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Ministry of Finance



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Institute of Education, UCC

UNIT 2

MISSIONARY EDUCATIONAL ENTERPRISE

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Introduction

- Though the development of education in the Gold Coast began with the establishment of castle schools, any meaningful contribution was made by the Missionary bodies.
- Missionary educational activities unlike castle schools extended beyond the castles and the immediate environment to other inland areas.
- The order in which the missions operated was: the *Basel, Wesleyan, Bremen, Roman Catholic, A.M.E. Zion.*

The Basel Mission

- The Basel Mission was mainly a German society with its Headquarters at Basel in Switzerland.
- The Mission came to the Gold coast at the request of the Danish governor, Major de Richelieu of Christianborg castle to work in the schools the Danes had established in and around the castle.
- Its first missionaries of four (Holwarth, C. Salbach, Jaeger and Heinze arrived in December, **1828**).
- Three of the pioneer missionaries and two other who came in 1832 died with the Rev Andreas Riis being the only survivor.
- In March, 1835 Riis moved to Akropong Akuapem on health grounds where he helped to spread the gospel and promote education.

The Basel Educational Contribution

- The Basel mission opened its first boys' school at Akropong Akuapim in 1843 and one for girls in 1847 which was later transferred to Aburi in 1854.
- Other schools were at Osu (1843). Abokobi (1854), Kyebi (1861), Anum (1864), Ada (1867), Begoro (1876), Nsaba (1891).
- In 1881, they extended missionary and educational work to Kumasi and reached Attebubu and Nkoranza in 1895 where they opened a Basel mission station in 1896.

Basel Educational Contribution

- **Basic Education:** The mission had to its credit 92 schools in 1889 with the total enrolment of about 2,500 children. and increased to 154 schools with enrolment of 4,984 children By 1898.
- **Subjects taught** – English, Reading, Writing Twi and Ga, Arithmetic as well as Bible Study. craft instruction and singing practice. Greek and Church history were taught to those desiring to go to Basel Seminary.
- **Girls Education:** The Basel Mission realized that Girls Education was important as boys. The boys to girls ratio in Basel Schools at that time was 2.7 to 1, compared with 6 to 1 in government and 7 to 1 in Wesleyan Schools.

Basel Educational Contribution

- **Teacher Education:** The Basel started a seminary at Akropong Akuapim in 1848 to train teachers and catechists (1st teacher training college, PTC).
- A second one was opened at Abetifi in 1898 but in 1924 it was merged with the seminary at Akropong.
- The Basel mission remained the only body providing teacher education until 1909 when the government opened the Accra Training College.
- **Technical and Vocational Education:** For the Basel the spade was as important as the bible therefore industrial education was at the core of their curriculum. They established Technical Schools at Akropong, Osu, Aburi and Abokobi and provided courses for joiners, wheelwrights, carpenters, locksmiths, blacksmiths, shoemakers and book-binders.

Basel Educational Contribution

- **Vernacular Education:** While the Wesleyan Missionaries were encouraged to learn the vernacular, the Basel Missionaries made it a condition for the missionary work they undertook.
- Andreas Riis wrote a book in Twi even before he opened a school.
- The Rev. Johann G. Christaller translated the four gospels, the New Testament, the Psalms and Proverbs and the whole Bible into Twi in 1859, 1864, 1866 and 1871 respectively. He also compiled a Twi dictionary.
- Zimmerman also translated into Ga the gospels and later wrote a Ga grammar and dictionary.
- The Basel missionaries also encouraged production of books in vernacular

Basel Educational Contribution

- **Agriculture:** - Practical agric education in school farms; Agriculture a compulsory subject at PTC; A model farm at Abokobi; Introduced new crops such as coffee, cocoa, pineapple, mango, pear and cocoa-yam.
- **Secondary Education:** The Basel Mission which later became known as the Presbyterian Church opened a Secondary School at Krobo Odumasi – Now PRESEC, Legon. Also Aburi Girls (1946) etc.
- The Basel mission by 1873 had put in place an educational system of 6 years primary education, 4 years middle school with technical and agricultural education as part of the curriculum. By 1890 a remarkable system of technical education had also been put in place.

the Wesleyan Mission

- The first Wesleyan Missionary, Rev. Joseph Dunwell arrived in Cape Coast in 1835 as a result of the request for bibles by William de Graft, who settled in Dixcove as a leader of a Christian study group. This was made possible by the Wesleyan Missionary Society in England through a certain Captain Potter who offered a free passage in his ship.
- Dunwell found that there was an excellent school of about 140 boys who were good at Reading and Writing. He however decided to establish a school in the Mission House where he lived. He employed an African teacher on a £3 a year and two or three assistants who were also paid in cloth.
- Dunwell, died within six months of his arrival in the country and so did his successors Mr. and Mrs. Wriggley and Mr. and Mrs. Harrop.

Rev. Thomas Birch Freeman

- In spite of the setbacks the mission persisted in carrying out its work, particularly with the arrival in 1838, of its most outstanding missionary, Rev. Thomas Birch Freeman in Cape Coast. Freeman was the son of an African father and an English mother. Prior to his arrival, the Methodist mission had inherited a number of schools established by the English and the SPG in Cape Coast and other places like Dixcove and Anomabu.
- Freeman spent about a year consolidating the work in these schools before he made two journeys to Kumasi where he was welcomed by the Asantehene. During his second journey in 1841 – 1842 he went with Owusu Ansah and Nkwantabisa and was given a plot to establish a mission but no permission to open a school in Kumasi.
- In 1857 Freeman resigned from the Wesleyan mission because of a disagreement over the mission's financial policy. He was appointed by the governor as Civil Commandant of Accra.

Wesleyan Educational Contribution

- **Basic Schools:** By 1880 the Wesleyan mission had more schools than any other body, eighty-three (83) with an enrolment of over 3,000.
- **Agricultural Education:** A maiden attempt to provide agricultural education was made by Rev Thomas Birch Freeman when he established the **Beulah** farm near Cape Coast. Unfortunately, the experiment did not last long.
- A second major attempt was made by Rev. W.H. Thackeray in 1841 with the establishment of the **Dominase** experimental model farm with the intention of encouraging Africans to develop in pupils the interest for Agriculture but it also did not thrive.

Wesleyan Educational Contribution

Technical and Vocational Education: In the 1880s the Rev. Kemp tried to re-organize teaching in two day schools at Cape Coast and Accra consisting of Upper and a Lower Divisions. Technical Drawing, Elementary Science, House hold-work, Bookkeeping and Industrial subjects were taught in the Upper Division while Reading, Writing, Arithmetic as well as Needlework were taught in the Lower Division.

- In 1892, Kemp also opened a Technical Boarding School at Cape Coast to train pupils in the handicrafts.
- The Wesleyans also opened a girls' school at Cape Coast in 1835 where Domestic Science was taught.
- On Mrs. Wriggley's death some five months after starting the school Mrs. Elizabeth Waldron took it over. She taught the girls Reading and Sewing.

Wesleyan Educational Contribution

- **Secondary Education:** The Wesleyans established the Wesleyan Secondary School (now known as Mfantshipim) in 1876. In 1935 Wesley Girls' High School at Cape Coast began to add secondary classes to its primary section which was established by Mrs. Wriggley in 1836.

Wesleyan Educational Contribution

Vernacular Development:

The Wesleyan paid attention to Vernacular Development

1859 - Translation of Twi books by Basel missionaries into Fanti

1870 - Rev. T. Laing, a mulatto minister produced the first primer in Fanti

1874 - Rev. Carr translated St. Mark's Gospel into Fanti

1884 - Rev. Cannel made Fanti Reading Book for Beginners

1885 - European minister, Cannel started compiling Fanti Grammar. Cannel became headmaster of Mfantsipim

Vernacular Development:

1886 - Cannel and Rev. A. W. Parker produced Fanti-English Dictionary

- Cannel and Rev. Isaac Anaman produced Fanti translation of John Bunyan's Pilgrim's progress

- Cannel, Rev. R. Hayfron and Rev. S.R. Attoh-Ahumah

1888 - Rev. A. W. Parker completed his Fanti translation of the New Testament

Wesleyan Educational Contribution

- **Teacher Education:** In order to train teachers, Freeman started a Theological Seminary at Accra in 1842 with the Rev. Shipman as its first Principal. It started with two students, John Ahumah Solomon and William Hanson. The seminary was abandoned after 1851 as a result of the death of Shipman in 1843 and the fact that the number of students never exceeded six.
- After this Wesleyan teachers were trained abroad especially at Fourah Bay in Sierra Leon.
- In 1918 one was opened at Aburi to train teachers and catechists but transferred to Kumasi in 1924 as Wesley College.
- The Wesleyans tried to solve the problem of shortage of teachers by introducing the **monitorial** system – Choosing the most promising boys as monitors who could then be trained to become teachers.

Bremen (North German) Missionary Society

1847 – First Bremen Missionaries settled at Peki Blengo (at the time not part of Gold Coast) under leadership of Rev. Lorenz Wolf

Death of Three of Wolf's Companions

1851 – Two others sent to help; but failed because Wolf was so sick and had to return to Europe

1853 – Next attempt at Keta because Peki was far from the sea. Again, because of the tribal war

1855 – (Three years later) station opened at Yuaya

Bremen (North German) Missionary Society

1857 - Another station opened at Ho

1881 - The Bremen mission established 6 outstations.

With education, their activities were similar to Basel Mission

- Emphasis on trade education, especially building

- Seven-class schools at main mission stations

1890 - Seminary established at Amedzofe .Teacher catechists produced
went out to open single-class village schools

1906 - A little under 3000 pupils attended the Bremen Mission schools,
including its few schools in the Gold Coast.

The Roman Catholic Mission

1482 - Originally the first mission to start schools in the Gold Coast when they came with the Portuguese

1637 - Their attempt failed. The Dutch forced them to leave

1880:

1. They restarted work at Elmina with the arrival of father Auguste Moreau and Father Eugene Murrat.
2. They found John Asante, an African. Was later baptised as James Gordon Marshall.
3. He acted as interpreter, served at Mass and later became one of the first Fanti catechists at Elmina.
4. They found a house to be used as a school
5. Father Murrat died later, but father Moreau started a school with 5 pupils.
6. The enrolment increased to 150 pupils by the end of the year

7. James Gordon and an Irish Brother helped in teaching the children English, Reading, Writing, Arithmetic and Religious Instruction
8. Father Moreau's Fanti catechism in Fanti was used in teaching the pupils
9. The school expanded. It moved into a new house
10. There were 140 boys and 40 girls under father Pellat, a Frenchman. He later assigned the best pupils to be in charge of the new stations at Agona, Shama, Breman Akyini and Adjina.

1884 – A girls' school was started with 26 pupils based on the suggestion of Rev. Moreau. Two sisters of Our Lady of the Apostles (OLA), Sister Ignatius, an Irish woman, and Sister Potamienne from Switzerland came to Elmina to take charge of the schools and the dispensaries and to bring Christianity to the African women. The Catholic Mission also started the first kindergarten in the Gold Coast at Elmina.

1890 - Many schools established. Extended its work to the former Trans Volta and opened a school at Keta. It later opened about 50 stations with village schools in the districts around Ho and Kpando.

1906 :

1. The Catholic settled at Navrongo in the North. Two missionaries from Algiers met Governor Rodger at Nakong (in the Navrongo district) to negotiate for their stay.
2. They established missions and schools including St. Francis secondary school at Jirapa for girls.
3. The missionaries were known as White Fathers because of the white robes they wore.
4. The Catholics laid emphasis on practical education (agriculture and trade training)
5. They taught woodwork and bookbinding at Saltpond and Cape Coast.

The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Mission (A.M.E. Zion Mission)

Introduction

This was an Afro-American Mission from USA.

1898 - Arrived in the eastern corner of Ghana opened schools in the Keta districts but later moved west and inland to establish schools at Cape Coast, Sekondi, Kumasi and other areas.

- The AME Zion Mission established Aggrey Memorial Zion School

Others

- The Anglican Church
- Islam

Conclusion

1. Sacrifices made
 2. Solid Foundations of Western education laid
- Basic Education
 - Secondary Education
 - Teacher Training College

Contributions of Missionaries to Education

NB: Quist, H.O. (1999) Secondary Education in Ghana at the dawn of the twenty-first century: Profile, Problems, Prospects, Vol. xxix, no. 3 September 1999.

The Assessment Of Missionary Activities In The Gold Coast

Impact on Country Described as Mixed Blessing

Contributions to Education

1. Were pioneers of elementary, secondary, technical and teacher training education.
2. Introduced literacy and numeracy. Thus affected the socio-economic and political development of Ghana.
3. Beginning of 19th century: basic schools in Ghana were largely mission schools.
4. Importance attached to provision of secondary education, e.g. Mfantsipim, (Wesleyan) Wesley Girls High School (Wesleyan) Adisadel School (Anglican) St. Augustine College (Catholic), and Presbyterian Secondary School, Odumase Krobo (Presby).

5. Role in Teacher Education:
 - (i) First Teacher Training College – PTC (1848)
 - (ii) Wesley College (Kumasi) 1924
6. Attention paid to technical, industrial or vocational education (notably Basel), set up industrial institutions and workshops to train carpenters, masons, blacksmiths, goldsmiths and book-binders. Agricultural education was also promoted.
7. Educational Units were set up to supervise and manage the schools, e.g. Methodist, Presbyterian, Catholic, etc.
8. Played pioneering role in scientific study and development of local Ghanaian languages
 - built up collection of proverbs, folktales, songs, dictionaries
 - introduced vernacular in the curriculum
 - used vernacular as medium of instruction in primary schools.
9. Introduction of Christianity
 - use of Bible
 - moral and character training
 - Presbyterian discipline

10. Christianity and Western education have contributed to liberalization of the mind of the African leading to social and political revolution of modern Ghana, e.g. scientific thinking has reduced superstition.
11. Missionaries helped to raise standard of living by introducing better housing, drinking wells and new crops, e.g. mangoes and pears.
 - ✓ commodities for export or for local market e.g. the Basel missionaries introduced cotton.
 - ✓ Rev. Simon Suss first manufactured palm kernel oil in 1861 and suggested its exportation.
12. Promoted good health
 - Provision of health services, e.g. building of clinics and hospitals NB. Agogo Presbyterian Hospital.
13. Promoted trading activities e.g. Basel missionaries founded a trading company in 1859 – the predecessor of modern UTC.
14. Provided Ghana with leaders e.g. Dr. Aggrey, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, Dr. K.A. Busia, Dr. J.B. Danquah – all had missionary education.

Defects of Missionary Activities

1. *Worst fault – condemnation of African culture*
 - (i) Everything African attracted derogatory remarks, e.g. pagan, barbaric, crude, primitive, animism, fetishism, idolatry
 - ❖ This attitude undermined African or traditional Ghanaian culture and generated inferiority feeling. This retarded African culture and spiritual development.
 - ❖ The few converts and educated elites were indoctrinated to develop hatred for their own culture. The educated were alienated from their society. This was responsible for the “African dilemma” (Asiedu-Akrofi, 1978) and the “copy-cat” attitude among the youth.
2. *Establishment of separate community*
 - ❖ “Salem” for the converts and the educated
 - ❖ this undermined the social cohesion or unity of the African. Do you consider this a past story?

3. *Missionary education laid too much emphasis on the 3Rs or liberal education to the neglect of technical and vocational education.*

❖ Result – clerks and pen-pushers

❖ This also undermined traditional education with its emphasis on

imitation, participation, observation, internalization and unity

❖ Missionary education tended to create unemployment, unknown in traditional Ghanaian society.

4. *Certain ethnic groups had educational advantages over others, thus giving them leadership advantages over others.*

Missionary influence confined to coastal and southern districts of Ghana, thus bringing about uneven social and economic development in the country.