

The Good Samaritan and Minorities in Africa: Christianity, the US Christian Right and the Dialogical Ethics of *Ubuntu*

Kapya Kaoma and Petronella Chalwe

ABSTRACT

In this article, we explore the influence of colonial and post-colonial missionary activities on Africa's sexual politics. We share the thesis that contemporary African sexual politics is influenced by external forces such as colonisation and Euro-American missionary activities. Specifically, we examine the political and religious influence of the US government's Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) agent-missionaries on African politics and Christianity during the Cold War era. We contend that US conservatives' interests shifted to 'culture wars' issues after the Cold War, thus increasing its influence on the development of post-colonial Christianity. Acknowledging the diverse global religiocultural and political factors influencing African sexual politics, we conclude that the ethics of *radical neighbourism* and *ubuntu* can aid Christian dialogue on sexuality.

Introduction

The title of this article is suggestive—it seeks to propose how African Christianity can deal with same-gender relationships. Understanding that the issue of sexuality is provocative, sensitive and a life-or-death issue, the article is an invitation to a healthy theological and ethical dialogue on same-sex relations. Acknowledging various ethical, sociopolitical and global religious systems at play in African Christianity, the essay proposes the ethics of *ubuntu* as the starting point in understanding sexual diversity. Aside from arguing that sub-Saharan Africa's perceptions of human sexuality is informed by early missionary and post-colonial Christian activities, especially those of the US Christian Right, the article explores how *ubuntu*, in addition to the gospel mandate to love the neighbour as oneself, can inform and enhance theological and ethical dialogue on this life-or-death issue. Using the case of the Congo, the article briefly discusses Christianity in Africa, locates sexuality within the wider colonial and missionary agenda. It then details

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the US government and Christian Right's political and religious activities in post-independence Africa. Acknowledging the life-denying facets of such activities, the article finally invites Africans to employ *ubuntu* and Christian love for the neighbour in sexual politics.

Christianity in Africa—Lessons from the Past

In a March 1963 article, 'The Church and the Movement for Congo Reform,' Catherine Ann Cline opened with the following words:

When Christian missionaries returned to the Congo in the nineteenth century, all traces of the promising Portuguese missionary effort of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries had been obliterated. The Kingdom of the Congo which had produced several generations of Christian Kings, thousands of converts, even an African clergy and an African Bishop, had been literally swept away by the European slave trade. The Church had paid a heavy price for its failure to restrain the greed of the faithful, and one would scarcely expect to find the error repeated.¹

The nineteenth century Roman Catholic missionary activities in Africa, Cline argues, were driven by the concern for the welfare of Africa. And yet, when this second encounter 'rivalled the first' in its brutality towards Africans, 'dedicated Catholic missionaries and zealous Catholic prelates staunchly defended the regime against the attacks of reformers'.² Aside from revealing the masked and incongruous character of missionary activities in colonial Africa, Cline's argument points to the fragility of the Christian faith amidst oppression. Cline's observations, however, are not limited to Roman Catholic missionary activities; they equally apply to the much of nineteenth century Protestant missionary encounters.

The self-contradictory nature of European Christianity in Africa was visible to Africans. The new religion preached God's love for all people, but it also denied

1 Catherine Ann Cline, "The Church and the Movement for Congo Reform", *Church History* 32, no. 1 (March 1963), 1-11:1.

2 Cline, "The Church and the Movement for Congo Reform", 1. Elizabeth Isichei has provided a detailed history of the Church in Africa in her book, *A History of Christianity in Africa: From Antiquity to the Present*. She explores how African Christianity appeared and disappeared first in North Africa in the eleventh century, but returned in the 1500s and disappeared again in eighteenth century before returning in the nineteenth century. Specifically, she explores the Kingdom of Congo under the Portuguese missionaries and specifically addresses female African pioneers in mission such as Vita Kimpa and Appolonia Mafuta. Kimpa was a black prophet who proclaimed that Jesus was black and born in the Congo capital. Due to her prophetic popularity, she was burnt at stake for heresy in 1706 at the age of 21 (66). Unlike Kimpa, Queen Nzinga used Christianity in her attempt to topple the Portuguese as well as male domination in Angola in the 1640s (67). Her analysis of this period is that missionaries tended to concentrate on kings with the hope that royal conversion might lead to the conversion of the subjects as well. Elizabeth Allo Isichei, *A History of Christianity in Africa: From Antiquity to the Present* (Grand Rapids, Mich: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co, 1995), 72.

Africans their fundamental human rights. The 4Cs—Civilisation, Christianity, Commerce and Conquest—are nicely summarised in the famous maxim: ‘When the missionaries arrived in Africa, we had the land and the missionaries had the Bible. They taught us how to pray with our eyes closed. When we opened our eyes, they had the land and we had the Bible’. While the origin of this maxim is disputed, missionaries came with bibles while aiding the conquest of Africa. Adam Hochschild writes: ‘In 1870 roughly 80 per cent of sub-Saharan Africa was living under indigenous rulers; by 1910 virtually all of it was European colonies or white settler regimes. It was the fastest land grab in history’.³

From Leopold II of Belgium to the Crown of England, imperial powers brutally exploited Africa. And just as ‘dedicated Catholic missionaries and zealous Catholic prelates staunchly defended’ the activities of Leopold II’s regime in the Congo, nineteenth century Protestant missionaries worked closely with colonial authorities. ‘A variant tactic’, Karen Fields argues, ‘was to summon a[n African] chief or headman to the mission to “speak to him,” just as local officials summoned these men to the boma for instructions and discipline’.⁴ In line with Cline, the missionaries were beneficiaries of unearned colonial privileges and power. But as Robert I. Rotberg argues, the rise of ‘indigenous discontent’ in Central Africa was driven by missionaries’ failure to oppose discriminatory policies. Rotberg writes,

By denying Africans such equality, by assisting in the conquest of Central Africa, and by generally condoning the discriminatory policies of government officials and settlers, the missionaries set in motion a rethinking of this ambivalence between precept and practice that, in time, contributed to the growth of indigenous discontent and the rise of nationalism.⁵

Rotberg’s observation speaks to much of Christian Africa. But with this discontent came the political independence of Africa. Amidst mounting poverty, human rights abuses and the demonisation of sexual minorities, can post-colonial Christianity avoid the mistakes of the past?

The Missionarisation of Coitus

The rejection of colonialism did not result in the abandonment of Christianity. In fact, many Africans now consider Christianity a local religion.⁶ Similarly, about

3 Adam Hochschild, “Congo’s Many Plunderers”, *Economic and Political Weekly* 36, no. 4, Money, Banking & Finance (27 Jan-2 Feb 2001), 287-288:287.

4 Karen E. Fields, “Christian Missionaries as Anticolonial Militants”, *Theory and Society* 11, no. 1 (1982), 95-108.

5 Robert I. Rotberg, *The Rise of Nationalism in Central Africa: The Making of Malawi and Zambia, 1873-1964* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard Univ. Press, 1972), 11.

6 Lamin O. Sanneh, *Translating the Message: The Missionary Impact on Culture* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1989); *Whose Religion Is Christianity?: The Gospel Beyond the West* (Grand Rapids,

500 million Africans consider the Bible as an African sacred text, and many African nations self-identify as 'Christian' nations.

From the outset, the missionary agenda was to enforce Western socio-religious norms upon the colonised. To be a Christian meant to reject one's self-identity, cultural values and cosmologies. With the help of colonial powers, missionaries' sexual norms became the law of the land. To missionaries, heterosexuality, specifically monogamy, was the only divinely sanctioned form of sexual expression. Thus, the discussion of sex was limited to 'Christian marriage', while local customs and sexual initiation ceremonies for the youth were sidelined. Unlike in traditional cultures where sexuality was central to community life and in which the young were initiated and explicitly instructed through age-appropriate lessons, dances, songs and riddles, missionaries relegated sex to 'Christian marriage'. In 1861, for example, the Church of England missionary Henry Rowley witnessed the rite of *chinamwali* (girl's initiation ceremony among the Nyanja) in today's Malawi. Despite being highly sympathetic to pre-colonial African rituals and philosophy, about the sexual rite he wrote, 'I felt that this Niamwali [sic] has so much wrong in it that I presented to the bishop the advisability of preventing it for the future'.⁷ From this perspective, it is understandable that missionary catechisms, hymn books and prayer books avoided the 'sex talk' all together—something that continues to this day.

The 'missionarisation' of coitus conflicted with the traditional perception of sexuality. Because sexual rites were critical to the African personality, many Africans lived double lives—as 'civilised' Christians in the presence of Westerners, and traditionalists among their people. In the absence of missionaries, for example, they practiced sexual rites and adhered to traditional sexual norms. A clear example of this situation was recorded by David Livingstone, whose prized convert 'Chief Sechele', and his teachers, turned out to be married to more than one wife.⁸

If Rowley and Livingstone were offended by *chinamwali* and polygamy respectfully, their contemporaries were equally disturbed by the sexual diversity they encountered among Africans. Since homosexuality was another form of sexuality in some cultures, historian Marc Epprecht argues, Africans 'expressed no strong shame or guilt about [homosexuality]'.⁹ Suzette Heald also argues that among the Gisu of East Africa, homosexuality was 'treated with amused contempt,

Mich: W.B. Eerdmans Pub, 2003).

7 Henry Rowley, *The Story of the Universities' Mission to Central Africa*, second edition (London, Saunders and Otley and Company, 1867), 210.

8 David, Chamberlin, ed., *Livingstone's Other Letters 1840-1872* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1940), 181-182.

9 Marc Epprecht, *Unspoken Facts: A History of Homosexuality in Africa* (Harare, Zimbabwe: GALZ, 2008), 134.

rather than shock, horror and sanction'.¹⁰ Among the Zande of today's Central African Republic, homosexuality was an acceptable lifestyle, and same-gender marriages were on par with heterosexual marriages as late as the 1930s.¹¹ The Kabaka (King) in Uganda had male pages in the 1880s, and so did Lewanika, the Lozi King in colonial Zambia.¹² Michele K. Lewis and Isiah Marshall,¹³ and Edwin W. Smith and Andrew M. Dale,¹⁴ independently reveal that sexual minorities were associated with extraordinary powers—thus socially accepted in some African cultures. Nkunzi Nkabinde and Ruth Morgan also document the practice of same-gender ancestral wives among female *sangomas* in post-colonial South Africa.¹⁵ Thus the criminalisation of homosexuality is a sad consequence of colonialism. In former British colonies, for example, it is the sixteenth century ghost of King Henry VIII, who made homosexuality a capital offense.¹⁶ This law was later exported to all British colonies—from India to Africa.

Post-independence Christianity and Politics of Sexuality

As noted, colonialism and Christianity were bedfellows; hence post-independence Christianity is tainted with colonialism. Political independence in Africa did not translate into the establishment of an indigenous Christianity as found in

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- 10 Suzette Heald, *Manhood and Morality: Sex, Violence, and Ritual in Gisu Society* (London: Routledge, 1999), 160.
- 11 E. E. Evans-Pritchard, *Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic among the Azande* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1937), 56; "Sexual Inversion among the Azande", *American Anthropologist* New Series 72, no. 6 (1970), 1428-1434.
- 12 J. Soane-Cambell argued that Lewanika 'had a choir of Mankoya boys who were said to be eunuchs. The certainly had very shrill voices'. J. Soane-Cambell, "I Knew Lewanika", *The Northern Rhodesia Journal* I, no 1 (1950), 18-23, 30.
- 13 Michele K. Lewis, and Isiah Marshall, *LGBT Psychology: Research Perspectives and People of African Descent* (New York: Springer, 2011), 107-108.
- 14 Edwin William Smith and Andrew Murray Dale, *The Ila-speaking Peoples of Northern Rhodesia*, Volume 2, (London, Macmillan and Co., 1920), 74.
- 15 Nkunzi Nkabinde and Ruth Morgan, "'This Has Happened since Ancient Times...It's Something That You Are Born with': Ancestral Wives among Same-Sex Sangomas in South Africa", *Agenda: Empowering Women for Gender Equity* 67 (2006), 9-19; see also Wade S. Kunhiyop, *African Christian Ethics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008), 304; Monica Mark, "Nigeria's yan dauda face persecution in religious revival," *The Guardian*, 10 June 2013. <www.theguardian.com/world/2013/jun/10/nigeria-yan-daudu-persecution>. Accessed 30 June 2014.
- 16 William Hough, *The Practice of Courts-Martial, also The Legal Exposition and Military Explanation of the Mutiny Act, and Articles of War* (Oxford, Oxford University, 1825), 833; In addition to "man with man," the law included "with the woman; or by man on woman; in any manner with beast." John Frederick Archbold, *Summary of the Law Relative to Pleading and Evidence in Criminal Cases With Precedents of Indictments, and the Evidence Necessary to Support Them* (New York, Stephen and Son, 1824), 262-264.

African Initiated Churches. In mainline Christianity, however, colonial religious institutions, traditions and theologies were left intact in what was meant to be the post-colonial Church. Whereas traditional societies had structured sex education through initiation ceremonies, post-colonial Christianity perpetuated the 'anti-sex' discourse of missionaries. Since no Christian sexual lessons existed for adolescents, Africans depended on traditional cultures for sex education. In the absence of such rituals, young people were left on their own to explore their sexualities.

Like colonial Christianity, African Christianity is highly opposed to sexual diversity. Although the separation of church and state is enshrined in many African constitutions, the divide is artificial. Unlike in pre-colonial Africa, where coitus was communally upheld, colonial and post-colonial African Christianity depends on willing 'state agencies' to control sexual expressions. In Zambia, for example, sodomy laws have been on the books since the colonial era. However, the 2012 arrest of the same-sex couple James Mubiana and Phillip Mwape was the first court action on these laws since 1964.

That said, global sexual politics influence the post-colonial African opposition to homosexuality. Anti-gay activists, for example, oppose homosexuality on the premise that it is of Western import, while pro-gay advocates view it as a fundamental human rights issue. Both sides have international allies. As the following section on the US Christian Right reveals, international allies play a critical role in shaping the contestation of sexuality in Africa.

US Conservative Christianity—Another Political Force in Post-colonial Africa

The US anti-gay advocates are generally agreed—there is a global 'homosexual agenda' to destroy the family which must be resisted both at home and abroad. Since sexual politics traverse continental boundaries, African sexual minorities and their opponents have established networking relationships with groups in the global North. While pro-gay rights advocates are allied with global human rights groups, anti-gay actors are allied to local and international conservative groups and, in the context of this article, the US Christian Right.

Generally, the US Christian Right is a white-dominated movement (some African Americans and Hispanic pastors are part of the Christian Right) that aligns itself to conservative politics and theology. Aside from voting with the Republican Party, it supports *laissez faire* capitalism, militarism, capital punishment, anti-immigration, anti-welfare, anti-gay and anti-gun control policies. It also denies climate change, and opposes all forms of contraceptives and abortion. Whereas African Evangelicals often deplore Roman Catholicism, in the United States, the

Evangelical Right has strong links to US Catholic conservative groups such as Priests for Life, the Catholic Family and Human Rights Institute and Human Life International (all have chapters in almost all sub-Saharan African countries) among many others. The US Christian Right is also associated with some Evangelical, Pentecostal and Charismatic churches that trace their origin to the US Azusa Street revival in Los Angeles from 1906-1908.

The difficulty of defining the US Christian Right in Africa lies in that it operates under the broad banner of ‘evangelicalism’, which means biblical and doctrinal orthodoxy, but without the anti-poor, anti-immigration and anti-science connotations it carries in the United States.¹⁷ Although the US Christian Right has championed various causes, it is heavily involved in culture wars issues both locally and internationally. By culture wars, we mean what Legee et al. call ‘culture politics’,¹⁸ that is, the US conservatives’ and progressives’ positions on homosexuality and abortion. While progressives use the human rights and individualised frame to advance these values, the Christian Right presents its positions mostly in religious terms, hence it is well received in African Christianity.¹⁹

The exportation of Western Christian values to nonwestern cultures can be contested as neo-imperialism. In missiological terms, however, it is religiously and theologically sanctioned. Christian mission involves sharing resources beyond geographical boundaries—something reflected in the Christian Bible (Acts 24:17; 1 Cor 16:1-4; 2 Cor 8:1-9:15; Rom 15:14-32). Moreover, the Great Commission has global outreach as its goal—it commands Christians to make disciples of all nations (Matt 28:19-21). Hence African Christianity may possess some indigenous expressions, but it benefits from ‘external intervention and spiritual flows’.²⁰ It is within this context that the US Christian Right’s involvement in Africa should be understood and analysed.

The US involvement in Africa—from the Congo to the rest of Africa

Various American sociopolitical concerns of the late 1950s to the 1980s directed the US involvement in Africa. Many factors led to these developments; however,

17 For a detailed discussion on US Christian Right activities in Africa, see Kapya Kaoma, *American Culture Warriors in Africa: A Guide to the Exporters of Homophobia and Sexism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Book Store/Political Research Associates, 2014); *Globalizing the Culture Wars: US Conservatives, African Churches, and Homophobia* (Somerville, MA: Political Research Associates, 2009); *Colonizing African Values: How the U.S. Christian Right is Transforming Sexual Politics in Africa* (Somerville, MA: Political Research Associates, 2013).

18 David C. Legee et al., *The Politics of Cultural Differences: Social Change and Voter Mobilization Strategies in the Post-New Deal Period* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 5.

19 Steve Brouwer, Paul Gifford and Susan D. Rose, *Exporting the American Gospel: Global Christian Fundamentalism* (New York: Routledge, 1996).

20 Ogbu Kalu, *African Pentecostalism: An Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 190.

the main reason had to do with the US political and economic needs. In the early 1960s, for instance, ‘the US National Security Council aided the assassination of Patrice Lumumba’ in today’s Democratic Republic of Congo (formerly Zaire) due to his demands for the continent’s political and economic independence. Since the West opposed his radical demands, Hochschild writes, ‘The CIA [Central Intelligence Agency] and the Belgians sent help to anti-Lumumba factions in the government, and in early 1961 he was killed’.²¹

Long before the death of Lumumba, however, the US government had established a working relationship with Joseph Desire Mobutu, aka Mobutu Sese Seko. In 1963, President John F. Kennedy had a meeting with Mobutu at the White House and two years later, Mobutu seized power and became the President of Congo—renaming it Zaire. The historic 30 October 1974 boxing fight between George Foreman and Muhammad Ali in Kinshasa, Zaire—aka the ‘Rumble in the Jungle’—followed these US interests. Until the end of the Cold War, various US administrations supported Mobutu’s 23-year autocratic rule, which led to his accumulation of an estimated \$4 billion from public coffers.

Mobutu’s usefulness to the US was further enhanced by the Cold War. Under the Reagan administration, the US government’s anti-communist campaign morphed into the infamous Reagan Doctrine—President Ronald Reagan’s pledge for the US government support to insurgents who ‘fought’ against Soviet and Cuban interests across the globe. As Ugboaja F. Ohaegbulam argues,

the prevention of ideological and political penetration of the region (Southern Africa) by communism also became a major objective of US policy towards post-colonial Africa. This policy objective persisted with little or no deviation from approaches established by the Eisenhower administration through those of Ronald Reagan and George [Herbert Walker] Bush.²²

Under the Reagan administration, this involvement took a religio-political angle.

Missionaries or CIA agents? Fighting liberation theology in Africa

Many independent nations in sub-Saharan Africa opted for socialism as opposed to capitalism.²³ Since socialism was aligned with Soviet and Cuban political interests, the Reagan administration perceived all socialist-leaning nations in Africa and South America as its enemies. In its attempts to sabotage socialist-

21 Hochschild, “Congo’s Many Plunderers”, 287.

22 F. Ugboaja Ohaegbulam, “The United States and Africa after the Cold War”, *Africa Today* 39, no. 4 (4th Qtr., 1992), 19-34. <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/4186860>>. Accessed 12 January 2014.

23 Kapyia J. Kaoma, *Raised Hopes, Shattered Dreams : Democracy, The Oppressed, and the Church In Africa (The Case of Zambia)* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2015), 40-42; Elizabeth Parsons, *What Price for Privatization?: Cultural Encounter with Development Policy on the Zambian Copperbelt* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2010), 63.

leaning leadership, President Reagan enlisted missionaries into the CIA and placed them in strategic countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and South America. These US funded CIA agent-missionaries established churches, bible schools and colleges in order to fight the growing influence of liberation and black theology—which were linked to socialism. Others, however, operated under various para-church organisations such as Campus for Christ, World Vision, etc. They also provided study opportunities to young Africans in American conservative colleges—who were later sent back to their nations as evangelists, pastors and teachers.

In an effort to destabilise the region, the US government provided financial, logistic, military and CIA support to rebel groups such as the Jonas Savimbi-led National Union for the Total Independence of Angola or União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola (UNITA), and the Afonso Dhlakama-commanded Mozambican National Resistance or Resistência Nacional Moçambicana (RENAMO). It is within this political context that Mobutu proved an excellent ally to the US and minority governments in the region. Following the 1983 US, South Africa, Israel and UNITA meeting in Kinshasa, Zaire, the American government gave Mobutu ‘more than \$1 billion in civilian and military aid’. The Reagan administration also ‘delivered arms shipments for UNITA to the ports of Boma and Matadi in Zaire’.²⁴

Howard W. French of *The New York Times* rightly characterises Mobutu as ‘master meddler: a finger in affairs of his neighbors’, due to his role in the destabilisation of sub-Saharan Africa. French writes,

Mobutu’s meddling in Angola, at the behest of Washington, set a pattern for the rest of his rule. He constantly kept a finger in the crises of neighboring countries, from Chad and Congo to Uganda and the Sudan.^[25] With its borders with nine other countries, Mobutu marketed his country to Washington and Paris—obtaining economic aid and political support in exchange—as a platform for interventions and covert operations throughout central and southern Africa. With the end of the Cold War, Mobutu’s relevance to Washington and most of the West declined sharply.²⁶

When Mobutu asked Governor William ‘Bill’ Richardson, then US Ambassador to the UN and President Clinton’s special envoy to Zaire, ‘why, after years of

24 Mel McNulty, “The Collapse of Zaïre: Implosion, Revolution or External Sabotage?”, *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 37, no. 1 (March 1999), 53-82:77.

25 US Conservatives such as the American Center for Law and Justice and the Franklin Graham-led Samaritan’s Purse played an important role in the creation of South Sudan as a sovereign state. ACLJ claimed that it was invited to help draft the constitution of South Sudan. With the outbreak of the civil war, US conservatives turned a blind eye on South Sudan.

26 Howard W. French, “Anatomy of an Autocracy: Mobutu’s 32-Year Reign”, *The New York Times*, 17 May 1997. <<http://partners.nytimes.com/library/world/africa/051797zaire-mobutu.html>>. Accessed 4 February 2015.

loyal service and friendship with the United States, he had been abandoned', Richardson responded, 'the mess you are in is not our mess. You just didn't govern your own country'.²⁷

Despite Mobutu's deplorable human rights record, President Reagan considered him as 'a voice of good sense and good will', while President Bush called him 'one of [the US's] most valued friends', Hochschild asserts.²⁸ Similarly, the Christian Right backed US government also celebrated Angolan rebel leader Jonas Savimbi as 'the West's most prominent anti-Marxist guerrilla'. Like Mobutu, Savimbi inflamed 'the conflict in Angola through the direct intervention of [US] right-wing supporters of UNITA. These supporters included [the US Christian Right organisations such as] the Heritage Foundation, Freedom House and the National Review'.²⁹

In addition to the exploitation of Africa's natural goods, the Christian Right sought the establishment of its approved governments in Africa.³⁰ Brennan M. Kraxberger writes, 'American policymakers and other elites assessed Africa as an important region in the quest for client states. The Cold War was marked by a zero-sum, spatially comprehensive framework, which was derived from American elites' concerns about communist encirclement'.³¹ The human cost of the US-funded civil war in Angola alone is heartbreaking—over one million deaths, over 3.5 million displacements and over \$30 billion in infrastructure damages.³² Similarly, as was the case with Mobutu's reign, the end of the Cold War saw the death of Savimbi, the end of the civil war in Angola and Mozambique. Reflecting on the US foreign policy and the Cold War in Africa, Peter Rosenblum of Harvard University said, 'Maybe we did win the Cold War in a lot of other places, but we

27 French, "Anatomy of an Autocracy". Hochschild, however, argues that the fall of Mobutu to Joseph Kabila in 1997 was highly driven by the Western nations' desire to continue plundering the Congo. Aside from arguing that Kabila arrived in Kinshasa to take up power on the corporate jet belonging to an American Minerals Corporation based in former President Clinton's town of Hope, Arkansas, Hochschild notes that the US supplied \$125 million in arms and training to troops that were fighting on several sides of the Congo's civil war. Hochschild, "Congo's Many Plunderers", 288.

28 Hochschild, "Congo's Many Plunderers", 288.

29 French, "Anatomy of an Autocracy".

30 As Elaine Windrich demonstrates, supportive but often factually incorrect articles by UNITA apologists such as Jean Kirkpatrick—printed in mainstream media outlets such as the Washington Post, Wall Street Journal and Christian Science Monitor—made Dr. Jonas Savimbi a "Cold War guerrilla," a necessary creation that the US media consciously and unconsciously participated in making. Elaine Windrich, *The Cold War Guerrilla Jonas Savimbi, the U.S. Media, and the Angolan War* (New York: Greenwood Press, 2006).

31 Brennan M. Kraxberger, "The United States and Africa: Shifting Geopolitics in an "Age of Terror," *Africa Today* 52, no. 1 (Autumn 2005), 47-68:48.

32 Martin James, *A Political History of the Civil War in Angola 1974-1990* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1992).

left an open wound across Africa'.³³

The Christian Right-backed government also supported the minority governments in Southern Africa. As demands for sanctions against the South African and Southern Rhodesian (Zimbabwe) minority governments intensified, the US opposed such measures. Of eight resolutions on Southern Africa and colonialism at the 1972 United Nations General Assembly, the US 'voted against seven and abstained on one'.³⁴ Reminiscent of the colonial era addressed by Cline, the Christian Right consistently discredited 'those engaged in the liberation struggle as terrorists', Prexy Nesbitt observes. Like their aforementioned European counterparts, 'the American public', Nesbitt insists, 'found it easier to condemn violations of American law, and human rights violations committed by avowedly "socialist" governments, than violations committed by "anti-communist" forces'.³⁵

After the death of Nelson Mandela in July 2013, Sam Kleiner of *Foreign Policy* characterised the US Right's newfound respect for Mandela as 'Apartheid Amnesia'. Kleiner's observation sought to expose the historical relationship between the US Christian Right figureheads, such as Jeff Gayner of the Heritage Foundation, Pat Robertson (known for his 700 Club, watched across sub-Saharan Africa) and Pat Buchanan, among the many US conservatives who supported the white supremacist South African regime and termed Mandela and Desmond Tutu terrorists.

From Fighting Terrorists to Defending African Values

Professor Rosenblum's point about leaving 'an open wound across Africa' seems to suggest that US conservative activities left Africa with the end of the Cold War. Yet, the Christian Right never left Africa. It may have failed to establish its 'approved governments' in Africa, but not its approved Christianity.

Ideologically, the Christian Right believes that the Marxist ideology morphed into the U.N, the European Union, the World Council of Churches and other human rights organisations such as Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International. These organisations are believed to be 'controlled by Marxists, secular humanists, radical homosexuals, and feminists with an agenda to eradicate traditional

33 Howard W. French, "Exit Savimbi, and the Cold War in Africa", *The New York Times*, 3 March 2002. <<http://www.nytimes.com/2002/03/03/weekinreview/the-world-exit-savimbi-and-the-cold-war-in-africa.html>>. Accessed 24 May 2016.

34 George Houser, "Relations Between the United States and South Africa", *The Black Scholar* 15, no. 6 (November/December 1984), 33-38:32.

35 Prexy Nesbitt, "US Foreign Policy: Lessons from the Angola Conflict", *Africa Today* 39, no. 1/2, (1st Qtr.-2nd Qtr. 1992), 53-71:66. <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/4186803>>. Accessed 1 February 2015.

Christian family values'.³⁶

Reminiscent of the Reagan doctrine, the Christian Right is resolute on waging 'culture wars' both at home and abroad. The American Center for Law and Justice—known for its anti-gay activism in America—has established offices in Africa. Similarly, Alliance Defending Freedom, Focus on the Family, Family Watch International, Human Life International and countless US church and para-church Christian Right organisations such as Samaritan Purse have strong presence in Africa. Aided by communication infrastructures—the web, the Christian Broadcasting Network, Daystar, Trinity Broadcasting Network, radio stations and massive literature—the Christian Right reaches hundreds of millions in sub-Saharan Africa.

Much like in the Cold War era, the US Christian Right has expanded its arms to African politicians. Jeff Sharlet documents the political alliance between the US Congress conservative group called 'The Family' and African politicians.³⁷ Whereas Yoweri Museveni of Uganda and Paul Kagame of Rwanda hold awful human rights records, they are also among the darlings of the US Right. Charles Taylor of Liberia, Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe and Salva Kiir Mayardit of South Sudan are among the many dictators with links to the US Right.

Similarly, Rick Warren, bestselling author and pastor of Saddleback Baptist Church in California, and Scott Lively of Abiding Truth Ministries (declared a hate group in the US) are among the many US conservatives with direct links to African politicians. In Kenya, Tanzania, Nigeria, Uganda, South Sudan and Zimbabwe, the Christian Right pushed for the expansion of anti-homosexual laws as well as opposed women rights³⁸ as enshrined in the African Union Maputo Protocol which 'guarantees comprehensive rights to women including the right to take part in the political process, to social and political equality with men, to control of their reproductive health'.³⁹ In March 2009, Lively lobbied the Ugandan Parliament to make new laws against homosexuality—leading to the drafting of the Anti-Homosexuality Bill 2009—the bill that originally called for death penalty for homosexuality. After replacing the death penalty with life in prison, President Museveni signed it into law in February 2014. However, the law was

36 William Martin, "The Christian Right and American Foreign Policy", *Foreign Policy* 114 (Spring 1999), 66-80:78.

37 Jeff Sharlet, *C Street: The Fundamentalist Threat to American Democracy* (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2010); *The Family: The Secret Fundamentalism at the Heart of American Power* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2009).

38 On 11 July 2003 in Maputo, Mozambique, the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (drafted in 1995), went into effect in November 2005. The African Charter On Human And Peoples' Rights, "On The Rights Of Women In Africa" <http://www.achpr.org/files/instruments/women-protocol/achpr_instr_proto_women_eng.pdf>. Accessed 3 February 2015.

39 Kaoma, *Colonizing African Values*.

struck down on technical grounds on August 1, 2014 after human rights groups took the matter to the constitutional court. The bill still has potential of being re-tabled in the future.

It is important to emphasise that the Christian Right's goal is informed by its missionary agenda of taking the Gospel to all nations. Since Christian values are informed by local cultural assumptions, like their European counterparts, US missionary activities are infused with American cultural politics. Based on the number of American-leaning Pentecostal-Evangelical-Charismatic churches and institutions operating in Africa, the Christian Right has been successful in promoting its form of 'Christianity'.

In *Globalizing the Culture Wars*, Kaoma documents the motives of the Christian Right's involvement in African Christianity. In US mainline Protestant churches such as the Episcopal Church, Presbyterian Church, and United Methodist, the Christian Right has appealed to African religious leaders to aid its ambitions to slow down these churches acceptance of sexual minorities with the overreaching motives of taking control of such churches. In addition, as Christian numbers dwindle in the West, the Christian Right has shifted its evangelistic efforts to Africa, where Christianity is growing. According to the 2011 Pew Global Survey of Evangelical Protestant Leaders who attended the 2010 Evangelical Lausanne Conference in Cape Town, 'U.S. evangelical leaders are especially downbeat about the prospects for evangelical Christianity in their society; 82% say evangelicals are losing influence in the United States today, while only 17% think evangelicals are gaining influence'.⁴⁰ From this perspective, U.S. conservatives see their involvement in Africa as justification of their relevance within global Christianity.

Since African evangelicalism is equally informed by local values and assumptions, if African Evangelical Christians fully understood the Christian Right's advocated policies and positions in US politics, they would find some of its positions heretical. For example, the marriage between the US constitution and Christianity/the Bible, their pro-gun endorsements and support for anti-poor policies, war, capital punishment, the denial of climate change⁴¹ and its 2016 support for Donald Trump as Republican Party nominee for the US presidency would make many Africans disassociate from the US Christian Right.

40 PewForum, *Global Survey of Evangelical Protestant Leaders* (Washington, D.C.: Pew Research Center, 2011). <<http://www.pewforum.org/2011/06/22/global-survey-of-evangelical-protestant-leaders/>>. Accessed 1 February 2015.

41 For example, in "The Care of Creation, the Gospel, and Our Mission" (184-197), and "Jesus is Lord...of All? Evangelicals, Earthcare, and the Scope of the Gospel" (105-120), leading English Evangelical scholars Christopher J. H. Wright and Dave Bookless independently characterise anti-science and climate change denial as wrong Christian and biblical theology. In Kapya J. Kaoma, ed., *Creation Care in Christian Mission*, Regnum Edinburgh Centenary Series 29, (Oxford: Regnum, 2015).

The Christian Right, however, does not project such values in Africa. Whereas the Christian Right employs the cultural politics of abortion and homosexuality in American politics, in Africa, it prominently organises around homosexuality, which it claims is imposed on Africa by the West.⁴² Backed with the story of Sodom and Gomorrah in the Hebrew Bible and in the Quran, Africa's opposition to homosexuality is *sacralised* and localised—homosexuality is un-African, un-Christian and un-Islamic.

Denial or Turning a Blind Eye: The Church's Dilemma

The denial of sexual diversity has contributed to the growing victimisation of sexual rights activists in sub-Saharan Africa. Yet the plight of sexual minorities cannot be ignored. In July 2013, Eric Lembembe, a human-rights activist and executive director of the Cameroonian Foundation for AIDS, was tortured and brutally murdered. In June 2013, Duduzile Zozo, a 26-year-old lesbian, was raped and murdered in South Africa. According to reports, the police discovered her half-naked body with 'a toilet brush rammed into her vagina'. This followed the murder of another South African lesbian, Patricia Mashigo, in April 2013. In April 2008 Eudy Simelane, a South African football player, was murdered after being gang-raped and stabbed in the abdomen 12 times. 'Her naked body was dragged towards a stream and dumped'. While the court dismissed her sexuality as the motive behind her death, sexual rights advocates blamed it on homophobia. In Tanzania, LGBTI activist Maurice Mjomba was tortured and murdered in July 2012. His body was discovered with blood oozing from his genitals. In 2011, outspoken Ugandan sexual rights activist David Kato was murdered. Like Simelane, the court ruled out his sexual orientation as the motive for his murder, but human rights activists blamed it on his sexual orientation. On Easter Sunday 2013, some Uganda pastors held a 'Say No to Homosexuality' rally just outside Kato's gravesite. In May 2009, Madieye Diallo's body was exhumed from the grave, spit on, and dumped at his parents' home in Senegal. These tragic events are among the various abuses LGBTI people and activists experience in sub-Saharan Africa.

The Church seems to turn a blind eye to these sad developments. But as Naim Stifan Ateek argues, 'Christians are conscious of their full and real life role in the world. They do not live in a shadowy existence, pretending that they are not affected by what is going on around them'.⁴³ If Christian mission as *missio*

42 Elsewhere, I argue that due to the prevalence of abortion in sub-Saharan Africa, the Christian Right argument that it is foreign can hardly sell in Africa. Kaoma, *Colonizing African Values*, 13-15.

43 Naim Stifan Ateek, *Justice, and Only Justice: A Palestinian Theology of Liberation* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1989), 183.

Creatoris Dei is the Creator's invitation to all people to participate in God's work on Earth, then African Christianity can play an important role in opposing the violence, discrimination and other human rights abuses committed against sexual minorities.

At its 55th session in Angola, in May 2014, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights vividly condemned the 'acts of violence, discrimination and other human rights violations' directed on sexual minorities. Specifically, the Commission highlighted the "'corrective" rape, physical assaults, torture, murder, arbitrary arrests, detentions, extra-judicial killings and executions, forced disappearances, extortion and blackmail' of sexual minorities. The Resolution stalwartly calls on

States to end all acts of violence and abuse, whether committed by State or non-state actors, including by enacting and effectively applying appropriate laws prohibiting and punishing all forms of violence including those targeting persons on the basis of their imputed or real sexual orientation or gender identities, ensuring proper investigation and diligent prosecution of perpetrators, and establishing judicial procedures responsive to the needs of victims.⁴⁴

It is ironic that the *Maputo Protocol* and the resolution on sexual minorities were issued in Mozambique and Angola respectively—two countries that paid a heavy price of the US Christian Right activities discussed above. So how can Africa address these challenges while remaining faithful to the *missio Creatoris Dei*? Arguably, the ethical resources of *ubuntu* and Jesus' command to love one's neighbour as oneself can influence Christian responses. But first, some words on *ubuntu*.

Applying *Ubuntu* to Sexual Politics in Africa

According to Desmond Tutu, *ubuntu* 'is difficult to translate into English. It is the essence of being human. It speaks of the fact that my humanity is caught up and inextricably bound up in yours. I am because I belong. It speaks about wholeness: it speaks about compassion'.⁴⁵ From this perspective, to be human means to be in just and loving relationships with others; thus, a person is fully human when the entire web of relationships is optimised.⁴⁶

44 African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, "275: Resolution on Protection against Violence and other Human Rights Violations against Persons on the basis of their real or imputed Sexual Orientation or Gender Identity", in *The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (the African Commission), meeting at its 55th Ordinary Session held in Luanda, Angola, from 28 April to 12 May 2014*. <<http://www.achpr.org/sessions/55th/resolutions/275/>>. Accessed 3 February 2015.

45 Desmond Tutu, *God Has a Dream: A Vision of Hope for Our Time* (New York: Doubleday, 2004), 26.

46 For a detailed discussion on *ubuntu*, see Kapya J. Kaoma, *God's Family, God's Earth: Christian Ecological Ethics of Ubuntu* (Zomba, Malawi: Kachere Series, 2013), 92-117.

The ethics of *ubuntu* has social harmony as its goal. Among the Bantu, social congruence is the *summum bonum*. As Malegapuru William Makgoba argues, *ubuntu* assents to and fosters human 'respect for [one]self, for others, and for the environment; it has spirituality; it [is] non-racial; it accommodates other cultures and it is the invisible force uniting Africans worldwide'.⁴⁷

Ubuntu as an ethical and philosophical ideology is not unique to African cultures. Penny Enslin and Kai Horsthemke rightly observe that '*ubuntu* as a philosophical approach to social relationships must stand alongside other approaches and be judged on the value it can add to better human relations in our complex societ[ies]'.⁴⁸ The universal application of *ubuntu* is reflected in former South African President Thabo Mbeki's words: the world 'is an interdependent whole in which none can be truly free unless all are free, in which none can be truly prosperous unless none elsewhere in the world goes hungry, and in which none of us can be guaranteed a good quality of life unless we act together to protect the environment'.⁴⁹ Desmond Tutu also writes,

If we could but recognize our common humanity, that we do belong together, that our destinies are bound up in one another's, that we can be free only together, that we can survive only together, that we can only be human together, then a glorious world would come into being where all of us lived harmoniously together as members of one family, the human family, God's family.⁵⁰

Understanding the world as the *family of God* implies collective identity without socially construed differences.⁵¹ By embracing this model, humanity is capable of transcending the dehumanisation and oppression of the othered, while working for the elimination of such vices.

The model of the *family of God* has rich implications for how sexual issues are debated on the continent. Viewing the society as the family of God puts extra moral responsibilities on faith communities. In his book *Uluntu*, David T. Williams argues that there exists 'a fundamental plurality in the Biblical understanding of humanity'.⁵² The Hebrew *adamah* is collective, but never plural or singular. It denotes both an individual and an incorporation of the many, thus humankind. This collective humanity is similar to how the Bantu perceive human role in the world. If *ubuntu* indicates 'how people should live', Williams argues, '*uluntu* is

47 Quoted in Penny Enslin and Kai Horsthemke, "Can Ubuntu provide a Model for Citizenship Education in African Democracies?", *Comparative Education* 40, no. 4 (November 2004), 545-558:547.

48 Enslin and Horsthemke, "Can Ubuntu provide a Model," 548.

49 Thabo Mbeki, "The African Renaissance, South Africa and the World", 9 April 1998, <<http://www.unu.edu/unupress/mbeki.html>>. Accessed 27 November 2008.

50 Tutu, *God Has a Dream*, 23-24.

51 Kaoma, *God's Family, God's Earth*, 104-106.

52 David T. Williams, *Uluntu: A Relational Theology of Humanity* (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2013), 15.

the nature of humanity'.⁵³ Since the essence of being is relational, life

is basically a relational activity. Full humanity lies in the fullness of the external. Any defect in any aspect of our relating reduces us and effectively makes us less than human. In sum, the ultimate expression of humanity lies in the fullness of relationships.⁵⁴

In missiological terms, *umuntu* (human being) as the *imago Dei* exists to participate in the *missio Creatoris Dei* (the mission of the Creator God in the universe). For this reason, *ubuntu* can address the oppression of sexual minorities, as well as other social evils on the continent. In South Africa, for example, *ubuntu* contributed to the establishment and later the success of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in the post-apartheid era. Since the TRC was also based on Christian beliefs, it is suggestive that *ubuntu* is in line with Christian ethics and theology.

The power of *ubuntu* in the transformation of social and political conditions is not limited to South Africa. *Ubuntu* has potential to transform human perception of sexuality. In this case, accepting *ubuntu* implies acknowledging our common humanity and vulnerability. Here, the success of one is celebrated by the greater whole, and the diminishment of one's humanity affects the whole.

*Ubuntu and victimisation of our neighbour*⁵⁵

Las Casas once said, 'God has the freshest and keenest memory of the least and the forgotten'.⁵⁶ From this perspective, a new analysis and application of *ubuntu* in sexual politics is overdue. Wim Van Binsbergen writes,

the discourse of *ubuntu* revolves around textual violence, but scholars must realize that 'the concept of *ubuntu* is historically determined to constitute a bone of contention, to remind us of past violence and to lead us into new violence, until we realise that above all, *ubuntu* is the invitation to confront this determination and, together, rise above such violence.'⁵⁷

While *ubuntu* remains a conceptual tool, it courts humanity to value and defend the dignity of others. Theologically, *ubuntu* holds humanity accountable to one another, while honouring the biblical command to love the neighbour as oneself (Leviticus 19:18; Mark 12:31; Matthew 19:19; 22:39). It is within this *theological* context that God expects humanity to advance community well-being while protecting the rights of the socially marginalised and powerless. Although the

53 Williams, *Ubuntu*, 19-20.

54 Williams, *Ubuntu*, 108.

55 Here we follow Kaoma, *Raised Hopes, Shattered Dreams*, 175-78.

56 In David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991), 443.

57 Quoted in Elias K. Bongmba, "Reflections on Thabo Mbeki's African Renaissance", *Journal of Southern African Studies* 30, no. 2 (June 2004), 291-316:300.

application of this command has been used to defend the rights of the materially poor, it includes all ostracised groups. David J. Bosch writes,

the poor are an all embracing category of those who were victims of society. The poor are the marginalized, those who lack every active or even passive participation in society. It is a marginality that comprises all spheres of life and is often so extensive that people feel that they have no resources to do anything about it.⁵⁸

From this perspective, sexual minorities are among the poor the Church is invited to protect from sociopolitical and religious forces that rob their humanity.⁵⁹

Accordingly, Bosch argues that liberation theology aided the Church to rediscover its ancient faith in Yahweh, 'whose outstanding qualification—which made [God] the Wholly Other—was founded on God's involvement in history as the God of righteousness and justice who championed the cause of the weak and the oppressed'.⁶⁰ In the Hebrew Bible, the words *yasar* (straight, right, upright) and *mispat* (judgment, justice, right, rectitude) were ethical terms employed in relational and moral transactions. These words were the moral foundation of Yahweh's relationship with Israel. Theologically, therefore, the sacredness of humanity is defended on the moral ground that human identity is planted in God's love-justice. Christian love demands the rejection of theologies and ideologies that harm God's people regardless of their socio-economic status and sexual identity. While we may hold different views on same-sex relationships, the biblical God desires justice for all people; Yahweh is the God of the least ones—social outcasts, the poor and the oppressed and in the context of this article, sexual minorities.

Ubuntu as radical neighbourism

Brazilian philosopher Paulo Freire argues that 'the starting point for any political pedagogical project must be precisely at the level of the people's aspirations and dreams, their understanding of reality and their forms of actions and struggles'.⁶¹ Like all humanity, sexual minorities aspire to live without discrimination, fear of violence, rape, imprisonment and death. In this regard, there is need to view their plight with moral lenses of *yasar*, *mispat*, love and *ubuntu*. To acknowledge that God is always standing with the oppressed and the outcasts is to commit to break the oppressive shackles that demean our common humanity. The Bible reflects the values of *ubuntu* when it defines Jesus's ministry as love-justice—proclaiming the good news to the poor and setting the oppressed free (Luke 4:18; Matthew 12:18; Isaiah 42:7).

58 Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 436-437.

59 Kaoma, *God's Family, God's Earth*, 103.

60 Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 442.

61 Paulo Freire, *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 30th anniv. ed. (New York: Continuum, 2000), 28.

From the Bantu perspective, *ubuntu* is also at the centre of the lawyer's question to Jesus, 'What must I do to inherit eternal life'? In the context of *ubuntu*, the question is about being truly human. Notably, while the philosophers answer in abstract theories, Jesus responded in relational terms: love God and thy neighbour as oneself. To Jesus, love involves giving up oneself for the sake of the other, or what Kaoma terms 'radical *neighbourism*.' Radical *neighbourism* is biased to God's love-justice. If Jews saw themselves as superior to Samaritans, Jesus points to the principle of love, which reduces ethnicity, sexual orientation and heteronormative assumptions to solidarity. Aptly put, Christian love-justice breaks all sexual and socio-cultural boundaries; it challenges humanity to love the neighbour as oneself; and to see God in the unseen or socially invisible neighbours. Christian love-justice is radical in that it goes beyond worldly love; it carries sociopolitical and prophetic responsibilities; it demands ranking 'justice over popularity'.⁶²

The Good Samaritan and sexual minorities

The ethics of radical *neighbourism* is visibly illustrated in the popular parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37). In this parable, a nameless person is travelling on the road to Jericho and is attacked by robbers and left for dead. The life-ending situation of the nameless person was apparent, but unjustly invisible to a Levite and a priest. The Samaritan, the avowed enemy of the Jews, however, saw the plight of the dying person. Risking personal life (should the robbers be hiding within the vicinity), the Samaritan sacrificed self in order to dress the 'open wounds' of the nameless stranger.

The dying person is nameless, without status, race, nationality or sexual orientation, but is only identified as a human being (*umuntu*). While the Levite and the priest pretended not to see the open wounds of the dying person, the Samaritan acted. Besides, the Levite and the priest could have behaved differently if the attacked individual was of higher social status. Yet, the Samaritan understood self as the nameless person's keeper—again indicating that while the poor and the oppressed are usually nameless and structurally invisible, they have sacred identity and divine visibility.

The attitude of the Samaritan is not self-seeking, but selfless. To the Samaritan, all life is sacred. The open wounds of *umuntu* and not the victim's theology, sexual orientation, choices or social status moved the Samaritan to make a moral call. In short, the Samaritan saw God and self in the dying person. Again radical *neighbourism* means looking after the needs of the least of Jesus' brothers and sisters (Matt. 25:31-45), something *ubuntu* strongly advocates.

62 Naim Stifan Ateek, *Justice, and Only Justice*, 90.

In the context of sexual politics, this understanding of *ubuntu* and *neighbourism* has implications for the Church in Africa. Again Bosch writes, 'If Christianity loses its counter-cultural and world-transforming role, other forces would take its role'.⁶³ The cultural fear of sexual minorities needs transforming into a life-giving opportunity. To be neighbours is to be each other's keepers (Genesis 4:1-9; Luke 12:30-31); it is to recognise God as the Creator 'of all, but most particularly the father [mother] and defender of those who are oppressed and treated unjustly. Out of love for them, God takes sides, takes *their* side against the repressive measures of the pharaohs'.⁶⁴

Finally, the ethics of radical *neighbourism* and *ubuntu* involve asking the following questions: how can we stop people from being forced into life-denying situations? It is not enough for the Church to dress the wounds of the poor—the Church ought to labour to ensure that people are not robbed of their dignity in the first place. In short, the Church ought to secure the road to Jericho from robbers, arresting them where possible and prosecuting them for their evil acts. In the context of cultural politics of sexuality, it means not only protecting sexual minorities' rights but also denouncing the criminalisation of our fellow human beings, and stopping religious and political leaders from scapegoating sexual minorities for Africa's socioeconomic and political plight. But it also entails resisting neo-colonial and foreign-born tactics in African sexual politics, and exposing the negative results of *globalising the US culture wars* on our fellow human beings to the global community. Only then can we accomplish more and make mama Africa and the world a better place for the entire human race in all its sacred diversity.

63 Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 447.

64 Leonardo Boff and Clodovis Boff, *Introducing Liberation Theology* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1987), 52.