

**INDIGENOUS GA IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE
BASEL MISSION CHURCH: THE ROLE OF CARL
CHRISTIAN REINDORF, PAUL MOHENU
AND THOMAS KWATEI**

BY

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis, with the exception of materials quoted from other scholarly works which have been duly acknowledged, is the original production of research work by the researcher undertaken under supervision. Any errors in this thesis are fully acknowledged as that of the researcher.

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ABSTRACT

From the very beginnings of the Basel Mission Church in Accra, indigenous people played very meaningful roles to ensure the success of the mission. The work of these African Christians is significant, and some historical accounts have sought to credit their roles. This study seeks to examine three (3) of these indigenous Ga in the Basel Mission Church and their contributions to the growth of the Basel Mission Church in the Ga district. These persons are Carl Christian Reindorf, Paul Mohenu and Thomas Kwatei. The study narrows to their contributions to music, mission and scholarship.

Data was collected and analysed through interviews with some descendants of the three personalities. Furthermore, archival materials were consulted together with some relevant literature.

The research work is based on the concept of African agency in Mission. The history of the early years of most missionary societies in Africa shows that Africans were involved in the founding and the growth of the mission.

The research demonstrated that the indigenous people like Reindorf, Mohenu and Kwatei played significant roles in the successful missionary enterprise of the Basel Mission. These three men brought their cultural experiences and sound education to bear on their missionary work and this dynamised the spread of the gospel among the Ga communities.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to the Almighty God for His grace and wisdom to complete this work, and also to my wife Mrs. Eugenia Addotey and the entire family.

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CHAPTER ONE

1.0 GENERAL INTRODUCTION

From the very beginnings of the Basel Mission Church in Accra, indigenous people played very meaningful roles to ensure the success of the mission. The work of these African Christians is significant, and some historical accounts have sought to credit their roles. Omenyo in “Mission as Intercultural Theology” quotes from the 1863 report of Johannes Christaller, who had a high opinion of the role of the Africans, as follows:

We cannot count ourselves lucky with respect to our native helpers, where we have capable ones, there is progress here, we would hardly have a Christian Congregation without Edward Samson, a fruit of Meischel’s presence here. The presence of the missions is in no way in vain, we are nothing without native people, they do nothing without us, but to GOD alone is the honour, His is the work. We are found worthy to be His instruments and are unworthy by His grace.”¹

This point by Christaller affirms that many Africans participated in the spread of the gospel by assisting as catechists, interpreters or by giving up pieces of land for missionary work. Omenyo again in his work “Agenda for a Discussion of African Initiatives in Christianity: The West African/Ghanaian Case” - argues that several African Christians contributed to the success of mission, by acting as mediators, catechists and translators.²

There were numerous African ordained pastors, catechists, teachers, interpreters and lay leaders who worked relentlessly alongside the Western missionaries to ensure that Christianity developed and spread in West Africa. Indeed, due to linguistic problems and unfriendly climatic conditions, both militating against the work of the Western missionaries, the various successes of the missions they spearheaded would not have been possible without indigenous African agency.

¹Cephas Omenyo, “Mission as Intercultural Theology in MarthaFredricks, meindert Dijkstra and Anton

² Omenyo, “Intercultural Theology,” 172.

Among these Africans were Carl Christian Reindorf, Paul Mohenu and Thomas Kwatei who helped in several areas of endeavours in the development of the Basel Mission Church among the Ga people of Accra.

Contrary to the widely-held belief that Western missionary reports on Africa lacked objectivity because they sought to impress their sending agencies, one finds evidence from written reports by missionaries which acknowledge the roles of their African hosts and co-workers. A well-documented example is the assistance that the missionary Andreas Riis enjoyed from a traditional herbalist through George Lutterodt in 1832, which enabled him to survive.³ There were several African kings, traditional priests and herbalists who can be classified as friends of Western missionaries. Some are on record as having invited Western missionaries and having offered them land to put up mission stations, and “liberty was given to publish the Gospel in the market place and the streets”⁴. In Akropong the king of Akwapim, Nana Addo Dankwa is known to have organized the local community to assist Riis in building his first house. In fact Riis was hosted by a traditional priest before he received assistance to build his own house.⁵

Even though the forgoing seems contradictory, that is not the actual case. Omenyo seems to be making the point that the Western report relegated the contribution of the African hosts to the background because they might have regarded such contributions as insignificant.

According to Daniel Antwi, one of the stimulating developments in Christian mission studies is the gradual shift of emphasis from Western Eurocentric interpretation and

³ Noel Smith, *The Presbyterian Church of Ghana, 1835-1960: A Younger Church in a Changing Society* (Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 1966), 30-31.

⁴ Smith, *Presbyterian Church of Ghana*, 30-31.

⁵ Smith, *Presbyterian Church of Ghana*, 30-31

initiatives to an emphasis which takes African participation seriously.⁶ For him the assertion is that Africans are the best people to tell their own story as far as mission is concerned. Too often the story is told from the perspective of mission records in North Atlantic archives. This is by no means disregarding mission records in the West. They may be authentic. However, the significant contributions of the African should be highlighted.

1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The work of the Basel Missionaries contributed immensely to the growth and success of the Basel Mission Church in the Gold Coast. This has been widely recorded by many authorities. It must be emphasised however, that there were some indigenous people who greatly supported the growth of the Basel Mission Church. This research work seeks to study three (3) personalities who worked in the Ga District of the church. They are: - Carl Christian Reindorf, Paul Mohenu and Thomas Kwatei. Not very much research has been done on these three (3) persons, even though their contributions have greatly impacted on Basel Mission work among the Ga people. This study seeks to acknowledge their works and to give them the proper place in the history of mission work among the Ga people.

1.2. PURPOSE OF STUDY

The purpose of study is to highlight the role of the indigenous mission by investigating these three Ga Christians. The following areas of endeavour are investigated: scholarship, music, translation and mission.

1.3 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The Literature Review for this study has been divided into four (4) main thematic areas that have bearing on the subject. These are firstly, the history of the Presbyterian Church

⁶ Daniel J. Antwi, "The African factor in Christian Mission to Africa: A study of Moravian and Basel Mission initiatives in Ghana," *International Review of Mission*, LXXXVII: 344 (1998), 55.

of Ghana, secondly, the practices and institutional control of the Basel Mission Church, Biographical Studies, finally, works on the Ga State and Society.

1.3.1 History of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana

Noel Smith in his work “*The Presbyterian Church of Ghana, 1835- 1960*:⁷ examined the historical and geographical background of the nation within which the Presbyterian Church of Ghana is found. He traced its origins in Europe and Africa and further discussed the eras following the beginnings. He described the period of 1843 to 1850 as the second attempt at evangelizing the Gold Coast. He maintained that not much was achieved during this period. It served as a preparatory period for the real take-off of mission. There is the period of consolidation which followed immediately, from 1850 to 1870. The period of advanced growth was from 1870 to 1918. The final chapter dealt with developments in educational and medical work in addition to; life and work of the church and the community. He argues that the initial activities of the Basel Mission Church between 1820 and 1840 were not successful because of the problems the missionaries encountered. Noel Smith asserts that the support the indigenes gave to the Basel Missionaries contributed to the growth and success of Mission work. One of his major strengths is the emphasis he lays on African initiatives, citing the work of Mohenu and mission work in Odumase and its surrounding communities.⁸ His work is of great importance in the development of this work, since it traces the origin of the Basel Mission Church in the Gold Coast. It brings to the fore, contributions of both Western missionaries and Black Africans to mission work in the Gold Coast.

⁷ Smith, *Presbyterian Church of Ghana*,

⁸ Smith, *Presbyterian Church of Ghana*, 47- 48.

Michael Albert Kwamena-Poh's work "*Vision and Achievement, 1928- 1978: A Hundred and fifty Years of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana*" - agrees with Noel Smith as far as the historical narratives of the Church is concerned. Both writers examine the achievements and contributions of Basel Mission in the areas of health, agriculture and spiritual development of the people. Kwamena- Poh also discusses the role of the African agents from the inception of the Church which brought about success in mission. He further analyses the work of the Basel Mission, the Scottish Mission and the Moravian Christians from the West Indies, as well as the native people who contributed to the establishment and the growth of the church. He affirms contributions in the following areas: - health, education, agriculture, and the spiritual development of the people right from the inception of the church. He further points out the long presence of the European trading nations in parts of the country. The early attempt by chaplains who accompanied the missionaries to introduce Christianity to Ghana was to prepare the grounds for effective mission. The chaplains' efforts were concentrated in the schools and they helped prepare the youngsters for future missions.⁹

Due to the limited human and material resources of the Scottish Missionaries who succeeded the Basel missionaries, they were left with no choice but to rely on the African agents for most of the work. The support given by the indigenes ensured the fast transfer of administrative authority to African hands. Thus, the indigenous people played a major role in the success of the work of the Scottish Missionaries.¹⁰

Kwamena- Poh and Smith, by their work have brought to the fore, the fact that several indigenes contributed immensely to the success of mission. Their work also served as a

⁹ Smith, *Presbyterian Church of Ghana*, 24.

¹⁰ Michael Albert Kwamena- Poh, *Vision & Achievement 1828- 1978: A Hundred and Fifty Years of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana* (Accra: Water Ville Publishing House, 2011), 139- 142.

catalyst for further research on the contributions of some other Africans. Thus, their work is of immense benefit to the researcher.

Danso in his work- *The Basel Mission in Anum, 1863- 1918*, a seventy (70) page document focusses on the work of the Basel Mission in the Anum area.¹¹ He agrees with Smith and Kwamena-Poh, highlighting the role that the indigenous people played in mission, language development, education and evangelism. For Danso, the sacrifice and the toil and enduring legacies are worth emulating. According to Danso, the motivation of the missionaries going to Anum was to establish a trade centre and buy cotton as part of their missionary endeavours. It is unfortunate that the contributions of the natives, such as Philip Kwabi, the catechist from Akropong are not often mentioned or acknowledged when the Mission story is being told. Without the native people, his Mission will not have been successful.¹² It is this missing link which Danso identifies, that this study seeks to build upon with regard to the mission history among the Ga people. His work is particularly important to this work as he specifically deals with mission work among Black Africans.

Ekem, in *Early Scriptures of the Gold Coast*, gives a detailed narrative of the history of the translation of Ghanaian Scriptures.¹³ He indicates that the underlying conviction held by the missionary societies and their translation, both foreign and indigenous, and the translation of the Bible was a necessity for the effective evangelization and the Christian growth for the African and indeed all humankind. He states that the motivating factor behind the translation of the Bible into our local languages, for example Ga, Twi, Ewe,

¹¹ Yaw Danso, *The Basel Mission in Anum: 1863- 1918* (Osu: Heritage Publications, 2013).

¹² Danso, *Basel Mission in Anum*, 51.

¹³ John David Kwamena Ekem, *Early Scripture of the Gold Coast* (Manchester: St. Jerome Publishing, 2011).

was for evangelization. This affirms the position that the indigenous people have played a significant role in African Christianity including Christian scholarship. Their main aim was to teach the Bible in the mother tongue languages, in order to better communicate the message of Scripture.¹⁴ Ekem's work throws some light on African Christians in translation and serves as a rich resource for this work. Ekem's work shows how indigenous people assisted, especially in the translation of the scriptures in the indigenous language. This area has much bearing on this research work, hence the reference to it.

1.3.2 Practices and Institutional Control of the Church

Miller's, *Missionary Zeal and Institutional Control: Organizational Contradictions in the Basel Mission on the Gold Coast, 1828- 1917* examines the internal organizational structure of the mission and the tension that was generated in the implementation of the missions' policies.¹⁵ The missionaries did not only preach and practice piety, but were also against the slave trade. They believed that preaching the gospel in the local language was essential and this is where the work of the three (3) key personalities under investigation becomes necessary. They were indigenes who were scholars and could help with the mission work in the vernacular. The missionaries considered education to be vital but this was to be conducted in the indigenous language in order to achieve maximum results. Here again the three (3) key Ghanaian personalities played very important roles in enabling the Basel Mission achieve its goals.¹⁶

¹⁴ Ekem, *Scripture of the Gold Coast*, 30- 35.

¹⁵ Jon Miller, *Missionary Zeal and Institutional Control- The Organizational Contradictions in the Basel Mission on the Gold Coast* (Grand Rapids- Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2003), 20-25.

¹⁶ Miller, *Missionary Zeal and Institutional Control*, 13- 15.

The Mission believed in order, discipline, and principled living and their activities helped shape the missions positively. The Basel Mission put in some policies and structures which were in line with Pietist beliefs about the proper way to organize life.

However, this success was not without tension and contradictions. For instance, the marriage of missionary Johannes Zimmermann (he was a missionary, clergyman and ethnolinguist of Basel Evangelical Missionary Society of Switzerland, who translated the entire Bible into the Ga language of the Ga-Dangme people) to an African woman, Catherine Mulgrave, raised a lot of eyebrows because of a number of reasons. First, permission was to be sought from the Basel Mission Committee before the marriage, but Zimmermann went against this. Again, his marrying a Black woman added salt to an injury. These were a direct affront to the marriage rules (he married without permission).¹⁷

The fear of the Basel Mission Committee was that the action of Zimmermann could meet resistance from the Pietist Community in Europe. The policy of the Basel Mission, to propagate the gospel in the indigenous languages, called for people who were not only literate, but also knew the culture of the area. The three (3) personalities being studied readily fell in place and that makes Miller's work so helpful to this work.

Quartey's work *Missionary Practices of the Gold Coast, 1832- 1895* examines the ways in which the practices of three members of the Basel Mission, Andreas Riis, Rosine Widmann, and Carl Christian Reindorf- helped to shape the success of the mission because of the policies and vision of the Basel Mission Church.¹⁸

¹⁷Miller, *Missionary Zeal and Institutional Control*, 145.

¹⁸ Seth Quartey, *Missionary Practices on the Gold Coast Discourse, Gaze and Gender in the Basel Mission in Pre- Colonial West Africa: 1832- 1895* (Youngstown- NewYork: Cambria Publications, 2007), 123.

Some of the Europeans in the Gold Coast who interacted with the Africans had children with some of the indigenous women but refused responsibility¹⁹. The colonial government (Danish and British) had the policy of looking after children of mixed heritage whose fathers had refused to take up their responsibilities. Reindorf's father who was a mulatto who benefited from this policy, even though he spent a sizeable part of his childhood with other African children. Had this policy not been there, Reindorf may not have been such a significant contributor to the success of missions in the Ga state.

Additionally, the Basel Mission established schools for mixed race and other selected children at the Christiansborg Castle. By going through this formal system of education, Reindorf and others acquired new values, a new identity and had their horizon broadened. The school had great impact on him and his orientation changed. These were all good for the success of mission work.

Quartey's claim does not mention vocational training, however, this training Reindorf had in the Basel Mission School helped to shape him to become a catechist, historian, a teacher and an author, and he was the first Ga minister to be ordained by the Basel Mission Church. These qualities enabled him to contribute immensely to the mission work in the Ga state.²⁰

Schweizer, in his work *Survivors of the Gold Coast: The Basel Missionaries in Colonial Accra* reflects on the various aspects of missionary involvement in colonial Ghana as far as mission is concerned.²¹ He focusses on the missionary movements and policies in the nineteenth and twentieth century and the effort made by both the indigenous people and

¹⁹Quartey, *Missionary Practices*, 122.

²⁰Quartey, *Missionary Practices*, 124.

²¹ Peter A. Schweizer, *Survivors of the Gold Coast, The Basel Missionaries in Colonial Ghana*(Accra: Smrtline Limited, 2000), 190- 200.

the missionaries to achieve a successful mission despite challenges and difficulties. He focusses on the visions, policies, achievements in the area of education, language and science, transportation, trade and commerce and the way the native people collaborated to achieve a successful mission. Schweizer indicates that missionary activities brought development to the Ghanaian society in that indigenes like Reindorf and Kwatei helped not only to translate the Bible into the Ga language but they also helped to develop the Ga language itself.

1.3.3 Biographical Studies

Odjidja, in- *Paul Mohenu The Converted Fetish Priest*, presents a biographical sketch of Paul Mohenu²² the traditional priest, who very early got converted to Christianity and became an itinerant preacher. He was instrumental in the nurturing of the Abokobi Congregation. According to Odjidja, there was political disturbance at Christiansborg in 1854, as the people refused to pay the Poll tax. This led to the bombardment of the community and it compelled the Christians to leave Christiansborg to settle at Abokobi.

There arose disputes and conflicts among the tribes and heterogeneous groups at Abokobi. Paul Mohenu; acted as an arbitrator to let peace reign. His actions therefore helped mission work to succeed in the Abokobi area. His knowledge of the life and culture of the natives contributed immensely to the success of his ministry at Abokobi.²³ He was a traditional priest who had acquired some knowledge of the medicinal use of herbs from his father. Through his exploits, he rose to become a very powerful traditional priest whose advice was sought by many people.

²² E. M. Lartey Odjidja, *Paul Mohenu the converted fetish priest* (Accra: Water Ville Publishing House, 1965), 5- 10.

²³ Odjidja, *Paulo Mohenu*, 5- 20.

Carl Christian Reindorf's work *The History of the Gold Coast and Asante, 1500- 1860*, begins with a biographical sketch by his son, C. E. Reindorf, who examines the history of the Gold Coast and Asante, the wars they fought, the early part of Reindorf's life, his work at Abokobi, Akropong and Mayera. This work brings to the fore some of the contributions of Reindorf in assisting the Mission to succeed in the area of scholarship, as a catechist, a pastor and a teacher and as a statesman.²⁴ He was a man of many parts. Throughout his life and work, he was at one time a teacher at the Basel Mission school at Christiansborg and the Theological seminary at Akropong, a minister at Mayera, Christiansborg and Odumase Krobo, a musician who enriched worship services with the composition and translation of some hymns, a scholar who assisted in the revision of the Ga Bible, a paramedic who attended to the sick and injured during local wars, a military leader who led *Asafo* companies and a statesman who mediated in some political disputes which brought peace.

Peter Haenger's "Reindorf and the Basel Mission in the 1860s, *A Young Man Stands up for Mission Pressure*" an article in the book *The Recovery of the West African Past- African Pastors and African History in the Nineteenth Century* edited by Paul Jenkins, presents a biographical sketch of Reindorf, his life, profession and ministry. According to Haenger, Reindorf was rooted in the culture of the Ga people, in spite of his Europe-African origin and his Western training in the mission. He comments on a letter that Reindorf wrote to the mission's leadership in Basel justifying his position in relation to the slavery question and argued that, it was not illegal to own slaves in the Gold Coast since the British colonial government had not yet issued a prohibition of slavery in the area under its jurisdiction. Haenger goes further to mention Reindorf's resignation from his position as a catechist in

²⁴ Carl Christian Reindorf, *The History of the Gold Coast and Asante* (Accra: Ghana University Press, 1966), 37- 40.

order to remain a slave holder.²⁵ Haenger agrees with C. E. Reindorf that Carl Reindorf had varied talents. However, he devoted much time to his life's work as a Catechist and later as a pastor of the Basel Mission Church. He taught at the Akropong Catechist seminary and later at the Basel Mission middle school at Osu (another name for Christiansborg). According to Haenger, Reindorf was at a point in time trading for his uncle along the Volta. He was at another time a farmer who dealt in coffee and cocoa. He acted as chaplain to the Christians of the Accra troops on the war front and medic as well. According to Haenger, later, Reindorf became a tireless collector of oral tradition. His experiences in the foregoing contributed to his success in mission.

Such authority can always be of immense help to many researchers including me. Some of his works are unique and have been the basis for further research. It is my hope that I can draw on his experiences to enrich this research work.

1.3.4 The Ga State and Society

John Parker's *Making the Town: Ga State and Society in Early Colonial Accra* is very relevant to the topic because it focusses on town politics and the ways in which Ga political action shaped Accra's transition from a pre-colonial city-state to a colonial port city. He touched on the origin and formation of the Ga state, on its culture, the values and political systems of the Ga people.

He identified the true indigenes of the Ga land as *Ganyo kronɔ* who were the original migrants (true Ga).

²⁵ C. C. Reindorf, & Samuel Johnson, "Reindorf and the Basel Mission in the 1860s", A young man stands up to Mission pressure in *The Recovery of the West African Past- African Pastors and African History in the Nineteenth Century*(Basel, Basler African Bibliographien, 2000), 19- 29.

For him, these are the people who reside in the central part of Accra. The early colonial period forms a crucial hinge in this long urban history. Parker made two critical observations about the Ga State in the late nineteenth and twentieth century.

Firstly, despite the dominance of change, the transformation of Accra was characterized by a striking continuity of pre-colonial forms. But the legacies and the structures of the colonial masters have also had an impact on the transformation of Accra.

Secondly, Ga town men and women played active roles in making the colonial city. The occupation of the Ga men was fishing, while the women were engaged in trade and commerce, mostly as fish mongers. Their various occupations helped open up Accra and remaking of the city. It can be argued that with the influx of people into the city for trade and commerce, the missionaries and the converted Christians could take advantage and evangelize them. He also makes mention of three political authorities in Accra: - first the chiefs - “Mantsemei”, the “Asafo Company” because he considered the town function as a centre of military institutions. As part of the rites making the passage from childhood to adulthood, every Ga male was initiated into an “Asafo Company”. The third political system is the “Wulomei” or priests who are considered spiritual leaders of the town.²⁶

Parker traces the beginning of Reindorf as having been schooled in the culture of the Ga people which shaped his orientation. His initiation into an *Asafo* Company as a Ga, coupled with the influence of the mother and grandmother greatly affected his life.

Parker was, however, silent so far as Kwatei’s influence on Ga social life was concerned. He touches on the quarters of Accra and their compositions. He mentions Christiansborg

²⁶ John Parker, *Making the Town: Ga State and Society in Early Colonial Accra* (Cape Town: David Philip Publishers, 2000), xviii- xxiii.

or Osu being known as and called Danish Accra and being made up of four (4) quarters or *Akutsei- Kinkawe, Asante Blohum, Alata* and *Anecho* (presently called *Anorhor*).

This assertion is supported by H. Nii Adziri Wellington in his book *Stones tell stories at Osu*.²⁷ Wellington refers to Danish Accra as Danish Osu and states that the long association with the Danes through trade, with the building of the Osu castle, and inter-marriages all led to the making of Danish Osu (Danish Accra). The people of Osu referred to the Danes as “*Den blofo*.”²⁸

Parker discusses the formation of quarters or *akutsei* in Ga- *mashi*. Four (4) quarters *Asere, Abola, Gbese* and *Otublohum* came under protection of the Dutch who helped them in wars against the powerful Akwamu, Akyem and Asante kingdoms. It is for this reason that these four (4) quarters collectively became known as Dutch Accra. The natives called it Dutch *Kinka*. This was in the 1600s until the 1800s when the jurisdiction over the town passed from the Dutch to the British. The new name was Usher Town. The three (3) other quarters or *Akutsei, Alata, Sempe Akanmaji*, emerged in the same area where the Royal Africa Company had built the James fort. These quarters or *akutsei* were collectively called James Town or English Accra, maybe because of the dominance of the British around that time.

It may be argued that the factors mentioned above positively impacted Reindorf’s mission work.

²⁷ H. Nii Adziri Wellington, *Stones Tell Stories at Osu: Memories of a Host Community of The Danish Trans- Atlantic Slave Trade* (Accra: Sub Sharan Publishers, 2011), 22- 34.

²⁸ Wellington, *Stones Tell Stories*, 21.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTION

The research question is “What were the roles played by the indigenous Ga people in the planting, nurturing and growth of the Basel Mission Church in the 19th century?”

1.5 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework is based on the notion of the African agency in Mission espoused by Cephas Omenyo. According to Omenyo, the history of the early years of most missionary societies in Africa shows that Africans assisted both in the founding and the continuation of the mission.²⁹ The importance of the African initiative was not diminished upon the immediate arrival of successive Western missionaries; in fact the importance of African efforts and leadership grew, considering the fact that Africans were responsible for keeping the church going when Western missionaries left or died. Continual death of foreign missionaries constituted a fundamental instability in the missionary structure of the various missionary societies that should not be overlooked, but because of the African agency, these deaths did not result in stalling the work of the Western missionary societies. Statistically, the number of African workers by far outnumbered that of Western missionaries. For instance, for the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society by 1872 there were three (3) Western missionaries compared to nine (9) indigenous ministers working with a hundred and four (104) lay agents and two thousand four hundred and thirteen (2413) members across five (5) primary stations and fifty three (53) sub stations.³⁰

This work examines how African agency impacted on the mission in the Ga area of the Gold Coast. Three (3) indigenous Ga Christians have been selected for this purpose.

²⁹ Omenyo, *Intercultural Theology*, 24

³⁰ Omenyo, *Intercultural Theology*, 174

1.6 METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The method of collecting data is through both primary and secondary sources. Primary sources include interviews with selected descendants of some of the three (3) personalities: Carl Christian Reindorf, Paul Mohenu and Thomas Kwatei. It also includes the examination of some archival materials. The secondary sources were retrieved from published and unpublished works on the subject. This study falls in the domain of church history and missionary activities.

1.7 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The three (3) personalities investigated have been dead for a long time. Besides, the information and documentation on their lives and activities are woefully inadequate. Even though their families and descendants were consulted, there is the possibility that the information solicited may embellish their achievements and successes. The study, however, has striven to present the most accurate account possible.

1.8 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The work focusses on the role that indigenous agents have played in the development of the Basel Mission Church in Accra in the period 1847- 1900. The following personalities are studied: firstly, Carl Christian Reindorf, who was the first indigenous Ga Christian to be ordained by the Basel Mission Church. He was a pastor, scholar and a historian. Secondly, Paul Mohenu was a very powerful and successful popular traditional priest and a healer who became very much respected. He got converted to Christianity and became an evangelist. His ministry had a great impact on the expansion of the Basel Mission church in the Ga District. Thirdly, Thomas Kwatei was involved in the activities of the Basel Mission. He was one of the first people to be trained as a teacher by the Basel

Mission. He assisted Zimmerman in the translation of the Bible into Ga.³¹ It must be stated that many other indigenous Ga people contributed to the growth of the Basel Mission Work but in this study, the three selected persons are studied.

1.9 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

The study is organized in five (5) chapters.

Chapter 1 is a General Introduction which deals with general introductory issues. These include Statement of the Problem, Review of Related Literature, Research Question and Theoretical Framework, the Methodology of the Study, Limitation of Study, Scope of Study and the Relevance of Study.

Chapter 2- Focusses on Carl Christian Reindorf. It discusses the origins of the Reindorf family and his work as a catechist and pastor. This chapter also includes Carl Christian Reindorf's work as teacher in the Theological Seminary, and as a minister at Mayera. The study will also look at Reindorf, the historian and his contribution to music and scholarship. His attitude to indigenous slavery will be discussed, and also his support for the church and state, and finally, his retirement will be considered.

Chapter 3- Focuses on Paul Mohenu. In this chapter the early life of Paul Mohenu is examined. It also examines his work as a traditional priest, his conversion to Christianity and his ministry as an itinerant evangelist.

Chapter 4- This chapter discusses the life and ministry of Thomas Kwatei as a Catechist. It examines his contribution to indigenous scholarship through Bible translation and music.

³¹ John David Kwamena Ekem, *Early Sricpture of the Gold Coast* (Manchester: St. Jerome Publishing, 2011), 31.

Chapter 5- is the concluding chapter; it discusses the findings, gives a summary and offers recommendations.

1.10 RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY

The study is very relevant because it will help highlight the role of indigenous people towards the development of Basel Mission church in Accra. It will serve as resource material on the contributions of the Ga people to the success of Mission in Accra. Furthermore, it is hoped that it will motivate many other indigenes to acknowledge the contributions of these men to Ga culture and language and to build upon the successes of the three (3) personalities.

CHAPTER TWO

CARL CHRISTIAN REINDORF

2.1 INTRODUCTION

According to Abraham Nana Opare Kwakye, the Presbyterian Church of Ghana traces its beginning to the arrival of the first missionaries of the Basel Evangelical Missionary Society in 1828 to Osu.³² The Basel Mission which was identified with the pietistic movement in Europe was founded in 1815 and from the very beginning, trained missionaries to serve with Protestant missionary societies. By 1820, however, the founders decided to establish religious outposts abroad in its own name. They started with a mission to Russia and established Missions among the Jews, Tartars and Armenians. Another Mission was started in Liberia in 1826, although they failed to succeed. Later on, the Basel Mission sent out their missionaries to the Gold Coast. The very first batch of young missionaries- Gottlieb Holzwarth, Karl F. Salbach, Johannes Henke and Johannes Schmidt arrived in 1828. These young men arrived upon a request by Major de Richelieu, Governor of Christiansborg, who saw the urgent need for teachers and preachers.³³ His request to the Danish Crown was forwarded to the Basel Mission. Unfortunately, the first four missionaries died less than three years after their arrival.

The Basel Mission sent another team of three missionaries who were Andreas Riis, Peter Peterson Jaeger and a missionary doctor, Christian Friedrich Heinze. Unfortunately, two of

³² Abraham Nana Opare Kwakye, "Mission Impossible Becomes Possible: West Indian Missionaries as in the Gold Coast," in *Interkulturelle Theologie, Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft*, 42 Jahrgang, (2016), 223-

³³ Schweizer, *Survivors of the Gold Coast*, 19.

them died within three months, leaving Andreas Riis alone. Most of the early missionaries died from malaria or typhoid fever.³⁴

The challenges faced by the missionaries, which included unfavourable weather conditions and rampant deaths, threatened the success of the Mission work in the Gold Coast. However, indigenous people like Carl Christian Reindorf, who had a long association with the Basel Mission through the spread of Christianity and education assisted to firmly plant the Mission in the country. The success of the missionary efforts largely depended on the contributions of such native people and on immigrant converts from the West Indies.³⁵

2.2 THE ORIGIN OF THE REINDORFS

The Reindorf family is closely related to a Danish family which originated from a region in Germany called Hackenburg. In the early 18th century, the Reindorfs were firmly established in Copenhagen as a Danish family. There is every indication that the family were part of the highly respectable middle class who prospered and flourished under the absolute monarchy, established in 1660 after the overthrow of the political dominance of the high nobility.³⁶

Denmark undertook an ambitious programme of maritime, commercial and colonial expansion. It was this programme that first brought a Hackenburg to Accra in 1739 as an employee of the Danish Company whose headquarters was situated in Christiansborg Castle at Osu. This Hackenburg was August Frederick Hackenburg, who arrived in Accra in the same ship as Esau Christensen Quist – the ancestor of Ghana’s Sir Emmanuel Quist,

³⁴ Kwakye, “Missions Impossible Becomes Possible,” 223-225.

³⁵ Smith, *Presbyterian Church of Ghana*, 19.

³⁶ *150th Birthday Anniversary Brochure: Remembering Rev. Carl Reindorf, 1834-1984*, 3.

the first Speaker of Parliament under colonial rule. Hackenburg stayed till 1748 and rose to the top of his career to become Governor of the Danish settlements.³⁷

2.3 EARLY LIFE

Carl Christian Reindorf was born on 31st May, 1834 in Prampram, a bustling colonial port town under British Colonial rule on the outskirts of Accra. When August Frederick Hackenburg arrived in the Gold Coast, he had a relationship with an African woman. A son, Carl Reindorf Hackenburg was born out of this relationship. Carl Reindorf Hackenburg also fathered Carl Christian Reindorf. Carl Christian Reindorf was very fond of his mother Anowah Amah Ashon Cudjoe, a Ga woman from Ga Mashie, and he expressed deep affection for her. He had two (2) sisters, Elizabeth and Angelia.³⁸ His paternal grandmother was Okako Asase. Although a child of dual heritage, Reindorf spent a sizeable part of his childhood with other African children and offspring from European and African relationships.³⁹

In 1842, at the age of eight, he entered the Christiansborg Castle School. He was baptized by Rev. Theophilus Jorgensen, the Danish pastor at the castle on the 7th April, 1844 at the age of ten (10), alongside several other mulatto boys. He was confirmed on the 26th October, 1852 with some other candidates. After having attended the Danish school for four (4) years, he left together with his elder brother, Carl senior, to attend the Basel Mission School, then newly opened by Rev. Johannes Zimmerman, where the Ga language was being taught for the first time.⁴⁰

³⁷ 150th Birthday Anniversary Brochure: Remembering Rev. Carl Reindorf, 1834-1984, 5.

³⁸ Seth Quartey, *Missionary Practices*, 121.

³⁹ Quartey, *Missionary Practices*, 123- 125.

⁴⁰ Reindorf, *History of the Gold Coast*, 4- 6.

In the Basel Mission Boarding School, he was taught by the missionary Johannes Zimmermann. Under Zimmermann's tutelage he learnt the differences between the European and African cultures, writing and Bible recitations. According to Nkansa-Kyeremateng, teachers in the Basel Mission School, as a matter of policy, were concerned with the training of pupils to read, write, work arithmetic and use their hands as experts in craft and agriculture.⁴¹ Kwamena- Poh agrees with Nkansa- Kyeremateng that the Basel Mission School had a policy of training the child to be academically and vocationally good.⁴²

In the work of Schweizer, Smith and Kwamena- Poh, there is a connection of Zimmerman to a theological seminary set up at Christiansborg.⁴³ Schweizer is silent on the founder, but states that this seminary was set up in 1847 and that later; Zimmerman came to direct it. The seminary was set up mainly to train people for mission work.

All the three (3) writers agree that the seminary at Christiansborg was eventually merged with the Akropong seminary in 1856. According to Schweizer, this merger became necessary because of economic reasons and the destruction the school suffered because of the bombardment of Christiansborg when inhabitants refused to pay the Poll Tax.

Smith, on the other hand, documents that Zimmerman set up the seminary which was a Catechist training school at Christiansborg and that it was similar to the Akropong seminary. He added that Biblical studies, Homiletics, Music, Church history and Pastoral care were taught at the seminary and it was meant to give the trainees a thorough grounding in mission work.

⁴¹ K. Nkansa- Kyeremateng, *The Presbyterian Church of Ghana (P. C. G) History and Impact* (Accra: Sebewie Publishers, 2003), 102.

⁴² Kwamena- Poh, *Vision & Achievement*, 292.

⁴³ Schweizer, *Survival on the Gold Coast*, 82, Smith, *The Presbyterian Church*, 57-58, Kwamena-Poh, *Vision & Achievement*, 86.

Even though Kwamena- Poh does not state who the founder of the seminary at Christiansborg was, he gave 1858 as the founding year and 1856 as the year that the Christiansborg and Akropong seminaries merged to become one.⁴⁴ This is quite confusing as it cannot be the case that there was a merger of the two (2) before the establishment of one of the entities. Kwamena- Poh however, states that Zimmerman took over the administration of the seminary soon after his arrival in the Gold Coast. The aim was to train mission workers and consistent servants of the Lord Jesus Christ.⁴⁵

On the 8th January, 1858, Reindorf married Miss Juliana Mansa, a former Basel Mission school girl⁴⁶ and also a member of the Ga Mashi stool on her mother's side and on the father's side, a member of Owula Mona, also a sub- division of the Asere quarter with whom he had eleven children.

2.4 HIS MISSIONARY WORK AS A CATECHIST & PASTOR

The missionary work of Carl Reindorf started very early in his life, in January 1855. He was appointed as a catechist and worked at a Teshie village called *Damfa* which is south-east of *Ayimensah*. He worked for fifty years in the Basel Mission.⁴⁷

Rev. W. A. Steinhauser, the then missionary in charge of Abokobi district often sent him to Odumase Krobo where the Konor is overlord.⁴⁸ Following his frequent visits to Krobo, the Konor gave three of his sons, namely Nyako, Agwai and Laweh for training by the mission. These boys were later baptized and had formal schooling.⁴⁹ They went to Abokobi to spend Christmas, but gradually the mission was deeply rooted in Odumase and

⁴⁴ Kwamena- Poh, *Vision and Achievement*, 86.

⁴⁵ Kwamena- Poh, *Vision and Achievement*, 87.

⁴⁶ Reindorf, *History of the Gold Coast*, 7.

⁴⁷ Reindorf, *History of the Gold Coast*, 6.

⁴⁸ Konor was and still is the title given to the Paramount Chief of the Kroboland.

⁴⁹ Reindorf, *History of the Gold Coast*, 7.

this might have contributed to the reduction in the frequency of their visits to Abokobi. While at Odumase, Reindorf composed the old Presbyterian hymn “*Kpakpa be zugba ne no*” (there is no good thing on this earth).⁵⁰

In the course of his missionary work, Reindorf was promoted to the rank of a full catechist in 1857. In 1859, he was transferred to Odumase- Krobo to carry on mission work there. According to the records, he had a very warm reception.⁵¹

However, there was an incident which threatened the good relationship with the converts.⁵² One day, Reindorf asked the wife to make him some “aboloo”, a local meal like a baked bread. The wife, being an Accra woman knew how to prepare kenkey which is in the same food family as the “aboloo” (the local baked bread). Unknown to Reindorf, it was an abomination to prepare that type of kenkey because, it was alleged that Nadu, the chief priest of the Krobo disliked baked leavened bread.⁵³ When the news got to the indigenes of the preparation of the “aboloo” (local baked bread), they insulted Mrs. Reindorf. Thankfully they did not do anything harmful to her because they were told that if they did the police could come for their arrest.⁵⁴

According to Ulrike Sill, in 1859, some three male European traders on a business trip visited their concubines at Odumase Krobo.⁵⁵ Mrs. Reindorf witnessed a scene where two of the men, Robert Hutchison who was the mayor of Cape Coast and Nichole Irvine, a trader, were seated in the courtyard with young women on their laps.

⁵⁰Reindorf, *History of the Gold Coast*, 7.

⁵¹Reindorf, *History of the Gold Coast*, 7.

⁵²Reindorf, *History of the Gold Coast*, 8.

⁵³Reindorf, *History of the Gold Coast*, 8.

⁵⁴Reindorf, *History of the Gold Coast*, 6-8.

⁵⁵ Ulrike Sill, *Encounters in Quest of Christian Womanhood: The Basel Mission in Pre- and Early Colonial Ghana* (Leiden: Brill Hotei Publishing, 2010), 177- 178.

These young women were undergoing the “dipo”, the Krobo female initiation into womanhood. According to Mrs. Reindorf she saw the men fondling the private parts of the young women. She reported the incident to her husband, who informed his superior, the missionary Wilhelm Locher in Christiansborg. In November 1859, missionary Locher wrote a letter to protest against the behaviour of the men.

About two (2) years after the incident, one of the traders involved filed a law suit for libel against Locher, claiming that; he had interfered in their private affairs and damaged their reputation. The missionaries were not sure of the outcome of the law suit, because the key defence witnesses had been dismissed, but Mrs. Reindorf appeared as the main witness in court, stating what she saw.

One of the concubines Abla, was also called as a witness, she explained her view of the case. Carl Reindorf, claimed that as a result of the case, it affected attendance to baptismal instructions. All parties involved discussed the incident in terms of the public versus the private sphere. The traders and their solicitor, lawyer Charles Bannerman claimed that Rev. Locher had violated their sphere of privacy and interfered in their private matters.

On the part of Locher, even though he admitted that the incident occurred at a public space, he questioned their behaviour and he concluded that it is not in accordance with Christian norms. To Carl Reindorf he was of the view that the incident was shameful according to both local and non- Christian norms.

The verdict was that the claim that the traders touched the private parts of the young women was not substantiated, but it was said that the behaviour of the traders had not been proper, missionary Locher was therefore not found guilty.

These two (2) different incidents were some of the challenges Reindorf faced in the course of his mission work at Odumase Krobo. According to Sill, the above incident highlighted male attitudes which present women as either objects of male desire or as object in need of protection.⁵⁶

It equally highlights the place of Christianity in adjudicating matters. As a missionary, Reindorf was also interested in social matters that enhanced his mission work.

2.5 WORK AS A TEACHER IN THE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Reindorf served as an Assistant Teacher in the Theological Seminary at Akropong when Rev. G. J. Auer was the Principal. Rev. Auer later became the Bishop of Las Palmas, Reindorf also served under the principal-ship of Rev. Harnisch in November, 1860.⁵⁷ Theological training in the Gold Coast started at Akropong and Christiansborg seminaries which were eventually merged in 1856, into the Akropong Seminary. The seminary offered a four year course, with the first two years being purely academic by training teachers for the schools. In the other two years, the learners received training in theology and homiletics. They also studied music, English and pastoral care.⁵⁸

In the early 1840s, elementary schools had been established at Akropong, Aburi and Christiansborg. These schools were producing a good number of men who had some good basic education. The seminary was one of the initiatives put in place to help some of them to continue their education.⁵⁹ Bediako states that the theological seminary was set up to equip church agents, such as teachers; and catechists, and some of them eventually became

⁵⁶Sill, *Encounters in Quest*, 179.

⁵⁷Reindorf, *History of the Gold Coast*, 8- 9.

⁵⁸ Smith, *Presbyterian Church of Ghana*, 58.

⁵⁹Kwame Bediako, *Christianity in Africa: The Renewal of Non- Western Religion*(Maryknoll: Regnum Africa, 2014), 48.

pastors; thus, with the establishment of the theological seminaries, mission work was enhanced.

His years of teaching at the Akropong Theological Seminary brought him into contact with the meticulous study of language, culture, historical investigation, and writing, subjects that grew up around Johannes Christaller and his African associates, David Asante and Jonathan Bekoe Palmer. It was from such material that Reindorf drew the relevant portions of his *History of The Gold Coast and Asante*, just as Christaller did for his *Dictionary of the Asante and Fante the language called Tshi (Twi)*.⁶⁰

2.6 WORK AT MAYERA

Carl Christian Reindorf was ordained as a full minister on 13th October, 1872, and was posted to Mayera, a village of some seventeen miles North- West of Accra. He became the first indigenous Ga to be ordained into the Ministry. It was therefore not surprising that he played a leading and significant role in mission work in the Ga state. His knowledge of the culture of the people also helped him succeed.⁶¹ On assumption of office, he set up a school, and had difficulty in getting boys for his school at Mayera.

He therefore came for twelve (12) boys from Accra for a start. In order to attract more boys, Reindorf sponsored these pioneers. He met the expenses of these boys, paying for their clothing, school fees with boarding and lodging from his own pocket. He named the school the “Decoying school”.⁶² Although the rationale behind the name given to the school is not known, it can be deduced that it was a strategy that Reindorf employed in motivating, attracting and luring the children to the school. He worked hard and founded

⁶⁰ Bediako, *Christianity in Africa*, 46- 47.

⁶¹ Reindorf, *History of the Gold Coast*, 14- 16.

⁶² Reindorf, *History of the Gold Coast*, 14.

prayer meetings for both men and women. They attended service every Sunday morning and, on Saturdays, every person had to go for water and get firewood ready for the Sabbath which was celebrated every Sunday, as on that day no work was tolerated. All the streets in town and the houses were kept clean, Sundays were observed with great joy. This regimen was strictly observed and the people worked with much enthusiasm.

Records have it that one Stephen Kwajo, who had been made a Presbyter, preached in the villages around Mayera. He was so successful that he was able to get seven catechumen and ten boys from Kwashimang, in one of the outlying villages. Because of his hard work Reindorf elevated him and gave him charge of these converts. Stephen Kwajo was able to erect a chapel, and teachers' residence with the assistance of the converts, both within a short time. When the chapel was completed, Reindorf appealed to the Missionaries for an honorarium, which was granted. This gesture was in appreciation of the good work and perseverance of both Stephen Kwajo and the converts.⁶³

With the growth and expansion of the missionary work, Reindorf appointed two (2) indigenes Abraham Tchwintor and Paul Odartei as local preachers and paid them from his own pocket. The two (2) moved from one village to another preaching. With time however, the two were accepted as workers and integrated into the mission system. They were subsequently appointed as evangelists. As part of their success story, there was the case of an old fetish man by name Akoto Badoo. This man got converted as a result of the preaching of the two evangelists. He brought his gods and charms which were burnt and took on a Christian name Abraham. According to Reindorf, through Akoto's instrumentality, two other traditional priests and a traditional healer were converted and baptized. Akoto often preached throughout the surrounding villages and towns even as far

⁶³Reindorf, *History of the Gold Coast*, 14.

as to Obutu which is some twenty miles to the west of Accra. As a result, a mission was founded at Obutu.⁶⁴ Efforts to find the present name for Obutu have not yield any positive results, unfortunately. Additionally, he travelled extensively preaching through Simpah (Winneba) to Gomoa land with missions being established along the way. As a result of the many days of travelling non-stop and preaching alongside, Abraham Akoto became weak and became seriously ill. He returned to his base at Mayera where he received healing.

Reindorf's work as minister and missionary at Mayera was largely successful and laid the foundation for further work and expansion of the mission in that part of the Ga state. His success at Mayera is attributed to a number of reasons including the planting of many churches in the nearby communities like Kwashimang, Achiaman and Otsirikomfo. He trained and nurtured leaders for these missions so that they could be established. Through his mission work some people got converted to Christianity. In an interview with Rev. Joseph Kwamena Tawiah, formerly of the Mayera congregation, Reindorf was known for his great work in the area of medicine. He prepared herbal medicine which people patronized because of its potency. Mayera therefore has a special place in the history of mission work in the Ga state, for Reindorf's work enhanced the mission. It was at Mayera that Reindorf wrote his book *The History of the Gold Coast and Asante*.

Mayera was also named "Osofoiaman" (community of priests) and was organised along the lines and concept of a Salem. Salem was the Christian community set up for the nurturing of believers.

⁶⁴Reindorf, *History of the Gold Coast*, 15

2.7 REINDORF THE HISTORIAN

Another significant achievement of Carl Reindorf was “*The History of the Gold Coast and Asante*” which was written when he was at Mayera. If he had not documented the history, it meant that much of such rich history would have either been lost or been diluted as it was passed on from generation to generation orally. His work therefore showed the important place of history in human life.

Kwame Bediako has argued that, Reindorf’s work portrayed him as one who had accepted that the study of history had become a truly Christian concern.⁶⁵ This is so because history shows the developmental pattern of a people or a nation. He contends that there was an oral tradition before the advent of a written history of the Gold Coast. In support of Reindorf’s Christian concern, Bediako cites the elegy for the Governor of Sierra Leone and the Gold Coast, Charles MacCarthy who died at the battle of Nsamankaw in 1814.⁶⁶

Reindorf’s own influence as a historian must have been remarkable. This is indicated by the following comment by a contemporary missionary Inspector of Schools, J.A. Mader, on Reindorf’s impact as a history teacher on his pupils at the Christiansborg Middle Boarding School in the 1870s:

Our Africans study history with great zeal and warmth. The study of world history helps this people to self-confidence. The class is one with the teacher, living the historical events. We must expect a new generation on the Gold Coast after ten years: a nation, called to freedom and independence, able to give political expression to this and gaining its aim in due course.⁶⁷

Reindorf’s efforts and activities in the religious and social fields were outstanding. His great work of classic historical scholarship, “*The History of the Gold Coast and Asante*” was outstanding and of great significance. In this book, Reindorf showed himself to be a

⁶⁵Bediako, *Christianity in Africa*, 44.

⁶⁶Bediako, *Christianity in Africa*, 45.

⁶⁷Bediako, *Christianity in Africa*, 47- 48.

conscious, purposeful historian who wrote to fill an informational gap.⁶⁸ Reindorf discussed and described the activities of the Ga people and the Fante kingdom.

The place of Reindorf in history as a historian is aptly described by Heinz Hauser- Renner, of the University of Zurich. Heinz Hauser- Renner has lived and worked in Ghana and is able to speak, read and write the Ga language of the people of the Ga state. He confesses that he has much interest in Ga history. He has written about Reindorf's Ga manuscript, kept at the archives in Basel.⁶⁹

According to Heinz Hauser-Renner of the University of Zurich:

Reindorf's historical work may be considered as a pioneering intellectual achievement because it was one of the first large-scale historical works about an African region written by an African, and it was highly innovative, including written sources and oral historical narratives and new methods for the reconstruction of African history.⁷⁰

The work portrays Reindorf as a scholar who relied on both primary and secondary sources. Heinz Hauser- Renner states that Reindorf used about twenty- five years in collecting data and being involved in active historical research.⁷¹

In 1860 he became conscious of the fact that oral transmitted history was slowly dying out.⁷² There was therefore the need to document the oral renditions. Furthermore, a missionary by name Christian Gottlob Aldinger inspired him to collect the oral traditions of the people. These two reasons coupled with the fact that with the emergence of Western education, oral history and tradition were being relegated to the background, encouraged him to work on the book, "*The History of the Gold Coast and Asante*".

⁶⁸Reindorf, *History of the Gold Coast*, 10.

⁶⁹ Hauser- Renner, "Examining The Text Sediments, Commanding A Pioneer Historian As An African Herodotus," *On the Making of the New T Annotated Edition Of C. C. Reindorf's History of The Gold Coast And Asante* (Basel: 1995), 231.

⁷⁰Renner, "Examining The Text Sediments," 1.

⁷¹Renner, "Examining The Text Sediments," 239.

⁷²Renner, "Examining The Text Sediments," 238- 239.

The book displays his in-depth knowledge of the topology, demography and culture, not only of the Ga people, but indeed of the people of the southern Gold Coast, including the Asante.

2.8 MUSIC AND SCHOLARSHIP

The man Carl Reindorf was not only a historian and a pastor. In fact he was a man of many parts and his contributions really impacted many people in the Ga state and beyond. He directly and indirectly added to the Ga hymns in the Presbyterian Church Hymnary either by composition or by the translation of some of the European hymns into the Ga language.

Hymns translated by Reindorf are numbered; 382, 345, 396 and 451 in the Presbyterian hymn book (PH).

Nuntsɔ Kristo Yesu, bo mi eshafeelɔ, toishikpɔŋ gbɛ ko ni sa jwaa, shikpɔŋ nɔ
gɔgɔmilɛɛɛŋ, lɛ toi obo daa! Kaanan seshi, Adam shwiɛmi niMɔbɔ, mɔbɔ ona mi,
Owura, David Bi!⁷³

Charles Wesley is the composer of the hymn 382. He took his inspiration from Mark 7:20-37, which dealt with repentance and forgiveness. In the passage three main things come out clearly and these are: *Self Discipline, Determination* (by the Greek woman and also a syro- Phoenician by birth) and finally *Faith*.

Wesley took this passage and meditated on it with the events that were happening in the world. This passage first talks about the human body and how it is defiled by words that come out of it, and by thoughts and actions. It goes on to talk about the determination and faith of the Greek woman and how she was able to stand her ground and answer our Lord Jesus till he saw there was nothing else he could do than to heal the poor little girl and finally the friends who brought the deaf and speech impaired man for him to be healed.

⁷³*Jesus hear my humble plea*, Presbyterian Hymn 382, (Accra: Water Ville Publishing House, 2014), 216.

Therefore, in the first stanza, Charles Wesley calls on Jesus to come to our aid and listen to our humble pleas. This is because the author agrees and accepts that humans are sinful, and the world is full of sin and lust. Christ Jesus should be merciful unto us and help us, else we cannot stand the challenges and trials of this world. The second hymn is as follows:

Nuntsɔ agbɛnɛ wɔ ba, ni wɔyɛ onane naa,kaaha wɔɲya eflo koo! Ani yaka wɔtsɛ
o?⁷⁴

This hymn composed by William Hammond (An American military physician and neurologist, during the American civil war, he was the eleventh surgeon General of the Army' medical museum). The hymn was translated into Ga by Carl Christian Reindorf who added the fifth stanza in the 19th Century.

The hymnist invites all to the throne room of God and with a plea that God should not drive those in His presence away, for they had come to seek mercy, teaching, and guidance.

The author based his hymn on Psalm 95: 6 which admonish all people to worship and bow down before the Lord our Maker.

Carl Reindorf added that; 'Jesus we wait for you, as your people we have come, for your word Lord we wait. Come and bless your chosen ones. This is because if we do not carry the anointing of our Lord it is very difficult for us to work in this sinful world and if care is not taken the lust and sins of the world will sway us away'.

⁷⁴ *To you Jesus we now come, Presbyterian Hymn 345*, (Accra: Water Ville Publishing House, 2014), 197.

The third hymn is also as follows:

Lɛɛlɛŋ akɛ Yehowa kɛɛ: Hɛjɔlɛko bɛ kwraa, Ha nɔɔɔɔ lɛ yɛ ehie; shi tsuiyeli enaa⁷⁵.

Carl Christian Reindorf based his hymn 396 on Isaiah 48:22; and Isaiah 57:20 which talk about the people of Israel fleeing from Babyon, their exile is over, and Babylon is about to be destroyed. The Lord has redeemed them. Carl Reindorf agreed with the prophet Isaiah who reminds the Israelites about the past when their forefathers were travelling through the dessert, God provided them water from a rock. The Lord gave them a warning there is no peace for the wicked, and there can be no peace with God for those who rebel against him.

However, as long as the person is unrepentant and keeps on his wilful ways, God will remain angry with him. But as soon as he begins to show contrition, God will heal him, guide him and restore comfort to him.

Aha mi gbɛnaa ko, ni mawo Nyɔŋmɔ daa,ni mahere misusuma ni gboŋ lɛ yiwala.⁷⁶

This is one of the most popular hymns of Charles Wesley. He composed this hymn out of the experiences of his ministry, and his hymns became tools for his ministry. Charles was said to have been inspired to write this hymn after reading Matthew Henry's commentary on Leviticus. Reflecting on Leviticus 8: 35, Matthew Henry wrote:

“We shall every one of us have a charge to keep, an Eternal God to glorify, an immortal soul to provide for, one generation to serve.”⁷⁷

⁷⁵*I want a principle within of jealous godly fear*, Presbyterian Hymn 396, (Accra: Water Ville Publishing House, 2014), 223.

⁷⁶*A charge to keep I have*, Presbyterian Hymn 451, (Accra: Water Ville Publishing House, 2014), 254.

⁷⁷Matthew Henry, *Commentary on Leviticus 8: 35* (Nashville: Royal Publishers Inc., 1979), 244.

The significance of the hymn is found in the first two (2) stanzas, that is, all have been given a charge to glorify God and to serve the present age, a duty to God and duty to man. It is a calling that all must fulfill. The charge reminds us of the question put to Jesus by an expert on the law in Matthew 22: 36- 38:

“Teacher which is the greatest commandment of the law? To which Jesus replied “you shall love the Lord your God with all your hearts and all your soul and with all your mind and the second is like it, you shall love your neighbour as yourself”⁷⁸

To fulfill this charge demands a lot of sacrifice from the Christian, and Wesley in stanza three (3) and four (4) is pleading with God, as if in prayer to arm all with jealous care, and to help all to watch and pray in order to discharge the obligations trusted upon him.

Reindorf’s Composition of

the hymn that he composed is:

Jielɔ Yesu, Bo ji ƿɔ-Nuntsɔ, ke ƿɔ-Nyɔɔmɔ, ƿɔɔ ƒɛɛ nɔ hu, Ye ogbele le hewɔ
ƿɔna, ohejɔle. Bo ni osa, ƿɔyijiemɔ ƒɛɛ⁷⁹.

Jesus Saviour, Jesus Saviour, was Carl Reindorf’s first hymn in the Presbyterian hymn book. Reindorf took his inspiration from the book of Isaiah chapter 53 which talks of Christ’s suffering and pain which was prophesied by the prophet. Carl Reindorf, realized how joyous Christians need to be for the price Christ paid with his life for Christians to close the gap and barrier between God and mankind.

⁷⁸T. K. Anderson, *Sixty Hymn Stories* (Cape Coast: Prima Business System, 2009), 1.

⁷⁹*Jesus Saviour, Jesus Saviour*, Presbyterian Hymn 14, (Accra: Water Ville Publishing House, 2014), 9.

In the first stanza, he discusses Jesus as being our Redeemer, Saviour and Friend. Reindorf, expresses how Christ is our being and sustenance because through his suffering we have been blessed and raised with him, our old self is put away and Christ is put on.

In the second stanza, he beckons and request Christ to come and revive all Christians and true believers from slumber because the world is trying to overtake us.

Reindorf is admonishing everyone who believes in Christ to follow Him and follow His precepts and all things shall be well.

Nyetea shi, nyε mei lε fεε, nyεkwεa ηweigβε pε!Naa, leebe ηulami lε mpue,
κεητςκ Yesu ηκκ gβε.⁸⁰

Carl Reindorf had his inspiration for composing the song from Matthew 2: 1 which states that now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem. Reindorf emphasises the importance of the new born who is the saviour of the world and how important it is to follow him.

In the first stanza, Reindorf makes the call for all men to rise up and lift up their heads with the aim of reaching and soaring higher to rescue and save God's people. In the fourth and fifth stanzas he cautions everyone in the dark to come out and see the light which shines over darkness and darkness cannot comprehend it.

He concluded the hymn by pleading with the heavenly father to grant us that we will see Him and know the true light and love of our saviour.

Bo toi! Magba o sane kpakpa, ake Nyεηηκ edε je ηεεη, κε gbεκκκ ji enyebe he!
Efiteη κ: esaa κ mon!E'smκ κ fεεda ni κλε lε; σακκ lε ji κκtσε Nyεηηκ
lε.⁸¹

⁸⁰*Rise up ye people of the earth*, Presbyterian Hymn 133, (Accra: Water Ville Publishing House, 2014), 73.
⁸¹*Come listen to Good News of Jesus*, Presbyterian Hymn 364, (Accra: Water Ville Publishing House, 2014), 205.

The hymn 364 was not only composed by Carl Christian Reindorf in 1856 but also with the assistance of the following; Johannes A. Mader and Christaller. Their hymn is based on John 3:16. Everything begins with the love of God for the entire human race.

God is love. He loves the poor, the rich, and the powerful in the society. For Reindorf and his colleagues Christ is the greatest gift to mankind. God gave us what was most dear to Him, for He does not want us to perish. Therefore, in order to give everyone the opportunity to be saved, He gave us his son. But only by faith can man receive this salvation, that is eternal life. If a man believes he will not perish, he will receive eternal life.

Yehowa ji mikwɛɔ; mɛɛ nii aaahia mi?Elɛɔ mi, ewaa mi, etsɔɔ mi gbɛni hi.Ehereɔ
misusuma; etsɔɔ mi gbɛni sa.⁸²

Carl Christian Reindorf composed this hymn in the Presbyterian Hymnal. He took his scriptural base from the Psalm 23.

This is a popular Psalm which talks of the love and care that our Lord Jesus Christ has for mankind. It gives the assurance of a secure protection from the Lord, if humankind will diligently walk with him. It is a hymn which encourages an individual; though the road is not easy and will be frightful, you need not fear the foe, because you have a solid rock, which is Christ our Lord, and with Him in your boat you will definitely smile at the storm.

Reindorf encourages all and sundry that, though the road is not easy, but when you come to Christ you will have easy access and smooth drive with him. He uses this hymn in evangelism and makes the ordinary people understand that there is no other God than the true Christ who is the Solid Rock. The gods of the land are blind, deaf, and dumb and

⁸²*The Lord God is my Shepherd*, Presbyterian Hymn 555, (Accra: Water Ville Publishing House, 2014), 314.

cannot to save them in times of difficulties, but in the case of the Most High, once you call upon Him He will deliver you.

His Rod and Staff is that which will comfort you, Carl Christian Reindorf really felt he needed to be able to get to his people and get them to change and to understand the gospel which he had accepted himself.

This is a true and blessed assurance that we have in serving our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Oo, kadimɔ, misusuma, aƒi ni eho nɛɛ!Nyɔji lɛ ehohoi kɛtee; otsii pii eho nɛɛ!⁸³

“Princes also sit and speak against me, but your servant meditates on your statutes. Psalm 119 vs. 23”

The above passage is what Carl Christian Reindorf used in composing the hymn 741 which is placed under the section “Times and Seasons, Old and New Year. In this hymn Reindorf calms the troubled soul to tell the believer to be patient and quiet although the days and times have passed so quickly, they beckon believers to prepare.

This is a hymn to inform the Christian that life has its limit, therefore once you have the strength to do what the master has sent you to do, channel all your energies on that course.

The first stanza of the hymn is a reminder to humankind that the old will always give place to the new and it happens so quickly.

⁸³*My soul keep still. Remember this*, Presbyterian Hymn 741, (Accra: Water Ville Publishing House, 2014), 420.

The second stanza is also a reminder that as the days, weeks and years pass by, the Day of Judgment, when the Lord shall sit on the throne is drawing near. On that day, all secrets will be revealed.

Reindorf therefore calls on all not to waste the years on earth, but rather live a righteous life since humankind has to account for their very life. Reindorf asks all to plead with the good Lord to help all to live a true Christian life, and be prepared to give an account of the life lived and finally ask the good Lord to renew the life he has given to humankind.

Reindorf ends the hymn by saying:

“As the year draws to a close in life, O Lord, renew my life. With each year I might closer be, Home with You Lord my God”

Oo mi-Yehowa Naa Nyɔŋmɔ, ha mabu migbii le,ni mikɛ mitsui aha o, ni matsɔ
nileɔ⁸⁴

Carl Reindorf is the composer of the hymn 746. He based this hymn on Psalm 90:12-17.

Realizing that life is short helps us use the little time that we have more wisely and for eternal good. Take time to number your days by asking, what do I want to see happen in my life before I die? What small step could I take towards that purpose today?

For Carl Reindorf, because our days are numbered, our work must count, and be effective and productive. We desire to see God’s eternal plan revealed now, and for our work to reflect His glory. If we feel dissatisfied with this life, and all its imperfections, we should remember our desire to see our work established before God. Our desire can only be satisfied in eternity. Until then, we must apply ourselves to the service of the Lord.

⁸⁴*Jehovah Lord. Almighty God help us to know life’s span*, Presbyterian Hymn 746, (Accra: Water Ville Publishing House, 2014), 422.

Bo toi gbee miibo keje ηwei, kemijjɔɔ mɔni egbo le:mɔni egbo ye Nuntsɔ leη, ajɔɔ
le ni ejɔɔ ehe!⁸⁵

Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, "Write: 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.'" "Yes," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labours, and their works follow them." Rev. 14:13 NKJV

The End Time is the section where this hymn will be found in the Presbyterian Hymnal. It talks about the end of man on earth, which is death. As a missionary, Carl Reindorf understood what it takes to die in the Lord if you have served him faithfully and diligently.

He makes man understand that those who have died in the Lord are resting, and they have no issues with the life of the world, because they are resting from their labour. The hardship of life is no more a burden to them and they don't have any issue with the challenges of life no matter the tarry. As part of his preaching to the people of his land, he needed to let them understand the need to follow Christ and how pleasant and sweet it is to die in the Lord.

In his poem he makes it clear that when you die in the Lord you have a communion with Him and you sit with Him at his table. This becomes so glorious and in the sight of the living to strive hard and reach the goal of seeing and meeting Christ. The ultimate joy is to be held by Christ when he or she dies.

Carl Reindorf therefore calls on everyone to make it a point to meet Christ. Oh what joy will it be when we have Christ in our boat, what joy will we have when we sit at his feet to listen to him. He calls one and all to make it a point in gaining that joyous place, a place

⁸⁵*I heard a voice from heaven above. A blessing for the dead I heard, Presbyterian Hymn 769, (Accra: Water Ville Publishing House, 2014), 434.*

where we will all be happy, a place where there's no more tension, bickering, economic hardship, a place where there's so much joy, peace and happiness always.

Wɔ beshia ye biɛ nɛɛ! No ha je nɛɛɲ naa kpe ehe;shi aw'rehoo kome flo be, mɔni meɔ ŋwei shia hiɛ.⁸⁶

Carl Christina Reindorf uses the scripture verse in Hebrews 13:14 to compose this great hymn. *'For we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come'*, NKJV. This is a great hope that Christians are not in this world and from this world but their hope and trust is in the new world to come where there shall be no sorrow, pain, and hurt.

Carl Reindorf makes it clear that Christians are strangers and travellers here on this earth, therefore all that they are fighting and bickering about is vanity, as King Solomon said in Ecclesiastics, but if they understand the sure hope of a new Jerusalem then they have great peace in that understanding that they have a home above. With this understanding they will then live in peace with their brothers as pilgrims on this earth, not associating themselves with things and the lust of this world, but rather prepare for a our home of peace.

In the city of Zion, the Saints peacefully abide therein. The blessed Holy place which we seek, where all we need shall be supplied. All we need and must do is to dwell on his mission on this earth for God shall come and give us rest from your labour.

2.9 REINDORF AND BIBLE TRANSLATION

Reindorf also assisted in the revision of the Ga Bible which started 1893, in collaboration with other members of the Basel Mission Review Committee. The first edition of the Ga

⁸⁶ *We have no home here on this earth, this sounds so strange to carnal men*, Presbyterian Hymn 840, (Accra: Water Ville Publishing House, 2014), 478.

Bible was put together by Johannes Zimmerman, a Basel Missionary and other indigenes of the Ga state including Thomas Kwatei and Joseph Nikoi, between 1853 and 1866. Their years of effort paid off and their deepest wishes were realized when, in 1866 the first full Ga Bible was published by the British and Foreign Bible Society with the title “Biblia alo Nmale kronkron le, kpanmo momo ke ehe, ye Ga wiemo le mli.”⁸⁷

The Basel Missionaries and their indigenous coworkers, which included Carl Reindorf, Daniel Saba and L. L. Richter, commenced work on revising the New Testament in 1897. This work was published in 1900.⁸⁸ Their modification accelerated the revision of the Ga Bible much later.

Their revised translation work was reprinted in 1940, but with hardly any references to translation and earlier revisions. This was a proof that the translation work of the Basel Mission, and their indigenous co-workers was well done. This good work must have contributed to the BFBS’s republishing of Mark’s Gospel with a revised orthography by C. A Hesse in 1954. The title was “Yesu Kristo Sanekpakpa le bɔni Marko ŋma le” (The Gospel of Jesus, the Christ as written by Mark).⁸⁹

The Ga Bible has undergone a number of revisions. In 1977, the Ga New Testament, with the reviewed orthography was printed in Cambridge for the Bible Society of Ghana.

Again in 1981, a new revision of the Ga Bible was done by Rev. Ishmael Sowah, E. J. Klufio and R. F. Mante. After twenty years of use the Ga Bible was again revised and republished in 2006.⁹⁰

⁸⁷Link May 2016, *Official Newsletter of the Bible Society of Ghana*, 7.

⁸⁸Ekem, *Early Scription*, 43.

⁸⁹Ekem, *Early Scription*, 45.

⁹⁰Link, May 2016, *Official Newsletter of the Bible Society of Ghana*, 7.

A number of issues account for the need to revise Bible editions. Some of these reasons include, ensuring that the language of the Bible continues to communicate and is relevant to the present generation. Also, revisions of the Bible help upgrade and make the Bible more interactive, by adding materials like Bible helps, maps, pictures and illustrations. These additions give the reader better insight than they would have gained from the older versions.⁹¹

For one hundred and fifty years, the Ga Bible has impacted millions of Ga speakers, influenced culture, and transcended numerous generations.

Knowledge of the Bible was transmitted not only through reading and listening, but also indirectly by its linkage to folklore and the proverbs of the Ga people.

The Ga Bible is a legacy for the Ga speaking community.⁹²

The argument here is that the original work of translation done by the Basel Mission and the indigenous co-workers formed the basis for the later revisions and also made the subsequent translation work a bit easier.

2.10 CARL CHRISTIAN REINDORF AND SLAVERY

One of the thorny issues that confronted all missionary societies working in the Gold Coast, now Ghana, was how to deal with the tradition of indigenous slavery that was practised in Ghana. Available documented and oral records on the Reverends David

⁹¹Link May 2016, *Official Newsletter of the Bible Society of Ghana*, 7

⁹²Link May 2016, *Official Newsletter of the Bible Society of Ghana*, 6

Asante, Theophilus Opoku and Carl Christian Reindorf paint a multifaceted Christian response to indigenous slavery.⁹³

Slavery and the trade in slave have been found practised on every continent in the world.

Orlando Patterson agrees with Perbi, that slavery is an ancient worldwide institution.

Patterson claims that:

There is nothing notably peculiar about the institution of slavery. It has existed from before the dawn of human history right down to the twentieth century, in the most primitive of human societies and in the most civilized. There is no region on earth that has not at some time harboured the institution. Probably, there is no group of people whose ancestors were not at one time slaves or slave holders. Slavery was firmly established in all the great early centers of human civilization.⁹⁴

Indigenous slavery became institutionalized in Ghana during the Neolithic and Ironage periods with the increase in state building activities, and especially from the fifteenth century AD.⁹⁵ The better a state's political structure became, the stronger it was in a position to practise slavery. Not only was it in a position to conquer its neighbours and to capture prisoners, but it also possessed the capacity to use the services of the prisoners internally or to trade in them. In fact, the stronger the political structure, the more slaves it could capture and own. These slaves were used as labourers. The stronger the political structure, the more lucrative and beneficial the slave trade.

⁹³Akosua Adoma Perbi, "The Christian Response to Indigenous Slavery in Ghana: A Historical Perspective Gleaned from the Records of Asante, Opoku and Reindorf," *Journal of African Christian Thought, Past and Present in African Christian Perspective* 17, no. 1 (2014), 7.

⁹⁴Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* (USA: Harvard University Press, 1985), vii.

⁹⁵Perbi, *History of Indigenous Slavery*, 17.

2.11 A CHRISTIAN RESPONSE TO INDIGENOUS SLAVERY

Perbi, in *The Christian Response to Indigenous Slavery in Ghana*, acknowledges the socioeconomic importance of slavery in the country. They constituted the labour force in agriculture, trade and industry. Slaves were the porters in Ghana's intra-state, inter-state and long distance trade. They served in administrative sectors in the traditional political states, particularly in the treasury and finance departments. In the music sphere they served as drummers, horn blowers and dancers. In the kitchen they were the cooks. In the religious sphere they were the caretakers of the royal mausoleum, and performed other important duties required by traditional religious customs. In the diplomatic corps, they were the sword bearers, heralds and linguists. Slaves also served in the military. Some of them were trained as soldiers to fight on the battle field, while others performed menial tasks, such as fetching firewood, water, food and running errands.

2.12 EMANCIPATION OF LOCAL SLAVES

The Basel Mission was of the view that owning slaves was both immoral and illegal. However, both Zimmermann and Reindorf believed that there was nothing wrong with owning slaves, since the British colonial government had not yet issued a prohibition of slavery in the area under its jurisdiction. This entrenched stance led to the dismissal of Reindorf, because he intended to continue to be a slave holder.

The issue of slavery became such a major concern; and Quartey writes that special conferences were held in the Gold Coast and in Basel to discuss the issue.⁹⁶

From these meetings came some legislation which shows the ambiguities in the position of the home committee on slavery. The home committee sometimes accepted the human-

⁹⁶Quartey, *Missionary Practices on the Gold Coast*, 144.

commodity relations and at other times sought convenient means of negotiation, since the loss of slaves also meant the loss of value which affects the dignity of the human. Additionally, slave holders could neither become members of the Christian parish nor members of the Christian family.⁹⁷

A review of the property of Christian slave holders in Basel Mission congregations at the beginning of the 1860s indicates that Reindorf owned about three (3) adult heathen slaves. One of them was a woman who was a foreigner (that is non- Ga and non- Akan).⁹⁸

Another survey was conducted by the Basel Mission in 1862. It revealed that he owned a nine (9) year old girl by name Adei. In a second survey, he is also listed as holding three (3) pawns. Two of them were thirty- eight year- old Krote of Osu and Tawiah from Teshi. Tawiah was married and was a Christian. Both men had become indebted to Reindorf, but the document does not tell us how.⁹⁹

According to the minutes of the meeting of 15th January, 1863, from the Basel Mission Slave Emancipation Commission, the missionaries pressed Reindorf to transform his relationship with Krote and Tawia into a contract, according to which they were obliged to work four days a week for Reindorf. Their pay of three shillings a month was to be credited against the debt to Reindorf. On the remaining days of the week they could work for themselves on their own farms.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁷Quartey, *Missionary Practices on the Gold Coast*, 144- 145.

⁹⁸Peter Haenger, *Reindorf and the Basel Mission in the 1860s A Young man stands up to Mission Pressure*, in *The Recovery of the West African Past*(Basel: Basler African Bibliographien, 2000), 22- 23.

⁹⁹Johnson&Reindorf, *Recovery of the West African*, 23.

¹⁰⁰Johnson&Reindorf, *Recovery of the West African*, 23.

Reindorf pointed out that owning slaves was not illegal on the Gold Coast, since the British Colonial Government had not yet issued a prohibition of slavery in the area under its jurisdiction.¹⁰¹

Because of Reindorf's position on slavery, in 1862 a dismissal letter was written by the field secretary of the Basel Mission, Rev. Widman, dismissing him from the Mission because he wanted to remain a slave holder.¹⁰²

Rev. Widman wrote a letter justifying the dismissal of Reindorf from the Mission in which he stated:

The Ga brethren are very unhappy about Reindorf, especially Zimmerman, and argue that I have handled the whole thing badly. But I required nothing from him except that he should give his girl a formal declaration of her freedom. He did not want to do this, claiming that she is the property of his mother. He does however admit that he bought and sold her. So the conclusion is simple: he trades in slaves.¹⁰³

Reindorf is reported to have written a paper dated 5th March, 1862, for the Basel Mission leadership in Basel justifying his position with respect to the slavery question. His paper was signed by all the slave owning catechists of the Basel Mission. Like Zimmerman, Reindorf treated domestic slavery in Ghana as an important part of family life.¹⁰⁴

2.13 REV. CARL CHRISTIAN REINDORF'S OTHER ACTIVITIES TO SUPPORT CHURCH AND STATE

In an interview with the head of the Reindorf family in Accra, H. K. Quartey Papafio, he touched on other areas where Carl Christian Reindorf supported the church and state.

¹⁰¹Johnson&Reindorf, *Recovery of the West African*, 24.

¹⁰²Johnson&Reindorf, *Recovery of the West African*, 24.

¹⁰³Johnson&Reindorf, *Recovery of the West African*, 24.

¹⁰⁴Johnson&Reindorf, *Recovery of the West African*, 24.

These areas are: medical, military, leadership, statesman and advocacy of freedom and justice.

a. Medical

Carl Reindorf was not only a missionary but also a nurse in local wars in which he participated. He acted as a nurse and trained others to diagnose diseases thus saving the lives of many European missionaries and also of African soldiers at the war front. He served as an assistant to Dr. Davis from Sierra Leone in extracting bullets from wounds. He was divinely gifted in identifying the creative powers of local herbs.¹⁰⁵ During the Akwamu war of 1869 to 1870, Reindorf was reported to have treated over three hundred Ga people, and extracted not less than three hundred bullets.¹⁰⁶ Additionally, Osei-Tutu in his work – *The Asafo in the History and Politics of Accra* asserted that Reindorf served as assistant to the medical officer.¹⁰⁷

b. As a Military Leader

Reindorf displayed bravado in battles involving the Ga people and their allies. He distinguished himself in the wars of 1866 between the Ada and the Awuna in which he captained the Asafo from Osu, as allies of the Ada.¹⁰⁸ He played other roles as well. He was at the same time Chaplain. He played multiple roles in the 1866 Awuna war II. He was the assistant captain of the *Osuasafoi* and a paramedic. Additionally, in the Awuna III or Akwamu III war of 1869 to 187, the *Osuasafoi* company was under Reindorf's command.

¹⁰⁵H. K. Quartey- Papafo (Head of the Reindorf family), Interview, Accra. 28th January, 2016.

¹⁰⁶Reindorf, *History of the Gold Coast*, 10-13.

¹⁰⁷ John Osei-Tutu, *The Asafoi (social military groups) in the History and Politics of Accra (Ghana) from the 17th to the mid 20th Century (Trondheim: Trondheim 2000, 2000)*, 55.

¹⁰⁸Isaac S. Epton, *Gallery of Gold Coast Celebrities, 1632- 1958* (Accra: Ilen Publications Limited, 1969), 56.

He was also a paramedic on the battle field. It may be argued that his educational background might have made him the choice for such roles.

The term *Asafo*, which appears in the vocabulary of both Akan and non-Akan ethnic groups in southern Ghana, is generally accepted to be a *Twi* (Akan) word. The term *Asafo* is defined generally in the literature of the *Asafo* system as a military company or organized military band. It also refers to a peace-time social event (drumming, singing and dancing) which was performed by the companies to entertain themselves and others during festivals, funerals and ritual ceremonies. In some contexts, the word *Asafo* is also referred to as one or more of the following: - a community, a religious congregation, a church society or an association.¹⁰⁹

The *Asafo* is also seen as a social group comprising the young men of the various indigenous states who, in war time, constituted the bulk of the fighting men. In peace time they constituted themselves as independent rivalry groups in the towns supporting the chief.¹¹⁰

The concept of *Asafo* spread through Accra through the following means, firstly the large number of Fante immigrants and fishermen who had settled in every town on the Ga coast. Secondly, because of the long interaction of the Fante and the Ga from earlier times. Thirdly, some Ga leaders sent people to Fante to learn how to play *Asafo*.¹¹¹

In the post 1850 period, there was the emergence of Christian *Asafo* companies. Young men seized an opportunity to join an *Asafo* in order to contribute their quota to the defence of their country. The conversion to Christianity set several people outside the regular

¹⁰⁹Osei-Tutu, *The Asafoi (socio-military groups)*, 52.

¹¹⁰Osei-Tutu, *The Asafoi (socio-military groups)*, 53.

¹¹¹Osei-Tutu, *The Asafoi (socio-military groups)*, 55.

quarter and town *Asafo* organizations whose ritual practices were not in tune with the tenets of Christianity. The man who promoted the idea of Christian *Asafo* companies among the Ga people was Carl Christian Reindorf.¹¹² When the occasions arose in 1866 and 1869 to 1870 to fulfil his traditional obligations he joined his *Asafo* brethren of Osu as required by Ga custom and as his non-Christian brethren expected of him and also of other African Christians.¹¹³ It was an obligation for able-bodied Ga men to join an *asafo* company to contribute to the defence of its state irrespective of one's religious inclination.

This showed his commitment to the tradition and culture of his people, which eventually shaped him to become a military leader

This act of courage and dedication did not go unnoticed. It can be argued that this act contributed to building his reputation as a military leader. His leadership roles were seen in the Awuna (sometimes written as Aɲula) war of 1866 when he was appointed as assistant captain of the Osu *asafoi* (companies). And, even when he was too old to join the Ga forces personally during the Glover war in 1873 to 1874, he appointed a deputy to go in his place. This clearly showed his leadership role as a military officer.¹¹⁴

Reindorf found out that the rituals and practices of his regular *Asafo*-company (of Asante-Blohum) were not in tune with his Christian practices. In order to lead and participate in the Asante campaign, Reindorf formed, armed and led his own company on each occasion.¹¹⁵

¹¹²Osei-Tutu, *The Asafoi (socio-military groups)*, 95.

¹¹³Osei-Tutu, *The Asafoi (socio-military groups)*, 95.

¹¹⁴Reindorf, *History of the Gold Coast*, 11.

¹¹⁵Reindorf, *History of the Gold Coast*, 10- 12.

The Asante-Blohum *asafo*-companies, like the other non-Christian *asafo* companies were involved in practices and rituals which were considered heathen. For instance, they consulted local deities and shrines.

What distinguished Reindorf's Christian *Asafo* companies from regular ones was that; the Christian one applied Christian rituals, songs and prayers, thus avoiding the rituals and medicines associated with the Sakumono and other gods in the Ga pantheon of war gods.¹¹⁶

Reindorf saw his military activities as a duty which eventually served as a catalyst to the struggle and fight for mulattoes's rights at Osu.¹¹⁷

It must be stated that the mulattoes were neither Europeans nor indigenes and were bound to be denied some rights from both races. The firm stance of Reindorf and his being in the forefront to find solutions to the challenges and struggles of the Ga people may be considered as a way of making the mulattoes fully acceptable as Ga to the people.

c. As a Statesman

Carl Reindorf never got himself involved in partisan politics, but nevertheless, his influence was felt in the Gold Coast. For instance, he was able to mediate in some political matters, an example being the granting of political asylum to political refugees from Asante Juabeng and the creation of the New Juabeng traditional area with Koforidua as capital.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁶Osei-Tutu, *The Asafoi*, 96

¹¹⁷Osei-Tutu, *The Asafoi*, 97

¹¹⁸H. K. Quartey- Papafio (Head of the Reindorf Family), Interview, Accra. 28th January, 2016.

2.14 HIS RETIREMENT

In 1893, Carl Christian Reindorf retired from active service. He went to settle in a village called Adenkrebi, near Aburi and specifically to his farm which he called “Hebron” for complete rest. He engaged in farming as a hobby but his restless activity found expression in his devotion to work at Adenkrebi. On 12th June, 1906, he completed the fiftieth year (50th) of his connection with the Basel Mission and there was a thanksgiving service to which many of the native pastors were invited and attended with gladness and great joy. Many presents were given to him in recognition of his past and valuable services.

On 1st July, 1917, he passed on to glory. He was buried at the Basel Mission cemetery at Christiansborg.

2.15 CONCLUSION

The contribution of Carl Christian Reindorf to mission in general and in the Ga state in particular cannot be over emphasized. His footprints in the area of music and scholarship still resonate loudly in contemporary times through the hymns the Presbyterian sing. His assistance in the revision of the Ga Bible has not only helped many to be able to read the Bible but indeed has contributed to the development and preservation of the Ga language as new words and letters have come up. Even though a mulatto, Carl Christian Reindorf showed much dedication and commitment to the cause of the Ga people; a military leader par excellence, a historian, a scholar and a statesman who should also be celebrated today. Indeed, he was a man of many parts, and his wide knowledge helped shape directions and informed policies for not only the Ga but for contemporary Ghana.

CHAPTER THREE

PAUL MOHENU

3.1 Introduction

There were a number of unsung heroes who really helped the African mission to expand and develop through their lives and work. Among the Ga people, a number of them can be mentioned and acknowledged. Some were educated, while others were not, yet both categories worked to sustain the Basel Mission work in the Ga state. One of such uneducated workers of the mission was Paul Mohenu. Although he was uneducated, his zeal in the mission had a great impact on Basel Mission Church in the Ga area when he got converted.

3.2 The Early Life of Paul Mohenu

Paul Mohenu was born in the year 1809 at Teshi, a fishing village eight (8) miles east of Accra, nineteen years before the arrival of the first Basel Missionaries at Osu. His father was Ataa Ayiku and his mother Adukoi both of Teshi. His father was a much respected citizen of the village who took great care to train his children in traditional morality. He was a strict disciplinarian. According to E. M. L. Odjidja, a former Moderator of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (1959 – 1966), Mohenu's mother was the opposite. She was very gentle and very loving, much devoted to her family.¹¹⁹ And Odjidja, being a member of the Mohenu- Ablorh family, acquainted himself with the account circulating in the family and documented it. The early death of this devoted mother greatly affected Mohenu, who was only 12 years old.

¹¹⁹Odjidja, *Paul Mohenu*, 6.

Following the trade of his father, he took to farming and hunting. Good arable land not available in the immediate surroundings of Teshie caused him and his brothers to move to Abladzei, a village not far from Abokobi where they could exercise their profession with profit. Mohenu had at that time married two (2) wives.

Around this same period the missionaries had started preaching in the coastal villages, La, Teshi and Nungua. It is not certain whether Mohenu and his father had anything to do with this new teaching. His way of life and morals were still governed by the traditional taboos dictated by the clan. There were rampant deaths in the family soon after the death of his mother. Four of his brothers and sisters died in rapid succession. The death of his last brother affected Mohenu more than the others, because he was so much attached to him.¹²⁰ He sold nearly everything he had to raise money to help find a cure. Despite all the efforts of the traditional priest, medicine men and others who were called in to help, the brother died. This shattered the faith of Mohenu in the powers of the traditional priests. He asked the question, if they really exist why did they not come to save his brother? Other factors began to influence Mohenu at this stage. He saw the easy way in which priest and priestesses made money. He must have thought and said to himself that if he too could learn the tricks of the trade and make some quick money, he might have an easier time and a more prosperous living.¹²¹

From the narration of Odjidja, it can be deduced that Mohenu had lost hope in the potency of traditional priesthood because his brother could not be healed by the traditional priests. He saw them as tricksters who used their position to extort or make quick and easy money, hence his decision to move into that profession. Mohenu had hitherto; believed in the

¹²⁰Odjidja, *Paul Mohenu*, 6.

¹²¹Odjidja, *Paul Mohenu*, 5-7.

potency of the traditional priesthood because he inherited this from his father. It was not until that fateful day when his own brother could not be saved by the traditional priest that he came to the realization that the traditional priests and priestesses were impotent.

3.3 Mohenu as a Traditional Priest

From his father, Mohenu had acquired some knowledge of the medicinal use of herbs. He had a good memory and could diagnose symptoms of fevers and diseases common in those days. He applied himself to the acquisition of more knowledge in herbal medicine. One night, while studying under a well-known medicine man at Teshie, his master took him to the bush for some initiation rites. The rites consisted of drinking from the same cup a concoction brewed from blood, herbs and water. The blood was obtained from incisions on the body of Mohenu and his master. The act of drinking this potion together, signified a solemn obligation on each side to observe absolute secrecy in the practice of herbal medicine, and a promise never to reveal secrets to any unauthorized person. That night he was told that there was no power in fetish; a priest must learn deceptive tricks in the practice of herbal medicine in order to influence his clients.¹²² It was after his conversion that he made public a confession of this strange episode.

Odjidja posed questions like – ‘why did Mohenu persist in his studies after this revelation and experience? Why enter into this contract when it was entirely based on falsehood?’. It could be deduced that the priority of Mohenu was not the truth but money. He was not looking for a philosophy or an ideal ideology of some sort to interpret life; he was after material possessions. He was not interested in any moral conscience whether the means was right or wrong. His reasoning was, - “if this is the way I can get the riches and the

¹²²Odjidja, *Paul Mohenu*, 7-8.

popularity I desire, then I will join them.”¹²³ Night after night they went out for more lessons in jugglery, orgy dances, weird songs, incantations and magic formula of various sorts. He paid money for recognition and acceptance into several cults. After a time, his tutor passed him out and presented him as a candidate suitable and fit to be accepted into the fraternal union of the traditional priest. The entrance fee to this union of priests was ten (10) pounds, and such an amount in those days was not easy to find. The ‘college authorities’ eager to enrol him, granted him a concession that he was to pay by instalment. Mohenu’s enthusiasm in the art soon made him a popular figure among his colleagues. He discovered at a very early stage the value of herbal medicine as the central power of the practice of traditional a priest and he spared no effort to increase his medical knowledge through research.

An event that happened during this period enhanced the reputation of Mohenu and made him an outstanding priest above his colleagues. A woman living in the suburbs of Accra had her property stolen by thieves. She was informed of the powers of Mohenu to recover her stolen property. What else could she desire more than this? She accordingly approached Mohenu to help her get the goods back. Mohenu assured her of his ability to do that. He instructed the woman to plant a pole by the side of the main road and to tie 2 strings or lines on it. The woman followed the instructions and waited for the results. A few days after, the stolen goods were returned to the amazement of all. From now on Mohenu began to make a name for himself as a wonder worker, herbalist and fetish priest.¹²⁴

¹²³Odjidja, *Paul Mohenu*, 9.

¹²⁴Odjidja, *Paulo Mohenu*, 9.

Odjidja asserts in the earlier discussion that the fame of Mohenu had grown as a powerful herbalist, so a lot of people not only believed in his powers but also feared him. His asking the woman to tie two (2) strings on a pole by the main road side might have put fear in the people or one who might have stolen the woman's property and this fear might have caused that person to return the property. On the other hand, if he had genuinely had powers, this might have caused the one who stole the woman's property to return them.

To attract public attention and advertise himself, Mohenu performed several public exhibitions at markets places and at functions such as funerals. Pretending to be possessed, he danced and performed several tricks which were indeed wonderful. He called the deity that ruled his life "Dzabaa". These performances astonished his audience in no small way. He was consulted by many who sought his advice. Indeed, he was generally accepted as an astonishing man. One of his triumph cards in divination whenever clients came to seek advice was his pretence to consult "Dzabaa" - publicly for he said, to get better results "Dzabaa" - had to be consulted publicly. "Dzabaa" - was made of clay in human form; his eyes were made of balls of shea butter. When placed in the sun, it shed tears to show pity and to convince the client of his sympathy. By ordinary standards, Mohenu was a highly gifted man with a magnetic personality, and with his acquired skills, he easily won many admirers and many more came to him for help and advice.

Again, Odjidja writes that as a herbalist Mohenu, was above his colleagues in his days. Many were the patients who came with various afflictions and went away cured. Barren and childless women sought his advice and were helped and many of them benefited from the treatment he offered. Mohenu now wielded power, and no one could challenge him in

the whole of Ga-Adangbe land. Many chiefs were afraid of him.¹²⁵ A search light thrown on the private activities of Mohenu during those dark days might reveal many heart-breaking episodes in his life. Many innocent lives were lost as a result of his activities. To whip up peoples' regard and acclamation, he frequently organized special functions to which he invited priests from other clans. For weeks on end these activities went on. His two traditional principal idols: - "Dzabaa" and "Antiko" - became famous during those days.¹²⁶ Special festive days were set aside for these deities and invitations went out to all other priests from Kpone to Kwabenya to come to the celebrations. Seven days of drinking and dancing were given at each feast. During this peak period, he moved from Abladzei to a lonely spot called Gonwuluno, a few miles to the east, and there he built a village by himself for his wife and children. To this village, other student priests came to study the secrets of the trade. The sick also flocked for a cure, and the troubled and disillusioned grouped to find solutions to their predicaments.

As a result of the rebellion of the people of Osu who refused to pay the poll tax and the consequent bombardment of Christiansborg in 1854, the Basel Missionaries with a few adherents left the coast to establish the village of Abokobi.¹²⁷ The party that left Osu for Abokobi on foot included Rev. Johannes Zimmermann, Rev. A. W. Steinhauser, Rev. Andreas Stranger, Rev. William Locher, male servants, maid servants and eleven catechist trainees,¹²⁸ including Carl Reindorf and Adolf Briandt.

Abokobi is a village in the Ga district in the Greater Accra region of Ghana. It is eighteen miles north of Accra and at the foot of the Akuapem Mountains. The total land owned by

¹²⁵Odjidja, *Paul Mohenu*, 13.

¹²⁶Odjidja, *Paul Mohenu*, 13.

¹²⁷Odjidja, *Paul Mohenu*, 14-15.

¹²⁸N. A. Odoi, *A Brief History of Abokobi* (Accra: 2004), 3.

Abokobi is about nine hundred and ninety- six acres.¹²⁹ According to Odoi, Abokobi had a population of about two thousand (2000) in 2004 but this has now increased significantly. The population according to the 2010 population census for the entire Ga East Municipal Assembly of which Abokobi is part stands at one hundred and forty-seven thousand, seven hundred and forty-two (147,742) representing 3.68 percent of the total population of the Greater Accra region.¹³⁰ Many others who are non- Ga have settled there. Almost the entire land of Abokobi is owned by the Presbyterian Church of Ghana as landlord. The indigenous people on the land are mere tenants. Farming is the main occupation of the people, and Christianity and other religions are practised in the village. The population is a mixture of Christianity and people of other faiths. Abokobi promotes and projects Christianity in a very special way, and this makes it unique as a Christian village.¹³¹

According to Odoi, the land is rich and arable and mainly intended to provide the settlers with a means of livelihood. Both Abladzei and Gonwuluno are not far from Abokobi and so news of the coming of the missionaries spread to Mohenu. Mohenu had possibly heard of the activities of the missionaries before and had determined to have nothing to do with them and their message. It might be for this reason that he left Abladzei to establish his own place at Gonwuluno. Many are the stories told to show that Mohenu might have had some apprehension about the message and activities of the missionaries. He was so jealous of his trade and reputation that he was determined to fight against anything that might prove a threat.¹³²

¹²⁹Odoi, *A Brief History of Abokobi*, 1.

¹³⁰Ghana Statistical Service, 2010 Population and Housing Census.

¹³¹Odoi, *A Brief History of Abokobi*, 1.

¹³²Odoi, *A Brief History of Abokobi*, 1.

At Abladzei, there lived a man called Adamah who was once cured by Mohenu. Custom demanded that all people who had once been treated and helped by the priest must bring gifts to him during annual festivals. Many were the gifts that usually came to Mohenu during the festivals, and with these gifts he carried out festival for weeks. During one of these feasts, Adamah's brother who had probably been the one cured did not bring a gift as he was expected to do.

This annoyed Mohenu, because he had been informed privately of the constant visits paid by Adamah and his brother to Abokobi. Mohenu confronted Adamah and asked why no gift came at the last feast. Adamah arrogantly replied - "your work is a cheat, you are fooling the people and because of that I persuaded my brother not to send you a gift". The practice of priests in those days was to engage a string of spies who gave information of what was happening in each family. Such information helped the priest. With a group of his supporters, Mohenu one night went to Abokobi to demolish the walls of the new house being built for the missionaries. The constant visit of Adamah and his friends to the mission at Abokobi resulted in the baptism of Adamah and one of his friends called Mante. The resident missionary Rev. Stanger paid regular visits to Abladzei and even on one occasion to the house of Mohenu. During this visit Mohenu was not at home but when he learnt of it on his return, he became very angry. He was now confirmed in his view that he was the principal target of the missionaries and that they without any pretence were out to destroy his trade and means of livelihood. They had succeeded in converting some of his adherents to Christianity and now they were bent on turning his heart to Christ.¹³³

¹³³Odjidja, *Paul Mohenu*, 16.

3.4 Conversion of Paul Mohenu

There are two (2) accounts on the conversion of Paul Mohenu to Christianity. The two (2), according to Odjidja, do not materially differ, one is the abridged form of the incident and the other slightly longish, as all oral accounts tend to be.¹³⁴

The account has it that Mohenu visited his farm only to realize that it had been ransacked by white pigs. He therefore decides to keep vigil the following day to ward off the animals. Odjidja did not state the year that this took place, but was emphatic that it happened on a Wednesday. Attempts to find out why a Wednesday has not yielded any positive effect yet. In the thickest part of the farm he sees a dazzling bright light and at the spot of the light he notices that there is a very long snake which had no head. In desperation he tries to shoot the reptile, but he hears a voice which asks him not to. He becomes seriously ill after this frightful event and all attempts to cure him prove futile. His condition further deteriorates, and he falls into coma. Changes start occurring in his body. His body swells to the point that he was given up as dead. During this period, he sees a vision in which a host of angels appears to him and beckons him to give up his old life and come with them. While they were on their way the angel asks him to look back and as he does he sees his own body being eaten up by worms until only bones was left. An angel smears clay on the bones and they come back to life with flesh and bone. As they go further along, they are confronted by a hostile crowd who demands to know where Mohenu is going. They threaten to kill him if he goes along with the angels. According to Odjidja, they march on till they come up to Jesus, seated on His throne. Jesus then asks him if he (Mohenu) knows the crowd that threatened him. When he answers in the negative, Jesus makes him aware that they

¹³⁴Odjidja, *Paul Mohenu*, 20.

are his fellow traditional priests. After his interaction with the Lord Jesus, and being shown many unconverted souls, on whose bodies were inscribed all their past evil deeds; Mohenu was ashamed and wept bitterly. He was asked to go back and proclaim the Lordship of Jesus to the world. It was at this point that he awoke from his coma and for the first time he prayed to the living God and sang a new song: “A new world like a heavy load has been laid on me. Ask Jesus to lift it up for you.”¹³⁵ Odjidja documents that Mohenu learnt this new song during the trance, when he was in coma. He must have sung it in Ga since he was not literate.

With this he moved from an old sinful life to a life of Christianity. The old self had given place to a new one.

He went to Abokobi and narrated his story to one of the Christian leaders and asked to be introduced to Rev. Johannes Zimmermann at Christiansborg in order to be enrolled as a catechumen.¹³⁶ At first nobody took him seriously, but when he persisted in his request he was enrolled. On the 11th of October, 1857 he and his family were baptized at Gonwuluno. He took the Christian name Paul. His fetish grove was cut down and destroyed by Rev. Laissle Smith. Mohenu brought along with him to the Christian faith his unlimited zeal, vigour, deep wisdom and sound qualities as an indigenous leader.¹³⁷

Mohenu got converted to Christianity at the age of forty- eight (48). He became an itinerant preacher, preaching in the surrounding communities in Accra, which included Abokobi, Sasabi, Mayera and did further work at Yilo Krobo. He was instrumental in the nurturing of the Abokobi congregation. There arose disputes and conflicts among the

¹³⁵ Odjidja, *Paul Mohenu*, 25.

¹³⁶ Odjidja, *Paul Mohenu*, 25.

¹³⁷ Odjidja, *Paul Mohenu*, 25.

tribes and heterogeneous group at Abokobi and Paul Mohenu was around to arbitrate for peace to reign.¹³⁸

3.5 Paul Mohenu as an Itinerant Evangelist

After his conversion, Mohenu enrolled at the Sunday school where he learnt how to read and write. He was able to read the New Testament in the vernacular. His constant meditation on the word of God, his deep prayerful life and his association with the missionaries gave him a completely different outlook on life. He was elected a presbyter (an elected elder of a congregation serving on the session of that congregation) in his local congregation at Abokobi.¹³⁹ He became a peace maker in the Abokobi community. He spent most of his time nurturing the congregation at Abokobi.¹⁴⁰ He settled disputes which arose from the different communities that had settled at Abokobi due to the political disturbances at Christiansborg. On one particular Sunday, when he turned up for service he noticed that there were two services being held at different places simultaneously. Upon enquiry he learnt that there had been a split between the indigenous people and the missionaries. He was instrumental in solving the problem and bringing back unity into the Abokobi community. Paul Mohenu was a naturally gifted leader who possessed sterling qualities. He was ahead of the missionaries in their work, because he knew his people and he could minister to them better than outsiders.¹⁴¹ He became an effective local missionary because of his background.

He moved from Gonwuluno and settled at Abokobi because the missionaries thought that when he was closer to them they could tap his resources and potentials. The movement did

¹³⁸Odjidja, *Paul Mohenu*, 20-27.

¹³⁹Odjidja, *Paul Mohenu*, 27

¹⁴⁰Odjidja, *Paul Mohenu*, 27.

¹⁴¹Odjidja, *Paul Mohenu*, 27.

not dim his desire to proclaim the Lordship of Christ. He began to proclaim the gospel in the surrounding villages.

He delivered a very powerful speech on the 17th of November, 1861 during the dedication of a church hall at Sasabi, an out station of Abokobi. The subject of his speech was “Jesus is the King of life, the Almighty Love, the bright and complete glory of God”-.

“He opened his speech by imploring the assembly to listen to him, a poor miserable sinner, converted and redeemed by Christ. He described his former life as full of deceit and wickedness to a degree unknown to his hearers. Jesus had shown mercy on him and had converted him by the power of his Spirit and so it is possible to bring each of them into this new life. Jesus loves us and has purchased for us the righteousness of God which we cannot achieve by ourselves. “Why do you remain in slavery? He pleaded with all to come to Jesus and be free. The service of fetish is slavery and brings suffering and internal pain. The service of Christ brings blessings and more abundant life here and hereafter. ”I, your Black brother, I am telling you this from my own experience”.¹⁴²

On another occasion when speaking at a public meeting in Labadi, Paul Mohenu described the belief in Lakpa (spirit possessed drums) as nonsense. He said:

“you believe spirits inhabit within the Lakpa drum. Take the drum to the farm, leave it there for a few days and on your return you will see the wood and skin of the drum eaten up by white ants. Where is the spirit you worship? It does not exist. I was drumming on this very drum myself and told you that Lakpa was speaking to you, it was a lie. The only living spirit is God who sent us His beloved son Jesus, the lamb of God and saviour of the sinner.¹⁴³ Repent, my brethren and come to the living God who made heaven and earth.

“Paul Mohenu was not content to confine his preaching to the surrounding villages in Ga area alone, he felt the call to go beyond the boundaries of the district. Accordingly, the Mission commissioned him as an evangelist in 1867 to travel and preach wherever he felt called to preach. For almost twenty years he travelled up and down the whole of the Ga state carrying the good news”.

¹⁴²Odjidja, *Paul Mohenu*, 29-30.

¹⁴³Odjidja, *Paul Mohenu*, 30.

From Christiansborg he travelled through the villages preaching and witnessing for Christ until he reached Ada. At Ada, he met a small Christian community and with them he stayed for a while touring the whole area. While there, an incident happened this nearly cost him his life. A member of the small community died. His relatives who were heathen insisted on coming for the corpse for burial as demanded by their culture.¹⁴⁴ Mohenu and his followers refused to release the dead body and wanted to give the deceased a Christian burial. This made the family of the deceased, who far outnumbered the Christians, angry and they beat up the Christians. Mohenu was severely injured. This beating laid him down for some weeks at Ada, before he returned to Abokobi.¹⁴⁵

After a period of rest, he journeyed to the Shai villages between the Shai and the Akuapem hills to preach and sow the gospel seed. God blessed his work and through him the door was opened for mission work among the people. While he was in the Shai community, he heard of the difficulties at Odumasi Krobo where a Catechist had been stationed in 1867. He trekked through an unfriendly region infested with bands of robbers to reach the village of the Konor of Manya Krobo towards the end of the year. At Yilo Krobo he stayed for some time at a village called Trom preaching and teaching. It is said that through him four men came forward for instructions and were later baptized.¹⁴⁶ No doubt many persons were saved, but Odjidja states that it is difficult to have any real statistics or information on what happened to these new converts afterwards. The absence of a nearby community to which these new converts could attach themselves, might have caused a number of them to relapse. Others, more favourably placed, were able to form themselves into small Christian communities which later developed into congregations. The seeds which were

¹⁴⁴Odjidja, *Paul Mohenu*, 31.

¹⁴⁵Odjidja, *Paul Mohenu*, 31.

¹⁴⁶Odjidja, *Paul Mohenu*, 31.

scattered did not all die, some germinated and grew into stalwart trees. The gospel had earlier been taken to Mayera by Carl Reindorf.

Paul Mohenu laboured day and night for five months to bring salvation to the people of Mayera. After months of patient work, ten souls were won for the master. Years after, a beautiful station was built at Mayera.¹⁴⁷ Later, Mohenu's son-in-law, Daniel Ablorh, was ordained and appointed the first pastor to Mayera. Many prominent Christian families have their Christian origin from here. It was here that their forefathers or mothers learnt of Christ and therefore became converted.¹⁴⁸

According to Odjidja, there were about a hundred villages in the Ga rural area and each one these villages were visited by Mohenu.¹⁴⁹

Tema, a town east of Nungua had hitherto resisted the gospel and closed its doors to the mission work. Mohenu was asked to try and enter and see what could be done. On arrival he was well received and took pains to visit each family in their compounds. He informed them of his intention to stay for a while. Mohenu was not a total stranger here, he had a family relation at Tema and was well known by several people.¹⁵⁰ Every morning he conducted a service on the compound to which many people came. Later he visited homes to speak to individuals and on Sundays he conducted divine services. The beginning was magnificent, and the promising sign of prosperous future. But after a couple of months the large number of people that came to hear him began to dwindle.

The enthusiasm with which he was at first received began to grow suddenly cold. The people had thought that since Mohenu, their kinsman, had turned a scholar and was

¹⁴⁷Odjidja, *Paul Mohenu*, 32.

¹⁴⁸Odjidja, *Paul Mohenu*, 33.

¹⁴⁹Odjidja, *Paul Mohenu*, 33

¹⁵⁰Odjidja, *Paul Mohenu*, 34.

associated with Europeans his visit and stay would bring them plenty of European goods and money. Now that none of these were forthcoming they secretly took counsel to boycott him and his message. No food was sold to him in the market place, his caterers stopped cooking his meals, all the good will was closed to him, except the very salty ones. When people saw him coming their way, they passed him by, those under instruction ceased attending classes, and when asked why, they simply said they had no time. It became evident that Mohenu could not prolong his stay for he was literally being starved to death. Before his departure this was what he said: “life seeds when sown must germinate someday, and I am sure that some of the seed sown here will germinate.”

Indeed it happened afterwards. Tema, eventually became an out station of Abokobi with a small Christian community. The congregation has continued to thrive and today serves as a base to the magnificent missionary work being done in the harbour and the industrial area.

Today, the church has taken roots in the Tema Metropolis and has expanded to cover other areas in Sakumono. Today, one can mention the following districts, and each has a number of congregations under them, Tema Community One, Community Two and, Community Four and Tema Manhean, that has so much expanded that it has been considered by the Presbyterian Church of Ghana for a Presbytery status.

Mohenu's exploits covered large areas of Ga-Adangbe and Fante land with his usual zealotry. It was from one of these evangelistic campaigns that he returned with a fever, from which he died on the 22nd May, 1886. According to Odjidja, a collection of reports on the life and work of Paul Mohenu from mission records at Basel speak highly of the outstanding figure that he was during his time.¹⁵¹ He was a great help to the missionaries

¹⁵¹Odjidja, *Paul Mohenu*, 35.

and acted as an honest interpreter who also gave sound advice. The missionaries placed confidence in him and treated him as their own. Though a former traditional priest with a very low standard of education, mostly self-acquired, he took his place among the distinguished leaders of the church.¹⁵² This is what the missionaries wrote about him:

“his approach to the European brethren, the missionaries, was in such a way, that he was always regarded as a member of the mission family and could follow their trends of thoughts without difficulty, as such, he shouldered their joys and sorrows with an understanding heart and was able to give support to many brothers in days of sorrows and relief.”¹⁵³

One of his last public acts was the part he played in a discussion at Synod when a motion on church tax increase was tabled. Odjidja is silent on the particular Synod and the year in which the decision on the church tax was discussed. Many people spoke against the increase and the motion was about to be thrown aboard, when Mohenu stood up, erect and squarely and in a commanding voice that caught attention, agreed that it was time the Christians took their obligations seriously. His speech broke down all resistance, and with these words he concluded: Give unto God what belongs to Him and unto Caesar what belongs to him. His commanding personality, an outcome of constant Bible reading and communion with God, was used in the service of his master.¹⁵⁴

He travelled far and wide, even reaching Ada in his evangelistic work. He had little education and in fact it was mostly self-acquired, yet he took his place among the distinguish leaders of the Church. He succumbed to malaria fever which attacked him on one of his evangelistic campaigns and finally died at the age seventy- seven (77).

In an interview with the chief of Abokobi, Nii Samuel Mohenu, he acknowledged that the greatest contribution of Paul Mohenu to mission work in the Ga area was his zeal in

¹⁵²Odjidja, *Paul Mohenu*, 36.

¹⁵³Odjidja, *Paul Mohenu*, 36.

¹⁵⁴Odjidja, *Paul Mohenu*, 36.

sending the gospel message to the Ga rural areas and other parts of the nation. Indeed, his contribution led to the planting of many congregations. It is therefore no wonder that one of these congregations in Teshie Aboma has been christened Paulo Mohenu Memorial Congregation.

3.6 Conclusion

Indeed, Paul Mohenu's contribution to the growth and development of Christianity in some Ga- Adangbe areas, notably in Ada, Tema, Odumase and their environs, is very significant. The seed he sowed in all the communities he visited and worked in has borne fruits. The documentation on the life and work of Paul Mohenu attests to the great work that he did. His role cannot be underrated because of the impact it has had on modern day work. Many prominent Christian families had their Christian origin from Mayera where Mohenu did extensive evangelism and was largely successful. Today, Paul Mohenu stands tall in the history of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana.

CHAPTER FOUR
THOMAS ANANG KWATEI, HIS CONTRIBUTION TO
INDIGENOUS SCHOLARSHIP

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The name, Thomas Kwatei, unlike those of Reindorf and Mohenu, is hardly known and mentioned among the Ga people, His contribution to scholarship in particular and mission in general in the Ga state is silent except maybe in academia. This chapter highlights some of his contributions to indigenous scholarship.

The Basel Mission Society in their missionary work in the Gold Coast pursued a translation and language development policy. According to F. L. Bartels, some missionaries were sent by the Basel Mission Society to Copenhagen to undertake lessons in the Ga language before their arrival in the Gold Coast. Despite these lessons, it became necessary for some of the indigenous people to help in missionary work. This was so because knowing the language was different from knowing and understanding the culture and topography of a people and an area.¹⁵⁵

Trying to fill the gap gave rise to scholarship among the people of the Ga state, as a few people were converted and eventually became helpful to the Basel Mission Society in their mission work. One of such people was Thomas Kwatei.

4.2 EARLY LIFE

Kwatei was born at James Town, the native place of his mother in the month, in December 1834. James Town, which was also known as English Accra, consists of three (3) quarters or “*akutsei*” namely *Alata*, *Sempe*, *Akanmaji* and is about two (2) miles to the west of

¹⁵⁵F. L. Bartels, *The Roots of Ghana Methodism* (Cambridge: University Press, 1965), 20.

Christiansborg also known as Osu or Danish Accra.¹⁵⁶ His father was a native of Christiansborg and one of the chiefs of the place. His name Anang meant that he was the fourth son of his father. His mother was named *Barkay* and it is said that she derived her name from a fetish in Prampram. His mother attended the public worship of this idol once a year, from her earliest infancy to about the year 1846.¹⁵⁷ At the time of Kwatei's birth, his father was devoted to a particular deity at Dutch Accra. The idol which was called *Gua*: a baboon to which his father and his whole family rendered special worship. Every male child born to those parents who were engaged in Gua worship were consecrated to the god and were therefore bound to serve it till their death. The children were forbidden to eat any winged fowl with anybody, except with their wives when they were married, but their daughters were allowed to eat fowls with anybody and to lie on monkey skins.

In December 1848 Kwatei entered the Basel Missionary institution at Christiansborg. This institution was set up on 27th November, 1843. A year later, he was baptized and confirmed by Rev. Johannes Zimmerman. Kwatei later assisted Zimmermann in his teaching and in bringing up some of the youth in the institution. According to J. D. K. Ekem, Kwatei was one of the first indigenous people to be trained as a teacher in the Basel Mission.¹⁵⁸ At the age of twenty- one he got married to Magdalene Nyakoa, a young Christian girl, sixteen years of age, whose father was Samuel Wrisberg, a shoemaker at Christiansborg. He had given her over with her two little brothers, Philip and Christian, to

¹⁵⁶ Parker, *Making The Town*, 12.

¹⁵⁷ Basel Mission Archive (BMA).D1.6, Ghana, 1855, Biographies III. Ild Thomas B. Kwatei, Material received from Dr. A. N. O Kwakye.

¹⁵⁸ Ekem, *Early Scription*, 31.

the missionaries for a Christian education under the supervision of Rev. Johannes Zimmerman and his wife.¹⁵⁹

4.3 THE HISTORY OF TRANSLATION

The earliest contact that the Europeans had with the people of the Gold Coast was through slave trade. These Europeans in their travels had chaplains onboard their ships who performed various pastoral roles and duties.

According to Kpobi, there is consensus among historians that the Bible was first introduced on the Gold Coast by the Portuguese Catholics in 1482 when they celebrated a mass at Elmina.¹⁶⁰

Suffice it to say that the Portuguese first landed in the Gold Coast in 1482. The Bible which the Europeans brought along was primarily for use of the Europeans in the forts and castles. As the contact between the Europeans and Africans grew and the desire of the Europeans to introduce the Africans to Christianity, there came a need to introduce the Bible to the African. Initially, the few Europeans who were desirous of converting the African to Christianity taught the Africans to read the Bible in European languages. This effort did not succeed.¹⁶¹ There arose the need to teach African in their own languages and this called for the translation of the Scriptures into African languages.

Earlier attempts at the translation met with little success because there was no expert to carry out such task.¹⁶² In 1737, Christian Protten was posted by the United Brethren as

¹⁵⁹Basel Mission Archive (BMA).D1.6, Ghana, 1855, Biographies III. Iid Thomas B. Kwatei, Material received from Dr. A. N. O Kwakye.

¹⁶⁰David N. A. Kpobi, *Entrusted with the Word: A History of the Bible Society of Ghana, 1965- 2015* (Osu: Heritage Publishing, 2015), 21.

¹⁶¹Kpobi,*Entrusted with the Word*, 24.

¹⁶²Kpobi,*Entrusted with the Word*, 24.

missionary to the Gold Coast. His father was Danish and his mother was from Osu. Protten had been trained in Copenhagen and the expectation was that he would use his knowledge and expertise of the local languages to convert the indigenous people to the Christian faith. But according to Kpobi, Protten faced many challenges and therefore made little impact.¹⁶³ He succeeded in translating portions of the Bible which he used as illustrations in his introductory grammar books of Fante and Ga.¹⁶⁴

In 1764, his translation of Luther's shorter Catechism was published. He made use of some selected Bible verses in Ga. Additionally, Major Philip Wilhelm Von Wrisberg, a Danish colonial officer in the Gold Coast and himself a Christian was said to have translated portions of the Bible into Ga using the literal Danish version of the Bible as his source. His translation was the first readily available translation work on the Bible into Ga.¹⁶⁵

According to J. D. K. Ekem, these translated texts appeared in a book published in 1826 in Copenhagen with a German sub text.

Additionally, Laryea makes reference to the pioneering contributions Rev. A. W. Hanson made to the translation of the Bible. Hanson translated the gospel of Matthew and John into the Ga language and this work was published by the British and Foreign Bible Society in 1843. Laryea describes this work as the most significant of the early attempts.¹⁶⁶ The quality of Hanson's translation shows that he was conversant with original languages of

¹⁶³Kpobi, *Entrusted with the Word*, 25.

¹⁶⁴Kpobi, *Entrusted with the Word*, 25.

¹⁶⁵Ekem, *Early Scription of the Gold Coast*, 25.

¹⁶⁶Philip Laryea, *Discovering The Life and Controversies of Augustus William Hanson, Nineteenth Century Missionary, Chaplain, Diplomat and Bible Translator on the Gold Coast*, in *Seeing New Facets of The Diamond: Christianity As A Universal Faith* (Oxford: Regnum Books International, 2014), 310- 311.

Hebrew and Greek as well as being fully conversant in his mother tongue, that is the Ga language.¹⁶⁷

The translation of the Bible into Ga and other languages was taken to a higher level with the arrival of the Basel missionaries in the year 1828. The missionaries insisted on using the local languages right from the beginning of their evangelization work.¹⁶⁸

Before they were ordained and left Europe, they had attended an orientation course in Copenhagen where they learnt not only Greek and Hebrew but also Danish. What was more important was that they received instructions in the Ga language from Major Wrisberg, a retired officer from Christiansborg, who had to his credit a translation of the “Sermon on the Mount” into Ga.¹⁶⁹

4.4 THOMAS KWATEI THE BIBLE TRANSLATOR

It is widely known and accepted by historians that the complete Bible was translated into the Ga language by Johannes Zimmerman, between 1853 and 1866.¹⁷⁰ The first full Ga Bible was published by the British and Foreign Bible Society in 1866. Little is known of those who assisted him in his translation work. One of such people was Thomas Kwatei, the indigenous Ga speaking catechist.

Thomas Kwatei was among the early Basel Mission teacher-catechist, trained at Christiansborg. He was first enlisted by Zimmerman as an interpreter, because of his language skills. Later, he became Zimmerman’s partner in the revision and translation of

¹⁶⁷ Laryea, *Life and Controversies of Augustus William Hanson*, 310.

¹⁶⁸ Ekem, *Early Scription*, 25.

¹⁶⁹ National Archives of Ghana, SC. 23/1098/1971.

¹⁷⁰ Ekem, *Early Scription*, 29.

the Bible. They were later joined by Jacob Nikoi, another indigenous Ga Catechist, from Teshie.¹⁷¹

The translation team revised Rev. A. W. Hanson's work on Matthew and John and in addition translated the gospels of Mark and Luke. These translations were published without title in 1855. Later in that year, the translated work was published by the British and Foreign Bible Society, but this time with the title "*Sadsi Kpakpai Edsue lɛ, yɛ Ga wiemɔ lɛ mli*" (The four Gospel in the Ga language)¹⁷²

Further, with Zimmerman as the leader, the team translated the first book in the Bible under the title *Genesi alo Mose klenklen wolo lɛ, yɛ Ga wiemɔ lɛ mli* (Genesis or the first book of Moses in the Ga language). The translated work was published by the British and Foreign Bible Society in 1857.¹⁷³

Again, the team put in much effort and this paid off as more of their works were published in the same year.¹⁷⁴ These works are Daniel "*Gbalɔ lɛ yɛ Ga wiemɔ lɛ mli*" (the book of the prophet Daniel in the Ga language and "*Iohane kɛ Iuda woji lɛ*", "*Teologo Iohane lɛ kpodsiemo yɛ Ga wiemo lɛ mli*" (The Epistles of John and Judah, the Revelation of John the Divine/ Theologian, in the Ga language). Then in the following year, in 1858, the team's translation of the Acts of the Apostles or the second volume of Luke's gospel under the title "*Bofoi lɛ Asadsi*" and also "*Luka sane kpakpa lɛ mli jaa niji enyo lɛ*" were published by the British and Foreign Bible Society.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷¹Ekem, *Early Sricpture*,32.

¹⁷²Ekem, *Early Sricpture*,32.

¹⁷³Ekem, *Early Sricpture*,32.

¹⁷⁴Ekem, *Early Sricpture*,33.

¹⁷⁵Ekem, *Early Sricpture*,33.

It has been acknowledged that Bible commentaries, on the one hand, together with the Hebrew and Greek texts of the Bible, helped the translations into the Ga language as well as in the production of a Ga grammar and dictionary. This also enhanced the quality of the applied linguistic analysis that went into translations.¹⁷⁶ It is no surprise that in just the following year, in 1859, the team translated the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans into the Ga language under the title “*Bofo kronkron Paulo le wolo ni enma eyamadse Romanfoi le*”.¹⁷⁷

In his quarterly report sent from Christiansborg dated 6th July, 1859, Zimmerman was said to have given a hint of the rest of the New Testament translation being dispatched to the Basel Mission Committee for onward transmission to the British and Foreign Bible Society for publication.¹⁷⁸

These manuscripts contain unpublished New Testament books which were the First and Second Corinthians, Galatians and Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, First and Second Thessalonians, First and Second Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, First and Second Peter.

The BFBS then put all together and published it in 1859 under the title “*Wo Nyontso ke yiwalaherele Yesu Kristo kpanmo Hee le, ye Ga wiemo le mli*” (The New Testament of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in the Ga language)

Zimmerman and his indigenous co-workers did not only translate the Bible into the Ga language, but in addition revised the translated version of the New Testament in Ga. This project was completed in 1870 and published in 1872 under the title “*Wo Nyontso ke*

¹⁷⁶Ekem, *Early Sricpture*,33.

¹⁷⁷Ekem, *Early Sricpture*,33.

¹⁷⁸Ekem, *Early Sricpture*,33.

yiwalaherelo Yesu Kristo kpanmo Hee le, ye Ga wiemo le mli” (The New Testament of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in the Ga language).¹⁷⁹

Ekem records that the team also produced a revised version of Dr. Barth’s Bible Histories, which enhanced Sunday School work and generated subsequent Ga literary products.¹⁸⁰

The good work and contribution of Thomas Kwatei to the translation of the Bible was well appreciated and acknowledged by Zimmerman in the letter he sent to the Basel Mission Committee on 3rd April, 1865 in which he wrote:

I have the great pleasure of informing you of the fifty years jubilee of our society, that it was granted to me to finish on the 30th March, after fourteen years work, the translation of the entire Bible into the Ga language. For all this time, I have enjoyed the appreciable assistance of our able native agent; Mr. T. Kwatei.¹⁸¹

This letter makes a strong case for the immeasurable contributions of the indigenous people to scholarship. It also shows the good relationship and strong team spirit that existed between missionary Zimmerman on the one hand and the indigenous team of translators of which Kwatei was one on the other.

4.5 KWATEI’S WORK AS A CATECHIST

There is not much documentation on Kwatei’s work as a catechist. However, from the records of the Basel Mission archives, it is evident that he worked at Odumase Krobo.¹⁸² According to records from the Basel Mission Archives, Thomas Kwatei together with Catechist Gottfried Alema were given specific instructions to follow in the course of

¹⁷⁹ Ekem, *Early Scription*, 40.

¹⁸⁰ Ekem, *Early Scription*, 40.

¹⁸¹ Ekem, *Early Scription*, 38.

¹⁸² BMA – D1.8, Odumase Krobo, Special Instructions for Catechists Thomas Kwatei and Gottfried Alema, January 1858 (Material Received from Dr. A. N. O. Kwakye).

their work at Odumase Krobo. These instructions which were issued in January 1858 spelt out Kwatei's role which included:

Firstly, the overall care of the Odumase Congregation being entrusted in his watch. Kwatei was to take care of the Sunday services, he was to preach, teach the catechumen and keep Sunday School.

Together with Catechist G. Alema, Kwatei was to pay visits to out-stations, register people for baptism, teach and prepare them for the sacrament.

In addition, he was encouraged to go on with the translation of the English- Ga dictionary. Catechist Thomas Kwatei and the wife were asked to show much interest in female education by teaching interested girls how to read, write, singing and sewing, as circumstances would permit.¹⁸³

In his report dated 5th January, 1858 on his activities at his station Odumase Krobo, covering 1857, it was evident that though the evangelism work was promising with a brighter future, the progress made was slow.¹⁸⁴

He spoke about the enthusiasm of some of the indigenes in learning how to read the Ga language, instruction that he gave. They were also interested in the prayer sessions.

Kwatei could neither speak nor preach in the Dangme language and therefore relied on a local person, Peter Nyarko, who did the translation for him. He expressed his desire to learn the Dangme language fast.

¹⁸³ BMA D- 1.9, Special instruction for the Catechist Th. Kwatei and G. Alema in Odumasi Krobo. Material provided by Dr. A. N. O. Kwakye.

¹⁸⁴ BMA – D1.8, Odumase Krobo, T. B. Kwatei Report, January 5, 1858. Material received from Dr. A. N. O. Kwakye.

Through his work as a catechist, he was able to save the life of a man who had been accused and sentenced to death for allegedly poisoning someone, who then died.

The accused man was taken to the chief traditional priest by the family of the deceased. Their intention was to kill him after consultation with the chief traditional priest. On hearing this, Kwatei together with four (4) other Christians went to the deceased's family and appealed to deliver the accused to them (Kwatei and the Christians) for safe keeping till the arrival of the Governor, who was then at Akropong, to judge him and see if it was right for the accused to die or not. The deceased's family offered to hold on till the Governor arrived. However, in between time, they sent emissaries to ask for the prosecution of the accused. Kwatei and the Christians however, cautioned that should the chiefs and the family of the deceased kill the accused, he would send a report to his Excellency who would surely not take it lightly. This put fear and fright in them and as a result they had to release the accused.¹⁸⁵

Kwatei states in his report that he gained respect after the above incident. He thereafter sought the assistance of one of the chiefs, called Ba, requesting to summon his people for a message. He preached to the large crowd that responded to the chief's call based on Scripture reading from Acts 17: 30 – 31.

In the brochure of the Zimmermann Congregation, Odumase Krobo, on the occasion of the dedication of Chapel and Manse on Sunday, 11th December, 2011, it has been stated that a few converts under the leadership, aspiration and inspiration of Catechist Thomas Kwatei

¹⁸⁵ BMA D- 1.8, Odumase Krobo, T. B. Kwatei Report, January 5, 1858. Material provided by Dr. A. N. O. Kwakye.

were won for Christ. Additionally, a new and second Chapel was started and completed in 1870.¹⁸⁶ It is not clear if Kwatei supervised the building of this chapel.

Thus, his work in Odumase Krobo as a catechist was largely successful.

4.6 KWATEI'S CONTRIBUTION TO MUSIC

In his work as a preacher, Kwatei was inspired to write hymns. Two (2) of such hymns are among the collection of eight hundred and fifty (850) hymns documented in the Presbyterian Hymn Book. The first verse of the first one is as follows:

ΚῚηκῚη Μείετε, naa wamiijaje akε woyiwalah'remɔ jε wɔ-
Nyηmɔgbɔmɔtsɔmɔ ke egbele ye seηmɔtso nɔ mli.¹⁸⁷

The hymn is classified under the praise and thanksgiving section of the Presbyterian Hymn Book. Through his life's challenges, Kwatei understood what was meant to be a true Christian; this encouraged him to write this hymn. In the first stanza, Kwatei exhorts all true believers to praise God with all that they have, because He is our saviour, the one who died in our stead so that we will have life.

He based his hymn on Matthew 28: 19- 20 which admonishes all true followers of Christ to make disciples. All Christians must go and establish His rule in every corner of the earth. He is the Lord of all nations, therefore we must go to all nations. The second hymn of Kwatei is PH 126. Its first verse is as follows:

Yesu gbei lefe gbeii feε tswem ye ηwei ke shikῚη le nɔ:ηwei bɔfoi ke gbɔmei
jaa le abonsam tsui faa ye he.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁶ *Brochure of Presbyterian Church of Ghana Zimmermann Congregation, Odumase- Krobo, Dedication of Chapel and Manse on Sunday 11th December, 2011, 17.*

¹⁸⁷ *Holy, Triune God, we acknowledge thee, Presbyterian Hymn 43, (Accra: Water Ville Publishing House, 2014), 24.*

¹⁸⁸ *Name of Jesus is above all, Presbyterian Hymn 126 (Accra: Water Ville Publishing House, 2014), 70.*

In the first verse of the hymn he inspires believers to succumb to and praise God with all that they have because His mercy and goodness endure forever. He goes on to praise God Almighty with humility, patience and obedience.

He based this hymn on Philippians 2: 9- 10. It was because Jesus had first lowered Himself that God exalted Him to that highest place at the right hand of God in heaven, where Christ is now seated. At the mention of His name, every knee (every person) whether living or dead, whether a believer in Christ or an unbeliever will bow, and every tongue (every person) will confess that Jesus is Lord. From his hymns, it can be deduced that there is no other God than Jesus Christ, who is the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End. Kwatei affirms his faith in serving the Lord, because the Lord has been good to him. Kwatei's composition has in no small way enriched the collection of hymns of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana.

4.7 CONCLUSION

Many Christians among the Ga speaking people believe that the work of translating the Bible into the Ga language was done solely by Zimmermann. Little is known of the indigenes who were part of the team of translators who worked hard to get the translation done and who eventually won the praise of the Basel Mission. These included Thomas Kwatei and Jacob Nikoi. A number of factors do contribute to this thinking about the translation of the Bible, that it was done by Zimmermann alone. There seem to be inadequate records on such indigenous people, and in some cases; there are virtually no records. That is the reason why this research work seeks to bring to the fore, some of the significant contributions of three (3) indigenous people, Kwatei inclusive.

Kwatei did not only assist in the translation of the Bible but was very effective as a catechist at Odumase Krobo. He is fondly remembered there for initiating and completing a Chapel for the town.

In fact, Kwatei's success as a catechist, his diligent work as a member of the Bible translation team and the hymns that he composed contributed immensely to the success of mission work in the Ga state.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION, FINDINGS, SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a discussion and analysis of findings of the study with reference to the work of the three (3) indigenous Ga people who contributed immensely to evangelization in the Ga state.

For the purpose of this study, thematic analyses of the findings are made under the following headings: Scholarship, Music, Translation and Mission.

5.2 SCHOLARSHIP

The contribution of Carl Reindorf, in particular, and among the three personalities comes to the fore as far as scholarship is concerned. Reindorf authored a book “*The History of the Gold Coast and Asante.*”

This book has served and continues to be a secondary source of data to many, both locally and internationally. He is often referred to as a historian as he used both primary and secondary sources to compile his work.

The success of Reindorf as a historian and scholar may arguably be traced to a number of factors which include not only the education he had through the formal schooling but also his deep affection for his mother. It may be deduced that the affection of his mother might have led him to have much interest in the culture of his mother who was from the Ga state. His childhood association with other African children as well as mulattos have served as a motivating factor.

One other reason why Reindorf was regarded as a scholar par excellence was his profession as a teacher. It was around this time of his life that he developed much interest in writing which eventually led to the writing of the book *“The History of the Gold Coast and Asante”*.

Unlike Reindorf, Thomas Kwatei did not author any book but he was in his own right a scholar. He was tutored by Johannes Zimmermann, and having undergone the training, he assisted his teacher in training some of the youth at the Basel Mission Station at Christiansborg. His training and subsequent work as a teacher went a long way to make his contribution as a scholar so significant, in that he served as a member of the translation committee.

Incidentally, both Reindorf and Kwatei were tutored by Johannes Zimmermann, but at different times.

Paul Mohenu cannot be regarded as a scholar, because he only had adult education from the Sunday school of the Basel Mission Church. This enabled him to read and write and this knowledge later helped him in his work as an evangelist. His success shows that informal education is also a source of knowledge acquisition and generation.

5.3 MUSIC

One of the vehicles that helped move the evangelizing mission forward in the Ga state was music. The African was and still is said to be full of music. It is therefore not surprising that Reindorf succeeded in his mission work because he was deeply involved in music. He directly composed ten (10) of the hymns in the Presbyterian Hymn Book and translated two (2) of the Methodist hymns into the Ga language. His hymns which are missionary-oriented have to do with fellowship and the trust in God. It is not known whether Reindorf

had any training in music, but his compositions suggest he might have had some training in music, or he may simply have been gifted. This is so because music is a specialized area that requires training.

Thomas Kwatei, on the other hand, composed two (2) of the eight hundred and fifty hymns (850) in the Presbyterian Hymnal. One has the theme of the Trinity, while the other falls under Christmas hymns.

Paul Mohenu did not compose any hymn that we know of, yet he was successful in mission work. This acknowledges the fact that music, while music, must have been a contributing factor to the success of his mission work, there are other significant factors which play equally important roles.

Abamfo Atiemo in his article, “*Singing with Understanding; The Story of Gospel Music in Ghana,*” has traced the evolution of gospel music in Ghana. To him, gospel music in the Ghanaian context was not defined according to the beat or rhythm but that the song text rather defines a particular piece of music, as gospel.¹⁸⁹

Gospel songs may be prayers of petition or songs of praise and thanksgiving or direct evangelistic messages appealing to unbelievers to accept the gospel of Christ.

Interestingly, Atiemo uses the words “Songs and Hymns” interchangeably. He mentions that some early churchmen and collaborators of the Western Missionaries which included Carl Christian Reindorf, Thomas Kwatei, Simon Koranteng, Christian Obuobi all of the Basel Mission and J. B. Anaman, Gaddiel Acquah and J. E. Allotey- Pappoe of the

¹⁸⁹ Abamfo Atiemo, “‘Singing with Understanding’: the Story of Gospel Music in Ghana,” in *Studies in the World Christianity* 12, (2016), 142-163.

Wesleyan Mission either translated Western hymns or composed their own original songs, many of which are included in the vernacular hymn books of Ghanaian churches.

Atiemo asserts that the style of music of these churchmen and collaborators are very close to the Western European hymns and were therefore not seen as distinctly African music, unlike the *ebibindwom*, *asafo*, *adzewa*, *agbadza* or *jama*.¹⁹⁰

However, in the 1920s there was a revival in song compositions by African church people. The emergence of Ephraim Amu in 1927 with his compositions which blended the effect of African and European aspects had tremendous impact on worship.

Additionally, the formation of the singing bands in the 1930s by Dr. Otto Boateng in the Presbyterian Church of the Gold Coast helped spread the indigenous music in both the Presbyterian and Methodist churches.¹⁹¹

Originally, accompanying instruments were not allowed to go with the local songs and hymns. Some African Christians were obviously not satisfied with the range of music types allowed in the church as this group wanted more freedom to express themselves in response to the rhythm of the song, the drum and other compliments.

Such people found satisfaction in the AICs that were also known as *sumsum sore* (spiritual churches). Most of their tunes were 100% African, yet the lyrics express Christian ideas. They started to use African rhythm and percussions (including drumming and rhythmic clapping of hands), and dancing in formal church worship.¹⁹²

¹⁹⁰Atiemo, "Singing with Understanding," 147- 148.

¹⁹¹Atiemo, "Singing with Understanding," 148.

¹⁹²Atiemo, "Singing with Understanding," 149- 150.

The theme running through their songs were mainly centred on the power of God to drive away evil spirits and to heal all kinds of diseases.¹⁹³

In contemporary times, hymns and songs have taken a new turn, as artists have taken these songs out of the church and have commercialized them. All sorts of instruments have been introduced to make the music meet the taste of the modern day Christian. Most FM radio stations begin each day with a long session of gospel music aimed at helping listeners to prepare themselves well to face the challenges of the new day.

5.4 TRANSLATION

For the word of God to be sent to the indigenous people, it must be packaged in such a way that it will make sense and bring meaning to them. The missionaries recognized this and set out to translate the Bible into some Ghanaian languages, the Ga language being one of them. Even though the earliest missionaries learnt the Ga language on their way from Copenhagen before their arrival in the Gold Coast, they nevertheless needed the assistance of some indigenous people to help them. Some of the indigenes recruited were Reindorf, Kwatei and Nikoi. Both Reindorf and Kwatei had learnt to write the Ga language at school and used this knowledge to help in the translation. The missionaries eventually learnt from indigenous people in the course of the work.

Paul Mohenu was not involved in any written form of translation, but his mastery of the Ga language helped him to convey the word of God to his people and contributed to his success as a missionary.

¹⁹³ Atiemo "Singing with Understanding" 142-163.

5.5 EVANGELISM

All the three (3) indigenous missionaries described in this thesis, did evangelistic work in the communities of the Ga- Adangbe state. Reindorf was at Mayera, Kwatei was at Odumase Krobo and Mohenu was at Abokobi. They all made a great impact at these mission head stations. It seems that the work of these three (3) indigenous Christians paved the way for the Basel Mission Church to establish itself in the rural areas. Again, the Presbyterian Church of Ghana is well noted for the use of local languages in their worship, which Carl Christian Reindorf, Paul Mohenu and Thomas Kwatei also practised.

Additionally, all the three (3) had some form of ministerial training which in the long run helped them in their successes. Reindorf was a Catechist and later ordained Priest, Kwatei was a Catechist and Mohenu was an Evangelist. The knowledge acquired during training enhanced their mission work.

5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made for consideration:

That the local languages should be developed and taken beyond the spoken form to the written form. It is only then that materials on evangelism can be prepared in many different languages to be sent to every part of the country.

Mohenu was able to read and write because of the Sunday school of the Basel Mission Church. The recommendation is that Sunday schools should either be formed or activated in the churches, as they will be a good ground for people to learn how to read and write in their mother tongue.

Thomas Kwatei contributed significantly to the success of mission and translation. The recommendation is that like Mohenu, who has a congregation named after him at Teshie, Kwatei should also be honoured by the Ga congregations by naming at least one building or monument after him.

The researcher found it tough gathering materials- both primary and secondary for the work. This challenge seems to have left some questions still unanswered in the minds of the reader. The researcher wishes to suggest that the Presbyterian Church of Ghana should have a set of documents on the life, work and activities of the three (3) among others, which might be at the Basel Mission in a secure place in the church house. The researcher acknowledges that more work can be done on all the indigenous people who helped the missionaries as this will enrich our history.

5.7 CONCLUSION

An attempt has been made in this work to examine the role of the three (3) indigenous people, namely Carl Christian Reindorf, Paul Mohenu and Thomas Kwatei to mission in the Ga state. The trio, with their rich cultural experience and sound educational background assisted greatly in the work of the missionaries from the Basel Mission Church in the Ga state.

The success of mission work by the Basel Mission Society in the Ga district can partly be traced to the immense contribution of the indigenous people. Notable among them were the three (3) personalities investigated. Even though the challenge of inadequate materials on the three (3) have earlier been mentioned, it can however be concluded that the work and contributions of the three (3) were largely successful. They helped dynamised the

spread of the Gospel to many surrounding communities of the Ga state, helped in settling disputes and assisted with various translations.

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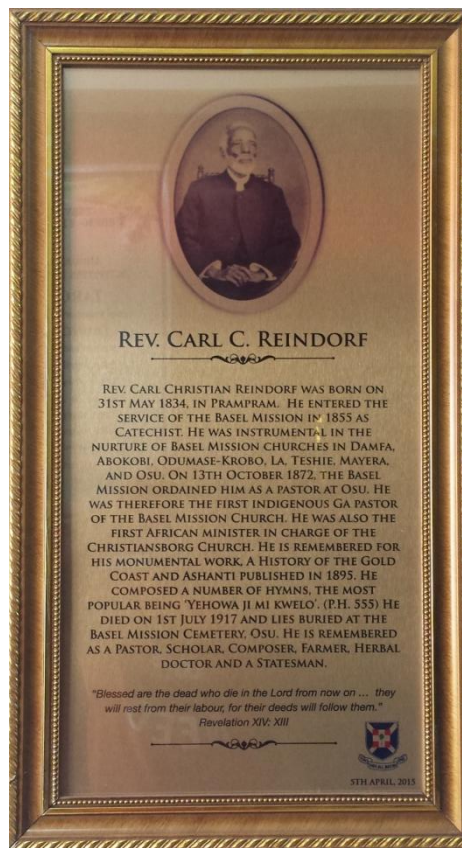
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APPENDIX

CARL CHRISTIAN REINDORF WITH HIS WIFE





This is a plaque in honour of Carl Christian Reindorf at Osu Eben- Ezer Chapel. This picture was taken on Wednesday 13th January, 2016 by Addotey Samuel Nii Akwei.



Osu Eben– Ezer Chapel extension christened after Rev. Carl Christian Reindorf.
This picture was taken on Wednesday 13th January, 2016 by Addotey Samuel Nii Akwei.



This is a renovated family house of Rev. Carl Christian Reindorf at Osu.
This picture was taken on Tuesday 22nd December, 2015 by Addotey Samuel Nii Akwei.



Presbyterian Church of Ghana Bethania Congregation Mayera- Osofoi Aman, this is Carl Christian Reindorf's first congregation he pastored after his ordination in 1872. This picture was taken on Wednesday 23rd December, 2015 by Addotey Samuel Nii Akwei.



This is a plaque showing the number of ministers who pastored the church including Rev. Carl Christian Reindorf.

This picture was taken on Wednesday 23rd December, 2015 by Addotey Samuel Nii Akwei.



This is the office Carl Christian Reindorf used during his tenure. This picture was taken on Wednesday 23rd December, 2015 by Addotey Samuel Nii Akwei.



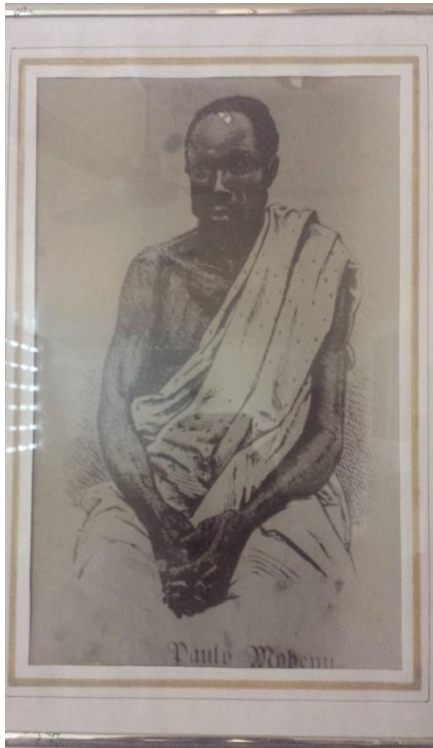
Carl Christian Reindorf used this communion cup to administer the Holy Communion. This picture was taken on Wednesday 23rd December, 2015 by Addotey Samuel Nii Akwei.



This is the tomb of Carl Christian Reindorf indicating that he was buried at the Basel Mission cemetery at Osu. This picture was taken on Monday 28th December, 2015 by Addotey Samuel Nii Akwei.



This is a Presbyterian Chapel at Teshie Aboma named after Paul Mohenu.
This picture was taken on Friday 1st April, 2016 by Addotey Samuel Nii Akwei.



This is a portrait of Paul Mohenu and a well with a bust of him in his grandson's residence at Abokobi.

These pictures were taken on Saturday 1st October, 2016 by Addotey Samuel Nii Akwei.



This is the tomb of Paul Mohenu and his wife Theodora H. Mohenu at the Basel Mission cemetery at Abokobi. This picture was taken on Saturday 1st October, 2016 by Addotey Samuel Nii Akwei.



This is a picture of Thomas Kwatei and his wife. Scanned from *Early Scriptures of the Gold Coast* by John David Kwamena Ekem.