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*Continuity in Black Political Protest: An
Examination of Edward Wilmot Blyden and Kwame
Nkrumah's Educational Philosophy*

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ABSTRACT

It is widely acknowledged that African education was subject to change since the inception of colonial rule in Africa. This system, though presented the core of communal life in Africa, became a sort of the past. A much Westernized system of education was introduced as many believed African traditional education to underdevelop Africans and enforce their backwardness. In fact, colonial rule did not invest in the development of this system, but recklessly, placed all the means for its destruction and erosion. Within this time of great upheaval for Africa, Edward Wilmot Blyden and Kwame Nkrumah championed the cause of African education and stood behind all Africans to recognize its vitality for their development and progress. This article examines Edward Wilmot Blyden and Kwame Nkrumah's educational philosophy, pointing out the similarities and the major themes shared by the two leaders regards African education. The examination indicates that Blyden's discernment had much impact on giving shape and substance to Kwame Nkrumah's educational philosophy and thus creating continuity in black political protest which extended over centuries of time.

Keywords: Blyden, educational philosophy, Westernization, Continuity, Kwame Nkrumah

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INTRODUCTION

Though colonialism ended, underdevelopment was still a feature of the socio-economic and cultural life of Africans. Indeed, the post-colonial situation unveiled new challenges for the merging African nations as there emerged many voices for the irrelevance of Western education. The latter, deeply entrenched and not likely to be easily removed, alienated Africans from their environment and led them to live in strict psychological conflicts, as they were unable to adopt things different to their life nor to forget about their past. Things were further aggravated by a rise in unemployment rates and illiteracy which accentuated widespread criticism levelled at the utility and applicability of Western education for African development and progress.

In Ghana, formerly known as the Gold Coast, the role of African education in promoting people's connection with their environment had a long rich history. Before the coming Europeans, people knew African traditional education, also known as African indigenous education. A system that represented a set of instructions, mostly familial and communal, which aimed at preparing apprentices to be useful members in the community. However, this system had been threatened by the introduction of Christian education to the region by the beginning of the fifteenth century. Alas for Africans, Christian education ignored the existence of African's form of education, and led sporadic attempts to supplant, and if necessary, erase all old practices. The Christian teacher did nothing but distorted a system that had long been in practice in favor of a mode of life different to African's socio-economic and cultural estate. Things further worsened by the second half of the nineteenth century when European nations embarked on systematic consolidation of their presence in the region. Indeed, the situation favored a further re-examination of existing education systems, and a much nascent attempts to Westernize and bring a change of life to Africans as many of them were needed to fill administrative positions in the colonial government

All these developments provoked severe criticism from Africans. Edward Wilmot Blyden disdained the apparent Westernization of African education and was at odds with how Europeans remodeled Africans to be imitators and producers of Western modes of live. He further called for the creation of purely African institutions for the dissemination of African art and philosophy and means to fight Western influences. Fortunately, Blyden's appeals were not ignored. Many Africans, including the notable nationalist messiah of the twentieth century Kwame Nkrumah, were an avid followers to Blyden's ideas.

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Kwame Nkrumah, like others, made it plain that a good understanding of African education would help address the African problem, and shape new mechanisms to fight all forces of Westernization. Similar to Blyden, he, as president of Ghana, worked a scheme to establish purely African universities to fight the glaring and derogatory abuses of Western education, and provide Africans with a type of education relevant to their environment and fit to produce an African scholar, not a Western scholar.

There is a plethora of literature on the nature of African education. However, there seems a lack of discussions on how African nationalists understood this system and set many promises for building new emerging nations out of suitable and relevant education. This article is thus a contribution to existing literature through a contextualization of Blyden's and Nkrumah's educational philosophy to see how both men shared the same principles regarding African education, and proposed similar scheme for African development and progress. In this respect, this article is set chronologically for two main reasons. First, it intends to trace the evolution of African education from the pre-colonial period up to the introduction of colonialism to see how much that system was affected by the new comers. Second, the article seeks to trace continuity in black political protest and thus it is potent to discuss Blyden's philosophy and then see how his principles continued to affect people up to the emergence of Kwame Nkrumah as president, a nationalist leader and a symbol of African nationalism.

2. The Development of African Education

2.1 Traditional Education

Informal education was the only means of training in the Gold Coast. It was home and members of the community who played the role of the teacher. Education did not serve to give apprentices high qualifications. Rather, it prepared individuals to be useful members in the community. Indeed, education (as cited in Djokoto, 2019) before the arrival of Europeans was almost a training for life:

In the olden days the son of a fisherman spent his mornings by the seashore, swimming in the surf until he became proficient in swimming and diving as in walking and running. With a miniature net he practiced casting in imitation of his father... The son of the farmer accompanied his father to the farm and gradually acquired the father's lore. He studied when the planting should be carried out,

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the right times for clearing and growing crops, and when the harvest was ripe and ready for the gathering...In like manner the girl trod in the footsteps of the mother. Almost as soon as she could walk, she accompanied her mother to the well and to the market, carrying her little water pot or bundle of market produce... As she grew older, she took part in the household offices and was taught apprenticeships by mothering the younger members of the family... I may say, then, that the education of the African child by the African system is a preparation and practical training for the life that lies before it

In this respect, Bartles (1949,p.223) stated that education in these societies covered three main areas. First, parents taught their children to care about their health. This included knowledge about food, physical fitness and medicine. Second, children must know about their customs. It was important for a child to know different conventional manners, oaths, festivals and celebrations. The last area of concern for parents was activity whether individual or communal. These activities included, among other things, swimming, dancing and games. Though people were strongly attached to that system of life, their early contact with Europeans seemed to infringe on their right to maintain that system.

2.2 Christain Education

It is stated that Europeans came to Africa for economic motives. Their presence, however, uttered new changes as the people, mostly needed to carry out commerce and help exploit the region's riches, were in the eyes of Europeans not fit to serve Europeans mentally and intellectually. Many believed that education (as cited in Kimble,1963) was "the main agent of social change, as well as the major determinant of social status in the new, semi-Westernized society"(p62). Consequently, early Christian missions sought the promotion of Western education side by side with evangelization. The first intent of the missionary was to "enable the congregations to read the Bible and to use hymnbook"(Aboagye,2013,p.70). Apparently, African children would attend schools, and without doubt would accustom themselves to Western modes of life of the newly established schools. Things were further deteriorated by a nascent attack on native culture. The missionary bestowed with the belief that everything associated with African culture was "evil" and "satanic", banned all forms of African art and music. Missionary education, in this regard, aspired to create a new world for the African where the African despised all old practices and showed respect for the new much Westernized world.

2.3 Western Education and the Colonial Government

Up to 1880, many colonial governments were apathetic about any scheme to introduce education to natives. However, the rising revenues of the colonial governments gave a boost to their investments. This made it clear that the introduction of Western education to natives was a necessary step for the newly established colonies. Furthermore, the initiation of education reforms were an attempt to compensate with the rising influence of missionary education which, according to the government, lacked financial support and was in most cases unorganized. The diffusion of Western education had economic as well as cultural motives. Economically, the colonial governments found European staff too expensive. This increase in cost may be due to the hard working conditions in Africa that clearly frightened Europeans. In such prevailing atmosphere, the government was expected to find cheap African personal who could fill in these jobs and could be afforded with meagre prices, or nothing at all (Djamila & Djafari, 2010, p15-17). Culturally, it was stated that there was a complementary relationship between Africa and Europe that resulted from the increasing benefits that each side took from the other. Africa had the sole role of providing raw materials to Europe, while Europe was destined to uplift the African people by exposing them to different facets of European modernity and civilization. Indeed, the influence of Western education was strong that natives could not afford to resist. Describing the great impact that Western education had on the Westernization process, a yearly report of the Gold Coast (Ghana) 1860 stated (as cited in Asare, 1982) that Western education brought much advancement to the religious, intellectual and moral status of the people:

... At the present time the Gold Coast essentially exhibits all the symptoms of progress in every phase of its existence. There is a vitality of change diffusing its innumerable currents throughout every class of society, and giving expansion and force to an entirely new class of ideas affecting the moral, religious, social and domestic condition of the people, A taste for many of European necessities and luxuries of life, and a partial assimilation in the construction of their houses, in dress, in manners and in religion, are becoming daily more observable, and even where little external change is perceptible, there is nevertheless going on an extensive modification of ideas, feelings and customs, paving the way for a more general conformity to the usages of civilized life (p.96)

Within this prevailing atmosphere that favored the alteration of all what was

African, Edward Wilmot Blyden defended African's right to keep their system of life. He engaged in systematic resistance to Europeanization of the African people and formed a culture of protest to revive native institutions.

3. Edward Wilmot Blyden: Educational Philosophy

Edward Wilmot Blyden was born on 3 August 1832 in the Island of St. Thoams, the Danish West Indies. He spent most of his childhood years at Charlotte Amalie, the island capital. There is meagre records about his parents. All what is known is that they were slaves before they got their freedom by 1846 (Holden,1966,p.455). A most notable period in Blyden's life was when he met the Reverend John Knox, a White priest in the Presbyterian Church in Newtown, Long Island (Conyers,1998,p.219). Knox admired Blyden's talent and intellect and was very enthusiastic to send Blyden to the United States to pursue higher education. Blyden took no time and grasped at the chance. In the United States, Blyden's first stay seemed a malign. He (as sited in Holden,1966) stated "I found, however, the deep-seated prejudice against my race, exercising so controlling an influence in the institution of learning, that admission to them was almost impossible"(p.22). As a result of racial prejudice and subjugation, Blyden, with the help of Walter Lowrie, Secretary of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, and John, B. Pinny of the New York Colonization Society, repatriated to Liberia in 1851 as the next destination to carry on higher education. At Liberia, Blyden succeeded in formulating a philosophy regarding African physical and intellectual emancipation. As a scholar, educator, theologian, politician and cultural nationalist, Blyden made of Liberia and other West African colonies the nucleolus of activities and a place to disseminate ideas about the proper education suited to African's socio-economic and cultural estate .

For Blyden, Euro-Christian education was debasing. It made Africans compelled to be imitators, not inventors (Conyers,1998,p.250). European education made Africans think very highly of European civilization. This pervasive attempts (as cited in Blyden,1888) to idolize all what was European led Africans blindly to imitate their educators without conceiving the fact that this process was only a means to engrave "a practical inferiority" and was likely to give the African "the faults rather than the virtues of their models"(p.110). Consequently, this would supersede national culture, and in a way or another made African's intellectual and spiritual characteristics lost in favor of merging an identity that was not their own. In describing how Euro-Christian education institutions alienated Africans, Blyden (as cited in Lynch, 1971) wrote bitterly of the present situation:

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He (African) finds himself by them alienated from himself and from his countrymen. He is neither African in feeling nor in aim. He does not breathe African air through any of the lessons he has imbibed. The smell of the African ground is not in them, but everything is Europe and European, and in some instances for the sake of gratifying the artificial and natural testes he has contracted, he would annihilate his sisters to produce a new race. This is the saddest of the results produced by training the African away from his country and his countrymen (p.256)

Accordingly, Blyden (1881) believed that European education with its “despotic and overruling method” had failed the African people. Now African Negroes fell victim to a brutal type of slavery that is of the mind. According to Blyden “The slavery of the mind is far more destructive than that of the body”. Blyden posited bitterly that Africans were misled through Euro-Christian education. For Blyden, “nearly all the books they read, the very instruments of their culture, have been such as to force them from the groove which is natural to them”(p.112). He in a way was sympathetic with missionaries who did not succeed in elevating Africans through education. He (as cited in Ashby,1966) considered it a “weakness and imperfection of human nature” that these bodies ventured to Africa to erase “shackles” out of the Negro mind. Instead, they even worsened the situation by distorting and contaminating all what was African (p.451).

Byden (as cited in Conyers,1998) further believed that the main objective of education was to direct Africans to discern their potential. Blyden stressed that education should “secure growth and efficiency”. It was a means to exploit Africans’s innate intellectual capacity to strive for what he could be in the future. It was an education that implanted “self-respect”, “appreciation of our own powers” and “a fitness for one’s sphere of life and action”. These qualities, if handed to African through education, would produce, as he termed it “a correct education”(p.116). According to Blyden, correct education was an amalgam of historical and cultural realities that would generate in the African a collective psyche. The latter encompasses African languages, norms and values and a systematic-African innate skills of interaction.

To remedy the delinquencies of the present status of African education, Blyden sought the creation of a West African university. Blyden (as cited in Ashby,1966) placed great promise on trusting native agency in taking the lead for Africa’s development. He firmly believed that a purely native agency, if not “despised” and “excluded”, would set in Africans the mechanisms of being fit to self-

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government. The creation of a truly native institution, he continued, could only be realized by the inauguration of new education system. A system that must go in pace with African's needs, and that did not interject with "native instincts" and in a way or another made the native African "out of harmony and sympathy with their own countrymen. Blyden further made the point that the realization of the project would provide Africans with a purely native agency uncontaminated by European influences and worked to let people knew about "indigenous literature" that would be a source of transformation of the "the moral and intellectual condition of the people"(p.451). The presence of native agency would provide a curriculum sensitive to African culture and a viable proposition for Africa's development.

The creation of an African university meant new interpretations of Africans system of life. For Blyden, it's high time for education to produce not a European scholar, but an African scholar. For Blyden (1900), Euro-Christian education granted Africans only "the power of adoption". The African would never come into intellectual and cultural maturity without resisting these forces, and urgently gave to the world, and the African masses, an African (Liberian) scholar who could "read what is "still unreal", written for the race in "the manuscripts of God"(p.14). This was done, Blyden (1900) continued, when education succeeded in producing "not the European scholar, not the American scholar, but the Liberian scholar". Blyden further posited that an African scholar should draw on African culture as a means to scientific, educative end. As president of Liberia College, Blyden (1900) set many promises on the education project of revolutionizing African image about themselves, and the image of the African in the European mind. Education, if properly conducted, would generate African scholars who enthusiastically:

will study and comprehend the ways of God in Africa, who ...will understand the African in his native state...who will be able to study from a scientific standpoint native law, tribal organization, native languages, native religion, native politics, the social and domestic life of the natives, their secret societies, and the effect of all these things upon their life (p.15)

Blyden detested Euro-centric vision of African life and customs and argued that the role of the African scholar was to get Africans out of "crudeness" and "superstitions". Blyden plainly professed for the need to re-study African's nature of government, religion and social customs. Each one, he believed, presented a rich, fruitful source of inspiration for many Africans.

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Blyden by 1882, encouraged the incorporation of vocational, agricultural and industrial training. For Blyden, Negro progress depended not only on cultural emancipation, but largely on economic self-reliance. As president of Liberia College, he sought the need to establish within the college a workshop that teach Africans the use of carpenter and other skills. He further believed that an education of this kind would provide trained and skilled individuals who would nourish autonomy for Negro individuals, and why not nations at large. As Lagos Agent for Native Affairs, Blyden addressed many letters to Governor Gilbert T. Carter of the need to establish "The Lagos Training College and Industrial Institute". Blyden insisted on Carter that the realization of the project would bring many benefits to Africans. The institute would work as a vehicle for Africans economic and material progress. It would provide Africans with new, advanced skills that would save money, time and health. As regards Agriculture, Blyden (1900,p.222) opined that autonomous African nation was in no way a product of self-contained African of food. Blyden explained that agricultural based curriculum was necessary for Africans. For him, the African continent was largely agricultural. This placed the mission that the curriculum should "regulate and foster the culture of the soil" instead of merely devoting concerted efforts to build railway or telegraph. He, thus, emphasized that with the study of Western languages and knowledge, a part must be agricultural based.

In all, Blyden prophetically longed for an African character determined to hold responsibility. He had a deep yearning to let Africans knew that European protection, and intervention in nations affairs would only bring subjugation and suppression to their well-being. For him a real liberated African was the one who detested European influences, and worked to forge a close bond of cooperation, assistance and goodwill. These mechanisms, indeed, made Blyden a notable figure in nineteenth century Africa. It was thus not a surprise to find many people in West Africa in general and the Gold Coast (now Ghana) in particular who continued to cherish Blydenic educational philosophy and made it a ground for their educational, political, economic and cultural protest.

3. West Africa, The Gold Coast and Blyden's Educational Philosophy

Early in the history of West Africa, people showed intensified efforts to resist all forms of colonial subjugation. Nationalism in this respect sought not only the withdrawal of colonial presence from the newly established colonies, but worked to strengthen Africans's ties with their origins as a response to the great tied of Western influences. Blyden's principles became a force to guide nationalism and give it shape against the derogatory and abusing influences of European presence

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and hence creating continuity in black political protest that rested up to present. In Nigeria, Blyden's principles became the source of great nationalistic uprising. John Payne Jackson (as cited in Michael, 1979) disdained European attempts to de-nationalize Africans and contended that the "attempt to develop Africa on European lines can only end in failure.... The African, if he wants to progress, must go on his own lines" (p.49). Similar to Blyden, Payne alluded to the fact that foreign teachers had always advanced the idea that the Negro is an inferior race and that he should be given "a foreign model to copy". For Payne (as cited in Michael,1979), the foreign teacher had never considered the existence of African life and philosophy. He stated "no account has been made of our peculiarities, our languages enriched by the traditions of centuries, our- parables many of them the quintessence of family and national histories"(125). In Sierra Leone, James Africanus Beale Horton was attracted by Blyden's ideas. He insisted that a correct education for Africans would be the source of great development. Like Blyden, he encouraged the establishment of a West African university in Sierra Leone where African history, art, philosophy and culture became the bone of the curriculum. He further called for the creation of a medical school. The school would in the long run produce African doctors who could help Africans be independent of Western influences (Meberbeche, 2010,p.145). Orishatukeh Faduma also levelled great criticism at the whole institution of Christian education. In the same manner as Blyden, Faduma (as cited in Meberbeche,2010) described missionary education as "a defective training". Missionary education made Africans subject to a foreign race and unable to do their mission. For Faduma (as cited in Meberbeche,2010) , missionary education left Africans "parasite, incapable of ameliorating their unfavorable environment and those of their neighbors, incapable of working out the salvation of their race, and resigned to an invisible and invincible fate"(p.137) .

In the Gold Coast, continuity in black political protest as regards Blyden's educational philosophy was an apparent feature of the twentieth century. Though Blyden died in 1912, his philosophy, indeed, continued to shape and fuel nationalistic uprising in the Gold Coast. His influence did not only affect the colonial period but surmounted to the post-colonial period when Kwame Nkrumah became the president of the newly established republic of Ghana. Early in the twentieth century, many saw the defects of Western education. Like Blyden, they contended that education should produce character. In the words of one commentator (as cited in Boakie,1966) , "Every educated Negro wants to be a first-class Negro, not a third-class European"(p.112). Education did nothing but made Africans disciplinarians of the Europeans and tools for exploitation. In

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a similar tone, Casely Hayford criticized the whole institution of Western education. He believed that education introduced to African was a means to “denationalize” rather than “Africanize” the Negro. In an editorial in the Gold Coast Nation published in 1915, the editor questioned the intent of Western education. The editor (as cited in Kimble, 1963) wrote:

education that fails to recall and install into the minds of the children the wisdom, brave deeds and civilization of the past is bound to produce and educated class of indigenes prone to foreign customs and ideals which will make them a soulless people in the land of their birth (p.245)

During the 1920's similar manifestations were held to support the cause of African education. In a number of meetings held between 1920 and 1930, the National Congress of British West Africa became a medium to address educational needs of Africans. Kobina Sekyi presented a paper entitled “Education with Particular reference to a West African University”. For Sekyi (as cited in Langley,1970) Western education failed the African and forced him to borrow “an alien physiology, psychology and sociology” different to the ones he knew before the arrival of Europeans. An education that intentionally suppressed “social institutions” of their ancestors and made these institutions “uncivilized”(p.232). The 1930's were also times of great appraisal of Blyden's educational philosophy. This was evident through the emerging youth movement and the West African Students Union in particular. Solanke, one of its members, undertook a mission to falsify missionaries' claim of black's inferiority. He contended that this misconception was a result of missionaries's “lack of knowledge” about Africa and Africans. He (as cited in Olusanya,1982) , like Blyden, insisted on the need to create an African scholar. For him, an African scholar would “investigate and give to the world in suitable literary form, an account of their history, laws, customs, institutions and languages”(p.451) .

A remarkable phase in Gold Coast history was the emergence of Kwame Nkrumah as a political leader during the 1940's and as a president of Ghana between 1957 and 1966. As president, much less notable during the pre-independence era, Kwame Nkrumah made notable contribution to the education sphere of Africans. Shortly After his return from England to the Gold Coast he started a long mission to initiate purely African educational institutions that would instill a love for African culture, art and philosophy. His active career as a president of the new republic Ghana presented a very remarkable phase in Pan-African struggle and by extension the great impact that Blyden's educational

philosophy had on his actions and intellects.

3.1 Post- Independence Ghana: Kwame Nkrumah to Power (1957-1966)

On 6 March 1957, Ghana got its independence, which ended a long distorting relationship with colonialism. Nkrumah, as the first president of Ghana, promised to set all sections of the country together as monitoring dynamic for progress. Indeed, the ten years as president showed surmounted efforts to work for the welfare of the people. Yet, Nkrumah never ceased to forget the dream of African unity and the right of African people for emancipation. He believed that though many African nations got their independence, still many, including Ghana, had to fight the remnant of colonialism and Western influences. He, thus, promulgated a program of action that worked to revive the African personality and bring much change to African people's economic, political and most importantly educational situation. Unlike the period preceding independence which was almost a struggle for unity to achieve independence, Post-independence Ghana unveiled strong and often continuous attempts by Nkrumah to immerse on the ideas of Blyden to face the new challenges of building the new republic and by extension the African continent.

The first task set by Nkrumah was the creation of an education with national character. Nkrumah, similar to Byden, never doubted the debasing and threatening effect of Western education. He condemned present African educational institutions that were still led by Western models of education. For Nkrumah, Euro-Christian education introduced Western society and environment. In doing so, it distorted the essence of African life and made Africans live a psychological trauma as education was irrelevant to their expectations. Nkrumah (as cited in Asamoah,2005) proposed that a proper education was the type where teachers adjust their mental make-up to suit the conditions and aspirations of Africans. Teachers should began with African peculiarities as a positive start "for maintaining a progressive and dynamic African society"(p.235). Nkrumah (1979) further longed for a day when education imparted not Western life, but an African life with all its peculiarities. Nkrumah summed up his intent of African education at Flagstaff House, Accra on 24 February 1963. He told audience:

The role of a university in a country like ours is to become the academic focus of national life, reflecting the social, economic, cultural and political aspirations of the people. It must kindle national interest in the youth and uplift our citizens and free them from ignorance, superstition and may I add, indolence (p.451)

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Nkrumah made the point that without proper education or what Blyden termed “correct education” “Africans could not find their way. In a similar manner like Blyden, Nkrumah (1979) accused colonial education institutions of giving the African things which did not match with his own development but they were “designed to suit the colonial order and their products therefore reflected the values and ideals of the colonial powers”. The result was that these institutions “were unable to assess the needs and aspirations of the societies for which they were instituted”(p.455). Nkrumah (as cited in Asamoah,2005) further made a glimpse at his future to be African university. The main drive of the curriculum should be “indigenous social structures and cultural institutions”. These two dynamics would make Africans one-step closer to “the philosophical principles that had guided African people throughout history”(p.235).

Like Blyden, Nkrumah sought education as a means to make Africans proud of themselves. Nkrumah saw no reason to still think of African inferiority. Africans made many accomplishments and contributions to world civilizations. According to Nkrumah (1973), “evidence from language, religion, astronomy, folklore and divine kinship, as well as geographical and physical proximity, confirms the basic African origin of his Egyptian cultural eminence”(p.325). It was only the corrupted picture of European historiographers which made the African a man without history and capacities. In 1962, at the behest of an invitation from the First Africanist Conference, Nkrumah (1973,p.325) presented a lengthy talk on Africans contribution to humankind. The talk focused on African history from the time of ancient Egypt until the period where the great Empires of West Africa emerged. Nkrumah began by analyzing the motives that drove European writings to depict false images about Africans. The first of these depictions came with early European contacts with the continent, namely the trade on slaves. For Nkrumah, there was only an economic drive behind European penetration into the continent. Thus, early European writings “needed to find some sort of excuse” for the illegitimate trade on human cargoes and irresistible impulse to find gold and ivory. These writings were in no means “apologetic” aiming in the first place “to justify slavery and the continued exploitation of African labour and resources”. By the end of the slave trade, African studies writings changed dramatically. The motives were no longer economic. For Nkrumah (1973), these writings “began to give accounts of African society which were used to justify colonialism as a duty of Civilization”(p.222). Similar to Blyden, Nkrumah (1973) mentioned that Europeans used religion and civilization as the main drive for the still process of exploitation of the African riches. Now, the African was bamboozled having no capacity “to look forward or backward”.

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The process culminated in a great amount of political, economic and cultural subjugation that denied all Africans spheres of life in favor of much betrayed Western modes of life:

The central myth in the mythology surrounding Africa is that of the denial that we are a historical people. It is said that whereas other continents have shaped history and determined its course, Africa has stood still, held down by inertia. Africa, it is said, entered history only as a result of European contact. Its history, therefore, is widely felt to be an extension of European history (p.225)

Nkrumah concluded that the African was made subservient to Europeans because “the history of Africa has...been European centered”. This justified the great zeal showed by Nkrumah to encourage African scholars to write the correct story of Africa. A story that brought to light the untold facts about many African personalities who were idols for Europeans centuries ago.

Nkrumah's pursuit of purely African education made of African culture the genesis of protests. Similar to Blyden, Nkrumah's manifestations to revive African culture centered on two main tenets. The first was that an understanding of African culture would make people recognize the existence of the African genius and its main contribution to humanity. The second owed to what Asamoah (2005,p119) termed “the institutional aspect of African culture”. Nkrumah believed that the revival of African culture would find expression through the foundation of educational institutions. Nkrumah was at odds with how the African university was Westernized and believed that purely African education institutions would be the source of purely African culture. In a speech entitled “the African Genius” addressed to the Institute of African Studies on 25th October 1963, Nkrumah (1979) told audience that the institute would provide an opportunity to read what was still unread about African life and environment:

One essential function of this Institute must surely be to study the history, culture and institutions, languages and arts of Ghana and of Africa in new African centered ways—in entire freedom from the propositions and presuppositions of the colonial epoch, and from the distortions of those professors and lecturers who continue to make European studies of Africa the basis of this new assessment. By the work of this institute, we must reassess and assess the glories and achievements of our African past and inspire our generation, and succeeding generations, with a vision of a better future (p.322)

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This mindset promulgated the foundation of the Institute of African Studies. For Nkrumah (1979), the institute would be a medium for “an internationally recognized center for the advanced study of African history, language, sociology and culture and of contemporary African institutions” (p.323). Nkrumah’s main purpose was to make Africans understand their peculiarities which were a stepping stone for an understanding of African unity. According to Nkrumah (1979), “It is important for every student to maintain his links with the African scene, and thus understand the great cause of African unity to which we are committed”(p.325). African unity, in this respect, was an amalgam of two main tenets. The first was to use African institutions as vehicles for the sacred objective which is “a searching after Africa’s regeneration”. This search should be principally grounded on producing literature “suited to the traditions, history, environment and communal pattern of African society”. The second tenet stressed the need for preparing the intellect of African individuals for “the foundation of pan-Africanism”. The latter necessitated that education should carve as a last resort “the freedom and development and unity of Africa” and “the moral, cultural and scientific contribution of the continent to the total world civilization and peace”(p.328).

Another major concern for the inauguration of the institute was the creation of an African scholar. Similar to Blyden, Nkrumah called on all African scholars of the world to join the institution for the sole task of interpreting a correct image of the African world. For Nkrumah (1973), “It is incumbent upon all Africanist scholars, all over the world, to work for a complete emancipation of the mind from all forms of domination, control and enslavement”(p.265). In front of an audience of nearly 17 research fellows and 40 post-graduate students, Nkrumah stated a set of duties cast upon scholars in African studies. These scholars should create new paths for research which would mark a move from the colonialist mindset into purely African mindset. For Nkrumah (1979), African scholars should “study the history, culture, and institutions, languages and arts of Ghana and of Africa in new African-centered ways—in entire freedom from the propositions and presuppositions of the colonial epoch”(p.265). The second duty was to make as soon as possible printed materials for their production. He advised scholars to cooperate with other African centers of research for their shared objective. These materials were important in the sense that they would encapsulate a re-Africanization process in the minds of youths and promulgate a new vision of the African personality that would be a source of encouragement for the emerging youth of the continent. These materials would be part of school education and provided for ordinary readers of the continent (Poe,2003,p111).

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Nkrumah also led the foundation of the International Commission on University Education. A look at the objectives of the commission revealed the extent by which Nkrumah endorsed the need for purely African education that worked to the development of African physical and intellect to face life challenges. During his inauguration as the Chancellor of the University of Ghana on 25 November 1961, Nkrumah (1979) stated the commission's objectives:

(١) To provide opportunities for education in all those branches of human knowledge which are of value in modern Ghana for the maximum number of Ghanaians who are capable of benefiting therefore.

(٢) To equip students with an understanding of the contemporary world and, within this framework, of African civilizations, their histories, institutions, and ideas.

(٣) To undertake research in all fields with which the teaching staff is concerned, but with emphasis where possible on problems—historical, social, economic, scientific, technical, linguistic—which arises out of the needs and experiences of the peoples of Ghana and other African states.

(٤) To enable students to acquire methods of critical independent thought, while at the same time recognizing their responsibility to use their education for the benefit of the peoples of Ghana, Africa and of the world.

(٥) To provide opportunities for higher education and research for students from parts of the world, and particularly from other African states.

(٦) To develop close relationships with the people of Ghana and their organizations and with other Universities (p.144)

Nkrumah further founded the Encyclopedia Africana. The new project had been proposed by Du Bois but its realization came after Ghana got its Independence. According to Du Bois, the new project had the aim of presenting new image of Africa uncontaminated by European influences. Thus, “the task of Encyclopedia Africana”, according to Du Bois (as cited in Amoh,2019), was “to correct these falsehoods and cause their removal from textbooks and common beliefs” (p.26). With Du Bois as its director, the Encyclopedia established a secretariat that was composed of both Afro-Americans and Africans. The reason why all members were Africans owed to the fact that they believed that only Africans could interpret the African world. According to Hesse (as cited in Amoh,2019), “for so long the spokesmen in Africa have been non-African. Now the time has come for Africans to speak for themselves. And the Encyclopedia

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Africana should be the medium which the African can re-interpret himself to the world”(p.112). Though the number of African scholars affiliated to the encyclopedia was small, all members insisted that no Whiteman could be given membership as the latter did not have a good grasp of African peculiarities and thus could not give accurate, unbiased interpretation of the African psyche and his cultural and historical background. Accordingly, the work of the new project “must be frankly Afro-centric in its interpretation of African history and of the social and cultural institutions of the African and people of African descent”(p.26). These interpretations, opined Poe (2003,p.113), must come in compliance with African concepts, assumptions and interests.

4. CONCLUSION

The purpose of the present study was to examine Edward Wilmot Blyden and Kwame Nkrumah's educational philosophy to trace continuity in black political protest. The article briefly exposed the development of African education through time as an attempt to show the new changes brought with the advance of Western patterns of life. This brief introduction added clarity to the response of Africans to the great tide of Western influences, namely that provoked by Edward Wilmot Blyden. The article revealed how Blyden attacked Euro-Christian education and provided systematic analysis of the faults of foreign teachers in Africa. For Blyden, these teachers, instead of ameliorating the lot of the Negro race, they bamboozled the African by stressing his inferiority and subordination. Blyden further proposed the creation of an African university. The university would be a medium for the dissemination of African art and philosophy. Indeed, Blydenic ideas had much impact on people of West Africa in general and the Gold Coast in particular. The article showed how people of West Africa, namely Nigeria and Sierra Leone, showed intensified efforts to express Blyden's educational philosophy. For them, the present situation of education was only a means to engrave underdevelopment and that the only escape was to frame a new education that placed African systems of life as monitoring dynamic for progress .

Furthermore, the article showed that people of the Gold Coast right from the inception of colonial up to independence saw in Blyden's ideas an outlet to address their educational grievances. Through identifying with local and regional manifestations, people criticized severely Euro-Christian education and systematically urged for the establishment of purely African educational institutions that would bring freedom and emancipation. The article then concluded by exposing Nkrumah's educational philosophy. Similar to Blyden,

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Nkrumah falsified Europeans's view of black inferiority and averred that this vision emanated from a lack of understating of African peculiarities by foreign teachers. Identical to Blyden, Nkrumah saw education as a means to intellectual and physical emancipation. Consequently, he led the foundation of many educational institutions for the revival of African art, literature and philosophy and a re-interpretation of African realities. Indeed, Blyden's and Nkrumah's contribution to African education was that of lasting effects that though both men belonged to different times they represented continuity in black political protest that rested up to present.

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