is the brain and that thinking cannot go on in a human being without the brain. This historical account also raises the question whether or not one ought to trace psychology in Ghana to Amo's publication in April 1734 under the supervision of Mr. Mart. Gotthelf Loescher Middleton.

So how has Amo influenced psychology in Ghana? Much of his life history is unknown, particularly after he returned home. However, his 'person' and ideas have had some influence on Ghanaian scholars (philosophers in particular) both intellectually and as a source of inspiration. In his *Memoirs of West African Celebrities in Europe (1700 – 1850)*, Ahuma (1905) provided a biographical sketch of Amo and his works. However, Ghanaian and African philosophers have studied Amo's life and contributions extensively (see Abraham, 2004; Ahuma, 1905; Bemile, 2002; Chimuka, 2012; Emma-Adamah, 2015) and have also influenced other Ghanaian philosophers such as J. B. Danquah (as cited in Twumasi, 1978), W. E. Abraham, Kwesi Wiredu and Kwame Gyekye. Increasingly, Ghanaian psychologists are paying attention to the works of these modern Ghanaian philosophers in offering alternative explanations of behaviour (see Gavi, 2014; Opere-Henaku, 2013; Oppong, 2015; Osafo, 2016; Sarfo & Mate-Kole, 2014). It is through these modern Ghanaian philosophers that Amo's intellectual influence is felt in psychology today. To this extent, Amo has influenced and will continue to influence Ghanaian psychology and psychologists. Further questions need to be adequately answered. Amo arrived in the Gold Coast in 1747, Jacobus died in 1747, Protten was in the Gold Coast from 1737 till his death in 1769, Philip Kwaku died in 1816 and the Timbuktu scholars were operating a university in the 1700s also in the Gold Coast (see Dumbe, 2013; Lauer, 2013; Reindorf, 1889/1895). Were there any scholarly interactions among these scholars in the Gold Coast? What was the content of the interactions? What are the implications of their interactions for understanding human soul or mind?

Indeed, there is more that can be derived from this rich intellectual tradition in Ghana by Ghanaian psychologists. For instance, Amo's doctoral dissertation can help resolve the mind-body problem in psychology from an African perspective. It is worth noting that there were other learned Ghanaians of the 18th and 19th centuries who received Christian-patterned education (see Table 4). Given that the study of philosophy and/or theology is the study of psychology by other means (see Hall, 1879), it can also be concluded that many of the early Ghanaian scholars who studied philosophy and theology also studied psychology (without experimentation). This can be even extended to those who studied law as law involved the study of philosophers and their philosophical positions on law. However, such studies should not be an uncritical, celebratory account of their work.

This list is, by no means, exhaustive as it focuses more on those who had some form of Christian education. It is important to note that there were Islamic schools in the Gold Coast in the 1400s (Hiskett, 1984). That Gold

Coast Muslim scholars were not listed in the table does not imply that there were no such scholars but that further research is needed to prove otherwise. Also note that among those who studied abroad, only Amo, Capitein, and Protten had all their education in Europe as the rest had their foundational education (sometimes at the college level) in the Gold Coast before obtaining their advanced education elsewhere. Note the first European-styled school was established in 1529 though it became inactive by 1661 until it was reactivated by Capitein in 1742 and saw steady growth into early 1800s. Another important fact is that Mensah Sarbah and colleagues established Fanti Public Schools Limited in 1903 which gave birth to the Mfantipim School in 1904. Sarbah had earlier on revived the then defunct Cape Coast Wesleyan School under its new name Collegiate School. In 1906, Mfantipim merged with Collegiate School retaining the name Mfantipim. However, it is important to also note that the first school established by a Gold Coaster (Ghanaian) was the one set up by Rev. Philip Quarcoe (Kwaku) in the 1766 at his house (see Ahuma, 1905; Reindorf, 1889/1895).

Table 4

Some Learned Gold Coasters (Ghanaians) in the 18th and 19th Centuries

Name	Beginning of Period (where known)	Course of study	Country of studies
Anton W. Amo, PhD	Graduated in 1734	Philosophy/Physiology/Psychology	Germany
J. E. J. Capitein	Graduated in 1742	Theology	Holland
Christian Jacob Protten	Early 18th century	Theology	Denmark
Philip Quarcoe or Kwaku	Graduated in 1765	Theology	England
James Bannerman ^a	Early 18th century	Law	England
Prince J. Owusu-Ansah	1836	Theology/Liberal arts/politics	England
Carl Christian Reindorf	Completed in 1855	Theology, History, and Ghanaian languages (Ga)	Gold Coast ^b
Theophilus Opoku	Completed in 1858	Theology	Gold Coast ^b
David Asante	Completed in 1862	Theology	Switzerland
Nicholas Timothy Clerk	Completed in 1888	Theology	Switzerland
G. E. Fergusson	1889	Surveying	England
John Van der Puije	Completed in 1860s	Liberal arts	Gold Coast ^b
J. E. K. Aggrey	1898	Education/Philosophy	USA
S. R. B. Attoh Ahuma	1898	History and Culture	England/USA
F. A. O. Pinnako	1899	Education/Philosophy /Theology	USA
E. J. Casely-Hayford	1884	Medicine/Law	England
B. W. Q. Papafo	Qualified in 1886	Medicine	England
J. M. Sarbah	Called to bar in 1880	Law	England
F. V. Nanka-Bruce	Late 19th century	Medicine	England
T. Hutton Mills	1891	Law	England
W. Essuman-Gwira Sekyi	Graduated in 1918	Philosophy/Law/Sociology	England
J. B. Danquah	Graduated in 1927	Philosophy/Law	England

Note. Source: Adapted from Asante (2011), Assimeng (1999, p. 122), and Hauser-Renner (2009).

^aGovernor of Gold Coast (1850 – 1851). ^bNow Ghana.

It is important for Ghanaian psychologists to identify and study works of some of these 18th and 19th century Ghanaian scholars. Nwoye (2015, p. 108) has, for instance, argued that:

African Psychology is... concerned with the study and understanding of the psychological significance of the oral traditions and metaphors of the great peoples of Africa...African Psychology is also the

psychology of the human significance or the psychological capital of African written literature in which are embedded a variety of mind-shaping categories and from which can be sourced the truths of human and social behaviour that nurture individual and communal attitudes and values in Africa.

Two illustrations will suffice. Dr. Joseph Kwame Kyeretwie Boakye Danquah's (1895 – 1965) 1927 Ph.D. dissertation (*"The Moral End as Moral Excellence"*) at University College, London is a philosophical work worthy of study by Ghanaian psychologists (as cited in Twumasi, 1978). In this 225-page Ph.D. dissertation, J. B. Danquah presented not only his views on ethics but also provided "psychological foundations of personality" in the Akan philosophy (Twumasi, 1978, p. 77). Twumasi (1978, p. 77-78) summarized Danquah's theory of personality as follows:

The psychological foundations of personality, Danquah wrote, are to be found in three elements—always in the process of growth—that constitute the human mind. These are cognition, the mental element by which we know and apprehend; conation, normally the physical condition antecedent to a bodily movement, the lowest form of which is the uneasiness one feels in the presence of an object of apprehension, and its function is the desire to effect a change in the external world. Affection or feeling is the element of pleasure or displeasure that accompanies action or desire, following closely on the occurrence of thought (or cognition) and conation... Development by feeling, though conscious, does not amount to consciousness of an end or purpose since impulsive activity lacks foresight. An individual always moves towards an end, and best realizes himself by achieving the ideal end; and the significance of a self-conscious agent's activity is to be found in its ethical import... The development of personality, however, does not proceed independently of the rational element, even if formal reason by itself cannot be accepted as fully expressive of the meaning of good in explaining moral responsibility. An individual person is a moral personality which is neither feeling nor reason merely, but a self-conscious, self-objectifying agent whose conscious activity has reference to an organic system of values conceived as his ideal end and for him absolutely.

Similarly, Gyekye (1978) argues, in his philosophical work *"The Akan Concept of a Person"*, that the Akans of Ghana hold a tripartite conception of human person, namely: *Okra* (soul), *Sunsum* (spirit), and *Honam* (body). He further argued that both *Okra* and *Sunsum* are immaterial whereas *Honam* is material. More importantly, Gyekye cites J. B. Danquah and K. A. Busia to further his argument that in the Akan conception, *Sunsum* is the source or basis of one's personality.

Indeed, a careful reading of ideas of Kwame Gyekye (philosopher), J. B. Danquah, the lawyer, philosopher, and sociologist (as cited in Twumasi, 1978), K. A. Busia, the sociologist (as cited in Fretheim, 2011), and Kwasi Wiredu (philosopher) as well as Wingo's (2008) examination of Gyekye-Wiredu philosophy of a personhood leaves one with the clear conclusion that personality is conceived of as a continuum with clear milestones. This is to say that an individual is expected to evolve towards an ideal of a responsible, independent person full of wisdom and knowledge about existential challenges of living as well as of reasonable material wealth. Thus, Erikson's theory of psychosocial development (Erikson, 1963, 1964, 1968) is the one Western theory with some semblance with an Akan theory of personality development. This may be summarized in Table 5.

Table 5
Bio-Cultural Theory of Personality Development (or of Becoming a 'Person')

Stage	English rendition	Possible age	Knowledge of good and bad (morality)			Responsibility for one's actions and inactions		Developmental Tasks		Helping others (Prosocial behaviour)
			Should begin to learn about morality	Should show this at a matured level	Should show this at a matured level	Should begin learning to take responsibility but there is no high expectation	Not expected	Not expected	Meeting one's material and immaterial needs of existence	
Abotafra /Abofra ngee	Babyhood	0 – 1	Not expected	Not expected	Not expected	Not expected	Totally dependent on adults	Not expected	Not expected	
Abofra	Childhood	1 – 7	Should begin to learn about morality	Should show this at a matured level	Should show this at a matured level	Should begin learning to take responsibility but there is no high expectation	Not expected	Should begin to show early signs of this	Should begin to show early signs of this	
Abaamuwaa/ Abaayewa	Adolescence	8 – 20	Should show this at a matured level	Should show this at a matured level	Should show this at a matured level	Should begin learning skills/vocations that enable the person to fulfill this task in the future	Should be required to show this	Should be required to show this	Should be required to show this	
Aberante/ Ababaawa	Young adulthood	21 – 49	Should show this at a matured level	Should show this at a matured level	Should show this at a matured level	Would be expected to independently carry out this task; begins this phase by continuing acquisition of skills for self-sufficiency; should be married and expected to have and raise children; industriousness and engaged in some income-generating activities	Would be required to show this	Would be required to show this	Would be required to show this	
Abeserewa	Middle adulthood	50 – 69	Should show this with wisdom	Should show this with wisdom	Should show this with wisdom	Would be expected to independently carry out this task; should preparing to disengage from active physical or strenuous activities; should have accumulated reasonable material wealth	Would be required to show this with wisdom	Would be required to show this with wisdom	Would be required to show this with wisdom	
Akokora/ Aberewa	Early Late adulthood	70 – 80	Should show this with wisdom	Should show this with wisdom	Should show this with wisdom	Supporting the children and others	Would be required to show this with wisdom	Would be required to show this with wisdom	Would be required to show this with wisdom	
Akokora posoposo/ Aberawa posoposo	Late adulthood	81+	Should show this with wisdom	Should show this with wisdom	Should show this with wisdom	There is no expectation for the person to physically meet his/her material needs because of expected physical weaknesses; becomes dependent on <i>mmabun</i> (youth comprising <i>mmarante</i> and <i>mmabaawa</i>) and <i>mmeserewa</i> such like <i>mmofra</i> and <i>mmotafra</i> .	Would be required to show this with wisdom	Would be required to show this with wisdom	Would be required to show this with wisdom	

Note. Source: Author's Own Construct.

This bio-cultural theory of personality development provides a more useful framework for counselling, psychotherapy on existential problems, personality assessment, curriculum development, and assessment of successful outcomes of living than most of the Western theories of personality development. It is worth then saying that so much philosophical psychology is contained in the philosophical and sociological works done by many early Gold Coast (Ghanaian) scholars which deserve qualitative research attention. However, such a theory will have cross-cultural applications once psychologists elsewhere replace the developmental tasks with those salient in their cultural settings. Thus, this enterprise itself shows that indigenous psychology can have universal applications.

Modern-day psychology as an academic discipline taught at the University is traceable to the early schools established in the 1800s. Nonetheless, the transition from the 1700s and 1800s to the 1900s is equally unclear due to the same charge of incomplete records. What is outstanding is the work by Jacobus Eliza Johannes Capitein (1717 –1747). Capitein was a native (Ghanaian) who was “ordained at (sic) Amsterdam on May 17, 1742, and was appointed a preacher and schoolmaster at Elmina by the authorities of the Dutch Reformed Church at the request of the directors of the Dutch West India Company” (Kwamena-Poh, 1977, para. 4).

Similarly, there was an imperial instruction to the Portuguese in the Gold Coast in 1529 which “encouraged the Governor of the Portuguese Castle at Elmina to teach reading, writing, and the Catholic religion to the people. While there is no evidence to demonstrate their success, it is amply proven that Dutch, Danish, and English companies operated schools on the Gold Coast, and that instruction in reading, writing, and religious education took place within the castle walls” (“Ghana”, 2016, para. 4). Reindorf (1889/1895, p. 220) adds that “Dutch, Danes, and English, we have traces of education given only at their head-quarters. It was mainly for the children begotten by them in the country (their children sent out to Europe for education excepted), but not for the general public”. That “Capitein revived the Elmina Castle School, which had ceased to function 80 years earlier in 1661, and made so much progress that in 1744 he was prepared to recommend two or three pupils to be sent to the Netherlands for further education” (Kwamena-Poh, 1977, para. 6) is evidence that the earlier attempts by the Europeans were unsuccessful. Besides, in the 1766, Philip Quarcoe (Kwaku) “established a school, which was kept up by his successors. The result of his labours for 50 years was, that some of the natives trained in that school associated themselves for the acquisition of religious knowledge” (cited in Reindorf, 1889/1895, p. 322).

It needs emphasizing that Islamic schools were established in Begho near Wenchi (in the Gold Coast) in the 1400s before the Portuguese school as well as an Islamic University in Dagbon (in the northern territories of the Gold Coast) in the 1700s (Hiskett, 1984). Again, a civil servant training school is reported to have already been established in the early 1800s at Buna, west of the Black Volta (in the Gold Coast) to train Ashanti civil servants as well (Hiskett, 1984). This implies the earliest form of non-indigenous education in the Gold Coast was not of European/Christian but Islamic. Lest we forget, the Mande Muslim scholars who settled in the Gold Coast were black Africans (Dumbe, 2013). This further implies that the earliest form of non-indigenous education in the Gold Coast was also introduced by black Africans not Europeans. However, there is nothing so unreal than to think of a distinct Christian or Islamic education because of the several centuries of interactions between the knowledge systems (Brennan, 1998; Lauer, 2013).

Another historical source suggests that in October 1848, Rev. J. F. Wildman of the Basel Mission began a school for the native (Ghanaian) children at Akropong while the first trained African (Ghanaian) teacher, David

Asante (1834 – 1892), was produced in 1852 in the Gold Coast (Assimeng, 1999; Ofosu-Appiah, 1997). Other historical records indicate that the training of teacher-missionaries in Ghana began with the establishment of the Basel Seminary (now Presbyterian College of Education) in 1898 and the Accra Teacher Training College (now Accra College of Education) in 1909 by the Basel Mission and the government of the Gold Coast respectively (Graham, 1971). So, there appear to be several possible dates of origin for the teaching and practice of psychology in Ghana. One is the establishment of the Koranic school in Begho in 1400s by the Mande Muslim Scholars from Timbuktu or the Portuguese school in the 1529 or its revival in late 1742 by Capitien or Philip Quarcoe's school established in 1766 or the establishment of the university town in Dagbon in 1700s as well as 1848 Basel Mission school. Irrespective of whichever year one selects, the application of psychological knowledge (particularly in formal education) in Ghana is well over a century. However, given that applications of philosophical psychology preceded any of the above-mentioned dates, it is plausible to conclude that the application of psychology is as old as the people.

1900s to Date

It is impossible to have a discussion of modern psychology education in Ghana without reference to the colonial rule and its demise. This is because colonial rule led to the establishment of modern universities in the various West Africa colonies. And with the establishment of these universities, the teaching and practice of psychology could move forward more rapidly. This is to say that in the absence of a university in Ghana, it is highly improbable for modern psychology to have been introduced or perhaps it would have taken longer than it did. Thus, the establishment of Fourah Bay College in Sierra Leone as a university (1876), Gordon Memorial College in Khartoum (1902), Mekerere College in Uganda (1921), Yaba Medical School in Nigeria (1930), Yaba Higher College (1932), and Achimota College in Ghana (established 1924 and opened on January 28, 1927) all prepared the grounds for the establishment of the University College of the Gold Coast (now University of Ghana, Legon) which officially opened in 1948 on Achimota College campus (Agbodeka, 1998). It is possible to even suggest that because Achimota College gave way to the establishment of the University of the Gold Coast, perhaps university education began in Ghana in 1924 rather than in 1948 where the latter was officially opened.

Perhaps, it is interesting to note that some Ghanaian scholars knew about psychology before the University of Ghana was established. For instance, W. Essuman-Gwira Sekyi (1892 – 1956) is reported to have said that Africa could not expect to have continuous development if it followed an educational system based on the borrowing of alien sociology, psychology and physiology in March 1920 (Asante, 2011; Oppong, 2016a). He made that statement when the Gold Coast chapter of the National Congress of British West Africa was being inaugurated. That Sekyi referred to psychology in 1920 meant that early Ghanaian scholars had learnt about psychology even before it became a university level course (as cited in Asante, 2011) and so did J. B. Danquah in his doctoral dissertation in 1927 (as cited in Twumasi, 1978).

Among the courses of study offered when the University of the Gold Coast began in October 1948 was Classics which involved some study of philosophy (Agbodeka, 1998). Currently, the Departments of Classics and Philosophy have been merged into a single department at the University of Ghana. Later, the Department of Sociology was established in 1950 from the then defunct School of African Studies established in 1948 and in 1954, the Institute of Adult Education was also established (Agbodeka, 1998). It is worth stressing here that

the School of African Studies is not the same as the Institute of African Studies which was established later in 1961. The mention of sociology is important here because it was in the Department of Sociology that psychology was first taught as a university course in 1963. It can be deduced from this that philosophy was taught in Ghana in the late 1940s as a university course and that by 1954 some form of educational psychology was also taught in Ghana as a university course. It is, perhaps, important to also note that the University College of Cape Coast (now University of Cape Coast) was established in 1962 and affiliated to the University of Ghana to train teachers for the educational institutions (Agbodeka, 1998). The possible role of the University of Cape Coast as a catalyst for the introduction of the university course in psychology at the University of Ghana has not received any serious attention. The circumstances which led to the mounting of the psychology course at the Department of Sociology at the University of Ghana have also not been fully explored. In sum, it can be said that all of these developments prepared the grounds for the establishment of a department of psychology at the University of Ghana.

The end of colonial rule in Ghana in 1957 and the subsequent attainment of a republican status in July 1960 meant that Ghana was free to determine for herself the direction and nature of her higher education (Agbodeka, 1998; Fynn, 1975). Of special interest was the severing of the relationship between the University of London and the University of the Gold Coast with the enactment of the University of Ghana Act, 1961 - ACT 79 (Republic of Ghana, 1961). This enabled the University of Ghana to introduce new courses without approval from the former. It was within this context that the Department of Psychology was established in 1967 and the Department of Psychiatry in 1972 (Agbodeka, 1998). A post-graduate programme was developed at the Department of Psychiatry for “residents preparing for the [Fellow of West African College of Physicians] FWACP or the Masters Degree in Clinical Psychology” (Agbodeka, 1998, p. 207). This makes clinical psychology the first postgraduate training in psychology to be offered in Ghana.

As an academic discipline, psychology began at the University of Ghana, Legon and was first taught in 1963 as a combined psychology-sociology course in the Department of Sociology (Agbodeka, 1998; Oppong Asante & Oppong, 2012). However, psychology became an independent academic discipline with the establishment of the Department of Psychology at the University of Ghana, Legon, Accra, in May 1967 (Oppong Asante & Oppong, 2012). It is also interesting to note that a graduate-level course in social psychology was taught at the then post-graduate Institute of Journalism (which later became known as School of Communication) at the University of Ghana in 1968 even before the master’s programme in clinical psychology was introduced in 1972 (Agbodeka, 1998). Though it is a growing science at best, psychology has gradually become established in Ghana due to the hard work of prominent scholars such as Prof. Cyril Edwin Fiscian (1926 – 2007), Mr. Herbert Claudius Ayikwei Bulley (1925 – 2002), Prof. Joseph Yaw Opoku (1948 – 2016), and Prof. Samuel A. Danquah. Danquah. It is worth noting that Danquah was instrumental in the establishment of master’s degree in clinical psychology in Ghana and West Africa, being the first qualified clinical psychologist in the West Africa in 1971 (Mensah-Sarbah, 2005).

Prof. Cyril Edwin Fiscian and Mr. Herbert Claudius Ayikwei Bulley are considered as the “initiator” or “father” and “promoter” of modern psychology in Ghana respectively (Oppong, 2016a; Oppong Asante & Oppong, 2012; A-N. Inusah, personal communication, November 25, 2015). This implies that the teaching of psychology as a university course was introduced by a Ghanaian, Prof. Cyril Edwin Fiscian. The effort of Mr. H. C. A. Bulley is also commendable. This is because Mr. H. C. A. Bulley held the fort when most Ghanaian psychology lecturers (including Prof. Fiscian, the initiator) left for Nigeria in the 1980s. This affected the staff strength of the

psychology department badly that, at the time, Mr. Bulley was forced to teach a number of undergraduate psychology courses, even courses outside his specialization as a psychometrician (C. S. Akotia, personal communication, November 27, 2015; Oppong, 2016a). Therefore, by staying behind and holding the fort, Mr. Bulley can be said to have single-handedly kept Ghanaian psychology alive, sustaining it so that it could flourish again in the present day.

As has been indicated earlier, the academic discipline of psychology has, since its humble beginnings at the University of Ghana, been growing (at least in terms of the number of psychology graduates) to the present state of having eight (8) universities offering psychology as a university-level course of study. There are several others that offer psychology as part of their business education curricula. In spite of this growth, psychology has had limited impact on national policies with a number of people not even knowing services that psychologists can offer (Oppong, 2013, 2016a). Perhaps other than in a few urban areas with a university or health centre nearby, most people do not know what services are offered by psychologists. It is this Eurocentric dominance over the discipline of psychology in its history, content, and practices that even necessitated the writing of this historical review.

Recent developments on the psychology landscape in Ghana include the following:

- the publication of Ghana's first textbook of psychology in 2014 (Oppong, 2016a),
- the launching of *Ghana International Journal of Mental Health* in 2009 (<http://www.ghana-ijmh.org>),
- institutionalization of a weekly psychology colloquium at the Department of Psychology at the University of Ghana since 2013,
- the establishment of clinical psychology programme at the University of Cape Coast,
- revival of Ghana Psychological Association (GPA); institutionalization of an annual psychology research conference by GPA as well as co-hosting with the Department of Psychology at University of Ghana, Legon (UGL) the "*Annual Fiscian-Bulley Memorial Lectures*" in honour of Prof. Cyril Edwin Fiscian (1926 – 2007) and Mr. Herbert Claudius Ayikwei Bulley (1925 – 2002),
- restructuring of the psychology doctoral programme,
- the zeal to develop theories out of Ghanaian proverbs,
- establishment of Pan-African Psychology Union (PAPU),
- the passing away of Prof. Joseph Yaw Opoku (1948 – 2016), Ghana's foremost cognitive psychologist and psychometrician, who for a long time taught 'Psychostats' (statistics for psychologists at the undergraduate level) and psychometrics and statistics at the postgraduate level,
- institutionalization of annual mental health conference co-hosted by GPA, Departments of Psychology and Psychiatry of the University of Ghana Medical and Dental School; the 2015 conference was co-hosted with PAPU and Association of Psychiatrists and Allied Professionals
- enactment of the Mental Health Act, 2012 - ACT 846 (Republic of Ghana, 2012) and Health Profession Regulatory Bodies Act, 2013 - ACT 857 (Republic of Ghana, 2013); ACT 857 regulates the practice of psychology in Ghana and ACT 846 regulates the entire mental health profession.

- the monumental contribution by Prof. C. C. Mate-Kole in terms of increasing the number of PhDs trained and graduated by the Department of Psychology at UGL and his encouragement to PhD students to publish during the doctoral studies; he has also contributed towards efforts at indigenizing psychology in Ghana as well as participation in the formation and steering of PAPU. Plans are underway for him to establish the Aging Centre at UGL.
- award of scholarships to many psychology doctoral students at the Department of Psychology at UGL under the New York-based Carnegie Corporation project “*Next Generation of Academics in Africa*” administered through UGL (University of Ghana, 2014); Prof. Mate-Kole was instrumental in getting psychology to be included among the programmes covered by the scholarship scheme.
- inaugural lecture by the first female full professor of social psychology in Ghana at UGL in the person of Prof. Ama de-Graft Aikins on Thursday June 30, 2016; her inaugural lecture was on the topic: “Curing our ills: The Psychology of chronic disease risk, experience and care in Africa”. Domiciled at Regional Institute for Population Studies (RIPS), she has served as the vice-Dean of the School of Graduate Studies and Director of Centre for Social Policy Studies all at UGL. Currently, she is the Dean of International Programmes Office also at UGL. At the School of Social Sciences, she participates in teaching doctoral students “Philosophy of Social Sciences” as well as some master’s level courses at the Department of Psychology.
- establishment of the Centre for Suicide and Violence Prevention by Dr. Joseph Osafo, a clinical psychologist at the Department of Psychology at UGL and Ghana’s foremost suicidologist.
- the tenure of Prof. Charity S. Akotia, an Associate Professor of Social Psychology at the Department of Psychology, as the dean of the School of Social Sciences; this makes her the first female psychology professor to hold that position and the second from the psychology department to hold such a position (the first being Mr. H. C. A. Bulley). By graduating with PhD in psychology from UGL in 2006, she also became the first person to obtain a psychology doctorate at a Ghanaian university and the first with such educational background to rise to the rank of an associate professor. Her place is among the female pioneers of psychology in Ghana.
- attempts by an early career Ghanaian psychologist to introduce a sub-field to be known as psychological theoretics (see Oppong, 2016b).
- the successful completion of the doctoral studies by Dr. Inusah Abdul-Nasiru in 2015 (see Abdul-Nasiru, 2014) at the Department of Psychology at UGL, making him the first person to receive a doctorate in industrial/organizational psychology at a Ghanaian university. All other doctoral-level industrial-organizational psychologists trained abroad.

Have there not been debates about the validity of the Eurocentric hegemony over Psychology taught at the University of Ghana? Not much is known or heard about any open debate. However, a more useful account could be Akotia and Olowu’s (2000) paper. The title, “*Toward an African-Centered Psychology: Voices of Continental African Psychologists*”, and preamble are both instructive. The preamble is as follow:

It is only when we start developing our own theories and epistemologies that we can really understand Africans and what makes meaning to the African people. We believe that when this is done, not only will indigenous psychology enhance the understanding of local phenomena but will also expand our vision of what forms psychological functioning may take in diverse cultures.

Akotia and Olowu's (2000) paper was based on a previous paper presented at the 14th International Congress of International Association of Cross-Cultural Psychology with Naidoo and Gilbert in 1998 (see [Naidoo, Olowu, Gilbert, & Akotia, 1998](#)). What needs emphasizing is the fact that Prof. Charity S. Akotia at the Department of Psychology, University of Ghana, Legon, may have been among the first known voice among Ghanaian psychologists at the University of Ghana to speak openly about the hegemony of Eurocentric psychology. Another voice has been that of Prof. B. B. Pupilampu, an industrial psychologist, who in 1997 also presented some findings on cultural variations in the meaning of work (MOW) using evidence from Ghana (see [Pupilampu, 1997](#)). However, their interest and/or voice have not been sustained over the years. Currently, the intellectual atmosphere is open and accommodative to indigenization, though there are elements of resistance. This is to say that the momentum is great enough to launch into an era of formally indigenizing psychology in Ghana.

Currently, any interested person with the appropriate bachelor's degree can obtain postgraduate training in psychology at both the master's and the doctoral levels. At the master's level, training in industrial and organizational psychology, clinical psychology, educational psychology, social psychology, counselling psychology, and educational measurement can be obtained in Ghana ([Oppong et al., 2014](#); [Oppong Asante & Oppong, 2012](#)). However, doctoral level training in psychology can be obtained at the University of Ghana alone whereas doctoral level training in curriculum and teaching can be obtained at the University of Cape Coast ([Oppong, 2016a](#)).

In keeping with the call for constructing a truly international history of psychology through a polycentric history rather than local histories ([Brock, 2014b](#); [Danziger, 2006](#)), a brief account is provided here about the interrelationship between Ghanaian psychology and some external centres of psychology. Ghanaian psychology has been influenced largely by psychologies of the United Kingdom, Norway, United States and recently South Africa (see [Oppong, 2016a](#)). However, the UK and US are the principal influencers. While the UK influence was felt through pioneers such as Fiscian, Bulley, Opoku, and Danquah (as cited in [Oppong, 2016a](#)) because they each received some of their postgraduate education there, the US influence on Ghanaian psychology have been through the availability of US textbooks and curriculum comparisons. A sign of general weakening of the UK influence has been the shift from the traditional research-based PhD (the British model) to the taught PhD (the American model) throughout the University of Ghana, Legon (UGL) and in particular, at the Department of Psychology. This shift is more likely to be the outcome of the success (improved quality and completion rates) of the taught model that was first adopted and experimented at the West African Centre for Crops Improvement at UGL with Cornell University. However, the PhD by publication model also exists but less used. Both Norwegian and South African psychologies have influenced Ghanaian psychology by way of provision of 'sponsored' doctoral education to some of the current teachers of psychology in Ghana. Nevertheless, their influence on how psychology is conducted (taught and practised) in Ghana is minimal.

The wave of indigenization of psychology in Ghana has been driven, to a large extent, by the successful developments in the US by African American psychologists and to a lesser degree successes by psychologists in South Africa, Zambia, India, Central and Eastern Europe (such as Croatia, Estonia, etc.) and generally Latin America (mostly Brazil). However, the main influencer on the indigenization has been the long-standing Ghanaian spirit to break free that dates back to the early encounters with Europe and tone of scholarly works by Ghanaian scholars in the 18th century through to the early 20th century, culminating in the regaining of independence from the British in 1957 after British imperial rule since the 1900s.

Writing in the early 20th century, a Ghanaian scholar armed with a master's degree from the US, [Ahuma \(1905, pp. 253-254\)](#) brilliantly captured the collective ancestral freedom in the following words:

The Gold Coast of Guinea [now Ghana] is without controversy a peculiar country, inhabited by aboriginal tribes whose manners, customs, institutions and laws dimly, but persistently, recall an advanced stage of civilization in a golden age that has long since receded into oblivion. But the landmarks are there for all that – clear, distinct and indelible... Four centuries of contact with Europe have in no way exorcised the spirit of our ancestors, and still it defies the remotest possibility of subjugation. The more soundly and liberally the sons of the soil are educated the more readily do they acknowledge the wisdom of the fathers, the more fervently do they pray for “Judicious training upon Native lines”, and the more solemnly do they affirm that “apart from the natives, any attempt at statesmanlike administration is doomed to failure.”...The Gold Coast native, therefore, will invariably “Go Fantee”ⁱⁱ in his intellectual evolution, and therein lies his national salvation...To “Go Fantee” marks the mental terminus of the Gold Coast native, and describes his ultimate reversion to the simplicity of his forebears, sobered and matured with all that is excellent in Western civilization...

What does the future hold for psychology in Ghana and “international” psychology? It is clear from the ongoing discussions that psychology in Ghana and most part of Africa will become qualitatively different from Western psychology over next couple of years. This is because a new generation of Ghanaian psychologists are gradually becoming aware of the fact that psychology is a science in which the ‘psychology and philosophy’ of the scientist influence how she/he conducts the science. This awareness is leading them to question the metaphysical (monistic) and epistemological assumptions of Western psychology. It is hoped that such awareness would lead Ghanaian and other African psychologists to answer the metaphysical questions that confront the African psychologist in the conduct of psychological science in the African context. This will also require African psychologist raising the appropriate metaphysical questions and attempting to answer them.

Indeed, Western psychology became distinct from its origin, natural philosophy or theology, through its resolution of its metaphysical questions ([Hatfield, 2002](#)). [Watson \(1967, p. 435\)](#) noted that:

In a recent analysis of the dynamics of the history of the older, more mature sciences Kuhn ... holds that each of them has reached the level of guidance by a paradigm... With this agreement among its practitioners, the paradigm defines the science in which it operates.

This is to say that once the appropriate metaphysical and epistemological questions are raised and answered, African psychology would have “reached the level of guidance by a paradigm” ([Watson, 1967, p. 435](#)) and it would become qualitatively distinct from its Western psychology.

An important observation is that Ghanaian psychology suffers from lack of intellectual continuity. For instance, many of the Ghanaian historians and philosophers of the 18th and late 19th centuries such as Amo, Capitein, Protten, Casely Hayford, Reindorf, Aggrey, and Danquah were intellectual contemporaries of Wundt, Titchener, Spearman, and Ebbinghaus given that they were educated at about the same time and all contributed to world literature on human nature (though the formers’ contributions were unknown at the time to the world). However, Ghanaian psychologists over the years have failed to engage the works of these early Ghanaian scholars as to their relevance to our understanding of human nature or mind that can help them explicate behaviours of Ghanaians better. This is particularly important given that the psychological categories developed in the West are only human kind but natural to those members of their speech community (see [Danziger, 1999](#)).

This is one reason it is sometimes difficult to teach certain western psychological concepts such as personality. Indeed, the common understanding of personality I have gleaned from teaching personality during an organizational behaviour class is that personality is 'a very important person' whereas 'character' makes more meaning to the students I have taught. It is also another reason why some of the diagnostic categories in clinical practice fail to capture the essence of an individual's psychological problem as Ghanaians ordinarily do not think of themselves in those categories.

Some argue that the possibility of translation undermines such argument that psychological categories are relative to the linguistic or speech communities of their proponents. On that matter, Danziger, in an interview with Adrian C. Brook (1994), argued that:

Some kind of translation, of course, can be achieved but I (Kurk Danziger) think that one's grasp of the alien concepts remains quite tenuous and is not to be compared with the absolutely taken-for-granted character which the categories of one's own culture have. You need a paragraph perhaps to express something that you say with one word because you have to supply some of the connotations which these words have for us (para. 15).

Danziger's argument is particularly consistent with the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, a position that our perception of reality is shaped by our thought processes and our thought processes are influenced by our language. Therefore, language limits our reality (Whorf, 1956). Thus, we can only think of ourselves better in the categories that we have created in our own speech community. Is this possibly not one of the reasons Ghanaians or perhaps Africans do not see mental health as an emergency? This leads us to question whether or not the current application of Western psychiatric diagnostic categories is not rather the cause of the so-called emergency. This is because such categories problematise people's apparently 'normal' conditions. This is likely the case as mental health conditions are not natural kinds in the same way as physiological diseases. The former are only human kinds or human creations specific to the speech community of the creators (see Danziger, 1999). This is to say that the psychological categories are too artificial for a non-native English speaker.

It is little wonder that clinical psychology students ask themselves if the 'Western' psychological disorders they study in the classroom do exist in Ghana (E. Dickson, personal communication, May 20, 2016). However, clinicians also face a practical challenge in that they do not have or know of Ghanaian labels for the pattern of behaviour and symptoms observed (E. Dickson, personal communication, June 13, 2016). This is because the client needs to know that his or her condition is not an unknown, non-describable, helpless situation as a way of inducing treatment compliance and foreclosure. This practical need also creates the problem of causing the clients to reinterpret a pattern of behaviour and symptoms as a "disease" when their speech community considers such behaviour as only benign. In contrast, Osafo, who is a contemporary of Dickson, is of the opinion that foreclosure is achieved in different ways and its immediacy also varies with social status (J. Osafo, personal communication, June 14, 2016). The more affluent, Western-styled educated Ghanaians sometimes may have read about what they think is wrong with them before seeking the psychological assistance whereas the less affluent with less formal Western-styled education tend to have few conceptions about what could be wrong with them when seeking help.

Osafo recommends differential diagnosis as a way of ruling out rival explanations due to possible or concurrent pathological disease(s) through referral to a medical practitioner for medical assessment; consequently, this

enables him to focus more on nonpathological explanations such as psychosocial and spiritual. Where spiritual explanations or beliefs prevail, he has found it necessary to refer such clients to the clergy for proper scriptural interpretations while focusing on cognitive restructuring to help the client identify more 'realistic' or 'rational' psychosocial explanations (J. Osafo, personal communication, June 14, 2016). This means a *psychotheosocial model* is applied here, where 'theo' refers to theology or spiritualism (for detailed discussion of the African roots of African psychological concepts, see [Nwoye, 2015](#)). Put another way, a *biopsychosocial model* (as opposed to a biopsychosocial model) would have to be understood as an approach to treatment or an explanatory system which takes into account and emphasizes, where applicable, any combination of the four interacting dimensions to wellbeing or behaviour, biological, psychological, theological, and social (see [Osafo, 2016](#) for a detailed discussion on the need for collaboration between mental health professionals and religious leaders).

In the particular case of Ghana, religious accounts provided by the pioneer Ghanaian historiographer, [Reindorf \(1889/1895\)](#) and the notably racist account of the Akan religious beliefs by [Ellis \(1887\)](#) all provide strong evidence of the continuity and persistence of the natural theology, religious nature and beliefs of the Ghanaian in general and the Akans in particular. This noticeable persistence of the manners, customs, institutions and laws of the Ghanaian including religion has also been affirmed by [Ahuma's \(1905\)](#). Similarly, John Mensah Sarbah's *Fanti Customary Law* ([Sarbah, 1897](#)) and *Fanti National Constitution* ([Sarbah, 1906](#)) as well as Joseph Ephraim Casely Hayford's *Gold Coast Native Institutions* ([Hayford, 1903](#)) and *Ethiopia Unbound: Studies in Race Emancipation* ([Hayford, 1911](#)) also provide additional indication of the persistence of religious beliefs and other customs of the Ghanaian. Other useful sources include J. B. Danquah's *The Akan Doctrine of God* ([Danquah, 1944](#)) and K. A. Busia's (1951) *The Position of the Chief in the Modern Political System of Ashanti* ([Busia, 1951](#)). Busia's publication was based on his 1947 doctoral dissertation at University of Oxford, which made him the first black African to obtain a PhD from Oxford ([Fretheim, 2011](#)). Modern sources also provide evidence in support of the continuity and persistence of the religious nature and of the beliefs of the Ghanaian ([Atindanbila & Thompson, 2011](#); [Opare-Henaku, 2013](#); [Osafo, 2016](#)).

On the issue of application of diagnostic categories, Osafo suggests that therapy is possible without the use of diagnostic schemes and their associated categories if the problem is purely psychosocial as such conditions tend to be purely existential crises (J. Osafo, personal communication, June 14, 2016). Differences in opinion and practice can only be put down to the fact that one has medical background as a physician (Erica Dickson) and the other purely a psychology background (Joseph Osafo).

However, they agree that some clients resist, downplay and even at times dismiss such labeling and reinterpretations (E. Dickson, personal communication, June 13, 2016; J. Osafo, personal communication, June 14, 2016). Indeed, this is particularly the case for psychological disorders without biological origins such as personality disorders. In other words, psychological disorders that can be explained only within a psychosocial model of causes suffer mostly from what [Danziger \(1999\)](#) is describing in relations to his description of natural kinds versus human kinds. All said and done, it is clear that natural versus human kind distinction is quite important for successful practice in Ghana.

Perhaps, disorders with possible biopsychosocial explanations such as psychoneuroimmunological disorders are less likely to lead to such practical challenges. According to Dickson, such disorders constitute somehow natural kinds because regardless of the label given to them, the biological basis and their physiological

manifestations will occur (E. Dickson, personal communication, June 13, 2016). This implies that a distinction should be made between the diagnostic categories that are natural kinds (such as psychoneuroimmunological disorders) and those that are human kinds (such as personality disorders) in practice and research. This way it is possible to consider the indigenous interpretations of the human kind as opposed to the received interpretations contained in the current Western diagnostic schemes. Relabeling of the natural kinds for the sake of easy identification and understanding by indigenous clients may not be a wasted effort as it can facilitate psychoeducation.

However, there is also a need to reconsider the human kinds against the indigenous worldview as to whether those categories are worth their usage and in such cases whether relabeling is worth the effort. This is because 'personality' or more appropriately from a Ghanaian or an Akan worldview, 'character' is one's *Suban* (Gyekye, 1978), *ne su ne ne ban* or his or her nature which has a certain connotation that one's nature cannot be modified significantly. Often, the recommended remedy is *nkasakyere* or *afutuo* (advising). However, it is also admitted that *afutuo nsakyera onipa gye se nsowhɛ* (challenges change people not advising). Probably, it is the view that therapy is not so successful in modifying personality or character. This view may be consistent with behaviourist understanding of behavioural modification. This also implies further that involvement of family and neighbourhood (where practically possible) could be a resultant recommendation for potential therapy. It is because family and neighbourhood can adjust their behaviour towards the client which would create the needed environment to induce the behavioural change in the person. Thus, it is about time Ghanaian psychologists engaged the literature created by early Ghanaian historians and philosophers to draw ideas so as to build a psychology capable of helping Ghanaians to understand themselves in their own terms.

In the light of the above, it is not far-fetched to describe psychology as a *socio-natural science that seeks to understand human behaviour in a context*. 'Socio-natural' because psychology has its feet in both the natural and social sciences camps which provides complementary explanations that is lacking in all that known sciences. By 'context', I also mean space and time which implies that our understanding of human behaviour may vary from geographical locations and different eras as the psychological categories used also are modified. Again, it studies human behaviour in a context because it is near impossibility to conduct decontextualised science of psychology as the nature of human behaviour and their descriptors are also embedded in the particular context. Psychological research in Ghana has tended to be more in the social than natural domain probably because of its academic origins, a department of sociology. Despite the initial experimental work, the psychology laboratory at the University of Ghana which was the only psychology lab in Ghana does no longer exist. This is perhaps another indication that psychological interests tend to be predominantly focused around the social domains of psychology.

Yet another important observation is that if such an intellectual history is possible to reconstruct, then psychology has been indigenized in Ghana. Before addressing this issue, let me rather start by commenting on how indigenization can be achieved. Indigenization can be achieved by (1) theories and concept, (2) historical reconstruction, (3) topics of inquiry, (4) methodological reforms, and (5) curriculum revision. Psychology in Ghana is indigenized as far as topics of inquiry are concerned but very little has been achieved in terms of the other approaches. However, I consider myself a labourer in drawing attention to these issues, particularly in Ghana and the 'majority world' at large. In this sense, this paper is an attempt at indigenization through historical reconstruction and to a lesser extent, through theoretical, methodological and curriculum reforms.

Limitations

The limited treatment of Gold Coast female scholars and Islamic scholars, no doubt, is a limitation of this historical study. It is expected that treatment of these underrepresented groups would have enriched the history told so far. It is particularly important that future historical studies of this nature make attempts to identify key Gold Coast Muslim scholars of the 1700s and 1800s given that by 1700s a university town had been created in Dagbon. An example is al-Hajj Muhammad b. Mustafa who wrote a history of the Gonja in 1752 (Dumbe, 2013), predating the history of the Gold Coast written by a Gold Coast educated Christian (C.C. Reindorf) in 1895 by 143 years. This will also ensure that an inclusive history of psychology in Ghana is presented as most of the Gold Coast Islamic scholars are from the northern zone of the country. Similarly, female scholars have not been featured at all in this history. However, the Achimota College was established as a coeducational institution in 1924 and as a result may have produced outstanding female graduates. A good example is Dr (Mrs) Susan de graft Johnson (nee Ofori-Atta) who qualified as a physician in 1949 (making her the first qualified female physician in the Gold Coast) and did studies on child development which led to the discovery of “kwashiorkor” among malnourished children. Another is Annie Ruth Jiagge who was the first female Gold Coaster to be called to the bar in 1950. The life, career and scholarly publications of such women should be examined in relation to their implications for psychology. Medicine and law (the philosophy element) are important just medicine was to W. Wundt and William James and philosophy to Aristotelian psychology (Brennan, 1998; Murphy & Kovach, 1972). Similarly, the role of the University of Cape Coast as possibly a catalyst for the introduction of university course in psychology at the University of Ghana needs further exploration.

A related concern is the possible criticism that this historical study is stereotypical of a “Great Man” history as often raised by new historiographers of psychology (Lovett, 2006; Tyson et al., 2011). However, a historical study focusing on women and non-Christians would also “read like stereotypes of old history of psychology, often being ‘Great Woman’ or [‘Great Muslim scholar’] (rather than “Great Man” history)” (Lovett, 2006, p. 31). Thus, the “new history” of psychology is also another form of discrimination against the overrepresented groups through affirmative action in favour of the underrepresented. As suggested by Lovett (2006, p. 32), “If the new historians wish to criticize the old histories’ selection of figures and topics, they should be prepared to offer a better system for deciding which people and ideas are most worth studying”. Thus, such criticism is unfair and unrealistic.

This historical study will also be criticized for being presentist and whiggish in the sense that it attempts to understand the past using the present as its lens (presentist) and seems to suggest that the present represents a progress from the past (whiggish). In other words, this study may be criticized for having committed with some regularity the cardinal historiographic error of presentism in which the past is read through the categories of the present or reading history ‘backwards’ (G. Adams, personal communication, July 27, 2016). However, Lovett (2006, p. 20) has argued that “mere reference to the present does not constitute presentist inquiry” because “old histories select certain psychologists because their work is relevant to current problems, and an explicit attempt is often made to interpret past work in light of present knowledge”. In other words, presentist histories have pedagogical function.

There is yet another reason for such presentism as is apparent in this historical study. For a continent which is denied to have any history (see Graness, 2015, 2016; Rodney, 1972) or whose knowledge is marginalized or

eroded (Bulhan, 2015) or “dismissed, appropriated without acknowledgement or simply held in contempt” (Chimuka, 2012, p. 1), the seemingly canonical practice of historicity in the West tends out to be ‘colonizing’ or hegemonizing rather than democratizing. And this is opposed to one of the principal objectives of the new history of drawing attention to contributions of underrepresented social groups to psychology (see Furumoto, 1989). How can African historiographers showcase the contributions of unknown African scholars from the antiquity if the hegemonizing practice of historicity prevents the historiographers from interpreting their contributions “in light of present knowledge” (Lovett, 2006, p. 20)? Thus, historicism is not unproblematic nor neutral as Western historiographers may understand it. It inadvertently contributes to the wrong canonical belief of an Africa without a past and perpetuates epistemic injustice against Africa and its knowledge. In other words, a certain kind of presentism is needed to demonstrate the usefulness of the ideas from its past. This is because the past only comes to live if we understand the past in terms of contemporary language.

Another criticism is that presentism in the case of a non-Western historiography results in an indigenous body of knowledge being colonized by a western category (G. Adams, personal communication, July 27, 2016). Both amateur and professional historians of psychology do not deny the existence of psychology in other cultures but the existence of Psychology as “organized discipline aimed at understanding the experience and behaviour of human beings” (Murphy & Kovach, 1972, p. 5). The work of the African historiographer is to contribute to historical scholarship through addressing the epistemic injustice and the denial of an Africa with a past. African historiography does not only have scientific value but also social, psychological (in relations to sense of self and inferiority complex), and political consequences for the continent and its people. In this process, the African historiographer will inadvertently and unapologetically be presentist in some ways. This presentist practice reflects my idea of critical historiography. I define ‘critical historiography’ as the practice of being critical of and adopting decolonial perspective in relations to the philosophy and methods of mainstream (Western) historiography which have the potential to keep non-Western historical reconstruction in denial, contempt or marginalized. The canons of the new history result in further epistemic injustices instead of ‘intellectual redemption’, the idea that historical scholarship should aim at making African epistemic contributions acceptable part of the canon of global scholarship and scholars. Perhaps, it needs emphasizing that if the ‘new history’ is critical of the ‘old history’, then African critical historiography is also critical of the ‘new history’ of the West. After all, the ‘new history’ also belongs to the ‘privileged’ West in canon formation.

This does not deny the value of historicity or historicism in historiography. This is because historicity in Western history of Western psychology helps African historiographers of African psychology to appreciate new paths their own profession can take and not to allow prevailing mainstream ideas to hegemonize their work as the mainstream is often a consensus or sometimes a compromise reached at particular point in time and in a specific context. Similarly, Lovett (2006) added that the new history of psychology is merely whiggish in a new way as the new historiographers consider “the transition from history written by scientists to history written by historians as the sign of the maturity of the discipline” (Litman, 1981, as cited in Lovett, 2006, p. 24). How can we think that scientific knowledge at particular point in time is not cumulative knowledge from the past yet we can accept that the science of history is becoming better?

An ardent reader would notice the unexplained breaks in this intellectual historical study. This is because “The initial conditions of the African colonial and postcolonial context render continuous narrative impossible; the uninterrupted tradition assumed in European studies of the history of philosophy since the end of the eighteenth century, simply does not exist [in the case of Africa]” (Graness, 2015, p. 88). Graness (2015, p. 88) argues that

the “The history of philosophy in Africa cannot ignore the impact of slavery, colonialism, racism as well as the so-called scientific arguments concerning the intellectual inferiority of the African” due to their impact on the growth of the discipline. [Rodney \(1972, p. 122\)](#) best captures it in these words:

The European slave trade was a direct block, in removing millions of youth and young adults who are the human agents from whom inventiveness springs. Those who remained in areas badly hit by slave-capturing were pre-occupied about their freedom rather than with improvements in production [intellectual and/or material].

[Bulhan \(2015\)](#), further explains that “coloniality rests on epistemic and ontological biases that promote validation of European hegemony and superiority while invalidating, marginalizing, and eroding the knowledge, experience, and rights of colonized peoples (p. 241) and that “slavery pauperized and depopulated the African continent, stealing its young and productive members and derailing the political history and economic development of its people” (p. 242).

Without any doubt, these conditions have not only affected the growth of philosophy in Africa (with its precursor in ancient Black Egypt) but all the other disciplines including psychology (or its precursor) in Ghana and Africa in general, if it is accepted that philosophy is the mother of all modern-day disciplines.

Conclusion

In this paper, I sought to trace the intellectual history of modern psychology as an academic discipline in Ghana. In the process, the history of psychology before the 1700s was presented focusing on the University of Sankore, Timbuktu whereas the events occurring between 1700 and 1800s focusing on the life and works of Prof. Anton Wilhelm Amo (1703 – 1784) were reviewed. In addition, a review of the historical events taking place in the post-1900 era was also outlined paying particular attention to the contributions of Prof. C. E. Fician and Mr. H. C. A. Bulley (see [Oppong, 2016a](#)). The paper concluded that Amo is the “father of psychology” in Ghana whereas Fician may be considered “father of modern psychology” (see [Oppong, 2016a](#)). In addition, Bulley was described as the “promoter of modern psychology” in Ghana (see [Oppong, 2016a](#)).

Given its humble beginning, the majority of professionals who were involved in the application of psychological knowledge were not always trained as professional psychologists per se; their training may be in such fields as education, theology, philosophy, law, medicine, and human services, to name but a few. In this sense, a fair picture of training and practice of psychology as a scientific discipline existed in Ghana but not as an academic discipline as known today.

The connections between philosophy and other subject areas such as theology and psychology speak to the issue of designing culture-rich curriculum. A discussion of the Amo’s and Wireduan critique of Cartesian dualism (as indicated under discussing the history) should demonstrate to Ghanaian psychologists that psychology will achieve its true indigenous status if the psychology curricula at our universities includes studies in philosophy of mind, African philosophy, social anthropology or sociology, and history. [Oppong \(2016a\)](#) provides an extensive discussion on how to indigenize psychology in Ghana and the rest of Africa and offers a definition and scope a Pan-African psychology. This paper itself is a testament to the fact some insight into the above disciplines will facilitate the process of indigenizing psychology in Ghana.

Perhaps, it is instructive to end by drawing attention to the need for a Ghanaian psychology not to be quick to discard everything Western and not to also accept everything Western. Indeed, [Ahuma \(1905, p. 254\)](#) made it clear that to go native “marks the mental terminus of the Gold Coast native, and describes his ultimate reversion to the simplicity of his forebears, *sobered and matured with all that is excellent in Western civilization...*(my own emphasis)”. This implies borrowing ideas wherever they may come from and whenever it is prudent. Additionally, based on the Sekyi Puzzle of modernity, [Oppong \(2016a, p. 8\)](#) suggests that:

As a matter of urgency, we should discourage wholesale rejection of all Western psychological concepts as it is inimical to cross-fertilization of ideas. It is also premature at this stage to make strong suggestion for total rejection of all forms of Eurocentric concepts. To encourage wholesale rejection of Western psychology is to throw away the baby with the dirty water.

Indigenization should involve intelligent borrowing of ideas from other cultures as no single culture has answers to all human problems. As [Lauer \(2013\)](#) has already indicated there is no such thing as a distinct Western philosophy and science as there have been influences from African philosophy (in ancient Black Egypt), Hindu philosophy as well as Islamic philosophy on the indigenous Western thought. Thus, indigenization efforts should range from developing ideas from the scratch within one’s culture to borrowing and adapting ideas from other cultures but Ghanaian psychologists must “think, speak, and do things for themselves in the first place” and not “to be hegemonised by others” ([Mafeje, 2000, p. 71](#)). That is the essence of [Mafeje’s \(2000\)](#) Africanity and Combative Ontology as an African-centred decolonial paradigm to doing science in Africa.

Future historical studies should address a number of the historical questions and gaps raised in this study. For instance, identification and exploration of the reflections of Gold Coast Muslim scholars and women in relations to human nature or behaviour would advance historical scholarship on psychology in Ghana and Africa. Analyses of the potentially catalytic role of the University of Cape Coast in the establishment of psychology as a university course in Ghana as well as the ‘pull’ and ‘push’ factors prevailing at the Department of Sociology and University of Ghana in the 1960s are needed. The interactions, if any, among Amo who arrived in the Gold Coast in 1747, Jacobus who died in 1747, Protten who was in the Gold Coast from 1737 till his death in 1769, Philip Kwaku who also died in 1816 and the Timbuktu scholars who were operating a university in the 1700s also in the Gold Coast should also be investigated. Some questions of interest would include: Were there any scholarly interactions among these scholars in the Gold Coast? What was the content of the interactions? What are the implications of their interactions for understanding human soul or mind? Further historical explorations of philosophical reflections on human soul and mind in ancient Egypt and Ethiopia as precursors of modern-day psychology in general and African psychology in particular would equally advance scholarship on internationalization of history of psychology. Again, the psychological positions of such modern Ghanaian psychologists such as S. A. Danquah, Fiscian, Bulley, and Opoku on one hand and others such as those mentioned in [Table 4](#) as well as Kwame Nkrumah, K. A. Busia, Gyekye and Wiredu on the other, should also be studied in order to uncover, understand and extend their treatises on psychology or nature of human mind or behaviour in Ghana.

Notes

i) ‘Akra’ is used instead of ‘Accra’ following the guidelines given by Carl Christian Reindorf in his History of the Gold Coast and Asante in which a repudiation of the latter spelling is presented. For more details see [Reindorf \(1889/1895\)](#).

ii) To “Go Fantee” implies to go native or to adopt the useful Ghanaian manners, customs, institutions and laws. Ahuma (1905) specifically used “Fantee”, perhaps because he was a Fantee (a member of the Akan group of Ghana) and thus, it can be understood to represent the Gold Coast natives or Ghanaians. This is supported by his numerous references to the “Gold Coast native” in the same text.

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