On the Legacy of Christian Missions

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Introduction

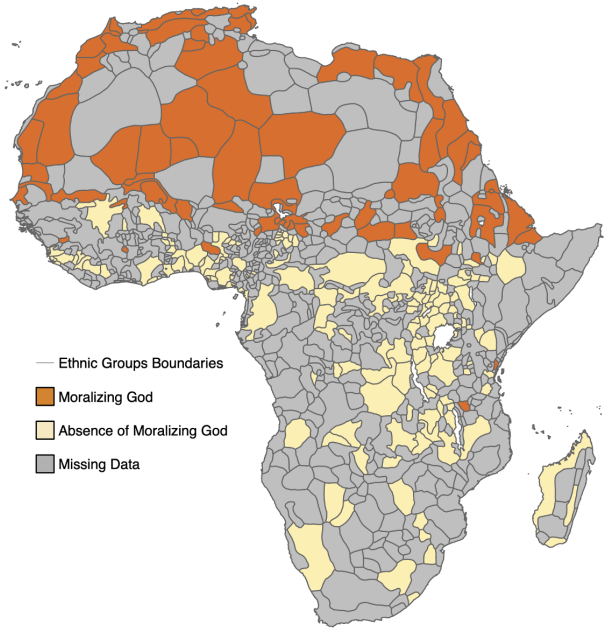
- Missionary: a person who is sent to a foreign country to teach people about religion, especially Christianity *Oxford Dictionary of English*
- Missionary work has been a driving force in the development of Christianity since the 5th century.
- Both Protestant and Catholic involved, divided in dozens of orders
- Disclaimer: The literature is vast... I won't be able to talk about everything!



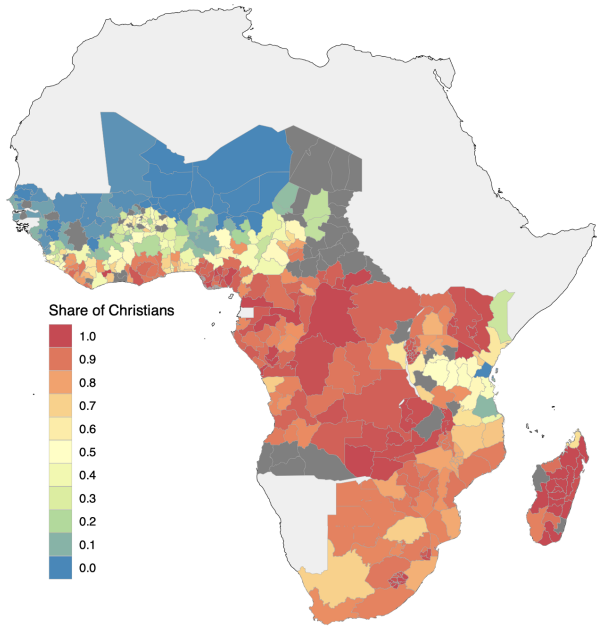
Monsignor Augustin Hacquard 1860-1901

Introduction

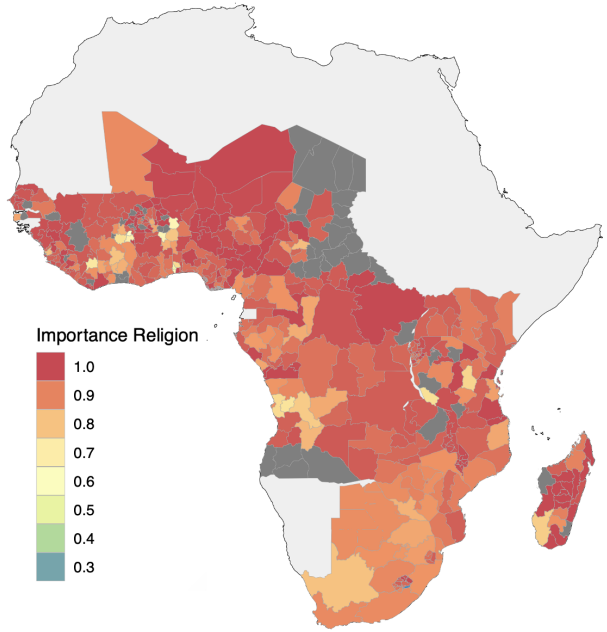
- The rapid expansion of Christianity was a huge cultural transformation within Africa



Prevalence of Moralizing God in XIXth Century (Murdock, 1959)

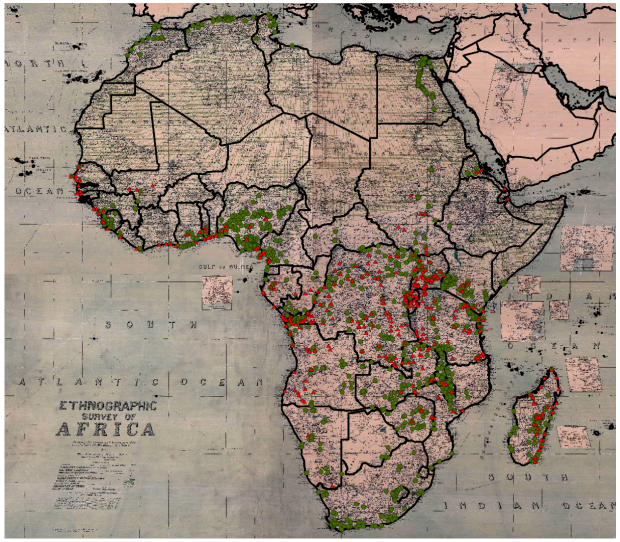


Share of Christians (data from Gallup 2009-2011)



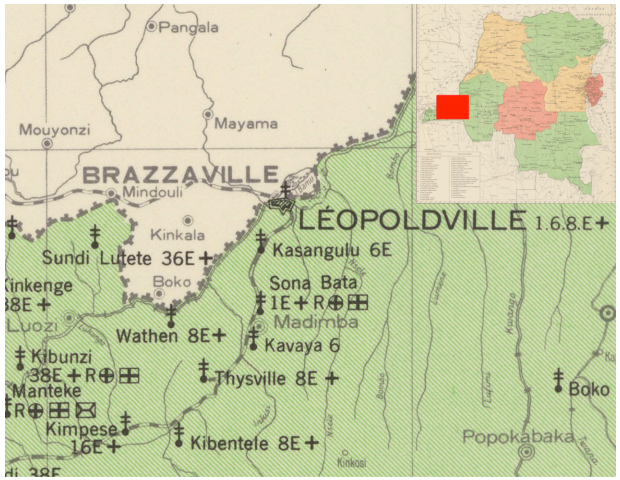
Importance of Religion (data from Gallup 2009-2011)

Data sources



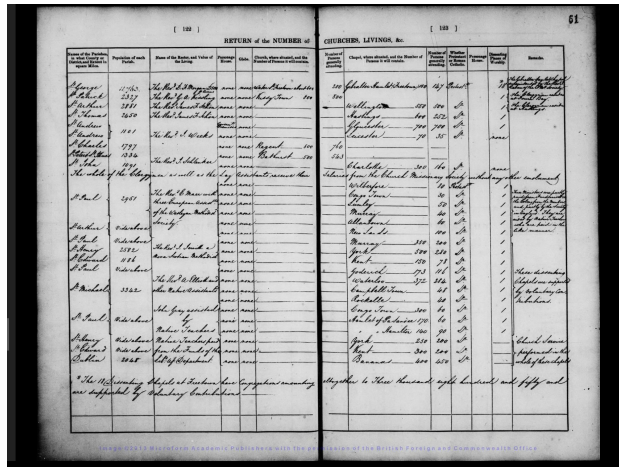
Ethnographic Survey of Africa (Roome, 1925)

Used in (Nunn, 2010)



Algemene atlas van Congo, 1954

(Donat-Bouillud et al., 2022)

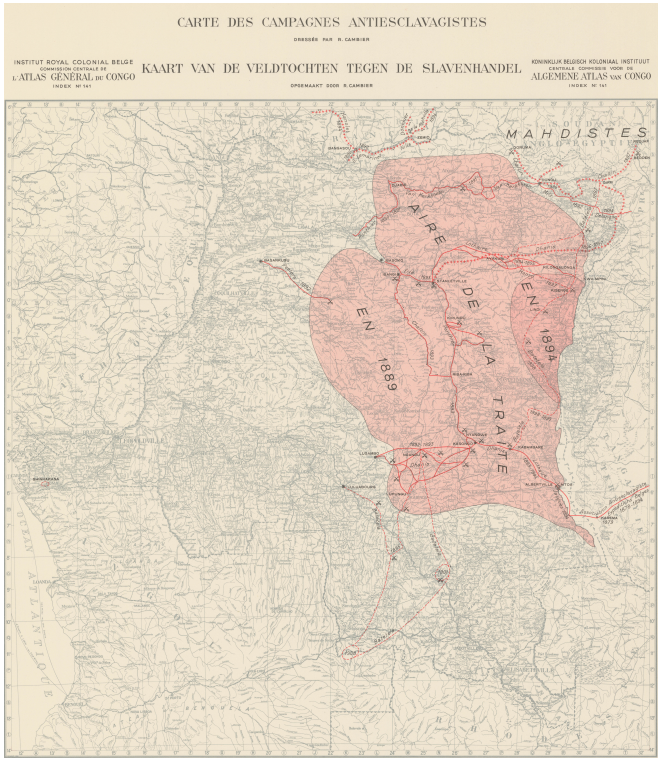


Ecclesiastical census returns

(Jedwab et al., 2019)

Challenges to Identification

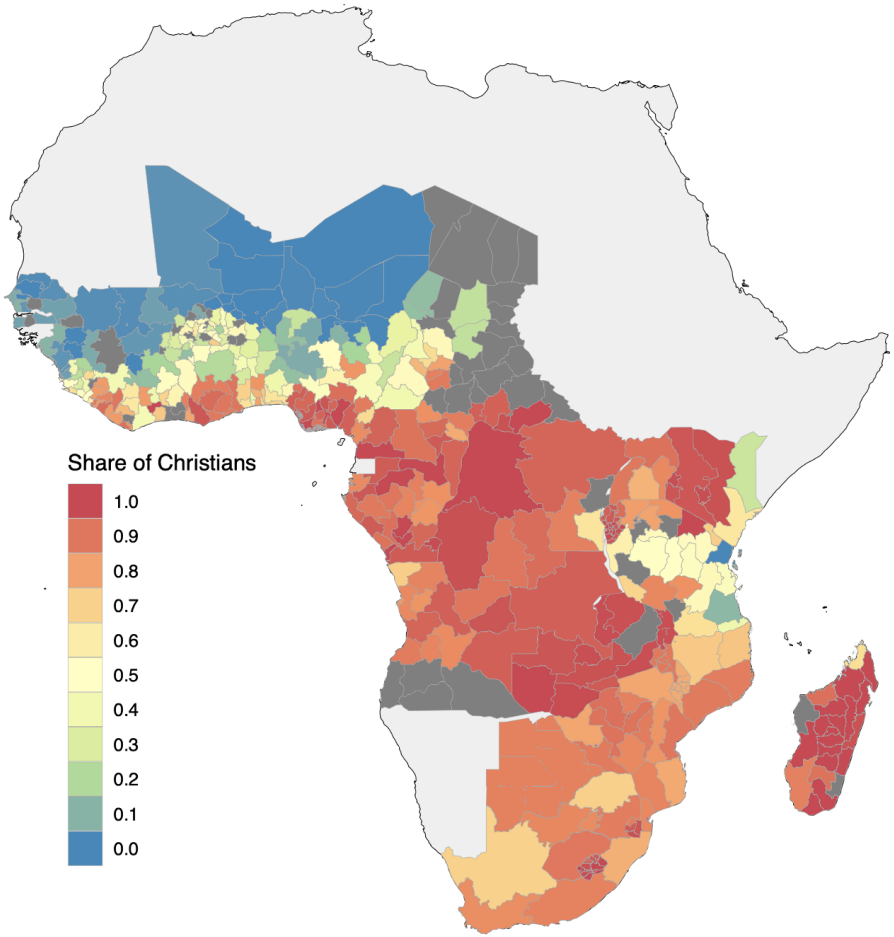
- Missionaries selected where to settle:
  - Slavery
  - Path-dependence explorer routes
  - Malaria was a major challenge before the 1850s
  - Soil fertility
  - Etc.
- Missionaries selected the goods they provided:
  - Supply versus (Africans) demand
- Issue of measurement error:
  - Atlases not representative of the universe of missions (Jedwab et al., 2019)



Area of the slave trade in the Congo, late XIXth century

Culture: Christianization

Figure: Christianization Within Africa

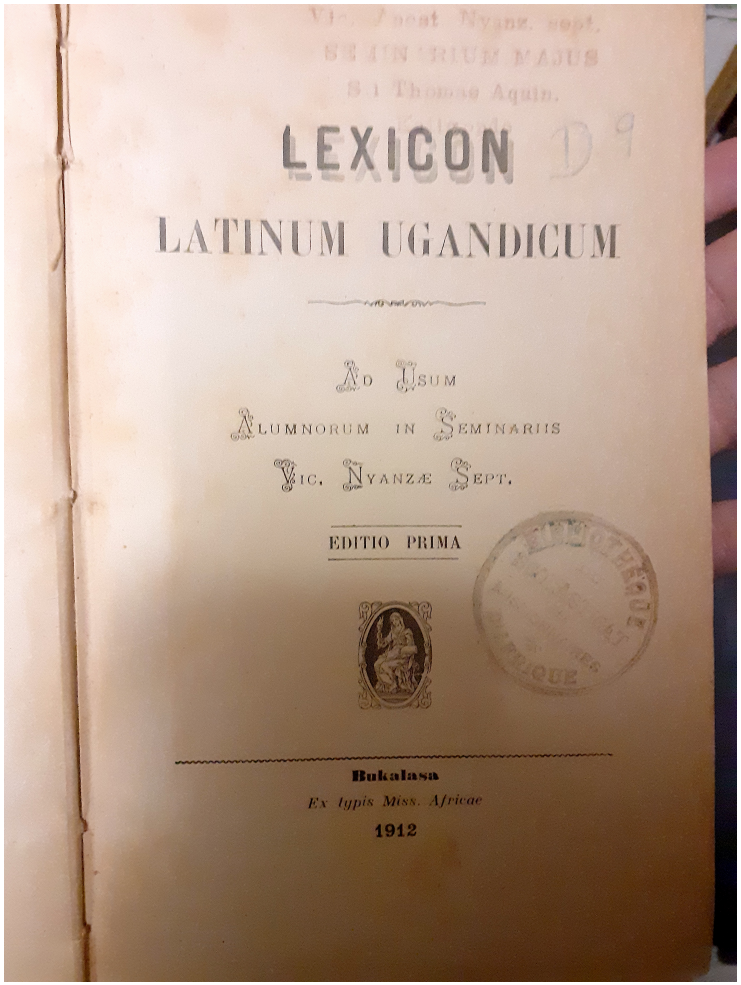


- Strong effect of exposure to Christian missions on Christian identity today Nunn (2010)
- Data: (Roome, 1925) & Afrobarometer data from 17 countries
- Exposure: Ethnicity level exposure (Murdock, 1959) (& place-based exposure)
- Results: Ethnicity-level exposure had greater impact on conversion than place-based exposure.

Notes: Source: Gallup (2009-2011).

Education

Figure: Latin-Ugandan Dictionary (1912)



- Spreading the gospel was insufficient to convert people
- Thus, missionary enterprises invested "heavily" in human capital (education, health)
- Historical exposure to Christian missions correlates today with higher education.
  - Effect is higher for protestant missions, especially for women (Nunn, 2014)
  - However, context matter a lots (e.g., in DRC, Catholic missions were favored by the colonial administration (Donat-Bouillud et al., 2022))
  - Competition for the ears encouraged productivity (Gallego and Woodberry, 2010)

Political Participation

Figure: The Printing Press in Bamanya (DRC)

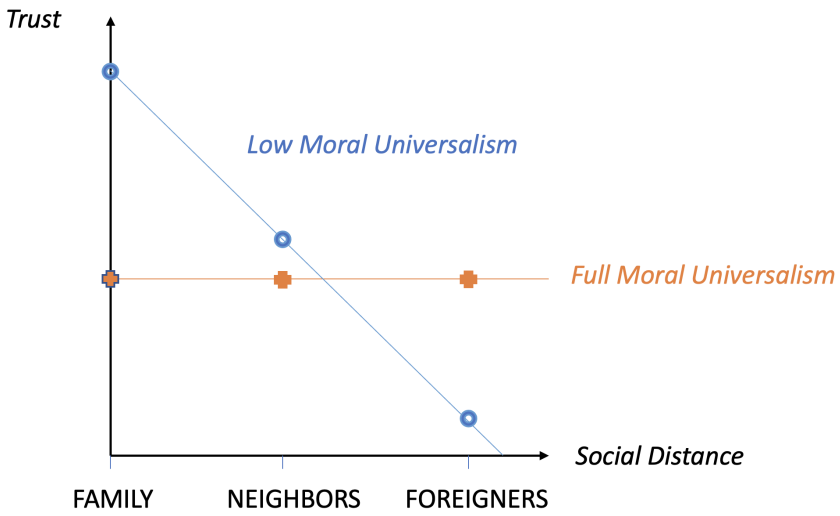


Source: AMSC-B, Fonds photographie, courtesy of Honore Vinck.

- Robust correlation between exposure to protestant missionaries and democracy (Woodberry, 2012)
- Within Africa, historical missions (with a printing press) are associated with more literacy, newspaper readership and political participation (Cagé and Rueda, 2016; Wantchekon et al., 2015)
- (Cagé and Rueda, 2016) also reveals a link between printing press exposure and trust

Cultural Traits

Figure: Concept of Universal Moralism

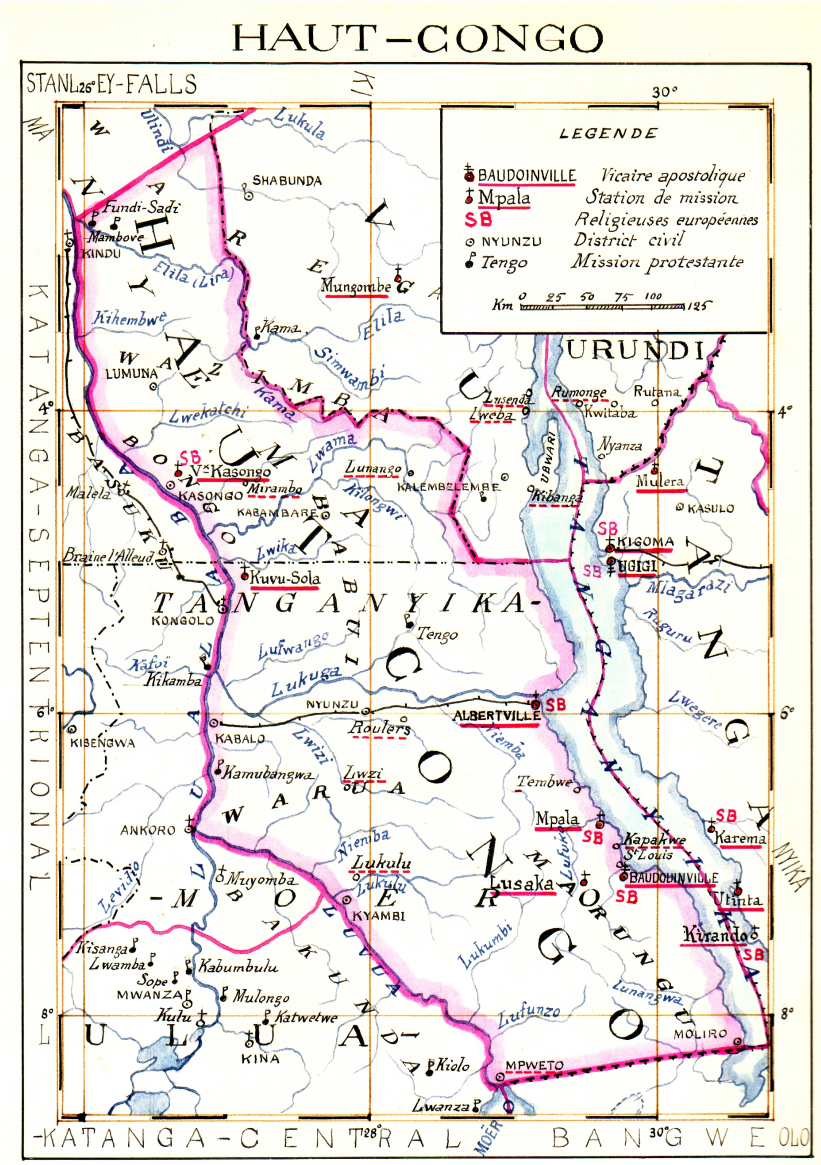


Note: Adapted from (Enke et al., 2021)

- Did missionaries lead to more moral universalism?
- In Europe, the Church was instrumental in the transforming clan and tribe-based societies into impersonal relationships-based societies (Schulz et al., 2019; Henrich, 2020)
- Bergeron (2019) took this hypothesis to the data in Kananga (DRC).
- Fining: More exposure reduced in-group bias
  - More favorable attitude towards out-group
  - More out-group within individuals' social networks
  - Higher propensity to recommend out-group members for a job
- Dozie will talk about missions and (level of) trust

Final Thoughts

- Missionaries had massive impacts on development trajectories
- There are many other aspects I did not cover:
  - Anti-gay attitudes (Ananyev and Poyker, 2021)
  - Prevalence of HIV (Cagé and Rueda, 2020)
  - Catherine will talk about missions and health (family planning)
  - and many more...
- There is still room for research:
  - What factors explain persistence? (Supply / Demand)
  - Dissecting the heterogeneity between the different sects
  - Etc.



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