

The Cross and the Crown: A Study of the Interplay Between Christian Missionaries and Colonialists in the Gold Coast



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ABSTRACT

The nature of the relations between European imperialists and European Christian missionaries in Africa has resulted in various perceptions, opinions, and interpretations about their roles on the continent. While some scholars argue that the missionaries are forerunners of colonialism, thereby paving the way for Europeans to colonise Africa, some are of the opinion that, it was the European imperialists who made it possible for the missionaries to spread Christianity in Africa. Still, others opine that the missionaries were genuine men of God seeking to spread the word without any political inclinations. The findings of some case studies have been used as generalisation for the whole continent, but the issue requires a holistic approach to achieve a more balanced assessment. This paper therefore undertook a study of Ghana to examine the specific role of the early European Christian missionaries in the country. Were they agents of colonialism in disguise or genuine men of God? The paper explored the intersections, conflicts, and collaborations between the European Christian missionaries and the imperialists within the region of modern-day Ghana, tracing from the arrival of the first Europeans up to the period of colonial rule. The evidence from this study revealed that, in the case of Ghana, the Christian missionaries were genuine and not forerunners for the European imperialists. Their interactions and the resultant consequences were accidental and not deliberately orchestrated. This paper contributes to the history of Christianity in Ghana with emphasis on the specific role of early European Christian missionaries.

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INTRODUCTION

It is widely believed that the introduction of Christianity to Africa, south of the Sahara is tied to the coming of the Europeans.¹ For this reason, the introduction of Christianity to the region of modern-day Ghana is often traced to 1471 when the Portuguese who were the first Europeans to arrive, landed

¹ Mark, C. Hayford, *West Africa and Christianity* (London: Baptist Tract & Book Society, 1900), 5; Edward, W. Blyden, *Christianity, Islam and the Negro Race* (London: The Charterhouse Ppress, 1887), 56.

on the Ghanaian coast.² While the benefits of Christianity have been highly acknowledged, some scholars are of the view that the Christian missionaries performed an unholy role by serving as precursors of colonialism. For example, Gilmour argues that Christian missionaries developed native South African languages to help them spread the word. He notes however that, either consciously or unconsciously, their works tended to serve British colonial interests in various ways.³ Similarly, Arntsen in her work titled "Missionaries and Colonisation in Zimbabwe" also discusses the role missionaries played in the colonisation of Zimbabwe including but not limited to teaching and convincing the people to be subservient and submissive to White political domination.⁴ Ndille also supports this view in his study of *Missionaries as Imperialists on the Coast of Cameroon from 1841–1914*, and argues that the missionaries were forerunners of formal colonialism in Cameroon.⁵ In the same vein, Nosipho Majeke points out the role missionaries played in the colonisation of Southern Africa.⁶ Contrary to these arguments against the missionaries, Prill, citing extensively from some of the critics of the missionaries, explains why their role in that direction was mistakes or circumstantial and not deliberate actions, to lead Africa to the gallows.⁷ He argues in favour of the missionaries as civilising agents of humanity.

A letter purported to have been written by King Leopold II of Belgium urging the Christian missionaries in the Congo to use their evangelising role to rather serve Belgium's interests which could be none other than political, economic, or material has been a strong basis for some of those who argue that the missionaries are precursors of colonialism.⁸ However, these opposing views are perhaps an indication that the various countries might have had different experiences. Also, King Leopold II was an individual whose intentions cannot be generalised to represent that of all Europeans.

The problem therefore requires a systematic study of it in all African countries which were colonised to come out with a balanced or better assessment rather than using a few cases to generalise for the whole continent. It is for this reason that the Christian enterprise in Ghana from the advent of the Europeans up to the period of colonial rule has been thoroughly examined in this paper. The main objective of this study is to find out the specific role of European Christian missionaries in the Gold Coast. Were they politically inclined but disguised as missionaries or they were genuine men of God with the sole aim of spreading the word?

METHODOLOGY

The weight of works in history is based largely on how reliable the sources are since the author usually deals with the past in which he may not have existed himself. Bearing this in mind, the argument is supported by primary data from the Public Records and Archives Administration Department (PRAAD), and Mission Diaries together with materials from other relevant secondary sources such as books and journal articles. Various categories of authorities concerned with Christianity in Africa, West Africa and Ghana in this regard include the following: Edward Wilmot Blyden, Peter B. Clarke, G. E. Metcalfe, Adu Boahen, Hans Debrunner, Kwame Arhin, Remigius McCoy, Benedict Der and Anthony Kofi Sackey. The paper is a normal historical narrative grounded in qualitative research.

² H.W. Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana* (Waterville Publishing House, 1967), 16.

³ Rachael Gilmour, "Missionaries, Colonialism and Language in Nineteenth-century South Africa," *History Compass* 5, no. 6 (2007): 1761–77.

⁴ Hilde Arntsen, *The Battle of the Mind: International New Media Elements of the New Religious Political Right in Zimbabwe* (Oslo: University of Oslo, 1977).

⁵ Roland Ndille, "Missionaries as Imperialists: Decolonial Subalternity in the Missionary Enterprise on the Coast of Cameroon 1841–1914," *Sumerianz Journal of Social Science* 1, no. 2 (2018): 51–58.

⁶ Nosipho Majeke, *The Role of the Missionaries in Conquest* (Society of Young Africa, 1952).

⁷ Thorsten Prill, "Ambassadors of Christ or Agents of Colonialism? Protestant Missionaries in Africa and Their Critics," *Scottish Bulletin of Evangelical Theology* 37, no. 1 (2019): 81–99.

⁸ Kemet Media, "Encourage the African to Love Poverty: Letter from King Leopold II to Christian Missionaries to Africa," 2022, <https://kemetmedianetwork.com/encourage-the-african-to-love-poverty-letter-from-king-leopold-ii-to-christian-missionaries-to-africa/>; "Letter From King Leopold To Colonial Missionaries," n.d.

Missionaries in the Gold Coast: Agents of Imperialism or Genuine Ambassadors of Christianity (1471-1750)

From 1471 to about 1750, not much was achieved by way of conversion and the spread of Christianity in the Gold Coast. It was mainly limited to the coastal areas. Available evidence indicates that the Portuguese who were the first Europeans to arrive had a dual mission in coming to the Gold Coast: to trade and to introduce Christianity.⁹ Their missionary mandate was believed to have been greatly influenced by Prince Henry popularly known by his voyages as the Navigator.¹⁰ However, Prince Henry passed away before the arrival of the Portuguese explorers on the coast of Ghana and his influence regarding evangelisation might have drastically reduced. To their great expectation, they found the gold in abundance when they landed in the Gold Coast.¹¹ Perhaps, due to the death of Prince Henry and partly due to the gold they found, their attention shifted dramatically to commerce or trade to the neglect of Prince Henry's desire; introduction and spread of Christianity.¹² Apart from this, other obstacles militated against the spread of Christianity. First of all, there were no full-time missionaries among the crew to do the work, but only the chaplain who accompanied them to serve their spiritual needs. Over time, the chaplains needed to extend their services to the mulattoes born of indigenous coastal women and also later to the coastal people. This was what remained of Christianity till about the middle of the eighteenth century. However, in spite of the gloomy situation cited above, a few full-time missionaries came in this period but were not successful in spreading the religion. The first to come were four Catholic priests of the Order of the Hermits of St. Augustine including Fathers Gaspar dos Anjos, Pedro de Graca, Jose de Moraes and Jeronimo da Encarnacao in 1572. In 1573, they were joined by two others, namely Frs. Domingo de Santa Maria and Atanasio de Cruz. They started well until one day when five of them were brutally murdered by the indigenous people before they could make any headway, apart from Pedro de Graca who happened to have traveled to work in another town.¹³ This gruesome murder has been recorded as the only case of human brutality of this kind towards Christian missionaries in the Gold Coast.

In 1638, four Capuchin priests came at the request of a group of French traders to serve them as chaplains. In addition to serving in that capacity, they opened stations at Axim and Kommenda, but three or four of them died later of guinea worm infestation.¹⁴ From 1651 till about 1673 other Spanish Capuchin priests started work at Takoradi and Arda, but their effort was short-lived because the Dutch Calvinists imposed a temporary ban on all Catholic missionary activities. This kept the Catholics away until the nineteenth century.

Some Protestant missionaries in this first phase of evangelisation included the Moravian Brethren, Heinrich Huckoff, and Christian Protten, the latter being a mulatto, born of an African mother from Osu in Accra and a Danish father. The two arrived in the Gold Coast in 1737. However, Huckoff died not long after their arrival and Protten encountered several obstacles in his efforts to evangelise.¹⁵ The then Dutch Governor, Martinus Francois de Bordes who suspected him of being a Danish spy, prevented him from establishing a school at Elmina and went ahead to imprison him for three years.¹⁶ He died in 1769 without making any significant impact apart from some publications he did on grammar in Ga and Fante.

Another Protestant attempt was made by Jacobus Elias Johannes Capitein of the Dutch Reformed Church. He was not a European but an ex-slave from Elmina. After obtaining a degree in theology from Leiden University, he returned to the Gold Coast in 1742 to minister to the employees of the Dutch West India Company (WIC) in Elmina as a chaplain, as well as extend his mission to the

⁹ Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana*, 14-18.

¹⁰ Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana*, 15.

¹¹ Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana*, 16.

¹² Peter, B. Clarke, *West Africa and Christianity* (London: Edward Arnold Publishers Ltd., 1986), 16.

¹³ Anthony Kofi Sackey, *The Beginnings of Mission on the Gold Coast (Present-Day Ghana): With Special Emphasis on Basel and Catholic Missions* (Lit, 2018), 71-75.

¹⁴ Sackey, *The Beginnings of Mission on the Gold Coast (Present-Day Ghana): With Special Emphasis on Basel and Catholic Missions*, 76-77.

¹⁵ A. Adu Boahen, *Ghana: Evolution and Change in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, (No Title) (London: Longman Group Ltd, 1975); Jacob Christian, "Dictionary of African Christian Biography," Protten, <https://dacb.org/ghana/protten-cj/>.

¹⁶ Christian, "Dictionary of African Christian Biography."

indigenous people around. Neither did he get the cooperation of the WIC nor his own people. He was not successful and died in debt in 1747.

No strong basis was laid in this first phase since evangelisation was generally not successful for both Catholics and Protestants, with the few missionaries or chaplains either succumbing to diseases or staying for only short periods. So far as relations between missionaries and imperialists are concerned in this period, what was more obvious was resistance on the part of European governors, consuls, or groups towards missionaries who were not nationals of their respective countries, largely due to colonial and commercial rivalry.

The Arrival of Christian Missions the Second Phase: 1751-1950

From about the middle of the eighteenth century to the middle of the twentieth century, a new crop of missionaries came purposely to reintroduce and spread the gospel. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel of the Church of England had started missionary work in the region in the 1750s when the first chaplain Thomas Thompson arrived in the Gold Coast in 1752.¹⁷ Having arrived and realized the importance of the local clergy in evangelization, Thompson sent out three boys for evangelical training in England. The three were Philip Quaquo, Thomas Cobbers and William Cudjoe. As the only survivor among the three boys sent to England, Philip Quaquo, the son of Birempong Kojo of Cape Coast was ordained a clergyman and returned to the Gold Coast in 1766.¹⁸ The Anglican Church was followed by the Presbyterian groups. These were the Basel Missionaries from Switzerland, and the Bremen Missionaries from Germany who arrived in 1828 and 1847 respectively to spread the Christian faith.¹⁹ Other Christian groups that followed within this period included the Methodist Church and the revived Catholic faith. The Baptist Church, the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, the Seventh Day Adventist, the Salvation Army, and the Lutheran Church among many others had emerged in the region by the early decades of the twentieth century.²⁰ What relations existed between these missionaries and other categories of Europeans and how did these relations affect and define their roles? Noteworthy is the fact that there were instances of collaboration and friendship, but also misunderstandings and conflicts between the Christian missionaries and the other sects of Europeans especially the colonialists or imperialists.

Intersection of European Sects in the Gold Coast: Friendship and Collaboration between the Christian Missionaries and the other European groups

One instance depicting collaboration between the colonialists and the missionaries for example was the coming of the first Basel missionaries. It was the collaborative effort between Major De Richelieu who was then the governor at the Christianborg Castle in the Gold Coast and the Basel Missionaries of Switzerland that the first Basel missionaries arrived in modern-day Ghana in 1828.²¹ In response to De Richelieu's appeal for missionaries to the Basel Missionary Society in Switzerland, four missionaries, Karl F. Salbach, Gottlieb Holzwarth, Johannes Henke and Johannes Gottlob Schmidt arrived from London in December 1828. Prior to his appeal for missionaries, he is reported to have held services for the mulatto children between 1824 and 1826 and succeeded in baptising one hundred and fifty children within the period. Similarly, it was the deliberate policy of Captain George Maclean to attract missionaries to the Gold Coast. He did this by first offering in 1832, to pay out of his own earnings an annual amount of 100 Pounds to any of the Basel Missionaries arriving in the Gold Coast, who would settle in or near Cape Coast.²² He also collaborated with Captain Potter, a Bristol Methodist who in turn negotiated for the coming of the first Methodist missionary, Joseph Dunwell. Upon the arrival of Dunwell and T.B Freeman in 1835 and 1838 respectively, Captain George Maclean extended

¹⁷ Boahen, *Ghana: Evolution and Change in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, 79; Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana*, 60.

¹⁸ Boahen, *Ghana: Evolution and Change in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, 60.

¹⁹ Sackey, *The Beginnings of Mission on the Gold Coast (Present-Day Ghana): With Special Emphasis on Basel and Catholic Missions*, 99-100; F. K. Buah, *A History of Ghana, Revised and Updated* (London: Macmillan, 1998), 133-135.

²⁰ Buah, *A History of Ghana, Revised and Updated*, 132-138.

²¹ H.W. Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana* (Waterville Publishing House, 1967), 93.

<https://books.google.com.gh/books?id=RLZrAAAAIAAJ>.

²² Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana*, 95.

courtesies to them even though the former died just six months after his arrival.²³ Freeman's journey with Governor Winniet to Kumasi in 1848 helped to restore confidence in British-Asante relations and his friendship with Brodie Cruikshank, a trader who later became a member of the Legislative Council helped in his missionary endeavours.²⁴

A typical example of collaboration between Christian missionaries and colonial officials can be seen in the relations between the Basel missionary, Reverend Friederich Augustus Louis Ramseyer and the British.²⁵ Towards the end of 1868 (December), Ramseyer started a mission at Anum in the Volta Region of modern-day Ghana with his wife Rosa and their baby boy. They were joined later by S. J. Khune, a trader in cotton. The Asante Army was in the area around the same time in support of Akwamu and the Anlo against their enemies. Erroneously suspecting that Ramseyer's mission was secretly selling arms and ammunition to the enemies of their allies, the Asante Army captured the Ramseyer family and Khune, believing they could make a huge ransom from the British once they kept them as captives in Kumasi. In the difficult journey to Kumasi on foot through the thick forests and the vagaries of the weather, Ramseyer lost his child to fever. Though in captivity, they were treated well and Ramseyer described the experiences of their early stay in Kumasi (Asante) as 'not too bad and was even interesting.'²⁶ They were released in their fourth year due to an impending British invasion which was an earlier plan to subdue the Asante prior to Ramseyer's captivity. With one stone, the British succeeded in killing two birds: defeating and subduing Asante as well as causing the release of Ramseyer and his group. Ramseyer later settled at the Basel mission at Abetifi in Kwahu which shares a border with Asante in the eastern part of the then Gold Coast Protectorate. While carrying out his missionary duties in this place, Ramseyer turned himself into a self-appointed intermediary between the Asante and the Governor of the Gold Coast, as well as a spy for the British colonial government.²⁷ He used his position to furnish the British with the knowledge he had about the Asante people and vehemently called for the British to conquer and colonise Asante. His ultimate aim was to have peace prevail in Asante for smooth evangelisation to take off, but in achieving this, he inadvertently contributed significantly to their fall.

On a similar note of collaboration, efforts to revive and re-establish Catholicism in the Gold Coast in the late nineteenth century witnessed the involvement of political officers, Sir James Marshall and Sir Garnet Wolseley.²⁸ In 1880, both men worked hard to bring missionaries from the Society of African Missions, Father Eugene Murat and Father Auguste Moreau from Lagos to the Gold Coast. Originally an Anglican, James Marshall converted to Catholicism and became a judge in the Gold Coast, and Sir Garnet Wolseley was in command of the British Army who led them to defeat the Asante in 1874.²⁹

Some missionaries through writings collaborated with some colonial authorities in the Gold Coast. Following the abortive Asante campaign of 1863-64, when the British contemplated leaving the Gold Coast in the 1860s, Reverend Elias Schrenk encouraged the British government not to desert the Gold Coast and its people, emphasising that, it was England's divine mission as a protestant country to champion the advancement of "the primitive peoples."³⁰ In his 1865 publication titled, *What Shall Become of the Gold Coast?* Reverend Elias Schrenk enumerated a series of steps towards the realization of this divine mission, and among them were the protection of trade, avoidance of war and most importantly making the Gold Coast a crown colony which he believed would later become the preliminary stage for formal colonial rule.³¹

²³ Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana*, 96 -98.

²⁴ Ivor. Wilks, "The Rise of the Akwamu Empire," *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana* 3, no. 2 (1957): 1650-1710.

²⁵ Kwame Arhin, "The Missionary Role on the Gold Coast and in Ashanti: Reverend FA Ramseyer and the British Take-over of Ashanti 1869-1894," 1968, 1-15.

²⁶ Arhin, "The Missionary Role on the Gold Coast and in Ashanti: Reverend FA Ramseyer and the British Take-over of Ashanti 1869-1894," 3.

²⁷ Arhin, "The Missionary Role on the Gold Coast and in Ashanti: Reverend FA Ramseyer and the British Take-over of Ashanti 1869-1894," 9-12.

²⁸ Buah, *A History of Ghana, Revised and Updated*, 133-135..

²⁹ Buah, *A History of Ghana, Revised and Updated*, 133-135.

³⁰ Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana*, 119-120.

³¹ Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana*, 119-120.

In the famous Sir Garnet Wolseley expedition otherwise known as the “Sagrenti War” of 1873-74 against the Asante, the Basel mission played a role in the form of providing shelter and other forms of assistance to the eastern column of the British troops under J. H. Glover.³² Debrunner notes that with the conclusion of the war, Glover helped Ramseyer and Schrenk to collect money from the British for an Asante mission, and that, the British Government officially thanked the Swiss Confederation for the hospitality offered by mission stations, such as those at Akropong, Kyebi, Kukurantumi and for the participation of Christian soldiers and craftsmen in the war.³³

An event in Northern Ghana supports Njoku and Korieh’s argument that the official colonisation and subjugation of African societies was, partly due to the mutual interests of the missionaries, traders or merchants and the imperial officials.³⁴ The first White man and merchant to visit the area, M. J. Bonnat, blazed the trail for the first Basel Mission pastors to arrive there in 1878. These were indigenous pastors, David Asante, Theophil Opoku and Philip Kwabi. Indeed, Bonnat’s first attempt to reach Salaga from Kumasi was halted at Atebubu where he was imprisoned and later deported to the boundaries of the Gold Coast Colony. The Bono(Bron) who were allies of the people of Juaben were suspicious of someone coming through Kumasi. Bonnat used an alternative route through the Volta on canoes to Kete Krakye and from there by foot to his destination. Forty-eight hours after his historic arrival at Salaga, Captain Gouldsbury became the second White man to step foot in Salaga. Philip Buss of the Basel Mission, also called the “mission builder” followed in 1879 with a caravan of fifteen carriers with cloth for sale in the Salaga market. He intended to buy horses, dairy cows and sheep for the missionaries at Begoro.³⁵ The efforts of the Basel Mission in Northern Ghana in this period were extremely exceptional, for despite the romantic appeal of the area, it was generally considered to be too far away from the bases of missionary work in the south. As the area for some time was also considered a neutral zone between German Togoland and British Gold Coast, it took some strenuous efforts of the eminent Methodist, George Ekem Ferguson of Anomabo to work out treaties with the Northern chiefs to claim the entire area for the British.³⁶ In other words, a merchant’s breakthrough brought in first, religion and missionaries, and later political domination in Northern Ghana.

Instances of Misunderstanding, Dust-up or Conflicts

Notwithstanding the above instances of collaboration and cooperation between the Christian missionaries and the colonialists, and sometimes, with the group of European merchants who came to Ghana with the primary objective of benefiting from the profitable trade, it is important to note that, it was not always the case as there were misunderstandings between the groups. In some areas in the northern part of the country, the Christian missionaries were often at odds with the British colonial officers for various reasons. The first Christian missionaries to arrive as late as 1905 encountered strong opposition from the colonial authorities in the area.³⁷ The White Fathers of the Roman Catholic Church were the first European missionaries to enter for missionary work in 1905 from Ouagadougou in the Upper Volta (Burkina Faso). Their plea to settle and start a mission station was rejected by the Chief Commissioner of the Northern territories, Colonel Watherston. The White Fathers were told that the North was not yet ready for the establishment of Christian missions. When the colonial authorities gave a nod to the missionaries to start a mission station, the Reverend Oscar Morin surveyed the entire Northern territories for a suitable place for settlement. The choice of Wa for their new station in the North-eastern province was rejected on religious grounds by the Chief Commissioner.

³² Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana*, 122-124.

³³ Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana*, 122-124.

³⁴ Chima J. Korieh and Raphael C. Njoku, *Missions, States and European Expansion in Africa* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 8.

³⁵ Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana*, 201-202.

³⁶ George Edgar Metcalfe, *Great Britain and Ghana: Documents of Ghana History, 1807-1957*, (London: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1964), 452 - 468. The specific chapter in the book is titled “The Ferguson Missions 1892-1894.”

³⁷ PRRAD 56/1/33 Colonial Secretary to the Acting Chief Commissioner of the Northern Territories. 4th July, 1905; Benedict Der, “Church-State Relations in Northern Ghana, 1906-1940,” *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana* 15, no.1(1974): 41.

As a Muslim Kingdom, the Chief Commissioner expressed aversion to having a Christian mission among the Muslims.³⁸ When permission was finally granted to start a mission in 1906 in Navrongo, there were conditions attached: that the mission station to be established would be near an administrative post and not within an area of Islamic dominance; that a mission school should be established soon and be ran in accordance with regulations designed for administration and management of schools in the Northern territories; that the medium(language) of instruction in all the mission's future schools should be English and that the clergy should be British subjects.³⁹ The White Fathers adhered to these conditions and their desire to establish a station was accomplished. Such open hostilities from the British colonial officers continued even when they had settled at Navrongo in the Northeastern province in 1906 to the extent of attempting to remove or close down the mission entirely. While the missionaries took some time to familiarise themselves with their new environment and learn the language in particular, the colonial authorities considered it a delay in starting a school to benefit the local people, describing them as 'idle white men'.⁴⁰ Even though the majority of them were French Canadians coming directly from Canada, because of colonial rivalries, the colonial authorities were still suspicious of them since they entered the country from Burkina Faso which was a French colony, and they feared they could be spies for the French. Despite these setbacks, the Catholic mission had by 1913 gained a sort of monopoly of missionary work in the Northern territories.⁴¹

In 1908, Watherson, one of the colonial officers sent out an invitation to the Protestant missions to establish stations in the North, but only the Methodists and the Presbyterians (Basel Mission) initially responded to this invitation.⁴² Two years later in 1915, both missions were closed down. Other missions in the North encountered hostilities from some of Watherson's successors who were not amenable to their predecessor's idea. For example, the hostility towards the Methodist Reverends H. G. Martin and M. Stormonth resulted in the closure of the Methodist mission in Tamale in 1915. Reverend Martin for example was not granted formal recognition as the representative of the Wesleyan Mission in Tamale by the then Chief Commissioner of the Northern Territories. He accused him of employing schoolboys in his house without permission, in addition to spreading other defamatory information about him.⁴³ This resulted in the recall of Martin and his replacement with Stormonth. Although Stormonth was welcomed and things seemed to go well between him and the Chief Commissioner (Armitage), relations between them soon turned sour. Stormonth refused to have his mission work strictly controlled by the colonial officers. The Wesleyans were compelled by this difficult situation to wind up in 1915, and made attempts again to return in 1920, but were discouraged from doing so by Chief Commissioner Armitage.⁴⁴

It can be observed from the foregoing narrative that while a considerable level of cordial relations existed between the missionaries and colonial government officers in the southern part of the country, to the extent that some of them even negotiated for the missionaries to come from Europe, a different situation in which misunderstanding and conflicts characterised their relations prevailed in the northern part of the country. This major difference could be partly due to the nature of British colonial policy in the north. The North was deliberately reserved as a source of unskilled labour for the South.⁴⁵ Therefore, any form of development was delayed and this included the introduction and spread of Christianity. Indeed when the White Fathers wanted to extend their mission from the north-

³⁸ PRAAD 56/1/33, Watherson to Colonial Secretary, 18th May, 1905; Remigius F McCoy, *Great Things Happen: A Personal Memoir of the First Christian Missionary Among the Dagaabas and Sissalas of Northwest Ghana* (Montreal: Society of the Missionaries of Africa) (Montreal: Society of the Missionaries of Africa, 1988), 30.

³⁹ Public Record Office, London, C. O.96/440, Governor Rodger to Earl of Elgin, 17th March, 1906. McCoy, 1988, 30.

⁴⁰ PRAAD 56/1/33, Watherson to the Father Superior at Wagadugu, 10th July, 1907; Der, "Church-State Relations in Northern Ghana, 1906-1940," 42.

⁴¹ Der, "Church-State Relations in Northern Ghana, 1906-1940," 43-44; McCoy, *Great Things Happen: A Personal Memoir of the First Christian Missionary Among the Dagaabas and Sissalas of Northwest Ghana* (Montreal: Society of the Missionaries of Africa), 71-91.

⁴² Northern Territories Report, 1908.

⁴³ PRAAD 56/1/33, Armitage to Martin, 5th February, 1913. Also, Armitage to Colonial Secretary, 10th February, 1913.

⁴⁴ PRAAD 56/1/33, the Reverend H. Webster to Armitage, 24th June, 1920; Der, "Church-State Relations in Northern Ghana, 1906-1940," 46-47.

⁴⁵ Roger G. Thomas, "Forced Labour in British West Africa: The Case of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast 1906-1927," *The Journal of African History* 14, no. 1 (1973): 79-103.

east (Navrongo) to the north-west (Upper West), the colonial government placed no limits on the number of stations they could open but vehemently barred them from establishing schools.⁴⁶ Furthermore, the difference in colonial attitude towards the Catholic missionaries in the north was based on the denominational orientation of the various officers. Those officials who were Catholics, such as A. W. Cardinal, and John Eyre-Smith, and Anglo-Catholics, such as H. A. Blair and Percy Whittall were tolerant towards the Catholic missionaries while those officers of Protestant inclination preferred Protestant missions.⁴⁷

Another source of conflict between the Catholic missionaries in the North and the colonial government centred around the refusal by the northern chiefs to have their subjects convert to Christianity and also prevented them from providing labour for road work on Sundays.⁴⁸ Since the procurement of labour, in particular, was to the benefit of the government, the officers often intervened in favour of the chiefs, thereby straining relations not only between them and the missionaries, but also between the missionaries and the chiefs as well. So serious was this problem that in 1935, a Conference involving all stakeholders was convened in Lawra in the north-east to end further conflicts. The Conference yielded good results, with a general agreement on religious liberty and freedom from forced labour on Sundays for Christians, but all other civil obligations to be observed by them.⁴⁹

It was against this background that the early missionaries to the North were subjected to a lot of restrictions leading to frustration and the departure of some of them, especially the Protestant denominations. The Catholic missionaries endured and eventually had a monopoly over the area for some time before the Protestants returned later some decades into the twentieth century.

CONCLUSION

From the study on the relations between the Cross and the Crown in the Gold Coast as discussed above, there is no evidence of any deliberate effort by the two parties to aid each other in carrying out their various agenda. Any forms of collaboration, or being of help to each other, only occurred as a matter of expediency or were merely accidental and not consciously orchestrated. It is worthy to note that apart from the Christian missionaries and imperialists, there was in addition, another category of Europeans who were in the Gold Coast mainly for commercial and material interests. Notable among them were S. K. Khune who allied with the Presbyterians and Pierre Bonnat who was with the Catholics. So, the Gold Coast then became a point of convergence for various groups of Europeans with different objectives, sometimes clashing, and at other times supporting each other for the realisation of their objectives. The calibre of missionaries that came to the Gold Coast even demonstrated that they were there for genuine reasons and not forerunners for any coloniser. A considerable number of them died due to harsh tropical conditions and diseases, but others were not deterred and followed suit to fulfill their evangelising mission. They persisted in the face of calamities and eventually succeeded. This was a measure of their high degree of dedication and genuineness of effort rather than paving the way for colonisation.

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⁴⁶ Der, "Church-State Relations in Northern Ghana, 1906-1940."

⁴⁷ Benedict Der, "Church-State Relations in Northern Ghana, 1906-1940," *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana* 15, no. 1 (1974): 49.

⁴⁸ Jirapa Mission Diaries, Vol. 1, entries for 6th May, 1935; Der, "Church-State Relations in Northern Ghana, 1906-1940."

⁴⁹ Jirapa Mission Diaries, Vol. 1, entries for 6th May, 1935; Der, "Church-State Relations in Northern Ghana, 1906-1940."

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