interest in examining local knowledge and displacing the privilege of the scholar, the logical next step in the reconstitution process will be to apply the insights from this volume to the analysis of primary linguistic and especially ethnographic data.

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RACHAEL GILMOUR, *Grammars of colonialism: Representing languages in colonial South Africa*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006. Pp. x, 231. Hb $80.00.

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In the 1990s, the historiography of the dialectics between language delineation, description, and prescription, on one hand, and colonial power and missionary action, on the other, became a field of study in its own right. As far as Africa is concerned, the ground for this "missionary and colonial linguistics" was pre-

pared in the 1970s, with sporadic publications by Welmers 1971, Feuchtwang 1973, Calvet 1974, Raison-Jourde 1977, and others. That ground was farmed further in the 1980s, for instance by Fabian 1983, 1986, Samarin 1984, 1989, Carmody 1988, and Harries 1988. But it is the 1990s that witnessed the first attempts to bracket the individual efforts, drawing the contours of a true subdiscipline within the larger field of the history of the language sciences. Indicative of this was a first colloquium on missionary linguistics held in Oslo in 1994 (Altman 1997), followed by others throughout that decade and later (e.g., Zwartjes, James & Ridruejo 2007). Syntheses by Renaud 1998, Mazrui & Mazrui 1998, and Errington 2001, 2008, among others, provided insights transcending the case-study level.

Gilmour's book substantially adds to the potential of this still growing field of study. It exposes the ties between colonial and missionary expansion in South Africa and the variation, across time and space, in the way languages and populations were represented, through wordlists, grammars, dictionaries, treatises, commentaries, and reading books. After an account of the earliest contacts around the Eastern Cape, as well as of the initial classifications and descriptions of Khoi languages and Xhosa (chaps. 1 and 2), chaps. 3 and 4 solidly perform the book's central task: interpreting the contrasts between the theories and practices of mid-19th-century missionary linguistics in the Xhosa region and those in Zulu-speaking Natal. Methodist missionaries' work with and on Xhosa was contextualized by colonial endeavors to suppress Xhosa resistance to frontier settlement. Accordingly, their representations of the populations and their speech were pervaded by an essentialization of the Xhosa language. It was represented as a standalone, speaker-independent "system," adequate for Christian proselytization in and by itself, regardless of its speakers' alleged "barbarity." In contrast, the take on Zulu language and culture was much more ethnolinguistic in its assumptions. Aspects of the culture of this population, successfully incorporated in the colonial project as early as the 1840s, had come across to colonizers and missionaries as more positively exploitable for evangelization and the organization of colonial labor. This led missionaries to treat Zulu language-and-culture as an indissoluble unity, and the language in particular as a code which, when cracked, provided access to the Zulu mind. In the fifth chapter, Gilmour continues her contrastive line of interpretation, demonstrating how Wilhelm Bleek turned away from the earlier missionaries' practical concerns with language learning, unification, standardization, and the like, to privilege grand typological theory, based on comparative work meeting the highest academic standards of the time. Blending parameters like race, language, subsistence economy, history, and religion, Bleek came up with types of humanity that he arranged in an evolutionary scheme, representing one single line of progress and applicable not only to the Bantu and Khoi-San languages-cultures-peoples of South Africa, but to universal, monogenetic language-and-culture.

Throughout all these discussions, Gilmour devotes full attention to the ways in which colonial control and missionary achievement were made possible by acts of linguistic appropriation, authority reversal, and related efforts to render dynamic demographic realities more fixed in time, more intelligible, better classifiable, and thus more readily employable. She has a consistent and adequate eye for the cleavages along which subaltern agency and resistance deflected, corrected, and steered colonial and missionary action. Furthermore, she convincingly incorporates the insight, inescapable since Fabian, that colonial representations of language were always modeled by, and in turn gave shape to, the tangible, physical conditions of the moments of communication between Europeans and Africans.

The book could have benefited from more cross-references to colonial and missionary language histories in other parts of Africa. The statement on p. 5 that "it will become clear that the arguments which were made and the theories which were formulated in this [South African] setting formed part of a network which connected colonies to one another" unfortunately remains more promise than fact, a few isolated references notwithstanding. Especially unfortunate is the absence of any connection with French-speaking Africa, and of insights from French literature on colonial and missionary linguistics. Many of Gilmour's discussions of South African contexts make readers familiar with that literature nod in recognition – too many, in fact, for these continent-wide patterns not to be spelled out more explicitly. The same hesitance to draw inspiration from colleagues writing in French must lie at the heart of the main weakness in the fifth chapter, the excessive number of echoes resonating from Chrétien's (1985) study of Bleek, unacknowledged by Gilmour. Chrétien's account of Bleek's views of language and race, of his language-cultural typological work, of his ideas on gender languages as opposed to noun-class languages, and others, runs remarkably parallel to Gilmour's. It is, admittedly, worthwhile in itself to notice that twelve years later, on the basis of an independent analysis, a different researcher comes to the same conclusions. What is more, Gilmour's research does offer some additional insights beyond Chrétien. A case in point is her critical section on the "Bleek revival" in South Africa, which refers to a recent, romantic tendency to portray Bleek as one of the first champions of South Africa's indigenous cultures.

Gilmour appropriately devotes attention to variance, opposition, instability, and uncertainty in the linguistic ideologies, theories, and practices of the historical figures and missionary societies she discusses, and she points to differences and changes in viewpoint across missionary societies as well as between them and ecclesiastic authorities. Yet there is one level at which we learn remarkably little about such variance: that of the missionary societies themselves. Did all Methodist missionaries in the Eastern Cape between 1830 and 1870 regard "the Xhosa as capable of transformation through Christianity and civilization, in such a way as to make them commensurable with the moral order of the colony" (82)?

Or would a study, for instance of personal correspondence between Methodists of that time, lay bare that at least some of them were more skeptical, let alone defeatist about such a potentiality? Were all American Board missionaries convinced that a common writing system for the southern African languages would help the development of one common language, that Zulu was the best candidate to lead the way, or that such a development was at all preferable (139)? Or would a detailed reading of minutes of their meetings be able to reveal that a minority within the Board's own ranks disagreed with these viewpoints? The alleged centripetal effects of authority and discipline within missionary societies, orders, congregations, or other agencies are more a matter of supposition and exaggeration than of historical fact. Narratives that, albeit implicitly, depict missionary societies as lacking internal counter-voices therefore tend to be less than credible, certainly when it comes to such notoriously contentious issues as language and culture.

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