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Making Better Men:

Christian Masculinity as a Key Component of French Colonization in West Africa in the 19th Century

Sofía Ruiz Vega

Supervisor: Matthias Waechter

Jury: Susann Heinecke

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Abstract

Masculinity still remains an extremely unexplored topic among gender studies. The main objective of this research was the identification of different characteristics of Christian masculine ideals and the analysis of the impact and involvement that the missionaries had during the French colonization of West Africa in the 19th century. The methods of this research included a combination of discourse analysis, historical review, textual analysis, deconstruction, case study, and gender studies. A thorough examination of the colonial past of France in West Africa and its relation to Christian missions was done in order to provide this information. The main finding of this research is that masculinity ideals for missionaries had a fundamental impact on their cooperation with the French Empire affairs and were largely engaging with their activities to keep the dominance and relevance of the Church at the time.

Keywords: *Masculinities, France, Christianity, West Africa, Colonialism*

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This chapter will discuss the concept of gender performativity. It aims to analyze and review the main masculine ideals established in Christianity, but also, the intersections that these expectations had with the hegemonic masculinities, masculinities in France, 19th century context, race, and colonialism. Missionary masculine performance will be analyzed as well as its possible subscription to hegemonic masculinities.

In this chapter, the intention is to revise merely in a historical manner the first contacts there were between Christianity and the African population. Due to the fact that in many cases missionaries were the first ones to arrive in West Africa, it appears imperative to examine and describe their arrival and behavior there. This would open the avenues to other questions regarding the involvement of religion in the French colonization. Furthermore, this chapter will encompass the participation of missionaries to achieve certain imperial objectives.

This chapter will discuss the ways in which Christian masculine ideals were used by missionaries to justify the actions of the colonizers and reinforce them. The civilizing mission will be analyzed as a mean to fulfill imperial and Christian ideals. The seeming lack of division between patriotism and missionaries will be addressed. Additionally, the idea of religion as a way to exercise power will be explored

7. **Chapter 4:** Case Study of Senegal

In this chapter, the information from the previous chapters will be utilized in the case study of Senegal. Given that Senegal is a French colony with a large Muslim population that had attempts to be indoctrinated into Christianity, it is a relevant case to discuss. Senegal will exemplify the manners in which Christian masculine ideals actively participated and influenced French colonization. Additionally, the resistance towards the indoctrination will be addressed.

8. Conclusion
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Gender is an integral part of most societies regardless of our individual preferences. Analyzing the impact of gender roles and expectations in a determined moment of history can reveal information and provide a better understanding of an event that may not have been taken into account before. This topic extensively intersects with most other areas in which societal behaviors are concerned. However, the understanding of gender is often fluctuating and continues to be very misunderstood. Analyzing gender in a particular group and historical event provides relevant data that allows a clearer understanding of its relations and dynamics. Even though nowadays the research and information available regarding gender and sexuality is broader than ever, the existing data regarding masculinities continues to be quite imprecise and restricted. It seems necessary to gather more information on masculinities to correct many of the stereotypes and ideas that have been attached to men for generations, as well as understanding how these ideals could have influenced the actions of many people in the past.

This research intends to contribute to the fields of postcolonial studies and gender studies with the analysis of the impact of Christian masculine ideals present in the missionaries during the French colonization of West Africa in the 19th century. The study of masculinities in Christianity is very relevant since it involves a large number of communities around the world. Moreover, in regards to the French colonization of West Africa, revising it is imperative due to its active participation through the missionaries. The French Empire is assumed to have had a strong attachment and reliance on the Church from the start, and the study of masculinities is fundamental since they are mostly male dominated spaces. The examination of masculinity is especially relevant because there are various intersections between gender studies, orientalism, and religion that justified and reinforced the continuation of French colonization.

The main question of this thesis is: How were Christian masculine ideals involved in the French colonization in West Africa in the 19th century? Some secondary questions for this research are: a) To what extent did missionaries participate in the French colonization?, b) What were the Christian ideals of men during the 19th century?, c) How did the French hegemonic masculinity affect Christian masculinity in the 19th century?, d) What was the role of race in the Christian masculinity ideals?, e) In which way were elements of colonialism justified through the Church? The hypothesis of this research is that missionary masculinity ideals had an imminent impact on their cooperation with the French colonial expansion, and they were engaging with their activities to keep the dominance and relevance of the Church at the time.

Very little research is available on the topic of masculinities, especially regarding the role of these in relation to religion and colonialism. To gather the information, various books, academic articles, literary pieces, and journals will be used to interpret, identify, analyze, and relate the idea of masculinities Christian masculinities and their relation to French colonialism. The methodological tools to be applied to answer the questions will be a combination of discourse analysis, historical review, textual analysis, deconstruction, case study, and gender studies. These different sources will be used to create links between each subject of study in order to be able to prove or disprove the hypothesis.

Literature Review

Understanding gender is a significant manner to display many of the events that have taken place throughout history. Gender debates frequently emerge as a topic of interest in today's society; however, research on masculinities remains very underdeveloped in this area. With the increase in gender studies, it becomes important for Men's Studies to be deepened in order to achieve a better comprehension of social behaviors. Even though gender studies have been approached in more detail in recent years, many questions remain concerning the majority of the concepts and notions that involve them. Butler (1999) argues that genders are performative actions that accommodate configurations of femininity and masculinity; however, femininity and masculinity are not genders per se, but only constructs of what we conceive of as gender. (p. 180). Thus, genders constitute a continuous agreement to act, reproduce and support binary cultural narratives that exclude those who do not conform and generate a sense of normalcy and necessity around them. Thereafter, it becomes almost impossible to identify what gender constitutes and what it does not. People act in the expected "masculine" and "feminine" ways in order to constantly accommodate our understanding of gender. Strasser (2020) states that gender exchanges between Europe and the rest of the world have been in charge of constructing many historical events. (p. 27). This research intends to explore the manners in which the gender conceptions of Europe permeated and pushed forward many of the behaviors related to colonialism, and more specifically, the way in which masculinity expectations related to the Church were a key component in these interactions.

The delineation of the concept of gender remains undetermined and questioned, but in a general sense, people tend to link masculinity and femininity to the "expression" of genders. Mosse (1996) asserts that masculinity today is still based on the separation of men and women from the past, which corresponds to the ideals of femininity and masculinity. (p. 9). Furthermore, Moblo (2008) mentions that genders respond and transform to social tensions and are constantly changing

when new circumstances arise. Connell (2016) expands on this idea explaining that it is suggested that different masculinities exist at the same time and a hierarchy is formed among them in which power, identity, and even violence takes place in order to be in the top. (p. 303). This becomes an important problem for analysis in gender studies since Butler (1999) mentioned that "gender is also a norm that can never be fully internalized; 'inside' is a surface sense, and gender norms are ultimately fantasy, impossible to embody." (p. 179). Due to constant shifts in gender performance and expectations throughout history, many gaps and questions remain unanswered. Determining the different primary manifestations of gender at various moments and places in time is important for tracking and understanding social dynamics that remain relevant today.

Masculinities are significant in most historical events since they often play an integral role in the development of domination and subordination. Werner (2011) stresses that Men Studies usually encounter issues with "homosocial relations"; since there is a deep link between domination and control with manhood and male ideals, to study interaction of men with other men is a determinant feature on how masculinities coexist and evolve. (p. 10). As noted earlier, research on masculinities has not been the focus of scholars for a long time in spite of the significant role they play in history. The term "masculinity" itself is a much-discussed concept that has yet to reach its definition. Nevertheless, there are a few studies that aim to trace and understand the evolution of masculinities. Mosse (1996) creates a portrait of the male ideal in his book, but while helpful, the ideal presented is very general. Farges (2013) mentions that masculinities relate, within a determined framework, to a variety of components that are socially perceived as being specific to men and that men have the responsibility to have them, to keep them, and to protect them in order to be masculine. Moreover, Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) establish that the concept of "hegemonic masculinity" represents the dominant masculinity at a certain moment in time. (p. 832). "Hegemonic masculinity" is not the only masculinity, but it obscures all others and requires men to adapt and be complicit in order to fit into the category. Marly

(2018) argues that "hegemonic masculinity" has its main power to generate a desire for people to identify and embody it, even when they cannot fully achieve it. (p. 242). Given that there seems to always be a dominant masculinity among all masculinities in a determined moment in time, it is relevant to discuss and determine the characteristics of this in order to understand how these impacted other masculinities, gender roles and interactions in history.

Men ensure the expected masculinity of the context in which they are involved, and they strive to achieve it. Connell (2016) suggests: "Hegemony is a historical possibility, a state of gender relations being struggled for, and struggled against, by different social forces. Since the accomplishment of hegemony is never guaranteed, the most useful way to conceptualize hegemonic masculinity is to treat it as a collective project for realizing gender hierarchy." (p. 306). Even though ideals of masculinity are in constant transformation across generations, particular traits can be found in the main representation of each period, and these traits constitute "hegemonic masculinity" despite the variations. Mosse (1996) mentions that the archetype of real manhood is very stable because it is an extremely concrete and visible ideal that people can easily determine. (p. 6). Bourdieu (1998) adds that the social order often favors this ideal to reinforce male domination over other populations, and over men who do not acquire it. (p. 15). However, most men, if not all, do not acquire all of the expected characteristics, which leads to a variety of problems with masculinities. Bola (2019) argues that regardless of multiple variations in masculinities, the view of manhood remains rigid and men are frequently forced and inclined to conform to hegemonic masculinity. (p. 11). Studies of men have determined that masculinities seem to incorporate a large amount of deviation at every time period, but even asserting "masculinity" or "masculinities" can be incredibly problematic. Kimmel et al (2005) comment that when the term is pluralized, it leads to more division in ways of "doing masculinity" that incorporate new variants such as social status. (p. 176). This idea needs to be further explored in relation to the Church due to its historical connection with the highest and the lowest classes of society simultaneously. Due to the large number

of alternatives that the study of masculinities can encounter and the insufficient amount of research that exists today, exploring different avenues on the subject is necessary in order to better understand what masculinity entails. To do this, returning to the interpretations, transformations and ideals of being a man must be a priority in this area. A few researchers have collected data tracing masculinities, but most of them remain unexplored.

Additionally, in the present, research on masculinities has been obscured due to problematic associations with the term. Kimmel et al. (2005) state that men are mostly identified as the "social gender problem" in the present day which has delayed a lot of progress in the field. (p. 142). Many scholars feel skeptical about discussing the topic due to the large focus established on men in the story, and there is a sense of wanting to shift the conversation away from them to other more marginalized populations like women and the LGBTQI+ community. However, due to the intrinsic connection and dependence that all of these have with each other, it is optimal to examine all of the variants of gender. Moreover, Butler (1999) asserts that gender is closely associated with the culture and politics of a specific moment in time. (p. 6). Then, she suggests that gender identity may arise from multiple intentions to impersonate prior personal or cultural practices and expectations attributed to one sex. (p. 176). Thus, studying the changes in gender roles experienced over time is necessary to understand how society worked in the past and even today, and this must include the study of masculinities. The view of masculinity in a specific period of time usually relies heavily in contrasting it with other entities, so when one role changes, many other roles follow it.

Power constitutes a relevant subject to cover with the research on masculinities. Different power dynamics coexist with each other, and therefore, it is imperative to research how they interact and influence each other. The colonial expansion represents a period in which these aspects can be thoroughly examined through the field of masculinities. Van Reyk (2009) states that masculine expectations from multiple locations and backgrounds are often interconnected and coexist with each other. (p. 1056). In many, if not most of history, masculinities and

their specific ideals play a large role, if not the main one, in the development of the events. For this reason, delving into masculinities in a certain moment in time is imperative to understand how specific hierarchical relations were developed. Sohn (2020) discusses how historically men have maintained control in most of the public space such as economy, politics and religion, which has created an indisputable connection of masculinity and power in the nineteenth century. French (n/d) further describes how the interactions that are often related to the exercise of power and the pursuit of relevance interact and impact its surroundings: "The masculine mystique does not satisfy anyone because it transforms ends into means: people, relationships, objects, pursuits, even power (as ability) become mere instruments aimed at control. Even worthy projects are infected by this goal. Domination is so tenuous that it brings more anxiety than pleasure. Without other ends, satisfaction is impossible." (p. 18). This becomes an integral area to explore in historical events, such as colonialism, due to the great number of contact that multiple masculinities had with each other, and how this interaction affected every one of them, their actions, and their reactions. Vann (2009) discusses that masculine ideals served as an emphasis of supremacy during the colonial expansion. (p. 407). Thus, it is essential to determine the manner in which these ideals intervened in the process. Furthermore, Miller (2018) establishes: "Rather, these hegemonic masculinities are the logical product of power hierarchies: there has to be one that is dominant." (p. 24). This enhances why the focus is the ending of the nineteenth century in France because the country was going through many changes such as the transformation of the Third Republic and a larger focus on colonial expansion; with this masculinities were undergoing multiple transformations. Maugue (1987) further analyzes the crisis that masculine identity was going under between the years 1871 to 1914. She establishes that there was uncertainty about the place that men were supposed to occupy due to the alterations that were taking place in society. France was undergoing internal changes, but also, it was confronted with new populations through its colonial expansion which was profoundly affecting gender performances. The period

requires special attention because masculinities were being threatened by multiple sources such as the engagement of women with spaces previously dominated by men and the encounter with other cultures. Moreover, Strasser (2020) mentions that throughout history, men's identity has been established through competition with others. (p. 25). With many more forms of masculinity interacting through the exchange with new communities, it is significant to further research the gender dynamics of the colonial period due to the long lasting effects of many actions and events. Vann (2017) explains that with the colonial expansion, race and masculinity induced more aggressiveness to assert supremacy. (p. 407). However, masculinities intersect and coexist with many more different areas of our society than race such as religion, and its relation to these groups is often overlooked.

Since masculinity appears to have been intrinsically related to dominance by many scholars, entities who are majorly composed by men would inherently have a significant impact in power dynamics in history. The Church is and has historically been a unit in which the majority of its authorities and figures are conformed by men. Norris (2019) stresses that throughout history the deponent desire to maintain and portray dominance is generally displayed in Christianity through their masculine based ideals. (p. 329). Loss of power or craving for power can be fueled through masculinity ideals in male dominated spaces. Van Reyk (2009) furthers this thought by stating that masculinity in itself can be culturally and socially considered a "social status." (p. 1072). Due to the close relation that Christianity has with the masculine identity, examining this can explain the decisions that were made and intervention of the Church for many events that occurred in history. The elements that describe Christian masculine ideals vary depending on the context in which they are being performed. It is undeniable that Christianity has been a crucial element in Europe for many years. Werner (2011) expands on this by determining that in a generalized way, Christianity and its many different variations has been a normative base of most Western societies. (p. 9). Thus, a lot of pressure exists for its authorities to maintain their relevance. Foster (2015) further emphasizes how this need to remain relevant has pushed forward the Church to

align in multiple instances with contradictory circumstances such as the rich and colonial empires while representing the poor and marginalized populations. (p. 283). Miller (2018) explores the unique position that the Church occupied in France during the Third Republic due to the vague relation that it maintained with the different economic classes that it coexisted with. (p. 25). Furthermore, he expands on the problematic status that the Church was facing as the Third Republic was established due to the diminishment of importance that had once been attributed to it by the government. (p. 26). Exploring these circumstances is relevant for this research due to the close link that Christianity had with the French identity in the period that is being considered.

Many of the most relevant figures who shape the Church represent untouchable and omnipotent individuals such as Jesus, The Pope, and even the priests. They display superiority for the followers of the religion. Gordon (2004) explains how the image of the priest has been constructed throughout history as an ideal for masculinity in spite of its many contradictions with the hegemonic expectations. (p. 104). Further, he describes the sacredness of the priests and their assumed connections with God. (p. 107). In spite of the assumed rigidness of these figures, they also have been subject of alteration as masculinity ideals. Moreover, from all of the masculine models in Christianity, the missionary often appears to be overshadowed in research of Men Studies scholars. Werner (2011) discusses how gender researchers have focused on the manner in which missionary affairs allowed women to challenge many gender roles, but they deeply lack depth on the effects on masculinity. (p. 15). This topic needs to be examined in more detail due to the supposed importance that this group had in the colonial expansion, as well as their close link to the imperial endeavors and goals. Similarly O'brien (2008) emphasizes in the quote: "(...) but there is little sustained analysis of how the mission field both shaped and was shaped by masculine identities." (p. 68). Masculinities often occupy a central role in conquest and domination of populations, objects, and territories throughout history. The nineteenth century was a period of extensive changes for both France and the Church, and the relation

between these two entities had considerable consequences for each other and many other territories. Therefore, this component requires more input in order to have a clearer idea on the reason why some power hierarchies emerged in the nineteenth century among masculinities themselves.

Missionaries appear to be profoundly involved during the French colonial expansion in West Africa. As it has been stated, masculinity is a relevant factor that has historically impacted many power relations, yet the influence of missionary masculinity during the French Empire has been neglected by gender scholars. Strasser (2020) mentions that gender and colonialism has been studied to determine the development of hegemonic and subaltern masculinities. (p. 28). With the interaction of different populations, it is common for hierarchies to appear in which one attempts to be more dominant and relevant. Said (1979) explains that the interpretation and behavior towards populations that are considered outside of the "norm" is displayed and enhanced in the culture through "discourse with supporting institutions, vocabulary, scholarship, imagery, doctrines, even colonial bureaucracies and colonial styles." (p. 9). Moreover, Werner (2011) comments on the way that Christianity had to evolve and mold itself to the circumstances and goals of the time: "The religious revivals and church mobilisations of the period were elements in the modernisation of society, and thus contributed, directly or indirectly, to the prevalence of the hegemonic concept of masculinity and its successive integration into the norms of the established churches." (p. 12). This, nonetheless, has not been expanded on enough into the research of the involvement of religions in the process of colonization. Francis (2015) explains that little progress has been made to determine the manner in which missionaries aided or opposed the colonial expansion. (p. 1). For this reason, analyzing this topic is a significant addition to both postcolonial and gender studies.

Focusing this research on West Africa is necessary due to the multiple factors that presented a challenge to hegemonic masculinity at the time. The colonization of West Africa was extensive, especially the French one, and it has lasting effects on the countries to this day. Sohn (2020) points out that colonization

was an important aspect that pushed forward more aggressive masculine performance in order to achieve the standards, and that the majority of its actors– administrators, missionaries, military, and government–were men. Thus, analyzing the masculinity expectations and assumptions during this period is essential to comprehend the expansion. West Africa contained many characteristics that propelled and enhanced many of the responses from all the different entities that were involved in the colonization period. O'brien (2008) establishes that tensions and stereotypes regarding different populations and races have links to the understanding of masculine identities. (p. 69). Furthermore, Connell (2016) establishes: "The growth of European empire in past centuries depended on certain social conditions in the metropole: strong states organized for sustained warfare; ideologies of supremacy, first religious and then racial; population growth able to sustain a flow of bodies to the colonies; and a mercantile capitalism searching for unlimited profits." (p. 311). In spite of all the possible avenues of investigation, research on the role of masculinities and Christianity during the French colonization in West Africa remains very limited. Inspecting the colonization of West Africa in the nineteenth century by the French is especially significant since it covered such a large territory and has had lasting consequences for its population.

Since religion appears to be a relevant actor in the lives of most civilizations, it is imperative to analyze its participation and influence in periods such as colonization. The subject of masculinities during colonialism has been researched in the past, but aspects about specific actors such as the Catholic Church in these two areas and how these are interconnected continue to be widely unexplored. Due to the fact that the data on this subject remains quite limited, the compilation of multiple sources and the analysis of their connections and gaps presented in this literature review is imperative in order to answer the main question of this research: How were Christian masculine ideals involved in the French colonization in West Africa in the 19th century?

In conclusion, the literature discussed in this review highlights several different aspects of the subject of masculinities. First, scholars have had a long debate about the concept of gender because of the multiple variations that can be encountered when studying it. Second, there is very limited research on the topic of Christian masculinities that offer a very narrowed view of the subject. Third, the end of the nineteenth century in France presents a relevant framework to study the drastic changes in the vision of gender and ideals for men. Fourth, the colonial expansion represents an important moment of assertion of masculine ideals. And fifth, analyzing the interactions and involvement of Christianity during the colonial expansion can better illustrate the development of power relations that are still quite unclear. All of these factors present the relevance of an examination of missionary masculinities during the French colonial expansion in West Africa in the nineteenth century.

Christian Masculinities in the 19th Century

Throughout history, creating a link between power dynamics and masculine expectations of any type is not a difficult task. The connection between these two concepts has become increasingly palpable as gender studies have developed through the years. Men are often conditioned, no matter the masculinity ideals that they are trying to conform, to compete and to be the superior version: "This 'hegemonic masculinity' formed one end of a gradient scale that moved along the intertwined lines of domination and manliness. Since domination is limited to a few, aspirants to masculinity had to compete against each other." (Mayordomo, 2011, p. 517). Thus, society has historically put men in a position in which they need to be active agents of control and acquisition. Additionally, if men fail to engage in these behaviors, their manhood will be put into question. Masculinity expectations are a driving power, no matter the setting in which they are established; and therefore, in an instance in which multiple types of manliness archetypes appear to intersect, it is almost foreseeable that there will be a need to adjust and strive to achieve hegemony: "Hegemony is a historical possibility, a state of gender relations being struggled for, and struggled against, by different social forces." (Connell, 2016, p. 306.). Moreover, different variations of masculinities are more important at a specific place and time: "Modern masculinity has helped to determine, and has in turn been influenced, by what were seen as normative patterns of morality and behavior, that is, typical and acceptable ways of behaving and acting within the social framework of past centuries." (Mosse, 1996, p. 4). The archetype of modern masculinity has been deeply based since the 18th century on the physical ideal of virile beauty which symbolizes virtue. This figure was determined and palpable through visual representations. The generalization of authentic masculinity has been so strong over time because it is not at all like simple thoughts or beliefs that can be subject to interpretation, but it can be seen and serves as a reminder of human excellence.

The French Empire, the Catholic Church, and Men themselves were and had been through history crucial actors of domination, and during the colonial

period, they were deeply dependent on one another: "(...) in their efforts to regain power, churches turned to masculinity as an instrument of legitimation. Connell notes how masculinity often arises as a tool in response to some disruption of "long-established and powerful ideals for men's lives, that is, to a sense of crisis." (Norris, 2019, p. 328-329.). Colonialism further pushed all of these elements to start what could be considered the "masculinity contest" in which every one of them strives to perform as the other while simultaneously attempting to dethrone it: "However, as long as there remain rigid and stereotypical beliefs around masculinity that are not to subscribe to a masculinity that is outside the status quo." (Bola, 2019, p. 11). When men became aware of their failure to meet expectations regarding their sex, as well as the contradictions surrounding masculinity, they have much more pressure to reflect the ideal. Thus, within their own ideals, men begin to overcompensate for their frailties and attempt to claim a simply unattainable masculinity.

In order to understand how the masculine expectations of all of these were a key element during colonialism, it is imperative to understand them in isolation and the manner in which they combine and contest. Christian masculine ideals can easily seem confusing and contradictory, especially in the 19th century in France. This is a consequence of the fact that Christian values sometimes are in direct opposition to masculinity ideals, in spite of the reality that its main institution pertains mostly to men. Around the end of the century, the image of Christian followers in itself appeared to be shifting, which brought additional anxieties to the men that practiced the faith. In theory, the goal for Christian men seems to be very transparent, which is following the image and behaviors of God, or more accurately put, the visual version of him which is his son, Jesus: "At their heart was the shared ideal of the imitation of Christ, an all-encompassing Christian ideal of personhood." (Van Reyk W, 2009, p. 1053), yet in practice, this appears much more complicated due to the multiple intersections with other societal expectations from which it is part of too. In the 19th century in France, in particular, Christian men were obliged to comply not only with the religious expectations, but the nation's expectations,

and the hegemonic masculine expectations: "However, rather than consider ideals of manliness as either secular or religious, we should recognize the co-existence of, and interconnections between, different discourses of manliness." (Van Reyk W, 2009, p. 1056). With the constant encounter of changes in gender roles, there was an exchange of ideals and competition among them.

By the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the eighteenth century, Christian men, specifically, were having diverse anxieties regarding their masculine identity. After the Enlightenment era, the male population in France had grown a detachment from the religion that used to be a central element in society, Christianity. Christian spaces slowly had started being taken by women and being disassociated from men. Thus, a space that used to be mainly controlled and occupied by men was changing. This situation brought a lot of tension for men at the time which felt a need to overcompensate with their manhood as the perception of the church shifted: "Men ran the churches, and the clergy long remained exclusively male, but at the parochial level women began to dominate more and more." (Werner, 2011, p. 9). The feminization of Christianity in the 19th century caused uneasiness for many men of the time since, theologically and in practice, the religion had historically been linked to masculinity: "[The social order functions like an immense symbolic machine tending to ratify the male domination on which it is founded: it is the sexual division of labor, a very strict distribution of the activities assigned to each of the two sexes (...).]" (Bourdieu, 1998, p15). When what is perceived as an activity related to a man or a woman gets altered, the conception of these gender norms and identities are challenged as well. Often, this leads to a redirection of the focus in which they can assert their gender performance. This became a great issue not only for men, but also for the Church itself who often strive to be too, a source of power and domination. That happens because the characteristic traits of manhood are deeply based on comparison and division which has reinforced the role of gender: "However, all these models, whether the outcome of scholarship or Christian manhood guides, chiefly make sense of evangelical manhood vis-à-vis the perceived crisis of masculinity, the

"feminization" of culture, and the expressive, nurturing "new man," or mythopoetic male self-discovery." (Maltby, 2017, p. 259). Thus, changes in women's actions directly impact the idea of masculinity. In spite of all of the concurrences that Christian manliness normally had with the hegemonic masculinities, the great participation of men compensated for it. However, with the engagement of the communities attending the Church fluctuating, so did the perception of the men that pertained to it.

Christian men felt the need to repair their image and one of the main solutions for this was found in missions: "On the one hand, missionary work required heroic bravery, on the other endurance, self-denial and compassion. However, more recent studies have shown that gender dichotomies were not ordered according to a totalizing template. Ideals of manhood were neither monochrome nor static and the boundaries of gender identity were not impermeable." (O'brien, 2008, p. 77). Through missions, Christian men were able to battle the feminization of their religion due to the connection that missionary work had with the hegemonic masculine ideals and the nations needs during the beginning of the colonial period of France:

> In order to counterbalance the 'effeminate' image of religious practice, the churches developed male semantics, often fused with notions of nationhood, that were supposedly appealing to men, and offered a framework of associations and organisations in which male Christian identities could be formed. The re-masculinisation that followed in the wake of confessionalism made it possible for Christian men to compensate for the feminisation of religious culture, real or imagined, for it offered an arena where male virtues and powers could be used for religious purposes. Using the theoretical perspectives presented above, we have formulated a general hypothesis of church mobilisation and Christian confessionalism as a strategy used by the churches to counteract the secularisation of society and the feminisation of religion, and to restore and reinforce male domination in the religious sphere. (Werner, 2011, p. 13).

The Church, being a majorly male dominated sphere, was equally affected by the seeming feminization of Christian practices, and in its need to prove itself again among the "masculinity contest", it needed to act towards changing the circumstances and perception.

Missionary masculinity responds to similar expectations as other Christian masculinities because it belongs to a highly male controlled space: "Christianity has markedly patriarchal traits, and by tradition men have played the dominant role in the affairs of all churches." (Werner, 2011, p. 7). Even the idea of God himself is attributed for it to be a man in Christianity. This emphasis of male figures permeates in the religion as a whole and thus, similarly to its followers. Moreover, as it was previously established, missionary masculinities were encountering additional tensions due to the surroundings and contact with femininity. However, there are many aspects that can be applied such as their reliance on passages of the bible, the imitation of other men–such as Jesus, apostles, and God–and Church officials. Following Jesus' example is probably the most relevant and visual representation of the Christian masculine expectations: "At their heart was the shared ideal of the imitation of Christ, an all-encompassing Christian ideal of personhood." (Van Reyk, 2009, p. 1053). Jesus embodies most of the qualities that need to be obtained both as a man and as a religious follower: "In both cases the Christian heroes, with Jesus as the ultimate example, were described as the instruments of God, distinguished by religious zeal and a willingness to refrain from the success and comforts of this world." (Werner, 2011, p.14). However, the image of Jesus in the Western world had been heavily edited already to fit many of the expectations of the society such as his looks and behaviors. It is, thus, the Occidental portrayal of the son of God, especially, who will work to illustrate what men need to achieve in terms in Christian manliness archetype. This alteration of the idea of Jesus will push forward many of the masculine ideals of missionaries in the nineteenth century.

Moreover, Christian manhood possesses many traits that could be considered contradictory to the general conception of masculine ideals related to

strength, hard work, bravery, and sexuality; however, these dichotomies seem to be compensated through other masculine ideals related to sacrifice, control, and humbleness: "Paul suggests that there is one way for a Christian male to give up his role as active agent: to belong to Christ." (Mayordomo, 2011, p. 519.). Thus, by devoting their lives to their religion, missionaries respond to their masculine archetype. When examining masculinities of any type, it is common to find incongruencies due to the fact that the many of the characteristics that are considered "masculine" are the direct opposite of each other: "Even where a man may feel he has failed in his responsibilities as a man (perhaps translating into notions of dishonor or unmanliness), the standard by which he is viewed as having breached its commitments remains relatively clear." (Kimmel et al, 2005, p. 176). It is in that way however that the social order often favors this ideal to reinforce male domination over other populations, and over men who cannot acquire it. These types of changes and actions are necessary in order for masculinity to be achieved, which becomes especially transparent while being challenged by the feminization of Christianity: "Since the human body was constructed as one single-sex body differing only in terms of extroverted or inverted genitalia, masculinity was not simply a matter of 'anatomical nature' but something which had to be achieved constantly. 'Manliness was not a birthright. It was something that had to be won.'" (Mayordomo, 2011, p. 516). The generalization of authentic masculinity has been so strong over time because it is not at all like thoughts or beliefs, it can be seen and serves as a reminder of human excellence. Additionally, the possible contradictions of missionary masculinity are combated by reinterpreting different concepts to make them fit the masculine expectations of the time, referring to family life: "Meanwhile, men who engaged in charity were commonly described as having acted in a paternal fashion." (Van Reyk, 2009, p. 1068), and patriotism: "Undergirding this masculine ecclesiology was a manly Christology that promoted an image of Jesus as "an unprecedented warrior (...)" (Norris, 2019, p. 322).

The image of Jesus as a warrior becomes especially relevant due to the masculine ideals in France in the nineteenth century and the manner in which

Christian missionary expectations were altering and molding themselves after them. The archetype of masculinity at the time was easily recognizable and sought after by men. It was the image of the warrior, represented by the military. Mosse (1996) explains that during the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars, the characteristics that symbolized masculinity became more apparent, and men became more aware of the attributes that made them manly in the eyes of the society to which they belonged. (p. 5). The ideals of the military permeated in many spaces of French society, and when the colonial period began, they became even more relevant for men to support them. Not only does the main image of manhood in Christianity, Jesus, was presented as a warrior, but even verses of the bible portray the characteristics of one:

> Be on your guard;
>
> stand firm in the faith;
>
> act like men,
>
> be strong. (1 Cor 16:13)

Maltby (2017) states that this reinterpretation goes as far as to say that God himself is a warrior and that since "man" was created from his image, it is their duty. (p. 278). While the main masculine ideals in France corresponded to the ones of the military, in spite of all of the clear differences, Christian masculine expectations were able to adapt and respond to them. The fact that these two could be connected was even more relevant due to the circumstances that Christian masculinity was facing with feminization, and consequently for the missionary masculinity and its influence during the French colonial expansion in West Africa.

The imagery of the Christian soldier made it possible for missionary masculinity to adapt to the masculine expectations of France in the nineteenth century. Miller (2018) argues that the military had been able to take into two opposite sides of manhood that would become seen as complementary instead of contradictory. (p. 24). The model of a warrior greatly influenced Christian archetype of manliness, and this time, not only coming from the French society's pressure,

but also from the intrinsic connection that the main personification of this had become none other than the son of God–the one to strive to imitate. In fact, it is not uncommon for Christian followers to refer to themselves as "soldiers." Additionally, with this self-identification, it provides facility for many of the characteristics of the military to be aspired for in Christianity: "In five clear and crisp charges [Paul] gathers together the duties which he has been inculcating, the duties of a Christian soldier. Four of these have reference to spiritual foes and perils, while the last sums up their duty to one another. They are an army in the field, and they must be alert, steadfast, courageous, strong; and in all things united." (Mayordomo, 2011, p. 523). The relation of the self-identification as "soldiers" to masculinity expectations is palpable. This is especially relevant when the contradictions that allowed for a constant competition among men and the anxieties of feminization of Christianity come into place:

> In a familiar paradox, the New Testament speaks of Jesus as both a lamb and a lion. He is "the Lamb of God" (John 1:29, 1:36), whose sacrifice takes away the sin of the world, and "the Lion of the tribe of Judah" (Revelation 5:5), who will conquer the nations with ferocious strength. This paradox has given rise to conflicting images of Jesus: the pastoral Jesus, who serves as a gentle and loving guardian, and the militant Jesus, who "[has] not come to bring peace, but a sword" (Matthew 10:34). (Maltby, 2017, p. 275).

This does not signify that the image of Christ was adapting into this "soldier" due to the circumstances of France and the Church in the nineteenth century, but rather, that the means were available to link them together all along, and most of all, in a moment in which both were in need of support. In this manner, it could be argued that missionary masculinity was able to merge, and therefore, subscribe to the hegemonic masculinity expectations in France in the nineteenth century.

Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) establish that the concept of "hegemonic masculinity" represents the dominant masculinity at a certain moment in time. (p. 832). Hegemonic masculinity is not the only masculinity, but it obscures all others and requires men to adapt and be complicit in order to fit into the category.

Purposefully or not, the constant competition to be considered masculine pushes men and even groups conformed by mostly men to follow and adapt to these features. Hegemonic masculinity has its main power to generate a desire for people to identify and embody it, even when they cannot fully achieve it which is why, as mentioned before, it is not uncommon to encounter many contradictions within masculine expectations. Moreover, the French Revolution had caused a lot of instability in the topic of men's identity which in itself was pushing forward a new hierarchy of masculinities and gender: "One way was that, if presented correctly, the Revolution could become an endorsement of a particular political vision for nineteenth-century France." (Miller, 2018, p. 95). Gender norms had changed due to a larger engagement of women in spheres that used to be occupied majorly by men. In this sense, it is possible to find parallels with the situation of the Church and their future alignments around manhood ideals. Adding to this lack of stability arrived the French Third Republic. Republican masculinity had a large role in shaping hegemonic masculinity at the time, yet it shared similar values and virtues from the one that came from the Revolution. The main aspect that changed with republican masculinity was consciousness of social classes due to the endorsement of the bourgeois command, yet it maintained a relevant connection with the admiration towards the military. Due to the new conception of the difference between social classes, a new focus was put on honor and authority: "Dominating the public sphere this way they could articulate the notion of merit while maintaining hegemony on their assertions or practice of maleness." (Miller, 2018, p. 47-48). These characteristics appear significant in the influence into the development of the hegemonic masculinity of the time and its implications for missionary masculinity.

Furthermore, with the establishment of the French Third Republic, the Church appeared to be losing authority in the country once more. Thus, more anxieties emerged for its followers and authorities. There was a need to establish themselves as a relevant, powerful, and dominant institution for the country: "The new government also put an end to the church's outward attempts to return France

to a throne and altar alliance. The result was a rejuvenation of Catholic thinking and administration, essentially shifting how the church would remain influential in society and helping to define its responses to the challenges that were to come. (Miller, 2018, p. 26). The implicated separation and the ongoing fear of the feminization of Christianity in the nineteenth century forced the Church, which was majorly constituted by men, to take further action into proving their masculine identity. This can be seen with the manner in which they started aligning more to the hegemonic manliness expectations in France, which was the military model: "The relationship between different kinds of masculinities form a dialectic interplay of alliance, dominance, subordination (...)" (Werner, 2011, p.12). In a way, participating in the military was considered an initiation of manhood. Thus, the manner in which different types of manliness respond to other masculinities will often be related to the context that will allow them to either strive or lose against them: "This explosion, at once material, intellectual, and moral, was an expression of what I call "the masculine mystique," a drive to power based in myth. The aim of this drive is domination which, according to the myth, allows men to transcend their human vulnerabilities." (French, n/d, p.18). Since Christian masculinities were facing many drawbacks, they were more willing to comply with characteristics of the hegemonic masculinities in France in the nineteenth century to assert themselves: "The term 'hegemonic masculinity' named a key mechanism sustaining an oppressive society and implied that contesting this mechanism was an important strategy of change." (Connell, 2016, p. 303.). This could even be considered a defense mechanism that Christian masculinities were using through the many anxieties of the time.

Moreover, there appeared to be a very evident lack of division between the Church and the nation at the time. This translated as well in the merging of patriotism as part of the Christian values and ideals. In fact, being an active participant in civilian activities was closely related to both masculinity expectations and Christianity: "But he shared their conviction that his manly duty was to be a responsible Christian citizen contributing to debates on national issues." (O'brien,

2008, p. 78). Consequently, the goals and missions of the country were intrinsically linked to the values that must be followed by Christians. As it was established, in the nineteenth century, the hegemonic masculinity in France consisted of the model of the military. This emphasized the relevance of men to fight for their nation and be active members of it, in spite of the sacrifice. And in fact, the same notion of sacrifice was perceived as a key part of the manliness expectations at the time: "He follows Connell in writing of a hegemonic Western concept of manliness, derived from biological categories that centered on ideals such as self-control, endurance, rationality, patriotism, heterosexuality, and physical beauty." (Werner, 2011, p. 12). Patriotism has been established in multiple gender studies before as a main component of masculine identity, and if the Church is examined as a majorly male dominated sphere, it comes as only natural that they would be too subjected to their merits.

When it comes to colonial expansion, the connection between patriotism and Christianity was especially blurred. Due to the apparent separation that the government was attempting to apply with the Church with the emergence of the Third Republic, Christian missionaries felt compelled to aid their country in their colonial endeavors to re-establish their influence. With the crisis that Christian masculinity was experiencing, it was imperative for them to impulse and compensate for their anxieties by augmenting their presence in other masculine expectations. The Church, then, became profoundly involved with the French Empire through their need to assert their masculine ideals that were attributed either by the hegemonic group or religious values. Werner (2011) argues that, in fact, Catholics had a proneness to even utilize nationalism for the benefit of their religion. (p. 13). He further refers to these circumstances as "nationalist religions." This would demonstrate their mutually beneficial relationship. However, in spite of the adaptation that Christian masculinity was attempting to hegemonic masculinity in France due to internal and external circumstances, the need to be the dominant and most superior entity did not stop: "Ultimately, however, the faithful Catholic emerged as superior to the regular soldier because an action done for God, no

matter how small, was greater than the exploits of heroes." (Miller, 2018, p. 227).
Through this quote, the masculinity competition becomes evident. By the end of
the nineteenth century, missionary masculinities were being profoundly impacted
and altered by many of the circumstances in their surroundings, and in their need
to satisfy their masculine expectations and compete they were actively participating
in the French Empire.

Christian missionaries from France appeared to be majorly involved in the
endeavors of the country, and their masculine ideals were an integral aspect for
this to occur: "The fact that they were French blurred some of the distinctions
between the church and the colonial power in French colonies (...) many French
missionaries were unabashedly patriotic and saw themselves as serving the glory
of France and of the Church at the same time." (Foster, 2015, p. 288). Patriotism
was a quality that was pushing forward many of the attitudes and ideals of
Christian masculinities in the nineteenth century. Moreover, missionary
congregations wanted to be supported by the military regime, not only as a way to
cover more territory in their missions, but also to have confirmation of their actions
and proximity to the ideals. In fact, Foster (2015) further expresses that different
Catholic authorities of the time urged their followers to be more openly patriotic and
to praise the extension of missionary affairs in the colonies. (p. 304). Nationalism
was not only a very relevant trait in French missionary masculinities, but also, it
was the same patriotism filled with the drive for superiority and dominance that
encouraged the expansion of these values in the colonies.

As it has been discussed throughout the chapter, masculinities are no
strangers to constant competition with one another; there are many aspects that
can intersect and impulse this further. With this continuous contest, it is imperative
for an "otherness" to be found in order to assert themselves in their masculine
identity. The "other" can be attributed to any that does not conform to the ideals of
one entity. Expectations around masculinity are often constructed against an
opposite rather than having the properties themselves. Finding the "other" in
France in the nineteenth century was not a difficult endeavor due to the colonial

expansion: "(...) a collective notion identifying 'us' Europeans as against all 'those' non-Europeans, and indeed it can be argued that the major component in European culture is precisely what made that culture hegemonic both in and outside Europe: the idea of European identity as a superior one in comparison with all the non-European peoples and cultures." (Said, 1979, p.15). This feeling of national superiority was present in France as much as in the rest of Europe, and through the colonial expansion it was enhanced. Patriotism was then playing a large role in the validation of missionary masculinity, and consequently, they were also influenced by the idea of "otherness." Due to this constant contrast that men had while trying to achieve "true masculinity" became a threat and a reminder of all failing to accomplish the desired stereotype. In some manner, it facilitated their masculine validation and performance both as Christians and as French.

Defining an "other" was not difficult with new territories and people being encountered during the colonial expansion. This was enhanced by the ingrained sense of patriotism and the threatened masculinity for Christians in France. A general sense of superiority flooded the French population so in comparison to other populations, they would often consider them suboptimal. The concept of the "other" became even more important due to the republican masculinity from the French Third Republic and the different positions regarding the Dreyfus Affair and the antisemitism it propelled: "(...) Dreyfus Affair shows how the confrontation with the racial "other" affected the discourse of masculinity. (Miller, 2018, p. 27). This sentiment was well reconciled with republican masculinity and was pushed forward in different ways towards hegemonic masculinity of the time. The French showed a lot of prejudice laid on the Arab and black population of West Africa that could not conform to their societies standards: "The colonized were devirilized through the figures of the soft or homosexual 'Arab,' or the 'effeminate' Bengali. The character of the 'boy,' subjugated to the private space, is a symbol of this." (Sohn, 2020). A clear focus on the male population remained when the "other" were referred to as inferior. The main characteristics that were given to belittle these populations were regularly related to their emasculation and comparison with their own masculine

ideals. Non-European countries and their inhabitants are often described in what could be considered feminine features. Nonetheless, attached to this belittlement, another masculinity ideal arises which is the need to "help" the "other"–the inferior one, the less powerful one–because it is their duty in order to achieve the masculine ideals themselves. The image of the "Christian soldier" emphasized this perception in which they needed to be active agents in negative environments: "To combat a hostile environment and the constant attacks of Satan and his evil angels, Christians are to become 'soldiers of Christ,' and to be 'bold and valiant.'" (Mayordomo, 2011, p. 521). This will be specially relevant with the justification of colonization that Christian provided and believed in. Since most of masculine ideals depend on the comparison with other men, the most effective way to conform and validate one is by diminishing the other.

Moreover, as it was previously discussed, the image of Jesus had been greatly adapted to Western society for it to reflect the masculine ideals of Occident and separate it from its Oriental origins: "Race anxieties also had implications for masculine identities." (O'brien, 2008, p. 69). This constant competition and "otherness" might have motivated the evident transformation of Jesus to fit Western ideals. Consequently, the distance that was established between the image of the son of God with the Orient–in spite of his origins–-perpetuated the sentiment of the "other" and impacted the Christian masculine ideals. With the colonization of West Africa, those who were not complying with manhood became more than evident, and in order for Christian men, missions were the main way in which they could overcome all other problems and display their superiority over all other men.

Religion had a significant role in the understanding of the inhabitants of the colonies. Similar to the idea that was held in Europe about Arab and black population was the understanding of Islam. Muslims were generally conceived as inferior:

> On the other side, the concepts of 'white Islam', Islam bidan, and 'Moorish Islam', Islam maure, was created to categorize Muslims of Mauritania, the Maghreb, and the Arab world. While 'white Islam' was considered to be more 'fanatical' and dangerous, French scholars and colonial officials believed that 'black Islam' was easier to govern. Still, in sub-Saharan Africa, too, fears of Islam, le peril de l'Islam, never really vanished from the colonial records. (Motadel, 2012, p. 853)

This passage not only portrays the general concept that existed from Occident towards the Muslim population, but also, the connection these ideas have with the constant competition in masculinity and the intersections they have with race and patriotism. The French Empire needed to rely on the mission work of the Church in order to advance with their expansion. Through subjecting the colonies to Christianity and their ideals, the imperial authorities were able to obtain access to the population and have a more rapid expansion: "Religious affiliation was an important lens through which colonial officials viewed their subjects. Across the world, the governing of religion was a pivotal concern of imperial authorities." (Motadel, 2012, p. 832). With this, the significance of the presence of Christian missionaries during the colonial expansion is evident. In addition, it is possible to establish the clear links that their intervention with the colonial affairs had with conforming to the masculine ideals of both Christianity and France at the time.

Christian masculinity in the nineteenth century was experiencing many changes. As it was a majorly male dominated space, the need for action to reassert themselves as superior within other men was necessary given the circumstances that they were facing inside of their religious sphere and the country's context. Christian missionary masculinity had a key role in their active participation and aid of the French Imperial authorities, and one of the main forces

for this was to comply with the masculine ideals of the time–both of the Church and of France. Missionary masculinity had a large involvement with the actions of the country in the colonies and due to the urge to compete their participation was crucial: "It was specifically a harsh and insistent masculinity adapted to the need to dominate a colonized population." (Connell, 2016, p. 307). Thus, it is not difficult to accept that missionary masculine ideals were not only key actors in the French colonial expansion in West Africa, but that they were the ones that took primary action into it.

Masculinities permeate most spheres in our society. Gender constructions that have been developed throughout history have a large impact on the behavior and attitudes that humans have. There is a constant exchange of expectations and roles that constitute the manner in which groups behave. Masculinity ideals during the nineteenth century appear to have had a large effect on the involvement of many entities in colonization. Studying these dynamics provides a profound insight on the relations that different units had with each other and how they have evolved.

French Missionaries in West Africa

As it was previously discussed, the large role that Christianity has played in European history is undeniable. The relation of the Catholic Church with France had been especially strong even until recent years, and therefore, it is not surprising that it has been an active participant in many of the actions and decisions of the country. Several attempts have been made by the Church to establish distance between it and many historical events in which it has been involved, especially when seeing the aftermath of it. In the case of France, its relevance transcended its own borders throughout the colonial period, but especially as a kickstarter of what was yet to come for the colonies: "As a predominantly Roman Catholic country, France encouraged Roman Catholic missionaries' right from the start of her colonial activities in West Africa." (Achebe et al, 2018, p. 97). In fact, the participation of the church in the French colonial affairs seems to have started even before the military forces and imperial authorities had arrived. Religion appears to have been one of its most intrinsically hidden powerful tools, and in fact, it could be considered a central role in the French colonial matters.

The relation that it has with the colonization of West Africa by the French through missionaries in the nineteenth century is probably one with the most complicated moments of interaction between both entities. In the nineteenth century, the bond of the Catholic Church and the French Empire ran so deep that it could be assumed there were not many clear distinctions between one and the other due to their parallel goals and ideals. Their participation in the colonial expansion seemed to dependent equally on the forces of both entities, which in return, brought a lot of ambiguity: "Throughout the period from 1830 to 1914, the nature of the relationships between and among missionaries and settlers, as well as the political dangers these relationships posed to the state, remained remarkably confused; and this confusion and the anxiety it engendered stemmed directly from the weakness, instability, and incoherence of the colonial state." (Francis, 2015, p. 2). This lack of distinction was a source of validation for both

entities regarding the greatness and importance. Additionally, as explained in the previous chapter, the links between masculinity and patriotism were especially strong when it came to transmitting the culture and rules to the colonies. Norris (2019) affirms that masculinity was used as an "ecclesial strategy for maintaining or regaining cultural relevancy and political power." (p. 320)

Missionaries, for the most part, felt very comfortable mixing their patriotism with their religion. The fact that they were being encouraged by French authorities to move forward with their missions in West Africa served as a confirmation that their behavior was fitting with the ideals that they aspired to. Similarly, their views on the inhabitants on the colonies as inferior in terms of masculinity, religion, and civilization further urged them to take action: "A 'theology of colonization' mattered very deeply to Catholics on both sides: they wanted the comfort and the empowerment of knowing that the church endorsed their views and their actions regarding the future of the colonies." (Foster, 2015, p. 287). This was congruent with the desire of the Church to re-establish its influence during the French Third Republic. From their perspective, in the missions in the colonies, they were equally pushing forward for their religion and for their nation. In West Africa, the ideas of patriotism and Christianity were used interchangeably by the missionaries since they were fiercely attempting to subscribe to both. However, it was not only missionaries the ones that were blurring the lines between the duties of the country and the duties of their religion, but the imperial authorities themselves encouraged this, knowing the large advantage that they could give them to control over the colonies. It was easier and also cheaper for the French Empire to incorporate and urge Christian missionaries to participate in the colonial expansion endeavors:

> French colonial officials were thus faced with the dilemma of having to choose whether to use missionaries to 'assimilate' these foreigners (and the minority of French Catholics) by spreading their universalist ideal of French culture and language or to allow missionaries to provide for these settlers' particular needs by fostering their own religious customs and preaching and ministering to them in their own native languages (...).
> (Francis, 2015, p. 2).

It was functional for the French Empire to utilize missionaries to transmit the norms and behaviors of their society in the colonies. This not only appears as a manner of domination but as a manner to effectively display superiority which was essential to fulfill the masculinity expectations of all concerned entities.

Furthermore, missionaries felt prompted to promote their religion as the correct one when it was in comparison to other religions, but more than that, Islam. Due to the conception of inferiority that Christians had over the populations of the colonies, there was an extra incentive to take on the imperial affairs to make this change. This allowed for a sentiment of self-control and satisfaction as well as selflessness that were very characteristic of the masculine ideals of both commodities. The colonization of West Africa is known to be specially rough towards the Muslim communities in comparison to other Empires due to the attachment of Christian values to the French culture: "(...) who has emphasized the frictions between colonial authorities and Muslim leaders, have shown the less accommodating side of French policies towards Islam. Scholars of imperialism in West Africa have often characterized French policies as interventionist and unaccommodating, contrasting them with British policies of noninterference and accommodation." (Motadel, 2012, p. 834). Thus, it is clear that French expansion was not only concerned with the control of new territories, but a priority was to transmit their values and behaviors to the colonies. This point of view accurately displays Christian and French masculine ideals of the time which heavily relied on patriotism, and these were reinforced with the French Third Republic in place. In addition, many historians argue that missionaries were especially able to foster the

agreement of the population of the colonies regarding the expansion of the empire through the diffusion of the language, culture, and religion of the colonizer.

For the French Empire and the Church, missionary work was mutually beneficial and aided their objectives in the colonies. Aforementioned, missionaries served the French Empire as a way to indoctrinate the population of West Africa into their beliefs and conducts. In fact, the Church had as well a major role in this field: "Schooling was the preserve of the church in the colony; it was one of the domains in which it had to establish its 'usefulness to his Majesty's service.'" (Jaenen, 1985, p.17). Promoting the French lifestyle and values was one of the main duties of missionaries other than sharing their faith. Nonetheless, this appeared to be a false sense of dominance for the Church and the missionaries since, for the most part, the military was in charge of all of these affairs:

> At the same time, the military retained ultimate authority over politically sensitive issues and governors general tended to work towards associating foreigners to the imperial state by providing for their particular and presumed cultural, educational, and religious needs. In this period, the military turned to missionaries to fulfill this goal and offered them protection from at times hostile civilian authorities and anticlerical colonists. Ultimately, religion played a pivotal role in the conception and application of both policies. (Francis, 2015, p. 75)

This fragment vividly exemplifies the manner in which the hegemonic masculinity and subaltern masculinities play the game of superiority and domination in which no matter anything, the ideal cannot be achieved.

The relation between the colonial empire of France and the Church proves to be mutually beneficial. With the early arrival of missionaries in West Africa, the confrontation of the native population with the imperial authorities tended to be easier: "(...) Catholic missionaries occupied a liminal space between European rulers and North African subjects, and their presence thus disrupted the racialized taxonomies on which imperial rule depended." (Francis, 2015, p. 69). The Christian population was deeply concerned with enlarging their following as well as

establishing dominance. At the beginning of the colonial expansion in West Africa, through the trust in missionaries, the French authorities were able to have a dedicated unit settle for the initial confrontation with the natives. The simple fact that Church officials and missionaries arrived in the colonies before imperial authorities provided a dominant role in colonial endeavors of France. Meanwhile, Christians felt compelled to demonstrate their superiority against the other religions. Their desire for acquisition can be related too to manly expectations of the hegemonic masculinity of France at the time and the Church. This was a continuous contest of domination played by Christian missionaries which was fueled by achieving the masculine expectations of their religion and their nation.

Moreover, with the feminization of Christian practices occurring in France after the Enlightenment era, they were searching for manners to superimpose themselves over other masculine dominated entities, either to assimilate more masculine ideals or to win the masculinity contest against some other unit. The Church noticed too a very needed opportunity of expansion with colonialism: "Rather than seeing the territory as a 'laboratory of modernity' whose findings could be transplanted back to the metropole, missionaries saw the empty space of empire as affording them the opportunity to forge and implant a religious present increasingly foreclosed in a secularizing France." (Francis, 2015, p. 7). Through missions in West Africa, the Christians would be able to fulfill multiple achievements such as transmitting the values of France, indoctrinating others in their faith, perpetuating their dominance, and validating their superiority. As previously mentioned, all of these can be found in the missionary masculinity expectations, and due to the circumstances of the time, they appeared much more aggressive than before.

The relevance of missionaries in West Africa is clear and had a crucial role in the expansion of the French Empire. They represented one of the main sources of doctrine and ideology transferred to the colonies. Additionally, in most cases Christian missions were in charge of establishing the first contact of the natives which proved to be crucial for the success of the expansion of the empire. The

influence of the Church in the colonization of West Africa continues to be overlooked in spite of the relevance it still has today: "This world was insular enough that historians of France and the French empire outside of the church have largely overlooked it, yet Catholic networks formed some of the most important and lasting links between France and its colonies, many of which remain in place today." (Foster, 2015, p. 285).

The work of the missionaries in West Africa was extremely important for the achievement of many imperial affairs. They had a prominent role in the distribution of European values, language, and culture in the colonies. The involvement of this group was necessary for the French Empire to have the range that it was able to cover during the colonial expansion. Moreover, the impacts of these contacts can be traced to this day in multiple ways in the previous colonies such as in their language, migration, trading, and political relations.

Justification of Colonization from the Church

Moreover, Ducattillon asserted that if an indigenous people tried to obstruct colonization, it was violating both the rights of the colonists and those of the wider universal human community, which stood to benefit from the development of the colonized lands. If they did attempt such obstruction, their political liberty could be forfeit to the state of the colonizing people. (Foster, 2015, p. 302)

Joseph-Vincent Ducattillon was a French monk who discussed extensively the role of the Church and patriotism during the French colonial affairs. As it can be noticed through this quotation, justifying the actions of the colonizers and actively supporting them did not present any issues for the missionaries since they were so vehemently attempting to prove themselves through accommodating to the hegemonic masculinity values of France at the time. This reinterpretation, adaptation, and actual parallels between the missionaries' manhood ideals and the ideals of the nation pushed not only for their participation but to defend it since it was essentially part of them. Additionally, through religion, missionaries were able to accommodate to the masculine expectations by reinterpreting the ideals of the hegemonic masculinity–the military–and patriotism in their own way in the colonial affairs: "The manly thing to do is to not fight with weapons but with words, to channel one's aggression into persuasive rhetoric and education." (Strasser, 2020, p. 64). As it was previously established, it was through the transmission of the French and Catholic ideologies to the population of the colonies that missionaries were able to display their alignment with masculine ideals and use that to legitimize their actions.

For missionaries, promoting their faith was not only their duty but a form of aid towards the colonies, which they believed they were in a position to provide. In many occasions, the Church would go to the length of stating that they were entitled to the lands in order to defend the colonial expansion: "Ducattillon claimed, following Vitoria, that the earth and its riches belonged to all peoples and no people had the right to ban another people from any part of the earth. The only limit on a

person's or a people's right to travel was the rights of others." (Foster, 2015, p. 301). Christians would eagerly utilize claims of the French government to determine their position with colonization and adapting them to the principles of their religion. In fact, they would even argue that it could be admissible to offend others to secure their claimed interests and the greater good of the other. This in itself promotes a conception of superiority that considers their beliefs as more adequate and preferable than those of the natives, which goes in agreement with the virtue of honor that were reinforced by the French Third Republic. Missionaries thought that with their work they were helping their nation, themselves, and the population of the colonies. Furthermore, Van Reyk (2009) comments that they enhanced that education for the participation of the national church was the main way towards salvation. (p. 1067). In this sense, missionaries thought that their goal was to rescue people from their damnation. It was their duty as "warriors": "To combat a hostile environment and the constant attacks of Satan and his evil angels, Christians are to become "soldiers of Christ," and to be "bold and valiant." (Mayordomo, 2011, p. 521). Thus, the way in which Christians defended colonization was both by the sake of the "improvement" of the colonies and the preservation of the French empire, which needed to be done under any circumstances, even if it required force or breach.

A large focus on instruction was placed within Christian missionaries in West Africa. The preconceptions that had been generated about the populations that inhabited those countries were generally negative. Those notions were in charge of pushing forward the wish to "aid" them: "Chateaubriand puts the whole idea in the Romantic redemptive terms of a Christian mission to revive a dead world, to quicken in it a sense of its own potential, one which only a European can discern underneath a lifeless and degenerate surface." (Said, 1979, p.172). This was as well one of the main advantages that the imperial authorities gained from their engagement with the colonial expansion. Furthermore, through this, they were able to exert their domination in a more intrinsic manner: "The Society's institutional formation and the remaking of clerical masculinity in Europe thus

intersected with global processes of domination and differentiation whose gendered patterns involved the mutual construction of marginal colonial and hegemonic colonizing masculinities." (Strasser, 2020, p. 47). Therefore, the spread of their faith would also play a role into masculinity by competition and assertiveness of their own ideals. Having Jesus as the main masculine ideal of Christian missionaries, further urged their involvement with the indoctrination of the natives on the colonies and emphasized the conception that they had of these populations. Aforementioned, as much as the male identity is established by competition, it is determined by imitation of the model of manhood: "Further, imitation of Christ was necessary. Christ as a model of masculinity was one that gave himself to little children, the ignorant, and the poor. He was without pride and spoke to others with gentleness and simplicity. He was humble and considered himself below others." (Miller, 2018, p. 227). By participating in the educational part for communities that could be considered minor to them, missionaries were able to follow the steps of their major image of masculinity.

The assimilation of the communities in the colonies to the French Empire was urged in spite of the manner in which it had to be done. This was emphasized by the lack of conditions that missionaries had to "educate" the colonies into "civilizations." Since missionaries considered their work was being done for the improvement of those populations as well as the aid of their nation, they were encouraged and obliged to it: "In exercising their right to rule, a colonizing people had to be just and charitable, even to 'the guilty,' and they had a duty to help the colonized people toward full participation in civic life. Yet colonizers would be remiss and would violate the tenets of justice and charity if they did not exercise their right of rule." (Foster, 2015, p. 304). Converting Muslims and other populations of West Africa into Christianism corresponded to a significant step for an easier assimilation with European culture and language. Moreover, Islam was often belittled and shamed in comparison to Christianity, which aided in the demonstration of their authority. Affiliation to Islam or any other religion was discredited and immediately characterized as savage, incorrect, false, and

damned: "The web of racism, cultural stereotypes, political imperialism, dehumanizing ideology holding in the Arab or the Muslim is very strong indeed (...)." (Said, 1979, p.35). The negative portrayal and assumptions about Muslims enhanced the superiority of Christians against them. Abernathy (2013) expands that "French Christianity" had a heavy weight when augmenting their rule over the colonies, and that the simple marker of someone as "Christian" presented the conspicuous moral superiority assumed by the French civilization. Missionary masculinity represented the most accurate unit to transmit the majorly patriarchal values and manhood ideals that permeated in both France and Christianity.

It seems clear that during the colonization of West Africa, religion was actively used as a way to exercise power and control. At the same time, it was necessary for missionaries to be willing and obedient towards what they considered their superior, their model, or their expectations. Thus, it would appear inevitable for them to assume the responsibilities that were charged by their nation when the relation of patriotism and Christianity is brought into place: "Finally, the Catholic male obeyed his superiors and those put above him. Since God has ordered everything, he should view them as God himself, a strong assertion of hierarchy in an increasingly democratic world." (Miller, 2018, p. 228). Therefore, it was not only the duty of the missionaries to transmit their faith, but also to assist the colonial rule.

The civilizing mission represented one of the main concerns of the French in the nineteenth century. Christian missionaries were essential components for this goal to be achieved since they were responsible for establishing a more personal contact with the natives. They were often occupying the space of intermediaries which was necessary due to the tensions that arrived through the colonial authorities. This mediation enhanced further the sentiment of supremacy of the Europeans by further establishing a difference between the civilized and the uncivilized: "Races were all equal, the cardinal said, but civilizations were not. Peoples who enjoyed cultural and technological superiority had a 'duty' to help less privileged peoples—that is, a civilizing mission." (Foster, 2015, p. 310).

Nonetheless, as it has been established previously, races were, indeed, not considered the same and they played a huge role in delimiting who was superior and who was inferior, in establishing the "other," and in propagating the idea that one was barbaric. This directly relates to the masculinity expectations that required a constant competition with other men to define who was closer to the determined model. Thus, it was through the civilizing mission that Christians could justify their affiliation with the French military and the French colonization; in addition, it increased their value for their nation and brought them closer to fulfill their ideals of acquisition and domination through them.

In fact, the lands that were being colonized were so belittled by the colonizers that they were often perceived as a blank slate for them to create a new civilization. Said (1979) explains that it was widely transmitted upon the Western world that the Arab population was considered low, savage, antithetical that it was through restorative efforts of European civilization that they could be saved. (pp. 171-172). With this into consideration, missionaries would argue that it was their obligation to transform the colonies into Christians and western educated communities. This was especially true for the French Empire since the closeness of their values with Christianity made them much more strict and inflexible with the natives. However, Christians were not only interested in the civilizing mission, but also were invested in the slavery problem in West Africa: "The expansion of the missionary movement into Africa was part of the growing conception of Christian responsibility for the regeneration of African peoples. The anti-slavery issue and the humanitarian conscience also played a vital role in stimulating European interest in Africa and gave an impetus to mission work." (Achebe et al, 2018, p. 96). Missionaries in West Africa were deeply involved in anti-slavery endeavors, which could be considered a positive mark if it wasn't because of the manner in which these efforts took place.

The interest in anti-slavery would turn out to be a significant tool during the civilizing mission which will be further expanded in the next chapter. Nonetheless, as it may be expected, the concerns on this topic could become easily

contradictory in the actions of the missionaries due to their engagement in the colonial expansion, as well as their constant support of the French Empire:

> Missionary accounts reveal the inherent tension of colonialism that professed antislavery as a critical part of the 'civilizing mission' on the one hand while seeking to impose social control according to metropolitan norms on the other. Missionaries often worked in close proximity to local African communities, learning African languages and adapting to the rhythms of African villages. At the same time, missionary accounts reveal the paternalistic and hegemonic discourse of Christian evangelism in Africa. (Jones, 2017, p. 89)

It is necessary to note that many of the most successful forces put into the civilizing mission took place in the Senegambia area which was specifically related to the most significant slaves trade in West Africa. Thus, the importance that missionaries were giving to the anti-slavery issue was directly involved with their civilizing and conversion efforts.

The Case of Senegal

The colonization of many of the countries in the West of Africa was a direct result of all the variables that were discussed in the previous chapters. Even though the colonization of Senegal began in the fifteenth century, the largest expansion and impact took place in the nineteenth century. Senegal was a crucial location in the topic of missionary masculinity and the influence of Christianity in the colonial expansion of France: "As a predominantly Roman Catholic country, France encouraged Roman Catholic missionaries' right from the start of her colonial activities in West Africa. The Church had its strongest hold in the Senegambia area." (Achebe et al, 2018, p. 97). With the premise of the civilizing mission, many affairs took place in Senegal due to the stereotypes that were attributed to their population that was conformed by a great portion of black and Arabs with a majorly Muslim faith. This sentiment towards "otherness" was reinforced with the antisemitism that came from the Dreyfus Affair, as it was explained in previous chapters. French Missionaries felt especially comfortable in Senegal to impulse their civilizing mission due to the regard that they had around the "other"–in this case, the populations of West Africa.

A significant reason for why the missionary affairs appear so prevalent in Senegal can be attributed to the relation that this country has with slavery in the Island of Gorée. In fact, the slave trade was blatantly utilized by missionaries as a form of conversion to suffice their indoctrination objectives. This proved to be quite a useful tactic, and it cannot be denied that it aided many individuals to escape slavery at the time: "Christian missions also took a leading role in the campaign to end the slave trade and to suppress slavery." (Achebe et al, 2018, p. 104). Nonetheless, this seemingly altruistic action is flooded by a hidden agenda which was undoubtedly the motivation for why the Church was so profoundly involved in this issue. People who sought scaping from the slave trade would be taken by missionaries for conversion in order to "liberate" them from it and convert them into Christians and a westernized civilization. Most of the missions had a focus on the formation of African communities with members that would be capable of taking

into significant positions for imperial endeavors, and this was mainly achieved through conversion and education from the missionaries: "The fugitive slave mission sought converts but the mission also aimed to create a community of urban African workers formed through western education and Protestant evangelism to occupy key roles in the colonial economy. Those who lived up to the pastors' ideals served as evidence of the success of the fugitive slave mission for the Bordeaux congregation and for officials in Saint Louis." (Jones, 2017, p. 88). This quotation exemplifies and demonstrates the weight of Church officials and missionaries and the reliance of Imperial authorities with their work in the colonies. Even more than that, it displays that the relation of the missionaries with freeing slaves was much more of exchange of freedom for conversion than anything else. It can be argued that it was a deliberate decision for missionaries to join forces against the slave trade to convert slaves. Unsurprisingly, the conversion of many of the natives and freed slaves was often questioned: "While mission reports contain inherent biases, the language used to communicate the narrative of the enslaved strengthened the position of runaway slaves as adherents to the faith when pastors looked for signs of 'lasting conversion' and metropolitan congregants doubted the sincerity of former slaves' conversion to Christianity." (Jones, 2017, p. 84).

Moreover, the image of slavery enhanced the need for them to act towards the civilizing mission since it directly reflected on the pre-conceptions that they had formed from the West African population. The sense of superiority and dominance prevails as one of the main masculinity ideals for Christians, the French, and missionaries, especially when confronted with slaves, who were by default "inferior" due to their condition and their need for help. There was a lot of influence as well from the consciousness of class division that had arisen with the French Third Republic. Said (1979) explains that the idea of the other in the West is mostly based on its own sovereignty and centrality, and through a series of wishes, investments, and predictions around it. (p. 16). Thus, the participation of missionaries in the end of slave trade can be associated to their prejudice and stereotypes of the natives. This is directly linked with masculinity expectations

surrounding "helping" others that are "weaker" or "inferior." The idea of helping is further endorsed by multiple verses in the Bible in which serving others is exalted, and it is even referred to as "a slave to all." (1 Cor 9:19-23). This can appear quite paradoxical when it is linked to the slave trade. From the prejudice surrounding West African communities that were discussed in previous chapters, and their connection with slavery, there was a larger opportunity for conversion and for the civilizing mission:

> The mission sought to create a class of disciplined workers and to establish credible marriages and durable nuclear families while eradicating 'superstition' and fending off Islamization. At the same time, fugitive slaves arrived at the mission for safety and to secure their status as free persons, or to cultivate land for their livelihood, or for the possibility of learning new skills to move into wage labor sectors of the town's economy. They also sought to establish their own families and communities as free persons. (Jones, 2017, p. 84)

The indoctrination into Christianity and Westernization could even be considered forced given the circumstances of the population that was being chosen and likely, had no other option. The aid of the missionaries against slave trade in Senegal must not be overlooked since, in the end, it aided to bring many people into freedom; nonetheless, this was in itself a trade for their own gain. Jones (2017) expands on this by explaining that many of the fugitive slaves missions would provide shelter for the slaves in which they would be welcomed by members of the Church for conversion until they acquired a certificate of liberty. (p. 81). Consequently this brought issues to the population that took the route of conversion since they ended up in a liminal space in which they no longer belonged to either group and often suffered marginalization from both parts.

The tensions and competition against Islam also had a significant impact in the intervention of missionaries with the slave trade and their conversion towards Christianity. Since missionaries believed that they were helping the natives "improve" themselves and get closer to Western civilization ideals, liberating them

from slavery was a strategic way in which they could send this message: "On the one hand, missionary pastors in a predominately Muslim region of West Africa sought to craft narratives that justified their evangelist goals and raised the emotions of their supporters in metropolitan France." (Jones, 2017, p. 78). Additionally, the fact that the population of Senegal were mostly linked to Islam aided them transmit the superiority of belonging to Christianity in order to liberate themselves from their conditions. Religion is used in order to exercise power over perceived "weaker" populations. As it was previously mentioned, this "altruistic" facade can effortlessly be dismantled since when the liberation of slaves was not serving their hidden agenda, they had no issues with it: "While the transatlantic slave trade gradually declined in the nineteenth century, slavery in Africa expanded and colonial officials often turned a blind eye to slave trafficking in the interior in order to satisfy European merchant demand for the region's agricultural commodities and to strengthen avenues of cooperation with 'friendly' African rulers." (Jones, 2017, p. 79). Thus, it becomes clear that the connection of missionaries with the end of slave trade in Senegal had much more to do with their affiliation with the French Empire, rather than the manner in which they justified it.

Writings from Christian missionaries often depicted a great level of success from the conversion in the colonies, yet this has come into question by recent scholars and general data of those colonies, such as Senegal. Efforts have been made to display the great actions that the missionaries were performing in the colonies. This exemplifies one of the many paradoxes such as it is expected from men to be humble about their victories: "Quiet heroism required the ultimate self-mastery. Reported in missionary narratives such as White's biography, it also points up the paradox whereby self-denying asceticism needed to be displayed and recorded to be fully effective." (O'brien, 2008, p. 78). Nonetheless, the writings of missionaries have a tendency to be very proud and even exaggerate their accomplishments in the civilizing mission. This need to portray themselves with more success and in a better light goes hand in hand with the masculinity ideals of superiority over the others. In reality, many of the slaves that were freed from the

slave trade by missionaries rejected Christianity and continued on with they own system of beliefs: "Finally, the report reveals an inherent tension within the missionary enterprise: optimism about the conversion narrative combined with a lament over the problem of 'backsliding' or African indifference to the Church and its teachings." (Jones, 2017, p. 88). Contrary to the multiple sources that mention enhancing the success of the missions in the colonies, little of this was being done by French missionaries, and actual conversion rates often heavily relied on local officials. Foster (2015) explains that the push towards conversion by missionaries in Senegal was enhanced by the construction of multiple cathedrals in Dakar in which the names of colonists and soldiers were displayed to praise their service in Africa. (p. 288). This further displays the close relationship that Christian missions in Senegal had with the colonial expansion and how their ideals of masculinity met.

As it was stated before, recent scholars have begun to question the success of missionaries in the colonies. Senegal is significant when asked this question, noticing the demographic's religious inclinations today. Approximately 90% of the population of Senegal are Muslims. During the colonial expansion, a great fear invaded both the imperial authorities and the Church, which was the resistance of Muslims against the civilizing mission: "Islamic renewal movements were widely perceived by the colonial officials as a global threat." (Motadel, 2012, p. 849). The resistance of Muslims against conversion deeply threatened not only the inferiority that they had marked over the population in West Africa, but also the ideas of their own masculinity. Nonetheless, it is clear that masculinity ideals were a relevant component that impacted both, the treatment towards the natives and the resistance of the Muslim communities: "Indigenous men were treated as children in need of control - 'boy' was an everyday term. Resistance by men, not surprisingly, took the shape of an assertion of manhood. The ANC mobilized stories of heroic resistance from the past and young men often interpreted joining the struggle as a form of initiation into manhood." (Connell, 2016, p. 308). With this in mind, the reason for the exaggeration of the success of their missions becomes transparent as a mechanism to adhere to the masculinity expectations of the time. Moreover,

the fact that Muslims could have the power to overcome their civilization mission was a direct menace to the conception of themselves and the "other." The resistance through Islam form many of the natives caught them by surprise and proved to be stronger than expected: "Islam played a crucial part in shaping the social and political life in Muslim communities and proved to be a highly effective legitimizing, organizing, and mobilizing force in a considerable number of popular anti-colonial movements." (Motadel, 2012, p. 841). Unsurprisingly, by the numbers that account today, the threat that Islam presented for the missionaries and the imperial authorities appears tangible. The involvement of missionaries in the liberation of slave trade in Senegal demonstrates the alignment of their interests with the ones of the French Empire and the internal government. It transparently depicts the motivations associated with masculinity ideals at the time and the competition for validation and superiority.

Conclusion

The theme of gender is increasingly considered and discussed every day. Even if masculinities remain a limited studied area, the information gathered allows us to better understand the society of the past and its implications today. Scholars continue to debate most ideas surrounding gender because of the multiple variations that can be encountered when studying it. The literature discussed in this research highlights the way in which the subject of masculinities intrinsically associates with beliefs and actions of many different entities. The end of the nineteenth century in France presents a relevant framework to study the drastic changes in the vision of gender and ideals for men.

In spite of the limited research on the topic of Christian masculinities, they represent a fundamental group in many historical moments. The colonial expansion displays an important moment of assertion of masculine ideals. Missionary masculinity expectations had a profound effect on French colonial expansion in West Africa and the analysis of these interactions and the involvement of Christianity during the colonial expansion better illustrate the development of power relations that seem to be still quite unclear. All of these factors present the relevance of an examination of missionary masculinities during the French colonial expansion in West Africa in the nineteenth century.

Delving into Christian missionaries in context of the French Empire and the expansion in West Africa proves the hypothesis that missionary masculinity ideals had an imminent impact on their cooperation with the French colonial expansion, and they were engaging with their activities to keep the dominance and relevance of the Church at the time. These results are important because they give an idea of the strength of gender stereotypes and how they affect behaviors and roles in society. Research also demonstrates that many of the issues that men face with masculine expectations have not been and remain unaddressed, leading to men feeling an inevitable perpetual inadequacy of masculinity. Research on masculinities is consistently poor and limited. People need to get more information about gender roles in order to get a better understanding of society and correction

of harmful aspects that contribute to the development of events such as colonialism.

       This research is only a small contribution to the field of men's studies. Possible future research can be done with the focus on different colonies, the analysis of masculinity ideals of smaller religions in the colonies, the approach of other empires, the perception of female missionaries in the colonies, etc. Extending the survey to other countries, other texts and other time periods will not only weaken the stereotypes and expectations around masculinity that prohibit men from being themselves, but it will surely provide more data on what masculinities represent.

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