

**THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE ASANTE KINGS TO THE GROWTH OF
METHODISM IN ASANTE: 1839-2002**

BY

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work towards the Mphil (Religious Studies) and that, to the best of my knowledge, it contains no material previously published by another person nor material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree of the university, except where due acknowledgement has been made in the text.

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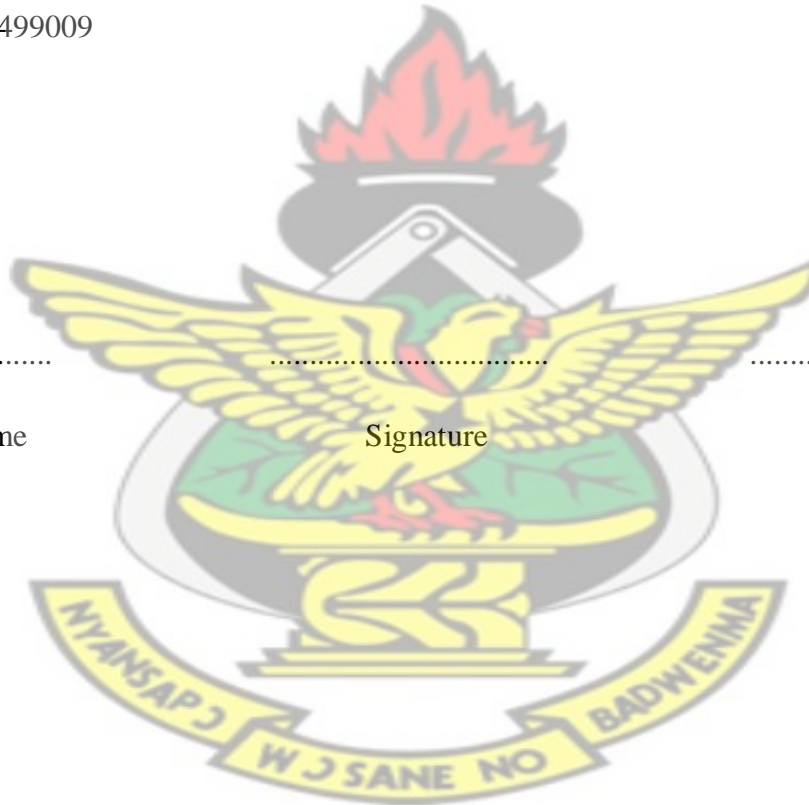
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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the Late Rt. Rev. Samuel N. Agyei Mensah (former Methodist Bishop of Obuasi), Beatrice Acheampomaa, my wife Mrs. Rebecca Appiah Antwi and our two boys, David Owusu Antwi and Derrick Antwi.

KNUST



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

WMMS	Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society
PRAAD	Public Records and Archives Administration Department
MCG	Methodist Church – Ghana
KNUST	Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology



ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to ascertain the perception that the Asante kings placed impediments on the Wesleyan missionaries and to discover the contributions, if any, of the Asante kings to the growth and development of Methodism in Asante between the period 1839 and 2002. The research is based on both primary and secondary sources and on fieldwork interviews. Data collection was achieved through interviews, visits to the archives, museums and libraries. The research revealed that from the inception of Methodism in Asante, the Asante kings have contributed immensely to the growth and development of Methodism. It has been observed that none of the Asante kings from Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I to Otumfoɔ Osei Tutu II maltreated any Methodist Missionary. There is no record of missionaries who suffered personal hostility from any of the Asante kings. The research revealed that, there has never been any conflict between any Asante king and any Methodist missionary or minister. Asante kings were always, very good friends of the missionaries, ministers and most of the local agents. They have always been very condescending. The Asante kings have played very significant roles in the spread of Methodism in Asante. They have been the providers of hospitality for the Methodist missionaries and ministers, lands for the church's development and allowed their family members and their subjects to join the Methodist societies in Asante kingdom. The researcher therefore recommends that the Methodist Church Ghana should endeavour to honour the Asante Kings for their great contribution towards the growth of Methodism in Asante. Chapels, church halls, offices and schools could be named after them. Again, the church should establish scholarship schemes in their names.

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CHAPTER 1

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background Information

Methodism began not as a church or sect but as a movement by John Wesley and his brother, Charles Wesley to revitalize the Church of England. The movement stayed with the Church of England until 1795 (Dowley, 1977:453). Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society (WMMS) which was formed in 1813, and commenced its missionary work in the Gold Coast, now Ghana, with the arrival of the Rev. Joseph Dunwell at Cape Coast on 1st January 1835 (Agbeti, 1986:55). Dunwell lived for only six months after his arrival. The next two missionaries and their wives, the Rev. and Mrs George Wrigley and the Rev. and Mrs. Peter Harrop who had arrived on 15th September 1836 and 15th January, 1837 respectively died before they had served a year (Bartels, 1965:27).

The Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society did not give up but decided to send a missionary of African descent. The Rev. Thomas Birch Freeman, the son of an African father and an English mother was sent. He arrived in the Gold Coast on 3rd January 1838; three years after the Methodist Mission had been established. Freeman began his missionary work by consolidating what his predecessors had started. He further planted many new missions along the coast in towns like Winneba and Accra. He established schools where churches had been established both to serve the church as well as the community (Bartels, 1965:33).

In early February 1839, Rev. Thomas Birch Freeman left Cape Coast as the head of a mission for Kumasi in a bid to establish Methodism there. He contended that if people in Kumasi who then were described as barbarous, blood-thirsty, and warlike surrendered to Christ, the whole country would easily become a Christian nation (Ahiable-Addo, 1999:12).

He was not allowed into Kumasi by the Asantehene, Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I (1838-1867). Freeman's motives were suspected and so he had to wait at Kusa and Fomena for six weeks. The reason was that in a battle between the Asante and the British in 1824, the former had killed the British Governor, Sir Charles McCarthy at Nsamankɔ (Osei, 1994:30). Accordingly, many Asante believed that the missionary had been sent by the British to revenge against the Asante nation. They did not only fear for a revenge but also, had been informed by their local traditional priest of some kind of revelation he had received about a disastrous fire which would consume the whole community on account of Rev. Freeman's entry in town and that they would even need to pacify the gods (Ahiable-Addo, 1997:32).

To allay the fears and doubts of Asante about the visit, Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I directed that the chief of Adanse at Fomena, Kwantwi Barimah I who was the keeper of the gate to Kumasi and his people monitor the activities of Rev. Freeman while at Kusa. However, the Asantehene sent spies to mount surveillance on Rev. Freeman to find out the intentions of his visit. Having been monitored for six weeks without any adverse report, Freeman was permitted entry into Kumasi; he arrived on 1st April 1839, and tried to persuade the Asantehene to allow him to establish a

Methodist Society and a school. His request was not granted, so he left for Cape Coast on 15th April 1839 (Bartels, 1965:39).

It is interesting to note that, currently, there appears to be a very cordial relationship between the Asante Kings and the Methodist Church. In May 2009 at the 48th Annual Synod of the Kumasi Diocese of the Methodist Church held at the Wesley Cathedral in Kumasi, the church presented a citation, a Bible, a Methodist Hymn Book, Weekly Bible Lessons (A study material for Methodists) and a sheep to Otumfoɔ Osei Tutu II. The citation was read by Emmanuel Asante, then Bishop of the Kumasi Diocese, and was presented by Robert Aboagye Mensah, then Presiding Bishop of the Methodist Church Ghana, to mark the 10th anniversary celebration of Otumfoɔ's reign. It stated that: "The Methodist Church Ghana is grateful to all Kings of Asante who displayed hospitality to emissaries of our LORD Jesus Christ through the Wesleyans and Methodists. This spirit of hospitality was outstandingly demonstrated in the reign of Nana Kwaku Dua I in the grant of lands on which the Kumasi Methodist Circuit Offices and the Diocesan Offices are now sited." (2009 Synod Citation). The question remains as to what the Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I and the other Asante Kings did as far as the growth of Methodism in Asante is concerned to merit such compliments and acknowledgements.

1.1 Statement of problem

There appears to be a general perception that Asante kings put impediments in the way of the early Wesleyan Missionaries in their bid to extend their mission to Kumasi. According to Ahiable-Addo (1997:38) "The Wesleyan Methodist missionaries were tormented physically and

psychologically by the Asante in a bid to deter them from their enterprises in the kingdom.” This is demonstrated in the comments, attitudes and statements made by some of the Asante kings.

For instance, Rev. Timothy Laing of the Methodist Church noted that the prospects for the future of the mission in Kumasi appeared gloomy in view of the continued commitment of Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I to the traditional values of the Asante society when he wrote as follows:

The state of the work of God in Asante is rather discouraging at present. The people wishing to become Christians are afraid to expose themselves to the King, whose frown means death for the people becoming Christians. The Asantes are not free people, they are fast bound in the chains of despotism, so much so that no one dares to do what he thinks proper in his own eyes, how good, however, it may be. They always do what the king sanctions, whether good or bad, so that as the king is a pagan, they must all remain pagans too (Reindorf, 2007:24).

Again, Asantehene, Otumfoɔ Mensa Bonsu, argued that the Bible and Christianity would make his subjects proud and disobedient. He told Rev. T. R. Picot of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society in Kumasi that:

The Bible is not a book for us. God at the beginning gave the Bible to the white people, another book to the Cramo (Muhammadans), and the fetish to us....We will never embrace your religion for it would make our people proud. It is your religion that has ruined the Fanti country, weakened their power and brought down the high man on a level with the low man (Anene and Godfrey, 1966:152).

From these observations one may conclude that the Asante court put impediments on the activities and growth of Methodism in Asante. A number of questions, therefore, arise which this project seeks to address. How did the Asante kings of the nineteenth century, perceive Christianity in general and Methodism in particular? Was the Asante kings perception positive or negative? How did that perception influence and affect their contribution to the growth and expansion of the mission in the Asante kingdom in the second half of the nineteenth century and the rest of the twentieth century?

1.2 Objective

The study seeks to find answers to the questions raised above and to achieve two objectives. The first is to ascertain if the perception that the Asante Kings put impediments on the efforts of the Wesleyan missionaries was true or not. The second is to identify what contribution, if any, the Asante kings provided to the establishment, growth and development of Methodism in Asante between the periods 1839 and 2002.

1.3 Scope of the study

This research covers the period from the ninth occupant of the Golden Stool – Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I (1834-1867) - to the sixteenth occupant of the Golden Stool, Otumfoɔ Osei Tutu II (1999- to date). The study precisely covers the time period from 1839 to 2002. This period was chosen because it was during the reign of Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I that Rev. Thomas Birch Freeman visited Kumasi in 1839. Furthermore, in 2002 the Methodist Church Ghana named and dedicated the Kumasi Diocesan office complex and the Diocesan Bishop's Manse to Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I, hence these two terminal dates are very significant, as landmarks in the history of Methodism in Asante.

1.4 The significance of the study

The study is relevant because the findings will help the Methodist Church Ghana to have a systematic and an orderly account of the contribution of the Asante kings to the growth of Methodism in Asante.

Moreover, this study would add to the existing body of knowledge for students who are pursuing African Church History courses as well as those who would want to conduct research in related issues.

The study would, additionally, serve as information or guide for ministers, evangelists and other church workers who will be stationed at Asante and will need a guide in terms of their relationships with kings and the people of Asante.

Finally, there is an adage that ‘a nation that does not honour its heroes is not worth dying for’. If some of the Asante kings have indeed, helped the growth of Methodism in Asante, this study would help and guide the Methodist Church Ghana effectively to accord them due recognition.

1.5 Limitation of the study

One major limitation is that this work does not capture everything about the Methodist Church in Asante. This study is limited in the sense that it traces the contribution of the Asante Kings to the growth of Methodism in Asante. This implies that, there is room for future research into other areas of Methodism in Asante. Further, there are so many churches in Asante that are not Methodist whereas this work examines only the Methodist Church in Asante. The implication is that future research may be carried out on the contribution of the Asante kings to other churches.

1.6 Methodology

The Triangulation research methodology was employed in this study. Both primary and secondary data were collected. The researcher started his research by conducting historical

research in several archives and libraries in Kumasi and Accra. These included the Methodist Church, Ghana Documentation and Archival Department, Kumasi Diocese of the Methodist Church, Documentation and Archival Department, the Manhyia Palace Archives, Public Records and Archives Administration Department Ghana (PRAAD) in Accra and Kumasi, National House of Chiefs' Archives, the Manhyia Palace Museum, Centre for National Culture Museum, KNUST Library, Christian Service University College Library, Balme Library – University of Ghana, and Trinity Theological Seminary Library. Key church leaders, chiefs, a queen mother and historians were interviewed.

1.7 Literature Review

Many scholars have studied and researched into Methodism and the history of the Asante kings. Under this segment the researcher has reviewed what some scholars have written about Methodism in Ghana and the people of Asante and their kings.

Bartels (1965) employs a chronological approach in examining the roots of Ghana Methodism. He gives the first full and coordinated story of the growth of the Methodist Church in Ghana, which achieved autonomy in 1961. In the first four chapters, Bartels focuses attention on the crucial role the Fante Christian leaders played in the growth of Ghana Methodism. His work has much interesting material on education, pastoral work and the constitutional development of the Methodist Church in Ghana that will help this research. However, Bartels in his work does not discuss in details the contribution of the Asante kings to the growth of Methodism in Asante.

Foli (2008) looks at the state of the Methodist Church in Ghana in contemporary times. He puts Ghana Methodism in the context of a two-fold early history. In the first place he takes an expedition in early church history and makes the claim that Methodism did not just begin at the time of the Wesleys but has been manifested now and again since the earliest times in the history of the church through various movements. In the second part he summarizes the roots of Methodism in Ghana, and describes in considerable detail how the Church was planted in Ghana in 1835 and grew through the efforts of Dunwell, the Wrigleys, the Harrops, and Thomas Birch Freeman as well as local converts like Joseph Smith, Thomas Hughes and George Brown. His work may help the researcher to trace the growth trends in Asante Methodism. Foli does very well in mentioning some of the Ghanaians who have contributed to Methodism in Ghana but he does not mention any traditional ruler who has contributed to the growth of Methodism.

Agbeti (1986) dealt with how Europeans and the American Christian Missionaries laid the foundations of the church in West Africa from 1482 to 1919. He examines the obstinate persistence with which Western missionaries flocked to West Africa, despite heart-rending disaster. He examines the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society work in Ghana but he does not discuss in details their work in Asante and how Asante kings related with the Wesleyan Missionaries. His work provides the researcher with a historical data for the research.

Ahiable-Addo (1997) spells out the rationale behind the introduction of the Methodist faith to Asante so early when it had not been extended to all the towns and villages on the Ghanaian seaboard, let alone the vast area between the coast and Asante. He also gives quite an elaborate

account of the efforts by the Wesleyan Methodist Missionaries to have the church extended to, and firmly planted in Asante, as well as the attitudes of the Chiefs and people to those efforts. Ahiable-Addo discusses his topic with the assumption that Asante kings and chiefs were hostile to Christianity. On the contrary, Asante attitude to other faiths and religions has never been hostile because it was common for an Asante to go for bosom and asuman (charms) from other places. This shows the reverence they had for the Supreme Being to bless. It seems he did not have much insight into the mindset of the Asante kings and chiefs. However, Ahiable-Addo's article may be of help to this research in relation to the Wesleyan Missionaries' motive for sending the gospel to Asante.

Edusa-Eyison (1999) submits that, from the inception of the planting of Methodism in the Gold Coast, the missionaries, the Ghanaian clergy and church agents worked with determination for the church to be established. They worked hard against all the odds including diseases and death which initially plagued the church. For Edusa-Eyison, what could not be ignored is the fact that the local people were instrumental in the planting and the consolidation of the gains of the Methodist Church in Ghana. The determination with which the fathers saw to injecting Methodism in Ghana had been continued by the generations after them. Although Edusa-Eyison focuses on the native initiative in the planting of Christianity in Ghana, his article is silent on the specific role the Asante kings played in planting Christianity in Ghana.

Ahiable-Addo (1996) discusses what the Methodist Church is, its philosophy, origins, establishment, challenges and achievements from 1835 to 1838 during which Asante experienced

formal expansion; the first part of the country's inland saw its activities extended from the coast. Ahiable-Addo's work may help the researcher in the area of Methodist philosophy and origins. This research would differ from his work in terms of the discussion on the contributions of the Asante Kings to the growth of Methodism in Asante.

Ahiable-Addo (1999) exposes the factors that actually motivated the early Society of African Missions (SMA) missionaries from the coast to establish Catholicism in Asante only two years after their arrival at Elmina. Though Ahiable-Addo's focus was on Catholicism and not on Methodism the researcher is of the opinion that it would be a source of good information when comparing how the Asante people and their kings reacted to Catholic missionaries as against the Methodist missionaries.

Dowley (1977) presents a complete picture of the world-wide development of Christianity, with emphasis on the key Christian movements, the outstanding Christian leaders, crucial turning points, and revolutionary breakthroughs. His work does not discuss Asante Methodism since he does not single any group in particular. Nevertheless, his work would provide some relevant information regarding Methodism and its missions in general.

Osei (1994) examines the contributions of each of the kings of Asante towards the building of the Asante nation starting from the reign of Opemsoo Osei Tutu I, the founder of the Asante Kingdom, to the reign of Otumfoo Opoku Ware II. Although Osei mentions all these great

occupants of the Golden Stool he does not comment on how these kings contributed to Asante Methodism or even Christianity. However, his work provides some fundamentals of Asante history that will help this research.

Dankwa (2004) in his book on chieftaincy, examines the legal definition of a chief, describes the king making process, the expected qualities of a chief, and the problems confronting chiefs. The duties of chiefs are also examined; the institution is seen as a social system dealing with the maintenance of law and order within the society. His work gives more insight about chieftaincy.

Osei (2002) introduces, teaches and reminds people of Akan descent, with particular reference to the Asante, their culture as practised in the olden days and the present time. Osei fails to treat how Christianity affected Asante culture or how Christian culture affected Asante culture after the introduction of Christianity in Asante. Nonetheless, his work provides relevant information on the cultural practices of the Asante.

Nkansa-Kyeremateng (2004) provides basic background information about Ghana in the first two chapters of his book and utilizes the remaining chapters to: identify the Akan among Ghanaians, discuss Akan kingdoms- past and present and Akan cultures- from procreation, through marriage to death as well as their religion. The work informs its readership on where Asante people originated from.

Williamson (1965) examines the nature and the aftermath of the impact of the advent of the Christian faith and indigenous religion among the Akan people of the Gold Coast. This book gives the researcher enough information on how the Akan religion and the Christian faith interacted. It does not, however, deal with the contribution of the Asante kings to Methodism in Asante because that was not his focus.

Ahiabile-Addo (1998) listed the following reasons as the factors that caused slow progress and collapse of the Methodist church in Asante from 1843 to 1900: the uncompromising stance of the various Asante kings and chiefs, the influence of Islam, the distance from the coast to Kumasi, strained Asante – British relations and the lifestyle of John Owusu Ansah and William Owusu Kwantabisa. This paper may help the research in terms of the lifestyle of some of the workers Methodist Church sent to work at Asante.

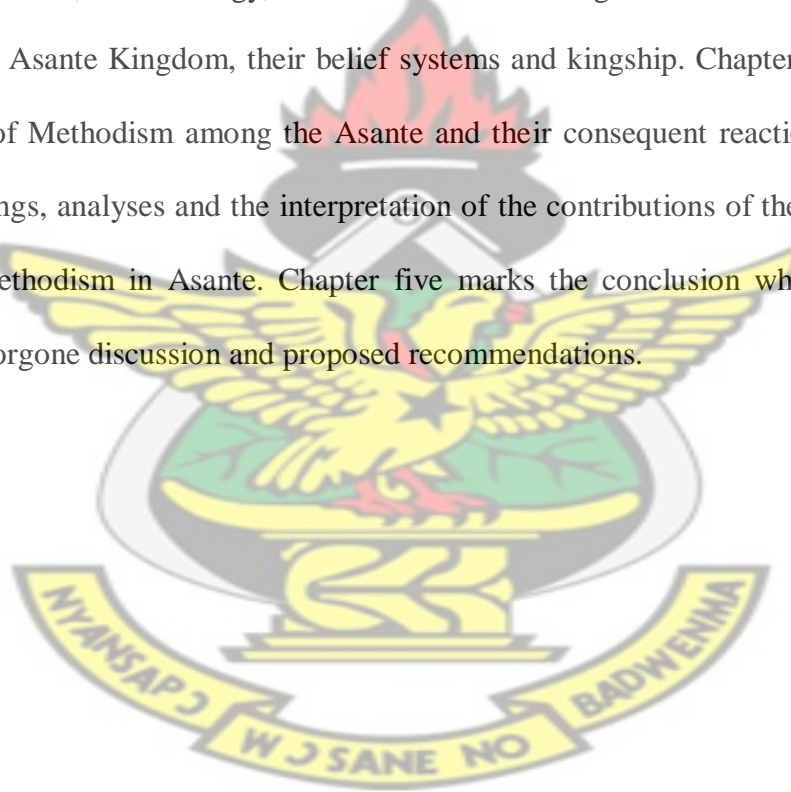
According to Busia (1968) chieftaincy in Asante is a sacred office. As the successors of the ancestors, the chief performs various rites for the welfare of his people. That office is joining with other functions which may be described as administrative, executive, judicial and military. This work may be useful to this research because it casts more light on the role chiefs are supposed to play in their communities.

From the information gathered in the literature review, the researcher has been amply furnished with facts that would make the report concrete; however, none of the works reviewed has

discussed the contribution of the Asante Kings to the growth of Methodism in Asante and this is the focus of this research.

1.8 Organization of the study

The thesis has been divided into five chapters. Chapter one is the introduction which covers background information, statement of problem, objective and scope of the study, the significance of the study, limitation, methodology, literature review and organization of the study. Chapter two discusses the Asante Kingdom, their belief systems and kingship. Chapter three focuses on the introduction of Methodism among the Asante and their consequent reactions. Chapter four presents the findings, analyses and the interpretation of the contributions of the Asante Kings to the growth of Methodism in Asante. Chapter five marks the conclusion which indeed is the summary of the forgone discussion and proposed recommendations.



CHAPTER 2

THE ASANTE KINGDOM, THEIR BELIEF SYSTEMS AND KINGSHIP

2.0 Introduction

The previous chapter examined the general introduction of the thesis. In this chapter, the origins of the Asante kingdom would be discussed. Asante belief systems, qualifications of a potential Asante king, the functions and the history of the kings who reigned before and after the advent of Methodism in Asante, would be specifically treated.

2:1 The origin of the Asante Kingdom

The Asante kingdom was officially established in 1701 and Osei Tutu was crowned the king of Asante (Asantehene). According to Ankomah (2009:11) Otumfoɔ Osei Tutu II said:

The Asante nation or Asanteman started with Osei Tutu I. All those before him were kings of Kwaman and the other four states which later came together to form the union of Asante. So there was no Asanteman or Asantehene before this time. Asanteman starts with the Golden Stool and therefore you cannot refer to the previous kings as Asantehene. No one should confuse that.

Considering the Otumfoɔ Osei Tutu II's submission it seems to the researcher that the Asante kingdom started with Opemsoɔ Osei Tutu I. Furthermore, history has it that, only those who had occupied or who would occupy the Golden Stool were the Asante kings. Yankah (2009:18) observed that Asante kingdom covers the entire Ashanti region, parts of the Brong Ahafo region and the Worawora district of the Volta region of Ghana where chiefs pay homage to the Asantehene. In 2008, the population of the kingdom was projected to be approximately 4.7 million and it covers an area of 25,000 square kilometres, representing about 11 per cent of the

land area of Ghana (Yankah 2009:18). This percentage of land space is quite significant to this study in which influence of the royals is being examined.

Arhin (1979: 40) says, the word 'Asante' is "the collective name of the peoples of contiguous traditional states who speak a dialect of Twi, the language of the Akan peoples, which belongs to the Kwa group of languages.... the important group of states which at the turn of the seventeenth century became Asante, were: Asumegya, Kumasi, Juaben, Kumawu, Mampong and Offinso. To these were later added Nsuta, Kokofu and Bekwai."

The Asante kingdom, known as *Asanteman*, is a homogenous society comprising a number of states all serving one king known as the Asantehene. Each of the individual states has her paramount chief and all the paramount chiefs owe allegiance to the Asantehene (Osei, 2000:1). There are two schools of thought in relation to the etymology of the word 'Asante'.

The first school of thought says that the Asante got the name 'Asante' from the special commodity they sent to Denkyira as tribute. All the towns under Denkyira were sending goods like plantain fibre, firewood and gold dust to Denkyira every *Akwasidae*. But in addition to these goods, the Asante were sending red clay as a special commodity to Denkyira. According to Osei (2000:1) the name for clay in Akan is *Asan*. This commodity made the Denkyira and other Akan states call the people who collected the *Asan* - *Asan-tefo*.

The second school of thought is that the individual Akan states which united for the purpose of war to overthrow the Denkyira kingdom were named *Ɛsa-Nti-Foɔ* (because of war), which later became *Asantefoɔ* (Adubofuor, 2000:1). According to Busia (1951:52) Otumfoɔ Agyeman Prempeh II gave the etymology of the word Asante as follows: “when the king of Denkyira heard of the Union of the five nations under Osei Tutu, he said he was certain that it had been formed for the purpose of making war against him (Osa-nti: Osa–war; nti–because of). So he called the members of the union sa-nti-fo.”

According to Osei (1994:1) there are a lot of varied versions on the origins of the Asante. One version maintains that their ancestors emerged from a hole at Asantemanso, near Asumegya. Others claim that their ancestors descended from the skies (Yankah, 2009:9). Further accounts claim that the Asante were among a group of people called Akan (these are; Akwamu, Guan, Fante, Denkyira, Brong, Akyem, Kwahu, Sefwi, Wassa, Asante, Akwapim and Assin) that descended from the rulers of the ancient Ghana Empire, far to the north in present-day Mali and Mauritania (Appiah and Gates, 1999:144). Authorities such as Osei (1994), Yankah (2009), Obeng (1996) Adubofuor (2000) and others agree that Asante was part of the ancient Ghana Empire that migrated. Osei (1994:132) maintains that:

The notion of some people claiming to have come from the ground or from a hole or from the skies was a coined up story to cover up the earlier history of the clans. Oral tradition had it that when the Asante clan chiefs united under Nana Osei Tutu, they were forbidden to relate their past history since that would sow the seed of disunity. To cut short questions from the inquisitive youth, they gave those answers.

The Asante are organised both matrilineally and patrilineally. Any Asante must belong to one of the matrilineal and one of the patrilineal groups by inheritance (Braffi 1999:28). The patrilineal

groups or *ntɔrɔ* are; *Bosompra*, *Bosomafra*, *Bosomtwe*, *Busumuru*, *Bosomnketia*, *Bosomafi*, *Bosomsika*, *Bosomakom*, *Bosomayensu*, *Bosomkrete*, *Bosomdwere*, and *Bosompo*. The matrilineal clans or *abusua* are; *Aduana*, *Asona*, *Agona*, *Asenee*, *Asakyiri*, *Bretuo*, *Ekɔɔna* and *Oyoko* (Osei, 2000:2). The present nation of Asante was in early times made up of individual towns founded by some of the matrilineal clans (Osei, 1994:2). Members of a clan are believed to be the descendants of one ancestress and are considered to be brothers and sisters. It was a taboo for brothers and sisters to marry each other, when one needed a partner; one had to go to another clan for the partner (Braffi, 1999: 11). The idea of intermarriage resulted in the creation of an alliance among the clans; therefore one clan had to go to the aid of another when the latter was attacked.

According to Adubofour (2000:1) Asante throughout the period of migration, did not build houses but they lived in caves, on trees and any available convenient places. The first place they settled was Adanse area. In the words of a nineteenth-century historian, Reindorf (2007:48) “Adanse is therefore an important ancestral home of many Twi speakers. The area is traditionally known in Akan cosmogony as the place where God (Odomankoma) started the creation of the world, such as the ideas of the clan and kinship.”

As the population increased the people began to look for areas of economic advantage so some of the clans moved away from Adanse to build new townships (Brukum, 2005:5). Towns with historical significance in those days were: Asumegya, Bekwai, Juaben, Kokofu, Kwaman

(Kumasi), Mampong, Offinso, Ejisu, Agona, Kaase, Kontanase, Tafo and Buokrom (Osei, 2004:3). History has it that as time went on, the towns mentioned above started waging war against each other at minor provocations resulting in disunity since they stopped protecting and defending one another. The Asante towns became very weak and were conquered by the Denkyira in 1660 so they served Denkyira and paid regular tribute. In tracing the history of the Asante Kingdom, chiefs like Nana Agyinamoa Mpatu, Nana Twum, Nana Antwi, Nana Kobia Amanfi, Nana Oti Akenten and Nana Obiri Yeboa were not ruling over the whole Asante Kingdom because at that time the kingdom had not been established (Buah, 1998:23). They were only the leaders of clans. The most prominent being the Oyoko clan. Nana Twum and Nana Antwi ruled over the clan at Asantemanso. Nana Kobia Amanfi ruled over them at Asumegya. Nana Oti Akenten and Nana Obiri Yeboa ruled over them when they settled at Kwaman which later became Kumasi. All these chiefs reigned during the period of vassalage to Denkyira. The chiefs mentioned above had strong connections with the chiefs of Kokofu, Nsuta, Juaben and Bekwai because they were all of the Oyoko clan and all were of one descent – an ancestress (Osei, 1994:3).

Yankah (2009:17) observed that as a result of the bad treatment Asante towns were receiving from the people of Denkyira, Nana Obiri Yeboa, king of Kwaman had a dream that the states should come together to form a united front, fight and free themselves from the shackles of domination by the Denkyira. Nana Obiri Yeboa called a meeting and all the chiefs agreed that they were badly treated by Denkyira. Some of the chiefs supported the idea of unity among the Asante towns whilst others expressed some doubts and fears. After lengthy deliberations they

agreed to form a loose confederation in which each state would be independent in all matters except defence (Osei, 2004:5) because no – one was ready to lose his autonomy. Nana Obiri Yeboa was chosen to lead the confederation as a war leader. When Dorma people heard of the unity arrangement by the Asante towns they took arms and defeated them town by town. Nana Obiri Yeboa died during this war. After the death of Obiri Yeboa, the people of Kumasi chose Nana Amoa Gyaame of Kokofu to be the next Kumasihene but he declined. Nana Kwaku Dua of Kenyaase was then asked to take over but he demanded so many conditions from the kingmakers to the extent that they were compelled to leave him alone. Nana Sarkodie of Wonoo suggested Nana Osei Tutu and preparations were made for him to take over the stool of Kumasi (Brukum, 2005:7).

Ɔpemsoɔ Osei Tutu I succeeded Nana Obiri Yeboa as the chief of Kwaman state later known as a Kumasi state. According to Osei (1994:6) during the enstoolment of Nana Osei Tutu I he promised his people that he would take up the idea of uniting the Asante states. He united the states with the help of his friend Ɔkɔ mfo Anɔ kye who prepared the united Asante states, psychologically, physically, and spiritually for war (Osei, 1994:10-11). Ɔkɔ mfo Anɔ kye commanded the Golden Stool from the skies on one festive Friday, *Fofie* when all the chiefs had gathered. The Golden Stool rested on the laps of Ɔpemsoɔ Osei Tutu I, making him the unquestionable king of the united Asante states (Brukum, 2005:10). The Golden Stool became the soul of the new kingdom and each chief swore an oath not to raise arms against the Golden Stool. They swore to protect the Golden stool with their blood (Yankah, 2009:11). The states that were assembled on that festive day were Mampong, Asumegya, Kokofu, Kumasi, Juaben,

Bekwai, Offinso, Nsuta, Kontanase, Ejisu and Agona. One could say therefore, that, these states were the original custodians of the Asante Golden Stool (Sika Dwa Kofi).

2.2 Asante Belief Systems

In the words of Nkansa-Kyeremateng (2004:85) belief system is “what any people’s religion has fashioned as constituting the sum total of the people’s experience, which they are expected to observe in order to preserve the community.” It seems that Asante are not religiously illiterate and their belief systems are not different from other Akans. Asante are observed to live in a spirit-filled world (Sarpong, 1996:2). An understanding of their belief systems would aid us in appreciating how they reacted to the introduction of Methodism whether positively or negatively in the following chapters.

2.2.1 The Supreme Being

The Asante have a firm belief in the existence of a Supreme Being called *Onyankopon* (God). They believe that God is the supreme, uncreated, self-existent being in whom all things end up, and upon whom all things depend. God is both transcendent over and immanent in, his world (God is everywhere but also far away beyond the reach of humans). According to Danquah (1968:46,49) the Supreme Being is known among Asante in superlative terms like *Ɔbo ɔ adeɛ* (Creator), *Daasebrɛ* (the Benevolent one), *Tweadumpon* (the one on whom you can lean forever) and *Nyankopon Kwame* (The God of Saturday). They believe that God has the keys to life and death. Consequently, when a baby is born the Asante thank God for giving them the

child – a gift of life; and when somebody dies the idiomatic expression Asante give is, ‘wayε Onyame dea’ (He has become God’s own). They do not worship God directly. Certain aspects of the Supreme Being’s position seem to be informed and influenced by the kings’ idea of kingship as they know and experience it (Obeng, 1996:34). They believe that God is a Supreme spirit and has no likeness so they cannot approach him directly. They approach him through his ‘middlemen’ the *Abosom*. They always point to the skies to infer the presence of God above (Osei, 2002:90).

2.2.2 The Abosom (Lesser gods/Divinities)

Due to their perception of God as very distant, the Asante considered it impolite to worship him direct. They worship through lesser gods which they represented in physical objects such as trees, stones, rivers, as well as carved minted figures situated in shrines, temples or groves of forests (Ahiabile-Addo, 1997:29). Sarpong (1996:2) submits: “the visible objects associated with the gods are not the gods. They are the habitats of the divinities.” The Supreme Being is the father and creator of those spirits. They believe that these spirits are ministers of the Supreme Being. They are known as the lesser gods, in that they have no power unto themselves but the power is from the Supreme Being. Obeng (1996:35) maintains that:

The abosom are Nyame’s akyeame as they relay his requests and pronouncements to humans through religious specialists and take back to him human appeals and concerns....Rivers such as Antoa and Nyamaa and lakes like the Bosomtwe, form the first stratum directly under Nyame as intermediaries. Sacrifices are offered to the abosom during festivals.

The abosom are able to work independently, doing the good work of healing and protecting the people (Rattary, 1923:144). These lesser gods have a generic name which is different from the names given to the Supreme Being. Sarpong (1996:3) points out that they are called *abosom*(plural) or *ɔ bosom* (singular) and sometimes referred to as the Deities. Through the Abosom, the Asante receive blessings, prosperity, protection from dangers and difficulties, direction and guidance for all aspects of their lives, and much more. In Asante, there are multiplicities of *abosom*, some rated very high, well known, well organized, very popular, effective and flourishing. Some of the examples of Asante's gods are: Antoa Nyamaa, Akonodi, Ɔboɔ Tabiri, Bosomtwe, and Pra. In the words of Rattray (1923:172) Tano is "the greatest of the Asante god."

2.2.3 Asase Yaa (Mother Earth)

The Asante believe in Asase Yaa (Mother Earth created on Thursday). Asase Yaa is an earth goddess of fertility. She is supposed to be the mother of all the spirits, and the consort of the Supreme Being, and she gives food and prosperity to her children. Osei (2002: 91) contends that "during Ɔko mfoɔ Anɔ kye's time, he ruled that the earth was not to be disturbed on Thursday therefore farming activities were not allowed on Thursday." Asante believe that a violation of this norm could arouse the anger of Asase Yaa which could result into infertility of the soil, drought, serious harm or even death to a non-conformist in the bush (Ahiable-Addo, 1997:29). She is called upon through libations and sacrifices, before making a new farm, planting, harvesting, digging a grave, building a structure, felling a tree and leasing land.

2.2.4 Life After Death

The idea of life after death occupies an important place in the Asante belief system. Among the Asante the dead are supposed to be living in a place of their own (Osei, 2002: 91). Sarpong (1996:4) maintains that “the Asante call this place *asamando* which is a place where there is no pain or physical deformity; but only happiness and joy.” There is a belief among the Asante that if the dead person was a chief, he would go there as a chief. That is why in the olden days when a king died, people were sacrificed to accompany him to the land of the dead. The Asante believe that the king would need people to serve him (Osei, 2002: 91).

2.2.5 Ancestors (Nsamanfoɔ)

The ancestors form an important part of the traditional Asante religion. They have a prominent place in the thinking and religious practices of the people. The ancestors are feared and at the same time, they are loved and respected; they are believed to be everywhere. They are not approached as gods (Sarpong, 1996:3). The *Nsamanfoɔ* (Ancestors) are honoured and appeased because they are forever watching and protecting people. The Asante believe that ancestors are in close contact with the Supreme Being thus they can call on them for assistance. One of the most important ways in which these ancestors are honoured is through the many festivals that are celebrated to remember them. During *Akwasidae* (major festival that is held in a cycle of every 40-42 days) they cleanse their stools and offer food and meat to the ancestral spirits which they believe inhabit the stools and influenced their daily lives. Libation is offered to invoke the souls of the ancestors for they believe that they can visit the living with the blessings and can also punish, especially those who break customs (Obeng, 1996:36). Another essential part of Asante

religion is the honouring of departed kings who are represented by stools which have been blackened during a sacrificial ceremony. Although the Golden Stool is clearly a more visible representation of the spiritual link to the king, it is the blackened stool that truly honours the strength and continuity of the throne.

2.2.6 Golden Stool

The Golden Stool is believed to have descended out of the skies in the late 17th century as a result of the prayers of Ɔko mfo Anɔ kye, the chief priest of the King of Asante (Osei, 1994:7). The stool was presented to the people in 1695, and Anokye declared that it contained the spirit of the whole of the Asante kingdom and that all of the strength of the kingdom depended on the safety of the stool (Yankah, 2009:17). According to Ankomah (2009:10) Nana Osei Tutu II said that: “The Golden Stool was commandeered through incarnations to the spirits by Ɔko mfo Anɔ kye. It is our soul, it is our heritage, and it is what we believe in. The Golden Stool is superior and higher than me, I am a servant and custodian of the Golden Stool and all Asante come under its spirit.” The spiritual centre of the Asante alliance is the mystical Golden Stool. Yankah (2009:20) in support of this assertion submits: “the Asante kingdom... are bound by loyalty to the Golden Stool which represent the soul of the Asante nation.” Essentially, the stool embodies the political unity of the Asante states and the power of the chiefs of Asante. The Golden Stool is considered to be so sacred that no person whosoever is allowed to sit upon it. It is kept with the strictest security and precaution; and is taken outside only on exceptionally grand occasions. Never must it come in contact with the earth or the ground. It is always on its own throne chair which was created by the first Asantehene, Ɔpemsoɔ Osei Tutu I (see Appendix A).

2.2.7 Concept of soul (*Ɔkra*)

Another important religious belief system is the concept of the soul. The Asante believe that every human being has a soul. Among the Asante a mother is believed to give her child its blood (*mogya*-this gives a person his/her status and membership of the mother's clan *abusua*), and the father its spirit (*sunsum*-this determines the character and individuality of the person). God gives the soul (*Ɔkra*) and the breath of life (*honhom*). The soul goes back to the creator when any one dies. The Asante therefore believe that the soul of a person is special deity in the human being which can cause the death of the human body should the soul be offended (Osei, 2002:49). It is believed that one's soul (*Ɔkra*) can be offended. When this happens the soul needs to be pacified. Sacrifices are made to the soul, and the soul is sometimes washed. This is referred to as *kradware* (Soul washing or Cleansing). The Asante believe that every *Ɔkra* has a name (*kra din*). This name is determined by the day in which a person is born. For instance, a child born on Friday is called *Kofi* if a male, and *Afia* if a female.

2.2.8 Witchcraft

Witchcraft is a mystic power which can be utilized by its possessors (witches and wizards) to harm other persons in the matrilineal side of the family. This malicious spirit when inherent in human beings makes them spiritually cannibalistic; they kill and destroy fellow human beings. Their activities are often localized within the same group. Witches are believed to hinder people's prosperity and can alter people's destiny (Brempong, 1996:43-44). Some of the stressful situations in life like barrenness, impotence, lorry accidents, impromptu death, dullness in school, snake bites, extreme poverty are believed to be the works of witches and wizards. A

person suspected of witchcraft becomes a social misfit, she/he is feared, scorned at and to a large extent ostracised from social gatherings.

2.2.9. Charms

The use of charms (*asuman*) is widespread in the Asante kingdom. These are repositories of 'power', and consist of a variety of substances and concoctions. In relation to the origin of power residing in the charms, Rattray (1927:22) thinks the power comes through the *mmotia* 'little people' (dwarfs) of the forest, and *sunsum* (spirit) of trees and plants. The *asuman* are manufactured objects, with protective qualities that the Asante use. Obeng (1996:36) explains that "the *asuman* consist of objects used as Charms, talismans, and amulets which owners wear around their waists, wrists, ankles, or necks....Some of the Asante *asuman* were *Katawere*, *Gyabom*, *Bodu Wangara*, *Bekwa*, and *Yentumi*."

2.2.9 Traditional priests

In Asante when spirit beings and humans participate in ritual contexts, the worshippers need to know how divinity responds or fails to respond to their pleas or concerns. This communicative tension requires religious specialists such as priests/priestesses (*akomfo/akomfomaa*) and diviners whose special vocation is to discern the response of spirit beings and also convey the expectations and feelings of humans to the spirit beings. In the Asante kingdom traditional priests have played a very significant role. In support of this assertion, according to Ankomah (2009:8) Otumfoɔ Osei Tutu II maintains that:

We have always ruled through our priests. They were seers and soothsayers; we wouldn't go to war without consulting them. A chief or king couldn't do anything without consulting the priests. They even went to war with us in those days; and therefore their impact on us was huge. And that naturally reminds me Okomfo Anokye, the famous traditional priest, whose close association with King Osei Tutu I gave birth to the Asante nation. So even though I am a Christian, traditional priests are part of our culture and important in our traditional systems.

2.3 The qualifications for an Asante king

Brukum (2005:10) delivering a lecture on the contribution of Ɔpemsoɔ Osei Tutu I to the development of Asanteman among other things declares that; “the next important thing Osei Tutu and his constitutional advisor did for Asanteman was giving them an unwritten constitution. In this constitution only the descendants of Osei Tutu are to inherit *Sika Dwa Kofi* [Golden Stool]. And since then it has been so.”

It seems that what this quote is suggesting is that it is only the descendants of the first occupant of the Golden Stool Ɔpemsoɔ Osei Tutu I who are rightful occupants and they alone can occupy the Golden Stool as the Asantehene. The fact is that there is only one royal clan from which the king of Asante can be selected. And that is the *Oyoko* clan. The Royal Oyoko clan boasts of 10 maximal segments known as *Oyoko Duo*; and only one of these segments, *Oyoko Obohyen*, yields male candidates to occupy the Golden Stool (Odotei and Hagan, 2003:33).

It was evident from the research that although it is only the lineage of Osei Tutu I who qualify to become Asante King or Asantehene, certain challenges can disqualify some of them. In support of this assertion, Hagan (1968:5) discussing the qualifications for Asante king submits:

A royal cannot be king if it is proved that he (a) is infertile (b) has committed a felony (c) is impotent (d) is a habitual drunkard (e) is a gambler (f) is deaf (g) is leprous, or, (h) is in any way deformed (circumcision now excepted). These physical disabilities conflict with the divine attributes of the Golden Stool. It would be implicitly contradictory to identify a leprous, impotent, or infertile man with the symbol which is considered the source of national health and well-being; and a gambler or drunkard would not have the temperance and vigilance which the duties attaching to the stool demand.

From the above, any royal who misbehaves for any cause whatsoever loses his right to the stool. Odotei and Hagan (2003:2) in support of this statement comment that: “the road to the Golden Stool and its occupancy is competitive, hard and hazardous. It has many stages that give opportunity for withdrawal or elimination. It is therefore reserved for those who not only qualify by birth but also have the courage, self-confidence, support and vision to lead the Asante nation.”

In Asante, at the demise of a king, the *Asantehemaa* (queen mother) assumes responsibility until a regent is nominated, elected and enstooled. In her capacity, she takes care of the royal household, by providing money for daily market, taking care of the king's personal attendants and his wife or wives. The queen mother whose prerogative it is to nominate a successor consults the royal lineage and the principal chiefs - Kokofuhene, Juabenhene, Bekwaihene and Nsutahene (Odotei and Hagan, 2003:5). After consultation with all stakeholders, she makes her first submission. If he is accepted, then the person becomes the next king. Odotei and Hagan (2003: 3) affirm that “once a candidate had been accepted, everyone rallied to support him as the new king. Individual preferences are submerged for the common good of the Asante nation.”

The research revealed that by the Asante custom and tradition, the *Asantehemaa*'s nominee has to be accepted by all the three traditional groups of Asante, that is the Gyaase chiefs, Kumasi traditional Council and the Asanteman Council. If the *Asantehamma*'s nominee is rejected, she is allowed two further nominations after which the Gyaase chiefs and the heads of the Kumasi state will be free to make their own nomination and subsequently the election (Odotei and Hagan,

2003: 6). After a king has been elected the Asante custom is that a king-elect is normally outdoored after 40 days in confinement. The period is considered necessary for taking him through the basics of being a king of Asante. It is a period of his spiritual purification and fortification, and also for teaching him the social and behavioural graces of his office.

2.4 The functions of Asante kings

Traditionally, the Asante king is tasked to perform religious, military, judicial, cultural, legislative, economic and administrative functions. It came out during the research that as a result of social change mainly brought about by colonialism and independence, most of these traditional functions have been taken over by modern administrative institutions.

In the first place the Asante king is the chief priest in Asante. He sits on the ancestral stool (Gyekye, 1996:109) therefore he is considered the embodiment of the beliefs, hopes, fears and aspirations of the Asante. He is the intermediary between the living and the ancestors. He performs special rituals and ceremonies on behalf of the gods and ancestors (Sarpong, 1998: 141). As a priest of his people there are certain days during the year such as *Akwasidae*, *Wukudae* and *Odwira* festival when he has to offer prayers to the ancestors. Also he has to see to it that the regulations and rules of the ancestors are kept. As part of his duty as a priest he has to keep the ancestors in constant memory of his people. The king's religious role according to Nukunya (1992:70) "places serious taboos on him to enable him maintain his ritual purity." The taboos relating to his conduct and mannerism are all intended to remind him and his subjects and others that the position he occupies is sacred. Hagan (1968:4) asserts that "the Golden Stool is

Divine, and the King of Ashanti is only its sacred agent: he is the guardian and officiant of this national shrine. Ashantis call their King, *ɔ hene -ɔ komfo*, the King-Priest.”

The second duty of an Asante king is that he is a commander-in-chief of the Asante army (Hagan & Odotei, 2001:54). The king is supposed to make sure that his people are protected from internal and external aggression. A king who fails to play this role of courage and of protection of his people stands in danger of being rejected. In support of this role Sarpong (1998:159) asserts: “the king of Asante is described as a leopard because of the supreme command that a leopard is supposed to exercise over the wild beasts in the forest. Just as the leopard is the commander of the forest, so also the king of Asante is the commander of his kingdom.” The Asante king being the commander-in-chief of the army, must be well built, physically strong and healthy. He must also be without blemish, not physically challenged in any form or lost any part of his body. Bravery and willingness to fight to defend the state is a criterion for selecting an Asante king. Therefore during the installation of Asante king, he has to demonstrate this by wearing the wardress of Asante – *Batakarikese* (smock, usually embossed with several talismans of various shapes and sizes) and fire a gun before the *Asantehemaa* (Queen Mother), the *Mamponghe* and the *Essemehyahene* (Odotei and Hagan, 2003:37).

The third duty is that an Asante king is a legislator (Sarpong, 1998:142). The king is the head and chairperson of the *Asanteman* Council which is made up of 35 traditional heads. The council is the highest legislative authority in Asante (Yankah, 2009:18). He presides over all meetings of the Council. The king together with his people makes laws affecting the state, such as land

tenure, customary marriage, tributes, trade, sanctions, and many others. These decisions become customary laws (see appendix B).

The fourth duty of an Asante king is a judicial role. It is incumbent upon the king to make sure that the laws of his predecessors are kept and applied. In Asante, crime is an act which offends the gods. In view of that it is the duty of the king to bring reconciliation among, and between, men and the spiritual forces (Sarpong, 1998:142). The king's judicial role includes the settlement of disputes and prevention of crimes. Not only that, but also to make sure that the custom and traditions of the society are kept. He also has the right to punish. The punishments available to the king include the death penalty, exile, ostracism, removal from office, and imposition of fines, disqualification to hold office (Odotei and Awedoba, 2006:172). It is a proverbial saying in Asante that "it is only the King that has a Knife" (Anti, 1974:38). The explanation is that the king has the power of life and death over his subjects. Even condemned prisoners could not be executed without the King's order.

It was clear during the research that chieftaincy, like so many other institutions of the country, has been undergoing a series of changes for a very long time now. The Asante king's functions such as military, judicial, legislative and administrative have been affected. Odotei and Awedoba (2006:175) in support of this submit:

With the taking over of the administration of the Gold Coast by the British and the consequent cessation of tribal wars, there was no longer the necessity for chiefs to retain armies. This means that the chief no longer had the need to perform his traditional function as a military leader. When independent Ghana established its own national armed forces, (the army, navy, and air force) which were responsible for the defence of the

entire nation....With the promulgation of the Native Jurisdiction Ordinance of 1883 by the colonial authorities, the judicial powers of the traditional rulers were curtailed; the power of life and death was taken from them. The chief's administrative and legislative functions gradually disappeared under the colonial administration and the parliamentary system of government introduced after independence.

An Asante king's traditional role as chief priest has been affected in some way. He is the spiritual head of all the people in the kingdom. Unfortunately, the emergence of Western education has affected it but he has not totally ceased to be the chief priest. Schools were established by the missionaries to convert their students to the religions of their various denominations. Missionaries trained their students to worship God through Jesus Christ. But in the olden days, the ancestors were worshipping God through their deities. The royals who passed through the schools became converted to the Christian religion of the schools they attended. They therefore retained their membership in the churches when they become kings and look to the pastors or ministers of the various denominations as their spiritual heads instead of them being the spiritual heads of the people.

Another function that has been affected is an Asante king's traditional role of having multiple wives. In the olden days, an Asante king was obliged to marry all the wives of his predecessors. The wives were classified as stool wives. When a king was destooled, stool wives could choose to stay and the next king could marry them. This has changed because according to Ankomah (2009:22) Otumfoɔ Opoku Ware II had only one wife and the present king Otumfoɔ Osei Tutu II has only one wife. When the present king Otumfoɔ Osei Tutu II was asked why he is not marrying many wives. He said: "But if you have a beautiful and a very good, supporting wife and you are happy with her, why go for another?" (Ankomah, 2009:22).

However, some of the functions have tended to persist. The Asantehene is the president of the highest authority of the kingdom which is the Asanteman Council. The Asanteman Council has the following membership: The Asantehene as the president, the paramount chiefs of the Asante kingdom, and four senior divisional chiefs of the Kumasi state (these are: Kontihene Akwamuhene, Adontenhene and Akyempemhene). Again the Asantehene is the president of the second most powerful organ of the Asante kingdom, the Asante Regional House of Chiefs. The Asante Regional House of Chiefs is composed of paramount chiefs in the Asante Region and the four senior divisional chiefs of Kumasi state. It is from this house that five members are chosen to represent the Asante Region at the National House of chiefs (Osei, 2000:10).

2.5 Asante Kings before the advent of Methodism in Asante: 1695-1834

This section discusses the Asante kings who reigned before the advent of Methodism in Asante. These kings are: Opemsoo Osei Tutu I, Otumfoo Opoku Ware I, Otumfoo Kusi Obodum, Otumfoo Osei Kwadwo, Otumfoo Osei Kwame, Otumfoo Opoku Fofie, Otumfoo Osei Kwame Asibe Bonsu, and Otumfoo Osei Yaw Akoto. Since all these kings reigned before the advent of Methodism in Asante, the researcher will give a very brief historical sketch about the date these kings reigned and what they are remembered for in the Asante Kingdom to serve as a background to the kings who fall within the period of this research in the next segment.

Opemsoo Osei Tutu I (1695 – 1719), the first occupant of the Golden Stool, united the individual Asante states to form the Asante kingdom under one king. He organized the kingdom into the various war flanks and made her a strong military kingdom to defeat the Dormaa state

and the Denkyira kingdom and added their lands to his kingdom. He introduced the use of firearms for war in his kingdom (Brukum 2005:4). Buah (1998:24) asserts that he instituted the *Odwira* Festival of the Asante. He built Kumasi as the capital of the kingdom. Otumfoɔ Osei Tutu I held three positions in the Asante kingdom. He was the king of the Asante Kingdom. He was also the paramount chief of Kumasi state. Finally he was the administrator of the Kumasi city.

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Otumfoɔ Opoku Ware I (1720 – 1750) succeeded Otumfoɔ Osei Tutu I. He conquered and added Sefwi, Wassa, Takyiman, and the Gyaman to the Asante Kingdom (Osei, 1994:15). Otumfoɔ Opoku Ware I won fights against Akyem, Akwamu and Ga-Adangbe. Brukum (2005:15) believes that this initiated Asante taking over the Gold Coast and the Ivory Coast. He created the *Ananta* stool, which served as the king's own battalion to challenge possible coup d'états by his war generals. He created the *Ankobe* or Home Guard stool to fight any aggressor who would invade Asante when the kingdom was at war with another nation (Osei, 1994: 16).

Otumfoɔ Kusi Obodum (1750-1764) succeeded Otumfoɔ Opoku Ware I as the third occupant of the Golden Stool (Osei 1994:18). Otumfoɔ Kusi Obodum concentrated on the consolidation of the gains of his predecessors and also on internal stability. During his reign he found out that one thing which disturbed the annexed states was capital punishment imposed on the people for trivial offences so he abolished capital punishment for trivial offences (Osei, 1994:18). In the words of Reindorf (2007:130) “he was the most humane of all the kings; forbade human sacrifices, and fostered peace among the chiefs”

The fourth occupant of the Golden Stool was Otumfoɔ Osei Kwadwo (1764 –1777). He continued with the northward expansion of the Asante kingdom through wars. According to Osei (1994:19) his might in warfare earned him the appellation: ‘Osei Koawia’, meaning ‘Osei who fights in the broad daylight’. He added Banda and the Dagomba lands to the Asante Kingdom. He brought a lot of changes in the Asante administration like the appointment of ambassadors to represent the king in the conquered states (Buah, 1998:27).

Otumfoɔ Osei Kwame (1777-1797) was a minor when he was enstooled so a regent by name Kwame Pete, was appointed to rule for him until he was matured. He prohibited many human sacrifices except that of funeral ceremonies for kings and royals. Osei (1994:22) asserts that “he developed this attitude because he secretly converted to the Muslim faith and even mediated the introduction of Koranic law into his kingdom.” Because of his attitude towards wars and human sacrifices, he was destooled in 1797. His people contended that if there would be no wars, even those conquered would break away and if offenders would not be executed there would be no fear of the people (Osei, 1994:23).

Otumfoɔ Opoku Fofie (1797-1799) succeeded his deposed brother Otumfoɔ Osei Kwame. In Asante’s history he is termed as the unlucky king. He ruled the Asante kingdom for less than 18 months. Immediately he was enstooled, the people of Gyaman attacked the Asante kingdom to free themselves from Asante rule. The Gyamans were joined by a large army from Kong. The battle was fought on the banks of River Tano. The Asante won this war but it took fifteen months of Otumfoɔ Opoku Fofie’s reign. According to Osei (1994: 23) “He did not live long after the

war but died in 1799. Oral tradition states that his death was caused by the ghost of his late brother, Nana Osei Kwame, which met him after the war.”

Otumfoɔ Osei Kwame Asibe Bonsu (1800-1824) was the seventh occupant of the Golden Stool. Osei (1994:24) holds that it was during his reign that the Asante kingdom first clashed with the British. He fought and conquered all the coastal states and extended the Asante boundary to the Gulf of Guinea. He established friendship between Asante kingdom and the British through the exchange of gifts. He built the Bonsu Aban Museum that was situated in the area where the Kumasi Fort, now Military Museum is situated. He kept valuable Asante items for show to visitors.

Otumfoɔ Osei Yaw Akoto (1824-1834) was the eighth occupant of the Golden Stool. He fought the Dodowa war which saw the Asante's first defeat by the British and allied states. It was during his reign that Asante lost all the coastal states as her territory. A treaty was made between the Asante kingdom on one side and the British and Coastal states on the other hand. The terms of the treaty were that the Asante Kingdom would not wage war on the coastal states for a period of six years, they were to pay 600 ounces of gold as security, and two royals were to be given to the British Government to be sent abroad and educated. The two royals were John Owusu Ansah and William Owusu Nkwantabisa (Reindorf, 2007:260).

2.6 Asante kings since the advent of Methodism in Asante: 1834-2002

Out of sixteen occupants of the Golden Stool eight have ruled since the advent of Methodism in Asante. These kings are: Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I, Otumfoɔ Kofi Karikari, Otumfoɔ Mensah Bonsu, Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua II, Otumfoɔ Agyeman Prempeh I, Otumfoɔ Osei Agyeman Prempeh II, Otumfoɔ Opoku Ware II and Otumfoɔ Osei Tutu II (the present king). These kings reigned within the scope that this research covers. In view of that, a detailed history of their reign will be discussed.

2.6.1 Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I (1834-1867)

In 1834, Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I succeeded Otumfoɔ Osei Yaw Akoto as Asantehene. On 18th March, 1837 Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua signed a contract with King William I of the Netherlands. He said that he would deliver 1,000 recruits for the Dutch East Indies army within a year. He received 2,000 guns by way of advance payment, with the promise of 4,000 more to come. Moreover, the Dutch obtained permission to open a recruitment agency in Kumasi which, for the next few years, would be headed by Jacob Huydecoper, a mulatto from Elmina. Reindorf (2007:258) observed that as part of the deal two young Asante princes, Kwasi Boakye and Kwame Poku accompanied the Dutch back to The Netherlands, where they were to receive Dutch education. Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I ruled Asante Kingdom for thirty three years but fought only one war. He was interested in commerce and to achieve this goal, peace was necessary. Whenever he had a hint that two states wanted to go to war, he would send his messengers with the Golden Axe to invite the warring parties to Kumasi. He would always resolve the conflicts; therefore the Europeans gave him the title, “The peaceful King of Asante” (Reindorf, 2007: 261).

He invited all the Chiefs of the Asante states to build houses in Kumasi so that they could have their own houses in which they would lodge when they came to celebrate the yearly Odwira festival. Selling of commodities in open places in Kumasi began during his reign. Bartels (1965:52) submits that Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I allowed the Wesleyan missionary, Thomas Birch Freeman to enter Kumasi in 1839 and in 1841. It was Freeman's second visit that he brought back the two hostages-John Owusu Ansah and William Owusu Nkwantabisa who were taken to Britain to be educated. Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I died in 1867 and was succeeded by Otumfoɔ Kofi Karikari (Lewin, 1978: 36).

2.6.2 Otumfoɔ Kofi Karikari (1867 – 1874)

Otumfoɔ Kofi Karikari succeeded Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I as the tenth occupants of the Golden Stool. Osei (1994:166) says that Otumfoɔ Kofi Karikari had compassion for the poor. This earned him a nickname, 'Karikari a *Ɔkyɛ Mpɔ*' (Karikari who gives wrapped gold knots free to people). He could not understand why people should live in poverty whereas the Asante treasury was full of money. He invited people and gave them money to work with. His people contended that if his predecessors had misused the treasury as he was doing, he would not have met a coin in it. It was during his reign that the Krepi war was fought and Ramseyer the Basel Missionary was captured and sent to Kumasi. He sent soldiers to the coast for the coastal campaign of 1873. The Sagranti war of 1874, which spelt the doom of the Asante kingdom, was fought during his reign. Sir Garnet Wolseley and his troops burnt down Kumasi when they conquered the city (Boahen, 2003:27). On October 21, 1874 Otumfoɔ Kofi Karikari was destooled. Some of the charges brought against him were that he had desecrated the coffins of Otumfoɔ Osei Yaw

Akoto and Asantehema Afua Sarpong by looting them of their gold and ornaments. The second charge was that since he ascended the throne the Asante Kingdom had not known peace (Adams 2010:57).

2.6.3 Otumfoɔ Mensah Bonsu (1874-1883)

Otumfoɔ Mensah Bonsu succeeded Otumfoɔ Kofi Karikari who was destooled after the Sagranti war of 1874. According to Osei (1994:46) Otumfoɔ Mensah Bonsu came to meet the Asante treasury empty because of how Otumfoɔ Nana Kofi Karikari managed it. In view of that he had to impose heavy fines on offenders for even trivial offences to fill the treasury. The civil war between Kumasi and Juaben occurred during his reign, which led to the migration of the people of Juaben to New Juaben in the Eastern Region. He was helpless against the British as they bombarded Kumasi with their sophisticated weapons so that, he was forced to surrender to save lives from being lost. As a result, he resolved never to have any confrontation with the British (Osei, 1994:45). In February 1874, he signed the Treaty of Fomena. According Agyeman-Dua (1999:15) the terms were:

- (a) Promised to pay an indemnity of 50,000 ounces of gold to the British (b) Renounce all his claims to Denkyira, Assin, Akim and Adanse (c) Renounce all his claims to Elmina and other allied tribes, and to the payments from the Government in respect of the forts at Elmina, Cape Coast and Accra as had hitherto been the practice (d) Undertake within a prescribed time to withdraw his troops from the South-West and other places.

He was destooled by the people because of his dislike for war unlike Otumfoɔ Osei Asibe Bonsu whom he was named after. He was also charged for imposing inappropriate fines and having weak morals (Busia, 1951: 99).

2.6.4 Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua II (1884-1888)

After Otumfoɔ Mensa Bonsu's destoolment there was chaos and disorder because the people were divided in choosing a successor. According to Osei (1994:120) some of the chiefs wanted Otumfoɔ Kofi Karikari to be re-ensooled but the chiefs in Kumasi as well as the youth favoured young Kwaku Dua (Kwaku Dua kuma). Young Kwaku Dua was the nominee of Nana Kwaku Dua I for the Stool; however he was too young when Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I died. This age disqualification opened the way for his older uncles to be ensooled. The Akyempemhene, Owusu Kokor spearheaded young Kwaku Dua candidature. The struggle for the stool resulted in a civil war in which chiefs like Agonahene, Atuahene, and Nsutahene, lost their lives. They supported the re-ensoolment of Otumfoɔ Kofi Karikari. Other chiefs on the side of the young Kwaku Dua who lost their lives were Gyaasehene Kofi Poku and Sanaahene, Sanaa Poku. The fighting took place in early August 1883. By the middle of August both sides sought to avoid further escalation of the conflict (Busia 1951: 99). Owusu Kokor, the Akyempemhene, initiated a new move by sending a peace message to Otumfoɔ Kofi Karikari for an amicable settlement of the misunderstanding. He agreed to the proposal because he knew he had the support of the influential chiefs of Asante and would be made the king after the meeting.

The time and place for the meeting were agreed upon and Otumfoɔ Kofi Karikari and six thousand of his supporters made their way to the meeting place but it was deception by Owusu Kokor who planned a coup and had armed his men for a massacre. Therefore, while innocently waiting for Owusu Kokor and Kwaku Dua kuma, they saw Prince Boakye Tenten and some of the followers of Kwaku Dua coming, with guns and immediately opened fire on the Otumfoɔ

Kofi Karikari and his men massacred them. About two thousand of Otumfoɔ Kofi Karikari's men perished. Some others including Otumfoɔ Karikari fled for their lives. After the massacre, Nana Kwaku Duah II was confirmed as Asantehene elect in September 1883. He was finally enstooled in 28th April 1884 but was attacked by small pox and died on 10th June 1884 after forty days on the stool (Osei, 1994:121).

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2.6.5 Otumfoɔ Agyemang Prempeh I (1888-1896)

It must be noted that after the death of Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua II in 1884, the Asantehemaa Nana Afia Kobi nominated a royal called Kwasi Kusi to succeed him. However, his enstoolment was delayed for the governor to be present. Messengers sent to Accra to invite the governor were in Accra when Kwasi Kusi also died (Tordoff, 1965: 122). Two contestants who emerged were Yaw Atwereboana and Agyeman Prempeh. Civil war broke out between their supporters. Prempeh's faction won the day and he was enstooled in March 1888 with the stool name Kwaku Dua III. This name later changed to Otumfoɔ Agyeman Prempeh I.

On 6th March 1844 the coastal states became a British colony but Asante remained independent. Tordoff (1965: 23) comments that as a result of the Berlin Conference of 1884-1885 to divide Africa, Asante was supposed to be colonized by Britain. The Governor at the time, William E. Maxwell asked Otumfoɔ Agyeman Prempeh I to allow a British representative in Kumasi, but he refused. In the words of Agyeman-Dua (1999:15) "On January 17, 1896, the British arrested Otumfoɔ Prempeh I on the orders of the Governor of the Gold Coast W.E. Maxwell. Also

arrested were his mother and the Queenmother Nana Yaa Akyea, his father...and all Kumasi chiefs.” They were sent to Cape Coast and later they were imprisoned in the Elmina Castle for one year. They were further sent to Sierra Leone for three years and finally sent to the Indian Ocean Island of the Seychelles for twenty-four years (Agyeman-Duah, 1999:17). When Otumfoɔ Agyeman Prempeh I was arrested, in the words of Osei (1994:124) “the governor entrusted the Administration of Kumasi state in the hands of Nana Kwaku Nantwi, Nana Opoku Mensa (Obuabasa) and Nana Kwame Afrifa were chiefs in Kumase.” In 1920 Otumfoɔ Prempeh I returned from exile and was king of Asante until he died in 1931.

According to Tordoff (1965:51) he might have become one of the warrior Kings if he had not been exiled by the British in 1896 because he waged war against the Nkoranza people in 1892 and 1894 to bring them back to the Asante fold. However, his exile to Seychelles changed his life. He had his formal education during his exile. He was also converted to the Christian religion while in exile. It was when he was in exile that he sent a message home that royals should be sent to school (Agyeman- Duah, 1999:18). His nephew Kwame Kyeretwie was among those who were sent to school, the nephew became Otumfoɔ Osei Agyemang Prempeh II who succeeded him in 1931. It was Otumfoɔ Prempeh I who enrolled Otumfoɔ Opoku Ware II in school when he returned from exile in the Seychelles.

From the discussions above, it is clear that by 1896, the British were in political control of Asante. It is observed by Agyeman-Dua (1999:21) that on March 28, 1900, Governor Arnold Hodgson came to Kumasi and demanded to sit on the Golden Stool as the new force. Yaa

Asantewaa (then the queen mother of Ejisu) was angered by this demand and declared war. The war lasted from March to November 1900. Asante was defeated. Asirifi-Danquah (2006:4) asserts that “Asante was annexed to then Gold Coast colony by Great Britain in 1900-1901 after the Yaa Asantewaa war.”

2.6.6 Otumfoɔ Osei Agyemang Prempeh II (1931-1970)

Otumfoɔ Osei Agyeman Prempeh II was the 14th occupant of the Golden Stool of the Asante kingdom. He was enstooled as Kumasihene in 1931. Donkoh in an interview said that Otumfoɔ Prempeh II enrolled at the Kumasi Wesleyan Methodist School in 1907 and completed in 1915. He was enstooled at the time when the Asante kingdom had disintegrated. It was Otumfoɔ Prempeh II who fought for the restoration of the Asante Confederacy in 1935. Osei (1994:90) maintains that “Nana Osei Agyeman Prempeh II ascended the Golden Stool officially as Kumasihene. Like his great grand uncle Osei Tutu I, he made the restoration of the Asante Confederacy his prime concern.” The British Government restored the Asante Confederacy on January 31st 1935 with Otumfoɔ Osei Agyeman Prempeh II as the Asantehene. In 1947 the British government conferred on him the knighthood of the Commander of the British Empire (KBE). He spearheaded the establishment of the National House of Chiefs and sited its headquarters in Kumasi.

He was the second literate and Christian king and he saw to it that education became the cornerstone of his nation’s development. He therefore encouraged the missionaries and other

interested groups to open schools throughout the Asante Nation. His time also saw the opening of the state schools. Many second cycle schools were opened during his reign. He also took interest in the education of women. Many women institutions were opened during his reign, for example, St. Monica's Secondary School and Training College, Yaa Asantewaa Secondary School and Kumase Girls Secondary. He facilitated the establishment of Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in Kumasi (Tordoff, 1965:40).

He encouraged royals to go to school. He established a scholarship scheme for the education of every promising citizen of the Asante kingdom. He gave land for the establishment of the many second cycles schools examples being Prempeh College, Opoku Ware Secondary School, Osei Kyeretwie Secondary School, T.I. Ahamadiyya Secondary School, Kumasi Academy and many others (Osei, 1994:95). Otumfuo Prempeh II also concerned himself with other fields like public health and social life of the people.

His interest in sports led to the construction of the Kumasi sports stadium. Asante Kotoko Football Club was formed in 1935 during his time and he was the life patron of the club. He also gave land for the establishment of the Turf club in Kumasi. He designed the Asante flag and crest (Osei, 1994:96). He showed keen interest in the Christian faith. He loved music and for many years, in his youthful days, was a chorister of St. Cyprian's Anglican Church, Kumasi. He initiated and established Kumasi Church Choirs Union consisting of the Choirs of the Christian Council and the Catholic Secretariat in the Kumasi city in 1968 (Kumasi Church Choirs' Union 2008:8).

2.6.7 Otumfoɔ Opoku Ware II (1970-1999)

Otumfoɔ Opoku Ware II succeeded Otumfoɔ Osei Agyeman Prempeh II, and ascended the Golden Stool as the 15th Asantehene. He was christened Barima Kwaku Adusei. As a young boy he lived in the Mission House with English Church Fathers at the St. Augustine's Anglican Training College in Kumasi from where he attended school and came under a strong Christian influence. He served at Mass on Sundays at St. Cyprian the Martyr (Anglican Church) in Kumasi, during his school days until he completed his education at the Bishop Boys Anglican School in Accra where he obtained the Standard VII certificate in 1933 (Odotei and Hagan, 2001:1).

He proceeded to Adisadel College. He studied Draughtsmanship and later studied law at the Middle Temple and was called to the Bar in 1962 (Boaten, 1999:7). His contribution to the development of education was centred on providing scholarships to the sons and daughters of the Asante kingdom who were brilliant but whose parents were not in the position to fund them, in school. He therefore established the Opoku Ware Foundation to offer scholarships to students of Junior Secondary Schools and others in Senior Secondary School. He also facilitated the establishment of a Medical School at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (Boaten, 1999:7). According to Osei (1994:101) the Anglican Church recognized his role as a peaceful king and conferred the title “Prince of Peace” on him.

2.6.8 Otumfoɔ Osei Tutu II (1999-to date)

Otumfoɔ Osei Tutu II was enstooled as the 16th occupant of the Golden Stool on 26 April 1999 in succession to Nana Opoku Ware II. He attended St. Joseph Primary School at Asante New Town and State Boys Middle School (Yankah, 2009:22). He continued his education at the Sefwi Wiawso Secondary School. He later studied accountancy at the Institute of Professional Studies (IPS) at Legon in Accra. Two years later he travelled to the United Kingdom to pursue further education at the Kilburn Polytechnic and the University of North London. He has contributed to education in Ghana. Within the first year of his reign, he was able to offer scholarships to six hundred University students, two hundred each to the University of Ghana, Legon, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi and University of Cape Coast. In 2006 the government appointed him as the Chancellor of the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi (Yankah, 2009:33). He has established a clinic at the Manhyia Palace which offers free medical services to patients. He has also established the Osei Tutu Health Fund for reduction of Buruli Ulcer and well as the eradication of Guinea Worm. In addition, Otumfoɔ Osei Tutu II has set up the Serwaa Ampem Aids Foundation for Children under the leadership of his wife, to help children who have become victims of the HIV and AIDS pandemic (Yankah, 2009:29).

2.7 Conclusion

The foregoing has been a brief survey of the beginnings of the Asante kingdom. The Asante kingdom was created and maintained by war, and a military philosophy remained a central feature of its cultural orientation. The Golden Stool was created as the politico-ritual symbol of unity, and was believed to embody the spirit or soul of the Asante Kingdom. To the Asante, the

Golden Stool is infinitely more important than anything, anybody and any group of people. It is more important than the king. The Asante believe that there can be no Asanteman without the Golden Stool. It has been revealed that the Asante king is the occupant of the stool of the ancestors- *ɔ te nananom akonnwa so*.

According to the history, it has been observed that from the founding of the kingdom in about 1701 to 2002, the Asante kingdom has been ruled by sixteen kings. The first occupant of the Golden Stool was Opemso Osei Tutu I and the sixteenth is the current Asantehene Otumfo Osei Tutu II. In Asante the belief systems are inseparable from social or cultural life. Therefore Asante may be described as a religious society.

In the 300-year history of the Asante kingdom, no nomination by Asantehemaa has ever been rejected. It has been established that an Asante king (Asantehene) is democratically elected but could be deposed or forced to abdicate. For example Otumfo Kusi Obodum, and Otumfo Osei Kwame were forced to abdicate. Otumfo Kofi Karikari was destooled. It is clear that an Asante king has no term limits; if he is a good leader he rules for life, if he is not he is overthrown or destooled. The Asantehene has a dual capacity of the Union of Asante States. Apart from being the Asantehene, he is also the chief of Kumasi and the head of the Kumasi Division within the Asante Union of States. Among his own family lineage and the Kumasi Division, he operates within the confines of checks and balances. Among the Amanhene or Paramount Chiefs he is the *primus inter pares* (first among equals).

It should be noted that some Asante kings have had the benefit of formal education in schools established by the churches. Otumfoɔ Osei Agyeman Prempeh II was educated in a Methodist School and Otumfoɔ Opoku Ware II was educated in Anglican Mission Schools. It has been observed that some Asante kings were adherents and full members of some Christian denominations. For example, kings such as Otumfoɔ Agyeman Prempeh I, Otumfoɔ Osei Agyeman Prempeh II, Otumfoɔ Opoku Ware II and Otumfoɔ Osei Tutu II. The next chapter shall discuss the introduction of Methodism among the Asante and their responses.



CHAPTER 3

INTRODUCTION OF METHODISM IN ASANTE

3.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the various attempts made by the Wesleyan Methodist Missionaries to introduce Methodism among the Asante people and their responses. It also discusses the achievements and the challenges faced by the missionaries.

3.1 Methodism and the Asante Response- Phase one

As a result of Governor George Maclean's Peace Treaty of 1831 between the Asante and the British and Coastal states after the battle of Katamansu in 1826, there was thirty-two year period of peace and trade boom in Ghana (Bartels 1965:37). Many ordinary Fantes who previously had little opportunity to engage in trade with the people of Asante, were attracted into business by the certainty of safety offered by the treaty as well as the profits that the enterprise promised. Ahiabile-Addo (1996:9) submits

These Fante traders, particularly the educated ones who were active participants in this nascent trade had by 1835 acquired a modicum of Christian life. From 1835 to 1838 when Methodism was vague at the coast, many of them became Methodists. Therefore, wherever they resided in Asante to trade, they formed Methodist Christian fellowships, not only for the purpose of communal worship, but also for identifying themselves as a social group among the indigenous Asante.

There were at least two of such fellowships in Asante; one at Kumasi and the other at Fomena. Bartels (1965:39) maintains that the fellowship at Fomena "later came to be known as the Obuasi circuit." The fellowship in Kumasi was founded by John Mills, a Fante trader resident in

Kumasi. Associate with the Kumasi fellowship was James Hayford, a Fante and a British representative on the appointment of George Maclean (Debrunner 1967:98). Hayford was influential enough to hold divine services in the Kumasi palace during the reigns of Nana Osei Yaw Akoto and Nana Kwaku Dua I. Bartels (1965:37) maintains; “Hayford won the confidence of Nana Kwaku Dua I (1838-67), and obtained his permission to hold in his presence, in the palace, a divine service consisting of the singing of psalms and hymns, readings from the Bible and prayer.” Debrunner (1967:102) asserts; “Hayford was even asked to conduct a Christmas service in the presence of the Asantehene and other members of the royal household.” One thing which is clear about this Fante Christian fellowship is that even though services were held with Nana Kwaku Dua I’s courtesy at the palace and in his presence, outsiders were not allowed to participate in Christian worship (Essamuah 2010:14). This could be a set-back as far as the spirit of evangelism is concerned. Nevertheless, it gave the royals their exclusive worship time.

In the light of the above discussions, Methodism was introduced to the Asante by Fante traders and not Rev. Thomas Birch Freeman. Again it was not Freeman who introduced Methodism to Nana Kwaku Dua I. Hence it could be concluded that the activities of these Fante traders prepared and paved the way for the Rev. Thomas Birch Freeman. This account marks the beginning of Methodist work in Kumasi and it was with this group that Freeman opened his mission in Asante (Agbeti 1986:56). In support of the above assertion, Ahiable-Addo (1997:30) points out: “A report which Mr. Hayford sent to the Church and Governor Maclean in Cape Coast about this service, whipped up the Rev. Mr. Freeman’s enthusiasm to reach Kumasi in order to build a formal Church, using the Fellowship that John Mills and Hayford had established as a foundation.” Edusa-Eyison (1999:44) in support declares; “It was through Hayford’s

devotional activities that the King of Ashanti extended an invitation to Freeman to open a school there.”

3.2 Methodism and the Asante Response - Phase two

The Rev. Thomas Birch Freeman’s attention was turned to the Asante Kingdom by the end of 1838. Freeman (1968:11) states; “Ever since my arrival at this Station, I had felt very anxious to visit Kumasi, the capital of Ashanti, and residence of the King.” What was the motivating factor that moves Freeman and other Wesleyan missionaries to visit Kumasi? Ahiable-Addo (1999:12) points out that: “Some European residents on the coast in the nineteenth century regarded the Asante as a people with a barbarous, bloodthirsty, bellicose and slave-trade culture. Accordingly, they stigmatised the Kingdom as ‘the heathen land afar’ where the incidents of cruelty, horror and wretchedness were common and, its capital, Kumasi, a stronghold of Satan in which the streets, though well laid out, were always scattered with beheaded corpses.”

Freeman (1968:11) remarks in support of the above that the Asante kingdom consisted of tales of horror, wretchedness and cruelty. According to Edusa-Eyison (1999:44) “Kumasi was said to be notorious for its threats of invasion. This had made the coastal tribes fearful of her. The mention of Asante was always associated with evils and atrocities. It was horrifying and cruel.” This knowledge about the Asante made the congregation in Cape Coast oppose Freeman’s intention of starting missionary work at Asante. According to Freeman (1968:11-12) opposed to his mission to Asante were:

First, the fears of a large majority of our members, as to the result of such an enterprise, concerning my health. Secondly, the very heavy expenses attending such a journey. Thirdly, the doubts of many with whom I conversed on the subject, that I should not succeed even in an attempt to get to Kumasi, on account of the almost unconquerable jealousies of the King. Fourthly, the strong claims of our societies on the coast; from which, in the event of my undertaking the journey, I must in all probability be absent from two to three months. And, lastly, the importance of my being at Cape Coast on the arrival of a fellow-labourer, whom I had for several weeks been expecting.

All the above challenges were removed according to Freeman (1968:12):

The first obstacle was removed by our members gaining a steady and increasing confidence, that God would preserve me, (if I endeavoured to take care of my health,) and bring me back in safety. The second obstacle was removed by a promise, on the part of our societies on the coast, to render me all possible assistance by their prayers and contributions. The third obstacle was removed by a promise of all necessary assistance on the part of His Excellency President Maclean. My fourth obstacle was removed, by the expectation that a new Missionary would arrive in the course of a few weeks at the latest; and also by my obtaining the assistance of an excellent young man (Mr. W. De Graft,) who was ready to take charge of the Mission-house for our societies, &c., during my absence; and, My fifth obstacle was, in a measure, removed by considering that I could write a long letter, by way of information and instruction, and leave it at the Mission-house for my fellow-labourer on his arrival.

Notwithstanding all the fears mentioned above and panic the societies on the coast raised £60.00 toward the cost of Rev. Freeman's first missionary journey to Kumasi (Essamuah 2010:14). On January 30, 1839, Rev. Thomas Birch Freeman led a team from Cape Coast to establish a new mission in the Asante kingdom. The people who travelled with him were twenty-one Fante Christians, eighteen carriers, John Martin (Freeman's interpreter) and two policemen- a sergeant and an escort who were assigned by Governor Maclean to provide security for the team during the journey (Bartels 1965:39). On Friday 8th February, 1839 Rev. Thomas Birch Freeman and his team arrived at Kusa in Asante. Freeman (1968:18) points out that "I had not been in Quisah [sic] more than an hour, when I was informed by the Chief, that I could proceed no farther into the Ashanti country without obtaining permission from the Chief of Adansi, who resides at Fomunah [sic], a neat little town, about a mile distance from Quisah [sic]. Being provided with a lodging-place, I halted here for the night." The next morning Rev. Thomas Birch Freeman was

invited to an audience with the Adansihene, Nana Kwantwi Barimah I. He was accompanied by his host, the chief of Kusa. Freeman introduced himself through his interpreter, John Martin. When Freeman was asked by Nana Kwantwi Barimah I his aim of visiting Kumasi he submits: “I told him I had nothing to do with trade or palavers, but was come into the country to promote the best interests of the King of Ashanti and his people, by directing them in the way of peace and happiness, through the preaching of the Gospel” (Freeman 1968:19). According to Wolfson (1958:120) the fetish priest at Kusa who was at the meeting proclaimed that the town stood the danger of being ravaged by fire on account of the Rev. Birch Freeman’s entry and that the calamity could only be averted by propitiating the gods. Rev. Birch Freeman was detained at Kusa for four days and later moved to Fomena upon Kwantwi Barimah I’s request. Freeman (1968:22) submits that: “Korinchi [sic] having made me the offer of waiting the King’s pleasure at Fomunah [sic], instead of Quisah [sic], I readily embraced it, as Fomunah [sic] is much larger, more open, and healthy.”

It seems to the researcher that Freeman’s detention at Fomena offered him the opportunity to conduct devotions and divine services with Fante members of his Cape Coast society who had come to Fomena to trade. Freeman (1968:20) declares that: “I had a goodly number of our people with me, who assisted in singing the praise of God. After a short prayer in Fanti by my interpreter, we sung the first verse of the hymn...after which I preached from Mark xvi. 15”

After detention at Fomena for forty-six days Rev. Thomas Birch Freeman was permitted to proceed to Kumasi. On 1st April, 1839, Rev. Thomas Birch Freeman and his team arrived in

Kumasi and received a reception of unexpected significance (Freeman 1968:48). According to Ahiabile-Addo (1997:33) “Rev. Mr. Freeman and his team, though jittery about the reception that would be accorded them, proceeded to the Asantehene’s palace to announce their arrival and intentions. Here, they had the first pleasant surprise of their visit. They were warmly received and lavishly entertained at the palace, with Opoku, the Asantehene’s Chief Linguist, being particularly benevolent to them.” Freeman met the Asantehene Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I magnificently dressed and sitting in state with forty thousand people at the Kumasi durbar grounds (Market place) where Kumasi Wesley Cathedral has been built (Freeman 1968:46, 48). Here is his own description of his entry into Kumasi on Monday, 1st April, 1839:

At two p.m. a messenger arrived from the King, requesting me to proceed as early as possible. I immediately dressed myself; and while so doing, three other messengers arrived, each bearing a gold sword, requesting me to hasten forward. I then proceeded towards the town, preceded by the messengers and some soldiers bearing arms. Having reached the outside of the town, we halted under a large tree, and there waited for another royal invitation. In short time, His Majesty’s Chief linguist, Apoko (sic), came in a palanquin, shaded by an immense umbrella, and accompanied by messages bearing canes nearly covered with gold, to take charge of my luggage, and see it safe lodged in the residence intended for me. All these things being properly arranged, another messenger arrived, accompanied by troops, and men bearing large umbrellas, requesting me to proceed to the market-place. The king’s commandment being ‘urgent,’ we pushed along with speed, preceded by a band of music. As soon as we arrived at the market-place, I got out of my little travelling chair, and walked through the midst of an immense con-course of persons, a narrow path being kept clear from me, paying my respects to the King and his numerous chiefs and captains, who were seated on wooden chairs, richly decorated with brass and gold, under the shade of their splendid umbrellas, some of them large enough to sun, and crowned with images of beasts covered with gold, surrounded by their troops and numerous attendants. I was occupied for half an hour in walking slowly through the midst of this immense assembly, touching my hat and waving my hand, except before the king, in whose presence I of course stood for a moment uncovered. I then took my seat at a distance, accompanied by my people and several respectable Fanti traders who are staying in the town, to receive the compliments of the King, etc., according to their usual custom. After I was seated, the immense mass began to be in motion: many of the Chiefs first passed me in succession, accompanied by their numerous retinues, several of them cordially shaking me by the hand. Then came the officers of the King’s household, his Treasurer, Steward, &c., attended by their people; some bearing on their heads massive pieces of silver-plate, others carrying in their hands gold swords and canes, native chairs and buffets, neatly carved and almost covered with gold and silver, and tobacco-pipes richly decorated with the same precious materials. (Freeman 1968:46-47).

It took several days before the Asantehene Kwaku Dua I eventually granted the Methodist mission audience. He wilfully delayed the missionary in Kumasi without giving him an official

audience so that his people could closely monitor the missionary to know the real aim of his visit. He permitted Rev. Thomas Birch Freeman to visit the royal mausoleum, preach in the streets of Kumasi and conduct two Sunday services which were attended by many Asante (Bartels 1986:39). Spurred on by these developments, Rev. Thomas Birch Freeman asked the Asantehene for permission to formally establish a church and a school. This request was turned down by the Court. The Rev. Thomas Birch Freeman was asked to return at a later date if he so desired. He and his team left Kumasi on Monday, 15th April 1839, and arrived in Cape Coast on 23rd April 1839 (Bartels 1965:39).

3.3 Methodism and the Asante Response - Phase three

Although Rev. Thomas Birch Freeman was not allowed to establish a Methodist society and a school in Kumasi during his first visit to Kumasi, this did not discourage him. He was delighted to return to Kumasi in honour of the Asantehene's invitation. Freeman began preparations that would make him succeed in promoting Methodism in Asante on his second missionary journey. His method was to visit England to raise funds for missionary work in Kumasi. Prior to his visit in March 1840, he wrote an elaborate report on his first mission to the Wesleyan Missionary Society in London. Ahiable-Addo (1997:34) points out that in this report, dated May 6, 1839, he drew the society's attention to the state of criminality and horror in Asante. The intention was to make the society know the state of Asante and the need to donate both in cash and in kind. Ahiable-Addo (1997:34) quoting from Metcalfe about what Freeman wrote states; "If ever there was a country which needed your attention it is Asante where human sacrifices are an everyday occurrence, and where though they do not eat human flesh like the Feejeans [sic], the mangled

bodies of human victims are suffered to lay swelling and putrefying in the public streets like dead dogs.” Rev Thomas Birch Freeman before sending his report to Wesleyan Missionary Society in England gave it to George Maclean to read. In response to Freeman’s report Maclean wrote that:

I herewith return your narrative of your journey to Ashanti, which I have perused with very great interest....I hope and trust the Wesleyan Missionary committee will be satisfied, that there is such an opening as will justify them, in pushing the advantage gained by your indefatigable zeal. I would almost go so far as to say, that if they have the means, a serious responsibility will rest upon them, and on Christian England, if so glorious an opening into interior Africa, □ if so rich a harvest, be neglected. But I hope better things. And I do not despair of yet witnessing the peaceful triumph of the cross, even in that stronghold of Satan, Kumasi. I expect considerable advantage will arise from the Christian education of the two Ashanti Princes, now in England. If well supported, for all depends upon that, their influence of Ashanti will aid the good cause much. I shall not fail to direct them to be introduced to the Wesleyan Missionary Committee (Freeman 1968:71-72).

This letter from MacLean points out that he gave every encouragement and assistance to Freeman to revisit Kumasi. Freeman sent a copy of Maclean’s comment together with his report to the Missionary Society in London. Bartels (1965:44) submits that: “they were received in great excitement and at once drew attention to his renewed request for help” Ahiabile-Addo (1997:34) commenting on the result of these two correspondences points out “Delighted with the information conveyed by the two correspondences the society invited the Rev. Mr. Freeman and William de Graft to London to hear from them in person about the progress they had so far made in missionary work and the prospects that lay ahead for Wesleyan Methodist missionary enterprise in Ghana.... On March 27, 1840, the invitees sailed for England, arriving on June 10, 1840.”

On 16th June 1840 Freeman and DeGraft met the Missionary Committee under the chairmanship of Rev. John Scott, and laid before them the state of the work on the Gold Coast and its

prospects. According to Bartels (1965:46) citing from the General Committee Minutes, after the committee has listened to Freeman they resolved the following;

1. That the Mission on the Gold Coast be extended in some proportion according to the plan laid down by Freeman.
2. That a Mission be immediately commenced in the Kingdom of Ashanti.
3. That Six missionaries be selected to accompany Mr. Freeman on his return to Western Africa, for whose passage and outfit, their establishment of the proposed stations, and their support of three years it is supposed that at least £5000 will be necessary.
4. That Mr. Freeman be authorized to visit such of the large towns and other places as may wish to have a visit from him on the condition of giving special collections and contributions for the Gold Coast and Asante Mission; which it is hoped may amount to a sum not less than £5000 before the month of October when it is proposed that Mr. Freeman returns.
5. That if in consequence of the shortness of the time of Mr. Freeman's visit to this country the sum of £5000 be not raised Dr. Bunting and Mr. Bowers with three other brethren hereafter to be appointed to take up the business of representing the wants of that part of the world and the necessity of extra subscriptions in order to carry into effect the plans of the committee.

It was announced that upwards of 800 have already been received as subscriptions and spontaneous and special contributions towards the Ashanti and Gold Coast Mission.

Bartels (1965:47) maintains that the July Methodist Conference at Newcastle-on-Tyne approved these resolutions and the news was put to English Methodism by every available means. On Sunday 21 June 1840, a special fund for Asante and the Gold Coast was launched at a public service in the Wesley College Chapel, Sheffield. Dr. Jabez Bunting, the Missionary secretary preached in the morning and evening, and Freeman preached in the afternoon. Bartels (1965:47) declares that "collections during the public services, and donations, came to £173." The two were sent to churches to preach and raise awareness and funds for the project. Freeman toured Scotland and Ireland and DeGraft toured London (Bartels 1965:47). Freeman's vision to establish a mission in the Asante kingdom earned him support from the Wesleyan Missionary Society and other sources as well.

According to Freeman (1968:86-87) the sum of £ 5000 was raised and five missionaries were designated for work in Gold Coast and Asante. They were; Rev. and Mrs. Thompson Hesk, Rev. and Mrs. Samuel Annesley Shipman, Rev. John Watson, Rev. Charles Walden and Rev. William Thackwray (Reindorf 2007:236). The Wesleyan Association Trust Bishop-gate, London, gave Freeman a Phaeton as a gift to the Asantehene. The queen and the British Government also shipped assorted goods through Maclean to the Asantehene. These comprised a portrait of the queen, a regimental dress with a cocked feathers, a dining room set of a table and twelve chairs with dinner, breakfast and tea services as well as table linen. Others were a telescope and harmonium inscribed with the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments (Ahaible-Addo 1997:34). According to Birtwhistle (1950:52) among the gifts was a pair of boots from a Macclesfield Methodist inscribed in gilt letters on the soles: "To His Royal Highness, Quakoo Dooah [sic], King of Asantee [sic], West Africa."

On November 25, 1840 Freeman remarried Lucinda Cowan, daughter of the minister at Bedminster, Bristol (Bartels 1965:48). On Monday 1st December, 1840, ordination and the valedictory service was held at Great Queen-street chapel, London for the five missionaries appointed to Gold Coast and Asante. Freeman (1968:87) submits that "the service was conducted by the Rev. Drs. Bunting, Hannah, Alder, and Messrs. Beecham and Hoole....The five Missionaries were then solemnly ordained to the office and work of the Christian ministry." On 10th December 1840, Freeman and his team embarked at Gravesend, and immediately set sail. This band of missionaries were favoured with a safe voyage and landed at Cape Coast Castle on 1st February 1841(Reindorf, 2007:236).

On 6th November 1841 Rev. Thomas Birch Freeman set out from Cape Coast on his second missionary journey to Kumasi. The mission consisted of three hundred and forty men – One hundred and fifty carriers from the Coast (they carried the belongings of the missionaries and materials for building a mission house), one hundred and sixty from Asante (they carried the belongings of the princes and the gifts meant for Asantehene), a sergeant and six soldiers from the castle, Rev. Robert Brooking, and two Asante princes, John Owusu Ansah and William Owusu Kwantabissa (Freeman, 1968:97). In this second visit there were no detentions and interrogations. Ahible-Addo asserts; “the only problem that bedevilled the mission was the transportation of the carriage gifted to the Asantehene on the narrow bush path. This obstacle was however overcome by dismembering the phaeton into parts and transporting it in pieces.” It seems to the researcher that all the necessary preparations were ready to receive Freeman and his team. This is seen in the two letters Nana Kwaku Dua I sent to Freeman on his way to Kumasi which are all in Freeman’s journal. The first letter dated November 19th, 1841 and the second letter dated November 30th 1841. Freeman (1968:106) submits in the first letter; “I am now prepared to receive you and my nephews. I expected to see you here on the 22d [sic] of this month; but am now informed that you are detained on the road longer than I imagined: please, therefore, let me know when you think you can reach Kumasi; for I am anxious that you should proceed as quick [sic] as you can.”

In the second letter according to Freeman (1968:112) Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I submits that:

I am sorry that you could not reach Kumasi on the 22d, as the *Adai* [sic] custom, which has now commenced, will not permit me to receive you until after the 10th of next month. I am making arrangements for receiving you on Monday, the 13th; and give you this early information, that you may have plenty of time to make your arrangements also, for reaching Kumasi at the time mentioned. Tell Mr. Henry Smith to come with you if he likes: it will afford me pleasure to see him. Salute my nephews with a kiss for me, and oblige.

Freeman and his team reached Kumasi on 13th December 1841. This is how Freeman (1968:123-124) describes how he was received by the Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I:

“About two, P.M., Apoko came to conduct us to the King. We found him seated in the same place where he sat to receive me on my first visit to Kumasi. We paid our respect to him in the same manner as I had done previously, and then passed on, through an immense concourse of people, to take our seats at a distance, and there wait, to receive a return of the compliment from the King and his numerous Chiefs. His Majesty then sent us some palm-wine; and, after we had refreshed ourselves with a draught, the multitude was in motion, and the King and the Chiefs came round according to the usual custom. He stopped opposite us for some little time, and surveyed the Princes, Quantamissah and Ansah, from head to foot, (as they stood in their English military dresses, one on my right hand and the other on my left,) under the influence of considerable emotion.”

The Rev. Freeman formally introduced the Princes, Mr. Smith, and Rev. Brooking to Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I. Also in the name of the Wesleyan Missionary Society, he presented the carriage to Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I. Again he presented all the other gifts he received from England to Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I. Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I accepted the present in a very gracious manner and asked Freeman to thank the Society on his behalf (Freeman 1968:125). Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I and his chiefs eagerly received the mission and acknowledged Freeman as a preacher and accepted Brooking as his representative to work among them with the assistance of John Owusu Ansah and W. O. Kwantabissa (Bartels 1965:52).

3.4 The Achievements of Wesleyan Missionaries work in Asante

Ahiable-Addo (1997:36) asserts that as a result of the positive change in attitude of the Asante court to Christianity, the Rev. Thomas Birch Freeman accomplished the establishment of Methodism in Kumasi in 1842. At this time Freeman had been able to establish regular Sunday services, and had been granted a site for a house where Brooking could live. Freeman spent six weeks in Kumasi and during this time Freeman and Brooking met Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I on a

regular basis, not as official visitors, but in the home as friends and almost as members of the family (Birtwhistle 1950:63). He appointed Rev. Robert Brooking as the first Wesleyan Methodist resident minister in Kumasi and returned to Cape Coast. Through the spread of the gospel in and around Kumasi by the Methodist missionaries, some converts were made Methodists. Occasionally, even the Asantehene, his elders and palace officials attended divine services conducted at the mission station (Bartels 1986:53).

According to Clarke (1986:58) the Wesleyan Missionaries placed a great deal of emphasis on civilizing the people by means of the school. In view of that the missionaries proposed the establishment of schools in Kumasi in which the Asante children could enrol for formal education. The Asante did not take kindly to the idea of having formal education in the Kingdom. Graham (1976:45) explains that “the Ashantis did not want schools to be opened mainly for fear that it might lead to rebellion and political unrest in Ashanti.” Bartels (1965: 52) in his view holds that “They suspected that a school, and the new ways it would teach, would produce a rift between the old and the young.” According to Ahiabile-Addo (1999:12) quoting from Kimble, Otumfoo Kwaku Dua I said that “Asante children have better work to do than to sit down (in school) all day long idly to learn hoy! hoy! hoy!; they have to fan their parents and do their house-work which is better.” This negative response from the Asante court did not discourage the church’s desire to introduce formal education into the Kingdom. The missionaries persisted in talking to the Asantehene and his elders about the benefits of formal education. The King and his court finally approved the establishment of the school in Kumasi in 1842. In 1844 the Wesleyan Methodist Primary School was opened in Asante (Methodist Church 1999:13).

3.5 Challenges the Wesleyan Missionaries Encountered

The introduction of Methodism in Asante faced a number of challenges both from within and without. These were; False Fetish Prophetic warnings, British and Asante Wars, Civil wars, Islamic influence, and Ansah and Nkwatabisa Challenge.

3.5.1 False Fetish Prophetic warnings

The first challenge was the superstitious activities of the Asante Traditional Priests. The misconception created by these priests was that Freeman's visit would provoke the gods. Three attempts were made to burn Kumasi while Freeman was there, and according to the rumour that was circulated, it was evidently clear that it formed part of a plot to stir the people against the Missionaries (Birtwhistle 1950: 63). According to Bartels (1965:52) "a whispering campaign rapidly spread the rumour that nothing but evil could result from acceptance of the new ways, and three attempts were made to burn the city, probably by an incendiary who was trying to prove the truth of rumour. When the missionaries helped to put out the fires and their quarters were untouched, several of the townspeople began to have second thoughts. Perhaps, said they, the gods were not angry with the missionaries after all." According to Freeman (1968: 174) a nephew of the King met him after the fire and intimated that, 'God preserved you Christians from the fire.'

3.5.2 British and Asante Wars

The second challenge was the renewal of hostilities between Asante and the British after the Maclean's Peace Treaty. In 1843 the British Government appointed Captain Hill a military leader as a Governor to Cape Coast to take over from Maclean when Britain resumed control of the Gold Coast and he brought with him a detachment of African troops from Sierra Leone. Birtwhistle (1950: 66) reports that "In Kumasi it was rumoured that Hill had brought an army with him and it was assumed that he meant to attack Ashanti... It seemed Hill had come to avenge McCarthy, and those in Ashanti who all along had been suspicious of the British now whipped up ill feeling against them." These developments really affected the infant church adversely. The Asante passed their anger at the British Administration in Cape Coast to the Wesleyan Methodist Missionaries in Kumasi and did not want to have anything in common with them (Ahiabla-Addo 1997:38). In reporting on this negative development and its effects Birtwhistle (1950: 66) points out that:

Some African Christians were killed and, though the King remained on good terms with Brooking and his new colleague, Chapman, tension and fear ruled in Kumasi. From that time on, the position deteriorated, both from the point of view of the mission and also in the relationship between Ashanti and Britain. In 1850 the European missionary retired from Kumasi and John Ansah, the King's nephew, was left to work alone. African agents continued to hold the position, but it was becoming increasingly difficult, and when Kwaku Dua died in 1867, it was only a matter of time before complete withdrawal became inevitable.

It was certain that the Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I was not hostile towards the missionaries, based on the facts available. It is highly probable that the problem was ignited by the British Administration in Cape Coast who made a mistake of sending a man to the scene with apparent reinforcement. Considering how far they had come in cordiality between the mission and the royalty, the best move was for them to have pre-informed them about the changes to ensure

peace and trust. Buah (1977:105) submits that: “George Maclean’s administration was praised by the people. He was noted for his wisdom and fairness, and was trusted.”

Maclean’s peace agreement in 1831 brought peace into the country as stated above but the peace contract was violated by the Asante in 1863. The immediate cause was due to the protection given to one of the Asante subjects called Kwasi Gyani, who had wronged Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I and the refusal of the then Governor, Richard Pine, to send him to Kumasi for trial. It was an Asante law that any treasures found anywhere on Asante land belonged to the Asantehene (Osei 1994: 162). Kwasi Gyani, found a gold nugget and kept it for himself. When he was confronted, he fled to Cape Coast. Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I sent messengers to the Governor to surrender Kwasi Gyani to him but the governor turned a deaf ear. Consequently, in 1863 the Asante troops went to the coastline to register their displeasure in a war against the British. According to Osei (1994: 163), after a bloody clash at Asikuma, the allied forces camp was destroyed by the Asante troops and the British were forced to retreat. Ahiabla-Addo (1998:50) commenting on the effect of this war declares that “The King, the Chiefs and people of Asante turned to regard the missionaries in Kumasi as the spy-wing of the Cape Coast British Administration and refused to have anything in common with them.” In Ekem’s (1994:86) view, the mission was closed down temporarily in 1872 owing to strained political relations between the British and the Asante.

In 1871, Britain purchased the Dutch Gold Coast from the Dutch, including Elmina which was claimed by the Ashanti. Otumfoɔ Kofi Karikari heard that Fantes and other tribes were

preparing to rebel against the Asante rule so on February 9, 1873 he sent the Asante army to defeat the Asian army at Nyankumase and a month later March 10 they defeated the allied forces consisting of Denkyira, Assin and Fante troops as well as a hundred Huasas from Lagos under the command of a British officer (Ajayi and Crowder 1974:201). After these victories Otumfoɔ Kofi Karikari wrote to Harley and demanded the return of Elmina and the southern tributary states. Major-General Sir Garnet Wolseley was sent to The Gold Coast in 1873 to plan an attack on the Asante. In 1874, the British declared war against the Asante. The war was named Sagrenti, with its origins from the Sir Garnet Wolseley the war-lord who led the British. During the war, the coastal states assisted the British soldiers and therefore, Asante were defeated, miserably.

Ajayi and Crowder (1974:203) submit that “the British army entered Kumasi on 4 February 1874 only to find it deserted. After waiting to hear from the Asantehene, the British army looted the palace, blew it up, set fire to the town and began the return journey to the coast on 6 February.” Otumfoɔ Kofi Karikari signed a harsh British treaty, the Treaty of Fomena in July 1874, to end the war. In relation to the effect of this war on the mission Ahiabie-Addo (1998: 53-54) points out that:

The phaeton presented to the Asantehene in December 1841, which among other gifts softened the Asante court to permit the establishment of the Methodist church in Kumasi in early 1842, was burnt during the war. Thereafter, the Asante did not see any reason in accepting, let alone promoting a religion of a destructive European power in their Kingdom. They saw anything British as an anathema....Kumasi, the capital of the Asante, did not want Methodism any more. It was impossible for the church to expand to any other part of Asante.

The Methodist Church Ghana (2003:6) commenting on the effect of the war declares “the Sagrenti War of 1874, virtually made the church in Kumasi dormant except in places such as Juaben, Tekyiman, Bekwai and Obuasi.” Clarke (1986: 58) in support of the assertion that the war affected the church confirms that: “the mission in Kumasi established in 1843 was closed down....In 1876, when the Wesleyans decided to reopen the mission just after the Asante war had ended, the Asantehene (king of the Asante) pointed out that he would only allow the mission to operate if the missionaries would help to keep the peace and ensure that trade flourished.” Graham (1976:45) comments that in 1876 the Wesleyan missionaries decided to once more, start their mission which had been closed down during the whole period the war went on.

The researcher wants to discuss 1896 depose of Otumfoɔ Prempeh I and Nana Yaa Asantewaa war in 1900 together and how it affected the Methodist missionaries’ endeavours. The Asante turned down an unofficial offer to become a British protectorate in 1891. In the earnest quest to keep French and German forces out of the Asante Kingdom and its gold, the British were anxious to conquer the Asante Kingdom for good. The war started on the pretext of failure to pay the fines levied on the Asante Kingdom by the Treaty of Fomena. Sir Francis Scott left Cape Coast with the main expedition force of British and West Indian troops in December 1895, and arrived in Kumasi in January 1896. Asantehene Agyeman Prempeh I was arrested and deposed. He was forced to sign a treaty of protection, and together with the other Asante leaders were sent into exile in the Seychelles as already reported and discussed in the paper. In 1900, the remaining Asante court not exiled to the Seychelles mounted an offensive against the British residents in Kumasi Fort, but they were defeated, which rather brought more woes upon them by

losing Nana Yaa Asantewaa, the Queenmother of Ejisu and other Asante leaders into exile in the Seychelles.

This war also affected the Methodist mission in Kumasi greatly. Ahiable-Addo (1998: 55) confirms that:

During the fighting, Asante forces not wanting anything foreign in their kingdom, burnt down the Wesleyan Methodist Mission Station, House, Chapel and School in Kumasi on May 5, 1900. They also destroyed all the Methodist Church's outstations, except Bekwai, Takyiman and Juaben. Panic-stricken converts and non-converts in Kumasi and the outstations fled into the bush to save their lives. Membership of the Church came to nought, for when the Wesleyan Methodist missionaries – the Revs. Frederick A. Lees and John Baoden – arrived in Kumasi after the war to replant Methodism, they reported, 'there is no native convert yet'.

Bartels (1965: 114) quoting from The Gold Coast Annual Report points out that; "the condition of the work in this important field is very sad. The war which broke out on the 1st April (1900) put a stop to all missionary operations and focused the people to flee for their lives. We are thankful that all our catechists and teachers were able to get away in time....It is a painful fact that now we shall have to begin all over again as though there never had been a mission at all."

From Asirifi-Danquah's (2006:122) viewpoint "there was a widespread destruction of life and property during the war. Thousands of the Asante were killed, whole villages and towns were razed to the ground, most of the 77 wards of Kumasi were burnt down and Kumasi became like a deserted village."

3.5.3 Civil wars

The third challenge was civil war and disorder in the Asante Kingdom. After the disastrous events of 1874 civil war broke out between Kumasi and Juaben in 1875, because Juaben failed to support Kumasi during the Sagrenti war (Ajayi and Crowder 1974:203). As a result, hundreds of Juaben captives were sent to Sefwi. Others from Juaben took refuge in the British Protectorate known as the Gold Coast Colony. The majority of the people in Juaben moved to Koforidua and they established the state of New Juaben. Some of the people of Juaben who left Asante were Wesleyans so it affected the Church at Asante. However, they also started a new mission at their new settlement. Bartels (1965:111) confirms this assertion when he points out that; “In contrast with these signs of decline in the homeland, Koforidua, the new settlement of the Ashanti exiles from Old Juaben was growing into a vigorous community set in the New Juaben Mission of the Methodist Church.” The emerging picture was that, although the conflict between Kumasi and Juaben had in some ways negatively affected the Asante Mission, it turns out to be a blessing in disguise, because it paved a way for a new mission to start at Koforidua.

In early 1876 Nkansa Brefo became King of the Adansi, and they decided to be independent of the Asante. In 1876 and 1883 the British passed the Native Jurisdiction Ordinance giving the chiefs and their councils judicial, executive, and legislative functions subject to the Governor’s approval. Otumfoɔ Mensa Bonsu was trying to win over the Adansi, and in early 1879 Nkansa Brefo appealed to the British Government. Captain Hay went to Kumasi and insisted that Otumfoɔ Mensa Bonsu respect the Fomena Treaty.

In the early 1880s Kokofu, Mampong and Nsuta, all original members of the Asante Kingdom rebelled (Osea and Odunsi 1973:70). Ajayi and Crowder (1974:203) citing Fuller, put it in strong terms as follows: “even Manpon, Agona, Nsuta, and Bekwai openly defied the Asantehene (Nana Kofi Karikari).” Osaе and Odunsi (1973:70) point out that; “there is ample evidence to show that the British not only took satisfaction in the trying conflicts within Asante but also actually engineered with some of the rebellious states for the ultimate dismemberment of the Asante Nation.” Clearly, the Asante Kingdom started witnessing disunity and this really affected the Kingdom and the Wesleyan Mission. Reindorf (2007:241) in support of this assertion confirms that, the internal wars of various tribes in Asante affected the Wesleyan Mission adversely when it was trying to reorganise itself after 1874 war.

In 1883 there was total confusion and disagreements after the destoolment of Otumfoɔ Mensa Bonsu. Asante was thrown into anarchy (Boahen 2003:12). His supporters wanted him back and the ex-Asantehene Kofi Karikari wanted a comeback. The third person interested in the stool was Kwaku Dua whom Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I nominated to be his successor as stated earlier on. The tension and the agitation subsided when Kwaku Dua II was enstooled but unfortunately died within forty days as already noted in the paper. Between 1884 and 1888 there was a civil war in the Asante Kingdom (Agyeman-Dua 1999:12). This was between the supporters of the two contestants Yaw Atwereboana and Prempeh.

It should be noted that while the civil war was going on in early 1886 the Adansis massacred 150 Asante traders. Bekwai’s Chief Karikari attacked the Adansi with his troops and killed 65 Adansi

traders in reprisal. Adansi's Chief Nkansa Berofof then invaded Bekwai territory and made an alliance with Dadiase. The Asante responded by persuading Dadiase to join them in an attack on Adansi, and in June they drove the Adansi nation about 12,000 back across the Pra River to their British protection. In 1887 fighting continued between Bekwai and Kokofu, until the following year, when the war receded and was ended by British mediation. It is now clear that during this period it was the British who resolved disputes among the Asante.

3.5.4 Islamic influence

The fourth challenge that faced the Wesleyan Missionaries in Kumasi was the Islamic influence of the Asante kingdom. Muslims were in the Asante kingdom before the Wesleyan Missionaries. During the reign of Otumfuo Opoku Ware I, the Asante kingdom expanded northwards through wars when they conquered Dagomba, Mamprusi, Gonja, and others. The expansion brought into the Asante kingdom a large number of people who had already been converted to Islam. Some of these converts were educated in Islamic Sciences and in Arabic (Osei 1994:145). Muslim traders from the states mentioned above and many more, began to visit and live in Kumasi. Samwini (2006:32) points out that; "Muslims came to Asante on diplomatic missions from Masina, others came on visits or upon the invitation of clerics by the Asante Kings....Furthermore, Muslim clerics came as advisers to the Asantehene....Another factor which brought Muslims into Kumasi before the 1950s was the *Asantehenfo*, Asante kings' belief that power from Muslim prayer and amulets could give protection in war and against other bad omens."

Ajayi and Crowder (1974:192) quoting from Wilks submits that:

Muslims not only monopolised the cattle industry but, with deliberate encouragement from the Asantehene, controlled the trade of primary products of Asante, gold, kola, slaves and salt along the trade routes to the north. Muslims were always found in the company of the king at all important negotiations with foreign visitors and ambassadors and played an active part....Muslims served as secretary to the Gyaasehene, head of the Kumasi bureaucracy, recording political events and noting casualties in war, while others served Asante Resident Commissioners in the provinces.

From the foregone facts, there is no doubt that, the Muslims wielded some political and economic influence in the Asante Kingdom by their numerical strength. The Muslims were permitted to practise and even proselytise their faith and they won converts in the Asante Kingdom (Ajayi and Crowder 1974:193). During an interview with Osei, he indicates the magnitude of the Islamic influence in Asante to the extent that it impacted Otumfoɔ Osei Kwame for him to consider instituting Islam as a state religion. Osei also observes that Otumfoɔ Osei Kwame introduced some Koranic laws into the Asante Kingdom. Ahiabile-Addo (1998:47) further confirms that; “During Osei Bonsu’s reign (1801-1824), Islamic influence assumed even greater dimensions. The King was so friendly disposed to these residents that he earned the accolade ‘the Saviour of the Muslims’....Their leader, Muhammad al-Ghambra was not only a member of the *Abrempong*, the Great Council of Asante; he was permitted also to establish an Islamic School in Kumasi.” Otumfoɔ Osei Bonsu made no secret of his love and commitment for Islam. According to Ajayi and Crowder (1974:193) Otumfoɔ Osei Bonsu told Dupuis that “the book (Koran) is strong and I like it because it is the book of the great God; it does good for me, and therefore I love all the people that read it.” Ajayi and Crowder further state that Otumfoɔ Osei Bonsu always supplicated the Muslims for their prayers especially for success during war time. He never killed Muslim war captives and regarded the God of the Muslim as ‘the God of all gods and men’.

Islamic influence on Asante kingdom was an undoubting challenge for Methodism and for that matter Christianity. Freeman (1968:43) points out that when he visited Kumasi in 1839 Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I was always surrounded by Muslims who prejudiced him against the ideas of Christianity. Ahaible-Addo (1998:48) asserts that “with Christianity and Islam at poles apart in doctrine, worship and attitudes, it was not unlikely that Muslim leaders and officials close to the Asante court counselled against official support for the spread of Methodism in nineteenth-century Asante.”

3.5.5 Ansah and Nkwatabisa Challenge

The fifth and the last challenge the Wesleyan mission faced was the lifestyle of Owusu Ansah and Nkwatabisa. It is important to state the missionary charge that Maclean gave them before they travelled with Freeman to Kumasi to help this discussion. According to Bartels (1965:51) Maclean addressed them that: “from what you have seen and heard and learned you must be able to explain to Kwaku Dua I, the immeasurable blessing which would surely attend the introduction of Christianity, practical Christianity; and what is more you should prove by the purity and correctness of your own conduct that Christianity is not a mere empty profession.” In simple terms what Maclean just told them was that their lives should be exemplary. They must act uprightly and be methodical and be good. Graham (1976:11) states that Maclean added that they must never attempt to interfere violently with the customs of their people. He also urged them not to forget their religious duties. Not only that but they were to take care against drunkenness and to prove to their people that the trouble, care and expense that had gone into their training were not a wasted effort. Ahiabile-Addo (1998:50) declares that: “As Christians

with British Education Ansah and Nkwantabisa were enjoined to be of good behaviour for the countrymen to emulate. In fact, they were seen as a lynch-pin in the establishment and propagation of Methodism in Asante.”

The question is whether Ansah and Nkwantabisa adhered to the godly charge stated above from Maclean. History reveals that they did not adhere to the charge that they were given. In 1843 Nkwatabisa was caught in an adulterous relationship with the wife of his landlord who was a Kumasi chief (Ahiable-Addo 1999:11). According to Ekem (1994:89) quoting from Rev. Chapman, the reason why the Asantehene and his elders were hesitant to permit the missionaries to establish a school in Kumasi was “the bad conduct of two Ashanti princes (Owusu Ansa and Nkwantabisa) who were sent to England for studies. They had grown up to disrespect traditional authority and were committing adultery with other people’s wives.” An interview with Osei points out that it was a custom to behead any man they caught in adultery and present his head to the husband of the woman he had committed adultery with. In the case of Nkwantabisa he was not beheaded but was spared whilst the woman was rather beheaded. Ahiable-Addo (1998:50) asserts that “For almost one year, Kwantabisa lived in adultery with one of his landlord’s wives. When this immoral behaviour came to light, the King’s executioners, in anger, dragged the adulterous woman to the missionaries’ doorstep where they beheaded her; they also compelled the missionaries to witness the woman’s execution in order that they would realise the seriousness of the crime their worker who they (the missionaries) had trained overseas were committing back at home.”

In relation to how this behaviour affected Methodism in Asante Kingdom Ahiable-Addo (1998:50-51) writes;

The princes' sexual misdemeanour contributed to the development of stronger negative attitudes towards Methodism in the Kingdom....On account of their anger, these elders turned into hard-liners against the Church wherever its matters came up for discussion at the palace. These courtiers took Methodism as a faith which trained criminals such as spies, fornicators and adulterers. They pointed out also that by accepting the religion and promoting its growth, they, as well as others, stood the risk of losing their wives to the people who had brought it. They were of the opinion also that their daughters, before entering marriage, would be defiled in fornication by the young male adherents of the faith.

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He further writes that this sexual misconduct put fear in the Asante and they perceived that if Methodism and Christian education which the princes had received is permitted to flourish, it would infuse Asante kingdom with moral decadence.

The other challenging aspect about the princes was their westernized lifestyle and manners. They always wore European clothing to the neglect of traditional attires. Their eating habits were also pro-European. They used the English language as their main medium of communication which was very difficult for their people to speak, write or understand (Ahiable-Addo 1998:51). The Asante saw this kind of lifestyle as disrespectful and a subtle condemnation of Asante's culture. Donkoh during an interview submitted that Owusu Ansah and Nkwatabisa were a disgrace to Christianity becoming a stumbling block for the Asante to get converted without reservations.

3.6 Conclusion

The foregoing has been the survey of how Methodism was introduced to the Asante and their response. It reveals that Methodism was first introduced to the Asante royals by Fante traders

living in Kumasi and not Rev. Freeman. Nevertheless, it has been gathered that it was through the selfless dedication of the Rev. Freeman that Methodism was firmly established in the Asante Kingdom. In addition, he was the first official missionary to enter Kumasi with the Gospel. It has also been established that Asante Methodism has gone through well defined phases – early success, followed by heavy set-backs, and then a bounce back to recovery which is permanent. It is clear that the Methodists were the first to introduce formal education in the Asante Kingdom through their missionary activities in 1844.



CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings, analyses and the interpretation of the contribution of all the Asante kings since the advent of Methodism in Kumasi. It will discuss the effect of their contribution to the growth and development of Methodism in particular and Christianity in general.

4.1 Contribution from Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I

Kumasi Diocesan Archives - Freeman Journal (1968) the following are the items that Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I contributed to support the Rev. T. B. Freeman and his team which visited Kumasi;

1. On March 11, 1839, while Freeman was waiting at Kusa, Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I sent him nine ackies of gold-dust (value of £ 2.5s in the currency of the day).
2. On March 19, 1839, Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I allowed his sister to present plantains, yams and pineapples to Freeman at Kusa.
3. On March 29, 1839, when Freeman was on his way from Fomena to Kumasi Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I sent him palm wine. The following are Freeman's own comments on this present, "Being very thirsty, I took a hearty draught. It was, I think, the best palm-wine I have tasted since I have been in Africa." It is clear from the above quotation that Freeman really appreciated the gift.

4. On April 1, 1839 when Freeman reached Kumasi a durbar was held to welcome him and Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I made a presentation of a pot of palm wine to Freeman.
5. On April 8, 1839, Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I presented the following to Freeman; a cow, a sheep, a pig, a quantity of palm-nuts, yams, plantains, and one ounce and four ackies of gold-dust (valued at £ 5). Nana also gave him the permission to visit some very important parts of Kumasi. He also presented three ackies for his interpreter, and five ackies for Freeman's attendants. This is what Freeman said in relation to the gold dust, "The gold was brought in a golden blow-pan, weighing several ounces."
6. On April 15, 1839 when Freeman was leaving Kumasi, Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I gave the following to him as his farewell gifts; two ounces and four ackies of gold-dust, (valued at £ 9) and a slave to serve him. He also gave eight ackies (valued at £ 2) for Freeman's interpreter and other attendants.
7. During Freeman's second missionary journey to Kumasi when he and his team reached Kaasi on December 11, 1841, Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I sent them three sheep and two pots of palm-wine.
8. On Sunday December 12, 1841, after church service the King sent Freeman and his team pots of palm-wine.
9. On December 13, 1841, when Freeman reached Kumasi Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I welcomed him with palm-wine.
10. On December 14, at 2 o'clock when Freeman and his team visited Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I, he refreshed them with Madeira wine, brandy, cherry-brandy, and liquors. According to Freeman all these were neatly served in decanters on a tray, with tumblers and wine glasses.

11. Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua 1 served Freeman and his team the same drinks when they visited him on the following day which was 15th.
12. On December 20, 1841, Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I sent the following to Freeman and his team; a block of fire wood, a cow and calf, several sheep, pigs, eggs, plantains, palm-wine, yams, and other vegetables. He also sent fifteen ounces, twelve ackies of gold-dust (equal to £ 63 currency). Freeman submits that, “Mr. Brooking’s share and mine amounted to £ 27 currency, which we gave for the benefit of the mission.”
13. On December 23, 1841, at 8:00pm during the conversation between Freeman and Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua 1, Freeman asked for the King’s protection and a place to build a mission house. The King responded; “I will protect you and supply you with land on which to build a house.” Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua 1 released a large tract of land from Kejetia through Krobo Odumasi (K.O.) part of Mbrom and the land in and around African Bungalow for the work of the mission on January 20, 1842.
14. On December 25, 1841, when Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua 1 was told that 25th was a special day (Christmas) for Freeman, he sent the following gifts; two sheep and a pot of palm-wine.
15. On December 28, 1841, Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua 1 organized a special dinner for Freeman and his team at the palace. Freeman reports that the dinner consisted of soup, fish, roasted mutton, roasted fowls, boiled yams and plantains, kidney-beans and other things.
16. On January 31, 1842 Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua 1 sent Freeman back with the warmest invitations to return and the customary gifts – a gold tobacco pipe and some wild beast for Queen Victoria of England, an unfinished silver pipe for the Wesleyan Missionary Committee. He gave Freeman a silver pipe, £ 9 worth of gold dust, and a slave.

All the items mentioned above clearly indicate that Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I supported Rev. T. B. Freeman and the other Wesleyan Methodist missionaries who worked at Kumasi materially and financially.

According to Danso, Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I donated land to the Wesleyan Missionaries to build a Mission house and a chapel at Adum in Kumasi. Akyaamaa III confirms this during an interview when she said that Kumasi Wesley Cathedral and its surroundings covering Adum prison and part of the central police station were all given to the Methodist Church by the Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I.

It is likely for someone to conclude that Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I put impediment on the way of the Rev. T. B. Freeman because he was halted at Kusa and Fomena for monitoring, but from the discussion so far one may confidently conclude that Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I did not in any way put an impediment or hinder the growth and the development of Methodism in Asante. On the contrary, he contributed to the development and the growth of Methodism in Asante. Freeman (1968:182-183) sums up the contribution of Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I to the development and the growth of Methodism in the following words:

I rejoice to say that the Lord has been mercifully pleased to crown our efforts in Ashanti with success. Our important negotiations with the King have been brought to so comfortable a close, that he has taken Mr. Brooking under his protection as a resident Christian missionary in Kumasi; given us land in a very healthy and airy part of the town on which to build a mission-house; allows the people to attend a divine service without restraint, and treats us with uniform kindness and attention....His carpenters are sent to the mission-house to work.... During my residence in Kumasi, he often gave many proofs that we have, by the blessing of God, secured his confidence.

It should be noted that it was Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I's wishes that the Wesleyan Missionaries succeed in Asante. During an interview both Asante and Osei submitted that the unfinished silver tobacco pipe that Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I sent to the Wesleyan Missionary Committee was symbolic. Symbolically, the unfinished silver pipe indicates that the work of the missionary in Asante was yet to be completed. In other words Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I was telling them that the work they have begun in Asante is not completed and they are always welcome to continue and complete. In support of this assertion, Birtwhistle (1950:93) points out that when the time came for Brooking to leave Kumasi, Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I resisted his departure only on condition that someone took his place so Freeman went to Kumasi in 1855 with Chapman to replace Brooking. It is no surprise that in Freeman's letter to the General Secretaries he described Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I as the "nursing-father to the herald of salvation in Ashanti" (1968:188). It is apparent from Freeman's description that if it was not the effort and support of Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I, the Wesleyan Mission enterprise would have been a failure. Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I allotted a large native-house for the residence of Wesleyan missionaries until they built their own mission house (Freeman 1968:182).

Ramsayer and Kuhne (1875:79) report of how Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I punished one of his eunuchs who maltreated a Wesleyan missionary in the following words: "a Wesleyan missionary met the wives of the king accidentally on his morning ride. He was at once dragged from his horse by the eunuch and shamefully treated. He complained to Quakoo Dooah [sic] who ordered the execution of the eunuch, as the missionary was a white man and a stranger; but on the

missionary's intercession he was handed over to corporal punishment instead.” (See the Asante laws in Appendix B)

Birtwhistle (1950:98) reports how Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I in 1854 saved Methodism when he points out that, “if war had come, the missionary in Kumasi and the Churches between the River Pra and Cape Coast would have been in danger, but Kwaku Dua I called the warriors back and reaffirmed his friendship with Britain.” In an interview with Osei and Opoku they said that one of the reasons that Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I considered was his relationship with the British Wesleyan missionaries like Rev. Freeman and others. His policy was to stay on friendly terms with the British and to use diplomacy and negotiation to achieve his aim.

Looking at various gifts ranging from gold to food supplies by Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I to Freeman, his attendants and other missionaries the Methodist Church Ghana is right in honouring him by naming the Kumasi Diocesan office complex after him. With reference to the above it seems to the researcher that Ahiabla-Addo's (1998:45) statement that after the Asante court had permitted the Methodist missionaries to establish the Church in Kumasi it neither encouraged nor assisted them morally or materially in their efforts to consolidate and expand on their achievements, becomes faulty and not valid.

Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I attended several divine services and he had a very cordial relationship with the Rev. Freeman which was refreshing. From the information gathered in this research, Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I never became a Christian notwithstanding his very cordial relationship with the Methodist Missionaries. Those sources interviewed (Osei, Asante, Opoku, Donkoh and

others) could not offer any evidence of the Asante king professing Jesus as Lord and Saviour in all his interactions with Freeman. Furthermore, no writing reveals this all important aspect of Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I's life, which leaves us to assume he never did or else it would have been documented.

4.2 Contributions by Otumfoɔ Kofi Karikari, Otumfoɔ Mensah Bonsu, and Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua II

These three Asante kings would be discussed concurrently: Otumfoɔ Kofi Karikari, Otumfoɔ Mensah Bonsu, and Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua II because according to Asante their impact was negatively felt during their reign when there was a 'serious tension' between Christianity and the Asante kingdom until the reign of Otumfoɔ Agyeman Prempeh I. During this period the missionaries were in disagreement with the Asante traditional authorities over traditional beliefs and values. Asante goes on to say that some Christian converts became ashamed of their own culture and opposed the rule of the Asantehene, the chiefs and other officials in the Asante Kingdom. At this period all the Christians were seen as one group of people and not as Methodists or Presbyterians. Christian converts were not participating in certain rituals because they saw them as fetish. Some of the religious observances and traditional practices they avoided were; *Odwura*, *Wukudae* and *Akwasidae* festivals, puberty rites, widowhood rites and funeral rites (Adams 2010:147). In an interview with Donkoh, she submitted that some of the native converts were hostile to Asante culture so Christianity was seen as a threat to the customs and traditions of the Asante.

According to Busia (1951:133) in 1905 the Chief Commissioner reported that: “Native converts cut themselves so completely adrift from the rest of the community that the chiefs are afraid to encourage a movement that experience tells them will, in the course of time, undermine their power.” Busia further reports that five years later the Chief Commissioner again reported that: “Christians in the villages have had a tendency to refuse the ordinary services to their chiefs on the grounds that they cannot take part in fetish observances.” In Asante’s view the Asante saw Christianity as a potent destructive social force being introduced into their society and therefore resented it. This brought serious tension between Christianity and the Asante traditional authorities during the reign of the three Asante Kings under study.

Osei during an interview said that at this period some of the native Christians who were supposed to carry a chief or queen in a palanquin decided against that duty simply because they had become Christians. They stopped serving the kings, chiefs and queens. The native Christians were not participating in communal labour. According to Busia (1951:137) when Christians in the villages were asked why they refused these services they usually reply: “‘I now go to church, I am not under the chief,’ or ‘The priest (Father or So fo) says we must not do them,’ or ‘It is against the law of the Church.’” It was obvious that the advent of Methodism, and for that matter, Christianity was fighting against the Asante traditional authorities in the sense that by becoming Christians they have put themselves under a new authority. Their conduct is regulated by Church law and discipline (Busia 1951:137). In an Asante tradition going to the farm on *dabɔ ne* (Thursday) -the day of Asaase Yaa (Earth Goddess) was forbidden as stated in chapter three. However, some Christian converts were disobeying and going to the farm on *dabɔ ne*. The Asante believe that all these amounted to inviting the wrath of the gods and ancestors. Therefore,

the Asante were not prepared to risk their lives by accepting Methodism and for that matter Christianity at this period.

Edusa-Eyison (2007:29-31) commenting on this period quoted Otumfoɔ Mensah Bonsu that: “But we will never embrace your religion for it would make our people proud. It is your religion that has ruined the Fanti country, weakening their power, and brought down the high man on a level with the low man.” For Edusa-Eyison, Otumfoɔ Mensah Bonsu expressed his refusal to recognise the missionary effort on the grounds of what he discerned as a potential clash of cultures which must take time to resolve. During an interview Edusa-Eyison made it clear that the Otumfoɔ Mensah Bonsu was not putting impediment on the way of the missionary but he seemed to have understood the effect of the missionary’s preaching, which in his view had adversely affected the cohesion of the local cultures. In view of that, the Asante authorities in this particular case, were unwilling to allow European penetration into their kingdom. In Edusa-Eyison’s view, the Asante preferred to have the status quo undisturbed. Nothing would, and must be allowed to disturb the already laid down traditional African structures, which to them, needless to say, indicated a well thought out plan. Debrunner (1967:310) submits that distrust for Christianity as a religion of the conqueror persisted in Asante till about 1920.

It is obvious from the foregoing that Otumfoɔ Kofi Karikari, Otumfoɔ Mensa Bonsu and Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua II did not in any way put impediments in the way of Methodism and for that matter Christianity. It seems to the researcher that the religious activities of the missionaries caused tensions and conflicts between the native Christian converts and the Asante traditional authorities. During an interview both Asante and Donkoh supported this assertion when they

submitted that Christianity came with the European culture which was attended with some arrogance. Everything about the Asante culture was regarded as bad so they came to civilize the Asante and this brought tension and conflict between Christendom and the Asante chiefs. It is not the Asante Kings who initiated this tension and conflict. In support of this observation Hagan and Odotei (2001: 126) submit that:

The relationship between Christianity and traditional culture has been a very controversial issue in the history of Christianity in Ghana. The negative attitude of the missionaries towards traditional culture did alienate many Christians from traditional culture, and Christian conversion meant making a choice between Christianity and traditional culture. From the missionary perspective, traditional culture and Christianity are fundamentally incompatible, which makes being a Christian and at the same time Ghanaian a problematic.

Bediako (1995:69) points out that the missionary enterprise of the nineteenth century did not see in African traditional religion and culture a partner for dialogue. Willianson (1965:56) similarly agrees with this observation when he claims that: “the missionary’s attitude was, without doubt, unfavourable to Akan customary ways and traditional life. He understood his purpose in terms of calling the convert from traditional associations in heathen surroundings into a new way of life. The demand was the inevitable result of a policy of converting individuals from a communal type of society.” Essamuah (2010: XXVIII) agrees that: “often it appeared that to become a Christian meant taking on the Western cultural ways. Local cultures were denigrated, and it was presumed that they had to be transformed, if not destroyed, before a foundation for the acceptance of Christianity.” Ekem (1994:82) points out that: “The Wesleyan missionaries’ contempt for, and quite often a misunderstanding of, traditional African customs had the unfortunate effect of alienating converts from their home communities, for conversion to Christianity meant in effect adopting the mentality of the missionaries.”

It seems to the researcher that what the missionaries did to Asante Christian converts to Christianity was to separate them from their own communities by rejecting their traditional beliefs and practices. For the native Christians to have a separate community under the authority of the European missionary who was the head of the Church was a serious issue in the Asante Kingdom. It is apparent that Christianity challenged the traditional position of the king as the religious as well as the political head of his Kingdom (Busia 1951:137). It was important for these Asante Kings being traditional rulers not to do anything that undermines the systems that hold and put them in place. From the researcher's view, it is not true that the Asante were putting impediments in the way of Christianity. Donkoh in support of the researcher's view said that: "if you look at the Asante mindset they were protecting themselves from extreme external influences that will destroy their society."

Notwithstanding, the tension between Christianity and the Asante traditional authorities there is no record of missionaries who suffered personal hostility from any of these three Asante Kings. For instance, Ramseyers and Kuhne were war captives as noted above, yet Otumfoɔ Kofi Karikari treated them very well during their stay in Kumasi. Otumfoɔ Kofi Karikari made time to hear the gospel from them and they got his permission to establish a school with ten pupils. According to Ramseyer and Kuhne (1875:73-74) they received a small allowance to stay alive and goods in the form of presents. They further submitted that: "On May 25th, we received from the King [Otumfoɔ Kofi Karikari] a couple of sheep, and an old pair of Dutch military shoes, accompanied by a pair of boots for Mrs. R., of English make, and the finest leather. They had been presented by the Wesleyan missionary Freeman in 1842, to the reigning sovereign, and

inscribed on the soles in gilt letters were the following words: - ‘To his Royal Highness, Quakoo Dooah [sic], King of Asante, West Africa.’”

It is on record that Otumfoɔ Mensa Bonsu welcomed the Rev. Thomas Picot to establish a mission station in Kumasi which nearly caused his destoolment. Adams (2010:57-58) in support of this assertion submits that:

The support for Mensa Bonsu began to wane when he decided to allow the Wesleyan missionary, Thomas Picot, to establish a mission station in Kumasi. Many Asantes saw this decision as a religious threat. They had not overcome the shock of the military defeat so for a new religion to invade them was too much to handle. The issue was debated at the council of Kumasi on the 21st April, 1876. Mensa Bonsu argued that the missionaries were welcome if they played the sort of role Rev. Thomas Birch Freeman (the first Methodist missionary to the Ashanti region) played for the peace of the nation and the prosperity of trade. The war party opposed this issue. Bantamahene, the Kontihene, the war commander, preferred a firmer line of action, stating that “polygyamy and slavery could not and should not be abolished in Asante and that Christianity was not wanted in Asante, and all that was required from the Europeans was trade.” Thomas Picot was not wanted he departed for the coast the same day.

Again in 1880 Otumfoɔ Mensah Bonsu welcomed Catholic priests August Moreau and Eugene Murrat of the Society of the Africa Mission to Kumasi (Graham 1976:61). On the part of Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua II, there is no information about his contribution because he spent just forty days on the throne as already stated and therefore, there is no record of his contact with any missionary or the church.

4.3 Contribution by Otumfoɔ Agyeman Prempeh I

According to Asante, the toleration of Christianity started after Otumfoɔ Prempeh I returned from the Seychelles. Otumfoɔ Prempeh I was greatly influenced by Christianity and their formal education. He became a member of the Church of England. During an interview Opoku said that

Otumfoɔ Prempeh I was baptised as Edward in the Anglican faith and his son John Boateng Prempeh became an Anglican priest. Debrunner (1967:312) asserts that:

Nana Prempeh I having been deported in 1896 as a pagan, his return as a Christian in 1924 made a big impression on the Ashantis, and did much towards helping Christianity to take root in Ashanti. Anglicanism in particular owes much to Nana Prempeh I. Methodists, Presbyterians, Anglicans, Seventh Day Adventists and Roman Catholics all took part in following up this move towards Christianity in Ashanti, opening schools in many places. The headquarters for Ashanti of all these Churches were in Kumasi.

It is then clear that Asante was right when he submitted during an interview that Otumfoɔ Prempeh I's relationship with the Methodist Church was very cordial. Osei agrees with this observation when he confirms that Otumfoɔ Prempeh I had a very good relationship with Methodist workers who worked in Kumasi. Hagan and Odotei (2001:127) point out that Otumfoɔ Prempeh I was the one through whom Christianity made its initial inroads into the Asante royal house. He saw Christianity essentially as an instrument that would assist Asante come to terms with the emerging new world of modernity. In 1935 a missionary meeting was held in Kumasi and it was chaired by Otumfoɔ Agyeman Prempeh I (Adams 2010:146). This meeting marked a major shift in Asante's response to Christianity. Opoku said that Otumfoɔ Prempeh I allowed all Christian groups to worship in the Asante Kingdom without interference and encouraged them to establish schools.

4.4 Contribution by Otumfoɔ Osei Agyeman Prempeh II

By Otumfoɔ Prempeh II's association with the Church as a student and chorister he had a very good relationship with the Methodist Church when he ascended the Golden Stool. This is evidenced in the various interactions he had with the Church. Donkoh in an interview said that

Otumfoɔ Prempeh II continued after school as a Methodist chorister before he became the Asantehene. As a result of that he had a very good relationship with the Methodist church. She further said that Otumfoɔ Prempeh II invited Methodist choristers to sing for him every Christmas at the Manhyia Palace and he will give them Christmas gifts.

According to Manhyia Archives Group (1/15/2 -1929-1947) Otumfoɔ Prempeh II donated materially and financially to support Methodist Annual Synods. The following correspondences testify to that fact: On January 12, 1940, Otumfoɔ Prempeh donated the following for the maintenance of the ministers attending the District Synod: 2 sheep, 100 eggs, a quantity of tubers of yams and £10.10. In appreciation for the donation Rev. M. B. Taylor, the Chairman and General Superintendent on January 13, 1940 wrote to thank Otumfoɔ Prempeh II for the kind donation for the District Synod refreshment.

Otumfoɔ Prempeh II donated to support the 1944 Synod. This is evidenced in the letter that was written by Rev. T. A. Beetham, an acting Chairman of the District and General Superintendent to Otumfoɔ Prempeh II dated January 13, 1944. In the letter Beetham thanked Otumfoɔ Prempeh II for donating a cheque for ten Guineas for the Synod refreshment.

It has been revealed that in the 1947 District Synod, Otumfoɔ Prempeh II invited all Synod members to a party at Manhyia Palace. According to Manhyia Archives Group (1/15/2 1929-1947) Rev. M. B. Taylor on behalf of Annual District Synod wrote a letter to thank Otumfoɔ

Prempeh II for his kind courtesy in inviting the members of Synod to the ‘Garden Party’ held at Manhyia on Saturday, January 18.

It should be noted that Otumfoɔ Prempeh II did not only support Methodist work in Asante but also outside Asante. According to Manhyia Archives Group (1/15/2 -1929-1947) Otumfoɔ Prempeh II donated fifty pounds (£50) for the work in the Western Frontier Mission during the Synod Missionary meeting night in 1944. At that time the Western Frontier mission comprised Tarkwa and its surrounding towns and villages.

According to Manhyia Archives Group (1/15/2 1929-1947) Otumfoɔ Prempeh also donated to support Osei Tutu School, a Methodist School in Kumasi. This is stated in a letter from Rev. M. B. Taylor to Otumfoɔ Prempeh II dated January 17, 1947. Rev. Taylor appreciated £2,000 that Otumfoɔ Prempeh II donated for the development of the Osei Tutu School. Again, Otumfoɔ Prempeh II donated Nɔ 500.00 to Osei Tutu Training College at Akropong when he chaired the 11th Annual Speech and Prize-giving Day in July 1967 (MCG Conference Agenda 1968:68).

Asante said that the Otumfoɔ Agyeman Prempeh II had a very cordial relationship with the Church and he contributed to Methodism in so many ways. He said that the Methodist Schools at Krobo Odumasi (K.O.) were very dear to him so he donated financially for the building and maintenance of the Schools. Asante also said that Otumfoɔ Agyeman Prempeh II supported the establishment of Wesley College. He donated money and also encouraged some of his chiefs to donate, in addition, to swell the sums.

From the Manhyia Archives (1/15/2 1929-1947) Otumfoɔ Prempeh II writing a foreword to Wesley College Development Scheme wrote:

At the request of the Authorities of the Methodist Missionary Society, operating in Ashanti, I have consented to write a foreword to a booklet they are issuing to the general public for the purpose of soliciting funds to carry on a scheme which they have in hand for the furtherance of the evangelical and educational work of the mission. The 31st of March this year saw the centenary of the triumphant entry into the historic capital of Ashanti of the late Reverend Thomas Birch Freeman, who might be rightly called the Father of Methodism in the Gold Coast Colony and Ashanti, and it cannot be gainsaid that it is the influence of Methodism that has transformed our country and made us all what we are today and what we hope to be in the future. It is only fair and proper, therefore, that we as loyal sons and daughters of Ashanti in particular and of the Gold Coast in general should show in a practical form our appreciation of, and gratitude for the great work done by this mission; and for that account, if for no other reason, I beg to appeal on behalf of the Mission to all and sundry to give both their moral and financial support to the new scheme which the Mission has in hand for the furtherance of its work.

It is obvious from the quotation above that Otumfoɔ Prempeh II did not only personally contribute to the growth and development of Methodism but he also encouraged and motivated his people to contribute to the growth of Methodism.

Commenting on the cordial relationship of Otumfoɔ Osei Agyeman Prempeh II and the Methodist Church, Danso said that he worshipped at the Wesley Cathedral every 31st December watch night service. As a result of that he, Danso and some leaders at Wesley were tasked to make a special chair for Otumfoɔ Prempeh II to use anytime he visited the church (see appendix D). Danso also mentioned that anytime he visited the Manhyia Palace with any Methodist Minister, Otumfoɔ Prempeh II would stand up until the minister sat down because to him every minister is *Onyame Komfoɔ* (Priest of God). He said that Otumfoɔ Prempeh II never turned his back on the church anytime they needed help.

Holdbrook during an interview submitted that Otumfoɔ Prempeh II visited the Wesley Cathedral very frequently and supported the Church financially. She said that Otumfoɔ Prempeh II was a special Guest of honour during the time the church was dedicating their Pipe Organ and he donated cash to the church.

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Asamoah-Okyere during an interview responded that the Methodist Church enjoyed a very good relationship with the Otumfoɔ Osei Agyeman Prempeh II. He worshipped with the Methodist Church from time to time and responded prayerfully to all the special invitations the church sent to him. Barffo-Mensah said that Otumfoɔ Prempeh II invited Methodist ministers to the Manhyia Palace for worship every Friday.

It is clear from the above that the Otumfoɔ Osei Agyeman Prempeh II contributed to the growth and development of Methodism in Asante by providing funds to support the church, its workers and its educational institutions. In addition, he encouraged the people of Asante to contribute to the Methodist Church.

4.5 Contribution by Otumfoɔ Opoku Ware II

According to Danso, Otumfoɔ Opoku Ware II attended watch night service every year during his reign with his wife, Lady Victoria Opoku Ware II (Nana Akua Afriyie), who was a Methodist. His favourite Methodist Hymn was 896, “Praise we great and famous men.” As a

result of his love for Methodist hymns, the Kumasi District (new Diocese) of the Methodist Church choirs made an audio cassette recording in honor of him (Kumasi District Agenda 1998:24).

Holdbrook said that during the burial thanksgiving service of Lady Victoria Opoku Ware on April 12, 1996, Otumfoɔ Opoku Ware II encouraged all the chiefs who attended the service to pledge to support Mmofraturu, Methodist Girls Boarding School in Kumasi. They all did and gave money to support the Lady Victoria Block at the school.

Commenting on the cordial relationship of Otumfoɔ Opoku Ware II and Methodist Church, Asante said that Otumfoɔ Opoku Ware II was very kind to him when he was the superintendent minister of the Kumasi circuit. He also said that Otumfoɔ Opoku Ware II used to call him *Agya Ku* and used to advise and encourage him on some issues. One example Asante cited was when they finished extension work at the Kumasi Wesley Cathedral. Asante said one evening Nana Opoku Ware II came there called his name *Agya Ku* and said “*wama aha aye fe mo ne adwuma pa*” (*Agya Ku* you have made this place beautiful, well done). This is a clear indication that Otumfoɔ Opoku Ware II motivated *Agya Ku* to do more for the Methodist Church. Another important thing is that it shows the respect and cordial relationship that existed between an Asante king and a Methodist minister.

Asamoah-Okyere said that Otumfoɔ Opoku Ware II honoured all the invitations the church sent to him during his tenure of office as the General Superintendent and Bishop of Kumasi Diocese. He further submitted that Otumfoɔ Opoku Ware II donated money to the church any time he was invited to Synod official opening. He said that when the Methodist Church founded the Association of Christian chiefs and queenmothers Otumfoɔ Opoku Ware II was their chief life patron. It is on record that Otumfoɔ Opoku Ware II was the one who commissioned the Methodist shopping centre at KO (MCG 1996).

Otumfoɔ Opoku Ware II played a very key role during the creation of Obuasi and Effiduase Districts (now Dioceses) from the Kumasi District (now Diocese) in 1997. During the deliberations on the creation of these two districts from Kumasi, Otumfoɔ Opoku Ware II advised that Asante is one and indivisible and so the three districts entered into a memorandum of understanding and formed the Central Districts – “Committee of Cooperation” in 1998 (MCG1999:15). What this means was that the three Districts pledged to work together on programmes and projects that are mutually identified. During an interview Opoku, the son of Otumfoɔ Opoku Ware II, said that his father was not just concerned that Asante is one and indivisible but he was afraid that it would affect the growth and development of the Methodist Church in Asante.

4.6 Contribution of Otumfoɔ Osei Tutu II

Boafo said that Nana Osei Tutu II has contributed immensely to Methodism in Asante. He cited Ankaase and Suame Round About land issues as typical. He said that after the death of the chief

of Ankaase who gave the Methodist Church land for the establishment of a hospital, the new chief who was installed started to sell parcels of that land to other individuals. The Methodist legal team went to him several times but the chief was still proving adamant so they reported him to Otumfoɔ Osei Tutu II. Otumfoɔ Osei Tutu II invited the Ankaase chief and asked him to return all the illegally sold portions of the land they have taken back to the Church and the chief immediately obeyed.

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According to Asare, at a point in time, Kumasi Metropolitan Assembly (KMA) wanted to seize the Methodist Church land near the Suame Round About so the case was reported to Otumfoɔ Osei Tutu II. Asare continued that Otumfoɔ's timely intervention halted the rezoning of the Methodist lands near Suame Round About. Asare also said that Otumfoɔ Osei Tutu II was very kind to him when he was a minister at Wesley Cathedral. He further said that Otumfoɔ Osei Tutu II invited him and Kofi Amponsah (Very Rev.) to pray for him at *Pampaso* before he was carried on palanquin to Manhyia Palace in 1999. This shows the very cordial relationship between Otumfoɔ Osei Tutu II and the Methodist Church.

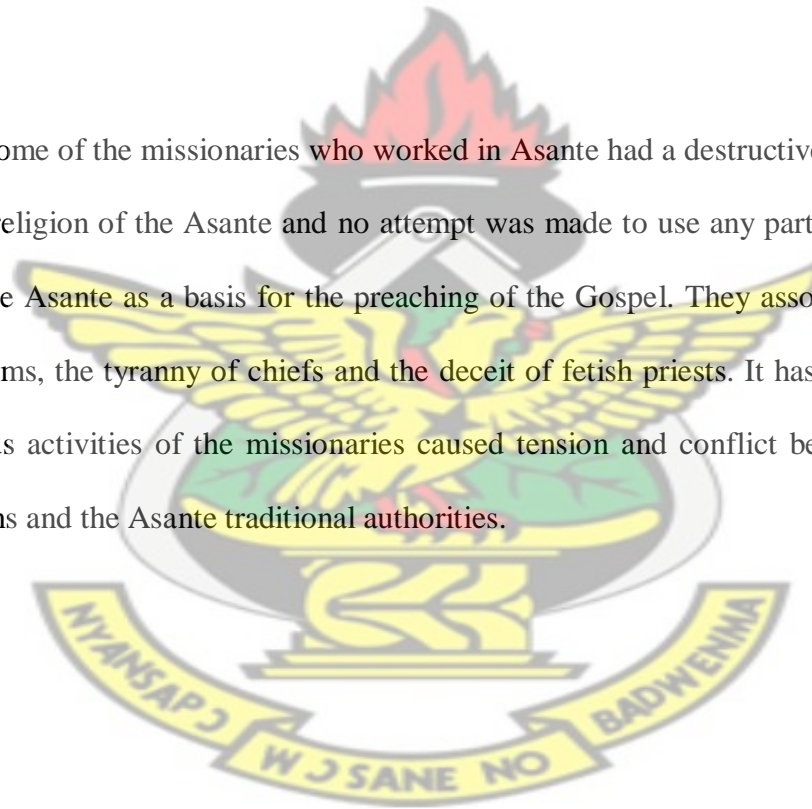
4.7 Conclusion

The foregoing has been the review of the contribution of the Asante kings to Methodism and Christianity in general. It has been revealed that the Asante kings have contributed immensely to the growth and development of Methodism. Materially and financially they have given lands, ounces of gold, cash, food stuffs, sheep, cows, pigs and many other items to the Methodist Church and its workers. Emotionally, socially and psychologically the kings have done very well

for the Methodist missionaries and ministers. Again, they have intervened on the Church's land dispute.

It has been observed that none of the Asante Kings from Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I to Otumfoɔ Osei Tutu II maltreated any Methodist Missionary. There is no record of missionaries who suffered personal hostility from any of the Asante kings. Therefore, it seems to the researcher that Ahiable-Addo's statement that the Methodist missionaries were tormented physically as already stated in the work is not true.

It appears that some of the missionaries who worked in Asante had a destructive attitude towards the indigenous religion of the Asante and no attempt was made to use any part of the traditional worldview of the Asante as a basis for the preaching of the Gospel. They associated the Asante with cruel customs, the tyranny of chiefs and the deceit of fetish priests. It has been established that the religious activities of the missionaries caused tension and conflict between the native Asante Christians and the Asante traditional authorities.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

The story about the Asante Kingdom and the Christian faith with special reference to the Methodist Church in Asante has been full of drama with so much to learn. The burden of this report was to ascertain the perception that the Asante kings put impediments on the Wesleyan missionaries as true or not and secondly, to identify the various contributions, if any, made by the Asante kings to the growth and the development of Methodism between the periods 1839 and 2002.

5.1 Summary

From all facts and evidence acquired both from personal interviews and authentic documented sources, it has been discovered that the Asante Kings did not put impediments in the way of the Wesleyan Missionaries. They made remarkable contributions to the growth and development of Methodism. They have supported, encouraged and contributed to the growth and development of Asante Methodism. The Asante kings have reacted respectfully towards Methodist missionaries and ministers, and were hospitable towards them. Financially they contributed ounces of Gold. Their hospitality was evidence in the gift of money, food stuff, sheep, fowls, cows, pigs and lands for the Church's development.

Morally and psychologically the Asante kings encouraged and assisted Methodist missionaries and ministers in their effort to consolidate and expand on their achievements. In Asante, there is an adage that *asomurofi dwoa na Ɔkraman nya da brɛ* (It is only when there is peace that development can take place). What this means is that if the Methodist workers were able to work in Asante to the extent that now, the Kumasi mission has successfully expanded to the extent that three new Dioceses (Sunyani, Obuasi and Effiduase) have been carved from it, then it was the peaceful environment that the Asante kings provided. It is remarkable to note that all the Asante kings have had a very cordial relationship with the Methodist workers in Asante. The research revealed that, there has never been any conflict between any Asante King and any Methodist missionary or minister. Asante kings were always, very good friends of the missionaries, ministers and most of the local agents. They have always being very condescending. They allowed their subjects and family members to join the Church. The Asante Kings did not allow any Asante to maltreat any missionary. It is on record that the Asante kings allowed the Methodist workers to conduct services in many places in Asante including the Manhyia Palace itself the highest venue of honour and prestige in the Asante setting. It should be mentioned that the Asante Kings have given protection and security to Methodist workers and their properties.

The research has brought to the fore that missionary activities in Asante have produced both positive and negative results. Christianity has brought great blessings into the Asante kingdom. Christian missionaries did pioneering work in introducing new forms of crafts, industries, and education and modern health services. Evil and pagan practices such as human sacrifice and

slavery have been stopped through the Christian influence and presence. It is on record that Otumfoɔ Opoku Ware II was buried as a Christian and no human being was sacrificed during his burial (Hagan & Odotei 2001:129).

The harmful influence of Christianity in Asante is seen on how Christian converts were indoctrinated to look down upon many things in their culture. The Christian religion damaged some part of the culture and traditional beliefs of the Asante, which could otherwise have been maintained and perhaps adjusted to fit into the Christian frame-work. For instance, drumming and the harmless songs and dances of the Asante were condemned.

The researcher discovered that the Asante kings are highly religious who link every facet of life with God, ancestors, deities and ancestors. They attribute every fortune or misfortune to the influence of God, ancestors and the *abosom* (lesser gods). Their policy towards other religions has always been that of tolerance because Asante traditional religion was accommodating, welcoming deities from other ethnic groups for specific assignments at times of crises. In simple terms, there is freedom of worship as long as individuals discharge their social and political obligations; they are entitled to their own beliefs. Methodism and for that matter Christianity was regarded by the Asante as an alien influence when the missionaries separated Asante converts from traditional societies and removed them from their familiar allegiance to their traditional authorities and the duties that go with it.

When Methodism was introduced in the Asante kingdom the first convert were from Asante Royal House by name Ansah and Nkwantabisa. Otumfoɔ Kwaku Dua I received the missionaries well but he was not converted to Christianity. Christianity made its initial inroads into the Asante royals' house through Otumfoɔ Agyeman Prempeh I and since then, all the kings who have succeeded have been Christians.

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5.2 Conclusion

On the strength of the findings of the study, one may conclude that, Asante Kings have contributed financially, morally, and psychologically to the growth and development of Methodism. The Asante kings have played a very significant role in the spread of Methodism. They have been the providers of hospitality for the Methodist missionaries and ministers, lands for the church's development and allowed their family members and their subjects to join the Methodist churches in the Asante Kingdom.

5.3 Recommendations

The following are proposed recommendations based upon the forgone discussion in the research report.

1. The Methodist Church Ghana should endeavour to honour Otumfoɔ Agyeman Prempeh I, Otumfoɔ Osei Agyeman Prempeh II, Otumfoɔ Opoku Ware II, Otumfoɔ Osei Tutu II, John Mills and James Hayford for their contribution towards the growth of Methodism

in Asante. Churches, halls, offices and Schools could be named after them. Again, the church should establish scholarship schemes in their names.

2. The memories and contributions of eminent members of the church should not be allowed to perish. The church must endeavour to preserve them for posterity to take inspiration from them.

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3. Kumasi Diocese of the Methodist Church Ghana should organize annual Thanksgiving services to thank God for the contribution made by the Asante Kings to Methodism.

4. The relationship between Christianity and traditional culture has been a very controversial issue in the history of Christianity in Asante; therefore the Methodist Church Ghana should organize a series of workshops and seminars for all their ministers and preachers on the interplay between the Christian faith and culture. Also sessions must be held for the general public to be educated on our rich cultural history and heritage.

5. Manhyia upholds Christianity and always welcomes the church to bring its Gospel message to Asante Kings and the people of Asante. In view of the old time affiliation a chaplain should be appointed to work with Asante Royal House.

6. Methodist ministers at the Wesley Cathedral in Kumasi should endeavour to reintroduce their Friday service at the Manhyia Palace which started during the reign of Otumfoɔ Prempeh II.

7. Funds should be made available by the Methodist Church to enable the History and Archives Committee to buy artefact, inventory books, registers, preservatives that will upgrade documentations of artefacts in Methodist Headquarters in Accra.
8. The church should organize workshops and seminars to sensitize their members on the need to keep important archival materials, starting at the society levels, then gradually grow them into a big enterprise where it would be very well established to entertain and educate tourists.



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