Contents

In	troduction
	rope and Africa, the Colonial Legacy and a New Christianity – riting on an African Theologian from a European Perspective
Pc	ospel, Culture and Language from an Intercontextual and ostcolonial Perspective
Er	acountering the Person Kwame Bediako27
W	ne Significance of Kwame Bediako as a Scholar in African and orld Christianity30
St	ructure of the Book
C	hapter 1: Methodological and Epistemological Approach – Presuppositions and Choices41
1.	'Research is not an Innocent or Distant Academic Exercise': Methodological Approach
	'Decolonizing Methodology': Kwame Bediako and the 'West'
	Interdisciplinary Approach and the Role of Theology in Academic Discourse
	Multilingualism as Hermeneutical Tool
	Sources
2.	Language Constructs Meaning: Epistemological Challenges and Choices
	Language, Power, and the Production of Knowledge and Meaning 67
	'God', 'Gods' and 'Lesser Deities'
	'Guilt' and 'Shame'70
	'Witchcraft' and the Conceptualisation of Evil
	Responding to the 'Invisible-Liminal' and to the 'Transcendent'
	The Conceptualisation of the 'Spirit World' in the Akan Cosmology78
	Approaches of Representing and Interpreting the 'Invisible-Liminal'85

	'Religion', 'Culture', 'Identity', "Translation': Key Categories Employed
	by Bediako101
	Religion 102
	Culture
	Identity
	Translation and Mother Tongue
3.	Conclusion
C	hapter 2: Life and Work of Kwame Bediako125
1.	Bediako's Life Story: From an Adherent of French Existentialism to an African Christian Scholar
	Childhood, Youth and Studies in Ghana (1945–1969) 125
	Studies in France: Tchicaya U'Tamsi and Bediako's 'Damascus Road Experience' (1969–1973)
	Scholarship as Vocation: The United Kingdom and Ghana (1973–1984)
	Ministry in Ghana and Building the Akrofi-Christaller Institute as a 'Theological Laboratory' for Africa and the World (1984–2008)
2.	Bediako's Impact on New Initiatives of Cooperation and Networking in Africa and in the Global Church
3.	Bediako's Legacy: The Akrofi-Christaller Institute of Theology, Mission and Culture – A New Type of Institution in Theological Scholarship
Τv	ccursus: The Local Context of ACI, Akropong-Akuapem, and the vo 'Patrons' J. G. Christaller and C. A. Akrofi – A Case Study on Frican Initiatives and African-European Relations
A	Akropong and the Akuapem Traditional State
	Early History and the Foundation of the Akuapem State
	From 1733 to the Gold Coast Colony
	Conclusion 155
	The Basel Mission in Akropong-Akuapem
	Difficult Beginnings and Early Encounters (18th Century – 1840s) 159
	Taking Root – West Indian and European Families, Akropong Christians (1840s–1850s)163

	of Innovation in the Town and the State (1850s–1920s)	. 167
	Conclusion	
	Johann Gottlieb Christaller (1827–1895) and his African Collaborators	
	Clement Anderson Akrofi (1901–1967)	
C!	hapter 3: African Christian Thought as Hermeneutic of	
	Identity – Kwame Bediako in the Context of	
	'African Theology'	
1.	Theological Debates in Africa from the 1950s Onwards	. 183
	The Debate on 'African Theology'	. 186
	A New Beginning and Exploring New Terrains	
	(From the 1950s to the 1980s)	
	Taking up New Challenges (From the 1980s Onwards)	. 194
	'African Traditional Religion' (ATR) in Theological Scholarship	202
	in Africa.	. 202
	African Expressions of Christianity: African Independent/Instituted Churches (AICs) and Pentecostal Churches from the 1920s to the 1980s	. 209
	Recognising African Initiatives in Christianity: African Independent/Instituted Churches	. 209
	The Rise of Pentecostal Churches in Ghana	
	'Ghana's New Christianity'	
2.	Bediako's Place in the Debate on 'African Theology'	
	Bediako and the Pioneers – Shared Concerns and Insights	
	Characteristics of Bediako's Distinctive Contribution	. 235
C!	hapter 4: Kwame Bediako's Significance as African	
	Christian Scholar	. 249
1.	'Local Agency': Mission History as History of African and World Christianity	. 249
	Transmission, Translation, and Appropriation	
	African Missionaries: Empirical and Historical Data	
	European Missionaries and the Concept of the 'Native Church'	
	European Missionaries and the Concept of the Mative Church	. 433

	Culture, World View and Language as Factors for Local Agency	. 255
	The Fragility of Hegemonic Rule	. 257
	Multiple and Hybrid African Identities	259
	A Theological Interpretation of the History of African Christianity	260
	Ambiguities and Conflicts in Local Agency: African Pioneers, Freed Slaves, Reformers, Church Leaders, and Women	. 261
	African Pioneers between Christian 'Salem' and Traditional Society	. 262
	Agency of West Indians, African-Americans and African Freed Slaves Between 'Hybrid' and 'Traditional' Cultures	. 266
	African Reformers and African Church Leaders	. 269
	Education between Innovation and Alienation	. 271
	The Silencing of the Agency of Women in Mission History	. 272
	Protagonists of African Agency in Bediako's Work: T. B. Freeman and Nana Korankye, E. W. Blyton, C. C. Reindorf, W. W. Harris,	
	J. B. Danquah	
	Thomas Birch Freeman and 'Chief Korinchi' (Korankye)	
	Edward Wilmot Blyden	
	Carl Christian Reindorf	. 279
	William Wade Harris	. 283
	Joseph Boakye Danquah	. 286
	Conclusion	. 288
2.	The 'Lordship of Jesus Christ': the Central Place of Christology and the Understanding of Scripture in Bediako's Theology	. 290
	Conversion, Transformation and Salvation: Gospel and	
	Culture Revisited	. 290
	'Continuity' and 'Discontinuity'	
	Bediako and Niebuhr's 'Christ and Culture'	. 292
	Walls' Concept of Conversion	. 296
	'Conversion', 'Transformation' and 'Salvation' in Bediako's Writings	. 299
	'Our Story': Bediako's Biblical Hermeneutics	. 306
	The Gospel as 'Our Story'	. 306
	Selected Biblical References and Reflections	. 313
	'Nana Yesu': Christological Images and Bediako's Ancestor Christology	. 320

	The Debate on African Christologies	. 320
	'Ancestor' – A Multi-faceted and Controversial Christological Image	. 328
	'Nana Yesu', the Great Ancestor, in Bediako's Writings	
	'The Servant Lord': The Uniqueness of Jesus Christ in Universality	
	and Particularity, Divinity and Humanness	. 341
	Jesus Christ as 'Lord': κυριος Ιησους	. 341
	The Unique and Universal Lord: Divine Vulnerability, Redemptive Suffering, Reconciling Love	. 343
3.	The De-Sacralisation of Power and the Role of the Church in the Public Sphere	350
	Society and Political Leadership in Ghana in Transition – Reflections	. 550
	from a Theological Perspective	. 350
	Traditional Authorities and Leadership Roles ('Chieftaincy') in	
	Transition	
	Aspects of 'Modernisation' and Social Change	. 330
	'Christian Witness in the Public Sphere': Bediako's Response to Political and Social Change	. 361
	De-Sacralisation of Political Leadership and the Quest for	261
	Democracy	
	Serving the Community and the Poor with the 'Mind of Christ'	
4.	Theological Scholarship as Ministry	. 368
	'Relevant Theology': The Debate on Theological Education and Formation Since the 1970s	. 368
	The Critique of 'Western' Academic Theology	. 368
	The Call for Relevance and Contextuality	. 370
	'Faith Seeking Understanding': An Experiential Approach	. 372
	Theological Scholarship in Pastoral Ministry, in Public Discourse, and in Discipleship: Bediako's Contribution	. 374
	The Need for Theological Scholarship and Pastoral Ministry in Africa	374
	Africa as 'Laboratory' for Theological Scholarship	
	Ministerial Training, Discipleship and Spiritual Life	
5.	Conclusion	. 381

C.	hapter 5: Kwame Bediako's Significance as	
	'World Christian'	. 387
1.	'Primal Religion as the Substructure of Christianity': A Fresh Approach to Gospel, Culture, World View and Religion	. 387
	The Debate on 'Primal' Religion(s), World View(s), Imagination in Religious Studies and Studies on World Christianity	
	Terminology and Presuppositions	. 387
	Proponents of the Concept 'Primal' from 1963 to the Present	. 389
	'Primal Religion(s)' - A Heuristic Concept?	. 396
	Tracing 'Primal Religion' in Different Contexts: The Contributions of Kwame and Gillian Mary Bediako	. 399
	'The Primal Imagination and the Opportunity for a New Theological Idiom'	. 399
	The Project 'Primal Religion as the Substructure of Christianity'	. 401
	Primal Religion and the 'West': Gillian Mary Bediako's Contribution	. 405
	'Primal Religion' and 'Spirituality' from European Perspectives	. 410
	Some Comments on Bediako's Concept of 'Primal Religion'	. 410
	'Popular Religion', 'Spirituality', and 'Angels'	. 414
	Conclusion	. 421
2.	The 'Infinitely Translatable Gospel': The 'Vernacular Principle' in Theology and its Significance for Intercontextual Encounters	. 424
	Translation and the Vernacular in Scholarship and Society	. 424
	Processes of Translation in Local and Global Languages	. 424
	Interpretations of Translation Processes in African History	. 430
	'Mother Tongue Theology': Bediako's Specific Contribution	. 441
	The Translatable Gospel in Bediako's Writings	. 441
	'Mother Tongue Theology' in the Akrofi-Christaller Institute	. 445
	'Hebrews as OUR Epistle': A Case Study	. 448
	European and North American Commentaries: Questions, Observations, and Presuppositions	. 448
	Hebrews from a Ghanaian Perspective	
	Conclusion	. 461

3.	'The West and the Rest': Critical Assessments and the Kairos for a
	Polycentric Understanding of Christianity and of Christian Witness 463
	'The West' and the 'Non-West'
	Who and What is 'the West'?464
	Orientalism and 'Eastern' Counter-Claims466
	The 'West' and 'Africa'469
	Enlightenment Critique: Frankfurt School, Michel Foucault, Nikita Dhawan, Karl Barth
	What Is 'Enlightenment'?471
	Critiques from Within: Frankfurt School and Michel Foucault 474
	A Postcolonial Critique of the Enlightenment: Nikita Dhawan 478
	A European Theological Critique of the Enlightenment: Karl Barth 480
	The 'West', the Enlightenment, 'Christendom', and the
	Missionary Movement
	The Enlightenment and World Christianity486
	The Evangelical Awakening, the Modern Missionary Movement, and the Enlightenment
	Bediako's Contribution: Critique of the 'West' and Space for Intercontextual Encounters
	Bediako's Critique of the 'West', the 'Enlightenment', and 'Christendom'
	A Space for Intercontextual Theological Encounters 504
C	hapter 6: Conclusion – A Call for Fresh Theological Encounters between 'Africa' and 'Europe'
B	ibliography517
Pι	ıblications by Kwame and Gillian Mary Bediako517
	ablications by the Akrofi-Christaller Institute of neology, Mission and Culture525
0	ther Publications 526
M	edia 576
W	Gebsites