

Encounters in Quest of Christian Womanhood

The Basel Mission in Pre- and
Early Colonial Ghana

By
Ulrike Sill



BRILL

LEIDEN • BOSTON
2010

CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	ix
List of Figures	xiii
Glossary	xv
List of Abbreviations	xvii
Prologue: Celebrating Christian Womanhood in Ghana – The 10th Anniversary of the Presbyterian Women’s Centre in Abokobi 2002	1
I Introduction	5
Theme and Analytical Framework	7
Sources	23
Overview	32
II The Basel Women’s Mission in the European and the Basel Context	35
Conceptual Background and Organisational Roots	36
Negotiating Women’s Mission in the Context of the Basel Mission	46
Conclusion	72
III The Women Involved in Basel Mission Encounters on the Gold Coast	75
From Wuerttemberg to the Gold Coast	76
Gold Coast Women	95
Conclusion	107
IV Embodying Christian Womanhood – ‘African’ Actors in the Basel Mission	109
The Pioneer: Catherine Mulgrave	110
Second Generation Exemplars: Regina Hesse and Rose Ann Miller	133
Conclusion	148

V	Christiansborg – Acquiring Space to Propagate Basel Femininity	149
	Christiansborg: The Basel Mission’s First Girls’ School in West Africa	150
	Social Aspirations, Morals and Girls’ Education	158
	Women and ‘New’ Morals for the Coast: Controversies and Conflicts Around 1860	172
	Conclusion	191
VI	Akuapem and Akuropon (I) – Establishing New Spaces	193
	The First Long-Term Missionary Wife in Akuropon, and Missionary Households as Female Space	200
	Negotiating Belonging: School Girls, ‘Girls in Training’ and Female Christians	215
	Conclusion	241
VII	Akuapem (II) – Existing Loyalties and New Options	243
	The Mission Station as a Space of Innovation: The Case of ‘Six-fingered Children’	246
	The First Moves for Innovation – ‘Rescuing’ Six-fingered Children in Akuropon, 1854	253
	The Mission as an Alternative Community: Debate, Conflict and Change	264
	Conclusion	285
VIII	Creating a New Female Space: The Basel Mission Girls’ Boarding Schools	287
	Educational Reform in Basel Mission Work in Ghana Around 1860	288
	Commensality and Commerce	293
	Female Industry: Clothing as a New Domain of Women	309
	Conclusion	326
IX	Women’s Speech in the Basel Mission Community and Beyond	329
	‘English’: Social Aspirations, Modernity and the Public	334

CONTENTS

vii

‘The Country’s Language’: ‘Tradition’, Local Modernity and Life Itself	342
Conclusion	377
Summary	379
Appendix	387
Bibliography	391
Index	409

LIST OF FIGURES

1. Archive Mission 21/Basel Mission QS-30.002.0237.02.
The Zimmermann-Mulgrave family. Unknown studio.
Europe. Taken between 01/01/1872 and 31/12/1873 130

2. Archive Mission 21/Basel Mission D-30.03.001. "*Missionaries in Christiansborg around 1860.*" *Christiansborg*. Taken between 23/08/1860 and 31/12/1864 136

3. Archive Mission 21/Basel Mission QD-30.011.0109. "*Girls boarding school in Abude with Rose Anne Miller in the centre.*" Taken by Locher, Christoph Wilhelm (Mr) Aburi. Taken between 23/06/1860 and 06/07/1860 142

4. Archive Mission 21/Basel Mission QD-30.011.0027. "*A.H. Engmann, Maria Engmann, teacher in Christiansborg, both mulattos.*" Taken by Locher, Christoph Wilhelm (Mr) Christiansborg. Taken between 01/01/1861 and 31/12/1880 156

5. Archive Mission 21/Basel Mission QD-30.011.0107.
"*Catechist Karl Rheindorf with his wife and father – in Odumase.*" Taken by Locher, Christoph Wilhelm (Mr) Odumase Krobo. Taken between 01/01/1860 and 31/12/1860 180

6. Archive Mission 21/Basel Mission QD-30.014.0017.
"*Akropong, houses for christians and orange-tree alley.*" Akropong. Taken between 01/01/1871 and 31/12/1881 195

7. Archive Mission 21/Basel Mission QD-30.011.0093.
"*Catechist Paul Staudt and his wife.*" Taken by Locher, Christoph Wilhelm (Mr) Akropong. Taken between 01/01/1861 and 31/12/1880 234

8. Archive Mission 21/Basel Mission QD-30.011.0062.
"*Akropong – The Widmanns with Rosine and the girls*"

<p><i>they are training.</i>” Taken by Locher, Christoph Wilhelm (Mr) Akropong. Taken between 01/01/1860 and 31/12/1876</p>	257
<p>9. Archive Mission 21/Basel Mission D-30-11-048. “<i>Out-station Late or Date near Akropong.</i>” Larteh. Taken between 01/01/1871 and 31/12/1900</p>	267
<p>10. Archive Mission 21/Basel Mission QD-30.011.0086. “<i>Abokobi – Miss Rüdi with her pupils.</i>” Taken by Locher, Christoph Wilhelm (Mr) Abokobi. Taken between 01/01/1860 and 31/12/1860</p>	298
<p>11. Archive Mission 21/Basel Mission QQ-30-101-0050. “<i>Ga girl with broom for sweeping.</i>” Ga. Taken between 01/01/1883 and 31/12/1888</p>	313
<p>12. Archive Mission 21/Basel Mission D-30.22.023. “<i>Women preparing fufu.</i>” Ghana (Modern State). Taken by Erhardt, Wilhelm (Mr). Taken between 01/01/1899 and 31/12/1912</p>	317
<p>13. Archive Mission 21/Basel Mission QD-30.016.0009. “<i>Indigenous teachers. In the centre of the front row: Mrs. Lieb.</i>” Ghana. Taken between 01/01/1881 and 31/12/1900</p>	323
<p>14. Archive Mission 21/Basel Mission D-30.14.041. “<i>Sewing class and kindergarten with Mrs. Ramseyer, Abetifi 1889.</i>” Abetifi. Taken by Ramseyer, Friedrich August Louis (Mr). Taken between 01/01/1889 and 31/12/1889</p>	346