

A STUDY OF SPIRIT ACTIVITIES AND SOME RELATED  
FORMS OF MAGIC TODAY IN IVETI, MBOONI,  
TULIMANI AND KISAU LOCATIONS OF UKAMBANI. "

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LOCATIONS OF UKAMBANI.

THE ABSTRACT

As indicated in its title this is a study of spirit activities in four selected locations of Ukambani. The choice of the topic was particularly prompted by several spirit activities which took place in 1983. Some of these spirit activities caused national concern, notably the ones at the home of Mr. P.N.K<sup>1</sup>, which continued for more than a year eventually forcing him to leave his permanent home and farm, to go to a very poor piece of land elsewhere.

According to Mr. B.M.K<sup>2</sup>, a family member, the attack started on 24th December 1982 at 7.30 p.m and continued throughout 1983 and into the middle of 1984, when they eventually moved away after unsuccessfully trying every method to stop the attacks.

Among the leading personalities who visited Mr. P.N.K's home during that time were the then Machakos D.C., some D.Os, the area member of Parliament, Councillors, the K.A.N.U National Organising Secretary, Religious and Civic leaders.

These happenings are related and discussed in chapter four of this study and also in case study three in the appendix.

Itembukani Secondary School, also in Ukambani, had to be closed for a while due to spirits' attacks. Discussion of this incident appears in chapter four and also in case study one in the appendix.

Other spirit activities continued to be reported in other parts of the country. For example Mr. J.M.N's<sup>3</sup> daughters-in-law had to run away from their homes in Mbooni Location to Nairobi where their husbands worked because they were being attacked by some invisible personalities, only to be followed there by the attackers. These attacks cause unhappiness, fear and panic among many people. A fuller list of the recent spirit activities in the country has been given in chapter one.

There seems to be a general belief as expressed by both J.S. Mbiti and G.Lindblom that appearance of, and belief in spirits were expected to cease after the coming of Christianity and Western Civilization (See discussion in Chapter one). Perhaps belief in and fear of Aimu may have been on the decline when these two authors wrote.

But as the survey given in chapter one shows, there seems to be a resurgence of spirit activities in Kenya today. Students' studies have been interrupted, families have spent sleepless nights and others have lost property worth thousands of shillings due to spirit attacks. Spirit attacks is a current problem in Kenya which does not seem to be responding to the traditional method of appeasing the spirits through sacrifices and staging of Kilumi dances. This study therefore set out to investigate spirit activities and the nature of spirits believed in, as well as related beliefs and practices, particularly magic, witchcraft and oath.

This research employed two methods to analyse the collected data. One of them was a descriptive method which involved categorization of the collected data according to the views expressed, before reducing them into general statements. The general statements were then interpreted and conclusions made.

The other method (quantitative analysis) involved establishing of correlations between belief in spirits and other variables. The selected variables for this study with which belief in spirits was compared were age, education and profession of the respondents.

It was found that there was a relationship (correlation) between the respondents' belief in spirits and their age, education and profession. What that relationship meant was then interpreted and conclusions made.

The two methods showed that the Akamba, both young and old, educated and uneducated, believe in and fear spirits. All this has been discussed in the chapter on methodology i.e chapter three.

Two types of spirits emerged from this study. They are Aimu and Majini. Aimu are the ordinary spirits the Akamba have always known, and the bulk of them are said to be ancestral spirits. There may be some other spirits that are not ancestral, but not many informants knew about this category.

This study has not been able to establish concretely what Majini, the second group of spirits really are. But from the responses given by the respondents, it was possible to construct a working definition. Accordingly, Majini may be defined as oriental spirits (probably of Arabian or Persian origin), which found their way to the Coastal region of East Africa and which have continued to penetrate into the interior parts of the East African countries. It was this kind of spirits which was attacking people in the selected areas of study.



One of the main findings of this study was that education, age, Christianity and profession do not influence belief in spirits and in spirit activities in the areas studied. The young and the old, the educated and the uneducated, Christians as well as non-Christians shared beliefs in spirits and in spirit activities. The same was found to be true in relation to beliefs in witchcraft, magic, curses and oath.

The study recognizes that there is a lot more that needs to be done in the area of spirits and spirit activities, and some suggestions have been made in the conclusion on some of the directions such further investigations might take.

(xiv)

NOTES

1. Mr. P.N.K. See case study - Three
2. Mr. B.N.K. - interview
3. Mr. J.M.N. See case study - Two

DEFINITION OF TERMS1. MAGIC

Magic may be defined as "the attempt to control human actions, natural events and in some instances, the will of gods by the use of certain incantations, rites or amulets".<sup>1</sup>

The purpose of using magic is to bring about the desired result, whether good (like helping a person to get promotion in his place of work) or bad (like killing one's enemy). Understood this way, magic is then the attempt to achieve security in and mastery over empirical reality by means other than those provided by this reality.

The term 'magic' does not in itself connote goodness or badness. It is a neutral term. Nevertheless, magic may be divided into benevolent and malevolent magic according to the purpose for which it is used. Thus, good or benevolent magic is used to effect something useful or beneficial, for instance curing a disease or removing any type of misfortune. On the other hand, evil or malevolent magic is used to harm the victim. We have illustrations of both types of magic in this study.

## 2. WITCHCRAFT

Witchcraft is the power associated with witches and it seems to be inherited. The main category of witches are said to belong to secret associations of witches called covens and sabbaths (not the Jewish Sabbath). Each of these associations are well-organised and with a recognized leader.

The witches hold their meetings (covens and sabbaths) at night in some obscure places. They are said to fly in the air to attend the night meetings. At other times they may ride upon horses, goats, broomsticks, on dogs or at other times on human beings. And whenever they leave their houses they are said to disappear through the chimneys. Witches are also commonly associated with animal familiars. The traditional picture of the witch (European) shows her with a black cat.<sup>2</sup>

From the foregoing description of witches it appears as though there are no witches in Ukambani, of this particular category. The Kikamba term translated witchcraft is Uoi. But this term Uoi though translated witchcraft, actually refers to evil magic or sorcery. There are however milder types of witchcraft (which can qualify to be called witchcraft according to the European usage of the term) known as evil tongue, kyeni and evil eye, but none of them is referred to as Uoi.

Other terms are used to describe them. Such persons have some unusual power in their tongues and eyes. Accordingly, a person who is praised by a person with an evil tongue may become sick or get into some other types of problems. Similarly, a look from a person with an evil eye may cause sickness on the child or person looked at.

Parrinder maintains that there is a clear distinction between witches and magicians. He writes:

There are the evil magicians or sorcerers, whose work is to harm enemies by magical or material means. They may use spiritual or magical devices, spells or charms or imitative methods such as sticking thorns in dolls. Or they may use real poisons which are dropped into the cooking pot. These magicians do not concern us here, for they are not witches.<sup>3</sup>

A witch as Parrinder goes on to point out, performs no rite, utters no spell, and possesses no medicine. An act of witchcraft is a psychic act.<sup>4</sup>

From the researcher's studies and knowledge as a Mkamba, it is quite clear that the Akamba do not have the organised type of witches known to the Europeans. What they have, though it has come to be translated witchcraft is actually evil magic and sorcery, (Uoi).

3. SPIRIT

According to 'The Oxford English Dictionary',<sup>5</sup> the earliest English uses of the word are mainly derived from passages in the Vulgate in which spiritus is employed to render the Greek term Neuma and the Hebrew term Ruah.

The dictionary goes on to give the following three meanings:

- (a) The animating or vital principle in man (and animals); that which gives life to the physical organism, in contrast to its purely material elements; the breath of life.
- (b) The soul of a person, as commended to God or passing out of the body, in the moment of death. The disembodied soul of a (deceased) person regarded as a separate entity - the soul.
- (c) A Supernatural, incorporeal, rational being or personality, usually regarded as imperceptible at ordinary times to human senses but capable of becoming visible at pleasure, and frequently conceived as troublesome, terrifying or hostile to mankind.

Having given the English Dictionary meaning of spirit, let us now see how the Akamba explain or define the term spirit.

The Kikamba term for 'spirit' is Aimu (singular Iimu). The plural term is more common. Unlike the dictionary meaning given above, the vital principle in man (and animals) according to Akamba psychology is not Iimu (plural Aimu) but Veva (breath of life). But all the respondents agree that spirits are incorporeal beings, imperceptible to human senses but capable of making themselves visible at will.

According to the Akamba Aimu may be divided into two main groups: those which were created as spirits, Aimu, and those which were once humans. The latter group has been further sub-divided by Professor Mbiti<sup>6</sup> into 'the Living dead'<sup>7</sup>, that is, spirits of people who had recently died, and who can be easily remembered and recognized by their living relatives, and the spirits of the long dead, which he calls spirits proper to differentiate them from the spirits of the relatives who had died recently. According to him, after the fifth generation a 'Living dead' becomes 'completely dead', loses his personality and is referred to as an 'It' because none of the living can remember him/her. But before that time he is not really dead because he still lives in the memories of his living relatives and appears to them whenever he likes.

In this study a case has been given of a man named Wangutu who had died long time ago, who therefore was unknown to the living, and he had to introduce himself (see chapter four).

Another type of spirits which surfaced during this study is that of the Majini. Majini have been defined elsewhere in the body of the thesis as 'Oriental Spirits, probably of Arabian or Persian origin, which found their way to the East Coast of Africa sometimes in the past, and which have from that time onwards continued to penetrate into the interior parts of East African Countries, particularly Kenya'. Interestingly, the spirits that were disturbing people at the selected areas of study were identified (during this research) as Majini. Discussion on this type of spirits, including their characteristics is found in chapters four and five of this thesis.



NOTES

1. Encyclopedic Dictionary of Religion, 1979.
2. Parrinder, G: OP. Cit PP. 37 - 46.
3. Parrinder, OP. Cit. P. 15
4. Parrinder OP. Cit. P. 14
5. The Oxford English Dictionary, 1933/70
6. J.S. Mbiti : African Philosophy and Religious,  
1969.
7. This is Mbiti's terminology, which has by no  
means been accepted by all scholars.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

1.

#### WHAT LED TO THE STUDY

When this researcher started teaching, he was posted to a school where he was required to teach African Traditional Religion (i.e Paper 228/2D). At first some difficulties were experienced because he had not studied that unit at his Overseas Colleges. So, when he later got admission to do a Master's Course, he decided to major in Religious anthropology, to make up for that deficiency.

While the researcher was still thinking on what topic to write/research on, several spirit activities were reported in the local press and others were even announced over the radio. These activities, some of which almost became, national concerns<sup>1</sup>, drew the researcher's attention and influenced his decision to research on 'the belief in spirits and in related forms of magic among the Akamba'.

Although spirit activities were also reported elsewhere in the country, the choice of Ukambani as the area of study was, firstly, because the researcher, who is a Mukamba and speaks Kikamba, understands the Akamba culture and customs better than any other culture.

Secondly, one of the longest reported spirit activities (in the recent past) (i.e from December 1982 to mid-1984)<sup>2</sup> took place in Ukambani.

Finally, Itembukani Secondary School, also in Ukambani, where the researcher's brother was a student in 1983, had to be closed for a while due to spirits attacks.<sup>3</sup>

## 2. RATIONALE AND JUSTIFICATION FOR THE STUDY.

Professor J.S. Mbiti, quoting from Lindblom's book, The Akamba, wrote:

It is said that since the arrival of the Europeans, the Aimu do not appear as often as they used to. Many of the places previously set aside for Aimu, have now been occupied by people - - -.<sup>4</sup>

According to both Mbiti and Lindblom, appearance of, and belief in, spirits were expected to cease after the coming of Christianity and western civilization. Maybe between 1911 and 1971 when these two authors wrote belief in and fear of Aimu were on the decline, but not so in the 1980's, as the survey given below shows. There seems to be a resurgence of spirit activities in Kenya nowadays, with a considerable impact on people's belief and thinking.

Recently it was even discussed in parliament.<sup>5</sup> The following are some of the recent reported spirit activities in Kenya.

- (i) Mr. David Kimacho, of 'Kenya Time', writing on 4/10/85, said that the spirits that were attacking a recently married couple at Uthiru, Nairobi, were doing so in 1982.<sup>6</sup>

(ii) On 29/1/83, the 'Nairobi Times', published a story headed "Machakos family terrified by unknown 'falling stones'".<sup>7</sup> On the same day, the 'Daily Nation' report on the same issue was entitled "stone's mystery, kajiwe sought." The report said that the Provincial Administration had refused to grant a permit for Kajiwe to come to exorcise the ghosts, lest they be seen as propagating witchcraft. It also said that Mr. P.N.K.'s homestead had been attracting a lot of people including senior government officials, politicians and wananchi.<sup>8</sup>

On 14/2/83 the "Nation" quoted Mr. P.N.K. as telling reporters and outsiders to keep off his home, because he did not want it to be turned into a show piece. He also advised his family members to shun strangers and not to talk to reporters.<sup>9</sup>

On 10/6/84 Chege Mbitiru of the 'Daily Nation', wrote an article on the 'falling stones incident at Mr. P.N.K.'s place' which had continued for more than a year, and mentioned some of the big people who came there to witness for themselves including the area D.C., the Local M.P., Councillors and church leaders.<sup>10</sup>

- (iii) On 21/3/83 the "Daily Nation" published another story of a spirit attack at a soldier's home in Iuani village, Kalama location, Machakos.
- (iv) On 14/4/83 the "Daily Nation" reported how a home in Mbololo location, Taiba-Taveta district, was attacked in 'a new stones mystery'.<sup>12</sup>
- (v) On 28/4/83 the "Daily Nation" wrote on how 'the flying stones had now hit a Nyeri home'. That home was in Kaheti village, Mukurueini location, Nyeri.<sup>13</sup>
- (vi) On 31/5/83 the "Nation" published that Itembukani Secondary School, in Tulimani location, Machakos, had been closed down because the students were being attacked by ghosts.<sup>14</sup>
- On 5/6/83 the "Sunday Standard" reported that 'the sexy ghosts are also good at physics, play soccer and are not afraid of light'.<sup>15</sup>
- And on 26/6/83, the "Sunday Nation," quoted one of the victims of the ghost attacks as saying, 'ghosts taught me physics'.<sup>16</sup>
- (vii) On 13/6/83, Mr. Richard Arap Kerror, of the "Kenya Times," reported that mysterious stones had hit a Nairobi house at Muthurwa estate.<sup>17</sup>

- (viii) On 3/7/83 the "Sunday Nation" reported that mysterious forces were terrorising two households in Muranga district. According to a police crime report, the forces slapped a boy twice, lifted saucers and threw them out and hauled stones at women.<sup>18</sup>
- (ix) On 23/2/84 the "Kenya Times" reported that stones, water, maize cobs and mangoes were flying at another home in Kalama location, Machakos. (This was a different home from the one mentioned in (iii) above).<sup>19</sup>
- (x) On 5/6/84 the "Standard" published that stones were hitting a Councillor's home in Kakamega.<sup>20</sup>
- (xi) On 17/1/85, the "Daily Nation" reported that stones were hitting the home of Mr. J.M.N., of Uthiuni village, Mbooni location, Machakos. The report also mentioned that the area D.O., the chief, assistant chief and the police officer in charge of Mbooni Division, visited the home.<sup>21</sup>
- (xii) On 4/9/85, the "Daily Nation" reported that Mr. Tsuma Washe, popularly known as Kajiwe, had exorcised ghosts from Kyangunga Primary School, in Mulango location, Kitui.<sup>22</sup>

(xiii). On 6/10/85, the "Sunday Standard," reported that stones were falling at a home of a widow in Laikipia district. Mr. Kiptoo Kipsangok, "Standard" reporter, who visited the home in the company of Mr. B.K., the local sub-chief, saw the stones falling. He also saw part of a house wall come off on its own and fall onto a twelve-year old girl, Njeri, who he said was the main target of the attacks.<sup>23</sup>

(xiv) On 1/5/86 the "Kenya Times" reported that a Kenyan Railway employee and his family of seven had not slept for a week due to attacks by ghosts at their home in Goliba settlement scheme, Thika. Reportedly, stones were falling, cooking utensils and cupboards were moving from place to place spilling their contents.<sup>24</sup>

On 7/5/86 the "Kenya Times" reported that Mr. X had shifted his family to a nearby trading centre, because the ghosts had intensified their attacks. But they were attacked at their new residence as well.

K.N.A. visited his new home and witnessed empty bottles dropping from nowhere and breaking into pieces. A plastic water bucket also flew from inside the house and started pouring water outside the house.<sup>25</sup>

(xv) On 10/7/86 the "Standard" published the story of yet another twelve year old girl, also named Njeri (not the one mentioned in xiii above), who was also the main target of ghost attacks.

According to the report, her father, Mr. J.M.K. from Ndumberi location, Kiambu district, appealed to anyone who was able to exorcise the ghosts to get in touch with him before it was too late.

He complained that his family had been suffering from those attacks for three months, and that his daughter named Njeri was the main target of the attacks. He transferred her to her grandmother's place at Riabai, in Kiambu Municipality, but the ghost attackers followed her there. By the time he was talking to the press, his daughter was at Kiambu district hospital receiving treatment.<sup>26</sup> And because of these spirit activities, it was felt that the phenomenon needed to be studied.

### 3. Objectives

This study therefore set out with the following objectives.

- (a) To determine the extent of belief in spirit activities and in some related forms of magic in the selected areas of study.
- (b) To investigate the forms these beliefs take, and hence the nature of spirits believed in.



- (c) To investigate what other basic traditional beliefs may be behind the beliefs in and the fear of spirit activities and in selected related forms of magic.
- (d) And to examine, how belief in spirits in the present Kamba society is affected by such factors as education, Christianity and involvement in modern (westernized) style of life.

To achieve the foregoing objectives the following hypotheses were to be tested.

- (a) The belief in spirits (Aimu/Majini) is not affected by age.
- (b) The belief in spirits (Aimu/Majini) is not affected by the number of years of formal schooling.
- (c) The belief in spirits (Aimu/Majini) is not affected by one's occupation.

#### 4. Background on the Akamba

##### (a) The People

The people are Akamba, one of them is a Mukamba, their land is Ukambani and their language is Kikamba. They live mainly in the Eastern and South-Central part of Kenya.<sup>27</sup> In 1979 their population was about 1.73 million (out of 15.3 million people of Kenya).<sup>28</sup>

There are large settlements of Akamba in other parts of Kenya, notably around Mombasa on the Coast, in addition to the Akamba who live in other towns and cities outside Ukambani.<sup>29</sup>

Kikamba is spoken throughout Ukambani with local variations. It is closely allied to Swahili and belongs to the Bantu family of African languages. It was first reduced to writing by Dr. Krapf in 1850.<sup>30</sup>

b) Population of the Akamba in Kenya

Apart from the Akamba living in the two districts of Ukambani, Machakos and Kitui, there are others who have either migrated to other districts and live there permanently or live temporarily in other places because they either own property/do businesses there or are just there on official duties.

According to K. Ndeti, one of the earliest theories on Akamba origin was advanced by Krapf, who stated that their ancient home was somewhere in the Giriama country, near the Coast.<sup>31</sup> Later they moved to a colony in the neighbourhood of Kilimanjaro and settled there until the Masai drove them to their present location. In this new environment they could not lead a strictly nomadic life and therefore they became cultivators.

Another theory on the origin of the Akamba was expressed by J.W. Gregory.<sup>32</sup> He held that the Akamba came from the South, since in Eastern Tanzania there is a Province called Ukamba.

In addition to the foregoing theories of origin, the Akamba have also a myth which attempts to explain where they believe to have come from. It goes as follows:

In the beginning Mulungu (creator) created the spirits. He then created a man and his wife. Those two people were tossed by Mulungu from heaven until they landed on a stone on Nzai<sup>35</sup> mound. Those people were then called clan of Mulata Ivia.

After they landed on Nzai, Mulungu sent them many cows, goats and sheep. These two were the first people, male and female. They were very happy, filled with the blessings of Mulungu and he loved them very much.

After a short while, Mulungu sent them plenty of rain. After the rains, there were many Mithumbi (ant-hills). Those ant-hills had no ants, but just the holes. Instead of ants, two people emerged from them, a man and his wife.

These people who were tossed from heaven had sons, and the people who came from the ant-hills had daughters. Since the people from heaven had many cows, their sons paid bridewealth for the daughters of the ant-hill couple. Their children got married and all had children, many of them. Their wealth increased and more rains came.

They sacrificed to Mulungu at each harvest season, until one year they forgot to sacrifice. Mulungu got very angry, and the heavens were closed. A famine followed. The people began to wander from Nzaui going to other places. Some of them remained in Nzaui, and these are the Akamba people who retained kikamba as their language.

These are the people called Mbai ya Aimu (the clan of the spirits) or Mbai ya Mulata Ivia (clan of Mulata Ivia)<sup>36</sup>

Lastly, the Akamba have also a legend which, unlike the preceding myth, traces their origin to a single meganthropus male being they call 'Yunga Muamba'.

As the legend goes, he lived on the mountains alone for a long time entertaining himself with his gigantic drums. When he got too old he mysteriously bore the first several Akamba, who kept multiplying according to his order until now.<sup>37</sup> It is not uncommon to hear a Mukamba tell another one:

Ko wiana Yunga-a Muamba? nduvitila mwanyani usu?  
Are you as big as Yunga-a Muamba?  
Can't you pass through that space.<sup>38</sup> Meaning are  
you that big?

(c) The Religion of the Akamba

It is very hard to isolate one section from an essay or a thesis (as in this study) in 'Religious Studies' and say that that section is the one which deals with religious belief and practices, as if the other sections do not. Therefore, the paragraphs that follow here below, give only a brief information on the beliefs, and practices of the people being studied, and are in no way more special than the other parts of the thesis.

The myth given above expresses in a nutshell what the Akamba think and believe about their origin, existence here on earth, their God and the spirits, Aimu, which seem to act as intermediaries between God and men.

Basing his argument on the preceding myth of origin, Ndeti has rightly observed that the Akamba do not rationalize the existence of reality : they just assume Mulungu, the Supreme Being, as the first causal principal;<sup>39</sup> In the beginning Mulungu - - - - God, Mulungu is therefore self-existent, needing no postulation. This lack of speculative spirit among the Akamba was even noticed many years ago by Lindblom as observed by Ndeti.<sup>40</sup>

God to the Akamba, is therefore the creator and originator of all things. He created both the spirits Aimu, and the human beings. For that reason, the people depend on him for sustenance and providence. He is a good, caring God. He gave them animals and sent rain as a result of which there was plenty of food for every body. But the Akamba in turn, are expected to show gratitude to God for his benevolence by giving a thank offering, a sacrifice, kwita nthakame nthi (Lit. To pour blood on the ground) at the end of every harvest. In fact they are supposed to sacrifice at every important stage in life, and for every good gift they get from Mulungu. Hence, they sacrifice and give a feast Mbingi (Lit. plenty) at the birth of a child, at initiations and at death, to mention just a few.

The Akamba followed the instructions to be sacrificing regularly after every harvest. But one time they forgot to do it, thereby forgetting their own God and source of life.

Mulungu became very angry, and punished them with a famine, which caused starvation and migrations to different places. From that time onwards the Akamba learnt the lesson. They always sacrifice (as mentioned above) at every important stage in life, and try to appease God lest a worse thing should befall them. Ugolano, the women's grain offering ceremony, is a thanksgiving festival at the end of every harvest season, during which God is thanked for the good harvest and requested to do the same or better next season. Any catastrophe or misfortune, whether on people, animals or land, like drought, disease or barrenness is seen as a sign of God's displeasure, for which a diviner - medicine man is usually consulted. And in most cases, he prescribes, as a remedy, a sacrifice to appease God and avert any possible danger. The Akamba are a sacrificing people. Theirs is a religion of sacrifices. They have even sacrificed human beings.<sup>41</sup>

Lindblom wrote:

On the whole, the Akamba are diligent in offering sacrifices, and it would be difficult to give an exhaustive account of all the occasions on which sacrifices ought to be made.<sup>42</sup>

Concerning Aimu, the Akamba believe them to be closer to God and superior to the human beings because they were created first and are more powerful than men.

They (Aimu) are also God's messengers and execute his wishes here on earth. As messengers they warn the living, through a medium, of any impending danger. And as executors of God's wishes they punish the wrong-doers and the negligent ones. Aimu may be seen as Hulungu's policeman. As such they harass people, even those who sacrifice to them, because they want to be recognized and their presence felt. The researcher once heard a song which expresses this relationship between Aimu and the living. It went as follows:

Aimu aya mati muva  
Manyamaasya ula unathumbaa.

These Aimu are never grateful.  
They harass even the one who sacrifices to  
them.<sup>43</sup>

This characteristic feature of Aimu was also noted by Lindblom. He notes;

The most characteristic feature of Aimu is, however, that they are considered to expect constant attention from their living relations, in the form of sacrifices. The sacrifice is a gift which the Aimu need; by it also connection with them is maintained and strengthened. The least inattention in this respect is avenged by sending off all sorts of misfortunes down upon the negligent one, such as diseases of both man and domestic animals, and even death.- - - -



The result of these beliefs is that the natives never know whether they have sacrificed enough, and so they live in a constant state of anxiety lest they shall incur the displeasure of the jealous and capricious spirits.<sup>44</sup>

In the preceding discussion more weight was given to the activities of and beliefs about Aimu because it was felt, as Mbiti puts it, that the bulk of Akamba religious ideas and practices is to be found in connection with Aimu. Hence, concepts regarding Aimu are more fully developed than those regarding God or the universe in general.<sup>45</sup>

Another thing that may be mentioned here briefly is that Akamba believe in and fear witchcraft and **evil magic, including** both the educated and illiterate, Christian and non Christian. So, whenever any misfortune strikes, like sickness or death, the diviner-medicineman is usually called in to tell whether the patient has been bewitched or whether it is just the spirits, Aimu, that are not happy. After establishing the cause of the sickness he treats the patient. In most cases a goat or a chicken is killed for the occasion and the blood poured to the ground, again as a sacrifice.<sup>46</sup>

(d) The land of the Akamba

The Akamba live in the Eastern Province of Kenya; and their land is called Ukambani, whose area is about 17,486 square miles.<sup>47</sup>

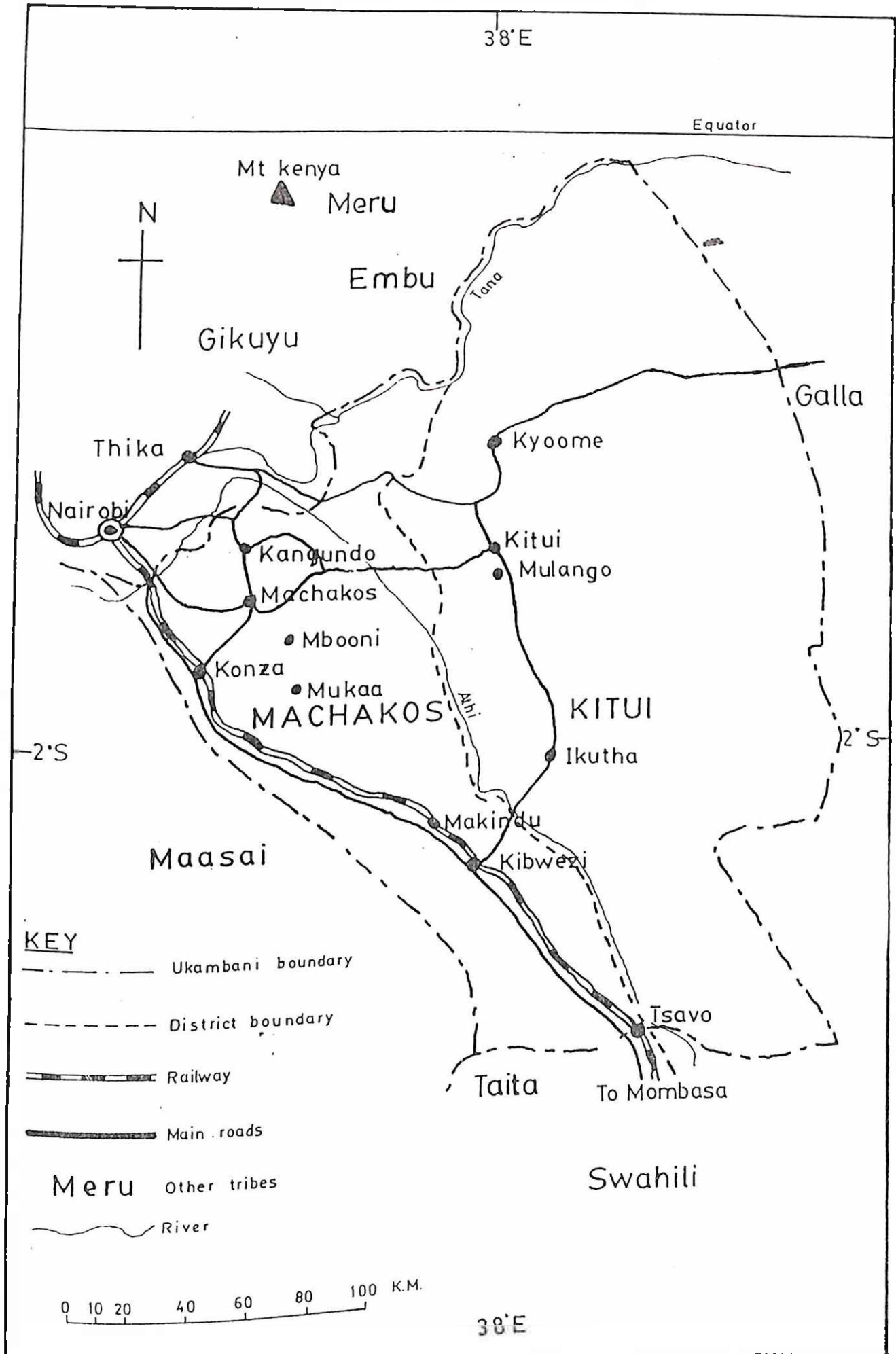
In terms of geographical position, Ukambani lies between 4 minutes and 3 degrees south and 37 degrees and 39 degrees east. The land rises in a series of steps as one travels from the coast to the hinterland. Approximately two thirds of the Ukambani area is between 1000 and 3000 feet above the sea level.<sup>48</sup>

During the British occupation of Kenya, Ukambani was divided up into two districts, Machakos (on the west) and Kitui (on the east). These were then sub-divided into locations for administrative purposes. This structure has been retained after Kenya's independence in 1963.<sup>49</sup>






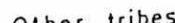

There are two rainy seasons (March - July), and two dry seasons a year, and temperatures range between 10°C in the cool months in the highlands and 27°C in the hot months. When it is dry, water is scarce and people and animals may have to travel long distances to find water.<sup>50</sup>

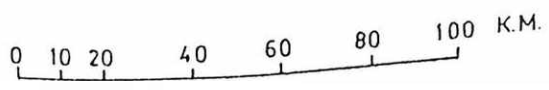
This country (Ukambani) is the one which was chosen for this research. Although it was not possible to travel to every part of Ukambani, the findings, it is felt, represent the belief systems of all the Akamba because the areas selected for the study were representative, at least of Machakos District.

# MAP OF UKAMBANI



**KEY**

-  Ukambani boundary
-  District boundary
-  Railway
-  Main roads
-  Meru
-  Other tribes
-  River



MAP No.1



## NOTES

1. For example Mr. P.M.K.'s place, which drew several leading personalities to come and see it for themselves. See case study - three.
2. Mr. B.K.N, interview see also case study - three
3. See 'Daily Nation' of 31/5/83, Pg.4, article by the 'Nation' correspondent, Machakos entitled "School shut over ghosts".
4. J.S. Mbiti, 1971, pgs. 136 - 137
5. See Parliamentary reports by F.Muroki, E.Omari and R. Keya in the 'Kenya Times' of 30/7/87, pg.4
6. See pg. 11
7. Reported by K.N.A. on pg. 4
8. Reported by K.N.A. on pg. 3
9. Reported by a Nation reporter, Machakos, pg. 3
10. Daily Nation, pg. 10. See also case study - three
11. Reported by Nation correspondent, Machakos, on page. 3
12. Reported by K.N.A, pg. 5
13. Reported by Nation correspondent, Nyeri, on page 20.
14. Reported by Nation correspondent, Machakos on page 4.
15. Reported by David Njagi, pictures by Frank Wanjohi, on page.5
16. Reported by Ben. Mitukaa on page 3. The ghosts' victim was also interviewed by this researcher and confirmed that she was actually taught physics by the ghosts for 30 minutes, see case study - one

17. See page 16
18. Reported by Mr. Irungu Mdirangu, on page 1.
20. Reported by K.N.A., pg.3
21. Reported by K.N.A., pg.17; see also case study - two
22. Reported by K.N.A., pg. 32
23. Story and pictures by Kiptoo Kipsongk on page.5
24. Reported by K.N.A. on page 3
25. Reported by K.N.A. on page 5.
26. Reported by the Standard Correspondent on pg.3;  
also by the K.N.A.
27. J.S. Mbiti, 1971, pg. 4
28. Volume I to Kenya Population Census 1979,  
Table numbers 2 and 4
29. J.S. Mbiti, 1971, pg. 4; see also the distribution  
of the Akamba people in the entire country as given  
in table .2 below.
30. J.L.Krapf, vocabulary of six East African languages  
(1850) and his translation of St. Mark's Gospel into  
Kikamba (1850), as given by J.S.Mbiti, 1971, pg. 5
31. J.L. Krapf, Reisen in Ost - Africa, 1850, cited  
by K.Ndeti, 1972, pg.25
32. J.W. Gregory, The Great Rift Valley, 1986, cited  
by K.Ndeti, 1972, pg.25  
P.G. Murdock, Africa : It's people and their culture  
history. 1959, cited by Ndeti, 1972, pg. 26  
See J. Muthiani, 1973, pgs. 11 - 12
33. A mythological mountain, see Ndeti, 1972, pg.29

34. J.Mbuta, M.A. Thesis, pg. 33f; see also Ndeti, 1972, pg.28, for the kikamba version.
35. J. Muthiani, 1973, pgs. 12 - 13
36. The researcher has been hearing this from neighbours, and even family members for a long time, but had not asked what it meant until he started this research when he learnt that Yunga Muamba was supposed to be a giant.
37. K. Ndeti, 1972, pg. 31
38. Ibid pg. 27
39. G. Lundblom, 1920, pg. 224.
40. G. Lindblom, 1920, pg. 217
41. Mrs. M.W.K., interview.
42. G. Lindblom, 1920, pg. 214
43. J.S. Mbiti, 1971, pg. 101
44. See also G. Lindblom, 1920, pg. 261f.
45. K. Ndeti, 1972, pg. 1
46. Ibid pg. 1
47. J.S. Mbiti, 1971, pg. 4
48. K. Ndeti, 1972, pg. 1

CHAPTER TWO  
LITERATURE REVIEW

The earliest works on the Akamba were done by foreigners, as may be seen from the list below, who had first to learn Kikamba and a bit of the Akamba culture and customs. Hence many of them had either inaccurate renderings of Kikamba words or unfair representation of the Akamba people.

C.W. Hobley, for example, mixes Kikuyu, kiswahili and even Kimasai with Kikamba. In his second book 1922/67, page 74 he gives the term for stomach content as Tatha, which is not Kikamba but Kikuyu. On page 75, he uses the terms Mawele and Mbaazi for millet and peas respectively. These are swahili words, not Kikamba. In the same page he also talks of Mvua yaua (when it rains) and uses the Kimasai word Engai for God.

A good example of derogatory representation of the Akamba people (and Africans in general) may be taken from Lindblom's book. He writes:

That the Akamba like meat is shown by the fact that they unhesitatingly eat it raw and do not mind eating animals that have died from natural causes, even such as have attained an advanced state of decomposition. . . . A. Arkell Hardwick relates, for instance how his Kamba porters eagerly devoured an ass that had fallen ill and died.



I have also seen my porters take the bones after my own meals and carefully gnaw them clean. Their power of eating all sorts of things without being in any way famished is shown, among other things, by the fact that they roasted guinea-fowls' feet.<sup>1</sup>

Also the language he uses to describe the Akamba dances is equally derogatory, unsympathetic and portrays his colonial mentality. He says:

When the natives really get into the grip of dancing, they, especially the young men, are seized by a regular passion for this amusement, which is beyond all description. Dancing is then their whole life, the sole thing they are interested in. This leads to unpleasant consequences both for those around them and for themselves. Under such circumstances, it is practically impossible for the travellers to get bearers and this is difficult even for the government service. When there is no other remedy one has to take bearers forcibly, a thing of which I have had experience ...<sup>2</sup>

The following are therefore some of the pioneer works on the Akamba, C.M. Hobley's Ethnology of Akamba and other East African tribes 1910/71, was the first book to be written on these people<sup>3</sup>, followed by G. Lindblom's The Akamba in British East Africa, 1920, and then Hobley's second book, Bantu beliefs and magic 1922/67.

C.W. Hobley, the first writer on the Akamba, was a British administrator, a D.C. and later a P.C., who at one time was in charge of Machakos district. It was during that time that he gathered material for his two books, whose main purpose seems to be to give to the foreign administrators some knowledge about the Akamba, to help them govern the Akamba better and more effectively for the benefit of the colonial government.

Apart from these unfair representations of the Akamba people and other small mistakes here and there, these early writers contributed a lot. A casual look at pages 281 to 285 gives the impression that he was calling upon his countrymen (colonist and missionary alike) to take time to understand the Africans' way of life. He for example, talks of the Africans (here referring to Kikuyus) running away from their masters and work to go to look for Dawa (medicine) and never coming back for fear of being punished, in which case both the European and the native lose. Had the European understood the African traditional beliefs, he would have given him leave to go home for treatment and to report back for duty immediately. This, he concludes, would have greatly reduced the desertions.

Hobley gives a good advice but he also seems to be torn between two worlds: On one hand, he wants to understand his subjects better and to guide their destiny better but, on the other hand, he wants to maintain his status as a colonist.

The native races in British colonies and protectorates are one of our greatest assets, both for production of products necessary for the European world and for labour supply. This is the utilitarian point of view and apart from this there is the question of our duty to the races subject to our rule. Their future is in our hands, and let us see to it that the verdict of posterity be that we have guided their destiny wisely.<sup>4</sup>

What then do these authors say about spirits?

C.W. Hobley (1910/71) classifies spirits into two groups:

1. Aimu - These are (ordinary) spirits of the dead ancestors. They haunt certain sacred fig-trees, Mumbu, and it is to them that sacrifices are offered periodically at the shrines, Mathembo.
2. Aimu ma Kitombo - These are supposed to be disembodied relics of people who have killed their neighbours by the help of black magic. They are said to correspond to the Swahili 'Shaitani' and are therefore evil spirits which the Supreme Being has banished to the woods where they wander about without anybody to care for them by sacrificing to them. These are a vindictive crew and cause some kind of madness to their victims. But Mbiti rejects this idea of evil spirits being banished to the woods and accuses Hobley of introducing foreign ideas to the Akamba religion.

In describing the 'Aimu Kitombo', Hopley says that they are banished by 'the Supreme Being ... to the woods where they wander without anybody to care for them....' This is completely foreign to the Akamba, ideas of the hereafter, and Hopley's description (op.cit,89) is possibly influenced by Mathew 12: 43-5 par, which his informant had probably heard and corrupted.<sup>5</sup>

Apart from reading about this type of Aimu from Hopley's book, Mbiti denies having come across it anywhere during his own researches.

I have not otherwise heard of this group of Aimu.<sup>6</sup>

But one of the informants, Mrs.T.M.N.<sup>7</sup> (originally from Mukaa location) confirmed that she had heard of it and that the possessed used to demand and be given articles like chains, Minyoo. But the type was older than her because it belonged to her mother's time (that is when her mother was a girl).

G. Lindblom, 1920, continues Hopley's list by catalogueing other spirits which he calls 'spirits other than Aimu'. He gives the following:

3. Aimu ma Mbevo - These are spirits of the neighbouring tribes, of Agikuyu, Masai, Galla and Wanjika. Mbiti admits that there are some Aimu which are hostile to human beings, because they cause their victims to hurt themselves with knives, jump into fires, have epileptic fits etc. But whenever such things happen, Aimu from other races are usually blamed.<sup>8</sup> All the same Mrs. T.M.M<sup>9</sup> does not blame any foreign spirits, neither does she group all the foreign Aimu together as Mbiti does. According to her, the victims of Mbevo Aimu used to remove grass from the huts and put it into the fire to warm themselves, because 'they were very cold'! She was big then and saw the possessed do it. The Kikamba word for cold is mbevo. Hence, her description seems quite convincing.

4. Kiesu or Chasu - Three authors (notably Hobley, Lindblom and Mbiti) and informants (such as Mrs. T.M.M. and Mr. Z.N.K.) agree that Chasu was a dance which was danced by people holding knives, with which they also cut themselves whenever they got possessed. They also jumped into fires and had a kind of epileptic fits.

Mrs. T.M.M adds that Chasu victims used to lick blood from the wounds they had cut. According to Mbiti<sup>10</sup>, the term (Kiesu) shows that the Christian message was beginning to make an impact in the country. He says that Kiesu is 'undoubtedly an adjectival - noun from Yesu (Jesus)'.

One wonders where Mbiti got such a strong conviction from. He does not give his authority. None of this researcher's informants ever connected the dance with the presence of the missionaries or Christianity. Mrs. T.M.M. confirmed that she saw it being danced and never said it had anything to do with the missionaries or Europeans in general.

Concerning the 'irresistible desire to shake hands with anyone' mentioned by Lindblom<sup>11</sup>, Mrs. T.M.M. states that that was a different dance at a different time, whose possessing spirits were known as Aimu ma Muviti (see discussion below) for which a kilumi dance was usually staged and an ox slaughtered. Therefore, as regards the origin of the term (unless it be granted that people were misled by Lindblom), Mrs. T.M.M. rules out the possibility of Christian influence. Hobley<sup>12</sup> calls it just Chesu and not Kiesu.

5. Aimu ma Kiting'o - These were European spirits, which came into the country with the Europeans. They used to possess people during the time of Chesu dance. But none of the interviewed informants had heard about them.

Other writers include Mbiti, N.J. Mutua, J. Mbula and Farouk Topan. In his two books, African Religions and Philosophy, 1969 and the New Testament Eschatology in an African background, 1971, Mbiti divides Aimu into two main categories:

Nature spirits, which were never humans and the ancestral spirits. The latter are further subdivided into the Aimu proper (that is spirits of forgotten dead people) and the living dead (that is, spirits of the recently dead relatives, who can be remembered by some of the living relatives). The spirits of the long dead belong to the Zamani period and those of the recently dead belong to the Sasa period. According to him it is the living-dead which disturb the living because they want attention or something to 'eat' such as sacrifice or just a dance to entertain themselves.

Norman J. Mutua wrote a manuscript (typed) entitled "African Conception of death and hereafter : case of the Akamba" (n.d). He says that spirits, Aimu live in communities called Ititu according to their clans or families.

The spirit abodes, or Ititu, he continues, are also regarded as sacred places, mathambo, by the communities concerned and sacrifices are offered there. Each spirit community has a leader who should be the founder of that sacred place. The founders are normally medicine men or some other influential persons who died and were buried in those places or that their spirits moved there. These communities continue to swell as more relatives die and join them.

When the communities become too big, some of the spirits break away and start new sites, but retain the former centre, where the founder spirit lives, as the main administrative as well as religious centre for the living community concerned. As for the harassment of the living, Mutua concludes that one can only be harassed or chased, at any spirits' centre by spirits who are not one's relatives although one's spirit - relatives are expected to be aware, and could intervene to save the situation.

It should be noted that much of what Mutua has said so far is quite new to this researcher. As such he has no comment because he has not met with other authors who share similar views.

Concerning the children's cries that are heard at sacred places, Mutua says they are either voices of the children who died young or that the spirits procreate. But according to Mbiti, "children who die young continue to grow and become adults, get married and raise families"<sup>13</sup>

As for the animals and birds that are seen at sacred places, Mutua gives three alternatives. They are either the animals which had been sacrificed (killed) at those shrines or they could be animals belonging to the spirit world (owned by the spirits) or they could even be human spirits assuming physical forms of the animals.



It has already been mentioned elsewhere that at two of the study places animals had reportedly been seen. At Itembukani Girls' Hostel, a ferret ant and two snakes were reportedly seen.<sup>14</sup> At Mbeoni a dog, a cock and a goat with two kids visited the home which was being attacked.<sup>15</sup>

Judith Mbula, in her B.A. Thesis entitled, Penetration of Christianity into the Akamba Traditional Home, 1974, classifies Aimu into two categories: Kathambi and Muviti spirits. According to her Kathambi is a general term for all female spirits and Muviti a general term for all male spirits. But according to Mubua, Kathambi Muvitu wa Lala is a one-legged single spirit. Lindblom had also heard of a Muvitu-alali, who dwelt on the mountain of Mutitu about thirty kilometres, north east of Kitui town.<sup>17</sup>

Of all the writers, Farouk Topan's Ph.D Thesis, 1971, entitled Oral Literature in a ritual setting : the role of spirit songs in a spirit - mediumship cult of Mombasa, Kenya, came closest to the researcher's enquiry. The only difference was that Topan dealt with the Swahili community of Mombasa, not with the Akamba, although in the end his research provided background information, supplemented this study, because Hajini, are said to come from the coast.

According to him, the origins of all the spirits in the world are explained in a myth connected with the prophet Solomon or Nabii Suleiman, as he is known among the Swahili.

Spirits were created by God and put under different masters at different times in the history of this world. But during the time of prophet Solomon they were all brought to work under Solomon, their absolute master. But because Solomon overworked them, some of them rebelled and were punished. Others continued with their toil until Solomon their master died, and then they were free to disperse to all parts of the world. The most powerful ones came to Pemba, in East Africa, where they possessed people and became mediums, and slowly some of them crossed to Mombasa, where they also took up mediums and settled there.

Other writers who also wrote on the Akamba may be cited here, some of them briefly though. Middleton and Kershaw : The central tribes of North-Eastern Bantu, 1965, have asserted that the world of the spirits is not always localized. They, however, mention two sanctuaries where the concentration of spirits seems to be very high. They are kyumbe, a mountain range near Kibwezi and Nzambani rock in Kitui. And because these spirits never like to be disturbed, people going near them are said to hear voices shouting questions such as : who goes there? or what do you want? And because of their sacredness, these places are referred to as Mulungu or Iloai (Kamba names for God), it is as if being there is being in the very presence of God.

They conclude their discussion by stating that Ajnu generally live in trees, preferably fig trees of the species of Iluumo or Mumbu or in other prominent natural features, solitary rocks or pools, which are therefore places of sacrifice. They live on food offered to them and require constant attention.

In 1944 Norman Larby published a booklet entitled The Akamba. He was not an anthropologist, according to his own words in the 'Author's Preface', but rather an educational officer, who spent seven years in that profession and in contact with the Akamba. Larby has been referred to elsewhere in the thesis as the educational officer who supervised the people who were building Kusyomomo primary school at an Ithemba place. In his booklet Larby locates the abode of the dead as the 'Lower regions' and adds that sacrifices are usually made to the spirit of a famous medicine man or some other prominent man.... He concludes by saying that the whole religion of the Akamba is one of communication with the spirits of their ancestors. According to him God, Mulungu, has no place in the Akamba religion.

In 1962 David N. Kimilu wrote a book in Kikamba entitled Mukamba Wam'g (The typical Kamba man). In this book Kimilu discusses many customs and traditions of the Akamba people, including initiation, games and dances, inheritance, division of labour, marriage, bridewealth etc.

R.L. Tignor, in his book The colonial transformation of Kenya, 1976, sees the many spirit outbursts as politically motivated. According to him the Akamba resorted to Aimu possessions as a means of uniting them to fight against the colonial oppressions. He mentions the Kijesu of 1906 to 1908, and a much more widespread outburst of 1911 (called Ngai Mania by other writers). Of the latter he says, "although the information on it is scanty, it seems to have been partly a reaction against certain aspects of colonial oppression"<sup>18</sup>, Some of those aspects of colonial oppression which the Akamba must have resented were:-

- (a) Loss of their land to the European settlers and other officers.
- (b) Torture from Langridge, a fruit farmer at Mua hills (although he claimed to be a missionary) who adopted the method of flogging his workers just before pay day, thus causing many to desert and relieving him of their labour expenses.
- (c) Introduction of Poll tax in 1910, which, he thinks was aimed at forcing men back to the labour market.

D. Penwill Kamba customary law, 1951, like Kimilu writes on very many customs of the Akamba.

Some of the things he discusses are marriage, inheritance and custody of widows, in case of husband's death, land tenure, kithitu (oath) and other ordeals etc.

Professor Hitoshi Ueda, has written and presented several discussion papers to the Institute of African Studies, University of Nairobi. Some of his papers are:

Witchcraft and Sorcery in Kitui of the kamba tribe, July 1971.

The Wathi ritual among the kamba,  
23th March, 1979

The power of hunting leaders among the kamba,  
28th March, 1979

He also wrote a project report entitled A study of Philosophy and Cosmology of the Kamba. (No date, but the research was conducted from November 1977 to September, 1979).

In all these papers, Ueda discusses the Akamba of Kitui, and much of what he says is at variance with what is found among the Akamba of Machakos. Of special note is what he says about wathi ritual and about the power of hunting leaders.

But his idea of a man's witchcraft being different from and stronger than that by a woman is shared by the Akamba of Machakos.<sup>19</sup>

Finally, in 1975, Udeti published a book entitled the Cultural Policy in Kenya. The purpose of this book, the author says in the preface, is to show how cultural policies are planned and implemented in various member states (provinces and districts). As such, the book does not deal with either religion or the Akamba.

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NOTES

1. G. Lindblom, 1920, page 511
2. G. Lindblom, 1920, page 415.
3. Dr. Krapft was the first foreign missionary to visit the Akamba in 1849. The Gospel of St. Mark which he translated into kikamba in 1850 is till extant at the Bible Society of Kenya, Nairobi. But Krapf's Travels, Researches and Missionary labours (1860) and the Vocabulary of six East African Languages (1850). (which includes kikamba) were not available to this researcher.
4. C.W. Hobley, 1910/71, pg2 vii.
5. J.S. Mbiti, 1971, pg. 133 footnote.
6. Op. cit, pg. 136
7. Mrs. T.M.M, over 60 years, was a small girl during the Kakuti famine, interviewed on 14/6/86 at her present home in the Settled Area location, Machakos.
8. J.S. Mbiti, 1971, pg. 136
9. Mrs. T.M.M, interview.
10. J.S. Mbiti, 1971, pg. 135 footnote.
11. G. Lindblom, 1920, pg. 332
12. C.W. Hobley, 1910/71, pages 10.
13. J.S. Mbiti, 1971, pg. 133
14. Sunday Standard of 5/1/83, pg. 5, calls them, 'two puff adders'
15. Mr. M.S., interview.
17. G. Lindblom, 1920, pg. 274
18. R. L. Tignor, 1976, pg. 3
19. Cp. D.H. Kimilu, 1960, pg. 133

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, the methodology used in this study has been discussed.

#### 1. Data Collection.

A questionnaire (with twenty-five questions) was used for this research. Spaces were provided in the questionnaire for writing down the answers. The researcher did not employ any assistants, nor did he use any tape recorders because many informants seemed quite uncomfortable with them. All the interviews were personally done and recorded by him. At times it became very necessary to digress from the questionnaire and let the informant tell his/her story uninterrupted. This digression proved particularly useful when interviewing people from the areas where attacks had been reported.

Two reasons warranted the employment of the 'story-telling' method. In the first place, it was discovered that by restricting oneself to the questionnaire, one might miss some important information, not covered in the questionnaire. The 'stories' were however, supplemented with questions here and there, put to the informants by the researcher, to clarify or expand on unclear or omitted points. Such questions were either asked from the questionnaire itself or from the story told, depending on the discretion of the researcher.



The second reason why this method was resorted to was to save time. Ideally, all the questions in the questionnaire should have been asked first, before inviting the respondents to tell the story in their own words. But it was found out that, by the time the questionnaire was over, the majority of the interviewees were tired and unwilling to continue with the interview. In that case the researcher would miss the informant's own version of the story.

Most of the informants were interviewed individually but not always. On four occasions it was different. On one occasion a man and his wife were interviewed together. On another occasion two students of Itembukani Secondary School were jointly interviewed. Of the remaining two occasions the second person was called to introduce the researcher to the informants, but he also participated in the discussions. The three of them were former students of Itembukani Secondary School.

## 2. Data Presentation.

### 2.1 Formal data presentation.

From the answers given, it was possible to scale each respondent's level of belief in spirits, Aimu. The scales were from 1, representing the lowest level of belief, to 5, the highest level. The scaled responses were then transferred on to a Master Table (see chapter IV) and given a column of their own.

The other variables like age, education and occupation were also coded and given their own rows on the same Master Table. This process of scaling responses and of coding characteristics, by reducing them into numbers, for the purpose of statistical analysis, is known as 'General Summarization'.

The researcher's first problem, according to Theodore Anderson, may therefore be, to transform observations into quantitative form, to permit statistical analysis.

A house address, for example, is usually expressed as a number (such as 2605, Riverside Drive). To add such numbers or to compute the 'average' address would of course be meaningless. However, we can convert an address into 'distance from city centre' through the use of a map and this number can be treated meaningfully by statistical procedures. The researcher's first problem, then may be to transform observations into quantitative form either through measurement or counting and, thereby, to permit statistical analysis.<sup>1</sup>

In this study, some of the characteristics which were reduced to small numbers for the purpose of computation were age, which was given numbers 1 to 6 and education, which was given numbers 0 to 5 etc. (See coding system, chapter IV below)

After all the data were summarized, they were analysed, using Correlation Coefficient method. To establish the Correlations the data were first grouped by counting the number of times each symbol appeared on the list. The counting is technically known as tallying. The tallied results looked like this:

<u>Category</u>	<u>Tallies</u>	<u>Frequency(f)</u>
A	<del>IIII</del> IIII	9
B	<del>IIII</del> II	7
Total		16

The tallied results were then tabulated and correlations computed. But before that, it had to be decided. which variable was going to become  $x$ , that is, the independent variable and which one was to become  $y$ , that is, the dependent variable. Theodore R. Anderson and Morris Zelditch Jr. (1958/68) feel that the dependent variable should be the one the researcher is interested in, and that it should be placed at the left of the table.

The variable in which the researcher is most interested in is called dependent variable. It is this variable whose distribution is compared under various conditions. The other variable is called independent variable. Its categories become the conditions under which the distribution of the dependent variable is examined. By widespread (but not universal) agreement, the dependent variable is at the left of the table and the independent variable at the top of the table.

That is, the letter Y is used to identify the dependent variable and the letter X the independent variable. When this convention is followed, the conditional distribution to be examined will always be found within the columns of the table.<sup>2</sup>

In this research, belief in spirits, (Aimu/Majini) is the variable being studied. Education, age and occupation of the respondents are the independent variables. The tables looked like the one shown below.

TABLE THREE. 1

COMPUTATION OF AGE VERSUS BELIEF IN SPIRITS (AIMU & MAJINI)

Y. Qns 1b x Age Belief	1	2	3	4	5	6	f <sub>y</sub>	v	f <sub>v</sub>	f <sub>v</sub> <sup>2</sup>	Σf <sub>uv</sub>	√Σf <sub>uv</sub>
1	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	4	8	-4	-8
2	0	1	0	2	0	0	3	1	3	3	1	1
3	0	0	0	2	1	2	5	0	0	0	10	0
4	0	0	1	0	0	3	4	-1	-4	4	9	-9
5	0	0	0	1	1	1	3	-2	-6	12	6	-12
f <sub>x</sub>	2	1	1	5	2	6	17		-3	27	22	-28
u	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3						
f <sub>u</sub>	-4	-1	0	+5	+2	+18	20					
f <sub>u</sub> <sup>2</sup>	8	1	0	5	8	54	76					
Σf <sub>v</sub>	+4	+1	-1	0	-2	-5	-3					
uΣf <sub>v</sub>	-8	-1	0	0	-4	-15	-28					

The formula used was: 
$$r = \frac{\sum f_{uv} - \sum f_u \cdot \sum f_v / n}{\sqrt{[\sum f_u^2 - (\sum f_u)^2 / n][\sum f_v^2 - (\sum f_v)^2 / n]}}$$

$r = -0.647.$

### HYPOTHESES TESTED

In the introductory chapter certain objectives were set for this study, one kind of objectives suggesting that the following hypotheses were to be tested:

H<sub>1</sub> The belief in spirits (Aimu/Majini) is not affected by age.

H<sub>2</sub> The belief in spirits (Aimu/Majini) is not affected by the number of years of formal schooling.

H<sub>3</sub> The belief in spirits (Aimu/Majini) is not affected by one's occupation/profession.

These hypotheses were tested by finding the Coefficient of Correlation between the variable of age and intensity of spirit belief, or that between the variable of length of formal schooling and intensity of spirit belief. If a positive correlation is found between age and spirit belief this means that one has found that the higher the age of a Mukamba the more likely he is to display a strong spirit belief. If the correlation is found to be close to zero, that means there is no reason for rejecting the hypotheses. If a negative correlation is found between age and spirit belief, that means that the higher the age of a Mukamba the less likely he is to display a strong spirit belief.

In the testing of an hypothesis such as the above it is, of course, important to follow generally recognized conventions about what constitutes a Correlation Coefficient which is sufficiently positive or negative to be able to reject the original hypothesis. Statistical experts have established that, depending on the size of one's sample, one can say from the Correlation Coefficient how much chance there is that the result came about by mere chance. This is expressed in terms of percentages. For instance, in the case of the Correlation between age and spirit belief, the coefficient from a sample of 17 was found to be  $r = -.647$ , which according to the statistical tables is significant at the 1% level (There is only 1% chance that this result came about by mere chance). Similarly, when the sample of 9 is used, and the Correlation is found to be  $r = -.657$ , the statistical tables suggest that this is significant only at the 5% level (there is five percent chance that this result came about by mere chance).

In social science research it is a convention to regard Correlations 'clearly significant' at the 1% level, and simply 'significant' at the 5% level. There are however some rules of caution in interpreting these Correlation Coefficients:

- (i) The smaller the sample becomes the more difficult it is to trust even these levels of significance. For instance, 9 is considered a very small sample, only good enough for Pilot studies.
- (ii) The fact that a clearly significant positive or negative correlation is found does not necessarily indicate that there is a 'causal relation' between the two variables. The correlation may be due to the influence of a third variable which is not considered in the research design. In other words, there is still the task of interpreting the statistical data, requiring considerable reflection on the reasons why a Correlation Coefficient shows itself clearly positive or negative.

## 2.2. Informal data presentation.

It has already been mentioned, above, that a questionnaire, with twenty-five questions, was used for this study, and that no research assistants were employed. All the interviews were conducted by the researcher himself.

After the data were collected, the researcher went over the questionnaire, listing down the answers given by the different respondents for each question. Although an attempt was made to group the answers according to their content, they still remained raw data, that is, mere field reports.



They were not compared with other existing works but were presented just as they were received from the interviewees.

Nevertheless, the questions were framed to meet certain objectives which the researcher had set out to explore.

These objectives were:

- (a) To determine the extent of beliefs in spirit, in spirit activities and in some related forms of magic in the selected areas of study.
- (b) To investigate the forms these beliefs take, and hence the nature of spirits believed in.
- (c) To investigate what other basic traditional beliefs may be behind the beliefs in and the fear of spirit activities and in selected related forms of magic.

### 2.3 Case Studies.

Four areas were selected to be the basis for this study. They were Itembukani secondary school, in Tulumani location, and the surrounding area, Uthiuni sub-location of Mbooni location, Kiandani sub-location of Iveti location and Kisau location; all in Uachakos District.

The first three were selected because spirit attacks had been reported there. But Kisau location was chosen as a neutral ground to give a general Akamba world view, one which would not be distorted by any recent happenings.

The information received from those three places was so much that it could not be contained in the main body of the thesis and leaving it out would mean missing some useful information. So it was decided that it be treated separately as 'case studies'.

The respondents from those three places were quite unanimous that the things that were attacking people there were majini. In some of the places it was even explained how the majini were brought there, by whom, when and why.

These case studies provided good material for the objectives of this study. But they were still raw data. No attempt was made to interpret them or to link them up with other published works.

### 3. Data analysis and interpretation.

In this section the researcher's interpretation of all the data has been given. To do this it was necessary to compare the formal data with the informal data and with what other authors have written. Concluding remarks and recommendations appear in the last chapter.

4. PROBLEMS FACED IN THE FIELD AND WHY REAL NAMES ARE NOT GIVEN

There are problems that were encountered during this research. Some of the problems were similar in all the selected areas of study, but there were also problems peculiar to particular areas. Of the four areas selected for study, Kisau Location, the control area had the least problems.

Those problems may be summarised as follows:

- (a) Unwillingness by the respondents to talk about their homes ( and private lives ) to strangers.
- (b) Fear by the respondents that what they shared might not be held in confidence.
- (c) Refusal by some of the government agents to allow the researcher to interview members of Itembukani Secondary School ( not real name ).
- (d) Researcher's personal problems in relation to his security in some circumstances as explained in the section below.

In almost all the places the respondents were reluctant to talk about their homes and personal lives to strangers. In Kisau Location, where the least reluctance was noted, a respondent refused to allow this researcher to counter-check ( interview ) with his uncle what he had told him about the cause of their family problems. The respondent feared that such a move would implicate him and create misunderstandings and hatred in the home.

At Iveti Location, Mr. P.N.K had grown tired of strangers who, from the time the stones started falling, were constantly coming there and taking photographs and writing reports about his home. He had therefore issued an order that no stranger should be entertained or allowed to take pictures or to write any report about that family. So when this researcher went there, none of the family members or neighbours were willing to say what had happened there. For that reason he had to spend a lot of time trying to coax at least some family members to agree to be interviewed. Several methods were used to try to induce them into talking including engaging a go-between. And those who were interviewed did so on condition that their true identity should not be disclosed in this report. That is why only the initials of the informants are given. The rest of the confidential information is with the researcher.

At Itembukani Secondary School, the Headmaster refused to allow this researcher to interview any of his staff or students. The researcher was referred to the District Education Office, Machakos, for an authorising letter, in addition to the permit he had. The D.E.O's office refused to give the required authority but referred this researcher to the Headquarters of the Ministry of Education in Nairobi. But even after procuring the required authority from Nairobi, the Headmaster of Itembukani Secondary School was not satisfied. He insisted on seeing 'his immediate boss' first, that is, the D.E.O Machakos. At last when that was done the researcher was made to sign an agreement not to mention the name of that school in his thesis. That is why the real name of the school has been omitted in this thesis. By the time this exercise was over, a lot of time had been wasted.

Mr. J.M.K, cited in this thesis is a very important and powerful personality in Kenya. But he is the one who is said to own the Majini that were disturbing students of Itembukani Secondary School ( mentioned above ). So when this researcher went to interview people in that area, he was advised ( by the local people ) not to make his mission known if he did not want to land into prison. Mr. J.M.K is a very respected ( feared ) man in that area. So the researcher conducted his research quietly and inconspicuously.

Another problem which is of a personal nature surfaced when this researcher went to the home of Mr. J.M.K to conduct a participant observation research. Mr. J.M.K sacrifices to his gods ( the Majini ) on every New Year's day and gives a feast to as many people as can come. So this researcher decided to use this chance to go and see for himself what happens there. But when he learnt that the meat that was cooked had first been sacrificed to those gods ( demons ) he declined to participate in the eating on religious grounds. Discussion on this problem is found in Chapter Six and elsewhere in the thesis.

NOTES.

1. Theodore R. Anderson & Morris Zelditch Jr,  
1958/68, page 2.
2. Theodore R. Anderson & Morris Zelditch, Jr,  
1958/68, page 102.

CHAPTER FOUR

A. DATA PRESENTATION : INFORMAL SECTION

In this section, findings from the field study will be presented. A questionnaire (with twenty five questions) was used during the research. But answers to all the questions are not necessarily going to be presented. However, the bulk of the questions will be tackled, and the various answers given for each question by different interviewees presented. At times two or three questions may be grouped together and the answers for them given collectively. No attempt has been made to analyse these answers at this stage. They are all raw data. Analysis and interpretation of these raw data will appear in chapters five and six respectively.

Questions 1 and 2 dealt with personal information, such as name, age, marital status, education etc. All those who answered question 3 ("Do you know anything about Aimu?) without any exception affirmed that they knew something about Aimu.

When asked whether in their opinion they thought that Aimu really existed (Qn.4), all the respondents said yes, they did. Then they were told to explain why they thought so (Qn.5). The following explanations were therefore given to prove that Aimu really exist.



1. Aimu apparitions

(a) In shadowy form

Aimu, in shadowy forms, used to be seen by the Akamba at different places such as dancing grounds, Itutoni, at sacred places, Mathembo and even at homes.

Mr. J.I.K. saw Aimu at their place of dance, Kitutoni, in Kiangini village, Iveti Location, Machakos. He narrated the story as follows:

After we finished dancing, a few of us, about four or six at most, remained behind to talk with our girlfriends, but the rest went home. We sat down on the grass below the dancing ground, Kituto, and began to chat. After some time we heard voices of 'people' coming from the other side towards the dancing ground, Kituto. We could hear the voices of the 'people' advancing towards us, but could not see anybody. We became scared. When they finally reached the dancing ground, Kituto, they stationed there for sometime and continued to talk. Slowly we began to make out very tall shadowy figures dressed in white. They were so tall that we could not see their faces. We could not even tell of what sex they were. They later went back the way they had come.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. N.M.K. saw a female Iimu at their home, seated by the fire place and working on a traditional basket, kyondo. He mistook it for his own mother, but when it disappeared after being spoken to he knew it had been an Iimu.

As usual I came in late from the young people's dance, wathini. I found that my parents had already slept. I too, got into bed and slept. After sleeping for about three or four hours I woke up to answer the call of nature. By the fire place, which was burning, I saw a woman figure whom I mistook for my mother, sitting up late. Maybe she was not getting any sleep, I thought. She had therefore decided to sit by the fire and plait her traditional basket, kyondo. All the same I decided to call. W-a-a!! The fire went out immediately, and the woman disappeared, ushering in total darkness. I was gripped with so much fear that I jumped back into bed, covered myself with my blanket, and slept till the following morning.<sup>2</sup>

According to Mr. N.J.M.<sup>3</sup>, there is also a tall one-legged Iimu, known as Nthambi/Kathambi, Mwiitu wa Lala (Nthambi, daughter of Lala), which used to be seen at wells and river bends where women used to go very early in the morning to fetch water.

It was also seen in the farms during the season that the Akamba referred to as Ivinda ya kuia, the season for bird watching. This was the time when sorghum and millet grains were tender and green in their ears. At times, Nthambi would be seen plaiting a traditional basket, kyondo.

(b) In physical form.

Aimu sometimes visit the living in physical form. Whenever they do, they are either friendly or unfriendly and revengeful. According to Mr. N.J.M., ancestral spirits appear to those who have angered them, especially to the Matima (seers). They always appear to quarrel, reprimand and to fight the seer.

Nevertheless, cases are reported of Matima, (seers) who have had physical confrontations with ancestral spirits they had angered. The ancestor appeared physically in his actual bodily form to quarrel, reprimand, wrestle or even fight the seer concerned. The public would even see the seer's body swollen. The seer would tell them the name of the dead relative who had fought him/her and why. An aunt of mine had been a seer for many years and she had often had physical confrontations with the spirit of her dead grandmother, her personal spirit.<sup>4</sup>

But according to Mr. N.N.K.<sup>5</sup>, the Aimu that used to visit their home (when he was a boy) were very friendly. They always appeared physically in human form. They were either Men-Aimu or Women-Aimu. And whenever they came, his mother always offered some food to them (threw it on the ground) after which they would go. But at no time did he see the Aimu eat the food offered to them. It did not matter whether the food was eaten by dogs or by chickens, provided that the visitors were satisfied by the gesture. None of the visiting Aimu were known to the family.

Mr. B.M.K., reports another story where the visiting limu was both friendly and yet a distant relative, a great grandfather. He relates as follows:

One day Mr. Mutua Mukunuu was returning home, in the evening when he met with a figure that looked like a very old man. The old man stopped him and gave him the following message: 'I am Wangutu, your great grandfather; and I am going to visit you one of these days.' He went home and told his wife what he had seen on the way. After a few weeks Wangutu visited them in the evening and revealed himself to them in the following manner. The family was sitting by the fire place when all of a sudden a figure began to form slowly on the wall of their house. Within a few minutes the figure became very clear, and both the wife and the husband saw him. He identified himself as Wangutu, the one who had met with Mr. Mukunuu on the way. He said he was a great grandfather of theirs, and afterwards disappeared. None of the people living knew him for he had died many years ago.<sup>6</sup>

II. Aimu fires, voices and beatings.

Other ways by which the Akamba know that Aimu exist are through Aimu voices that are heard at sacred places, Mathembo, the beatings that people get when they come too close to the Aimu quarters and the Aimu fires that are seen at the sacred places, Mathembo and at cemeteries.

According to Mr. J.I.K<sup>7</sup>, one such place where Aimu voices were heard was at Kusyomuomo Ithamboni, on Iveti hill, Machakos.

The then area Administrative Officer, Mr. D.J.Penwill<sup>8</sup>, sent a Mr. Norman Larby<sup>9</sup> with prisoners from Machakos, to go to Iveti hill and cut down trees there, prepare the ground and start building an elementary school there. But when the work started, one of them was cutting down a branch from a Mukuyu tree when, to his amazement, instead of the usual white sap, blood oozed out of the cut. Then a feminine voice was heard saying, 'Mwambuwaia u-mwana nimuunenga·ungi' (If you kill this child you will give me another one). The workers, on seeing the blood and hearing that voice, fled from there and reported the matter to the administrative officer.

Mr. D.J. Penwill was very unhappy with that superstitious report. He immediately sent another group with strict orders to forget about their superstitions and clear the place immediately and build the school. But when blood oozed out again and the same feminine voice was heard, the administrative officer gave in. He ordered that the shrine be fenced around and another place be cleared for the school. That second site is where Kusyomuomo Primary School<sup>10</sup> stands today, asserts Mr. J.I.K.

Another informant who also mentioned that blood oozed out of a Mukuyu tree when white men were cutting down the shrine

was Mrs. M.N.<sup>11</sup>

Mr. D.N.M.<sup>12</sup> rounds up this discussion by saying, 'generally, whenever any person, man or woman, young or old, passed too' near an Ithembo, shrine, he, was either slapped or stoned or chased'.

Mr. B.M.K.<sup>13</sup> reports that when he was young they used to see firebrands rising up and falling down from the then Christian cemetery at the Africa Inland Mission (A.I.M), Machakos. But today, those fires have ceased and a theological college has been built on the same ground. Mr. B.M.K's home is near the A.I.M Mission and he has always lived there.

On the same note Mr. J.I.K. says that they too, when he was young (he is now 67 years old) used to see Aimu fires almost every day at around 2 a.m. in an Ithembo, shrine near his home. But nowadays those fires are no longer seen. He continues to live in the same old village.

And finally Mr. N.J.M. says:

At these quarters (spirits' quarters) and elsewhere, lights and fires could be seen. The lights could be either stationary or mobile. A light or a fire could appear and disappear mysteriously. They could be either from the spirits or the spirits themselves, as the spirits were known to assume, as they willed, any sort of visible forms whenever and wherever they wanted to show themselves to human beings for any reason, good or evil.

The fires seemed to consume the vegetation but on the following day one would not find any effects of the fire one had seen at night.<sup>14</sup>

III. To the Akamba the clearest proof that Aimu exist is by Aimu possessions that take place during Kilumi dance (the commonest) and other dances. Some of these other dances during which dancers got possessed were Ilbovoi, Mwambe, Museleku, and Kyesu, among others. Some of the possessing Aimu could be identified as Kyesu Aimu, Ngai Aimu and Mbevo Aimu during which the possessed used to remove the grass that was thatching their huts to make fire 'because they were very cold'! (Mbevo means cold.) The possessed therefore behave differently and do extraordinary things, as can be seen below.

(a) Some of the possessed persons are insensitive to burns.  
Some of the possessed persons hold red-hot charcoal in bare hands without their getting burnt, says Mr. K.N.

I have on several occasions seen possessed persons hold red-hot charcoal, makaa, without getting burnt. And some of those who were doing it are still alive today. Mrs. Mwongeli wife of Kinyili used to get possessed during the Mwambe dance and then hold red-hot charcoal, Makaa, in her bare hands. She was then married next door to my neighbour Mr. Kinyili, but has long been divorced. She is now married to another man in Yatta.<sup>15</sup>

Mr. D.N.M. says:

I have on several occasions seen not only the possessed persons holding red-hot charcoal, makaa, in their bare hands, but also others licking red-hot iron impliments without getting burnt. One such person was Mr. Makau Syuki (deceased).<sup>16</sup>

Mrs. T.M.M. says:

I have on several occasions seen possessed persons jump into the fire but without getting burned.<sup>17</sup>

Lastly Mrs. B.M.K. says:

My uncle, Mr. Z.M. (deceased) used to get possessed during the kilumi dance. When so possessed my uncle would jump into the burning fire (hearth) and dance there for a while, then ascend to the roof, kiango, dance there again floating in the air, and later come down. I have seen it happen very many times!<sup>18</sup>

But his wife Mrs. M.N.N.<sup>19</sup>, denied having seen it happen, although she admitted having seen him do many other strange things (see below).

(b) Some possessed persons act as seers/prophets

Some of the possessed persons prophesy. According to Mr. F.M.M.<sup>20</sup>, the possessed at times foretold events and also offered solutions for the unpleasant ones.



Mr. F.M.M. narrated how a renowned Mukamba medicine man named Iluvya used to advise the Warrior Akamba on the auspicious days for attacking the Masai and raid their cattle. He also forewarned the Akamba of the Masai invasions. One interesting thing about Iluvya was that he was not stingy with his knowledge. If the Masai came to him for consultation, he also told them the most auspicious days for raiding the Akamba cattle, and even forewarned them against the Akamba raids.

According to Mrs. M.N.M, her late husband used to tell them where to find lost items and how to do things to avert an impending danger.

One day some people came and bought a cow from our place, but after a few days the cow came back. It stayed with us for some time and then it disappeared. We looked for it every where and after two months or so we despaired. But when my husband's Aimu came back to him, he told us where to find the lost cow. He told us the cow had strayed into a gully and got trapped there. It could not come out. He also told us that the cow had given birth to a calf of a particular colour, and that both the cow and its calf were still alive and in good health. His step-brother was therefore commissioned to go and bring the animals home. He went and found exactly as my husband had said.

On another occasion there was a family dispute as to where a new cattle shed should be prepared. My husband showed them where it should be, including the exact spot where the gate should be, but they objected to it and prepared the shed elsewhere. So he told them, "Mwalea kwika uu kuikya niva kukwa ng'ombe syi kitumi" (if you do not do that a big number of cows will have died by tomorrow morning). And it happened. In the morning six huge cows were found dead. So they reverted to where my husband had shown them.<sup>21</sup>

But as Mrs. M.N.N. explains, not all prophecies come true. Some of the predictions do not happen as stated. And some of the solutions offered by the possessed seers do not avert the calamities.

One seer and a medicine woman, called Mrs. Nuthikwa Kala (deceased) prophesied that there would not be any rain in a particular year, and advised people to plant only sorghum and cowpeas. But the opposite happened. That year it rained very heavily and people had a lot of yield, except in the seer's home where they had not planted. She was therefore declared a false prophet and excommunicated by the king'ole (Akamba Council of elders).

Sometime later army worms invaded our area and started to eat the crops. Another medicine woman named Syonguma (deceased) advised the elders to sacrifice and ritually bury the worm (kuthika or kutonya kiinyu). That was done, but to no avail. The worms ate everything, ushering in a very severe famine in that part of Ukambani. We used to go to either Kitui or Kikuyu to look for food.<sup>22</sup>

(c) Some possessed persons have strange desires and unusual abilities.

Mr. I.N.<sup>23</sup> relates how during a kilumi dance he saw a possessed woman who wanted to drink dog's blood, and she would not rest until it was procured. She drank it and recovered, that is, the Aimu left her.

Mrs. B.M.K.<sup>24</sup> reports that, when possessed, her uncle Mr. Z.M., used to grow so big at night that he almost displaced his wife from the bed. This information is supposed to have been passed to the outsiders by her uncle's wife, Mrs. M.N.M.<sup>25</sup> When contacted, Mrs. M.N.M. confirmed it. Her daughter-in-law had also heard the same story before from their mother-in-law.

Mrs. B.M.K. continues to describe the mysterious power that her uncle possessed. His wife used to leave him sleeping (in the morning) and go to the only gate/entrance that there was to their home and start milking.

But to her surprise she would later see him coming back from the fields, not knowing where he had passed. When contacted, Mrs. M.N.M confirmed it. Her daughters-in-law had also heard the same story before from their mother-in-law.

Mrs. B.M.K. says that her elder sister, Munyiva, used to get possessed. And when possessed she used to prophesy, and almost all her prophecies came true. But the strange thing with Munyiva was that, when so possessed she never recognized people, not even her own children.

And lastly, according to the same informant, Mrs. Mbesa Kaleli (deceased) who was a medicine woman, used to get possessed. And when possessed, Mrs. Kaleli used to eat stones!!

(d) Some possessed persons eat a lot of food

Mr. Kavuta Kala (deceased) surprised people when he started eating too much food. According to Mrs. M.M.M. <sup>26</sup>, Mr. Kala drew the whole village to come and feed him, because he was very hungry. He was crying and appealing for help. Everyone who heard his cry responded with food, especially porridge, usuu or ikii. He would swallow a gourdful of porridge, kitethi kya usuu/ikii and continue his cry - kyangati kyangati ninquawa ni nzaa-i, kyangati kyangati. (Kyangati kyangati I am dying of hunger. Kyangati means hunger pangs). Mr. Kala later became a medicine man and stopped eating excessive food. He was being called (by Aimu) to become a medicine man (kumwa ni uwa).

When asked whether Aimu can be sent to attack somebody, and if so by whom (Qn. 6 and 7), the respondents got divided into two groups, and a difference between majini and Aimu arose.

According to one group Majini can be sent by a medicine man or his agent, to attack another person, who may be either near or far, whereas Aimu act on their own volition and or attack those who go too close to their quarters, the shrines. But the other group maintained that both Majini and Aimu can be sent, although Aimu are not as powerful and as harmful as Majini.

It was nevertheless, a very small percentage, about 7.3% that said that Aimu can actually be sent to harm somebody. The rest said that Aimu attack when disturbed by the humans, and that it is the Majini that are, and can be sent to attack a person(s) or a family.

#### AIMU CAN BE SENT TO ATTACK SOMEBODY

The following are some of the respondents who said that Aimu can be sent. A medicine man can send Aimu to attack another person, says Mrs. M.N.H.<sup>27</sup>. The Aimu that are sent are called kiika or muviti spirits. The kiika/muviti Aimu are spirits of dead wifeless persons who die away from their homes. Those spirits keep on wandering about aimlessly in the woods and waste places. A medicine man has the power to, and can get these wandering muviti spirits and send them to another person, who then becomes mad.

Mr. M.N.<sup>28</sup> talked of Uoi wa mathembo (witchcraft of the shrines), which he said is known and practised by women only. A woman mixes all types of food and goes to a shrine and offers it there, mentioning the name of the person she wants to harm. She summons all the Aimu from all the shrine and directs them, kwathiisya, to go and attack so and so. This process is known as kuthemba nganya, ( to sacrifice so and so) and it is said to be very effective. After that the 'person sacrificed' becomes sick, which must include madness, and may die if nothing is done about it very soon.

According to Mr. D.N.M.<sup>29</sup> Love Aimu can be sent by a medicine man or his agent to a girl that one is wooing, to persuade her to love him. His own sister was sent Aimu by her lover, Mr. Mbithi Vuio (deceased) to persuade her to accept him in marriage. They later got married. But when the Aimu powers, which were sustaining their love ended, their love also ended, and he hated her, though she was very beautiful. Attempts to contact Mrs. Mbithi for comment were fruitless for reasons that need not be published.

#### HAJINI CAN BE SENT TO ATTACK SOMEBODY

Mr. M.K.<sup>30</sup> narrated how a pigeon that visited and stayed with the family of a Mr. K.M., became the cause of two deaths in that home. When they consulted a medicine man they were told that the pigeon that was staying in their home was the cause of the deaths, because it had been sent. They were therefore advised to kill it and burn it under kerosene.

When contacted Mr. K.M.<sup>31</sup> confirmed that two of his children (one in standard two and the other aged three months) died when that pigeon came to their home, but denied that the order to kill it and burn it under kerosene came from any medicine man. He said that it was his own initiative after learning that the bird was responsible for the death of his children.

After the three-month old baby died the wife conceived again and gave birth. While the baby was still nursing, its mother woke up one night and went out to answer the call of nature. The sky was very clear and it was a full moon. As she was relieving herself she heard a voice behind her, which said, "Ninqwithie vau!" (Let me find you there!). She took to her heels, calling the husband from the house of her co-wife to come to her rescue.

He came out immediately but nothing was seen. The following morning they could not see any foot prints at the spot where the voice had been heard the previous night. So they went to the diviners, who told them that the power of the bird that they had killed was the one still operating. They had killed the bird on their own, without first consulting a medicine man.

Mr. K.M. brought a medicine man from Voi who advised him to collect all types of cereals and foodstuffs; mix them with coins and pieces of clothing, and then deposit them in a traditional highway, isyuko, so that whoever picks up any of them removes that problem (Majini) from their home. He did that. After that the medicine man went around Mr. K.M.'s land sprinkling some protective solution and chanting some words softly as he went. Then he planted a protective magical substance into the ground to ward off any future enemy attacks, be they witchcraft or majini. After that he cleansed the home, treated the members and left. That was done in March 1984, and to this day (1987) there has not been any problem.

When asked who had sent the Majini (pigeon) to them and why, Mr. K.M. immediately mentioned his uncle, whose name he gave. This revelation had come from the diviners and medicine men. Mr. K.M. and his uncle have in the past been quarrelling over their inherited land. So the uncle had decided to send Majini to Mr. K.M.'s place not only to evict them from there but to kill the whole family so that he could own the whole land.

But Mr. K.M.'s uncle was not contacted for comment. It was suggested that that would not be a wise thing to do.



Mr. Simon<sup>32</sup>, a Tanzanian medicine man based at Machakos, whose other names the researcher was not able to get, confirmed that he owns Majini, and that he can and does send them to go and do whatever he tells them to do. He cited a case where one of his clients had not come with enough money when he came for treatment. So, with the man's permission the Majini were dispatched to go and bring more money from the man's home. Within ten minutes the money was placed on the man's laps. He paid his medicine man and went home.

Mr. Simon said that he divines using his Majini and that without them he can do nothing. Whenever any one goes to him with a problem, one is led into a very dark room, the sanctuary, and made to sit down on a mat. After a few minutes one hears the door being knocked at. Mr. Simon, the medicine man, tells 'them' to come in. The door is opened and one hears footsteps of 'people' entering the room, but does not see any one. The in-coming 'people', the Majini, greet the patient in Kiswahili, as they take their seats in front of them. Mr. N.J.M.<sup>33</sup> reports how he was greeted, when he went there for divination.

The male Jini (had a deep masculine voice), which was leading as they entered the room, asked him "Habari kijana"! (How are you young man!)

After that the female Jini (feminine voice) said, "Habari mwanangu"! (How are you my child!). And he replied to both the greetings.

After that he was asked, by the Majini, to pay fifteen Kenya shillings to start the business. He did, and immediately the divination started. He was asked what his problems were. He began to tell them. But to his surprise the Majini seemed to know so many things about him and his own family back at Kitui, that he became scared. Among other things that they told him was where he had worked before coming to Machakos. It was Mr. N.J.M. who introduced this researcher to Mr. Simon, the medicine man, and accompanied him on the three occasions he went there.

After learning that Mr. Simon's Majini could talk and bring items from elsewhere, the researcher decided to try them. It was decided that an item (newspaper) be left at Mr. N.J.M.'s place, and the Majini be asked to go and bring it. The researcher also carried a tape-recorder with him to record the conversation between himself and the Majini. But on the three occasions he went there, the Majini were always out with a colleague of Mr. Simons.

It was however, learnt that Majini's voices cannot get into a tape, unless their master, the medicine man, grants that permission. To emphasize that point, Mr. Simon said that several Europeans have been coming to him with small tape-recorders hidden in their pockets but later discovered that the majini's voices had not gotten into the tape, though they had conversed a lot with them. The Europeans would hear only their own voices, and maybe that of the medicine man.

It was also learnt that Mr. Simon is an adopted son of a Mukamba woman working at Machakos town, and that that Mukamba woman also uses the same majini for divination and for treatment. So, on three occasions that this researcher visited them, the majini were out with this woman treating people.

Interestingly, the researcher had an opportunity of seeing the medicine man's dark room, the sanctuary. On his last visit to that place, i.e 21st June, 1985, the researcher was conducted to the sanctuary by the medicine man himself. While inside, the researcher was asked to produce a coin, if he had any, spit on it and then drop it somewhere where he was shown. He produced a ten cent coin and did as he was told. The room was not very dark that time because, a lantern lamp was burning, though with a very low flame. A mat was spread on the floor, and alot of paraphernalia were seen.

In the sitting room there were two different sayings hung on the wall. They were both written in Arabic and translated into english.

The first one read as follows:

Muhammad left us Koran and his own lifestyle to follow.

The second said:

Alah alone is to be worshipped, and Muhammed is His prophet.

It has already been mentioned (see case study - two) that Mr. J.M.N., was sent Majini by his younger brother Mr. S.M.N, to evict him from their inherited land, so that he (Mr. S.M.N) could own the whole land. This revelation was given to them by Mr. Kajiwa when he, as a last resort, was called in to come and remove whatever was beating them up. It was also Mr. Kajiwa who revealed that the animals that appeared in Mr. J.M.N's compound, were actually Majini, sent by Mr. S.M.N. to go and kill that family. The animals were a dog, a cock and finally a goat with two kids.

Another question which may be asked at this stage, and which seems to cover the objective of the remaining questions would be, "What other traditional beliefs may be behind the beliefs in and the fear of spirits, Aimu, and their activities?". To that question the following answers were received:

1. The Akamba believe in and fear witchcraft, Uoi.

According to Mr. I.N<sup>34</sup>, Mr. Josiah Muoki (deceased) was bewitched by Mr. M.S. after they quarrelled over a land boundary. A few days after the quarrel Mr. Muoki started behaving funny. He started eating his own faeces. At the same time his stomach began to swell, and it became so big that he at last died.

According to Miss J.K.K.<sup>35</sup> and Mr. M.K.<sup>35</sup> (jointly interviewed), one Mr. M.M., a primary school teacher, was bewitched by a woman for whom he had written a letter.

When contacted, Mr. M.M.<sup>36</sup> was quite reluctant to talk about that incident. And it has not yet been established exactly why he was not willing to talk about it. It could be he felt embarrassed to talk about those things in the presence of his wife. Admitting that one has been mad in the past is no good news to tell. Or it may be because he was in a hurry. He was going to a meeting.

But during the few minutes that he talked, he revealed that in 1968 he had to break his P2 training at Kangumo Teachers' College because of sickness. But in 1972 he went back and completed the training. It was during that time when he was sick and out of the college that it was rumoured that he had been bewitched by a certain neighbouring woman (whose name he disclosed). So out of anger and desperation, he went to her place and beat her up very thoroughly. And after sometime he recovered. After that that woman did not stay there for long. They sold off their land at a throw-away price and went away. Her immediate departure and failure to report the beatings to the police convinced people that she had actually bewitched him. This researcher was shown the exact place where that woman's home used to be.

2. The Akamba believe in the effectiveness of magic.

(a) Mbandio/Kuvandiwa Kithangona - A jinx

A mbandio is usually a fetish, which a medicine man or his agent places or plants in the house, homestead or farm of the person he wants to harm. It is intended to cause death, sickness, disagreement or just general confusion in that home. But any magically treated object may also be harmful. A small scratch from such a magically treated object can render the foot which hits it disabled.

According to Mr. M.K.<sup>37</sup>, Mrs. Muendo was pierced on the foot by a maize stub. The foot became swollen and so painful that she had to be taken to Kenyatta National Hospital for treatment. She was admitted and stayed there for six months. She was then discharged to go home and look for traditional healers, because she was not getting any better, but only worse. By the time she left the hospital, the whole leg was almost disabled. But after consulting traditional healers, her leg got healed. Today she walks like any other person. Attempts to contact her for comment were fruitless. It is believed that the maize stub which pierced her had been worked upon (magically) by a medicine man or his agent.

In Machakos town there is a medicine man from Kitui called Mr. Maina Maingi<sup>38</sup>. Mr. Maingi narrated to this researcher how he removed a mbandia from somebody's house, at Machakos town, which had defeated other medicine men for more than seven years.

The mbandio was in the third row of a brick-built house, and it had the ability to move from place to place along the wall. That is why it had defeated other medicine men. But Mr. Maingi removed it without causing any damage to the wall.

Mr. Maingi divines using a torch at night, and a mirror during the day. So, when he was called, the first thing he did was to tell the owners not to show him where the mbandio was. (They had already been told where it was). He wanted to discover it on his own. And because it was at night, he took out his torch, applied some medicine onto it, and then switched it on. He moved the torch light in a systematic way, from one direction to the other, until it reached where the object was. And when it did, it started flickering. He therefore announced to everybody that the place where the light flickered was where the mbandio was. They all said yes, because previous medicine men had detected it at the same place; but it used to move away and then come back whenever anybody tried to remove it.

Mr. N.J.M<sup>39</sup>, who was present when this operation was taking place adds, 'If the mbandio is too powerful, the torch goes off on its own and lights again when moved elsewhere.' He related an incident in Kitui where the same medicine man, who is actually his own cousin, was called upon to remove a mbandio from a neighbour's farm.

There, Mr. N.J.M witnessed the torch going off on its own whenever its light reached where the mbandio was, and lighting again, when moved away.

After spotting the mbandio, Mr. Maingi began to arrange his equipment to remove it when, to everyone's disappointment, he announced that the object had moved away. It was at that juncture that the broken-hearted old mother cried:

That is true my son. It always does that. And that is why it has been defeating all medicine men since 1978, when it was first detected.

But Mr. Maingi calmed them down, telling them not to worry because the situation was still under control. He then located it again, and immediately trapped it using his magical powers. He pulled it from the wall into the ground and then away from the wall to an open place, where he immediately poured beer around it (in case it had been placed there by a man) and also tea (in case it had been planted by a woman).

Having subdued it, he then asked for something to dig with. All the village gathered to see what he would get out of that place. And sure enough, to everyone's satisfaction and wonder, he removed the mbandio, a rusted horn of a goat, tied with seven strings, and covered with wax.



When contacted, Mrs. L.K.<sup>40</sup>, a middle-aged woman, whose husband and children were restored to good and decent living by the removal of the mbandio and the subsequent treatment by Mr. Maingi, confirmed that the above story is correct. She added that Mr. Maingi also removed another mbandio from their cultivated land. This time it was during the day time, so the medicine man used a mirror to detect where the object was. She also witnessed the removal of this one. Mrs. L.K. was glad that at last peace had returned to her home. Previously her children had refused school, but now they were attending. Her husband, who had been a helpless drunkard, leaving her to feed for the family, has now stopped drinking. He not only helps in supporting the family, but also loves her and the children, unlike before.

(b) Mbingo (Lit. Protected).

The Akamba use mbingo, magic, to protect not only their property from thieves, but also to prevent their unfaithful wives from having sexual intercourse with other men. Mrs. M.W.K.<sup>41</sup> related how her own brother and others got trapped when they tried to steal cassava from a protected farm (muunda muingo).

The men, numbering up to four or more, were returning home from a hunting expedition and were very hungry, because they had not killed anything. On seeing a cassava farm on their way back, they sent one of them to go and dig up some cassavas for the group to eat.

The man went and began to dig, but as soon as he saw the first cassava, there was a total black out. He could not see anything, not even his way back. So he called out to his colleagues and asked:

Ku kwenyu nikutie, kau kuu nikuie ?

Has anything come/happened there because something has happened here?

The other men guessed what had happened and they told him to cover the place again and rejoin them. He did, and sure enough sight returned to him. He went and joined them and they went home.

The other type of protection is sexual. On 5th July 1983 and 8th July 1983, the local press<sup>42</sup> published the story of a man and a married woman, who had an affair behind her husband's back, and got stuck to each other because the woman's husband had secretly protected his wife against any sexual intercourse with other men. According to the press report, the police rushed the couple to Kenyatta National Hospital "still clinging together". Neighbours had tried in vain, to pull them apart before they decided to call the police.

Mr. F.M.<sup>43</sup> a records officer at the Kenyatta National Hospital, said that he had heard that the two people were brought to the casualty department of the hospital, treated and later discharged.

He did not elaborate, but advised this researcher to contact the hospital authorities for further information.

Dr. H.<sup>44</sup>, a Provincial Gynaecologist, based at Machakos General Hospital, confirmed that he not only heard of the incident but also met some workers (cleaners), who had actually seen the man and the woman at the casualty section, "still clinging together". But the most interesting thing is that the Nursing Officer in charge of that section, did not have the names of these patients in her records, said the doctor.

When contacted, a long-serving Nursing Officer<sup>45</sup> at the casualty department who requested anonymity, at first repeated what the others had said, that is, she had heard of it but not seen the people. But when the researcher returned in the afternoon, with the newspaper cutting referred above, she became a bit more cooperative. She looked at the researcher straight on the face and said, "If you want to interview us go and get a letter of authorization from the Director of Kenyatta National Hospital and come back. We will tell you more." And because the Director was not immediately available to give the required letter, no more information could be received.

But the press report seems to have not only established the couples, presence in the hospital wards, but also to have received confirmation from some of the hospital authorities that the couple were actually treated there.

A well-placed source at the hospital told "The Standard" the unfortunate couple were still undergoing treatment in the hospital. By yesterday evening it had not established what method was used to separate the couple or what treatment the two were undergoing.

The source said the woman's husband who was believed to have gone to his Ukambani home to consult a witchdoctor, who had helped him catch his unfaithful wife red-handed, had not yet returned.

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Contacted for comment, the hospital administrator claimed he had no knowledge of the mysterious incident. When "The Standard" told him of the particular ward where the couple had been hospitalized, he promised to give details after investigating. He could not be traced thereafter.<sup>46</sup>

(c) Kaleve (a type of magic)

The Akamba also believe in the power of another type of magic called Kaleve. It is a spell, nzevu. But the Kikamba word nzevu seems to be broader in meaning than the English 'spell'. Nzevu carries with it the idea of a powdered substance (muti muthie), which the bewitcher/administrant releases into the air in the direction of the person(s) or thing(s) he intends to harm, to stupefy, or to just disperse, like in the case of wild animals.

As he releases the powder he directs it (kwathiisya) to what it should do. Kaleve was mostly used during traditional dance competitions and other related activities. Kaleve power could for example detain dancers on the way for a very long time, forcing them to miss a dance competition, and enabling their opponents to have an easy walk-over.

The other difference was that whereas nzevu could be used with evil intentions, that is, to harm others, kaleve was always used as a form of entertainment, a sport or a game, through which different people, and in particular leaders (Ngumii sya wathi) of different dancing groups (Ituto) demonstrated their prowess. The one whose kaleve was strongest was congratulated most and applauded by the public. Kaleve was therefore an accepted offensive weapon for use during traditional dance competitions. A good example of an Akamba dance during which kaleve was used much was the Mbeni dance.

Mr. J.I.K<sup>47</sup>, of Iveti Location, Machakos was a famous dance leader (Ngumii ya wathi yai mbai) in the 1940's. Some of the kaleves he used were Muteo kaleve (Trap kaleve), Muteve kaleve (Muteve is a plant) and Nzuki kaleve (Bees Kaleve)

He relates:

We used to set up a trap on the way (Lit. plant a stick into the ground) so that when dancers pass that way they may be caught and detained there by an unseen power. They would all fall to the ground and be unable to move either forward or backward. They would therefore remain there until the person who had set up that trap comes to release them. My group and I were caught in 1942 and detained for a whole week by a trap that had been set up by one Mr. Nzyoka Kyambo. We were being brought food there. In the end we paid him kshs.12, i.e the price of a goat and he freed us.

Muteve is another type of kaleve which was used to cause the dancers of an opposing team to fall down and begin foaming and kicking about as if in fits. The administrant, holding his corked bamboo container that contained the kaleve powder, would kwathiisya (Lit. direct) as follows:

Vaya ve eitu muonza, na anake muonza.

Onthe ninamavalukya vau nthi.

Nimo namila uu: Naimila kikuniko.

Nayu ninaumya thavu woo : nnyumya kikuniko kyu

ngikia kingi.

Andu asu mevaluka vu nthi na kumasya ivuyu,

muvaka niuungamii wa wathi ambisuva nimokilye;

nundu mekala kilungu kiasa mate okilye no matonya kukw'a.

Ateo akethwa esi kyama kiu noutonya kukilya  
aini make makaendema na kwina wathi.

Hamina kwisuvwa na kunangwa kila neetya ta mikanda  
ili kana mbui, nookaa na kathitu kakwa nathooete  
Imole, kuya Yatta. Hinamatinaa asu mavalukite  
kila mundu kavaso, na kanywa, na nqiweta, makitika.  
Na indi makyukila.

Over there are seven young women and seven young men.  
I have struck them down.

It is they I have twisted this way : then I  
twist the lid.

I have now taken their lives ( I announce ):  
removing the lid and replacing it with another one.  
Those people would fall down and remain there  
frothing in their mouths until their leader pleads  
with me to raise them up, because if they remain  
there for too long they may easily die.

But if their leader knows that trick, he may raise  
his dancers up, so that they continue dancing.

After being pleased with and given what I demanded,  
like two drums or a goat, I would go with my small  
fetish (dimunitive) which I bought at Imole, in  
Yatta. I would touch the fallen people with it,  
on their chest, mouth, and then call them.  
They would answer and rise.

He gave this illustration.

In 1942, my dancing group and I were invited by the then colonial government to Nairobi, to go and perform for the British Officers in Kenya. A government lorry was sent to ferry us.

Other dancers were also invited. It appeared as though they had already been told of my powers (probably by my friend Mr. D.N.M.<sup>48</sup>), of 'killing' people and then 'resurrecting' them, because they asked me to do it in their presence. So, from a distance, I caused some of my dancers, whom we chose together, to fall down. Immediately government doctors were dispatched to go and try to raise them up. But they could not. Then I raised them. On seeing such a feat, all the other dancers fled, leaving all the food behind.

There is yet another type of kaleve called Nzuki kaleve (bees kaleve). This one is used when one wants to disperse dancers. Holding the bamboo container that contained his kaleve powder with one hand, and the handle of a whip in the other hand, the administrant would kwathiisya (Lit.direct) as follows:

Kithui kii, ethwa kula nakumisye kwai kwaw'o  
Ninautuma ukavalaanya wathi ula wina nganya  
(Muungamii wa wathi). Manaitolekya kivoko kila  
nilingilite. Oyu mituki andu asu onthe mevalaanw'a  
ni nzuki, onakau aloeli mayaumawa.



Manyaiika Neekaa kutwila mata nanqikuna kithalu.

'Thii!' 'Syokai!' Ma nzuki iinyaiika.

This swarm (of bees), if where I collected you from was genuine/true, I have sent you to go and disperse the dance that is with so and so (name of the dance leaders). Then I would quickly unwind the whip that was on my waist, and make a whizzing sound with it. Immediately those dancers would be dispersed by bees. Surprisingly, the spectators were never stung.

After they disperse (Manyaiika)

I used to spit into the air, and with a click on my fingers, beckon the bees to go back. Go! Go back! and the bees would disappear.<sup>49</sup>

### 3. Curse (Kiumo)

Curse is another thing which is believed in and feared most by the Akamba, whether illiterate or highly educated. Mr. T.W.'s story illustrates this:

There was a Mr. N.K. from location X of Machakos District, who was a retired primary school teacher. He had very highly educated children, both sons and daughters, who were, and still are holding very important posts in Kenya today.

One day, he took a woman, who had children who were not his, hired a room for her in town, and started living there with her. But his children were not happy with that behaviour. They told him to leave that woman and go home. But the old man told them to leave him alone to lead his life as he wished; after all he had educated them. He refused to go home.

Then on another day, when their father was not there, all his children, both sons and daughters, ganged up and beat up that woman thoroughly, and ordered her to leave their father alone. When their father returned, he summoned all his children to a family meeting and cursed them because of their behaviour.

After accusing them of being proud because of their social status and the many vehicles they had (it is said that they had nearly ten, with some of them owning two or more cars), he said:

Mitokaa ino mukwiyona nayo noyo ikamumina.

These cars, of which you are proud of, are the same ones which will finish you.

That same day, as they were returning to their respective places of residence, one of his daughters had a car accident, and died on the spot. Her husband did not die, but became paralysed. That was in 1981. A week later she was buried.

After burying her, one of his sons was driving back home when his car overturned and rolled. He escaped with minor injuries and bruises.

Still in the same month, another son had yet another car accident, but he too escaped with minor injuries. But after the third accident, the sons realized that it was their father's curse (mentioned above) that was causing those accidents. So they decided to go back and ask his pardon and blessings.

At the sametime, village elders, who were worried by these many accidents, also approached Mr. M.K. and requested him to reconsider his stand concerning his children. He demanded an unconditional apology from his children, if he had to change his mind. They were also required to pay a given amount of money each, to compensate for the harm they had done. They did that, and then slaughtered a bull for the cleansing ceremony, kuumukwa. They were cleansed and accepted back as his children. They in turn, accepted his concubine as their step-mother. He stayed with that woman until his death at the end of 1983.

But before he died, he called all his sons and ordered them to be taking care of that woman until she also dies. Up to this day they still do it. She still stays in the same town where her husband left her.

4. Kithitu (Oath)<sup>51</sup>.

Finally, the Akamba believe in the effectiveness of an oath and fear it very much. There are two types or uses of Ithitu (plural of Kithitu), which seem relevant to this study.

(a) Kithitu (Oath) is used as a weapon of revenge by the weak, and by those who may feel that they have been unjustly deprived or denied of their rights. After unsuccessfully attempting to recover his/her debt or after failing to identify who, from a group/community has stolen his property, a person procures a potent fetish, and then strikes it athiisye (Lit.directing) as follows:

Whoever stole/took/deprived me of my such and such,  
may this kithitu kill him/her.

Mysterious and sudden succession of deaths or grave misfortunes within the family or amongst the relatives of the wrong-doer, is a sure sign that the kithitu has begun to take effect. A medicine man is quickly brought in to cleanse the family before more losses/deaths occur. But before the cleansing ceremony begins, the culprit or his family (if he is already dead) must return whatever he had taken/stolen, with costs.

(b) Kithitu (Oath), as a means of settling land disputes.  
This is the commonest use of kithitu among the Akamba.

Here, unlike the previous type, the parties concerned are well known. And if the kithitu has to take effect it has to kill a specific person or members of his immediate family.

Among the Akamba, kithitu is regarded as the highest court of appeal, whose power transcends the visible modern world. After a kithitu has been struck, the litigants sit back and wait for the final judgement from above. An invisible power is expected to strike the wrongdoer, avenge the weak, and vindicate the right/innocent. A sudden death of the person who swears falsely on the kithitu or of his immediate family members is a sure sign that he was on the wrong. And a medicine man must be brought immediately to cleanse them before many more members die. A well known Kamba saying goes as follows:

Kithitu nikiminaa misyi

Kithitu (Oath) does annihilate families.

This is a warning to the powerful and shrewd Akamba not to take other people's property, and in particular land, because if they did and the kithitu is struck, it would mercilessly clear (kill) such a family and their relatives. Therefore, a kithitu taker is usually cautioned, both by his family and friends, not to swear on the kithitu if he was not sure that what he was saying was true, lest he plunges all of them into trouble.



## B. DATA PRESENTATION : FORMAL SECTION

The above Table (Fig. 1) represents all the answers that were given by the respondents, for different questions put to them, but in a compressed form. The answers were scaled and are shown in the column on the left hand side of the Master Table. Variables, like Education, Age and Occupation of the respondents are shown in the rows on the right hand side of the same Master Table. By comparing the belief column (dependent variable) with other rows (independent variables) it was discovered that a relationship existed between them.

### SCALING

From the answers given by the interviewees, it was possible to scale each respondent's level (intensity) of belief in spirits, Aimu. The grades awarded ranged from 1, representing the lowest to 5, the highest level of belief, a five-point scale (1-5) was adopted.

It is possible to construct a five-point scale from zero, that is 0 - 4, but this researcher did not do that, because none of the interviewees were found to have no belief in the Aimu, spirits.

Why the researcher chose the five-point scale and not any other, like a three-point scale, seven-point scale or a ten-point one, is not very easy to explain.

To say that it was the researcher's decision may not be very convincing, yet it is the truth. As long as some order has been followed, the number of positions one puts in one's scale does not seem to matter very much. Claire Selltiz and others (1951/65) have this to say:

In constructing a rating scale, one must decide how many scale positions or categories are to be used, unless one is using a graphic scale on which the rater is free to check any point on a continuous line. There is no simple rule for determining the optimal number of positions. A basic consideration of course, is the degree of differentiation wanted in the measurement.<sup>52</sup>

The parameters used or why some answers were rated high like, let us say 5 or 4 and others as low as 1 or 2 maybe of interest to some people. Again, this is another area where the judgement of the researcher had to come in. And in judging/rating, it is possible that some elements of subjectivity may have slipped in. But an attempt was made to make the judging unbiased and as objective as possible.

The respondents who were rated as high as 5 or 4 were those who showed a very strong belief in what they were saying/reporting.



They were people who had either been personally attacked by the Aimu/Majini or were present when their friends were attacked. In answer to the question, "Do you think Aimu really exist, and if so why?" (Qns. 4 & 5), Mr. N.I.<sup>53</sup> related how, during a Kilumi dance, he witnessed a possessed woman drink dog's blood. He was rated 5. Mrs. M.M.M.<sup>54</sup>, in answer to the same question related how she witnessed a possessed Mr. Kavuta Kala (nicknamed 'Kyangati', deceased), drank hundreds of gourdfuls of porridge without getting satisfied. The informant also used to get possessed and do strange things. The researcher has even seen her possessed. She was rated 5. Mr. B.M.M.<sup>55</sup>, in answer to the same question related how he witnessed a family (see case study Two) being beaten by unseen personalities. He was rated 4.

Those who replied that they did not know, to the questions put to them, were rated 1. Mr. F.M.M.<sup>56</sup>, when asked whether Aimu can be sent to attack somebody, and if so by whom (Qns. 6 & &), replied that he did not know. He was rated 1. Mr. A.M.<sup>57</sup>, in answer to the same question also said he did not know. He was rated 1.

Those who brought in Christian ideas or sounded evasive were rated 2. Pastor W.M.<sup>58</sup>, when asked whether Aimu can be sent to attack somebody, and if so who sends them (Qns. 6 & 7), answered that 'Satan' sends them. He was rated 2.

Another pastor, Mr. A.M.<sup>59</sup>, when asked whether he thought that witchcraft works, and if so in what areas (Qns. 9 & 10), replied, "Death originated with Adam and Eve". He was rated 2.

Three, being the mid-point between strong believers and the weak ones, was hardest to decide. Those who made statements of fact without showing whether they believed in the facts or not (non-committal facts) were rated 3. Mr. F.M.M.<sup>60</sup>, when asked whether he thought that Aimu existed, and if so why (Qns. 4 & 5) said:

Aimu are dead people, to whom libation is offered. The Akamba are convinced that these people are not fully dead; that is why libation is offered to them.

He was rated 3. In reply to the same question, Mr. Z.N.K.<sup>61</sup> said, "Aimu used to possess women during the kilumi dances", period. He too, was rated 3.

CODING SYSTEM.

I. VERTICAL (AREAS OF STUDY)

Ms..... Masaku  
I..... Itetani  
K..... Kisau  
Mbo..... Mbooni

II. HORIZONTAL

Column 1 ..... Sex  
M = Male  
Fe = Female

Column 2 ..... Age  
15 - 25.....A  
26 - 35.....B  
36 - 45.....C  
46 - 55.....D  
56 - 70.....E  
Above 70.....F

Column 3..... Occupation  
Pastor ..... 1  
Teacher..... 2  
Housewife/Farmer.... 3

Column 4..... Education

No school.....	σ
Primary seven.....	α
Secondary 'O'.....	β
'A' level.....	η
Diploma/s1.....	<del>ϕ</del>
Dip. Theol.....	ψ

Column 5..... Type of school attended

Mission school.....	1
Govt./Harambee.....	2
Government.....	3

Column 6..... Religion

Christian.....	1
Muslim.....	2
Traditional.....	4

Column 7..... Yes/No answers

Y.....	Yes
N.....	No
X.....	I do not know

Qn(s)..... Question number(s) as they appear in the questionnaire.

NOTES.

1. Mr. J.I.K., 67, interviewed at his home in Iveti location, Machakos on 17/11/86.
2. Mr. N.M.K. 66 years interviewed at his home on 15/1/85.
3. Mr. N.J.M., Tutor Machakos T.T.C. interviewed on 22/3/85 and 21/6/85.
4. Mr. N.J.M., interviewed on 22/3/85, 21/6/85 and his unpublished paper "Death and Here after"
5. Mr. N.M.K., 66 years, interviewed on 15/1/85.
6. Mr. B.M.K., 83 years, interviewed on 12/1/85 and 26/10/86 at his home in Iveti location, Machakos.
7. Mr. J.I.K., 67 years, interviewed on 17/11/86
8. Mr. D.J. Penwill became a District Commissioner at Machakos from 1952 to 1955.
9. Mr. Norman Larby was the principal of Government African School, Machakos from 1938 - 1945. He was also in the District. After 1945, he went to the Headquarters to become incharge of African Education in Kenya.
10. Kusyokuomo Elementary School was opened in 1944.
11. Mrs. M.N., 46, interviewed on 10/1/85
12. Mr. D.N.M. 67, retired D.O., interviewed on 16/10/86
13. Mr. B.M.K., 83, jointly interviewed with his wife on 12/1/85
14. Mr. N.J.M, Tutor, Machakos Teachers' College, interviewed on 22/3/85, 21/6/85 and also his typed unpublished paper on 'Death and Hereafter'.

15. Mr. K.M, 62, interviewed at his home in Kisau location on 21/12/84 and on 21/2/87. Mwangeli could not be contacted for comment because she is too far.
16. Mr. D.N.M, 67, interviewed at his home in Iveti location, Machakos, on 16/10/86.
17. Mrs. T.M.M, 60, interviewed at her home in settled area, Machakos, on 14/6/86.
18. Mrs. B.M.K., 75, jointly interviewed with her husband at their home in Iveti location, Machakos, on 12/1/85.
19. Mrs. M.N.M, more than 100 years old, interviewed at her home in Iveti location, Machakos, on 19/2/87.
20. Mr. F.M.M, 79, interviewed at his home in Iveti location, Machakos, on 5/1/85.
21. Mrs. M.N.M., more than 100 years old, interviewed in her Iveti home, Machakos on 19/2/87 in the presence of her daughters-in-law who also confirmed that they have heard these stories and many more from their mother-in-law.
22. Mrs. M.M.M, about 82, interviewed at her home in Kisau location, Machakos on 17/12/84 and 20/2/87.
23. Mr. I.N., 43, interviewed at his Kalawani home, Machakos on 21/11/84.
24. Mrs. B.M.K., 75, interviewed
25. Mrs. M.N.M, more than 100 years old, interviewed.
26. Mrs. M.M.M, about 82 years old, interview.
27. Mrs. M.M.M, about 82 years old, interview.
29. Mr. D.N.M, 67, interview.

30. Mr. M.K, 23, was at that time working at Mr. K.M's home. He is currently at Kilimabogo T.T.C. interviewed on 7/12/84 and 10/12/84.
31. Mr. K.M., 40, interviewed at his home in Kisau location, on 7/11/86
32. Mr. Simon, about 40 years old, visited on 22/3/85, 14/6/85 and interviewed on 21/6/85.
33. Mr. N.J.M, interview.
35. Miss J.K.K and Mr. M.K., jointly interviewed on 7/12/84 in Miss J.K.K's home, Kisau location.
36. Mr. M.M, 36, Primary school teacher, interviewed at his home on 8/11/86.
37. Mr. M.K, 23, interview.
38. Mr. Willy Maina Maingi, 32, a medicine man from Kitui, based at Machakos, interviewed on 14/6/85.
39. Mr. N.J.M, about 38, Cousin to Mr. Willy Maina Maingi, and Tutor at Machakos Teachers' College, interviewed on 22/3/85, 14/6/85 and 21/6/85.
40. Mrs. L.K, about 40, interviewed at her home on 26/3/87.
41. Mrs. M.W.K, about 55 years old, interviewed in her home at Kisau location, Machakos, on 8/11/86.
42. 'The Standard' of 5/7/83, pg. 3, Kenya News Agency and of 8/7/83, pg. 3, reported by Mr. Wanjohi Muttunga.
43. Mr. F.M., about 40, records officer at K.N.H, interviewed at his office on 26/3/87.
44. Dr. H., about 42, interviewed at Machakes General Hospital, on 23/3/87.
45. This anonymous nurse, who has worked in that department for more than ten years was interviewed on 26/3/87.

46. 'The Standard' of 8/7/83, pg. 3, reported by Mr. Wanjohi Muttunga.
47. Mr. J.I.K, 67, interviewed at his home in Iveti location, Machakos, on 17/11/86.
48. Mr. D.M.N, 67, confirmed that he witnessed the dance in Nairobi, where English doctors could not raise the fallen dancers but his friend Mr. J.I.K, raised them, interviewed on 16/10/86.
49. All this information was given by Mr. J.I.K, 67, a former dance leader, from Iveti location, Machakos, on 17/11/86.  
He became a christian in 1947, and handed over the Kaleve paraphernatia to his younger brother, who in turn abandoned them at Nairobi, after a person that he treated died.
50. Mr. T.W., who is 26 and a Univeristy graduate, believed staunchly in the effectiveness of a curse. He was interviewed on 12/11/86.
51. For further discussion on the subject see O.K. Mutungi, 1977.
52. C. Selltiz, M. Dentsch, M.Jahoda and S.W. Cook, 1951/65, pg. 353.
53. Mr. M.I, 43, interview
54. Mrs. M.M.M, 82, interview.
55. Mr. B.M.M, 41, interviewed on 22/1/85 and 30/10/86.
56. Mr. F.M.M., 79, interviewed on 5/1/85
57. Pastor A.M., 57, interviewed on 6/12/84
58. Pastor W.M., 35, interviewed on 7/11/84



59. Pastor A.M, 57, interview.
60. Mr. Г.М.М, 79, interview.
61. Mr. Z.N.K, interviewed on 8/1/85.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

In this chapter correlation results and descriptive data have been analysed and interpreted. Correlation results (see table below) have been presented first, analysed and interpreted, followed by the descriptive data. Then the two types of results have been compared/linked (where necessary) with other relevant existing works.

#### TABLE V.1 : CORRELATIONS OF THE INTENSITY OF SPIRIT - BELIEF WITH AGE, PROFESSION AND EDUCATION.

The table given below shows the results received (correlations) after computing the intensity of belief in spirits against age, profession and education of the respondents.

TABLE V.I : CORRELATIONS OF THE INTENSITY OF SPIRITS - BELIEF WITH AGE, PROFESSION AND EDUCATION

	Qn.5	Qn.7	Qn.8	Qn.10	Qn.12B	Qn.13B
1B Age	n=17 r=+.647 =1% $\alpha$ =.575	n=15 r=-.415	n=13 r=.078	n=13 r=+.048	n=7 r=+.428	n=9 r=-.637 =5% $\alpha$ =.602
1C Profession	n=17 r=-.816 =1% $\alpha$ =.575	n=15 r=-.638 =1% $\alpha$ =.606	n=12 r=+.345	n=11 r=+.340	n=7 r=.620	n=10 r=-.300
ID Education	n=17 r=.361	n=14 r=.510 =5% $\alpha$ =.497	n=15 r=.065	n=11 r=+.598 =5% $\alpha$ =.553	n=8 r=+.793 =1% $\alpha$ =.765	n=10 r=-.048

After the correlation coefficients were computed the above results were received.

Qn = Question number

n = Population/Universe or the number of people who answered that question.

r = Correlation Coefficient

$\alpha$  = Critical value, that is either where 1% level or 5% begin, as the case maybe.

1% level of significance means that the chances of that result being obtained by chance is one out of a hundred. And 5% level means that there are 95% chances that the result received is correct, and only 5% chances that it may have been obtained by chance.

The above table of results can be divided into three rows, namely : Age row, Profession row and Education row.

Age row (B)

N = 17 → 1% level of significance begins at .575. N = 9 → 5% level begins at .602

Profession row (C)

N = 17 → 1% level of significance begins at .575. N = 15 → 5% level begins at .606.

Education row (D).

N = 14 ———> 5% level begins at .497

N = 11 ———> 5% level begins at .553

N = 8 ———> 1% level begins at .765

V. CORRELATION SIGNS.

The negative significance correlations in the first row ( i.e  $r = - .647$  and  $r = - .637$ ) may indicate that either the older people do not believe in and fear Aimu/Majini as the young people do, or that their belief in these things diminishes as they grow older. It may also mean that the younger a person is, the more he/she believes in and fears Aimu/Majini.

But is this really the case? It may not necessarily be. During the interviews it was discovered that whereas the young people were quite open and very willing to tell what they knew about Aimu/Majini, and to share whatever experiences they might have had with them, the majority of the older folks on the other hand, were quite closed, reserved and generally unco-operative. They felt that if they talked they would be:

- (a) Exposing their family secrets to the outside world.  
(Kumaalya musyi - Lit. To take ones home outside.)

That is why none of the family heads, from the three places where Majini attacks took place accepted to be interviewed.

Mr. J.M.N.<sup>1</sup>, 67, refused to give out any information even after being visited three times, but his seventeen year old, Form One grandson Mr. M.S.<sup>2</sup>, gladly gave out the information after being seen only once. Similarly, Mr. P.N.K.<sup>3</sup> would not accept to be interviewed, but his son, Mr. B.K.N.<sup>4</sup> was interviewed.

(b) Disclosing to the public the source of their power, riches etc. a move which could weaken their position and/or cause them to lose their respect. Women who bewitch others cannot admit that they are witches, because witches are hated for their evil practices.

But the Akamba wizards are not as hated as their women counterparts, because their witchcraft is usually protective. So, a Mkamba man who is able to protect his family from evil magic and witchcraft, and one who can avenge for any member of his family who gets harmed, is usually praised. He does that using a stronger magic and or witchcraft. So, in addition to preserving family secrets, a traditional Mkamba may not tell you the source of his powers, riches etc, because if he did, you could outdo him and or defeat him.

Therefore, their unwillingness to answer questions or to be interviewed, which resulted in a very high Negative Correlation, may not mean lack of belief, but rather, if anything a stronger belief than that of the young people.

If a person who admits that she was actually strangled and taught physics by the Majini can be rated as high as 5, would it not be fair to assume that the one who causes the Majini (owners) to attack others should deserve a higher grade than 5 ? . The following is therefore a summary of the results in the first row:

1. Both the young and the old believe in and fear Aimu/Majini.
2. That whereas the young people are willing to talk about whatever experiences they might have had with the Aimu/Majini, the older people, on the other hand, are closed, reserved and just keep within themselves whatever knowledge they may have.

The Positive Significant Correlations in the third row (i.e  $r = +.598$  and  $r = +.793$ ) may mean that the more educated a person is, the more he/she believes in and fears Aimu/Majini. But is this what we would expect? Certainly not. Interestingly, Mr. J.E. Miller's<sup>5</sup> research on Kenya's secondary school students (although others were also interviewed) yielded a similar result as far back as 1973, when the report (typed) was presented.

He says:

The response to 15 questions were found to have significant correlations to the level of education of the student - - - -

In twelve of the fifteen questions above, there is a consistent pattern for responses to be more inclined towards a traditional and conservative world view as the level of education increases.<sup>6</sup> - - -

As we have seen in this study, the assumption that educational system in Kenya is giving a Western and innovative direction to the secondary students' values and attitudes is only partially correct. The over-all factor profile of this student sample shows that the students leaning towards a Western outlook, beyond a certain undefined point, the more conservative, that is non-innovative, they become. For the highest educated (Form 6 and above), a liberal, western, independent outlook is less likely than in a Form 2 student.<sup>7</sup>

(In addition to secondary school students, Miller also interviewed 107 Diploma/S1 students, 12 B.A, B Sc and B.Ed students and 17 students from St. Paul's United Theological College).<sup>8</sup>

But can it be said that high education causes belief in and fear of Aimu/Majini? May be not. Significant Correlation Coefficients do not necessarily imply causation. An observed association (e.g. correlation) may be due to one, two, three or more factors. Nevertheless, the assumption that educated people (Akamba) do not believe in Aimu/Majini and other related traditional beliefs, has been disproved by this study.



Mr. T.W.<sup>9</sup>, a B.Ed graduate from Kenyatta University, was found to believe strongly in the power of curses. Mr. N.J.M.<sup>10</sup>, a B.A(Ed) holder from the University of Nairobi, believes very strongly in witchcraft, Majini/Aimu, the powers of a medicine man, traditional healing etc. He has seen his cousin, Mr. Willy Maina, who is a medicine man, remove a mbandio (jinx), from the wall of a house. He has also been to Mr. Simon's place (the medicine man), where he witnessed Majini conduct a divination for him. The Majini told him much more of his past life than he anticipated. He got scared.

Mrs. Z.M.M.<sup>11</sup>, Dip.Ed., is related to a person who owns Majini. She has first-hand information of what Majini can do, and of how a Majini owner behaves. (To name, but a few).

But this does not mean that the illiterates and the less educated do not believe in and fear Aimu/Majini at all. They do. Mrs. M.M.M.<sup>12</sup>, does and she is an illiterate. She related how a possessed Mr. Kavuta Kala's hunger (now deceased) could not be satisfied, even after being fed by the entire village. She was among those who went there for a kilumi dance, and carried with her food.

Mr. I.N.<sup>13</sup> is illiterate, and he too, believes in Aimu/Majini. He narrated how, during a kilumi dance, he saw a possessed woman demand and drink dog's blood.

Mrs. M.N.M.<sup>14</sup>, also an illiterate, related how her own husband, who was on the verge of becoming a medicineman, used to grow very big at night, to be visited by a snake, to prophesy, and his prophecies came true, and used to disappear mysteriously, that is, even when the gates and the doors were closed. She certainly believes that Aimu have a lot of powers. Mr. K.M.<sup>15</sup> is a P.III primary school teacher. He related how a pigeon that came to his home and was allowed to stay became the cause of the death of his two children. This was revealed by a medicineman, who added that the pigeon was actually a Jini, sent to finish them

He was even told the name of the relative who had sent him the Jini, the reason for doing it, and the name of the medicineman who had given out the Jini.

The above mentioned medicineman, who happens to come from the researcher's location, is said to own some Majini.

Finally, Mr. M.M.<sup>16</sup>, a P.II primary school teacher, admitted that he beat up a woman who was said to have bewitched him, forcing him to discontinue his studies at a Teachers' College. He must have believed the story. Interestingly, neither the woman nor her family took any action against him for the beating.

Instead they sold off their land and moved away. They also must have believed that the woman was a witch.

From the significant positive correlations, it has been shown that the educated people (Akamba) believe in and fear Aimu/Majini. And from the examples given above, it has been shown that even the illiterates and the less educated believe in the same. What has not been explained is what these positive correlations mean for the illiterates and the less educated.

Almost all the illiterates and a very large proportion of the semi-educated (interviewed) are also old.

And from row one, above, it was shown that old people do not readily talk about their beliefs. For them, these things are theirs to keep and safeguard, not to tell others. It is as if they have been admonished to maintain tribe secrets. What Pierre Erny found among the Zaireans seems to have some relevance to the Kenyan Akamba.

We asked about a hundred psychology and education students of the University of Lubumbashi - representing a cross-section of the people of Zaire - to tell us about initiation rites in their own regions. On the whole, their knowledge in this matter turned out to be quite superficial.

For those who have gone through these rites, they know it is a serious experience as shown by the following statements: 'What is described here is only a general view; the essence of initiation cannot be revealed to just anybody. Consequently, there is a certain belief involved - and I would even say a fear. Those who have passed through these rites have taken an oath never to speak about them to anyone, no matter who, and this for fear of falling sick or dying.'<sup>17</sup>

Therefore, although the illiterates and the semi-educated Akamba believe in and fear Aimu/Majini, like everybody else does, they prefer not to give out that knowledge to others. On the contrary, the highly educated freely tell whatever they know and believe, without any reservations. Hence, the reason for the high positive correlation on the part of the highly educated.

From the Negative Significant Correlations in the second row, it would appear that pastors believe more in the Aimu/Majini than the teachers, peasants and ordinary housewives. The Negative Correlations might also indicate a descending order of belief, with the pastors heading, followed by teachers/clerical officers/administrators/businessmen etc, and then by peasants and ordinary housewives. But surely, is this the case, bearing in mind that some of the peasants and ordinary housewives are not Christians?

As can be seen from the Coding System, column 3, it was assumed that pastors would believe least in the Aimu/Majini, followed by teachers/clerical officers etc and then by the illiterate ordinary peasants and housewives. But after the computation this order was reversed.

From the discussion on education versus belief, row three, above, it was shown that the highly educated believe more in the Aimu/Majini than the illiterates and the less educated. And all the pastors, without any exception, will be able, at least, to read their vernacular bibles, with some holding Diplomas and others Degrees in theology. In all, only two pastors were interviewed, and each of them had a Diploma in Theology. So, arguing from the educational point of view, the pastors are supposed to believe in the Aimu/Majini more than the illiterate peasants and housewives.

It has been said that seeing is believing. And each of the two pastors mentioned above has witnessed Majini attacks in their respective areas of work. Pastor W.M.<sup>18</sup> twice visited the former home of Mr. P.N.K.<sup>19</sup> (he has migrated) and witnessed the falling stones. Pastor A.M.<sup>20</sup> had to flee for his life after he was attacked by Majini. It is said that he had his food soiled, and then slapped by some invisible personalities, who demanded to know why he had taken some of the offertory money to repair a crack that was on the church wall.

That is when he abandoned the church and fled home, never to return. According to Miss J.M.M's aunt, Pastor A.M., presented his report to a District Church Council (D.C.C) meeting at Tawa Market and demanded that he be transferred from that church or else he would quit the ministry. Miss.J.M.M.'s aunt is a member of the Tawa D.C.C. of the ABC Church.

When contacted for comment, Pastor A.M. admitted that he was away, but on sick leave, from March to September 1983, and that when he reported back he stayed for nearly a month and was transferred to another station. Dismissing the allegations that he had run away after being attacked by the Majini, he said that he only heard about those things while he was on leave. He however looked quite uncomfortable with that story, and he quickly switched off to something else.

During the interview he disclosed that the money to build that church, pastor's house and a water tank had been provided by Mr. J.M.K.<sup>22</sup>, the same man who had donated money for building the girls' hostel at the adjacent Itembukani secondary school, whose residents had to be sent home after being attacked by Majini.

But because the number of pastors interviewed was only two (just mere random sampling), forming a percentage which was as low as 3%, it is quite unlikely that their belief, no matter how strong it might have been, was the cause of this high negative correlation. The reason may have to be looked for elsewhere, maybe from the way the next two groups of people answered the questions.

The majority of teachers, students and administrative officials shared their beliefs and experiences with Aimu/Majini quite freely, unless they had instructions to keep their mouths shut. The students may have shared their experiences freely because they were young (see discussion on age, above). The teachers may have shared freely what they know, probably because they were educated (see also discussion on education above). The administrative officials may be shared their experiences freely because they had no family secrets to hide ; they were just reporting what had taken place in their own areas of jurisdiction. It should not also be forgotten that all administrative officials have had some formal education no matter how low or high it may be. Also the nature of their work makes them to interact with people of different professions and educational and social statuses. This might in a way have broadened their outlook.

Another reason may have to do with the coding system used. It was assumed that the peasants and ordinary housewives would believe in Aimu/Majini most, followed by teachers and then pastors, in that order.

As such peasants and ordinary housewives were rated highest (that is 3, others 2 and 1)<sup>23</sup>. But because they refused to share their beliefs or just dodged the questions, the correlation came out negative. Added to that, some teachers and administrative officials from one of the study areas (Itembukani secondary school and surrounding area) also refused to share what they knew about Aimu/Majini because they had been ordered by the local chief not to do it. This may also have increased the negative trend.<sup>24</sup>

### V. 3 DEFINITION OF MAJINI (Sing. JINNI).

From the three case studies, given above, it was shown that the spirits that were attacking people in the selected areas of study, were not the traditional Aimu known to the Akamba, but a new type of spirits known as Majini. Majini may be defined as oriental spirits (probably of Arabian or Persian origin), which found their way to the Coastal region of East Africa, and which have since continued to penetrate into the interior parts of the said countries, (see the discussion below).

Mr. Mutua's<sup>25</sup> definition of Majini as "water spirits" does not seem to be correct because Majini can live on land. Prof. Salim<sup>26</sup>, basing his argument on the Koran, defines Majini as 'Supernatural beings; doers of good as opposed to Mashetani, which do evil.'



According to the author of the 'Arabian Nights', Majini are divided into five orders. He says that some majini are good (supporting Prof. Salim's view) and others are evil. But from his list there are more orders which are evil than the good ones.

Jinni, (sing. of Jinn) Genii, being created of fire.

The species of Jinn is said to have been created some thousands of years before Adam. According to a tradition from the Prophet<sup>27</sup>, this species consists of five orders or classes; namely, Jann (who are the least powerful of all), Jinn, sheytans (or Devils), Efrits, and Madrids. The last, it is added, are the most powerful; and the Jann are transformed Jinn; like as certain apes and swine were transformed to men<sup>28</sup>. The terms Jinn and Jann, however, are generally used indiscriminately, as names of the whole species (including the other orders above mentioned), whether good or bad; the former term is the more common. (Iblis is satan, their king.) "Sheytan" is commonly used to signify any evil Jinn. An Efrit is a powerful evil Jinni: a madrid, an evil Jinni of the most powerful class. The Jinn (but generally speaking, evil ones) are called by the Persians Divs; the most powerful evil Jinn, Narahs (which signifies "males", though they are said to be males and females); the good Jinn, Peris, though this term is commonly applied to females.<sup>29</sup>

V. HOW MAJINI CAME TO EAST AFRICA : MYTH OF ORIGIN.

Having stated that Majini are oriental spirits, one would then want to know how they found their way to the East African Coastal region, to Mombasa and then into the interior. Farouk Topan's<sup>30</sup> research among the Swahili community of Mombasa, Kenya, produced excellent results which the present researcher finds useful and relevant. He wrote:

The origins of Kipemba spirits, and indeed of all the other spirits in the world are explained in a myth connected with the prophet Solomon, or "Nabii Suleiman" as he is known among the Swahili. Spirits were created by God and put into this world from its beginning; they then served different masters at different places during the history of the world. But during the time of Solomon, God brought all spirits together to work exclusively for the prophet, their absolute master. And Solomon worked them very hard by day and night. Then, one day, Solomon died while supervising his spirits at work, but was prevented from falling to the ground by the staff on which he was leaning. And as he was a prophet of God, his body remained intact even after his death. The spirits were thus deceived by his appearance and kept on working. This they did for about seven years. Then woodworms got into the staff, ate it away, and Solomon fell.

When the spirits realized that they were free, they scattered themselves once more all over the world. Some of them came to East Africa and settled among some peoples and tribes, and in some places, The most powerful of them settled on the island of Pemba.<sup>31</sup>

The earlier part of this myth is a modified version of the story given in the Quran, with which it may be compared. The relevant passages from the Quran are Chapter

34:12-14

12. And (we made) the wind subservient to Solomon; it made a month's journey in the morning and a month's journey in the evening; and we made fountain of molten brass to flow for him. And of the Jinn<sup>32</sup> there were those who worked before him by the command of his Lord. And whoever turned aside from our command from among them, we made him taste of the chastisement of burning.

13. They (the Jinn) made for him, Solomon what he pleased, of synagogues and images, and bowls (large) as watering troughs and fixed cooking pots. Give thanks O people of David! and very few of my servants are grateful.

14. But when we decreed death for him (Solomon) naught showed them his death but a creature of the earth that ate away his staff. So when it fell down, the Jinn saw clearly that if they had known the unseen, they would not have tarried in humiliating torment.<sup>33</sup>

V.5 HOW PEMBA MAJINI REACHED MOMBASA.

Having said that the Majini (spirits) that settled in Pemba were the most powerful, Dr. Farouk Topan goes on to explain how the Kipemba type of spirits reached Mombasa and became the most popular cult there. There were three main ways through which Pemba Majini reached Mombasa.

1. At the end of an apprenticeship, an upcoming medicine man from Mombasa was usually presented with a Jinni by his Pemba teacher.

Medicinemen from Mombasa, it is said, used to go to Pemba as apprentices over a certain period to learn the art of their vocation from their superiors. Or alternatively, the latter used to come to Mombasa for a certain period to impart their knowledge to the lesser-medicinemen trainee for a specific fee. At the termination of his apprenticeship a trainee was given a spirit, Jinni, as a present from his teacher; this was an additional spirit to whatever he may already have had as a practising medicineman in Mombasa.

2. Sometimes evil spirits from Pemba which got imprisoned into bottles and thrown into the sea were carried by water across to Mombasa Island.

Medicinemen from Pemba used to catch hold of very evil spirits possessing their clients, imprison them in bottles and throw them into the sea. On reaching the shore, the imprisoned Jinni often managed to get out after a curious passerby or a fisherman decided to remove the cork or through the bottle getting broken.

This story is almost word for word identical with that of the 'Fisherman and the Efrit' (a jinni) found in the Arabian Night<sup>34</sup>. Interestingly, the majini caught at Mbooni were also trapped in corked bottles.<sup>35</sup>

3. Sometimes some of the evil spirits were buried in the ground with a spell, never to come out again anywhere in Pemba, but instead the buried spirits (Jinns) travelled underground and came up again at Mombasa, and then resided there.

#### V.6 CONTACT BETWEEN THE ARABS AND THE SWAHILI COMMUNITY OF MOMBASA WITH THE UPCOUNTRY AKAMBA.

From the middle of the 18th century onwards, the Akamba were engaged in long distance trade, specializing mainly in the sale of ivory to the Arabs at Mombasa, with whom they had come into contact during their travels.

J.S. Mbiti goes beyond this trade contact, and suggests that the Akamba had actually originated from the Coastal area.

He begins by saying:

There is no written history of the Akamba before the middle of the nineteenth century. Traditions say that they came from around Mount Kilimanjaro, or from the Coast. I am more inclined to favour the latter. Akamba trade was already a flourishing occupation in the nineteenth century, the traders penetrating into the interior of Kenya, and Tanzania as far as Lake Victoria, particularly in search of ivory which they traded with the Arabs and oriental people at Mombasa and elsewhere on the Coast. When Missionary J.L. Krapf arrived at Mombasa in 1844, he not only heard much about the Akamba but met a number of them, from whom he learnt Kikamba.<sup>36</sup>

B.A. Ogot<sup>37</sup> supports the Akamba's long distance trade, that is with the coastal people, between 1780 and 1850. He states that:

A famine of 1836<sup>38</sup>, caused the Akamba to settle at Rabai (in Mombasa), thus establishing contact with the mainland Akamba. These Akamba became liaison communities for swahili merchants at the coast who needed ivory.

And by 1865<sup>39</sup>, concludes Ogot, there were Swahili traders operating in the hinterlands of Ukambani, such as Machakos town.

Prof. Salim<sup>40</sup> adds that intermarriage between the Swahili traders took place, and that the grandfather of the present member of Parliament for Kangundo was born out of such an intermarriage. To this day there is a Swahili community in Machakos town. One of the respondents of this researcher, Mr. B.M.K. is a son of Swahili parents. He gave this information quite freely.

V.7 HOW MAJINI FOUND THEIR WAY UPCOUNTRY, AND IN PARTICULAR, TO UKAMBANI.

It has been shown that, for a long time there has been trade and contact between the upcountry Akamba and the Swahili community of Mombasa. It is therefore possible to imagine that even the Akamba medicine men benefited from this contact and learnt new skills from their counterparts at the coast. G. Lindblom writes:

Akamba also go westwards, to the Akikuyu, and when formerly the trade caravans came to Mombasa, they took the opportunity of consulting the magicians at the coast.... The people of Kikumbuliu seem to occupy themselves a good deal with black magic, a part of which is said to come from the Giriama tribe.

It is said, for instance, that an expert in Uoi can take the life of an enemy he fears by giving certain instructions to one of his cocks. The cock<sup>41</sup> flies to the hut of the man indicated, perches on the roof and crows. When the man comes out to see what is the matter, the cock moves, by means of the uoi - power of his master, into his body(!). The man dies unless they can discover what is the matter with him.<sup>42</sup>

If it be granted that the Akamba medicine men learnt new skills from the Mombasa medicine men, it could be equally assumed that they were also given spirits, Majini, just as the kipemba spirits, which are now famous in Mombasa, were given to the Mombasa medicine men by their Pemba counterparts. This could therefore be one of the ways through which the coastal spirits, majini, found their way to Ukambani.

But surprisingly, the men who own majini, in the selected areas of this study are neither medicine men nor herbalists. The majority of them are business men. So, the consensus opinion of all the respondents was that majini are bought by whoever wants them; and that they improve their owners' businesses and make them rich.<sup>43</sup> The following testimonies illustrate what the Akamba feel majini are and do for those who own them.



Majini are not like Aimu; they are like witchcraft. They are Syama, tricks. (Kyama Pl. syama, may mean either a trick or a miracle).<sup>44</sup>

Majini are syama, tricks, for business; they can make one rich. Majini can collect wealth from one place and take it to their master in another place.<sup>45</sup>

I have also heard that whenever anyone goes to collect/buy Majini he/she must agree to be fulfilling certain conditions, so that the Majini may continue serving him. He may for example, agree to be sacrificing every year a human being.

According to Mrs. J.H.N.<sup>47</sup>, Mr. K. was the richest person in Kitui in 1970's. At one time he lent money to the Kitui County Council to pay salaries of all the primary school teachers in the district. He had also bought his son a sports car. But when he refused to sacrifice his own daughter, as required by his majini, he lost everything. His son died in a car accident. Two of his three wives died almost at the same time. The daughter who was supposed to be sacrificed got a chronic headache from that time (1976) to this day. Some of the remaining children ran away from school. And all his money disappeared mysteriously. The informant was a schoolmate of Mr. K's daughters.

V.8

CHARACTERISTICS OF MAJINI.

Before the general characteristics of Majini can be given, it seems quite in order to add a few more testimonies from the respondents, to illustrate the different views held by the Akamba, about Majini.

Majini originate with satan. They are found/seen at the Coast, not upcountry. Majini can be sent to kill a person, but God does not harm people.<sup>48</sup>

Majini and Aimu are different. Aimu are spirits of dead people, but Majini are syama, tricks, which are brought. They are recent happenings in Ukambani. Maybe they are bought at Mombasa.<sup>49</sup>

Majini are witchcraft, because they never used to be there.<sup>50</sup>

Aimu and Majini are different. Aimu are usually associated with medicine men, Awe, because that is where their wishes are fulfilled. For example, if they ask for a goat a medicine man, Mundu Mue, gives them. Majini, on the other hand are kept and fed by Muslims. Kajiwo has been exercising them from Mosques and Swahili houses which are usually kept locked.<sup>51</sup> Majini originated with Arabs, and are bought by rich people.

They are spirits of dead people because if you took a jinni woman to your home, the following day you would wake up in grave yard. Aimu are also spirits of dead people because they are seen mostly at shrines, Mathembo.<sup>52</sup>

There seems to be some uncertainty and at times contradictions, among the Akamba, as regards the nature of Majini. The following are some of the areas where uncertainty may be detected.

Some say that Majini are different from both the Aimu and the witchcraft.

Others say that both Aimu and Majini are similar in that they are both spirits of dead people.

Others say that it is only Aimu that are spirits of dead people, with Majini being tricks, syama, for business.

Still others would contend that both Majini and witchcraft are one and the same thing.

There are however, other areas where they are seen to agree.

They all agree that Majini can make one rich.

They also seem to put Majini under the general

The following points have therefore been summarized from the statements made by the interviewees and from the scanty literature available, on the subject.

- (a) Majini are created beings.
- (b) They are the fallen (heretical) angels according to the Islamic tradition.

The Arabian Nights is full of allusions to their having been punished for their rebellion.

Know thou, said he, that I am one of the heretical Jinn : I rebelled against Suleyman the son of Da'ud; I and Sakhr the jinni; and he sent to me his Wezir, Asaf the son of Barkhiya, who came upon me forcibly, and took me to him in bonds, and placed me before him: and when Suleyman saw me, he offered up a prayer for protection against me, and exhorted me to embrace the faith, and to submit to his authority; but I refused; upon which he called for this bottle, and confined me in it, and closed it upon me with the leaden stopper, which he stamped with the Most Great Name : he then gave orders to the Jinn, who carried me away, and threw me into the midst of the sea. 53

- - - -, know that this is one of the Jinn whom Suleyman the son of Da'ud, when he was incensed against them, imprisoned in these bottles, and he poured lead over them, and threw them into the sea.

When the fisherman casteth his net, it generally bringeth up these bottles; and when they are broken, there cometh forth from them a jinni, who imagineth that Suleyman is still living; wherefore he repenteth, and saith, Repentance!  
O prophet of God!<sup>54</sup>

Even Dr. Farouk H.T. Topan<sup>55</sup> traces the origin of all spirits to the time of prophet Solomon, and makes no attempt to appraise the myth.

(c) Majini can be caught (and stored in bottles).

Solomon caught them, imprisoned them in bottles and threw them into the sea. Pemba medicine men do the same with the Majini they do not like. Similarly, the Majini that were caught in the selected areas of study were imprisoned in bottles. Mr. M.S.<sup>56</sup> saw four Majini trapped in a corked Treetop bottle. Mr. B.M.M.<sup>57</sup> saw one Jinni put in a corked Fanta bottle.

(d) Unlike Aimu, Majini can be owned and controlled by individuals.

From Farouk Topan's researches, it was shown that an upcoming Mombasa medicineman was usually presented with a spirit, jinni, by his Pemba teacher, and that from then on that spirit became his personal possession/property.

How the jinni was caught and presented, this researcher has not been able to find out.

Mr. Simon<sup>58</sup>, the Tanzanian medicineman, confirmed that he owns majini, with which he divines for and treats his patients.

(e) Majini can be sent on errands (including attacking) by their masters.

Mr. Simon, the above mentioned medicine man, sent his majini to the home of his client, to bring additional money to pay for his (client) treatment. They brought the money. The majini that were attacking the home of Mr. J.M.N.<sup>59</sup> had been sent by his younger brother, Mr.S.M.N.

Similarly, the majini (in the form of a pigeon), that were attacking the home of Mr. K.M.<sup>60</sup> had been sent by his uncle. Dr. Farouk M.T. Topan, also discovered that majini could be sent on errands by their masters.

I asked a Mqanga sorcerer whether he could send his spirit to harm someone and whether he would; he smiled and said he could and would if I wanted him to. When I feigned surprise and disbelief, he proceeded to try and convince me by quoting instances when he had done so with varying degrees of success. He did so, not remorsefully, but with some pride.<sup>61</sup>

(f) Majini can make their owners rich.

Majini have of late become very popular because they are said to make their owners rich. It is not yet known how they do it; but at least two theories have been advanced. The first one is that they collect wealth from elsewhere and bring it to their masters. Mr. Simon's ability to have his Majini go for money has been mentioned above.

It has been said that when Mr. P.N.K's home was being stoned, money was also dropped. According to Mr. H.M.K<sup>62</sup>, at one time two shillings and fifty cents were dropped, following which Mr. N.M.K.<sup>63</sup> dropped a twenty shilling note where the Majini had dropped their money. The Majini became very angry at this mockery and they stoned Mr. N.M.K thoroughly. He ran away.

When contacted Mr. N.M.K. denied having seen any money dropped, but asserted that Majini can collect wealth elsewhere and take it to their master.

The second theory is that Majini can make one prosperous in one's place of work by getting him promoted to senior positions. According to Mrs. J.M.N.<sup>64</sup>, the man whose Majini were terrorising students of Kyangunga primary school, Kitui, had been promoted that way. That man, who was then working for the Posts and Telecommunications Corporation, had joined the Corporation as a messenger, because he was not educated (some even joked that he was a class four dropout).

This man, by the time he retired, had worked his way up to the Post of a Post Office Manager. When Kajiwe visited that school, he summoned that man and his wife from the crowd and accused them of harbouring the majini that were troubling the students. The man admitted owning majini.

During the three-hour exercise, Mr. Kajiwe - - - summoned a man and his wife from the crowd whom he told the anxious wananchi were responsible for the problems facing the school. - - -. The man and his wife admitted harbouring the genies but they claimed that they did not know the spirits were harmful or could cause havoc to other people.<sup>65</sup>

Although Majini make people rich, they nevertheless make certain demands upon their owners; and those demands must be met. It has already been shown how Mr. K lost everything because he refused to sacrifice his own daughter to them. Mr. J.M.K.<sup>66</sup> has been made very rich by Majini (he owns a ship among other businesses). He sacrifices to them a cow and some goats on every New Years' Eve, and then gives a party to relatives, friends and neighbours the following day in the afternoon.<sup>67</sup> This practice has continued from 1973 Or 72, when it started, to this day; in spite of repeated appeals by his brothers to discontinue it. Somehow he convinces the government that the party is necessary, and he gets a permit to hold it.



This year (1987) and last year police and government officials had been dispatched from Machakos and Mbooni to supervise it and maintain security. The researcher was there this year and saw the government officials. In 1985 the researcher was also there but the government officials were not there. .

NOTES

1. Mr. J.M.N, 67, see case study - Two
2. Mr. M.S, 17, see case study - Two
3. Mr. P.N.K, see case study - Three
4. Mr. B.K.N, 26, see case study - Three
5. J.E.Miller : Kenya Students' World view: Implications for educational Curriculum, unpublished, typed script, Nairobi, 1973
6. J.E. Miller, Op.Cit pg.47
7. Ibid, pg. 48
8. Ibid, pg.7
9. Mr. T.W, see 'Course' Kiuno, above
10. Mr. N.J.M, interview
11. Mrs. Z.M.M, see case study - One
12. Mrs. M.M.M, interview
13. Mr. I.N. interview
14. Mrs. M.N.M, interview
15. Mr. K.M, interview
16. Mr. M.M, interview
17. P. Erny, The African child and his environment in Black Africa, pg. 179
18. Pastor W.M., interviewed on 7/11/84
19. Mr. P.N.K., see case study - Three
20. Mr. A.M., Pastor A.B.C. church Itembukani, interviewed 6/12/84
21. Miss. J.M.M and Miss. H.J., former students of Itembukani secondary school, jointly interviewed on 24/1/85.
22. Mr. J.M.K is said to own Majini, see case study - One

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23. See coding system in chapter - four above
  24. For more information about Itembukani area, see case study - One
  25. Mr. N.J. Mutua, interview.
  26. Prof. A.I. Salim, interview.
  27. Probably Prophet Solom
  28. The researcher is not aware of this tradition.
  29. The Arabian Nights, pg. 9 Foot note.
  30. Faronk Mohamedhusein Tharia Topan, Ph.D Thesis.
  31. What is the source of this tradition? Is it Koran or interviewees? If Koran where?
  32. But according to Maulana Muhammad Ali's coomentary on verse 12, the "Jinn were no other than the strangers whom Solomon subjected to his rule and forced into service (2chr.2:2-18). The words every builder and diver (38:37) make it clear that the Jinn and devils who were related to have been subjected to Solomon were only human beings." (Commentaries on 34:12 and 38:37).
  33. Faronk M.T. Topan, Ph.D Thesis, pg. 60
  34. The Arabian Nights, 1909/37 pgs. 25-30
  35. See case study- Two
  36. J.S. Mbiti, 1971, pg. 5
  37. B.A. Ogot (Ed). 1976, pg. 178
  38. B.A. Ogot (Ed). 1976, pg. 213
  39. B.A. Ogot (Ed). 1976, pg. 180
  40. A.I. Salim, interview.

41. Interestingly, a cock was similiary sent to the home of Mr. J.M.N., using Majini power also form the Coast, but because they discovered what was the matter, bddy died. See case study - Two, above
42. G. Lindblom, 1920, pgs. 280 and 282.
43. J.S. Mbiti also wrote about 'guardian spirits' which, he said give people success in hunting, cattle-breeding, bee-keeping etc, 1971, pg. 135
44. Mrs. M.M.M, interview.
45. Compare this with what Mr. Simon, the Tanzanian medicine man, did for his client who did not have sufficient money (see chapter IV, above).
46. Mr. M.M.K., interview.
47. Mrs. J.M.N., interviewed on 10/4/87
48. Mr. M.N., interview.
49. Mr. K.N., interview.
50. Mr. M.N<sub>2</sub>, interview.
51. Mr. David Kimacho, of Kenya Times, reported a similar story under the title 'Do ghosts exist?', pg.11, 4/10/85.
52. Mr. I.N., interview. In the same paper as in foot-note 51 above same page, Mr. Kimacho relates another story of a man who lent his Jacket to a 'woman' he had met that evening at a hotel, but was quite surprised the following day when he found his jacket on the 'woman's' grave, after he had insisted that her parents show him her grave, if she had actually died long time ago.

53. 'The Arabian Nights' 1903/37, pgs. 27-28
54. 'The Arabian Nights' pg. 297
55. Farouk M.T. Topan, Ph.D Thesis
56. Mr. M.S., interview, see case study - Two
57. Mr. B.M.M., interview, see case study - Two
58. Mr. Simon, interview
59. Mr. J.M.N, interview, see case study - Two
60. Mr. K.M., interview
61. Farouk M.T. Topan, Ph.D, pg. 128 Footnote.
62. Mr. H.M.K., interview
63. Mr. N.M.K., interview
64. Mrs. J.M.N., interview
65. Daily Nation, wednesday 4/9/85, pg. 32, K.N.A.
66. Mr. J.M.K., see case study - One
67. Dr. Farouk, M.T. Topan, witnessed a similar ceremony at the grave of Shebe Mvita, Mombasa, in August, 1966. It was the yearly celebration of the swahili New Year; Ph.D Thesis, pg. 72.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

In chapter one the objectives for this study were stated. In this concluding chapter, the main findings are given in brief, against each of the objectives.

- (a) The first main objective was to determine the extent of belief in spirits, in spirit activities and in some related forms of magic among the Akamba.

The results showed that these beliefs are strong and quite extensive, and they are found both among the young and the old, the educated and the illiterates alike. They are even found among the christians. Of all the nearly sixty people interviewed there was not any one who did not believe in spirits.

- (b) The second main objective was to investigate the forms these beliefs take, and hence the nature of spirits believed in.

It was found that spirits appear to the living. They may appear in shadowy forms of human beings or as animals. At other times their voices are heard and their fires seen. In their invisible forms they sometimes beat up people, stone them and soil their

In the selected areas of study, the spirits that were doing the above - mentioned things were identified as Majini. Majini, as explained elsewhere in the thesis, are a foreign intrusion into the Akamba world of spirits. They never used to be there. Therefore, future researchers into the spirit beliefs among the Akamba should expect to find ideas about the traditional Aimu and ideas about Majini, most likely mixed up.

- (c) The third main objective was to investigate what other basic traditional beliefs may be behind the beliefs in and the fear of spirit activities and in the selected related forms of magic.

Other beliefs that were found to be very strong among the Akamba were, belief in the effectiveness and power of witchcraft, uoi, of curse, kiumo, of oath, kithitu, of mbingo, jinx and kaleve, a type of magic. Illustrations of how each of them works were given in chapter four, above.

- (d) The fourth main objective was to examine how spirit belief in the present Kamba society is affected by such factors as education, Christianity, or involvement in modern (Westernized) style of life.

When belief versus age was computed for individual questions, a significant negative correlation was found. (see Correlation table in chapter five). But after grouping five questions together, out of the six that were computed, the Correlation Coefficient that was found was  $r = -.158$ , which was no where near significant. Nevertheless the negative trend was maintained. This would mean that the higher the age the lesser the belief. Hence there is no reason to reject hypothesis  $H_1$ , although it is not yet known whether the same hypothesis would stand with larger numbers of respondents.

There is therefore need for alertness in interpreting these results. For example, it may not be correct to conclude from the significant negative Correlations that old people do not believe in spirits, Aimu/Majini. It was learnt during this research that whereas the young people freely discuss their spirit - beliefs, the old people on the other hand prefer to keep that knowledge to themselves and within their own circles. It would therefore be quite incorrect to take their unwillingness to talk about beliefs or their non-committal and evasive answers to mean lack of belief. If anything it should mean a stronger belief. But how does one differentiate (quantitatively) a genuine 'I do not know' answer from an evasive one which actually means, 'I do not want to



If one 'I do not know' answer is scaled, let us say 2, all other 'I do not know' responses should also be scaled 2. The formal (quantitative) method is therefore limited in that it cannot differentiate a genuine 'I do not know' response from an evasive one.

But going by the informal data it was possible (during the interviews) to observe the behaviour and listen to the tone of the interviewees, a thing which helped to differentiate genuine 'I do not know' answers from the 'I do not want to tell you' ones. Interestingly, the old people from the three study areas where spirit activities had taken place, either refused to tell what had happened there or just gave evasive answers. But their own children and grandchildren discussed the incidents quite freely and answered the questions put to them. Discussion on this topic is found in chapters four and five of the thesis.

## 2. Recommendations

It has been shown by this study that religion can be studied using quantitative method. One advantage of formal research over the informal method is that it is supposed to produce results which are not influenced by the researcher's assumption and biasness. During this study, the general assumption that educated people do not believe in and fear Aimu/Majini, has been shown to be quite incorrect, a result which would have been difficult to get if the traditional informal method of analysis was used.

The first recommendation from this study is therefore an appeal for more people to go in for quantitative research of religion.

The study also recommends that caution be exercised in interpreting formal data, e.g. Correlations. It was stated elsewhere (see chapter three) that a significant Correlation, whether positive or negative, does not necessarily indicate that there was a 'causal relation' between the two variables. In other words, there is still the task of interpreting the statistical data, requiring considerable reflection on the reasons why a Correlation Coefficient shows itself clearly positive or negative. This is where the informal data supplements and compliments the formal data. It would for example, not be correct to say that education causes the belief in spirit to increase. It was noted during this study that, whereas the highly educated discuss freely their belief in spirits, the less educated and the illiterates do not. They prefer to keep that knowledge to themselves and within their own circles.

It has also been shown by this study that the word 'spirits' may mean both the traditional Aimu known to the Akamba and a new phenomenon called Majini, which have recently invaded Ukambani. Therefore, researchers who work among the Akamba need to be aware of these two types of spirits.

It is recommended that future researchers on spirits (Aimu/Majini) and their activities be people who do not have personal restrictions. When this researcher went to do participant observation at the home of Mr. J.M.K, he found himself in a fix because he was not prepared to 'eat meat which he knew to have been sacrificed to demons', just for the sake of his research. (see case study one).

Similarly, when the researcher went to the home of Mr. Simon, the medicine man of Machakos town who divines using Majini, he was once ushered into the shrine and told to produce a coin, spit on it, rub it and then drop it into an open container which contained other items used in divination. He did it, not with a clear conscience though, but with the hope of hearing the Majini talk, or at best seeing them. He had in fact carried his tape recorder to tape the conversation. But disappointedly the medicine man changed his mind and no divination ever took place.

It is recommended that future researchers on spirits, particularly Majini, visit the Majini sellers at Mombasa and other places at the Coast, and if possible also go to Arabia to see for themselves how the transaction takes place. It may be advisable for the researchers to actually buy some of the Majini for empirical verification and to authenticate the finding.

This research was limited to the study of beliefs in spirits and in the spirit activities, not with the reality or unreality (i.e ontology) of the phenomena.

It would also be good for the researchers to contact Mr. Tsuma Washe, the Mombasa medicine man, popularly known as Kajiwe, to learn from him what he thinks Majini are and do. He, unlike many other upcountry medicine men, seems to be expert in exorcising Majini. This researcher did not have either the money nor the time to travel to Mombasa to interview him. And it is not yet known whether he would have granted the interview or not, or the fees he would have charged. It is therefore recommended that future researchers be given more money and time for better results.

It would also be good if the Kenya Government relaxed some of its restrictions to researchers. This researcher has in mind the rough time he had with the administration of Itembukani secondary school and the community around. The District Education Office had strictly warned the Headmaster and staff of that school not to give out any information about what had taken place there. Similarly, the local chief, it is not yet known under whose directive, had ordered that the issue should not be discussed with anybody. Fortunately the new D.O, Mr.K.I.M, was very cooperative. He honoured the research permit and accepted to be interviewed.

The other officers had also seen the permit but ignored it. Discussion on this topic, including the press reporters' view that the government was obstructing the publicity of that Itembukani incident by covering it up, has been presented in case study one and in chapters four and five of this thesis.

It is hoped that the findings from this study will be useful to social workers, educationists, doctors, religious leaders and administrators in general, working among the Akamba in particular, and among other Kenyan Communities in general.

3. WHY THE AKAMBA BELIEVE IN MAGIC.

One of the main findings of this study is that the Akamba, both the educated and the uneducated alike, believe in magic and in spirits and fear them. (See Correlation results and their interpretation in chapter five of this thesis). From the significant positive Correlations, it appears as though the more educated a Mkamba was the more he/she believed in and feared both magic and spirits.

Such a result may be questioned by some readers today, because they would not expect to hear that educated people still believe in magic. But from Parrinder's work (and others cited in the thesis) this does not seem to be unique with the Akamba. He writes:

The coming of (Western) education seems to have done little as yet to shake the beliefs (i.e. in witchcraft), and there are signs that many of the educated increase in their convictions in the reality of witchcraft when the power of old gods is broken.<sup>1</sup>

So the question is why this should be the case. Magic has elsewhere been defined as:

the attempt to control human actions, natural events, and in some instances the will of the gods by use of certain incantations, rites, or objects such as fetish figures or amulates.<sup>2</sup>

The aim of this control may be to gain security and protection in a hostile environment, to be assured of success or a good future or an attempt to explain or have some mastery over the mysteries of nature.

According to Parrinder, there are social conditions which favour belief in magic (and in witchcraft). Some of those hard conditions are still found in Ukambani, making it easy for the belief to remain. He says:

Belief in witchcraft gradually declined during the 17th and 18th centuries. The social conditions which had favoured its rise, the disorders of European wars, the epidemics, the high child mortality, the general unsettlement of religion and society, gave way to better conditions and higher education. Later disorders were attributed to other scapegoats.<sup>3</sup>

The Akamba have in the past been fighting against the Maasai. Diseases and epidemics have for a long time claimed many lives in Ukambani. There are wild animals to be feared or charmed away. And the climatic conditions of Ukambani are not good. They do not always get enough rainfall. At times it fails to come completely, and in the past when it failed many people died due to famine. Thanks to our government, the situation nowadays is not as critical. At such times the Akamba would resort to magic and prayers to God for rain.

Another reason why the Akamba believe in magic might be to solve mysterious problems which continue to be felt. A good illustration of the latter is in relation to one particular spot, 'the small world club area' near Machakos on the Mombasa road, where there have been many accidents, some fatal. In an attempt to understand why the accidents occur, and to provide a solution, one Mukamba Member of Parliament has suggested that a cleansing ceremony be done at the place. This may be because no other explanations have been found for the many accidents at that particular place. Discussion on this issue is found in chapters five and six of this thesis.



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ORAL INTERVIEWS

1. Mr. Z.N.K, 90 years old.
  - Interviewed on (1) 8/1/85 and (2) 13/6/85 at his home in Manza village, Kiandani sub-location, Iveti location, Machakos.
  
2. Mr. & Mrs. B.M.K, 83 years and 75 years old respectively.
  - Interviewed (jointly) on 12/1/85 at their home in King'ang'ani village, Kiandani sub-location, Iveti location, Machakos.
  
3. Mrs. M.K, 26 years old, daughter-in-law of Mr. P.N.K.
  - Interviewed on 16/1/85 at her home in Maiuni village, Kiandani sub-location, Iveti location, Machakos.
  
4. Mr. M.K, 70 years old, (not husband of No.3 above), elder brother of Mr. P.N.K.
  - Interviewed on 14/1/85 at his home in Iuma village, Kiandani sub-location, Iveti location, Machakos.

5. Mr. H.M.K, 35 years old, secondary school teacher.
  - Interviewed on (1) 8/11/84 and (2) 20/1/85 at his home in Katisaa village, Kiandani sub-location, Iveti location, Machakos.
  
6. Miss M.M.K, 20 years old, former student of Itembukani secondary school, admitted she was strangled.
  - Interviewed on 10/12/84 at kwa Kinuna market, in her Kyangondu village, Usalala sub-location, Kisau location, Machakos.
  
7. Mr. N.M.K, 65 years old.
  - Interviewed on 15/1/85 at his home in Maiuni village, Kiandani sub-location, Iveti location, Machakos.
  
8. Mrs. S.K., 40 years old, Matron, Itembukani secondary school girls' hostel.
  - Interviewed on 24/1/85 at her office in the girls' hostel.
  
9. Miss H.M.K., 28 years old, teacher at Itembukani secondary school.
  - Interviewed on 28/11/84 at her house in the school compound.



10. Miss J.K.K, 19 years old, former student of Itembukani secondary school, admitted that she was strangled and taught physics by Majini.
  - Interviewed on 7/12/84 at their home in Nthengeni village, Mangani sub-location, Kisau location, Machakos.
  
11. Mr. W.M.M., 30 years old, medicine man who removed a mbandio, jinx from a house wall.
  - Interviewed on 14/6/85 at Miwani estate, Machakos town.
  
12. Mr. M, 42 years old, former headmaster of Itembukani secondary school.
  - Interviewed on 9/1/85 at his office in Katoloni secondary school, near Machakos town.
  
13. Mr. F.M., 29 years old, bursar at Itembukani secondary school.
  - Interviewed on 24/1/85 at his office in Itembukani secondary school, Tulimani location, Machakos.

14. Mr. H.M., 30 years old.

- Interviewed on 15/1/85 at the staff-room of Mumbuni secondary school, Machakos.

15. Mr. F.M.M, 77 years old.

- Interviewed on 5/1/85 at his home in Manyatta village, Kiandani sub-location, Iveti location, Machakos.

16. Mr. B.M.M, 39 years old, Assistant chief.

- Confirmed that he witnessed the family members of Mr. J.M.N. being beaten by invisible personalities.
- Interviewed on 22/1/85 at his home in Uthiuni village, Uthiuni sub-location Mbooni location, Machakos.

17. Mr. W.M., 32 years old, Pastor of A.I.C., Mumbuni.

- Interviewed on 7/11/84 at Machakos town.

18. Mrs. M.M.M, 80 years old.
  - Interviewed on 17/12/84 at her house in Katitu village, Mukimwani sub-location, Kisau location, Machakos.
  
19. Mrs. M.N.M, 54 years old.
  - Interviewed on (1) 1/1/85 (2) 24/1/85 at her home in Kanzui village, Kalawani sub-location, Tulimani location, Machakos.
  
20. Miss E.O.M, 18 years old, former student of Itembukani secondary school.
  - Interviewed on 10/12/84 at their home in Kitile village, Nduluku sub-location, Kisau location, Machakos.
  
21. Mr. M, 35 years old (not one mentioned in No. 12 above), Deputy headmaster, Itembukani secondary school.
  - Interviewed on 24/1/85 at his office in Itembukani secondary school, Tulimani location, Machakos.
  
22. Mr. T.M.M, 53 years old, chief, Iveti location.
  - Interviewed on (1) 16/1/85 (2) 17/1/85 at his office (chief's office) Iveti location, Machakos.

23. Mr. A.M., 55 years old, Pastor, A.B.C. church.  
- Interviewed on 6/12/84 at his church office,  
Kyamue A.B.C, Kalingile sub- location,  
Kiteta location, Machakos.
24. Miss J.M.M, 17½ years old and Miss M.J, 17½ years  
old, students of Itembukani secondary school,  
- Joint interview conducted on 24/1/85 at  
Itembukani secondary school, Tulimani  
location, Machakos.
25. Mr. N.J.M, 35 years old, witnessed Mr. Maingi  
remove a mbandio from a house wall, also  
heard majini talk during divination.  
- Interviewed on (1) 22/3/85 and (2) 21/6/85  
at his office in Machakos Teachers' College,  
Machakos town.
26. Mr. J.M., 30 years old.  
- Interviewed on 10/1/85 at his home in  
Maiuni village, Kiandani sub-location,  
Iveti location, Machakos.

28. Mr. K.N, 60 years old.  
- Interviewed on 21/12/84 at his home in Iviani village, Mukimwani sub-location Kisau location, Machakos.
29. Mr. M.N, about 30 years old.  
- Interviewed on 22/12/85 on his way home from a Communal work organised by Uthiuni sub-locational Community of Mbooni location, Machakos.
30. Mr. W.M.N, 33 years old, Assistant chief,  
- Interviewed on (1) 13/11/84 and (2) 9/1/85 at his office at Mavivye market, in Kiandani sub-location, Iveti location, Machakos.
31. Mr. M.N, 74 years old.  
- Interviewed on 8/12/84 at his home in Itakani village, Mukimwani sub-location, Kisau location, Machakos.

32. Mr. M.N, 68 years old.  
- Interviewed on 18/12/84 at his home in Muthwani village, Muthwani sub-location, Kisau location, Machakos.
33. Mr. B.K.N, 25 year old, son of Mr. P.N.K.  
- Interviewed on 10/1/85 at Mavivye market, Kiandani sub-location, Iveti location, Machakos.
34. Mrs. M.N, 44 years old, wife of Mr. P.N.K.  
- Interviewed on 10/1/85 at her new home in Manza village, Mung'ala sub-location, Iveti location, Machakos.
35. Mr. Simon, about 35 years old, medicine man, admitted that he owns and divines using majini.  
- Interviewed on 21/6/85 at his house in Miwani estate, Machakos town.

36. Mr. J.M.K, the man from Tulimani location, Machakos, reputed to own the majini that were disturbing students of Itembukani secondary school.

- This researcher went there to conduct a participant observation research on 1/1/85 and 1/1/85.

37. Mr. K.I.M, D.O, Mbooni division, Machakos, interviewed on 6/11/86 at his office.

- He confirmed that he had chaired two meetings concerning Mr. J.M.K's majini that were disturbing his own brothers and their families.

38. Mr. J.I.K, 67 years old, interviewed on 17/11/86.

- He is a former traditional dance leader, and owned kaleve magic.

39. Mr. S.W.M, 40 years old,  
Interviewed on 23/3/87

40. Mr. B.M.M, about 43 years old,  
Interviewed on 23/3/87.

41. Mrs. L.K, about 40 years old,  
Interviewed on 26/3/87.
42. Mr. D.N.M, 67 years old,  
Interviewed on 16/10/86 and 19/2/87.
43. Mr. L.K., 60 years old, former headmaster  
of Kusyomuomo primary school, interviewed  
on 15/12/86.
44. Mrs. M.N.M, more than 100 years, interviewed  
on 19/2/87 in the presence of her daughters-  
in-law.
45. Mrs. Z.M.M, about 30 years old, wife of  
Mr. J.M.K's younger brother, interviewed on  
21/1/87.
46. Mrs. J.M.N, 27 years old, interviewed on  
10/4/87.
47. Mr. K.M, 40 years old, interviewed on  
7/11/87. He confirmed that majini, in the  
form of a pigeon were sent to his home.



48. Mrs. M.W.K, about 68 years,  
interviewed on 8/11/86.

49. Mr. M.M, 36 years old,  
Interviewed on 8/11/86.

- Confirmed that he had to discontinue  
his studies at a teachers' college for  
a while because of sickness, and that  
he beat up a woman who had allegedly  
bewitched him.

50. Mrs. T.M.M, over 60 years old,  
interviewed on 14/6/86.

51. Mr. M.S, 17 years old, grandson of  
Mr. J.M.N.

Interviewed on 28/11/86.

- He confirmed that the majini that were  
disturbing them were removed by Kajiwe  
and his servants.

52. Mr. T.W, 26 years old,  
Interviewed on 12/11/86.

- He talked of the effects of a curse.

53. Prof. Salim, Department of History,  
University of Nairobi, interviewed  
on 1/11/85.

54. Prof. O.K. Mutungi, Department of Commercial  
Law, University of Nairobi and Principal,  
College of Arts,  
Interviewed on 5/11/85.

Others who were also interviewed but whose  
records are missing include:

55. Dr. H, the Provincial Gaenacologist, Machakos  
General Hospital.

- He confirmed that he heard of the couple  
that was brought to Kenyatta National  
hospital, still clinging together because  
of mbingo, a type of magic.

56. Mr. M, a record's clerk at the Kenyatta  
National Hospital.

- He also confirmed that he had heard of  
the couple that was brought to the casualty  
department of the hospital clinging together,  
but he did not see them.

57. A long serving nurse at the casualty department of Kenyatta National Hospital had also heard of that couple, but demanded to see an authorising letter from the Director of Kenyatta hospital before she could give more information.

APPENDIX ONE

QUESTIONNAIRE ( Section 'A' - General ).

Good morning/afternoon. My name is .....  
I am a student from the University of Nairobi. I am  
going around this area asking people questions concerning  
spirit activities, Aimu, Majini and even witchcraft.

We at the University of Nairobi, do not know as much as  
some of you do about the phenomena called spirits,  
Aimu. And we are interested in gaining this knowledge,  
not only for ourselves but also for later generations.  
That is why we are going around this place asking  
people to tell us what they know about Aimu.

This research has the permission of the Office of the  
President. I would therefore be grateful if you  
could answer the following questions.

Name of Head of Household..... Date.....  
Name of Respondent ..... Sample, No.....  
Location .....  
Sub-Location .....  
Village .....

- ( a ) Sex .....
- ( b ) Age .....
- ( c ) Marital Status .....
  - (i) Single .....
  - (ii) Married .....
  - Monogamous .....
  - Polygamous .....
  - (iii) Separated .....
  - (iv) Divorced .....
- ( d ) Occupation .....
- ( e ) Education

NO SCHOOL	1-4	5-7	1-IV	V-VI	UNIVERSITY	OTHER

- ( f ) School - (i) Mission School .....
  - (ii) Government .....
  - (iii) Private .....
2. Religion
- (i) Christian .....
  - (ii) Moslem .....
  - (iii) Traditionalist .....
  - (iv) Other .....

3. Do you know anything about spirits, Aimu? Yes/No

4. In your own opinion, do you think Aimu really exist?

(a) Yes ..... (b) No.....

5. (a) If yes Why? .....  
.....  
.....

(b) If No, do you think people imagine them?

(i) Yes ..... (ii) No .....

(c) If you think people imagine them, then what makes them imagine?  
.....  
.....  
.....

(i) Illness eg. Madness .....

(ii) Sadness .....

(iii) Alcohol .....

(iv) Stories Heard .....

(v) Having no religion .....

(vi) Other .....

(a) Yes ..... (b) No .....

7. If yes, who sends them? .....

.....

.....

8. If all your cows are dying one by one, and or, if your brother or child became mentally sick, whom would you consult?

- (a) A Traditional Healer .....
- (b) A Medical Doctor .....
- (c) Why? .....
- .....
- .....

9. Do you think witchcraft works?

- (a) Yes .....
- (b) No .....

10. If yes, in which areas does it work?

.....

.....

11. If no, why? .....

.....

.....

12. If a person is being attacked by Aimu can he/she get rid of them?

(a) Yes ..... (b) No .....

(c) If yes how?

.....  
.....

(d) If No why?

.....  
.....

13. Do you think Aimu and witchcraft are different?

(a) Yes ..... (b) No .....

(c) If yes how ?

.....  
.....

(d) If no why?

.....  
.....



QUESTIONNAIRE - SECTION 'B'

( Near the places where incidents took place )

14. Did you hear about the stones that were falling at Mr. P.N.K's home or the spirits, Aimu that were disturbing the students at Itembukani Secondary school?

(a) Yes ..... (b) No .....

15. What did people around here think about it?  
.....

16. What do you think caused these stones to fall?  
.....

(a) Aimu ..... (b) Witchcraft.....

(c) Other .....

17. What kind of stones were they? .....

18. If thrown by the spirits, Aimu why did the Aimu throw them?  
.....

19. If it was witchcraft, explain .....

20. But if thrown by the spirits, Aimu what kind of spirits were they?  
.....

21. Where did those spirits come from?  
.....
22. Where do they reside? .....  
.....1.
23. Where are they now? .....  
.....
24. By what other ways do people know that spirits,  
Aimu are there? .....  
.....  
.....
25. How can we treat.  
(a) A spirit case .....  
.....  
(b) A witchcraft case .....  
.....

APPENDIX TWO

CASE STUDY - ONE

MR. J. M. K. AND THE MAJINI STORY

ORIGIN.

Towards the end of 1971 it was alleged that Mr.J.M.K.<sup>1</sup> was sick with a mental problem. At that time he came to the shop of Mrs. M.N.M<sup>2</sup>, informant, and told her that he had come from Mombasa to be treated by his father. He had come with an Arabian medicine man. He was going to throw a very big party and invite many people to it. Those to attend the celebration would include Kilumi dancers, shrine priests and elders, his uncles and aunts, his mother and step-mothers (he has two step-mothers), and his sisters. During that celebration they would bless his gods and institute worship places, (mathembo), for him, so that whenever he came home he would be worshipping/praying there. If that was done he would be healed.

On the appointed day he entered the houses of his two step-mothers with the Arabian medicine man and placed in each of them a cowrie shell and notes of a hundred shillings and twenty shillings.

They killed two black goats, one at each house, sprinkled blood in the houses and carried the remaining blood with them back to Mombasa. They spread a mat, dressed up in lessos like Arabs, and prayed in each of the houses, in a language similar to the one used by muslim priests; it must have been Arabic.

From there they went to his own mother's house where they killed the third black goat and placed a cowrie shell and money in one of the rooms, as they had done in the other houses. Then Mr. J.M.K. took up one room (from his mother's house), which he specially sanctified, and in which he kept all the utensils which were from then on going to be used for cooking and serving his yearly dinners. From then on no one was allowed to enter that room, particularly women, except his specially selected cooks when collecting utensils for the yearly dinners.

Having finished with the home/houses, they went out to sacrifice and to institute the two sacrificial places, Mathembo, that were from then on going to become his personal shrines. One of them, the major one, was set up at a Yumbuni tree (*Ficus Moraceae*), in their cultivated farm at Kanzui village, next to one of his step-mothers place, and is known by the family name as kwa mbaa 'K's' Ithembo (the Ithembo that belongs to 'K's family). The other one, the smaller one, was at first set up under another Mumbu tree (*Ficus Moraceae*), about one hundred metres north of his main home at Nthengeni Village. It was later transferred<sup>3</sup> to its present site, in a river, under a Mukuyu tree (a type of fig tree) about three hundred metres south of his Nthengeni home. It was transferred because its original place was too open. Its present site is very inconspicuous and concealed from the

The researcher visited these two shrines on 1st January 1985, 2nd January 1985 and 1st January, 1987, but at no time was he able to get to the foot of the main shrine at Yumbuni, because it is in their cultivated land, and too close to the houses, about fifty or sixty metres away.

This then, is how the shrines, Mathembo, were instituted. A big fire was made at each place. A bull and a black goat were killed and sacrificed at each of the shrines. Blood was sprinkled. Dressed in lessos and under the direction of the Arabian priest, prayers and incantations were made in Arabic. Then the Arabian priest planted some magical substances at each shrine, Ithembo. While all this was happening Mr. J.M.K. was accompanied by his father and his three wives, his uncles and aunts, and local priests and elders. It was a public affair. That was on 1st January, 1972.<sup>4</sup>

After the sacrifices, the slaughtered animals were carried back to his main home at Nthengeni, where they were skinned and the feasting began. Kilumi dance was staged, and people made merry. During that merry-making feast Mr. J.M.K. announced the following:

From today onwards I will be hosting a party at the beginning of every year, that is on the first day of every year. All of you will be required to invite your relatives and friends for the party, but no letters of invitation will be sent to any one. People have to be invited by word of mouth; even radio announcement to invite people, who might be far, is not allowed. That is what my gods (Ngai syakwa) have directed.<sup>5</sup>

And from then to this day that party has been there. Even this year (1987) the party was still held. The researcher went there on 1st January, 1987 and found it in progress at around 3 p.m. It had not yet started around 2.30 p.m.

#### LATER DEVELOPMENTS

##### (a) AT SCHOOL.

Mr. J.M.K's yearly parties continued uninterrupted and unnoticed by the outside world until mid-1983 when reports about attacks on girl students at Itembukani secondary school appeared in the local press. When the researcher went to conduct his studies there, about six months later, those problems had been dealt with and the students were learning peacefully.

He was however, told by respondents that what had been disturbing the students were majini belonging to one Mr. J.M.K, a businessman based at Mombasa, and that the majini had long been removed by Kajiwe. One informant claimed that she had actually seen Kajiwe's certificate, with the matron, certifying that he had actually removed the attacking majini. The following are therefore some of the things that happened at Itembukani secondary school, forcing it to close down, at least for a while.

The problem started with visits (to the girls' hostel compound) from lesser animals such as lizards (matelembu), safari ants (nguku), and snakes.

The lizards were found lying on the girls' beds but did not run away immediately on seeing the owners. Next came the safari ants, nguku, which filled the entire hostel compound for a few days. According to Miss M.M.K<sup>6</sup> the ants did not bite them, so they left them alone, but Miss J.M.M and Miss M.J.<sup>7</sup> said the ants bit them 'both day and night'. Then came the snakes, three in number, of the same size and colour, which appeared on different days, and were killed. But some of the girls wondered whether the snakes actually died when hit! How come they reappeared the following day?

Later they began to hear tuttings, windows being scratched on and knocked. These things continued for several days and then, one morning a student by the name Miss J.K.K<sup>8</sup> complained that she had been strangled and taught physics on the entire chapter of 'pressure' by an invisible teacher, who admonished 'them', the students, not to talk loudly lest those outside hear them. She had been woken up by the invisible teacher. The other students were still sleeping. On another occasion, the same student was strangled by a 'man' dressed in white. Miss M.M.K<sup>9</sup> was the next to be attacked. She was rising to light a candle to study when her assailant pounced on her. She tried to scream for help, but could not, until her attackers left her. Her bed-mate (they sleep in double-deckers) had not experienced anything like that and was sleeping comfortably. Still on another day Miss N.N<sup>10</sup> saw a small whirl wind which threw her into her bed and strangled her.

On a day when the school went to Nakuru, on excursion, a girl named Miss M.M<sup>11</sup> was in the hostel when she saw a figure walking on top of the double-decker beds. The upper part was not recognizable but at the bottom it was a woman. The figure told her that all the other students had gone to Nakuru, she alone had been left. She was then strangled so badly that she was unable to swallow a thing for sometime.



Another girl Miss K.M.<sup>12</sup> was one day returning her plate after supper, at about 6 p.m. when she saw a shadowy figure in front of her. A force made her to fall down, and when she got up she said she had been strangled. From then on many more girls were strangled each night, including the christian union leader, Miss J.K.<sup>13</sup> and another girl Miss M.M.<sup>14</sup> who never believed that those strangling reports were true. Then they decided to forward the matter to the authorities through their matron. The headmaster advised them to sleep with the lights on, but to no avail. That night many more students were strangled.

The following day there was no prep. The girls met in one of their dormitories to sing. Their lady teachers also came but remained outside talking with the matron. Some of the girls did not join in the singing. About six of them decided to remain in the other dormitory to chat. The window of the place where these six girls were sitting was knocked twice. They got scared and ran out to join the rest. As they were going in, the girls inside were singing the song "Twavika ituni vinya wa satani ukeethiwa wi musinda" (when we get to heaven satan's power will be no more). At that moment something like a mighty earthquake shook the whole place so violently that both the girls who were standing including those who were arriving, and even those who were seated on the double-decker beds fell to the ground.

They screamed so loudly that they attracted very many people from the village. When they got up at first they could not see where the door was, but when they at last did, they all rushed out to the main gate where they met with the public who were coming to rescue them. And because of this incident the girls were allowed to go home the following day, and the press came to know about it.

The log book report <sup>15</sup> sums up the circumstances which led to the closure of that school as follows:

20/5/83 Trip to Makuru, Form fours only  
23/3/83 Report from girls' hostel has been brought by the matron that some mysterious persons are attacking the girls at night by down pressing them on their beds and choking or strangling them.

Some voices were heard and a female figure was seen. The headmaster, deputy and a lady teacher have addressed the girls not to be afraid. Lights to remain on throughout the night.

24/5/83

The mysterious people continue to appear and disturb the girls as stated above. A person was heard (mysterious person) teaching physics on topic of pressure. The headmaster has summoned an urgent meeting of the Board of Governors, administration, security and local leaders to meet on 26/5/83.

25/5/83

The mysterious people continue to intensify, D.H.E.O.'s office and chairman of Board of Governors informed.

26/5/83

The situation at the girls' hostel is worsening. Last night it was terrible. There was something like an earthquake - girls fell down and shouted so loudly that the whole village around came for rescue. Nothing was seen. The girls spent the night at the dinning hall. A teacher's house was also attacked by the mysterious persons.

26/5/83

The executive committee of the Board of Governors has met and reached the following decisions:

1. Due to the fears among the hostel residents, students should be sent home immediately while a solution is being sought.
2. To seek for DC's advice on the matter.

27/5/83

The headmaster in company of the chairman and area assistant chief have left for Machakos to see the D.C. in efforts to come to a conclusion on how to solve the problem at the girls' hostel.

The mysterious happenings were not noticed or experienced at the hostel after the girls were sent home. The school is under Mr. M.M, the deputy headmaster.

31/5/83

The entire school has adjourned for Madaraka celebrations which are extended to half-term holiday. Classes will be resumed on Monday.

2/6/83

Mr. J.J.O., Deputy D.H.E.O. visits the school

The students came back on 6/6/83 and were called back through radio announcement.<sup>16</sup> When they came back they were :

Told to sleep and forget about the past, and that even if there was anything it had been removed.<sup>17</sup>

Told that the majini had been removed by Kajiwe.<sup>18</sup>

(b) AT HOME

After the disturbances at Itembukani secondary school the talk on Mr. J.M.K.'s majini died down until it was raised up again by the family members in 1985. Mr. J.M.K.'s younger brothers complained first to the chief and then to the area D.O. that their brother's majini were disturbing them and that he should be told to remove them from their mothers' houses and put them in his own houses.

The problem started with an attack on the family women. First the three mothers were attacked and then their daughters-in-law. Mrs. A.M.K., one of the step-mothers heard sounds and noises of people running up and down and others talking, and still others knocked on her door. She woke up, opened the door, but saw nothing. But when the same thing happened the following day, she reported the matter to her elder co-wife, who told her:

J.M.K. aisye twasa kwiw'a andu maineena tuikaungane  
namo isu ni ngai syake.

(J.M.K. said, whenever we hear people talking, we should not be bothered, those are his gods). 20

At that time Mrs. A.N.K. learnt that what was happening to her was also happening to the other women, because they told her.

Next the daughters-in-law were attacked. They heard sounds and voices of people running up and down in the compound, others talking, and still others knocked on their doors.

Then something strange happened. Some personality in white gown (kanzu) would come to their beds, and still at other times they would be lifted up from their beds and put down on the floor. They screamed and rushed to their mothers-in-law who were not able to offer any solution. Then the husbands took up the matter with their father. Mr. J.M.K. was summoned and a family council was held.

Mr. J.M.K. announced the following measures to ward-off future attacks:

1. Whenever these 'visitors' come, his father should the following day be killing a goat of one colour, to be eaten by people. He should kill it at one shrine and the following week kill another one at the other shrine.

2. Only he should observe that the killing should be done on dates like 11th, 21st or 31st, not even days like 20th or 22nd.
3. Whenever his father has to give money to somebody, let us say 10/-, 20/-, 50/-, 100/-, 120/- etc, he should always add one shilling on top of that amount, that is 11, 21, 51, 101, 121 etc.

And as soon as these precautions were taken, the problem stopped. There were no more disturbances.

The younger brothers were also given their own rules and regulations to observe. They were:

- (1) Not supposed to drink or smoke
- (2) Not to have sex with their wives more than once in a month
- (3) Not to have sexual intercourse with women other than their wives.

- (4) Never to quarrel with their wives, no matter what happened.
- (5) Not to eat sheep's meat or pork, not even beef, but to be eating only goat's meat.<sup>21</sup>

The brothers were not able to keep these rules. At first they tried, but slowly they began to break one by one secretly. And because they broke them, the attack from the unseen personalities resumed, this time it was more violent. They were beaten up by unseen personalities. And instead of their wives being lifted up and placed on the floor, they would now be carried and placed outside, in the cold. It was therefore because of these escalated attacks that all the younger brothers of Mr. J.M.K ganged up together and demanded that he remove his majini from their mothers houses. They complained to the area D.O.

Another version/reason as to why the brothers took up this family squabble to the government was because Mr. J.M.K proved too strong for them. According to this version, the problem began in 1981.<sup>22</sup> In 1981 Mr. J.M.K had all his young brothers, their wives, and his cousins jailed at Mombasa for allegedly stealing his money.

According to the area D.O., Mr. K.I.M, the brothers were accused of stealing his money, but according to Mrs. Z.M.M, wife of one of the young brothers, they were accused of plotting to kill Mr. J.M.K. Nevertheless, the two agree that the brothers were jailed.<sup>23</sup> And because he had them jailed, enmity started.



Around 1979 Mr. J.M.K.'s majini told him to have his brothers and cousins as managers and supervisors of his businesses in Mombasa. He accordingly asked them to resign where they were working and he employed them, making some of them managers. Around 1981 somebody informed these younger brothers that their elder brother had majini and that the party that he hosted at the beginning of every year was a sacrifice to his gods. On hearing that the brothers met to discuss that information, and Mr. J.M.K. came to know about it. It was then that he accused them of either stealing his money or plotting to kill him, and had them put behind bars.

When they were released they resigned from his firms and came home. And because they had learnt that their brother owned majini, they brought with them a medicine man from Mombasa, who removed the majini from their home. But Mr. J.M.K. replaced them immediately. This was happening in 1981/82. Later, that is, in 1984 the brothers brought another medicine man from Pemba, who, again removed all the majini from their home. And for that reason (removal of majini), Mr. J.M.K. became so sick that it was even thought he would die, but he survived. That is when he brought other stronger majini which began to harass the whole family, as stated above. Hence during the years 1984/85 life was very bad for the wives of the brothers. This is the time when they were being visited in their bedrooms by a mysterious man dressed in a white gown (kanzu).

So, Mr. J.M.K's brothers had no alternative but to report the matter to the government for redress.

On 21/7/86 the area D.O., Mr. K.I.M, chaired the first meeting to try and solve that family dispute. Accompanying the D.O. on the government side were, the Divisional Police Boss (O.C.S), chief inspector B.M; the chief, Mr. O.M and the assistant chief for that area Mr. D.N.

On the family side were Mr. P.M.K, the father; Mr.J.M.K, the eldest son and the accused; all the six young brothers, and their two mothers. The third mother was then in the hospital. The same group met again on 28/8/86, under the chairmanship of the same D.O., but at that time the chairman of Ethanga clan, Mr. S.M. was also present.

#### COMPLAINT

- (a) All the brothers accused their elder brother Mr. J.M.K, for bewitching them.
- (b) They said that the bewitching is done at the beginning of every year.
- (c) That he makes a party for all of them and neighbours through which he bewitches them.
- (d) That he had been hosting that party for more than ten year.
- (e) Therefore they wanted a permit from the D.O. to cleanse the home and administer a Ndundu oath.

## RULING

- (a) The D.O. refused to grant permission for the ndundu oath to be administered.
- (b) The brothers were told to move away from their father's land and buy theirs if they felt that Mr. J.M.K was bewitching them.
- (c) That in future the party should not be given without a letter from the D.O.
- (d) The chairman of the clan requested that the case be removed from the government offices and taken back to the clan. The D.O. first gave his ruling, as stated above, and allowed the clan to take up the matter in future.

CASE STUDY - TWO

MR. J.M.N. AND THE MAJINI STORY

THE PROBLEM

Problem started in the month of November, 1984, when lumps of earth and other objects started to fly in through the space between the wall and the roof, and landing onto the children's beds. Later the corrugated iron sheets were also hit and the doors knocked on.

At first they suspected either some mischievous boys or thieves were trying to scare them away so that they could steal. But when they found all their things intact after spending the night at a neighbour's place, they changed their mind. All the same they employed a watchman to guard their home and make sure that no unauthorised person either knocked on their door or threw any stones at them. But this did not help. In the evenings the watchman himself would hear the doors being knocked but on flashing on his torch he would not see anything. At the same time stones would still be hitting the roof and the people inside. Such an experience was too scaring for the watchman. So he left that job and ran away.

One day a grand child of Mr. J.M.N was hit by those invisible personalities and its mother decided to take it to the divisional dispensary. On the way she passed at the home of the area's assistant chief to tell him the troubles she was going through and to leave her bigger son there.

The assistant chief is a neighbour of hers, though not very close. While the woman was relating her story, her bigger son went aside to relieve himself. But while he was doing it, a stone from nowhere, hit him on the head so hard that he rushed back screaming and bleeding. The mother had therefore to take both of them to the hospital. This information was given to the researcher by the assistant chief's mother<sup>24</sup>, who saw it happen in her own home.

On another day one of the daughters-in-law went to the police station to report about the beatings and seek some help from the police. But while she was there, waiting to be attended, she was slapped and knocked down by the same invisible personalities. The other daughter-in-law went to her parent's place to seek refuge. But she too, was followed there and beaten.

Yet on another day the stick used for rolling up chapaties rose up on its own and hit their servant girl so hard that, she, like the watchman, ran away and never came back. This was disclosed by Mr. M.N.<sup>25</sup> But according to Mr. M.S.<sup>26</sup>, it was the daughter of Mr. J.M.N who was hit.

Following the complaint mentioned above, the divisional administration visited the home of Mr. J.M.N. to assess the situation and see what help they could render

But while they were there, discussing with the family, as if to mock them, the beatings resumed. According to Mr. M.S, Mr. J.M.N's daughter was hit at this time. The administration group witnessed the family being beaten up by the invisible personalities. They for example, saw a shoe brush rise on its own and hit one of Mr. J.M.N's grand children. And a table-cloth rolled itself up into a lump and hit another member of the family. Sticks could be seen beating up people, and others being slapped, although none of the outsiders was beaten. But the administration was helpless before those invisible attackers. The only suggestion they could give was, "look into that matter among yourselves as a family", and they left.<sup>27</sup>

The government officials who were there and witnessed these beatings were, Mr. A.A., the then D.O.; Mr. B.M, the O.C.S; Mr. P.M., Senior chief and Mr. B.M.M, the assistant chief, among others.<sup>28</sup>

Having failed to get help from the government, Mr. J.M.N's two daughters-in-law took their children and went to Nairobi, where their husbands work.<sup>29</sup> But even there, they were followed by the invisible personalities and attacked. They were stoned, pierced with needles, cut with razor blades, had their food soiled, added pepper and also kerosene. They had no peace even there.<sup>30</sup>

Mr. J.M.N.'s family therefore united their forces to look for a solution. They contacted several medicine men but none was able to help them. At last one of the sons Mr. K.M, travelled all the way to Tanzania to look for Kajiwe. He found him at Namanga. Kajiwe gave him a horn and told him to spit on it and tell it what he wanted done. Mr. K.M spat onto the horn and told it, "I want the harrassment of my people to stop immediately". And immediately it stopped. It was exactly at 10 a.m. in the morning, when he said it and the beating stopped.<sup>31</sup> Mr. M.S., the informant, did not know what date it was, but he was sure that it was in the month of february, 1985. After that Mr. K.M brought Kajiwe home with him, arriving at around 6 p.m, in the month of March, 1985.

#### EXORCISM - ONE

Mr. Tsume Washe, popularly known as Kajiwe, went around the homestead and promised to tell them what was disturbing them the following day at 3 a.m. That day they never slept before that information was received. With the help of his magical power he caught the majini, four in number, and started interrogating them. The majini said that they had been brought from Saudi Arabia by Mr. S.M.N, that is J.M.N.'s younger brother. The informant<sup>32</sup> was not there when the Majini were caught but he came the following day and found the four majini in a corked tree-top bottle.

The bottle was filled half-way with water. All the four majini were black in colour and looked like sticks. Three had by then died and were lying at the bottom of the bottle. They were about 2 cm. long and as wide as the nip (tip) of a kilometeric ball pen. The fourth one, which was still alive, looked slightly bigger and was swimming up and down. Mr. Tsuma Washe assured them that the living jinni was also going to die and it did.

#### HOW AND WHY THEY HAD COME

Mr. J.M.N's younger brother had brought the majini from Saudi Arabia when he was trading with honey. He wanted the majini to make him rich. He sent the majini to his brothers home to evict them from their inherited land so that he could own the whole place. But when he refused to move, it was decided that the two sons of Mr. J.M.N and their families be killed, so that when the old man finally died, there would be no one to inherit his property except his younger brother, Mr. S.M.N.

After removing the majini Mr. Tsuma Washe remained at the home of Mr. J.M.N for about three months, treating people and collecting witchcraft paraphernalia.<sup>33</sup> But when some people (particularly Mr. S.M.N) complained about his presence, he left and went back to his Emali home.



EXORCISM - TWO

With Kajiwe's departure, Mr. S.M.N decided to send another jinni. This time the aim was to finish Mr. J.M.N. The daughter-in-law had not yet come back from Nairobi. One day as he was cooking, the sauce pan was overturned, and the food poured down. At night he would hear his door being scratched on like by a dog, but on opening the door he would not see anything. These disturbances continued for some time, but one day it was a knock. Then he heard his name being called. He was told to open the door. But before opening he took a bow, arrows and a sword.

He saw a very tall fire-like figure standing there outside. From the waist downwards it looked like a human being; two legs could be made out. Mr. J.M.N put down his arms and grabbed it. He hit it by the ribs so hard that it screamed. It then hit him on the cheek and he fell down. When he rose up he did not see it again, but his jaw was swollen.

Mr. Kajiwe, who was seeing all this from his Emali home, Machakos sent his three servants; Mr. Mutua, Mr. Mwariti and Mr. Bhakari to come and rescue the old man.

On their arrival they first reported to the area's assistant chief. They then proceeded to the home of Mr. J.M.N. After one week they, using their magical power set a trap for the jinni and caught it at mid-night.

The following morning the assistant chief was sent for. He found the jinni put in a corked bottle of fanta, which contained some perfumed liquid substance (manukato). It was black in colour, about 3 inches long and as wide as two thumbs. It looked like a fish and had whiskers. It was very active, swimming up and down. They took it to their master, Mr. Kajiwa.<sup>34</sup>

Mr. M.S., the informant, was not there when it was caught and never saw it, but was told that:

It looked like a european man, but visible only from the waist upward. This one was far much bigger than the first four. It was about 2 inches long.<sup>35</sup>

#### OTHER ATTEMPTS

After removing the jinni Kajiwa's servants treated the family and protected their home against future majini and witchcraft attacks. Even then, the enemy did not give up.

He sent a dog to come and bite Mr. J.M.N, but it could not get into the protected home or its treated members. It only went around the homestead several times and then disappeared. After that a cock was sent. It came flying and perched on top of some eucalyptus tree, below their home. And because it could not get into the home, it also flew away. Last of all a goat with its two kids was sent. It also disappeared through the eucalyptus forest and down a stream, which is below the forest. This researcher was shown both the eucalyptus forest and the stream.

HOW IT WAS KNOWN THAT THE ANIMALS WERE SENT TO ATTACK

MR. J. M. N's FAMILY.

When these animals were appearing, Kajiwe's servants were still there and they saw them, just as everybody else did. When they later went to their master, Mr. Kajiwe's first question was whether they had seen those animals. They said yes. Then Mr. Kajiwe told them that those were not ordinary animals but majini sent to attack Mr. J.M.N's family members, but could not do so because the family was now protected against majini attacks.

From that time to this day there has been no other majini attack. The family is living in peace; even those who had fled to Nairobi have come home. When the researcher visited their home on 6/11/86 and on 28/11/86 he found one of the daughters-in-law and her children there. The children are attending school. Mr. J.M.N himself has even been told to eat whatever is given to him by his younger brother Mr. S.M.N, without any fear, for nothing can happen to him.

CASE STUDY - THREE

MR. P. N. K. AND THE MAJINI STORY

ORIGIN

Problem started on 24/12/82 at 7.30 p.m. They heard stones hitting the roof of Mr. P.N.K's house. The stoning continued for half an hour and stopped. On 25/12/82 and 26/12/82 they were again stoned at the same time for about half an hour each day.

But on 27/12/82 the stoning changed. It started at 6 a.m. and continued until 7 a.m. or so and stopped. This time the door of their house was the one being hit, not the roof. The objects that were hitting the door included lumps of earth, pieces of broken pots and volcanic tuff (building stones), as opposed to the quartz (ordinary stones) which had previously been hitting the roof. There are quartz stones in that area, but where the volcanic tuff came from nobody knows. From then on the stoning was no longer restricted to any particular time. They could, for example, be stoned during the day, early in the morning or at night.

At first they suspected some mischievous passersby. (There are at least two main foot paths close to their home.) So they decided to conduct a secret research in an effort to catch the culprit. On 26/12/82 they caught a very innocent boy who happened to be passing by when they opened the door after their house had been stoned.

The boy pleaded innocent and ignorant of what they were asking him. He was let go.

After sometime they informed neighbours and the police, who stationed their men in the coffee plantation around the home, but no arrests were made although the stones continued to hit the home. Everyday some sympathetic friends and neighbours would come to enquire how they were faring, and they were told. But when Mr. Mbugua of K.N.A., Machakos, published the story, followed by other reporters, too many people flocked into that home. And because of the too many embarrassing questions, the family stopped giving out any information away. These many visitors trampled down the crops and did not give the family any room for privacy. They only seemed to be interested in popularizing the matter without offering any solution to the stoning problem. The same incident was even broadcast over the Voice of Kenya and by the British broadcasting corporation, London.<sup>36</sup> Therefore, Mr.P.N.K ordered his family not to give any information to anybody. So when this researcher went there about four or five months later, he met with a lot of resistance and indifference from the family members.<sup>37</sup>

Among the distinguished personalities who visited that family during that time were Mr. P.M, D.C. Machakos; the O.C.P.D, Machakos; Mr. N.H, the then area M.P, with his councillors; Mr. N.M; the K.A.N.U National Organising Secretary and V.O.K staff from both Machakos and Nairobi. Among the groups that visited that home included school parties, e.g. Mumbuni High School 'A' level C.R.E. class, which went there with their teacher, Mr. H.M.K; churches, choirs, theological insitutions and wananchi from all walks of life, also went there. Prayers were said but to no vail. 38

It was suggested that Mr. Kajiwe be brought to deal with the matter, but the then D.C., Mr. P.M, refused to give permit. Mr. P.N.K went there three times, sometimes accompanied by sympathising neighbours and friends who pleaded with the D.C. to give the permit, but on each occasion he refused. At the same time they were also pleading with Mr. Kajiwe to come secretly and help them, which did not work. Instead Kajiwe sent his own son, Mr. Kagwe Kajiwe to come and do it. When he came he stripped himself naked and climbed onto the roof where the stones were. He removed all the stones, throwing some this way and others that way. Then he climbed down and went around the homestead, sprinkling some herbal concoction. After that he dressed up and addressed the gathering, which was not less than one thousand people, and told them that from then on there would be peace; he had removed the thing that was disturbing them. 39

But after a few days the stoning resumed.

After Kagwe's failure to remove the majini more attacks were reported. This time women were the main targets and in particular the daughter of Mr. P.N.K. and her son. According to Mr. H.M.K.<sup>40</sup>, her son used to eat his meals under a table, fearing to be stoned or have his food soiled. Even then he was stoned and had his food soiled.

Others were stoned and were also present when the family members were being harrassed. Mr. N.M.K.<sup>41</sup> witnessed their stew being soiled and he advised them not to eat it. On another occasion the area chief, Mr.T.M.M.<sup>42</sup> was in the kitchen investigating how their food was being soiled, when a stone hit one of his officers, Mr.W.M.N, the assistant chief. He collected the stone and later handed it over to the Voice of Kenya staff, who photographed it and carried it away with them. It was just an ordinary quartz stone.

It has also been said (by Mr. N.M.K and Mr. H.M.K, above and others) that the majini used to play sex with the women in that home, including any visiting women who happened to spend the night there. And that at times the women used to disappear at night (perhaps carried by the majini), leaving their husbands in the bed. But Mrs.M.K,<sup>43</sup> one of Mr.P.N.K's daughters-in-law denied having had any sexual intercourse with the spirits.

Both family members and outsiders were stoned. Mr. B.K.N, son of Mr. P.N.K, admitted that he was stoned several times, but was not hurt as much as his father was. According to him, his father was hit on the head so hard that he had to go to Machakos General Hospital to be stitched. Mr. J.K,<sup>44</sup> of D.C's office, Machakos came there not believing that the majini could actually stone any one. He was stoned so hard that he immediately ran back home.

On another day the majini dropped a twenty shilling note (kshs.20) in front of the family members. Mr. N.M.K, who was present then, mocked the majini by also dropping his two shillings and fifty cents (shs.2/50) where the twenty shilling majini note was. He was stoned so hard that he too decided to go home. This information about money that was dropped by majini was given by Mr. H.M.K on 8/11/84 and on 20/1/85 and by Mr. & Mrs B.M.K<sup>45</sup> (jointly) on 12/1/85. But Mr. N.M<sup>46</sup> denied that he saw any money being thrown by the majini. He however, admitted that majini can transport wealth (including money) from one place to your home. He is uncle to Mr. P.N.K's wife.

Therefore, because of these attacks, the family decided to migrate from that place. They consulted a Mombasa medicine man who assured them that if they migrated there would be peace. And sure enough, from mid-1984, when they migrated to this day, there has been peace.



The medicine man was paid only two shillings for his advice (consultation fee). He promised to come there to remove those majini whenever his gods allow him. At that time he would be paid additional twenty shillings. But the failure Mr. Kagwe Kajiwe was paid six thousand shillings, and was also given Mr. P.N.K's daughter, who had been the main target of the stonings, but she refused to go with a man 'who had been seen naked by the whole world'.

#### WHAT WAS ATTACKING THEM AND WHY?

All the interviewees agreed that Mr. P.N.K's family was being attacked by majini. Mr. B.N.K, on behalf of the family said that almost all the medicine men that came there, including Mr. Kagwe Kajiwe, said that they were being attacked by majini.

But when asked why the majini attacked them, none of the interviewees seemed to have a clear answer. Their answers can be summarized as follows:

- (a) That Mr. M.M, former husband of P.N.K's daughter had sent them majini because they had snatched away his wife and son, and got her married to somebody else.
- (b) That Mr. P.N.K's elder brother, Mr. M.K<sup>47</sup>, who had been away for many years (possibly in Tanzania) had married a woman there but later deserted her when he decided to come back home. Therefore that jilted woman in retaliation sent him majini.

It is even said that a female jinni visited him at the beginning of the attacks. Mr. P.N.K's home was therefore being attacked because Mr. M.K had no family of his own. He was staying in the same compound with P.N.K's family.

- (c) That Mr. P.N.K himself owns majini and that for some reasons best known to him, his majini turned against him and started attacking his family. That is probably why, he opted to go away instead of admitting that he owned majini and revealing what he had done to make them angry. Mr. M.M<sup>48</sup> was heard saying that they bought majini together with Mr. P.N.K and that Mr. P.N.K was now suffering for not treating his majini well.

1. Mr. J.M.K is a leading businessman based at Mombasa. It is alleged that he owns majini, for which he hosts a party at the beginning of every year.
2. Mrs. M.N.M., 55, one of the chief informants and a member of Mr. J.M.K's extended family. She was interviewed on 1/1/85, 24/1/85 twice, and 29/11/86.
3. It has been said that the majini that were terrorizing students at Itembukani secondary school escaped at this time, that is, when they were being transferred to the new shrine. However, this is just one of the views, though a strong one.
4. The respondent who gave this date on 1/1/85 gave a different date, i.e. 1/1/73 on 24/1/85 depending on what her informants were telling her. The researcher did not have access to any family members or Mr. J.M.K himself to verify the date.
5. This information was given to Mrs. M.N.M by Mrs. A.M.K. one of Mr. J.M.K's step-mothers. Sometimes aimu are referred to as family gods (ngai sya musyi) or simply as gods.
6. Miss M.M.K., of 1983 class, interviewed on 10/12/84.

7. Miss J.M.M and Miss M.J both of 1985 class jointly interviewed on 24/1/85.
8. Miss J.K.K's name was given by all those interviewed, including the uncooperative staff, as the one who was first strangled and later taught physics. She confirmed that she was actually strangled and later taught physics. Interviewed on 7/12/84.
9. Miss M.M. was another student whose name was mentioned by many respondents as one of those who were attacked. She confirmed during the interview on 10/12/84.
10. Miss N.N's name was given by J.K.K and others.
11. Miss M.M's name was given by Miss J.K.K on 7/12/84 and by Miss E.Q.M on 10/12/84.
12. Miss K.M's name was given by Miss M.M.K on 10/12/84
13. Miss J.K's name was given by Miss J.M.M and Miss M.J. (jointly), see above.
14. Miss M.M's name was given by Miss J.K.K on 7/12/84.  
These students could not be reached for comment because after completing their studies they went away. Some of them go back to their far away homes and others to different cities and towns to look for employment.
15. Log book is the official entries of that school, entered only by the headmaster or his deputy.  
Notes taken on 24/1/85

16. Miss J.M.M and Miss M.J, jointly interviewed on 24/1/85
17. Miss J.K.K, interview.
18. This information was given by Miss M.M.K on 10/12/84, who said that she and Miss J.K.K were shown Kajiwe's certificate.
19. Miss J.K.K on 9/1/87 confirmed that she saw the certificate.
20. Mrs. M.N.M heard this from Mrs. A.M.K herself, during an interview, on behalf of the researcher.
21. Interview with Mrs. M.N.M.
22. Both the D.O, Mr. K.I.M, interviewed on 6/11/86 and Mrs. Z.M.M, wife of one of the young brothers, interviewed on 21/1/87, agree that problem started in 1981.
23. Mrs. Z.M.M adds, 'including their wives and cousins who were in Mombasa'. The informant, who was not yet married, used to go to the prison to see his fiance and met these other wives and cousins.
24. This information was given during the first interview of the Assistant Chief, Mr. B.M.M; on 22/1/85.
25. Mr. M.N, a neighbour of Mr. J.M.N, interviewed on 22/1/85.
26. Mr. M.S., grandson of Mr. J.M.N, interviewed on 28/11/86.
27. Mr. B.M.M, the Assistant Chief, who gave this information was in that group which had accompanied

28. These names first appeared in the Daily Nation of 17/1/85 and were also given by the area's Assistant Chief during the interview.
29. When the researcher first visited the home of Mr. J.M.N on 22/1/85, it was learnt that his two daughter-in-law had carried their children and gone to Nairobi where their husbands work.
30. Interview with Mr. M.S, grandson of Mr. J.M.N, on 28/11/86.
31. Mr. M.S. 17 years, grandson of Mr. J.M.N, interview.
32. Mr. M.S, Mr. J.M.N's grandson, interview.
33. On 28/11/86 this researcher saw a heap at the home of Mr. J.M.N, which was covered with a white cloth. Mr. M.S. said it was the witchcraft items collected by Kajiwe from his clients.
34. Mr. B.M.M, the Assistant Chief, second interview, 30/10/86
35. Mr. M.S., grandson of Mr. J.M.N, interviewed on 28/11/86
36. This information was given by Mr. B.K.N, son of Mr. P.N.K on 10/1/85
37. The researcher first visited that area in November, 1984, interviewed three neighbours of Mr. P.N.K and went away because it was learnt that Mr. P.N.K's family was mourning after losing a relative. He came again in January 1985 and interviewed more people.

- 38 . Information given by Mr. T.M., the chief, on 17/1/85 and by Mr. B.K.N, son of Mr. P.N.K, on 10/1/85.
- 39 . Mr. B.K.N, interview.
- 40 . Mr. H.M.K, 38, secondary school teacher and a neighbour of Mr. P.N.K, interviewed on 8/11/84 and 20/1/85.
- 41 . Mr. N.M.K, 66, neighbour and uncle to Mrs.P.N.K, interviewed on 15/1/85.
- 42 . Mr. T.M.M, 55, chief, interviewed on 17/1/85
- 43 . But Mrs. M.K, one of the daughter-in-law of Mr.P.N.K denied that the majini played sex with them. Interviewed 16/1/85.
- 44 . Information that Mr. J.K was hit was given by Mr. H.M.K during the first interview, on 8/11/84.
- 45 . Mr & Mrs. B.M.K, 83 and 75 respectively are close neighbours of Mr. P.N.K. Interviewed on 12/1/85.
- 46 . Mr. N.M.K, 66, also a neighbour and uncle to Mrs. P.N.K, interviewed on 15/1/85.
- 47 . Mr. M.K, 72, and unmarried; interviewed on 14/1/85. Mr. M.K. denied having been to Tanzania as alleged but said he had lived for twenty-four years in Uganda as a Mason.
- 48 . This information was given by Mr. H.M.K, during the interview. He is a neighbour of Mr. P.N.K's.