

## Visions of Friendship and Equality: Representations of African Women in Missionary Propaganda in Interwar Britain

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[Aller au sommaire du numéro](#)

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### Résumé de l'article

Pendant l'entre-deux-guerres, des femmes évangélistes du Royaume-Uni ont commencé à défendre l'idée que les femmes d'Afrique étaient dignes d'amitié et d'égalité. Ces images de l'Africaine différaient non seulement de celles que nous avait léguées l'époque victorienne, mais aussi de celles que les auteurs laïques de l'entre-deux-guerres avaient répandues. Le présent article soutient que les deux missionnaires-écrivaines les plus prolifiques de l'entre-deux-guerres, Mabel Shaw et Cicely Hooper, ont présenté ces images positives tout en oeuvrant comme éducatrices auprès des Africaines. En tant que féministes, ces évangélistes appréciaient les Africaines et à titre d'adeptes de la théologie de l'accomplissement, vulgarisée dans le discours oecuménique des missionnaires, elles admiraient des traits de la culture africaine qu'elles estimaient divinement inspirés. Vers la fin des années 1920, ces femmes missionnaires ont propagé encore plus d'images favorables des Africaines à un moment où elles craignaient que le matérialisme occidental ne détruise la vie de famille africaine. Ainsi, le présent article illustre la position intermédiaire des femmes missionnaires qui étaient liées aux auditoires du Royaume-Uni, d'Afrique et du mouvement oecuménique grandissant. Il attire également l'attention sur l'importance de l'entre-deux-guerres, une période clé pendant laquelle les idées sur la race, le sexe et la culture étaient en pleine évolution. Bien que ces femmes missionnaires n'aient pas supprimé la distance qui les sépare des Africaines, elles ont invité les Britanniques à s'unir à elles pour établir des relations d'amitié interculturelles et interraciales.

# Visions of Friendship and Equality: Representations of African Women in Missionary Propaganda in Interwar Britain\*

REBECCA C. HUGHES

## *Abstract*

*During the interwar years, British evangelical women began to promote African women as worthy of friendship and equality. These representations differed not only from Victorian images of African women, but also those popularized by interwar secular writers. This article argues that the two most prolific female missionary writers of the interwar period, Mabel Shaw and Cicely Hooper, promoted these positive images while working as educators of African women. As feminists, these evangelicals valued African women, and as adherents of fulfillment theology popularized in ecumenical missionary discourse, they admired features of African culture that they believed were divinely inspired. By the late 1920s, these missionary women generated even more favourable images of African women, as they feared Western materialism was disintegrating African home life. Thus, this article demonstrates the liminal position of missionary women tethered to audiences in Britain, Africa, and the growing ecumenical Church. It also points to the importance of the interwar years as a key period in which ideas about race, gender, and culture were being reworked. While these missionary women did not erase boundaries of difference between themselves and African women, they invited Britons to join them in building cross-cultural, cross-racial friendships.*

## *Résumé*

*Pendant l'entre-deux-guerres, des femmes évangélistes du Royaume-Uni ont commencé à défendre l'idée que les femmes d'Afrique étaient dignes d'amitié et d'égalité. Ces images de l'Africaine différaient non seulement*

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In her 1927 book, *If I Lived in Africa*, evangelical missionary Cicely Hooper recounted the story of an African mother who drove a hyena out of her house, saving her two young boys from its greedy jaws. Sketched in an accompanying image, the graceful woman athletically wielded a whip over the intruder. Hooper praised the mother for her courage and informed her British audiences to expect even finer acts when Africans learned of Christ.<sup>1</sup> What is striking about this representation of an African woman is that she was commended as a valiant mother, and it is even more unusual since she was not a Christian.<sup>2</sup> While she was pictured as somewhat exotic with a whip and a shoulder-less dress, this portrayal distinctly differs from earlier stock images of non-Christian African women as fearful, depraved, and unhappy. Hooper may have distinguished between Christian and non-Christian women in terms of relative bravery, but African women were now respected in their own right.

Evangelical missionary women generated far more positive views of African women during the 1920s and 1930s as evangelical missionaries' conceptions of race and culture shifted to erode the starker hierarchical differences that existed in the late Victorian and Edwardian years. African women were allowed complexity and were presented as more human in this literature than the "less fortunate sisters" colonized women had been portrayed; they were also more human than the cardboard models of difference converted women were claimed to be. More remarkably, this literature broke from the uniformly unfavourable depictions of African women that characterized British writings and attitudes. As Carole Summers asserts, many settlers and colonial officials in Southern Rhodesia "understood African women not as people, but as dangers."<sup>3</sup> Lynn Thomas notes that in Kenya, colonial officials thought that African women "exerted a 'considerable,' if 'frequently baneful' influence within their communities."<sup>4</sup> The view that African women were problematic, or inconsequential at best, also characterized the work of secular female activists working on Africa.<sup>5</sup> In her comprehensive work on Britain and Africa, historian Barbara Bush argues that African women were excluded from the "friendship" that progressive imperialists extended to African men, and that African women remained "as silent icons of the primitive."<sup>6</sup> Even into the late interwar period, British literature on Africa propagated these same ideas. Margery Perham ignored African women in her prosopography, *Ten Africans*, and other authors, such as George Bernard Shaw, portrayed African women as backward and highly sexualized.<sup>7</sup> Thus, this evangelical missionary literature departed from the standard telling and moved toward including African women in the imperial conversation. This shift demonstrates the importance of the interwar years as a critical period in which racial and gender hierarchies were being reworked and promoted in evangelical missionary literature.

This article argues that the two most influential missionary women writers of the interwar period, Mabel Shaw (1888-1973) and Cicely Hooper (1891-1973), intentionally blurred the racial boundaries between themselves and colonized women.<sup>8</sup> Although the distinctions between the two groups were not dissolved by any means, the work of these missionary women increasingly shaded the

divide during the 1920s and 1930s as they sought to reinforce and expand the roles of women in society and the Church, both in Africa and in Britain. Shaw and Hooper promoted a modern Christian Africa that valued stable, companionate marriages and supported women making public and private contributions to society. In order to attain this goal, they believed that African women were key players, and eventually should be recognized as partners, in this endeavour. To these missionary women, Africans needed to progress, but they could only do so by adopting and blending the finest features of both indigenous and British cultures.<sup>9</sup> (Both authors distinguished different African cultures from each other, but much of the literature homogenized Africa.) In other words, these missionaries gradated both African and British cultures with the intent of cultivating the most desirable features of each and then merging them into the most “Christian” culture possible. Their attitudes demonstrated a growing respect for African cultures, arguably because they were increasingly alarmed at the infiltration of negative influences from the West that were allegedly undermining the stability of African culture. In their eyes, African women were essential coworkers in helping Christian missions stanch the corrosive impact of Western materialism and secularism. Both Shaw and Hooper asserted that African women were less prone to succumbing to these perceived ills than were African men, and that African women were unduly suffering from the consequences of materialism with its concomitant phenomenon, urbanization. Thus, this “turn” in missionary literature was highly gendered, and it demonstrated a growing respect for traditional African rural cultures and for the constructive roles African women could play in building a Christian society.

Much of the scholarship on missionary literature from the Victorian period through World War I contends that the discourse was markedly racialized and clearly distinguished “civilized” missionaries from colonized peoples.<sup>10</sup> According to these studies, missionary women created crude binaries to generate emotional support for missions and to secure their position as professionals in the late Victorian era.<sup>11</sup> While many of the conclusions in these works are convincing, the focus relies on a too-simplistic understanding of religion as a divisive agent. Scholars such as Anna Johnston and

Jeffrey Cox have argued persuasively for a more nuanced understanding of the role religion could play in colonialism. They assert that missionaries viewed others through a “double vision” that accounted for their Christian belief in the spiritual equality of all humans while maintaining the superiority of British culture.<sup>12</sup> This essay builds on this more nuanced view of religion, but it argues that during the interwar years, religion served as a bridge between missionary women and colonized women, acting to subvert in particular instances the racial and cultural boundaries that had been erected in prior decades. As both Shaw and Hooper adopted versions of fulfillment theology with its tenet that “the kingdom of God was embryonically present in all humanity, but completely expressed only in the life and teachings of the perfect Son, Jesus,” they gained appreciation for aspects of African culture.<sup>13</sup> This theology had emerged out of liberal evangelical encounters with Hinduism in the late nineteenth century, and it was popularized after the ecumenical World Missionary Conference held in Edinburgh, 1910. Shaw and Hooper were among the first to apply fulfillment theology in regards to their work with African women.<sup>14</sup> Despite the more positive view of African culture espoused in fulfillment theology, both women, as evangelicals, would have been comfortable with the extinction of African religion with its submergence into Christianity. However, Shaw would have particularly expected that African Christianity would be clearly indigenized with local customs; she esteemed African culture more broadly than did Hooper.

Historians of twentieth-century Africa indicate that religion did indeed foster closer relationships between missionary women and African women. For example, Elizabeth Prevost argues that outside the metropole, one can see the building of cross-cultural solidarity through the bonds of shared Christianity between African and British women in the Mothers’ Union during the early twentieth century.<sup>15</sup> She maintains that Anglican missionaries shifted their focus from one on imperial missions to a globalized sisterhood based on mutual relationships, albeit ones not entirely free from hierarchy. Aili Mari Tripp asserts that by the 1950s missionary women in Uganda saw themselves as “participants in a transition to African rule” rather than as colonialists.<sup>16</sup> Tripp’s work builds on Deborah

Gaitskell's assertion that Christianity provided means for unity among women in South Africa between 1907 and 1960.<sup>17</sup> Therefore, this essay reveals how some of these changes on the ground in Africa were reported and tailored for British audiences, and it illuminates the ways that the interwar years were critical in the move toward postwar and postcolonial relationships.

This paper also directly points to the liminal position of missionaries as individuals who had to balance the requirement that their stories would elicit funds from British supporters with the need that they remain attentive to their goals in the field.<sup>18</sup> Much of the scholarship on missionary propaganda has privileged the metropole and occluded the ways in which missionaries were in fact tethered between two worlds. Certainly missionary literature was designed for home consumption and corresponded with metropolitan ideas of gender and mission work, but evolving conditions in the mission field also shaped missionary propaganda. Shaw and Hooper were deeply concerned that Western materialism was unraveling the fabric of African society by tearing apart families as men moved to urban centres for work. Their writings also demonstrate the increasing clout of non-Western Christians in the global ecumenical Church and their desire for respect from British missionaries. While power differentials were not erased in the global Church, missionaries had little choice but to acknowledge the critiques that non-Western Christians voiced if they were to be seen as genuine Christians. Missionary women grappled with how to empower African women and how to foster spiritual and emotional friendships, not merely relationships, between British and African women.

The literature that these missionary women created provides additional insight into the nature and goals of interwar missions. Some historians have argued that mission work broadly turned in a more secular direction towards the soft evangelism of "good work" rather than conversion during the early twentieth century.<sup>19</sup> Certainly the building of educational and medical institutions abounded in the interwar era as mission organizations enthusiastically adopted schemes for material aid to colonized peoples. However, the weight of the claim that evangelical missions were less devoted to conversion is based on evidence from India and Indian

resistance to evangelism. Africa, however, was a very different place. Mission work there maintained evangelistic fervour in the early twentieth century, and mission education was directed at converting Africans.<sup>20</sup> Similarly, some historians have argued that by the early twentieth century British missionary women regarded Indian women on more secular terms as sharing bonds of common sisterhood, rather than being viewed as non-Christian women in need of Christianity.<sup>21</sup> Yet, when analyzing missionary propaganda on Africa, it is apparent that the evangelical missionary women constructing this discourse eschewed secularism, and instead categorized African women as within the scope of the sovereignty of God. In their eyes, all African women (except the most perverse) could be located on a Christian continuum that ranged from devout Christian to non-Christians who were moral guardians of the most “worthy” aspects of African culture. The operative point is that the “worthy” features of African cultures were deemed to be divinely inspired. Thus, African women were no longer routinely viewed as “heathens” outside the domain of God’s immanence in the world.

### **Mabel Shaw and Cicely Hooper and the Professionalization of Female Missionaries**

This essay examines the work of two of the most influential and prolific evangelical female missionary authors of the interwar period.<sup>22</sup> Mabel Shaw laboured for the non-denominational, but primarily Congregational, London Missionary Society (LMS) in Northern Rhodesia from 1915 to 1940, and Cicely Hooper served with the evangelical Anglican Church Missionary Society (CMS) from 1916 to 1926 in Kenya. Although Hooper returned to Britain when her husband was promoted to Africa Secretary with the CMS, she continued to do promotional work for the organization and regularly visited Kenya. Thus, both women wrote about African women based on their time in Africa. They were also similar in that they espoused a moderate evangelical faith with a stress on Christian conversion, special regard for the Bible, and a strong emphasis on Christian service.<sup>23</sup>

Both women were highly esteemed within their respective organizations: their work was prominently publicized, and each



organization capitalised on their popularity for promotional and fundraising events. In fact, the LMS flew Mabel Shaw to Britain in 1937 for a special six-month fund-raising programme when finances were severely pinched.<sup>24</sup> Missionary leadership regarded each as an expert on Africa who deserved to be heard. Shaw was praised not only “as an interpreter of Africa,” but also for “her fearless championship of her sons and daughters as members of the family of God.”<sup>25</sup> Described as a “poet-prophet,” Shaw regularly contributed to the LMS annual meetings and preached the LMS Annual Sermon at Memorial Hall in 1941, an honour usually reserved for ordained men.<sup>26</sup> Shaw also garnered admiration outside LMS circles as her work as an educator stimulated a one-day conference on her innovative methods in 1925, and she was awarded the OBE in 1932 for her work in Northern Rhodesia.<sup>27</sup> Cicely Hooper may not have been as celebrated, but she, too, was highly respected in Anglican and ecumenical circles. CMS leadership commended her as an “interpreter” who had “intimate knowledge” of Kenya and commissioned her to write a textbook about East Africa.<sup>28</sup> Additionally, Hooper spoke at various CMS gatherings and was a featured authority at the “Education for Modern Africa” exhibition in 1938.<sup>29</sup>

As evidenced by the sales of their books, both women were admired by their missionary audiences. Mabel Shaw authored four books and contributed numerous articles to the primary missionary journal of the LMS. The most far-reaching of Shaw’s works was her third book, *God’s Candlelights*, which was published (as was her second book) by the ecumenical Edinburgh House Press in 1932.<sup>30</sup> It sold extremely well, and by 1948 it had gone through 14 impressions with 40,500 copies printed.<sup>31</sup> Likewise, Cicely Hooper wrote four books and contributed several thoughtful articles to Anglican periodicals. Hooper reached a wide audience with *If I Lived in Africa*, a textbook on Africa designed for juniors and teachers, which was also published by Edinburgh House Press.<sup>32</sup>

Shaw and Hooper were able to veer in a new literary direction as a result of missionary women gaining status as professionals.<sup>33</sup> The earliest writings of missionary women had been private spiritual autobiographies, which were frequently compiled by grieving widowers in the first half of the nineteenth century as a witness to the

spiritual strengths of missionary wives as true helpmeets to their husbands in the field.<sup>34</sup> These works proved the value of missionary women in the mission field and aligned with the popular genre of missionary heroism.<sup>35</sup> Yet, daring physical adventures were reserved for male missionaries: female missionaries regarded their work as service rather than adventure.<sup>36</sup> But by the mid and late nineteenth century, the spirit of service provided religious women the grounds to claim that only they could reach some audiences, particularly Indian women cloistered in the *zenana*. Women thus began to be recruited as professional missionaries. To cement their newly gained status, missionary women wrote tales that justified their work and the need of Indian women for Christ, similar to the ways in which Victorian feminists took up the plight of their Indian “sisters,” with their assertion that British culture and political trusteeship over India endowed them with the position as advocates.<sup>37</sup> In the same vein, Shaw and Hooper publicized the value of educating African women.

As middle-class professionals, Shaw and Hooper can be seen as emblematic of the new generation of women who were employed in the helping professions. They expressed satisfaction in their vocations as missionaries, work that feminists commended as key to expanding women’s roles in church leadership.<sup>38</sup> Both also can be described as feminists of their day, although Shaw would have been coy about using that term before she retired from the LMS in 1940.<sup>39</sup> As a single woman, she had to be quite politic with LMS leadership in order to safeguard her position as head of the girls’ school at Mbereshi. When she was faced with the possibility of local male supervision of her school in the early 1930s, Shaw successfully fended off the overture, claiming “a kind of sex pride.”<sup>40</sup> Hooper, in contrast, was married and could identify more openly as a feminist since she was generally shielded by her marriage to the capable Handley Hooper. She safely voiced her criticisms of the status of women and settlers in Kenya as a married Christian woman. Thus, Hooper could toss out more incendiary comments while Shaw muffled her radicalism. Studying this discourse lends insight into the differing lives of married and single missionary women as well as the varieties of Christian feminists.<sup>41</sup>

Notably, Shaw and Hooper laboured to erode patriarchal authority in mission work, both in Africa and in Britain. Although

the two emphasized different aspects of African women's lives and roles, their writings fit within the generous bounds of the "Janus-faced" "conservative modernity" that Alison Light persuasively argues characterized much of the middle-class literature of the inter-war period.<sup>42</sup> Both women espoused the idylls of the Christian home, but they also were optimistic about the expansion of women's roles in society and the ways that these new endeavours would benefit society. Furthermore, they advocated a type of "neotraditionalism" in Africa that was both forward-looking and conservative. In particular, they hoped to preserve the ties and customs that bound African societies together, while simultaneously eliminating customs or practices that they deemed to hold women back. Both Shaw and Hooper believed Christian homes were essential to a stable society, but their writings encouraged both British and African women to see beyond the home and to take active roles in the church and society.<sup>43</sup> Hooper specifically pressed her audiences to be politically active and inquire carefully to see if "the church order which they support is meeting the peculiar needs of African women" and to consider how "enlightened Christian opinion at home" could inform the Colonial Office.<sup>44</sup> In a contribution to the *Church Militant*, a feminist Christian journal, Hooper asserted that Christianity was improving the status of African women in Kenya, but they still needed to make more inroads in public life.<sup>45</sup> It is noteworthy that neither woman publicly challenged the status of women in Britain, although they implicitly reminded their audiences of the ongoing struggle for women to achieve the same degree of independence and authority that men enjoyed.

Hooper and Shaw were able to express these more activist messages to a broader audience than had their nineteenth-century predecessors. Not until the 1920s did women's writings first begin to be published in the CMS and LMS main missionary journals. Prior to this time, women's stories were relegated to female magazines.<sup>46</sup> But after missionary women established themselves as professionals and after they gained the vote, they began to be included in them.<sup>47</sup> Their inclusion could reflect a shrinking missionary readership, but arguably it also points to increasing regard for women's work. The insertion of women into the main missionary journals also signals

the turn toward a technocratic empire, with female professionals reporting as “experts” on Africa and African women.<sup>48</sup>

### **Shaw and Hooper: Their Backgrounds and Early Years in Africa**

Despite being raised in a “non-Christian” home, Shaw wanted to work as a missionary after listening to a missionary speak at her devout grandmother’s church.<sup>49</sup> Shaw heard that children in Africa did not have schools and that African children “were not half as happy as she was.”<sup>50</sup> To her consternation, Shaw learned that while she was living contentedly in England, another girl, Maggie, had been raised as a slave-girl in Central Africa. (Such representations were standard fare in missionary antislavery discourse.) In preparation for her work, Shaw studied at St. Colm’s Missionary School, where Annie Hunter Small taught her “to understand and sympathise with the inner character and thought of the peoples of Asia and Africa.”<sup>51</sup> Shaw took this philosophy to heart and designed Mbereshi Girls’ School around the concept of “Chief Jesus,” Shaw’s notion of African Christianity. To extend the influence of her school and to counter perceived deficiencies in African maternal care, Shaw launched the House of Life, a maternity ward and teaching centre, in 1928.<sup>52</sup> With her fierce streak of independence and her penchant for authoritarian rule, Shaw oversaw the mission for another 12 years. But after skirmishing with the LMS over autonomy and educational theory, Shaw briefly retired.<sup>53</sup> She soon returned to Africa, however, this time with the CMS in East Africa. In an interview after her second retirement in 1952, Shaw claimed that she had long held the more sacramental theology of the Anglican Church, but she had initially opted to work for the LMS because she was allowed more autonomy within an organization that afforded single women more independence.<sup>54</sup> Shaw remained closely connected to the CMS in later years as she served as an executive director on the CMS board from 1954 to 1962. Upon her death in Britain in 1973, her ashes were buried on the grounds of the chapel at Mbereshi.<sup>55</sup>

Hooper, nee Winterbotham, was born into very different circumstances than Shaw. She came from an upper-middle-class, politically-active family with Liberal sympathies.<sup>56</sup> Her sister, Clara

Frances Winterbotham, served as the first female alderman in Cheltenham and as mayor in 1921-1923, and again from 1944 to 1946.<sup>57</sup> Undoubtedly, Hooper's education at Cheltenham Ladies College also influenced her feminist outlook, as the school was renowned for its suffragette principal and its commitment to an academic curriculum for women.<sup>58</sup> The college also had an active Missionary Study Circle that maintained close connections with overseas members, and it embraced the idea that missionaries should respectfully study the beliefs of the people to whom they were going.<sup>59</sup> Hooper was reputed to be an outspoken, "modern" woman, and she married Cambridge-educated Handley Hooper, a man who followed in his father's footsteps as a CMS missionary in Kenya.<sup>60</sup> The Hoopers served at Kahuhia, Kenya from 1916-1926 and then moved to England when Handley became the CMS Africa Secretary, a position he held until 1949. Although Cicely Hooper opened the first girls' boarding school in Kenya and raised funds for it while she was on furlough in 1920-1921, she was merely recognized as the spouse of a missionary. Thus, she was more obscured to the British public in the same way that nineteenth-century women missionaries were in their roles as missionary wives. Hooper was, nonetheless, a prolific writer of missionary propaganda, revealing more of herself and her views than did her forbears. She also was actively involved with her husband's work and toured East Africa with him in 1937 and 1938, presumably as part of her research for her book on partnership. Despite her role as a missionary wife, Hooper was "appalled by the oppressive male dominance which she discerned in both the CMS and in Kikuyu society."<sup>61</sup> She undoubtedly was a primary actor in the dispute between male and female missionaries in Kenya that led to the election of "lady missionaries" to the district commission in 1922, and she certainly communicated her displeasure with the limited role African women were afforded in the local church and more broadly in their communities.<sup>62</sup>

Both Shaw and Hooper encouraged their British supporters to form emotional attachments with the women and girls among whom they were living in Africa. Shaw's work aspired to provide readers with the opportunity to "be on terms of affectionate intimacy with the life and personnel of the Girls' School at Mbereshi."<sup>63</sup> Her third

book was praised for helping readers “rediscover the meaning of a ‘koinonia,’ in which we have fellowship with the whole family of God.”<sup>64</sup> Artifice may have coloured these missionaries’ writings, but it was designed to elicit greater regard for African women.<sup>65</sup> For example, Hooper modeled respect for Africans by prefacing one of her books with:

To our African friends, whose love and friendship we value, I apologize, lest they should find too many weaknesses in the story, in which I have tried to make their [Africans’] lives and problems real to friends in this land whom they have never seen.<sup>66</sup>

Thus, these missionary women strove to direct their British readers to view African women as friends who merited mutuality in relationships, including apologies for British failings.

This position had evolved from their earlier, more single-minded, goal to prove that African women were worthy of education. When Shaw and Hooper each began working in Africa during World War I, they were primarily focused on convincing their British audiences that African women deserved schooling and that positive outcomes for Africa would result from this work. This point was essential, particularly since some questioned whether education might “spoil” African women.<sup>67</sup> Both authors stressed that African women made admirable Christians and needed to be afforded the right to practice Christianity freely so they could serve God as individuals and raise the Christian families that would transform Africa. Furthermore, missionary women were forced to dispel any doubts that their British audiences may have entertained about their close contact with African women — assuring their British audiences of the humanity of African women was a necessity.

Much of the early literature Shaw and Hooper composed approximates nineteenth-century didactic prosopographies of British women that were undergirded by the principle that “nurture more than nature” limited women’s accomplishments under less “advanced” cultural conditions.<sup>68</sup> Similar to the women in British prosopographies, African women in the propaganda were lauded for defying traditions that were seen to keep them from modernising.<sup>69</sup>

Yet Shaw and Hooper reported that they wrote about typical women and girls with the intent of raising respect for all African women, not only the exceptional. In fact, Shaw stressed that her school was filled with “ordinary girls,” refusing to represent them as exotic or as superior specimens of African womanhood. Furthermore, she highlighted the complexity of their lives as students, wives, mothers, and teachers. Thus, these missionary women’s sensibilities centred on empowering females. They were creating a class of élites, but they did not present them to Britons as women they had chosen for their innate abilities, but rather as representative of the variety and value of all African women. While Hooper and Shaw maintained hierarchical differences with their positions as teachers and authors, imparting a degree of condescension to their work, they aimed to overturn negative images of African women. Furthermore, they were sensitive to their relationships with African women and attempted to portray them respectfully.

Initially, however, neither Shaw nor Hooper wrote about African women in a glowing light, much less in terms of friendship. Shaw may have embarked for Africa with relatively higher opinions of Africans than her colleagues and sought to present Christianity in distinctly African terms, but it is apparent that she had also absorbed racialized Victorian conceptions about the continent of Africa. Her early writings perpetuated stock missionary representations of African females as unhappy and enslaved by fear until they were successfully converted to Christianity. Shaw also focused on combating customs that offended her Christian maternalist sensibilities: particularly the killing of twins or babies who cut their top teeth first. Hooper, too, raised maternalist concerns. A fund-raising event for her school featured a play that presented a Kikuyu girl, “a child of sorrow,” who “should have been destroyed for cutting upper teeth first.”<sup>70</sup> Even so, Hooper vociferated more passionately about customs that limited women’s freedom. Her early writings propagated the “less fortunate sister” trope and commended African women for their inherent abilities that were suppressed by a backward, misogynistic culture.<sup>71</sup> Moreover, Hooper doggedly reported the distress of Kikuyu widows who were forced to marry their late husbands’ brothers, regardless of their unsuitability or, more importantly, a woman’s

desires. Hooper lamented that African women would not see the benefit of converting to Christianity if they did not gain rights commensurate with British Christians.

### **Friendship as Ecumenical Imperative**

In moving toward the concept that British and African women needed to be on terms of friendship, Hooper and Shaw were influenced by global missionary debates and popular theology. The topic of friendship between missionaries and mission converts inspired some heated discussions since it pointed to missionaries failing to treat others as Christians equal before God.<sup>72</sup> At the highly publicized and attended 1910 Edinburgh Missionary Conference, V.S. Azariah, an Indian delegate to the meeting, admonished British missionaries: "Give us FRIENDS!" rather than extending "condescending love."<sup>73</sup> British missionaries had little choice but to listen to their colonized fellow believers if they hoped to keep missions relevant and growing. Ideas of mutuality were also debated among missionary women. Dana Robert asserts that "World Friendship" supplanted an earlier movement of "Women's Work for Women" in American circles.<sup>74</sup> This step toward friendship was one that expressed a degree of humility following World War I, a war in which European Christians killed each other, undermining Western claims of cultural superiority.

Popular Christology in Britain also broached the concept of friendship as theologian and mission supporter, T.R. Glover, asserted that Jesus came into the world to establish a friendship and partnership with humans.<sup>75</sup> Missionaries were then to imitate Jesus by living as friends with others. Both Hooper and Shaw incorporated this thinking into their work. Shaw directly echoed Glover in her claim that Jesus proceeded through three years of ministry without building an organized institution and instead bequeathed a "friendship" with "very ordinary" people.<sup>76</sup> Hooper likewise believed that friendship with Africans was necessary to African-European relationships, or they would break. The servant/master relationship struck Hooper as inadequate, and she insisted that relationships between Europeans and Africans mimic Jesus' relationship with his disciples as he dis-



nated them as “friends” during his final days.<sup>77</sup> Arguably, Hooper equated Europeans with the master Jesus in the relationship, but she was careful to state that “friendship is reciprocal, and neither friend does all the giving or all the taking.”<sup>78</sup>

One way in which Hooper and Shaw vaulted African women into a position of equality and potential friendship with British women was through professing that African women were worthy of emulation. In a *volte-face* from Victorian literature, Hooper composed a fictional adventure romance headlining an African heroine, Njoki.<sup>79</sup> This 1929 work predated juvenile imperial literature of the 1930s that commonly highlighted the adventures of Europeans in Africa.<sup>80</sup> The difference was that in such literature British heroines very often saved “noble” Africans from less enlightened Europeans as well as from more savage tribes, rather than featuring an African girl as the protagonist. In this case, Njoki overcame witch doctors, evil suitors, and leopards, through her faith in Christ, the assistance of British missionaries, and the love of a young African man. Interestingly enough, missionary men briefly turned in a similar direction in the 1920s and wrote biographies of “great” African men, but very, very few were singled out. For their part, the African women in these tales were relegated to the periphery as “helpmeets” and often did not even merit a name.<sup>81</sup>

A key reason Hooper and Shaw changed their stance on African women is that they themselves grew friendly with African women. As both missionary women became accustomed to life in Africa, they developed relationships with African women, recanting their earlier, harsher criticisms. For example, Shaw wrote in 1927 that she had once considered the older women of the local village her “enemies,” since they had seemingly “thwarted her at every turn” and had drawn the girls at her school “back into all the dark ways of the past.” But after ten years in Northern Rhodesia, Shaw relished sitting with these women in “that intimate fellowship of silence” around a fire where they could commune with God together. Although the older women were not Christians, Shaw maintained that God was present in the midst of the village, and she cherished the familial relationship and mutual respect she and the older women shared. She emphasized this shift by closing her second book with this very scene. She bid “Good

night, my mothers,” and the older women responded, “Go in peace, child of ours.”<sup>82</sup> Thus, Shaw stressed to her readers that she embraced a subordinate position with these older women and that relationship gave her strength.<sup>83</sup>

Shaw and Hooper further modified their thinking as they identified ever more closely with the people among whom they lived. Shaw erased differences between African girls and British girls by chastising British patrons of missions for donating different gifts to African girls than they would British girls. She argued that African girls also “enjoy toys and pretty clothes.”<sup>84</sup> Shaw also downplayed physical differences between Africans and Europeans. In describing a holiday swimming excursion with some of her students, she declared that it “was a joy to see Ruthie, with the sunlight on her golden body, stand straightly poised on the rock, and then dive into the clear water.”<sup>85</sup> Shaw described the girl in terms that characterized her as more similar to, than different from, European ideals with a “golden” body and athletic grace. This depiction differs distinctly from the stereotypes that historian Barbara Bush asserts were replete in colonial literature in which whites were “physically repulsed by black body odour and black skin.”<sup>86</sup>

Hooper, too, promoted ideas of greater closeness with Africans despite her move to Britain in 1926. In Hooper’s last fictional work, the British missionary noted that an African boy serving at a European tea shop “was of her people, a Kikuyu.”<sup>87</sup> The missionary categorized herself as a Kikuyu, yet she also acknowledged that it was an assumed identity when she wonders what would have happened in the shop if she had brought an African “friend” with her. She thought that it was “so really stupid” that Europeans were willing to accept service from Africans, but not friendship with them.<sup>88</sup> By identifying with the people with whom they lived and worked, these missionaries challenged the binaries of the colonized and colonizer and implicitly invited their audiences to join them in their cross-cultural and cross-racial relationships.

## Fulfillment Theology and Greater Appreciation of African Culture

Fulfillment theology also provided both missionary women with the intellectual foundations for greater respect of African culture. This theology was promoted at the World Missionary Conference, Edinburgh 1910, and was premised on the idea that God had revealed fragments of the light of divine truth to all people with the expectation that missionaries would instruct non-Christians on how to gradually absorb the Christian message.<sup>89</sup> However, Africans were virtually excluded from this theology (certainly at Edinburgh in 1910), and Hooper and Shaw were among the earliest to apply it to Africa. Shaw embraced this philosophy so wholeheartedly that she based the Christian doctrine at the Girls' Boarding School at Mbereshi on "Chief Jesus," her own Western idea of how Africans might conceptualize Jesus. Despite her recognition that Christianity needed to be made culturally relevant, Shaw did not initially admire Africans or African culture. However, she shifted dramatically. In *God's Candlelights*, she claimed that David Livingstone, the most renowned missionary, had not, in fact brought God to Africa, but that he had "found Him here in every village, in every man, and woman."<sup>90</sup> This statement was quite a leap for any evangelical missionary in Africa (others had respected devout African "pagans"), but it was astonishing to say that God could be found in every woman in Africa.

While fulfillment theology provided the foundations for some degree of appreciation of African culture, both missionaries gained ever-greater esteem for it as they believed the spread of European materialism with its corresponding urbanization was eroding the social fabric of Central Africa. Alarmed that families were breaking up as men moved to urban centres, Hooper and Shaw expressed keener respect for African home-making in particular. Hooper excoriated British colonial and commercial endeavours in Kenya for destroying "the very gift with which God himself has blessed the African — genius of community life and home making."<sup>91</sup> Hooper drew from Charles Gore's eschatological idea of "interracial catholicity" that all cultures have something to contribute to the

improvement of world culture.<sup>92</sup> Gore, the Anglican bishop of Birmingham, promoted this idea at Edinburgh in 1910, and again at the Lambeth Conference in 1920. Similar to fulfillment theology, “interracial catholicity” accorded respect to all cultures with its tenet that each people group provides a specific facet of the universal truth of God.<sup>93</sup> Historian Brian Stanley notes that Gore’s work attracted the attention of Anglican missionary leadership.<sup>94</sup> Hooper, thus, adopted this theology and praised African home-making, the female domain, and decried the way that it had suffered at the hands of colonists whom she condemned as simply wanting to live comfortably abroad. Comparatively speaking, traditional African culture increasingly appeared less problematic than that of greedy colonists.

Fulfillment theology could, however, also justify greater interference with African culture, as can be evidenced in missionary writings on female circumcision. Hooper wrote about the custom after the primary furor over it had passed. From 1928 to 1931, missionaries in Kenya attempted to ban female genital cutting, and the matter was also debated in Parliament.<sup>95</sup> When Hooper published on the matter in 1935, it was ostensibly to communicate that African women were still practicing the custom. In *New Patches: Women’s Customs and Changes in Africa*, Hooper deemed the rite to be “wicked mutilation for girls” as well as “useless for instruction,” and she included a story of a young woman nearly bleeding to death after going through the procedure.<sup>96</sup> Although Hooper acknowledged that anthropologists claimed to find sense in the rites, she thought the customs were not based on the guiding principles of “reason and truth.”<sup>97</sup> However, rather than barring mission girls from the rites, Hooper’s missionary simply urged girls to reject them as CMS missionaries at Kahuhia had done.<sup>98</sup> The incongruity of teaching girls “to honor thy father and mother” while simultaneously urging them to repudiate the rites did not escape Hooper, but she argued that blind obedience did not constitute honour.<sup>99</sup> Moreover, to Hooper, initiation did not bestow liberty on the women, and she championed rights for women.<sup>100</sup> She discounted the rite’s importance to Kikuyu identity and rather naively thought that the Kikuyu could follow a “new road” that was Christian without jeopardizing their social structure.<sup>101</sup> Ultimately, she pressed for further education. Shaw, on

the other hand, was much more understanding about the significance of the event (at least in promotional materials) and asserted that education would eventually eradicate the more repugnant aspects of the rites. Thus both women communicated to their British audiences that civilizing missions were still needed in Africa in accordance with the evolutionary ideas contained in fulfillment theology.

This same theology, though, became increasingly important to Shaw and Hooper as fears of African urbanization drove them to embrace African rural life. By the 1930s, Shaw allowed that the grandmothers may act as a “necessary drag” upon missionaries’ “over-eager desire to get a speedy ‘move-on.’”<sup>102</sup> Shaw concluded that these women could be following God to ensure that there is no “unnatural growth in His Kingdom”; therefore, the women promoted healthier, more stable communities. Again, Shaw viewed African women through the lens of fulfillment theology: she believed African women had knowledge from God outside Christianity. Shaw noted that “modern Africans” in her district blamed the “mothers” for keeping the country back, but she argued that although they might be opposed to change, they were “more moral” than the men and were “loyal, amazingly friendly and responsive.”<sup>103</sup> In another reversal, Shaw stated she could now “honestly” claim that Africans were not lazy in their villages and that they enjoyed their work and did it leisurely, which was “wiser than we [Europeans] are, perhaps.”<sup>104</sup> Although Hooper did not espouse fulfillment theology to the degree that Shaw did, she, too, began to extol the work ethic of African women. She maintained that African women grew up in an atmosphere of ministry since they served their tribe, family, and household as a matter of course.<sup>105</sup> Hooper asserted that the “Master” recognized the ministry of women and the Church lagged behind in seeing how their work resembled Christ’s.<sup>106</sup> By referring to Jesus as “Master,” Hooper emphasized his authority, and thus the moral imperative of acknowledging the sacred value of women’s work.

Hooper did not think Western capitalism was the ideal, and she went so far as to say that her dreams for a more equal Kenya were “a little Bolshie.”<sup>107</sup> She argued that “Christian women” were “unprotected by State and Church” and were “left cruelly to a fate planned for them by the mercenary business instinct of men.”<sup>108</sup> While

Hooper may have expressed her opinion more stridently, her views on social equality aligned with the goals that were proclaimed at the 1924 Christian Conference on Politics, Economics, and Citizenship (COPEC) and later at the 1937 Oxford Conference of Life and Work.<sup>109</sup> Missionary leadership of both the CMS and LMS agreed that they were deeply concerned about “the influence of Christendom’s sub-Christian commerce and politics and social life on the thought and lives of Indians and Chinese and Japanese and Africans.”<sup>110</sup> Thus, the apprehensions that Hooper and Shaw communicated paralleled those of both mission organizations.

Shaw was less political in her criticism of materialism, but her words were no less barbed. She blamed materialism for destroying much that was “gracious and of value in African life,” and she deplored such money-mindedness.<sup>111</sup> She continued, “we white missionaries, with our big houses and all our possessions, are rich beyond all their dreams. It comes as a challenge to set our own houses in order.”<sup>112</sup> Again, these missionary women communicated humility about their own failings in ways that may not have eroded white prestige, but undoubtedly called it into question. Moreover, in this case, Shaw did so in a very personal way, confessing how difficult it was even to begin the feat of assessing, much less tackling, her own complicity in Western materialism.

### **The Goals of Empowering and Respecting African Women**

Despite their criticisms of Western materialism, both Hooper and Shaw hoped to see African women gain more economic independence within their societies in ways that championed Western capitalism and culture. Hooper may have gained greater respect for African culture by the late 1920s, but she still ranked British culture higher than African since “Christ’s own thoughts lie behind our customs.”<sup>113</sup> She desperately wanted to see polygamy eradicated and political and property rights instated for women so they could live as independent Christians. Hooper blamed patriarchal customs for the plight she believed widows, especially young Christian widows, faced. In essence, Hooper contended that African women could not own homes, food, or money, and that they were simply the property

of men.<sup>114</sup> If a woman's husband were to die, she then became the property of her brother-in-law or another male relative. What made matters worse, in her eyes, was that *Christian* elders upheld these customs and were invested in the system, because they "as owners, fear to risk the material loss which this might mean."<sup>115</sup> Hooper argued that if Christianity allowed freedom for men and not for women, African women would find little reason to become Christians. Her criticism of Christian African men implicitly condemned Indirect Rule with local power resting in the hands of older men. Interestingly enough, Hooper's criticisms of African men coincided with emerging nationalist sentiments in Kenya, and she sympathized with the difficulties black Kenyans faced under colonial rule in a settler colony. Indeed, she railed against the settlers and contended that Africans deserved to grow as their own nation, and "surely in the light of Christ's teaching we cannot deny that right."<sup>116</sup> She also complained that the British practice of the hut tax placed widows in an untenable situation since they were unable to afford them.<sup>117</sup> However, she wanted to ensure that African women were respected and that their voices would be included in state-building.

The subject of formal prostitution was one that animated Shaw and Hooper's anxieties about the seeming financial insecurity of African women. Although neither devoted considerable space to the issue, it was always broached with deep dismay and lurked in the shadows as the steepest tumble a woman could take. Despite this moralizing stance, both missionaries viewed the issue within the realm of women's need for economic independence. Hooper asserted that until African women had more rights, the only way they could live independently was to sell their bodies, and urban centres afforded such opportunity. She reported that "prostitution is the best-paid profession for women in this country."<sup>118</sup> Even more sadly to her, widows who did not want to remarry had no other recourse to take care of themselves and their children.<sup>119</sup> Shaw likewise condemned towns, particularly the mining centres, as places which "destroyed lives," euphemistic language referring to prostitution.<sup>120</sup> Cities posed particular problems for rural women according to Shaw because they had "no occupation" there since they did not have their gardens, their traditional method of work.<sup>121</sup> Therefore, she empha-

sized the need for further education, which women could gain at her school.

Hooper did not express as much concern about women gaining economic freedom through the option to train and be employed outside the home. As a married woman, Hooper praised the benefits of African women building Christian homes, and she viewed the institution as essential to the construction of a Christian Africa. However, Hooper charged that women needed “healthy employments” and could be taught various industries.<sup>122</sup> She also fully endorsed African women working as missionaries.<sup>123</sup> Shaw, on the other hand, promoted the benefits of women having careers outside the home, despite (or perhaps in light of) the fact that the House of Life affiliated with the Girls’ Boarding School failed to produce the numbers of professional nurses it was established to do.<sup>124</sup> Even so, one of Shaw’s strongest denunciations of Africa was that it was quite a new thought for an African woman to have a career, “and not a very welcome one.”<sup>125</sup> But she believed that when young women secured respect for their work and earned enough money to keep themselves clean and clothed while helping others, minds would change.<sup>126</sup> She happily reported five years later in 1937 that such a change had occurred. She commended one divorced young woman, Janet Mupelwa, as a “pioneer” for training as a midwife at the House of Life and working in a nearby village where the local people built her a house.<sup>127</sup> Despite advocating what could be construed as a move toward the materialistic West, Shaw carefully pushed for female careers in the helping professions and stressed that African women needed to be able to pay for the education of their children.

Not only did Hooper and Shaw aim to empower African women economically, but they also promoted African women holding leadership positions in the Church. As stated earlier, Hooper demanded that African women be included in church governance, and she thought that African women could “discern more readily” what of traditional life was worth retaining.<sup>128</sup> Shaw, too, was concerned that women be included in church matters. She praised her assistant, Chungu, for choosing a career at the school and for refusing marriage proposals.<sup>129</sup> Shaw reported that Chungu relished her role as a deacon in the Church, composed hymns for all occasions,



which were “amazingly beautiful,” and that she even “preached” at the girls’ school.<sup>130</sup> Shaw lauded Chungu for making Christianity relevant in Bemba culture and commended her for praying the “most imaginative and beautiful prayer I’ve ever heard — no white person could have done it.”<sup>131</sup>

Both Hooper and Shaw believed African women could contribute not only to the African Church, but also to the global ecumenical Church. The ideal of partnership between Christians from older and younger churches was expressed at the IMC decennial meeting at Tambaram, India, in 1938. However, Hooper and Shaw were cognizant that African women could not be heard unless British Christians were willing to humble themselves before Africans. In her book on partnership with Africans, Hooper charged that Britons needed “to rid themselves of the fears — personal, social, and economic — which stand in the way of friendship with Africans.”<sup>132</sup> Furthermore, if the Church hoped to gain a “fuller vision” of God’s Kingdom, “world partnership” with fellowship between African and British Christians was essential to this growth.<sup>133</sup> Similarly, Shaw urged her readers that if they wanted “to learn anew” from God, that they must “hear God speak to us through the voices of African men and women.”<sup>134</sup>

By the late 1930s, the need to revitalize British Christianity was especially pertinent to both the CMS and LMS as both organizations were experiencing financial hardships. The LMS was particularly strapped, and in September 1937, LMS leadership enlisted Shaw to help with a special fund-raising campaign. As part of her speaking tour, she read a letter from Chungu’s daughter, which bemoaned the failure of Britons to generously support mission work. The letter was also published in the main LMS journal, and it included commentary with the stereotypical belittling of Africans that characterized much missionary propaganda. Yet, the article also pointed to the growing faith of Africans in contrast to the perceived waning passion of Britons.<sup>135</sup> Moreover, the letter itself was written by an African woman — evidence indeed that African women could help enliven and build the global Church.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, it was in the best interests of missionary women to create a discourse on African women that generated support for missions. But rather than portraying African women as in dire need of an overhaul, these evangelical feminists directed their readers to respect their African friends. Ecumenical missionary discourse and the insertion of voices of Asian and African Christians challenged British missionaries to rethink their relationships and acknowledge that they had not lived out the ideals of spiritual equality in the temporal realm. Both Hooper and Shaw took this point seriously and worked toward building friendships and seeking common values that could be deemed “Christian,” even if deemed rudimentary in African culture. What pushed them to embrace African women even more wholeheartedly, however, were fears by the later 1920s that Africa was descending away from, rather than progressing toward, a Christian ideal. This change prompted British evangelical women to enlist African women as partners in stemming the tide of Western materialism and the attendant ills of urbanization. Both Hooper and Shaw began to see greater beauty in African rural life and retracted some of their former criticisms, reassessing how they measured African society. They hoped to make rural life more attractive by educating women for companionate marriages and empowering women to have greater influence and broader roles in the Church and in the community. In order to achieve these goals, missionary women needed the support of Britons who were educated on these matters and could understand the powerful part that African women could play in creating a Christian Africa. Moreover, these missionary women were hopeful that British Christians would cooperate in building the global ecumenical Church. Hooper’s last work aptly captures the change in attitude that she and Shaw hoped Britons would adopt if they had not already. She opened with a foreword urging Britons to see their responsibility in partnering with Africa, implying their superior position in the relationship. But she closed the book declaring that everyone needed to be aware that the Kingdom of God transcended “nationality, colour or sect.”<sup>136</sup> Equality among all peoples was the Christian ideal. British mission-

ary women may not have erased boundaries of difference between themselves and Africans, but they worked on blurring them in the pivotal interwar years.

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#### Endnotes:

- 1 Cicely Hooper, *If I Lived in Africa* (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1927), 34–35.
- 2 Only a couple years earlier Hooper had stressed that men were expected to defend the home from “marauding beasts,” but here the woman was up to the task. See M. Cicely Hooper, “Hidden Hearths,” *Church Missionary Review* (1925), 25.
- 3 Carole Summers, “‘If You Can Educate the Native Woman ...’: Debates over the Schooling and Education of Girls and Women in Southern Rhodesia, 1900–1934,” *History of Education Quarterly* 36.4 (1996), 450.
- 4 Lynn M. Thomas, *Politics of the Womb: Women, Reproduction and the State in Kenya* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 57.
- 5 Barbara Bush, “‘Britain’s Conscience on Africa’: White Women, Race and Imperial Politics in Inter-War Britain,” in *Gender and Imperialism*, ed. Clare Midgley (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), 214.
- 6 Barbara Bush, *Imperialism, Race and Resistance: Africa and Britain, 1919–1945* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), 92.
- 7 Margery Perham, *Ten Africans* (London: Faber & Faber Ltd, 1936). The African girl in G.B. Shaw’s *The African Girl and Her Search for God* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1933) had pronounced sexual features and wielded a knobkerrie. Studies on Africans in British literature and visual culture include Annie E. Coombes, *Reinventing Africa: Museums, Material Culture and Popular Imagination in Late Victorian and Edwardian England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994); John Cullen Gruesser, *White on Black: Contemporary Literature about Africa* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press,

REPRESENTATIONS OF AFRICAN WOMEN IN MISSIONARY PROPAGANDA  
IN INTERWAR BRITAIN

- 1992); Patrick Brantlinger, "Victorians and Africans: The Genealogy of the Myth of the Dark Continent," in *Race, Writing, and Difference*, ed. Henry Louis Gates, Jr. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986).
- 8 Undoubtedly the two women met at some point after Shaw transferred to the CMS (she corresponded with Handley Hooper, Cicely's husband), but there is no indication that the two were friends.
  - 9 On the continuing belief in the ideal of progress, see David Mark Stephen, "'The White Man's Grave': British West Africa and the British Empire Exhibition of 1924–25," *Journal of British Studies* (2009), 103.
  - 10 Esther Breitenbach, "Religious Literature and Discourses of Empire: The Scottish Presbyterian Foreign Mission Movement," in *Empires of Religion* ed. Hilary M. Carey (Houndsmills, Basingstroke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 102; Jane Haggis and Margaret Allen, "Imperial Emotions: Affective Communities of Mission in British Protestant Women's Missionary Publications c. 1880–1920," *Journal of Social History* Spring (2008), 691–716; Jane Haggis, "White Women and Colonialism: Towards a Non-Recuperative History," in *Gender and Imperialism* ed. Clare Midgley (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), 45–75. On a later period, see Nancy Rose Hunt, "Colonial Fairy Tales and the Knife and Fork Doctrine in the Heart of Africa," in *African Encounters with Domesticity*, ed. Karen Tranberg Hansen (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1992), 143–171.
  - 11 Haggis and Allen, "Imperial Emotions," 691–716; Haggis, "White Women and Colonialism," 45–75.
  - 12 Jeffrey Cox, *The British Missionary Enterprise since 1700* (New York: Routledge, 2008); Anna Johnston, *Missionary Writing and Empire, 1800–1860* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).
  - 13 Brian Stanley, *The World Missionary Conference, Edinburgh, 1910* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2009), 212. This quote is from a summation of David S. Cairns' definition, and aptly fits the broad contours of the theology as expressed by Shaw and Hooper. Cairns was a key participant at the ecumenical conference.
  - 14 Missionary ethnographer Edwin Smith argued that fulfillment theology applied to Africa in his 1926 book, *The Golden Stool*. See Dana Robert, "Cross-Cultural Friendship in the Creation of Twentieth-Century World Christianity," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 35.2 (2011), 102.
  - 15 Elizabeth Prevost, "From African Missions to Global Sisterhood: The Mothers' Union and Colonial Christianity, 1900–1930," in *Empires of Religion* ed. Hilary M. Carey (Houndsmills, Basingstroke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 243–64.
  - 16 Aili Mari Tripp, "Women's Mobilization in Uganda: Nonracial Ideologies in European-African-Asian Encounters, 1945–1962," in *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 34.3 (2001), 548. Tripp argues that class, rather than race, was a greater barrier to the building of cross-cultural relationships.

- 17 Deborah Gaitskell, "Female Faith and the Politics of the Personal: Five Mission Encounters in Twentieth Century South Africa," *Feminist Review* 65 (2000), 68–91.
- 18 One exception is Elizabeth Prevost, *The Communion of Women: Missions and Gender in Colonial Africa and the British Metropole* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).
- 19 Susan Thorne, *Congregational Missions and the Making of an Imperial Culture in 19<sup>th</sup>-Century England* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), 162. See also Rhonda Semple, *Missionary Women: Gender, Professionalism and the Victorian Idea of Christian Mission* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 2003), 192–193.
- 20 Rebecca C. Hughes, "Africans in the British Missionary Imagination, 1910–1965," (Ph.D., diss., University of Washington, 2010), 33–89.
- 21 Haggis and Allen, "Imperial Emotions," 691–716.
- 22 Another female author, Phyllis Garlick, wrote extensively for the CMS, but not from the foreign mission field.
- 23 David Bebbington's definition of evangelicalism neatly captures the beliefs of both women. See *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (London: Routledge, 1989), 2–17.
- 24 Shaw flew to Britain in September 1937 and stayed through February 1938 as a key speaker for the "Wide Open Doors' Campaign."
- 25 Shaw MS 380319. "Miss Mabel Shaw, O.B.E.," Executive Committee Minute, 11 February 1953.
- 26 Honor Woolley, Book Review of *A Treasure of Darkness, East and West Review* (1940), 90. On Shaw's annual sermon, see Howard Diamond, "Livingstone House in Wartime, 1939–1945," 15. Church World Mission Archive (hereafter CWMA), School of Oriental and African Studies, London University, Home Odds, Box 26. Shaw also delivered the BBC speech, "In the Tracks of Livingstone," 8 June 1941. 4.45 to 5.00 p.m.
- 27 The International Missionary Council held the conference at High Leigh in July of 1925.
- 28 Church Missionary Society, "*Kenya Calling: Four Outline Talks*" (London: CMS, 1939). Church Missionary Society Archives (hereafter CMSA), University of Birmingham, ACC 523.
- 29 "Education for Modern Africa Programme," (London: CMS, 1938). CMSA, H10/E2.
- 30 Mabel Shaw, *God's Candlelights: An Educational Venture in Northern Rhodesia* (Edinburgh House Press, 1932).
- 31 Conference of British Missionary Society archive, School of Oriental and African Studies, London University. United Council for Missionary Education Minutes. By 1939, it had gone through 11 impressions with 33,500 copies printed. This work also provided the inspiration for Sunday School lessons. See Muriel Wray, *Along the Forest Path: Story Lessons from Africa* (London: Livingstone Press, 1935).
- 32 Cicely Hooper, *If I Lived in Africa* (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1927).

REPRESENTATIONS OF AFRICAN WOMEN IN MISSIONARY PROPAGANDA  
IN INTERWAR BRITAIN

- This work went through six impressions between 1927 and 1936 with 19,500 copies printed. CBMS Archive, SOAS, EHP, Catalogue of Books.
- 33 Semple, *Missionary Women*, especially 190–206; Elizabeth Prevost, “Married to the Mission Field: Gender, Christianity, and Professionalization in Britain and Colonial Africa, 1865–1914,” *Journal of British Studies* (2008), 797–98.
  - 34 Clare Midgley, “Can Women Be Missionaries? Envisioning Female Agency in the Early Nineteenth-Century British Empire,” *Journal of British Studies* 45.2 (2006), 335–358.
  - 35 Gareth Griffiths, “Popular Imperial Adventure Fiction and the Discourse of Missionary Texts,” in *Mixed Messages: Materiality, Textuality, Missions* eds. Jamie Scott and Gareth Griffiths (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 51–66.
  - 36 Semple, *Missionary Women*, 37.
  - 37 Antoinette Burton, *Burdens of History: British Feminists, Indian Women, and Imperial Culture, 1865–1915* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1994).
  - 38 Lucy Delap, “Conservative Values, Anglicans and the Gender Order in Interwar Britain,” in *Brave New World: Imperial and Democratic Nation-Building in Britain between the Wars* eds. Laura Beers and Geraint Thomas (London: Institute of Historical Research, 2012), 160.
  - 39 Shaw later actively supported female ordination. See Jessica Thurlow, “The ‘Great Offender’: Feminists and the Campaign for Women’s Ordination,” *Women’s History Review* (17 January 2014, Online), (19 March 2014, Print).
  - 40 Shaw to Mr. Chirgwin, 2 April 1930, Highgate. CWMA. Microfiche, Northwestern University.
  - 41 Delap, “Conservative Values,” 149–168. Delap notes that Anglicans consisted of conservatives and liberals.
  - 42 Alison Light, *Forever England: Femininity, Literature and Conservatism between the Wars* (London and New York: Routledge, 1991), 9, 11.
  - 43 Adrian Bingham argues that the interwar period should be seen as an era in which women articulated “a self-consciously ‘modern’ femininity that drew upon real changes in the political, social, economic and sexual position of women.” See “‘An Era of Domesticity’? Histories of Women and Gender in Interwar Britain,” *Cultural and Social History* (2004), 233.
  - 44 Margaret Cicely Hooper, “‘Widows Indeed,’” *Church Missionary Review* (1925), 33.
  - 45 M. Cicely Hooper, “Hope Deferred,” *Church Militant* (1926), 11–12. In Prevost, *The Communion of Women*, 248.
  - 46 French women were also excluded from the main missionary publications before 1920. J.P. Daughton, *An Empire Divided: Religion, Republicanism, and the Making of French Colonialism, 1880–1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 121.
  - 47 On the ascendancy of female missionaries, see Cox, *The British Missionary Enterprise*, 197. In an interesting parallel, women first appeared prominently in the literature of the Conservative Central Office in the 1920s. See David

- Thackeray, "Home and Politics: Women and Conservative Activism in Early Twentieth-Century Britain," *Journal of British Studies* 49.4 (2010), 827.
- 48 On the technocratic empire, see Joseph Morgan Hodge, *Triumph of the Expert: Agrarian Doctrines of Development and Legacies of British Colonialism* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2007); Frederick Cooper and Randall Packard, *International Development and the Social Sciences: Essays on the History and Politics of Knowledge* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).
- 49 Mabel Shaw, Candidates Paper, 5. CWM/LMS/Home/Candidates Papers, Box 34; "The Life and Work of Miss Mabel Shaw," 2. CWMA, MS 380319.
- 50 Mabel Shaw, *Children of the Chief* (London: Livingstone Press, 1921), 22, 45. This book was the LMS gift book of 1921. The first printing of the book was to total 25,000 per CWMA, CWM/LMS Literature Committee, Book 3, 21 September 1920.
- 51 *Dictionary National Biography*. Quote from Annie Hunter Small, *Missionary College Hymns: Being Hymns Oriental, Missionary, and Devotional, Sung at the Women's Missionary College, Edinburgh* (Edinburgh: Oliphant, Anderson and Ferrier, 1914), preface.
- 52 The training of African women in domesticity and nursing was a common feature of missionary education. See Nakanyike B. Musisi, "Colonial and Missionary Education: Women and Domesticity in Uganda, 1900–1945," in *African Encounters of Domesticity*, 172–94; Lynn Thomas, *Politics of the Womb*, 52–78; Nancy Rose Hunt, *A Colonial Lexicon*, 159–236.
- 53 Sean Morrow, "No Girl Leaves the School Unmarried': Mabel Shaw and the Education of Girls at Mbereshi, Northern Rhodesia, 1915–1940," *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 19 (1986), 633–34. The LMS decided to combine the boys' and girls' schools in Mbereshi, and thus, a man was to head the new co-ed school.
- 54 Shaw was baptized into the Anglican Church in 1943. See "The Life and Work of Miss Mabel Shaw," 2. CWMA. MS 380319.
- 55 *Ibid.*, 2.
- 56 *The Times* (8 October 1932), 14, col. B.
- 57 Obituary for Clara Frances Winterbotham, *The Times* (7 July 1967), 14, col. A.
- 58 Jocelyn Murray, "The Kikuyu Female Circumcision Controversy: with Special Reference to the Church Missionary Society's 'Sphere of Influence,'" (Ph.D. diss., UCLA, 1974), 188. Hooper studied at the school presumably under the tenure of Dorothea Beale and Miss L.M. Faithfull. See A.K. Clarke, *A History of the Cheltenham Ladies' College, 1853–1953* (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1953), 130.
- 59 *Ibid.*, 103–04.
- 60 John Casson, "'To Plant a Garden City in the Slums of Paganism ...' Handley Hooper, the Kikuyu and the Future of Africa," *Journal of Religion in Africa* 28 (1998), 388.
- 61 *Ibid.*, 389.

REPRESENTATIONS OF AFRICAN WOMEN IN MISSIONARY PROPAGANDA  
IN INTERWAR BRITAIN

- 62 Jocelyn Murray, "The Role of Women in the CMS, 1799–1917," *The Church Missionary Society and World Christianity, 1799–1999* eds. Kevin Ward and Brian Stanley (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000), 90.
- 63 E.R. Micklem, "Foreword," in *A Treasure of Darkness* by Mabel Shaw (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1936), vii. Micklem was a chaplain and lecturer at Mansfield College, Oxford.
- 64 Norman Goodall, "The Reader's Guide," *LMS Chronicle* (1933), 256.
- 65 Haggis, "White Women and Colonialism," 45–75.
- 66 Cicely Hooper, *New Patches: Women's Customs and Changes in Africa* (London: The Livingstone Press, 1935), 3.
- 67 Rev. E.W. Smith, "Programme for a Single Group Discussion. No. 6: Will Education Spoil the African?" (London: LMS, 1927), CWMA.
- 68 Alison Booth, *How to Make It as a Woman: Collective Biographical History from Victoria to the Present* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2004), 198–99; 208, 213.
- 69 *Ibid.*, 9.
- 70 "Programme: Kikuyu Girls at Kahuhia, East Africa," 21 July 1921. "The Open Door." CMSA, ACC 523.
- 71 Margaret Cicely Hooper, "Beauty for Ashes," *Church Missionary Review* (1923), 149.
- 72 Stanley, *The World Missionary Conference, Edinburgh 1910*, 121–130.
- 73 Cox, *The British Missionary Enterprise*, 230–31; W.H.T. Gairdner, "Edinburgh 1910": *An Account and Interpretation of the World Missionary Conference* (Edinburgh and London: Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier, 1910), 111.
- 74 Dana L. Robert, *American Women in Mission: A Social History of their Thought and Practice* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1996), 272–85.
- 75 T.R. Glover, *Jesus in the Experience of Men*, (London: SCM, 1921), 182–95.
- 76 Shaw, *God's Candlelights*, 151.
- 77 Hooper, *The Way of Partnership with the CMS in East Africa* (London: CMS, 1939), 23.
- 78 *Ibid.*
- 79 Cicely Hooper, *Beyond the Night* (London: Highway Press, 1929).
- 80 Kathryn Castle, *Britannia's Children: Reading Colonialism through Children's Books and Magazines* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996), 170–71.
- 81 The two standouts were King Khama of Bechuanaland and Apolo Kivebulayo of Uganda. There were a few books on the "great women" of Africa designed for the African market. See G.A. Gollock, *Daughters of Africa* (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1969), originally published by Longmans, Green and Co., London, 1932.
- 82 Mabel Shaw, *Dawn in Africa*, (London: Livingstone Press, 1927), 60, 62.
- 83 The schoolgirls at both mission stations referred to Shaw and Hooper as "Mama Shaw" and "Bibi," respectively. These terms conferred authority to Shaw and Hooper, but they were also familial terms. On Baptist missionaries, see Nancy Rose Hunt, "Colonial Fairy Tales," 159–61.



- 84 Shaw, *Dawn in Africa*, 64.
- 85 Shaw, *A Treasure of Darkness*, 144.
- 86 Bush, *Imperialism, Race and Resistance*, 143.
- 87 Hooper, *New Patches*, 25.
- 88 *Ibid.*, 26.
- 89 Stanley, *The World Missionary Conference, Edinburgh 1910*, 246.
- 90 Shaw, *God's Candlelights*, 164.
- 91 M. Cicely Hooper, "Hidden Hearths," *Church Missionary Review* (1925), 25.
- 92 Brian Stanley, "From 'the poor heathen' to 'the glory and honour of all nations': Vocabularies of Race and Custom in Protestant Missions, 1844–1928," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* (2010), 8.
- 93 Stanley, *The World Missionary Conference*, 194.
- 94 Stanley, "From 'the poor heathen ...'," 8.
- 95 Susan Pederson, "National Bodies, Unspeakable Acts: The Sexual Politics of Colonial Policy-Making," *The Journal of Modern History* (1991), 647–680.
- 96 Hooper, *New Patches*, 35; 40.
- 97 *Ibid.*, 35.
- 98 Jocelyn Murray notes that CMS missionaries at Kahuhia were particularly understanding on female initiation rites since so many of the Christian leaders were unwilling to question the practice. However, the CMS was divided on the practice. In general the CMS was less adamant about banning the practice than was the Church of Scotland Mission and the Africa Inland Mission. See Murray, "The CMS and the 'Female Circumcision' Issue in Kenya 1929–1932," *Journal of Religion in Africa* 8.2 (1976), 92–104; also "The Kikuyu Female Circumcision Controversy," 185–211. On the political context of the issue, see Thomas, *Politics of the Womb*, 22–26. The Methodists in Meru, Kenya banned female circumcision in early 1930, and church membership plummeted from 70 to six. Lynn Thomas, "'Ngaitana (I Will Circumcise Myself)': Lessons from Colonial Campaigns to Ban Excision in Meru, Kenya," in *Kenya: Culture, Controversy, and Change* eds. Bettina Shell-Duncan and Ylva Hernland (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2000), 132.
- 99 Hooper, *New Patches*, 48.
- 100 *Ibid.*, 51.
- 101 *Ibid.*, 62.
- 102 Shaw, *God's Candlelights*, 160.
- 103 *Ibid.*, 178.
- 104 *Ibid.*, 121.
- 105 Hooper, *The Way of Partnership*, 33.
- 106 *Ibid.*
- 107 Hooper, *New Patches*, 27.
- 108 Hooper, "'Widows Indeed,'" 27.
- 109 Adrian Hastings, *A History of English Christianity, 1920–2000* (London: SCM Press, 2001), 422.
- 110 Kathleen Harnett, *The Highway of God* (London: CMS, 1921), 15. This book was also published by the CMS and the UCME. See also Edward

REPRESENTATIONS OF AFRICAN WOMEN IN MISSIONARY PROPAGANDA  
IN INTERWAR BRITAIN

- Shillito, "COPEC and the Missionary," *IRM* (1924), 585–94.
- 111 Shaw, *God's Candlelights*, 159.
- 112 Ibid.
- 113 Hooper, *New Patches*, 15.
- 114 In her early writings, Hooper nodded towards the radical feminist idea that marriage is a form of prostitution, but only with respect to non-Christian marriages between Africans. She asserted that African women were valued solely for their physical charms and that women were trained from an early age to arouse men's sexual passions. Moreover, she homogenized Africans with respect to these alleged practices. See Hooper, "Beauty for Ashes," 149–50, 152.
- 115 Hooper, "Widows Indeed," *CMS Review* (1925), 28.
- 116 Hooper, "Hidden Hearths," 28–29.
- 117 Hooper, *New Patches*, 12. Yet, Hooper did not uniformly condemn British rule: the widow in question gained freedom by a colonial government ruling.
- 118 Hooper, "Beauty for Ashes," 154.
- 119 Hooper, "Widows Indeed," 31–2.
- 120 Shaw, *Dawn in Africa*, 60.
- 121 Ibid., 35.
- 122 Hooper, "Widows Indeed," 32.
- 123 Hooper, *New Patches*, 43.
- 124 Linda Beer Kumwani, "The Training of Female Medical Auxiliaries in Missionary Hospitals in Northern Rhodesia, 1928–1952," *Social Sciences and Missions* 16 (July 2005), 114.
- 125 Shaw, *God's Candlelights*, 140.
- 126 Ibid.
- 127 Mabel Shaw, "Life Building at Mbereshi," *The LMS Chronicle* (1937), 110–11.
- 128 Hooper, *The Way of Partnership*, 35.
- 129 Shaw, *God's Candlelights*, 85–86. Chungu later remarried.
- 130 Shaw, 1933 Report, CWMA; Shaw, *God's Candlelights*, 183.
- 131 Shaw, Reports, 16 May 1932; 1933 Report, CWMA.
- 132 Hooper, *The Way of Partnership*, 24.
- 133 Ibid., 62.
- 134 Shaw, *God's Candlelights*, 175.
- 135 Elizabeth Cungu, "Young Africa to the Church of Christ in Britain: A Campaign Letter Brought by Miss Shaw by Air from the Children of Africa," *The Chronicle* (1937), 276–77. The letter was written in Chibemba and translated by Shaw.
- 136 Hooper, *The Way of Partnership*, i, 63.