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The Depth of the Colonial Project: The Entanglement of Race, Gender, Religion, and Class in the Emasculation of Africa

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Abstract

Encounters between Africa and Europe have occurred since ancient times, yet a decisive turn in these relations occurred during the height of European imperial and colonial expansionist explorations from the 15th century. The central question behind this article is how did Europe succeed in emasculating Africans and Africa? Through a multi-focal analysis combining systems-thinking and intersectionality approaches to analyzing these encounters, this article makes the following findings—Europe constructed an asymmetrical relationship in which race, gender, religion, and class were instrumentalized and weaponized, erasing or blurring the distinctions between the sacred and the secular to achieve the total domination and control of Africans while assuring themselves of access to all African resources.

Keywords: colonization; race; gender; class; religion; Africa

1. Introduction

The encounters between European peoples, kingdoms, and empires and African peoples and kingdoms produced a complex history of human interactions and relatedness whose outcomes and impacts continue in the present. While Africa has often been referred to as a single continent with one people, this implication does not always affirm the singularity that acknowledged plurality—one people but many, with little or no fixed geographical boundaries but overlapping and sometimes very different customs and practices.¹ “Pre-colonial Africa” was succeeded by colonial Africa, the product of encounters with Europe, with four critical spheres of these encounters being decisive in shaping not only colonial but also post-colonial Africa, that is, the trafficking and enslavement of Africans, the colonization of Africa, the evangelization of sub-Saharan Africa, and the imposition of Western epistemology (Western science of knowledge with an emphasis on reason and experience and objective universal truth (Wolenski 2004)) in Africa. These areas of encounters created an intrinsic web that entrenched the domination of Africa and Africans by Europeans (and the United States of America); a domination that saw race, gender, class, and religion mutually reinforcing each other for almost total domination.

At the infamous Berlin Conference of 1884–1885 (Mfum-Mensah 2025, pp. 8, 27–28), the gathered European powers and the United States of America strengthened the process of reorganization of African societies informed by racial logic, gender norms, and a profit-driven economic system that created new class stratifications in Africa. Alongside these politically and economically driven disruptions of pre-colonial Africa was the evangelization of sub-Saharan Africa by missionaries who shared kinship with those leading the political and economic takeover of Africans and Africa. By recognizing that



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the colonial project sought to and successfully achieved the domination of Africans and Africa by racially, politically, economically, epistemologically, and culturally emasculating Africans and Africa, this article paints a picture of an intended (sometimes unintentionally) complex image of colonization demonstrating collaboration, betrayal, exploitation, and resistance that continues to define the historic and continuing encounters between Africa and the West.

The first thesis of this article is that European ideas of “multiple human races” functioned as the undergirding and foundational basis upon which both the enslavement and trafficking of Africans and the colonization of Africans and Africa were legitimized. The intentional racial degradation of the humanity of Africans was critical in legitimizing “the gravest crime against humanity” (United Nations 2026, p. 6), that is, the trans-Atlantic trafficking and chattel enslavement of Africans. The same approach was used in legitimizing the direct colonization of Africa and Africans. It is also the position taken in this paper that gender was used to determine access, opportunities, and obstacles, leading to the emasculation of both femininity and masculinity among Africans (Parpart and Staudt 1989, p. 6; see also Mfum-Mensah 2025). The colonial economic system created new class distinctions within African communities and within the newly established colonies, in ways that built on and mutually reinforced race, gender, and class into a toxic web of domination. Finally, these three factors were welded together through some intricate theological and religious weaving of prejudices, stereotypes, and differences into a divinely ordained system of oppression (Rihoux and Otseng 2024, pp. 5–7; de Haas and Frankema 2018, pp. 973–74).

The second thesis is that the mutual reinforcement of race, gender, class, and religion created a system and structure that almost succeeded in erasing African identities and supplanting them with foreign identities, customs, and practices. This quad-focal analysis will also demonstrate how the colonial project blurred the distinction between the sacred and the secular in the European execution of enslavement and colonization globally. To carry out this task, the article will explore the instrumentalization and weaponization of race; the imposition of the Western concept of gender in Africa and how such a concept intersected with race. The next subsection will interrogate and explore religious interventions in the context of the colonization of Africa, in particular, sub-Saharan Africa, seeking to demonstrate how religion legitimized and was legitimized by race and gender, followed by an exploration of how colonization, aided by racial, gender, and religious ideologies solidified class distinctions in Africa. In the penultimate subsection, this article will analyze the impact of the intricate ensnaring web of domination created by the intersection of race, gender, religion, and class in colonial and post-colonial Africa. Some observations and implications will conclude this article.

2. The Instrumentalization and Weaponization of Race

In explaining the encounters between imperial Europe and Africa from the 15th century onwards, it is difficult to understate the role that European ideas about people—built by a combination of observations of physical differences, evolutionary theories, pseudoscience, and theological constructions—played. The outcome of these beliefs was the social construction of “races”, separating people into permanent and separate boxes. The encounters between Africa, Africans, and Europeans were influenced by this socially constructed ideology of races. This ideology of races affected inter-personal and community encounters, as well as political, economic, and religious encounters (Gunda 2024, p. 439). Africans had no concept of “race” but rather of family, clan, and tribe (ethnicity), which acknowledged diversity but also the sense of relatedness (Makgamatha 2024). The encounters between Europe and Africa were devoid of respect, mutuality, or the common good because the ideology of races constructed and legitimized inequalities and exploitation. The enslave-

ment and exploitation of Africans and Africa by imperial and colonial Europe was built on and legitimized by the socially constructed ideology of races. Not only was “race” instrumentalized, but it was also weaponized—race was used to achieve domination and unchecked access to the labor and resources that Europe craved, and it was adapted to attack, harm, and coerce victims and targets to accept their exploitation, as a blessing and a favor.

The descriptions of Africans by some early European explorers, colonial settlers, and missionaries help shed light on the role played by “race” in these encounters. Africans were nearer to animals than they were to Europeans, had no form of organization, and were permanently trapped in childishness. Lord Frederick Lugard, well known as the governor-general of Nigeria and born in India of missionary parents (Perham 2026), writes of Africans,

“in character and temperament the typical African of this race-type is a happy, thriftless, excitable person, lacking in self-control, discipline, and foresight, naturally courageous, and naturally courteous and polite, full of personal vanity, with little sense of veracity . . . is far nearer to the animal world than that of the European or Asiatic . . .—in proof of which he cites the lack of decency in the disposal of the dead, the state of complete nudity common to one or other, or to both sexes among so many tribes . . . and the nomadic habits of so large a section of the race”. (Lugard 1922, p. 69)

These observations and dehumanizing descriptions of Africans were widely disseminated across Europe and were central in shaping the mainstream European attitudes toward Africans.

“The Negros likewise lead a beastly kind of life, being utterly destitute of the use of reason, of dexterity of wit, and of all arts. Yea they so behave themselves, as if they had continually lived in a forest among wild beasts. They have great swarms of harlots among them; whereupon a man may easily conjecture their manner of living: except their conversation perhaps be somewhat more tolerable, who dwell in the principal towns and cities: for it is like that they are somewhat more addicted to civility”. (Africanus 1600, p. 42)

The African was described as one who could not manage business or people, loving the display of power with no understanding of its responsibility. However, the African was hardworking with little or no incentive (Lugard 1922, pp. 69–70)—explaining the enslavement and colonial exploitation of Africans. Further, the African was believed to have no moral virtue, surviving, instead, on instinct and only good at imitating anything new, even if unsuited to his environmental context (Lugard 1922, pp. 69–70). This led to the belief that Africans were children, actual ages notwithstanding, bearing no malice and grievance, only steadfastly loyal and affectionate (Lugard 1922, p. 70). “Such in brief are the peoples for whose welfare we are responsible² in British tropical Africa. They have a fascination of their own, for we are dealing with the child races of the world and learning at first hand the habits and customs of primitive man” (Lugard 1922, p. 72).

The differences in the understanding of wealth, land tenure, and the ecosystem were interpreted through the lenses of the ideology of races—the European ways were considered superior and the only right ways while the African ways were considered backward, primitive, and wrong (Lugard 1922, pp. 73–74). To “prove” the veracity of these prejudices and the dehumanization of Africans, a new category of Africans was created, without actually changing his stock:

“The Europeanised African differs not merely in mental outlook from the other groups, but also in physique. Doctors and dentists tell us that he has become less

fertile, more susceptible to lung-trouble and to other diseases, and to defective dentition—disabilities which have probably arisen from in-breeding among a very limited class, and to the adoption of European dress, which writers in the native press say is enervating and inimical to the health of the African”. (Lugard 1922, pp. 79–80)

By Europeanized African, Lugard was referring to Africans who had been educated by Europeans and had embraced not only Western epistemologies but Western culture as well, that she or he was on a path to becoming “white” (Lugard 1922, pp. 80–81).

In the scheme of the European ideology of races, Africans were the lowest form of humanity, primitive or backward while the European male sat at the apex of this chain of Being. The African was a paradox, on the one hand, a perpetual child and on the other hand, a criminal and immoral being, especially the African male. The child-African “needed” management (domination and exploitation) because they were not mature enough to make decisions for themselves, thereby making the enslavement and colonization of Africans a favor to this supposed “child-race”. The criminal-African, especially the African man, was guilty even before he committed the crime. The greatest danger the African man posed was “the sexual violation (rape) of the white woman” in what has gone down in history as “the Black Peril” (Majavu 2023, p. 3), referring to “incidents of alleged sexual violence by black men against white women” (Pape 1990), even though there were more cases of “white peril”—the sexual violation of black women by white men, than cases of white women being sexually violated by black men (Pape 1990). “The main reason for the differing official response to the “black” and “white perils” was the nature of race, class and gender relations in the colony. The “perils” were necessary in order to solidify racial and gender differences and thereby to construct a white and male supremacist social order” (Pape 1990). The sexual violation of white women was considered much more threatening to claims of racial superiority or white purity (Anderson 2010). The black peril propaganda was critical in strengthening the barriers between different ethnicities, including making apartheid—as official policy or general practice—desirable in colonies, industries, and sometimes even churches. It created an enduring sense of fear and hatred against Africans, and in some cases, especially the African man. In South Africa, the “English newspapers depicted Black people as ‘the most barbarous and monstrous of the human species’ who supposedly abducted stranded white women on the southern African coastline and coerced them into ‘vilest brutish prostitution’ . . . [equating] Black skin hypersexuality . . .” (Majavu 2023, pp. 4–5).

A combination of the infantilization of Africans, self-assigned trusteeship of Europeans over the affairs of Africans (Mfum-Mensah 2025, p. 27), and the re-purposing of biblical myths led to the placement of Africans at the base of the hierarchy of Being and informed the treatment of African adults, including the administering of corporal punishment (Anderson 2011), which was widely regarded as a method of disciplining children in many African communities. Trusteeship and the Hamitic myth (Genesis 9:18–29) were further strengthened by the supposed African’s physicality, “capable of great feats of strength and endurance . . . with but brief intervals for rest” (Lugard 1922, p. 68) to serve European imperial economic and colonial goals with Africans reduced to “hewers of wood and drawers of water” for the Christian nations of Europe and America (The Commission on Faith and Order (F&O) and The Programme to Combat Racism (PCR) 1975, p. 3). In this construction, “race” became both secular—biological and social—as well as sacred—biblical and theological.

The continuing legacies of enslavement and colonization are a product of this blurring of the sacred and the secular, informing “structural racism, racial inequalities, underdevelopment, marginalization and socioeconomic disparities affecting Africans and people of

African descent in all parts of the world” (United Nations 2026, p. 6). Even though direct enslavement and colonization ended, the colonial tentacles built around the ideology of races continues to intensify “the inequalities that afflict our communities today. When racism intersects with the economy, politics, religion, gender, climate change and conflict, it increases the vulnerabilities of the weak and marginalized people and makes racialized communities to question their own humanity” (Gunda 2024, p. 452). The critical outcome of the racialization of ethnicities has been the hierarchy of Being, which is an outcome of the intersection of sacred and secular beliefs and ideas. Without suggesting a chronological sequence in their origins, the following section will consider the imposition of Western conception of gender as yet another invention of the colonial web that not only questioned the binary of the sacred and the secular but also intentionally affirmed the intrinsic relationship of the sacred and the secular.

3. The Invention and Imposition of Western Concept of Gender in Africa

If the colonial and imperial project of European powers was undergirded by a racial logic, it also was undergirded by a gendered logic that created special obstacles in the paths of women. Both the racial and gender ideologies were meant to separate, fragment, and order society for comprehensive control by those who held power, authority, and influence. The tendency in studying the impact of gendering society has been to isolate gender, instead of approaching gender and the other variables through a systems-thinking approach, which acknowledges the mutual reinforcement of gender, “race”, and other pillars of discrimination. In this section, it is important to demonstrate how the European concept of gender was used not only to separate African men and women but to also disempower both for the benefit of the colonial system. In order to avoid repeating some of the oversights and mistakes of the past, it is important to clarify that while colonial gendering emasculated and disempowered African men and women, the experiences of colonial systems were differently felt by men and women (Lovett 1989, p. 23). A systems-thinking approach or an intersectional approach is critical in order to expose how seemingly separate aspects are intricately connected in serving the same ultimate goal, that is, domination and control (Crenshaw 1989).

Gender studies in Africa have been growing exponentially over the years from and in various disciplines to the point where it has become a discipline in its own right. Like in many other disciplines in the humanities in Africa—religious studies, theology, sociology, anthropology, etc.—gender studies in Africa can be described as a reactionary discipline. Its emergence is both inspired and triggered by the imposition of the Western concept of gender, that is, a rigid binary that cuts across space and roles (Comaroff and Comaroff 1991, p. 68), that was part of the colonial package. The Western conceptualization of gender was a rigid demarcation based on roles and hierarchies and impacting women’s socioeconomic and political opportunities, and Christian missionaries contributed significantly to entrenching this conception in the colonies (Montgomery 2017, p. 226).

The encounters between African communities and Muslim and Christian merchants, travelers, and missionaries has led some scholars to contend that the spread of these religions contributed to the distortion of Africa’s gender identities (Comaroff and Comaroff 1991). “These religions often promoted more rigid and patriarchal gender roles compared to Indigenous African religious traditions” (Rihoux and Otseng 2024, pp. 2–3). A lot has been theorized on the Western construction of gender identities, especially as part of the architecture of the industrial revolution. According to Comaroff and Comaroff (1991, p. 68), “it was not only the disparity of master and worker, rich and poor . . . that was sanctioned by Protestantism. Inequality of male and female was also taken to be a fact of life . . . Its enshrinement in the social canon of Protestantism was to assure that it would become a

vital part of the civilizing mission to ‘undomesticated’ savages abroad.” By the time the Western concept of gender was imposed on African communities, it already was living in the intersection of the secular (the capitalist order) and the sacred (Christian doctrine and theology).

The following were critical indicators of the success of the “modern engendering of self and society” in which “the workplace was seen increasingly as a distinctly male domain”, while “females, by contrast, belonged in (and to) the home” (Comaroff and Comaroff 1991, p. 68). This separation came to mean that economic production and public life became masculine or male domains, while consumption, reproduction and private life was feminized. Through these innovations, women in Europe, and later in Africa, had gradually been replaced in the areas of economic production and public life and firmly domesticated through the restrictive roles of wives and mothers, leading some observers to equate the Victorian version of the good woman with monasticism for men (Comaroff and Comaroff 1991, pp. 68–69). The conception of gender as binary, rigid and hierarchical is what gender studies in Africa have often been reacting to. A number of researchers have consistently highlighted that African societies had different understandings of gender identity depending on ethnic, cultural, and regional groups. While there were distinct roles, the roles and identities were not always rigid or hierarchical (Rihoux and Otseng 2024, p. 2), the binary gender conception was imposed by colonial settlers (Oyewumi 2016).

The intricate web of domination that was spawned by the colonial logic in Africa saw the imposition of gender being entrenched and sustained politically, economically, epistemically, and religiously. One area in which the double emasculation of African women was instigated by the colonial matrix of power (Quijano 2000) is in the access to and control of land and its produces. According to Lovett;

“Women’s access to land was indirect and thus ultimately insecure. Women possessed no independent, autonomous rights to land; rather, their access was mediated through men—either their fathers, adult sons, or, most notably, their husbands. Upon marriage, a husband allocated a portion of his land to his wife on which she was obliged to grow crops for the family’s subsistence. The husband retained control over unallocated fields, reserving rights of disposal over the produce therefrom, while his wife generally possessed the right to dispose only of surpluses from her food gardens. These precolonial patterns of authority over basic resources were manipulated and/or invoked by men during the colonial period to justify the gendering of rural class formation. In particular, catalyzed by expanding cash-crop production, and with the active cooperation of the colonial state, men’s supervisory rights over land increasingly were transformed into ownership rights”. (Lovett 1989, p. 25)

While Lovett observes the lack of “rights to land”, that might not be the most appropriate way of understanding pre-colonial African land tenure systems, which did not conceive land as a commodity to be owned but rather as a divine asset held and to be used in trust and preserved for the future generations. With most communities being patrilineal, land was passed on from generation to generation through the males, while in matrilineal communities the inheritance was passed through the females. The colonial systems exploited the lack of ownership by commodifying land and then legislating male ownership against females. Even then, most African men were then driven away from prime land, losing access to their traditional inheritance while being offered ownership of less fertile and generally dry pieces of lands—disempowerment by empowerment!

Another important observation made by Lovett is the introduction of cash-crop farming even for peasant farmers. Through this, farming became fully integrated into racial capitalism, which was at the core of the colonial project. There is evidence that “the impact

of colonialism manifested in the post-colonial era in most African societies due to the transformation of the economic structure that altered the gender arrangement in place, leading to the marginalization of women as colonial economies, disrupted traditional agricultural practices that were central to women's economic power" (Rihoux and Otseng 2024, p. 3). In some ways, the colonial project reproduced the gender imbalances it had innovated on during the European industrial revolution era. In the many areas that have been consistently interpreted as initiatives to empower African women, a deeper systems-thinking analysis shows how the same could have disempowered the same women. Disparities and embedded prejudices have been observed in the manner that politics, education, and economics were consistently structured to drive African men into paid capitalist labor fields, while women were being restricted and constrained within the domestic and private spaces, increasing their dependence on men than previously (Rihoux and Otseng 2024, p. 4). Not only were African women suffering from being "black", but they were also now paying the price for being "female", which was understood in Europe, as being lesser than man (Comaroff and Comaroff 1991), affirming the importance of intersectionality as a lens of interrogating systems of oppression (Crenshaw 1989). According to Rihoux and Otseng (Rihoux and Otseng 2024, p. 7);

"The start of colonialism began the gradual eradication of existing traditional laws, values, and morals, substituted by colonial laws and regulations which limited women's access to land and other possessions, resulting in their separation from their traditional roles in society, taking away their status and restraining them from active labour and be recipients of support."

Meanwhile, "roles of women in pre-colonial Ghana varied among ethnic groups, but in general women were independent and integral to the economy as traders and cultivators . . . Women held important political positions and were highly respected" (Morgan 1984, p. 257).

This is what African women lost to colonization, losing their claim to equality with all other human beings because they were already racially degraded against Europeans and now gender degraded against African men.

The existing differences in gender roles and social structures were exploited in ways that did not only emasculate African men but created a web of marginalization that deepened gender inequality in African communities. According to Jacobs (1989, p. 164), "British colonial authorities tended to not legislate directly in most matters concerning women, a concept in line with their policies of indirect rule and of leaving African institutions 'intact', while at the same time altering their structural bases." The widening gap between the experiences of African men and women that solidified gender inequality and injustice was not coincidental, rather it was designed and executed "[t]hrough their [colonial states] ideological, legal, and material efforts, states foster the mobilization of certain groups and issues. This mobilization usually benefits men rather than women" (Parpart and Staudt 1989, p. 6).

Education presents some compelling evidence for the empowerment to disempower approach to gendering colonized African communities. This area is also particularly important due to the immense contributions of missionaries, in the 18th and 19th centuries, in the area of education in the colonies. Among the many impositions as part of the web of control by colonial authorities, "they introduced formal education, coupled with the existing missionary activities, which further helped them to consolidate and impose their norms on the people . . . colonial education systems were designed to provide different types of education for boys and girls, reinforcing gender stereotypes. Education for girls was frequently focused on domestic skills, while that of boys was focused on professional skills" (Rihoux and Otseng 2024, p. 5). The African girl child was being chaperoned

into domesticity through education. To achieve and sustain these separate paths, it is alleged that

“European missionaries actively discouraged mixed schools, and that girls’ education was primarily aimed at training women to be good Christian wives. This meant inculcating an attitude of moral purity and ‘domestic virtues’, which included industrious activities such as household crafts. One particular petition to open an Anglican school for girls in 1911 summarizes the spirit of the time: it is absolutely necessary for the welfare of the country that the girls should also be educated to a degree suitable for their conditions in life. To teach the girls to lead pure, clean lives, and become industrious. To shew [sic] them the best methods for cultivating their gardens, and keeping their homes clean, and to teach them what I may call ‘Home Industries’, e.g., mat making, basket making, sewing, etc.”. (de Haas and Frankema 2018, pp. 987–88)

While these new skills could have contributed to sustainable women empowerment and independence, that was not the motivation of the missionaries who “encouraged women to learn handicrafts ‘mainly to improve their own homes’, and ‘craftware made by some women in a community could be made by others too, so there was little demand’” (de Haas and Frankema 2018, p. 988). While women were being trained or domesticated through skills that could keep them firmly restricted within the household, “the modernized (formal) sectors were primarily reserved for men” (Zu Selhausen and Weisdorf 2016, p. 230). The economic developments during the colonial period clearly demonstrate the close interaction between race, gender, religion, as well as class. Even though “[g]ender is . . . relatively autonomous from class, but this by no means implies . . . that it can be studied and apprehended across the boundaries of and independently from class” (Fatton 1989, p. 50). This is why a multi-focal analysis of the impact of colonization or any other oppressive system is desirable over and above narrow single lens analyses.

With African women firmly domesticated through a combination of economic, religious, and education policies and practices, the African man who had lost his entitlement to holding land in trust earned another feather—he was “a lustful creature” (Majavu 2023, p. 6) who led “a beastly kind of life . . . [surrounded by] “great swarms of harlots” (Africanus 1600, p. 42). To be an African man was synonymous with promiscuity and reckless sexual behavior leading to episodes of Black peril in many colonies. Armed with this racially motivated prejudice against African men, “white governments introduced ‘legalized lynching’—that is, the death penalty for the rape of white women by Black men” (Majavu 2023, pp. 3–4). The monster African man was now fully present in the self-fulfilling prophecies of the colonial settlers. Since the death penalty was only meant for African men accused and convicted of rape and not for white men who raped African women, the records of the criminal justice systems across Africa will show that indeed of all men found in the colonies, African men were the rapists.

The systematic separation of African families through colonial policies did not help the case for equality or the respect that African women had previously enjoyed. The systematic coercion or forceful transfer of African men into mining, industrial, commercial farming, and urban areas while restricting the movement of women, especially married women, meant families were separated for long periods of time, a major disruption for families that used to live in communities made up of the extended families. “In the economic aspect, colonial policy altered the existing order to the detriment of women due to the introduction of cash economies, which disrupted traditional gender roles, particularly in agriculture. Men were often recruited for wage labor, while women remained in subsistence farming, altering their economic and social statuses” (Rihoux and Otseng 2024, p. 5). With taxes payable only in cash and only by men, the non-cash generating activities and contributions

of women continued to be eroded and with it, the value of the women themselves (Lovett 1989, p. 27), who were fast equating the image of the European woman, who was good for the home and reproduction (Parpart and Staudt 1989, pp. 3–4).

The supposed “good news” of Christianity was also instrumental in solidifying the gender degradation of African women. Mercy Amba Oduyoye, having understood the intricate entanglement between Western patriarchy and Christianity, observed that “Christianity reinforces the cultural conditioning of compliance and submission and leads to the depersonalization of women” (Oduyoye 1995, p. 9). She bemoans the ways in which the church has been a vehicle for toxic patriarchy, leaving African women worse off than their pre-colonial ancestors. “It is painful to observe African women whose female ancestors were dynamically involved in every aspect of human life define themselves now in terms of irrelevance and impotence” (Oduyoye 1995, p. 175). Indeed, “Western churches implanted in Africa mirror Western Christian attitudes pre-1914 Europe” (Monohan 2004, p. 43). Without trying to romanticize pre-colonial African relations between men and women, the scholars cited above generally agree “that colonization deprived and disempowered African women in a significant way” (Gunda 2023, p. 488) and that it is possible to suggest that colonization resulted in the fore-grounding of gender inequality and oppression in African cultures (Dube 1999, p. 214), with Cheater adding that “it is probable that women always had more say in Shona society than was formally admitted” (Cheater 1986, pp. 66–67).

Within Christian communities, the systematic exclusion and marginalization of women included the areas of ordination, lay leadership, and also theological training such that even in post-colonial African churches, the exclusion or token inclusion of women continued and by it, women’s experiences were denied an opportunity to be heard and to shape the disrupted communities (Kanyoro 2002, p. 33), with Oduyoye championing the inclusion of women and their experiences to the theological agenda (Monohan 2004, p. 6). The systematic exclusion of women—or the alternative, the token inclusion—was happening at all levels, but ordinary women were the worst affected (Gunda 2023, pp. 488–89). In some ways, the colonial contribution to gender inequality in Africa has been to reinforce, reshape, deepen, and entrench discrimination against women by magnifying the widely acknowledged gender differences that existed in pre-colonial communities (de Haas and Frankema 2018, p. 987). Churches promoted the idea that the domination of women by men was divinely ordained; in other words, oppressing women was a sacred duty imposed on men, thereby intensifying the gender inequalities among indigenous populations (Montgomery 2017, p. 234). This is not to say there were no gender inequalities or male privileges in pre-colonial African communities (Gunda 2023, p. 500); it is an acknowledgement of the exponential growth of the inequalities through the colonial web of domination and control.

After all is considered, the hierarchy between men and women was made fully visible through the intricate workings of the colonial political, economic, epistemic, and religious components. In recognition of the validity of this assertion, we venture to consider how religion, in our case, Christianity, developed instruments that reinforced both “race” and “gender” as pillars of the colonial matrix of power.

4. Religious Interventions in the Colonial Project

Imperial and colonial Europe was also European Christendom; the Europe that colonized Africa was one whose culture, customs, and ideologies traced their origins to some Christian teachings or beliefs or were super-imposed on traditional and popular Christian teachings and biblical texts. Christendom was the result of Christianity serving as both the soil upon which ideas grew and the clouds that watered the ideas. Even before colonialism was systematically developed and implemented against Africa, Europe had

already developed and executed the “chattel enslavement of Africans” for centuries. A warped idea of “trusteeship” was developed through which Europeans believed they had a divine right to steward (exploit, oppress, dehumanize) “primitive peoples” from around the world (Mfum-Mensah 2025). There are some examples, especially in archives of the actual contributions of churches and individual Christians, such as the Moffat Treaty of 1888 Rhodesia, mediated by Robert Moffat, a missionary (Harris 1920, pp. 54–55), or Blantyre Mission’s 1880s campaign for imposition of the British rule in Malawi (K. R. Ross 2023, p. 160). Instead of focusing on these elements, this section will focus on foundational contributions from a Christian perspective. In Africa, Christianity encountered a religious heritage of ethno-specific spirituality that revolved around the interdependence of the underworld, the world of the living, and the spiritual realm. Believers accessed a Supreme Being through ancestral spirits and other spirit mediums (Platvoet 1996).

One of the foundational points of discomfort with most systems of oppression is the paradox of doing something that does not feel right and therefore going on to create a legitimating rationale that makes what is not right begin to feel right. The industrial revolution in Europe created a demand for more—more resources, more labor, more consumers, and more profits. These multiple “mores” pushed Europe to find new sources for these “needs”. Within that context, Christianity, which was the spiritual and intellectual bedrock upon which these developments were anchored, whether intentionally or not, provided the anchors that made injustice feel like a favor to those so exploited.

First and foremost, the Hamitic myth (Goldenberg 2003, p. 3) became a legitimating theological foundation upon which Africans (Black people) could be “legitimately” enslaved or colonized. Through biblical interpretation, the primeval myth of the flood (Gen.6-9) was read historically leading to the conclusion that the sons of Noah were progenitors of “races”, that Ham was the progenitor of the “Black race”, and that Ham and his descendants were divinely ordained to be enslaved (Park 2021). Having successfully read contemporary communities of the human family into the biblical story of Noah’s family, and reading the blessings and curses pronounced by Noah on his sons as timeless and ongoing, a firm Christian basis for justifying and legitimizing the injustices perpetrated by Europeans on Indigenous peoples and Africans through enslavement, imperialism, and colonialism had been established.

Beyond the separation, another decisive move was the “blackening” of Ham, which would legitimize the enslavement of Africans. Ham was painted Black and inferior, meaning Black Africans were the descendants of Ham and his inferiority and therefore, legitimate objects for enslavement and exploitation. The curse of Ham was now being read as “the curse of blackness”, and its reach was “not merely physical; it affects all intellectual, moral, and mental capacities. In this way, Ham’s inferior status is passed down through his lineage in the very character of his descendants” (Park 2021, p. 7). There was a convergence between faith and (pseudo-)science in this view of Africans. This direct infusion of Africans into the “curse of Ham” was widely shared among Christian writers of 18th and 19th century Europe and North America, both in Europe and beyond. “Morgan John Rhys (1760–1804), a Welsh Baptist minister, associated the curse with other physical features including hair: ‘Where a curse is, a mark you think will follow. The colour, shape, and even the hair on their heads, prove the poor Africans to be children of the curse, and fit for nothing but drudgery and slavery’” (Goldenberg 2017, p. 219). According to Charles A. Gallagher,

“The classification of the earth’s population into racial categories ostensibly based on sound scientific principles (see (Pittard 1927) on classification of human races, (Aylward et al. 2026) on the science of eugenics), was nothing more than the religious dogma of the day given a veneer of respectability by the scientific community ... a scientific retelling of the curse of Ham, manifest destiny, and

God's will that heathens (anyone not white and Christian) must be converted, controlled, or eliminated. Science confirmed what Christian theologians knew all along: The white race was God's chosen people and as such had the right to claim all natural resources and to subjugate any population deemed culturally inferior, heathen, pagan, or uncivilized". (Gallagher 2007, p. 11)

By emphasizing blackness as accursed and enslaved, whiteness was theologically constructed as blessed and free by implication (Delgado and Stefancic 1997, p. 82).

With European travelers, missionaries, and colonial settlers consistently promoting the superiority of Europeans, in what continues to date as "white supremacy", while Africans were consistently painted as child-like primitive people incapable of self-determination and only capable of hard labor, the idea of trusteeship in matters involving Africans were shared by many Europeans. The idea of European supremacy itself found fertile soil in Christian teachings and claims, especially in the fact that European Christians appropriated "the idea of the elect, the privileged versus those soiled with sin and defeated" (Caldararo 2020, pp. 4–5); this belief portrayed Christians as the new Israel, chosen by God. Being the elect or chosen, Europeans catapulted themselves to the top of the hierarchy of Being. Even though leadership was masculinized in most Christian traditions, African men were excluded, losing their claims to being divine patriarchs. In addition to that, the skin pigmentation of Europeans was theologically affirmed "as a marker of divine beatitude and blessing. Whiteness is divinized, while blackness is dehumanized. Whiteness exists not only as the opposite of non-Whiteness, but as the superior opposite" (Haney-Lopez 2006, p. 20). Whiteness was pure and was to be protected, gaining legal status where nonwhite blood was considered polluting, thereby disqualifying anyone with a drop of nonwhite blood from whiteness (Park 2021, p. 14). European Christians adopted and adapted Israelite concepts of purity and applied to their racialization projects in the process, blurring the separation of the sacred and the secular. That European empires' and kingdoms' successful conquering of the world was interpreted as "a vindication of a white covenant with the Old Testament god. We find this not only in the Spanish conquistadors, but also in the various sects from England, France, and the Low Countries like the Puritans" (Caldararo 2020, p. 4).

There are considerable conversations around the concept of whiteness in anti-racism circles. This concept has also been found to build on some Christian core teachings and theologies that use a binary approach to divide the world into good and bad, in which the good group is symbolized by the color "white" while "black" was the color chosen to symbolize the bad group. The ideology of White Supremacy was accompanied by a culture of Whiteness, which was described as "a way of being in the world and seeing the world that forms cognitive and affective structures able to seduce people into its habitation and its meaning making"—and specifically those ways of being, which privilege the bodies and perspectives of people of European descent and a pale skin tone" (Jennings 2020, p. 9). According to Jennifer Martin, "whiteness and white racialized identity refer to the way that white people, their customs, culture, and beliefs operate as the standard by which all other groups are compared" (Martin 2022, p. 16). Whiteness created a hierarchy of cultures, epistemologies, economic and political systems consistently privileging anything practiced by "white people" and seeking to impose all such "white ways" on all the other peoples that Europe encountered globally.

The binary of Black–White expresses how power and privilege were assigned, "[t]hus, the terms "blackness" and "whiteness" represent conceptual machineries of universe-maintenance relative to the concept, "race"" (Guess 2006, p. 656). Again, the binary or the colors therein are more ideological than mere colors; they denote power, privilege, superiority, powerlessness, deprivation and exploitation. The ultimate aspiration for those

marked “black” was to upgrade themselves toward whiteness, including within Christian communities. “For every Christian in the world to find their Christian story is to find themselves in Whiteness . . . Christian culture has, for many centuries, been shaped by Whiteness; Christian theology, culture, and ecclesial practice have been Eurocentric” (Munyao and Tanui 2021, p. 2). The degradation of blackness can be traced back to the Islamic world that associated blackness with inferiority and “legitimate” exploitation, yet Europe took the degradation of blackness to another level. “To reiterate, it is in the *fatwas*, the theological polemics, and the *fiqh* jurisprudential treatises that religiously sanctioned anti-Blackness and the idea that Blacks are suitable or destined by providence for enslavement emerges. The intersectionality of theology, faith, race, and sociological verities produced a powerful economy of anti-Blackness” (Ochonu 2021, p. 15). This is not surprising owing to the Trans-Sahel enslavement of Africans, which obviously required some kind of justification (E. Ross 2010).

The anti-blackness trajectory in Europe was found in European thinking and illustrations of the Christian faith, where for example,

“historical research found that in Northern Europe by the 15th Century, clear links can be seen between dark skin color and evil and inferiority with respect to gypsies who were feared and hated for both their darkness and their alleged sexual prowess . . . by the 1690s, there was widespread opinion that Negroes were only one link above the apes—also from Africa—in the great chain of being . . . Anglo-Saxon scholars such as . . . , David Hume³, and even Ben Franklin⁴ openly expressed popular opinions that dark skin color was linked to moral and mental inferiority”. (Bernal 1987, pp. 201, 203)

The European binary system was theologically reframed to divide most things into two, using the Bible to theologically justify the lived experiences of their time. These theological ideas were disseminated not only in theological treatises but in popular images—European artists illustrated God, Jesus, and Angels following the image of European people (especially men), while Satan and his rebellious angels were constantly illustrated as Black people. Darkness was equated with evil and confused with the African skin pigmentation, darkness was blackness and therefore evil. The images of Adam and Eve, in drawings and illustrations resembled European people (Haruyama 2024, pp. 120–21). The theology of the superiority of White people and the inferiority of Black people was so thoroughly shared that it became the everyday truth for all, enlisting widespread acceptance and affirmation by all, oppressor and oppressed, with the asymmetrical power relations acting like self-fulfilling prophecies (Hall 1985, p. 310). Having created an intricately woven system of oppression that predetermined who succeeded and who failed, the predetermined failures of Africans were read as confirmation of the truth of the widely shared prejudices and stereotypes of Africans as child-like primitive people who could not govern themselves. For that reason, the Europeans had an obligation, a burden even, to shepherd these infants through a warped concept of trusteeship. While trusteeship was applied across all spheres—political, legal, and economic—it was also applied in religious circles. “. . . many European Christian missionaries institutionalized religious trusteeship. . . In Africa, European Christian missions . . . believed . . . they had the responsibility and obligation to drain Indigenous African religions of their powers” (Mfum-Mensah 2025, p. 27).

The European trusteeship policy in Africa had a clear goal, that is, to exploit, dominate, and take possession of resources—human and material—of Africans (Mfum-Mensah 2025, p. 27). The justification for this policy was the presentation of Africans as people without organization, deficient in the management of self and resources, yet bestowed with beastly industry (Lugard 1922, pp. 69–70). Therefore, the Europeans believed that these were

“the peoples for whose welfare we are responsible in British tropical Africa. They have a fascination of their own, for we are dealing with the child races of the world, and learning at first hand the habits and customs of primitive man” (Lugard 1922, p. 72).

Having interrogated the way “race” and “gender” were instrumentalized and weaponized in service of the colonial goal of political and economic domination of Africa, this section added yet another dimension, that is, “religion”, and how it not only legitimized race and gender but also reinforced the economic and political goal of imperial and colonial Europe. In the following section, we throw in a brief analysis of how “class” became a reflexive variable—a pillar that sustained colonization alongside race, gender, and religion, as well as an outcome of the economic, political, and religious innovations of the colonial project.

5. Solidification of Class Distinctions

In the previous three sections we have explored the colonial contributions to the emergence and deployment of “race”, “gender”, and “religion” as categories and pillars through which the colonial goal of getting access to, dominating, and controlling resources and people could be realized. If one is to fully expose the colonial matrix of power, then one cannot rely on piecemeal analyses, often involving one variable; what is needed is a systems-thinking, intersectionality or multi-variable analytical lens. This section will add “class” to our systems-thinking approach to the dexterity of the colonial matrix of power in Africa. According to Christensen and Levinson (Christensen and Levinson 2003, p. 189),

“The term *social class* generally refers to a group of people who share the same socioeconomic status or who have common economic, cultural, and social characteristics. The term is popularly used to divide people into categories such as upper, lower, or working class. The category is important for understanding questions of social stratification—the structured inequality of material and symbolic rewards in a given society. Issues of social mobility, collective action, and community and group consciousness are all touched by the concept of social class.”

Defined and understood in this way, there clearly existed some forms of social classification in pre-colonial Africa, especially as economic wealth was not always equally or equitably distributed. This section seeks to briefly interrogate the manner in which these traditional social and economic faultlines solidified into “class” once they had been infused with colonial ingredients and this new form of class entered into a mutually reinforcing relationship with race, gender, and religion in Africa.

The economic, education, and political innovations of the colonial system created an environment in which African peoples had to either resist or collaborate, thereby engendering intra-African competition. While commenting on the context of the United States, Smith’s observations regarding the availing of some privileges to some among the exploited masses holds true for Africans with those embracing the economic opportunities and education offered by the colonial system. Many were seduced by this promise for upward social mobility in the colonial system (Smith 2016, p. 69). What made these seductions even more attractive was the fact they were theologically and biblically undergirded and justifiable; the only realistic option was to take whatever the system gave one. By the early 20th century, Lugard observed that “Europeanised Africans represent no tribe or community, but form a class apart in the principal cities of the West Coast, where they reside in a varying minority among an illiterate population in the tribal stage of development, amid sordid surroundings for men of education and culture” (Lugard 1922, p. 80). Similarly, the “rapid Christianization in Buganda and its subsequent diffusion was predicated on an alliance between British missionary and colonial interests and Ganda elite factions, and

stress the crucial role of native converts” (de Haas and Frankema 2018, pp. 973–74). In some communities, those far removed from the traditional power structures used the colonial system to steal a march on the traditional system, while in other places, as in the case of Uganda, the African elites used the colonial system to strengthen their hold on power.

When we considered the rise in rigid gender binaries, we noted how education and economic opportunities coalesced to place African men ahead of African women in terms of gender relations. That analysis can also be extended to explain the relative march to class superiority for African men in general. Education and paid jobs were made available to men earlier than they were made accessible to African women, thereby creating a web of gendered and religious class categorization, in which Christian men stood a better chance of gaining a class advantage over non-Christian men and African women (Cheater 1986, p. 71). African women experienced a degradation in their status because they were women, owing to the reinforcement of traditional gender differences with the colonial gender binary that reflexively informed and was informed by economic policies. According to Gunda,

“As a result, the pre- colonial systems of gender-fluid relations could no longer survive. The colonial era also fundamentally altered the value of land from an inheritance that could not be sold because it was held perpetually in trust for future generations even though it was “owned” by men. In reality, land was beyond any material value. The colonial era transformed land into a bankable, commercial asset with monetary value. It could be bought or sold, and it could be absolutely owned. Even though women in most communities could not “own” the land, under colonial rule their situation worsened”. (Gunda 2023, p. 498)

While African women lost in multiple ways, especially because of the conflation of race, gender, religion and class configurations, their only hope for a high social and economic status was now dependent on “inordinately on aligning themselves with powerful men” (Fattou 1989, p. 48). The class solidification of the colonial radically transformed and worsened the situation of African women, making them lose more equality ground to African men, even as African men were being brutally emasculated by the same system that was making them claim superiority over women. According to Lovett,

“East, Central, and Southern African women’s experiences of the colonial state as it consolidated its rule; as it intervened to largely determine the conditions under which a migrant labor force would be reproduced and controlled; as it promoted cash-crop production and undertook a series of interventions into African systems of land usage and tenure all differed from those of men. This difference ultimately was rooted in the gendered nature of class formation in that under a colonial capitalist system largely predicated on male migrant labor with subsistence wages, production increasingly came to be gendered male, while reproduction conversely became gendered female ... The strategic nature of women’s structural position as reproductive laborers both subsidized capitalist production and ensured the continuity of those precapitalist social relations on which the edifice of colonial rule was constructed”. (Lovett 1989, p. 23) (See also, Jacobs 1989, p. 164)

Class formation was further legitimized and strengthened by the colonial infantilization of Africans because being perpetual infants necessitated European trusteeship over them, but it also solidified the distinction between the European class (the adults) and the African class (the infants), with the implication that the higher class ought to receive privileges for the burden of managing the lower class. Adult African men lost their assumed patriarchal status, especially in public, where they were treated like children by the colonial settlers. As infants, African men and women were dispossessed of their agency in telling

their own stories (Mfum-Mensah 2025, pp. 34–35). One of the key structures was “class” by which struggling Africans became victims not only of the unfair economic policies but of narratives that blamed them of laziness.

6. Race, Gender, and Class Intricately Knitted with Religious Impulses

In the preceding sections, we have interrogated the roles played by race, gender, religion, and class in sustaining the colonial structure and system in Africa. When these pillars are thought of as independent of each other, it blurs our view of colonization and coloniality. With the formal ending of colonization, African states have been run by governments of indigenous Africans and with that it blurs the continuing role and function of the racialization of Africans, or the coloniality in gender relations in Africa, or in African education. In the case of colonization and coloniality, the colonial project was greater than the sum of its parts—the pillars could not achieve as much if they stood independent of each other than they achieved as an intricate system built on mutual reinforcement by these pillars; it constructed the “colonial matrix of power” (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013). While Europe had already been going through phases of processing and revising the framework of separating the sacred (Church) from the secular (State) (Sandberg and Doe 2007), the colonial adventures respected no such boundaries, blurring and often erasing the boundaries between the sacred and the secular. In the encounters between Africans and Europeans, the Bible was critical in legitimizing the colonially constructed racial, gender, religious, epistemic, and class hierarchies (Park 2021, p. 6). Due to the socially constructed needs felt, such as cash, education, jobs and the power of the recommendation of the missionary, most Africans embraced Christianity and Christian education for which the Bible served as the all-inclusive textbook. The hierarchies were presented as God’s order. An intricate web of oppression emerged out of the weaving of these pillars, and its impact continued across the African continent to varying degrees of success in the supposed post-colonial contexts.

One of the enduring outcomes of this web of deceit and exploitation surrounds the “Black Peril”⁵ meta-narrative, which, by drawing on race, gender, religion, and class, constructed the image of the African man who was primitive, obsessed with sexual lust, and knew no god, as opposed to the White woman who was cultured, civilized, and vulnerable. This enduring narrative continues to follow Black men, continues to define them and, in the process, shapes everyday encounters between them and women. In the context of the colony where these narratives emerge, the number of “black peril” cases—Black men violating White women—were extremely small compared to “white peril” cases—White men sexually violating Black women. The main reason for the differing official response to the “black” and “white perils” was the nature of race, class and gender relations in the colony. The “perils” were necessary in order to solidify racial and gender differences and thereby to construct a white and male supremacist social order (Pape 1990). The white male was constructed as the savior, while the black male was the destroyer. The superiority of the white male was established through the superiority of his race, gender, religion, education, and class, thereby establishing total domination over the African man and, by extension, the African woman. The (white) male supremacist colonial order permeated all spheres of life and was gradually embraced by African men, in the absence of the alpha white male, thereby (further) degrading “the position of women in African societies, who could neither be defined as inferior to men, superior, nor equal, [but] reflected its worldview, which was defined as more wholistic than dualistic” (Dube 1999, p. 222). When reviewing the growing body of literature in women’s studies, Greene acknowledges the growing body of evidence suggesting “African women often held powerful economic, religious and political positions within their societies” (Greene 1999, pp. 17–18), something that was dismantled through

the colonial matrix of power. This was neither a sacred nor a secular domination, it was comprehensive because it had effectively erased the sacred and the secular distinctions.

Another enduring outcome of the colonial process is the infantilism and trusteeship approach to the relationships between the colonizer and the colonized. An intricate narrative was constructed drawing on all the colonial pillars that dehumanized Africans by projecting Europeans as “adults,” “superior,” “civilized,” “godly,” “developed,” “advanced,” and progressing, and Africans as “infants,” “inferior,” “primitive,” “pagans,” “underdeveloped,” “stunted,” and “retrogressing” (Mfum-Mensah 2025, p. 7). These narratives were not told in secular spaces alone; European missionaries embraced such narratives and constructions in sacred spaces, thereby justifying the European claims to trusteeship over the affairs of Africans in all spheres of life. Trusteeship became the strategy by which Europeans assumed total domination of Africans and their resources and identities—not only taking control of the secular but the sacred but also abrogating for themselves a right to dominate, oppress, and violate the rights of other groups (Mfum-Mensah 2025, p. 2). Trusteeship created the “white man’s burden” by which they were obliged “to correct the social and political institutions of non-Europeans so they can enjoy the universal standard of European sameness” (Mfum-Mensah 2025, p. 22). For Africans, “to be” was “to be like Europeans”—in politics, economies, religion, education, and class. Colonial trusteeship, therefore, represents acts of violence, injustice, dispossession and expansion, the accumulation of wealth and privileges by “colonial trustees,” and the accumulation of debts, inferiority, and vulnerability to the colonized (Bhambra and Newell 2022, p. 2). The web of oppression that was woven during the imperial and colonial era has continued to determine the outcomes for Africans even in post-colonial contexts because the web manifests as the heart of coloniality in these contexts.

7. Conclusions and Implications

In concluding this article, it is important to acknowledge that in the construction and function of the colonial matrix of power (Quijano 2000; Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013), the blocks of race, gender, religion, and class were intricately woven together to achieve the colonial goal of access to, domination, and control of/over Africa, Africans, and the resources that were found across the continent. Without an intentional deployment of a systems-thinking or intersectionality approach to study the mutual inclusive and reinforcement of these blocks, the full breadth and depth of the colonial intentions is never fully revealed. Without claiming that the blocks work in a chronological sequence, the strength of the web is in fact because these blocks did not emerge in a chronological sequence; rather, each context determined which block would be laid first. What is apparent is that racial, gender, religious, epistemic, and class hierarchies were intricately interwoven, reinforcing each other in ways that created lasting socially constructed realities that continue to influence and impact global relations. Central to the findings of this article is the disruption, emasculation, and disempowerment of African men and women through the system of colonization. African men and women lost traditional instruments of authority, such as land, access to the spiritual realm, and the capacity to produce and determine the disposal of produces. Traditional political and legal frameworks were destroyed, leaving them at the mercy of systems that were foreign to them. Sadly, the legacies of the colonial system (coloniality) continues to manifest across African states. The contextual variations in the application of the colonial matrix of power also calls for narrow-focused studies, addressing regional, national, and even tribal experiences. Therefore, decolonizing actions must focus on untangling these intricately constructed intersections. Unless the colonial system and coloniality are undone through comprehensive, interconnected interventions, they cannot be successfully dismantled.

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Notes

- ¹ While we acknowledge the multiplicity of societies across Africa, the encounters between Europeans and different African societies tended to follow patterns that were a result of the colonial matrix of power, producing some outcomes that had minor variations. This work does not seek to interrogate the context-specific outcomes and intentionally consults scholars who studied different African communities.
- ² Italics my own to emphasize the emergency and justification of the “white savior mentality” or the “white man’s burden” that became the justification of colonization and colonial domination of Africans.
- ³ In a footnote on page 213, David Hume writes, “I am apt to suspect the Negroes to be naturally inferior to the Whites . . .”, see (Hume 1903).
- ⁴ Franklin ([1755] 1817) writes about America “. . . why should we in the sight of superior beings, darken its people? why increase the sons of Africa, by planting them in America, where we have so fair an opportunity, by excluding all blacks and tawneys, of increasing the lovely white and red? But perhaps I am partial to the complexion of my Country, for such kind of partiality is natural to Mankind” p. 10/224. <https://dn760006.eu.archive.org/0/items/increasemankind00franrich/increasemankind00franrich.pdf> accessed 29 June 2026.
- ⁵ The South African government set up The Black Peril Commission, which was gazetted on 21 June 1912, The Advertiser, Adelaide. <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/5353290> accessed 29 June 2026.

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