

# We are decolonizing the pulpit: Discursive postures of Pentecostal-styled preachers venerating ancestors in South Africa

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| <p><i>Keywords:</i><br/>syncretism<br/>Pentecostalism<br/>ancestral<br/>veneration<br/>ideology<br/>decoloniality</p> | <p>South Africa has recently experienced a new religious vitality. Apparently, select Pentecostal-style preachers are embracing syncretic technologies and discourses. These blatantly counter-biblical narratives are heavily charged with aspirations to decolonize the pulpit and reclaim African spiritualities and reform mentalities. Forbidden practices of ancestor worship have emerged as important accommodations to express African methodologies of spirituality, cosmology, and thought. The play examines a preacher from South Africa who brazenly promotes this shunned accommodation. Prophet Magejageja re-articulates biblical textuality to traverse a decolonial horizon. The preacher knowingly commits doctrinal suicide by contradicting his Pentecostal theological heritage in order to promote something religiously innovative. The preacher encourages a return to the past, even though Pentecostalism enthusiastically calls for a break with the past because of evil and retrogressive associations with the past. Four YouTube sermons are linguistically examined using thematic critical discourse analysis with the aim of elucidating the preacher's decolonially charged pulpit language tropes. Key findings reveal entanglements of multiple ideological discourses: Post-Christianity, Afrocentrism, Counter-Pentecostalism, Missionary Critique, Black Consciousness, Pan-Africanism, Black physical liberation, anti-inferiority complexes, and counter-narratives to Western oppression in Africa. His syncretistic register undoubtedly underscores that the new media facilitate the possibility of undermining the insidious life of the coloniality of power.</p> |

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## Introduction

Significant religious shifts, continuities, and discontinuities have manifested in South Africa. Prophet Magejageja's online performativity animates these complex religious transformation, rearticulation and reticulations which are veraciously ensuing within the vibrantly youthful African continent. Magejageja is the pulpit stage name of the new prophetic Pentecostal-styled clergyman explored in this paper. Consummately, new prophetic Pentecostal churches stress divine healing and heightened spiritual-supernaturalist ambitions. Speaking in tongues, spiritual deliverance, material prosperity are also seminal stresses (Kgatle, 2017) within this non-linear and vibrant religious tradition. Animatedly, new prophetic Pentecostal churches seriously appropriate new media technologies with the staunch ambition to proselytize distant and apparent publics (Kgatle, 2018; Ibrahim, 2023). These churches and their dazzling prophetic leaders have undergone criticism by South African intellectuals, mainstream media, and social critics for forthrightly agitating the necessary conditions that facilitate for the commercialization of religion (Kgatle et.al, 2023).

In the case of this paper, the prophet under investigation, Magejageja, is a former member of the *Apostolic Faith Mission* of South Africa, a traditional/classical Pentecostal denominational sect. Magejageja, his well-known nickname, translates *plow*. Within his distinguished religious and Pentecostal circles, the nickname evolved to engender his powerful preaching exploits and aptitudes. However, Magejageja has recently embraced anti-Pentecostal practices, such as extra-biblically, ancestor veneration, and syncretistic apologetic preaching. His preaching style rejects the sacred and seminal tenets of his Pentecostal and charismatic

heritage and doctrinal loyalty. Scholars Kgatle and Ngubane (2023) describe his radical ideological changes as characteristic of *sangomas on the pulpit*.

According to Mlisa (2009), *sangomas*, are commonplace traditional diviners or healers who strongly embrace African spirituality and performativity associated with cultural traditions and practices like ancestor veneration. Ancestor veneration, sometimes dubbed ancestor worship, of which *pulpit sangomas* endorse, have been a topic of major scholarly attention and engagement (Mtukwa, 2014). *Pulpit sangomas* promulgate epistemological precepts that denounce ordinarily consistent Christian doctrine, Western sociologies, and theologies. Okon's (2014) critical concern about Africans being erased, marginalized, and invalidated in the world are discourses exacerbated through the poignant rhetoric of *pulpit sangomas*. Such syncretistic preachers, or pulpiteers contend that in order to reacquaint pulpits (discursive horizons for sermoning) with more African registers and sensibilities. They univocally argue that the pulpit, as a discursive-communicative platform, must undergo urgent decolonial reformation and bends. *Pulpit sangomas* are certainly aware that the Christian discursive projection strives to provide powerful remedies in moments of conflict, adversity, and destitution (Quadri, 2013).

Further, they contend that African spirituality offers more formidable supportive instruments in addressing social imbalances, such as witchcraft, bad spirits, and other debilitating issues Africans contend with daily. These clerics contend, in no uncertain terms, that where Christianity fails African spirituality compensates and affords existential remedies and viable solutions. The majority of scholars of the society identify this double-conscious squaring as unambiguously syncretic, however, other researchers consider it to be religious mutual

co-existence, wherein African spirituality coexists with the mutually exclusive Christian ideals and modes (Maimela, 1985). Combining two faiths that are mutually incompatible to create something new is widely acknowledged as syncretism (Kgatle, 2023). Syncretism, according to Mbiti et al. (2015), is ideological mixture and concoction. According to other studies, there are risks and hazards associated with this ideological mixture (Anderson 2003; Engelke 2010). In Afro-ecclesiastical historiographies, African Initiated Churches (AIC) have been the hallmarks of performing religiosities aimed at reconciling Christianity and African spiritualities, where the latter has encountered peripheral treatment. The sociological imperative of these African-ideologically tinted churches, during the brutal colonial period, was to protest and counter-narrate against the pervasive Western spiritual bottlenecks and to intentionally liberate African spirituality from the Western gaze (Ranger, 2007).

In similarly explicit ways, Magejageja embraces forthright indigenization and syncretism with the strategic ambition of decolonizing Christian discourse on the pulpit. His appearance on the popular Christian apologetics podcast *PowerHour* was a clear demonstration of his decolonially discursive posture. Magejageja's shift from a biblically loyal Christian to an ancestral venerator—a behavior that is discouraged in the Pentecostal-Christian tradition—is examined by the podcast presenter (Siba 760 TV, 2021). Ancestor veneration is typically seen as demonic in widespread Pentecostal Christian literature, which advocates abandoning traditional customs in favor of living lives guided by Christendom (Anderson 1993; Marshall, 1995). In the podcast interview, Magejageja claims that his prior complete Christian doctrinal commitment was proof of spiritual immaturity at the time (Siba 760 TV, 2021).

This lexical reciprocation demonstrates how Magejageja perceived his transition to ancestral veneration as a step toward spiritual advancement and enlightenment. Magejageja's newly assumed positionality is fundamentally anti-Christian and anti-Pentecostal in *praxis*.

According to Maxwell (1998) Pentecostal-Christian beliefs emphasize a relationship with the Holy Spirit, church-centeredness, rejection of African expressive religiosities, and rigorous Christian resocialization. According to Soothill (2007), resocialization is defined as being “*born-again*” and is typified by deliberate acts of holiness, purity, diligence, curiosity, and an envisioned sense of social mobility. According to the trailblazing religious anthropologist Birgit Meyer (1998), being born again entails both embracing a freshly revealed and redeemed future and rejecting the atavism and impurity of the past. In the African sense one's African religious habits must be indefinitely suspended. When someone is born again, rescued, or redeemed, the presumed atavism of ancestor veneration is commonly rejected.

During the *PowerHour* podcast, Magejageja claims that he is born again and redeemed with his ancestors. This is a complex positionality, wherein Magejageja aims to make sense of the incompatibility of being born again with ancestral devotion. I propose this nuanced syncretic viewpoint is works as a protest against what Magejageja considers to be Western theological episteme, which was first propagated by European missionaries entering Africa. A critical discourse analysis of four of Magejageja's sermons broadcast on *YouTube* is conducted in order to illustrate this curated discursive machination. What is significantly striking is how Magejageja advances his argument in his sermons by using phraseology/lexical choices that are ideologically charged in nature. Repositioning discarded African spiritualizing, cosmological, and

cognitive processes is the aim, according to Magejageja. The representational approach of Magejageja shows how modern media technologies are opening new avenues for a platform that aims to transcend colonialism and power dynamics. Decolonizing religious performance and the pulpit. The methods used to gather and analyze the data for this study will be covered in the next section.

## Method

The study built on the academic tradition of scholars who have used critical textual approaches to examine sermonic content (Cipriani, 2002; Khanyile, 2023). Four chosen *YouTube* videos illustrate Magejageja's teachings and the emphasized ideological commitments of religious discourse. Social media, including *YouTube*, has clearly become the go-to medium for preaching, inspirational messages, and self-branding in South Africa's emerging prophetic Pentecostal churches. Obtaining and archiving sermons from Magejageja's *YouTube* channel was the first methodological step. Sermons that addressed coloniality, socio-cultural discourses, and the aspirations for decolonial futures were specifically targeted by the selection criteria as the analysis wanted to dig deeper into those sermonic narratives.

The first sermon engaged was titled: *Afrika Oppression: Ingcidezi kubantu Abamnyama Ngenkolo*. This sermon resonated and was justified to be selected because it addresses issues of oppression, coloniality, and the bounding effect mainstream religion, animated through Christianity reproduces. He also makes syncretic appeals to counter the alleged hegemony of the Western-Christian epistemic edifice.

The second sermon, "*God and Culture: UNkulunkulu usebenza ngosiko lwase-Afrika*," examined the intricacies of God and culture, contending that the practice and acceptance of one's own culture, customs, and cosmologies

cannot be equated with the genuine essence of experiencing God. *UNkulunkulu wase Afrika: Sikhathela oNkulunkulu Bezizwe sicela owase-Afrika* is the title of the third sermon chosen for engagement. It is an ideological plea in the South African vernacular, IsiZulu, for people to embrace the "God of Africa" and conveys the spiritual exhaustion that comes with accepting foreign conceptions of God, which he claims the Christian project advances. Magejageja challenges Western epistemology's obsession with the written word in the fourth and final sermon, *UNkulunkulu wethu akabhaliwe phansi*. He contends that African religion is experienced through nature rather than being written down and should never be suppressed because of how it is expressed. This appears to reevaluate the importance of African historical archiving techniques that rely on orality rather than the written word. The sermons carried the thrust of Magejageja's ideology where he teaches on his decolonial convictions on Christianity.

Despite their seeming objectivity, texts—in this case, sermons—use strategies that are strongly influenced by ideology (Van Dijk 2001). CDA is the ability to dissect each text's explicit and implicit discursive and ideological investments through careful reading. CDA aims to expose the connection between ideology and power in texts through critique and analysis. The process of denaturalizing ideas and omissions from texts is referred to as *critical* (Van Leeuwen, 2006; Fairclough, 2013). CDA also seeks to expose strategies that legitimize relationships of social injustice. It also looks at how institutionally structured discourses, social relations, and communication shape power abuse. Magejageja's discursive communication presents notions that are decolonial, post-Christian, and aligned with African perspectives. The Bible has been intentionally weaponized to bolster theologies that promote ancestor worship



and devotion, but it is not limited to Magejageja. In contrast to Pentecostalism, which frequently claims that Pentecostal rites call for breaks with the past, often in an obvious and prominent manner, Magejageja pushes for a return to the past, the ancestors, and the rejected underworld. The next section will now outline discourses and ideology that advance from the teachings of Magejageja.

## Results and Discussion

### *Magejageja's sermonic critique of religion and politics in Africa*

*"Afrika Oppression: Ingcidezi Kubantu Base-Afrika Ngenkolo,"* which translates to religious oppression of Africans/Black people, was the title of the first sermon that was closely read. Magejageja's stance on the intersection of religion and politics in South Africa is made clear in this sermon. Magejageja outlines potential subjective dangers. Magejageja uses the phrase *"ingcindezi"* to highlight the oppressive and debilitating practices associated with colonial religion/Christianity (what he refers to in the vernacular as *inkolo*). The sociological theoretical stance of systemic oppression is in line with this word choice. According to Magejageja, religion is a tool of structural oppression. Systemic oppression (SO) is the term used to describe the ongoing subordination, humiliation, and dominance of some social groups because of their socially constructed inferior status in society because of the oppressive groups socially constructed superior status (Liedauer, 2021). The brutality of missionaries who assisted to spread the Christian message throughout Africa is heavily criticized by Magejageja. To Magejageja this brutality actualizes through longstanding psychological damage which manifests through the negation African forms of religious creativity.

Many African scholars have found validity in such conclusions and sensibilities (Okon, 2014). Foundationally, colonial encroachment negated and sidestepped love and was motivated through the logic ontological hate. Magejageja argues that Black people have been spiritually and existentially brutalized by the systemic oppression of religion (*inkolo*) and Christianity as colonialist technology *par excellence*. Magejageja lambastingly asserts in an open sermon that Black people honor white ancestors. Similar remarks against the Black church were made by political thinker Steve Biko (1978), who criticized its trapping and vexation of white love and adulation (Kobe, 2018). According to Biko (1978), these travesties happen because Black people are deemed inherently inferior since they are consistently rated at the bottom of the human spectrum. The colonial masters were essentially inspired by colonialism, which sought to establish white man as "the predestined master of this world," to guarantee that all aspects of Black people, including their culture and customs, were denigrated and labelled as evil or heathen (Baloyi, 2019).

Baldwin's (1979) concept of black self-hatred helps us understand how deeply ingrained self-hatred has become in the lives of Black people in Africa, even though it is viewed from an African American perspective. This self-negating attitude contributes to what scholars perceive as black people's subconsciously whimsical submission to whiteness. In this context, being white signifies a form of institutionalized oppression, authority, and control over the lives of Black people. The language issue is brought up by Magejageja as a stark example of black self-negation in his vehement sermon. Magejageja explains how white people, who are subjects of power, are continuously exonerated for their

South African native/vernacular linguistic incompetence and are often afforded the luxury of butchering African languages. Black people who have trouble speaking English, however, could be mocked and rejected if they butcher English. From the underbelly, this dialectic starkly reveals the systematic violence and oppression that are evident in the way colonialism interacts with African languages.

According to Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o (1998), an African language sociologist, this is the metaphysical empire that deliberately positions English as the superior language of intelligence, dignity and high intellection. Black people, at least in the South African context, receive intense disdain if they struggle to understand/speak English. Therefore, linguicide manifests, in which English is valued, and African languages are devalued and systemically mutilated. Magejageja claims that English is a symbolization of whiteness. Whiteness is perceived as correct, pure, and intelligent, according to Kobe (2018), while African/black people's values afford an atavistic characterization. There is a reason why black lives are drawn to white values; they provide affirmation and encouragement. Magejageja also makes passionate claims that Africans are the cradle of humankind (Magesa, 2014) and the black/African race is inextricably linked to nature and the natural. Africans practice animism and totemism (Mbiti, 1990), which maintains that nature is essentially spiritual, and that humans, animals, and plants are inseparable.

According to Magejageja, "*ukuxhumana nezidalwa ngomoya*"—his theory that Africans/Black people (*abantu abamnyama*) are made to connect with nature spiritually and via the air—is what makes them unique. He contends that Westernized religion has caused Africans to acquire twisted necks or "*ukusontwa*." According to Magejageja, black people's natural head position has

been violently wrenched aside. African identities and practices were therefore uprooted by the missionary presence, leaving them in a condition of abyss (Nkomazana and Setume, 2016) because it was necessary to eradicate *African* religious manifestations and lived realities because they were deemed of lesser value. *African* traditions and ways of life were placed in an extremely perilous circumstance because of this cultural genocide (Sepota, 1998). The deliberate retreat to nature is his answer and solution. According to Magejageja, Africans are "*inzalo yelanga*," or the "*sun's children*," and are thus inseparable from the natural world. Magejageja elaborates on the notion that political zombification has resulted in spiritual nudity in Africa.

According to Magejageja, coercive anti-African religious experiences are like enslavement; as Africans, according to many critical engagements, are viewed as innately religious (Van den Toren et al. 2020). Many religious forms—including Christianity—are easily influenced on them. According to Magejageja, this apparent spiritual deficiency appropriately sets the stage and tempo for Africans to become estranged from the source of their spirituality, nature, and connect to spiritual colonialism infused through anglicization and Christian ethics. In Magejageja's view, the Bible arrived to denigrate family ties, which are essential to African spirituality, for Africans follow natural rules rather than written laws as proclaimed and advanced in the Bible.

According to Mofokeng (1988), colonialism and the Christian mission formed an awkward partnership that allowed the Bible to reach Africa. Using the Bible, the evil elements that ruled African society—such as corruption and subpar economic systems—were eradicated. Second, attitudes, practices, and cultural values from Europe were imported and implemented. According to the missionaries' supporters, Africans

should demonstrate gratitude for the alleged “developmental” merits of coloniality. But several rebuttals, such as Desmond Tutu's, show that the missionaries' primary goal was Europeanization before Christianization, suggesting that the enculturation endeavor took precedence over the spiritual mandate in their eyes. Because of white ethnocentrism and the deliberate dehumanization of the same people missionaries sought to convert, the Christian invasion of Africa ultimately failed tragically.

### *Magejageja on God and culture in Africa*

The second sermon that is analyzed is “*God and Culture: UNkulunkulu usebenza ngesiko lase Afrika*”. According to the sermon, God values African culture, and African culture should be respected. Like Kgatla (2019), Magejageja is convicted that every civilization is rooted in its culture. Therefore, by reprimanding and demeaning non-Western (*African*) civilizations, imperialist governments solidify Western standards. Western names were categorized as “*Christian names*,” and Western cultures were seen to be interchangeable with Christianity. Through this intellectual prism, Christianity was brought to non-Euro-American nations. African communities were classified as atavistic, meaning they needed to be immediately cleansed, purified, and saved. Magejageja so discusses this ostentatiously condescending introduction of the missionary intervention in his sermon. Magejageja makes a controversial theological claim at the start of the talk.

Since God is Spirit, Magejageja holds that a human never dies because if a spirit dies, then God also dies. Magejageja continues in an anti-hell argumentative trajectory by implying that if we die in hell, our owner (*God*) would by implication also suffer. This does not make sense to him. Magejageja highlights “*amadlozi akhona futhi ayasebenza*”

when speaking in the local dialect; meaning that ancestors are present, and they work. Magejageja argues that ancestors should be seen as guides who perform the same duties as angels; rejecting the idea that they are worshipped or idolized. Magejageja claims that this viewpoint enables us to view our ancestors as spiritual guides who bring spiritual information from the metaphysical realm of existence to the material world. Magejageja asserted that he cannot approach God without first seeing “*oyihlonkulu*,” or forebears, since he believed that his predecessors were closer to God.

The rigorous sociological reading of African peoples' beliefs about the afterlife is based on this conceptualization. According to Magejageja, remembering ancestors is acceptable since God honors those who proudly claim to be African. Magejageja further highlights the idea that God does not exist exclusively in literature and books as espoused by the Western view of religion. A recurring issue in his discourse is his belief that religious rituals, texts, or laws cannot restrict, institutionalize, or provincialize God within the realm of inaccessibility. Magejageja quaintly addresses human flourishing in this sermon, highlighting the fact that prosperity can only be achieved via the preservation of our African customs, traditions, and cultures. To access rain, fertility, and wealth, Magejageja impels the congregation to reevaluate African spiritual practices. Recalibrating absconded ancestral practices is the liberating universal key to the continent's troubles, Magejageja fervently contends. He uses *Matthew 17:1–8* to support his claim that Africans should be treated with the same respect that Jesus's ancestors, Moses, and Elijah are afforded.

Magejageja contends that an ancestor visitation rather than an “*angelic*” one took place on the *Mount of Configuration*. Because Pentecostals consider ancestral communion to be demonic, he also questions if Jesus had

a demonic contact. Magejageja bemoans cultural insensitivity and the tendency to have a timid regard for other cultures. Magejageja is adamant that he is modifying the Bible hermeneutically to make it more compatible with and relevant to African religious customs. Magejageja affirms that he now supports *sangomas* and *izinyanga* and expresses sorrow for his past rejection of these practices, attributing it to ignorance. Since everyone in his church—pastors, Christians, and ritualists—participates in treating, curing, and restoring, Magejageja claims that *sangomas* and *izinyanga* are officially supported. Magejageja, a personal specific note asserts that African marriages are doomed to fail due to African traditional marital customs absconded. Magejageja politicizes the issue of clan names and surnames to further encourage ancestor reverence, asserting that an African must reject the surname if they reject the ancestors.

Importantly, any name from the original countries of the missionaries was considered Christian. Most African names were considered paganistic, if not all of them. Consequently, the use of one's original African name was prohibited for those seeking baptism (Tennent, 2010). According to Kimeria (2017), a person had to change their name before getting baptized because African names could not be used as baptismal names in any way. Magejageja's main argument is that God cannot be contained by culture; rather, he must be allowed to express himself in a variety of ways that are consistent with the numerous civilizations that he has created. Additionally, the overarching discursive topic is that God is culturally relative and meets everyone's needs according to their culture.

### ***Magejageja on rejecting the foreign God and reintroducing the African God***

"*Sikhathele oNkulunkulu bezizwe sicela owase Afrika*" was the title of the third sermon that was analyzed. The sermon is delivered as a protracted, melancholy lamentation. Magejageja bemoans the recognition of the "God of Africa," which is a call for the respect, inclusion, and portrayal of African religious expressions. The word "*sikhathele*" furthers the idea that, in his opinion, Africans are weary of the European/colonial representation of God and wish to see him in their own likeness. Church-goers who reject their forefathers and expose themselves to generational curses are confronted by Magejageja. Magejageja says this is counter-productive and futile.

According to his rewriting of the Bible (*Lamentations* 5:7), benefits may undoubtedly be passed on if curses can. On the other hand, Magejageja disagrees with the negative, conventional reading of this biblical text, asserting that human pleasure, progress, and beneficial things may undoubtedly be carried on from generation to generation. According to Magejageja, scripture should be understood favorably rather than unfavorably, always from the vantage point of human development. To him, a healthy reading of the Bible promotes growth, achievement, and well-being, human flourishing. The main theme of Magejageja's communication, in this sermon is prosperity, which can be attributed in large part to the ancestors. He assures his devoted followers that all that has been held back in their lives would soon be released.

Magejageja goes on to say that since the land was taken from our ancestors, we should return the land to them instead of depending on politicians to liberate us from



our condition of landlessness. He uses the phrase "*Asikwazi Ukubaziba*," which signifies that we cannot disregard them. Magejageja is certain that we give *Shaka Zulu* and all of our valiant and accomplished forebears top priority. Referring to the valiant Zulu Kings of the past, Magejageja angrily declares that he longs for the God of *Jama, Dingane*, and *Senzangakhona* and does not seek the God of Israel. Africans long for a non-canonical God who is encountered via nature rather than formalized texts, according to Magejageja. Magejageja goes on to critique the bible, saying that it penetrated Robben Island despite newspapers being prohibited during Apartheid and asking whether it was ever a liberating text since no controls/ or prohibitions were put in place. According to Magejageja, the colonial ruler turned the Bible into a weapon and gave it to the colonized. He begins to doubt its legitimacy and capacity to free others as a result of that insight. The main takeaway from the sermon is that Africans need to get back to their origins since they have forgotten their origins.

### ***Our God is unwritten***

"*UNkulunkulu wethu akabhaliwe phansi*" was the title of the last sermon under critical examination. The sermon's ideological focus was to unequivocally declare that God cannot be documented, written down, or recorded. This focus seems to be a recurring theme in Magejageja's sermonic language. According to Magejageja's introductory remark for his sermonic presentation, the Bible covers four main topics: *Jews, Gentiles*, and the *Church*. According to Magejageja, not everything of the Bible was put together with Black people in mind. Magejageja presents a compelling argument for the resuscitation of context-specific theologies, which enable Africans to understand the Bible considering their unique experiences, phenomenology's, and

situations. Magejageja openly contends that the Bible portrays Africans as slaves, primitive, and atavistic, challenging the manner this is done. Magejageja uses the biblical account of the Ethiopian Eunuch who assisted Jesus in carrying his cross before to crucifixion to support his assertion. He uses the biblical incident to support the ideological idea that people of African descent are inherently enslaved since the African, who is Ethiopian, is given laborious tasks.

According to Magejageja, the reason our religion is weak is because we have embraced ideas that were not meant for us. Magejageja promotes the notion that theology degrades and dehumanizes people. According to Magejageja, everything that separates a person from their family is dishonest. According to Magejageja, a person's father is their primary source of divinity, and following the rules set down by our ancestors is the only way for us to coexist harmoniously with God. According to Magejageja, when someone is rescued, they expel the angel of prosperity, gift, or prospering. Witches are pursuing this angel, according to Magejageja, since it bestows spiritual favors on the family.

People's potential for riches and success has been taken in several ways, according to Magejageja. According to African cosmology, people who are born with the amniotic sac still attached will lead lives filled with great wealth, luxury, and good fortune. Magejageja asks, "Why are you using the surname if you don't want the ancestors"? Magejageja bemoans the fact that when you pronounce your surname, you are connecting with your ancestor if you reject your forefathers and abandon the surname. Magejageja goes on to say that using our surnames helps us maintain a sense of identity as Africans. According to Magejageja, our surnames are far more important than our names as Africans. He asserts that rather than merely

coming through official channels, spiritual beings are invited and aroused. He notes that there are several theologies prevalent across the world besides African theology. He asserts that the reason for this is the deep spirituality of Africans. Nothing is written about us since we are spiritual creatures. Our African God is unpredictable; his actions vary according to the circumstance.

Magejageja suggests that everything we own is spiritually stored (accessible); all one needs to do is ask the spirit to guide them. This sermon aims to demonstrate that the God of Africa is spiritually discernible rather than written down, and that people should not be deceived by the Bible into thinking that God is any different from what he is because God has always existed throughout Africa. The absence of historical documents, like books, has caused many Europeans to mistakenly believe that Africa and its people have no religious past, he is echoing the ideas presented in the Magejageja sermon. Africans practiced their own religion and form of worship long before European explorers ever set foot on the continent, and it is crucial to educate people who continue to hold the view that Africans are irreligious.

## Conclusion

An intriguing case study of significant religious intersectionality is offered by Magejageja. His blending of Christianity with African spirituality, locates Magejageja as doctrinally regressive in Pentecostal-Christian circles. His ideological vision, desire, and motivation all seem to be directed toward realizing a decolonial potentiality and outlook. Through a careful analysis of his four *YouTube* sermons, the paper revealed his intellectual framework and deliberate syncretistic goal. From the sermon(s) appraised, Magejageja unmistakably uses the Bible to advance decolonial narratives.

In a major theological break from the Christian mainstream ideological thrust, his representational repertoire attempts to decolonize and rescript the pulpit discourses by incorporating traditions of ancestral worship and nontraditional, purportedly Afrocentric readings of biblical texts.

Africans have always been relatively willing to reconcile African Christianity with African spirituality when it is expedient, according to Magejageja's sermon-discursive online curations (Baëta, 1968). One of the main concerns of African belief systems seems to be existential security. The possibilities of the hereafter and death are at the centre of Africans' existential concerns. Magejageja perpetuates that ancestors exist and assist living descendants.

## Declaration of Ownership

This article is my original work.

## Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest to declare in this article.

## Ethical Clearance

This study was approved by the institution.

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