

Basel Mission Archives

"Zimmermann's Report about the Third Quarter of 1853"

Title: "Zimmermann's Report about the Third Quarter of 1853"

Ref. number: D-01.04b.212

Date: Proper date: 07.10.1853

Description: Gives a detailed account of the villages visited in an extend preaching tour of the Accra plains in order to demonstrate to the Committee the populousness of the area....he offers the estimate that in the quadrilateral R. Sakumo - Akwapim hills - Volta - Sea slightly less than 1000 villages and towns are to be found with scarcely less than 80'000 inhabitants. He certainly reports more villages than has been done before and for many offers an interpretation of the site name based on the idea that it had a twi origin. Kwantanang - a village serving the La fetish - is mentioned as having been visited on the outward and homeward journey. No mention is made of Legon. The Kwantanang people welcomed the visit, and asked for a, school to be run in their village...people came forward as baptismal candidates. From Kwabenya they walked one hour to Tefia, then passed Asiye to Amrahia, from where they visited the nearby Kpetekpong, a Tema village. From there they travelled through Nanyo-Akrowa and Odomiabra to the Nungua twin-village of Sasabi. From Sasabi through a district dotted with little villages to the bigger villages of Suta and Blofonyo Mang (Friedrichstelle), which belong to Prampram. From there through Asrema to Kwabinya, another Prampram village. They stayed the night in Santse, one hour from Kwabinya, the village of the Osu prince Fred. Dawuna. Santse and its chief are described...Dawuna had been brought up in Denmark and baptised there, and travelled out to the Gold Coast with Henke and the other early missionaries having stayed for a month in the Brüdergemeinde at Zeist, where he felt a strong call back to his home country. On the Coast he had served as interpreter and schoolteacher both to the missionaries and the Fort, but soon seemed to be lapsing from the christian religion. However, when after several years the people wanted him to be the king he refused so as not to mock God by being involved in the service of fetishes...for that he was despise as far as Zimmermann could see out of his unpleasant situation he cause to found the villages of Santse by the Larte hills (Lateburg) 3 hours from Akropong, lying between the Ningo and Shai villages. He made it a village of refuge for runaway slaves and others in destitution or outlawed, 'so that now it is a nice village'. His buildings are like those of large European farm houses, so that one sees he knows how to apply European techniques to use here. Now there is pressure to make him king again, but he has set the conditions that he must not serve the fetish, and be able to wear European clothes. Zimmermann does not know whether these negotiations have come to any conclusion. The village is in a magnificent situation, one hour from Larteh, Osu to the SSW, Akropong NNW Sai SE Krobo NE Ningo SSE Prampram S by E, and Pong S. Zimmermann is impressed by the agriculture...He also visited the Nungua villages in the district, where although the people spoke Adangbe he was able to converse with them. Zimmermann travelled back by the same route, pointing out that

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in the whole journey he had only crossed one stream between Santse and Kwabinya which reaches the sea at Pong where it is called Elaoe, but where Zimmermann was its name is Siako. Other villages named on this return are Oyarefa, and Damfa, where there are some recently baptised christians who were visited by 3 of Zimmermann's pupils. The latter belongs to old Afutu in Teshi, several of whose family have been baptised. Zimmermann also seems to have travelled from Krobofa (or Asadwale) to Ata (a 20 hour day) passing through a large number of villages and visiting Osudoku. The report also includes a discussion of the vocabulary of names for gods and priests in Ga, including a short account of Ga monotheism, and an equation between gbaloi and prophet (or prophet with nkunialoi). In a short discussion of some aspects of morality he says the commandment "Honour thy Father and Mother" is the fundamental instruction of all indigenous political ethics.

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