

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

**ECONOMIC ENTERPRISES OF THE BASEL MISSION
SOCIETY IN THE GOLD COAST: A STUDY OF THE
BASEL MISSION TRADING COMPANY FROM 1859 TO
1917**

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**THIS THESIS IS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA,
LEGON IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT
FOR THE AWARD OF THE M.PHIL DEGREE IN AFRICAN
STUDIES**

JULY, 2014

DECLARATION

I declare that I have personally undertaken this study under supervision and it is my independent and original work. This thesis has not been submitted in any form to any other institution for the award of another degree. Where other sources of information have been cited, they have been duly acknowledged.

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ABSTRACT

During the ninety years of operation on the Gold Coast (1828-1918), the Basel missionaries did not limit themselves to their primary task of evangelism. As part of the efforts to achieve their aim of total social transformation of converts, the missionaries promoted the establishment of schools, linguistic studies, agricultural experimentation and other economic ventures. A trading post which evolved into the Basel Mission Trading Company (BMTC) was established at Christiansborg in 1859 to take charge of all their economic ventures. This study documents the attempt by the Basel Mission Trading Company to transmit the Mission's work ethic and practices to its converts through its operations. Financial difficulties constrained the Basel Mission Society (BMS) to become self-supporting; and the Basel Mission Trading Company's profits provided support for its educational and other missionary activities. Drawing on available archival and secondary materials with supplementary sources from oral data on the activities of the Basel Mission Society in the Gold Coast, this study examines the Basel Mission Trading Company as an economic institution and the interplay between Christianity and commerce in the quest for moral and material regeneration of the African society.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my grandmother Mrs. Rose Obeng; my parents Mr. Alex Oppong-Boateng and Mrs. Comfort Oppong-Boateng; and my siblings Elizabeth Asomaning, Angela Oppong-Boateng and Ebenezer Nana Yaw Anim Oppong-Boateng.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My first heartfelt gratitude goes to the Almighty God whose divine grace and mercy has made this study a reality. I cannot forget my supervisors, Prof. Irene K. Odotei and Dr. Ebenezer Ayesu, whose practical directions, instructions and criticisms helped in bringing this work to a successful end. I say a big thank you to them and may the good Lord replace everything that they have lost in the course of supervision.

My sincerest gratitude goes to Prof. Robert Addo-Fening for taking time to read through this work and his genuine criticisms that enabled me to produce this work.

My special appreciation goes to Prof. Irene K. Odotei, Dr. Wilhelmina J. Donkoh and Dr. Vincent Dodoo for their encouragement to undertake graduate studies.

I also want to thank all the people who out of their busy schedule still found time to provide me with the necessary information for the study. They are Mrs. Rose Obeng; Madame Margaret Adibi, Esther Mensah and Sitsofe Adjandeh; Obaapanin Anima Obriem, Mr. James Quartey and Opanin Oduro Kwarteng.

I also want to deeply appreciate my friends and colleagues who in one way or the other contributed to the production of this work. They include Evelyn Aku Adjandeh, Kafui Tekpo, Richard Awubomu, Emmanuel Nii Bortey, Richmond Brako-Abeyie, Charles Boadu, Junias Adusei-Gyamfi and Anthony Osabutey.

Finally I want to thank my parents Mr. Alex Oppong-Boateng and Mrs. Comfort Oppong-Boateng for all the love, support and encouragement they offered me in the course of the study. God richly bless you all.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION.....	I
ABSTRACT.....	II
DEDICATION.....	III
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....	IV
TABLE OF CONTENTS	V
LIST OF PICTURES.....	VIII
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	IX
CHAPTER ONE	2
INTRODUCTION.....	2
1.1 BACKGROUND TO STUDY	2
1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT	7
1.3 OBJECTIVES OF STUDY	8
1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY	9
1.5 SCOPE OF STUDY	10
1.6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....	10
1.7 REVIEW OF SELECTED LITERATURE.....	11
1.8 METHODOLOGY	18
1.9 ORGANISATION OF STUDY.....	20
CHAPTER TWO	22
HISTORICAL BACKGROUND TO BMS ACTIVITIES IN THE GOLD COAST	22
2.1 INTRODUCTION.....	22
2.2 THE BEGINNINGS IN EUROPE	22
2.3 THE BASEL MISSION SOCIETY.....	24
2.3.1 THE <i>MISSIONS INSTITUT</i>	25
2.3.2 THE BEGINNINGS OF INDEPENDENT MISSIONARY WORK.....	27
2.4 BACKGROUND TO MISSIONARY WORK IN THE GOLD COAST.....	28
2.5 AFRICAN TRADITIONAL RELIGION ON THE EVE OF CHRISTIAN MISSION ADVENT	32

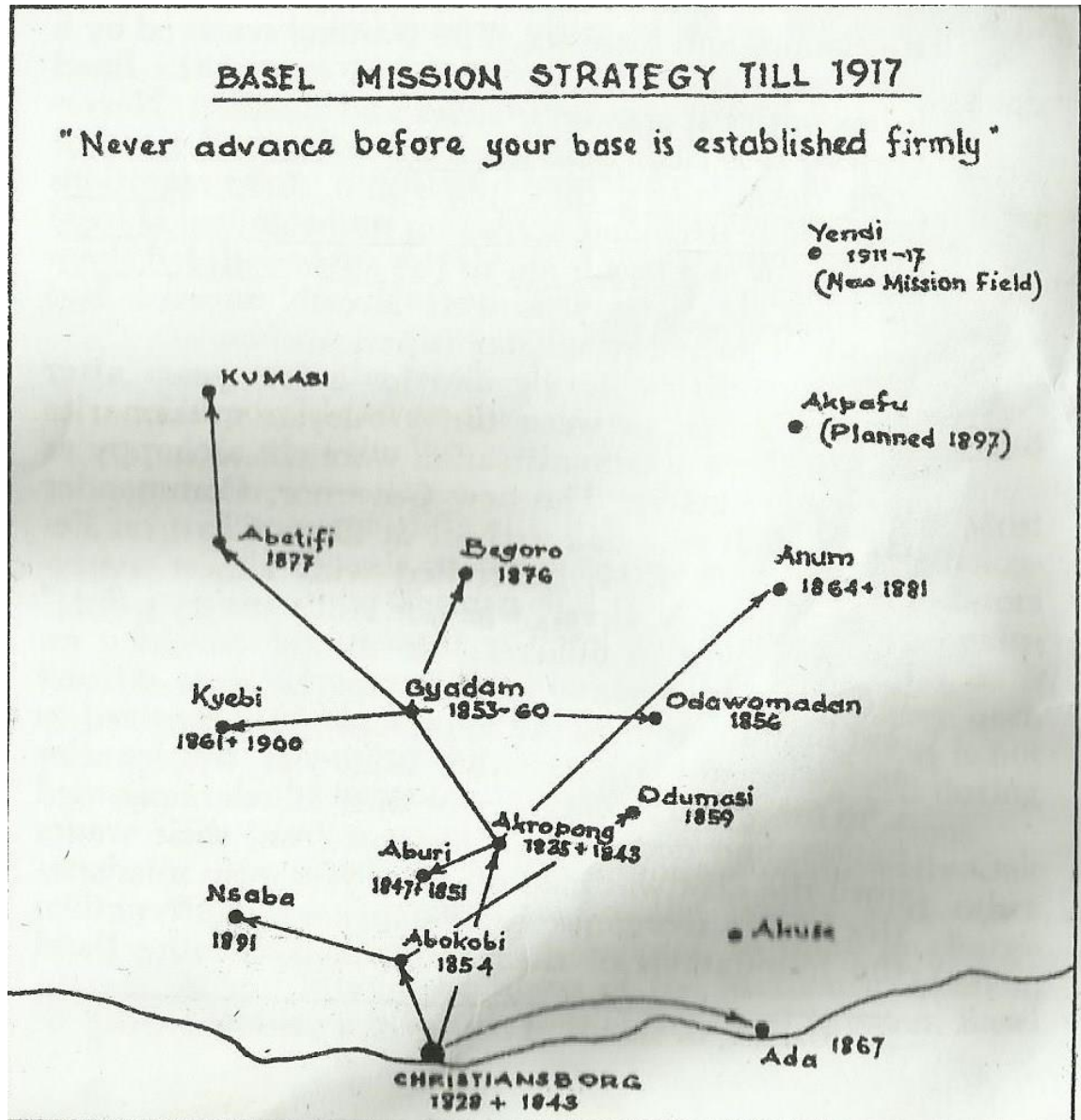
2.5.1 CONCEPT OF GOD THROUGH ORAL TRADITIONS.....	32
2.5.2 CONCEPT OF GOD THROUGH NON-ORAL SOURCES	33
2.6 THE BASEL MISSION SOCIETY ON THE GOLD COAST.....	35
2.6.1 IMPACT OF THE BMS ON THE GOLD COAST.....	40
2.6.1.1 <i>Social and Educational</i>	40
2.6.1.2 <i>Agricultural and Economic Development</i>	42
2.6.2 THE TAKE-OVER BY THE SCOTTISH MISSIONARIES.....	45
2.7 CONCLUSION	46
CHAPTER THREE	48
THE ORGANISATION OF THE BMTC ON THE GOLD COAST	48
3.1 INTRODUCTION.....	48
3.2 THE RATIONALE FOR ESTABLISHING THE BMTC.....	48
3.2.1 INADEQUATE FUNDS	48
3.2.2 DELAY IN ACQUISITION OF THE NEEDED COMMODITIES	50
3.2.3 HIGH COST OF COMMODITIES AND TRANSPORTATION	51
3.2.4 DEVELOPED TASTE FOR EUROPEAN GOODS BY AFRICANS.....	52
3.3 OPPOSITION TO MISSION TRADING ACTIVITIES.....	53
3.4 THE BEGINNINGS OF BMTC	54
3.5 THE STRUCTURE OF BMTC	56
3.6 THE VISION OF THE BMTC.....	56
3.7 THE OBJECTIVES OF THE BMTC.....	57
3.8 ETHIC THAT GUIDED THE OPERATIONS OF THE BMTC	60
3.8.1 HONESTY	62
3.8.2 RELIABILITY	655
3.8.3 DILIGENCE	66
3.9 OPERATIONS OF THE BMTC	68
3.9.1 COMMODITIES OF TRADE	68
3.9.2 TRANSPORTATION.....	71
3.9.2.1 <i>Road Transportation</i>	721
3.9.2.2 <i>Water Transportation</i>	76
3.9.3 ORGANISATION OF SERVICES	77
3.9.3.1 <i>Transportation of Persons</i>	77
3.9.3.2 <i>Postal Services</i>	788
3.9.4 ADVERTISEMENT	79

3.10 THE SEPARATION OF THE BMTC FROM THE BMS	81
3.11 INDIGENOUS AFRICAN RESPONSE TO ACTIVITIES OF BMTC	83
3.11.1 ACCOMMODATION	85
3.11.2 RESISTANCE	87
3.12 CONCLUSION	89
CHAPTER FOUR.....	91
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION	91
4.1 SUMMARY	91
4.2 CONCLUSION	95
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	101
PRIMARY SOURCES	101
SECONDARY SOURCES	103
APPENDICES	110

LIST OF PICTURES	PAGES
1. BMS evangelical map in modern Ghana.....	1
2. “Sewing lesson, Saturday afternoon.”.....	43
3. “Book display”.....	69
4. “Basel Mission trade Bonaku”, Cameroon.....	69
5. “In the shop. A pyramid display of lamps”.....	69
6. A bicycle display.....	69
7. “Basel Mission factory, lorry review, Accra”.....	70
8. Clearing a road near Abokobi”.....	74
9. “...and was transported in barrels like this”.....	74
10. Carpentry workshop in Christiansborg.....	74
11. Dispatching cotton from Anum trading post.....	74
12. Women carrying sacks of cocoa to the coast.....	75
13. “First AEG 5 ton lorry designated for the Gold Coast, 1904.”.....	76
14. “The 'Pioneer', the Mission Trading Company's steamer on the Volta”.....	76
15. (a) and (b) BMTC airline and postal advertisements.....	78
16. Advertisement of medical and chemical products sold by BMTC.....	80
17. Advertisement of some items sold by the BMTC.....	80
18. “Shop” – Some African customers in a BMTC store.....	86
19. “Basel Mission Trading Company shop in Bonaku”.....	86
20. “Adda premises of the Basel Mission Trading Company...”.....	87
21. “Trading post of the Basler [Basel] Mission in Akuse by the river Volta”.....	87

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BMS	Basel Mission Society
BMTC	Basel Mission Trading Company
CMS	Church Missionary Society
PCG	Presbyterian Church of Ghana
PRAAD	Public Records and Archival Administrative Department
SPG	Society for the Propagation of the Gospel
UAC	United Africa Company
WARS	West African Review Supplementary



Picture 1: BMS evangelical map in the region of modern Ghana

Source: S. K. Odamtten, *The Missionary factor in Ghana's Development (1820-1880)*, Waterville Publishing House Accra, 1978, p. 102.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to Study

Members of the Basel Mission Society (BMS) originating from Switzerland first arrived on the Gold Coast in 1828 in response to the call by the Danish establishment on the Gold Coast. The mission operated in the Gold Coast (now modern Ghana) for ninety years. It became the first mission society to achieve significant success in the country after operating for over a decade along the coast. From 1843 it shifted its base to Akropong in the interior. Generally, some of the reasons given for such action were the unfavorable weather conditions and bad influence of other Europeans living along the coast.¹ The shift can thus be attributed to the necessity to carry out the evangelization process away from a place that had continually responded negatively to previous attempts by other missionaries and missionary societies.

By the year 1828 when the first batch of Basel missionaries arrived on the Gold Coast, the transatlantic slave trade was in the process of being replaced with the trade in 'legitimate' goods. The concept of 'legitimate' trade, as demonstrated by Kea, originated in the late nineteenth century with the attempt by "Denmark to establish an agricultural colony, a projected alternative to the external slave trade".² Debrunner traces the origin of this concept to Dr. Isert, a German botanist and former royal chief medical inspector of

¹ Noel Smith, *Presbyterian Church of Ghana, 1835-1960: A Younger Church in A Changing Society*, Ghana Universities Press, Accra, 1966, pp. 35-44. (henceforth Smith, *Presbyterian Church of Ghana*)

² Ray A. Kea, "Plantations and Labour in the South-East Gold Coast from the late Eighteenth to the mid Nineteenth Century" in *From Slave Trade to Legitimate Commerce: The Commercial Transition in Nineteenth-Century West Africa*, (ed.) Robin Law, Cambridge University Press, London, 1995, p. 123. (henceforth, Kea, "Plantations and Labour in the South-East Gold Coast" and *From Slave Trade to Legitimate Commerce* respectively)

the Danes in Africa. He is noted to have convinced the Danish government that the establishment of plantations could replace the transatlantic slave trade.³ In addition to this was the ulterior motive of ensuring that the Danish colonies in West Africa would be placed on strong economic footing. The agricultural colony was intended to produce two kinds of crops; first, those crops associated with processing and mass consumption to be known as colonial products. Examples were maize, coffee, tobacco and sugarcane. Second, were those crops to be produced for industries. They included such crops as cotton, palm oil and indigo to be produced for the local, urban and overseas markets.

To encourage individuals to engage in these agricultural productions, the Danish government promised protection and assistance especially to persons residing around Danish forts. By 1792 when Denmark abolished the slave trade, a number of plantations had been established in some south-east towns of the Gold Coast colony namely; Accra, Adanme [Dangme] (Krobo and Shai) and Akuapem. Britain and the Netherlands which abolished the transatlantic slave trade in the first quarter of the nineteenth century (1807 and 1814 respectively), began to turn the Gold Coast into an exporter of agricultural produce for their home industries.⁴ Palm oil gained high economic patronage because it was needed to feed the manufacturing industries in Europe.⁵

When the BMS arrived on the Gold Coast, they showed strong support for the development of plantations and the export of agricultural products⁶ as part of efforts to end the transatlantic slave trade. The so-called 'legitimate' trade was relatively less

³ Hans W. Debrunner, *Abokobi and the Basel Mission*, Public Records and Archival Administrative Department (PRAAD)-Accra, E.C. 6/1, p 1. (henceforth Debrunner, *Abokobi and the Basel Mission*)

⁴Kea, "Plantations and Labour in the South-East Gold Coast", p. 121.

⁵ Francis Agbodeka, *An Economic History of Ghana: From the Earliest Times*, Ghana Universities Press, Accra, 1992, p. 40. (henceforth Agbodeka, *An Economic History of Ghana*)

⁶ Kea, "Plantations and Labour in the South-East Gold Coast, p. 121.

profitable for the West African traders and rulers who dominated the slave trade.⁷ Consequently, it became open to all persons in the society including the missionaries. The Basel missionaries took advantage of this opportunity and established plantations and farms around their mission stations.⁸ Andreas Riis, the only survivor of the third batch of Basel missionaries,⁹ planted coffee and fruit trees when he relocated from the coast to the inland town of Akropong. In 1844, he purchased a piece of land at Abokobi to establish a private plantation. This was in line with his belief “that honest and solid work and improvement of farming methods was an important part [of] his missionary work, since the gospel wants the rebirth of the whole personality... [and so] Africans should learn the benefits of modern farming and honest steady work”.¹⁰ Riis was not allowed by the Basel Committee to continue with his vision for Abokobi; but his case illustrates the early support for plantation development by some missionaries. It brought to the fore the case of the mission engaging in a ‘legitimate’ activity as part of the policy of transforming the African life. The Abokobi plantation was taken over by the BMS and later played an important role in the BMS’s work in the Gold Coast as a ‘model town’ and a transit point between the coast and the Akuapem mission stations.¹¹

In 1851 Johannes Zimmermann took control of the Abokobi plantation and recruited labourers to work on it for pay. The crops cultivated were for food as well as for export.¹²

The Rev. Joseph Mohr also established a botanical garden in Akropong for the

⁷ Robin Law, (ed.), *From Slave Trade to Legitimate Commerce*, pp. 10-11, 20.

⁸ There were exceptions in places like Old Calabar where slaves were not permitted to get involved in the palm oil trade on their own accord. Ibid.

⁹ This development is discussed in detail in chapter two page 37 of this study.

¹⁰ Debrunner, *Abokobi and the Basel Mission*, p. 2.

¹¹ Peter A. Schweizer, *Survivors on the Gold Coast: The Basel Missionaries in Colonial Ghana*, 2nd ed. Smartline Publishing, Accra, 2001, p. 57. (henceforth Schweizer, *Survivors on the Gold Coast*)

¹² Paul Jenkins, “Zimmermann’s Quarterly Report end of May 1852” in *Abstracts of Basel Mission Gold Coast Correspondence*, Legon, 1970, pp. 11-13. (henceforth Jenkins, *Abstracts*)

experimentation of crops such as arrow root (cocoyam), plantains, bananas, yams, groundnuts and local vegetables which the indigenous people named *Owura Mo Turom*.¹³ Simon Süß, likewise, successfully experimented with the extraction of palm-kernel oil in 1861 which the Basel Mission Trading Company (BMTC) took up and included in its exporting items to Europe.¹⁴

As Adu Boahen maintains, missionary societies were not only interested in promoting Christianity and western education but they were also interested in promoting agriculture and ‘legitimate’ trade as means of achieving three goals. These goals were the end of the Trans-Atlantic slave trade; the development of ‘an independent active middle class of farmer-planters’; and the promotion of western civilization.¹⁵

Individual converts were therefore encouraged to undertake similar plantations for the purpose of producing for both the local and external markets and experiment with “Proper” farming methods. The Rev. Bohner indicated to the Abokobi converts that “their farming methods were wrong in the eyes of God” because they weeded the ground for cultivation without planting a tree as replacement.¹⁶ His question, “was it Christian to leave the land desert to your children?” hinted at the idea of deforestation and afforestation for these Christian converts to ponder. To make the Abokobi converts “progressive farmers”, the Abokobi mission land was divided into forty-four plots and leased out to converts for planting palm trees, plantains and bananas. Failure to work on

¹³ Hans W. Debrunner, *Digest of Articles on Ghana in Basel Mission Periodicals, 1828-1851*, PRAAD-Accra, EC 6/3, p. 90. (henceforth Debrunner, *Digest of Articles on Ghana in Basel Mission Periodicals*)

¹⁴ Albert Adu Boahen, *Ghana: Evolution and Change in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, Longman, London, 1975, p. 82. (henceforth Boahen, *Ghana*)

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Debrunner, *Abokobi and the Basel Mission*, p. 7.

the land resulted in its confiscation without compensation.¹⁷ Similarly, Süß equated Christianity with hard work as revealed in a letter to Basel concerning his activities in Gyadam.¹⁸ In this way, missionaries attempted to inculcate the Christian ethic of hard work and discipline into their converts.

This is not to suggest that the Christian converts on the Gold Coast prior to their conversion, were lazy and undisciplined. On the contrary, Wolf of the Bremen Mission for example, found the people of Peki before their conversion to be hardworking and honest by nature. According to Debrunner, he described the Peki town as a clean place “where the weaving looms never cease to rattle, and whose industrious inhabitants cultivated the soil beautifully.”¹⁹

According to Asare-Danso, members of the BMS believed in the total social transformation of individuals alongside the development of their faith. For this reason, they made conscious efforts to help people acquire knowledge and skills that would enable them earn ‘godly living’. It is also for this reason that persons sent out as Basel missionaries were persons with a background in craftsmanship and farming.²⁰ The Basel

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Jenkins, “Suess to Basel 3 Dec 58 (No. Gyadam 19)” in *Abstracts*, p. 39.

¹⁹ Hans W. Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana*, Waterville Publishing House, Accra, 1967, p. 111 (henceforth Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana*).

²⁰ Seth Asare-Danso, *Historical Analysis of the Effects of Education Acts on Basel Mission Education in the Gold Coast/Ghana (1950-2007)*, PhD thesis, Department for the Study of Religions, University of Ghana, 2011, pp. 62-63. This point is further elaborated in chapter two pages 26 to 27 of this study.

missionaries also adhered to the Zwinglian ethic²¹ which admonished them to work for the economic upliftment and development of the societies they operated in.²²

As a pietistic society, the BMS was a strong advocate for the Protestant ethic of hard work, self-discipline and frugality. According to Arhin, adherents of the protestant ethic held on strongly to capitalism in its early days because of their belief that accumulation of wealth was a sign of being accepted by God.²³

1.2 Problem Statement

Existing studies on the development of missionary economic ventures are few. Greater emphasis has been placed on their effort at evangelization to the neglect of their economic ventures. It is this lacuna that this study seeks to help fill. The phenomenal changes that activities of missionary societies brought to the territory of modern Ghana in the field of religion and education are well known but not the Mission's economic legacy. The question then is: in what ways did the BMS attempt to regenerate the African society from the slave trade through its economic activities?

By regeneration, it means that the transatlantic slave trade had resulted in the degradation of the African society and there was the need for restoration. First of all, the transatlantic slave trade caused people to be greedy and insensitive because selling slaves became a profitable venture. Therefore there was the quest for people to acquire more slaves in

²¹ The Zwinglian ethics arose from the work of a Protestant Reformation leader in Switzerland, Huldreich Zwingli (1484-1531) who favoured the interpretation of the Bible on his accord and challenged some of the practices of the church such as the adoration of saints and relics. Rev. Reinhold Niebuhr, "Huldreich Zwingli." *Microsoft® Student 2009*, Redmond, WA: Microsoft Corporation, 2008.

²² Schweizer, *Survivors on the Gold Coast*, p. 95.

²³ Kwame Arhin, "The Role of the Presbyterian Church in the Economic Development of Ghana", *Research Review*, 1(2), 1985, p. 154. (henceforth Arhin, "The Role of the Presbyterian Church in the Economic Development of Ghana").

exchange for European goods like rum, gun powder and spices. As such African people could exchange their own family members for these European goods or to pay their debts owed Europeans and African merchants. In addition, the slave trade rendered some African people poor because as indicated above, it was dominated by the African chiefs and wealthy traders. Also persons who cultivated farmlands could not attend to their farms regularly because of the fear of being kidnapped. This largely affected production because the society was relatively a subsistence one that produced for personal consumption²⁴ and so the inability to cultivate their lands rendered them poor. It is this state of the African society that the BMS sought to regenerate through its Christian teachings and practices. This attempt by the missionaries was, however, for the purpose of changing the African society into an European one.

This present study argues that the BMS used the BMTC as an instrument in transmitting their ethic and practices of work to their converts as part of their efforts to regenerate the African society from the ills of the slave trade.

1.3 Objectives of Study

The overall objective of this study is to examine the Basel Mission Trading Company as an organization through which the Basel Mission Society disseminated some of its ideas on Christianity and commerce on the Gold Coast mission field. Specifically the study aims at;

- a. Examining the structure, vision and objectives of the Basel Mission Trading Company.

²⁴ Arhin, "The Role of the Presbyterian Church in the Economic Development of Ghana", p. 156.

- b. Examining the work ethic that guided the BMTC's operations and how they were reflected in its operations.
- c. Examining the indigenous African response to the organization and operations of the BMTC.

1.4 Significance of Study

The Basel Mission Society is noted to have developed a well-organized and extensive economic outfit in the years of its operation in Africa.²⁵ These economic activities included agricultural innovation and experimentation, craft works such as furniture making, masonry, carpentry and bookbinding among others. The Mission also undertook trading activities that served the purpose of raising funds for missionary activities; and taught converts to earn a living through godly means.²⁶ These economic activities were not peculiar to the BMS. Other missionary societies that worked in modern Ghana such as the Bremen Missionary Society and the Wesleyan Mission were also involved in a number of economic activities. However economic activities of the BMS have been recognized to have been well organized.²⁷ These activities have been mentioned in previous studies but not examined in sufficient depth. The significance of the present studies lies in the attempt to complement studies on the religious and evangelical activities with documentation and evaluation of their economic activities to give a more complete picture of the impact of the BMS' work on the Gold Coast.

²⁵ William J. Danker, *Profit for the Lord: Economic activities in Moravian Missions and the Basel Mission Trading Company*, Grand Rapids-Michigan, 1971, p. 80. (henceforth Danker, *Profit for the Lord*)

²⁶ Edward Reynolds, *Trade and Economic Change on the Gold Coast 1807-1874*, Longman Group Ltd. New York, 1974, p. 149. (henceforth Reynolds, *Trade and Economic Change on the Gold Coast*)

²⁷ Danker, *Profit for the Lord*, p. 80.

1.5 Scope of Study

The period of this study spans from the years 1859 to 1917. The year 1859 was chosen as the starting date because it was in that year that the Basel Mission Trading Company was registered in Basel as a commercial entity with branches in India and Africa.²⁸ For the terminal year, the year 1917 was chosen because it was in this year that the Basel Mission Trading Company was decoupled from the Basel Mission Society.²⁹ Until 1916 the British colonial government of the Gold Coast looked favourably upon the mission society and its trading company in the Gold Coast. By the late 1916 and early 1917, the Basel missionaries whose personnel comprised mostly Germans³⁰ had come under suspicion due to their perceived ties to Germany. Hence it became prudent for the trading company to disassociate itself from the mission society and present itself as a neutral entity. This attempt, however, failed to save the trading company and it was confiscated by the British colonial government.

1.6 Theoretical Framework

This study is informed by the theory of the Bible and the Plough as propounded by T. F. Buxton in his work, *The African Slave Trade and its Remedy* published in the year 1840.³¹ The theory was further developed by Henry Venn, secretary of the Church Missionary Society (CMS) in the 1850's.³² According to the theory, Christianity and economic developments were the agents for positively redressing the damage caused by

²⁸ Schweizer, *Survivors on the Gold Coast*, p. 108

²⁹ Margaret Gannon, "The Basle Mission Trading Company and British Colonial Policy in the Gold Coast, 1918-1928", *The Journal of African History*, vol. 24, no. 4 (1983), p. 504. (henceforth Gannon, "The Basle Mission Trading Company and British Colonial Policy in the Gold Coast")

³⁰ The mission society however was headquartered in Switzerland.

³¹ T. F. Buxton, *The African Slave Trade and its Remedy*, London, 1840 as quoted in J. B. Webster, "The Bible and the Plough" in *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria*, 2(4), 1963, p. 418.

³² Webster, "The Bible and the Plough", p. 418.

the transatlantic slave trade in Africa. The “Bible” represented the Christian faith and the spread of the Gospel, whilst the “Plough” represented agriculture and economic development.

Most if not all existing work on the BMS have used the concept of the “Bible” and the “Plough” as their frame of reference. Majority of them have focused on the concept of the “Bible” considering the religious, social and educational impact of the BMS. Among them are Dah, Agyeman, Nkansa-Kyeremateng, Yartey Mensah and Asare-Danso. Yartey Mensah for instance, concludes that the BMS spearheaded the development of the boarding and the single-sex school system.

A few of the scholars have also focused on the concept of the “Plough” paying considerable attention to the economic and entrepreneurial endeavours of the Mission. This group of scholars includes Danker and Odamtten. Danker maintains that the BMTC established the most extensive economic entity in Africa and was guided by the work ethics of diligence, honesty and reliability. This present study follows the track of the second group of scholars by using the concept of the “Plough” as the frame of reference.

1.7 Review of Selected Literature

A number of scholars have carried out research on the activities of the BMS and other missionary societies in Ghana, Africa and outside the continent. A few of these works are reviewed under this section to place the study in the right context.

Max Weber's *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*³³ argues that in the early stages of capitalism, people associated with Protestantism became quite successful because of their adherence to the protestant ethic. This was because they believed that economic success on earth had a bearing on the eternal salvation of the soul. Weber's work stands as a classical one on the protestant ethic that emphasized principles such as self-discipline, hard work and frugality. The Basel missionaries are known to be adherents of the protestant ethic; therefore the book gives an insight into their work ethic and practices which this study attempts to examine.

Debrunner's *History of Christianity in Ghana*³⁴ gives only a general view and a narration of events pertaining to the history of Christianity in Ghana without analyzing them in order for an objective assessment to be made. This study seeks to examine the economic activities of the BMS in order to be more objective in analyzing the outcome of these activities. The book is a resourceful one that is consulted by many scholars researching on Christianity in Ghana. It contains clues into the events that led to the propounding of the theory of the Bible and the Plough by Buxton as such it is useful for this study which uses the concept of the "Plough" as a frame of reference.

In his book, *Presbyterian Church of Ghana, 1835-1960: A Younger Church in A Changing Society*, Noel Smith³⁵ argues that Christianity in general has not been able to situate itself within the African traditional society and operates largely out of the social and religious practices of the African people. For instance, the Rev. Bohner condemned

³³ Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, translated by Talcot Parsons, Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, London, 1930.

³⁴ Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana*.

³⁵ Smith, *Presbyterian Church of Ghana*.

the Abokobi converts for leaving their land bare after cultivation.³⁶ He did not appreciate the belief of the people prohibiting them from cultivating a land for a period of time as their own means of practicing the fallow system. The book demonstrates the value of the socio-cultural practices of the African people which has enabled them to adapt to European lifestyle but still be able to maintain their own. For instance, the introduction and development of cocoa improved the standard of living of people as owners of, or labourers on cocoa farmlands. On the other hand, it also led to family conflicts over issues of inheritance of farmlands but this did not breakdown family ties and unions.³⁷ As this study documents the provision of work ethic and practices in the cultural systems of the African people through proverbs, Smith's book reinforces the prejudices towards the cultural systems of the African people.

The article, *The Relations between the Church Missionary Society and the Royal Niger Company, 1886-1900* written by E.A. Ayandele³⁸ examines the alliance between missionary societies and imperial agents in rebuilding the African society. He indicates that the Royal Niger Company got the support of the CMS in introducing anti-liquor policy and plantation systems. According to the author these efforts were relatively successful as "the plantations ... started in Abutshi ... and other places for the purpose of instructing the natives in the cultivation of cocoa [and] coffee ... are making satisfactory progress."³⁹ Though Ayandele's work is not primarily concerned with the BMS, it is of

³⁶ Debrunner, *Abokobi and the Basel Mission*, p. 7.

³⁷ Smith, *Presbyterian Church of Ghana*, pp. 247-248.

³⁸ E. A. Ayandele,, "The Relations between the Church Missionary Society and the Royal Niger Company, 1886-1900" in *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria*, vol. 4, no. 3, (Dec. 1968), pp. 397-419. (henceforth Ayandele, "The Relations between the Church Missionary Society and the Royal Niger Company")

³⁹ *Ibid*, p. 407. This is Goldie's report as stated by Ayandele.

relevance to the study because the Basel missionaries sought to implement the theory of the Bible and Plough in rebuilding the Gold Coast.

A most detailed study on the BMTC is William J. Danker's book *Profit for the Lord: Economic activities in Moravian Missions and the Basel Mission Trading Company*.⁴⁰

Danker argues that for the non-Western churches to be financially independent of western-based ecumenical organisations, there is the need for them to achieve an indigenous economic base. Danker's work romanticizes the economic activities of the two missionary societies under consideration because he belongs to the school of thought that approves of the churches engagement in economic activities. It, however, does provide elaborate insight into the operations of the BMTC. Though the book indicates the work ethic of diligence, honesty and reliability as guiding principles for the economic activities of the Basel missionaries, the author did not consider the cultural systems within which the missionaries operated. This study attempts to bring to the fore these work ethics as present in the culture of the African people.

Reynolds' book, *Trade and Economic Change on the Gold Coast, 1807-1874*⁴¹ examines the social, political and cultural changes that accompanied the commercial evolution of the Gold Coast. The book highlights the competition that BMTC gave to local merchants and middlemen and provides information on the rationale for setting up the mission trading company. However, it does not discuss into details the operations of the BMTC such as the commodities it traded in. This study attempts to examine the operations of the

⁴⁰ Danker, *Profit for the Lord*.

⁴¹ Reynolds, *Trade and Economic Change on the Gold Coast*.

trading company in order to bring to bear the work ethic that guided these operations and the attempts at instilling them in the African people.

The book *Missionary Factor in Ghana's Development (1820-1880)* written by S. K. Odamtten⁴² argues that although missionary societies contributed significantly to the development of Ghana, they created a group of African people who disdained their cultural systems. For instance, some converts refused to appeal to the chiefs' court for the adjudication of their cases because of such practices as presenting alcohol to the chief which the missionaries preached against. This issue in addition to the missionary societies' creation of Christian quarters disturbed the traditional setups of some African societies as it negatively affected the relationship between chiefs and their converted subjects.⁴³ However, it also meant the missionaries had the privilege of instructing the converts who moved to the Christian quarters on agricultural and economic systems as a means of empowering them economically and achieving the concept of the "Plough" in rebuilding the African society. Odamtten's work is one of the few that looks at the total phenomenal changes that missionary societies brought to Ghana; religious, economic, educational, and social. The book, however, provides little information on the operations of the BMTC as it tries to deal with all the activities of the various missionary societies. This notwithstanding it provides an insight into the economic legacy of missionary societies.

⁴² Odamtten, *Missionary Factor in Ghana's Development*

⁴³ This issue has elaborately been discussed by Addo-Fening as he examines the relationship between the Basel missionaries and the chiefs of Akyem Abuakwa. See Robert Addo-Fening, *Akyem Abuakwa 1700-1943: From Ofori Panin to Sir Ofori Atta*, Department of History, Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU), Trondheim, 1997, pp. 55-99. (henceforth Addo-Fening, *Akyem Abuakwa 1700-1943*)

Dah, in looking at the activities of the BMS in Cameroon in his work *Missionary Motivations and Methods: A Critical Examination of the Basel Mission in Cameroon 1886-1914*⁴⁴ identifies some of the methods and strategies employed by the Basel missionaries in the evangelization of Cameroon as the establishment of Christian villages and mission schools. The author did not consider its economic activities in the methods and strategies employed. He merely mentions in passing the BMS's involvement in trade as an attack on, and an alternative to the trade in liquor. Dah, however, illustrates that some Cameroon people accepted the Christian faith because of the benefits they stood to gain such as acquiring a career through the mission schools and training by the Basel missionaries. This study focuses on the economic activities of the BMS in the Gold Coast with particular attention to the BMTC.

Gannon's article, "The Basle Mission Trading Company and British Colonial Policy in the Gold Coast 1918-1928"⁴⁵ is one that considers British colonial practice of trusteeship by examining the disposition of the BMTC after the events of the First World War. The article does not examine the BMTC as an economic entity of the BMS but uses it as case study for an understanding into colonial decisions. The article is useful for the present study because it provides an insight into the state of the BMTC after the deportation of the Basel missionaries.

Nkansa-Kyeremateng⁴⁶ in his work *History, Mission and Achievements: Presbyterian Church of Ghana* focuses mainly on the achievements of the PCG and its impact on the Ghanaian society in the areas of education and infrastructure development among others.

⁴⁴ Dah, *Missionary Motivations and Methods*

⁴⁵ Gannon, "The Basle Mission Trading Company and British Colonial Policy in the Gold Coast"

⁴⁶ Nkansa-Kyeremateng, *History, Mission and Achievements*.

Attention is not given to the BMS except from presenting it as a predecessor to the PCG and the church's achievements are linked to the BMS. The book is useful for this study because it provides a history of the BMS on the Gold Coast. In this study, the BMS is examined with focus on its trading company the BMTC.

The book, *An Economic History of Ghana: From the Earliest times* written by Francis Agbodeka examines the economic journey of Ghana from prehistory to the twentieth century.⁴⁷ Like Dah, Agbodeka, occasionally mentions the BMS in connection to the development of transportation, crafts and manufacturing industry in Ghana. He does not delve into details of the economic activities of missionary societies. This study seeks to examine the economic activities of missionary societies as a catalyst to change in the African society using the BMTC as a case study.

Schwezier produces a non-academic work that tries to present the story of the Basel missionaries in an informed manner in his book *Survivors on the Gold Coast*. He occasionally makes references to scholars and produces a romanticized history of the BMS in the Gold Coast. The author informs readers that the book was not published for academic purpose which makes it quite difficult to be assessed objectively. However, it contains insightful information into the background of the BMS especially the *Missions Institut* which is quite difficult to obtain and useful for an understanding into the economic background of the Basel missionaries. The book also contains photographs that provide firsthand information on the BMS activities on the Gold Coast.

⁴⁷ Agbodeka, *An Economic History of Ghana*.

An MA dissertation *The Role of the Basel Missionaries in the Development of Education in Greater Accra and Eastern Regions* written by Yartey Mensah⁴⁸ and a doctoral thesis *Historical Analysis of the Effects of Education Acts on Basel Mission Education in the Gold Coast/Ghana (1950-2007)*, by Asare-Danso⁴⁹ focus primarily on the contributions of the BMS to the development of western type education in Ghana. For instance, Yartey Mensah attributes the boarding and the single-sex school system to the BMS. One finds little information on the economic activities of the BMS in this work. This study is an attempt to consider outcomes of BMS economic activities focusing primarily on the BMTC.

1.8 Methodology

The methodology for this study is the time-honoured historiographical approach that relies on examination of archival records (primary sources) in combination with published works (secondary sources) supplemented by oral data and internet sources.

The main primary sources used in this study are archival records that include letters sent to and received from the BMS headquarters and the local mission society; correspondence containing raw data; and reports. Archival documents in the E.C. 6 series and CSO series were obtained from the Public Records and Archival Administrative Department (PRAAD) in Accra. In the Koforidua PRAAD office, archival documents were obtained from ADM/KD.29/6/96, ADM/KD.29/6/125 and ADM/KD.29/6/510. Paul Jenkins' *Abstracts from the Gold Coast Correspondence of the Basel Mission* was,

⁴⁸ Mensah, *The Role of the Basel Missionaries in the Development of Education in Greater Accra and Eastern Regions*

⁴⁹ Asare-Danso, *Historical Analysis of the Effects of Education Acts on Basel Mission Education in the Gold Coast/Ghana (1950-2007)*

likewise, obtained from the Akrofi Christaller Institute in Akropong. A significant limitation that this source of information posed was the delicate state of the available archival materials. The writings of some of these documents are fading making reading difficult. Some of the materials are also in the German language which posed as a hindrance to the acquisition of any relevant information that they could have provided. In addition archival documents, photographs were obtained via the internet from the BM Archives/Mission 21 online base. Some of the photograph series are C-30.91.029, E-30.05.026, QE-30.114.0066, QE-30.128.0067 and QU-30.016.0067.

The secondary materials consulted consist mainly of existing publications in the form of books, journals and articles. Unpublished secondary materials in the form MA/MPhil and PhD theses were also consulted. These secondary materials were obtained from libraries such as the Balme Library, University of Ghana; Akrofi Christaller Institute library; the George Padmore Research Library on African Affairs; the Institute of African Studies library, University of Ghana; the library of the Department for the Study of Religions, University of Ghana; library of the Department of History, University of Ghana; the office of the Historical Society of Ghana, University of Ghana and office of the Institute for Research Advocacy and Training. In addition, internet sources such as JSTOR and Cambridge Journals Online provided some published articles.

Oral data were collected through interviews and informal conversations with individuals who have some knowledge on the activities of the Basel missionaries in the Gold Coast. Although these persons did not live within the period of study of this work, (which made it quite difficult in getting interviewees) they were interviewed because they had acquired some knowledge through oral traditions as persons hailing from towns around the

Akuapem area (where the Basel missionaries are known to have been based) and members of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG). A major limitation of this source of information is the additions and subtractions that characterize information being passed from one person to the other by word of mouth. In addition, the affiliation of some of the persons to the Presbyterian Church of Ghana influenced the objectivity of their information as they sought to justify some of the activities of the Basel missionaries. Informal conversations were used as a means of acquiring the meanings of some of the Ghanaian proverbs that have been examined in the study to bring to the fore the knowledge of the indigenous African people on work ethic and practices.

1.9 Organisation of study

The study is organised into four chapters. Chapter one introduces the study by setting the background, identifying the objectives of study and the significance of study. It also covers the theoretical framework which informs this study, the review of relevant literature, the methodology employed in the conduct of the research and the structure of this study.

Chapter two provides a historical background to the BMS activities in the Gold Coast, and the state of the African traditional religion on the Gold Coast on the eve of European missionary advent. The chapter serves the purpose of setting the background for an understanding of the organizational setup of the BMTC and the work ethic that guided their operations.

Chapter three documents the rationale and objectives for setting up the BMTC. It further examines the operations of the Basel Mission Trading Company focusing on trade

activities and the work ethic that guided these operations. Ideas on Christianity and commerce such as Europeanization, apprenticeship and living by work ethic as portrayed through the operations of the BMTC are highlighted in the chapter. In addition, the chapter highlights a few Akan proverbs that depict such work ethic and practices of honesty, diligence and reliability in the cultural systems of the African people. The chapter also briefly interrogates the response of the indigenous African people to the organization and operations of the Basel Mission Trading Company.

Finally, the chapter four of the study provides a summary and conclusion of the research work.

CHAPTER TWO

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND TO BMS ACTIVITIES IN THE GOLD COAST

2.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the beginnings of the BMS in Switzerland and the Gold Coast. It further looks at the state of the African traditional religion on the eve of the advent of European missionaries to African. The chapter aims at giving the background to the activities of the Basel Mission Society on the Gold Coast in order to understand the context within which they operated.

2.2 The Beginnings in Europe

The eighteenth century marked a turning point in missionary activities in Africa championed by Protestant denominations and by the nineteenth century, missionary work had spread from Europe and America to other parts of the world.

According to Darkwa Amanor, Pietism began in Germany towards the end of the seventeenth century.⁵⁰ The movement is traced to Philipp Jakob Spener (1635-1705), a German theologian, a reformer and a member of the Reformed Lutheran congregation⁵¹ who attempted to spread his idea of the all-inclusiveness of church members through a book he wrote. The book aimed at demonstrating “the authenticity of the Christian faith

⁵⁰ Jones Darkwa Amanor, “Pentecostalism in Ghana: An African Reformation”, in *Cyber Journal for Pentecostal-Charismatic Research*, p. 3, <http://www.pctii.org/cyberj13/amanor.html> Retrieved 4th February, 2013. 10:13pm (henceforth Amanor, “Pentecostalism in Ghana”)

⁵¹ Schweizer, *Survivors on the Gold Coast*, p. 7.

and the reality of ... Christian experience”⁵² through words and deeds. The Pietists believed all persons regardless of their race possessed some good qualities in them and efforts had to be made to bring out these good qualities which do not come out by themselves. Thus the movement emphasized the personal spiritual growth of individuals through prayer, group and individual Bible studies and meditating on what has been read. An organisational network was formed throughout Europe and North America through the formation of Bible reading clubs and the formation of interdenominational missionary societies. Darkwa Amanor is of the view that missionary work reached Africa due to the determination of the Pietistic and other Protestant groups to do humanitarian work in the direction of “spiritual uplifting” of persons outside the western world. This assertion is contrary to the theory of the Bible and the Plough which anticipated that missionary work together with economic activities was needed for the economic upliftment of Africa.⁵³

Peter Croxton acknowledges the tremendous changes in Europe towards the end of the eighteenth century as a factor for the zeal for mission work outside Europe.⁵⁴ This assertion is confirmed by Adu Boahen who reveals that towards the beginning of the nineteenth century, an evangelical revival in addition to anti-slavery movements arose in Europe which enforced the attempt to spread the Christian faith to other parts of the world.⁵⁵ Together, Croxton and Adu Boahen’s assertions are confirmation of the anticipation of the theory of the Bible and the Plough. It can therefore be asserted that

⁵² Amanor, “Pentecostalism in Ghana”, p. 5.

⁵³ Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana*, pp. 104-105.

⁵⁴ Peter Croxton, *A History of Christian Mission*, n. d. p. 16. Retrieved 19th March, 2013. 9:28pm.

⁵⁵ A. A. Boahen, “New Trends and Processes in Africa in the Nineteenth Century”, in *General History of Africa (vol. VI): Africa in the Nineteenth Century until the 1880s*, (ed.) J. F. Ade Ajayi, UNESCO, Paris, 1989, pp. 43-44. (henceforth “New Trends and Processes in Africa in the Nineteenth Century”)

Pietistic zeal together with economic considerations constituted the motivations for missionary work in Africa.

By the end of the eighteenth century, Protestant churches under the influence of the Evangelical revival were thriving because their message was welcoming and people had bought into it. The period is considered as the age of missionary societies because a number of them were founded. They included the London Missionary Society founded in 1795; the British and Foreign Bible Society founded in 1798; and the Church Missionary Society founded in 1799.⁵⁶ The establishment of these missionary societies and others laid the foundation for conscious missionary work.

2.3 The Basel Mission Society

Generally, five factors have been given as having accounted for the establishment of the Basel Mission Society. These were;

the deep personal devotion to Christ fostered by the German Society for the Advancement of Christian Truth and Godly Piety...; the Pietism of Lutheran Churches of South Germany...; the example of...missionary enterprise by the Moravian Brethren and of the Danish-Halle Society...; the success of the Mission Seminary of Pastor Jänicke in Berlin; and the awakening of Christians within the Protestant churches of Western Europe to missionary responsibility...⁵⁷

However, the above factors can be considered as the remote reasons for the beginnings of the mission society. This is because there was no immediate response to these factors for missionary work. The immediate factor that can be said to have led to the establishment of the Basel Mission Society was entangled in the Napoleonic wars of the early nineteenth century in Europe. France had issued a threat to destroy the city of Basel

⁵⁶ Croxton, *A History of Christian Mission*, p. 16; Geoffrey Bingham, *The History of Christian Missions*, New Creation Publications Inc., Blackwood, S. A., (n. d), p. 24. Retrieved 20th March, 2013. 7:49am.

⁵⁷ Smith, *The Presbyterian Church of Ghana*, pp. 19-20.

which lies close to the borders of Germany and France. Confronted with this military threat, a group of Christians in Basel who were members of the Reformed Church of Basel and the Lutheran Church of Wurttemberg pledged to start a seminary to train missionaries to spread the Christian faith if God saved the city of Basel from the military destruction.⁵⁸ It is therefore asserted that it was in response to this pledge to God that resulted in the founding of the Basel Mission Society. As important as the remote reasons indicated above were, it took the near destruction of the Basel city to bring the institution into existence.

In the year 1815 when Napoleon was defeated at Waterloo, six Christian men under the leadership of the Rev. Nikolaus von Brunn met at the Rectory of St. Martin in Basel and constituted themselves into the missionary society.⁵⁹ A seminary called *Missions Institut* was established in the following year 1816 to train missionaries.

2.3.1 The *Missions Institut*

The initial objective of this seminary was not to train missionaries for BMS.⁶⁰ This was probably because the mission society was a young one and needed to be grounded well for the task of evangelization. Thus the missionaries trained by the *Missions Institut* worked under other Protestant societies such as the British and Dutch (Netherlands) Mission Societies until 1821 when the BMS began missionary work on its own.⁶¹

⁵⁸ Extract from the Basel Mission Christian Association's "Festival of Christmas Music 82" brochure, <http://www.children-of-bangalore.com/basel.htm> Accessed 4th February, 2013. 12:19pm

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ J. M. Jenkins, "About the Basel Mission" in *No Bird Flies with just One Wing: Reflections on the History and Identity of the Basel Mission*, Franz Bauman (ed.) Basel Mission, 1990, Basel, p. 103. Trans: E. Jackson et al.

⁶¹ Extract from the Basel Mission Christian Association's "Festival of Christmas Music 82" brochure

The *Missions Institut* operated under the trimester system for a study period of three years.⁶² The subjects of study included Bible studies, preaching, and rhetoric for the purposes of preparing the students for “unknown ‘exotic’ idioms”.⁶³ The need for preparing students for “unknown ‘exotic’ idioms” is an indication that there was the awareness of missionaries encountering cultural systems different from theirs. This is not limited to language as the word “idioms” may signify but all aspects of culture. Other subjects that were taught the students were administrative correspondence, arithmetic, and history of cultures, geography and cartography, the basis of medicine and surgery, and botany. Particular attention was paid to the development of the “faculties of initiative, entrepreneurship and independent appraisal of situations” of students for the purposes of character building.⁶⁴ Thus as missionaries, students were expected to be adaptive to their new surroundings and innovative to support their evangelization work. They were to undertake ventures that would improve the lives of the people among whom they would serve.⁶⁵

The *Missions Institut* aimed at training students with equal emphasis on both spiritual work and physical development. As such the requirements for applicants were religious convictions, a practical skill and academic readiness.⁶⁶ It is in this regard that most of the initial applicants to the seminary were from rural towns in Switzerland or South-Western Germany with agricultural and artisanal backgrounds. For example, the Rev. Simon Süss was from Baden and he was trained as a weaver before enrolling in the seminary in 1846. Similarly, the Rev. David Baum hailed from Mahlberg in Baden and worked as a farmer

⁶² Schweizer, *Survivors on the Gold Coast*, p. 26.

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 27.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 27.

before going to the seminary in 1847.⁶⁷ The background of the missionaries can therefore be said to have contributed to their efforts in working towards the development of both the spiritual and physical welfare of their converts.

2.3.2 The Beginnings of Independent Missionary Work

Earlier graduates of the seminary were either assigned to mission fields of other missionary societies like the CMS in Sierra Leone, Liberia⁶⁸ and India⁶⁹ or served as chaplains attached to European trading companies. Their reports from working for the other missionary societies raised concerns over liturgy, hierarchy subordination and indifferences on the part of staff of the European trading companies. For instance some of the earlier missionaries who were sent to India to work for the CMS were faced with the challenge of non-permission from the East India Company to undertake missionary work within the company's area of influence because they were not English. The differences in the beliefs and practices of the different Protestant societies coupled with social issues thus encouraged the BMS to begin its independent missionary work in 1821.⁷⁰

The first batch of independent Basel missionaries was sent to the Caucasus region of southern Russia. Independent work was also begun in Africa particularly Sierra Leone and Liberia but under the protection of the CMS. These initial independent efforts were however unsuccessful mainly due to disease and death which the Basel missionaries suffered.

⁶⁷ Jenkins, "Notes on the Missionaries who worked on the Gyadam Station" in *Abstracts*, p. 49.

⁶⁸ Schweizer, *Survivors on the Gold Coast*, p. 16.

⁶⁹ Extract from the Basel Mission Christian Association's "Festival of Christmas Music 82" brochure

⁷⁰ Schweizer, *Survivors on the Gold Coast*, pp. 14-15

In the course of these events, the BMS sought to widen its scope of work with the support of Christian circles in Europe. It was in line with this quest that the BMS through the efforts of the Danish Missionary Society and the Danish establishment in Christiansborg, arrived on the Gold Coast in 1828 for evangelization work.⁷¹

2.4 Background to Missionary Work in the Gold Coast

The attempt for the process of Christian evangelization in Africa can be traced back to the period of European explorations in the fifteenth century. According to Darkwa Amanor the Gold Coast's first encounter with Christian missionaries was through the Roman Catholic missionaries who accompanied the earliest Portuguese voyages of the fifteenth century.⁷² Aside from the widely acclaimed search for a new sea route to India, Christian evangelization process is indicated as another reason for the Portuguese voyages of exploration. As Nkansa-Kyeremateng puts it, Portugal, had “nursed a Divine mission ... to link up with the legendary Prester John in Ethiopia”⁷³ for the course of Christian evangelism against the spread of Islam. In addition, Portuguese explorers who landed on the coast of the territory of modern Elmina in 1471 are noted to have thanked God during their first mass and requested for the grace of God to “win” the indigenous people to the Christian faith.⁷⁴ This religious reason can be said to serve the purpose of concealing the original intentions of the Portuguese explorations which is economic. This

⁷¹ See page 35 of this study for more on the BMS in the Gold Coast.

⁷² Amanor, “Pentecostalism in Ghana”, p. 1. Debrunner, however, reports of an earlier missionary attempt in the sixteenth century from 1572 to 1576 when four monks of the Order of the Hermits of St. Augustine worked in Elmina as missionaries. They succeeded in opening mission stations in Komenda and Efutu. The chief of Efutu together with six sons and three nephews were baptized likewise the chief of Komenda and his first child. The work of these missionaries ended when they were killed by the indigenous people out of possible misunderstanding between the European officials and the people. Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana*, p. 27.

⁷³ Nkansa-Kyeremateng, *History, Mission and Achievement*, p. 5.

⁷⁴ Sidney George Williamson, *Akan Religion and the Christian Faith*, Kwesi A. Dickson (ed.), Ghana Universities Press, Accra, 1965, p. ix.

is because when Portuguese explorers arrived on the coast of Elmina, they discovered the profitability of the gold trade between the indigenous people and Arab traders via the Sahara desert. They did not only participate in the trade, but went a step further to acquire a monopoly over the trade from the papacy in Rome because other European countries such as the Dutch, the Swedes, the Danes, the English and the French had been attracted to it.⁷⁵ The monopoly was attached to a responsibility of bringing the indigenous people to the Christian faith.⁷⁶ However, the profitability of the trade gained much significance to the detriment of the evangelical work. This is an indication that the evangelization process of Africa was minimal from the fifteenth century. It was not until the eighteenth century that much effort was put into the process as a result of an awakening to spread the Christian faith in Europe. The eighteenth century saw the arrival of missionary societies such as the Moravian Church Missionaries and the English Church Mission (Church of England Society for the Propagation of the Gospel) to be followed by the Basel Mission Society, the Wesleyan Mission and the Bremen Mission in the nineteenth century.

Prior to the eighteenth century, priests who arrived on the Gold Coast came as chaplains attached to the various European trading companies. Their duty was to attend to the spiritual needs of the European officials and soldiers. They were also responsible for the mulattoes that were born out of relationships between the European staff and African women.⁷⁷ These chaplains were thus confined to the various forts and castles.

⁷⁵ Smith, *The Presbyterian Church of Ghana*, p. 5.

⁷⁶ Ibid

⁷⁷ I. van Kessel (ed.), *Merchants, Missionaries and Migrants: 300 years of Dutch-Ghanaian Relations*, Sub-Saharan Publishers, Accra, 2002, p. 13.

The mulattoes therefore became the first group of people to be Christianized along with a few indigenous people who worked in the forts and castles. The chaplains offered catechism classes for the mulattoes and also organized schools in the castles to train these children to be employed in the European enterprises as soldiers, clerks and overseers of their fathers' businesses. Some were also sent to Europe to be trained as missionaries. Examples of such mulatto missionaries were Christian Protten born to a Danish father and Ga mother, and Frederick Pedersen Svane.⁷⁸ These mulattoes together with a few African trained missionaries like Jacobus Elisa Johannes Capitein⁷⁹ became the pacesetters in the missionary work in the Gold Coast although they were not successful in their ventures because of the problem of race that they encountered on the coast.

Frederick Pedersen Svane was sent to Christiansborg as a missionary in 1737 after his training in Copenhagen together with the Moravian Henrick Huckoff.⁸⁰ Another person was the Rev. Thomas Thompson of the Society for Propagation of the Gospel who came to Cape Coast where he served as chaplain for the Royal African Company and missionary for the SPG from 1751 to 1756.⁸¹ He trained his African disciple Philip Quaque who served in his stead nine years later after his departure from the coast from 1765 to 1816.⁸²

⁷⁸ Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana*, pp. 62-63.

⁷⁹ Jacobus Elisa Joannes Capitein was a slave boy from the Ivory Coast educated by his protector Jacobus van Goch at the University of Leyden. He was ordained as the first Black priest of the Dutch Reformed Church after writing a doctorate thesis that justified the slave trade. He was sent to the Gold Coast as a chaplain attached to the Dutch West India Company. Ibid, pp. 63, 66. Henri van der Ze, "Jacobus Capitein: A tragic Life", in *Merchants, Missionaries and Migrants*, pp. 73-79.

⁸⁰ A. Jehle, "The Story of the Basel Mission work in the Gold Coast, British West Africa: 1828-1928", in *The Basel Mission Centenary 1828-1928*, Scottish Mission, Accra, 1961, p. 7. PRAAD-Accra, EC 6/4.

⁸¹ Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana*, p. 60.

⁸² Debrunner and Odamtten on the other hand have shown that there were a few attempts by Augustinian and French priests to undertake missionary works outside the immediate surroundings of the forts and

However, by the beginning of the nineteenth century, no significant success of “winning” the indigenous people to the Christian faith had been achieved. A number of reasons accounted for this. First of all and more importantly was the indifferent attitude of the European staff, traders and mulattoes on the coast to the evangelization process. They exhibited negative behaviours such as gambling, drunkenness, violent behaviours and some were slave owners.⁸³ Another reason that can be said to have accounted for this state of affairs was the fact that the missionaries disregarded the African traditional religion and described the African people as “pagans” without any knowledge of the Supreme God.⁸⁴ They demanded the African people to disassociate themselves completely from their traditional religion and embrace the Christian faith. The inability of the missionaries to relate Christianity to the African traditional religion therefore hindered the African from accepting the new faith because they did not understand it. Moreover, Christianity was new to the African people and like any new movement; it was going to take time to get well-grounded and succeed.

Success in missionary work on the Gold Coast was achieved from 1835 when the Basel Mission Society penetrated into the interior town of Akropong and invited Black West Indian missionaries from Jamaica in 1843 to help.⁸⁵

castles in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana*, p.27. Odamtten, *Missionary Factor in Ghana's Development*.

⁸³ John Parker, *Social History of Africa: Making the Town*, James Currey Ltd. Oxford, 2000, p. 65. (henceforth: Parker, *Making the Town*)

⁸⁴ The section below briefly examines the state of the African traditional religion prior to the coming of European missionaries as an attempt to counteract the description of the African people as “pagans” by the Europeans and missionaries.

⁸⁵ Smith, *The Presbyterian Church of Ghana*, pp. 37-38. See the section on the BMS in the Gold Coast below for more on this.

2.5 African Traditional Religion on the Eve of Christian Mission Advent

The concept of a Supreme God was not alien to the African by the time European missionaries began operations in Africa. The African has been described as “Notoriously Religious” because religion is embedded in every aspect of his life; from economics to politics and social life.⁸⁶ In contrast to the Christian and Islamic religions that possess a sacred literature which serves as documentation for the existence of God, the African Traditional religion does not possess one. The idea of God to the African was and is revealed mainly through oral and non-oral sources.

2.5.1 Concept of God through Oral Traditions

From oral traditions, the concept of a supreme God was revealed through the various names and appellations that he is referred to. Some of these names and appellations are *Odomankoma* (the boundless one), *Tweadumpon* (He who supports) and *Onyankopon* (the only Great God) among the Akans; and *Mawu* (the Supreme God) among the Ewes.⁸⁷ These names are an indication that the African recognizes the existence of a mighty being that has absolute control over the affairs of man.

Another means by way of oral traditions through which God was known to the African was through myths which convey usually supernatural ideas in connection with a group of people. For instance, the Ewe people believe that *Mawu* is the creator of the universe and everything that is within it. A myth has it that the sins of man caused *Mawu* to take a permanent abode in the sky away from man sending his son *Lisa* to come and take

⁸⁶ T. N. O. Quarcoopome, *West African Traditional Religion*, African Universities Press, Ibadan, 1987, pp. 10, 12; John S. Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 2nd edition, Heinemann Educational Books Inc. USA, 1989, pp. 1-2; J. O. Awolalu, “What is African Traditional Religion?”, *Studies in Comparative Religion*, 10(2), 1976, p. 1.

⁸⁷ Smith, *The Presbyterian Church of Ghana*, p. 76.

control over the affairs of the world.⁸⁸ The withdrawal of God to reside in the skies due to the behaviour of man is a shared myth among various African societies such as the Akan and Yoruba as Quacoopome reveals.⁸⁹ These stories are considered as myths because there are no historical evidences to ascertain their authenticity. However, they do give a clear indication of the African's knowledge about a Supreme God.

Furthermore, proverbs served as another form of oral tradition that reveals the knowledge of God to the African. A common proverb among the Akans in this regard is *obi nkyere abɔfra Nyame* which literally means "No one points the child to God". This proverb demonstrates the existence of God to the African from birth. In an informal conversation with Madam Margaret Adibi, she explained that a child is able to pick unconsciously from his/her society that God resides in the sky and at a communicative age, can point to the sky as God's abode.⁹⁰

Personal theophoric names such as Mawuli (God exists) and Nyamekye (the gift of God)⁹¹ are also forms of oral traditions that demonstrate the knowledge of God to African people.

2.5.2 Concept of God through Non-Oral Sources

By way of non-oral sources, artistic expression or artefacts and symbols like the *Adinkra* symbols of the Akan people demonstrate the knowledge of God to the African people. The *Adinkra* symbol "*Gye Nyame*" literally meaning "Except God" is used to explain the

⁸⁸ Quacoopome, *West African Traditional Religion*, pp. 25-27. This myth was confirmed through oral data from Madam Sitsofe Adjandeh, Trader, Kpando on 4th May, 2014 but she did not confirm the name of God's son as *Lisa*.

⁸⁹ Quacoopome, *West African Traditional Religion*.

⁹⁰ Oral data from Madam Margaret Adibi, farmer and member of PCG, Nkwantanang on 12th May, 2014.

⁹¹ Quacoopome, *West African Traditional Religion*, pp. 31-33

omnipotence of God.⁹² The expression reveals that the African was conscious of a supreme being who is in control of the life of man and knows the destiny and fate of man.

Smith contradicts himself when he asserts at a point that the supreme God as believed and known by Christians was not worshipped by the Akan and then at another point indicates that the Akan acknowledged a being referred to as *Nyame* who is attributed several appellations as indicated above.⁹³ His argument indicates that the *abosom* (lesser gods) who serve as the intermediaries between the Akan and God were the ones worshipped as these (*abosom*) were consulted for help through their *akomfo* (priest and priestesses) that guide them. Smith's observations and arguments are made as an European who fails to recognize the role of the *obosom* (singular for *abosom*) as an intermediary between the African people and God. The different African societies and ethnic groups have different *abosom* and it may reside in a river, a rock or a forest grove according to the belief of that particular group of people.

Thus on the eve of European missionary activities on the Gold Coast, the African people adhered to their traditional religion that was passed on to them by their ancestors.⁹⁴ According to Mbiti, religion served as a form of identity for the African people. He indicates that, "[the African man] cannot detach himself from the religion of his group, for to do so is to be severed from his roots ... and the entire group of those who make him aware of his own existence."⁹⁵ This understanding posed as one of the hindrances to success for earlier European missionaries in their endeavours as Christianity was seen as a religion belonging to a different ethnic group. It also contributed to the double

⁹² Ibid, p. 37.

⁹³ Smith, *The Presbyterian Church of Ghana*, pp. 76-77.

⁹⁴ Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, p. 4

⁹⁵ Ibid, p. 2.

mindedness of some African people who accepted the Christian faith but still returned to their traditional worship when convenient for them.

2.6 The Basel Mission Society on the Gold Coast

The Danish Missionary Society is credited with the arrival of the BMS on the Gold Coast.⁹⁶ The quest of the BMS to undertake independent missionary work as indicated above met a need of the Danish settlement on the Gold Coast. The inspector and chaplain of the Denmark court Roenne arranged with the missionary society to give support to the Danish Missionary Society in terms of personnel.⁹⁷ Around this period the Danish settlement of Christiansborg on the Gold Coast was in need of priests to take care of the educational and spiritual needs of the growing mulatto population. Major de Richelieu was the governor of the Danish establishment on the Gold Coast who acted as chaplain and a teacher in the absence of one.⁹⁸ He made a request to Roenne for a chaplain and a teacher when he returned to Denmark for his leave. Roenne subsequently informed the BMS and both parties came into a compromise on the terms of operations. The Basel missionaries would be subordinate to the Denmark Missionary Society but they had the freedom to undertake missionary work outside the Christiansborg castle.

The first batch of Basel missionaries arrived at Christiansborg in the Gold Coast in December 1828.⁹⁹ The members of the first batch were Karl F. Salbach, Gottlieb Holzwarth, Johannes Henke who were all Germans and Johannes Gottlob Schmidt a

⁹⁶ See page 28 of this study.

⁹⁷ Schweizer, *Survivors on the Gold Coast*, p. 18.

⁹⁸ Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana*, p. 93.

⁹⁹ Fred Agyeman, *Our Presbyterian Heritage*, Pedigree Publications, Accra, 2006, p. 8.

Swiss.¹⁰⁰ According to Agyeman, the missionaries were instructed by the Home Committee on the manner of their operations on the mission field. The instructions given them were to;

1. Love the people with the love of the Lord.
2. Preach and teach the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
3. [Know that their] mission is partly a work of Restitution for the evils of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade.
4. Take time and care to choose a suitable site for [their] mission station.
5. Learn, study the language of the people, communicate with them, preach and teach in the language.¹⁰¹

Upon their arrival, the Basel missionaries attended to the spiritual and educational needs of the Danish mulattoes and the nearby people of Osu. They offered catechism lessons and opened a school to teach the mulattoes and the few African people.¹⁰² However, the Basel missionaries were faced with a number of challenges such as the bad influences of the European staff, the discouragements received from the other Europeans and the continuation of the slave trade among some Europeans.¹⁰³ Due to these challenges, the missionaries sought for a new operational point at Ningo. However by the end of 1829, Salbach, Holzwarth and Schmidt were dead. Henke remained as a chaplain of Christiansborg and a teacher for the castle school.

Before Henke also died in 1831 and the Home Committee had received the news of the missionaries' death, the second batch of Basel missionaries had been dispatched to the Gold Coast. These were Andreas Riis, Peter Petersen Jäger (both Danes) and Christian Frederich Heinze (a German medical doctor). They arrived on the Gold Coast in March

¹⁰⁰ "The Basel Mission on the Gold-Coast, Western African on the 1st January 1879: a retrospect on fifty years of mission work", *Foreign and Commonwealth Office Collection*, (1879), p. 3. (henceforth "The Basel Mission on the Gold-Coast")

¹⁰¹ Agyeman, *Our Presbyterian Heritage*, pp. 8-9.

¹⁰² Smith, *The Presbyterian Church of Ghana*, p. 29.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

1832.¹⁰⁴ This second batch of missionaries experienced similar fate to that of the first as two out of the three missionaries died within the first four months of their arrival on the coast. Heinze who was charged with the health needs of the others was the first to die followed by Jäger. A number of writers have shown that Riis survived only after receiving medical attention from an indigenous herbal practitioner.¹⁰⁵

Riis continued to work as chaplain and teacher at the Christiansborg castle after recovery until a new Danish chaplain was appointed for the castle in 1835.¹⁰⁶ This gave Riis the opportunity of undertaking missionary work on his own. In that same year, he travelled to the Akuapem region after he had made the decision to start his missionary work in the interior of the Gold Coast with Akropong as his base station. His reasons were the “urgent request by Copenhagen Missionary Society to go inland” and his “own desire to leave the camp ...and... begin my real job [at] Akwapim.”¹⁰⁷ Some scholars have explained that the decision was influenced by four factors. First of all, Akropong was a healthier location and of a relatively suitable environment considering its higher location than Christiansborg. Secondly, the indigenous people of the interior had had relatively lower interaction with the Europeans on the coast and so they were likely to be unaffected by their indifferent behaviour and influence.¹⁰⁸ Thirdly, it enabled him to present himself and the mission to the indigenous people as an independent missionary and organisation respectively than as an agent of the Danish settlement. Finally, he was

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, p. 30.

¹⁰⁵ Some of the authors are Smith, *The Presbyterian Church of Ghana*, p. 30; Schweizer, *Survivors on the Gold Coast*, p. 19; Amanor, “Pentecostalism in Ghana”, p. 6. The Basel record does not capture the role of the herbal practitioner in the recovery of Riis from two severe fever attacks. Rather, it is merely stated as the doing of the Lord without recognizing that the Lord worked through the herbal practitioner to save Riis life. See “The Basel Mission on the Gold-Coast”, p. 6.

¹⁰⁶ “The Basel Mission on the Gold-Coast”, p. 6.

¹⁰⁷ Debrunner’s *Digest of Articles on Ghana in Basel Mission Periodicals*, p. 15.

¹⁰⁸ Addo-Fening, *Akyem Abuakwa 1700-1943*, p. 56.

influenced by the accounts of Dr. Paul Isert who had been to the Akuapem region and recommended the place to Riis.¹⁰⁹ In 1836, two more missionaries, J. Mürdter and A. Stanger together with M. A. Wolter (the future wife of Riis and the first female missionary) arrived on the Gold Coast to assist Riis in the missionary work.¹¹⁰

Riis' relocation was significant to the progress of missionary work in the Gold Coast but it was not the ultimate factor that transformed it. His initial attempt at Akropong was unsuccessful even though he was welcomed and accommodated by the *Omanhene* of Akuapem, Addo Dankwa. Riis encountered a number of challenges at Akropong as he did along the coast. First, Stanger and Mürdter died in 1837 and 1838 respectively.¹¹¹ In addition, a misunderstanding arose between Riis and the new Danish governor of Christiansborg F. S. Mörck about the question of his allegiance to the Danish settlement.¹¹² The political unrest in Akropong at the time also made mission work quite difficult.¹¹³

Riis had been at Akropong for four years without any success in his missionary endeavour. When he returned to Basel in 1840, there were arguments concerning the continuation of the missionary venture in the Gold Coast considering the number of missionaries who had died and yet no success had been achieved. The decision to make a second attempt was reached with the idea suggested by H. M. Waddell that missionaries should be recruited from the West Indies among freed and Moravian converted African

¹⁰⁹ Smith, *The Presbyterian Church of Ghana*, p. 30.

¹¹⁰ The Basel Mission on the Gold-Coast, p. 7.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Debrunner, *Digest of Articles on Ghana in Basel Mission Periodicals*, pp. 20-21, 24-25.

¹¹³ Jehle, "The Story of the Basel Mission work in the Gold Coast, p. 8, PRAAD-Accra, EC 6/4

slaves to assist in the work.¹¹⁴ Six Black families and three bachelors were recruited in Jamaica. The families were the Hall family, the Rochester family, the Miller family, the Mullings family, the Walker family, the Green family; and the bachelors were David Robertson, Alexander Worthy Clerk and Jonas Hosford.¹¹⁵ The party including Riis and his new colleagues Johann Georg Widmann, Herman Halleur and Thompson a Liberian arrived at Christiansborg in April 1843. The arrival of this group began the second attempt of the BMS's efforts on the Gold Coast.

The significance of the Black West Indian missionaries lies in the fact that they served as signal to the people of Akropong that the God of the European could also be accepted and worshipped by the African.¹¹⁶ This effort confirms Mbiti's assertion indicated above that the African drew his identity from his religion and so to him, Christianity was a religion of another ethnic group.¹¹⁷

Consequently with the help of the Black missionaries, considerable progress was achieved in the spread of the new Christian faith not just in Akropong but further inland to Kwawu, Akyem and Asante.¹¹⁸ By the year 1851, the BMS had forty African converts worshipping with them at Akropong and Aburi.¹¹⁹ A great improvement had been made by 1869 with the BMS recording a total of 1,851 members from eight mission stations.¹²⁰ A report of the mission society in 1900 indicated that the mission stations of the BMS

¹¹⁴ Smith, *The Presbyterian Church of Ghana*, p. 35.

¹¹⁵ Ibid, p. 37.

¹¹⁶ Schweizer, *Survivors on the Gold Coast*, p. 51.

¹¹⁷ See the section on African traditional religion on page 32 of this study.

¹¹⁸ Amanor, "Pentecostalism in Ghana", p. 8.

¹¹⁹ Ibid, p. 6,

¹²⁰ Ibid.

had increased to eleven with a total of 17,651 members.¹²¹ Though this is considered as a success for the BMS, there is no indication that the converts had been convicted to accept the Christian faith. Rather, as Odamtten reveals, many indigenous people accepted Christianity for the material gains it promised¹²² western based education, improved medical care, skills in craftsmanship and employment opportunities with the missionaries.

2.6.1 Impact of the BMS on the Gold Coast

The Basel Mission Society succeeded in bringing about progress to the Gold Coast in the areas of education, linguistic development, agriculture, industrial activities, trade and architecture among others. Adhering to their idea of the total social transformation of converts, they emphasized education and training for productive ventures.¹²³ Some of the contributions made by the Basel missionaries to development of the Gold Coast are examined in this section.

2.6.1.1 Social and Educational

In the area of education, they promoted formal education in accordance with European standards. They established mission schools to teach the African people the new skills of reading and writing. These included primary schools, middle schools, seminary and teacher training college at areas such as Akropong and Odumase Krobo. Education enabled the African people to secure employment as clerks, interpreters, and officers in the colonial administration. Others became teachers and clergymen in the missionary enterprises. A group of “missionary-trained educated Africans” emerged who played

¹²¹ *Report of the Basel Evangelical Mission on the Gold Coast, West-Africa: 1900*, Basel, 1900.

¹²² Odamtten, *Missionary Factor in Ghana's Development*, p. 168.

¹²³ “The Basel mission on the Gold-Coast”, p. 13.

important roles in the political developments of the Gold Coast. These included John Mensah Sarbah, John Aggrey and F. C. Grant.¹²⁴ In addition, the Basel missionaries embarked on the scientific study of indigenous languages like the study of the Twi and Ga languages by the Basel missionaries Johannes Christaller and Johannes Zimmerman respectively.¹²⁵ This was part of the training they received in the mission seminary that prepared them for “unknown ‘exotic’ idioms”. The essence of this was to enable the missionaries reduce the indigenous language to writing so that they could read the bible in their own language for better understanding.¹²⁶

Furthermore, new architectural styles were introduced. Riis is known to have introduced a new style of architecture in Akropong when he first went there which earned him the nickname *Osiadan* (Builder of houses) because the indigenous people were impressed by his architectural style and imitated it in their own buildings. The building materials that their trading company sold enabled the African people to acquire the European building materials for imitating the architectural styles of the Basel missionaries thereby building similar houses for themselves. By the end of the nineteenth century a number of houses in Akuapem had been built after the model of the first stone house built by the Basel missionaries in Akropong in the year 1846.¹²⁷

Moreover, there were improved medical facilities which further enhanced the standard of living of the African people.¹²⁸ The BMTC as is seen in the chapter three of this study sold medicines and drugs in its stores which the indigenous people purchased. Addo-

¹²⁴ Boahen, *Ghana*, p. 87.

¹²⁵ Amanor, “Pentecostalism in Ghana” p. 9.

¹²⁶ My paternal grandmother is illiterate but her training from the Presbyterian Church enables her to read the Twi bible perfectly. She is one out of many illiterate elderly Ghanaians with that skill.

¹²⁷ Arhin, *The Role of the Presbyterian Church*, p. 160.

¹²⁸ Amanor, “Pentecostalism in Ghana” p. 9, pp. 11-12.

Fening indicates that by the year 1890, the Basel missionaries were treating the African people of “wounds and minor ailments” such as dysentery without a fee.¹²⁹

In addition to the above was the suppression of slavery and pawning.¹³⁰ The missionaries bought the freedom of some slaves from their masters. For instance, the Rev. Süß indicated in a correspondence to Basel in 1856 that together with the Rev. Baum, they had purchased the freedom of six slaves.¹³¹ The slaves worked for the missionaries in exchange for the freedom. But more importantly, the act was a means of converting the slaves to the Christian faith. Likewise acts such as human sacrifice and polygamy were suppressed because the missionaries deemed these acts “inconsistent with Christian morality”.¹³² Persons labeled as outcasts also found acceptance in missionary quarters.

2.6.1.2 Agricultural and Economic Development

In the area of agriculture and economic development, the Basel missionaries made considerable contributions. First of all, education was extended to industrial training. They were particular about vocational and technical training and so established industrial institutions and workshops to equip the local people with artisanal skills in carpentry, blacksmithing, cask making, masonry and shoemaking among others which they could sell to earn income. For instance Tetteh Quarshie earned a skill as a blacksmith from the Basel missionaries which he went to sell at Fernando Po. Young girls were trained by wives of missionaries in housewifery, cooking and sewing as seen in picture two below.

¹²⁹ Robert Addo-Fening, *Akyem Abuakwa c. 1874-1943: A Study of the Impact of Missionaries Activities and Colonial Rule on a Traditional State*, Degree of Doctor of Philosophy thesis, University of Ghana, Legon, 1980, p. 267. (henceforth, Addo-Fening, *Akyem Abuakwa c. 1874-1943*)

¹³⁰ Ibid, p. 233.

¹³¹ Jenkins, “Suess to Basel 24 Apr 56 (No. IV 55)” in *Abstracts*, p. 27.

¹³² Addo-Fening, *Akyem Abuakwa c. 1874-1943*, p. 262.



Picture 2: “Sewing lesson, Saturday afternoon.”
<http://www.bmarchives.org/items/show/71297>

Secondly, in the area of agriculture, the Basel missionaries contributed to the exportation of cash crops which they had experimented with. With regards to the oil palm industry, there was the extraction of oil from the palm fruit for exportation as had been successfully done by the Rev. Süß. Similarly, they were also involved in the development of cotton through the cotton ginning plants that were opened at Anum and Kpong trading centres.

Of all the crops that the Basel missionaries developed, the most important was the cocoa crop. Cocoa was introduced into the Gold Coast in 1857 from Surinam through Johannes Hass, a Basel Mission agriculturalist and a second set of seedlings from Cape Palmas that were brought to the Gold Coast in 1858 by Bishop Auer.¹³³ The missionaries experimented with the cultivation of the crop in Akropong, the agricultural station of the mission society, and other towns in the eastern part of the Gold Coast. These initial experiments of the cultivation of the cocoa crop by the missionaries were however unsuccessful until 1879 when Tetteh Quarshie returned from Fernando Po with some

¹³³ Michael A. Kwamena-Poh, *The Basel Missionaries and the Development of the Cocoa Industry, 1858-1918*, n.d., p. 17.

cocoa seeds.¹³⁴ He was successful in planting these seeds in his farm at Mampon which became successful and with assistance from the Basel missionaries and the British administration, the cultivation of cocoa spread to other parts of the Gold Coast.¹³⁵ The contribution of the Basel missionaries lies in the fact that it made the initial attempts to draw the attention of the indigenous people to the potential value of the cocoa crop.¹³⁶ The Basel missionaries gave some of its initial seeds to local farmers to cultivate which failed. It can be presumed that it was through this effort that Tetteh Quarshie acquired knowledge and importance of the cocoa plant that made him to take the risk of smuggling some cocoa seeds to the Gold Coast. According to Schweizer the BMTC recorded the first consignment of cocoa exported from the Gold Coast to Hamburg by ship.¹³⁷

Furthermore, road and water transportation systems were improved for the transportation and distribution of goods to the various trading centres and mission stations. The road from Christiansborg to Abokobi, for instance was cleaned by the Basel missionaries with the help of some African people for easy passage.¹³⁸ A network of roads was thus created to connect the interior towns to the coast and the mission stations. This created a sort of “regional economic integration” as Schweizer puts it.¹³⁹ In essence, it expanded the indigenous market as people began to access other alternative markets apart from the ones that were originally available to them. More producing areas became opened for

¹³⁴ Although Tetteh Quarshie is widely believed to have introduced the cocoa crop to the region of modern Ghana, scholars such as Kwamena-Poh and Kwame Arhin have set the records straight by attributing the introduction of this crop to the Basel missionaries. See Kwamena-Poh, *The Basel Missionaries and the Development of the Cocoa Industry*, p. 17; and Arhin, “The Role of the Presbyterian Church in the Economic Development of Ghana”, p. 158.

¹³⁵ Boahen, *Ghana*, p. 92.

¹³⁶ Arhin, “The Role of the Presbyterian Church in the Economic Development of Ghana”, p. 158.

¹³⁷ Schweizer, *Survivors on the Gold Coast*, pp. 97-98.

¹³⁸ “Cleaning the road to Abokobi”, D-30.05.033, *BMArchives*, <http://www.bmarchives.org/items/show/56172> Retrieved 9th June, 2014. 11:12 am.

¹³⁹ Schweizer, *Survivors on the Gold Coast* p. 102.

conducting business. These efforts at improving transportation can be said to have laid the foundation for the British colonial government of the Gold Coast to further develop the transportation systems of the region during the colonial era.

2.6.2 The Take-over by the Scottish Missionaries

The operations of the BMS ended in 1918 after ninety years of existence on the Gold Coast. In connection to the First World War, the British colonial government of the Gold Coast deported the Basel missionaries in 1918. This action was necessitated by the fact that at any given time the Basel missionaries were mostly Germans. The 1900 report of the BMS on the Gold Coast revealed the number of European missionaries in service was sixty-six including ordained and unordained ministers. Out of these sixty-six missionaries, forty-three of them were Germans, nineteen of them were Swiss, three of them were “Gold Coasters” (probably mulattoes), and one Russian.¹⁴⁰ At the outbreak of the war, thirty-seven foreign missionaries worked for the mission society. Out of this number, thirty-one of them were Germans, five were Swiss and the remaining one was an American.¹⁴¹ The British were therefore suspicious of pro-German sentiments and so deported them.

By this time the BMS had been transformed into an organized church consisting of one hundred and ninety-six congregations.¹⁴² Measures were put in place for ordained African ministers to take over from foreign missionaries as heads of the district churches. The British colonial government in the Gold Coast ensured the replacement of the Basel missionaries with Scottish missionaries as the managers of the local church. The Scottish

¹⁴⁰ *Report of the Basel Evangelical Mission on the Gold Coast, West-Africa: 1900*, pp. 3-4.

¹⁴¹ Schweizer, *Survivors on the Gold Coast*, p. 67.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*

missionaries were attached to the United Free Church of Scotland Mission Council and they were based in Calabar in modern Nigeria. The Scottish missionaries could take over the operations of the BMS because both organisations belonged to the Presbyterian family of Churches and shared similar protestant beliefs. The coming of the Scottish missionaries to the Gold Coast laid the foundation for the Basel Mission Church to become the Presbyterian Church of the Gold Coast now the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG).¹⁴³

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter has given a historical background for missionary work by the Basel Mission Society in general and specifically on the Gold Coast. The training by the Basel missionaries in the *Missions Institut* equipped them with skills in adapting to the societies within which they operated. However, the missionaries limited themselves to studying the language of the indigenous people as their training in the seminary prepared them to deal with “unknown ‘exotic’ idioms”. They did not attempt to understand the totality of the African cultural systems so as to relate with it in their operations. It is this situation that led to the creation of nominal African converts who accepted to be part of the Christian faith because of the material gains, such as educational and employment opportunities that it offered. In the course of their operations, they succeeded in contributing to the development of the Gold Coast through their various activities, economic and non-economic. On the other hand, the missionaries equally contributed to the creation of confusion and conflicts between chiefs and their Christian subjects. This chapter serves the purpose of giving an understanding to the operations of the BMTC

¹⁴³ Ibid, p. 70.

which was founded out of the economic activities of the Basel missionaries as a subsidiary of the BMS. The economic organisation is considered in the next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

THE ORGANISATION OF THE BMTC ON THE GOLD COAST

3.1 Introduction

This chapter argues that the BMTC was established as a subsidiary of the BMS that had the vision of evangelizing through trading activities in addition to preaching. The chapter examines the rationale for the establishment of the Basel Mission Trading Company on the Gold Coast. It focuses on its structure, the vision and objectives it set to achieve. The work ethic and practices that guided the mission trading company's operations are further interrogated to bring to the fore how these work ethic and practices reflected in the operations of the company. In addition, this chapter highlights a few Akan proverbs that depict the work ethic and practices used in the studies in the cultural systems of the African people. Finally, the response of the African people to the operations of the BMTC is briefly examined to activeness of the indigenous people to the trading activities of the BMTC in the Gold Coast.

3.2 The Rationale for Establishing the BMTC

A number of factors necessitated the establishment of the BMTC on the Gold Coast. These include; the inadequacy of funds, the high cost of needed European commodities and the delay in acquisition of the needed European commodities.

3.2.1 Inadequate Funds

First of all, the funds for running the activities of the BMS on the Gold Coast were inadequate. The BMS was supported by funds received from donors and philanthropists

in Europe. These funds supported the activities of the various mission stations on the field. Outgoing Basel missionaries were provided with a personal grant and seed money to begin their work but this was not enough. Due to the limited available funds, the finances of the BMS on the field seemed to be strictly kept under a budget and controlled by the Home Committee. Andreas Riis in a letter to Basel in March 1837 tries to explain why his expenditure for the previous year was high and raised concern about the attempt of the Home Committee to spend less money instead of being concerned about the welfare of the newly arrived missionaries.¹⁴⁴ He said, "...the life of the newly arrived missionaries is more important than the economizing of a few rigsdalers."¹⁴⁵ It could be inferred that Riis had been questioned over his high expenditure which he was not pleased with considering the necessities for that expenditure.

The inadequacy of the mission's funds is again revealed in an 1859 conference report of the Gyadam station.¹⁴⁶ The report gives an insight into the expenditure of an amount of One Hundred and Thirty Pounds (£130) given by the Basel Committee for the building of the new Gyadam station. The missionaries had complained that the amount of money remaining was not enough for the completion of the new station. The report shows the inadequacy of the money that had been sent.

The inadequacy of the BMS's funding therefore triggered the question of the local mission selling agricultural produce to make it self-supporting. At a general conference held earlier in June 1852 at Osu, Jenkins reveals that a reply was given to an enquiry that sought the possibility of the Gold Coast mission supporting its activities through the sale

¹⁴⁴ Debrunner, *Digest of Articles on Ghana in Basel Mission Periodicals*, p. 24.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁶ Jenkins, "Gyadam station conference protocol dd 2 May 59 (Gyadam No. 9)" in *Abstracts*, p. 40.

of its cultivated products.¹⁴⁷ Even though the author did not make known the contents of the reply to the enquiry, a suggestion by Stanger in 1853 indicates that a conclusion had not been reached on the issue. In Zimmermann's report for the first half of the year to Basel, he indicated that Stanger had proposed a wagon-based business to be run by a Christian merchant to transport the produce of the mission's farms at Abokobi to the coast for sale.¹⁴⁸ The profit gained out of the trade could be used for philanthropic purposes by supporting the missionary activities in the interest of the indigenous people.¹⁴⁹ For instance, some of it could be used to support the educational activities of the BMS.

The essence of the trading activities was getting an alternative source of income apart from the donations that the missionary societies were given. This meant that they could expand their activities at their own pace without having to wait for donations from Europe.

3.2.2 Delay in Acquisition of the Needed Commodities

One other reason that raised the question for a mission trading company was the delay in missionaries getting access to their needed commodities on the Gold Coast. The Basel missionaries brought with them some of the items needed. Missionaries on the field were then provided with the necessary items upon request sent to the Home Committee in Basel. With the expansion of missionary activities, the need for regular supply of such European goods became inevitable.¹⁵⁰ Items that were requested for included tools,

¹⁴⁷ Ibid, "General Conference 15 June 1852 Osu Report – No 61" p. 7.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid, "Zimmermann's part of the report for the first half of 1853", p. 22.

¹⁴⁹ Gannon, "The Basle Mission Trading Company and British Colonial Policy in the Gold Coast", pp. 507, 515.

¹⁵⁰ "The Story of the Basel Trading Company Limited", p. 7.

clothes, school books and drugs. For instance Stanger and Mürdter sent letters from Akropong to Basel requesting for clothes and hat in January 1837.¹⁵¹ Widmann reported to the Home Committee in 1846 that “we lack cloth linen and shoes for them [the Black West Indian Christians]-not available on the Coast”. He therefore suggested that “a special mission trader” be sent to the Gold Coast so that he could take care of the acquisition and transportation of cowries and goods into the interior.¹⁵²

Widmann’s suggestion is an indication that the proposal raised by Stanger for trade to be run by a missionary as indicated in the above section was not the first. Transportation and communication issues around that time were not advanced as it is now. This meant that it took several weeks for request sent to Basel to be received and responded to. Therefore with a trading store available on the coast, the missionary in charge could request for the commodities in large quantities and keep stocks for regular supply to the missionaries.

3.2.3 High Cost of Commodities and Transportation

As a result of the unavailability and scarcity of the needed European commodities as indicated above, prices of available goods were inflated and sold at high prices. This situation is a confirmation of an economic principle which states that the price of goods goes up when the demand for the particular good is higher than the supply.¹⁵³

At a missionary’s conference in March 1848 at Akropong, Schiedt raised the issue of the high cost involved in transporting goods from Akropong to the coast making it

¹⁵¹ Debrunner, *Digest of Articles on Ghana in Basel Mission Periodicals*, p. 24.

¹⁵² *Ibid*, p. 58.

¹⁵³ Justin R. Cress, *Principles of Economics: Supply and Demand*, pp. 33-35, <http://gatton.uky.edu/gradstudents/cress/teaching/micro%20fall%202010/lectures/lecture%2004%20-%20supply%20and%20demand.pdf> Accessed 17th July 2014. 12:55pm

impossible for them to “sell their products to traders on the coast and on ships.”¹⁵⁴ Stanger had suggested the weaving of cloth in Akropong to serve as an employment opportunity for many people but most importantly the cloth could be sold at Akropong without having to transport the final products to the coast which would in turn reduce the cost of transportation. If this suggestion was to be implemented, then it required a trading post to oversee such transactions.

In addition, Zimmermann raised concerns in 1852 about the practice of European merchants selling their commodities at high prices. He indicated that “the merchants are selling the cheapest sugar at double the price they pay for it in England.”¹⁵⁵ In July 1857, Baum also reported the problems that were involved in buying building materials in the Gold Coast and the major problem was the inflated prices of such goods by indigenous merchants.¹⁵⁶ Thus a trading company was needed to supply goods at cheaper prices to the Basel missionaries.

3.2.4 Developed Taste for European Goods by Africans

A fourth rationale for establishing the BMTC was the taste that the African people had developed for European commodities. The Christiansborg town was considered as a suitable market place for trading activities due to this reason.¹⁵⁷ The African people were familiar with European goods because trading relations had already been established between Europeans and the African people as far back as the fifteenth century when the Portuguese first arrived on the coast. For instance in 1852, seven years before the establishment of the BMTC, the Basel missionaries Widmann and Wader travelling from

¹⁵⁴ Debrunner, *Digest of Articles on Ghana in Basel Mission Periodicals*, p. 89.

¹⁵⁵ Jenkins, “Zimmermann’s Quarterly Report end of May 1852” in *Abstracts*, p. 13.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid*, “Baum to Basel 14 July 57 (No. Gyadam 7), p. 34.

¹⁵⁷ Debrunner, *Digest of Articles on Ghana in Basel Mission Periodicals*, PRAAD-Accra, EC 6/3, p. 124

Akropong to Akyem indicated that they made a stopover at Kyebi where they were accommodated in a house which contained European furniture. The house belonged to a man who had stayed on the coast serving European merchants.¹⁵⁸ Besides that, the African people were perceived to have much trust for the missionaries.¹⁵⁹ For instance due to the medical help they received from the missionaries, medical commodities stood as potential profitable commodities.¹⁶⁰ Therefore a trading company could supply the African people with the European commodities and at cheaper prices.

3.3 Opposition to Mission Trading Activities

The proposal for the mission society to get involved in trade received some opposition. H. N. Riis opposed the Basel Mission's involvement in trade as suggested by Widmann's in 1846. He was of the view that "trade is pernicious for us, and we should completely abstain from it".¹⁶¹ H. N. Riis thought that the disadvantages of the mission's involvement in trade outweighed its advantages. First, the profitability of the trade may corrupt the missionaries as their attention could be divided between the trading activities and the missionary evangelism and they may pay more attention to the trade than the evangelization. Secondly, there was the fear that trade by the mission society may tarnish the image of the BMS as a whole and which in effect could affect its evangelical work negatively. This was because of the bad attitude of fraud and cheating that characterized the trading activities between the Europeans and the African people.

¹⁵⁸ Jenkins, "Widmann & Mader to Basel 23 Mar 1852 (no. 47 of vol. V of the correspondence received from Africa)" in *Abstracts*, p. 5.

¹⁵⁹ Debrunner, *Digest of Articles on Ghana in Basel Mission Periodicals*, p. 124

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 59.

Although the Home Committee approved the establishment of the trading company (as registration confirms), later events in Basel indicate that the debate could not be completely resolved. Danker reveals that the economic activities of the mission triggered a debate in Basel over the essence of the Basel Mission Trading Company in the 1880s, after two decades of its existence. This debate subsequently led to the resignation of the head of the Mission Society, Inspector Schott because he protested with the argument that the activities of the trading company were negatively affecting the primary motive of the missionary work.¹⁶² Inspector Schott's resignation is an indication that he did not get other members of the Home Committee to support his protest against the trading activities of the mission society. It could further be inferred from the action that by the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the trading activities of the BMTC had gained significant momentum and profit from the trade was perhaps higher than conversion of the African people to the Christian faith.

3.4 The Beginnings of BMTC

The initiative for the establishment of the missionary company is credited to Hermann Ludwig Rottmann. He arrived on the Gold Coast in 1854 as an accountant to the BMS¹⁶³ with a duty of handling the finances of the Basel missionaries. In addition, he was to supervise project financing, the ordering and supplying of goods, and the transportation of these goods needed by the missionaries and the mission stations.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶² Danker, *Profit for the Lord*, pp. 85, 108-109.

¹⁶³ Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana*, p. 131.

¹⁶⁴ Schweizer, *Survivors on the Gold Coast*, p. 107.

Rottmann became convinced that it was important for stocks of goods to be kept and supplied to the local mission stations when needed.¹⁶⁵ He therefore opened a store in 1855 at Christiansborg where he resided to supply daily goods to the missionaries and the mission stations. A large portion of the capital for the store was provided by a Basel merchant and patron of the mission society David Burckhardt.¹⁶⁶ The store developed quickly and served both the European and indigenous populations. The Home Committee decided to separate the funds for trading activities from that of the funds for the mission work. This was because some Basel missionaries were not comfortable with using the mission society's money for trading activities.¹⁶⁷ In 1859 the Basel Mission Trading Company was registered in Basel as a commercial entity with branches in India and Africa.¹⁶⁸ Rottmann was put in charge of the company in the Gold Coast.

After the separation, funds for the trading company were at this time provided by the Mission Trading Commission made up of Basel industrialists and traders.¹⁶⁹ Elias Schrenk was sent to the Gold Coast to take over as the mission's accountant. The mission traders were, however, still subordinate to the Basel Home Committee in "personnel, discipline and trading policy".¹⁷⁰ The BMS held one hundred and twenty of the shares in the trading company¹⁷¹ and part of the profits made from the trade was used to finance the activities of the mission society such as education.

¹⁶⁵ Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana*, p. 131.

¹⁶⁶ "The Story of the Basel Trading Company Limited, 1859-1935" in *Supplement to the West African Review*, November 1935, p. 7.

¹⁶⁷ Reynolds, *Trade and Economic Change in the Gold Coast*, p. 149.

¹⁶⁸ Schweizer, *Survivors on the Gold Coast*, p. 108

¹⁶⁹ Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana*, p. 132.

¹⁷⁰ Webster, "The Bible and the Plough", p. 424.

¹⁷¹ Other shareholders were Swiss, German, English and French individuals. Gannon, "The Basle Mission Trading Company and British Colonial Policy in the Gold Coast, p. 504.

3.5 The Structure of BMTC

Rottman who began the BMTC had been educated and trained in commerce in Germany and was the son of a tobacco manufacturer.¹⁷² Therefore he had the professional skills and experience to manage a commercial entity. But for the mission society, professionalism was not enough to undertake a trading activity. This is because every other activity of the mission society in addition to its evangelical work was regarded as a mission in itself. Its trading activities had to be run by personnel of missionary status and African converts.

The BMTC was therefore a subsidiary of the BMS. It was under the supervision of the Basel Home Committee. On the Gold Coast, the mission trading company was headquartered at the Christiansborg with branches in interior towns like Akropong, Anum, Ada, Akuse and Kpong.¹⁷³

3.6 The Vision of the BMTC

The BMTC had a vision of being a platform through which godly trading principles could be practiced. In view of the oppositions that the BMS faced with its decision to engage in trading activities, the mission trading company was registered with an added purpose of being a training ground for the indigenous people on fair trading terms. Rottman was required to use his shop as a platform for demonstrating godliness in trade on the coast and be a role model in the area of trade.¹⁷⁴ The trading company was therefore envisioned

¹⁷² Schweizer, *Survivors on the Gold Coast*, p. 96.

¹⁷³ Pictures eleven, twenty and twenty-one reveal this situation.

¹⁷⁴ Danker, *Profit for the Lord*, p. 96.

to teach the indigenous people the act of trading based on Christian principles.¹⁷⁵ This was necessary because the period was a time when people were encouraged to live their lives in conformity with the gospel of Christ through which others would learn. Therefore the company had a vision that the indigenous people would imitate it by engaging in trade as it did.

Furthermore, traces of the slave trade could still be seen on the Gold Coast at the time of the establishment of the BMTC. Hence the company could serve as a measure to consolidate the 'legitimate' trade in place of internal slavery which continued to exist after the abolishment of the transatlantic slave trade. Trade was to create the opportunity of making available a new form of profit making venture in line with the concept of the legitimate trade. This alternative could help in the development of the natural resources of Africa that could be exported to Europe and create a better economic image for the continent instead of the slave trade. This way the economic hardships of Africa would lessen if not eliminated.

3.7 The Objectives of the BMTC

In line with the calls by Basel missionaries to undertake trade, the BMTC was registered under the statutory purposes to supply the missionaries with their respective requirements, to supply goods needed for the various projects and to train suitable indigenous personnel in 'fair trading practices' among others.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁵ "The Basel Mission on the Gold-Coast", p. 10

¹⁷⁶ Schweizer, *Survivors on the Gold Coast*, p. 108.

The primary objective of the Basel Mission Trading Company was to provide the Basel missionaries with the needed European commodities that were not readily available on the local market in the Gold Coast.¹⁷⁷ The company was to serve as an intermediary between the Basel missionaries on the coast and the Basel Home Committee by requesting for the needed commodities and then supply it to the missionaries. This way, the delays that were associated with requisitions would be eliminated.

Furthermore, the mission trading company was to supply the needed materials for the projects of the Basel missionaries at cheaper prices. This way, building materials that Baum complained of being sold at high prices by indigenous merchants could be acquired directly from Europe by the mission trading company who would then supply them to the missionaries. This meant that the role of the African merchants as middlemen was eliminated.

Moreover, the BMTC had an objective to achieve the vision of the company by training suitable African people to engage in Christian trading practices such as self-reliance and hard work. In the whole of the Basel Mission establishments converts had the opportunity of living with missionaries to be trained in different fields. For instance girls could live with missionaries to be trained by their (missionaries) wives in housekeeping, sewing and baking among others. In other instances missionary artisans' trained African male converts in the missionary workshops to be artisans in the fields of carpentry, cobbling and masonry. In the bid to do this, some of the African people were to be employed as apprentices to understudy the missionary merchants in the trading stores. The concept of

¹⁷⁷ "UTC Estates of Ghana Limited Prospectus", October 1994, p. 11.
[http://www.annualreportsghana.com/Home/Documents/Circulars/Companies/UTC-Estates-Ghana-\(Prospectus,-1994\).aspx](http://www.annualreportsghana.com/Home/Documents/Circulars/Companies/UTC-Estates-Ghana-(Prospectus,-1994).aspx). Retrieved 24th April 2013, 7:01pm (henceforth "UTC Estates of Ghana Limited Prospectus")

“on the job training” was applied in this instance. In addition, these African apprentices could acquire skills in clerical duties and shop attending. This training method in the form of apprenticeship somehow was similar to the informal apprenticeship that existed among the African people where a boy, for instance, learnt a trade such as hunting from his father as he assisted the father in the trade.¹⁷⁸

The mission company likewise had an underlying objective of encouraging the consumption of European goods as a mark of ‘civilisation’. Adu Boahen avers that one factor that influenced the establishment of the BMTC was to “...import goods which would promote civilization...”¹⁷⁹ The word “civilisation” is used in the European perspective and interpretation. Being ‘civilised’ meant that the African people were living as Europeans; eating European food, wearing European clothes, living in European style buildings and bearing European names. Thus the company had an objective of drawing the African people to embrace Europeanisation.¹⁸⁰

Closely linked to the above point was an objective of the BMTC to share what they had with the African people. According to Danker, the manufacturing and selling of European goods was an opportunity for the Basel missionaries to “demonstrate how a Christian cares for and meets the needs of his fellow men”.¹⁸¹ They shared the idea that the European culture had been impacted positively by the New Testament with gifts that had to be shared with other people. These gifts included “qualities of service, integrity and

¹⁷⁸ Odamtten, *The Missionary Factor in Ghana's Development*, p. 108; Oral data from Opanin Oduro Kwarteng, farmer and member of PCG, Fayaase. 20th May, 2014.

¹⁷⁹ Boahen, *Ghana*, p. 82.

¹⁸⁰ S. D. Cudjoe, *Aids to African Autonomy: A Review of Education and Politics in the Gold Coast*, first edition, The College Press, London, 1949, pp. 1-7.

¹⁸¹ Danker, *Profit for the Lord*, p. 131.

joy in productive labour". This objective was in line with the view that Europe had the responsibility of making right the wrongs of the Trans-Atlantic slave trade in Africa.

Finally, an objective of the BMTC was to be a platform for the liberation of Africa from economic hardships. Schweizer asserts that wealthy persons from Basel who invested in and supported the trading activities of the mission trading company shared a view that healthy trading practices could help liberate the African people from their poverty and put an end to the practice of indigenous slavery in the Gold Coast.¹⁸² This objective can be connected to that which was promoted by the African Civilization Society in England in the 1840s that missionary activities should be supported for the "economic upliftment of the Black man". Consequently the gospel of "the Bible and the Plough" was to be propagated in Africa for the purposes of exploring the economic resources of Africa to end the slave trade and introduce the continent to legitimate commerce.¹⁸³ It was also to provide the means of Africans acquiring white collar jobs such as clerks and shop attendants in the mission trading company.

3.8 Ethic that Guided the Operations of the BMTC

Pietism emphasized on living the Christian faith as is professed. It is in line with this that pietistic societies adhered to the protestant ethic. The protestant ethic emphasized self-discipline, hard work and thriftiness (not wasteful of money or other resources). Max Weber argued that;

Protestant ethic was an important factor in the economic success of the protestant groups in the early stages of capitalism because ones success in the world was interpreted as the

¹⁸² Schweizer, *Survivors on the Gold Coast*, p. 107

¹⁸³ Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana*, pp. 103-104

individual's election into eternal salvation and so economic success was pursued with enthusiasm.¹⁸⁴

Schweizer reveals that in the *Missions Institut*, missionary students were trained to be disciplined and do things orderly.¹⁸⁵ Their life was structured to ensure that they lived by these protestant principles. In addition the need for order and discipline was taken seriously by the students because they were attached to their Christian faith as “God given concepts”. Therefore in order to achieve the vision and objective of the BMTC as a training platform for godly trading practices, there was the need for the Basel missionaries to demonstrate their protestant principles in their deeds as they professed. Dankers asserts that the Basel missionaries were guided by the work ethic of honesty, reliability and diligence.¹⁸⁶

This section of the study examines these work ethic and practices and how they were reflected in the operations of the BMTC. A few Akan proverbs are further highlighted to depict the presence of these work ethic and practices in the African cultural system. The essence of this is to demonstrate that the Basel missionaries met a society that had a fair idea of work ethic and practices and demonstrated these principles in their day to day activities. However the difference lies in the fact that the African society comprises of different ethnic groups hence a difference in the interpretation, understanding and practice of these work ethics. In addition, the principles of work ethic and practices among the indigenous African people were not formalized and systemized as that of the Basel missionaries. The Basel Mission Trading Company presented a formalized and

¹⁸⁴ Encyclopedia Britannica Online Academic Edition, *Protestant ethic*, Encyclopædia Britannica Inc., 2013. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/479867/Protestant-ethic> Accessed: 24th September 2013.

¹⁸⁵ Schweizer, *Survivors on the Gold Coast*, p. 27

¹⁸⁶ Danker, *Profit for the Lord*, p. 102.

systematic work ethic and practices. An example is the setting of a uniformed price for the same kind of commodity in all mission stores whereas the indigenous markets were characterized with unequal prices for commodities based on the system of bargaining. But it can be said that the knowledge of these work ethic and practices by the African people contributed immensely to the success story of the BMTC.

3.8.1 Honesty

Honesty served the purpose of distinguishing the BMTC from the other European trading firms that were characterized with fraud and cheating. This way, it aided in presenting a good image of the company as one that did not intend to extort money from its customers.

The Basel Mission Trading Company instituted control regime as a means of ensuring fair trade. First of all it set fixed prices for goods that were sold in the trading posts.¹⁸⁷ The practice of having fixed amounts for goods ensured that all persons who bought from the stores obtained the goods at the same price irrespective of their colour, age or status. This was in opposition to the practice of selling goods under bargaining terms where persons with much bargaining skills are able to acquire goods at lesser prices than those with less skills in bargaining. In this sense, Madam Esther Mensah in an interview indicates that persons with less bargaining skills stand a chance of being cheated as goods may be sold to them at higher price than expected.¹⁸⁸ In a public lecture, Quayson reveals that price tags serve a function of preventing negotiations when buying from shops as

¹⁸⁷ Ibid, p. 90.

¹⁸⁸ Oral data from Madam Esther Mensah, trader and a native of Kwahu, Accra, 9th May, 2014.

against buying on streets or in the market.¹⁸⁹ Thus the BMTC presented the opportunity for all persons who acquired goods from its stores to get them at the same price by establishing fixed amounts. This demonstrated its efforts at showing the principle of honesty in trade. It prevented cheating of any customer.

Furthermore the practice of fair trade ensured that farmers who produced raw materials for export were not cheated but received good prices from the sale of their produce. As a result, there was the need for a reduction in the market chain to cut down cost of production and to be able to pay the farmers accurately. This could be achieved by eliminating middlemen and dealing directly with the farmers.

An Akan proverb that goes to attest the BMTCs work ethic and practice of honesty is *Wode nnabraba tu kwan a wudu; na mmom wonsan w'akyi bio*¹⁹⁰ which literally means that “if you embark on a journey based on deceit, you may reach your destination but you will not be able to retrace your steps back.” This proverb also entreats individuals to go through the right channel in acquiring the needed success. It teaches against fraud and cheating. It goes in line with a common adage that says that “short cuts are always dangerous”. Thus in trading activities, the individual is admonished not to cheat trading partners and deal with each client or customer on fair trading grounds.¹⁹¹ It goes to say that cheating customers to make good profit may result in the total collapse of one’s

¹⁸⁹ Prof. Ato Quayson’s Public Lecture Series, *Oxford St.: Globalization and its Discontent*, Sociology Department, University of Ghana, 21st February 2014. This was a three-day public lecture series organized by the International Institute for Advanced Studies (IIAS) in collaboration with the Institute of African Studies (IAS) and the Sociology Department, University of Ghana on the theme, *Accra: From Ethno-Politics to Globalization* on 17th, 20th and 21st February 2014.

¹⁹⁰ Kofi Asare Opoku, *Hearing and Keeping: Akan Proverbs*, African Proverbs Series, vol. 2, Asempa Publishers, Accra, 1997, p. xx. (henceforth Opoku, *Hearing and Keeping*) p. 73.

¹⁹¹ Oral data from Madam Margaret Adibi

business as the fraudulent act is exposed. Therefore the individual is required to be honest in all his/her dealings.

Opoku asserts that the very first moral lesson given to an Akan baby during its *abadinto* (naming ceremony) is honest living.¹⁹² He is of the view that the practice of dipping water and alcohol on the tongue of the baby at the ceremony accompanied by the saying, *nsu a nsu, nsa a nsa* literary meaning “water is water, drink is drink” is an indication of the “rules for membership” into the family and the society. This is because the society is based on truth¹⁹³ and the child is to be able to differentiate between two identical situations as water and drink (traditionally alcohol) have the same colour but different taste. This lesson is not for the child only, but a means of reinforcing this moral teaching to people present at the ceremony. This practice illustrates the extent to which the morality of an individual is of great importance to the African society.¹⁹⁴ One is therefore admonished to be honest in all his/her general human relations.

It can therefore be said that the Basel missionaries succeeded going by this work ethic of honesty in their trading activities partly because it was inculcated in the African people already some of whom were employed in the mission stores.

¹⁹² Opoku, *Hearing and Keeping*, p. 72.

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ Oral data from Opanin Oduro Kwarteng.

3.8.2 Reliability

The BMTC also engaged in the provision of services aside from their trading activities. It handled issues on changing currency, the arrival and departure of Basel missionaries to and from the Gold Coast.¹⁹⁵

Furthermore Danker reveals that the BMTC stores became a centre for fighting corruption and a testimony to the “ethical concerns of Christianity”. For instance, in 1869 attempts were made to assign the entire responsibility of selling revenue stamps in India to the BMTC due to the misappropriation of funds by the revenue collectors.¹⁹⁶ The mission trading company in the Gold Coast can be said to have assumed such credibility too as its retail stores were given the responsibility of selling tickets to events organized by the Basel Mission Church. A notice by the Basel Mission Church in Accra about a concert to be given by the choir of the church on 15th September 1899 had the BMTC retail store in Accra as the major outlet for the sale of the tickets together with the Basel Mission Book Depository assisted by certain individuals.¹⁹⁷ The point of the BMTC being reliable and the practice of Christian commerce placed it in a position of rendering quality service to its customers and organisations.

This need of being reliable in rendering services to customers is similarly portrayed in the Akan proverb *Obi nsene mɛwe-mɛwe akɔɔ-bɔ*¹⁹⁸ which can be literally translated as “no one performs better than the one that chews the crab.” This proverb can mean that anyone who is interested in his work does it well. This further means that the work of a person

¹⁹⁵ Danker, *Profit for the Lord*, p. 99

¹⁹⁶ Ibid, p. 90

¹⁹⁷ EC 6/6, PRAAD-Accra

¹⁹⁸ Peggy Appiah, Kwame Anthony Appiah and Ivor Agyeman-Duah, *Bu Me Be: Proverbs of the Akans*, 2nd ed. Ayebia Clarke Publishing Limited, 2007, p. 14. (henceforth, Appiah et al, *Bu Me Be*), p. 42

demands perfection once he/she has set out to do it. In the area of trade or profession, the proverb could be understood to admonish persons to be focused on the occupation that they have chosen and to do it well. By this, customers must be able to rely on a person to deliver to their satisfaction in performing their duties. The proverb therefore can be said to admonish good customer satisfaction in rendering services. In addition, the proverb can mean that an individual must be ready at all times to undertake task irrespective of the difficult nature of it.¹⁹⁹

This Akan proverb thus reinforces the attempt by the BMTC to render quality services to its customers and the knowledge of this work ethic and practice by the African people can be said to have partly contributed to the success of the mission trading company.

3.8.3 Diligence

Diligence was the third principle that guided the operations of the BMTC. The company took careful measures in ensuring that it adhered to godly trading practices. For instance, the company as part of the means to engage in ‘legitimate’ and honest trading activities based on Christian principles refused to engage in the sale of rum and firearms²⁰⁰ even though these commodities attracted much profit. It was considered unchristian by the missionaries to trade in these items.²⁰¹ As such converts who were found to be engaging in the trading of these were punished by being “excluded”.²⁰² This practice was further necessary because trading activities were not to disturb the evangelical work of the Basel

¹⁹⁹ Oral data from Madam Esther Mensah

²⁰⁰ “The Basel Mission on the Gold-Coast”, p. 10.

²⁰¹ Oral data from Madam Margaret Adibi indicates that members of the PCG are not supposed to drink or engage with alcohol.

²⁰² Jenkins, “Haas to Basel 1 Dec. ’59 (No. Gyadam 22)”, in *Abstracts*, p. 42. Although Haas was not specific with what he meant by “excluded”, it is presumed that converts caught engaging in the trade of rum and firearms were excommunicated.

Mission Society. Considering the bad conduct and behaviour of the other European persons who stayed on the coast which served as a major hindrance to the initial success of missionary work, there was the need for conscious effort to make a clear distinction between the mission's trade and that of the other Europeans.

Furthermore, a study of some BMTC accounting documents reveals the attempt of careful documentation of transactional records of the company. Payments in terms of wages and salaries, pro forma invoices issued that reveal the dispatch of various items to mission stations²⁰³ were kept as part of general correspondence. The Account of Catechists, Invalids, Widows and Orphans Fund of the Basel Evangelical Mission in Africa received support from the BMTC under the supervision of its General Treasurer.²⁰⁴ This was in compliance to the support that was expected to come from the BMTC as contributions to the evangelical work.

The company was further diligent in terms of the efforts that were made at expanding its activities into the interior markets. In the bid to keep the prices of goods low, Rottman ordered large quantities of the goods which in the long run contributed to the expansion of the initial mission trading post leading to the establishment of some trading posts in the interior towns such as Anum and Kpong. The establishment of the trading posts in the interior towns resulted in the reduction of the cost of goods in the interior as the position of the middlemen was eliminated.

²⁰³ EC 6/6 PRAAD-Accra

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

An Akan proverb that also depicts diligence as depicted by the BMTC is *ɔbaa brefoɔ kɔ awareɛa, ɔde ade pa ba fie*²⁰⁵ which literally means that “a hard working woman brings fortune from her marriage to her home”. The proverb can mean that if a person is industrious in what he/she is doing, the end result of the venture is success. In another instance the proverb can mean that a person who associates himself/herself with a hard working person stand the chance of achieving success as well.²⁰⁶

Thus the knowledge of the African people of similar work ethic and practices as portrayed by the Basel merchant missionaries through their own cultural systems is an indication of the immense contribution that the African people were able to make in ensuring the effectiveness of the work ethic and practices of honesty, reliability and diligence in their trading activities.

3.9 Operations of the BMTC

3.9.1 Commodities of Trade

An objective for the BMTC was the supplying of Basel missionaries with the needed European commodities that could not be readily acquired on the Gold Coast.

Some of the commodities that were imported to the Gold Coast by the BMTC comprised various European products such as books and stationeries to be supplied to the mission schools; building materials such as iron sheets; European food items such as biscuits, sugar and butter; other items such as bibles, watches, clothes, furniture, lamps, bicycles

²⁰⁵ Appiah et al, *Bu Me Be*, p. 14.

²⁰⁶ Oral data from Mrs. Rose Obeng, trader, Accra, 9th June, 2014.

and drugs.²⁰⁷ Below are some pictures revealing some of the commodities that were imported from Europe displayed in BMTC stores.



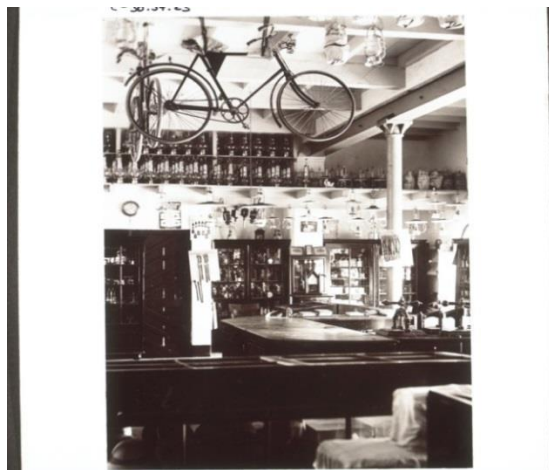
Picture 3: “Bookshop display”
<http://www.bmarchives.org/items/show/55801>



Picture 4: “Basel Mission trade Bonaku” Cameroon
<http://www.bmarchives.org/items/show/74987>



Picture 5: “In the shop. A pyramid display of lamps”
<http://www.bmarchives.org/items/show/84648>



Picture 6: A bicycle display
<http://www.bmarchives.org/items/show/53886>

²⁰⁷ Debrunner, *Digest of Articles on Ghana in Basel Mission Periodicals*, pp.80, 104. Schweizer, *Survivors on the Gold Coast*, p. 108. Some of the lists of items such as bible, drugs and clothes were confirmed by Madam Esther Mensah.

However, as Danker asserts that the BMTC practiced control regimes, it is not visible from the above pictures if there were prices tagged to the commodities or whether the company ensured that the various outlets sold their commodities at the same price.

As the trade and commerce activities of the mission trading company expanded over the years, more European goods were introduced by mission trading company. For instance the roads improved by the BMTC and its use of the motorized vehicles as is discussed in the next section brought in a new line of business for the company. By the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, the BMTC had become an importer of vehicles and servicing motor vehicles in the Gold Coast.²⁰⁸ Picture seven below shows a fleet of vehicles at the mission trading post in Accra.



Picture 7: “Basel Mission factory, lorry review, Accra”
<http://www.bmarchives.org/items/show/56061>

The company exported to Europe mainly cash crops such as palm oil, palm kernel, cotton, rubber, coffee and later cocoa. The crops were exported in their raw state to meet the demands of the growing industries in Europe. The palm oil and the palm kernel for

²⁰⁸ Schweizer, *Survivors on the Gold Coast*, p. 103.

example were exported to Europe to be used in the making of soaps, margarine, lubricant for industries and animal feed in Europe.²⁰⁹ The Basel missionaries had experimented with the cultivation of most of these cash crops like the oil palm, cotton and cocoa at their agricultural station in Akropong. The outcome of the missionaries' agricultural experimentation and products from the farms of indigenous farmers fed the exporting list of the mission trading company. Cash crop farming together with mining was to become the mainstay economic activity behind the colonial economy of the Gold Coast. The Gold Coast recorded 44% of palm oil and 48% of palm kernels as export revenue in 1890 and 1901 respectively.²¹⁰ By the first half of the twentieth century, the cocoa crop had taken over as the lead crop for export in the Gold Coast accounting for about 46% of the region's total exports value.²¹¹

3.9.2 Transportation

To facilitate its trading activities, the BMTC did not limit itself to trading activities. Its activities were extended to cover the transportation of goods and persons. These were to support and ease the buying and selling of goods. The sections below examine the measures that were put in place by the BMTC to improve road and water transportations in order to maximize trading profit. It also shows the attempt of the BMTC to show the work ethic of diligence as they made efforts to expand their activities and deal with obstacles that hindered their work.

²⁰⁹ Agbodeka, *An Economic History of Ghana*, p. 40.

²¹⁰ Gold Coast under Colonial Rule, <http://www.businessghana.com/portal/aboutghana/index.php?op=gold> Accessed 25th April, 2014. 8:47pm.

²¹¹ Ibid.

3.9.2.1 Road Transportation

Transportation served as a hindrance to successful trading activities. Until the mid-nineteenth century, head portage was the only means of transporting goods between the coast and the interior towns.

Transportation by head portage posed a number of limitations on trading activities. First of all, bulky goods could not be transported in large quantities. Head porters could carry as much as they could as human beings. It could be easier, for instance, for head porters to transport cotton from Anum to Christiansborg than for them to transport cocoa beans from Akropong to Christiansborg because of the bulkiness of cocoa beans. A second limitation of the head portage system was the cost involved.²¹² Tying in to the first limitation, if more bulky goods had to be transported inland from the coast, it meant that more head porters would be needed to do that. In this instance the cost of transporting goods increases because all the head porters had to be paid. Finally, transportation by head portage took a longer period of time. Head porters had to walk over long distances to towns to deliver goods. These limitations of the head portage system did not only hinder effective trading activities but subsequently also increased the prices of goods. In the end it defeated the mission trading company's attempt to keep prices of goods at the possible lowest level. Pictures eleven and twelve below show head porters carrying cotton and cocoa to the coast.

It was based on this background that the need to better the road facilities that linked the interior towns and the coast of the Gold Coast became necessary. The essence of better

²¹² Webster, "The Bible and the Plough", p. 424. This was confirmed by Opanin Oduro Kwarteng. According to Opanin, his father told him that his father (i.e. Opanin Oduro Kwarteng's grandfather) had served as a head porter on few occasions.

road transportation was to eliminate the limitations that head portage posed. It was further to facilitate the importation and exportation of produce and the inland transportation of produce between the interior towns and the coast.

The BMTC was fortunate to have the Basel Mission Society laying a foundation for improvement on road transportation. In the early years of the 1850s, the BMS began to reconstruct a road built earlier by the Danish people from Christiansborg to the foot of the Akuapem hills.²¹³ The road was to have a diversion to Odumase-Krobo. By the year 1859, the road had been completed up to Abokobi. The mission society planned to construct the road up to Aburi but the slope of the Akuapem hills made it difficult for this to be achieved. This notwithstanding, the road was motorable by 1868.²¹⁴ The BMTC's association with the BMS enabled it to continue the work of improving the roads and to make use of them for its trading purposes.

The initial roads built were to be used by hand carts and trucks that had been built at the mission workshops at Christiansborg by 1882.²¹⁵ As is seen in picture eight below, the footpaths that were used by head porters were cleared and expanded for easier transportation purposes. Those footpaths connecting mission stations in Accra and Akuapem were also widened and straightened.²¹⁶ By the end of the century, cask and barrels had been introduced for the transportation of palm products and cocoa beans by means of rolling. These casks and barrels were produced in the workshop of the company. In picture ten is a workshop located at Christiansborg for producing the casks

²¹³ This road had been built by the Danes from Christiansborg to through Legon to the foot of the Akuapem hills in the early years of the nineteenth century. By the year 1850, the road was in ruins so the Basel Mission began to reconstruct it. Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana*, pp. 89, 135.

²¹⁴ Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana*, p. 135.

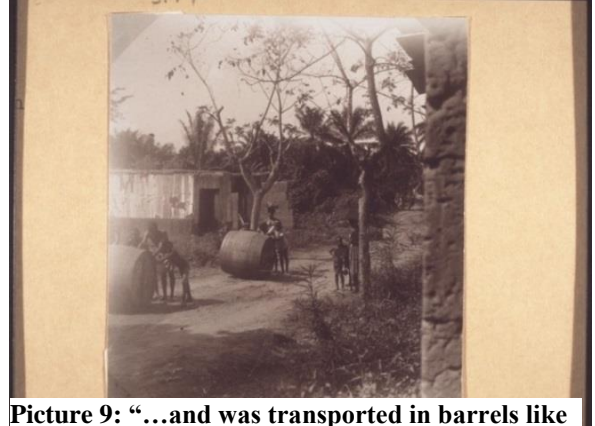
²¹⁵ Boahen, *Ghana*, pp. 84, 98.

²¹⁶ Schweizer, *Survivors on the Gold Coast*, p. 102.

and barrels. They were rolled on the footpaths from the interior to the coast for exportation.²¹⁷ For instance, in picture nine below is an illustration of the transportation of palm oil to the coast.



Picture 8: Clearing a road near Abokobi
<http://www.bmarchives.org/items/show/56172>



Picture 9: "...and was transported in barrels like this"
<http://www.bmarchives.org/items/show/84441>



Picture 10: Carpentry workshop in Christiansborg
<http://www.bmarchives.org/items/show/71078>



Picture 11: Dispatching cotton from Anum trading post
<http://www.bmarchives.org/items/show/70056>

²¹⁷ Boahen, *Ghana*, p. 98.



Picture 12: Women carrying sacks of cocoa to the coast

<http://www.bmarchives.org/items/show/57076>

Despite these attempts by the mission society to improve road transportation, the ultimate goal of easier transportation of goods between the coast and interior towns had still not been achieved. It can be argued that the transportation of goods by rolling of cask and barrels did not remove much of the limitations that head portage had on trading activities. Rolling of casks and barrels though may reduce the number of persons needed to transport goods; it did not shorten the distance to be covered. Rollers would still travel by foot and needed enough energy to roll the heavy casks and barrels. The rolling of casks and barrels furthermore had to be done tactfully especially in instances of ascending or descending hills so that the containers do not get out of control of rollers. It is based on this that it can be said the BMTC still needed a transportation system better than the rolling of casks and barrels. Vehicle use provided the mission trading company with the best alternative of transporting goods.

In 1904, the BMTC acquired a vehicle for the purposes of transporting goods with weight of one hundred and fifteen (115) pounds. Picture thirteen below is the first vehicle

acquired by the company. This vehicle could not render much service for the company as expected. Therefore, a Mercedes Benz vehicle which was acquired about three years later proved more useful.²¹⁸



Picture 13: “First AEG 5 ton lorry designated for the Gold Coast, 1904.”
<http://www.bmarchives.org/items/show/84463>



Picture 14: “The 'Pioneer', the Mission Trading Company's steamer on the Volta”
<http://www.bmarchives.org/items/show/70433>

3.9.2.2 Water Transportation

The improvement of transportation systems was extended to cover the area of water transportation to facilitate import and export of goods to and from the Gold Coast. The BMTC purchased sailing ships which were considered cheaper to the already in use steam engine driven freighters to transport goods from German ports (Hamburg or Bremerhaven) to the Gold Coast. As a Swiss organisation traditionally, the ties which Switzerland and Germany shared enabled the BMTC to acquire goods directly from Germany to be sold in its stores in the Gold Coast. The first of five sailing ships acquired by the BMTC was the *Palme* bought in 1866 that could carry about two hundred and forty (240) tons of goods for the company.²¹⁹ The ship was used to carry the European

²¹⁸ Schweizer, *Survivors on the Gold Coast*, pp. 102-103.

²¹⁹ *Ibid*, p. 104.

commodities to the Gold Coast and then returned to Germany with the cash crops that were exported to Europe.

In the Gold Coast, water transportation was considered essential for trade along the Volta River. The mission trading company acquired a tugboat with a capacity of one hundred and twenty (120) tons driven by a double engine to be used for the transportation of goods upstream.²²⁰ Picture fourteen above is the boat “Pioneer” on the Volta River. It operated between Akuse, Kpong and Ada for the transportation of agricultural products acquired from these towns.

The efforts of the BMTC at improving transportation systems indicate their diligence in ensuring that trade is effective and efficient.

3.9.3 Organisation of Services

3.9.3.1 Transportation of Persons

The transportation activities of the BMTC were not limited to that of goods. The mission trading company acted as an agent for transportation services too. As part of its support to evangelical work, it arranged for the transportation of Basel missionaries and workers to and from Africa. From the pictures fifteen (a) and (b) below, it can be presumed that these transportation services were extended to the general public in the years to come as these adverts of the company produced by the West African Review Supplement in 1935 reveal.

²²⁰ Ibid.

In the same way, they could receive timely response to their requests and questions from the Home Committee. The missionaries demonstrated their work ethic of reliability as they ensured that credible services were rendered to customers.

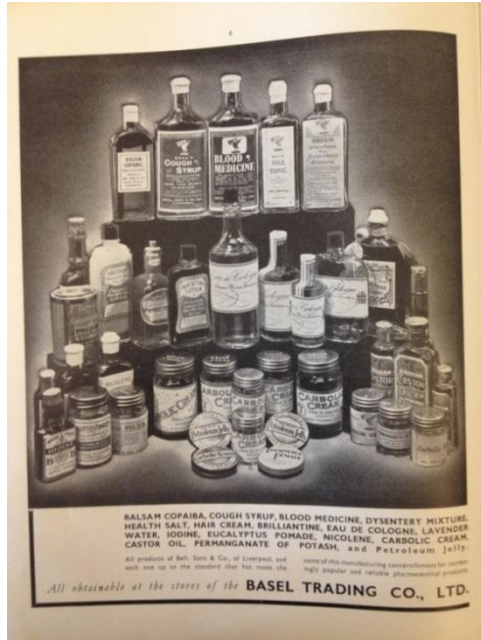
3.9.4 Advertisement

In the Supplement to the November 1935 edition of the *West African Review*, a number of advertisements of the BMTC are displayed. These adverts show the various kinds of goods that were available at the mission trading stores and other services that it rendered. As a company that imported and distributed various European goods to the Gold Coast, the advertisements reveal a number of issues that are worthy of attention.

First of all the adverts reveal efforts that were made to promote European commodities to the African community. As shown in the pictures sixteen and seventeen below, medical products sold by the mission trading company ranged from syrup to balm. They served the purposes of curing diseases such as cough and dysentery. Listed below the products in picture sixteen are other chemical products that the company imported from Europe which included hair pomade, body perfume and iodine. In picture seventeen, Bovril an energy giving fluid meat product which was first produced in 1871 by Scot John Lawson Johnston²²³ carried the message of an alternative energy giving product to that known by the African people locally. The sale of these products by the BMTC goes to confirm what Birgit Meyer considers as a contribution by missionaries to the development of “an evolution of new individual needs” in African communities²²⁴ as the African people developed a taste for European goods.

²²³ *History of Bovril*, <http://www.bovril.co.uk/ind.php>, Accessed 14th March 2014. 3:11am.

²²⁴ Meyer, *Translating for the Devil*, p. 12.



Picture 16: Some medical and chemical products sold by the BMTC, WARS, p. 6



Picture 17: Some items sold at the BMTC stores, WARS, p. 10

In addition the advertisement of the commodities sold by the BMTC reveals that the initial objective of supplying the Basel missionaries with their needed commodities in the Gold Coast was reviewed to include a supply to other European nationals on the Gold Coast and the African people. Left with the Basel missionaries alone, the mission trading company would not have been concerned about advertising because the initial store opened by Rottman in Christiansborg was for their benefit (the Basel missionaries). However, in Debrunner's *Digest of Articles on Ghana in Basel Mission Periodicals*, the Christiansborg town is considered as a profitable trading point²²⁵ because of the presence of various European nationals in the town coupled with the increase in taste for European goods by the African people. There was therefore the need to capture the attention of

²²⁵ Debrunner, *Digest of Articles on Ghana in Basel Mission Periodicals*, p. 124.

other consumers aside from the Basel missionaries to the commodities sold by the mission trading company.

Finally, the advertisements run by the BMTC reveal the competition that existed between the various European trading companies for buyers of its products.

3.10 The Separation of the BMTC from the BMS

The Basel Mission Trading Company operated under the mission society until 1917 when it was decoupled. At the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, the British governor of the Gold Coast Hugh Clifford indicated the danger that the BMS and BMTC posed for the security of the colony because of their pro-German sentiments.²²⁶ This was as a result of the high number of German missionaries that worked for both the mission society and the mission trading company.²²⁷ The Secretary of State for the Colonies, Walter Long accused both the BMS and the BMTC of being pro-German because they had employed more Germans in the organisation. The organization was therefore seen as an enemy to the British because of their Germanic ties.

To present the trading company as a neutral company in relation to the war, all the German workers of the company were retired.²²⁸ The company went on to further separate itself formally from the mission society with the making of new by-laws in November 1917 and the mission society's shares in the trading company were sold out to Swiss nationals. This attempt by the management of the Basel Mission Trading Company to present itself as a neutral entity did not achieve its objective as the Basel missionaries

²²⁶ Gannon, "The Basle Mission Trading Company and British Colonial Policy in the Gold Coast", p. 504.

²²⁷ This has been elaborated in chapters one and two of this study.

²²⁸ Gannon, "The Basle Mission Trading Company and British Colonial Policy in the Gold Coast", p. 504.

were deported from the Gold Coast. All the properties of the mission society and the trading company were seized by the British Colonial Government.

In February 1918, the Gold Coast Legislative Council passed the Ordinance No. 1 of 1918, Enemy Property Control and Disposal under which the properties of the mission society and the mission trading company were placed under the supervision of a Controlling Officer of Enemy Property.²²⁹ The trading company did not agree with the action taken by British Colonial Government and protested against it. During the years of protest, the mission trading company was handed over to the Commonwealth Trust Limited as a property under the Board of Trustees of the British Government. The Gold Coast Legislative Council passed the Ordinance No. 40 which permitted the control and continuation of the mission trading company. By this an attempt was made to maintain the philanthropic nature of the old mission trading company.

The Swiss Government protested the deportation of the staff of the mission trading company and the seizure of its properties for ten years. The rate of protestation from Switzerland raised questions about Britain's legality in the matter. For fear that the Swiss Government would present the case before the League of Nations, and the financial difficulties that the Commonwealth Trust Limited was experiencing, attempts were made to return the mission trading company to the missionaries.²³⁰ A decision was made in February 1928 to liquidate the Commonwealth Trust Limited and its holdings returned to

²²⁹ Ibid, p. 506.

²³⁰ Ibid, p. 510.

the Basel Mission Trading Company. The Basel Mission Trading Company was paid an amount of Two Hundred and Fifty Thousand Pounds (£ 250,000.00) as compensation.²³¹

Having been separated from the BMS, the BMTC changed its official name to the Basel Trading Company Limited.²³² Locally, it was known to the people as the Basel Mission Factory.²³³

3.11 Indigenous African Response to Activities of BMTC

Most literature on the response of Africans to European activities on the continent have been limited to the imposition of colonial rule.²³⁴ This has risen out of the efforts by some historians to show that Africans were not passive in, and did not accept the imposition of colonial rule.²³⁵ The response of African societies to either accommodate or confront colonial imposition or to implement both reactions (referred to by Adu Boahen as “hybrid”) varied from the different societies at different times and occurred under different circumstances.²³⁶ Some African societies resisted European intrusion from the beginning and later accommodated them; other African societies accommodated and later

²³¹ Gannon, “The Basle Mission Trading Company and British Colonial Policy in the Gold Coast”, p. 515.

²³² “UTC Estates of Ghana Limited Prospectus”, p. 11.

²³³ “Basel Mission Factory change of name to Basel Mission Trading Co. Ltd”, The Gold Coast Gazette, December 24 1932, CSO 6/7/30, PRAAD-Accra

²³⁴ Examples of some of these literature on African resistance are Allen Isaacman and Barbara Isaacman, “Resistance and Collaboration in Southern and Central Africa, c. 1850-1920”, *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 10(1), 1977, pp. 31-62; Margaret Priestley, “The Asante Question and the British: Eighteenth-Century Origins”, *Journal of African History*, 2(1), 1961, pp. 35-59; David Ross, “Dahomey”, in M. Crowder (ed.), *West African Resistance: The Military Response to Colonial Occupation*, Hutchinson, London, 1971, pp. 145-169; and Ali A. Mazrui, “Seek Ye First the Political Kingdom”, in Ali A. Mazrui (ed.) *UNESCO General History of Africa: Africa since 1935*, vol. VIII, UNESCO, Paris, 1993, pp. 105-126.

²³⁵ T. O. Ranger, “African Initiatives and Resistance in the face of Partition and Conquest” in A. Adu Boahen (ed.), *UNESCO General History of Africa: Africa under Colonial Domination 1880-1935* vol. VII, UNESCO, Paris, 1985, p. 45.

²³⁶ Albert Adu Boahen, *African Perspectives on Colonialism*, John Hopkins University Press: Baltimore, 1987, p. 35.

resisted European intrusion; and other societies resisted European intrusion from the beginning till they were crushed. However, Adu Boahen maintains that African societies usually received the Europeans to reside and conduct their activities in their towns (with the consent of their leaders) but later resisted with attempts by the Europeans to take over the sovereignty of their lands.²³⁷ For instance the Kingdom of Dahomey had a pleasant relationship with the French until the 1880s when the French attempted to take over Cotonou which served as the most important port for exporting palm oil, the prominent source of income for the kingdom at the time which resulted in the first and second Franco-Dahomean wars in 1890 and 1892 respectively.²³⁸

African response to European activities in Africa was extended to trading and missionary activities which were met with equal response of either accommodating or resisting in various forms. For instance Parker reveals that Ga chiefs were hostile to the BMS because the mission society discouraged its members from settling their disputes in the chiefs' court.²³⁹ This attempt by the BMS could be a means of preventing its members from dealing in alcohol which had to be presented to a chief upon visit but was against the principles of the mission society.²⁴⁰ The hostility of the Ga chiefs to the BMS therefore falls within the category of indigenous response to European activities in Africa.

It is in this regard that the response of the indigenous African people to the trading activities of the BMTC is being considered in this work. The BMTC was accommodated

²³⁷ Ibid, 56.

²³⁸ David Ross, "Dahomey". In M. Crowder, (ed.), *West African Resistance: The Military Response to Colonial Occupation*, Hutchinson, London, 1971, p. 147.

²³⁹ Parker, *Making the Town*, p. 64.

²⁴⁰ See chapter three, p. 63

by the indigenous people from the beginning of its operations but as the mission trading company expanded, the response of the indigenous people shifted largely to that of resistance.

3.11.1 Accommodation

The increase in the taste for European goods by the African people enabled the BMTC to expand its operations including the establishment of trading posts in the interior towns. As indicated in chapter three, Christiansborg was considered a profitable trading town because the African people demonstrated a high demand for European goods.²⁴¹ The company gave the African people access to European goods at cheaper prices. Thus the willingness of the African people to purchase goods from the BMTC stores was an indication of them accommodating the mission trading company.

Furthermore, the accommodation of the activities of the BMTC by the African people is revealed through the attachment of some of them to the company as apprentices and shop attendants to be trained in 'Christian commerce'. An example of such a person was Benjamin Tetteh who was trained as a bookbinder in Germany and was later employed to work in the BMTC. After working with the BMTC for some time, he became an evangelist for the Basel Mission Society at Mayera till his death in 1871.²⁴²

²⁴¹ E.C. 6/2, PRAAD-Accra.

²⁴² Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana*, p. 138



Picture 18: “Shop” – Some African customers in a BMTC store

<http://www.bmarchives.org/items/show/75089>



Picture 19: “Basel Mission Trading Company shop in Bonaku” – Some African and European attendants in a BMTC store

<http://www.bmarchives.org/items/show/58957>

In pictures eighteen and nineteen above some African people are seen in front of counters purchasing goods from BMTC stores. On the other side of the counters are some African people also seen together with missionary merchants attending to customers in the stores. These pictures help to illustrate the reaction of the African people in terms of accommodating of the activities of the BMTC by the African people on the Gold Coast.

Likewise the African people on the Gold Coast accommodated the BMTC by serving as middlemen between the coastal stores and the interior towns for the supply of commodities. By the year 1860, African merchants exchanged African produce for European goods from the BMTC.²⁴³ For instance Addo-Fening indicates that by 1878, some people from Akyem went to the coast to buy commodities like cloth and tobacco which they took to their town to resell.²⁴⁴ Some African persons too gained employment as head porters and carriers of the goods to and from the coast until the improvement of transportation systems.

²⁴³ Reynolds, *Trade and Economic Change on the Gold Coast*, p. 149.

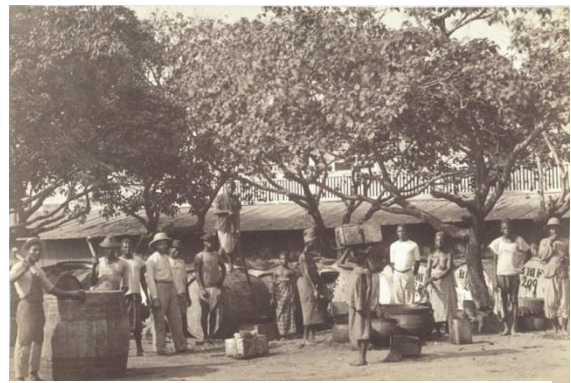
²⁴⁴ Addo-Fening, *Akyem-Abuakwa c. 1874-1943*, p. 315.

3.11.2 Resistance

The activities of the BMTC were confronted by African merchants and middlemen when it became obvious that the company was competing with them (African merchants and middlemen) for the interior market.²⁴⁵ This happened after the mission trading company penetrated into the interior towns of the Gold Coast to establish trading posts.²⁴⁶ At the initial stages of operations, the BMTC trading activities was limited to the coast, specifically Christiansborg from where goods were supplied to the various mission stations. Local traders then purchased goods from the store to sell in the interior markets. By its tenth year of operation, the BMTC was able to establish branches of the company in the interior towns due to its association with the BMS. For instance picture eleven above indicate a trading store at Anum and pictures twenty and twenty-one below indicate mission trading stores at Ada and Akuse.



Picture 20: “Adda premises of the Basel Mission Trading Company...”
<http://www.bmarchives.org/items/show/84295>



Picture 21: “Trading post of the Basler [Basel] Mission in Akuse by the river Volta”
<http://www.bmarchives.org/items/show/71645>

²⁴⁵ Reynolds, *Trade and Economic Change on the Gold Coast*, p. 148.

²⁴⁶ *Ibid*, p. 149.

The mission trading company established these stores alongside the mission stations that were opened in the various towns as the mission work of the BMS expanded.²⁴⁷ The Rev. Süss, for instance saw the possibility of setting up a mission station in the Afram town through which trading activities could be established in the town. To him, the Afram town was well situated for trade.²⁴⁸ These interior stores can be said to have been established to liaise with the BMTC in Christiansborg so that they could serve the purpose of supplying the mission stations with the needed European commodities. As the BMTC established branches in the interior towns, it implied that the businesses of some African merchants and middlemen were disrupted.

A number of scholars have established some of the major protests that were raised against the operations of the BMTC by African merchants and middlemen.²⁴⁹ Some of the protest were in connection with the mission trading company's cheaper prices of goods which was possible because it had the advantage of acquiring its goods directly from Europe and from the mission farms and workshops which the African merchants and middlemen were not privileged to. In addition, the mission trading company was accused of poaching market centres created by the African people and not creating their own.²⁵⁰

However, according to Parker, hostilities by African merchants particularly the Ga traders towards the BMTC were influenced mainly by the Asante invasions in Krepi in 1869 that disrupted trading activities particularly the palm oil and cotton trades.²⁵¹ This

²⁴⁷ Schweizer, *Survivors on the Gold Coast*, p. 100.

²⁴⁸ Jenkins, "Süss to Basel June 55" in Abstracts, p. 31.

²⁴⁹ Some of these works are Reynolds, *Trade and Economic Change on the Gold Coast*, pp. 149-150. Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana*, p. 133. Schweizer, *Survivors on the Gold Coast*, p. 100. Parker, *Making the Town*, p. 64.

²⁵⁰ Reynolds, *Trade and Economic Change on the Gold Coast*, p. 150.

²⁵¹ Parker, *Making the Town*, p. 64.

disruption in trade did not necessarily turn the African merchants against the BMTC because of its (i.e. BMTC) trading activities but because of the severe competition that the mission trading company seem to give them at the time when their (i.e. the African merchants) businesses were faced with major setbacks.²⁵²

3.12 Conclusion

This chapter has examined the beginnings of the Basel Mission Trading Company. It considered the rationale for establishing the company and what it sought to achieve. The operations of the BMTC have been considered as well attempting to illustrate how the work ethic and practices of honesty, diligence and reliability reflected in their operations. These work ethic and practices were based on the protestant ethic and the structured training the Basel missionaries received in their mission school. The goods that the company traded in for instance were selective based on moral grounds and also on the conviction that it was a mission in itself. It can therefore be concluded that the operations of the BMTC were affected by its association with the evangelical section of the mission society because it operated within this means. Therefore its activities were directed towards achieving the vision of the BMS in regenerating the African society. However in achieving its successes, the chapter has illustrated that the good sense of these work ethic and practices by the African people (some of whom were employed by the mission trading company) made significant contributions. This is because these work ethic and practices were inculcated in the indigenous people through their various and different ethnic cultural systems.

²⁵² These hostilities were not peculiar to the BMTC as other European firms received similar protest from the African merchants and middlemen when they (European firms) appeared as threats to the businesses of the African merchants and middlemen.

Furthermore from this chapter, it can be said that the response of the African people on the Gold Coast to the organisation and operations of the BMTC placed them in the category of African societies that initially accommodated European activities but resisted due to the unfavourable position they were placed in. These reactions demonstrate the kind of relationships that existed between the African people and the various European groups that operated on the coast.

CHAPTER FOUR

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

4.1 Summary

The Basel Mission Society operated for ninety years on the Gold Coast. Throughout the years of missionary work in Africa, missionaries who arrived had to be innovative in order to be able to work effectively. By this the instructions given them and the means of operation were likely to change depending on the conditions met in the mission field. The Basel missionaries were no exception in this circumstance.

The task of Basel missionaries in Africa was to convert the indigenous people to Christianity and educate them formally for them to acquire reading and writing skills. The main purpose of the BMS educational system was to use the schools as a vehicle for evangelism.²⁵³ In addition to that, education also served as a vehicle for the implementation of the total social transformation idea of the pietistic movement which the Basel missionaries were associated with. The total social transformation idea expected that the change in the life of converts must not be limited to religion and faith but must include change in the social, health, economic and cultural life of the people. Change, however, was defined in terms of European perspective. This was to mean that the indigenous people among whom these missionaries operated were to reach a stage of living as Europeans which was regarded to be better.

²⁵³ Odamtten, *Missionary Factor in Ghana's Development*, p. 105.

Therefore the idea of total social transformation coupled with the innovativeness and adaption of missionaries worked together to direct them in undertaking secondary activities on the mission field.

A number of factors worked together to cause the Basel missionaries to engage in economic activities. The missionaries engaged in economic activities to support its evangelical work with the profits that were to be made out of the economic activities. Another reason that motivated the Basel missionaries to engage in economic activities was the problem of scarcity of European goods and the high cost of acquiring them. Therefore the missionaries engaged in these economic activities to be able to provide for themselves the needed goods at cheaper prices.

Moreover the Basel missionaries in compliance to its total social transformation idea had to generate enough income to be able to cater for their converts who left their families to stay in the Christian quarters. They also needed money to be able to “purchase” the freedom of some slaves from their masters. The missionaries’ economic activities enabled them to create jobs for these converts and liberated slaves under their care.

The Basel missionaries therefore engaged in economic activities at different places in different instances on their own. The Rev. Mohr engaged in farming with the help of the West Indian missionaries at Akropong. He cultivated both local and cash crops on his farm. Rev. Zimmermann employed labourers to work on the Abokobi plantation. He further experimented with the rearing of animals – goats, sheep and cattle (which was unsuccessful due to the presence of tsetse fly) – on the Abokobi farm to provide fresh and

healthy meat and milk for the missionaries at no or lower cost.²⁵⁴ The Rev. Süß also engaged in the selling of cloth at Gyadam and later settled at Koforidua to carry out trading and farming activities.

The economic activities of the Basel missionaries were met with opposition from within the mission society but the inability for any organisation to operate effectively without adequate funds coupled with the various reasons that have been raised can be said to have overcome the opposition. There was, however, the need to organize the various economic activities of the missionaries into one economic venture with missionary merchants in charge so that the evangelical work of the mission society did not suffer any hiccups.

It was in view of this that Hermann Ludwig Rottman was sent to the Gold Coast to take charge of mainly the acquisition and supply of needed commodities by the Basel missionaries. Rottman's background in commerce enabled him to see the possibility of engaging in profitable trade and so he established a trading store in Christiansborg in 1854 to supply the missionaries the needed goods readily and offer some for sale. The trading store gained the approval of the Home Committee and was registered as the Basel Mission Trading Company in 1859. The mission trading company was mandated to supply the mission stations with the necessary goods and materials and then create a platform to teach godly trading practices to the African people. It was also established as a self-supporting entity for the local Basel Mission Society on the Gold Coast.

The work of the BMTC was based on the idea that it was part of a bigger mission society and so had to operate within those boundaries. It operated as a pietistic organisation that

²⁵⁴ Jenkins, "Zimmermann's Quarterly Report end of May 1852" in *Abstracts*, pp. 11-13.

expected its members not to just profess their Christian faith but to “live” the Christian way of life and be an example to others in deeds through which others would be attracted to the faith. It can therefore be said that it was devoted to spreading the Christian faith in a different format from preaching the gospel. Due to this, it was selective in its operational commodities. It therefore did not sell firearms and alcohol. It further developed the areas of communication (transportation and postal systems) and advertisement in the bid to make its trading activities more efficient and profitable.

The mission trading company was further guided by the work ethic of honesty, reliability and diligence in its operations to distinguish itself from the trading activities of the other European firms that were characterized by cheating and fraudulent acts. To ensure fair trading practices in dealings with its customers and clients, the BMTC instituted control regimes so that all customers could acquire the goods at the same price. Efforts were also made to give farmers good prices for their farm products sold to the trading company. The company in addition ensured that it provided reliable services to its customers. In the area of diligence, the BMTC showed diligence in the careful documentation of its transactions and the expansion of its activities and other trading stores in the interior towns to complement the expansion of the BMS stations. The Basel missionaries hoped that through these practices and work ethic, the way of life of the African people will be affected as they (the African people) try to imitate their (Basel missionaries) conduct.

In all of these the African people had their own means of responding to the operations of the company. The indigenous African people accepted the mission trading company because they patronized its goods and services. The African people further made themselves available to be trained as apprentices in the trading stores. On the other hand,

the BMTC received criticisms from the indigenous people especially from the middlemen and African merchants whose source of livelihood was threatened as the company expanded its trading activities into the interior towns.

4.2 Conclusion

From this study it has been seen that conscious efforts were made by the Basel Mission Trading Company to achieve the vision of the Basel Mission Society as a social transformer of the people among whom it evangelized. The economic policy of the Basel Mission Society aimed at transforming positively and enhancing the quality of life of the people among whom they worked.²⁵⁵ By this policy, it was recognized that developing the economic life of a people was as important as the development of the spiritual life which was in accordance with the mission society's idea of a total social transformation. As the mission trading company operated in the Gold Coast, it succeeded in influencing some aspects of the economic pattern of the region which can be said to have had a long term effect on the Gold Coast.

Likewise the mission trading company supported the activities of the BMS in terms of education with profit from the trade. It also operated a book depository where the necessary learning materials such as bible and atlas could be acquired. This went a long way in developing the literacy level of the Gold Coast as some African people got the opportunity of learning to read and write.

Through its efforts, the BMTC provided a ready market for the indigenous people who took up the cultivation of the crops it exported. The mission trading company's

²⁵⁵ Agyemang, *Our Presbyterian Heritage*, p. 86.

penetration into the interior towns to open trading centres enabled these indigenous farmers to sell their products at lesser transportation cost and acquire more profits. This in effect contributed significantly to the opening up of the economy of the Gold Coast and the move towards achieving a monetized economy. The cocoa crop continues to be one of the major cash crops for exportation now in Ghana and it continues to contribute largely to the revenue of the country.

New employment opportunities became available to the African people through the operations of the BMTC as land and labour became available for sale. The new employment opportunities gave birth to a new class of workers both unskilled and semi-skilled.²⁵⁶ For instance the importation of vehicles by the trading company enabled some of the African people to acquire skills as drivers, mechanics and fuel attendants²⁵⁷ who can be placed in the category of semi-skilled workers. There were unskilled workers as farm labourers especially with the development of the cocoa industry. Land owners also began to give out their lands on lease for the cultivation of cash crops. They were able to acquire wealth which could enable them build houses like that of the missionaries, send their children to school and consume more of European commodities. In addition, they could contribute in terms of money to the operations of the local church.²⁵⁸

Furthermore in the area of trade, there was the emergence of “nouveaux riche” merchants who made their riches out of trade. Addo-Fening gives examples of some of such persons who emerged at Akyem Abuakwa as James Kwaku Ashmore, John Yaw Boafo and John Wilson Boobae. These people were trained at the Basel mission schools and took up trade

²⁵⁶ Boahen, *Ghana*, p. 103

²⁵⁷ Schweizer, *Survivors on the Gold Coast*, p. 103.

²⁵⁸ See appendix c below.

after graduation.²⁵⁹ Another African merchant who emerged was Alf. J. Ocansey from Ada.²⁶⁰ He was trained by the Basel missionaries and then worked with Messrs. F & A. Swanzy before establishing his own business. Alf. J. Ocansey became an importer and exporter in general goods after leaving Messrs. F & A. Swanzy. He established his business at Somanyah in 1910 and expanded to other towns such as Ada, Akuse, Nsawam, Koforidua and Osiam with Accra as the headquarters.²⁶¹ The emergence of these African merchants is an indication that the vision of the Basel missionaries in consolidating the ‘legitimate’ trade was being achieved. By the peak of colonial rule, a number of African people had their trading companies registered by the colonial office. For instance, The New Juabeng Trading Co. was a partnership of Samuel Kwasi Sao, Yaa Sarponmaa and Akua Donkor registered in Koforidua in 1944.²⁶² This company dealt in “books, stationaries and sundries” and operated in Koforidua and Suhum.²⁶³ In Accra, the Hasko & Sons Ltd. was a partnership of David Amon, Hammond Ashaley and Ashie Amon registered in 1946. This company imported and sold “books, stationeries, drugs and provisions” in Accra.²⁶⁴

The operations of the BMTC had negative effects on the Gold Coast as well. These effects resulted in some of the trends affecting the economy of the Ghanaian society.²⁶⁵

In the first instance the BMTC served mainly as an importing and exporting company distributing European commodities. Their exporting items, like all other European firms

²⁵⁹ Addo-Fening, Akyem Abuakwa c. 1874-1943, p. 317.

²⁶⁰ Allister Macmillan (ed.), *The Red Book of West Africa: Historical and Descriptive Commercial and Industrial Facts, Figures, and Resources*, Frank Cass and Company Limited, London, 1968, p. 203.

²⁶¹ Ibid.

²⁶² “Partnership Firms registered”, ADM/KD.29/6/125, PRAAD-Koforidua.

²⁶³ Ibid.

²⁶⁴ Ibid.

²⁶⁵ Almost all the persons interviewed for the study talked about the positives that came out of the operations of the Basel missionaries without considering some possible negative outcomes.

in the Gold Coast were limited to cash crops. As Adu Boahen puts it, there was no development in the “technological change in the means of production nor in the industrial processing of the products”²⁶⁶ before they were exported. Thus the mission trading company did not make significant efforts in developing the manufacturing sector of the economy. The over-concentration on exportation of agricultural products in their raw state continued throughout the colonial era and after the attainment of independence by the country. Although the exporting brackets have been widened to include non-tradition exports (NTEs) such as pineapple, peanut, *agushi* and dried fish, they continue to be exported in their natural state without much value added.

In addition, agricultural experimentation contributed to giving the economy of the Gold Coast a backbone predominantly in the hands of small holder farmers and individuals. The success of the cocoa industry is greatly attributed to the relentless efforts, commitment and dedication of the peasant farmer. Presently the Ghanaian economy is still predominantly agrarian and largely in the hands of individual farmers although farming techniques have improved considerably as against that of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Thus the mission trading company can be said to have contributed to the current economic pattern of modern Ghana as an agrarian one.

The BMTC likewise contributed to the continuous importation and consumption of manufactured European commodities in Ghana as against the consumption of locally manufactured commodities. This is because it created an avenue for satisfying the wants of the African people for European goods. In recent times the consumption of foreign

²⁶⁶ Boahen, “New Trends and Processes in Africa in the Nineteenth Century”, p. 62.

commodities in the Ghanaian society has been widened to include Asian goods particularly goods from China dominating the local market.

It is worthy of note that the operations of the BMTC worked together with other European activities to achieve the above consequences.

Significantly, the church in recent times is still recognised as a strong force in Africa's development. According to Zalot, the Church is mandated by both social teachings and the quest for eternal salvation to work at the development of the African people.²⁶⁷ As such Christianity continues to be attached to the social transformation of the African people.

This study has attempted to examine the Basel Mission Trading Company not just as a trading organisation but as an instrument through which the Basel Mission Society attempted to influence the lives of the African people as part of the means of regenerating the African society from the ills of the transatlantic slave trade. It can be concluded that the Basel missionaries to a large extent did succeed in their efforts to regenerate the African society through trade but there were negative consequences as well. In addition, the Basel missionaries did succeed in their efforts because the African people who were employed to work for the BMTC had a good sense of work ethic and practices of honesty, reliability and hard work which were inculcated in them through African cultural systems.

A number of Africans did earn a skill and a means of earning income and the 'legitimate' trade acquired a foothold on the African economy. However, regeneration was done in

²⁶⁷ Jozef D. Zalot, *The Roman Catholic Church and Economic Development in Sub-Saharan Africa: Voices yet Unheard in a Listening World*, University Press of America Inc. New York, 2002, p. 237.

the context of European perspective without much acknowledgement of the African cultural system. As Meischer notes, the Basel missionaries sought to “re-shape individual personhood by re-constructing local ideas”²⁶⁸ whereby the style of living of the indigenous people conformed to their own. It is for this reason that European commodities continue to dominate the African market.

Similar to the work ethic and practices of the Basel missionaries, the Ghanaian working society operates with ethic which is couched as “code of ethics” for the different professions and organisations. The nature of a profession determines the code of ethics which serves the purpose of being a guiding principle for members of the profession in the course of carrying out their duties. Further research can therefore be carried out to determine the existence of ideas of work ethic and practices in African cultural systems as well as examine the current code of ethic of the various professionals in Ghana to determine the influence of both European ideas and African cultural systems on them.

²⁶⁸ Stephan F. Miescher, “The Challenges of Presbyterian Masculinity in Colonial Ghana”, *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, New Series (9), 2005, p. 75.

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APPENDICES

- a. Copy of certificate of receipt

This is to certify that I received
£1.8.6 for furnitures
(table 5/ , bedstead 10/ , library 2/6
2 chairs 5/ , sofa 6/)
& £1. 4 - , the payment for
4 loads from Asfo to Sadrin & 6/1
from Mr. W. Rottmann, this
7. day of July. 1893.
Khan - Sadrin.

Enock A. Kwabi

Source: EC 6/6, PRAAD-Accra

b. Copy of request sheet by Basel missionary Rev. Schmid of Nsaba to the BMTC

1896		<u>Rev. Schmid, Nsaba.</u>				
December	24	3	Dy. Hymnbooks	14/-	2	14
1897		4	" Heart Books	3/-		12
Feby.	4	5	Arnold's Bible History (Amotafowa)	2/-		15
		2	Reader II	6/-		12
		2	Logbooks	4/2		9
		4	Cashbooks	3/3		13
		2	Boxes Celtic pens	1/6		3
		2	" Viaduct	1/3		2
		1	Dozen Tohi Reader N IV	9/-		9
		1	" Hymn Books	24/-	1	4
"	5	2	Bible Jewels	1/3		2
		1	Do. Wonders	1/3		1
		1	Fifty years in the Church of Rome	3/-		3
		2	Nuttall's Standard Dictionary	3/-		6
		1	Dy. Royal Readers I	3/3		3
		1	" Royal Readers II	5/6		5
		2	Vols. Barnes Notes on the 4 Gospels	2/-		4
"	17	3	Holborn Class Registers	10/-		2
		1	Dy. Tohi New Testaments	12/-		12
		4	Gill's Military Drill-Books	2/3		9
Mar.	5	4	Dy. Tohi Primers	3/-		12
"	15	1	Holborn Register	11/-		11
"	22	1	Dy. Tohi New Testaments	12/-		12
"	"	1	" Post Cards	1/-		1
"	"	1	Packet of Paper	1/10		1

L. H. M.

Source: EC 6/6, PRAAD-Accra

- c. Abstract showing contributions of the congregations and total expenditure in the year 1899

Abstract showing contributions of the congregations and Total Expenditure in the year 1899.

Stations	Subscriptions and Collections			Church Tax			Sunday Offering			School fee			Special Collection for Local purposes	Total income from Congregat.	Grant ²⁾ in aid	Payments of the Committee			Total Expenditure ³⁾						
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.				£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.				
Christiansborg	100	2	6	82	17	—	59	17	8	41	14	—		284	11	2	292	7	2	192	11	—	769	9	4
Abokobi	50	6	5	81	11	6	37	10	—	1	3	3		170	11	2	80	15	7	548	16	10	800	3	7
Odumase	50	1	3	49	4	3	30	13	8	12	1	6	140 ¹⁾	142	—	8	127	2	5	296	17	11	566	1	—
Ada	65	8	—	46	16	—	39	—	—	5	2	9		156	6	9	47	—	5	301	1	2	504	8	4
Aburi	40	15	6	81	5	6	25	11	1	2	15	1		150	7	2	101	10	10	195	8	3	447	6	3
Akropong	83	2	8	234	9	11	92	1	9	10	17	9		420	12	1	515	10	8	84	5	9	1020	8	6
Anum	26	6	6	70	7	—	33	1	11	3	10	—		133	5	5	124	15	8	577	14	11	835	16	—
Begoro	84	2	7	202	9	9	107	—	7	22	9	6		416	2	5	252	6	11	527	10	8	1196	—	—
Abetifi	56	—	—	92	6	9	41	4	11	3	1	3		192	12	11	113	5	1	185	12	5	488	10	5
Nsaba	49	10	—	82	17	9	38	19	7	—	15	6		172	2	10	47	8	4	471	1	3	690	12	5
Kumase	24	6	1	12	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—		36	11	1	82	15	2	331	9	5	450	15	8
	630	1	6	1036	10	5	505	1	2	103	10	7		2275	3	8	1781	18	3	3712	9	7	7769	11	6

1) Not included in Total.
2) This Grant in aid comes into account for 1900.
3) Approximate number. Europ. Missionaries not included.

Source: *Report of the Basel Evangelical Mission on the Gold Coast, West-Africa: 1900*, Basel, 1900.