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NELLIE ARNOTT'S WRITINGS ON ANGOLA, 1905–1913

Missionary Narratives
Linking Africa and America

Sarah Robbins and Ann Ellis Pullen



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PUBLIC WRITING AND ARNOTT'S LITERACY NETWORK

Nellie Arnett was a highly prolific writer, composing in a wide range of public genres. While in Africa and for decades afterward, she had numerous correspondents connected to the mission movement, and she expected they would share her letters with others. She submitted regular reports to mission organizations. She published articles for specialty periodicals. And, for many years, she kept scrapbooks based on her foreign mission experience—visually rich archives for herself and for future generations. The large quantity and range of Arnett's writing for diverse audiences demonstrate that she was quite comfortable viewing her writing as communally oriented and that she envisioned the connections her writing made with readers as a foundation of the foreign mission movement.¹

Whether reporting from overseas or as a home-based supporter, missionary authors often signaled their belief that their reading-and-writing network was crucial to the movement's success. Arnett herself explicitly affirmed this point, frequently invoking the ways in which those stationed abroad depended on counterparts in the U.S. to provide both financial and spiritual support. One telling example of Arnett's own views about this literacy-oriented community appeared in both *Life and Light for Woman* and *Mission Studies* in early 1908. This particular narrative described a formal gathering of women held near her station for both missionaries and Angolan Christians. To present a gendered solidarity that cut across other differences, Arnett's article constructed the women's conference as a celebration of shared Christian commitment, uniting missionaries from England and the U.S. with African counterparts who had successfully been prepared to assist in evangelical work. After describing recent achievements in the mission enterprise in Angola, Arnett built to a climax by underscoring

the important role that readers at home were also playing to sustain those serving overseas: “My heart often fills with joy for the privilege of being here myself, and knowing you are helping in this blessed work by your prayers and gifts.”² As she crafted messages like this one, Arnott positioned her authorship within a well-established community of women using collaborative literacy practices to affiliate with the mission movement. Arnott’s mission publications were multidimensional, blending pragmatic goals such as fundraising with related ideological aims such as fostering solidarity among supporters based on shared religious beliefs. Her content varied in line with her multiple audiences, ranging from the sisterly colleagues who contributed directly to her upkeep in the mission field to the officials who set priorities for organizational-level policy, from the Sunday school children she hoped would study her narratives about teaching young Angolans to the managers of the publications where such an account might appear. Sometimes she wrote for one of those very specific audiences; other times she crafted her texts for a blended readership. Always she described her travel to and within Africa, as well as her daily experiences there, in ways that would appeal to those at home—audiences whose Protestant middle-class American values she understood well.

Interestingly, one helpful key to understanding Arnott’s public writings today is the set of small leather diaries she maintained while in Angola and for many months after her return to the U.S.³ The diaries illuminate her daily life, sometimes revealing that the messages she sent home in public texts painted a different, more positive picture of her experience than her private writing. In contrast to her goals for formal reports and magazine articles, Nellie Arnott used her diaries for her own personal purposes. Even when overwhelmed by her many missionary duties, she found time to jot a few lines cataloging her activities or listing some Bible verses. Arnott’s daily observations generally match what Jennifer Sinor has characterized as “ordinary writing,” versus a contrasting body of personal texts Sinor identifies as more self-consciously “aesthetic”—like the diaries of Mary Boykin Chestnut, Charlotte Forten Grimké, Virginia Woolf, or Anaïs Nin.⁴ Arnott’s diaries, like the brief notes kept by Sinor’s great-great-great-aunt Annie Ray in the Midwestern U.S. during the late 1880s, fill small, contained spaces with everyday records. In describing intense spiritual challenges, Arnott’s diary writing was often more reflective than Ray’s, and Arnott’s travels to, from, and within Africa generated

some compelling bursts of narration that would sometimes reappear in a published piece months later. But the activity listings in typical entries during her mission service were more in line with Sinor's "ordinary" category, mainly cataloging unfiltered experiences. Thus, most of Arnott's diary entries clearly differ from her public writing, which is more crafted in organization, content, and tone. Overall, the diaries convey a sense of work as-yet-unfinished. They chronicle her never-ending round of activity at the mission and her ongoing efforts to mesh that labor with an elusive spiritual vision. Private and unpolished, the diaries are more artifact than artifice. Nonetheless, we can draw on their content to contextualize her published texts, reading her daily notes and musings to deepen our understanding of the lived experiences that fed into her writing for others back in the U.S.

While Arnott's diaries addressed very personal needs, her public writing fulfilled a core institutional responsibility: maintaining U.S.-based supporters' engagement in the mission enterprise. Arnott's public writing fed into a blend of mixed-gender and women's texts produced by and for the ABCFM and affiliated Protestant groups from the U.S., England, and Canada. Her most broadly circulating texts—her largest body of writing outside her diaries—appeared in specialty magazines, including *Mission Studies*, *Life and Light*, and the *Missionary Herald*. Another body of public writing arose from the requirement to submit official reports to the ABCFM and the WBMI. Although such pieces reached a smaller group of readers than the periodical stories, these narratives were nonetheless quite "public" in that they circulated among multiple administrators, potentially influencing the whole organization.

Arnott's official mission reports actually aimed at two distinct audiences: female supporters of the mission movement and male managers of the enterprise. The distinction between these supporters and managers was significant. While women donated funds and built a shared literacy network for missions, men set the major policies and held ultimate authority.⁵ Therefore, when writing to the male-led ABCFM headquarters in Boston, Arnott and her women colleagues in Africa took a different stance than when composing texts for venues like the WBMI annual report for women enthusiasts. In the first case, Arnott needed to present herself as capable and the work as progressing well; in the second, she emphasized challenges that money and prayers from women at home could address.⁶

One audience very specific to Arnott was the Substitute Circle. As outlined in Chapter 1, she had a longstanding relationship with a group of missionary supporters who raised funds for her passage to Africa and who followed her work for years through her writing. Her “circular letters” for this community of readers often included other friends and family members in the distribution list, so these texts struck a personal tone. However, this correspondence could also serve as drafts for more formal reports or submissions to periodicals. Therefore, the circular letters were both public in reaching a larger audience than we would normally associate with personal letters and in regularly being adapted for later publication.

Whatever venue Arnott was writing for—magazine pieces, institutional reports, or letters for her “circle”—she capitalized on readily available genre patterns, some specific to the mission movement and others drawn from the larger culture of women’s writing in her day. More specifically, in composing her texts as a foreign missionary, Arnott took advantage of the popularity and the norms of women’s travel writing. She also tailored features of travel writing for her movement’s institutional agenda as missionary authors had been doing for decades. Accordingly, she wrote about several types of journeys simultaneously: literal travels to the location of her service (like her initial passage to Africa or her frequent treks to outstations), journey-like stages in her learning to be a successful foreign missionary, and the passage to Christianized, Americanized culture that she envisioned for the Umbundu people.

Below, we locate Arnott’s public writing within the broader literacy networks of the American women’s Protestant missionary movement and offer historicized close readings of representative pieces.⁷ We identify recurring rhetorical trends in Arnott’s oeuvre, setting her texts in dialogue with others of her day that operated in what Mary Louise Pratt has called “contact zones,” spaces of cross-cultural interaction shaped by striking social differences.⁸ We situate Arnott’s authorship in a specific chronological and geographical context with very particular shifting contingencies. Overall, we will argue that her public writings responded to strong genre expectations yet carved out a distinctive position among an array of authors writing for and about ABCFM enterprises in West Africa.

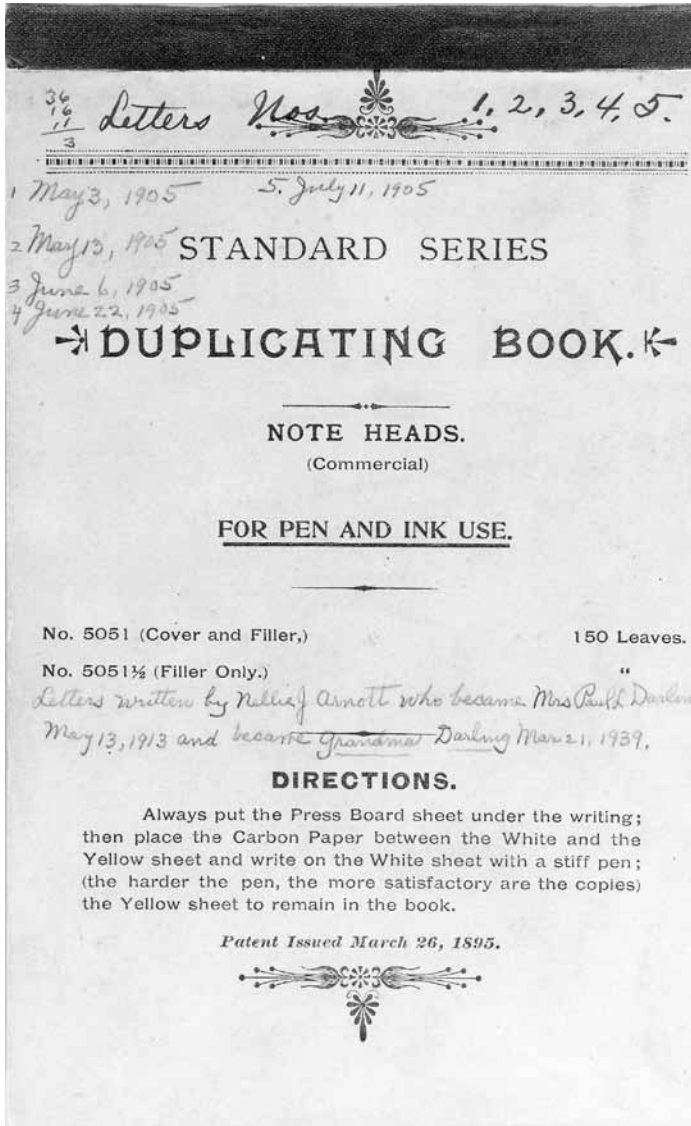


Figure 7: Arnott's circular letter notebook for 1905. Courtesy of The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

WOMEN'S MISSION-ORIENTED TRAVEL WRITING

Nellie Arnott's publications on African mission service appeared during an era when travel writing had enormous appeal for American

middle-class women. With increased opportunities for education and professional work, many more women were traveling overseas than in previous generations. Arnott's assignment to Angola also corresponded with a period when the U.S.'s role on the international stage was expanding, as evident in political developments like the acquisition of the Philippines and Caribbean territories. This move to claim a U.S. empire fed an increased appetite for writing about places where American influence was being exercised in new ways. For example, the early 1900s, around the time of Arnott's posting overseas, saw a burst of articles in the influential *Atlantic Monthly*, with titles such as "The Educational Problem in the Philippines," "Race Prejudice in the Philippines," "The United States in the Philippines," "Our Spanish Inheritance in the Philippines," and "A Letter from the Philippines."⁹ Well-known authors like Mark Twain (Samuel Clemens) joined in the ongoing dialogue about the U.S.'s assuming a potentially troubling new international role. For example, Twain's "To the Person Sitting in Darkness" in the *North American Review* critiqued Western imperialism in Cuba, Africa, China, and the Philippines and linked mission work to questionable political interventions. Twain's 1901 text generated vigorous responses from numerous readers—including some missionaries, who dubbed his attack on Christian evangelism abroad patently unfair.¹⁰ The larger debate represented by Twain's piece and published responses to it continued throughout Arnott's time in Africa.

Among the white Protestant middle-class women for whom Nellie Arnott wrote, whatever their position might be on the U.S.'s becoming an imperial political power, there was little doubt about the rightful place of American religious outreach in the world. Home-based supporters of the women's foreign mission movement eagerly consumed texts by and about their overseas workers. This literacy network bolstered the missionary endeavor itself both by generating funds and by supporting the audience's tendency to see their movement as contributing to national and transnational goals. Arnott crafted her public writing to take advantage of this *ethos*. Composing for colleagues already committed to foreign missions, Nellie Arnott presented herself as a motherly servant reshaping the "heathen" culture of Africa into an Americanized Christianity. Over time, she gained increasing skill in this mission discourse.

From the outset, her reports and magazine articles reflected a sound understanding of her audience and purpose. She had been consuming

this literature herself for years, and she had ongoing access to models even while stationed overseas. (One recurring element in her diaries is lists of readings both completed and anticipated.) So, to hone her rhetorical techniques, Arnott had a rich tradition to draw upon—ranging from broad-based travel narratives aimed at general audiences to the niche sub-genre of ABCFM foreign missionaries' writing, which cultivated Protestant American women's intense interest in faraway places as fields for spiritual work.

By the early twentieth century, travel writing was well established as a popular genre among middle-class U.S. readers with many nineteenth-century accounts by European Americans having shaped conventions for describing foreign lands and peoples. For example, texts typically focused on ways in which the foreign place contrasted with one's home and framed that difference at least in part around themes of national identity. An American travel writer might speculate on what family and friends were doing at home on a holiday while the author was in a place where the event (e.g., Christmas Day, Thanksgiving) was not officially celebrated. Whether based on a grand tour of Europe or on exploration of more remote locales, travel accounts presented other places through a lens of U.S. cultural values. So, for instance, an author might complain about the stuffy manners of the British (payback to English writers like Charles Dickens and Frances Trollope for casting America as uncouth) or note the grandeur of art and architecture reflecting a richer cultural history than in the U.S. If visiting what today could be called a developing country, the author might complain about the dirtiness and unhealthy environment of a local street scene and then turn, just a paragraph later, to praising a landscape's unique appeal.¹¹ These motifs of difference accrued cultural power for writer and reader alike both by claiming new knowledge of the world being gained through travel and by making that vision available to the audience at home.

Africa held a special fascination for many Euro-American readers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Accounts by well-known explorers and by imperialism's managers and critics drew a highly engaged readership. Henry Morton Stanley had stoked his personal fame with accounts such as *Through the Dark Continent: Or, The Sources of the Nile, around the Great Lakes of Equatorial Africa, and down the Livingstone River to the Atlantic Ocean*. By the time Nellie Arnott reached Angola, Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* had been

in print for several years. Thus, a discourse depicting Africa as remote yet fascinating, dangerous yet enthralling, was already circulating in the larger culture.¹²

Missionary travel writing about Africa had a special appeal for Arnett's social group. The renowned David Livingstone had drawn many English and American readers to the subject with publications like the multivolume *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa*, appearing originally in 1857. Livingstone himself was a touchstone.¹³ Reissuings and extensions of his earliest writings (such as *The Life and African Explorations of David Livingstone*, published in the U.S. in 1874) fed a persistent mythology. Allusions to his work abound in mission literature well on into the twentieth century. As early as 1858, a review in *Harper's* positioned Livingstone as more of a secular, progressive leader than a dedicated missionary society functionary, and Livingstone himself had increasingly distanced his own view of mission service from that of the London Missionary Society. Yet, later movement authors continued to tout him as a role model both for his religious service and for his abilities as an interpreter of African culture. A major dimension of Livingstone's appeal, for those closely affiliated with the mission movement as well as for general, more secularly oriented readers, was the heroic persona of an explorer taming the vast landscape of Africa. Indeed, though the title of Livingstone's first book highlights his "Missionary" identity in its initial adjective, the "Travels and Researches," rather than preaching and teaching, claim most of the textual space.¹⁴ Given this role model, we should not be surprised to see echoes of secular heroism in some stories about male missionaries who served in Arnett's cohort—traces of Livingstone-the-manly-explorer taking precedence over Livingstone-the-minister in accounts of ABCFM male ministers' hunting expeditions or their sage and forceful management of both native and Portuguese leaders.¹⁵

More than to Livingstone, Nellie Arnett was drawn to Frederick Stanley Arnot (no relation), another manly missionary who began writing on Africa in the 1880s. She had the good fortune to meet Arnot during her journey to Angola, and she viewed him primarily as a spiritual leader. Significantly, though, whereas she focused on his religious energy in writing about him, Arnot himself had embraced recognition as an explorer as well as a minister, as seen in an 1889 address to the Royal Geographical Society on his travels from Natal to Bié and Benguela.¹⁶ The narrative content and diction of Arnot's published

talk exemplified a lingering tendency among male missionary travel authors to blend their religious mandate with adventures à la Livingstone. Arnot described himself as inspired, while still “quite a child” in 1864, by hearing Livingstone speak “in a school in Hamilton.”¹⁷ He reinforced his affiliation with the Livingstone model by stressing links between work “to establish a station in a healthy part of the interior” and forays around the African region where Nellie Arnot would later serve. Arnot’s audience certainly affirmed this framework. The first respondent, a “Rev. Horace Waller,” declared that “Mr. Arnot had followed in the footsteps of Livingstone” by successfully charting important new areas of Africa. In further dialogue after the address itself, other audience members repeatedly linked Arnot’s report with Livingstone’s explorations, noting how both men embodied “British pluck” in the face of daunting physical challenges.¹⁸

Texts like David Livingstone’s and F. S. Arnot’s provide an important context for reading the public writing of Nellie Arnot. Protestant women’s publications on foreign mission service would both align with the heritage of admired male authors like Livingstone and show how women’s overseas work contrasted with men’s, a crucial move for delineating a special role in the enterprise. Indeed, by the time Arnot was writing for periodicals like *Mission Studies* and *Life and Light*, sub-genre patterns linked to gender differences were as strong as those associated with the shared, cross-gender aims of the mission movement.

These rhetorical distinctions were consistent with contrasts between men’s and women’s travel writing in a broader genre framework. As Mary Suzanne Schriber has noted, beginning in the nineteenth century, “women took hold of the conventions of the [travel literature] genre as developed by men, historically the world’s travelers and travel writers by privilege of their gender, and turned them to their own purposes.”¹⁹ Claiming travel literature as a women’s genre not only involved transporting features from other literary forms already established as appropriately feminine (such as sentimental and didactic stories) but also included strategies such as satirically resisting stereotypes of lady travelers and reconfiguring features of men’s travel texts.

Taking on what had been a male genre could be challenging. As Kristi Siegel has explained, there was a delicate balance between generating “material that was reasonably exciting” and needing “to remain a lady.” Accordingly, Siegel suggests women authors “strained the conventions of femininity, but did not break them.”²⁰ Mary Gaunt

exemplifies this negotiation process in *Alone in West Africa*, based on a 1911 journey. Gaunt's narrative about visiting Liberia blends a sentimentalized critique of U.S. slavery with a historical synopsis of America's founding of its African colony (which the author associates with the movement to "return" blacks to Africa). Her account of conversations with her ship's captain (who discouraged her from going ashore at the capital, Monrovia) and with the consul (who provided the most genteel tour of the city possible) demonstrate the position a woman writing on Africa in Arnott's day had to assume, navigating between intrepid traveler and well-bred lady.²¹

Based on a survey of numerous women's texts on Africa composed between the time of the first missionaries and the era of independence for former colonies, Patricia W. Romero posits several notable differences between men's and women's reports on African travel: "For women travelers accent [is] on detail; intensity of individual experiences; empathy for some people; criticisms of others." Romero argues that "Men travelers in Africa doted on describing their heroic exploits (sometimes with exaggeration) as well as the mountains, lakes, and savannah," whereas a woman writer's account would focus on specific flora and fauna when treating the natural setting and on ongoing interpersonal relationships more than on impressive exploits.²² Where



Figure 8: Arnott (left, in a tepoia) and Mrs. [Elisabeth] Ennis in a bush-cart. Courtesy of The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

men travel writers would depict problems as solved and obstacles as conquered, women were more open to fluidity and uncertainty. These general differences between men's and women's travel writing were certainly borne out in missionary texts from Arnott's day and in her own writing.

An equally important lens for evaluating Arnott's work sets up contrasts in another direction—between writing by mission women who lived overseas for an extended period and publications by women operating from a more secular and less embedded perspective. Cheryl McEwan has pointed to salient differences between writing on Africa by Mary Kingsley (*Travels in West Africa*, 1897) and Constance Larymore (*A Resident's Wife in Nigeria*, 1908) on the one hand and by the Scottish missionary Mary Slessor on the other. (Slessor served in the Calabar region of Nigeria from 1876 to 1915 and wrote for journals such as *Missionary Record* and *Women's Missionary Magazine*.) McEwan cites Kingsley and Larymore as examples of British women travel authors' frequent tendency to cast Africans as anonymous, negative stereotypes rather than as individuals. These depictions were consistent, McEwan suggests, with an authorial stance framed as observing instead of affiliating—i.e., written as “detached” and “objective” instead of empathetic. In contrast, McEwan argues, Mary Slessor, who “came to identify Calabar as ‘home,’” viewed West African women as allies with individual identities and positioned herself as respecting African customs even while striving to bring her neighbors into Christian allegiance.²³ In highlighting Slessor's stance, McEwan resists simplistic confluences of missionaries' work with imperial agendas. By extension, this analysis demonstrates that we need to read each missionary woman author not only as influenced by discursive conventions and beliefs associated with her organization's goals but also as an individual rhetor capable of carving out a distinctive standpoint. Nellie Arnott never went so far as Mary Slessor in affiliating with local African culture or in resisting guidance from her sponsoring organization. (Slessor moved far into the interior of Nigeria, away from the mission administration's reach, and even achieved economic independence by building a trading system). But as we shall see later in this chapter, Arnott did develop a perspective more progressive than some earlier-generation women affiliated with her station. In addition, Arnott eventually used her writing about Africa to seek expanded authority for ABCFM women's missionary work and enhanced opportunities for the Umbundu people themselves.

NELLIE ARNOTT AS A CHARACTER IN MISSION LITERATURE

The discourse community to which Arnott belonged cut across geographic and temporal boundaries by bringing together thousands of readers. The texts they exchanged provided ongoing guidance for movement members at home and abroad. If shared literacy practices shaped the movement, though, the movement also shaped its published texts. These white middle-class women shared a spiritual vision based on transnational religious work, an ideology that left its mark on their texts' content, structure, diction, tone, and even strategies for visual design. To illuminate this connection, we will preface our analysis of writing *by* Nellie Arnott with discussion of missionary magazine publications *about* her. Genre-based features of Arnott as a literary figure would carry over into her own compositions as she depicted herself in ways consistent with the character readers had come to know in stories about her. Though certainly far less renowned than Livingstone, Arnott and other women serving at ABCFM stations were very well known to their own readership. Establishing dedicated servants like Arnott as familiar friends with whom the audience could identify supported the movement's goals while also influencing its literature.

Like other authors crafting accounts of women's work at foreign stations, ABCFM writers associated mission service with an idealized Christian motherhood.²⁴ We can see this characterization process beginning very early in the development of mission literature about Arnott cast as a motherly Christian traveler enlightening and domesticating her work site.²⁵ A 1905 *Missionary Herald* piece announced:

The first new missionary sent out by the Board in 1905 is Miss Nellie J. Arnott, who sailed from Boston April 25, in company with Rev. and Mrs. William H. Sanders, who were returning to the West Central African Mission. Miss Arnott was born in Minneapolis, but her parents have since resided in Iowa. Her studies were pursued in Nashua, Io., and in the Bible Institute at Chicago. She has taught in connection with the schools of the American Missionary Association for five years—two years at Savannah, Ga., and three years at Meridian, Miss. In one of these schools, she was an associate of Miss Stimpson, now of Kamundongo, West Africa, and the two have long desired

to work together under the American Board. This reinforcement for the West Central African Mission has been greatly needed, and Miss Arnott carries out a long cherished wish to enter upon mission work in Africa.²⁶

Even in this brief profile, the *Missionary Herald's* seemingly straightforward report emphasizes aspects of Arnott's biography that



Figure 9: Arnott's official ABCFM photograph. Courtesy of The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

would have resonated with ideals of American motherhood as they were then being adapted for single women in foreign mission service. Arnott appears as a woman well educated, already experienced in mission teaching, and now ready for a new pedagogical assignment consistent with feminized Christian values. The report includes a catalog of Arnott's past schooling at Moody Bible Institute and her teaching for the AMA, whose educational programs would have been highly regarded by the *Herald's* readers. The sketch points to her prior AMA-based ties to Sarah Stimpson, who would have already been well known among the periodical's readership. School teaching itself would have been a highly coded reference. As the first profession open to women in the nineteenth century, teaching was, by the turn into the 1900s, thoroughly feminized; the percentage of positions had shifted to well over two thirds female, and the discourse that had helped make that shift possible also continually reinscribed connections between teaching and motherly, benevolent work. By describing Arnott's journey to the West Central African Mission as the fulfillment of "a long cherished wish," the article also associates her personal story with a plotline familiar to the periodical's readers, who could have easily matched this goal with the photograph of "Miss Nellie J. Arnott" reproduced just above this text—a portrait emphasizing her proper womanliness in attire, hairstyle, and pose ("Recruit" 267).

Depictions of Arnott as a capable yet highly feminized mission worker continued in the reports published about her throughout her stay in Angola. Sometimes addressing readers directly as "you," a narrative about Arnott was also, implicitly, about the shared values being developed among the mothers, teachers, and children studying the exemplary life of this faraway missionary. "At Kamundongo," a 1908 *Mission Studies* piece, designates her as "your own missionary in Africa, Miss Nellie Arnott," stressing bonds between her service and her supporters at home. Emphasizing the crucial role that missionary women were playing in carrying American civilization to peoples otherwise lost to Christian values, this sketch noted: "She has been there three years and has learned the strange language and can speak to the people and teach the boys and girls. Of course you know that before the missionaries go to them[,] the people of Africa have no books, no letters and no schools."²⁷

Typical of stories on women missionaries at work, this update on Arnott's activities seems straightforward on the surface but actually

navigates a number of complex issues of gender and cross-cultural relationships. A number of genre patterns in these mission magazine stories were adapted from nineteenth-century American domestic literacy narratives, which depicted women's motherly teaching in home-based and home-oriented settings as crucial cultural work.²⁸ In that vein, finessing ongoing questions about prioritizing the evangelical and service dimensions of missionary action, this text's implicit contrast between "the people of Africa" before and after ABCFM engagement there temporarily suspends questions about how the activities of women teaching at mission stations could best complement the gendered ministerial activities of male missionaries. Foregrounding "books" and "schools" for the moment, the account celebrates appropriately feminized pedagogical work in this foreign mission setting. The story's portrayal of Arnott as now ably running a large school, partly because she can rely on local helpers, skirts a related, complicated element in her situational context. Her aides are "some Christian young men . . . who have themselves been taught in such schools." By invoking rhetorical patterns long established in domestic literacy narratives about school teaching—particularly that genre's idealized visions of motherly teachers guiding male learners—this report adroitly copes with (and even capitalizes on) the otherwise troubling scenario of a single American woman interacting closely with African males. Rather than portraying the young men of Kamundongo as savage brutes or pitiful victims (two of the stereotypes circulating in many of the travel narratives on Africa at this time), this story trumpets how, "having learned to read and write and live better lives themselves, they are glad to teach their own people."²⁹ Behind the portrait of these now-capable local African teachers, of course, is the enlightened teaching of motherly Nellie Arnott, who has transformed these young men so that they can lead others to a Christian path.

Teaching in Africa may seem to be a radical departure from ideals of true womanhood. But mission magazines positioned such work within the context of the domestic pedagogical tradition whereby mothers influenced the larger society through educating their children and motherly schoolteachers exercised comparable power through guiding their students. By Arnott's day, domestic literacy narratives' plots and characterizations had long been appearing in travel writing depicting women's foreign mission work as consistent with conservative views of American women's proper social role.³⁰ Writers limned schools run by

women missionaries as transplanting American social practices and religious vision along with literacy skills. For example, this “At Kamundongo” article points out, “The schools begin in the fall and close in the spring at about the same time yours do,” and the students study “the Bible and Pilgrim’s Progress” once they have progressed beyond “the blackboard” and primers. Practicing their “writing and arithmetic” while memorizing “many psalms and hymns,” the story explains, these students are experiencing the same basic curriculum as white middle-class American children.

Meanwhile, the narrative does acknowledge how challenging it was for Arnott to learn “the strange language”—a process viewed by the ABCFM as necessary for effective teaching. Here too, the apparently straightforward reporting skims over what was actually a complex matter: in choosing to teach in the Angolans’ native language (as outlined in Chapter 2), ABCFM mission educators like Arnott and her colleagues allied themselves with their students as opposed to the Portuguese, who were seeking political control of the region and who would eventually enforce the use of their European language in colonized education settings. For Arnott’s readers, though, this alliance is framed in domestic rather than political terms.

Counterbalancing the rhetorical spin associating Arnott’s mission work with American domestic(ated) teaching, an equally persistent trend in this writing emphasized difference and distance while weaving in vicarious journeys for readers. So, for example, the 1908 magazine piece referenced above described the “heavy rains in Africa” that sometimes made it “impossible” to hold school sessions. Similarly, a pronunciation and location guide at the end of the core article marked the exotic nature of the setting. In an appendix, a curriculum for studying Arnott’s mission station recommended acquiring a good map “from Rand McNally & Co. 160 Adams St., Chicago, for 25 cts. each” and yoking this study to “school geographies” (L.L., “At Kamundongo,” 252). In inviting children to study Arnott’s story, *Mission Studies* envisioned both those young readers and the U.S.-based, maternal adult “you” addressed as their teacher as taking an imaginative journey of their own by way of this curriculum.

Significantly, of course, traveling to Africa by reading about it is far less daunting an enterprise than actually going there. In this regard, we might consider an analogy between Arnott’s riding in a tepoia (or hammock-like carrier) and a reader’s being “carried” through this text

to get a view of the Angolan highlands. Somebody else is doing the hard work, and the passenger is getting only a limited view. At the same time, however, the directions provided for this imaginary trek do at least encourage readers (in this case, white American middle-class teachers and their students) to place themselves in a new and different environment and to project themselves toward becoming real travelers:

Invite the children to go on a long trip with you. . . . , and as a large part of the trip will be by water those who have sailor suits might wear them. . . . Tell the children you are going to take them on a trip to see their missionary in Africa, Miss Nellie J. Arnott, of Kamundongo. Ask if they can remember any Bible characters who journeyed to Africa (Abraham, Joseph, his brethren, etc.) and for the Scripture lessons read Matt. 2:1–15.

Now let them start on their own journey—to New York by rail, then by boat to Lisbon, changing there to a Portuguese steamer bound for Benguella, 860 miles south of the Equator on the west coast of Africa. . . .

If you can get hold of any pictures illustrating life in West Central Africa so much the better. (“At Kamundongo,” 252)

Miss May J. Johnston presented a parallel story for the Young People’s Department of *Mission Studies* in October 1908, several months after “At Kamundongo” had appeared in the same publication. Johnston’s piece offered a blend of affiliating and distancing strategies. In Johnston’s “A Trip to Kamundongo and Ochileso,” we see an extended travel metaphor developed to draw young readers into study of African mission work with Johnston casting herself as fellow traveler. Here, the imaginary, shared journey is framed initially as a pleasant excursion with picturesque sights worthy of being chronicled in a tourist guidebook. “A trip to Africa? Yes, indeed, we’ll go,” the article declares. “We young people are ready to go anywhere, anytime. Moreover Africa promises to be a fashionable ex-official resort” (307). Johnston describes the first stage of the journey—its multiple sea voyages—in language reminiscent of tourist memoirs: “Our first campagnon de voyage is old Father Neptune, who for a month entertains us as we sail to Liverpool, Lisbon, and finally Benguella. . . .” (307). But she hints

at a theme of difference that will emerge more forcefully later in the text when she adds a qualifier to describe Benguela as “on the coast of the Dark Continent, 12°, which is eight hundred miles south of the equator.” With its views of “ravines” full of wild animals and “a robber tribe of men,” the ride by “hammock-like tepoia” from “the malarial coast” also invokes distance and difference. Once readers arrive at the ABCFM station, Johnston shifts her rhetoric to suggest how this site offers a promising ground for missionary work. She characterizes the area as “situated in a beautiful well-watered region” and worthy of inclusion in a “Baedeker” (a familiar brand of tourist guide in this era). At the same time, by saying that “our Baedeker” is actually “as yet unwritten,” she conjures up the place as still remote and underdeveloped.

In Johnston’s text, the village of Kamundongo and surrounding areas embody cross-cultural interaction. While a strong narrative line emphasizes the positive impact of the missionaries’ work, an equally persistent subtext acknowledges ways in which the values of the local community continue to shape daily life. Tracing this tension throughout Johnston’s narrative, we recognize the complex framework into which Arnott would need to position her own writings. For example, Johnston declares that the people of Kamundongo “[f]ormerly” lived “in one-room huts, mudded and thatched, with one door and no window,” but that they now have “a village of straight, clean streets, and neat, wattled houses with grass roofs and an adjoining garden” thanks to the guidance of the missionary team.³¹ The local people are “great travelers,” participating in caravans that help bring Christianity to a people Johnston characterizes as from “the Bantu family of the brown race,” an “erect, well formed” group “with regular features, kindly disposed and intelligent.” However, even in this Christianized village, troubling signs of the pre-mission past persist as unconverted villagers remain caught up in “fetishism, superstition and witchcraft”: “men and women are tortured, poisoned, tried by fire and killed in the belief they have caused another’s death by sorcery.” In contrasting the still-unconverted dimensions of the community with the order evident in the “missionary compounds” (including “a church, school house, cloth house, press house, missionary and girls’ home”), Johnston underlines both material features (such as sun-dried bricks and shiny windows) and social practices reflecting Christianity’s power. In school, she explains, the young children here are learning from their capable teacher, Miss Arnott, with the curriculum including “sewing, weaving, clay

work, songs and games, just as . . . in America” (308). At the same time, however, Johnston reports that although Mrs. Sanders tries to teach the adults basic medical care, “The ignorance and need of the people” are “appalling” (308).

As in Arnott’s own publications, Johnston seeks a tricky balance in her characterizations. Johnston praises the progress already made in evangelizing the local people, but she also points insistently at work still to be done. Given the mandate mission movement publications faced for raising funds, this approach is certainly strategic. Readers wanted to know that contributions (financial, personal, and otherwise) already made were having the desired effect. However, they also needed to be reminded how crucial their future donations could be to the cause. Over time, Arnott’s own writing would gradually place a greater focus on the capabilities of the local people than on the deficiencies of pre-Christian society in the places where she worked. This discursive gap, as outlined in our introduction, would not only mark some distance between her writing and that prepared by home-based interpreters of her mission service but also a contrast between her early and later writing on Africa.

Meanwhile, additional articles in *Mission Studies* would extend the portrait of Arnott while continuing to emphasize her identity as a motherly traveler, carrying Christianity to even more places, formerly isolated but now possible to serve through her presence. Like the articles reviewed above, these texts wavered back and forth between celebrating successes already achieved and delineating unfinished work. In September of 1909, for instance, a brief piece on “Miss Arnott’s Schools” described her increasing efforts to train “native young men, who work earnestly and faithfully” teaching at remote outstations but who were clearly dependent on Nellie Arnott’s willingness to travel from location to location, providing guidance and “sometimes staying six weeks at an out-station far from any other white person” so as to extend her mission station’s impact. “Are we not thankful to help such a missionary?” this article asked just below a reprint of Arnott’s mission service photograph. In an unsigned story for the Children’s Work section of *Mission Studies* appearing later that fall, Arnott herself again claimed center stage. Adapting techniques already identified in Johnston’s essay of the previous year, this narrative explicitly called on “children” to revisit the long “journey” of “our missionary, Miss Nellie Arnott,” from the U.S. to Africa, this time in even more detail. While

stressing that Kamundongo “is so far” away and “so hard to reach” that readers would “never go there” in person, the unnamed author still declared that “the little children in the central western part of Africa” were actually learning “many of the things you are learning” thanks to their missionary teacher.³² Echoing several other reports on the widening circle of Arnott’s influence, this article reminded readers:

Those that live in the villages far away cannot come to Miss Arnott’s school, so she has been teaching some of the big boys so that they may teach the little ones to read and write. Then they go to one of these little villages and try to have a school just as much like Miss Arnott’s as they can. But, alas! They do not know how as well as she does.

I think if we ask her she will take us with her to one of these little schools that was begun last November. She has a very large native house for a school room built of sticks and mudded inside, with a thatched roof. . . .

There are several such schools in the villages near Kamundongo and Miss Arnott goes from village to village to visit these schools. Sometimes she stays three or four weeks in a village, when it is a long way from Kamundongo, and then she lives in a native hut, too.
(345)

Envisioning Arnott as a benevolent itinerant teacher and Africa as her needy student, such texts invited readers to share in her journeys—both the literal trips to outstations around Kamundongo and her progressive journey of professional and spiritual development. To create an admirable figure with whom the periodical’s audience could easily identify, stories about Arnott reinforced familiar features of the motherly missionary character. As a reader of these texts herself, Arnott would draw on their models in her own writing, and her editors back in the U.S. would encourage this interactive process in the ways they managed her texts.

ARNOTT’S CONTRIBUTIONS TO WBMI REPORTS

Over the years of her service in Angola, we regularly see Nellie Arnott’s own words woven into annual reports of the Woman’s Board of

Missions of the Interior (WBMI), the mission support organization founded in 1868 and headquartered in Chicago. As a women's arm of the ABCFM, the WBMI cosponsored Arnott's mission service. Thus, the documents of this highly gendered organization provide a valuable window into her position within a larger social enterprise highly dependent on its publications network. The reports also reflect how the collaborative process that continually reinforced traits of women's mission literature was as dependent on U.S.-based editors as on authors stationed overseas.

Beginning in the 1905 year-end report, in its brief mention of Nellie Arnott's arrival at the West Africa station of Kamundongo, the WBMI signaled the degree to which her writing home to supporters was an expected element in her job as a woman missionary. Reminding readers that Sarah Stimpson had been faithfully working as the sole teacher at the Kamundongo station, the report dubbed the arrival of Arnott with Reverend and Mrs. Sanders an exciting moment: "How happy she [Stimpson] must have been to see our dear Miss Arnott." Then, in appending the promise that WBMI supporters would "soon be hearing" from Arnott about her work, the editor alerted the organization's members that a new voice would now be sending dispatches from Africa.³³

The editors of these official documents were accomplished writers in their own right. They were skilled at synthesizing reports from scores of correspondents stationed all over the globe into an overarching narrative aimed at guaranteeing involvement by American women at home. Of course, for these official accounts to be created and circulated, individual missionaries like Arnott and her colleagues in West Africa had to send in their own submissions, and that writing needed to fit the expectations of the community of readers the editors cultivated. Accordingly, in the 1906 report, editor Mrs. Joseph B. Leake drew on materials from Miss Emma Redick and Mrs. M. M. Webster, as well as from Nellie Arnott, to offer readers an appealing picture of the work in Angola. Describing a new school's impressive structure, the section on Kamundongo (based on materials from Arnott) explained that building this essential facility "cost about \$300." Chronicling expanded outstation activities made possible by Arnott's having joined the team there, the report also emphasized that a young male "native teacher" was applying approaches learned from the recent arrival and her colleagues. These lessons were implicitly bound to fa-

miliar American ideology for feminized teaching's outward-reaching influence by casting the new Umbundu teacher as "go[ing] to read and explain a Bible lesson and [to] have songs and prayers" with potential converts. Reiterating the benefit of adding another missionary to the team, the report cited impressive attendance figures at services and portrayed Nellie Arnott as making progress in her language study since she "must be able to do more than to sing with them, the desire of her heart having been to be able to talk with them and lead them heavenward."³⁴

By 1907, the annual report indicated Arnott was still finding language learning challenging, but she described herself as "well and happy." The report also integrated into its larger narrative on Africa her account of teaching local children the story of Christmas and the Christ-child partly by using "pictures" that would help them "get hold of the real Christmas thought." Drawing directly from one of Arnott's own submissions, the editor shared an appealing portrayal of the holiday celebration: "On Christmas Day I had all the children on the Station here for a feast. Seventy-two children sat down at tables in the yard."³⁵

Again assigned the byline for the "Africa" section of the report in 1908, Mrs. Joseph B. Leake brought together a range of material from Arnott and other West Africa colleagues. This time, alongside the number of students in weekday school and in catechism classes, the overview gave data on hymnals printed by the station press—another sign of progress. But Arnott's voice was invoked to stress how much work remained to be done. Leake noted that "Miss Arnott, in writing of the sore need of re-enforcement in the Africa mission, quotes, 'Long delays on God's part involve no forgetfulness of His promises. When the destined moment comes, no good thing will fail, of all that He hath spoken.'³⁶ Since God would never forsake His missionaries, this Biblical reference implies, shortcomings in achieving the work must be due to recalcitrance among mission supporters in the U.S., who still had time to remedy the situation.

In these WBMI annual reports, where excerpts from individual missionaries' submissions became part of a larger textual pastiche, we gain a strong sense of how rhetorical conventions helped unite the organization's widely dispersed writers and readers. Content and diction from authors in other WBMI-supported locales echoed contributions from Arnott and her Angola-based colleagues. Reappearing regularly

over many years, the names of specific editors and writers became familiar to every reader even as the textual features the authors used accentuated gendered affiliation over individualized identity.

One important dimension of this community-building resided in the print medium itself. With business-like design, attentive editing, and regularized presentation sequences for their recurring topics, the WBMI annual reports affirmed the maturity of the organization. Like the printed annual reports prepared for many middle-class American women's clubs during this same era, the formal publications of groups like the WBMI promoted solidarity by embodying language skill, seriousness, and effective management principles in the medium then most effective for promoting long-distance affiliation associated, more recently, with media such as radio, television, and the internet. Using their literacy to fortify their network, women like Arnott simultaneously strengthened their sense of gendered social efficacy.³⁷

GENDER, COLONIAL DISCOURSE, AND MISSION MAGAZINES

Like the multi-vocal WBMI annual reports, the periodicals where Arnott published her own single-author stories played a key role in the foreign mission network's public relations agenda. Both *Life and Light* (headquartered in Boston and aimed at women readers in New England and the northeast) and *Mission Studies* (based in Chicago and addressing women in the midwestern states), her two major publishing venues, focused on women missionaries.³⁸ Whereas WBMI annual reports briefly summarized the key events in many regions over a full year, women's mission magazines offered longer narrative accounts inviting readers to journey, imaginatively, to a particular mission site. These stories placed a high premium on personalizing particular missionaries, rendering the location of their service in compelling terms and making the case for that station's current needs. In addition, while the annual reports of the WBMI took on the official tone and features also typical of *Missionary Herald* (an ABCFM publication aiming for mixed-gender readership), the narratives in publications like *Mission Studies* made their gender affiliation paramount.

"Our Literature," an article in the September 1910 issue of *Mission Studies*, makes the distinction between women's and mixed-gender publications quite explicit:

The Woman's Board of Missions of the Interior publishes a monthly periodical called MISSION STUDIES. . . . The purpose of MISSION STUDIES is to acquaint the women of our Congregational churches with the work which is being carried on among the women and children of Christless lands and their need. The magazine contains short, crisp articles, showing the conditions abroad and their rapid change; letters from missionaries showing progress in their respective fields; information about the Home Department of the Board; and attractive pictures of foreign life. Those who contribute to Foreign Missions should read it to see where their money goes.³⁹ Those who do not contribute can scarcely resist its mute appeal as they learn of the condition of other women and children whom Christ loves but who have no knowledge of that Love.⁴⁰

Highlighting the WBMI's commitment to reaching the "Christless," this description of *Mission Studies* presents one important rationale that women's groups often gave for maintaining an identity distinct from the larger shared goal of men and women working together in mission service. Specifically, "the women and children" in mission fields had particular needs that women were best suited to address; meanwhile, women at home could contribute in gendered ways too, such as teaching children about the enterprise. Women's engagement in the mission movement was to be a collaborative endeavor supported by women's publishing.

In declaring that *Mission Studies* would report specifically about "the work" being done by women missionaries, "Our Literature" identified one dimension of the periodical's focus. Another important element, announced in the same sentence, was the "need" being addressed by the movement—that is, the rationale driving the work. The theme of "need" actually ran throughout writing for women's mission publications, ranging from the letters field workers sent to would-be donors, to short leaflets describing the desperate situation of "the heathen," to extended periodical accounts from particular locales. This theme provided one strategy for adapting travel writing's and sentimentalism's literary conventions to an evangelical goal by linking *need* to *difference* and soliciting affective responses from readers. For Arnott

and other writers involved in her literacy community, *need* actually applied both to the white middle-class American women involved in the movement and to the people foreign missionaries aimed to serve. Texts Arnott created for mission magazines and her letters to supporters addressed the needs of white middle-class Protestant women in the U.S. by underscoring the benefits they could accrue from spiritual service. Rhetorical patterns in narratives for these audiences established equivalencies between missionaries abroad and supporters at home.⁴¹

One equivalency argument focused on women donors. Arnott often used this technique at the beginning or end of an article, depicting the funds that supporters should send as absolutely essential. Linking the need that the foreign mission site had for financial support with the ability of women at home to provide aid, such passages suggested that home-based women's donations were as important to the enterprise's success as the activities of women in the field, like Arnott, Sarah Stimpson, and Emma Redick. So, Arnott frequently infused her writing with observations about what the mission could accomplish if given additional personnel and funds. She wrote in "News from Kamundongo" for *Mission Studies* in April 1908, for example, that she had many plans for improving schools and housing for her female students, but "these require time and money, neither of which we have at present." She noted, "[I]f you could only look into one of the heathen villages and see the women and children living in all their dirt and trusting in all their spirits and superstitions, without schools or any kind of knowledge of the Savior who died for them, I'm sure your hearts would be stirred to help them" (106–07).

When we recognize how familiar and appealing this equivalency principle would have been for Protestant women in the U.S., we can appreciate the sophistication of such narrative patterns as inviting readers to go along on an imaginative journey from America to a station or from the main site of mission activity to an outstation. These descriptions helped readers picture the location of a missionary's work, and they also tied into the equivalency principle's system of shared identification and gendered Christian service. Strengthening the financial and spiritual power of the women's foreign mission network, these motifs also established genre conventions that, in turn, reinforced movement ideology.

This ongoing community-building enterprise was closely connected to the "imagined communities" of national identity that Benedict

Anderson has explained were crystallizing beginning in the nineteenth century, with mechanisms like print culture playing a pivotal role. As women read (and/or wrote for) such publications as *Mission Studies* or *Life and Light* and connected with each other through the medium of print, they overcame separations of geography and time to achieve mutual identification based in gendered, collaborative benevolence.⁴² In this case, print texts sought to capitalize on U.S.-based women's affiliation with an increasingly forceful vision of the nation as extending influence on a far-reaching international scale and to reinforce their commitment to a transnational agenda of Christian service with highly gendered dimensions.

Significantly, however, the imagined community of women in mission (both women missionaries and women supporters) was also dependent on another dimension in their rhetoric: limning the local people around the foreign mission station as needing the movement's cultural intervention in the first place. Here, in the published texts by mission authors like Nellie Arnott, we see related discursive conventions that synthesize techniques from imperial-era travel writing and sentimental literature, envisioning social outreach by women as a "traveling" extension of their domestic teaching role (as in the domestic literacy narratives referenced above) but with complex linkages to Euro-American colonial discourse also coming into play.

One stock-in-trade plot element was the conversion story demonstrating that the native's need to be saved had been met by the missionary enabled by her home-based supporters. Perhaps Arnott's most compelling example was her account of Chief Kanjundu, who "brought his fetishes to be burned, put away all of his wives but one, and became a Christian," after which he "built a church and school house in his village" and even learned to read. Enduring false imprisonment at the hands of the Portuguese, he was eventually acquitted and, upon returning home, "gave all his slaves their liberty, although since being a Christian he had treated them as children rather than slaves."⁴³

Variations on the conversion storyline include the saved native redeeming others—and being able to do so because of learning from the woman missionary and her network—along with accounts describing the site of missionary intervention as achieving a new, Christian identity uplifted from its previous precarious existence. In Arnott's writing, we see an example of the first plotline in the story of the young boy Fumika in *Mission Studies* in May 1910. Fumika's parents "told him

sickness and trouble would come to him” if he attended the mission school. Yet, according to Arnott, he persisted in his education. He eventually became an outstation teacher and converted several family members to Christianity. An example of the second motif occurs in Arnott’s account of the Umbundu girl Cipuku. When Cipuku’s father chose an unacceptable husband for her, she escaped to the mission and eventually married a Christian. Based on Cipuku’s success, her sisters also overcame harassment and an attempted kidnapping by a brother by fleeing to the mission. Arnott depicts the Kamundongo station itself as a haven for imperiled young women, who, she suggests, needed a boarding school to ensure full safety—vital protection only her readers had the power to give.⁴⁴

Stories like these brought together the home-based woman supporter of the movement, the missionary living abroad, and the site of intervention (physical locale and/or people). Using an explicit or implicit “endeavor-in-jeopardy” scenario, a mission movement author like Arnott would first convey a challenging problem and then communicate how the help of women living in the U.S. could address it. This network of home-based supporter, mission site, and missionary was also, by extension, reconfiguring conceptions of travel to erase the reader’s need for actual in-person journeys overseas. Missionaries, mission supporters, and the objects of their evangelical benevolence all came together in a shared spiritual space created in writing.

Around this nexus of need, links between foreign mission publications like Arnott’s and the broadly circulating colonial discourse of her era are crucial to acknowledge. Even though she and her colleagues viewed their work in community-building terms, and despite her particular station’s ongoing conflicts with the Portuguese attempting to control the Angolan highlands, such tropes invoke core features of colonial rhetoric, thereby reinforcing hierarchies associated with the more political versions of cross-cultural intervention. In particular, postcolonial critics have decried the longstanding impact of such texts on the very people a missionary sought to “save.” To construct the object of social intervention as helpless—indeed, doomed—without the righteous intervention envisioned in mission discourse is to establish a framework for future thinking, doing, and interacting that constrains those on both sides of the equation. African authors such as Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o, who has thoughtfully drawn on histories of African mission pedagogy in his work, are prominent voices around these points.⁴⁵ In

situating Arnott's magazine writing within a rhetorical context of colonial discourse, we join other scholars who have called for analyses of colonialism as a cultural (i.e., broader than a political) phenomenon in which discourse plays a central part. As outlined in our introduction and in Chapter 2, reading Arnott's writings as representations of experience for a particular audience rather than as transparent records offers an approach for addressing what we have called the discursive gap between actual everyday life and movement-shaped narratives.

Along those lines, when positioning decades' worth of American women's foreign mission texts within the broader category of travel writing, Mary Suzanne Schriber discerns a recurring insistence on cultural hierarchy: "Missionary accounts," she finds, "are exercises in colonizing and 'othering,' authorized by belief in the absolute truth of Christianity and the superiority of the United States, understood as the apex of civilization, Protestant and Anglo-Saxon."⁴⁶ Similarly, Nicholas Thomas, surveying an array of materials (such as photos as well as print texts) from both the Pacific and African theaters, has tracked recurring rhetorical patterns in British mission literature associated with a pervasive colonial culture, including dramatizations of "savagery or heathenism," "the before-after narrative," "infantilization of the indigenous people," and a related "discourse of racial types."⁴⁷ So, too, David Spurr has suggested that studies of colonial discourse should broaden the frame of analysis, "explod[ing] . . . categories of genre in the effort to seize hold of a more global system of representation." For Spurr, a central question to ask about colonial discourse is "how writing works, in whatever form, to produce knowledge about other cultures," with a broad array of texts included under the rubric of writing (Spurr, *The Rhetoric of Empire*, 10–11). Such calls to expand and complicate our interpretation of colonial discourse are particularly relevant for studying a missionary author like Nellie Arnott. Considering "discourse" as our purview, we should contextualize Arnott's print texts within a more extensive compositional framework, including not only her own diaries and scrapbooks but also such material culture "writing" as her helping redesign village sites into neat, orderly patterns that would undo the local (mis)arrangements missionaries equated with uncivilized behavior. (See, in this regard, the description of reformed native space in Miss May J. Johnston's "A Trip to Kamundongo and Ochileso," referenced earlier in this chapter. See also Chap-

ter 2's discussion of layouts for traditional Umbundu villages versus Christianized ones.)

Taken altogether, Nellie Arnott's texts reflect a hierarchical stance consistent with colonialism's *ethos*—though not as consistently as the sweeping characterizations of mission writing by Schriber and Thomas would suggest. Intriguingly, in her private diary writing and correspondence, we can trace a decided shift over time in her depictions of the Umbundu people with whom she worked—including a deep affection for particular individuals and an associated valuing, however limited, of the local culture as expressed in everyday practices.⁴⁸ Letters former students sent to Arnott many years after her return to the U.S. verify that the bonds of affection evident in her own writing were hardly one-sided.⁴⁹ However, even after many years in Angola and even though she had developed such treasured personal relationships, Arnott continued to invoke such terms as “heathen” when referencing Africans she did not know personally; furthermore, her appreciation of some social practices (such as Umbundu women's interactions with their young children) did not dissuade her from determined critiques of polygyny, alcohol consumption, and food preparation techniques she considered unclean. In addition, Arnott's stories for public consumption by missionary supporters at home in the U.S. continued to utilize techniques such as the “before-and-after” conversion storyline Thomas describes as emphasizing the depravity of a convert's “before” stage.

COMPARATIVE READING OF ARNOTT'S WRITING

One helpful approach for assessing relationships between Arnott's oeuvre and the complicated larger category of colonial discourse is to read her publications for women's mission supporters comparatively. Texts by other women serving at her station are particularly useful points of reference, encouraging us to see Arnott as operating in an approximate middle ground on a continuum ranging from a decidedly colonialist stance (including diction consistent with racial essentialism and racial Darwinism) to a perspective more affirming of local culture and even approaching cultural relativism. Bertha Stover's “Women of West Central Africa” exemplifies one side of that continuum while Elisabeth Ennis's “Umbundu Baby and Its Mother” illustrates a viewpoint nearer the other side. Perhaps unsurprisingly, these two women also embody generational differences that may help explain their

contrasting standpoints, with the elder Stover coming from a period before shifts in thinking within the larger context of the WBMI and ABCFM organizations had come to the forefront along with new educational backgrounds among many women missionaries.⁵⁰

Stover and Ennis both overlapped with Arnott in their Angolan service. Stover came to Africa before Arnott as a spousal adjunct, typical of early generations of women foreign missionaries, whereas Ennis (though also a mission wife) arrived later, bringing her own academic preparation for her posting and, with that educational background, a more progressive discourse. Mrs. Stover's long career as a foreign missionary embodied the traditional helpmate model as she supported her husband's preaching with woman's-work-style teaching. As Elisabeth Ennis would observe in her own published history of the ABCFM in Africa, Stover ran "a large Bible class for women" and managed "evangelistic work" aimed exclusively at women in outlying areas.⁵¹ Like other ABCFM women serving overseas, whether married or single, Stover wrote for mission supporters at home in the U.S., and her "Women of West Central Africa" pamphlet epitomized the extreme hierarchical language readers of her generation would have expected in reports of the movement's activities in sites like Angola.

Although Stover began her narrative with rather neutral descriptions of the founding of "The West Central African Mission" in 1881 and the location of the work "in the countries of Bailundu and Bihé," she quickly moved in her second paragraph to characterizations consistent with Schriber's and Thomas's linkages between mission texts and colonial rhetoric: "Here, amidst the squalor of an African village, surrounded by her children, chickens and pigs, we will find the typical Umbundu woman." A little further into her report, Stover forcefully stressed the distance between her American middle-class readers' commitment to an idealized model of (nuclear) familial domesticity and Angolan women's more community-oriented views: "No word for Home exists in the Umbundu language. They always say 'my village,' never 'my home.' These villages are composed of several men with their various wives, children, concubines, and slaves. . . ." With "polygamy . . . the rule," Stover declared, there was "no end of strife and unhappiness." Overall, Stover stressed, before Christian intervention, there was only "utter blankness, desolation, and hopelessness of these lives without the Gospel of Christ!" Accordingly, much of her pamphlet celebrated the "divine ray even in [a local woman's] dark mind,"

which had been awakened through the Christian mission endeavor in which Stover and her readers were participating. Squalor had been replaced with “whitewashed” walls. “Christian motherhood” was embodied in a new vision: a “neatly dressed, placid-faced woman sitting there” with “no palm oil on her hair,” as “she spells out the words of her Sabbath-school lesson, and the little children playing on the floor are singing ‘I am so glad that Jesus loves me.’” From Stover’s perspective, “Christian homes” were now “lead[ing] into light these who for ages have been groping in darkness.”⁵²

Elisabeth Ennis, though working in the same Angolan area as Stover and also serving in the capacity of mission wife, brought a different perspective to her assignment and to writing about it. Ennis, who did not come with her husband, Merlin, to Angola until 1907, had studied at Lawrence University, the University of Oregon, and Wellesley College. While her mission movement publications drew on features that had been associated with the literature for many decades, her writing also marked ways in which the rhetoric was evolving to accommodate new perspectives, including a more academic, if not a totally affirming, stance toward local social practices.

Ennis’s “The Umbundu Baby and Its Mother” offers a case in point. Even in her opening sentence, she signals one significant shift in perspective, alerting readers that African women should not be carelessly overgeneralized: “Much that may be said of the Umbundu woman is no doubt true of the average African woman, yet tribes quite near each other present many differences and what I shall say here refers only to the women of the Ovimbundu tribe in the uplands of Angola.” Highlighting variations across tribal communities, Ennis here adopts a stance avoiding the kind of stereotyping often criticized in colonial discourse. Ennis employs a strategy of affiliation rather than the traditional approach in colonial rhetoric: highlighting difference. Rather than painting Umbundu women as radically different from their American counterparts, she invokes gender solidarity via a women’s rights vocabulary consistent with her generation’s progressive agenda within the U.S.: “The ‘female of the species’ is difficult of description, be she militant, domestic or professional, and the Umbundu woman is no exception. I have sometimes thought her the original suffragette.” Ennis goes on to admit to “contradictions” within the “character” of Umbundu women, leading them to range between being “spirited and docile, hard-working and easy-going, willing to learn and slow to prac-

tice.” However, Ennis explains, on balance, Umbundu women exercise great cultural influence her readers should admire: “It is usual for us to look upon the ‘heathen’ woman as down-trodden, the natural man as the natural woman’s oppressor, but I have come to feel the idea quite an erroneous one. True she tills the soil and wins her daily ‘mush’ by the sweat of her brow, but possessing the key to the granary she possesses the key to the situation, and the Umbundu woman is not the only one who complains over tasks she would not have taken away from her for the world.”⁵³

For readers schooled in the traditional patterns of women’s mission literature, Ennis’s pamphlet represents a striking, even if relatively subtle, departure from the rhetoric of earlier-generation authors. Directly rejecting the term “heathen” via the use of scare quotes, she likewise terms stereotypes of “down-trodden” women and oppressive native men as “erroneous.” Instead, Ennis explains, Umbundu women, though carrying out very different kinds of labor than their American counterparts, hold significant social influence by “possessing the key to the granary,” that is, by having control of the vital food resource for the community. In these passages, Ennis clearly alludes to the many previous portrayals of African women in mission literature as oppressed since they were (supposedly) forced to assume responsibility for field work that Americans would deem more appropriately assigned to men. Here, Ennis’s cross-cultural vision accommodates the Umbundu woman’s duties more positively—even observing that “her conservatism” in this regard (i.e., not adopting Euro-American divisions for gendered labor) is a choice enabling her to serve as “the guardian of the tradition of mothers, the keeper of the sacred fire of tribal life” (2). Viewing “tribal life” as “sacred” is, of course, a telling move on Ennis’s part since it signals her openness to synthesizing values and practices honored by the local culture into any Christianizing endeavor. Indeed, though Ennis terms the social vision of Umbundu women “narrow” and asserts that “she is down-trodden in the bonds of her own superstition,” this missionary author of a later generation than Bertha Stover constructs conversion goals for the particular Umbundu tribal woman as aiming to “broaden her vision,” not to overturn her cultural heritage entirely (3).⁵⁴

Ennis’s writing, in contrast to Stover’s, anticipates shifts in the culture of the women’s mission movement that would reach fuller, more explicit expression in the 1920s. The WBMI, in particular, would be-

come more and more sensitive to potential connections between imperialism and evangelism, according to the organization's historian, Grace T. Davis. Writing about the WBMI's own language practices, Davis would assert that the "very vocabulary" of the annual reports had appropriately changed over the years: "The word 'foreign' may go, and the word 'missionary' may finally go. Certainly we cannot retain it unless we can remove from it any ancient flavor of condescension which it appears to have acquired in many minds." Attributing an increasingly collegial stance to the women's foreign mission enterprise, Davis affirmed a "sense of the value of working together" and noted that "Such words as cooperation, interdenominationalism, internationalism, unification, occur with increasing frequency," as, she claimed, "the word 'heathen' has disappeared," and instead "'Togetherness' is everywhere."⁵⁵

Even in the 1920s, Davis's assessment may have been more aspirational than descriptive. Certainly, in the time frame of Arnott's public mission writings for the venues where her work appeared, a wider range of stances was the norm. Reading authors like Bertha Stover and Elisabeth Ennis—both colleagues in Arnott's area of service—helps delineate that range. The differences in their perspectives remind us that missionary publications in that period were flexible enough to embrace noteworthy internal contradictions and that a gradual movement toward more progressive viewpoints was not fully or even uniformly achieved.⁵⁶

Inconsistencies in Arnott's writing for women in the U.S. are, therefore, consistent with the larger body of evolving mission publications to which she contributed. Though in some cases Arnott moved beyond the language of Bertha Stover's model, she never adopted a perspective akin to Ennis's—at least not in her public writing. Like many missionary teachers—including those working within U.S. geographic borders to "uplift" post-Reconstruction African Americans, to manage Chinese and marginalized European immigrant workers, or to "assimilate" Native Americans during this same era—Nellie Arnott struggled to understand and represent her relationship with the people she viewed herself as serving. Encouraged throughout her life to celebrate Protestant Christianity's superiority and denied the advanced education of college women like Elisabeth Ennis, Arnott would have been unlikely to arrive at a position of cultural relativism—however much she might have come to care for individuals where she was

stationed.⁵⁷ Trained to write for an audience of readers anticipating constructions of Africa and Africans in line with traditional mission movement ideology, she would have been hard put to reject the literary conventions already established in her regular publication venues. Within this persistent institutional context, therefore, even the partial and unstable changes in stance emerging in some of her public writing over time mark discursive gaps. Overall, therefore, we must accept the fact that Arnott's public texts for women readers, as "colonial discourse," cannot be easily compartmentalized since her writing spanned a number of years, appeared in a wide range of forms, and necessarily addressed audience expectations so influential that we cannot simply equate what she says in a given text with what she feels/believes at the time.

Neither, however, should we assume that her public language masked "true" feelings hiding behind others' conventions. Significantly, the ongoing instability in perspective evident in her published texts is often echoed in her private writing, suggesting that we cannot attribute these lingering inconsistencies to intense audience and genre awareness. For example, in a diary entry on March 29, 1912, as she began the trek from the interior that would carry her home on furlough, Arnott described young Angolan women who came to visit her camp in highly positive terms as "nice looking bright girls," a far cry from the characterizations she had penned in diary pieces composed upon her arrival in Angola years earlier. She hoped her conversation would somehow "linger in their hearts" after this brief encounter. But that same day's entry also chronicled her evening's efforts to read the Bible to the local village "boys" and bearers from a caravan that her traveling group had encountered. They were, she observed, in a familiar yet nonetheless striking phrase, "heathen of the heathen."

WRITING FOR MALE ADMINISTRATORS

As we have pointed out, the complex position of being an American Protestant missionary in a Portuguese Catholic colony should discourage any straightforward equation of Arnott's work in Angola with the European power's imperial agenda there, however much her writing aligned itself with colonial discourse models. Another factor making such a characterization problematic is the gender dynamic at the heart of mission service in Arnott's time period. Although women had made substantial progress in claiming leadership within the foreign mission

movement, men still held the positions of greatest authority. This distinction was clear in day-to-day interactions at mission stations, and it was forcefully embodied within mission rhetoric. When writing to women supporters at home and to each other, women missionaries adopted a collaborative voice. When writing to male mission officials, deference was the expected stance. A few women tried a more assertive standpoint, at least on occasion, but this approach carried risks, especially given the public nature of mission organizations' correspondence. As in other dimensions of her oeuvre, here, too, Arnott's case resonates with larger cultural trends.

When Nellie Arnott composed letters to male officials of the ABCFM both during her stay in Africa and after her return to the U.S., she knew that these texts served a very public function shaped by gender. While she could count on home-based women supporters of the foreign mission movement for moral if not always financial support, the relationship she and women colleagues in Angola had with the men who led their sponsoring organization was far more complex. Issues of authority and access, traceable to the historical position of women in foreign mission service, are evident in the writing Arnott sent home to male leaders.

In the early days of the American foreign mission movement, only men were eligible for appointment to service overseas. Saintry women pioneers like Mrs. Harriet Newell and the various wives of Reverend Adoniram Judson had elicited admiration as role models dedicated to their husbands' service. Gradually, the distinctive gender-based contributions that wives of missionaries could make earned more recognition. Some wives began to carve out informal duties as teachers, complementing their husbands' work as preachers, and missionary societies slowly came to grips with the reality that, in many foreign settings, wives could gain far better access to women and children as objects of evangelism than could their minister husbands. Bertha Stover's career, referenced above, exemplifies this trend. Still, women working at foreign missions were often unpaid adjuncts for their husbands rather than leaders in their own right.⁵⁸

After the Civil War, the access that American women had to foreign mission service improved, partly in response to the demographics of a depleted population of males and also due to women's beginning to claim some entrée into postsecondary education and the professions. At foreign stations, women's success as teachers, health care providers,

and social workers among women and children gained increasing respect from male officials—though that appreciation was sometimes grudgingly given. Even after they began to earn their own appointments as workers in foreign fields, women like Nellie Arnott and her colleague Sarah Stimpson still faced constraints in their relations with their male superiors, both day-to-day at their overseas postings and in long-distance exchanges with U.S.-based leaders. Women's abilities were not fully trusted, and their roles were still circumscribed by ideological structures such as the cult of domesticity and, in some cases, by male church leaders' discomfort with female advancement in the institution.⁵⁹

Arnott grappled with this situation throughout her stay in Africa and during her first months back in the U.S. on furlough when she was campaigning to raise funds for a girls' school in Angola. Reading her correspondence with male administrators alongside her other public texts—such as the circular letters and magazine stories she wrote for other women—we can discern one reason why the interactions between female missionaries and people living around a station often took on a different character than relations between male missionaries and the locals there. How could a female missionary like Arnott—despite the white, Protestant American dimensions of her identity—take on a straightforwardly hierarchical stance toward the Africans with whom she worked when she was being reminded, on a daily basis, of her inferior position in the mission movement hierarchy based on her gender?⁶⁰

Noteworthy signs of this gender hierarchy in action—and Arnott's efforts to navigate this terrain—are her letters to Judson Smith, James L. Barton, and Enoch F. Bell, some of which are printed in this volume. Smith (whose family had hosted Arnott just before her departure to Africa), Barton (the Secretary of the ABCFM), and Bell (the Assistant Secretary) worked in Boston at the organization's headquarters, directing policy all over the globe. By virtue of the positions they held, Arnott realized that her correspondence with these men would be shared with other readers. Indeed, in some of her Barton- and Bell-addressed letters, Arnott seems to be reaching out to the entire hierarchy of her sponsoring mission organization. Taking on a goal of institutional-level persuasion, this correspondence occupies a liminal space on the private/public continuum of Arnott's written archive.

To illustrate how Arnott's writing engaged with the challenge of gender relations, we have included in this edition correspondence from several different periods in her mission career. One telling text is a 1905 letter to Smith when she was very new to her foreign mission work and was just beginning to use her writing to male administrators to advocate for resources. An example from the midpoint of her overseas work is a 1909 letter written while she was still in Africa and crafted to convince the organization that she and Sarah Stimpson should be allowed to work on their own at a Gamba outstation.

In these first two example letters, we see her most deferential tone. Indeed, to grasp the full import of her gentle suggestions to the Boston-based administrators in these early letters, we need to juxtapose this exchange with a message sent from Sarah Stimpson to a female ally in the U.S. around the same time as Arnott's 1909 message. In Stimpson's letter, evidently cultivating a female back channel of communication, we find much more overt protests against the male missionaries in the region for attempting to limit the activities of Arnott and Stimpson around Gamba—a context that Arnott skirts far more delicately in her own missives to such leaders. In a complaint implicitly linked to the ongoing suffrage campaign in the U.S., Stimpson describes male leaders in Africa as having exerted unethical pressure via a staged “vote” at a meeting where the women were not allowed to participate.⁶¹ Pointing out that in Gamba at that time “over 400 people” were “left alone without a missionary” despite their wish for their children “to be taught the true way,” Stimpson protests that “Miss Arnott & I had expected to come here after the first of June to stay during the dry season, but a little before that some opposition” emerged among male mission leaders in the region. Quoting some of the objections raised, Stimpson simultaneously pokes fun at them: “That it ‘was not safe’—‘that single ladies ought not to travel alone in this country’—‘that they ought not to be at the outstation alone.’ If we had to wait to be escorted, we’d never go anywhere.”⁶²

This discursive gap between Arnott's and Stimpson's letters about the Gamba controversy is defined in large part by a difference in tone. Whereas Arnott positions herself as a suppliant addressing male superiors, Stimpson affiliates, through satire bordering on sarcasm, with female allies. But Arnott's voice changes over time in her official correspondence. Chapter 6 reproduces a series of letters she sent to Bar-

ton and Bell during the first months of her furlough when she had acquired a stronger professional identity.

In contrast to her tentative stance during much of her overseas assignment and more in line with Stimpson's 1909 text, by the time Arnott has returned to the U.S. on furlough later in her career, she was much more assertive. She advocated for her own agenda for the West Africa mission and claimed experience-based knowledge. Whether sent from a stop on her cross-continental journey to her family's home or from California after she arrived there, these final letters from Arnott to ABCFM male officials still reflect the gender politics inherent in the American foreign mission movement. Highly dependent on the contributions of middle-class Christian women all over the U.S., the ABCFM was eager to capitalize on Arnott's potential ability to attract donors. The letters show that managing the campaign for funds for her special project (a school for girls) was requiring Arnott to navigate the hierarchy of male power quite carefully. We can also see signs that she had matured as a writer and a political player within the mission movement. However limited the likelihood that she could direct the future course of the ABCFM program in West Africa, Arnott was determined to try. One of her major tools was the language of travel writing as she repeatedly invoked her experience in Angola to claim authority. She had lived a long time in Africa, her texts reminded recipients. Accordingly, her letters extended beyond such agendas as pushing forward her school campaign (a goal in line with her feminized missionary identity as a teacher) to her determined defense of colleagues (the Cammacks) who had fallen from favor within the organization.

Another discursive tool available to Arnott at this point also derived from travel writing's conventions. She repeatedly invoked her current status as a transcontinental traveler doing what missionaries on furlough were expected to do: journeying from support group to support group to strengthen the organization's infrastructure by disseminating stories about Christianity taking root in a faraway place. Her descriptions of this public relations campaign were modest and respectful, but they nonetheless stressed her ability to do work her male superiors could not do—to speak from the experience of having served recently in Africa herself.

In the end, to convey surprising news, Arnott used yet another familiar argument associated with women in mission—their ability to serve the movement from an American domestic setting—in a letter

announcing that she was marrying California businessman Paul Darling and that she therefore would not be returning to Africa as scheduled. To describe how she planned to continue as an active agent for missions despite her marriage, Arnott called upon the same rhetoric she had used in her magazine stories and reports to the ABCFM and WBMI. As a home-based supporter, she asserted, she could still contribute to women's work for women.

Arnott's self-characterizations here certainly meshed with the very rhetoric she had used when cultivating the support of U.S. women for her overseas service. Significantly, however, by leaving behind her role as a single woman missionary posted overseas, she was reinforcing anxieties that male movement leaders had expressed for years about the long-term reliability of unmarried women for work in the field. In that vein, Rhonda Semple has noted that British mission societies' screening committees and management groups continually worried over the potential problem of losing a single woman missionary to marriage. The London Missionary Society (LMS) actually required candidates to sign a pledge promising to remain single for at least five years from the start of their service or to reimburse some of their salary to the LMS.⁶³

Do the tensions around the mission movement's gendered power relations, which are so conspicuously embedded within Arnott's correspondence, provide one explanation behind her decision to wed Paul Darling rather than to return to Africa? Perhaps. In any case, these semipublic letters offer an effective example of how a woman missionary could try to use her writing as a potential avenue for influence—not only on her women supporters at home but also on the male leaders who had the greatest control over the enterprise.

MEMENTOS, MIXED MESSAGES, AND AFRICAN VOICES

After her marriage, Nellie Arnott published several magazine articles with her new "Darling" surname in the byline.⁶⁴ She continued fundraising for the girls' boarding school. She stayed actively involved in the movement as she had promised Bell and Barton. However, her role soon shifted. No longer able to report on direct experiences in the field, she became one of the committed supporters like those she had written to throughout her time in Africa. That this new identity might have been less than satisfying is suggested by her attempts to convince her husband to join her in Africa as a mission couple. (Well aware

that Paul Darling had no ministerial ambitions, she urged him to consider a business position, such as managing the Angola mission press.) When it became clear that her spouse would not agree, she began to re-envision her own experience overseas as a retrospective rather than a forward-looking story.

The change in Arnott's mission movement engagement took her to a different genre for her writing—composing scrapbooks. No longer assigned the task of fundraising and network-building through her writing, she could draw from the full trajectory of her mission experience reframed through memory. Arnott assembled at least three scrapbooks. Each one took on a somewhat different character, with one organized to revisit her African journey from start to finish, one serving mainly as a repository of mission publications (including some of her own) relevant to her assigned region, and one crafted as a picture-book of mission-oriented images seemingly aimed at young readers. As a form associated with domestic collecting and reminiscence, Arnott's scrapbooks can be viewed as a private memoir. However, she apparently also intended them as a pedagogical tool for future generations—especially for her two grandchildren. Margin notes captioning photos and explanatory glosses for mission magazine articles pasted in the text—as in “grandma's station” jotted under one image from Kamundongo—show that she planned for Truman and Mary Darling to study her story.

Although a detailed analysis of Arnott's scrapbooks is certainly beyond the scope of this current project, they should be taken into account as part of her travel writing oeuvre. For one thing, Arnott's scrapbooks make extensive use of textual resources closely associated with travel memoirs. For instance, photographs, postcards, and maps adorn her pages. She also assembled official documents (such as pamphlets about the West Africa mission during and after her stay there) and copies of texts signaling her continued affiliation with the movement after returning to the U.S. (such as a talk given to a support group and a bulletin listing her as an officer in a home mission organization). As her final word on her mission career, the scrapbooks tell a personal story linked to a larger social history.

In the scrapbooks, as in the rest of Arnott's large and multifaceted body of missionary texts, we find a consistent inconsistency, especially in her representations of Africans as recipients of missionaries' benevolence.⁶⁵ On one page, we see a pair of images with the fa-

miliar pre-/post-conversion hierarchy invoked from mission rhetoric through juxtaposed, captioned photographs: “A pagan mother and child—Around her neck many fetishes,” versus “A Christian mother and child—Around her heart no fears.”⁶⁶ In contrast, on a nearby page, we find a mission magazine article touting the success of local Umbundu teachers who have fully taken over the school Arnott had formerly managed, and, in the margin, we find an affirming note: “my students.”⁶⁷

Striking (and, of course, troubling) as these contradictory images are today, they would not have been as unusual to find so close together in the myriad discursive spaces missionaries used in Arnott’s day. As John W. De Gruchy has observed, missionaries of that era were often struggling to synthesize the conflicting messages of the Bible and the (purportedly) scientific rhetoric on racial differences that were circulating at that time. On the one hand, for English and North American missionaries like Arnott, who had intellectual and emotional ties to the abolitionist movement’s values and to the language of the Bible, an egalitarian stance could sometimes be achievable in belief and social practices. On the other hand, missionaries of this time period were constantly exposed to “‘findings’ of science on matters of race [which] reinforced the racism of the colonists” in many of their foreign field sites, so that some missionaries wound up affiliating more with white European settlers there (and their negative attitudes toward local peoples) than with “their own converts.”⁶⁸ In this historical context, Arnott’s wavering stance toward those with whom she had worked in Angola may be understandable even though disappointing in personal terms. Perhaps the longer she remained at home in the U.S., the more difficult it would have become to hold on to the affiliative stance she had developed and often communicated in her writing during the later stages of her actual stay in Africa.

Along those lines, Corinne Fowler’s analyses of more recent and more secular journeys than Arnott’s provide some useful observations. Fowler has identified some women travel authors who cultivate an “antitouristic” stance achieved through such efforts toward “cultural embeddedness” as learning the local language, adopting a local name, and dressing like a native. For Fowler, such moves can be associated with a “traveler” rather than a more “voyeuristic tourist” who is not “genuinely interested in the lives” of those about whom she writes.⁶⁹ To some extent, Arnott fits Fowler’s pattern, having struggled for years

to learn (and use effectively) the Umbundu language, having acquired an affectionate Umbundu nickname (“teacher Nellie”) among the Angolans that some continued to use when writing her after her return to the U.S., and having brought back to California such items as a native baby-carrier that she employed for her own son and grandchildren. In Arnott’s scrapbooks, we see numerous, diverse signs of this embedded traveler identity being communicated. With margin notes (e.g., “my students”) proclaiming her close relationships with various figures in mission texts, for example, Arnott claims authority as a reporter while simultaneously asserting her commitment to the places and people being commemorated in her new writing space.

How, given Arnott’s inconsistency of stance, can we construct a coherent narrative of her experience, much less of the movement in which she participated, from the diverse array of mementos assembled in her three scrapbooks? Through institutional records, we have been able to place most of the missionaries who appear in Arnott’s scrapbook within a historical framework not only embracing but also extending beyond her own time in mission service overseas. Still, Arnott’s representations of Africans in her scrapbooks are more challenging to interpret both as individual artifacts and as a more comprehensive account.

For instance, how should we read a postcard, a Christmas greeting from the Means school, evidently mailed to Arnott (now Mrs. Paul Darling) in the 1930s? The photograph shows a line of young girls in uniform. With a printed message labeling the scene “Happy Girlhood,” the postcard commemorates the work of the boarding school Arnott had helped to establish.⁷⁰ Is her choice to display this postcard an affirmation of her confidence in the learning and future capacity for leadership that these students can achieve, consistent with libratory literacy ideals? Or should we instead focus on the ways in which the visually embodied curriculum—as represented in the highly Westernized dress of the students’ uniforms—enacts an ongoing exercise in cross-cultural power, leading us to critique Mrs. Darling’s sustained role in the enterprise?⁷¹ Of course, both readings are available in such a text. On the one hand, we should take into account the forceful critiques that point to converts attending such schools as coming disproportionately from outcast groups rather than from the local mainstream and to ways that the European values and social practices inculcated were at odds with important native traditions. In this sense, a picture of young African women marching along in European dress can be seen

as restraining rather than liberating. On the other hand, some of the same researchers who have identified the limitations mission schools placed on students have also highlighted ways in which these institutions, in some individual cases, could provide a means of escape from cruel parents or an unwanted marriage. In evaluating the curriculum itself, there are similar contradictory forces to take into account. Were lessons in sewing, cooking, and household skills such as doing laundry effective avenues to an enhanced social role or merely preparation for domestic service in white settlers' homes and a model of domesticity not suitable to the African setting? And, in the long run, did teachings suggesting women could embrace social and political leadership advance or undermine the postcolonial societies that would eventually replace the sites of much mission teaching in Africa? The Inanda Seminary, which Nellie Arnott had visited on her way back to the U.S. and which she had hoped to cast as a model for a seminary in Angola, could be the object of just such a range of queries.⁷²

Looking at the scrapbooks' many representations of Africans as a body of artifacts is even more challenging. Arnott does include affirming and individualized captions for some of the images she assembled—whether from mission magazine stories, postcards, or photos. For example, one figure appearing in several places is Jonas Soma, whose journey to the Tuskegee Institute in the U.S. and completion of his studies there Arnott clearly celebrates. Similarly, Cipuku, familiar from several of Arnott's writings, is identified by name and valued as a former student. In many cases, however, the subjects remain unnamed and undifferentiated. Whatever her intentions, one story emerging from these texts depicting Africans in diverse ways is actually about Arnott herself. In that vein, Douglas Wheeler and Diane Christensen have argued that mission accounts "reveal more about missionary attitudes than about African views" (Wheeler and Christensen, "To Rise With One Mind," 80). In this case, the contradictory mix of artifacts shows that Arnott, like many missionary writers of her era, did not ever develop a coherent, unified perspective.

So how should we characterize her work as teacher and writer in the end? One important strategy for addressing this question is to turn to African women's own texts. This goal is challenging. Since Western representations of cross-cultural exchange like Arnott's have created an incomplete and distorted picture of African women and since relatively few African women have had access to traditional publishing

venues, to recover relevant African voices from her era is no simple task.⁷³ A detailed analysis of the interplay between such texts and Arnott's public writing is necessarily beyond the purview of this initial foray into her work. However, two authors with particularly salient responses to mission enterprises like Arnott's should be at the center of future scholarship.⁷⁴ One, Eva de Carvalho Chipenda, born in the 1930s, studied in Methodist mission schools in Angola and eventually became the wife of influential African pastor Jose Chipenda. Another, Maria Chela Chikueka, attended 1940s' Congregational schools in the same area where Arnott had taught decades earlier.

Chipenda's *The Visitor: An African Woman's Story of Travel and Discovery* turns the white traveler/black native relationship on its head by writing about her experiences in such varied locales as Brazil, North America, and Europe. She blends critique of her Methodist mission schooling experiences with recognition of the access to social influence she acquired through that education. Specifically, Chipenda says her understanding of mission teaching's limitations was heightened when she was chosen for advanced study in Brazil,

It was . . . an eye-opening experience to discover that the lessons the missionaries taught us in Angola were not necessarily applied elsewhere. The missionaries had intended to build a system in which Christians lived separately from non-Christians. They advocated the idea of not mixing with 'pagans.' Christianity in Angola was based on too many don't's: don't drink, don't dance, don't watch football on Sundays, don't go to the movies. . . . So it was a surprise to visit other countries and discover that not everyone acted in the way the missionaries advocated. I was unable to distinguish Christians from non-Christians. They looked alike and in many ways behaved alike. (23-24)

Although Chipenda saves many of her most pointed critiques of Western intervention in Angola for the Portuguese rulers of her youth, her reflections on missionary teaching's constraints do offer a telling response to mission-oriented rhetoric like Arnott's, both in the earlier public writings and in the scrapbooks.⁷⁵ For instance, Chipenda's surprise at being "unable to distinguish Christians from non-Christians" while studying in Brazil offers a strong counterpoint to the before/after

conversion images still appearing in Arnott's scrapbooks and in much mission discourse in Chipenda's day.

According to Muriel "Ki" Henderson, an ABCFM missionary wife and activist who served in Angola as a contemporary of Chipenda's, the critique of mission education put forward in *The Visitor: An African Woman's Story of Travel and Discovery* surprised—and even hurt—some of the missionaries who had known Eva since they had viewed their own labors in Africa as unselfish service and had assumed it was welcomed as such. Henderson herself, however, despite clearly being proud of her husband Lawrence's ministry and her contributions to it, has characterized Chipenda's story as honest and insightful. "She was truthful," Henderson declared.⁷⁶

A much more positive portrait of missionaries' interactions with Angolans over time emerges in two texts by Maria Chela Chikueka, who studied in ABCFM classrooms in the region where Arnott had served and who eventually became a minister, teacher, and writer herself.⁷⁷ In *Angola Torchbearers*, Chikueka traces the history of Congregational missionaries' work in the highlands and presents an account of native Christian leaders (a number of whom were originally trained by Arnott and her colleagues). *The Trail of My Life Journey* presents Chikueka's autobiography, including her forced exile from her beloved Angola. Edited and published soon after her unexpected death by heart attack in early 1999, Chikueka's personal story offers a fascinating and fitting companion to Arnott's. Echoing language in the biographical letters Arnott left for her grandchildren, Chikueka's accounts of enthusiastically dedicating herself to Christian pedagogy provide an important reminder that we must balance critiques of missionaries' constraining influence on African peoples with an awareness that many Angolan leaders, men and women, have drawn on the learning the mission movement provided for strength, skill, and dedication. In that regard, Chikueka argues that, since the colonial government had no schools for Angolans when she was growing up, mission education was "a blessing . . . opening many doors which otherwise would have been closed."⁷⁸

That the different visions of mission-sponsored learning in these two authors' works both resonate with elements of Arnott's writing again shows that her own stance—like her experience of Africa—was highly inconsistent, encompassing a broad range of attitudes. In light of those contradictions, we must avoid any temptation to cast Arnott

herself as a trustworthy, straightforward reporter on Angolan culture or even on her own interactions with Umbundu people in her day. We should nonetheless recognize the value of her writing as an example of cross-cultural authorship's inherent complexities and of the powerful influence the foreign mission enterprise exercised over so many American women's lives.

NOTES

1. Focusing on European missionaries, David Arnold and Robert A. Bickers have emphasized that mission writing was often the major source of information about foreign places for the public at large. Arnold and Bickers explain that what this writing offers us today is more a record of the *perceptions* that movement participants circulated about the societies where they served, than a reliable portrait. Furthermore, editors played a role in filtering what reached the public, especially given that "marketing" the movement was a core goal of these texts. "Introduction," in Bickers and Seton, *Missionary Encounters*, 1, 3–4, 9.

2. Miss Nellie J. Arnott, "A Trip to an African Woman's Conference," *Mission Studies*, January 1908, 23; Nellie Jane Arnott, "A Trip to the Woman's Conference in the West Central Africa Mission," *Life and Light for Woman*, January 1908, 45. See Chapter 5 for a full text of the report. Such references to readers as supporting the enterprise regularly appeared in writing by many women missionaries. (See Robbins, "Woman's Work," 259–63.)

3. For one year of her Angolan assignment, 1911, we have found no diary. (The Bancroft library, which holds the bulk of her papers, has no record of a diary having been donated for that year.) Also, although Arnott did maintain her diary during the first year of her marriage, her family has not found others. The day-to-day experiences of a California wife and mother may have seemed less worthy of sustained record-keeping, or she may have chosen not to save diaries from that later period. The last diary held by the Bancroft library stops somewhat abruptly in 1914, a year after Arnott's marriage.

4. Traits Sinor associates with diaries that are more literary than ordinary include a strong plot, recurring literary devices, and polished diction. Jennifer Sinor, *The Extraordinary Work of Ordinary Writing: Annie Ray's Diary* (Iowa City: Univ. of Iowa Press, 2002), 12.

5. Rhonda Semple's study of gender-based differences in the work of British Protestant men and women missionaries shows that women's roles became increasingly important to the movement in the early twentieth century but that a woman missionary was still "subordinate to that of her male

colleagues” (*Missionary Women*, 1). Among American missionary organizations, a similar pattern persisted. On the male/female hierarchy in English foreign missionary culture, see Patricia Romero, who posits that “The missionary societies were long run by men. When women were permitted to go to the mission stations, they reported directly to male supervisors who, in turn, reported back to the church organizations at home.” Introduction to *Women’s Voices on Africa: A Century of Travel Writing*, ed. Patricia W. Romero (Princeton: Markus Wiener Publishing, 1992), 12. Scholars have traced a trajectory of American women in foreign mission work progressing from serving only as helpmates to male preachers, to missionary couples partnering in the enterprise, to single professional women serving as missionaries. But male authority persisted in U.S. Protestant culture, even after the Civil War. James M. Hoppin, a theology professor at Yale, wrote a book for ministers aiming “to brake the accelerating locomotion of leadership among ministers’ wives.” See Leonard I. Sweet, *The Minister’s Wife: Her Role in Nineteenth-Century American Evangelicalism* (Philadelphia: Temple Univ. Press, 1982), 236.

6. Based on her study of missionaries working in the southwestern U.S., Susan M. Yohn found what she terms “an odd schizophrenia” in their writing: “they wrote with a rhetorical flourish about the ideals of the enterprise in the reports intended for public consumption in the pages of mission journals such as *Home Mission Monthly* or in fund-raising letters to mission societies. Their letters to administrators of the WEC [Women’s Executive Committee], however, show little concern with ideology; they are primarily concerned with administrative neglect.” Susan M. Yohn, *A Contest of Faiths: Missionary Women and Pluralism in the American Southwest* (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1995), 107. While Yohn’s description of differences in that body of mission discourse has some parallels in Nellie Arnott’s writing, we see more rhetorical self-awareness in Arnott’s texts.

7. This approach aligns our work with scholarship advocated by Catherine Hall, whereby “Historians and cultural critics concerned with understanding colonialism as a culture have made discursive analysis a central tool,” to emphasize that “Differences, whether of race, ethnicity or gender, are always socially constituted, and they always have a dimension of power.” Catherine Hall, introduction to *Cultures of Empire: Colonizers in Britain and the empire in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries—A Reader*, ed. Catherine Hall (Manchester: Manchester Univ. Press, 2000), 12, 16.

8. Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (New York: Routledge, 1992) stresses that transcultural exchange within such contact zones is fluid and relational: “A ‘contact’ perspective emphasizes how subjects are constituted in and by their relations to each other. It treats the relations among colonizers and colonized, or travelers and ‘travelees,’ not in terms of separateness or apartheid, but in terms of copresence, in-

teractions, interlocking understandings and practices, often within radically asymmetrical relations to power” (7).

9. Fred W. Atkinson, “The Educational Problem in the Philippines,” *The Atlantic Monthly* 89 (March 1902): 360–65; James A. Le Roy, “Race Prejudice in the Philippines,” *The Atlantic Monthly* 90 (July 1902): 100–17; Arthur Stanley Riggs, “A Letter from the Philippines,” *The Atlantic Monthly* 92 (August 1903): 256–66; Alleyne Ireland, “The United States in the Philippines,” *The Atlantic Monthly* 94 (November 1904): 575–94; James A. Le Roy, “Our Spanish Inheritance in the Philippines,” *The Atlantic Monthly* 95 (March 1905): 340–46. In a history of the *Atlantic*’s first half-century, Ellery Sedgwick has noted: “Although the *Atlantic* had a smaller circulation than the others [*Century*, *Harpers’* and *Scribner’s*—other major, “quality” magazines growing up second half of the nineteenth century], it often carried greater intellectual prestige and represented an influential, relatively high-brow portion of that culture. The *Atlantic* . . . contained in varying proportions not only literature but also commentary on politics, science, economics, art, and current social issues” (2–3). Referencing Bliss Perry, editor of the magazine in the years before and after the Spanish-American War, Sedgwick reports that Perry’s tenure maintained the *Atlantic*’s longstanding “emphasis on social issues, politics, and economics,” and that, in particular, “His coverage of the aftermath of the Spanish-American War represented the whole spectrum of opinion, but the majority, including his own editorials, resolutely opposed colonialism as a violation of American principles” (310–11). *The Atlantic Monthly 1857–1909: Yankee Humanism at High Tide and Ebb* (Amherst: Univ. of Massachusetts Press, 1994).

10. We thank Susan K. Harris for sharing her manuscript, “Mark Twain’s America.” As William R. Hutchison has pointed out, the turn-of-the-century heyday of Protestant foreign missions coincided with an era when many Americans wished for the U.S. to exercise sustained imperial power, but missionaries and their supporters did not generally envision a seamless connection between the two enterprises. Hutchison argues: “While missionary attitudes toward imperialism ran the gamut from wholesale enthusiasm to condemnation, and varied with particular locales and embodiments, the most common response voiced two assertions: that imperialism was an inexorable force, and that this force must somehow be tamed. . . . American missionary thinkers, by and large, wished to displace the evil or dubious forms of expansionism—those involving exploitation or colonization—in favor of the ‘fine spiritual imperialism’ that their own movement aimed to represent” (*Errand to the World*, 92). Hutchison uses the term “colonization” more narrowly than the way we have defined the term in our introduction.

11. An example of this mix appears in an unsigned 1910 essay in *Mission Studies*. The U.S.-based author references Nellie Arnott’s challenging

journey to her mission station but extols the impressive landscape; the article also praises a new railroad into the highlands but laments that it can take the hardworking missionaries only “part of the way” to their destination. Even within some individual sentences, we can track this continual shift back and forth, as in these examples: “Swinging in a hammock [tepoia] is very pleasant for a time, but when one has swung there for hour after hour it grows tiresome, and your good missionary is often glad to get out and rest herself by walking” and “There are many picturesque things about such a journey—listening to the songs of the carriers as they jog along, and to their peculiar signal whistles; watching for the approach of another caravan and exchanging news items; selecting and making the camp for the night or fording a stream, while perhaps the terrifying cries of wild animals may be heard in the forest.” See “The Way Our Missionaries Travel,” *Mission Studies*, April 1910, 119. Such accounts’ emphasis on the unusual (even the exotic) features encountered on a journey contributed to what Kristin Fitzpatrick has dubbed the “project of difference” often associated with travel writing as a genre. See “American National Identity Abroad: The Travels of Nancy Prince,” in *Gender, Genre, and Identity in Women’s Travel Writing*, ed. Kristi Siegel (New York: Peter Lang, 2004), 264

12. An illustration of how women missionary writers in Arnott’s own ABCFM group circulated this complex view of Africa emerges in a story on witchcraft that Mrs. Merlin Ennis submitted for the Children’s Work section of *Mission Studies*. Mrs. Ennis’s account vividly describes a “mysterious” ceremony she observed in a neighboring village, when a “divination” aimed at helping several patients included wild dancing, chicken-tossing, and chanting. Though she found the proceedings “wearisome,” Mrs. Ennis also admitted to being fascinated—so much so that she “resolved to witness” a follow-up ceremony the next day. Mrs. Merlin [Elisabeth R.] Ennis, “African Witchcraft,” *Mission Studies*, October 1910, 317–19. A copy of this article is in one of Arnott’s scrapbooks; on it she noted, “I was with them & saw this. N.J.A.” She added the date Jan. 1910. (*Ideal Scrapbook*, box 2, NJADP).

13. For thoughtful discussion of Livingstone’s career as explorer and writer, including significant contrasts between his heritage and that of Henry Morton Stanley, see Tim Youngs, “Africa/The Congo: the politics of darkness,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing*, ed. Peter Hulme and Tim Youngs (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2007), 160–64.

14. David Livingstone, *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa: Including a Sketch of Sixteen Years’ Residence in the Interior of Africa*. 2 vols (New York: Narrative Press, 2001; reprint, London: 1857); Dr. David Livingstone, *The Life and African Explorations of David Livingstone* (New York: Copper Square, 2002; reprint, St. Louis, 1874); Andrew C. Ross, *David Livingstone: Mission and Empire* (New York: Hambledon and London, 2002).

Ross interestingly classifies Livingstone as both “patron saint of imperialism and the ideal Protestant missionary” (240). Whether or not one views Livingstone as an imperialist, Ross’s treatment of the famous author’s progressive movement away from the program of the London Missionary Society that originally sponsored Livingstone’s work in Africa is compelling. Ross argues that, already in the 1850s, caught up in the appeal of exploration, “it was clear that [Livingstone] knew that he was not going to go back to settled mission station type service” (93). Ross also documents Livingstone’s increasing interest in alternative models for mission work, emphasizing sustained community-building with local populations over individual conversion efforts (122). Even in the initial responses to his first book, commentators had begun circulating characterizations of Livingstone that cast him more as explorer-hero than as missionary. The 1858 *Harper’s New Monthly Magazine* review of *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa* and *Travels and Discoveries in North and Central Africa* is a case in point. Although the reviewer suggests that Livingstone “regards his discoveries from a religious stand-point,” the review itself focuses on his explorations (“the results of years of travel and research” which “entirely revolutionize all our theories as to the geographical and physical character of Central Africa”—368). Further, *Harper’s* approvingly asserts that “Livingstone’s missionary scheme is accommodated to the actual state of things,” i.e., that he adopts a worldly attitude toward his work (394–95). For this reviewer as for others of this era, it was Livingstone’s “travels” more than his missionary identity which made him “no ordinary man” (369).

15. Here is an exemplary excerpt from an undated magazine clipping in Arnott’s scrapbook collection: “Dr. Hollenbeck, of Angola, appears to be the particular hero of the month, in that he secured two hippos in connection with an expedition to the Kuanza River, dispatching each animal with a single shot. There was great joy throughout the countryside. Not less than a thousand natives gathered to share in the feast. The Doctor dried large quantities of the meat, and took back a plenteous supply to the schoolboys at Kamundongo.” Scrapbook Volume 1, NJADP, 3. In line with the tendency to focus on Livingstone’s manly exploits, Andrew Ross has pointed to representations of the missionary-explorer in the early twentieth century. Ross underscores biographical details indicating that Livingstone himself was a conversionist with an egalitarian perspective rather than a promoter of the hierarchical “trusteeship” view of Africans. Nonetheless, Ross’s survey of biographies demonstrates that Livingstone was most often portrayed, via omissions of information and overt characterizations, as “the pioneer of European imperialism” (103). Andrew Ross, “Christian Missions and Mid-Nineteenth-Century Change,” in Porter, *Imperial Horizons of British Protestant Missions*, 85–105.

16. John M. MacKenzie describes Arnot's writing as representative of a trend among missionary authors to focus on the landscape and its beauty, often via an Eden motif. "Missionaries, Science, and the Environment in Nineteenth-Century Africa," in Porter, *Imperial Horizons of British Protestant Missions*, 112.

17. According to J. Keir Howard, the Livingstone and Arnot families were friendly neighbors. "Livingstone was his [Arnot's] hero and he would spend much time at the Livingstone home looking at the explorer's various maps and artifacts in the attic and, as a boy, he determined to go to Central Africa and follow in his hero's footsteps." See Dr. J. Keir Howard, "Arnot, Frederick Stanley," *Dictionary of African Christian Biography*, http://www.dacb.org/stories/demrepcongo/arnot_stanley.html.

18. F. S. Arnot, "Journey From Natal to Bihé and Benguela," *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society and Monthly Record of Geography* 2 (February 1889): 65, 78–80. See Chapter 4 for Arnot's report on meeting this well-known missionary, whose work with the Plymouth Brethren she greatly admired. Arnot's explorations took him into remote regions. In 1884, he trekked through central west Africa from Natal, crossing both the Zambezi and Congo rivers and eventually arriving at Benguela, on the west coast. After his initial explorations, Arnot responded to an invitation from the powerful chief Msidi, then ruling over a large area that included the Katanga province of Congo (what Arnot called Garenganze), to come to that area. Arnot's relationship with Msidi was complex, leading some to question the Scot's failure to assist Msidi later when the chieftain was assassinated by agents of King Leopold of Belgium. Defenders of Arnot point out that he was in Angola at the time of Msidi's death, working at another mission station, and too ill to travel. In any case, Arnot had established a successful mission in the Katanga region and had tried to maintain an officially neutral stance typical of the Plymouth Brethren while also advising Msidi on how to manage relations with the European political leaders so intent on plundering Africa's resources. See Howard, "Arnot, Frederick Stanley," *Dictionary of African Christian Biography*.

19. Mary Suzanne Schriber, *Writing Home: American Women Abroad, 1830–1920* (Charlottesville: Univ. Press of Virginia, 1997). Notes Schriber: "At a time when women were assiduously moving into public spaces both geographic and literary, travel writing was another space in the public domain for the voices of women" (7).

20. Kristi Siegel, "Intersections: Women's Travel and Theory," in *Gender, Genre, and Identity in Women's Travel Writing*, 2–3. Schriber strikes a similar note, explaining: "In the later nineteenth century, when the female traveler who ventured into international spaces was often a type of the New Woman, women's travel was a magnet for diverse and complicated reactions.

On the one hand, through clever marketing that played on stereotypes of Woman, the public in the last quarter of the century was drawn into the exploits of journalists like Nellie Bly and Elizabeth Bisland—lauded, lionized, and applauded for circumnavigating the globe in record time. On the other hand, some segments of the public continued through the turn of the century to be uneasy about what they perceived to be excessive numbers of female travelers” (*Writing Home*, 7). Susan Bassnett strikes a helpful balance between identifying trends in women’s travel writing and pointing to the wide diversity evident in various women’s travel accounts. See “Travel Writing and Gender” in Hulme and Youngs, *Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing*, 225–41.

21. Gaunt, an Australian, had been widowed early in life and made the best of that situation by traveling to remote locales and writing about her experiences in a distinctively female voice. Mary Gaunt, *Alone in West Africa* (London: T. W. Lowrie, 1912).

22. Romero suggests that the “personal nature of their experiences distinguishes the women” and their texts from their male counterparts. Introduction, *Women’s Voices on Africa*, 10.

23. Cheryl McEwan, “Encounters with West African Women: Textual Representations of Difference by White Women Abroad,” in *Writing Women and Space: Colonial and Postcolonial Geographies*, eds. Alison Blunt and Gillian Rose (New York: Guilford Press, 1994), 74–75, 77. The “heroes of the faith” series has published one enthusiastic account of Slessor’s ministry. See Sam Wellman, *Mary Slessor: Queen of Calabar* (Uhrichsville, Ohio: Barbour Books, 1998).

24. On links between motherhood and mission service, see Hill, *The World Their Household*, 24–27, 61.

25. Publications where Arnott appeared as a subject of missionary writing and as an author included the formal annual reports of the WBMI, *Life and Light*, *Mission Studies* and the *Missionary Herald*. For the specific group of women readers engaged in the foreign mission movement of her day, Arnott would have been something of a celebrity. Coming to this realization only through the gradual process of tracking down her publications in many archives reaffirmed to us that the recovery of major missionary women’s writing remains unfinished.

26. “Recruit for Africa,” *Missionary Herald*, June 1905, 267. *Missionary Herald* was a publication aiming for a mixed-gender audience of mission supporters at home in the U.S.

27. L. L. [initials only], “At Kamundongo,” *Mission Studies*, August 1908, 251, 252. Often reports about the work overseas were unsigned, particularly when the author was synthesizing input from multiple correspondents.

28. See Sarah Robbins's "Missionary Motherhood" chapter in *Managing Literacy, Mothering America*. Domestic literacy narratives were a broad genre with several sub-genres tied to women's benevolent work outside the home.

29. L. L., "At Kamundongo," 251, 252. Here the text affiliates the AB-CFM with an egalitarian view of African Christians as quite capable of leading religious work in their own societies, thereby resisting the "trusteeship" model. Dana L. Robert characterizes the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as a period when some British missionaries were "pragmatic and responsive to the immediate needs of the particular context," but other individual missionaries and organizations were increasingly influenced by racial hierarchy and imperialism, so that they increasingly embraced a "trustee" model for interactions with Africans, including Christians. Introduction to *Converting Colonialism*, 14–15.

30. See Sarah Robbins's analysis of characterizations for Laura Haygood, who served in China during the same generation as Arnott's overseas posting (*Managing Literacy, Mothering America*, 205–10). Deborah Gaitskell has commented on the evident contradictions between this ideology and the actual work by women in the mission field. For example, she notes that "urban missionary wives themselves did not lead a purely domestic life, in two ways. Though not in paid employment, they were frequently out at meetings, like their husbands; they also employed domestic servants to help 'keep the home,' a further ideological twist." Thus, Gaitskell explains, efforts by American Board missionaries like Mrs. Clara Bridgman in Johannesburg to promote a Euro-American version of housewifery among converts was at odds with the proselytizers' own lived experiences. "Housewives, Maids or Mothers: Some Contradictions of Domesticity for Christian Women in Johannesburg, 1903–39," *Journal of African History* 24 (1983): 241.

31. Based on missions sponsored by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, an Anglican organization, Modupe Labode posits that the push to substitute square houses for round huts and related physical changes in Christianized settings marked "nothing less than restructuring of African society" as a mission movement goal. "From Heathen Kraal to Christian Home," in Bowie, Kirkwood, and Ardener, *Women and Missions*, 126.

32. "Miss Arnott's Schools," *Mission Studies*, 282; "Children's Work: Miss Arnott's School," *Mission Studies*, November 1909, 344. The titles of these articles point to the periodical's efforts to make Arnott herself familiar to readers as a character in the ongoing, larger narrative about mission work.

33. Mrs. Joseph B. Leake, "West Central Africa," 37th *Annual Report of the Woman's Board of Missions of the Interior* (Chicago: WBMI, 1905), 31. Annual reports used many of the same rhetorical techniques as the mission

magazine narratives but positioned accounts of overseas work in a broad institutional context.

34. Mrs. Joseph B. Leake, "Africa," *38th Annual Report of the Woman's Board of Missions of the Interior* (Chicago: WBMI, 1906), 29. U.S.-based writers like Mrs. Leake gained expertise by reporting on the same regions over several years.

35. "West Central Africa," *39th Annual Report of the Woman's Board of Missions of the Interior* (Chicago: WBMI, 1907), 48. References to holidays that readers in the U.S. could identify with often appeared in reports from foreign mission stations, along with details marking the difference between celebrating at home and working abroad.

36. Mrs. Joseph B. Leake, "Africa," *40th Annual Report of the Woman's Board of Missions of the Interior* (Chicago: WBMI, 1908), 47. Leake's invocation of Arnott's own words blends confidence in God's capacity with an implied critique of home-based women's failure to fully carry out His will so far.

37. For discussion of the impact of print culture on the clubwomen's movement around this time and, in particular, of the role played by publications such as annual reports, see Anne Ruggles Gere and Sarah R. Robbins, "Gendered Literacy in Black and White: Turn-of-the-Century African-American and European-American Club Women's Printed Texts," *Signs* 21 (Spring 1996): 643–78.

38. The latter magazine showcased Arnott's articles more frequently, probably because of her sponsorship being situated in the midwestern organization and because of her longtime ties to the region. At least one of Arnott's American magazine pieces was apparently reprinted in *Canadian Congregationalist*. John T. Tucker quotes from it and credits Arnott in his *Drums in the Darkness*, 143, citing the *Canadian Congregationalist* of November 23, 1911.

39. This description's reference to "Those who contribute" and to "where their money goes" blurs the line between fundraising for the magazine and fundraising for mission service. Periodicals like *Mission Studies* and *Woman's Work for Woman* (whose audience was Presbyterian women) certainly helped publicize the labors of women missionaries stationed overseas to stoke supporters' enthusiasm and elicit funds. However, at times the necessity of attracting subscribers for the magazines themselves could distract readers from the goals of the larger movement. Along those lines, the "Current Topics" piece opening one issue of *Mission Studies* in 1911 focused *only* on a call to increase subscriptions. See "Current Topics," *Mission Studies*, August 1911, 1.

40. "Our Literature," *Mission Studies*, September 1910, 310. We thank Elizabeth (Liz) Rohan for sharing this article.

41. In correspondence about our work, Semple helpfully suggested that we consider how this relationship might be viewed as a kind of “Christian feminism.” “Parlor Press Reader’s Report,” June 2008, 3. From Semple’s cue, we might consider if the mission movement had transnational dimensions comparable to suffrage activities, yet shaped more by shared religious than political commitment. See, too, Sarah Robbins, “*Woman’s Work for Woman*,” 258–63.

42. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Revised edition (London, Verso, 1991), 43. For a discussion of Anderson’s concepts as they apply to American women’s writing, see Robbins, *Managing Literacy, Mothering America*, 26. In her dissertation on Janette Miller, Elizabeth (Liz) Rohan also discusses the role of an “imagining of communions” among women of the mission movement, with this group identification process “facilitated by true womanhood ideals, based on Christian beliefs,” as well as “the exchange of texts.” Rohan, “Imagined Communions” (Ph.D. diss) Chapter 4, 1–2.

43. Nellie Arnott Darling, “Chief Kanjundu’s Death,” *Mission Studies*, April 1914, 118–19. Here Arnott touches on a delicate subject—the fact that some African Christians owned slaves themselves—but she also asserts that Kanjundu had finally come to understand that his own liberty was no more precious than theirs. Nicholas Thomas has offered a related description of what he calls “the before and after story” as a “central feature of mission discourse.” Noting that this recurring plot “is not just a matter of religious change but of wider social transformation,” Thomas also points to descriptions of pre-Christianization practices as playing a key role in these narratives and cites cannibalism and widow-killing stories set in Fiji or India as examples which, we think, have their parallels in accounts of witchcraft and polygyny in stories about Africa penned by Arnott and her colleagues. Thomas’s analysis of how missionaries’ narratives often struggle with the contradiction between an impulse to infantilize indigenous people (in both verbal and visual texts) and a competing discourse of shared humanity through Christ’s eyes is relevant as well. Nicholas Thomas, “Colonial Conversions: Difference, Hierarchy, and History in Early Twentieth-century Evangelical Propaganda,” in Hall, *Cultures of Empire*, 302–03, 306.

44. Nellie J. Arnott, “Kamundongo and Vicinity,” *Mission Studies*, May 1910, 144–45. See also “A Visit to an African Village (Continued),” *Mission Studies*, June 1913, 185–86. The latter article was published after Arnott’s return to the U.S and her marriage to Paul Darling, a shift in identity noted by the byline’s now listing her as Nellie Arnott Darling. For more on Arnott’s relationship with Cipuku, see Chapter 2.

45. See especially Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o, *Decolonising the Mind* and Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o, *The River Between*. Focusing especially on Africa, but

theorizing expansively, Albert Memmi has argued that “Colonization distorts relationships, destroys or petrifies institutions, and corrupts men, both colonizers and colonized.” Envisioning a hopeful alternative, he adds: “To live, the colonized needs to do away with colonization. To become a man, he must do away with the colonized being that he has become. If the European must annihilate the colonizer within himself, the colonized must rise above his colonized being.” *The Colonizer and the Colonized*, 151. See also Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* (London: Pluto Press, 1952) and Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*.

46. To illustrate her point, Schriber draws on writing by Agnes McAllister, who worked as a Methodist missionary on the Kroo Coast of West Africa and who published a book about her experience (*A Lone Woman in Africa*) in 1896. Schriber notes that McAllister “places Liberia outside of civilization,” equating Christianity and civilization, while associating the familiar trope of “the darkness of the heathen mind” with the pre-intervention status of the people she was hoping to save. Schriber, *Writing Home*, 134–35.

47. Nicholas Thomas, *Colonialism’s Culture*, 127, 131, 132–33. Thomas asserts: “In one sense it is apparent that evangelical missions in both Africa and the Pacific had entirely different objectives to, say, Stanley’s expedition or the Fijian administration, but it is also true more specifically that missionary work employed and enacted notions of infantilization and quasi-familial hierarchy in a far more thorough way than any other colonial project. . . .” (135–36).

48. Desiree Lewis has described traits of an informed “cultural studies” being promoted by African women scholars, and Arnott’s writing includes a number of the features Lewis extols. “African feminist scholarship” Lewis explains, “has encouraged attention to the everyday, the ordinary and the seemingly insignificant.” Lewis also points to how such studies avoid viewing women’s culture as “static and unchanging.” In contrast, Lewis critiques writings which “present African women as frozen in time and place,” having “rituals and customs but lacking any real history,” and she notes that such a stance is often associated with “an effort to demonstrate (and inscribe) the radical difference of African from western societies,” including “conjur[ing] up a sense of all-pervasive ‘strangeness.’” While Arnott’s writing about African women does embody such negative features at times, Lewis’s critique would apply more clearly to Bertha Stover’s stance, outlined below, than to Arnott’s writings. Desiree Lewis, “African Gender Research and Postcoloniality,” in *African Gender Studies*, ed. Oyèrónké Oyěwùmí, 382–83.

49. For example, João Batista wrote to “My dear Teacher Mrs. N.A. Darling,” February 17, 1936, that “[t]here is never a day that I forget to think of you, my teachers, [like] Miss Stimpson. . . . And you, also, though many

years have passed, I have never forgotten you” (Box 2, “Loose Letters, 1910–1943,” NJADP).

50. Soremekun, in “History of the American Board Mission in Angola,” provides some evidence of a parallel generational difference in the attitudes toward Umbundu Christians expressed by Merlin Ennis (Elisabeth’s minister spouse) and Reverend William Sanders. Soremekun notes that Sanders decried “the mental limitation of these people,” who should not be entrusted with their own churches because they were “not prepared to stand alone and should not be expected to any more than children from eight to fifteen years old.” Ennis, in contrast, argued that “Anyone who has kept tabs on the workings of the native church for the last ten years knows that they are competent” to lead their own congregations (157–58 and 283–85). The contrasting views and backgrounds of Bertha Stover and Elisabeth Ennis fit the distinction that Jane Hunter draws between nineteenth-century female missionaries, who saw themselves primarily as helpmeets to their husbands and who often held conservative views on racial issues, and twentieth-century “New Women” missionaries, who were often college-educated, were confident that they “had something of their own to offer” (27) in the mission field and were sometimes opposed to prevailing views on race. “Women’s Missions in History,” in Reeves-Ellington, Sklar and Shemo, *Competing Kingdoms*, 22–31.

51. Elisabeth Logan Ennis, *The Hope of Glory: An Account of the Work of the West Central Africa Mission of the American Board for the Year 1916–1917* (Kamundongo: Sarah H. Bates Memorial Press, 1917), 25.

52. Mrs. Bertha D. Stover, *Women of West Central Africa* (Chicago: Woman’s Board of Missions of the Interior, 19—[undated]), 2, 3, 9, 8. An editor’s note on this pamphlet observes that this “new edition” of Mrs. Stover’s text celebrates recent additions to the West African mission, including “Miss Nellie J. Arnott at Kamundongo, who arrived in 1905 and entered upon her work with joy,” as well as “Mrs. Marion M. Webster of Bailundu” and “Miss Emma C. Redick at the new Ochileso station” (9). These comments date this edition as after Arnott’s 1905 arrival but also suggest the first circulation might have been before the end of the nineteenth century.

53. Elisabeth Ennis, *The Umbundu Baby and Its Mother* (Boston: Woman’s Board of Missions, 19—[undated]), 1–2. While the writing by Ennis that we review here was, like Arnott’s, for women mission movement supporters, by the late stages of her career, she produced at least one publication for an academic audience: “Women’s Names Among the Ovimbundu of Angola,” *African Studies* 4, no. 1 (March 1945): 1–8.

54. Although we have not attempted the kind of extensive review of Ennis’s writings as we have taken on for Arnott, we can affirm that the relatively accepting stance she adopts in *The Umbundu Baby and Its Mother* is echoed in her longer text, *The Hope of Glory*, referenced above. For instance,

she provides highly positive, individualized portraits of two young men (Feramenta and Kunjuka) who progressed from studying at a station school to preaching and teaching (18); she offers an appealing account of “a wise man, a magician” named Kunanga, who gave up his work as a “witch-doctor” to study a mission curriculum, eventually becoming “a church member and a trusted elder of the village” and finally “open[ing] a school in a[nother] village” with his “wife . . . a worthy helpmate” (18–19). Like Ennis’s portrayals of Umbundu women in her earlier pamphlet, these depictions emphasize the new leadership of converted local men without invoking the negative stereotypes typical of pre-conversion characterizations in many earlier missionary accounts.

55. Grace T. Davis, *Neighbors in Christ*, 200, 205. Davis also wrote that the WBMI could not ignore mission churches’ demands for freedom. “More and more the control of affairs must drop from our hands into those of their own leaders” (204). Dana Robert argues that after World War I, an ideology of “World Friendship” replaced the former ideals of Woman’s Work for Woman. “World Friendship assumed that Western culture no longer had a monopoly on virtue,” according to Robert, “and that women around the world stood poised to lead their own people not to Western, Christian civilization, but to their own forms of Christian life” (*American Women in Mission*, 273).

56. Related critiques recognize imperialist assumptions in Euro-American feminists’ views of non-Western women as needing to be saved. As Laura Briggs, Gladys McCormick, and J. T. Way note, global feminism has not been achieved, when we can still point to such phenomena as “human rights discourse construct[ing] a female object of imperial intervention, as in the U.S. project of ‘rescuing’ Afghan women from the Taliban (by bombing them)” (635). Even among feminists themselves, there have been “struggles, in academic scholarship and international conferences” over issues related to colonialism. Indeed, they note, in the 1980s, when “Robin Morgan proposed that there was a ‘global feminism,’” Pratibha Parmar and Valerie Amos “rejoined that its proper name was ‘imperial feminism’” (631). See “Transnationalism: A Category of Analysis,” *American Quarterly* 60, no. 3 (September 2008): 625–48.

57. In emphasizing the fluidity of Arnott’s perspective, we affirm Alison Blunt’s emphasis on the capacity of travel to change the traveler’s perspective through shifts in time and space. As Blunt notes, and as Arnott experienced, travel “involves the familiarization or domestication of the unfamiliar at the same time as the defamiliarization of the familiar or domestic.” In that sense, travel can be “liberating,” Blunt points out, by encouraging the traveler to question “ideas formulated at home.” See *Travel, Gender and Imperialism: Mary Kingsley and West Africa* (New York: Guilford Press, 1994), 17. Build-

ing upon Blunt's analysis, we should recognize how travel may undo or at least dislodge the perspective with which someone begins a journey, leading to shifts in discursive standpoint as well. At the same time, however, as our reading of Arnott's oeuvre demonstrates, even as one journeys, there may be cultural materials and practices from home that still exercise a powerful influence, leading to a push-pull around one's standpoint, potentially inhibiting the kind of "liberating" process Blunt identifies within travel. In Arnott's case, her affiliation with both the mission movement itself and with the women's literacy network for which she wrote would have exercised such a restraining influence.

58. Decades after Arnott's service in Africa, mission wives often continued to be relegated to a second-class status. In that vein, Muriel "Ki" Henderson has pointed out that her years of ABCFM work supporting her husband's ministry, in the same region where Arnott had labored, did not merit a missionary pension, leaving a burden on her children after Reverend Henderson died. Ann Pullen and Sarah Robbins, interview with Ki Henderson, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, August 31, 2005. On the importance of Harriet Newell as an "iconic figure" whose "story came to symbolize for many women evangelicals the central role" that they as individuals (rather than spouses) might be "called to play in world history," see Mary Kupiec Cayton, "Canonizing Harriet Newell: Women, the Evangelical Press, and the Foreign Mission Movement in New England, 1800-1840," in Reeves-Ellington, Sklar and Shemo, *Competing Kingdoms*, 69-70.

59. Leonard I. Sweet argues that, between the 1880s and the beginning of the twentieth century, just as women were claiming political power within the U.S. by finally achieving voting rights, many male religious leaders were feeling increasingly uncomfortable with women's enhanced leadership in church affairs. Sweet sees these decades as marking an "aggressive re-entry of men into American religious life" and associated efforts to render women "less visible and public," such as limiting their "right to speak in church." *The Minister's Wife*, 234-35. Deborah Gaitskell, writing on missionary women in southern Africa, has outlined conflicts between single women missionaries and their male superiors, sometimes grounded in the men's unwillingness to honor the expertise of the women. Gaitskell identifies the American widow-missionaries Katherine Lloyd and Mary Edwards as facing this challenge in Natal. "Rethinking Gender Roles: The Field Experience of Women Missionaries in South Africa," in Porter, *The Imperial Horizons of British Protestant Missions*, 145-46. Also, Rhonda Semple has observed in the context of British mission history, that although women's numbers in overseas mission work "grew exponentially" between 1865 and 1910, men "continued to dominate mission administration" (Semple, *Missionary Women*, 3).

60. Sweet has explained that, in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, “When women were permitted to go to mission stations, they reported directly to male supervisors who, in turn, reported back to the church organization at home” (Sweet, *The Minister’s Wife*, 12).

61. Stimpson eventually became such a thorn in the side of mission officials that there was discussion about withdrawing her from service. See, for example, Nellie J. Arnott to Miss [Kate] Lamson, Sept. 25, 1912. ABCFM Papers, 15.5: Southern Africa, Women’s Board, Vol. 2, Rhodesia, West Central Africa, Zulu, 1900–1914, Documents and Letters, A-Z, reel 215, Pitts Theological Library, Emory University. Along related lines, as Elizabeth Rohan’s dissertation has recorded, Janette Miller, whose African assignment overlapped with the end of Arnott’s Angolan service, eventually left the ABCFM, choosing instead to labor on her own in the region more as social worker than missionary. Taken together, Stimpson’s and Miller’s experiences suggest that however much the ABCFM sought single women missionaries in this era, relationships with the male hierarchy of the institution were challenging. It is noteworthy in this context that, after her marriage, anecdotal evidence suggests that Arnott proposed adopting at least one child from the region where she had worked in Africa, but her husband rejected the idea.

62. Sarah Stimpson to Miss [Kate] Lamson, Aug. 3, 1909, ABCFM Papers, 15.5: Southern Africa, Women’s Board, Vol. 2, Rhodesia, West Central Africa, Zulu, 1900–1914, Documents and Letters, A-Z, reel 215, Pitts Theological Library, Emory University. Characterizing the Umbundu peoples living in Gamba as trustworthy colleagues who would help ensure the women missionaries’ safety, Stimpson forcefully critiques the male authority figures—both on site and in the U.S.—who initially prevented her and Arnott from making the move. Although a formal vote held at the annual meeting in Kamundongo had rejected their proposal, Stimpson reports that she and Arnott decided to go ahead with their plans, and she contrasts the support they gained from Reverend Sanders for this endeavor with the machinations of other mission men then serving in the region.

63. Semple contrasts this wish to maintain single missionary women’s unmarried status with the perennial push for male missionaries to marry. Whereas men were encouraged to take a wife both as a helpmate and as a safeguard against sexual dangers in the field, single women were assumed to be immune to sexual temptation there and were urged to maintain their unmarried status so they could devote all their energies to the work. See *Missionary Women*, 54–55. Semple also cites “financial considerations” and “administrative difficulties caused by the loss of women’s services” if they did marry as motivations for the mission organizations to encourage single women missionaries to remain unmarried (201). See also Rosemary Seton, “Open Doors for Female Labourers,” 66.

64. Our choice of “Arnott” in this section is made with full awareness that her “Mrs. Darling” identity was surely shaping these scrapbooks, perhaps even more than “Arnott” did. Given this project’s focus on ways in which this missionary movement author publicly represented her foreign service, which occurred before her marriage, we continue in this closing section to use the name under which she worked while in Africa.

65. The seeming contradictions in Arnott’s stance, here and in her earlier texts, echo patterns which Susan M. Yohn has identified among missionary women who worked with Hispanos (Yohn’s term) in the American Southwest. For instance, Yohn notes that Mollie Clements, who taught in both New Mexico and Colorado for over thirty years beginning in 1891, at times brought together contradictory views within the same individual text. “She could, in one sentence, call Hispanos ‘sickly and immoral’ but then in another assert that they were ‘bright, uncomplaining, and naturally sympathetic’” (Yohn, *Contest of Faiths*, 145).

66. Scrapbook Volume 1, NJADP, 8. Such re-inscriptions of hierarchy echo discourse not only in the mission literature Arnott had written for periodicals but also in other women’s travel writing of her day. Ruth Y. Jenkins highlights how some British women authors constructed their own identities by generating discourse about Other women encountered during travel. In these portrayals, Jenkins argues, Victorian women travelers often aligned their gaze with an imperialist, race-based perspective more than with an affiliative stance based in gender. In that vein, Nellie Arnott’s scrapbooks sometimes draw stark distinctions that separate her own sense of self from the Africans with whom she worked. Ruth Y. Jenkins, “The Gaze of the Victorian Woman Traveler,” in Siegel, *Gender, Genre and Identity in Women’s Travel Writing*, 15–30. John MacKenzie comments that missionary societies commonly distributed postcards to encourage support of their work; such cards invariably highlighted “the heroism of missionary endeavour and the ‘permissiveness’ and ‘superstitions’ of the peoples of the missionary fields” (*Propaganda and Empire*, 23).

67. Comparable references are scattered throughout the scrapbooks, suggesting that Arnott made special efforts to document the successes of past students. For example, above the title of a pamphlet celebrating the work of the African pastor Enoque Gomes Sacamana and his wife Lucia (“An African Pastor and His Wife Go to Their New Field”), Arnott has added this pencil note: “Lucia and Nele were 2 of the nine girls in the Kamundongo Girls Boarding school started by Nellie in 1910. Eno[qu]e my helper at Olotu.” “The Ideal Scrapbook,” NJADP.

68. De Gruchy relates this “social tension” to a “confusion of identities” among missionaries themselves. John W. De Gruchy, “Who Did They Think They Were?: Some Reflections from a Theologian on Grand Narra-

tives and Identity in the History of Missions,” in Porter, *Imperial Horizons of British Protestant Missions*, 219.

69. Corinne Fowler, “The Problem of Narrative Authority,” *Gender, Genre, and Identity in Women’s Travel Writing*, ed. Kristi Siegel, 210. Fowler’s analysis has a parallel in work Roberta Wollons has done on ABCFM missionaries serving in Turkey. See “Travelling for God and Adventure: Women Missionaries in the Late 19th Century,” *Asian Journal of Social Science* 31, no. 1 (2003): 55–71. Wollons’s study determines that interactions between missionaries and indigenous people led to “mutual accommodation. Culturally hybridized mission schools came to reflect the power of local politics and local people to transform the foreign missionary agenda. In the process, ‘successful’ American missionaries became bilingual, deeply bicultural, and accommodated themselves to multiple views of religious practice and womanhood” (55–56). Two of Wollons’s subjects, Mary and her sister Charlotte Ely, were single women college graduates who helped found schools for girls, eventually leading to “unanticipated conversion from evangelists to educators, and from educators to political partisans” (56).

70. “Happy Girlhood” postcard, Scrapbook Volume 2, NJADP, 65. Arnot added the 1937 date in pencil.

71. Tucker, in *Drums in the Darkness*, comments on the uniforms of the Means students as symbols of acculturation, especially given that, in Umbundu society, men had traditionally made the clothing, with the needle being “part of the man’s equipment”: “Dresses made by the girls with their own hands for graduation at Means signify a new day for African womanhood” (147). The frequent images of converted African women laboring at their sewing machines in vocational education programs are also relevant.

72. While thorough treatment of the conflicting evaluations of mission-sponsored schools for girls and women is beyond the scope of our current work, we recommend these sources: Adrian Hastings, “Were Women a Special Case,” 104–125; Modupe Labode, “From Heathen Kraal to Christian Home: Anglican Missionary Education and African Christian Girls, 1850–1900,” 126–44; and Tabitha Kanogo, “Mission Impact on Women in Colonial Kenya,” 165–186—all in Bowie, Kirkwood, and Ardener, *Women and Missions*. See also Dana L. Robert, “The ‘Christian Home,’” in Robert, *Converting Colonialism*, especially 155–58; Heather Hughes, “‘A Lighthouse for African Womanhood’: Inanda Seminary, 1869–1945,” in Walker, *Women and Gender*, 197–220. Hughes’s discussion of Inanda Seminary is noteworthy in light of Arnot’s envisioning that site as a model for the school she wanted to found. On the somewhat contradictory legacy of Inanda, see Lynette Hlongwane, “The Role of Inanda Seminary in the Education of African Girls in South Africa: A Report of Graduates’ Views” (Ed.D diss., Columbia Univ., 1998).

73. Marnia Lazreg points out that, as we move African women's own stories to the forefront of cultural analysis, we must remember that there have been multiple factors promoting silence as well as speech. Lazreg insists that "Silence as the absence of public voice is not synonymous with absence of talk or action." Referencing Algerian women, in particular, she identifies "circumstantial," "structural" and "strategic" causes of silence, with the first relating to social circumstances discouraging public speech, the second referencing constraining forces such as the requirement to use a European colonial language in public discourse, and the third being a "voluntary act" linked to "self-preservation." See "Decolonizing Feminism" in Oyěwùmí, *African Gender Studies*, 77. Besides helping to explain the dearth of public texts available from Angolan women of Arnott's time period, Lazreg provides useful tools to help us read the silences—as well as the overt statements—in writing like Chipenda's and Chikueka's.

74. Though the perspectives on missionary work offered by Chipenda and Chikueka are quite different, both serve as examples of an important dimension of colonial studies that Frederick Cooper has called for—identifying and engaging with "the ongoing encounters through which colonial rule was tested, limited, and sometimes reshaped by those who sought niches within systems of colonial power as well as those who fought it." Frederick Cooper, *Colonialism in Question*, 235. In both Chipenda's and Chikueka's stories, we see distinctions between their views of the political imperialism of the Portuguese and the sustained cross-cultural engagement they experienced through mission-sponsored education. For both women (and in spite of the contrasting stances they adopt when depicting their schooling experiences), their interactions with missionaries helped provide what Cooper has called "handles by which the [colonial] system itself could be moved" (242).

75. Chipenda complains, "The Portuguese colonizers wanted us to become Portuguese to look like them, to take on the Portuguese life-style. For many urban Angolans especially, this meant living a double life: the Portuguese way and the African way" (9). Though she draws clear distinctions between the overt rule of the Portuguese and the social position of the missionaries, Chipenda also depicts the mission culture as exploitative. For instance, she complains that "Black pastors were paid very low salaries," criticizes missionaries' efforts to separate Christian from non-Christian Angolans, and suggests that black spiritual leaders like her brother could be easily recruited and cynically used by mission leaders (4). Chipenda recounts details of her brother Julio's work as an ordained "Methodist pastor," beginning at only seventeen years of age, when he was already "the perfect man to be planted among his people and convert them to Christianity" through labor both rewarding and challenging (4–5). Chipenda notes that when her brother and other family members were posted to an isolated station, they "were often sick, but the missionaries gave very little support of any kind"

initially (5). However, she declares, “a new post in Mazozo” was an improvement, and her parents clearly felt that living there with her brother offered some advantages for Eva, so that they arranged for her to spend part of each year aiding her brother’s ministry away from her home village, where, sadly, she began to feel like “a visitor.” Indeed, Chipenda explains, hers became a “dual life” with both “positive and negative sides,” since living part-time with her brother “meant the chance of growing in a better environment, an environment that would lead me to better opportunities and advantages for my future, such as a good education” (7–8). Significantly, Chipenda also offers plenty of criticism of Angolans’ own social practices that constrained children and women (13).

76. Muriel “Ki” Henderson and daughter Nancy Henderson-James, interview, August 31, 2005. Henderson’s descriptions of her work with the ABCFM as a mission spouse emphasized associations between gender differences and power differences among those in Angola during her day—almost a full generation later than Arnott.

77. Worth noting in this context is the fact—stressed by Ki Henderson’s daughter Nancy—that Eva Chipenda was of the Kimbundu and not the Umbundu group and that her education was provided not by ABCFM-run Congregational schools but by a different group of missionaries. Interview, August 31, 2005.

78. Maria Chela Chikueka, *The Trail of My Life Journey* (Toronto: Chela Book Group, 1999), 27–28. Chikueka also recounts how her parents, Protestant church members, “used to tell us children the way to be liberated from the oppression of colonialism was to go to school”—i.e., to the schools provided by missionaries like the ABCFM team. “The Portuguese did not like this and we often heard them say that the Protestant missions were spoiling their labourers” (7). See also Maria Chela Chikueka, *Angola Torchbearers* (Toronto: Chela Book Group, 1999). One of our most helpful sources on the experience of mission-sponsored education was our colleague from Kennesaw State, Dr. Sam Abaidoo, who described his own experiences in Ghana, including underscoring the degree to which most first-generation postcolonial leaders had been educated at some point in Christian schools. Currently a professor of sociology, Dr. Abaidoo described his own past work as including involvement with the Baptist Mission Board and in that regard emphasized that missions were not always “hand in glove with the colonial government,” but rather had “many facets to their work.” Although some retrospective rhetoric has cast the mission schools in Ghana in a highly negative light, suggesting they were linked closely to colonialism’s aims, Abaidoo stressed to us that these same schools were also well regarded for their rigorous curriculum and attention to positive discipline, which led many to credit the institutions with contributing to the “acceleration of the process

of decolonization.” As an indicator of a potentially productive view of the schools today, Dr. Abaidoo noted that a number of the mission schools are still operating in Ghana, though with such symbolically meaningful changes in the recent past as replacing the bells that formerly marked change of class time with drums and substituting elements in the curriculum that conveyed “symbolic representations” of British rule (e.g., songs and literature) with more locally significant content. Sam Abaidoo, interview with Ann Pullen and Sarah Robbins, June 25, 2008. The positive view of the role of missions is also reflected by current discussion within government circles to return some supervisory roles over ex-mission schools to mission organizations. In the context of Dr. Abaidoo’s comment on the shift from bells to drums, see John M. MacKenzie who relates the purposeful management of space in missionary settings to a comparable effort to regulate time. Among British-sponsored sites in Africa, he observes, “Missions were run with the discipline of the factories at home,” as days were “carefully broken up into blocks of time, demarcated by the ringing of bells.” See “Missionaries, Science, and the Environment in Nineteenth-Century Africa,” 122.