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Women and the Christian Missionary Encounter in the Jos Plateau Area of British Nigeria

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Abstract

Women were assigned domestic duties within the European Christian enterprise, of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, in Africa. As such, Christian women were trained in the art of 'domestic science' and 'devout domesticity'. European Christian women who conveyed this gendered role to Africa were expected not only to fulfil this mandate by being good Christian wives and mothers, but to impart the knowledge and skills that they possessed on African Christian women converts. Despite the gendered roles assigned to women in the Christian missionary enterprise of the late period of European rule in Africa, a dominant perspective in the scholarship of the encounter argues that women participants did not restrict themselves to the domestic functions that were given to them. This perspective further argues that Christian women surpassed their gendered social expectations, of being good wives and mothers, by selectively deploying their agency in ways that both made sense to them and gave them a sense of fulfilment as individuals and as groups.[2] This work supports this assertion by drawing on examples from the functions that different categories of Christian women participants carried out in the Christian missionary encounter that occurred in sub-Saharan Africa as a whole and the Jos Plateau area in particular during the period of British rule in Nigeria.

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[2]See Prevost, Elizabeth. "Anglican Women Missionaries and the Culture of Spirituality in Africa, 1866–1930", (Ph.D Dissertation, Northwestern University, 2006).

INTRODUCTION

Women participants in the European Christian missionary encounter of the late 19th and early 20th centuries in Africa were assigned gendered roles.[3] These gendered roles carved out the home as the location where women were to perform their duties. Scholars, however, argue that women did not restrict their agency to the specific roles given to them.[4] As such, studies on the Christian missionary encounter of the late period of European rule in Africa have examined the origins of gendered roles within the missionary establishment. To this end, Susan Thorne, who analysed factors that led to the 19th and 20th century Christian missionary enterprise in Africa traced them to both the evangelical revival and the industrial revolution in Europe.[5] Thus, as a product of European industrial capitalism, Christian missionaries, she says, imbibed class difference into their civilizing mission and transmitted European forms of social hierarchy and cultural forms to Africa.[6] Dana Roberts, shares a similar perspective with Thorne when she asserted that gender–based agency was important in the Christian encounter in Africa.[7] She agrees that, the gendered agency that featured in the Christian proselytization of Africa was borne out of the interaction between the evangelical movement and the industrial revolution in Europe. The dominant view of the era, she says, perceived domesticity and the centrality of the home as the primary role of women in society. She observes that women were viewed as the transmitters of morality to men and children. Hence, the evangelical missions carved out the home as the base for women to carry out their Christian missionary duties.

As mentioned earlier, roles given to European, especially British Christian missionaries in Africa were assigned on a gender basis. It is pertinent to note that traditional Christianity recognises two gender categories for people, that is, the male and female gender. Traditional Christian practices are also embedded in patriarchal authority. Christian Protestant reformers of 16th century Europe imbibed the gender and patriarchal basis of traditional Christianity.[9] The patriarchal leadership of the reformation instituted the home as the location

[3]This assertion is captured in Thorne, Susan. Congregational Missions and the Making of Imperial Culture in 19th century England Stanford University Press, Stanford (1999); Thorne, Susan."Conversion of Englishmen and the Conversion of the World Inseparable: Missionary Imperialism and the Language of Class in Industrial Britain" in Cooper, Frederick. and Stoler, Ann. Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in A Bourgeois World, (Berkerly, University of California Press, 1997), and Roberts, Dana. "The Christian Home as a Cornerstone of Anglo–American Missionary Thought and Practice" in Converting Colonialism, Visions and Realities in Mission History 1706–1914, ed. Roberts, Dana. (Michigan: Wm. Erdmans Publishing Company, 2008).

[4]Ibid

[5]Thorne, Congregational Missions and, 5, 25 and 156–157

[6]Thorne, Conversion of Englishmen, 170, 253–254

[7]Roberts, "The Christian Home, 134–147.

[8]This point is made by Wood, Hannelie. "Gender Inequality: The Problem of Harmful, Patriarchal, Traditional and Cultural Practices in the Church" Theological Studies, vol. 75: 1 (2019), 1–8 https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v75i1.5177 Even though her work advocates for gender equality in the church.

[9] Stjerna, Kirsi. Women and the Reformation, (Malden 021485020: Blackwell, 2009), 32

where women were to demonstrate their faith as they carried out their duties as spouses and mothers. Some women became Pastors' wives. Wives of Pastors became the leaders of women in the church. This function they combined with their role as spouses and mothers. Other Protestant women were authors, theologians and prophets.[10] Prominent women of the reformation also worked in schools, orphanages and hospitals. Although the leadership within the Protestant reformation was patriarchal, it was from that era that women fashioned out new roles for themselves within the Christian enterprise. As such, women who played pioneering gendered roles within the early period of the reformation set trends that became traditions that influenced later generations of women missionaries, including those who participated in the 19th century European Christian encounter in sub–Saharan Africa as a whole and the Jos Plateau area in particular.

Western European and North American societies witnessed ideological, political and social reforms at the end of the Napoleonic wars to the start of World War I.[11] These reforms culminated in industrial capitalism and urbanization. Industrial capitalism privatized the means and profits of industrial production in the hands of wealthy elites and an emerging middle class in Britain. This period in 19th century England coincided with the monarchy of Queen Victoria, who reigned between 1837 and 1901.[12] Thus, the period is referred to as the Victorian era in English history. One of the hallmarks of the Victorian era with its strides in industrial capitalism was the increasing separation of the home from the work place.[13] As the home became separated from the business premises, increase in wealth among the middle–class sustained women in the domestic sphere. While men (i.e. husbands and fathers), provided for the middle–class family women, (i. e. wives and mothers) and took care of the home.

As mentioned earlier, a prominent feature of the Victorian era was the rise of Evangelical Protestant Christianity.[14] Thus, as a product of its time, Evangelicals maintained both the patriarchal traditions of the Protestant reformation as well as the emerging cultural trends of industrial capitalism. Following in the footsteps of the Christian norms on male leadership, Evangelical Protestants internalized patriarchal standards that enabled men to conceptualize standards for Christian feminity.[15] Male Christian Evangelicals set female submission to patriarchal authority, modesty and purity as standards for women to adhere to. Evangelical

[10]Such women include Elizabeth of Leeuwarden and Katharina Schutz Zell among others. For details see Stjerna, Women and the, 8, 13–14, and 36–37.
[11]Reimer, Vanessa. "Guardians of Virtue: Historisizing the Evangelical Maternal Ethos and Exploring the Empowering Potentials of Religious Mother–work" Journal of the Motherhood Initiative for Research and Community Involvement, vol. 5, no. 1 (2014), 278.
[12]Okawa, Mariko. " 'If she was every inch a Queen, she was also every inch a woman' : Victoria's Queenship and Constitutional Monarchy in 19th century Britain" (Ph.D Thesis, University of St. Andrews, 2020), 10.
[13]Stocking Jr, George. Victorian Anthropology, (New York 10022: The Free Press, 1987), 197–199.
[14]Okawa, " 'If she was, 8.
[15]Reimer, "Guardians of Virtue, 277–278.

women who adhered to these norms were the guardians of virtue and their ultimate duty was the enculturation of Evangelical standards in children.

Evangelical Christian norms of patriarchal authority with the English industrial capitalist culture of the Victorian era shaped the role of women largely within the home. Thus, ideal womanhood emerged within the patriarchal Evangelical Victorian family in conjunction with privately owned middle-class businesses.[16] Although ideal womanhood emerged within the patriarchal, Evangelical and middle-class Victorian family structure, this standard was inaccessible to all classes of people. The Victorian family standard where ideal womanhood was cultivated, eluded the poor working class families whose members had to work menial jobs regardless of their gender; beginning at an early age, to contribute to earnings that catered for their members. The ideal Victorian family structure was also beyond most members of other racial groups who migrated to the Western hemisphere largely as subjected people. Therefore, the ideal Victorian family structure as described, existed along with other family formations that were practiced by people who were culturally and socially outside the "white' Victorian Evangelical Christian category.[17]

The English people of the Victorian era drew confidence from their Christian morality, business enterprise, and domestic arrangements to view themselves as leaders of civilization.[18] It was based on the above that the English people of the Victorian era visualized themselves as the universal ideal standard of cultural, racial, and religious superiority and set themselves at the top of the 'ladder of civilization.[19] English Victorians drew up a ladder of civilization that placed them at the top. They were followed on the ladder by North Americans of English decent, other Anglo-Saxons and Southern Europeans, while Asians, Africans and Aboriginal peoples of the Pacific areas were placed at the bottom of the ladder. Thus, as self-professed leaders of progress, the Victorians decided to spread their 'civilization' across different continents of the world. In doing so, however, Victorians faced competition from other European nations who shared similar sentiments.

European economic, political and strategic expansion since the 16th century culminated in the scramble and partition of Africa in 1885.[20] The British participated in the multidimensional motivations and conditions that inspired the extension of European rule to Africa. The motivations and conditions include scientific, technological and industrial advancements, economic, military, and

[16]Reimer, "Guardians of Virtue, 278.
[17]Reimer, "Guardians of Virtue, 278.
[18]Robinson, Ronald et al. Africa and the Victorians: The Official Minds of Imperialism,(London: Macmillan, 1961), 1
[19]Robinson, et al. Africa and the, 2-3.
[20]Shepperson, George. "The Centennial of the West African Conference of Berlin, 1884-1885" Phylon vol. 46, no. 1 (1985) 37- 40

medical breakthrough(s) that enabled Europeans in general and the British in particular, to be able to live in sub-Saharan Africa.[21] These in addition to the rise of nationalism across Europe caused the imperialist persuasions among 19th century Europeans. The British parliament abolished slavery and the slave trade in all its territories and possessions in 1807.[22] After the British parliament abolished slavery in 1807, stopping the trade became a humanitarian motivation for Victorian imperialism in sub-Saharan Africa. As such, there was a moral persuasion in addition to the dominant strategic, economic and political agenda that motivated the forceful European colonisation of Africa.[23] British Protestant Evangelical missionaries championed the humanitarian cause of European imperialism in Africa through the extension of Christian beliefs to the continent.[24] The extension of Christianity, the missionaries hoped, was to help stem the evil tide of slavery and transfer the Evangelical Victorian standards of domesticity to African converts. Thus, British Christian missionaries to Africa extended their religious ideology together with European cultural baggage.[25] The cultural baggage also included gendered roles for participants in the encounter.

Scholars have drawn from the gender arrangements of the Victorian era to examine how European Christian women went beyond their assigned roles in fulfilling their mandate of converting African women to Christianity. Accordingly, Elizabeth Prevost drew from the increased participation of British women in Christian foreign missions between 1865 and 1930 to buttress this point.[26] Using Anglican women's missionary work in Madagascar, Uganda and Britain, Prevost argues that the role of European women did not result in the automatic transplant of metropolitan paradigms of femininity, imperialism, and Protestant Christianity onto African soil. Rather, she says, women missionaries selectively deployed and contested both European and African religious and cultural practices as a way of imparting these "virtues" in African women.[27] Jenny Daggers agrees with Prevost's assertion.[28] She argues that women in the Church Missionary Society's (CMS) Niger Mission station in Igbo land, adopted and adapted the Victorian notion

[21]Robinson, et al. Africa and the, 17-27 and 463-472.

[22]http://www.bl.uk/restoration-18th-century-literature/articles/abolition-of-slave-trade-and-slavery-in-britain retrieved on 4/07/2022.

[2]Robinson, et al. Africa and the, 17-27

[24]See Harlow, Barbara. et al (eds) Archives of Empire vol. II: The Scramble for Africa. (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003

[25]See Comaroff, John. and Comaroff, Jean, Of Revelation and Revolution Volume One Christianity, Colonialism and Consciousness in South Africa, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991); and Comaroff, John. and Comaroff, Jean.Of Revelation and Revolution Volume Two: The Dialectics of Modernity on a South African Frontier, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997) for a detailed discussion of this perspective.

[26]Prevost, "Anglican Women Missionaries, 3.

[27]Prevost, "Anglican Women Missionaries, 3.

[28]Daggers, Jenny. "Transforming Christian Womanhood: Female Sexuality and Missionary Society Encounters in the Niger Mission, Onitsha", Victorian Review, vol. 37: 2, (2011), 889-106.

of Christian womanhood in different ways. Daggers drew from the experiences of three categories of Christian women who participated in the Christian encounter between 1857 and the 1920s to make her point. These categories of women include married African Christian women who were trained in Sierra Leone, married and single British Christian women and local Christian women converts. She says that the agency of local women in the encounter generated new forms of 'womanhood' that emerged from their negotiation of both Igbo and English patriarchal systems that were poised to control the sexuality of Christian women.

In another study carried out on the domestic role of women as envisaged by mission churches in Africa, Deborah Gaitskell says that European Christian missionary and indigenous women converts in South Africa, developed bonds of affection that transcended their racial differences in an increasingly racially segregated country.[29] These bonds she said were developed through mutual dependence and cultural sympathy.

The role of education in conveying genderspecific roles to African women within the Christian missionary enterprise during the late period of European rule in Africa has been analysed. On the one hand, Kathleen Sheldon says that some Christian mission trained women in Mozambique went beyond their education in domestic science to acquire post elementary school training or skills.[30] These skills, she says, enabled them to surpass their gendered social expectations of becoming Christian wives and mothers. Such women, Sheldon says, gained waged employment as professional nurses, health auxiliary workers and garment industry workers. However, Jean Allman examined both Christian missionary efforts at training Christian mothers and the government's efforts at reconstructing motherhood in colonial Ghana.[31] In her analysis, she says, both Christian missionary training and the government's efforts at fashioning out gendered roles for women in colonial Ghana had both expected and unexpected outcomes. In the study, Jean Allman says that the outcomes were based on the ways through which women participants negotiated the encounter. For example, she says that some women who received Christian missionary training got married and practiced monogamy, while others used their knowledge to challenge patriarchy, on the one hand and maternal succession rights on the other.

Similarly, Natasha Erlank's work on the Scottish Christian missionary enterprise in South Africa, shows how African Christian women converts among

[29]Gaitskell, Deborah. "Female Faith and the Politics of the Personal: Five Mission Encounters in Twentieth Century South Africa" Feminist Review, 65, (2000), 68–91

[30]Sheldon, Kathleen. "I Studied with the Nuns, learning to Make Blouses: Gender, Ideology and Colonial Education in Mozambique" International Journal of African Historical Studies 31: 3, (1998), 600, 603–608.

[31]Allman, Jean. "Making Mothers: Missionaries, Medical Officers and Women's Work in Colonial Asante, 1924 to 1945" History Workshop, 38, (1994), 23–47.

the Xhosa of South Africa demonstrated a greater affinity to Christianity compared with their men.[32] The affinity shown by Xhosa women towards Christianity was in spite of the lesser attention given to their education by missionaries. Erlank's work shows how indigenous women were resilient Christian converts despite that they were trained for domestic roles while their male counterparts were provided with higher standards of education. Further studies on the gendered functions of women within the Christian missionary and colonial encounter in Africa have revealed how the responses of women to their restricted roles were dynamic. In another study, Deborah Gaitskell argues that indigenous Christian women converts created independent prayer communities within mission churches where they dictated the intensity of prayers as response to challenges they faced.[33] Her work offers yet another example of how women did not restrict themselves to the performance of "devout domesticity" as the ideal role of women in the Christian missionary encounter in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Generational differences accounted for varying responses to Christian proselytization among indigenous people during the late period of European rule in Africa.[34] Indigenous people across different age categories, such as the elderly, people in their prime, and the youth differed in their responses to the extension of Christianity into their communities. While the elderly and people in their prime often did not see reason to abandon local traditions in favour of newly introduced Christian beliefs, young people did not share the same reservation. This is so because young people were drawn to Christianity as an inroad to colonial modernity.[35] Misty Bastian in her study on young Christian converts at the CMS station in Onitsha offers an insight into the agency of young people in the colonial and Christian encounter.[36] In her work, Bastian, says that young Igbo converts of the CMS, who had a desire for European ideas and commodities, combined both European and local concepts of gender to create a new category of persons called 'Ndi Kris'. In doing so 'Indi Kris' became a distinct category of personhood that embodied both conversion to Christianity and modernization within colonial Igbo society.[37]

19th century African gender practices were sometimes at variance with

[32]Erlank, Natasha. "Gender and Christianity among Africans attached to Scottish Mission Stations in South Africa" (Ph.D Dissertation, Cambridge University, 1998).
[33]Gaitskell, Deborah "Devout Domesticity? A Century of African Women's Christianity in South Africa" in Walter, Cheryll. (ed) Women and Gender in Southern Africa to 1945, (Claremont: David Philip, 1990). Retrieved from https://v1.sahistory.org.za/pages/library-resources/onlinebooks/women-gender/women-index.htm
[34]Abdullahi, Samuel. "A History of Christianity in the Jos Plateau Area during the Period of British Rule in Nigeria 1900-1960" (Ph.D Thesis, University of Johannesburg, 2019), 119-131.
[35]Gabbert, Wolfgang, "Social and Cultural Conditions of Religious Conversion in Colonial South West Tanzania 1891-1913," in Ethnology vol. 40, no. 4 (2001): 298-299.
[36]Bastian, Misty. "Young Converts: Christian Missions, Gender and Youth in Onitsha, Nigeria. 1880-1929" Anthropological Quarterly, vol. 73: 3 (2018), 145-158.
[37]Ibid

European concepts of gender.[38] This is so because gender practices in some African communities were based on the social functions that a person performed. This was in contrast with Victorian gender concepts that delineated gender categories based on the biological foundations of Western thought on human society.[39] This is why participants in the European Christian encounter in Africa had to negotiate both local and Victorian concepts and practices on gender to achieve their goals of adopting Christianity or making Christian converts. The negotiation of both local and foreign cultures by participants in the encounter often created a new culture, i.e., a cultural high breed that combined aspects of local and expatriate ideas and practices. In this regard, scholars of gender in Africa have interrogated gender concept in terms of the local biological and social roles it confers on persons.[400] Their work shows differences in how the concept of gender is delineated in different communities. As such, they advocated that the recovery of indigenous epistemologies is necessary to enable an understanding of the concept of gender as is applicable in different societies.

Adherents of Christianity have advocated for gender equity in Africa. In her work, Chiedozie Obia[41] argues that women have not been given equal leadership opportunities with men in the church despite that they supported the extension and development of Christianity in Africa from the varying roles that they have played in both missionary and independent church movements on the continent. These roles, she says, range from being spouses and helpers to pastors and evangelists, teachers to children, women church leaders, preachers to church planters. She therefore advocates gender equity among men and women in the opportunities for leadership within the Christian enterprise. Hannelie Wood shares the same sentiment with Obia. As mentioned earlier, Wood opined that the enculturation of patriarchy in the church was a practice that was harmful to Christian women.[42] Thus, she also advocates for gender equity as a solution to gender bias within the Christian church.

[38]Examples are found in works such as Muonwe, Micheal. "Women in Igbo Traditional Religion and Politics: Prospects for Women's Political Leadership Role in Nigeria." UJAH vol. 20 no. 3 (2019), Achebe, Nwando. The Female King of Colonial Nigeria, (Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 2011), Mosadomi, Fehintola. "The Yoruba Iyalode", Journal of Culture and African Women Studies, no. 16 (2010) and Chukwu, Gloria. "Igbo women and Political Participation in Colonial Nigeria, 1800s–2005", International Journal of African Historical Studies, vol. 42, no. 1, (2009). Also see Denzer, LaRay. "Yoruba Women: A Historical Study" International Journal of African Historical Studies, vol. 27 no 1, (1994).

[39]Oyewumi, Oyeronke. (ed) African Gender Studies, A Reader, (New York 10010: Palgrave, 2005). Also see Stocking Jr. Victorian Anthropology, 197–214.

[40]See Oyewumi, African Gender Studies, xiii and xiv.

[41]Obia, Chiedozie. "A Re–appraisal of the Role of Women in Church Missions in Africa" HSN, vol. 27, (2018), 48–63.

[42]Wood, Hannelie. "Gender Inequality: The, 1–8

Women's Agency in the Jos Plateau Christian Missionary Encounter
Pioneering Women

As mentioned earlier, women were assigned gendered roles within the Christian missionary enterprise of the late period of European rule in Africa. Accordingly, the first Christian women who worked in the Jos Plateau mission field were recruited to cater for freed slave children and to teach indigenous women converts and girls the art of domestic science.[43] The art of "domestic science" consisted of gendered domestic practices that enabled Christian women to provide care for members of their immediate family. The Christian family was hinged on the marriage principle of monogamy. Thus, Christian women missionaries had been trained as teachers, nurses and medical auxiliaries to enable them fulfil their assigned roles. However, before the first set of European Christian women care givers reached the Jos Plateau area, some women had performed significant roles that led to the extension of Christian missionary activities to the area. This category of women missionaries was made up of people who worked remotely from Europe and North America for the benefit of the mission field. Of note, in this category, are Lucy Evangeline Kumm (Guiness), who established the Sudan United Mission (SUM) together with her husband Karl Wilhelm Kumm,[44] and Mrs. Margaret Gowans, who recruited volunteers for the Sudan Interior Mission (SIM).[45] These women were part of the pioneer workers of two of the missionary organisations that proselytized in the Jos Plateau area. These women were instrumental in securing personnel and finance for the missionary enterprise.

Lucy Kumm was an experienced, Irish, missionary who dedicated herself to the Christian evangelisation of the 'Soudan'.[46] The Soudan, as referred to in Christian missionary circles in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, was the area to the south of the Sahara Desert, from the Senegal valley to the Camerounian mountains.[47] Christian missionaries who championed this cause termed their mission "the burden of the Soudan" and their effort to mobilize volunteers for the venture as the "call for the Soudan".[48] Consequently, pioneer Christian missionaries to Northern Nigeria responded to the "call for the Soudan".

Thus, during the closing decades of the 19th century, when British

[43]See "The SUM in Nigeria, The Camerouns, Chad, Sudan and other African Territories" accessed at www.ampltd.co.uk/digital_guides/african_missions_parts_1_to_3 on 22/02/2022
[44]Guiness, Grattan.LucyGuinessKumm, (London: Morgan and Scott, 1907), 19.
[45]Bingham, Rowland. Seven Sevens of Years and A Jubilee: The Story of the Sudan Interior Mission. (Toronto: Evangelical Publishers, 1943).
[46]Guiness, Lucy Guiness Kum, 19.
[47]Sauer, Christof. "Reaching the Unreached Sudan Belt: Guiness, Kumm and the Sudan-Pioneer Mission" (Ph.D Thesis, University of South Africa, 2001), 41-42.
[48]See SUM promotional literature such as "Ethiopia" Shall Soon Stretch forth its Hands", 1909. "Look in the Fields" 1910, "A High Way for our God" 1914 among others. Bingham, Seven Sevens of Years and A Jubilee: The Story of the Sudan Interior Mission. (Torono: Evangelical Publishers, 1943), 9-12.

authorities were preparing to extend their rule into Northern Nigeria,[49] European and North American Christian missionaries mobilized volunteers to halt the southward advance of Islam from the Maghreb into sub-Saharan Africa.[50] Christian missionaries who came to proselytise in Northern Nigeria at the turn of the 20th century were part of this mission. The two sets of Europeans, that is, Christian missionaries and British government officials wanted to use members of the Hausa cultural group, within the Emirates, to advance their objectives. While British authorities wanted to use the Emirate model of governance to administer the vast territories of Northern Nigeria, Christian missionaries wanted to use the Hausa population to form a buffer zone that they hoped would halt the southward advance of Islam from the Maghreb into sub-Saharan Africa and to evangelize its population.[51] The Jos Plateau area lay within the central area of the Soudan. The Jos Plateau is a mountainous area in the central part of Nigeria and its surrounding lowlands include the Benue valley, while the Adamawa highlands and the non-Muslim rural communities of Hausa land and southern Borno share traditional and religious affinities with its multi-cultural peoples.[52] Consequently, some of the pioneer Christian missionaries to Northern Nigeria who responded to the "call for the Soudan" directed their efforts towards the Jos Plateau area and its surrounding lowlands.

Lucy Kumm offered her services to the evangelization of the Soudan in various ways.[53] First, as a co-founder of the SUM, she was a pioneer in her own right. Despite being a co-founder of the SUM, Lucy was a devout spouse and mother. This is so because it was during the formative years of the SUM that she gave birth to her two sons.[54] The first in North Africa, while she and her husband were delineating their proposed mission field, and the second in England, while making preparations to send missionaries to the Soudan. Second, as a recruiter for the mission, Lucy wrote passionately about the need for the Christian evangelisation of the people of the Soudan. She also spoke at Christian gatherings in Britain and North America, where she convinced Christians to volunteer themselves for service in the Soudan. Third, as a fund raiser, Lucy encouraged wealthy British and American Christians to donate money to the

[49]Colonial Reports, Annual No. 260 West African Frontier Force (WAFF) Report for 1897-8, http://www.hathitrust.org, accessed on 07/12/2015.

[50]Muslim reformers had created Emirates in Hausa speaking areas of the southern fringes of the Sahara Desert and in other areas within northern Nigeria. See Boer, Jan. Missions Heralds of Capitalism or Christ?(Ibadan: Day Star Press, 1984), 32-33; Shankar, Shobana. Who Shall Enter Paradise? Christian Origins in Muslim Northern Nigeria 1890-1975.(Athens Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2014),xvii and 3-5.

[51]Boer, Missions Heralds, 32-33; Shankar, Who shall enter Paradise, xvii and 3-5

Kennedy, J. "The Jos Plateau, its People and some Aspects of Forestry", Empire Forestry Review, vol. 28 no. 2, (1949), 152.

[53]Guiness, Lucy Guiness Kumm, 19.

[54]Guiness, Lucy Guiness Kumm, 19 and 20.

cause of the Christian proselytization of the Soudan. Her efforts at recruiting volunteers and raising funds for the SUM were only surpassed by her husband, who travelled extensively to achieve the set goals, while she combined her work with her domestic duties. Fourth, as an editor for the "Light Bearer", the SUM's magazine, she reviewed and published notes on the experiences of missionaries that were on the mission field. Lucy did all these while maintaining her Christian gendered role, of domestic service, as a wife and mother.

Lucy had two sons with Karl and died because of complications from a miscarriage she had, from a third pregnancy. Despite being ill, Lucy ensured that she finished working on a book she was writing on the need for the evangelization of the people of the Congo area of Africa. She was an influential writer who had previously written on the plight of working class women in London's East end and about the need to evangelize in Behar located in the northern part of India.[55] Her writings generated responses from volunteers who established a hostel for working class women in London and a missionary society for evangelization in India. Her last public function was when she spoke at a gathering, in preparation for a women's interdenominational conference, at Northfield, Boston in the United States of America.[56] She spoke on the need for more people to volunteer their services for the evangelization of the Soudan and for wealthy Christians to donate money for the noble cause. Lucy subsequently yielded to a doctor's recommendation for surgery, after she finished writing her last book. A surgery that she did not recuperate from.

Lucy's role within the Evangelical missionary movement fits within the gendered functions that were assigned to middle-class Christian women of the Victorian era. For example, she carried out her role as the conveyor of Evangelical traditions to her children while her husband travelled to and from the mission field. Lucy's work as a writer, speaker and fund raiser for the SUM was complementary to the task her husband performed as the leader of the mission. Her role places her on a similar pedestal to prominent women of the Protestant reformation who carried out matching functions in support of their Protestant husbands.[57]

As mentioned earlier, Mrs. Margaret Gowans was another woman who played an important pioneering role in the Christian missionary enterprise of the Jos Plateau area. Mrs. Gowans was a Scotch Canadian lady who developed a passion for the evangelization of the Soudan from her son, Walter.[58] Walter Gowans had accepted the 'call for the Soudan' and had gone to the mission field. Walter established the SIM for the sole purpose of the Christian evangelization

[55]Guiness, Lucy Guiness Kumm, 9 and 12.
[56]Ibid 29-33.
[57]For details see Stjerna, Women and the,
[58]www.ecwagoodnewsdawaki.online/history-of-ecwa accessed on 10th/07/2022.

of the Soudan. Mrs. Gowans became a recruiter for the SIM. She used her home as the venue for recruiting young people to join her son's missionary effort. Mrs. Gowans invited young people to prayer meetings that she held in her home and convinced them, while having tea, to volunteer to serve with the SIM.

A missionary recruited by Mrs. Gowans was Rowland Bingham. Bingham was among a group of three members who pioneered the SIM's effort in the Soudan. They were Walter Gowans, Rowland Bingham and Thomas Kent. Bingham said that Mrs. Gowans sold the idea of joining the mission, to evangelize the Soudan to him at her home in Toronto. He recounts that "she spread out the vast extent of those thousands of miles south of the Great Sahara as she told of the sixty to ninety million people without a single missionary. She led me from the rising waters of the Niger to the great river Nile. There, (when) I closed that first interview in her home she had placed upon me the burden of the Soudan."[59] Bingham also recalls that when he answered the call for the Soudan he pondered: "The Soudan with a population of about sixty million in an area larger than India, without a single missionary? The whole land divided between Muslims in the Northern half and the 'pagans' in the vast stretch of the territory in the south? In imagination I could then see what afterwards I saw in reality."[60]

Mrs. Gowans role as a recruiter, who invited volunteers to join the missionary cause in the Soudan while she hosted them to tea in her home, can be likened to the mobilization of people that Katrina von Bora Luther did through her hospitality during the reformation. Katrina fed, lectured and drew disciples from hundreds of people while she hosted them in her home or at the 'black cloister' a former monastery that she converted into a boarding school.[61] Although Mrs. Gowans role as advocate for the Soudan targeted a few people, Katrina's advocacy during the reformation involved hundreds of people.

The two women discussed above were Christian missionary visionaries and pioneers in their own right. Their role in promoting the Evangelical Christian brand of Christianity as wives and mothers was largely carried out in either the domestic realm or within duties that were associated with the gendered responsibilities assigned to Christian women right from the period of the reformation. In addition, both women did not go to the Soudan to ensure its evangelization. Despite their absence in the mission field they participated in the Christian missionary enterprise by their contributions in shaping the vision of the missionary effort, recruiting personnel and raising finances for the Christian endeavour in the study

[59]Quoted from Faught, Brad. "Missionaries, Indirect Rule and the Changing Mandate of Mission in Colonial Northern Nigeria: the Case Study of Rowland Victor Bingham and the Sudan Interior Mission" Canadian Society of History, Historical Papers (1994), 124.
[60]Bingham, Rowland. Seven Sevens of Years and A Jubilee: The Story of the Sudan Interior Mission. (Toronto: Evangelical Publishers, 1943), 11 and 12.
[61]Stjerna, Women and the,59–60.

area. The supporting roles of these women also resonates with Katrina's duty as financier of the Luther home and mission even though she did not accompany him on his missionary tours.

Women Social 'Gospellers'

A second category of women who performed important duties in the Christian missionary encounter in the Jos Plateau area were care givers. Caregivers were Christian missionaries who served using the 'social gospel' in the mission field. "The 'social gospel' addressed the physical needs of people while attempting to save their souls".[62] As such, the pioneer Christian women missionaries to the Jos Plateau were as Ilia Delio observes, "social gospellers".[63] Two unmarried South African women were among the missionaries who came to evangelize using the social gospel at the SUM's Lucy Memorial Freed Slaves' Home (LMFSH) in 1909.[64] The Freed Slaves' Home was named in memory of Lucy Kumm who had shown care for underprivileged people during her lifetime. The two South African women missionaries were Miss Milne and Cilliers both certified teachers. The women were educated professionals who were trained in South Africa. Miss Cilliers was also a qualified nurse, while Miss Milne had several years of teaching experience at Lovedale.[65] Lovedale was a multi-institutional establishment of the Scottish Presbyterian Mission located among the Xhosa of South Africa. The two women were part of the South African Dutch Reformed Church's (DRC) volunteers that joined the SUM's work in the Jos Plateau area. They volunteered after two men, Mr. Johan Botha and Vincent Hosking, both of the DRC who had joined the SUM in 1908. Botha and Hosking travelled to England for further missionary training that included auxiliary medical practice and Hausa language studies.

Christian women missionaries were recruited to work in the Jos Plateau area as part of efforts to increase the personnel needed to consolidate and expand the initial efforts of male pioneers. The addition of personnel to the Jos Plateau mission field occurred when there was increased missionary emphasis on the role of the social gospel in the work of Christian missions. Men from four Christian mission organizations had pioneered the evangelization of the Jos Plateau mission field. These men were members of the Sudan United Mission (SUM), who arrived in 1904,[66] priests of the Societe des Missions Africaines (SMA), of the Catholic

[62]Samuel, Vinay."Social Concern and Evangelisation", Transformation. Sage Publications Ltd, vol. 7 no.1, (1990). 1–2.
[63]Delio, Ilia. "The First Catholic Social Gospellers: Women Religious in the 19th Century", United States Catholic Historian 13 no. 3 (1995).
[64]See "The SUM in Nigeria, The Camerouns, Chad, Sudan and other African Territories" accessed at www.ampltd.co.uk/digital_guides/african_missions_parts_1_to_3 on 22/02/2022
[65]Second Annual Report of the Sudan United Mission South Africa Branch 1909.

Church, who came in 1907[67] and members of the Cambridge University Mission Party (CUMP), an affiliate of the Church Missionary Society (CMS), who also entered the mission field in 1907.[68] Men of the Sudan Interior Mission (SIM) came to the Jos Plateau in 1911, however, the mission had both male and female workers around the confluence of Rivers Niger and Benue since 1903.[69]

Dr. Wilhelm Karl Kumm led a group of four (4) pioneers of the Sudan United Mission's (SUM) expedition, to Wase in the Lowland area of the Jos Plateau in 1904.[70] Kumm began to ask for reinforcement from the home board of the mission in the same year. Additional personnel of the SUM arrived at the mission field between 1905 and 1906.[71] John Lowry Maxwell, who was the first recruit of the SUM and a pioneer recalls: "Our second party of helpers from the United Kingdom were Messrs. Frank Aust, Horatio Ghey and John Young; all of whom were engineers."[72] He notes that when the SUM decided to extend their work to the Jukun cultural group in 1906, himself and Young were deployed to do so. In 1906 also, the SUM received more missionaries from the United States of America. These were Reverend Joseph Baker, an African American of Caribbean origin, Reverend C. Guinter, Mr. W. Hoover and Dr. Arthur Emilyn.[73] Reverend W. Broadbent arrived in 1907. The entry of these additional missionaries to the Jos Plateau area marked an increase in the capacity of the SUM to expand its work beyond the Jos Plateau. More workers came in 1908, with the number further increasing from 1909 onwards. All these newcomers enabled the SUM to expand its operations to Wukari, Dampar, Donga and Ibi in the Jukun area, Rumasha (Lucy Memorial Freed Slaves' Home, LMFSH) in the Nassarawa area, Langtang, Bukuru, Du, Foron, Ngell in the Jos Plateau area and M'bula in the Adamawa area.[74]

As mentioned earlier, Christian women missionaries were recruited as part of efforts to increase the personnel needed to consolidate and expand on the initial efforts of male pioneers. The addition of personnel to the Jos plateau mission field also occurred when there was increased missionary emphasis on

[66]Maxwell, Lowry. Half a Century of Grace: A Jubilee History of the Sudan United Mission. (London: Sudan United Mission, 1953), 36 and 38.
[67]Walsh, Jarlath, The Growth of the Catholic Church in the Diocese of Jos 1907–1978: The Contribution of the Society of African Missions to its Development (Iperu–Remo: Ambassador Publications, 1993), 25–26.
[68]Kwashi,Benjamin. "The Church of Nigeria: Anglican Communion," in Markham, Ian. (ed) The Wiley–Blackwell Companion to the Anglican Communion, (West Sussex: John Wiley & Sons, 2013), 170.
[69]Blench,Roger. Out of the Cactus from Darkness to Light: An Introduction to the History of ECWA/ SIM in Rigweland, (Jos: ECWA Miango DCC, 2012), 40, and 45–55.
[70]"Is it Time"? 42, 50–51.
[71]Ibid 42, 50–51.
[72]Maxwell, Half a Century, 59, 60 and 61.
[73]"Look on, 24–25. "Is it Time"? 45, 52; Maxwell, Half a Century, 64, 96, 97, 99, 101, 104 and 109.
[74]Roome, "A Highway for, 14.

the role of the social gospel in the work of Christian missions.[75] The SUM had established the LMFSH. With the establishment of the LMFSH the mission needed the expertise of women as caregivers to take care of inmates. As such, the SUM led the way in the recruitment of women personnel. This was followed by the SIM and the CUMP. The Catholic mission brought up the rear in this matter since its Nuns, who had worked in the southern area of British Nigeria since the late 19th century only became active in the study area in 1943.[76] The Nuns who established a maternity clinic in Jos were members of the Irish congregation of Our Lady of Apostles (O. L. A). The congregation later established many primary and secondary schools in the study area during the post-colonial period.

The work of the SUM at the freed slaves' home was important in attracting women to the mission field. As such, the Miss Cilliers and Milne worked with other women in the home. These, at inception, included four Britons, Miss Elsie Rimmer the supervisor, Miss Overy, the assistant supervisor and Mary McNaught as well as Clara Haigh.[77] African women who had worked in similar state owned facilities assisted these Christian missionary women.[78] The expatriate Christian women missionaries on the one hand, taught female inmates European gendered values, collectively known as domestic science. Subjects that made up the domestic science curriculum include Christian home keeping, modern child care, sewing and needle work.[79] Alternatively, male missionaries taught carpentry, modern farming and gardening methods to male inmates.[80] This type of gender-specific educational curricula is similar to those that have been discussed earlier in the examples drawn from Mozambique, South Africa and Ghana. Having a gender specific curriculum, with an emphasis on women's domestic enculturation, resonates with both Victorian standards for women and practices that emanated from spouses of the leaders of the Protestant Reformation of the 16th century.

Some of the Christian women missionaries at the LMFSH gave special attention to children with 'adoption' status.[81] Children under this category received funds for their care and training from benefactors who were abroad. Miss Milne had in her charge some of these children. Fatty and Amina were two of such young girls who spent a lot of time with her on her veranda, observing closely how she sewed clothes and took care of her house. Miss Milne eventually got married to Dr. Alexander, a missionary with the SUM. She therefore practiced

[75]Samuel,"Social Concern and, 1-2.
[76]For details see http://olahospitaljos-ng.org retrieved on 04/04/2022.
[77]"The SUM in,
[78]Olusanya, G. "The Freed Slaves' Home – An Unknown Aspect of Northern Nigerian Social History" Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria, vol. 3 no. 3 (1966), 526.
[79]Maxwell, Half a Century, 77-80, 81-82.
[80]Olusanya, "The Freed Slaves', 529.
[81]"The Light Bearer" 6, (1910), 31 and 93.

devout domesticity and mentorship in addition to her teaching services in the LMFSH after she got married. This type of mentorship is considered similar to those mentioned by Kathleen Sheldon and Deborah Gaitskell.

Both male and female inmates of the LMFSH were given Christian religious education and were expected to disseminate the ideals that were instilled in them after they left the home. As such, some inmates remained with the SUM by becoming local agents of the mission even after they left the home.[82] Indigenous men, who remained with the mission, received further training at the Christian Institute at Ibi, while the women who received suitors among the male converts became Christian wives and mothers.[83] Tabitha is an example of indigenous agents who emerged through the extension of the social gospel at the LMFSH.[84] Mama Tabitha, as she was known, imbibed both Christianity and the art of "domestic science" from the missionaries during her time at the home. The art of "domestic science" as mentioned earlier, consisted of gendered domestic practices that were hinged on the Christian marriage principle of monogamy. It was the aim of the missionaries that the children they catered for would eventually raise Christian families. Former women inmates of the home were considered successful when they got married. Marriage provided them with a platform to put what they had learnt from the missionaries into practice. As earlier mentioned, the practice of training women to become enculturators of faith within their immediate family, religious community and the larger society began with the families of the leaders of the Protestant Reformation and became instituted within the Evangelical movement of the Victorian era. The Victorians extended this practice to sub-Saharan Africa in general and the Jos plateau area in particular.

Tabitha was considered a successful inmate; by Christian missionary standards since she got married.[85] However, her husband died and she became a widow with a child. After the death of her husband, Tabitha reunited with her missionary benefactors when she moved to the Vom Christian Hospital with her daughter in 1936. Mama Tabitha trained as a nurse and later as a midwife. She received the first midwifery certificate that was issued at the Vom Christian Hospital by the Nigerian Midwifery Board.[86] Clearly Tabitha surpassed her initial training in domestic science and vocation as a Christian wife and mother to become a Western trained mid-wife. Her example is similar to those given earlier on the indigenous Christian women converts in Mozambique and Ghana who went beyond the social status envisaged by the gendered training contained in the

[82]Gutip, Nanwul. Church of Christ in Nigeria (COCIN) Birth and Growth (Jos: Jos University Press, 1998), 27-33.
[83]Olusanya, "The Freed Slaves', 536.
[84]Gutip,Church of Christ,75.
[85]Ibid. 32 and 75.
[86]Moles, M. "A place called Vom". Quoted inGutip, Church of, 32 and 75.

curriculum of their Christian missionary training. Tabitha's initial training also resonates with the training that the CMS provided to the young marginalized Igbo men and women who were expected to become local Christian leaders within indigenous communities.

Women's role as care givers in the Christian missionary encounter of the Jos Plateau area was not restricted to the LMFSH. This is attested to by the number of Christian mission owned dispensaries, clinics and hospitals where Christian missionary women worked.[87] The provision of medical services to local communities not only gave European women Christian missionaries access to the inhabitants of villages around their stations but also provided them with the opportunity to interact closely with the people they tended to. An example is given of Effie Varley, a missionary nurse of the SIM's dispensary at Miango.[88] Effie attended to Uho, a young girl, who contracted polio as a child in the late 1940s.[89] First, Uho's mother took her to the SIM dispensary at Miango, where Effie referred her to the SUM hospital at Vom. However, the severity of Uho's ailment had advanced by the time she arrived at the health facility in Vom. The doctors could offer very little to ameliorate her condition. Since little could be done for her, Uho was discharged from hospital with deformed limbs. Her mother became so upset about having a crippled daughter that she turned her into an outcast. Out of frustration, Uho's mother accepted a bride price of one pound, offered by a Hausa man, for her daughter's hand in marriage. Marriage to a Hausa Muslim would have ended Uho's participation in Christianity. However, the Christian women missionaries at Miango who had taken an interest in her rushed to her rescue. Women missionaries at Miango include Miss Dorothy Howe, Miss Effie Varley and Miss Daisy Law.[90] Others were Mrs. Viola Ogilvie, who came with her husband, Harold, and Mrs. Appel, who came along with her husband, Reverend William Appel.[91] The missionaries refunded Uho's bride price and adopted her. From that time onwards, Uho stayed under the custody of the missionaries of the SIM. The women missionaries sponsored her elementary education, after which she was sent to a craft school where she learnt how to sew clothes.

Sewing machines were quite rare in rural areas during the colonial period in Nigeria. However, the women missionaries at Miango procured one for Uho. With her skills and sewing machine, Uho could fend for herself and take care of

[87]Blench, Out of the Cactus, 210–221. Turaki, Yusufu, An Introduction to the History of SIM/ ECWA in Nigeria 1893–1993.(Jos: Challenge. 1993), 174 and 235–236. Tett, Mollie. The Sudan United Mission: The Road to Freedom, (Kent: Sudan United Mission, 1968). 74–94. www.ecwaevangel.org retrieved on 23/3/2015. http://www.olasistersnigeria.org retrieved on 13/07/2017; http://olahospitaljos–ng.org retrieved on 13/07/2017.
[88]Blench, Out of the Cactus, 59–62.
[89]Ibid,132–134.
[90]Blench, Out of the Cactus, 109–110.
[91]Ibid, 62.

her aging parents, who had initially lost hope in her when she was a child. More importantly, Uho turned her house into an informal school. She provided religious instructions using Bible stories to children, who were always welcomed in her house, and taught songs that she had composed to local Christian women who visited her regularly. The relationship between Effie Varley and Uho is an example of the bond that women missionaries on the Jos Plateau developed with their protégées. Such bonds resonate with the examples that Elizabeth Prevost drew from the Christian missionary encounter in Madagascar, Uganda and South Africa.

Social outcasts, like Uho, were people on the fringe of society. They were catered for by women missionaries and converted to Christianity. This category of people was drawn to the Christian enterprise by missionaries who gave them a sense of hope and a new lease of life through the social gospel. In a similar instance Mrs. Suffill, of the SUM, took care of orphaned children at the Foron station with her husband Thomas.[92] Between 1926 and 1950 when they retired, the Suffils had taken care of about a hundred orphaned children.[9] These were children whose mothers had died during child birth. According to local tradition, the children were thought to possess evil spirits and caused their mothers' death. Such children were buried with their dead mothers.[94] The Suffils appealed to people in surrounding communities to give them such children to raise. Taking care of orphaned or abandoned children was a prominent feature of the Christian missionary endeavour in colonial Nigeria.[95] Some orphans saved by the Suffills, were themselves trained to offer social services. After converting to Christianity, some of the former outcasts later participated in evangelization using the social medium by which they had been drawn into the Christian fold. For example, John Nash, an orphan catered for at the Foron mission station became a hospital evangelist at the SUM's Vom Christian hospital.[96]

Women as Station Heads, School Teachers and Evangelists

Women's agency in the religious encounter in the Jos plateau area, during the colonial era, was not restricted to their roles as care givers in places such as the LMFSH, and the adoption of abandoned children, as done by the Suffils at Foron

[92]"The Light Bearer" January – February, (1960), 6.
[93]Bot, Bulus."Da-Lo Da Tomas Bot: Shigar Mission AKasar Berom". Undated manuscript. Quoted from, Musa, Gaiya. Rengshwat, Jordan. "Scottish Missionaries in Central Nigeria" in Afeosemine Adogame and Andrew Lawrence, (eds.) Africa in Scotland, Scotland in Africa: Historical Legacies and Contemporary Hybridities. Leiden: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2014, 271.
[94]Maxwell, Half a Century, 271.
[95]For details see Oyemade, Adefunke. "The Care of Motherless Babies: A Century of Voluntary Work in Nigeria', Historical Society of Nigeria, vol. 7, no. 2 (1974), 369-371.
[96]Bot, "Da-Lo Da", 271.

and Miss Varley at Miango. This is so because Christian women, in the study area, performed diverse functions in both formal and informal spaces. As such, Christian women missionaries in the Jos Plateau area were appointed as station heads and heads of educational institutions. They were also itinerant preachers, teachers and mentors to indigenous Christian converts. For example Miss E. M. R. Webster was appointed as head of the CUMP's Panyam station in 1919.[97] Webster replaced Mrs. Hayward and her husband the Reverend Edward Hayward, who served in Panyam between 1911 and 1919.[98] In 1919 the couple had gone on leave and were unable to return to the mission field due to ill health.[99] During their stay at Panyam, the Reverend and Mrs. Hayward employed Vrenkat, a young Christian convert, as their "house boy". House boy was the term Europeans in the colonies used for male house servants. The Haywards gave Vrenkat extra Bible and literacy lessons when he was in their employment. After Miss Webster substituted the Haywards, she recalled warm memories of her first encounter with Vrenkat. She said that when she first arrived at the "mission compound" in Panyam, she was met by Vrenkat, who informed her excitedly that "he was her boy".[100]

Vrenkat attended classes for religious instruction along with his father.[101] When he attended the classes for religious instruction, the missionaries noticed his ability to quickly grasp what he was taught, least of which were Bible stories, arithmetic, reading and writing. Therefore, when the missionaries established a formal school in Panyam, Vrenkat was among their first pupils. Miss Webster recalled: "Quite soon he could help teach others and I gave him individual lessons at other times as there was no one else anywhere near his ability. He was a dedicated soul even at an early age".[102] Vrenkat eventually attended the first Pastor's training course at Gindiri that was taught by both women and male Christian missionaries. He was among the first set of indigenous clergy of the SUM. The mentorship provided by Miss Webster to Vrenkat enabled him to rise to the leadership strata of the Christian missionary establishment in the Jos Plateau area.

Miss Webster was also an itinerant preacher who went out to villages to

[97]Undated copy of the diary of the Reverend David Vrenkat Lot.
[98]Interview with Reverend David Vrenkat Lot, 90 years, Panyam, Plateau State, Nigeria, on, 21st March, 1991. Quoted from Lere, Pauline. Reverend David Obadiah Vrenkat Lot: His Life and Church Development on the Plateau. (Jos: Jos University Press, 1996), 58 – 59.
[99]Goshit, Zakariya. et al History of the Church of Christ in Nations 1904–2013.(Jos: COCIN Headquarters, 2013), 65.
[100]Tett, The Sudan United, 102.
[101]Gutip, Church of Christ,102.
[102]Webster, E. "Notes on early days at Panyam". COCIN Records, Jos. 1977. Quoted from Gutip, Church of Christ,102.

preach the Christian gospel to adherents of local tradition.[103] This act might, on the surface, not seem adventurous, but placed within the perspective of resistance to British rule by local dissidents who attacked armed patrols of colonial officials, her actions were indeed bold.[104] British officials even discouraged both European men and women from moving freely in places that were not fully under the control of the colonial government to prevent any harm from coming to them. However, Miss Webster's actions were not alien to women missionaries in Nigeria. Her actions were similar to those of Edith Warner who, as principal of Saint Monica's girls' school, undertook preaching tours that took her over a thousand miles from her station that was close to Onitsha.[105] Also Webster's preaching tours draws similarities with another Anglican missionary, Miss Miller, who was an adventurous independent itinerant preacher among Hausa rural communities.[106]

Miss Webster was a disciplinarian to her congregation at Panyam. This trait was observed when a particular incident occurred at her station. The incident concerned the consumption of alcohol by some of her congregants. The consumption of alcohol was part of rituals guiding economic activities as well as social relations in most traditional communities in sub Saharan Africa in general and the Jos Plateau area in particular.[107] The three Evangelical Christian missions that proselytized in the Jos Plateau area, however, preached abstinence from alcohol consumption. Some indigenous Christian converts of the CUMP, however, felt that they could not do without alcohol and therefore did not observe the mission's policy on the non-intake of alcohol.

Addiction to alcohol by some of the members of Miss Webster's congregation was such that they stopped over for a drink on their way to church on Sundays.[108] The stop over encouraged late coming to congregational worship. Miss Webster abhorred this practiced and she discouraged the habit among her congregation by speaking to them. However, her determination to discourage the practice among members of her congregation by speaking to them did not yield any result. She even went as far as inviting her protégée, David Vrenkat Lot, who was undergoing Pastor's training at Gindiri, to discourage the habit among

[103]Bukar, Dan'azumi et al, "A History of the Panyam Provincial Church Council (COCIN) 1907-2014", (A Pamphlet of PCC Panyam), 2014. 110

[104]An example of such dissent to British rule is recorded in McCNetting, Robert. "Clashing Cultures, Clashing Symbols: Histories and Meanings of the Latok War" Ethnohistory 3: 4 (1987): 356 and 363-370.

[105]Daggers, "Transforming Christian Womanhood, 96.

[106]Shankar, Who Shall Enter, 57-67.

[107]See Turaki, Yusufu. Tribal Gods of Africa,(Nairobi: Ethics, Peace and Justice Commission of the Association of Evangelicals in Africa, 1997), 52; Abdullahi, Samuel. "A History of Wase Emirate from 1817-2006". (Masters Dissertation, University of Jos), 2011. 55-70 for more on some of the principles that guided relations within some traditional communities in the Jos Plateau area.

[108]Bukar, "A History of, 69 and 70.

local Christian converts. Even so the erring members did not yield to David Lot's admonition. When David Lot's admonition did not also deter the erring members, Webster decided to lock the late comers, who stopped over for a drink before Sunday service, out of Church and subsequently suspended about a hundred of them from the congregation.[109] A solution to the problem was however found in a comedy twist of some sorts. The non-abstaining members brewed a 'less intoxicating' variant of the local beverage, that enticed them, and named it 'war Nakam' meaning Nakam's brew.[110] Miss Webster and the other clergy were more tolerant of the new product as it was sweeter and considered less addictive to the traditional variant. Thus, 'war Nakam' provided an unofficial solution to the alcohol addiction of members of the Panyam mission station. Although Miss Webster was a stern station head, her memories remained dear to members of the local Christian community who named a school, Nakam Memorial Secondary School, in her honour long after her retirement from the Jos Plateau mission field in 1954.[111]

Local people have warm memories of European Christian women who worked in the Jos Plateau area during the colonial period in Nigeria. Examples from the Panyam mission station show that European Christian women were remembered fondly by the indigenous people of the area. The sense of the warm memories of the women missionaries is drawn from the names that local people gave them. For example, local people in the Panyam area referred to Miss Webster as "Nakam", a name that was the feminine version of teacher in the local dialect, while Miss Christine H. Cheal was referred to as "Nakris", a local derivative of her first name Christine. Miss Compton Burnett was called "Matyen" a name derived from her medical work.[112]

European Christian women missionaries taught in Higher Institutions in the colonial Jos Plateau area. At the inception of the SUM's multi-institutional training centre at Gindiri, three of the four teachers were women.[113] They were Miss Elsie Rimmer, who had begun work at the LMFSH. She moved to the Christian Institute at Ibi when it was merged with the home and was eventually posted to the multi-institutional compound of the SUM at Gindiri when Clergy training commenced there. Others include Miss Josephine Barthrop, who was a nurse and Mrs. Bristow, who was appointed together with her husband Mr. W. M. Bristow. There were two indigenous assistants, Mallam Shetur and Iliya Allah Kyauta, who taught the remedial language class. Three sets of courses were taught when

[109]Ibid, 69 and 70.
[110]Nakam was the name that people in the Panyam area gave to Miss Webster. The name means teacher.
[111]Ibid. 108.
[112]Maisaje, Sabina. "Anglicanism on the Jos Plateau, 1906-1970". (Masters Dissertation, University of Jos, 1997), 42.
[113]Goshit, History of the, 139

the school began. Mr. Bristow taught the classes for the Bible School. Miss Rimmer took the teacher training course while Mrs. Bristow and Miss Barthrop gave gender-based lessons to the wives of the trainees on the compound.[114] Miss Pixie Moles also joined the SUM as a teacher at Gindiri.[115] She adopted Ma'u, a young Fulani girl. Ma'u, who was Pixie's protégée, eventually became an administrator of the Girls' School on the Gindiri mission compound, after her elementary, secondary and University education. European Christian women who worked mostly as teachers and nurses developed close relationships with the young converts that they mentored. The relationships were also responsible for the emergence of dedicated local agents who became influential figures in the development of Christianity in the Jos Plateau area.

European Christians mentored most of the mentees of the Christian missionary enterprise in the Jos Plateau area. However, while most Christian missionary protégées were mentored by European missionaries Vou Gyang, an exceptional local Christian missionary agent, was mentored by her mother who had converted to Christianity under the SUM.[116] Vou's mother, Tiri, had converted to Christianity when it was first conveyed to Foron, their village. Vou was raised according to Christian norms by her mother. However, when she had attained the age of consent, she could not find a Christian man to marry. Although Vou's mother had converted to Christianity, Gyang, her father, remained an adherent of tradition. Being an adherent of tradition, he accepted a traditional marriage proposal for his daughter. Vou held firm to her Christian faith and refused to go through with the traditional marriage because she felt that it would jeopardize her membership of the Christian community. Since the SUM had taught absolute abstinence from alcohol as a mark of true conversion to Christianity, Vou used the policy in her defence. Vou's response to her father, when he urged her to marry a non-Christian young man was: "I have never known the taste of beer, and how would I now go into a compound where I would have to make it for all who live there?"[117] Apparently Vou was able to use her Christian faith to contest the traditional proposal for marriage. There is, nevertheless, a possibility that her mother helped her to negotiate her way through the situation since she was just an adolescent.

The solution to Vou's problem was found in Bot Dung, a Christian widower, who was much older than her.[118] Bot's proposal was received when Vou was only ten years old, and even though she could not be taken to his house till she was much older. Vou's friends teased her about the age of her suitor. However,

[114]Ibid, 139

[115]Interview, Rachael Asama'u Mannok nee Gawata, retired school administrator, 65 years at Gindiri, Plateau State, Nigeria, 21stJanuary, 2016.

[116]http://www.dacb.org/stories/nigeria/vou_gyang.html accessed on 29/01/2017.

[117]Marriage according to Berom tradition entailed brewing local alcoholic beverages for the ceremony and subsequently for family members on other occasions.

in 1924, when Vou turned sixteen, she got married to Bot, her Christian suitor.[119] Being among the first female Christian converts among the Berom, Vou and her mother were not only able to subvert patriarchal authority, by choosing their religious affiliation, but Vou went a step further to select her spouse.

In 1927, Vou and Bot volunteered to become Evangelists among the Aten, a small cultural group, located on the north western escarpment of the Jos Plateau. By the following year, the couple had made converts among the Aten. Their converts include Song, a 12–year–old boy. Song later became the first ordained clergy among the Aten.[120] Vou's role in the Christian proselytization of the Aten made her the first female evangelist among the Berom and the Aten cultural groups in the Jos Plateau area. Vou's role, as an evangelist, contrasts with the fact that most of the other indigenous evangelists were men who were accompanied to their stations by their wives.[121] A role of the first set of the SUM's local agents, not only attests to this fact but, shows how Vou reversed the gendered role when she agreed to become an evangelist and was accompanied to her station by her husband.

CONCLUSION

The duties that women were meant to perform during the European Christian missionary encounter in the Jos Plateau area were fashioned out by Evangelical Christians during the Victorian era. The religious, cultural and social norms of Evangelical Christians of the Victoria era were also drawn from gendered practices of the period of the Protestant Reformation in Europe. As such, the training given to women within the missionary enterprise was fashioned towards making them imbibe and convey attributes that made them good Christian wives and mothers. However, the actual functions that these women performed were both varied and dynamic. As such, Christian women deployed themselves within the patriarchal imperial, Christian and local systems in many ways that were not restricted by their perceived gender roles. Thus, women participants of the Christian missionary encounter in the Jos Plateau area were in addition to their gendered roles of home keeping, pioneers, visionaries and authors. They were also editors, teachers and mentors. Christian women participants were also nurses, caregivers and station heads; itinerant preachers and evangelists. To this end, this study lends more support to the perspective that women, within the Christian missionary enterprise of the late colonial period in Africa, performed functions

[118]Ibid, vou_gyang.html.
[119]The couple were baptised in 1926 at the SUM Church in Foron and volunteered as the first evangelists to the Aten who were a less populated cultural group compared with the Berom.
[120]Ibid, vou_gyang.html.
[121]See "The News Letter of the Sudan United Mission", April, 1923. Issued with the "The Light Bearer" of March and April ,1923 and "The Light Bearer" July and August, 1923; for details.

that were beyond the gender–specific roles espoused by the Christian missionary movement of the era.

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