AOSIS

The 19th-century missionary encounters with the Batswana people in South Africa: An intersectional-decolonial approach

CrossMark

Author:
Themba Shingange[1]

Affiliation:
[1]Department of Christian Spirituality, Church History and Missiology, College of Human Sciences, University of South Africa, Pretoria, South Africa

Corresponding author:
Themba Shingange, shingt@unisa.ac.za

Missionary encounters were often characterised by shifting and multilinear intents within the broader global spaces. In Africa, the 19th-century missionary encounter happened concomitantly within the nexus of Christianisation, colonisation, and civilisation agendas. Succinctly put, missionaries sent by the London Missionary Society who came to South Africa and had encounters with the Batswana people were equally agents of cultural transfer and imperialism that were linked to Christianisation, colonisation, and civilisation processes. Thus, the missionary mandate was entrenched in evangelisation that constructed and portrayed to Africans the imagery of a monotheistic and monopolistic God, and in the deformation and classification of African cultural practices and religions as heathen, barbaric, and uncivilised. Consequently, the dividing line between Christianisation, colonisation, and civilisation was blurred. This study used desk research to examine the nexus of missionary encounters among the Batswana in South Africa. The findings were that the understanding of Christianity and the imagery of God depicted by the missionaries still has a grip on contemporary Africa. Therefore, there is a dire need to problematise the narrative because it has continued the colonial aspirations of the past.

Intradisciplinary and/or interdisciplinary implications: The study used intradisciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches by engaging the intersectional and decolonial theories together with insights from theology and missiology. This was done to delineate the problem and to argue for the need to decolonise the current narrative. This can, perhaps, transform the status quo and provide opportunities for Africans to define their beings and understanding of God in their terms.

Keywords: Christianisation; colonisation; civilisation; missionary; decolonial; intersectionality.

Introduction

Missionary encounters were often characterised by shifting and multilinear intentions within the broader global spaces (Amina 2020:3). Brunner (2021:415) observed the shifting patterns in missionary consensus from proselytisation to social concerns, and the indigenisation of missions. In the same vein, Elbourne (2023) opined that missionary societies such as the Baptist Missionary Society, founded in 1792, the Interdenominational London Missionary Society (1795), and the Church Missionary Society (1799) were intended to be agents of world peace and global harmony. Thus, in Africa, the 19th-century missionary encounters happened concomitantly within the nexus of Christianisation, colonisation, and civilisation agendas (Comaroff & Comaroff 1886; Dube 2000). According to Masuku (2023:1) 'In the 19th and 20th centuries, Christian missionaries from Europe and North America expanded into Africa and Asia in tandem with Western imperialism'. This missionary-imperial interlink implicated the missionaries and caused them to be equal agents of cultural transfer and imperialism that used Christianisation, colonisation, and civilisation processes to force Africans to hate themselves, their cultural practices, and their religions (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2015b:30). This was accomplished by the 19th-century missionary encounters with the Batswana people of South Africa through the missionary mandate given by the London Missionary Society (Cooper 2002; Dube 2015; Elbourne 2023) that was entrenched in evangelisation that constructed and portrayed to Africans the imagery of a monotheistic and monopolistic God (Mothoagae & Shingange 2024). Furthermore, Mothoagae and Shingange (2024) provide examples such as the demand for the Batswana people to discard polygamy, their religions, and cultural practices as prerequisites to become Christians. The missionary mandate was also embedded in the deformation and classification of African cultural practices and

Note: Special Collection: Decolonialism in Theology today.

religions as heathen, barbaric, and uncivilised (Mbaya 2023). Consequently, the dividing line between Christianisation, colonisation, and civilisation of the Batswana people was blurred by the depiction of a God who demanded the denial of self and one's culture to become a Christian.

This study examines the nexus of the 19th-century missionary encounters with the Batswana people of South Africa. To begin with, the study presents a brief background on the missionary epochs in South Africa. Subsequently, it presents some methodological and theoretical issues. Thereafter, the study puts the notion of evangelisation of Africa into perspective. That is followed by the discussion on the colonisation of Africa that aims to show its interconnectedness with evangelisation. The study continues to present the argument considering the civilisation of Africa by demonstrating how this concept relates to both Christianisation and colonisation. Then follows the discussion on the need for a colonial turn with the view that this turn can perhaps lead to the decolonisation of the current narrative.

Brief background of the missionary epochs

Masuku (2023) has written a very insightful discussion of the Christianisation of Africa. Without reinventing the wheel, it suffices to mention the three waves of missionary expansion in Africa. According to Masuku, the first wave of Christianisation of Africa took place in North Africa during the 1st and 7th centuries, while imperial Rome was in power. The Portuguese then led the second wave in West and East Africa throughout the 15th and 16th centuries. Eventually, it was the Central African period throughout the 16th to 18th centuries, and then the third epoch happened during the mid-19th and 20th centuries (Masuku 2023:1). The argument presented in this study centres on the third epoch as delineated by Masuku. However, this article places the focus on the third epoch regarding the missionary encounters with the Batswana people of South Africa in the 19th century (Dube 2015:3).

Methodology and theoretical issues

The study was conducted through desk research by collecting and analysing existing data sources that address the aspects of the intersectionality of Christianisation, colonisation, and civilisation in the missionary encounter with Africa. These sources included journal articles, academic books, official publications, and computerised data sources (Pandey & Pandey 2021:69). These sources were specifically analysed through the theoretical lenses of intersectionality and decoloniality. The intersectionality theory is a framework often used within social sciences to describe multiple social issues that are interlinked in the oppression of individuals. This theory was initially coined by African–American attorney Kimberlé Crenshaw (Crenshaw 1989). Although Crenshaw used intersectionality to define the interrelatedness of race, gender, and social class in the oppression of women

in society, Yee (2020:11) argued that 'Scholars have extended intersectionality beyond race and gender to investigate the various forms of oppressions. Thus, intersectionality was used in this study as the framework that assisted in best delineating the problem of the 19th-century missionary encounters with Africa and defining this phenomenon. The decision to use intersectionality was influenced by De Santiago et al. (2022:80) who argued that intersectionality is a paradigm that provides one of the best analytical vantage points for understanding exclusionary, unequal, and unfair actions.

Furthermore, the study also used the decolonial theory to curve paths that could address and transform this phenomenon. According to Maldonado-Torres (2016), decoloniality challenges and dismantles the ideological frameworks and structures that justify and maintain colonial power relations. The depiction of God used by the missionaries in their encounters with Africa justified the colonial power relations between the West and the Global South. This form of power was best defined in Foucauldian terms as 'Pastoral Power' (Foucault 1982), 'Sovereign power' (De Onrubia 2013:22), and 'Biopower' Foucault (1978:140). Therefore, to address these powers, Mignolo (2007) opined that there is a need to 'delink' from oppressive structures and to challenge power imbalances. However, he further asserted that achieving this goal would require a new mindset and a brave move to execute what he calls 'epistemic disobedience' (Mignolo 2009). The following section presents the nexus of missionary encounters with Africa in the light of intersectionality and decolonial lenses.

The 19th-century Christianisation of Batswana in South Africa

The arrival of missionaries in Africa during the 19th century was marked by the display of abuse of power. The presence of missionaries in the rest of Africa and Botswana was not inherently negative as displayed in the words of the former president of Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah, in his appreciation of the missionary work in Ghana when he asserted that (Eshun 2021):

> The fortitude which they showed is the sure foundation upon which Christianity is based in Ghana. Ghana salutes these men and women who gave their lives for the enlightenment and welfare of this land. (p. 390)

However, the display of abuse of power by missionaries in Botswana and the rest of Africa can not be disputed. This is like the use of 'biopower' that, according to Foucault (1978:140), was related to the 19th-century repressive hypothesis entrenched in biopolitics and how authorities (missionary-colonial enterprise) oppressed human life processes using power, knowledge, and subjectification. Thus, the use of power was displayed by missionaries forcing the Batswana people and other Africans to accept their version of biblical discourses and the imagery of God they presented (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2015b:30; Shingange 2023:115). In the same vein, Foucault referred to this use of power as 'governmentality' that forces

people against their will to accept what they are being told without challenging or questioning it (De Onrubia 2013:22). Therefore, missionaries used power to apply governmentality in their Christianisation agenda (sometimes referred to as evangelisation) (Masuku 2023, Hendricks 1978).

According to Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2015b:30), 'Under colonial governmentality, the colonised African people were forced to lose their African subjectivity as they were reproduced by the colonial paradigm as objects'. Hence, the Batswana people were reduced to objects or 'things'. Succinctly put, borrowing from Césaire (2000:42), Africans were 'thingified' (regarded as non-human or as things) or as Fanon (1963) puts it as being pushed into the zone of non-being. However, to enforce this narrative, missionaries appealed to the African religious consciousness as Mbiti (1990:1) opined that 'Africa is "notoriously religious", in that religion permeates every aspect of African life. Thus, Africa's religious notoriety was negatively used against them through the construction of the Christianisation theology'.

The Christianisation theology

The Christianisation theology emanates from how the missionaries constructed and portrayed God in Africa. Their theology was based on the misconstrued representation of God as a monopolistic and monotheistic Being (Mothoagae & Shingange 2024:4). The essence of the monopolistic and monotheistic God was embedded in the use of fear and guilt to portray a disciplining and punishing God (Foucault 1975). Thus, God was portrayed to Africans as a dreadful Being who was always ready to inflict punishment upon those who disobeyed his prescribed rules and commandments. This happened through the performance of surveillance by the divine and the Western colonial Christian God who demanded adherence to the tenets and precepts of the Western colonial Christian doctrinal belief system. Mothoagae and Shingange (2024:2) assert that this surveillance is based on the techniques of observing and normalising judgement. Against this backdrop, God does not only police the actions of Africans, but God is also ready to punish them. Again, the existence of only one God was emphasised by the portrayal of this God as a jealous God who did not want any God to be served but himself. These notions of monopolistic and monotheistic God are expanded further in the following sections.

The monopolistic God

The notion of the monopolistic God lies behind the kind of power from the Middle Ages, which Foucault calls 'sovereign power' (De Onrubia 2013:22). This power undergoes two different shifts that is, the disciplinary power exerted upon single bodies through mechanisms of surveillance and normalisation, and the biological control of life in general through the state's role in protecting life, known as 'biopolitics'. These two forms of power, disciplinary and biopolitics, together make up the new form of governmentality 'biopower' (De Onrubia 2013:22). Thus,

governmentality demands allegiance. Mbembe (2001) defined how the missionaries portrayed the monopolistic side of God when he asserts:

> It is also assumed that the person who is converted agrees to accept, in everyday life, the practical consequences of this submission and this transfer of allegiance. By this definition, every conversion ought therefore to entail, at least in theory, a fundamental change in modes of thought and conduct on the part of the convert. From this point of view, it is implicit that the act of conversion should be accompanied by the abandonment of familiar landmarks, cultural and symbolic. This act means, therefore, stripping down to the skin. (p. 228)

Against the backdrop of the citation above, monopoly implies that conversion to Christianity is equated to Africans abandoning their fundamental cultural and religious symbols. The missionaries enforced the abandoning of cultural symbols while neglecting the fact that these symbols transcended cultural implications by also having religious and spiritual connotations. According to Waweru (2020):

> Symbols serve as means to make the reality of God more concrete to the Africans. They also help to integrate and bring together two levels of realities, namely, the transcendent and the immanent attributes of God, making religion a real practical experience for the African people. (p. 38)

Lamentably, missionaries misled Africans by teaching them that the abandonment of the symbols would be an act of displaying their allegiance to God (Mbembe (2001:228). Furthermore, this allegiance was additionally a sign of acknowledging the existence of one true God, that is, the Christian God as portrayed by missionaries in monotheistic terms.

The monotheistic God

Mbembe (2001:226) opines that 'Christian monotheism based itself on the idea of universal dominion in time as well as in space. It evinced an appetite for conquest, of which conversions were only one aspect'. In this context, the theology behind the monotheistic God portrayed by the missionaries was grounded on a mission to convert Africans and conquer other gods. This was demonstrated by the presented imagery of a God who demanded that people shall serve no other God as Exodus 20:3 puts it 'You shall have no other gods before me'. Thus, African religions and spiritualities were demonised, and regarded as paganism, heathen, and witchcraft. Kebede (2004) states:

> The more missionaries relegated African religions to superstition and witchcraft, the higher, they thought, the place of Christianity became. Their insensibility to the anti-Christian nature of their approach was caused by belief painting the disparagement of African beliefs as an exaltation of Christianity. (p. 36)

In the context of the citation above, embracing the notion of the monotheistic God meant that Africans were prepared to relegate their religions. Thus, conversion to Christianity came with the expectation of separating oneself from paying homage to African religious belief systems. Wa Thiong'o

(1981:6) called this move the effect of a bomb which is 'to annihilate a people's belief in their names, in their languages, in their environment, in their heritage of struggle, in their unity, in their capacities, and themselves'. African people's beliefs were thus annihilated and considered devoid of relationality by the missionary presentation of one *omnipresent* (a God who is present everywhere at the very same time), *omnipotent* (the all-powerful God), and *omniscient* God (the all-knowing God).

However, this view is contrary to the African worldview which embraces diversities and sees the world and Divinity from a pluralistic perspective. According to Maxwell (2022):

> Men in pre-colonial southern Africa could belong successively, or even simultaneously, to overlapping networks of religious relationship: 'he could express his control of his household through a localized ancestral cult, carry tribute to a distant territorial shrine, belong to a gun-hunter's guild, and be an initiate of a spirit possession cult that linked him to the men and women who lived along route.' (p. 204)

Maxwell's assertion demonstrates that Africans can pay homage to multiple deities without contradictions. In the same vein, Waweru (2020:36) posited that 'The African image of God is the mystery and incomprehensibility of God implicit in the plurality of divine names'. Africans did not have and still do not have one name assigned to the Supreme Being. However, they use a variety of names to refer to the nature and greatness of God. For instance, the use of *Mwari or Muari* among the Shona people of Zimbabwe denotes the 'Supreme Creator God' who is believed to be distant and invisible but cares for humankind (Ranger 1973:582). Another example is that of *Modimo* who is believed by the Tswana people of South Africa, Namibia, and Botswana to be the 'Supreme God' who is separated from people, being somewhere in the sky, and is seen to be ultimately good (Kasera 2012:122). Therefore, the missionaries contradicted the African imagery of God when they introduced a monotheistic God. However, they did this to honour their allegiance to the colonisation agenda.

The colonisation of Africa

The colonisation of the Batswana people of South Africa in the 19th century falls within the spectrum of the general colonisation of Africa. Maldonado-Torres (2007) states:

> Coloniality is different from colonialism. Colonialism denotes a political and economic relation in which the sovereignty of a nation or a people rests on the power of another nation, which makes such a nation an empire. Coloniality, instead, refers to long-standing patterns of power that emerged as a result of colonialism, but that define culture, labour, intersubjectivity relations, and knowledge production well beyond the strict limits of colonial administrations. (p. 24)

The above citation provides a framework to help us understand the process of the colonisation of Africa that falls within the spectrum of coloniality. The continued existence of coloniality is based on patterns of power between the West and Africa. The colonial interlink to the Christianisation process is like what was defined by Comaroff and Comaroff (1992) as 'the colonization of consciousness' because Africans were made to deny themselves, their consciousness, and their existence. Schmidt (2015) asserts that together with explorers and traders, Christian missionaries were evangelising the continent throughout the early stages of African colonisation.

Therefore, the missionary-imperial relationship was formed to destroy African cultures, and religions and to rob Africans of their rich sources of minerals and wealth. Although missionaries were not formally dispatched as representatives of colonial administrations, Christianity became a pacifying factor that facilitated the process of colonialism and the cultural assimilation of Africans. According to Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2015b:15), colonial structures of power produced Africa as a cartographic entity, an idea, a reality, as well as reproduction(s) of African subjectivity as deficient and dependent. This is because the process of colonisation was entrenched in the notion of Africa's subjectivity and dependency on the West.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2015a) provides three modalities of coloniality that can help us understand how the missionary-colonial enterprise ensured the subjectivity and dependency of Africans. To begin with, the coloniality of power divided the world between the zones of 'Being' and 'non-being' (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2015a:489). The 'Zone of Being' placed the Europeans in the geopolitical position of privileges and supremacy. On the other hand, 'The zone of non-being' meant that Africans were lesser human beings in comparison to Europeans. Maldonado-Torres (2016:16) argues that the place of marginality that Africans continue to be pushed to is 'the zone of sub-humanity'. This means that the West benefited from the designed white supremacy that considered them to be better than the rest of the world. Following was the coloniality of knowledge, which was based on 'teasing out epistemological issues, politics of knowledge generation, as well as questions of who generates' (Ndlovu 2015a:490). This modality gave the West epistemic privileges and made the Westerners think they had the right to produce and reproduce knowledge by defining a universal constitution of knowledge. Lastly, 'the coloniality of being', that denigrated blackness by associating it with darkness while depicting whiteness in association with the light. Thus, in the colonisation of Africa, Africans were made to doubt themselves. They were made to believe that they were not created in the image of God.

In the same vein, Quijano (2000) opined that coloniality is based on:

> [T]he imposition of a racial and ethnic classification of the global population as the cornerstone of that model of power, and it operates on every level, in every arena and dimension (both material and subjective) of everyday social existence and does so on a societal scale. (p. 342)

Thus, the binarism and hierarchies of whiteness and blackness were wrongfully emphasised in the colonisation agenda. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2015b) maintains that:

> Ontologically speaking, a new racial discourse of defining and classification of people, racially hierarchizing them, and then colonizing and ruling over, dominating, and exploiting those that were deemed racially inferior emerged. (p. 17)

This was succinctly summed up by Césaire when stating the equation: colonisation is 'thingification'. This implies that the colonisation of Africa was marked by brutal disregard for Africans, their beings, cultures, practices, and religions. Cesaire (2000:32) further pointed out that colonialism was a form of disruptive, 'decivilizing', dehumanising, exploitative, racist, violent, brutal, covetous, and 'thinking' system. This system was also linked to the disguised civilisation of Africa.

The civilisation of Africa

Amina (2020) posited:

> Missionaries came to Africa under the concept of civilization; they considered African people as savage and inferior to whites. Missionaries came to spread Christianity at first but they had hidden intentions, they worked to pave the way to European Colonialism. Missionaries such as David Livingstone were sent by The London Missionary Society in 1840 to Africa, they worked on converting locals to the new faith which they were refused at the beginning but later, those missionaries succeeded in convincing Africans to accept Christianity using a smooth way. (p. 3)

Against the backdrop of the citation above, the hidden intentions of missionaries were propelled by their distorted perceptions of Africans and the Batswana people of South Africa. These perceptions were embedded in the notion that Africans were uncivilised. Mothoagae and Shingange (2024) lamented the demonisation of African cultural practices like polygamy, which were portrayed as 'primitive', 'backward', 'savage', 'barbaric', 'uncivilized', and 'heathen'. This happened to the point where the superior element and the dominant tendencies of some Westerners made them judge African cultures as inferior. At some stage, speaking African languages and wearing African clothes were demonised and discouraged (Masuku 2023:3). This came to pass because Africa was dubbed the 'Dark Continent' (Amina 2020:6). Therefore, missionaries claimed to have brought light to chase the darkness. Olsen (2008) likewise observed that:

> Missionaries were the first group of Europeans who tried to achieve an understanding of native African culture, although their focus remained on the transformation and conversion of natives into civilized beings and Christians, rather than on the validation and preservation of African culture. (p. 23)

Mothoagae and Shingange (2024:1) argued that this happened because the missionaries thought that Africans were *tabula rasa* [clean slates] waiting to be guided by the paternalistic West.

When Iliya (2022:13) asserted that, 'To the Western missionaries, accepting the Christian faith is more of accepting civilization', it effectively highlighted the relationship between Christianisation and civilisation that was difficult to distinguish between because of the false belief that African cultures and faiths were archaic and that Western civilisations should be emulated to advance. Lamentably, the nexus of the 19th-century missionary encounters has a perpetual legacy that should be challenged to the core. This is like what Shingange (2023:108) meant when arguing that 'the missionary-colonial subjugation tendencies are far from over'. Again, this means that the task of uprooting colonisation is not completed until the nexus of missionary encounters with Africa becomes a mere historic event that has no impact on contemporary society.

Therefore, there is a clarion call to decolonise this narrative among several scholars and proponents of decoloniality. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013:10) articulated this call when asserting that Africans must be vigilant against the trap of ending up normalising and universalising coloniality. He further admonished that 'coloniality must be unmasked, resisted, and destroyed because it produced a world order that can only be sustained through a combination of violence, deceit, hypocrisy, and lies' (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013:10). Against the backdrop of the call to decolonise, the narrative in the next section moves for a decolonial turn.

The decolonial turn

Transforming the status quo entrenched in the 19th-century missionary encounter with Africa is referred to as the 'decolonial turn' (Maldonado-Torres 2006:114). Its impetus is that 'decolonization', or 'decoloniality', is an ongoing necessary 'task' (Maldonado-Torres 2011:2). Similarly, Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2015a:485) sees decoloniality as a modality of knowing, thinking, and acting in addition to a long-standing political and epistemological movement that aims to free (former) colonised peoples from global coloniality. As detrimental components of Euro-North American-centric modernity, it is a part of marginalised but tenacious movements that sprang from fights against the slave trade, imperialism, colonialism, apartheid, neo-colonialism, and underdevelopment.

The urgency of this movement has been demonstrated by the priority given to decolonial thought in recent years. In further defining this move, Maldonado-Torres (2006) asserts:

> The decolonial turn (different from the linguistic or the pragmatic turns) refers to the decisive recognition and propagation of decolonization as an ethical, political, and epistemic project in the twentieth century. The project reflects changes in historical consciousness, agency, and knowledge, and it also involves a method or series of methods that facilitate the task of decolonization at the material and epistemic levels. (p. 114)

Thus, the decolonial turn is a call to action. Africans are therefore called to reflect on the historical consciousness. These reflections should be an impetus to take the position of

being agents of change for their predicaments. This will require Africans to take destiny into their own hands and shake off the colonial burden that is rooted in Christianisation, colonisation, and civilisation agendas. Hence, the narrative must be problematised and dismantled as Grosfoguel (2011) opined that:

> Decoloniality seeks to dismantle relations of power and conceptions of knowledge that foment the reproduction of racial, gender, and geopolitical hierarchies that came into being or found new and more powerful forms of expression in the modern/colonial world. (p. 1)

Maldonado-Torres (2011:2) posited that the 'decolonial turn' does not designate a single theoretical school but rather a family of varied viewpoints that agree that coloniality is the primary issue facing the contemporary society.

Mills (1997:145) argues that 'decoloniality is re-emerging during the current age of "epistemic break"'. He further posited that:

> The term 'epistemic break' is drawn from the French theorist Michel Foucault and It refers to a 'historical rupture which occurs when one epistemic system breaks down and another begins to take its place'. (p. 145)

This means that Africans will have to forcefully break from the epistemic bondage of the West. The same move is referred to by Mignolo (2007:459) as 'to change the terms of the conversation, and above all, of the hegemonic ideas of what knowledge and understanding are'. The result of such an act will be to 'delink' and to cut the ties with the contemporary narrative that is entrenched in the nexus of missionary encounters with Africa. This transformation can present both the Westerners and Africans as created in the image of God and thus, being viewed by God as equals without constructed hierarchies.

Conclusion

This article argued that 19th-century missionary encounters were often characterised by shifting and multilinear intents within the broader global spaces. It further pointed out that, in Africa, and specifically among the Batswana people of South Africa, missionary encounters happened concomitantly within the nexus of Christianisation, colonisation, and civilisation agendas. This meant that missionaries who came to Africa were equally agents of cultural transfer that was linked to Christianisation, colonisation, and civilisation processes. The study further argued that Christianisation was anchored in the construction and portrayal of Christianising theology emanating from the concepts of a monopolistic and monotheistic God. Both these concepts are problematic because they were meant to use fear and guilt to make Africans abandon their cultures and religions. Again, they also displayed the use of 'pastoral power', 'sovereign power' and 'biopower' against Africans. On the other hand, colonisation and civilisation were the hidden intentions of the 19th-century missionaries. These two intents were based on the notions that African cultures and religions were backward, barbaric, and uncivilised. This narrative was

problematised by the call for a 'decolonial turn'. This meant that Africans would have to forcefully break from the epistemic bondage of the West by changing the terms of the conversation, and above all, of the hegemonic ideas of what knowledge and understanding are. The result of such an act will be to 'delink' and cut the ties with the nexus of 19th-century missionary encounters with Africa. This transformation can present both the Westerners and Africans as created in the image of God and thus, being viewed by God as equals without constructed hierarchies.

References

Amina, F., 2020, *Missionary's involvement in Africa during the 19th century*, Doctoral dissertation, Ministry of Higher Education.

Brunner, M.P., 2021, 'From converts to cooperation: Protestant internationalism, US missionaries and Indian Christians and "Professional" social work between Boston and Bombay (c. 1920–1950)', *Journal of Global History* 16(3), 415–434. https://doi.org/10.1017/S1740022821000103

Cesaire, A., 2000, *Disclosure on colonialism*, transl. P. Joan, Monthly Review Press, New York.

Comaroff, J. & Comaroff, J., 1986, 'Christianity and colonialism in South Africa', *American Ethnologist* 13(1), 1–22. https://doi.org/10.1525/ae.1986.13.1.02a00010

Comaroff, J. & Comaroff, J., 2006, 'The colonization of consciousness', in *Ethnography and the historical imagination*, pp. 235–263, Westview Press, 1992, Oxford, reprinted in M. Lambek (ed.), A reader in the Anthropology of Religion, Wiley, New York, NY.

Cooper, J., 2002, 'The invasion of personal religious experiences: London Missionary Society missionaries, imperialism, and the written word in early 19th-century southern Africa', *African Historical Review* 34(1), 49–71. https://doi.org/10.1080/00232080285310031

Crenshaw, K.,1989, 'Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: A black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory and antiracist politics', *University of Chicago Legal Forum* 140, 139–167.

De Onrubia, F.G., 2013, *Shifting paradigms: Walter Mignolo's decolonial project through Michel Foucault*, John Cabot University, Rome.

De Santiago, B.S.R., Carretero, M.D.R.M., Gómez-Jarabo, I. & Vera, C.S., 2022, 'An intersectional focus on inequality and inequity in the framework of the 2030 Agenda', *International Journal of Latest Research in Humanities and Social Science* 05(11), 73–82.

Dube, M.W., 2000, *Postcolonial feminist interpretation of the Bible*, Chalice Press, Des Peres, MO.

Dube, M.W., 2015, 'Translating cultures: The creation of sin in the public space of Batswana', *Scriptura: Journal for Contextual Hermeneutics in Southern Africa* 114(1), 1–11. https://doi.org/10.7833/114-0-1131

Elbourne, E., 2023, 'Peace, genocide, and empire: The London Missionary Society and the San in early nineteenth-century Southern Africa', in G. Troughton (ed.), *Pacifying missions*, pp. 24–54, Brill, Leiden.

Eshun, D.J., 2021, 'Speaking for ourselves: The Ghanaian encounter with European Missionaries–Sixteenth–Twenty-first centuries', *Mission Studies* 38(3), 372–397. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004536791_003

Fanon, F., 1963, *The wretched of the earth*, transl. R. Philcox, Grove Press, New York, NY.

Foucault, M., 1975, *Discipline and punish: The birth of the prison*, transl. A.M. Sheridan (ed.), Vintage Books, New York, NY.

Foucault, M., 1978, *The history of sexuality: The care of self*, Penguin Books, London.

Foucault, M., 1982, 'The subject and power', *Critical Inquiry* 8(4), 777–795. https://doi.org/10.1086/448181

Grosfoguel, R., 2011, 'Decolonizing postcolonial studies and paradigms of political economy: Transmodernity, decolonial thinking, and global coloniality', *Transmodernity: Journal of Peripheral Cultural Production of the LusoHispanic World* 1(1), 137. https://doi.org/10.5070/T411000004

Hendricks, B., 1978, 'What is Evangelization?', *Missiology* 6(4), 409–424. https://doi.org/10.1177/009182967800600402

Kasera, B.M., 2012, *African names for God and the biblical concept of YAHWEH*, Mission Namibia, p. 112.

Kebede, M., 2004, *Africa's quest for a philosophy of decolonization*, Rodopi, Amsterdam.

Iliya, M.O., 2022, 'Church as an agent of transformation: The impact of Christianity in Nigeria', *African Multidisciplinary Journal of Researc*h 6(2), 1–21.

Maldonado-Torres, N., 2006, 'Cesaire's Gift and the decolonial turn', *Radical Philosophy Review* 9(2), 114. https://doi.org/10.5840/radphilrev20069217

Maldonado-Torres, N., 2007, 'On coloniality of being: Contributions to the development of a concept', *Cultural Studies* 21(2–3), 240–270. https://doi.org/10.1080/09502380601162548

Maldonado-Torres, N., 2011, 'Thinking through the decolonial turn: Post-continental interventions in theory, philosophy, and critique – An introduction', *Transmodernity* 1(2), 1–15. https://doi.org/10.5070/T412011805

Maldonado-Torres, N., 2016, *Outline of ten theses on coloniality and decoloniality*, Caribbean Studies Association, viewed 15 February 2024, from http://caribbeanstudiesassociation.org/docs/Maldonado-Torres_Outline_Ten_Theses-10.23.16.pdf.

Masuku, M.T., 2023, 'Mistakes of Western Christian missions in Africa and related response, mid-19th to 20th Century', *Verbum et Ecclesia* 44(1), 2746. https://doi.org/10.4102/ve.v44i1.2746

Maxwell, D., 2022, 'Christianity, mobility, and frontiers of change in Africa', in C. Burlăcioiu (ed.), *Migration and diaspora formation*, pp. 203–220, De Gruyter, Berlin.

Mbaya, H., 2023, 'Contested religious and cultural issues: An encounter between Western Missions and African cultures and religions in South Africa in the Nineteenth Century', *Journal of Religion in Africa* 1, 1–31. https://doi.org/10.1163/15700666-12340259

Mbembe, A., 2001, *On the post colony*, University of California Press, Berkeley, CA.

Mbiti, J.S., 1990, *African religions & philosophy*, Educational Publishers, Heinemann.

Mignolo, W.D., 2007, 'Delinking: The rhetoric of modernity, the logic of coloniality and the grammar of de-coloniality', *Cultural Studies* 21(2–3), 449–514. https://doi.org/10.1080/09502380601162647

Mignolo, W.D., 2009 , 'Epistemic disobedience, independent thought and decolonial freedom', *Theory, Culture & Society* 26(7–8), 159–181. https://doi.org/10.1177/0263276409349275

Mills, S., 1997, *Discourse*, Routledge, London.

Mothoagae, I.D. & Shingange, T., 2024, 'The 19th-century missionary literature: Biculturality and bi-religiosity, a reflection from the perspective of the wretched', *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 80(1), a9032. https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v80i1.9032

Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S.J., 2013, 'Why Decoloniality in the 21st Century?', *The thinker* 48, 10–15.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S.J., 2015a, 'Decoloniality as the future of Africa', *History Compass* 13(10), 485–496. https://doi.org/10.1111/hic3.12264

Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S.J., 2015b, 'Genealogies of coloniality and implications for Africa's development', *Africa Development* 40(3), 13–40.

Olsen, B., 2008, *An overview of translation history in South Africa 1652–1860*, Degree of Master of Arts, University of Witwatersrand.

Pandey, P. & Pandey, M.M., 2021, *Research methodology tools and techniques*, Bridge Center, New Delhi.

Quijano, A., 2000, 'The coloniality of power and social classification', *Journal of World Systems* 6(2), , 342–386.

Ranger, T., 1973, 'Territorial cults in the history of central Africa', *The Journal of History* 14(4), 581–597. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0021853700013062

Schmidt, B., 2015, 'Christianity as a double-edged sword in Colonial Africa', *17th Annual Africana Studies Research Conference and Luncheon*, Ohio, February 03, 2015.

Shingange, T., 2023, 'Biblical discourses and the subjugation of Africa: A Decolonial-Foucauldian perspective', *Acta Theologica* 43, 108–126. https://doi.org/10.38140/at.vi.7015

Wa Thiong'o, N., 1981, *Decolonising the mind: The politics of language in African literature*, Zimbabwe Publishing House, Harare.

Waweru, H.M., 2020, *African theology in a postcolonial perspective*, Franciscan Kolbe Press, Limuru.

Yee, G.A., 2020, 'Thinking intersectionally: Gender, race, class, and the etcetera's of our discipline', *Journal of Biblical Literature* 139(1), 7–26. https://doi.org/10.1353/jbl.2020.0001