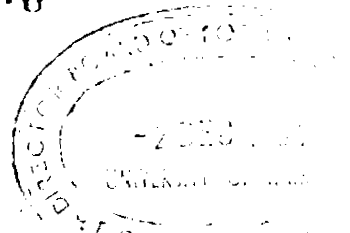


THE AKURINU CHURCHES :
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE
TO THEIR THEOLOGY //

BY

NAHASHON WAMATHAI NDUNG'U



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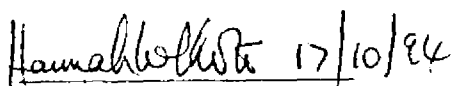
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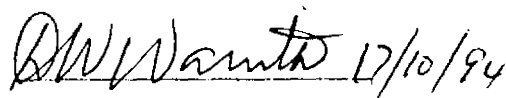
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This thesis has been submitted for examination with our approval as University Supervisors.

 17/10/94

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 17/10/94

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ABSTRACT

The phenomenon of African Independent Church movement has attracted the attention of scholars from different disciplines such as History, Sociology and anthropology, who have attempted to discover the factors that lead to the rise of these churches. Much emphasis is put on the social, economic and political factors in explaining the rise of the independent churches in Africa. This work attempts to incorporate the theological factor in the study of the Akurinu Churches movement which emerged in Gikuyuland in the 1920s. This study on the Akurinu Churches had three objectives:(a) to investigate the historical background and development of the Akurinu movement, (b) to study the Akurinu theology as manifested in their beliefs and practices, (c) to find out how their theology has influenced their social status.

Field data mainly from the Central and Rift Valley Provinces has been utilized in testing the following hypotheses of this study: (a) that the Akurinu Churches mainly appeal to people with a low education standard,(b) that the Akurinu beliefs and practices have been influenced by the Gikuyu religion, (c) that the Akurinu hold a futuristic

eschatological view, (d) that the future of the Akurinu Churches will depend on the reforms which will encourage the youth to remain in the Churches.

Four main things are clear about the Akurinu Churches from this study. Firstly, the Akurinu movement, like other African Independent Churches among the Gikuyu, emerged as a response to the social, economic, cultural, political and religious upheavals caused by British colonisation and the teachings of Western Christian missionaries among the Gikuyu in the 1920s. Secondly, the Akurinu Churches have been responsive to social changes. Thirdly, in their beliefs and practices, the Akurinu have retained some aspects of Gikuyu religion. Fourthly, in their theology, the Akurinu Churches are basically pneumatological. Although they accept the Triune doctrine, they however lay more emphasis on the Holy Spirit who is believed to be present and active among these Christians.

This study is important to those interested in understanding the nature of the African Independent Church movement. It is also relevant in enriching our knowledge on how the Africans have made the Gospel message relevant to their

social and cultural environment. Finally, this study has shown how the Akurinu Churches have contributed in the growth of Christianity through their hymns which other Churches are using during worship. The ways in which the Akurinu have made the gospel message relevant to their members by incorporating some Gikuyu customs should be of interest to those advocating for an African Christian theology and the inculturation of the Gospel.

Three problems facing the Akurinu Churches were identified during the field study. Firstly, there is the continued rise of new Akurinu groups which are formed by expellees from the older Akurinu Churches on disciplinary cases or due to theological differences and power struggle. Secondly, there are no theological training institutions among the Akurinu. With the number of educated youth rising, there is need to have educated and trained clergy in this church. Thirdly, the Akurinu have a financial problem which partly explains why they have no full-time salaried pastors.

Finally, this study has identified the dependence of some Akurinu on faith healing. This is an area that requires further study as it would be of interest to the medical professionals and the general public at large.

ABBREVIATIONS

AACA	-	All Akurinu Churches Assembly.
AHGCC	-	African Holy Ghost Christian Church.
AIM	-	African Inland Mission
AIPCA	-	African Independent Pentecostal Church of Africa.
AOC	-	African Orthodox Church
AMHGS	-	African Mission of Holy Ghost Church
AYC	-	Akurinu Youth Convention
CCHS	-	Chosen Church of the Holy Spirit
CHGCEA	-	Christian Holy Ghost Church of East Africa.
CMS	-	Church Missionary Society
DC	-	District Commissioner
DO	-	District Officer
EAA	-	East African Association
GMS	-	Gospel Missionary Society
GWHGC	-	God's Word and Holy Ghost Church
HGCEA	-	Holy Ghost Church of East Africa
IBEA	-	Imperial British East African Company
IA	-	Kikuyu Association
KAU	-	Kenya African Union
KEPC	-	Kenya Foundation of Propnet Church

KISA - Kikuyu Independent Schools
Association

KKEA - Kikuyu Karing'a Education
Association

KNA - Kenya National Archives

LNC - Local Native Council

NDEFFO - Nakuru District Ex-Freedom
Fighters Organization

PC - Provincial Commissioner

PCEA - Presybeterian Church of East
Africa

YKA - Young Kikuyu Association.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.

I am deeply indebted to my supervisors, Dr. H. W. Kinoti and Dr. D. W. Warata for their guidance and encouragement during this study. Their constructive criticisms and suggestions are highly appreciated.

My informants from the Akurinu Church were very generous to me during the field work. They readily availed themselves and were patient for long hours during our discussions and interviews. I take this opportunity to sincerely thank them for their co-operation and hospitality. While I cannot mention them all, I must mention Archbishop Elijah Kinyanjui, Bishop John Muhia and Bishop Samuel John Chege for allowing me to read through some of their personal files on the Akurinu Church.

My research assistants, Naomi Nyaga, Elinah Ngatia, and I Isaac Mwangi helped me greatly in collecting some of the information for this study. Pastor Rufus Gichuki made it possible for me to attend several Akurinu ceremonies and services. I would like them to know I have much appreciated their help.

I am very much indebted to Miss Sara M. Mwanja for her untiring effort and patience in typing this

thesis. I also thank my wife Gachambi and our children for their patience and understanding during the course of this study.

Finally, I am very grateful to the Deans Committee, University of Nairobi, for offering me a research grant for this study.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Problem

To date, there are few studies on the Akurinu Churches. The members themselves have not produced any literature about their churches. This has led to most people perceive the Akurinu churches as an exclusive and secretive movement. Other independent churches such as the African Independent Pentecostal Church of African and the African Orthodox Church which emerged in Gikuyuland at the same time with the Akurinu, have been studied while little or no reference to the Akurinu is made in those studies. It is this lack of information and particularly an insider's view of the Akurinu churches that was the basis of this study.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The Akurinu churches rank among the oldest African independent churches in Kenya. They emerged as a reaction to the social, political, cultural and economic oppression and attacks which were directed to the Gikuyu community by both the colonialists and the Western Christian missionaries in the 1920s. Although these Churches have been in existence for about sixty years, very little study

has been done on them. This lack of study and adequate information on a Christian community in the Kenyan society is a problem worthy of study. Often, references are made to other independent churches such as the African Independent Pentecostal Church of Africa and the African Orthodox Church while the Akurinu Churches are left out yet the three churches emerged at the same time among the Gikuyu.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

This study has the following four objectives:

- a) To find out the origins and development of the Akurinu Churches.
- b) To study some aspects of the Akurinu theology as manifested in their beliefs and practices.
- c) To investigate whether the Akurinu have been influenced by the Gikuyu religious beliefs and practices.
- d) To find out whether the Akurinu religious beliefs and practices have had any impact on their socio-economic status.

1.4 Working Hypotheses

The following four working hypotheses were tested during the field work of the study;

- a) The Akurinu churches mainly appeal to people with a low standard of education.

- b) The Akurinu beliefs and practices are influenced by the traditional Gikuyu religion.
- c) The future of the Akurinu Churches depends on the reforms which will encourage the youth to remain in the churches.
- d) The ridicule of the Akurinu by some outsiders is mainly due to ignorance and lack of interest to understand these churches.

1.5 Rationale for the Study

The Akurinu churches are among the oldest African independent churches in Kenya with their history dating back to the 1920s. However, up to now there is not adequate information about these churches. For example, little is known about the founders and what exactly prompted them to start this movement. Is it likely, for instance, that the founders were ex-followers of the mission-founded churches and schools? Were they literate enough to read the few scriptures that had been translated into Gikuyu language by then? Were they likely to have been motivated by the rise of the 'African Independent Pentecostal Church of Africa and the African Othodox Church' both of which emerged among the Gikuyu around 1930? Answers to such questions about the Akurinu call for a thorough study of these churches.

The Akurinu movement was started by a few Gikuyu members. With time it spread over Gikuyu land and to parts of Meru and Embu. Today, these churches have followers in various parts of the country although they still draw heavily from the Gikuyu community. Their members thus form a conspicuous Christian community which justifies a study of this nature.

The founders of the Akurinu were opposed to the attacks which were directed to the Gikuyu cultural values and practices by the early Western Christian missionaries. It is therefore necessary at this time to find out to what extent and in what manner the Akurinu have incorporated the gospel message to the traditional Gikuyu values and practices. It is also important to find out how they interpret the scriptures in the light of their social and cultural background. The Akurinu theological insights, yet unknown to outsiders, could be of relevance to other Christians. For example the expression of their spirituality through prayer and hymns and their sense of Christian community are cases in point.

Today there are discussions going on among African theologians on how to develop an 'African Christian theology'; a theology that takes into account the rich values in the African culture and

at the same time presents the gospel message to the Africans in the light of their cultural heritage. The independent churches in Africa have already made a move towards this development. What requires to be done is to carry out thorough and systematic studies of these churches and identify African practices which they have managed to incorporate in the Christian life. Such an analysis will demand extensive studies on the independent churches across Africa. The present study among the Akurinu will have some contribution to offer in such an endeavour.

The Christian communities in Kenya have gone far in the promotion of ecumenism which is aimed at promoting unity within diversity in the Christian Church. The independent churches are involved in this undertaking. For a proper dialogue to be achieved, the mission founded churches may want to know the Christian stand of the independent churches. This study among the Akurinu will contribute towards a better understanding among the churches in Kenya.

The study on independent church movement in Africa has been carried out mainly by historians, sociologists and anthropologists. Not much about these churches has been written by theologians. It is therefore necessary to have studies bearing a theological dimension of the independent churches.

This study makes an attempt at providing a theological view of the Akurinu Churches.

From the beginning, the Akurinu have experienced a history of frequent attacks and conflicts with the government both during the colonial days and in independent Kenya. The causes of the conflicts are basically rooted in the Akurinu religious beliefs and practices, some of which are viewed by the state authorities as obstacles to the national development. For example, some Akurinu have been accused of refusing to go for medical treatment in the hospitals, while others are said to have refused the use of fertilizers in their plots of land. Still there are some who have been accused of not dipping their cattle or of denying them the services offered by the veterinary personnel. To bring about any worthwhile change among these believers, those concerned will need first to understand the Akurinu religious point of view.

Finally, the churches under study were described as churches of religious fanatics, of people with low morals, conservative and anti-social. Such negative attitude about the Akurinu was in most cases based on ignorance about their churches by the Europeans and other Gikuyu non-members. There is need therefore to carry out

studies on these churches in order to provide a correct picture of the Akurinu.

1.6 Literature Review

Although not much has been written on the Akurinu churches, several studies have been done on other African independent churches both in Kenya and other parts of Africa. Some of these works will be referred to in the present study due to their similarities with the Akurinu churches.

Sundkler is among the early scholars to study the African independent church movement in some depth. In his work, Bantu Prophets in South Africa, he has analysed the factors that led to the rise of the independent churches in South Africa¹. He argues that the major causes for the rise of these churches were; the 1913 Land Act by which Africans were denied land ownership in favour of the whites; the missionary policy of encouraging separate Christian churches where Africans can develop their own congregation and leadership; the apartheid policy of racial segregation and the Bantu syncretism².

According to Sundkler, the African independent churches in South Africa fall under two types namely the Ethiopian and Zionist types. The Ethiopian churches are those that seceded from the white mission churches on racial grounds³. They are thus a reaction to the European conquest of the

Africans and have the slogan "Africa for Africans". Their theology and church organisation, however, remain the same as that of the white Protestant churches from which they seceded. The Zionist churches are characterised by features like faith healing, speaking in tongues, purification rites and taboos⁴.

For Sundkler the independent churches and especially the Zionist types are a threat to Christianity for they lead people back to heathenism, "to the animism from where they once started"⁵. Although the objective of his study was to discern aspects of the African independent churches which the missionaries could utilize in building a strong church of Christ in Africa, he was at the same time opposed to what he saw as syncretism in the Zionist churches. The inclusion of traditional African practices in the independent churches should not necessarily be viewed as a return to paganism as will be seen in this study.

Harold Turner has studied the independent church movements in West Africa. Using a typological approach, he categorises these churches into three types namely the neo-pagan, semitic and the Islamic. The neo-pagan are those which "remain essentially traditional -- even though they also appear as part of the reaction to the advent of

Christianity"⁶. The semitic churches fall under three groups namely the Herbalist, the Israelitish and the Judaistic. The Herbalist are "those showing a radical breakthrough from the traditional animism or polytheism and the associated magic practices in favour of faith in the one God they find in the Old Testament---";⁷ The Israelitish are those churches that grow round a prophet with a gospel similar to that of the earlier prophets of Israel⁸. The Judaistic are those that put emphasis on laws and rituals instead of the revelation of a prophet. Turner has not described the islamic types of movements.

Turner has also used Sundkler's broad classification of the African independent churches into the Ethiopian and the Zionist types. He equates the Aladura or praying churches of West Africa with the Zionist type. Turner argues that the African independent church movements "Are fundamentally religious in nature and must be so understood"⁹. He further observes that these movements are searching for a new spiritual home which the mission churches could not provide.

Turner also observes that most studies on the African independent church movements have been done by disciplines that do not relate directly to the study of religion. He therefore concludes that since the African independent church movement is a

religious phenomenon, then it is the disciplines that deal with religion such as phenomenology of religion, history of religion and theology "that should take us to the heart of the matter"¹⁰. This study among the Akurinu incorporates the theological dimension in an attempt to understand their churches better.

West has carried out a study on three African independent churches in Soweto (Johannesburg) in South Africa. He has observed that the quality of church leadership and faith healing are major attractions which lead people to join these churches"¹¹. No study has been done among the Akurinu to find out the factors that attract members in this church. The present study attempts to deal with this aspect of church membership.

D.B. Parret has taken quite a different approach in the study of church independency in Africa¹². Instead of dealing with one church, he attempts to provide a general theory for the rise of the independent churches in Africa. To formulate the theory he considers six thousand African independent churches across Africa. The factors he considers crucial in his theory are: traditional background of a people; presence of too many missions in one area; polygamy; impact of Bible translation into the vernacular; failure of white mis-

missionaries to show love to the African Christian followers¹³. To apply such a theory to a specific church, one has to identify the relevant elements pertaining to the study in question. His observations on schism and the continued renewal in the African independent churches will, however, be of use in this study when evaluating the kind of reforms that have taken place in the Akurinu churches.

F.B. Welbourn and B.A. Ogot have studied two independent churches in Western Kenya, namely the "Church of Christ in Africa" and 'The African Israel Church-Nineveh'¹⁴. Their conclusion is that the main objective for the founding of these churches was to establish a church where its members would remain both true Africans and Christians at the same time hence "a place to feel at home"¹⁵. Such a desire is expressed in all other African independent churches.

In a separate work, Welbourn has written on the rise of the 'African independent Pentecostal Church of Africa' and the 'African Orthodox Church'¹⁶. He views these churches among the Gikuyu as rebellious movements which were opposed both to colonialism and Western Christianity as preached by the White missionaries. He makes a brief mention about the Arathi (prophets) who are said to have

appeared in 1930 as a 'natural outcome of the disturbed conditions then prevailing--'17. He, however, describes the early Arathi (prophets) as being of low moral standards and having no regard for the civil authorities. He also notes that the movement was quickly checked by the colonial administration. This gives the impression that the Arathi movement, as the 'Akurinu' were known at that time, came to an end which was not the case as this study will show.

Muga in his work; 'African Response to Western Christian Religion, argues that the main cause for the rise of African independent churches was the faulty approach used by the western missionaries in teaching Christianity to the African converts¹⁸. For example, he observes that the western missionaries condemned the African cultural practices like polygamy, dances, beer drinking and female circumcision. There was also a discrepancy between what the missionaries taught and what they practised. Thus, while they preached love of one another, they discriminated the Africans especially in church leadership.

Muga considers the political and economic factors as reinforcements to the development of the African independent church movement. His emphasis on the faulty approach used by the Western Christian missionaries leads him to conclude that:

"the African separatist church and political movements would not have emerged had western Christian missionary approach in their proselytization--- been different in some ways"¹⁹.

Muga's overemphasis on one factor as the main cause of the rise of independent church movement may not give a complete picture of these churches. For example, such grievances like the loss of land, taxation and forced labour among the Gikuyu were not directly related to missionary work. Although Muga mentions two of the independent churches which emerged among the Gikuyu as a reaction to Western missionary approach, namely the African independent Pentecostal Church of Africa' and the 'African Orthodox Church' no mention of the Akurinu is made yet it emerged in Gikuyuland at the same time²⁰. This is an indication of how the Akurinu have not been adequately studied. This study attempts to provide detailed information on these churches.

Kenyatta in his work, Facing Mount Kenya makes reference to the Akurinu. He discusses the rise of the Watu wa Mungu (people of God) or Arathi (prophets) as the Akurinu were being called during the early days²¹. Kenyatta's account covers the period between 1929-1934 of the Akurinu movement. According to him, the Akurinu emerged during a time when Africans were reacting to the way the Western missionaries were propagating the Good News

in Africa. The Africans discovered discrepancies between what the Western Christian missionaries preached and what is written in the Bible. For example, the Africans discovered that people like Abraham, David and Solomon were polygamists and kept their friendship with God at the same time.

Kenyatta observes that the Akurinu were preoccupied with religious affairs and were non-political unlike other groups such as the Karing'a group²². According to him the Akurinu regarded themselves as the chosen people of God (Watu wa Mungu) who should strive to remain holy and should not touch anything foreign as these were already defiled²³. In their worship the Watu wa Mungu adopted some Gikuyu traditional practices such as facing Mount Kenya (Kirinyaga) with their hands raised or going for worship in forests and on mountains.

Kenyatta further records that at first these people were taken for granted and were ridiculed as a bunch of lunatics. Socially, they were a closed community trying to seclude themselves. The colonial Government however began to suspect the motives of the Akurinu movement, particularly due to the fact that they were carrying in their persons some weapons such as bows and arrows²⁴. To the Akurinu, these items were symbols for their mission to fight against evils but the colonial

Government thought that it was a subversive secret movement. As a result the Akurinu began to be persecuted by the colonial administration. Their persecution came to a climax when three of their founder members were murdered in Kiambu in 1934²⁵.

According to Kenyatta, the Akurinu raised no resistance during their persecution. When taken to court, they did not defend themselves but would start praying and praising God²⁶. Their attitude to material wealth was indifferent. Their concern was with eternal life not with acquiring property in this world²⁷.

Much of what Kenyatta had observed about the attitude of the Akurinu seem to have changed significantly. For instance, their non-concern with some social affairs, politics, and their ignorance about the civil law has greatly changed as will be seen in this study.

Kenyatta's record about the Akurinu covers a short period of five years of their history. Thus there is a lot of information that is not found in Kenyatta's work which requires to be studied. Also Kenyatta's view of the Akurinu is that they were mainly concerned with religious affairs but as this study will show, the Akurinu were equally concerned with political issues especially the

freedom of the Gikuyu from the colonialists.

Some reference on the *Watu wa Mungu* is made in Farson's account of his experience in Kenya during the colonial period²⁸. Writing in 1949, he observes that the rise of the African independent churches was due to the disillusionment of the Africans because,

"the African has lost faith in the white man's interpretation of God; he has lost his faith in the white man; he has lost his faith in life, but he still wants to find his way to God"²⁹.

Farson's assessment of the *Watu wa Mungu* was that they had at least modified their attitude towards the western culture. They were not as extreme as their predecessors. He also noted that the Bible translation into the Gikuyu language had a great impact on the rise of the African independent church movements. This is a factor that has not received enough attention in discussing the rise of these churches. Farson further observed that the Old Testament had a particular appeal to the Africans due to the similarities between the Jewish and the African culture.

In an article entitled 'The rise and persecution of the Aroti-Propnets 1927-1948', Elijan Kinyanjui, one of the early converts and a leader of one of the Akurinu churches gives a brief account of the rise and objectives of the Akurinu

movement³⁰. He narrates how the Akurinu churches came into being as a will of God and how God chose people (Akurinu) and gave them power to interpret the word of God and also to prophesy³¹. He mentions the negative attitude people had towards the Akurinu as well as the persecution they received from the colonial Government.

Kinyanjui highlights some of the practices of the Akurinu which caused people to suspect and ridicule their movement. These include their refusal to shake other peoples' hands during greetings, the peculiar noises and cries they make and the speaking in tongues when possessed with the Holy Spirit. From his account, Kinyanjui seems to imply that from the beginning the Akurinu were non-political. Their role was to preach and interpret the Word of God. Kinyanjui is in agreement with Kenyatta in noting that the Akurinu accept persecution and rejoice for it, since it is a fulfilment of what Jesus had said about the suffering of his followers (Lk.21:12-20; Mat.10:22)³².

In an article entitled 'the_kikuyu_Spirit Churches' J. Murray has tried to reconstruct a historical-sociological account of the Akurinu³³. While acknowledging the impact of the socio-political factors which led to the rise of their churches such as land deprivation and the female circumcision issue, Murray argues that one can not

rule out the possibility of a direct relationship between the rise of the Akurinu and the translation of the New Testament into the Gikuyu language. Murray like Farson, sees the Bible in vernacular as instrumental to the Gikuyu reaction to the preaching of the white missionaries and subsequent formation of independent churches.

Murray also observes that from the early days, the Akurinu members were among the marginalized people in the society. They were landless and had no formal education to enable them to fit in the new colonial social and economic set up. Hence, they remained a discontented lot who Murray has described thus;

"the Arathi, lacking the education and standing within Kikuyu society to respond by aggression or cooperation, preached rejection and withdrawal"³⁴.

While the early Akurinu rejected things of European origin, at least they did not reject the Bible. On the contrary they turned to it and "drew out beliefs and practices which would enable them to build a new way of life"³⁵. Another observation made by Murray is that some of the Akurinu practices are based on the Gikuyu customs. Although only two practices are discussed in the article namely prophecy and ritual uncleanness (thahu). The present study attempts to provide a fuller

account of the Akurinu church life.

A recent study has been carried out among the Akurinu by Philomena Njeri³⁶. In her work, Njeri has looked at the origins of the Akurinu churches and their later expansions among the Gikuyu in Central Province and other parts of the country. The possible social, political, economic and religious factors which led to the founding of these churches are discussed. The study however, concentrates on one of the Akurinu groups, namely the 'Holy Ghost Church of East Africa'. Njeri discusses the problems these churches have encountered during the colonial period and in independent Kenya.

Njeri also looks at some of the beliefs and practices of these churches. For example, the role of the Holy Spirit among the members is analysed from the view point of prophecy, dreams, visions, baptism and faith healing³⁷. The concept of ritual uncleanness is discussed highlighting the importance of the Levitical laws (from the book of Leviticus) among the members of these churches.

By way of conclusion, Njeri has looked at the present situation of the Akurinu within the Kenyan community. She has identified some positive aspects of the members such as involvement in business, agriculture and their discipline as

public employees. However, she has noted certain behaviours of some Akurinu members which are ridiculed by the community. These include refusal of medical care, keeping off from non-members and refusal to eat certain foods. She observes that the Akurinu will have to modify some of their practices in order to retain the youth who will be its future members and leaders³⁸.

As mentioned above, Njeri has concentrated on one group of the Akurinu. There is therefore need to have a detailed study of the other groups. This study has looked into the origins and main features of the five oldest groups in the Akurinu churches. Also, such rituals like initiation, marriage and funeral ceremonies which Njeri has not studied are covered in the present study. The Akurinu churches should be understood not only from a historical point of view but also from a theological perspective. This study attempts to find out the Akurinu theology on some basic Christians themes like Trinity, Eucharist and Eschatology.

Some information about the Akurinu has been recorded in the Administrative reports which are available in the Kenya National Archives³⁹. The reports are mainly from District and Provincial Commissioners during the colonial period and they

mention the rise of the Akurinu movement and the subsequent conflicts between the Akurinu and the colonial authorities. Although most of these reports are biased against the Akurinu movement, they have some useful information on the historical background of these churches.

1.7 Methodology

In this study a historical-theological approach is used in an attempt to understand the origins, main beliefs and practices of the Akurinu. The historical approach in this study involves understanding and explaining past events in order to arrive at conclusions concerning the rise of the Akurinu movement. Such historical events like colonization and christenisation of the Gikuyu and the subsequent religio-cultural and political phenomena that emerged in Gikuyuland in the 1920s forms the background to the understanding of the Akurinu churches. But on the other hand, the Akurinu movement is essentially a religious phenomenon. It is a movement centred on beliefs and faith in divine revelation. The founders, for example claimed to have been 'called' by God for a purpose. It is for this reason that a theological approach becomes essential in exploring the spiritual dimension in the Akurinu movement.

The theoretical framework used for this study is based on Barret's theory on the rise of the African independent churches¹⁰. According to the theory, at first the Africans were living in their traditional set up. Then they were colonised by the European powers. At the same time, Western missionaries brought new christian teachings and values some of which were accepted and others rejected by the Africans. This led to a situation of confusion and tension. Finally, some Africans got disillusioned and broke away from the Mission Churches and started their own Independent Churches which have in turn experienced schism and reforms.

The arrival of colonialists and Western Christian missionaries in Gikuyuland disrupted the traditional Gikuyu life. This was done particularly through the Christian teachings by Western missionaries to the Gikuyu converts. The Gikuyu, like other Africans, soon got disillusioned about the teachings of the Christian missionaries. Moreover, the few literate Gikuyu converts discovered discrepancies between what the missionaries preached and what is contained in the Bible. For example, there was no biblical support for the condemnation of polygamy.

The Western missionaries' attack on some Gikuyu customs like polygamy and female circumcision created a state of tension which finally led to the political and religious reactions of the 1920s. The Akurinu movement was one of the groups that emerged in search of freedom from Western missionaries and colonialism. In their own church, the Akurinu wanted to be truly African and Christian at the same time. Thus there was a deliberate move to adapt some Gikuyu customs to the Christian worship in the Akurinu churches. The Akurinu churches, like other churches, are going through a process of renewal characterised by reforms in their religious practices in order to accommodate new social, economic and political changes.

Since there is scanty literature that deals specifically with the historical background and theology of the Akurinu other than what was mentioned above, it was necessary to carry out an extensive field research for this study. The information from the written records is mainly used in chapters two and three which deal with the historical background and development of the Akurinu churches.

Kiambu and Murang'a Districts were selected for the study since they are the areas in which the Akurinu movement started. It was in Kiambu, at

Gathumuri (present Kimende) where the first Akurinu prayer house was built in 1935. Kiambu is also a stronghold of the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa and the Christian Holy Ghost Church of East Africa with their headquarters at Murengeti (Limuru) and Kiratina (Githunguri) respectively. Murang'a District was the home of the conservative Kahiriga group before they settled in the Rift Valley. Also the group of Akurinu who went for the Mount Kenya commandments were from Murang'a. Two of the Akurinu groups under study have their headquarters in Murang'a. The African Holy Ghost Christian Church has its headquarters at Gichagi-ini while the Kenya Foundation of Prophets Church has its headquarters at Kaguthi in Kandara.

Although initially the Akurinu movement was not strong in Nyeri District, today it has several Akurinu congregations. The African Mission of Holy Ghost Church has its headquarters at Kamakwa near Nyeri town. Nyandarua and Naguru Districts have large numbers of Akurinu. They include those who were squatters during the colonial period and those who have migrated after independence in search of land. The former Akurinu squatters in these Districts were useful in giving information on how the movement spread in the Rift Valley. The headquarters of the God's Word and Holy Ghost Church is

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at Rusiru in Njoro. Nairobi area was selected since most of the Akurinu groups are found there. Also it provides a basis for comparing the rural and urban way of life among the Akurinu.

In the course of the fieldwork, it became necessary to visit areas that were not originally-planned for. Eldoret was visited after some informants referred the researcher to a resourceful early convert to the Akurinu churches, Bishop John Muhia who resides there. At times, ceremonies were organised in Laikipia District and this made it necessary for the researcher to accompany his informants from Nyeri on such occasions.

The sample of informants used for this study was divided into two groups, namely the youth (20-35 yrs) and the adults (over 35 yrs). This grouping was found to be necessary as there were certain matters that concerned each of the two categories. The selection of informants for the adult group was based on several criteria. Firstly, those who gave the history of the Akurinu were supposed to have been either founder members or had joined the movement in the early days. Secondly, those who gave information on the life of the churches were required to be either church leaders or senior members of the clergy (ahoj). Thirdly, the informants were to be drawn from the five churches covered in this study. However, to avoid leaving out

some knowledgeable informants, a few were interviewed although they have joined new Akurinu churches⁴¹.

The selection of the informants from the youth group was based on three criteria. Firstly, some of those interviewed were required to have been born and brought up in Akurinu families for they would be better placed to suggest the changes required in the churches. Secondly, it was necessary to interview some youths who were former members of other churches before they joined the Akurinu churches. These would provide information on the factors that attract new members to the akurinu church. Thirdly, the youth informants were to be drawn from the five Akurinu groups under study.

Using the above criteria, and a stratified random sampling, ninety informants were interviewed during the field research. Forty eight of these were adults while the rest were from the youth group. The adult informants included fifteen senior prayer leaders (ahoi) who are known by such titles as Archbishops, Bishops or pastors¹². Some of them are the leaders of their churches. The rest are members who serve as church elders or are knowledgeable about the affairs of the Akurinu churches. For the youth group, forty two

informants were interviewed. In each case the process of selection was done through contact informants in each area who knew the church members well.

Two questionnaires were used, one for each of the two groups⁴³. The questionnaire for the adult group (Appendix III(a)) consisted of fifty four questions designed to cover both theological as well as aspects of church life. The questionnaire for the youth (Appendix III(b)) had ten questions which covered aspects of the life of the youth in the churches, the problems that they encounter and the changes which they would like to see carried out in the Akurinu churches. In both cases the questionnaires were used as a guide in developing a natural discussion. Further probing questions were asked as the discussion progressed.

All the interviews of the adult group were conducted in their homes. This was done intentionally for two reasons. Firstly, it offered an opportunity to establish a relationship with the informants and clear away any suspicion which would hinder them from revealing some information. Secondly, in an attempt to relate the Akurinu theology to their practical living, it was necessary to stay with them in their homes for a close observation. This approach proved to be very useful in this study. For the youth, it was not

always possible to find them in their homes as some were either at school or at work. They were therefore interviewed mostly on Sundays after the church service with the help of research assistants.

Two methods of recording were used. For most of the interviews, a tape recorder was used. It proved to be a convenient method as it enhanced a continuous flow of the discussion with minimal interruptions. The interviews recorded on tape were later transcribed followed by the analysis of the data. In a few cases however, the informants were unwilling to have the discussions recorded on tape and this forced the researcher to take notes during the discussion. This was a cumbersome method because the informant had to keep on repeating things at the request of the researcher, thus taking a lot of time.

All the interviews were conducted in Gikuyu. This made the discussion to be relaxed and natural. The information was later translated into English when transcribing the tapes. The original information is however, still retained in the tapes in vernacular.

In a research such as this which deals with the religious beliefs and practices of a people, the participant observation technique was found to

be quite useful. Such phenomena like Spirit possession, speaking in tongues and faith healing are normally to be seen during worship. Participant observation was used on thirty nine occasions which included twenty eight normal church services, six marriage ceremonies, one funeral ceremony, two ordination ceremonies, one annual prayer session, and one baptism ceremony. Some rituals were however performed during the normal church services that were attended. These included faith healing, cleansing rituals, churching of mothers and the presentation of newly born babies.

This study was carried out between 1990 to 1993. Although the period taken may appear to be long, there were some factors that were beyond the researcher's control. Firstly, the nature of the study required the attendance to the Akurinu services which could only be done on Sundays. Secondly, some Akurinu rituals such as ordination, baptism, marriage and funeral, are not very common and one has to wait for months or years. Thirdly, this study was carried out while the researcher was a full time lecturer at the University of Nairobi. This meant sandwiching the fieldwork between the teaching schedule.

1.8 Scope and Limitations

The field research for this study was limited

1. The first step in the process of identifying a problem is to recognize that a problem exists. This is often done by comparing current performance with a desired state or goal. For example, a manager might notice that sales are declining or that customer satisfaction is low. Once a problem is identified, the next step is to define it more precisely. This involves determining the scope of the problem, its causes, and its effects. A clear definition of the problem is essential for developing an effective solution.

2. The second step is to gather information about the problem. This can be done through various methods, such as interviews, surveys, and data analysis. The goal is to understand the underlying causes of the problem and to identify any constraints or resources that may affect the solution. For example, a manager might conduct interviews with employees to learn about their perceptions of the problem or analyze sales data to identify trends.

3. The third step is to generate potential solutions. This is often done through brainstorming or other creative techniques. The goal is to come up with a range of possible solutions that could address the problem. It is important to consider both short-term and long-term solutions, as well as solutions that are feasible and sustainable. For example, a manager might brainstorm ideas for improving customer service, such as offering more personalized service or improving the quality of products.

4. The fourth step is to evaluate the potential solutions. This involves comparing the different solutions based on their effectiveness, feasibility, and cost. The goal is to identify the most promising solution and to develop a plan for implementing it. For example, a manager might evaluate the costs and benefits of different solutions and choose the one that offers the best value for money.

5. The fifth and final step is to implement the chosen solution. This involves putting the plan into action and monitoring progress. It is important to communicate the solution to all relevant parties and to provide ongoing support and training. For example, a manager might assign tasks to employees and provide them with the resources they need to succeed. Regular monitoring and evaluation are essential to ensure that the solution is working and to make any necessary adjustments.

Akurinu groups. It became apparent during the field work that some of the older members take a neutral stand and are not members of a particular group. They still consider the Akurinu movement as a United Church. These experiences, however, made the research all the more interesting apart from the information that was acquired which forms the basis of this study.

1.9 Definition of Terms.

- i) Akurinu : This is the general term used to refer to the followers of the churches among the Gikuyu whose male members wear white turbans while the women wear long dresses and white headscarfs.
- ii) Christology: This refers to the study of the person and mission of Christ.
- iii) Eschatology: This is the belief in a coming end of the present world order and the introduction of a new order through divine intervention.
- iv) Parousia: This is the Christian doctrine about the second coming of Christ which will mark the climax of the salvation history.
- v) Trinity: The Christian doctrine of one God in three Persons, namely the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

NOTES ON CHAPTER ONE

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4. Ibid. p.55.
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8. Ibid.
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19. Ibid. p. 142.
20. Ibid p. 144.
21. J. Kenyatta, Facing Mount Kenya, London, Secker and Secker and Warburg Ltd, 1938
22. The term Karing'a means pure. As used here, it referred to a religio-political movement which advocated for rejection of western Christian missionaries teaching and European values and called for a reverse to Gikuyu customs.

23. Kenyatta op cit. p. 275.
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28. N. Farson, Last Change in Africa, London, Victor Collanncz Ltd. 1949.
29. Ibid. p. 221.
30. See article by Elijah Kinyanjui, "The rise and persecution of the Aroti-Prophets 1927-1948" in Kenya Churches Handbook. Evangel Publishing House, Kisumu, 1973 p. 124.
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33. See article by Jocelyn Murray, "The Kikuyu spirit Churches" in Journal of Religion in Africa Vol. V. 1973.
34. Ibid. p. 220.
35. Ibid. p. 222.
36. P. Njeri, "The Holy Ghost Church of East Africa". Unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of Nairobi, 1985.
37. Ibid. see chapters five and six.
38. Ibid. p. 222.
39. The Official records can be found at the Kenya National Archives (KNA) Nairobi.
40. For a detailed account of the theory see Barret op.cit. pp. 264-273.
41. See Appendix II for details for the informants.
42. Ibid.
43. See Appendix III (a) and (b).

CHAPTER TWO

THE CULTURAL BACKGROUND

This study deals with a church that draws its members mainly from the Gikuyu society¹. In this chapter we shall discuss aspects of the traditional Gikuyu way of life before they were destabilised through colonialism, Christianity and Western culture. This will form a basis of drawing comparisons between the Akurinu and the Gikuyu beliefs and practices. Since much has been written on the Gikuyu, we shall highlight those aspects that concern our study, particularly the social political and religious aspects of their life².

2.1 The Land

The original homeland of the Gikuyu lies in the central region of Kenya, comprising of the three districts of Nyeri (Gaki), Muranga (Metumi) and Kiambu (Kabete)³. Gikuyuland is marked by four geographical features. To the North is the snow-capped Mount Kirinyaga (mount Kenya), in the East is Kia-njahi (Ol Donyo Sambuk), in the West lies Kia-nyandarua (Aberdares) while to the South is found Kia-mbiruiru (Ngong hills). These mountains were also of religious significance to the Gikuyu as we shall see later.

Lying at an altitude of between 1000m-2500m.

the land slopes gently eastwards from the Aberdares. A North-South cross-section reveals a dissected ridge and valley topography especially in Nyeri and Murang'a Districts. In North Nyeri, one observes an undulating landscape which gradually merges into the Laikipia plains. The Aberdares and Mount Kenya form the catchment for the tributaries of the Tana (Sagana) river. The rivers form a parallel drainage pattern. The parallel river valleys and the ridges between them were used by the Gikuyu as administrative units (ng'ongo).

Rainfall in this region ranges between 1020mm-1140mm on the average. The amount however, varies with the altitude of a place. The lower parts of Muranga receive lower amounts of rainfall compared to the highland areas bordering the Aberdare forests. The fertile volcanic soils found in this region are suitable for agriculture which is the main economic activity of the Gikuyu⁴.

At present, the Gikuyu are the largest tribe in Kenya. According to the 1989 population census they numbered 4.5 millions thus accounting for 20% of the total population of Kenya⁵. While they are the majority in Central Province, many of them have migrated especially to the Rift Valley in search of land. Others have settled in the urban areas as

businessmen and some are on employment.

2.2 The Social-Political Organization

The Gikuyu social organization was based on three main considerations, namely the kinship, the age-group and the territorial factors⁶. Kinship ties brought together people who were related by blood. The smallest unit in the kinship hierarchy was mucii, (homestead). The family was the most fundamental basis of the social structure. It was at this level that relations were established which would be applied to the other wider kinship circles. Several nicii formed a nyumba (the wider or extended family group). A nyumba would consist of a man, his wife or wives, their children, grand and great-grand children⁷. The mbari, (sub-clan) was made up of several nyumba who traced their ancestral lineage to a common male founder. Several mbari in turn made a muhiriga, (clan).

The Gikuyu tribe is made up of nine clans who trace their origin to the nine daughters of the mythical tribal parents, Gikuyu and his wife Mumbi. The clan names, which are derived from the names of the nine daughters are; Anjiru (Wanjiru), Acera (Wacera), Agaciku (Wanjiku), Ambui (Wambui), Ethaga or Ambura (Mwithaga or Nyambura), Angui (Wangu) Aithiranou or Angeci (Waithira or Wangeci), Airimu (Wairimu), Angari (Wangari)⁸. Apart from these

nine, there is a tenth clan, the Aicakamuyu who are descendants of Wamuyu. According to Gikuyu custom, it was a taboo to count people or children⁹. It was feared that such a total count would lead to their death. The conventional method of counting was therefore to leave out one clan uncounted in which case they would refer to the clans as kenda muiyuru (nine full), meaning ten¹⁰. Another explanation given for the extra clan is that originally there were nine clans. At one time a girl from one of the clans got a child out of wedlock. This formed a new clan of the Aicakamuyu¹¹.

From the mucii upto the muhiriga each person was expected to support and strengthen the kinship ties. At the tribal level, each individual saw himself or herself as belonging to the wider community of "ciana cia or mbari ya Mumbi,"¹² (The children, of or descendants of Mumbi). This idea was an important unifying factor when solidarity of the nyumba ya Mumbi (house of Mumbi) was required. Clan members were required to support one another, especially during important occasions like building, initiation ceremonies, marriage and in the payment of blood money. Each clan had a niama ya muhiriga (clan council) which had the responsibility of sustaining the clan solidarity by visit-

ing clan members and collecting membership fee which was paid in form of goats by the adult males of the clan¹³.

It should be noted that with time, the nyumba, might increase to an extent whereby the members would not trace their relations to one another. Such a situation would lead to the establishment of more mbari units although they remained under the same muhiriga (clan).

For purposes of maintaining social order, the father was in charge of the affairs of his nyumba. The manner in which a man handled the affairs of his nyumba was an indicator of his ability to manage public affairs¹⁴. Each nyumba was therefore regarded as a social and administrative unit headed by the father. In case the father was dead, then, the responsibility fell on the eldest son, or the eldest son of the senior wife in an extended family.

The mbari affairs were under a mbari council comprising of the initiated males who had reached the status of elderhood. A muramati (a guardian) was chosen to head the mbari council. He was responsible for the day to day affairs of the mbari as well as overseeing the administration of the mbari land. He would sermon the mbari council when need arose.

The second unifying factor among the Gikuyu was the age-set system or riika (pl. marika). The rite of circumcision was of great importance among the Gikuyu as Routledge writing in 1910 observed;

"The festivals and rites associated with both marriage and death hold but a small place in Kikuyu imagination compared to that greatest of all ceremonies whereby the boy becomes a man and the girl a woman¹⁵".

It was through initiation that a boy or girl graduated from childhood to adulthood. This in turn paved the way for the boys and girls to acquire new rights and responsibilities in the society. Initiation was in this case "the basic prerequisite for the attainment of full adult social status"¹⁶. The beliefs and secrets of the tribe could only be revealed to those who had been initiated. According to Kenyatta "the initiation was the conditio sine quo non of the whole teaching of tribal law, religion and morality"¹⁷.

Among the Gikuyu, initiation was performed periodically. In Nyeri (Gaki) there would be an open period of five years during which the boys would be circumcised. This was followed by a muhingo (closed period) of nine years during which no circumcision of boys would take place. In Kiambu (Kabete) the open period was of nine years

while the muhingo took five years¹⁸. Those in Murang'a (Metumi) either followed the Nyeri or the Kiambu pattern. The muhingo period gave the young boys time to get strong in preparation for the initiation ceremony. It should be noted that there was no muhingo for girls as they were initiated every year¹⁹. The reason was that it was a taboo for a girl to experience her first menses before initiation.

The boys and girls circumcised at the same time formed a riika (age-set). Such a riika was given a distinct name which the age mates would keep till death. The name would be derived from an outstanding event which occurred within the period of their initiation ceremony²⁰. Members of a riika treated one another like a blood brother or sister. The membership to a riika was equivalent to that of a nyumba, a family, hence the Gikuyu saying that "nyumba na riika itiumagwo", (one cannot defect from his nyumba and riika)²¹. Muriuki summarises the unity of the riika members thus;

"Indeed riika mates looked upon each other as actual brothers or sisters, depending upon their sexes and behaved accordingly. The spirit of comradeship was so strong among riika 'brothers' that it occasionally even led to a sharing of their wives"²².

The riika system was an important factor in the social organization of the Gikuyu society. It went beyond the kinship ties of the nyumba (family), mbari (sub-clan) and the muhiriga (clan). The new bonds of relationships of the riika were often stronger than those of the kinship ties.

The third unifying factor which also determined the social organization was the territorial principle. This was based on the system of land tenure. Land possession often brought together people from different families and clans. As regards the importance of land ownership among the Gikuyu, Kenyatta observes that,

"In studying the Gikuyu tribal organization it is necessary to take into consideration land tenure as the most important factor in the social, political, religious and economic life of the tribe"²³.

Land ownership at the family level was either through inheritance or through buying. A man who had purchased a piece of land would refer to it as githaka giakwa (my land). His wife or wives and his sons would in turn refer to the piece of land as githaka giitu (our land), as each had a right over a portion of the land. With time the extended family would become a mbari and the mbari members would be referring to the piece of land as githaka giitu (our land)²⁴. So, we note here

that the land owned by a mbari was a unifying factor besides the kinship ties.

With time the mbari members would increase such that the land would not be adequate for them. In such a case, some members left and bought land elsewhere. The newly bought land would also gradually become another mbari land. Some of the mbari members were not wealthy enough to buy their own land. Such people "acquired cultivation or building rights on lands belonging to another family group or clan unit."²⁵ They were referred to as ahoi (sing. muhoi or athami (sing. muthami)). A muhoi was one who was given cultivation right whereas a muthami (immigrant) was given both cultivation and building right on the land of his philanthropist²⁶. It was not unusual to find the families of the athami and those of the land owners develop close relations for their mutual benefit. The land was the underlying factor for their relationship and not the kinship ties.

At the local level, a mbari could occupy a whole ituura (pl. matuura) or even a ridge, rugongo, (pl. ng'ongo)²⁷). There were cases, however, especially in Kiambu where most of the land was bought from the Dorobo, where inhabitants of a rugongo came from different families and clans. In terms of spatial organization, there emerged

certain patterns of settlement units. The first unit was the individual homestead or mucii (pl. micii). Several micii close together formed a village or ituura. The ituura provided the residents with a spatial identity. Each member would relate to another as a member of their village even if there was no blood relations between them. According to Muriuki, "the ituura was the focus of social and political interaction"²⁸. All those in the ituura had an obligation to co-operate in all matters of their village irrespective of whether they had any lineage connections²⁹. What we have said of the ituura applied to the mwaki (pl. miaki) which was made up of several villages closely situated.

At a higher level of the settlement pattern was the ridge or rugongo which was a more spatially distinct territory. It was noted earlier that rivers in Gikuyuland formed natural boundaries separating people from different ridges. The rugongo was therefore an important bond of unity for those living on it. Its residents had to remain united in order to maintain law and order as well as for defence during times of external attacks³⁰.

The ng'longo formed the bururi (country).

The bururi could refer to each of the districts of Nyeri, Muranga or Kiambu. The whole territory comprising the three districts was also referred to as bururi wa Gikuyu, the country of the Gikuyu. At this level the land, like the riika which transcended kinship ties, acted as a unifying factor for all the Gikuyu. In the words of Kenyatta,

"The Gikuyu defended their country collectively and when talking to a stranger they would refer to the country as 'ours' bururi witu or bururi wa Gikuyu to show the unity among the people"³¹.

2.3 Gikuyu Government

Having looked at the Gikuyu social organisation, we are in a position to discuss the Gikuyu form of government. There was no central government among the Gikuyu. The power to rule and to maintain law and order rested on the various councils. At the national level there were two ruling generations or mariika (sing. riika) called Mwangi and Maina (or Irungu), which alternated the running of the country³². The tribe thus fell into two moieties for the ruling purposes. Each moiety would rule for about thirty to forty years after which it handed over power to the next ruling moiety through a secret ceremony called ituika.

Membership to a ruling moiety was hereditary in the sense that it was determined through birth.

If the ruling generation was Mwangi; their children would be Maina (or Irungu) and their grandchildren would be Mwangi. This naming system ensured the continuity of power sharing between the two moieties. Each ruling generation was concerned with the political, judicial and religious affairs of the whole tribe. They were expected to uphold a democratic leadership, "where every section of the community would have some practical part to play in the people's government"³³.

Apart from the two ruling moieties, there were several other councils at various levels in the society that were involved in the administrative functions. These councils will be discussed under four categories. Firstly, there were those councils dealing with general administration in a hierarchical order and comprised of ndundu va mucii (homestead or family council), kiama gia ituura (village council), kiama kia rugongo (the ridge or District Council), and kiama kia ndundu (senior elders committee within the District Council).

The homestead council headed by the father dealt with the family affairs. The village council comprised of heads of family councils. The duty of this council was to solve disputes in

the village and also represent the ituura in the government. The ridge or district council was made up of all the elders from the ridge. The kiama kia ndundu presided over the district council. The most senior elder, both in age and wisdom was selected to preside over this council as the muthamaki (a judge). It was from the district councils that a National Council (Kiama kia bururi) was formed comprising of the senior elders. This council dealt with matters of national concern³⁴.

Secondly, there were those councils that dealt with kinship affairs, namely, njama va nyumba (extended family council), and njama va muhiriga (clan council). The extended family council dealt with land disputes, domestic issues related to marriage and other misconduct in the nyumba. The clan council had the responsibility of maintaining contacts among clan members. The council disciplined errant clansmen and punished the habitual criminals. It also made claims for redress when a clansman was killed by a member from another clan³⁵.

Thirdly, there were two councils which were concerned with the security, law and order in the land. There was the njama va ita, (war council) comprising of the initiated young men aged between twenty and forty years. It should be noted that

after initiation, all the young men qualified to become warriors. All the boys initiated during one open period formed a regiment which was divided into the junior and senior warriors. The war council was concerned with the military operations, instruction and discipline of warriors³⁶. The war council worked closely with the council of elders both at the local and national level.

There were occasions when life in the society was threatened by the activities of habitual thieves, traitors, and witches. In such circumstances, an ad hoc njama ya king'ore would be constituted comprising of young men from different clans. Their duty was to flush out and if need be, execute those who made life difficult for others.

Fourthly, there were councils that dealt with age-set affairs for both men and women. The njama ya riika (age grade council) for the married age-mates kept watch over the behaviour of its age-mates even in their homes. Any riika member whose conduct would tarnish their name was punished. The njama ya anaake (council of young men) maintained discipline and safeguarded their riika name. The girls, like the men, had their njama ya airitu (council of girls) whose duties included disciplin-

ing errant girls such as those who engaged in indecent love affairs. The married women had their council, njama ya atumia, which could levy fines to husbands who mistreated or neglected their wives³⁷. They also punished wives who indulged in illicit love affairs.

We have already mentioned previously that among the Gikuyu, age was an important factor in determining how people interacted and also how it contributed to a person's seniority and social standing. In this section we shall discuss how these qualities led to the formation of councils based on elderhood³⁸. This is relevant in the study of the Akurinu Churches where leadership is based on similar requirements of seniority in age and experience.

The first of these councils was kiama gia kamatimu (council of spear bearers). It comprised of newly married men who had retired from active military service, although they could be called upon if there was need to boost the warriors. They had to pay an entry fee of one goat and a calabash of beer to the senior elders of the kiama, hence the designation of their council as kiama kiamhuri imwe (council of one goat). The kamatimu elders were learners in the affairs of the council. During their period of apprenticeship, they acted

as messengers to the kiama, collected firewood, lit fire, slaughtered animals and roasted meat for the senior elders. Although they were allowed to listen to the proceedings of a case, they were not allowed to participate in the making of a judgment which was done only by the experienced senior elders.

The second council was known as kiama kia mataathi or kiama kia mburi igiri (council of two goats). Only the men whose first born children had been circumcised qualified to become members. They paid a fee of two goats to the senior elders³⁹. The elders were then given a staff (muthigi) and a bunch of matathi leaves (*clausena inaequalis*) as a sign of their new status. These items were symbolic of a peace maker as opposed to the warlike kamatimu grade, marked by the carrying of spears. Entry into this senior council qualified an elder to be called a muthamaki (a leader). This council commanded the highest authority in the country and to it belonged the elders who administered the law⁴⁰.

The last and most senior council was called kiama kia maturanguru because the elders carried the maturanguru leaves as a symbol of office. It was also known as kiama kia ukuru (council of old

age). The members comprised of the most senior elders from the council of two goats. It was therefore an inner circle within the kiana of two goats. The members were also recognised by the spiral brass rings (icuhi) worn in the ears⁴¹. The duties of this senior council included the offering of sacrifices to Ngai (God) during prayers for rain, planting and harvesting ceremonies. They also decided on the dates of circumcision and the ituika ceremonies⁴². An important feature in their initiation ceremony was the dedication of their life to Ngai and to the welfare of the community⁴³. In this respect, they were the high priests of the society and the custodians of the Gikuyu religious and cultural heritage.

The married women had a council, ndundu ya atimia which comprised of two grades. The kang'ei (with no circumcised child or children) were the juniors whereas the nyakinyua (with a circumcised child or children) were the seniors⁴⁴. The women at this senior level were concerned with matters affecting the women such as circumcision of girls and childbirth. The old women were also involved in religious duties.

To conclude this section, we need to emphasize the fact that although age was an important requirement for entry into elderhood,

other factors were equally important. For example one had to have gone through initiation, and then to have raised a family. Age, experience and marriage are important requirements in the choosing of leaders in the Akurinu Churches

2.4 Gikuyu Religion

In this section we shall look at the religion of the Gikuyu with the objective of identifying the salient features. Some of the features of Gikuyu religion are reflected in the Akurinu Churches as we shall see in chapters four, five and six.

Gikuyu religion focused on two supernatural entities namely Ngai (God) and Ngoma (the ancestral spirits)⁴⁵. The ancestral spirits were not in the same category with God. Worship was directed to God while the ancestral spirits were venerated. Kenyatta has illustrated the distinction between Ngai and Ngoma by referring to the terms used during sacrifices. The Gikuyu referred to the act of sacrificing to God as "guthathaiya Ngai" to beseech or worship Ngai (God). On the other hand, when a sacrifice was directed to the ancestral spirits, the Gikuyu would talk of guthinjira ngoma, to sacrifice for the spirits. If meat and beer were offered to the spirits, the act was referred

to as guthinjira na guitangira ngoma njohi, to slaughter and to pour out beer for the spirits⁴⁶. In this case the Gikuyu acknowledged the supremacy of God while they communed with the spirits of the departed. Their religion was therefore a monotheism based on the belief in Ngai.

The Gikuyu conception of God can be derived from their myths of origin, names and attributes of God. According to the myth of origin, it is said that when God was distributing the lands to the peoples of the world, he gave the man Gikuyu a land for his possession⁴⁷. The man Gikuyu was commanded by Ngai to establish his homestead in the middle of the land at the Mukurwe wa Gathanga (so named because of the huge Mukurwe tree that was there). Later Ngai provided Gikuyu with a wife called Mumbi. The man Gikuyu was also commanded to be praying to Ngai with raised hands facing Mount Kirinyaga (the official resting place for Ngai) whenever he had problems and God would respond⁴⁸.

From the myth, we note that the Gikuyu regard God as the creator, hence their reference to God as Ngai Mumbi, God the creator or moulder. Secondly, the fact that God gave the man Gikuyu a land and a wife for his possession shows His concern for man. Thirdly, God showed Gikuyu how he should communicate with Him through prayers. Fourthly,

it can be argued that Ngai wanted Gikuyu to be obedient as when he was directed to go and settle at the Mukurwe wa Gathanga.

God was known by various names which were also descriptive of His nature. The commonest name was Ngai which derives from the word kugaya, meaning to divide or distribute⁴⁹. Hence Ngai is the great divider especially in connection with the material things. The second name was Mwene-nyaga (possessor of brightness). The name is related to Kirinyaga (Mount Kenya). The idea of God's glory and mystery as that displayed by the glittering snow-peaks of Mount Kenya is implied. A third name was Nyene, meaning the owner. It implies that God owns everything there is in the universe. God was also known as Murungu which signified the otherness, mystery, power and mercy of God⁵⁰. God was at times referred to as Githuri, which is a derivative from the word muthuri (an elder)⁵¹. As elders were the custodians of the tribal social equilibrium, God as the Great elder was the overall overseer of the well-being of the tribe.

Despite the various descriptive names of God, the Gikuyu were aware that Ngai was a mystery and nothing was comparable to Him. According to Gathigira, (Ngai),

"Ndahana mundu kuna na ndahana nyamu kuna, --- ni mutukanio wa mundu mugendi wa nyamu⁵².

(He is not fully a man nor is he fully an animal -- rather he is a mixture of the two).

The mystery about God was expressed by the people when they came across a mysterious thing by exclaiming, 'kai giki kihana o ta Ngai-ii'⁵³ meaning, this thing is as mysterious as Ngai. In this case the comparison was between the visible thing and the invisible Ngai and not vice versa. It was for this reason that the Gikuyu never thought of making graven images or pictorial representation of God.

God's power was acknowledged by the people in various ways. When all efforts to cure a patient proved futile, the medicineman would resign by saying 'mundu uyu no Ngai ungimucokia iguru',⁵⁴ meaning, it is only Ngai who can save the sick person. Furthermore, it was believed that it is only God who decides when one should die by untying the knot which He tied at the birth of each person⁵⁵.

Although the Gikuyu believed that God was invisible, they however, regarded the creation as the visible manifestation of His wonders and mysteries. Thus, the earth, sky, mountains, water, sun, moon and the stars revealed the wonders of God⁵⁶. The Gikuyu believed that God was both transcendent and immanent. For example, when

there was thunder, it was thought to be the sound of the cracking of God's joints and people were discouraged from looking upwards lest they earned God's wrath⁵⁷. God's immanence was related to the belief that He occasionally carried out inspection among the people. He therefore had some temporary abodes on the four mountains marking Gikuyuland, upon which He rested during such visits. The four mountains, Mount Kirinyaga (Mount Kenya), Kia-njahi (Ol Donyo Sambuk), Kia-nyandarua (Aberdares) and Kia-mburuiru (Ngong Hills) were held as sacred places and during prayers the officiating elders faced the four mountains alternately. It will be noted that the Akurinu were also going for worship on these mountains and some do so even in the present.

The task of approaching Ngai was in the hands of the elders of the highest council, kiama kia maturanguru. When women were required to participate in a religious function, it was normally the wives of the religious elders who were selected. Having gone beyond the child bearing stage, they were regarded as ritually clean. At the family level, the father was the priest of the home and the religious instructions of the children was the responsibility of the parents.

The belief in ngoma or the ancestral spirits played a great part in the religious life of the Gikuyu. The spirits were regarded as the older members of their former families and society at large. It was for this reason that the ancestral spirits had to be respected by the living members. The ngoma were therefore not foreigners to the people. Hopley rightly noted that the Gikuyu,

"have quite a clear conception of the ngoma or spirits of the departed, the character of which is said to be similar to that of the person during his or her life time⁵⁸".

What is important to note here is that the people could identify and even address ngoma by their names for each ngoma retained the personality of the person before he or she died. Thus, if a person was bad the ngoma would also be a bad one, whereas a good person would similarly become a good ngoma⁵⁹. The ancestral spirits continued to hold the social and material status a person had held while alive. The ngoma of professionals like medicinemen and blacksmiths also retained their skills in their world of spirits.

The living had a responsibility towards the ancestral spirits. Since the spirits were not self-sufficient, they required the services of their living relatives especially in the provision of food and drinks. Thus, elders would not forget

to set aside a portion of meat or beer for the spirits. Failure to do that would be interpreted to mean negligence for which the ngoma would reprimand those who overlooked them by causing problems like sicknesses, bareness or even death in the family⁶⁰. In fact, whenever there was sickness in a family, the father would consult a diviner to establish whether one of the ancestral spirits was responsible and what should be done to propitiate it⁶¹. The ancestral spirits on the other hand provided guidance to the elders so that they could run the affairs of the family properly.

Generally, the spirits were believed to dwell in the underworld⁶². But they were by no means restricted there permanently, for they could take flights back to the land of the living wherever they wanted. Certain places were also associated with spirits. These included big trees, waterfalls, deserted houses, and at the hearth stones. Since the spirits were incorporeal they would make their appearances by possessing people, animals and even birds⁶³.

According to Kenyatta the Gikuyu grouped the spirits under three categories⁶⁴. The first group consisted of the parental spirits, ngoma cia aci-ari. These were the most important ngoma due to

their closeness to the people. They exercised their influence within the family unit from where they came from. The second category comprised of the clan spirits, ngoma cia muhiriga. These were concerned with the affairs of the whole clan. The third group were the age-set spirits, ngoma cia riika, which were concerned with the affairs of age-sets. Since age-sets had representatives all over Gikuyuland, the age-set spirits were in turn operative at a national level. Thus, each social unit had a corresponding group of spirits which acted as a police unit to check on the behaviour of the people in addition to providing advice.

To summarize the Gikuyu conception of spirits, the following points should be noted. Firstly, the destiny of every person is to become a spirit and there was no option to that end. Secondly, the relationship between the living and the departed continued after death. The living had to take care of the ancestral spirits who had in turn to provide advice and also reprimand errant members of their former families. Thirdly, there were no natural or animal spirits as ngoma belonged to the people. So, one could not talk of animism among the Gikuyu as Hobley and Leakey tried to imply⁶⁵.

Before we conclude this section it is necessary to mention the concept of thahu or ritual

uncleanliness for it featured greatly in the Gikuyu religious life. It is also greatly observed in the Akurinu church. According to Gathigira,

"Thahu ni undu uria uthukagia mundu ni undu wa kuwika, na noguo witaguo mugiro kana ng'uki"⁶⁶.

(Thahu is that which defiles a person by doing, it is also called mugiro or ng'uki.)

To have thahu, then is to be in a state of ritual or ceremonial uncleanliness as a result of doing that which is forbidden, (gwithahia). The term mugiro (pl. migi) is derived from the word gira, meaning to forbid or prohibit. Hence mugiro refers to a taboo or that which is forbidden. There are many forms of thahu. Gathigira says that the causes of thahu are numerous and varied. He however gives thirty two examples of the causes of thahu⁶⁷. Kabetu on the other hand gives a longer list of thirty nine causes of thahu⁶⁸. With reference to the causes to thahu, Routledge observes that,

"thahu or ceremonial uncleanliness is incurred through certain acts or accidents some of them inevitable in the ordinary causes of nature"⁶⁹.

He goes further to discuss the types of thahu. Depending on the nature of its cause, thahu could fall under three categories⁷⁰. Firstly, is thahu

caused by a person's deliberate behaviour such as incest or homosexuality. The concerned person is fully aware of the taboo related to the act but goes ahead to do it notwithstanding the dire consequences. Secondly, there is thahu incurred through accidents. A good illustration is, "if a man fell outside his homestead, that is thahu"⁷¹ In this case the act was purely accidental but all the same the victim incurred thahu. Thirdly, there is thahu which may result out of natural events which a person has no control over them. Thus, "if a child starts teething from the upper jaw, there is thahu"⁷². It was also thahu for a woman on her monthly period to touch someone else⁷³.

Whatever the cause of thahu the result was ritual uncleanliness and unless the victim was purified disaster would befall such a person.⁷⁴ Cleansing methods varied depending on the seriousness of the thahu. Lesser thahu could be purified by an elder. For example, thahu incurred through a ngoi (leather pouch for carrying a baby) left overnight outside the house could be purified by an elder caning the ngoi while asking it where it spent the night⁷⁵. More serious cases like stepping over a corpse required a cleansing ceremony involving the services of a medicineman and the slaughtering of a goat. We need to emphasize that

from a religious point of view, a person who had incurred thahu was convinced that life was insecure until a purification ceremony had been performed. This was illustrated by the fact that at times a diviner could attribute sickness or family problems to a member having broken a mugiro and thus incurred thahu.

We have so far looked at the Gikuyu society before the arrival of the Europeans. With this background, we shall now turn to the colonisation and Christianisation of the Gikuyu and also discuss how they reacted to the new forces and social changes.

2.5 Colonisation of the Gikuyu

The last decades of the nineteenth century witnessed the arrival and the subsequent colonisation of Gikuyu by the Europeans. It was during this period, as Muriuki puts it, that,

"Administrators, settlers, traders and missionaries poured into the Gikuyu country bringing with them what was, in the Kikuyu eyes, a new and strange way of life with its sometimes incomprehensible demands and ideas" ⁷⁶.

The arrival of the white man and his peculiar things was viewed by the Gikuyu as a fulfilment of the prophecy of Cege wa Kibiru, the greatest prophet in Gikuyu land. He had prophesied years

before, about the strangers who would come from the big waters in the East. Their bodies would look like those of the small light-coloured frog, their dresses would resemble the wings of butterflies and that they would be carrying sticks that would spit fire. The strangers would also bring with them an iron snake which would stretch from the big water in the East to the big water in the West and it would be spitting fire⁷⁷. The sign for the arrival of the strange things would be a great famine in the land. The prophecy ended with a signal of suffering which the Gikuyu would go through after the coming of the Europeans.

By 1890, the Imperial British East African Company (IBEAC) had established a station at Dagoreti for provision for the Uganda bound caravans⁷⁸. To the Gikuyu around Dagoreti, the station was a sure proof that the white man was not just a passer-by but one who had come to settle. There followed a chain of attacks on the station by Gikuyu warriors who were determined to get rid of the intruders. Dagoreti was vacated and in 1891, Major Smith established a new station (Fort Smith) a few kilometers from Dagoreti⁷⁹. Francis Hall was posted at the station in 1892 and became the superintendant the following year. To keep the station

out of the attacks and thuggery by the Gikuyu warriors, Hall and Major Smith waged punitive expeditions in Kiambu and Muranga districts, during which several Gikuyu people were massacred, villages razed down while several heads of cattle, goats, sheep and loads of grains. were taken. During the 1894 'pacification' mission Hall would boast that, "we brought in 1,100 goats and loads of grain .. but we didn't manage to do much execution as the brutes wouldn't stand"⁸⁰ By 1895, Hall had pacified the areas around Kabete.

Another person who contributed in the initial stage of colonization was John Boyes⁸¹. Boyes, (nicknamed Karianjahi) arrived in Tuthu in Muranga in 1898 and struck friendship with Karuri wa Gakure whom he later elevated to a chief for his own gains. Initially Boyes began trade in food-stuffs but later abandoned it for the more lucrative ivory trade. Using Karuri, Boyes harassed and carried out punitive expeditions both in Muranga and Nyeri. He acclaimed himself the King of the Gikuyu. Boyes was notorious of setting one ridge against another by manipulating the hand-picked chiefs. By the time he was arrested by Hall in 1900, Boyes had made six punitive expeditions, had acquired three Gikuyu wives, and had looted cattle,

sheep, on top of personating the colonial government⁸².

Despite all the evils that Boyes committed, he played a great role in pacifying the Gikuyu warriors in Muranga and Nyeri as evidenced by Hall's remarks of having an easy time in Muranga as he put it,

"We rarely saw any of the people; when we did, they were at very long ranges, we did not have much fun but we destroyed a tremendous number of villages -- having gone straight from one to the other of the disaffected districts"⁸³.

Having been terrorised by Boyes, the Muranga warriors were not prepared for another lesson from the white man, hence their keeping of a safe distance from Hall and his men. The last punitive expedition was sent to Nyeri, and by 1904, Nyeri warriors, were cowed down thus completing the pacification missions all over Gikuyuland⁸⁴. The first task of making the Gikuyu realize the presence of a new superior power among them was thus accomplished.

Meanwhile, another development was taking place in the Kiambu area. This was the alienation of land from the Gikuyu for white

settlers. Sir Charles Elliot had advised the colonial office on the need to have Europeans with money in the new colony, who could supposedly utilize the fertile lands hitherto unused⁸⁵. The agricultural products from the settler farms would maintain the running of the Kenya - Uganda railway which was operating at a loss. The colonial office heeded the advice and by 1900, the policy of land alienation was adopted⁸⁶. Various methods were used to acquire land from the Gikuyu. At first, some settlers posed as temporary visitors and were given camping sites like ahoi. The Gikuyu realized too late that the 'visitors' had turned out to be permanent settlers on their lands. Another method used was the bartering of land with such gifts as cows, blankets, bracelets, beads and other foreign items⁸⁷. Kamuyu has mentioned a third method through which the Gikuyu lost their lands. Traditionally, it was a taboo to use the manure from the dumping heap (kiara) since it comprised of all sorts of filth. When the colonialists discovered this, they would force the Gikuyu to use the manure. To avoid the dire consequences of breaking the taboo, some would vacate their homes and the colonialists

would occupy the land⁸⁸. These methods were shortlived as the Gikuyu were quick to discover the tactics of the white man.

The colonialists resorted to the use of force in order to get more land for the increasing number of settlers. Land ordinances were passed to give a legal basis for alienation. In 1901, the East Africa (Lands) Order in Council was passed which defined the Crown Land as 'all public' land subject to the control of His Majesty⁸⁹. The Crown Lands Ordinance passed in 1902 stated that,

'in all dealings with Crown land, regard shall be had for the rights and requirements of natives and in particular the Commissioner shall not sell or lease any land in actual occupation of natives'⁹⁰.

Land alienation, however, continued as loopholes were created to short circuit the 1902 Land Ordinance. Between 1903 and 1905, 60,000 acres of land had been taken in Kiambu for European settlement which was the rightful land of 11,000 Gikuyu families⁹¹.

A further move on land alienation came with the creation of Native Reserves which were officially gazetted in 1912. While one of the objectives of creating the reserves was to grant some land security for the Africans, land could still be

carved out from these Native Reserves for European settlements, as it happened in Nyeri between the Chania and Amboni rivers in 1913⁹². By 1926 the colonial Government had assumed full control of land and the Africans had become mere tenants on what used to be their land. According to Welbourn, about 9,000 square miles of land were in the hands of about 2,000 Europeans, some of them absentee landlords as against 47,000 square miles tentatively described as Native Reserves for an African population of about two and a half millions⁹³. Kenyatta has also observed that by 1933, there were about 110,000 Gikuyu living as squatters on European farms in various districts in Kenya⁹⁴.

Apart from loosing their lands for the European settlers, the Gikuyu were required to provide labour. At first, the families who were living as squatters on the settler farms provided the required labour. But as more settlers arrived the demand for labour became unsatisfiable. Various unscrupulous methods were designed by the colonialists in order to maintain a regular flow of forced labour to the European settler farms. The idea was to create situations which would compel both the old and the young to seek for wage employment from the settlers. The introduction of taxation was one of such tactics as Sir Percy Girouard is quoted to

have categorically stated,

"we consider that taxation is the only possible method of compelling the native to leave his reserve for the purpose of seeking work. Only in this way can the cost of living be increased for the native".⁹⁵

During the 1912 Labour Commission, the settlers had urged for among other things, higher taxation of the Africans, a reduction of the Native Reserves and the introduction of a ground-rent for Africans. These would be effective methods of forcing the unwilling Gikuyu to take up wage employment in the European farms⁹⁶.

In 1919, there was an influx of new arrivals of European settlers leading to more demands of African labourers. This led to the issuing of a decree in which the Government officials were directed to,

"exercise every possible lawful influence to induce able-bodied male natives to go into the labour field. Even women and children should go to nearby farms"⁹⁷.

The task of recruiting and forcing people to go to work in the settler farms lay squarely in the hands of the hand-picked chiefs and headmen. Their administrative effectiveness would be gauged by the amount of tax collected as well as the number of workers they had recruited. Chiefs, therefore, forcefully got men and women for the work force and

heavy penalties were levied on those who evaded.

The forced labour greatly disrupted the Gikuyu social structure and family life as members were separated for long periods. The role of the father as a symbol of authority in the family had been taken over by the new colonial masters and the settlers. Children would witness their fathers being harassed by chiefs and settlers alike, in their presence. The dangers of social disruption were expressed by Barlow in 1913 when he stated;

'we believe that the home-life of the native should be preserved and allowed to develop its best characteristics which is impossible when the father and sons are at home only at odd times separated by months of absence. We believe again, that the moral and spiritual development of the children of the soil is of as much importance as the financial prosperity of their conquerors'⁹⁸.

In the same vein, Kenyatta was to lament in 1938 on what had become of the Gikuyu way of life which had become deplorable as he put it;

'The Gikuyu are no more where they used to be; that is to say, 'all is confusion'. Religious rites and hallowed traditions are no longer observed by the whole community'⁹⁹.

Another disturbing issue that came up in 1919 was the introduction of the Kipande, which was an identification device designed to facilitate the tracking down of the males who were evading the

forced labour and the payment of tax¹⁰⁰. All males aged sixteen years and over were required to carry the kipande at all times, failure to which one risked a fine of 20s or one month imprisonment¹⁰¹. The carrying of the kipande was cumbersome as the clothes worn by the Africans had no pockets and one had to hang it on the neck using a string. No wonder it became a main grievance levelled against the colonial administration when Africans began to express their dissatisfaction formally in the 1920s.

At this juncture we can highlight the outcome of colonialisation of the Gikuyu. Firstly, the Gikuyu lost most of their lands through the land alienation policy. They were reduced to the status of ahoi in their own lands. Secondly, there emerged the racial zones, namely the African Native Reserves and the exclusive European settlements better known as the 'white highlands'. Thirdly, a social structure developed whereby the European was the master while the African became the servant. With these changes the traditional Gikuyu rhythm of life was no more as family nucleus were scattered all over, some as far as the Rift Valley.

The impact of the colonial policies especially on land alienation was greatly felt in Kiambu District. It was therefore, by no accident that

the first organised party to speak openly against the social economic sufferings of the Gikuyu, emerged in South Kiambu. It was formed in 1920 and was known as the Kikuyu Association¹⁰². The founder members were drawn mainly from the pro-government chiefs, churchmen and other tribal leaders. The fact that Chiefs were involved was a sure way of telling the colonial Government that the land issue was biting each and every one. Chief Kinyanjui was to act as the patron of the Association.

To the colonial administrators the Kikuyu Association was considered "to be representative of the Gikuyu opinion in general"¹⁰³. The Kikuyu Association was moderate in its approach to the Gikuyu grievances. This should be expected bearing in mind the fact that the chiefs were beneficiaries of the colonial regime while the African Christians in the Association had often to seek advice from the European missionaries who would not advocate any form of militancy. So the Kikuyu Association did not go far in solving the Gikuyu grievances. However, it did demonstrate the seriousness of the problems the Gikuyu were undergoing.

A more militant party was formed in 1921 by Harry Thuku under the name 'Young Kikuyu

Association' (YKA). Thuku was prompted to form the Association by a meeting called by the D.C. Kiambu on 24th June 1921 to discuss the Gikuyu grievances. Among those to attend the meeting were colonial administrators, missionaries, Kikuyu Association members as well as members of the public. Thuku hurriedly convened a meeting at Pangani in Nairobi on 10th June 1921 where the YKA was formed to tackle the Gikuyu grievances¹⁰⁴. The YKA differed with the K A for their approaches were quite different, the former being militant while the latter advocated for dialogue with the colonial authorities.

Thuku lost his job with the Government as a telephone operator at the treasury but this gave him an opportunity to consolidate the affairs of his Association. The name was changed in July 1921 to East African Association in order to include non-Gikuyu communities¹⁰⁵. Thuku's course of action was however shortlived. To the colonial authorities he was "officially stated to be of bad character[and].. organising a political society in Kikuyu villages¹⁰⁶". These accusations were not without a basis for Thuku had toured Muranga, Nyeri and Machakos seeking for support¹⁰⁷. The Colonial Government could no longer take his activities lightly. With pressure from the Kikuyu

Association and the missionaries Thuku was arrested on 14th March 1922 while addressing a meeting at Pangani. He was deported to Kismayu at the Coast to serve a nine year detention¹⁰⁸. The East African Association was also banned but already the seeds of nationalism had been sowed.

In 1924 the Kikuyu Central Association was formed to pursue the Gikuyu grievances from where Thuku had stopped. Like the Young Kikuyu Association, it was militant in its approach and was to play a leading role in shaping the politics in Gikuyuland and especially after the decline of the Kikuyu Association¹⁰⁷. The Kikuyu Central Association (KCA) tackled a broad range of issues covering not merely political and economic grievances, but cultural matters as well. It was for this reason that KCA collided not only with the colonial administrators but also with the missionaries as we shall see later. The concern for upholding the Gikuyu cultural identity demanded that KCA members reject the western lifestyle brought by the Europeans and the teachings of the missionaries. Rosberg and Nottingham have summarised the objectives of K.C.A. thus;

"they were groping for an ideology that would bring the Kikuyu into the modern world without abandoning their dignity

and independence, both politically and also in social and cultural terms¹¹⁰”

We should note at this juncture that some of the founder members of the Akurinu Churches were former members of the K.C.A. The aims of the Akurinu Churches in the early days were also parallel to those of K.C.A. though they had a different explanation as we shall see in chapter three. The parrallellism between the aims of the Akurinu and the K.C.A. in cultural affairs is important when analysing the factors that led to the rise of the Akurinu Churches..

2.6 The Christian Missionaries

So far we have looked at the manner in which the Gikuyu were colonised and how their lands were alienated for the European settlers. We need also to see how Christianity was planted in Gikuyuland and the social implications that resulted leading finally to the rise of the independent Church movement among the Gikuyu.

Before the construction of the railway line from Mombasa (1896) to Kisumu (1901) Gikuyuland was hitherto cut off from the European community. The few who had ventured in Gikuyuland were mainly traders with their Kamba or Swahili guides. The establishment of the Protectorate in 1895 followed by the construction of the railway 'provoked a

hurry-burly race among missions new and old into hitherto unoccupied territory¹¹¹.

Long before they came, the missionaries had been told about the natives in the dark continent. So they came to Africa with the divine mission of saving the African souls by bringing the light of the gospel. From the outset, Christianity was presented as part of the Western civilization which was meant to replace the pagan religion and primitive ways of life as Cagnolo puts it;

'It is an obligation on us civilized peoples to put these phantasms to flight and to lighten their darkness with the sun of justice and the stars of civilization'¹¹².

These views of Cagnolo were shared by other missionaries who came to Gikuyuland. Their determination to eradicate the customs which they considered to be unchristian brought them into conflict with the Gikuyu. We shall briefly look at the circumstances that led to the breakaway from the missionary Churches by some Gikuyu Christians who later founded the independent churches.

The first missionary society to arrive in Gikuyuland was the Church of Scotland Mission (CSM). The Imperial British East Africa Company had set up the East African Scottish mission in 1889 which would deal with religious, educational,

medical and industrial training¹¹³. The first camp was set up at Kibwezi in 1891 but proved a failure due to the hot climate, malaria and the sparse Kamba population. The camp was transferred to Kikuyu station in 1898¹¹⁴. The administration of the training centre was taken over by the Church of Scotland Foreign Mission in 1900¹¹⁵.

Meanwhile, A.W. Macgregor of the Church Missionary Society (CMS) had arrived and opened a station in 1901 at Kihuruko, the present day Kabete¹¹⁶. In the same year the interdenominational African Inland Mission (AIM) arrived and by 1903 had established a station in North Kiambu at Kijabe. A fundamentalist group of the AIM calling itself the Gospel Missionary Society (GMS) established a station in 1890 at Kambui in Kiambu¹¹⁷.

The race for spheres of influence in Gikuyuland by the missionaries was intensified by the arrival of the Roman Catholics. The Holy Ghost Fathers arrived in 1899 and established a station at the present day St. Austins to the West of Nairobi. They were followed by the Consolata Fathers who established a station at Limuru in Kiambu in 1903.

Thus, by 1903, four Protestant Missions and the Roman Catholics had established their bases in the Southern part of Gikuyuland in preparation to

penetrate into the interior. At the invitation by Chief Karuri of Muranga, (then Fort Hall), the Roman Catholics and the CMS ventured into the heart of the Gikuyu country. The Roman Catholics had by the end of 1903, established stations at Tuthu, near Karuri's home, Mugoiri in Muranga and Karima and Gikondi in Nyeri¹¹⁸. In the same year, Mcgregor of the CMS founded a station at Weithaga and a second one at Kahuhia in 1906¹¹⁹. The CMS founded a station in 1908 at Mahiga near Nyeri town while the CSM opened their second station at Tumutumu in Nyeri in 1908¹²⁰.

After establishing the mission stations and spheres of operation, the missionary societies embarked on the task of evangelising among the Gikuyu. The process of evangelisation was initially hampered by the language problem and the suspicion of the Gikuyu towards the missionaries. Various methods were adopted which were geared to establishing close relations, between the missionaries and the Gikuyu. These included employing Africans in the mission stations and farms. Thuku writing about the GMS at Kambui says that the missionaries "thought it would be easier to influence people to become Christians once they had worked close to the mission for some time"²¹.

Dispensaries and hospitals were opened in the mission stations and the sick were persuaded to go for treatment. A word about Jesus would be passed over as the patients were treated. Another method that was used was the opening up of industrial and agricultural training institutions for the youths. During the instruction the teachers would have an opportunity to talk about the new life provided by Christ as well as establishing friendship with them¹²².

The method that proved most effective was the formal school education system. At first it was difficult for the missionaries to get pupils for their schools. H.E. Scott for example, gives an account of how they had to give presents or pay money to pupils to induce them to the CSM school at Kikuyu¹²³. Schooling was seen by the Gikuyu as a form of employment during the early days of missionary work. Before long, however, formal education proved to be a means of getting better jobs with the Government as well as in the private sector. To the relief of missionaries the pupil enrolment increased even without the inducements.

Formal education and Christianity were presented in such manner that the two were indistinguishable. This approach became more of a standard among the various missionary societies

such that, as Leys observes, 'when a mission begins work in a new district in Africa, it begins with a school'¹²⁴ A similar observation is made by Anderson when he says,

"-- in Kikuyuland, Christianity and formal schooling were presented together. Those who sought schooling became Christians and those interested in Christianity went to School¹²⁵"

Furthermore, the same building served both as a class as well as a Church while the teacher would also be the preacher. The term githomo was used for both schooling and church services. Even today, the older Christians will talk of going to githomo when referring to a Sunday service. The athomi then, were those who went to school, but the education offered was not for its own sake. It was to help make the gospel message intelligible to the Africans. The Africans however realized the Christian bias of the education offered in the mission schools and they began to demand more of a secular better quality education¹²⁶.

Apart from the dissatisfaction with the education offered in the mission schools, other issues were emerging which strained the relationship between the Gikuyu and the missionaries.

We have already discussed the issue of land alienation, which had resulted in the Gikuyu families becoming squatters on the European settler farms. Unfortunately the missionaries had also carved out large tracts of land just like the settlers. D.C.R. Scott of the CSM, had for example acquired 3,000 acres of land at Kikuyu in 1901, belonging to the mbari ya Hinga¹²⁷. A.J. Temu states that,

"by 1914 all the missions had applied for and taken up land on the reserves on which to build a church; and some, like the Church of Scotland and the Consolata Mission, had taken up huge areas of land for commercial purposes"¹²⁸.

To the Gikuyu, the missionaries were no different from the settlers as far as the issue of land was concerned. To express their conviction that all Europeans had the same motive of exploiting and oppressing the Africans, the saying "gutiri muthungu na mubia", was coined, meaning, there is no difference between the European settler and the missionary¹²⁹. So the White man could be in various guises, either as an administrator, a settler or a missionary but in the final analysis he remained a colonialist.

What was even more disturbing among the Gikuyu was the missionaries' and especially the Protestants' condemnation of certain aspects of Gikuyu

religion and customs. To be a Christian meant abandoning what the missionaries regarded as unchristian practices. According to Macpherson, the unchristian practices were put into three categories on the basis of their seriousness as follows;

- i) "Beliefs and customs regarded as being at variance with Christian principles but not necessarily actively opposed to them and therefore to be allowed to die out of their own accord. These included deference to ancestral spirits, the traditional sacrificial system and the practice of magic and 'ugo'.
- ii) Customs regarded as incompatible with Christian principles and therefore unacceptable in a Christian community, such as polygamy and sexually-motivated dances.
- iii) Customs regarded as medically or hygienically undesirable and to be actively taught against, such as the exposure of the dead and female circumcision¹³⁰".

During the early years, the missionaries were cautious and persuasive and resorted to teaching against the unwanted customs. Outright demands or discipline would have sent the few converts away. With the increase of converts, the missionaries stepped up the demands on their adherents, who were required to refrain from such practices as the taking of alcohol, traditional dances, taking of snuff and polygamy. The issue of female circumcision remained a major source of problems between the missionaries and some African Christians and non-Christians right from the start. Since it was used as a cause for the separation by some Gikuyu Christians to form their own schools and churches,

we shall briefly look into the development of the female circumcision controversy.

Five groups were involved in the female circumcision controversy. Firstly, there were the Roman Catholics who, from the start did not collaborate with the Protestant missions. They avoided direct involvement and attacks on the ritual. They were more concerned on how the ritual should be performed, not on its moral and religious implications¹³¹. This attitude of the Roman Catholics of avoiding provoking Africans to react to the missionaries even in theological aspects, is collaborated by Leys when he writes;

'They (Catholics) do not circulate the scriptures and they teach an ethic suitable to the circumstances and social condition of Africans,'¹³²

This may explain why there were few cases of break-ways from the Roman Catholic Mission.

Secondly, there was the colonial Government which inevitably got involved in the controversy. Already, the colonial administrators were aware of the deep grievances caused to the Gikuyu through the alienation of land, forced labour and the taxes. The colonial Government was therefore cautious not to provoke the Gikuyu further by attacking a custom which in the final analysis had no relevance in the administration of the colony.

To the colonial administrators, the custom "was of very ancient origin and would disappear only as a result of gradual process of education"¹³³.

Thirdly, there was the Church Missionary Society, which, like the colonial Government, avoided direct confrontation with their Gikuyu adherents over the female circumcision. It is worth noting that the CMS came up with a policy on the female circumcision issue in 1931, after the breakaway had occurred and independent churches formed¹³⁴. The absence of such a policy led to CMS stations taking different actions towards the female circumcision issue. For example, Kabete CMS station followed the Kikuyu CSM and was therefore opposed to the ritual whereas Kahuhia CMS in Muranga was quiet or non-committal about the controversy.

Fourthly, there were the churches that were on the forefront in carrying out the campaign for the abolition of the female circumcision. The church of Scotland Mission held the lead, followed by the Africa Inland Mission and the Gospel Missionary Society. Among these missionary societies the issue of female circumcision was turned into an ecclesiastical requirement and became a criterion of judging the committed

Christians from the nominal members.

Finally, there were the Gikuyu who were opposed to the abolition of the custom. They comprised of Gikuyu Christians as well as non-Christians both the old and the young. The female circumcision issue acted as a unifying factor in bringing the Gikuyu together to reject the missionaries' teaching against the operation. It was not therefore accidental when the Kikuyu Central Association picked up the issue and added it on the list of the grievances affecting the Gikuyu community.

As noted earlier, the CSM was the champion and sustainer of the campaign to abolish the female circumcision among the Gikuyu. The teaching against the operation started back in 1906 at CSM Kikuyu station with Mrs. Mary Watson, Marion Stevenson and Dr. John Arthur who was a medical doctor¹³⁵. Initially the campaign took the form of Christian moral teachings both at school and in the church. By 1914, the CSM missionaries saw the fruits of their labour when two girls at Kikuyu mission school expressed their wish not to be circumcised¹³⁶. The missionaries, however, feared that it was too early to adopt such a move for fear of a possible negative reaction from the Gikuyu.

So, a compromise was reached between the girls, their parents and the traditional women circumcisers that the girls be circumcised in Kikuyu mission hospital with Christian sponsors¹³⁷. A similar experiment was carried out at Tumutumu in 1915 when three girls were circumcised by a traditional circumciser at the mission hospital in the presence of Dr. Philp. He, however, felt that the operation was too brutal and vowed it would never be repeated again¹³⁸. From then on, he was determined to have the operation stopped by all means possible.

The campaign took a different turn when the church committees at both Kikuyu and Tumutumu came up with a church policy in 1916, which forbid the circumcision of baptised girls or girls of Christian parents or girls in mission boarding schools. A defaulter would face church discipline¹³⁹. The AIM and the GMS had followed the CSM policy. By 1920, the GMS came up with a resolution that if a GMS churchman gets his daughter circumcised he would be ex-communicated for two years and such a girl could not get married to a GMS man¹⁴⁰. Despite this threat some GMS adherents continued with the practice and this led to a further stern resolution in September 1921 which stated;

"If a circumcised woman wishes to have a church marriage she should first be ex-

communicated for two years before her wedding. If she completed her ex-communication satisfactorily and still sought a church marriage, the wedding would be performed in the church verandah-not inside and no spectators were allowed to watch it except for the official witness, the best man, the maid and the minister"¹⁴¹.

The campaign was by this time characterised by threats of suspensions and ex-communication of members who allowed their girls to be circumcised. It should be noted that the Gikuyu Christians as well as non-Christians had also begun to question and to doubt the missionaries' motives. The relationship of Gikuyu customs and Christianity was questioned. This period of doubting coincided with the time when the first formal political parties among the Gikuyu were emerging. It is for this reason that those seeking for support capitalized on the issue of female circumcision in order to rally behind them the Gikuyu who were opposed to the abolition of the custom. The K.C.A. in particular, according to Rosberg and Nottingham came up,

"as a champion of Kikuyu cultural nationalism; its members did not seek the rejection of Christianity but the preservation of selected aspects of Kikuyu culture"¹⁴².

The K.C.A. was to collide with the missionaries in its endeavour to preserve the Gikuyu cultural values, the female circumcision being one of them.

The issue of female circumcision had taken a different turn. It was no longer an affair between an individual adherent and the church elders. It had assumed a similar status like the land, labour and tax grievances. The colonial Government had therefore to intervene in an attempt to resolve the controversy although it was due to the pressure from the missionaries who wanted an official policy to bring the custom to an end. In July 1925, the Local Native Council in Kiambu met to discuss the issue. Despite the D.C. urging the members to ban the practice, they refused. The D.C. however, directed that those who wanted to continue with the practice should only perform the minor and not the major operation. The major operation was defined as;

"the removal of not only the clitoris but also the labia minora and half the labia majora together with the surrounding tissue"¹⁴³.

The Government stand was spelt out during the East African Governor's meeting in 1926 which recommended that, "through education the custom would come to an end, and if practiced at all, only a small excision of the clitoris should be cut"¹⁴⁴. The missionaries were unhappy with the Government stand for they had hoped for a policy which would bring the custom to an end once and for all. The colonial Government's unwillingness to be estranged

in the controversy was further demonstrated when it pressurised Dr. Arthur to resign his post in the Legislative Council in 1929 where he had represented the Africans from 1928¹⁴⁵. The colonial Government feared that the Gikuyu could assume that Dr. Arthur, the chief actor in the campaign, was acting on behalf of the Government.

The female circumcision crisis came to a climax in Nyeri in April 1928. A meeting was called which was attended by the missionaries and church elders to announce the campaign against the custom in the district, whose Local Native Council alone among those in Gikuyuland, had refused to pass the bylaws to regulate the custom¹⁴⁶. The church elders were required to endorse their support for the abolition of the practice but seven of them rejected. One of them, Ezekiel Kabora could recall the scene and the proceedings at the meetings as he put it,

"Many people had gathered about half a mile away from where the meeting was being held. They comprised of Christians and non-Christians from Nyeri who were against the abolition of female circumcision. Before we left them in order to attend the meeting, we were solemnly warned not to sell the people to missionaries"¹⁴⁷.

After the Nyeri incident it was clear to the missionaries that not all their adherents were

supporting them in their campaign. It was therefore necessary for the churches to identify their true followers. At the same time, more strict disciplinary measures were deemed necessary for the defaulters. This is illustrated by the recommendations of an interchurches meeting held at Tumutumu in March 1929 which stated that;

"-- this custom is evil and should be abandoned by all Christians --- [and] --- all Christians submitting to it should be suspended by the churches everywhere"¹⁴⁸.

The Tumutumu resolutions were taken up and written by Joseph Kangethe, President of K.C.A. in their Kikuyu Newsletter called Muiguithania (The reconciler), in May 1929¹⁴⁹. Kangethe expressed the concern of the Gikuyu who were opposed to the abolition of the custom thus;

"Missionaries have tried on many occasions to interfere with the tribal customs, and the question is asked whether circumcision being the custom of the Kikuyu Christian he is to be a heathen simply because he is a Kikuyu"¹⁵⁰.

The K.C.A. members turned to the very Bible the missionaries were using to condemn the custom and found that the Gikuyu translation of the virgin Mary is muiritu¹⁵¹. Since a muiritu is a circumcised girl in Gikuyu, they then concluded that Mary must have been circumcised. The demand to abolish the custom was therefore seen as Dr.

Arthur's eleventh commandment as Kangethe stated;

"We have discovered a law and it has been made public in the European newspaper and it has been written by Dr. Arthur and another European from Kambui Mission"¹⁵².

Rumours were in the meantime, circulating during this period that the K.C.A. was organising a mass circumcision for girls in several parts of the country and every kirigu (pl. irigu), uncircumcised girl, would eventually be circumcised even if she had become a grandmother¹⁵³. Such threats could not be taken lightly by the churches for they had witnessed cases of girls having been forcefully circumcised. It was therefore necessary for the mission to establish their loyal adherents. At a meeting held at Thogoto in October 1929, and attended by representatives of the CSM and GMS, it was resolved that. "churches would compile signatures of their adherents who rejected the circumcision of girls--"¹⁵⁴. Those who failed to sign the declaration would henceforth be ex-communicated. The Thogoto Loyalty declaration read;

"I --- reaffirm my vows to the church of Christ and wish to disassociate myself with the practice of girl-circumcision which I hereby renounce again"¹⁵⁵.

There followed a campaign all over Gikuyuland to collect signatures from the converts. But since majority were illiterate, they would thumbstamp the anti-female circumcision declaration forms. The K.C.A. thus termed the whole exercise as the kirore affair¹⁵⁶. Those who signed the loyalty forms were henceforth called the Gikuyu of kirore (andu a kirore) as opposed to the Gikuyu karing'a (the true or pure Gikuyu) who were for the preservation of the custom.

While the churches were busy collecting the signatures, there emerged a song-cum-dance called muthirigu which spread like wildfire all over Gikuyuland¹⁵⁷. It was first heard at Kabete Native Industrial Training Depot, from a group of youths who had gone to Mombasa for a construction job. The song was adapted such that it became a popular instrument of sensitizing the Gikuyu during the female circumcision controversy. It condemned the abolitionists, the Gikuyu loyalists, the missionaries and the colonial administrators. On the other hand it praised all those who were patriotic and ready to suffer for the defence of their lands and cultural heritage. A few stanzas will serve to illustrate the nature of muthirigu.

(a) Attack on missionaries and the church

- (i) Tuhii tunini njora-ini
Nigetha tuhure kanitha
Hindi ni nginyu.

(Little knives in their sheaths
That we may fight the church
The time has come).

- (ii) Tukuina na marinda
Na tukinye mwembe
Kanitha gakiandika
Gecunage miromo.

(We shall dance in skirts
And walk majestically
When the Athomi see us
They will envy us).

- (iii) Rev. Calderwood ni mubatithania
Niathii akabatithie
Nugu githakaini.

(Rev. Calderwood baptises
Let him go and baptise
monkeys in the forest).

- (iv) Dr. Arthur ni muciaru
Na muka ni muciaru
Ndakora makiurania
Makuhuhirio nuu?

(Dr. Arthur has given birth
And his wife has given birth
I found them asking each other
Who will cater for us?).

(b) Attack on the colonial administrators

- (v) Murebie kurebia
Toria turarebirie
Murangoini kwa D.C.

(Dance with pride
The way we danced
At the D.Cs office).

(vi) Na D.C. ni muhake
Ni muhake na irigu
Niguo githaka githii.

(The D.C. has been bribed
He has been bribed
With uncircumcised girls
So that the land may be taken).

(c) Attack on the kirore group and Loyalists

(vii) Na Leakey ni muthungu
Na Arthur ni muthungu
Nawe Musa kingethu
Wi wa kabira iriku?

(Leakey is a white man
And Arthur is a white man
Now you toothless Musa,
What race are you?).

(viii) Waruhiu kumanyoko
Na Mbiyu kumanina
Ni ciana cia Mumbi
Mworagithia Ngeretha?

(Chief Waruhiu, what a fool!
Chief (Koinange) Mbiyu
You are a fool too!
For you have let the
British to kill
The children of Mumbi?

(ix) Muhoya na muka
Ni aciaru
Ndakora makiurania
Tukurugiruo nuu?

(Chief Muhoya and wife
Have given birth
I found them asking each other
Who will cook for us?).

(d) Attack on the uncircumcised girls

- (x) Ninguigurira kimwe x2
Kiaremua ni kurima
Kihaichage miariki.

(I will marry one (uncircumcised girl)
If she is unable to cultivate
She will be climbing castor oil trees).

- (xi) Kirigu ni gikiigu
No umenye ni gikiigu
Ndiragitirie tai
Kirandehere mukwa!

(An uncircumcised girl is stupid
And she is really stupid
I asked one to get me my tie
She brought me a leather strip).

- (xii) Kirigu ni kiaganu
No umenye ni kiaganu
Mwana aguitwo ni irigu
Gikagua na mitheko!

(An uncircumcised girl is naughty
And she is really naughty
A baby chokes from a banana
And she falls with laughter).

(e) In praise of the Gikuvu Customs;

- (xiii) Ninguraga thiritu x2
Thiritu itakuraga
No itu na Jehova.

(I will break all friendship x2
The only friendship I will keep
Is between me and Jehova (God)).

- (xiv) Baba ni muruu
Maitu ni muruu
Ndigacenjia ndini
Tonde ndi Mugikuyu karing'a.

(My father is circumcised
My mother is circumcised
I will never change my (traditonal)
religion
Because I am a Mugikuyu karing'a).

(xv) Gikua kihare
Nikio mboburu ya Gikuyu
Na mwere wa mukombi
Ni mucere wa Gikuyu.

(A well roasted yam
Is the bread for the Gikuyu
And the millet
Is the rice for the Gikuyu)¹⁵⁸.

Such was the nature of Muthirigu. It became so popular especially among the youths such that bands could be seen singing and dancing along the roads with crowds of people cheering. To the missionaries and the loyalists the song was in the same category with the unchristian traditional songs and dances. With pressure from the CSM, who described it as the 'vile, immoral and seditious muthirigu dance', the song was finally banned in 1930 by the Government although it continued to be sung secretly¹⁵⁹. By then it had achieved its objective of serving as a manifesto for the preservation of Gikuyu cultural and political nationalism.

Towards the end of 1929, the separation of the loyal adherents and the dissenters was almost complete. At Kikuyu mission the CSM had lost 90% of its communicants while AIM Kijabe mission lost

50% of its 600 adherents¹⁶⁰. Those who broke away immediately embarked on organising the independent schools and churches. Their development cannot be covered in this study¹⁶¹. What has been highlighted will suffice as a background to the rise of the Akurinu movement to which we turn in the next chapter.

In concluding this chapter, the following points should be emphasized. Firstly, before the coming of the Europeans the Gikuyu had a democratic form of government whereby people participated through the various representative councils. The athamaki were accepted as the custodians of law and order. With the coming of the Colonialists, there was established a new form of government in which the Gikuyu had no say. The hand-picked chiefs and their henchmen served the interests of their masters and were often worse in oppressing their own tribesmen. Secondly, the Gikuyu were greatly affected economically by the land alienation policy. Land was the very basis of their livelihood. The deprivation of their land reduced the Gikuyu into squatters, and labourers while others sought degrading jobs as porters. Thirdly, the social integration of the Gikuyu was disrupted. Members of a family or a clan were forced to scatter in different settler farms and stay there

for long periods. Land was no longer a unifying factor as the mbari land had been alienated for European settlers. Fourthly, the Gikuyu cultural values were attacked by the missionaries who imposed upon them western European values under the guise of Christianity.

It was against these new forces that the Gikuyu resistance in the 1920s can be understood. The female circumcision controversy should therefore be seen as a peg against which several other grievances were attached as revealed by the Mu-thirigu song.

One of the outcome of the social, political, economic and cultural upheavals in Gikuyuland was the rise of the African independent churches. The Akurinu movement was one of those independent churches and is discussed in the following chapter.

NOTES ON CHAPTER TWO

1. Other terms used are Agikuyu and Kikuyu. In this study the term Gikuyu will be used.
2. For detailed studies on the Gikuyu see Kenyatta J., Facing Mount Kenya, London, Secker and Werburg Ltd, 1938; Kabetu, kirira kia Ugikuyu, Customs and Traditions of the Kikuyu; Nairobi; EAPH, 1947, Gathigira S.K. Miikarire va Agikuyu, Customs of the Agikuyu, London, The Shelton Press, 1959.
3. Lambert refers to the Gikuyu in these districts as the Gikuyu proper to distinguish them from the Ndia and Gicugu of present day Kirinyaga District. See Lambert H.E. Kikuyu Social and Political Institutions, New York, Oxford University Press, 1956; p.1. See also Appendix IV, Map 1.
4. Ominde, H.O., Land and Population Movement in Kenya, London, Heinemann, 1968, p.19.
5. 1979 Population Census Vol.II, Analytical Report. Kenya Government Printer, 1979, p.35. The 1989 Census results have not been released.
6. Kenyatta op.cit p.1
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid. p.6
9. Gathigira op. cit. p.1
10. Kabetu op. cit. p.1
11. Gathigira op. cit. p.1, see Kabetu op. cit p.2.
12. Muriuki G., A History of the Kikuyu 1500-1900, Nairobi, Oxford University Press, p.133.
13. Gathigira op. cit. p.6.
14. Kenyatta op. cit p.9.
15. Routledge, W. S. With a pre-historic people. The Akikuyu of Birth East Africa. London: Frank Cass and Co. Ltd. 1910. p.154.
16. Muriuki, op. cit. p.118.

17. Kenyatta op. cit. p.133.
18. Muriuki op. cit. p.120, see also Gathigira op. cit. p.42.
19. For a detailed account of age-sets and regimental names see Lambert, op.cit. p.22.
20. Gathigira op. cit.
21. Muriuki, op. cit. p.119.
23. Kenyatta op. cit. p.21.
24. Ibid. p.39.
25. Ibid. p.30.
26. Ibid. 34.
27. Muriuki op. cit. p.112.
28. Ibid.
29. Kinoti H.W. - Aspects of Gikuyu Traditional Morality, Ph.D Thesis, University of Nairobi, 1984, p.63.
30. Lambert op.cit. p.99.
31. Kenyatta op. cit. p.25.
32. For a detailed account of the ruling generations see Kenyatta op. cit. p.186-200, Kabetu op. cit., p.89-93 and Lambert op.cit. p.58-60.
33. Kenyatta, op. cit. p.194.
34. Ibid. The various njama (councils) should be distinguished from the Kiama (elders council) which was composed of those who qualified as elders.
35. Gathigira op. cit. p.3.
36. Lambert op. cit. p.76, Kenyatta op. cit p.195.
37. Kinoti op. cit. p.68.
38. For a detailed account on elderhood, see Kenyatta op.cit. p.200-205; Dundas, K.R. in *Man*, 1908, p.180; Gathigira op. cit., p.3; Hopley C.W.; Bantu Beliefs and Magic, London: Frank Cass and Co. Ltd. 1938, p.210, Barlow

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CHAPTER THREE

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE AKURINU CHURCHES: 1927- 1993

3:1 The founding of the Akurinu Churches 1927-1934

The Akurinu churches date back to 1927 the period which was marked by social and political upheavals among the Gikuyu as we noted in chapter two. Following the female circumcision controversy and the subsequent breakaway by the dissidents in 1929 there emerged independent schools and churches to cater for the expellees from the mission founded churches and schools. The Akurinu churches were among the independent churches that emerged during that period¹.

According to the informants, the rise of the Akurinu movement is attributed to the work of the Holy Spirit. People were called individually to become prophets and it was later that the Arathi (prophets) joined together and began evangelizing.² So, strictly speaking, the founding of the Akurinu Churches can not be attributed to a single person. Among the first people to be called was Joseph Nganga who came from Mangu in Kiambu. It is said that Nganga received his call in 1927³. He was illiterate and could read both Gikuyu and Kiswahili. It is likely that he had attended the Gospel Missionary Society School at Kambui. At the time of his call he was a young man in

his late twenties. His call was a mystery to him for according to Njeri's informants, Nganga had come from a drinking spree and in his sleep, he heard a voice calling his name.⁴ Although he was not baptized the voice called him "Joseph" and this made him conclude that it was God's voice. The message he received during the call was that he should pray for his own salvation and also for his people (the Gikuyu) that "they might be liberated from their colonial rulers."⁵ Nganga embarked on prayers and Bible study, an exercise he performed for three years in seclusion in his hut.⁶ For the whole period he was in seclusion he did not cut his hair and beard for he regarded himself as a Nazirite, or one set aside for God's work.

Other Arathi were called during the same period in other parts of Gikuyuland. According to Elijah Kinyanjui, Samuel Muinami was also called in 1927. He came from Magina near Kijabe in Kiambu.⁷ Like Nganga, Muinami also secluded himself in a store and embarked on prayers and Bible study for one year. Then John Mungara and Musa Mucai also received the call. Musa Mucai was both a teacher at A.I.M. Kijabe and a member of the K.C.A.⁸ By 1929, Musa Mucai's home had become the meeting place of those who had received the Holy Spirit. Several members report on how each of them was directed by the Holy Spirit from distant places to Mucai's home.

In the case of Elijah Kinyanjui, he recalls that

"I was at Wathuguti, about three miles away from Kijabe Mission, looking after my father's sheep. In 1929, I had a vision in which I was told to go to Magina. I did not know the way but I was directed by a cloud. When I came to crossroads, I would be told the way to follow until I came to a house which I was told to enter. This was Musa Mucai's home." 8

Kinyanjui had left behind his bride who also received the Holy Spirit after three months and was led to Musa Mucai's home. If a person resisted the call to become a Murathi, one was forced through various means. A case of a man who was driven by a swarm of bees up to Musa Mucai's home is remembered by the early Arathi.¹⁰ Those who came adorned in the traditional attire had to remove their skin garments and ornaments and put on the white calico cloth (Cuka). Mucai's home became a kind of a dormitory as well as a prayer house. As the number of Akurinu increased, he removed the partition to create more space. The Men took half of the house while the women took the other. People lived like brothers and sisters and even the married lived as though they had never married.¹¹

Life at Mucai's home was characterised by prayers, Bible study and the interpretations of visions and dreams. At first Mucai was the prayer leader and was following the mission style. Later on, they were instructed through a revelation to be worshipping God in

the following manner:

- (i) To pray with their eyes open.
- (ii) To face East, towards Mount Kenya (because God appears on mountains).
- (iii) Those who led prayers or sacrifices to God should be upright.
- (iv) To pray with raised clean hands.¹²

Those who were literate searched in the Bible for more insights on the God and man relationship. According to John Muhia, they found a lot of teaching which became part of their basic beliefs and practices.¹³ For example they discovered the various forms of ritual uncleanness (thahu) in the book of Leviticus.

As the community grew bigger, it became necessary to appoint leaders for various responsibilities. Samuel Muinami was chosen to be a prayer leader (Muhoi) as well as a preacher. John Mung'ara was to be a Muhoi as well as a leader during the singing. Musa Mucai was the overall leader (Mutongoria) and could perform all the other functions if need arose. The group at Musa Mucai's had by 1930 organized itself into a worshipping community with distinct characteristics that made them appear peculiar to the outsiders.

In 1931, John Mung'ara and Samuel Muinami were directed through a vision to go from Magina to Mangu and look for Joseph Nganga who had been in seclusion for three years.¹⁴ They had to inform him that his time to

preach had come. They found him and after explaining the purpose of their mission, they cut his hair which had not been cut since his call. This was to symbolize that he was now in a position to mix with other people. After the three returned to Magina God directed the Arathi to go out and evangelize in the villages. So, the three became the evangelists and they preached not only in Kiambu but also in other parts of Gikuyuland. At the same time they used to go to pray on Mount Kenya, the Aberdares, Longonot, Ngong Hills and Ol Donyo Sabuk.

In the meantime, some people had received the Holy Spirit and become Arathi in Murang'a (then Fort Hall) District. These included Musa Thuo, a former K.C.A. member and who later on joined KAU. Others included Henry Maina, and Jassan Kanini from Kangema, Erasto Warii from Giiitwa and Jeremiah Mutu from Kariguini.¹⁶ Like the Kiambu group, some of those who were called were ex-mission followers. For example Jassan Kanini was a church elder at CMS Weithaga Mission.¹⁷ Erasto Warii, on the other hand was a blacksmith as well as a medicine man before his call.¹⁸ After the call each person was assigned his priestly duties. These early Arathi from Murang'a are of special significance due to a revelation they received concerning the Akurinu churches which is commonly referred to as the "Uhoro Wa Kirima" or "the message from Mount Kenya". Due to the impact of this

revelation among the Akurinu, we shall discuss it in the following section.

3.2 The giving of the Law on Mount Kenya

In 1930, Erasto Warii is reported to have received a revelation that the Arathi elders should go to Mount Kenya to receive the Law which would guide their church. Eight elders were chosen for this mission. They were Henry Maina, the Leader, Jassan Kanini, Elijah Gichuki, Titus Gitangu, Isaiah Kagwanja, Joseph Njogu, Philip M'kumbwa (from Meru) and Lilian Wanjiru¹⁸. Erasto Warii decline from the mission, because, according to some informants, his wife was pregnant²⁰. Her death during delivery was seen as God's punishment to Warii for having refused to obey God's word. It is not clear what role the woman was to play and most members are silent even about her participation in the mission.

The party left Murang'a for Mount Kenya on 2nd July 1930. They arrived at Mwimbi in Meru on 18th August 1930, where they were told by the Holy Spirit to Holy prayers. In a vision, God appeared to Isaiah Kagwanja and showed him where they would go for Worship. When Titus Gitangu started praying, Isaiah Kagwanja began trembling all over until the prayers were over. All were amazed at what had happened to Kagwanja and they concluded that the Holy Spirit had descended on them during that occasion. The following day, 17th August

1930, they discussed the visions that each of them had received. Isaiah Kagwanja reported that God had revealed to him the following

- "(i) The Arathi should not close their eyes during prayer, so that the country does not fall into darkness.
- (ii) Whenever they go to preach, the Holy Spirit will be given to them.
- (iii) Those who repent and become Arathi should be welcomed and greeted by an elder three times in the name of the Father, the Holy Spirit and the Son."²¹

From Mwimbi, the party was to climb Mount Kenya. Kagwanja had been shown the route which they would follow. He had also been told in a vision that only five out of the eight people would go up the Mountain. Joseph Njogu, Philip M'mkubwa and Kagwanja himself would remain behind. Kagwanja had further revealed that of the three one would refuse to be left behind although he would never get to the top of the mountain. It was Joseph Njogu who insisted on accompanying the other five up the mountain.²²

Before they started the journey up the mountain Titus Gitangu led them in solemn prayers. In the evening they came to a valley and across it they saw the mountain of God. There was thunder which struck three times while a rainbow ran over the mountain. After the thunder a huge rock came rolling down towards them and Gitangu

screamed in fear. The Holy Spirit cautioned them against shouting while on the Holy mountain of God.²¹ As they looked for a place to spend the night, they came across a lake and Joseph Njogu got so frightened that he decided to return to where Kagwanja and M'mkubwa were waiting. This was however, seen as a fulfillment of Kagwanja's prophecy. The remaining five members continued and came to a cave with four outlets, where they slept. During the night they were given Bible references to read as well as songs to sing. They were on the mountain for two days and on the third day they descended to where the others were waiting.

On their arrival, Kagwanja reported the following things which he had received through visions,

- (i) God would have performed greater things on the mountain were it not for the fear of the five people.
- (ii) God had shown Kagwanja a Book with letter "M" which stood for "Muthamaki" a leader and "Munabii" a prophet.
- (iii) The two, Muthamaki and the Munabii dug a hole in which they planted a flag with the Muthamaki holding the upper part and the Munabii held the lower part of the flag post.
- (iv) Whoever takes up the leadership of the country will put on Manjoho on both shoulders and a turban on his head.
- (v) The K.C.A. would break up and become two parties.
- (vi) The way in which the five Arathi had overcome the mountain in ascending and descending was the same manner in

which the enemies the colonialists,
would be defeated.²⁴

We note that Kagwanja's report was religio-political in nature. The emphasis on the religious factor as the basis of the country's leadership is worth noting. The symbolism of the leader putting on the Akurinu priestly attire of Manjoho and the turban implied that the country's leader would be a religious person. The report thus carried some hope of victory whereby the Africans would finally attain their freedom from the colonial oppressors. The Arathi seem to have considered themselves an instrument that God would use in the struggle for Kenya's independence. Such involvement, whether in form of prayers or prophecy negates the view held by some writers like Kenyatta that they were only interested in religious matters.²⁵

The party started their return journey on 25th August 1930. They stayed for three days at Tungu in M'mkubwa's home. They preached in Embu and Kirinyaga on their way back and arrived at Tumutumu on 6th September 1930. The Holy Spirit directed them to preach in the area but the C.S.M Missionaries would not allow them. So they left for Giitwa in Murang'a and stayed in Erasto Warii's home. It was then that Warii revealed the Commandments that God wanted the Akurinu to observe as well as the purpose for calling them, which included the

following,

(i) To part with those who had accepted the Kirore and the teachings of the missionaries as well as those who were selling out our lands and country to the colonialists.

(ii) Not to go to hospitals for treatment due to the Europeans hypocrisy for the whiteman was opposed to the new movement of the Arathi.

(iii) Not to use the things brought by the Europeans, and to reject their teachings.

(iv) The Arathi should go back to their Gikuyu traditional way of life.

(v) To pray for the party, K.C.A. and the Government that would be given to fight against the enemies.

(vi) To pray for the advancement of our youth's education so that there would be educated leaders for our country.

(vii) To pray for the sufferings which the Arathi were facing from the colonial Government, missionaries and even from their own people.

(viii) To pray for the Mutamaiyu wa Mugunda or food, and the wealth of the land.

(ix) Not to eat meat with blood, and to bury blood, liver, lungs, spleen and kidneys when an animal is slaughtered.

(x) To be praying God with clean raised hands and to repeat the lord's prayer three times.

(xi) Prayers should be made in the name of the Father, the Holy Spirit and the Son."²⁶

Warii also reported that he was given the following books to seal this covenant, Joel 1:1 - 8, Ezekiel 33: 1ff, 37:1ff and Jeremiah 33:1ff. ²⁷ These verses were relevant during that period in Gikuyuland. The reference in the book of Joel is about the distress

in Israel which had been caused by locusts. The magnitude of the suffering was such that it would be retold over generations to come. It is likely that the Arathi interpreted this account in the light of the colonial invasion of Gikuyuland and the subsequent suffering of the Gikuyu. The verses in Ezekiel 33;1 ff challenges the prophet to act as the people's watchman and to warn the people when there is danger. To the Arathi who had witnessed the giving of the law, they had the responsibility of disseminating the message to all the other Akurinu. Ezekiel Chapter 37 and Jeremiah chapter 33 are particularly relevant in view of their message of hope and restoration of the exiled Jews.²⁸ There would be a recovery of both their lost land and glory. The Gikuyu, like Jews, had lost their land to the colonialists and the European settlers, but it appears that the Arathi like the biblical prophets had some hope for the restoration of the Gikuyu on their land.

An analysis of the eleven Commandments reveals that the first four deal with the preservation of the Gikuyu social and cultural identity. The Arathi were not only to avoid mixing with those Christians who had signed the Kirore but were required to go back to their Gikuyu practices. Commandments five to eight spell out the means by which the survival of the Gikuyu community could be achieved. While other groups were to use different

approaches the Arathi were to rely on the power of prayers. The last three Commandments deal with the worship in the Akurinu church. It should be noted that some of these Commandments continue to influence the life of Akurinu members to the present.

The Arathi who had received these Commandments were required to go and deliver them to other Arathi leaders. (Atongoria). Thus, the group went round preaching in the adjacent areas of Murang'a and Nyeri and culminated with prayers on 15th September 1930 at the Mukurwe wa Gathanga, the traditional home of Gikuyu and Mumbi. By now the Arathi in Murang'a had begun to attract the attention of the colonial administrators. On 20th September 1930, they were led by Henry Maina to Kahuhia C.M.S. Mission where they held prayers and then rang the mission bell to symbolize that, the time had come for the liberation of the Gikuyu from their oppressors.²⁹ They were arrested and taken to Murang'a (then Fort Hall) where ten of them were jailed for two months and two were jailed for three months each.³⁰ After their release they continued with their preaching as well as visiting other Arathi in other parts of Gikuyuland.

It is likely that during a visit to Kijabe by this group, they revealed the law to Mucai's group in 1932 for it was during this period that they changed their way of worship from the mission to the Arathi style as outlined

in the Commandments.³¹ It should be noted that the contents of Mount Kenya Law (uhoro wa Kirima) is not discussed openly even among the ordinary Akurinu members. It is only a few leaders who keep copies of the law, referred to as Mundwa, to imply that it is like a lump of papers put together and whose content is incomprehensible. Some leaders are reported to have kept the Mundwa outside their houses for they consider it too sacred to be in the houses.³² These Commandments had great influence on the life of the early Arathi as we shall see in the following section.

3.3 The early life of the Akurinu

By 1931, the Arathi had crystallized into a worshipping community in Kiambu and Murang'a. According to Elijah Kinyanjui, "They had developed, through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, their own church".³³ Their practices were either based on discoveries from the Bible or from revelation through the Holy Spirit. One informant, John Muhia, recalls that he spent most of his time searching in the Bible how the Israelites lived during the Old Testament period.³⁴ The books of the law and prophecy were particularly appealing to the Arathi. They adopted the Levitical laws as part of their teaching and some Akurinu observe these Mosaic laws even today. The New Testament on the other hand was important in providing insights on the work of the Holy Spirit which

the Arathi believed was their guide.³⁵

The Arathi developed a behaviour which made them appear a peculiar community to their kinsmen and the colonial administrators. A few features will illustrate their peculiarity during that period. Firstly, they were living a communal life comprising of both the old and the young. We have already noted that the Kiambu group were staying at Musa Mucai's house at Magina where they demonstrated a brotherhood stronger than the kinship ties. They kept to themselves and avoided mixing with non members. Thus they were a closed community whose internal affairs were unknown to outsiders.

Secondly, their prayer patterns were different from those of other Christians. Apart from praying during the day, they used to hold prayers at odd hours in the night which were accompanied by singing. According to Zablon Gichuki, he was taught to pray three times in the night, at 9 p.m, 12 midnight and 3 a.m, a practice he observes to the present.³⁶ The Ahoi (prayer leaders) used to pray on mountains and forests as the Holy Spirit directed them. During prayers the Arathi would tremble all over and roar like lions as a sign of being possessed by the Holy Spirit. The men would pray with their hands raised and eyes open while the women would stretch their hands in a receiving posture, facing Mount Kenya.

Thirdly the Arathi believed that they had been

endowed with prophetic powers. The name Arathi (sing. Murathi) means prophets. They would prophesy about events which were later experienced. Some prophets are reported to have been directed by the Holy Spirit to visit people they had not known before in distant places after which those people became Arathi.³⁷ During moments when they were filled with the Holy Spirit, the Arathi would speak in tongues. John Muhia recalls that he was among the first people to speak in a strange language which only a few could understand and interpret to the rest.³⁸

Fourthly, the Arathi tried to live according to the Levitical laws of Moses. This led them to adopt new lifestyles different from the Gikuyu way of life. Among such practices were the washing (Methamba). Members were required to wash after making a journey and before entering a prayer house just in case one had got into contact with an unclean object or person. To safe guard themselves from contracting ritual uncleanness, (thahu) they abstained from shaking hands during greetings, sitting on stools, eating food and meat in non members houses. It should be noted that among the Gikuyu as is true of other African communities, the shaking of hands during greetings is a vital gesture of expressing welcome, acceptance and oneness. So, when the Arathi refused to shake hands it was a serious offence to the

non-members who saw the Arathi as perverting the age-old Gikuyu customs.

Fifthly, the Arathi in their endeavour to do away with anything European cast away their clothes and put on white cuka. The early group had two calico sheets (manjoho) which were tied one on each shoulder.³⁹ For their heads, some initially used handkerchiefs but later put on the turbans, while the women tied white headscarfs. At first only those with priestly duties were to wear the white cuka and the turban but later all Arathi were required to wear them.⁴⁰ Their white dressing made them a conspicuous lot wherever they were. Another important feature was their hair and beard which the men did not cut. On top of this they used to carry arrows, bows and swords whenever they went for prayers and preaching missions. These were for self defence against wild animals although some observers saw them as symbolizing the Arathi war against Satan.⁴¹ When need arose the Arathi were ready to use the weapons against their enemies. Kinyanjui recalls that while at Magina they used to be trained on how to use the weapons.⁴²

Finally, when the Arathi set out for their preaching missions they used to go in a single file with one leader at the front and the other one at the rear. Such military-like appearance would attract people although the Arathi would not talk to anyone on the way.

Having looked at the characteristics of the early Arathi, we are in a position to discuss the various names that were used to refer to their movement. Unlike other independent churches which had official names, the Arathi never had an official name and the ones that appear in Government records are descriptive of their activities and appearance. The following seven names have been used in the history of this church.

(i) Arathi (sing. Murathi). This name as noted earlier means prophets. It implies that they had the power to prophesy. Although not every one prophesied, the name was used in general to cover all those who joined the movement. Kenyatta's observation illustrates this point when he writes;

"They claim, too, that Mwenenyaga (God) has given them power to know the past and the present and to interpret his message to the community at large, hence their name Arathi."43

Government records on the early Arathi activities refer to them as Prophets or False Prophets as the missionaries called them. For example, F. H. Mackerick of A.I.M Kijabe when giving his opinion about the movement in 1934, wrote,

"The impression I have formed is that all these prophets are closely connected with K.C.A."

A police report of 1934, describes some Arathi who had been arrested, in the following words,

"They all appear to be quite sincere and fanatical. Certain of them tried prophesying

but this has not been very successful."⁴⁷
(emphasis mine)."

This, the name Arathi was a common name in the early days. The Kiswahili equivalent, Nabi, corrupted in Gikuyu as Anabii (Sing. Munabii) was also used. During an interview about the Arathi movement in 1934, Father Chilardi of Ruchu Catholic Mission remarked

"I know that the K.C.A. is gradually dying a NATURAL DEATH in the RESERVES but I am afraid the ANABI or Arathi are taking its place and that their numbers are increasing."⁴⁸

(ii) Watu wa Mungu (people of God). This name implied the special relationship between God and the Arathi. The basis for such a belief was the mode of their call and the personal experiences of the Holy Spirit. Moreover they viewed themselves as a chosen people, the equivalent of the house of Israel, charged with a divine mission. Kenyatta summarises their conviction when he writes,

"The members of this religious sect strongly believe that they are the chosen people of God to give and interpret his message to the people. They proclaim that they belong to the lost tribes of Israel."⁴⁹

According to one of the early Arathi, John Muhia, they had no doubt that they were the "Andu a Ngai (Watu wa Mungu) or people of God."⁴⁸ It is likely that the Arathi were using the Kiswahili version when confronted by the colonial administrators for it is used alternately with Arathi in the Government records.⁴⁹

but this has not been very successful."⁴⁷
(emphasis mine)."

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(iii) Ararami (Those who roar). The term came up to describe the behaviour of the Arathi of trembling and roaring like animals when they were possessed by the Holy Spirit. It is however not a very common name and is rarely used today though the practice of trembling and roaring is a common feature in the Akurinu church.

(iv) Aroti (Dreamers). The name signifies the ability of the Arathi to receive messages from God through dreams and visions. It is common even today for a member to come up with a "Kioneki", a mystical experience which requires a prophet to interpret.⁵⁰

(v) Andu a Iremba (People of the turbans). This is a descriptive name on how the Arathi dress. The white turbans made them appear peculiar and conspicuous from long distances. Those who did not know them by other names referred to them as the 'Andu a Iremba'.

(vi) Arata a Roho (Friends of the Holy Spirit). The Arathi were convinced that they had been given the Holy Spirit to guide them. This is a central belief even today as we shall see later. It is on this basis that they considered themselves as the Friends of the Holy Spirit.⁵¹ According to Kenyatta, one form of their greetings was phrased thus, "Niwageithio ni Roho Mutheru" meaning, 'The Holy Ghost is greeting you.'⁵² This implied the fact that the Holy Spirit was dwelling in the Arathi.

(vii) Akurinu (sing Mukurinu). Presently, this is the most commonly used name for the Arathi. It is however one whose background and meaning remains obscure, even among the Arathi. There is evidence that it was in use by 1944 for it is one of the names of the Arathi movement that was known to the Director of Intelligence.⁵³ There are three possible theories about this name. The first theory is that the name is derived from the word 'gukurina' which the Arathi say is the act of roaring and screaming when one is possessed by the power of the Holy Spirit. A Mukurinu then, is one who gets possessed and manifests such features. The term gukurina is also used in a more general manner to mean the conversion to the Arathi. Thus, after the act of gukurina, one becomes a Mukurinu.

The second theory is based on a linguistic analysis. It is said that during their preaching missions in the early days, the Arathi would ask the people, "Mukuri-nu?" (Who is the redeemer?). Due to the frequency of the question, the people corrupted the question and pronounced it as one word, Mukurinu, which was used for those people who were asking this question. There is however no historical evidence that such question was ever part of the Arathi sermons. Elijah Kinyanjui, who has been an evangelist since the early days of this church denies any knowledge of such question being

asked.⁵⁴ So, it is likely that the theory of Mukurinu?, is a latter attempt to explain the mysterious name.

The third theory is that a Mukurinu means a person who leads a life of self denial or an ascetic. The Arathi were seen as ascetics due to the various taboos which they were observing. For example they could not take beer, attend dances, mix with non-Arathi and some left their families after becoming a Murathi. During occasions of amusements, the non-Arathi would make jokes and say "I will drink and dance with the girls for I am not a Mukuru ".⁵⁵ The implication was that they had not joined the Arathi movement which was characterized by self denial of the earthly pleasures. The name Mukuru was then corrupted to Mukurinu and was initially used in a derogatory manner. Today it is an accepted name even among the Arathi themselves and is used as an official title.⁵⁶ At this juncture, we turn to the problems that these Churches went through during the colonial period.

3:4 Persecution and death of Arathi evangelists:

Before 1931, the Akurinu had not attracted much attention from the colonial Government and missionaries. It was after they started their evangelistic journeys that the colonial Government got concerned about the activities of the Arathi and their motives. This marked

the beginning of the Akurinu persecution which emanated from three groups.

Firstly, there was the colonial Government which saw the Arathi as a secret arm of the K.C.A, taking cover under a religious guise. At least there were some Arathi members who were well known ex-K.C.A. members such as Musa Mucai from Kiambu and Musa Thuo from Muranga. The carrying of arrows, bows and swords by the Arathi may have added to the Government's suspicion about their motives. It should be noted that the situation in Gikuyuland after the female circumcision controversy was politically volatile and armed groups of men roving all over the reserves and in the forests could not be taken for granted. The first step the colonial administration took was to ban the Arathi meetings which were termed illegal, and to arrest those found in such meetings. In a communication from the D.C. of Muranga to the D.C. of Kiambu, there is evidence of the arrest of Arathi who had attended a meeting at Kangema in 1931. Part of the report reads,

"The chiefs and the elders of this district cannot accept these meetings were religious in any way and maintain that the whole movement is subversive of peace and good order.⁵⁷"

Among the accusations levelled against the Arathi in the report were that their new faith urged its followers not

to wear European clothes; not to build huts but only grass shacks, not to grow food crops for Jehovah would provide his people with food; not to go to Government or mission schools and that nobody should be baptized at a mission church.⁵⁸ Apart from the accusation about food crops, all the others were part of the teaching of the Arathi in their anti-European campaign. They were indeed part of the Mount Kenya Laws which they claimed God had directed them to follow. So the Arathi influence had to be curtailed at the earliest convenience as the Muranga D.C put it,

"If these pseudo religious fanatics are allowed to wonder round the country side, they will collect around them an enormous number of half wits, criminals, political agitators etc. and will become a serious danger to the peaceful administration of the reserve."⁵⁹

During an evangelistic meeting held at Kangema (Muranga), Joseph Nganga, John Mungara and Samuel Muinami, the three evangelists from Kiambu, were among those who were arrested and jailed for two months with hard labour by the Muranga Superior Tribunal.⁶⁰ Many other early Arathi report of having been jailed on several occasions for holding such meetings.⁶¹

Equally alarming was the fact that the Arathi were ready to defy the man-made laws and face the consequences in their zeal to fulfill God's Commandments. A good illustration is contained in a report by a European settler at Naivasha, Mr. Johansen, who asked the Arathi

employees on his farm what they would do if Mungu (God) commanded them to kill him, to which they replied that, "they would do it at once!"⁶² Such a conviction could not be taken lightly and the Arathi were expelled from the farm. It should also be noted that some of their prophecies carried anti-Government sentiments. For example a prophet from Muranga had prophesied that,

"A yawning pit would appear just outside Nairobi and the first to fall into it would be the Governor and only believers in the sect would survive."⁶³

Secondly there were the missionaries who saw the Arathi as an obstacle to their work of converting as well as civilizing the Gikuyu. The Arathi as we have noted earlier were not only anti-European but were also urging people not to be baptized in the mission churches. Moreover, some of their members had left the mission churches to join the Arathi movement. The missionaries were therefore, willing to collaborate with the colonial administrators in stamping out the movement. The case of Father Chilardi of Ruchu Catholic Mission, Murang'a and Mckenrick of A.I.M. Kijabe illustrates how missionaries served as informers for the police on the Arathi activities.⁶⁴ Elijah Kinyanjui summarises the hatred of the Missionaries towards the Arathi when he writes,

"Missions told their followers to be aware of the Arathi, for they were false prophets, and followers of a church of Satan."⁶⁵

Thirdly, the Arathi persecution came from their own kinsmen. Their peculiar behaviour earned them the wrath of the Gikuyu elders who viewed them as an anti-social and a detribalised lot who had more allegiance to their new faith than to their families. Young men and women were often expelled from their homes by their parents after joining the Arathi movement.⁶⁶ A common accusation from the Gikuyu elders was that the Arathi were inducing the young girls to follow them with the motive of having free sex with them. Such views were expressed during a Kiama meeting at Kangema where one of the elders concluded that,

"These people were a menace to the district as they held meetings at night. They enticed young girls from their homes and he felt that all unlicensed religions should be prohibited."⁶⁷

In addition, the Arathi were accused of not paying dowry for the girls they married. Among the Gikuyu no marriage would be recognized as binding if the dowry was not paid. So, if the Arathi refused to pay dowry then they were undermining an important custom which cemented the ties between the in-laws. The seriousness of the Arathi activities in the eyes of the Gikuyu elders is illustrated by Chief Njiri Karanja of Murang'a, who recommended that the Arathi: "should be deported from this country to a place of their own."⁶⁸ The local native councils even suggested that legal measures should

be taken against the Arathi because they were violating Gikuyu customs. The following recommendation by the Muranga Native Council to the D.C. serves to illustrate the point;

*One means suggested by the Kiama is to sue the false prophets civilly under native law and custom for appropriating young girls without paying marriage dowries e.t.c. as well as criminally for holding unauthorized meetings.⁶⁹

The Akurinu informants, however, argue that these accusations were false and were based on dislike and people's misunderstanding of the Arathi way of life.⁷⁰ As regards free sex with the girls, they argue that this would not be practiced bearing in mind their strict observance of the Levital laws. They do, however, agree that there were occasions when some girls were married without the payment of dowry. This happened if a girl had been chased away by her parents after becoming a Mukurinu. Furthermore, the Arathi would not participate in some of the practices such as beer drinking which was an important aspect in marriage negotiations. It was for this reason that old men used to say, according to Elijah Kinyanjui, that,

"Kaba uria uthiite maraya kuruga mukurinu. Mumaraya kuri o muthenya akainukia murengeti."⁷¹

("The one (girl) who has become a prostitute is at least better than one who has become a Mukurinu. The prostitute will one day bring home a blanket.")

The persecution of the Arathi reached a climax in

1934 when three of the evangelists Joseph Nganga, John Mungara and Samuel Muinami were murdered during a bloody confrontation with the police. The circumstances leading to their death remain obscure to the present. The information from an inquiry into the murders show that the police were looking for a gang headed by one, Mukono wa Njoroge, who had committed murder and other serious offenses in Thika. A police sub-inspector, Luka wa Kiwanuka went to Kijabe area on 25th January 1934 in search of the gang. He saw the three Arathi, seated outside an Asian's shop, armed with arrows, bows and simis. Suspecting that they were part of the wanted gang, Kiwanuka went closer in order to interview and possibly arrest them. The Arathi however, refused to be interviewed saying that, "they were God's people out preaching the gospel."⁷⁵ When the sub-inspector insisted, the three requested to be given five minutes to pray after which they would accept to be interviewed. Kiwanuka wanted to join them in their prayers but they refused saying that his religion was different. Kiwanuka's account on the incident is more revealing,

"They retired, put their bows down, drew a line on the ground, stretched their heads back and put out their hands, and roared like a lion. In Kikuyu they said, "Our God, we give you, our blood and ourselves, we are going to die together today."⁷⁶

After the prayer and to the surprise of the sub-inspector, the three told him that they were ready to

fight and die but were not going to talk to him.

The Akurinu report on the circumstances leading to the death of their evangelists is worth noting. According to Elijah Kinyanjui, after the three had preached far and wide, the Holy Spirit revealed to them that God wanted them to conclude their work.⁷⁴ The three Arathi visited the Akurinu communities in various parts in Gikuyuland bidding them farewell. At the same time they held their last prayers on the mountains and finally prayed at Kereita forest near Kijabe. Kinyanjui vividly recalls their last meeting which was held at Gathumuri (Kimende) near Kijabe, and says,

"The three came to Gathumuri and bid us farewell. They exhorted us to continue with the work of God without slackening. For them, their time to go had come."⁷⁵

When asked how they would depart, whether they would be killed by the enemies or be taken up alive like prophet Elijah, they replied that they "would die fighting with the whiteman."⁷⁶

So the confrontation between the Arathi and the police was seen as part of a divine plan. According to another informant, the three told Kiwanuka that if he wanted to arrest them he should follow them to Mangu where they were heading to.⁷⁷ This then shows that they were not hiding from the authorities. After their last prayers at Gathumuri they left for Nganga's home at Gatundu.

Soon after their arrival word went round that Mukono's gang had been spotted near Ndarugu forest. A team of policemen, led by Assistant Inspector Coleman was dispatched from Thika on 2nd February 1934. They searched for the criminals in the Ndarugu forest without any success. Finally, the policemen came to Nganga's hut. The three Arathi seem to have been aware of the coming of the policemen and as if to keep to their word that they would die fighting with the white man, they landed on the police with their arrows and swords. Joseph Nganga is said to have attacked Coleman and shot him with an arrow on the back as he retreated to warn his colleagues. Realizing the danger they were in, the police in turn opened fire on the three Arathi killing John Mungara on the spot. Joseph Nganga died the following day while Samuel Muinami died on 6th February 1934 at Kiambu District hospital.⁷⁹

The inquiry into the murder of the Arathi which was conducted by the D.C. Mr. A. S. Sheldon, exonerated the police from any blame for the death of the three Arathi. His verdict was that the three were responsible for their death as the police shot them in self defence. Furthermore, the three had the opportunity and time to escape from the police if they had wanted.⁷⁹ The Ndarugu murders had significant implications on the Akurinu church especially in regard to their relations with the

colonial authorities.

For the Arathi, the murder of their evangelists increased the existing anti-European hostility. The death was, however, seen as part of God's plan of events. In terms of the life of the Akurinu church, the three are seen as martyrs, who set an example on how devout members should strive even to death in safeguarding their faith. Thus, it has been a source of inspiration and courage for other Akurinu during times of difficulties and persecution. Today, the three are regarded as having offered their blood in defence of their faith and country. It was after his death that Nganga earned more prominence and respect and even came to be regarded as the founder of the Akurinu churches. Today it is not unusual to hear such titles as "High Priest", "Bishop" and Archbishop" being used in his praise.⁸⁰

To the colonial authorities, the Ndarugu incident had proved that the Arathi must be harbouring a hidden motive. The weapons they were carrying were not just symbolic of their fight against Satan. If an opportunity occurred they would use them for a real revolt against the Europeans. Thus from 1934 the colonial Government took the Arathi seriously and there were intensified efforts to bring the movement to an end. The Central Provincial Commissioner went ahead and directed the D.Cs of Kiambu and Muranga Districts to bring to an end by

suppression what he considered as a "purely destructive and amoral propaganda"⁸¹ The carrying of any form of weapon as well as holding of meetings by the Arathi were banned.

Various methods were used in an attempt to establish the true identity of the Arathi. Informers would be sent to Arathi homes to find out more about their activities. Such efforts are illustrated by the following police report of 1934, which addressed itself to three basic questions,

- "(i) Are the Watu wa Mungu merely natives who are suffering from a form of religious hysteria?
- (ii) Are they concealing some other activities under the guise of religious faith?
- (iii) Are they simple minded individuals who are being used without their knowledge and by means of deception by cleverer politically minded Africans for the purpose of creating unrest?"⁸²

These questions reveal the difficulties that the colonial authorities had in trying to understand the Arathi movement.

There followed an intensified tracking down of Arathi especially those who were suspected of manufacturing arrows. Kinyanjui recalls that Chief Josiah Njonjo went to Gathumuri and ordered Musa Mucai to tell his people to stop carrying bows and arrows.⁸³ Soon after the meeting seven Arathi including Musa Mucai and

Kinyanjui were arrested for breaking the Chief's order. All the seven were found guilty by the Dagoretti Native Tribunal which sentenced them for jail terms ranging from one to two months with a fine of fifty shillings. Samuel Thuku who was a youth was fined twenty shillings or fourteen days in jail in default.⁸⁴

To summarise the section, the following points should be noted. Firstly, the Arathi had by 1934 developed into an organized movement although it remained mysterious not only to the colonial authorities but even to the non-members. Secondly, after the Ndarugu affray in 1934, the Government no longer took them for granted. Their activities were closely monitored by the police while the Chiefs were directed to suppress the movement. Thirdly, the murder of the three Arathi heightened the Akurinu's determination to safeguard their faith even if it meant facing death. They saw their persecution in the light of the suffering of the Christians during the Apostolic age. Thus, they were ready not only to suffer but also to give away everything else to carry out God's orders. The following event which followed the Ndarugu incident illustrates such a commitment to fulfil divine instructions.

3:5 The Exodus to Meru

In 1935, word came to the prophets that God wanted all the Arathi to leave their homes and holdings and go

to a land he would give them in Meru.⁸⁵ The Arathi saw the prophecy as an answer to their prayers. It was, moreover, to be a counterpart of the Biblical Exodus during which the Israelites were rescued from their slavery in Egypt. The Kiambu group was particularly badly off during this period as the young chief Makinei who had replaced Chief Ngang'a, was determined to prove his administrative ability by ending the Arathi movement. He is reported to have whipped them on sight as well as having their hair and beard forcefully cut or burnt.⁸⁶

The whole idea of going to a new land was good news to the Arathi as this would save them the harassment from the chiefs. Further more, the fact that they were going to live at the foot of Mount Kenya, the Holy Mountain of God, made it all the more appealing to the Arathi. According to an informant who participated in the exodus, "the Akurinu were convinced that they were going to live with God at Mount Zion."⁸⁷ A police report of 13th October 1934 corroborates this information in the following words,

"Their latest theory is that God is in Mount Kenya and they are endeavouring to enlist people to go and live there."⁸⁸

The first group left Kiambu for Meru in 1935 led by Musa Mucai. They carried all the property they could manage, for they were not intending to return to Gikuyuland. They trekked all the way to Meru, a journey

that took them about six days. In Muranga they spent the nights in the homes of other Arathi at Muruka and Kariguini. In Ndia and Embu, they slept either in non-Arathi homes or in the open.⁸⁰

They finally arrived at Tungu in Meru and were welcomed by the Meru elders who regarded them as Ahoi. There was in particular one, Johastone M'kiambati, an ex-C.S.M. follower, who had joined the Independents and had built a church at Tungu. He is said to have become a Murathi possibly having been converted by Joseph Nganga during his preaching missions. The immigrants used to worship in his church. The Arathi were allowed to clear virgin forests for settlement and cultivation by the Meru elders. The Meru D.C. confirmed in 1937 that "Some Gikuyu had settled in the Tungu area having been given permission by the Githaka owners."⁸⁰

After the departure of Musa Mucai, there was need to have new leaders who would take care of the Arathi who were left behind in Kiambu. Prayers were held to request the Holy Spirit to identify the leaders and Elijah Kinyanjui was chosen to be a preacher, John Muhia became the baptizer while Samuel Thuku became the prayer leader.⁸¹ It was at this time that the first prayer house was built on land given to Samuel Thuku by his father at Gathumuri. Throughout 1935 Elijah Kinyanjui preached in the surrounding villages such as Korio,

Matathia, Magina, Kereita, Ngarariga and Ndeiya. Among the converts he made in the Limuru area were Hezron Tumbo and Johana Wangendo who later became key leaders in the Akurinu churches.⁸²

In 1936 the Holy Spirit directed that Elijah Kinyanjui, John Muhia and Samuel Thuku should follow the Arathi who had gone to Meru. This was seen as God's plan for them to go and preach the new faith in Meru. Before they left they appointed Hezron Tumbo and Johana Wangendo to be the leaders in the Limuru area while Stephano Mucai and Petro Mutura would be in charge of the Gathumuri area.⁸³

On arrival at Tungu they found the earlier group already settled. The land in Meru was plenty and fertile and the Arathi cleared as much as they could for cultivation. They became successful farmers growing bananas, sugarcane, sorghum and finger millet. This was enough proof that God had at last saved his people from suffering and brought them to a land of peace and plenty. Apart from farming, the Arathi preached and won converts among the Meru and Embu.⁸⁴ It should be noted that the unmarried young men and women were not taken to Meru. The Akurinu claim that God had forbidden them to go but it is more likely that the move was taken to safeguard possible intermarriages with the inhabitants in the new land. As mentioned earlier, the Akurinu

considered themselves a special people who wanted to keep to themselves. The youth could only visit them and return to Gikuyuland.

The Arathi stay in Meru was however shortlived. The migration of Mucai's group from Tungu to Chuka must have raised some suspicion in the Meru elders. By 1940 the colonial administrators convinced the Meru elders that the Gikuyu would finally disinherit them their lands. According to John Muhia, the Meru people were told that,

"We would get the remains of our fathers, bones and hair, and bury them in Meru and it would be difficult afterwards for them to get us out of the land."⁸⁵

It is likely that the colonial Government was afraid that the Gikuyu would influence the Meru politically and turn the region into a K.C.A. zone of operation. So, the Arathi were forced to leave Meru and go back to their homes in Gikuyuland. At first they resisted but the Meru people assisted by the colonial administration set their houses on fire both at Tungu and Chuka. Efforts by John Muhia their spokesman, to be compensated for the loss they had incurred were fruitless and he was jailed together with Elijah Kinyanjui for one and half months at Mutindwa for being the ring leaders. After their release the Arathi finally left Meru on 12th February 1940.⁸⁶

At this juncture we need to raise three questions about the Meru Exodus. Firstly, is it likely that the Arathi were escaping the persecution in Kiambu? While

this may be possible, there is no evidence that their persecution had reached a magnitude to warrant their departure from their homes. Moreover, not all the Arathi from Kiambu left for Meru. Secondly, were the Arathi looking for land in Meru? This is also unlikely for some like Musa Mucai, Samuel Thuku and John Muhia had their family lands. Furthermore, there is no evidence that before they set out for Meru they knew about the land God would give them. One should also bear in mind that it was a risky undertaking for the Arathi and their families, considering the distance from Kiambu to Meru on foot. Hence, the viable conclusion to make is that the Exodus was in response to God's command. This is the view held by the Akurinu. Despite the disastrous ending of their five year stay in Meru, the Arathi did not give up their faith as we shall see in the following section.

3:6 Spread in the Rift Valley - 1940 - 1948

When the Meru group returned to Gathumuri they found that the Church had expanded to other areas and had more members. There was, however, a leadership dispute because those who were left behind in Kiambu refused to recognize the older leaders who had gone to Meru. At Gathumuri, for example, Stephano Mucai could not accept Elijah Kinyanjui. John Muhia was possibly accepted because he came from the area. The Limuru group had

consolidated itself under Hezron Tumbo and Johana Wangendo.⁹⁷ These were the beginnings of the divisions among the Akurinu and which exist even today.

Possibly due to his rejection in Kiambu, Elijah Kinyanjui turned his attention to the Rift Valley although he attributes his mission to the Holy Spirit. He recalls that before he left for the Rift Valley, he was told to go and pray for three days and nights on Mount Longonot accompanied by six other men.⁹⁸ They then set for Ndunduri area where he preached for nine months, in 1941. John Muhia would occasionally visit the area to baptize or wed the new converts.⁹⁹ It should however, be noted that even before Kinyanjui's evangelistic mission, there were individual Arathi scattered in different European Settler farms in the Rift Valley. But it was after 1944 that their numbers increased greatly.¹⁰⁰

The Arathi in the Rift Valley were met with mixed feelings. In some cases, they were accused of influencing other labourers from honouring their terms of labour contracts. The Nakuru labour officer reported in 1937 that,

"There was labour uneasiness which had spread from Kijabe area to other settler farms as a result of the workers "becoming converted to the doctrines propagated by the Watu wa Mungu."¹⁰¹

The P.C. Rift Valley went further and advised the estate owners to get rid of any active adherents, of the faith,

"because they are a common nuisance and likely to adversely affect regular and normal employment."¹⁰² Not all European settlers were disturbed by the Akurinu practices. Some seem to have had a sympathetic attitude towards them as illustrated by A.R. Bringley from Nakuru who said,

"I think that the native must have some amusement and it is unfortunate that it has taken this form but personally I am not convinced that it is doing any real harm, British mothers and fathers are probably quite as worried about some of their offspring."¹⁰³

When the Arathi were expelled from one settler farm, they would seek employment in another farm. They would put up a grass-thatched prayer house wherever they went but if they were refused a church, they would meet in their houses for worship.

While Elijah Kinyanjui was still preaching in the Ndunduri area, Johana Wangendo brought word to him in September 1941, that the Holy Spirit had directed them to go and visit their brothers in Nyanza. A group of seven Arathi set for Nyanza on foot. For the last part of the journey they boarded the train after one of them Nehemiah Kihoro, paid for their fare.¹⁰⁴ At Kisumu, they enquired where they would find the turban people and they were told to proceed to Kakamega. They finally got to Vihiga and found some members of the Roho Church who included Joel Mindikila and Jacob Bulukhu.¹⁰⁵ At first the Luhya group was hesitant to receive the Akurinu. Kinyanjui

recalls that a meeting was held during which he revealed to them that they had not received the Akurinu wholeheartedly. It was thereafter that the two groups shared their experiences and especially the realization that they were called by the Holy Spirit during the same period.¹⁰⁶

After staying for sixteen days the Akurinu returned taking with them three Luhyas, Japhet Thale, Elijah Kilela and Joel Mindikila. They had also adopted the Luhya's way of dressing and put on a red cross on their kanzus. They were also given a small drum to be using when singing.¹⁰⁷ The group went back to the Rift Valley accompanied by their Luhya colleagues and continued with their preaching. Later, they took the visitors to Gathumuri to meet the other Arathi. The elders at Gathumuri could not allow them to enter the house with the red crosses on them. So they removed them from their kanzus but for the drum they requested that they be allowed to be using it while preaching in the country side. It was later that drums were allowed to be used in the Akurinu churches during worship. Kinyanjui was seen as having brought new teachings from a foreign land. After one month the Luhya visitors returned but from then on there used to be frequent visits from both sides during which they worshipped together.¹⁰⁸

In 1944, the church at Gathumuri, the first

organized Akurinu church, came to an end. The circumstances that led to its close down are not very clear but the informants say that they were required by the colonial authorities to register their church. Samuel Thuku's family on whose land the church was built, however, refused to give out the land on the ground that they had already donated some thirty acres of land for a school at Matathia. With no other alternative the Arathi closed the church at Gathumuri rather unceremoniously and went to their homes. Elijah Kinyanjui recalls that "no one removed their religious robes and books from the church."¹⁰⁸ By then there were seven houses on the church compound.

It is likely that there were deeper issues that led to the closure and subsequent disintegration of the Gathumuri group. Already there was evidence of a growing theological misunderstanding between the young and the old members. Of particular importance was a young man, Joshua Mburu who had migrated from Muranga to Kiambu in 1940 after becoming a Murathi. He had learnt tailoring while staying with a tailor later a murathi called Jeremiah Mutu from Kariguini in Muranga District. Joshua Mburu is remembered for having sewn the two cuka worn by Arathi into a kanzu thus making it easier to wear.

Together with other young people like Samuel Thuku, they are said to have demanded a strict observance of the

Levitical laws for they felt that the old men were not observing the law properly.¹¹⁰ Although they did not succeed in reforming the church at that time their demand may have contributed to the close down of the church. At least one would have expected Samuel Thuku, who had been given permission by his father to build the church, to save the situation which he did not.

After the closure, Elijah Kinyanjui went with his family to Nakuru where he lives to the present.¹¹¹ Joshua Mburu went to Nyahururu where he joined a group of Akurinu led by Zablon Gichuki.¹¹² After a short stay with them, he revived his criticism of the old members, claiming that they were not well informed about the keeping of the Levitical laws as stipulated in the Bible. He was particularly concerned with the Methamba (the washing of the body and clothes) after a journey and before entering a prayer house. When he realized that the old members were not ready to accept his teachings, he turned to the youth who readily accepted his views. So Zablon Gichuki was left with the older generation of Arathi while Mburu broke away with the youth and settled at a place called Mbega's.¹¹³ It was then that he was able to carry out his reforms especially in connection with strict observance of the Levitical laws. Being a powerful and influential preacher, he won many converts in Nyahururu, Subukia and Kinangop. He then invited Musa

Thuo from Murang'a to go and ordain him as a Mutongoria (leader) so that he could perform the various rituals for his followers since he had differed with Zablon Gichuki. Musa Thuo ordained him and allowed him to perform the lesser rituals like baptism but not marriage since Mburu was not yet married.¹⁴⁴ Thus Josua Mburu had started his church later named the "Christian Holy Ghost Church of East Africa," which is the most conservative wing of the Akurinu as we shall see later.

3:7 The Second Exodus

In 1946, the prophets received a revelation that God wanted all the Akurinu in the Rift Valley to go back to their homes in the reserves. The reason for this divine directive was that God was about to bring a great disaster on the land which had never been seen before. Besides the suffering, there would occur a great impassable fault running between Longonot and Naivasha. John Muhia went around the Rift Valley warning the Akurinu to escape to safety while there was time, for afterwards nobody would be able to go back home.¹¹⁵ Today, the Akurinu interpret that prophecy in the light of the State of Emergency which was declared in Kenya in 1952 during the Mau mau revolution. The great vault symbolized the travel restrictions during the Emergency for a person had to obtain a Pass Book, a travel permit to be allowed to move from one Province or District to

the other.

In response to the call, several Akurinu left their jobs in the settler farms and returned to the reserves in Central Province. According to Samuel Gathimba, the group at Ndundori held a party before their departure to celebrate the occasion for God had assured them that they would return to the Rift Valley to possess the Land.¹¹⁶ The return of the Akurinu to the reserves was later seen as God's plan to assemble the Akurinu together and give them the conditions to be observed before the country was liberated from the colonial oppressors.¹¹⁷

In 1949, Samuel Thuku is said to have received a revelation in which he was directed to gather the Akurinu and take them to Kahiriga (Giiitwa) in Muranga District. This is where God would make known the conditions to be fulfilled by the Akurinu before the country was liberated. A number of members including Johana Wangendo who had differed with Hezron Tumbo at Limuru, took their families and went with Samuel Thuku to Kahiriga. Others like John Muhia declined, most likely due to his earlier bitter experience during the first Exodus to Meru.¹¹⁸ At Kahiriga, the group was welcomed by Erasto Warii who gave them his land on which they built their houses.¹¹⁹ Each day the men and women would look for casual employment in the neighbourhood where their payment would be in form of foodstuffs. There

developed a strong bond of unity similar to that of a Gikuyu family with Samuel Thuku as the head of the group.

On the 15th September 1949, God is said to have revealed to the Kahiriga group the conditions which they were to observe.¹²⁰ Firstly, they were required to devote themselves to serious prayers. In response, they set three days aside for worship, namely, Wednesday, Friday and Sunday. During those three days, nobody was supposed to do any work. On top of that they set aside the months of July and December for prayers and they also refrained from eating fried foods and meat as a sign of self denial during that period of prayers.¹²¹ Secondly, they were told that such serious prayers could not be carried out by people who were emersed in worldly pleasures. So, they stopped eating salt and sugar for the following fourteen years. In addition to that, they abstained from sexual relations with their spouses up to 1952, when "God lifted the restrictions."¹²² Thirdly, they were required to circumcise both their boys and girls. Ezekiel Njai recalls that,

"After we had circumcised all the big ones, God told us that we should circumcise even those in the wombs which the elders asked, "How can this be done?" But just then a woman gave birth to a baby boy and who was circumcised on the eighth day and God revealed that he was pleased.¹²³

Fourthly, they were told to remove the lower front tooth (or two teeth). Finally they were required to pierce

their earlobes. This last ritual was performed ceremoniously during prayers that were held at the Mukurwe wa Gathanga, the mythical cradle of the Gikuyu.¹²⁴ The ceremony at the sacred tree was symbolic of the sealing of the covenant between God and the Akurinu.

After adopting the new practices, the Kahiriga group became a distinct community different even from other Akurinu groups and have remained so to the present day. The reversion to the traditional Gikuyu practices has been the main factor in the difference. It should be noted that back at Gathumuri, Samuel Thuku had ganged up with Joshua Mburu and rejected such traditional practices like female circumcision which had no Biblical basis. While one would accept the Kahiriga group's justification that it was due to God's command, it is more likely that Erasto Warii played a greater role in influencing Samuel Thuku. The fourth commandment of the Mount Kenya Laws, which Warii had received back in 1930, required the Akurinu to go back to their traditional way of life.¹²⁵ Most Akurinu had only adopted some aspects of the laws. So, Thuku's group would in this case be exemplarily in carrying out God's commands.¹²⁶

The reversion to the traditional practices demonstrated the interplay of the Judeo-Christian and Gikuyu customs in the Akurinu church. The circumcision

of boys on the eighth day is based on the covenant between God and Abraham (Gen. 17:12). Similarly the piercing of the earlobes was done on slaves among the Jews as a sign of their adoption in their master's home (Ex. 21:6). In the case of the Akurinu, it is done to show that they are God's servants.¹²⁷ Among the Gikuyu, however, the piercing of earlobes was a pre-initiation rite which was done partly for beauty but also as a sign that the boy or girl was ready for circumcision.¹²⁸ It is therefore logical to conclude that the practice is based on the Gikuyu understanding of the custom and the Biblical interpretation is applied in order to rationalize the ritual. Polygamy, which was also adopted at Kahiriga is justified on the grounds that the patriarchs like Abraham, Jacob, David and Solomon were polygamists (Gen. 25:1, 29:15, II Sam 3:2, I King 11:1). From the Gikuyu point of view, polygamy was a sign of a man's wealth. The more wives and children a man had, the higher was his social status. It is likely that the Kahiriga group was forced by circumstances to resort to polygamy. Being a closed community which discouraged intermarriages with non-members, the marriageable girls may have outnumbered the young men and the only solution was to allow the married men to take extra wives.

For the removal of the front teeth, there is no Biblical support given by the Kahiriga group. We can

therefore conclude that it was performed as part of the pre-initiation rites among the Gikuyu.¹²⁹ Similarly there is no Biblical support for female circumcision. The Akurinu and the Kahiriga group in particular, go to the extent of overstressing some Biblical accounts in order to justify female circumcision. For example, Samuel Gathimba, the High Priest of the Kahiriga group, argues;

"Matuku macio ma tuhii matariruo ni undu ki?
Hau ni kindu kiahithiruo."¹³⁰
(Why were the days for boys counted? There must be some hidden message.)

The argument is that God would not give the eight days for boy's circumcision and forget the girls. Another informant, Stephano Machango, even went further, and suggested that, "the topic on female circumcision was deliberately left out."¹³¹ The Kahiriga group, in their endeavour to keep God's Commandments, demonstrated at the same time that they were both Christians as well as true Gikuyu (Karinga) not only in their beliefs but also in practice.

While Thuku's group was still at Kahiriga, the Akurinu who were left in the Rift Valley once again received a prophecy in February 1952 urging them to go back to the reserves. Laban Nduhiu, went round the areas of Nyahururu and Ol Joro Orok, calling upon the Arathi to heed the warning because according to the prophecy,

"God was about to let loose lions and then

close all doors to safety. When this happens none will be able to escape the suffering."¹³²

It should be noted that this prophecy was reminiscent of the earlier one in 1948 which had called on the Akurinu to leave the Rift Valley. God was once again urging them to look for safety while there was time. The Akurinu did not know that the Mau mau war and the declaration of the State of Emergency were just a few months away.

Laban Nduhiu gathered those who were willing to leave and in April 1952 they boarded a train to Nairobi, from where they proceeded to Sagana. The party camped at Sagana for one week. In the meantime, Nduhiu went to Kahiriga to request more Akurinu to accompany him on the journey which God had directed.¹³³ After failing to get support from Thuku's people, he went back to his group and they proceeded to Embu where they rested for a day. They were to proceed to Ishiara but were intercepted by the police at Nembure and fined for lack of Pass Books. This information is corroborated by the correspondence between the D.C. Embu and P.C. Central who gave orders for the Akurinu families to be repatriated back to their homes.¹³⁴ The fact that they had their families implied that they were going for permanent settlement just as the group which had settled in Meru before.

Despite the orders to go back, the party was determined to proceed, for to them, going back was

tantamount to disobeying God. They took a different route on foot and finally got to Ishiara. It was while at Ishiara that as they claim, were told through the Holy Spirit to select four men who would survey an appropriate place for the party to cross Tana River on foot. Those who were chosen included Laban Nduhiu, Wilson Nyanga, Hosea Mugo and Elijah Nyaga.¹³⁵ Hosea Mugo however, declined and was substituted by Joel Ngaburia. The four Akurinu were given instructions by the Holy Spirit on how to cross the river. At the bank of the river they would pray and then sing the song, "Rugendo rua Israel rua kuma Misiri", (The journey of the Israelites from Egypt). Then Wilson Nyanga would be the first to get into the water followed by Elijah Nyaga, Joel Ngaburia and finally Laban Nduhiu.¹³⁶

When the four men came to the river, they saw some young men with boats across, who beckoned to show them that they were coming to ferry them across. Before the boats arrived the Akurinu had already prayed, sang their song and with Wilson Nyanga leading got into the water. One after the other, the four were swept by the swift currents of the Tana. The bewildered boat men tried to pursue them in their boats but gave up when they got out of sight. According to Wilson Nyanga, they were swept down for about a kilometre after which they were all miraculously thrown to the bank at a river bend.¹³⁷

Despite their having escaped death narrowly, they were still determined to fulfill the divine mission.

The second point they chose was even more dangerous than the first one for they could see crocodiles basking on the sands on the river banks. They nevertheless got into the river with Wilson Nyaga leading. Once again they were swept for a bout fifty metres down the river. Again the four managed to get out to safety. Other than Laban Nduhiu the other three decided that they had enough of the ordeal and would not make any further attempts. They pleaded with Nduhiu but to no avail. So, for the third time, Nduhiu prayed, sang the song and then plunged into the water. This time he drowned never to be seen again. The other three ran along the bank hoping that they would find him alive until they gave up. It is likely that he was devoured by the crocodiles. The three went back to Ishiara and even before they disclosed their ordeal, they were told that it had been revealed to those left behind that Laban Nduhiu would not come back.¹³⁰

The Akurinu cut short their journey and went back to Sagana. The Kahiriga group was informed about the misfortune of Laban nduhiu. Samuel Gathimba was sent and he took some of the people to Kahiriga while others joined other Akurinu in the Gikuyu reserves.¹³⁰ It is important to note four points about the Laban Nduhiu mishap. Firstly, the journey originated from a second

prophecy about a coming disaster. This was fulfilled through the suffering of the Gikuyu during the Mau mau war. The symbolism of lions let loose and doors locked were meant to show the magnitude of the disaster. Secondly, the Akurinu departure from the Rift Valley to go to an unknown land illustrates their concern to obey God. Throughout the history of the Akurinu a lot of events have taken place in the name of prophecy. The role of prophets among the Akurinu will be discussed in detail in chapter seven.

Thirdly, the Nduhiu group, like the previous ones of Musa Mucai and Samuel Thuku, believed that God would lead them to a new land. The destination for Nduhiu's party is not known although one informant who refused to join them says that they were heading to a place near Garba Tula.¹⁴⁰ Finally, it is clear that Nduhiu and his people viewed themselves as the Israelites during the Exodus. Crossing the wide river on foot would be similar to the crossing of the Red Sea and River Jordan. (Ex.14:21, Joshua 3:1-17) The insistence by the four men to cross the Tana on foot shows that they expected a kind of a miracle to occur which would enable them to cross the river, possibly on a dry path. This is why they would not accept to be ferried on the boats which were available to them. The song which they sang puts emphasis on the liberation of the Israelites from their

slavery in Egypt. This may have been their belief that they were also on an exodus which would lead them to freedom from the colonial oppressors. A few stanzas from their song will serve as an illustration on this point.

(Hymn No. 95)

1. "Rugendo rua Israeli,
Rua Kuma Misiri,
Jehova arutogongoririe,
Nduriri, Ikimaka,
Makinya Iria-ini Itune,
Rigituika Njira nyumu.
 2. Firauni amoima thutha
Nathigari ciake,
Me na hinya wa guku thi
mwiri na thakane
Magikora njira nyumu makiuga,
Maringe nayo.
 3. Ungiriria Maundu
Ngai akananitie,
Ni ari uiru no agute
Ndenda mathangania,
We ni njamba ndahotagwo, ni mahinya
Ma guku thi."¹⁴¹
- (1. The Journey of the Israelites,
Of departure from Egypt,
Was directed by Jehovah,
All nations were amazed,
When they came to the Red Sea, it became
A dry path
 2. The Pharaoh followed them
With his soldiers,
They had the powers of this world,
Flesh and blood,
They found the dry path and said,
They would cross on it.
 3. If you desire things
Which God has forbidden
He is jealous and can forsake you
He hates doubts
He is powerful and is never defeated
By the powers of this world.)

These stanzas emphasize God's power as was demonstrated during the Israelites' Exodus. So, the Akurinu were relying on this power in their attempt to cross the Tana river on Foot. What became of the Kahiriga group during the rest of their exodus will be discussed in a latter section. In the meantime we look at a religious movement that emerged during this period and which had a serious repercussion on the Akurinu church.

3:8 The Dini ya Jesu Kristo (J. Kristo)

The origin of the J. Kristo movement is not very clear to the informants. It is attributed to one Reuben Kihiko who started the movement in 1945 while living at Maji Mazuri in the Rift Valley. According to Elijah Kinayanjui, the movement started after Kihiko was told through a vision to start a church and call it "Dini ya Jesu Kristo".¹⁴² Some sources identify Kihiko as having been a Murathi before he started his church.¹⁴³ Farson also equated the J. Kristo movement with the Watu wa Mungu.¹⁴⁴ The Akurinu are, however, categorical in denying that Kihiko was ever a Murathi. According to Zablon Gichuki, Kihiko used to visit him and they would worship together in the Akurinu church at Makutano near Londian.¹⁴⁵ He even recalls that he gave Kihiko two shillings to buy him a hymn book which Kihiko never bought.¹⁴⁶ Thus, although the Akurinu deny Kihiko being one of them, there is evidence that he had some

association with some Arathi.

Another account of the J. Kristo is given in an article in the Gikuyu News paper, Mumenvereri, in which Paul Kiarie describes the movement thus:

"Their religion was founded at Londiani in 1945 - 1946 on the farm of a European called Ryder. Reuben Kihiko was a follower of the "Dreamers" Religion (Aroti). In 1945 the followers of this religion were told they would be sent to Mahiga Mairu (Yatta). Kihiko denounced that religion (of Dreamers) left Maji Mazuri and came to Londiani to the farm of a European called Raki...."147

During his preaching, Kihiko presented himself as the Gikuyu Messiah for he proclaimed that,

"I have been living between Jesus and God. When I was born I never sucked for I went there straight (to heaven). I was grown up. I came down for circumcision. I went back there. I then came back to get married. I then returned there. Now I have been sent here to deliver my people from bondage and whoever believes all I say shall wear a badge consisting of a cross and an arrow."148

The above self description by Kihiko reveals that he was a self-seeker capitalizing on the sufferings of the Gikuyu and playing on the messianic role of Jesus. Despite his false teaching he won some followers out of whom he made financial gains.¹⁴⁹

Kihiko's teachings soon brought him into conflict with the authorities. When squatters were required to renew their labour contracts, he directed his followers not to renew them. So, they were expelled from one farm after another. At Londiani he built a church and when a

European Forester asked him who gave him permission to build it , his reply was that "both trees and the earth belong to God."¹⁵⁰ For this, he was convicted and jailed for three months. After his release he ordered his followers to harvest their crops for the time was near for them to go to New Jerusalem.¹⁵¹ In the meantime he was making flags for his churches. He taught his followers that their clothes on the journey to New Jerusalem would be sheep skins and not the European clothes. So, they discarded their clothes and put on skins hence their name "Watu wa Ngozi", the people of the skins.

In 1947, Kihiko and his followers were finally deported to the reserve. He took the people to his home in Gatundu.¹⁵² It was then that he came into a final clash with colonial administration. The scenario started on the 16th December 1947 when the J. Kristo members asked a tailor called Stephen Mwenje to sew a flag for them but he refused. Two weeks later, on 20th December 1947, Kihiko led his armed men to look for Mwenje and collect their flag.¹⁵³ They found him in an eating house at Kiganjo Market. He was called three times to come out but he refused after realizing the danger he was in. Kihiko then showed him the J. Kristo crown on his head and then ordered his men to get Mwenje out by force. Mwenje sneaked out but Kihiko's men chased him and

finally caught him. They beat and stabbed him with their swords and thereafter took him and went singing saying that they had prepared his grave.¹⁵⁴

People at the market did not intervene for fear of causing more blood shed. They however reported the incident to the Gatundu police. When the police arrived Kihiko told them,

"You are the devil's soldiers and we are Christ's soldiers, do you want me to order my soldiers to fight you?"¹⁵⁵

The policemen managed to rescue Mwenje but avoided arresting the men for they realized that they needed more reinforcement from Ruiru and Kiambu to round off the warlike J. Kristo men. Some of Kihiko's men had in the meantime organized an ambush for the police during which they murdered a European Assistant Inspector, Dominic Mortimer and two African Constables. Farson has reported how his wife saw Kihiko dressed in red and his men in skins, escape along the Thika river after the murder.¹⁵⁶ There followed an intensive hunt for the J. Kristo members. Seventeen of them were arrested and four, including their leader Reuben Kihiko were found guilty and executed.¹⁵⁷ During this fracas, the Akurinu in Kiambu were also harassed and arrested for being associated with the J. Kristo. They were released later after it was established that they had nothing to do with the murder.¹⁵⁸

The J. Kristo had turned out to be a violent movement similar in several ways to the Dini ya Msambwa led by Elijah Masinde.¹⁵⁹ Although there is no evidence of a direct contact between Kihiko and the followers of Masinde, it is likely that he had heard about their teachings. There are several similarities between the two movements. For example, both advocated the return to traditional practices, wearing of skins, contempt of European items, and the use of force to get rid of the colonialists. The J. Kristo still survives in parts of Kiambu, at Riabai and Ndumberi although they are few in numbers.¹⁶⁰ They are no longer violent but some still wear skins or traditional Gikuyu attire made of cotton cloth. Kihiko's conviction that the white man had to be forced out of the country was demonstrated during the Mau mau uprising. The next section deals with the Akurinu church during that war.

3:9 The impact of the Mau mau on the Akurinu Church 1952 - 1960

The declaration of a State of Emergency in Kenya on the 20th of October 1952 marked the beginning of an agonizing period for the Gikuyu community.¹⁶¹ The Gikuyu members who were suspected of being pro-Mau mau were the target of the colonial authorities while those who were pro-government, and pro-missionary were victims of the

Mau mau. Thus, either way a person had problems from the Government or Mau mau forces. Taking a neutral stand was not a solution, for it was a suspicious position which often led to harassment from both sides. The Independent churches among the Gikuyu were persecuted during this period for being associated with the Mau mau. Their schools and churches were razed down or taken over by the Government or mission churches.¹⁸²

The Akurinu church experienced this persecution of the Independent churches. All along they had been suspected of planning a revolt against the colonial Government. During the early days, as mentioned earlier, they used to carry bows, arrows and swords which made them appear more of a military wing than a religious community. The two incidents in 1934 when three Akurinu were gunned down by the police and in 1947 when three policemen were ruthlessly murdered by the J. Kristo, was enough evidence to the colonial Government that if an opportunity came by they could rise up in arms.

During the Emergency the Akurinu who were still in the Rift Valley were repatriated back to the reserves where they were put into the concentration villages. The degree of Akurinu suffering varied from one place to the other depending on the understanding between them, the Mau mau and the local chiefs. In Kiambu and Muranga Districts, for example, the chiefs had lived with the

Akurinu for a long time unlike in Nyeri where the church had not been well established.¹⁸³ Informants from both Kiambu and Muranga say that the Mau mau were friendly to them.¹⁸⁴ In Nyeri the main sources of Akurinu persecution was from the chiefs and their retainers. Most of the Akurinu were appearing in their turbans and uncut beards for the first time in their home areas in Nyeri. Coupled with their conservative behaviours such as refusal to shake hands during greetings, to share food and to mix with others, they became a disliked lot even among their own people. Paul Muriuki, for example, recalls that he was put in detention soon after coming back to his home in Mathira.¹⁸⁵ He had been converted by Joshua Mburu the leader of the conservative Akurinu, while working at Subukia. Joshua Kingori had a similar experience of being detained after returning to Nyeri from the Rift Valley.¹⁸⁶

In the villages the Akurinu had problems of getting prayer houses. In some cases, one would request for an extra house which would be turned into a church.¹⁸⁷ When such a request was turned down, they would converge in one of the member's house and hold their worship. It is worth noting that they upheld their pattern of prayers even during the Emergency. They would pray in the night at 9 p.m, 12 midnight and at 3 am. According to one of Njeri's informants, the morning

prayer was particularly important because the Akurinu,

"would beseech God to drive out the white man, before the missionaries beseeched God to perpetuate their stay in Kenya."¹⁸⁸

The singing and drumming during those odd hours of prayers, was another source of problems. It is unusual for a Mukurinu to worship without singing which is in turn accompanied by drumming. So, when they were ordered to stop disturbing other villagers at night, they would not compromise. Zablou Gichuki who remained in Nyahururu during the Emergency recalls that on several occasions he was accused of using the drum as a secret code to communicate with the Mau mau in the following manner,

"Four drum beats meant that there were homeguards around: Three drum beats signalled to the Mau mau that the place was safe for them to come for food."¹⁸⁸

There may have been a coincidence of the Akurinu drumming and the arrival of the Mau mau which made the local chief arrive at the above theory. But for the Akurinu, they used the drums for worship purposes.

A major setback on the Akurinu during the Emergency was the curtailment of their movements. We noted earlier that they could be directed by the Holy Spirit to go on preaching or prayer missions to distant places. Thus, it became difficult for them to carry out such missions. Those who dared move about were harassed. John Muhia for example, recalls how he was directed by the Holy Spirit to go from Gathumuri to Kandara in Muranga to preach in

1953. He ended up being jailed for one and half months at Kandara for what the authorities termed as an illegal meeting and for being in Muranga without a Pass Book.¹⁷⁰

A major driving force in the Mau mau movement was the oath of unity which was often administered forcefully to unwilling Gikuyu Christians.¹⁷¹ Anyone who had not taken the oath could not be trusted and was regarded as a traitor of the people. The oaths involved the use of blood and meat, things that the Akurinu are forbidden to eat by the Levitical laws. Furthermore the whole ritual was tantamount to reverting to traditional magical practices which were contrary to Akurinu faith. From the Mau mau view point, it was necessary to identify the stand of individual Akurinu. According to some informants the Akurinu were allowed to take the oath of unity using the Bible or milk.¹⁷² There were cases whereby some Akurinu were forcefully given the oath in the traditional manner while in some places they were exempted from the ritual.¹⁷³

One exceptional case, however, was that of Musa Thuo, the Akurinu leader in Muranga. As mentioned earlier, he was involved in politics through his membership in K.C.A and K.A.U. According to Njeri he is reported to have taken the oath voluntarily together with some of his followers.¹⁷⁴ This information is corroborated by an informant who recalls that Musa Thuo

went to the Akurinu in Nyahururu to collect money for oathing expenses.¹⁷⁵ Joshua Mburu, who Thuo had ordained before, differed with him on the issue of money for oathing and this led to a final rift between the two. It is likely that Musa Thuo's participation in the Mau mau activities saved the Muranga Akurinu from harassments from the Mau mau forces. One informant, Kezia Wangari, recalls that although Kangema in Muranga, was a hot bed of Mau mau activities, the Akurinu were not disturbed and the two groups were friendly.¹⁷⁶

At this juncture, it is necessary to look at how the Akurinu viewed the Mau mau and also the role they played in the movement. To the old Arathi, the Mau mau war was not a surprise since God had forewarned them through various prophecies in the past. The two prophecies mentioned earlier about a great impassable vault between Longonot and Naivasha, and the lions which would be let loose on the land were fulfilled during the State of Emergency. The vault symbolized the travel restrictions while the lions and closed doors symbolized the suffering inflicted by the military forces upon the Gikuyu who had no place to escape. The Akurinu also claim that they had been told that the white man would be driven out of the land by swords although they would not be the ones to use the swords. According to Ezekiel Njai, at the onset of the Mau mau war,

"The Arathi were told to bless their swords and hand them over to the boys (Mau mau warriors) who would use them during their armed struggle for independence."¹⁷⁷

Despite incidences of Akurinu being harassed by the Mau mau, it should be emphasized that the two groups had the same objective namely to have the colonialists out of the land. The Akurinu considered themselves as people called by God to pray for the liberation of the country from the colonial domination. John Muhia summarises the role they played when he says,

"Ni ithui twahoeire mahiga na tukimaikia rui tukiuga, Thirikari ya Muthungu irorika uguo. Niithui twathondekire micii ya Mau mau irimaini na mititu-ini kuria twatuire tuhoyagira."¹⁷⁸

(It is we who prayed for stones and threw them into the river to symbolise the drowning of the colonial Government. It is we who prepared the operation grounds of the Mau mau on the mountains and forests where we used to go for prayers.)

The seriousness of their prayers to God during the Emergency is further revealed by the life of self denial which some members adopted. We have noted that the Kahiriga group had already abstained from using salt, sugar and even from sex before the State of Emergency was declared. In Kiambu other Akurinu followed the Kahiriga group's example. The rationale given by the Kiambu group was that they could not live in luxury while some of those fighting for the liberation of the country were suffering in detention camps.¹⁷⁹ The Kiambu group lifted their ban after Kenyatta was released in 1961. The

Kahiriga group resumed using salt and sugar after Kenya achieved her independence in 1963, having observed the ban for fourteen years. They claim that it was God who revealed to them that time had come for the ban to be lifted.¹⁸⁰ Their young children vomited after eating the salted food which they had not eaten before.¹⁸¹

An important development in the Akurinu church which occurred towards the end of the Emergency was the registration of the churches. According to Samuel John Chege, the process began in 1955 when a D. O. at Limuru, Mr. Campbell, advised the Akurinu to register with the Government.¹⁸² This would give them an official recognition and thereby save them from the harassment from some colonial administrators like the chiefs. He issued them with travel permits to allow them to consult their members in other parts of Kiambu regarding registration. The Limuru group, led by Hezron Tumbo saw the need of taking the opportunity to secure some peace for their church. They consulted an Asian lawyer, Bhola and Bhola Advocates, who formulated a constitution for them.¹⁸³ They chose the name, "Holy Ghost Church of Kenya".

Although the application was made on the 30th of June 1956, it took the Government three years to process the registration. According to Chege, the delay was caused by the colonial Governments's scrutiny to

ascertain that the church was a genuine society.¹⁸⁴ In doing so, various parties were consulted to give their views about the Akurinu church. Only the Catholic church raised an objection to the use of the name "Holy Ghost Church".¹⁸⁵ The Catholics argued that since they already had such titles like the "Holy Ghost Fathers" and the "Holy Ghost Mission," it would be difficult to distinguish the Catholic bodies from the Akurinu church. The Government seems to have down played the argument and the first Akurinu church was registered on 10th February 1958 Under the name, the "Holy Ghost Church of Kenya". Hezron Tumbo was its first leader (Mutongoria) and its headquarters are at Murengeti in Limuru Division of Kiambu District. In 1970 the name was changed to "Holy Ghost Church of East Africa", may be to show that it was not confined to Kenya.

There followed a rush for the registration of other Akurinu churches in other regions under their respective leaders. The Kahiriga group was registered on 27th May 1959 under the name "God's Word and Holy Ghost Church", with Samuel Thuku as its first leader. After the registration, Thuku's group left Giiwa in 1960 and went to Nyahururu where they were employed in a saw mill. After one year they left for Ng'arua in Laikipia District where they were employed on a settler's farm until 1965. After a quarrel with the European settler, the Akurinu

were taken by the Kenya Government to Koru in Nyanza Province where they worked on a Government farm and where they were given plots of land to settle.¹⁸⁶

Life at Koru was unbearable particularly due to the Malaria infection. Since the Akurinu were not taking medicine, they were the most affected. After four years they left Koru for Rusiru in Njoro where they joined a land buying company owned by the Nakuru District Ex-Freedom Fighters Organisation (NDEFFO).¹⁸⁷ This finally brought to an end their "exodus" which had taken twenty years of wandering with their families. To them, those journeys were directed by God. Their return to the Rift Valley, and the owning of land is seen as a fulfillment of what God had promised them before their departure in 1947. Today this church has its headquarters at Rusiru and Samuel Gathimba is the current leader or High Priest.

Musa Thuo had his church registered on 9th February, 1960 under the name the "Kenya Foundation of the Prophets Church" with its headquarters at Kaguthi in Muranga. During the emergency, Joshua Mburu had gone with his group back to Kiambu and settled at Kiratina, hence the nickname of his church as the 'Church of Kiratina.' He had his church registered on 11th November 1960 under the name, the "Christian Holy Ghost Church of East Africa" with its headquarters at Kiratina near Githunguri. Its current leader is Hosea Mugo.

Johana Waweru registered his church in 1960 under the name "African Mission of Holy Ghost Church" with its Headquarters at Muruka in Muranga. The official leader is Jacob Nderitu who has set up the headquarter at his home in Kamakwa in Nyeri.¹⁸⁸ In 1968, Daniel Nduti differed with Musa Thuo. He began his church which was registered in the same year under the name "African Holy Ghost Christian Church", with its headquarters at Gichagi-ini in Muranga. His brother, Ayub Nduti is the current leader. Finally, outside Central Province was Elijah Kinyanjui's church. At first it was registered under the name "Church Holy Spirit of God in Africa" in 1958, with its headquarters at Nakuru. Later the name was changed to, the "Chosen Church of the Holy Spirit in Kenya" Elijah Kinyanjui is still its leader.¹⁸⁹ Thus, by 1963, the original Akurinu groups had registered their churches with the Government.

It is clear from the above registrations that the Akurinu members belong to different churches. There are various reasons given for the existence of several churches within the believers of the same faith. Firstly, there is the geographical factor, according to which the Akurinu have historically been found in particular regions. The various groups in such places as Limuru in Kiambu, Kaguthi and Giitwa in Muranga District conducted their affairs under their respective leaders.

There was no centralized church Government since the rise of the Akurinu movement. Leaders from different regions would only meet when there was an issue affecting the Akurinu in general. Thus, during the registration each leader (Mutongoria) handled the exercise as an affair affecting his group within his region.

Secondly, there was the theological factor which had created divisions among the Akurinu long before the registration took place. We have already noted the case of Joshua Mburu who had parted with both Zablon Gichuki and Musa Thuo over the observance of the Levitical laws. According to Njeri, efforts to have Hezron Tumbo and Joshua Mburu register their churches under one name failed due to their theological stands.¹⁸¹ Mburu advocated a conservative observance of the laws while Tumbo took a liberal stand.

Thirdly, there were personal differences as in the case of Elijah Kinyanjui who had been disowned by both the Gathumuri and Limuru groups. It was difficult to reconcile after so many years of separation and inevitably, Elijah Kinyanjui had to register his church separately.¹⁸²

Fourthly, the travel restrictions during the Emergency made it difficult for leaders to meet and draw plans for the registration of their groups.¹⁸³ The Akurinu tendency to capitalise on this factor as a major

cause for the different registrations may be to cover up the other factors.

Fifthly, the fact that all along, the Akurinu did not have an official name for their church led to the formulation of so many names during the registration. Names like Arathi, Ararami, Aroti and Akurinu were all descriptive of their behaviour and not specific official names for their movements. Had there been a specific name for their church, it is likely that it would have been adopted during the registration.

Finally, other factors have cropped up leading to further secessions. These include leadership wrangles where an individual may break away with a few members and start a church in which he becomes the leader. In some cases when errant members are excommunicated, they are too shy to discard their turbans or long dresses in the case of women. Such people start their own churches which may offer refuge to other expellees from other Akurinu churches. Disagreements on the question of polygamy, the use of medicine and some of the edible oils like Kimbo brand have all contributed to the complexity of the causes of schism in the Akurinu movement.

Since the registration of their churches and more so after the country achieved independence in 1963, the Akurinu have had freedom of worship. Some churches have managed to get plots both in the rural and urban areas on

which they have erected permanent modern churches. Each church has endeavoured to evangelise as widely as possible. Today, one finds representatives of various Akurinu churches in various parts of the country and particularly in the urban centres.

In concluding this chapter the following points should be noted. The Akurinu belief that they were called through the Holy Spirit is of special importance in these churches. Their personal and collective experience since the early days, have convinced them that they are a chosen people with a special relationship with God. Thus, although other social, cultural, economic and political factors contributed to the shaping of their churches, the theological factor was a significant driving force.

Contrary to the view that the Akurinu are apolitical, it is clear from their activities that they were involved, albeit at times indirectly, in the politics of the land. Moreover, they believe that they were called in order to pray for the liberation of this country from the colonial oppressors.

Finally, the Akurinu in their attempt to retain their cultural identity have interpreted some of the Gikuyu customs and beliefs in the light of the Old Testament. Where a custom like the female circumcision, has no biblical parrallel, it is then attributed to God's

divine command which must then be observed by the Akurinu members.

NOTES ON CHAPTER THREE

1. Other churches were the African Independent Pentecostal Church of Africa and the African Orthodox Church. See Ndungu, N.W., op.cit. p. 38.
2. Elijah Kinyanjui, has a handwritten draft of a book, called Kenya Book of Prophets, in which he has recorded the history of the Akurinu. Only chapters are given in the manuscript hence it is not possible to quote the pages. In later quotations we shall use Elijah Kinyajui, ms.
3. Ibid. chapter 1.
4. P. Njeri op.cit. p. 58.
5. Ibid. p. 59.
6. Njeri says that Nganga was secluded in a cave in Ndarugu forest: He may have gone there occasionally for prayers but it is unlikely that he stayed in the cave for three years.
7. Kinyanjui, interview, Nakuru, 10/1/92.
8. E. Kinyanjui ms chapter 1.
9. Ibid.
10. John Muhia Interview - Eldoret 11/1/92.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid. The Ahoi were to be austere in observing the Levitical law.
13. Ibid. Muhia is one of those who had influence in the early Akurinu Church as a Muhoi and baptiser.
14. Kinyanjui, Muhia, Interview - Nakuru, 8/2/94.
15. Ibid.
16. James Thuo - Interview, Kangema 22/2/92. He is the son of Henry Maina and has valuable documents on the Akurinu handed over to him by his father before he died.
17. Kezia Wangari, interview, Kangema 13/2/92.

18. James Thuo op cit.
19. Ibid.
20. Kezia Wangari op cit.
21. James Thuo op cit. This information is contained in files kept by Thuo and which he allowed the researcher to read through.
22. Ibid.
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid. Manicho. were the two sheets worn by Arathi in those days.
25. Kenyatta op cit p. 273
26. James Thuo op cit.
27. Ibid.
28. Allen E.L, in the interpreter's Bible, New york, Abindon Press, 1956, vol vi P. 267.
29. James Thuo, op.cit.
30. Ibid. See also KNA DC/FH/2/1/4
31. Kinyanjui op.cit. - Although Kinyanjui does not say that they were taught by the Murang'a Arathi, he recalls that Titus Gitangu visited them at Magina, and took Joseph Nganga to Ngong Hills for prayers. So Gitangu might have discussed the law during that occassion with Nganga.
32. Ezekiel Karanja, interview Nakuru, 23/1/92
33. Kinyanjui op.cit.
34. John Muhia op.cit.
35. The literate Arathi could read the Old Testament in Kiswahili. The New Testament was availalbe in Gikuyu translations since 1926. The old Testament in Gikuyu was produced in 1951.
36. Zablon Gichuki Interview, Shamata - 6/2/92
37. Ibid.

38. John Muhia op.cit
39. Ibid.
40. Elijah Kinyanjui op.cit
41. Kenyatta op.cit p. 278
42. Kinyanjui op. cit
43. Kenyatta op.cit 273.
44. K.N.A. DC/FH/2/1/4
45. lbid.
46. K.N.A. DC/KBU/3/2. The name Munabii is today used in this church to refer to individual members who prophesy.
47. Kenyatta op.cit. p. 275
48. John Muhia op.cit.
49. See K.N.A. DC/FH/2/1/4 The Arathi were referred to as "Watu wa Mungu alias Prophets" in a correspondence between the Colonial Secretary and the DC Kiambu in 1934.
50. Participant observation, Kamakwa Nakuru; 10/9/91; 12/5/91
51. Njeri op.cit p. 7
52. Kenyatta op. cit p 274
53. KNA PC/CP/8/7/3
54. Kinyanjui op. cit
55. Ezekiel Njai, Rusiru 27/1/92; Elijah Kinyanjui op. cit.
56. One of their Associations is called "All Akurinu Churches Assembly".
57. KNA. DC/FH/2/1/4.
58. Ibid.
59. Ibid.

60. Ibid.
61. Kinyanjui, Muhia, Njai op.cit.
62. KNA PC/CP.8.7/3.
63. KNA DC/FH/2/1/4.
64. See KNA DC/F/H/2/1/4; also DC/KBU/3/2
65. Kinyanjui, ms. op.cit. chapter I.
66. Maritha Mwhaki, interview, Nakuru 8/2/92.
67. KNA DC/FH/2/1/4.
68. KNA DC/FH/2/1/4.
69. Ibid.
70. John Muhia op.cit.
71. Kinyanjui op.cit. The term marava was used to refer even to women who had gone to towns for employment.
72. KNA DC/KBU/3/2.
73. Ibid.
74. Kinyanjui op.cit.
75. Ibid. By 1934, the Arathi had shifted from Musa Mucai's home at Magina to Gathumuri (present day Kimende).
76. Ibid.
77. John Muhia op.cit.
78. East African standard 20/2/1934. This report is in the KNA DC/KBU/3/2. Also interview with Joseph Kaboro Tumbo confirms this information - Matathia (Kijabe) 26/5/92.
79. Ibid.
80. Participant observation Nakuru, 12/5/91.
81. KNA DC/FH/2/1/4.
83. Kinyanjui, John Muhia op.cit.
84. KNA PC/CP/8/7/2. The DC Kiambu wrote to the PC

Central notifying him about the verdict of the Native Tribunal on the seven Arathi on 16/4/1934.

85. John Muhia op.cit.
86. Ibid.
87. Ibid.
88. KNA DC/FH/2/1/4.
89. John Muhia, op.cit.
90. KNA PC/CP/8/7/3.
91. Elijah Kinyanjui, op.cit.
92. Elijah Kinyanjui Ms. Chapter six.
93. Ibid.
94. Elijah Kinyanjui, John Muhia op.cit.
95. Muhia op.cit.
96. Ibid.
97. According to Njeri, Elijah Kinyanjui was actually excommunicated by the Limuru group after a quarrell. See Njeri op.cit. p. 66.
98. Elijah Kinyanjui op.cit.
99. Stephano Muchango, Ezekiel Njai op.cit.
100. Ibid.
101. KNA PC/CP/8/7/3.
102. Ibid.
103. Ibid.
104. Elijah Kinyanjui ms chapter six.
105. Ibid.
106. Ibid.
107. Ibid.

108. John Muhia op.cit.
109. Elijah Kinyanjui op.cit.
110. Samuel John Chege, Siribwet 16th - 18th/9/91.
111. He founded his own church, Chosen Church of the Holy Spirit" with its headquarters at Nakuru.
112. Zablon Gichuki, op.cit.
113. Ibid.
114. Ibid.
115. John Muhia, op.cit. Also Samuel Gathimba, Ezekiel Njai and Stephano Machango op.cit.
116. Ibid.
117. Ibid.
118. John Muhia, op.cit.
119. Samuel Gathimba, Ezekiel Njai and Stephano Machango op.cit.
120. The 15th of September remains an important day for this group up to the present day. They commemorate the giving of the conditions which, as they claim, finally led to the independence of the country and their return to the Rift Valley where they own land.
121. Gathimba, Njai, Machango op.cit.
122. Ibid.
123. Ibid.
124. Ibid.
125. See the eleven commandments discussed earlier in this chapter.
126. Note that the idea of keeping God's word is contained in the official name of this church, "God's word and Holy Ghost Church."
127. Gathimba, Njai, Machango op.cit.
128. Gathigira op.cit. p.16.

129. Ibid.
130. Gathimba, Njai, Machango op.cit.
131. Ibid.
132. Wilson Nyaga interview, Rusiru (He was one of those on this journey).
133. Ibid.
134. KNA. PC/CP/8/7/3 - Political unrest.
135. Wilson Nyaga op.cit. See Appendix IV map II.
136. Ibid.
137. Ibid.
138. Ibid.
139. Ibid.
140. Gideon Matu. Interview, Nyahururu, 1/1/92
141. Daudi Ikigu, Nyimbo cia Roho Mutheru, Kijambe, Kijambe Printing Press, 1987, p. 81.
142. Kinyanjui ms chapter five.
143. See Njeri op.cit. p. 70
144. Farson op.cit p. 219
145. Zablon Gichuki op.cit.
146. Ibid.
147. KNA MAA/8/106 Mumenyereri
148. Ibid.
149. Ibid.
150. Ibid.
151. Ibid.
152. Njeri op.cit. p.71.
153. KNA MAA/8/106 op.cit.

154. Ibid.
155. Ibid.
156. Farson op,cit. p. 219
- 157 KNA MAA/8/106 op.cit.
158. Kinyanjui, op.cit.
159. For a detailed account of Dini ya Msambwa see Simanyula J. B. Elijah Masinde and Dini ya Msambwa. (Nairobi, TransAfrica) 1987.
160. Njeri, op.cit. p 73
161. For a detailed account on Mau Mau see Rosberg and Nottingham, op.cit.
162. Rosberg and Nottingham op.cit. p. 296. See also Ndungu N.W., op.cit. p.44
163. In Nyeri, the Akurinu church flourished after independence through the efforts of Joseph Wahome and Rufus Gichuki.
164. John Muhia, op.cit., Ayub Nduti, interview Gichagi-ini 12/2/92
165. Paul Muriuki interview Ngorano (Mathira) - 10/12/91
166. Joshua Kingori, op.cit.
167. John Muhia, op.cit.
- 168 Njeri, op.cit. p.74
169. Zablon Gichuki, op.cit.
170. John Muhia, op.cit.
171. For details of the oath see Rosberg and Nottingham op.cit. p 243 - 262.
172. John Muhia, op.cit.
173. Zablon Gichuki, Paul Muriuki op.cit.
174. Njeri, op.cit. p.74
175. Ezekiel Karanja, op.cit.

176. Kezia Wangari, op.cit.
177. Ezekiel Njai, op.cit.
178. John Muhia, op.cit.
179. Ibid.
180. Samuel Gathimba, Njai, Machango op.cit.
181. Ibid.
182. Samuel John Chege, op.cit.
183. Ibid.
184. Ibid.
185. Ibid.
186. Gathimba, Njai, Machango op.cit.
187. Ibid.
188. Jacob Nderitu - Interview, Kamakwa 15/9/91.
189. Elijah Kinyanjui op.cit.
190. Those listed are the ones relevant for this study. Several others, some unregistered are in existence.
191. Njeri, op.cit. p.76.
192. Elijah Kinyanjui, op.cit.
193. Samuel John Chege, op.cit.

CHAPTER FOUR

MEMBERSHIP, ROLES AND LEADERSHIP

The last chapter focused on the historical background of the Akurinu churches. The present chapter deals with aspects of the Akurinu church life. Firstly, the categories of members and their background is discussed. Some of the factors that attract people to the Akurinu churches are highlighted. Secondly, the roles played by men, women and the youth in the life of the church are identified. Finally, the leadership hierarchy both administrative and ecclesiastical is discussed as well as the methods of selecting and training of the clergy. The chapter concludes by identifying the attempts being made by the Akurinu to have a United Akurinu Church.

4.1 Types of Membership

On the basis of the reasons given for joining the Akurinu churches the members can be classified under three categories. Firstly, there are those who claim to have been called through the Holy Spirit. Such a call may take various forms such as a dream or a vision. It can also be in form of a great urge from within a person, to attend an Akurinu service during which the person declares

the wish to become a member. One informant, Samuel Wagura, recalls how he spent a sleepless night due to such feeling and the next day he attended a service of the Akurinu during which he became a member¹. As noted in chapter three the majority of the early members fall under this category. In some cases a prophet (Munabii) is directed through the Holy Spirit to visit a person unknown to him and tell the person that he should become a Mukurinu. This happened to Zablon Gichuki who recalls that, in his case,

"A mukurinu came to Maji Mazuri all the way from Nyahururu and told me that he had been sent by the Holy Spirit to look for me. He stayed for a week, preaching to my family. In the end I changed from the Independent to the Akurinu Church²".

Several members claim that if one does not accept the call, the Holy Spirit will use various means which may include punishments until one is compelled to accept the call. In the case of Cleophas Mathu, he recalls that,

"I had been called on several occasions through dreams to join this church but had refused. One day I was caught in a police swoop as a suspect in a crime although I was innocent. While in the police custody, I had a vision in which a man dressed in white told me that my problems would be over if I agreed to dress in white. I agreed and to my surprise I was set free the following day. I straight away went and joined the Akurinu Church before going to my home"³.

Secondly, there are some who become members by their personal choice. This is prompted by a person being attracted by a feature in the Akurinu Churches. Such attractions include singing, social acceptance, the wearing of turbans and long dresses and faith healing among others. Members in this category normally join the Church during the outreach missions both in the rural and urban areas⁴.

Thirdly, there those who become members by virtue of being born in an Akurinu family. Most of the youth fall under this category for they have no choice. It should be noted that it is among this category that the majority of drop-outs from the Church are found. The children will remain in the Akurinu Churches partly through a sense of duty and partly as a sign of obedience to their parents. After getting to adolescence and are no longer under the direct control of their parents, some of them leave the Church. This applies especially to those who get to secondary schools and university. The exposure to new ideas and the influence of new friends of non-Akurinu backgrounds account for the desertions⁵. According to Naomi Nyaga, boys leave the Churches more than the girls⁶. This is due to the fact that only a few girls manage to get to secondary schools. Despite the rate of desertions, membership through birth is the main source

of membership for the Akurinu Churches.

Fourthly, there are those who become members through the influence of relatives and friends. This particularly occurs in families when for example, a husband joins the Akurinu and the wife follows or vice versa. The members in this category will however attribute their joining the Church to the work of the Holy Spirit.

4.2 Nature of the Members

In an attempt to describe the nature of the Akurinu members, four factors will be taken into account namely, the age, the educational achievement, the economic status and the ethnic element. A visit to an Akurinu Church will reveal that two age groups predominate. These comprise of the young children below the age of twelve years and the older people over thirty five years. The middle age-group comprising the youth are few and this is a common feature in other Akurinu Churches⁷. Various factors account for this phenomenon. It has been observed that children born in the Akurinu families automatically become members thus accounting for the large numbers of the young members. Drop-outs are more among the adolescents. Those who join the church after-adolescence normally stick to it, hence the bigger

numbers of the adult members. West has observed a similar feature in the independent churches in Soweto when he writes,

"It appears that most independent church congregations consist of young children and people of middle age and older- there appears to be a fairly uniform dearth of members in their twenties and early thirties"⁸.

In terms of educational achievements, the Akurinu members fall under three categories, the illiterates, semi-literates and the literates. Prior to independence, the first two groups predominated. The low standard of education can be attributed to the members' lack of interest in Western education during the early days. Other independent churches in Gikuyuland had great concern for the education of their children. For example, the African Independent Pentecostal Church of Africa, and the Africa Orthodox Church not only built their own schools but also had their Education Associations, the Kikuyu Independent Schools Association (KISA) and the Kikuyu Karinga Education Association (KKEA) respectively⁹.

The Akurinu never came up with schools possibly because formal school education was part of the teachings of the white man which they had rejected. At the same time the schools for Africans were under the management of the missions.

This meant that if a mukurinu child were to attend such a school, then he had to convert to that church, a sacrifice which the Akurinu could not afford. Their concern for keeping the Levitical laws was also prohibitive for children would mix with others at school and thus contract thahu (ritual uncleanness).

The 1968 Education Act brought to an end the Church management of public schools in Kenya. Children thereafter could attend schools of their choice irrespective of their religious backgrounds. It was from this time that most Akurinu parents sent their children to schools. But as late as 1976, a D.O. in Nyandarua District informed Akurinu leaders in a meeting that he was aware, "most Akurinu do not take their children to nursery schools, primary schools or even secondary schools..."¹⁰. Some informants lamented that even today Akurinu children are harassed in some schools by teachers who are prejudiced against the Akurinu faith, forcing the children out of school prematurely¹¹.

The academic achievements often influence the social-economic status of people especially in terms of job opportunities. The low education status of most Akurinu has kept them from the job market. Thus, most of them are in the low income

bracket¹². The older members are mainly peasants working on their plots of land. The younger members have taken up employment as drivers, artisans, tailors while others are self-employed as small traders in different fields. Those who have managed to go through secondary and university education have acquired better jobs. It is worth noting that members of the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa are economically better off possibly due to their liberal stand¹³. The members of the God's Word and Holy Ghost Church who were on exodus for twenty years, began a settled life in 1969 at an old age¹⁴. The majority of women are housewives. These observations about the Akurinu churches apply to other Independent Churches as Turner has well observed about the Church of the Lord:

"For the present, the membership consists largely of small traders and farmers, clerks, artisans, drivers the unemployed and many women"¹⁵.

A similar observation has been made by West in his study of the independent Churches in Soweto where he notes that most followers were in the unskilled employment¹⁶.

A more conspicuous feature of the Akurinu Churches is the ethnic element. These Churches draw their members mainly from the Gikuyu

community. The only other communities with some followers are the Embu and the Meru who are however, linguistically closer to the Gikuyu. Thus, despite being in existence for about sixty years, these Churches have not made any impact upon other ethnic groups. The official statements in the constitutions of the churches, however, indicate that they are open to other communities. The following articles illustrate this point:

(i) Holy Ghost Church of East Africa. Article 2 Under Aims and Objectives reads:-

"membership of the society shall be confined to all tribes in Kenya who are desirous of following the faith of the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa, founded on the teaching of Christ"¹⁷.

(ii) The African Holy Ghost Christian Church article 3 under Aims and Objectives reads, "The African Holy Ghost Christian Church shall be open to all people in Africa of all races over the age of 18 years"¹⁸.

(iii) The Kenya Foundation of Prophet Church article 2 reads,
"The Church shall be open to all Africans in Kenya by birth or adoption"¹⁹.

It is clear from the above articles that each church had in mind the nature as well as the scope of its catchment area for its members. In theory one would expect international representatives in the Akurinu

Churches. A peculiar features is that of the African Holy Ghost Christian Church which requires its members to be over eighteen years, which would make it a church for adults only.

A number of factors have contributed to the retention of Akurinu within the borders of the Gikuyu community. Firstly, the language barrier poses a major obstacle to their penetration to other communities. So far, Gikuyu is the language used in worship and in preaching. Furthermore most of the leaders who are qualified for the evangelistic work are only fluent in Gikuyu. Secondly, for the Akurinu who adopted the Mount Kenya Commandments, for example the God's Word and Holy Ghost Church (Kahiriga), they would find it difficult to convince other communities to adopt such practices like female circumcision and the piercing of earlobes. Thirdly, communities whose main diet comprises of meat, milk and blood like the Masai, would find it difficult to uphold the Levitical laws. Thus, to date, this Church has revolved within the Gikuyu community. The tribal element is however not peculiar to the Akurinu for other writers have

observed a similar phenomenon in other independent churches in Africa²⁰.

An exceptional case is that of the Chosen Church of Holy Spirit. It was mentioned earlier that after Elijah Kinyanjui differed with the Kiambu leaders, he went to Nakuru where he registered his church. According to him, he "prayed God to enable him to preach the gospel far and wide even outside Gikuyuland²¹. His prayers were answered in 1980 when he opened branches of his church among the Kisii, Luo and Luhya communities. To accommodate the new converts with diverse cultural backgrounds, Kinyanjui states,

"I have outgrown the teachings of the old Arathi. I am working for a church that will accommodate all people irrespective of their backgrounds. I would like to have young educated people who can spread the word of God as preached in the Chosen Church of Holy Spirit, to other lands and even to the Europeans"²².

Thus, such Akurinu practices like the wearing of turbans, long dresses, keeping uncut hair and beards are not essential requirements in this church. He has overcome the language barrier by use of interpreters into local languages during his preaching missions²³. Critics of Kinyanjui however, see him as misrepresenting the Akurinu faith. But

his approach illustrates in a practical way how the church can spread beyond the tribal boundaries.

4.3 The Roles of men, women and the youth in the churches.

It was noted in chapter two that in the Gikuyu community, the role a person played in society was determined by gender and age. The priestly duties for example, which included prayers and sacrifices to Ngai were in the hands of the senior members of the council of elders. The Akurinu Churches have adopted the Gikuyu patterns in the distribution of church responsibilities and duties. For example the church government has always been in the hands of men despite the fact that women are the majority.

-This male domination in church affairs can also be attributed to the Jewish traditions where the men enjoyed a superior position over women. The Akurinu through their emphasis on the Mosaic teachings, have retained a male-dominated church structure. The Pauline teachings about the role of women in the church (1Cor. 14:34-35 and 1 Tim. 2:8-15) is taken as further biblical basis for not involving women in church affairs.)

Women therefore, perform ceremonial and ritual

roles in the churches. They are, however, included in Church committees dealing with such activities as fund raising, building and welfare²⁴. Their involvement is found to be necessary since in the general life of the Church they form its backbone. Several women informants appear to be satisfied with the status quo. According to Julia Lucy, "women are satisfied with the manner in which church affairs both secular and spiritual are conducted"²⁵. Kezia Wangari would even go further and state, that "it would be tantamount to disapproving God's wisdom and plans for the women to demand to be ordained for the ministry"²⁶.

The Akurinu youth do not hold leadership posts in the churches. They do, however, play an important role by their involvement in Church choirs. Singing, as will be discussed later, plays a central position in Akurinu worship. During ceremonies such as weddings, the youth do most of the work. Young men also participate in the preaching in Church. Being more fluent in reading, they are often called upon to read during services²⁷. They participate in outreach missions which are at times interdenominational. During meetings which require interpretations either into Kiswahili or English, they offer the assistance. This is an important asset for the Akurinu if

they hope to make converts among other communities.

Men then, hold the administrative and priestly duties in the Akurinu Churches. The elders, in particular are seen as the custodians of the churches for their decisions guide the members²⁸. The manner in which the leaders are chosen is discussed in the next section.

4.4 Leadership and Ministry

Leadership is an important aspect in the Akurinu and other independent churches in Africa. The quality of leadership determines the stability of the church. Some members indicated that they left their previous Akurinu churches to join those with better leadership²⁹. West also observes that leadership is one of the factors that attract people to a church in Soweto³⁰. It was noted during the fieldwork that most members do not know the official names of their churches. They resort either to place names to identify the Churches, for example "Kahiriga Church" for "God's Word and Holy Ghost Church", or identify the church by its leaders, for example, the "church of Joshua Mburu", for the "Christian Holy Ghost Church of East Africa".

As mentioned earlier, there was no centralised

church government in the Akurinu movement and this contributed partly to the registration of the churches under different leaders. The leadership pattern in the various churches however reflects some uniformity as we shall see later in this section.

Leadership and ministry are inseparable in the Akurinu Churches. There is no dichotomy of administrative and spiritual leaders. Church leaders are expected to attend to both the spiritual and secular needs of their members. This point is illustrated by the use of the term mutongoria (leader) which is the common title used in these churches³¹. A mutongoria has to cater for the general welfare of his flock.

For a person to be appointed in the ministry he has to meet the following three basic requirements. Firstly, one has to be above the middle age group. Those that were interviewed during the field work were over forty years. Secondly, one must be married. This is a sign of a person's level of responsibility. His ability to handle family affairs is regarded as a measure of his capability to deal with church affairs. Thirdly, one should have been in the church long enough to have gained experience in church affairs.

Seniority in terms of age, marital status and experience, is thus an important factor in choosing the leaders. These requirements apply to other independent churches as illustrated by West when he writes,

"In the independent churches age is very important in conferring status, and so is marriage. The ideal leader, in addition to being male is at least middle-aged, and married"³².

Turner also collaborates this point by noting that in some Aladura churches of West Africa, entry into the ministry is postponed until, "there is sufficient seniority to command the respect necessary for a leader in traditional African society"³³.

We noted in Chapter two that among the Gikuyu a man entered into elderhood after marriage and acquired seniority with increased age and experience³⁴. The Akurinu have adopted a similar pattern in apportioning leadership responsibilities. It is for this reason that the youth have no part to play in church leadership and ministry. One of the leaders, Samuel John Chege, emphasized that the Akurinu "are not used to giving young men high posts in the church for it is only the elders who can keep the church running properly"³⁵. The only exceptional case was that of the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa where Hezron

Tumbo, the former leader, and Daudi Ikigu were ordained for the ministry although they are unmarried. According to John Muhia, the two were ordained after they declared that they had given their lives for the service of God³⁶.

The selection of the candidates for the ministry takes two forms. The common method is by the elders identifying a charismatic person who fulfils the requirements. On the other hand, the choice of a person to join the ministry may come through a revelation by a prophet. Such a revelation can take the form of a dream where the candidate appears dressed in priestly robes to the prophet, or it can be a voice telling the prophet that the candidate should become a muhoi, (prayer-leader)³⁷. When such a revelation is brought to the elders, they wait for a second or third time to ascertain its authenticity³⁸. This is to safeguard malpractices which could hamper the choosing of proper leaders. In case the revelation is repeated, preferably by a different prophet, then the elders accept it and engage in prayers to seek for further guidance from the Holy Spirit about the acceptability of the candidate for the ministry. Such prayers can take a month and if no objection is received, then the candidate is taken for the

ministry³⁹.

The Akurinu do not have theological colleges or Bible schools for training their clergy. The training is done on the job in the form of apprenticeship. Formal instruction in the ministry is however, provided occasionally by the senior leaders in the gaaru (the hut for men in the church compound). The training on the job takes about three years after which the candidate is presented for ordination for the first appointment in the leadership hierarchy.

Ordination ceremonies are colourful occasions and are usually attended by members from other Akurinu churches. At present members from other Christian churches are also invited to these ceremonies⁴⁰. The procedure of the ordination ceremony is common in all the Akurinu churches and is adapted from the Anglican Book of Common Prayer (Ibuku ria Thaara). The following description will serve as an illustration⁴¹.

The ceremony began at 10.a.m. when the senior elders (ahoi anene) got into the church for prayers. After the prayers were over, the rest of the congregation got into the church and took seats according to gender. As usual, men were on the right side while women were on the left. The senior leaders were in the kigongona (sanctuary).

The presiding bishop then called the meeting to order and said that the purpose of the ceremony was to ordain one member for the service of God in the Church. The actual ceremony then proceeded as follows:-

Stage I

Bishop - Asked the guardian pastor to present the candidate.

Pastor - Brought the candidate closer to the sanctuary.

Bishop - (Addressing the Pastor) "Have you scrutinized and ascertained that the person you are presenting to be sanctified is fit for God's work?"

Pastor - "I have scrutinized and found him fit to be ordained for God's work in this Church.

Bishop - (Addressing the congregation) "Is there any member with an objection to the ordination of this candidate? If there is, let the person give the reasons before the ceremony proceeds".

(There was no objection raised)

Bishop - Asked the congregation to sing hymns No.1 and 12 from the Akurinu hymnal, Nyimbo cia Roho Mutheru

Congregation - Sang the two hymns.

Bishop - Called one of the ahoi (prayer leaders) to pray for the occasion.

Stage II

First reading and the dressing of the candidate.

Bishop - Announced the biblical references for the first reading, Numbers 11:16-18, Luke 10:1-4, Exodus 29:4-7; and called one of the pastors to read. During the reading of Exodus, the bishop asked a senior muhoi to dress the candidate with the official robe for the ministry. After that he exhorted the candidate to devote himself to God's work in the new appointment.

Stage III

Second reading and the taking of vows.

Bishop - Asked the congregation to sing hymn No.36. He then announced the second reading, I Tim. 3:1-7; and Jn 10:1-10 and asked a pastor to read.

Bishop - (Addressing the candidate) Read out eight vows to the candidate from the Book of Common Prayer (Ibuku ria Thaara).

Candidate- Responded (loudly) to each of the vows in the affirmation.

Stage IV

Third reading and singing on of the elders' hymn.

Bishop - Asked the elders (those in the sanctuary) and those at the front bench to sing the elders' hymn.

Elders - sang hymn No. 26 (the rest of the congregation did not participate).

Bishop - Called a pastor to read Num.3:5-10 and Mk 3:13-19. After that there were prayers and congregational singing of hymns No.23, 176 and 12.

Stage V

Fourth reading and the laying on of hands.

Bishop - Announced the reading.

Numb.27:18-22 and Jn 21:15-20, and called a pastor to read. After the reading the bishop asked the senior muhoi who had dressed the candidate to lay hands on him.

Senior Muhoi - Prayed for the candidate who was kneeling and laid his hands on his head as a sign of the giving of the Holy Spirit. After that he led the candidate to take a seat on the front bench, facing the congregation⁴².

Conclusion

Bishop - Concluded the ceremony by giving the candidate a copy of the Bible and telling him; "Take the Book of God's Law and preach the message contained in it with all your courage"⁴³.

From the above account, we can make the following observations. Firstly, the consent of the guardian pastor is important as proof to the members that the candidate has acquired the necessary skills and is morally and spiritually upright. Secondly, the justification for the ordination ceremony is based on both the Old Testament and New Testament. The above description reveals a pattern whereby an Old Testament and a New Testament reading are placed together. These verses are meant to justify the choosing of some members for the ministry, (Num.3:5-10, Lk.10:1-4), the giving of new robes (Ex.29:4-7) and the qualities of a good leader (I Tim.3:1-7). Finally, the Pauline teaching of monogamy as a requirement for the clergy is not strictly followed in the Akurinu churches. For example in the God's Word and Holy Ghost Church and the Kenya Foundation of Prophet Church, polygamy is allowed⁴⁴. In the other Akurinu churches, members who were polygamous before joining the church are also considered for

leadership⁴⁵.

The clergy passes through four stages in the leadership hierarchy. With the first ordination one becomes a deacon and takes the seat in front of the sanctuary facing the congregation (see position 1 in dig.1, page 209). In this status, one is entitled to go out and preach, lead the singing in the church and to be sent by the mutongoria (leader)⁴⁵. After serving in this position for some unspecified time and at the recommendation of the elders, one goes through a second ordination similar to the first one and is made a junior prayer - leader (muhoi munini) or pastor. In some churches like the African Holy Ghost Christian Church, he takes a seat in the sanctuary (kigongona) on the left side. (position 2 in dig 1). In others like the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa, he continues to sit on the front bench until the time he becomes a senior prayer-leader. In this post, he can conduct prayers in Church as well as churching of mothers after delivery. With experience, the pastor is allowed to conduct other ceremonies like baptism, marriage and burials.

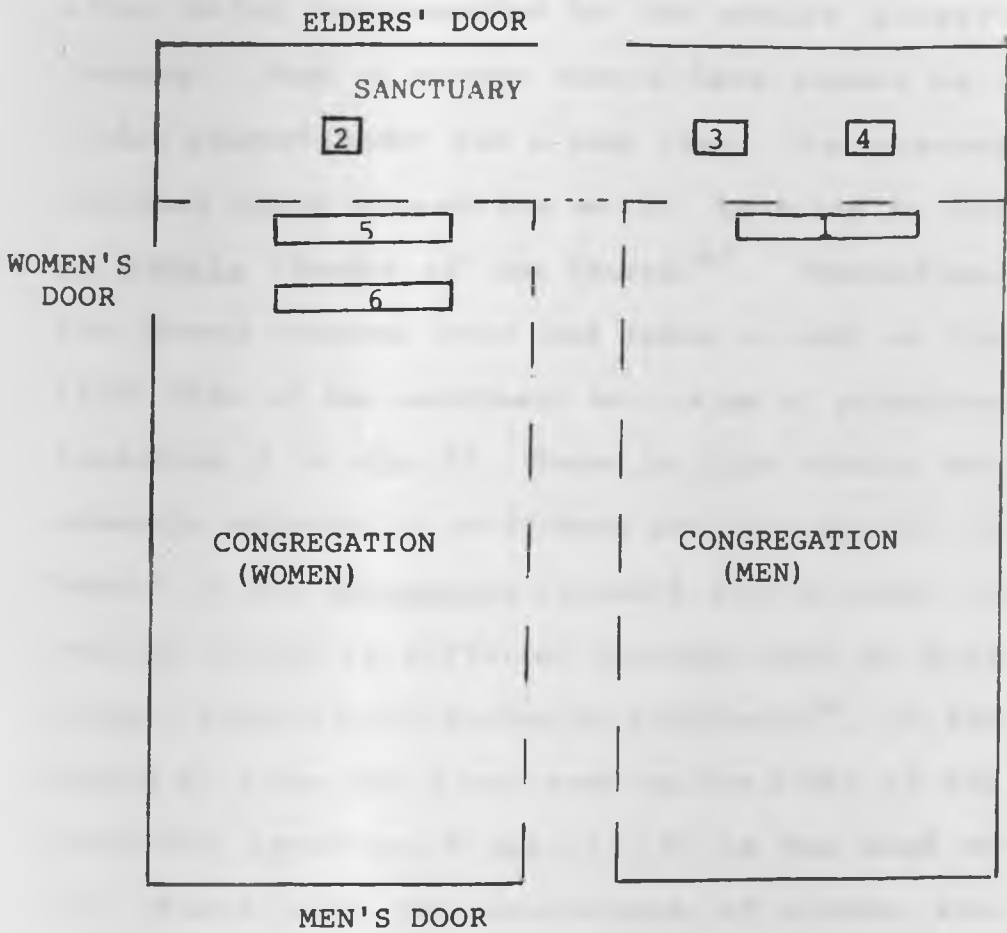


Fig.I. Layout of seating arrangement for Church leaders.

Lengend

1. Deacons' bench.
2. Pastors' seats.
3. Bishops' seats.
4. Archbishop's seat..
5. Bench for ceremonial women
6. If position 5 is taken by men, the ceremonial women take this bench.

The grade of the senior prayer-leaders (ahoi anene) is held by only a few members. One qualifies after being recommended by the senior prayer-leaders. Such a person should have served as a junior prayer-leader for a long time. The ceremony involves being prayed for while kneeling by the mutongoria (leader of the Church)⁴⁷. Thereafter, the person crosses over and takes a seat on the right side of the sanctuary as a sign of promotion (position 3 in dig.I). Those in this status are commonly referred to as Bishops and they can act on behalf of the Mutongoria (leader) who is known by various titles in different churches such as High Priest, Right Priest Bishop or Archbishop⁴⁸. In the church he takes the first seat on the right of the sanctuary (position 4 dig. I). He is the head of the church with the assistance of elders who constitute a National Governing council. The choice of the leader is done by the elders. Where there is no power struggle a leader can remain in office until he retires due to old age, or sickness or until he dies. When the seat falls vacant, it is normally the elder second-in-command who takes over the leadership⁴⁹.

Among the Akurinu, the ministers are not paid. Apart from the fact that they have no funds, there is also the belief that those who are chosen

for the ministry offer their services to God, and therefore should not demand material rewards. The church ministers are therefore part-time in the sense that during the week they are busy working for their livelihood. Their pastoral duties are, thus, reserved for Sunday or when members in need approach them. This point is illustrated by the remarks of one pastor who said;

"Sunday should be spent from morning to evening for worship because on the other days of the week, we are busy attending to our own things"⁵⁰.

This is one area where the Akurinu should consider having a full time ministry with paid pastors. Such salaried clergy will have more time for their pastoral work as well as the development of the church. The financial relieve that members have by not paying their clergy, may not in the end be for the well being of the churches.

As mentioned earlier women are not ordained among the Akurinu but are given ceremonial posts. Among such women are the wives of the ordained ministers. They assist during ceremonies such as the dressing of new women converts, the churching of mothers after delivery and during the presentation of babies in the church⁵¹. At times, the elders can choose an elderly woman for the ceremonial status even if the husband is not

ordained⁵². In most churches, the ceremonial women sit on a bench in the front position of the sanctuary facing the women's side (position 5 in dig.I). In some churches like the Holy Ghost church of East Africa, they sit on the front bench facing the sanctuary (position 6 in dig.I). Position 5 is taken by the ordained men in this church.

The administrative officials are chosen from the clergy since they hold both ecclesiastical and administrative posts simultaneously. The following structure based on the African Holy Ghost Christian church illustrates this point⁵³.

Ecclesiastical Post	Administrative Post
(i) Right Priest Bishop	Chairman
(ii) Bishop	Vice Chairman
(iii) Reverend	Secretary General
(iv) Pastor	Assistant Secretary
(v) Minister	Treasurer
(vi) Deacon	Assistant Treasurer

The administrative regions of the Akurinu churches are rather arbitrary. It is at times difficult to know where one region ends and where the other one starts. It is not unusual then to see a leader officiating a ceremony in another region supposedly under another minister⁵⁴. To

illustrate the problem of the administrative zoning, we shall take the case of the African Mission of Holy Ghost Church. At present there are three zones each under a bishop namely (i) Nyeri, Muranga, Nyandarua and Laikipia; (ii) Kirinyaga, Embu and Meru. (iii) Nairobi, Kiambu and Machakos⁵⁵.

Although they refer to each of these zones as a diocese, they have not yet come up with proper names. It is clear from the above regions that for proper administration the zones are too large. Zone one for example, covering four large districts, would pose a problem to a bishop in monitoring the church activities, bearing in mind that he is part-time and with no transport facilities. Other churches take the districts as their units of administration. In such a case, the congregations outside the headquarters are referred to as branches⁵⁶. Despite the present ambiguities in titles and undefined administrative regions, the Akurinu are evolving an administrative machinery which is necessary for church organisations.

4.5 A change in the concept of ministry

A major change that has occurred among the Akurinu is worth noting. As mentioned

previously, these churches have no training institutions or trained ministers. Those in the ministry are believed to be guided by the Holy Spirit in their work and especially in their interpretation of the Bible. This view has taken a new turn with the Akurinu having two pastors who have trained for the ministry at the St. Paul's United Theological College, Limuru.

The whole idea of sending the students for training originated from a visit by Samuel John Chege to the College where he had gone to see a friend who was a student there in 1990. In the process, Chege was introduced to the Rev. Johan W. Becks, who was the acting Dean of Studies in the college⁵⁷. During their conversation, Becks challenged Chege as to why the Akurinu do not send their students at the college for training. An important outcome of their discussion was the assurance Becks gave Chege that the Akurinu would be assisted to get financial support for the training of their students.

Samuel John Chege took up the matter to the Church elders of the African Holy Ghost Christian Church. He explained that the training was not meant to convert the Akurinu pastors to other churches, but to equip them better for the benefit of their church⁵⁸. The elders then, saw the

chance as beneficial for the future of the church. With their blessing, Samuel John Chege embarked on a search for the educated Akurinu youth who could meet the entry requirements of the college. Two men, Solomon Waigwa and David Mbugua were identified as suitable candidates. With their consent, Samuel John Chege formally wrote to Rev. Becks on 7/2/90 requesting for financial assistance for the training of the two students at the college⁵⁹. He got a reply on 9/5/90 telling him that the two candidates had been admitted for a Bachelor of Divinity degree course at the College⁶⁰.

Samuel John Chege then wrote to Waigwa and Mbugua for their formal acceptance of the offer. This was crucial as the two were already employed as teachers. Both replied and indicated that while they were willing to take the offer, they needed answers to two issues. Firstly, they raised the issue of financial support since leaving their jobs meant loss of their salaries. Secondly, they raised the question of their being ordained as pastors before joining the college⁶¹. This was possibly for fear of being treated as inferior students by those already ordained from other churches.

In reply to the two issues Samuel John Chege told them that for their financial support while at the college, they should not worry for "God will help the church to get assistance"⁶². On the question of ordination they were assured that the church elders would consider their request while they were in the college⁶³. The issue of ordination was a difficult one since this church does not ordain young people for the ministry.

In the meantime, Samuel John Chege had started looking for sponsors for the two students. Through Rev. Becks, he wrote to Dr. P. Magri of the Board of Missions, Netherlands Reformed Church requesting for financial assistance⁶⁴. In a second letter Samuel John Chege expressed the financial difficulties of the Akurinu Churches thus,

"--- the majority of the members comprised mainly of people from the rural areas of our country. Most of our people are in the lower income bracket, being small scale subsistence farmers."⁶⁵.

More important is Samuel John Chege's affirmation of the Church's change of attitude towards theological training as he puts it;

"Like many indigeneous churches in Africa, this Church at first did not welcome the idea of exposing its clergy to modern theology. This mistaken notion, however, is long gone"⁶⁶.

In his reply, Dr. Magri wanted a clarification on three points. Firstly, he wanted a confirmation about the salaried status of the two pastors at the completion of their training. Secondly, he wanted to know whether the church had an agreement with the two students on their service to the church after the training. Thirdly, he wanted to know the number of members in the church⁶⁷.

The points raised by Samuel John Chege in his reply are worth noting. About the agreement between the church and the two students, he confirmed that they had agreed to serve the church. He also noted that the church intended to ordain them as pastors before they completed their training. On the question of their salaried status he wrote,

"Regarding their remuneration in terms of salary and allowances, this church feels that by the time the students graduate it will be able to pay them. We are currently involved in the process of restructuring methods of generating income for the church through contributions from our members and also initiating income generating projects in our church plots. By 1992, some of these church projects will be operating⁶⁸.

For the number of church members, a figure of ten thousand members was given.

The two students at last wrote to their employer, the Teachers Service Commission asking for a three year unpaid study leave commencing

from September 1990. To their relief, their financial requirements were met by both their sponsor and their church. Initially the church was to meet a quarter of the cost which was Kshs:86,000 per student per year. This was however later paid in full by the sponsor, the Commission on Interchurch Aid of the Netherlands Reformed Church because the Akurinu Church could not pay⁶⁹. The Akurinu then only provided the personal allowances. A committee was set up to deal with the financial affairs of the two students under the chairmanship of Ezekiel Karanja⁷⁰. This committee was organizing fund raising harambees through which they managed to maintain the students.

At this juncture, let us look at the long term objectives of having trained pastors among the Akurinu. According to Ezekiel Karanja, there were four goals that this church hoped to achieve⁷¹. Firstly, the members feel that their church should no longer be viewed as being led by a clergy composed of semi-literates. Thus, time has come for the church to have theologically competent pastors. This is particularly significant since nowadays the Akurinu share fellowship with other churches. Secondly, the Akurinu like other churches, are facing the problem of the backsliding of the youth. Young educated pastors

might be able to identify the problems of the youth and possibly retain them in the church. Thirdly, there is hope that the trained pastors might be able to unite all the Akurinu into one church. Efforts have been made to inform other Akurinu churches about the two pastors with the hope of soliciting their support and acceptance. The two pastors have also been visiting other Akurinu congregations to make their training and objectives known⁷². Finally, there is hope that with trained pastors, the Akurinu can start their own training institutions for their clergy.

There are however a number of obstacles that have to be overcome before these goals can be achieved. The financial problem remains a major one. Although they had hoped to have income generating projects by 1992, so far there is none⁷³. The two pastors graduated in July 1993 but the Akurinu could not employ them. So, they have gone back to their teaching career and only perform their pastoral duties on part-time basis. This financial handicap is further evidenced by the fact there is a plan to have the two students proceed on with a masters degree course possibly to give the church more time to organize itself financially.

Another equally difficult task is that of convincing other Akurinu churches on the advantages of having a trained clergy. Already, the idea has met with mixed feelings. According to Elijah Gaitho of the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa, "the best theological training is that offered by the Holy Spirit"⁷⁴. Most Akurinu regard a person's ability to understand and interpret the scriptures as a gift of the Holy Spirit. Such conservative members might be opposed to the training of the clergy.

There is also the problem of trying to unite the leaders of the various groups who still recall the issues that led to their separation. Apart from the above obstacles one can also include the fear held by some members that sending the pastors to the college will result in the importation of foreign ideas in the Akurinu faith. It is difficult at this stage to speculate to what extent the pastors could retain, modify or even change the beliefs and practices among the Akurinu. According to Solomon Waigwa, "even if change has to come, it will be a gradual process"⁷⁵. This being the first lot of trained clergy, it may take some time to evaluate their effect in the churches.

Before we conclude this section, we should note that David Mbugua was ordained on 4/10/92 to the post of a deacon⁷⁶. This was seen as a historical event in this church, for he is the

first young and unmarried person to be ordained. Waigwa had been ordained for the same post earlier before he joined the college since he was already married. This move is proof enough that this church is ready to change with the needs of the times. Other Akurinu churches may also follow the example of the African Holy Ghost Christian Church and send their young men for training as pastors.

4.6 Community Life

The community life among the Akurinu has some features that are worth highlighting. Although they have been described by outsiders as anti-social and exclusive, a closer observation of their relationships reveals that they are a close-knit community with a strong intra-group cohesiveness. Their church can therefore be described as a community in which each member feels both recognised and wanted by the others.

Most of the congregations observed during the field work were small in size with an average of twenty to thirty members and some had even fewer people. This appears to be a common feature among independent churches for West has made a similar observation among the independent churches in Soweto⁷⁷. Such small congregations offer an

opportunity for the members to know one another intimately. This in turn makes it easier for even a new convert to make friends within the group. Such a strong interpersonal relationship among the members makes the congregation appear like one large family especially during their meetings for worship. The leader of the congregation is normally referred to as a Mzee (elder), a title that signifies his father-like role within the group⁷⁸.

Another unifying factor among the Akurinu is their shared past and present experiences. The older members believe that they were called by God for the purpose of praying for the independence of this country. But even after the achievement of political freedom there is still need to pray to God for the well being of the country. Hence, the Kahiriga group (God's Word and Holy Ghost Church) at Rusiru continue to live a prayerful life⁷⁹. The youth and the new converts are reminded that they are a special people chosen among many in order to maintain the true worship of God.

Another factor that enhances their unity and social identity is their dress. The wearing of white turbans for men and white headscarfs and long dresses for women makes it appear like a uniform. Other than the religious significance, the dressing

acts as a mark of identification. According to Zablon Gichuki, in the past, "one only required to see a turban and you would know that is one of your people"⁸⁰. We noted in chapter three that one of their names is Andu a Iremba (the people of the turbans). Thus, it is possible for a person to identify the Akurinu by their way of dressing which is not possible in the mission churches.

Unlike in some churches where social classes are manifested either in terms of material well being or educational achievements, among the Akurinu these are not divisive factors. As noted earlier, majority of the members are in the low income bracket and only a few of the youths have acquired high educational levels. Thus, no section of the congregation feels threatened or challenged by the socio-economic status of other members.

Socialization is an important aspect in the Akurinu Churches. This takes place either before or after the service when members are seen in groups according to age and gender. The holding of fellowships in members' homes offers a further opportunity for the members to socialize⁸¹. This promotes the sense of belonging and social acceptance of a member by the rest of the congregation. On this point, Pauw has made a

similar observation among the Tswana independent churches when he writes;

"The intimacy of the relations is often increased by the fact that the church services are held at the homestead of a church leader or one of the other members"⁸².

Such fellowships are normally accompanied by a meal provided by the host or hostess.

A more important aspect of the Akurinu community life is their concern for one another. A collective responsibility is manifested when a member is in difficulties or has a ritual. For example, when a member has financial problems, members hold fund raising meetings commonly known as thoko (derived from the Kiswahili word for market, soko) during which items such as goats, hens, and foodstuff are auctioned to raise the required money⁸³. The sick are visited in their homes and prayers held for them. If a man is financially unable to organise a wedding, the church members take over and manage the ceremony for him. In one case of a son of a single parent, the pastor acted as the father of the man and the wedding ceremony was held at the pastor's home⁸⁴. Similar assistance is given to members during funerals⁸⁵. This concern for one another is a feature that is found in other independent churches

as West observes that,

"--- it was repeatedly noticed that church members would attend funerals, weddings and thanksgivings as well as other occasions, of individual members. In many of these instances there appeared to be more church members than kin and other friends present and on more than one occasion a 'family affair' was taken over by the church⁸⁶. (emphasis mine)

New converts among the Akurinu are people who leave other churches. The concern for those experiencing problems could be a major attraction to this church. West's summary of the independent churches in Soweto is equally relevant in the Akurinu churches as he puts it,

"They are caring communities where concern is shown for all but particularly for the sick, the aged and those in adversity"⁸⁷.

4.7 Morality and Discipline

The hue and cry from the churches and secular authorities about the declining moral standards is proof of the desperation the society is facing. Much of the blame for this state of affairs has been attributed to colonialism and the Western Christian missionaries who undermined the traditional African cultural values. Today, many observers lament that the Western Christian values do not provide a solution to the ongoing moral decay in the society which include nepotism,

adultery and murder. Whereas in traditional societies there were common norms and values for all, the Christian churches have varied standards which make the teaching of morals all the more difficult. Mugambi has rightly observed that,

"Both in theory and practice there has been discrepancy between the expectations of various denominations as far as Christian morality is concerned. For example, some denominations advocate for teetotalism whereas others do not. With regard to marriage, all imported denominations have been against polygamy; some have required prospective polygamous male converts to expel all their wives except the first one, whereas others have allowed for all to be expelled except the favourite one---. Birth control is another issue about which there is no consensus"⁸⁸.

Some observers see the solution to the moral issues as lying in the resurrection of the traditional moral values of each people. Kinoti for example has suggested;

"But there is hope precisely because Africans are unhappy about this state of national and personal morality ---. There is hope that they can only answer to the name African. There is hope because the rural majority is still close to the principle which guided the morality of past generations"⁸⁹.

In this section, we look at how the Akurinu people deal with the question of morality.

One of the main tasks facing the Akurinu leaders is the maintenance of morality among the members. The problem of moral decay has affected

the Akurinu like the rest of the society. The older members recall that in the early days morality among the Akurinu was better than it is today⁹⁰. A number of factors have contributed to the moral decline in these churches. Firstly, unlike in the past when the Akurinu were a closed and exclusive community, today they have relaxed and are more open to the rest of the society. Children attend schools, some in boarding institutions where they are inevitably influenced by their peers from other social backgrounds. It was noted earlier that it is among the youth group that the rate of backsliding is highest. Previously, according to one informant, Akurinu children and especially girls were not allowed to go to towns, to avoid the moral pollution in the urban areas⁹¹. This is no longer the case for the cost of living drive young men and women to the towns in search of jobs where they are exposed to the forces of secularization and moral decadence.

Secondly, the Akurinu have no common moral code. While the Sinaic commandments apply to the various groups as a basic guide, each Akurinu church has other rules for its members. The case of polygamy illustrates such a divergence. The God's Word and Holy Ghost Church and the Kenya Foundation of Prophet Church accept polygamy

whereas the other Churches are opposed. Some allow their members to go to hospital while others are opposed to Western medicine. The consequence has been the fluidity of members whereby a person who feels morally constrained to do certain things in a church shifts to another Akurinu church where a desired practice like polygamy is allowed⁹².

Thirdly, the mushrooming of Akurinu churches have created a problem in upholding morality because a member who is excommunicated from one church seeks refuge in another church. Previously, according to Elijah Kinyanjui, a member who transferred from one Akurinu group to another had to produce a letter from the leader of the previous church⁹³. This was to prove that such a member had a clean record and had not been expelled due to misconduct. Today this is no longer observed, for some of the leaders of some Akurinu churches are expellees from other churches.

The above obstacles notwithstanding, the Akurinu continue to be strict in demanding moral uprightness from their members. According to Samuel John Chege, "not many can adhere to these moral demands, hence the few number of members in the Akurinu churches"⁹⁴. It was noted in chapter three that one of the Mount Kenya commandments

required the Akurinu to go back to the Gikuyu customs. The God's Word and Holy Ghost Church made an attempt to fulfil this commandment during their exodus. In the case of morality they still retain some traditional features. For example, women do not just enter in the gaaru (huts for men). They call out the person they want from outside. In the case of greetings one notes a special feature of humility shown by the youth to the elders⁹⁵. Among the Akurinu, respect for age is further demonstrated in the seating arrangement in the church whereby the older members take the front seats followed by the youth and the children take the back seat (see dig. II. page 252).

Hospitality to visitors is another important aspect of moral teaching among the Akurinu. The following experience by the researcher with the God's Word and Holy Ghost Church at Rusiru illustrates this point;

"After arriving late in the evening word went round that there was a visitor in the gaaru. Soon women began flowing in bringing with them various types of foods and drinks"⁹⁶.

They appeared to be applying the Gikuyu saying that "mucii ukuaga ngaguro" meaning failure to welcome a visitor with something to eat could tarnish the good reputation of a home. Such hospitality was

experienced among other Akurinu groups. Zablon Gichuki gave a biblical basis for showing hospitality to visitors without discrimination. He quoted Gen. 18:1 ff where Abraham welcomed three angels in the guise of travellers who later on gave him the good news about his wife Sarah bearing a son. Thus, one should not put off a visitor for he might be one sent by the Holy Spirit to deliver some message. The Akurinu themselves are aware of occasions some of them are sent to distant places to people they have never met before.

At this juncture, it is important to look at the disciplinary measures taken against errant members. Penalties vary depending on the seriousness of the offences committed. According to Joshua Kingori, an offence like adultery is so serious that one is expelled immediately even if he is the leader⁹⁸. Expulsion cases are characterised by the burning of the turban by the members to show that the expellee is no longer one of them⁹⁹. For other less serious offences like consulting medicine men, smoking and drinking, one is suspended from the church for a period of time which may range from a few months to one year. The person is supposed to 'gwicokera' or repent and meditate over the offence, so that one can start the life in the church afresh. When serving

such a suspension one cannot mix with the others neither attend church service. According to Jacob Nderitu, in the Africa Mission of Holy Ghost Church, if a suspended member attends service, he can only sit outside the church¹⁰⁰.

Apart from such disciplinary measures, there are two other factors that act as custodians of morality among the Akurinu. Firstly, there are the Anabii (prophets) who are known to reveal evils committed by people even in secret. Such revelations are normally exposed in the church during moments of Spirit possession. The fear of being exposed before other members thus acts as a deterrent to immoral acts. One can therefore conclude that the Holy Spirit working through the prophets is a custodian of morality among the Akurinu.

Secondly, the Akurinu are conscious about the public opinion about them. As mentioned before, the white dressing makes them a conspicuous group easily identified in the community. The society has a certain expectation of proper moral behaviour from the Akurinu. Although they do not live to please the world, the world is quick in judging them when they fall short of the expected behaviour. Cases have been reported in which some

Akurinu have met the wrath of the public after being found either smoking or drunk¹⁰¹. The Akurinu uniform acts as a constant reminder to the person to lead an upright life.

4.8 Towards a United Akurinu Church

Before we conclude this chapter, it is worth looking at the effort being made to unite the Akurinu into one community. The idea to unite the Akurinu was mooted in Nyandarua where in 1976, the Akurinu faced what they termed a wave of persecution from the Government. The harassment involved forcing the Akurinu to go to hospital. A more threatening issue was a rumour that there was a conspiracy to have the Akurinu take a choir to Gatundu to entertain the late President Jomo Kenyatta and in the process they would be given an oath in the traditional Gikuyu custom¹⁰². The administration was on the other hand accusing the Akurinu of being divided among themselves and of non-involvement in development projects and failure to take their children to school.

A series of meetings were held in 1976 between the administration and the Akurinu leaders in Nyandarua District. Several issues were discussed among which the need for the Akurinu to unite was emphasised as Zakaria Gitundu, one of the leaders stated,

"-- most of Akurinu church leaders are in this meeting, they can now solve whatever differences they have. We fear each ones sect, I urge you Akurinu present to have all these minor differences cleared in this meeting"¹⁰³.

Another member, Solomon Mbugua endorsed this view when he said.

"In this respect we agree here today to forget the past and forge ahead together as a team so that we may succeed and at the same time enjoy all the rights and privileges accorded to every mwananchi by the Government"¹⁰⁴.

During a meeting held on 18/4/76 at Nyahururu, a committee was set up, known as, "The Akurinu Church Leaders Committee", and Samuel John Chege was elected the chairman¹⁰⁵. The committee was responsible for streamlining the affairs of the Nyandarua Akurinu Association. In his first address as the chairman, Samuel John Chege summarised the objectives of the Association as follows:

"The primary objective of this Association will be to clear all differences among the Akurinu community. It will be the duty of this committee to look into matters affecting Akurinu generally. This committee is not going to force any Mukurinu to anything that one does not believe in but the objectives of the committee will be to unite us all in the Name of Jesus Christ"¹⁰⁶.

A further development towards unity took place in 1980 when a national association known as, "All Akurinu Churches Assembly" was formed. The

Nyandarua Association which at the time represented seventeen Akurinu groups may have been instrumental in the formation of the national body in two ways. Firstly, those in the working committee in the Nyandarua Association would have to seek final authority in decision making from their senior leaders. A National Association approved by the respective national leaders of the various Akurinu groups would offer a better operational atmosphere for the local associations. Secondly, the association had proved in a practical way that there can be unity within diversity among the Akurinu.

Once again, Samuel John Chege was elected the chairman of the Assembly, possibly due to the role he played in its formation as well as his experience in the Nyandarua Association. The objectives of the Assembly reflect the issues and challenges that were voiced in the various meetings of the Nyandarua Association. The main objective according to the constitution is that,

"The Assembly shall promote unity among all the followers of the All Akurinu Churches Assembly---"107.

Equally, important is the concern for the improvement of the members living standards as illustrated by the following two objectives:

(i) Objective 2(d) reads:

"Teaching the followers of the assembly to have more education up to the highest standard, health, clean, nutrition and to have better houses together with self-respect".

(ii) Objective 2(f) reads;

"Self-help, encourage the churches assembly to be active and to have interest in trade and industry--"108.

It is worth noting that the membership for the Assembly is open not only to the Akurinu but also to the Israel and Roho Churches and other Christian churches. According to Samuel John Chege, the Assembly has not achieved much so far due to financial constraints¹⁰⁹. They intend to build the headquarters in Nairobi which is in a central position.

The same period saw the formation of the Akurinu Youth Convention. It is an organisation for the youth from the various Akurinu churches and operates under the auspices of the All Akurinu Churches Assembly. Formed in 1980, the convention has similar objectives as the Assembly namely,

- i) "To unite all the Akurinu youth.
- ii) To develop the youth spiritually and socially.
- iii) To promote the Akurinu church through evangelism"¹¹⁰.

One problem facing the convention is the interference by some leaders who fear that the youth from their church might shift to other groups¹¹¹. Given support by the elders, the youth

could restore unity among the Akurinu as it was at the beginning. The two pastors from St. Paul's theological College are aware of this opportunity and are already visiting various Akurinu churches with the intention of sowing seeds for such a united church¹¹².

As the search for church unity continues to be voiced all over the world, the Akurinu have also realized the need for a united front both in the proclamation of the Gospel as well as in solving their problems. The ecumenical spirit which is developing among them, if well harnessed should lead to a stronger and self-supporting church.

NOTES ON CHAPTER FOUR

1. Samuel Wagura, Interview, Othaya (Mahiga) 21/12/91.
2. Zablon Gichuki op. cit.
3. Cleophas Mathu, Interview, Kamakwa, 10/3/91
4. Participant observation, Muhotetu and Nyeri town. 1/3/93; and 11/4/91
5. Moses Maina, interview. Ngorano. Mathira. 9/12/91. He left the church after getting to the University.
6. Naomi Nyaga, interview, Nakuru. 25/1/92. She is one of the few girls who have remained in the church after graduating from the University.
7. Participant observation during church services.
8. West, M. Bishops and Prohepts in a Black City, (London, Rex Collings), 1975, p.77.
9. See Anderson op.cit p.119; Also see Ndungu op.cit, p.28-30. About one third of the members are either illiterate or semi-literate as observed in the field.
10. Min 16/76 of a meeting held between the Akurinu and the D.O., Mr. Abdulla K. Kinyariro at Nyahururu on 18/3/76. (In the files of S.J. Chege).
11. Michael Muthui, interview, Muhotetu, 31/12/91 He is a mukurinu teacher.
12. This point is confirmed in a letter by Samuel J. Chege to Rev. P. Magri in which he says that most Akurinu are subsistence peasants. (In S.J. Chege's files).
13. See Njeri op.cit. p.214.
14. Ezekiel Njai, Stephano Machango, op. cit.
15. Turner H.W., History of An African Independent Church II. (Oxford University Press) 1976, p.19.

16. West op. cit. p.77.
17. Holy Ghost Church of East Africa, Constitution and Rules. See Appendix I A.
18. African Holy Ghost Christian Church, Constitution and Rules. See appendix I E.
19. Kenya Foundation of Prophet Church, Constitution and Rules. See appendix I D.
20. See for example, Turner op.cit p.15, Sundkler op.cit. p.38-39.
21. Elijah Kinyanjui op. cit.
22. Ibid.
23. Ibid.
24. Samuel John Chege, op. cit.
25. Julia Lucy Mwaura, Nairobi, 10/9/91
26. Kezia Wangari - op. cit.
27. Participant observation, Shauri 22/9/91; Kamakwa, 10/11/91.
28. Rufus Gichuki - Birisha, 19/12/91.
29. Samuel Wagura said they were about ten who left the Africa Mission of Holy Ghost Church due to leadership disputes and joined the Preachers church of God.
30. West op.cit. p.49.
31. According to Samuel J. Chege, the Akurinu refer to their church leaders as 'Atongoria' (sing. mutongoria) and do not emphasize the titles used in other Christian churches.
32. West op. cit. p.53.
33. Turner op.cit p.29 see also Sundkler op. cit. p. 102.
34. See Kenyatta op. cit. p.200-205.
35. Samuel J. Chege, op. cit.
36. John Muhia, op. cit. See also Njeri op. cit. p.267 and 274.

37. Jacob Nderitu, op. cit, (He further says that his two titles, Bishop and Archbishop were revealed to him and commanded to adopt them by the Holy Spirit).
38. Samuel J. Chege op. cit.
39. Ibid.
40. Participant observation, Eldoret, 4/10/92
41. The description is based on an ordination ceremony held at Eldoret in the AHGCC on 4/10/92.
42. If it were for a senior muhoi, or pastor, he would have been led to take a seat in the sanctuary (kigongona).
43. A full text of this ordination ceremony is found in the Thaara; p.329-334.
44. See article 12 in Appendix I of the Constitution and Rules of Kenya Foundation of Prophet Church.
45. Zablon Gichuki for example is a bishop although he is a polygamist.
46. Samuel J. Chege op. cit.
47. Ibid.
48. In the constitutions of Kenya Foundation of Prophet Church and the African Holy Ghost Christian Church the first two titles are used. The title of Archbishop is currently more popular among the Akurinu.
49. Samuel John Chege, op. cit.
50. Elijah Gaitho - Nyahururu (shauri) - Service - 27/10/91.
51. Participant observation. Birisha service
24/11/91
52. Samuel John Chege, op. cit.
53. African Holy Ghost Christian Church, Constitution and Rules.

54. Participant observation, Nairobi 15/12/91. Pastor Rufus Gichuki from Nyeri was invited to conduct a wedding in Nairobi although there is a local pastor there.
55. Jacob Nderitu op. cit.
56. Samuel John Chege op. cit.
57. Ibid.
58. Ibid.
59. Letter of Samuel John chege to Rev. Becks, 7/2/90. (Kept in Chege's Files).
60. Letter of Rev. Becks to Samuel John Chege, 9/5/90.
61. Letter of Mbugua and Waigwa to Samuel John Chege - dated 3/8/90 and 28/8/90.
62. Reply of Samuel John Chege to Mbugua and Waigwa, 7/9/90.
63. Ibid.
64. Letter of Samuel John Chege to P. Magri, 3/6/91.
65. Ibid.
66. Ibid.
67. Reply of P. Magri to Samuel John Chege, 1/7/91.
68. Letter of Samuel John Chege to Jan Van Dogger-son, Commission of Interchurch Aid, Nether-lands Reformed Church, 30/7/91.
69. Ibid.
70. Ezekiel Karanja, op. cit.
71. Ibid.
72. Solomon Waigwa, interview, Eldoret 4/10/92.
73. Ezekiel Karanja, op. cit.
74. Elijah Gaithe, op. cit.
75. Solomon Waigwa, op. cit.

76. Participant observation, Eldoret, 4/10/92.
77. West op. cit. p.53
78. Participant observation, Kamakwa, 14/9/91.
79. The High Priest spends all his time in prayer.
80. Zablon Gichuki, op. cit.
81. Participant observation, Birisha, 13/10/91.
82. Quoted in West, op. cit. p.83.
83. Participant observation, Nakuru, 12/5/91. Each person brings what one can afford and outsiders are also invited during such occasions.
84. Pastor Rufus Gichuki explained that the young man was unable to organise the wedding and therefore the church had to assist him.
85. Participant observation, Mathira, Iruri, 13/12/91.
86. West op. cit. p. 87.
87. Ibid.
88. Mugambi J.N.K. and Nasimiyu A. ed. Moral and Ethical Issues in African Christianity Nairobi, Initiatives Publishers, 1992. p.15.
89. Kinoti H.W. in Mugambi J.N.K. & Nasimiyu A. ed. Ibid. p.81.
90. John Muhia, op. cit.
91. Mburu Machua, interview, Nairobi, 16/3/91
92. Mugambi makes a similar observation of members shifting from one church to another among other Christians, See Mugambi and Nasimiyu op. cit. p.15.
93. Elijah Kinyanjui op. cit.
94. Samuel John Chege op. cit.
95. Participant observation, Rusiru, 25/1/92.
96. Ibid.

97. Zablon Gichuki op. cit.
98. Joshua Kingori op. cit.
99. Ibid.
100. Jacob Nderitu op. cit.
101. See Daily Nation 20/8/91, 9/10/91.
102. Minute 11/76 of a meeting held between the Nyandarua District Akurinu leaders and the Administration on 18/3/76, at Nyahururu.
103. Ibid, min 14/76.
104. Ibid. min 22/76
105. Minute 30/76 of a meeting held on 13/5/76 at Nyahururu.
106. Minute 20/76 of a meeting held on 11/6/76.
107. All Akurinu churches Assembly, Constitution and Rules.
108. Ibid.
109. Samuel John Chege, op. cit.
110. Joshua Kariuki, interview, Nakuru 16/1/92. He is a former chairman of the convention.
111. Isaac Mwangi, Interview, Nakuru, Bahati 20/1/92.
112. Solomon Waigwa op. cit.

CHAPTER FIVE

WORSHIP

Worship is one of the unifying elements among the Akurinu. A visit to the Sunday services in different Akurinu groups reveal the uniformity in worship which they have maintained to the present day. However, with the Akurinu becoming more open to the rest of the community, there has been some influences from other churches and vice versa. In this chapter we shall examine the various aspects of Akurinu worship.

5:1 Places of Worship

Among the Akurinu, one can identify two types of places of worship. Some congregations meet in open grounds for their Sunday services. This is particularly the case in urban areas where different Akurinu groups are seen at times in close proximity to one another conducting their worship in open grounds. The main reason is that it is difficult for them to acquire plots to build churches. But even in the rural areas it is not unusual to see them meeting in market places or under trees.

Some members claim that their church is discriminated

against during the allocation of church plots by those in authority. Elijah Kinyanjui, for example, laments that he has applied several times for church plots in Nakuru municipality without success while mission founded churches get them easily.¹ Michael Wanjau holds a similar opinion as he observes that the Catholics and Protestants have been given plots in Muhotetu (Laikipia West) while the Akurinu were left out.²

Prior to independence and the registration of the Akurinu churches it was difficult for them to get church plots due to the negative attitude of the colonial Government and the influence of the mission churches. As noted earlier, in places where the Akurinu had built churches, the plots were donated by some of the members who had some land. The first Akurinu church in Kiambu for example, was built at Gathumuri on a plot given to Samuel Thuku by his father.³ This practice of members donating plots for church buildings has continued and a number of churches are built on the members' property.⁴

Church plots given by members are however, becoming problematic due to unpleasant experiences in recent times. For example, if the land owner differs with the other members and decides to change to another Akurinu group, it follows that the church building on his land also goes to the new group. Some plot donors have overcome this problem by registering the church plot separately under the name of

the church. Joshua Kingori says that he obtained a separate title deed for the half - acre plot he gave to the church to avoid any controversy which might arise between the church and his family members after his death.⁵

This gesture of giving land for church buildings is based on the Akurinu conviction that material wealth including land is a gift from God. Therefore, giving a portion of the land to the church is one way of thanking God. In the same spirit the Akurinu clergy offer their services without any remuneration.

Some churches have managed to get plots in the public lands both in the urban and rural areas on which permanent stone church buildings have been erected. These indeed testify to the changing attitude among the Akurinu towards modernity. In some places like Nyahururu, the Akurinu church is adjacent to other churches. Such a proximity has contributed to the acceptance of the Akurinu by other Christians for they are no longer viewed as a secretive community. Thus, in terms of church buildings the Akurinu are getting closer to other Christians and are no longer associated with the grass - thatched buildings.

An important feature to note about the construction of Akurinu churches is the orientation of the buildings. Whether temporary or permanent, the church building wherever it is located must face the direction of Mount Kenya.⁶ The senior prayer leaders always face the mountain

as they sit at the sanctuary (Kigongona) while the rest of the congregation do so when they turn during prayers. Very few members are aware of this feature about their church and therefore not many can explain its significance or how it became part of their practice.

According to Samuel John Chege the early Arathi were commanded by God to be turning towards Mount Kenya during their prayers.⁷ They had therefore to construct their churches in such a way that they faced the mountain during prayers. He further observed that the turning towards the mountain symbolises that the prayers are for the people and the country as a whole.⁸ This practice has become part of the church tradition which members do not bother to question.

It is more likely that the idea of having people face Mount Kenya during prayers is based on the Gikuyu religious practice. In their myths, Mount Kiri-Nyaga (Mount Kenya) is the holy mountain from which Ngai (God) showed the man Gikuyu the land he and his descendant were to own. Furthermore, Gikuyu was told to turn towards this Mountain whenever he had problems and pray to Ngai. In the words of Kenyatta,

"Before they parted, Mugai told Gikuyu that whenever he was in need he should make a sacrifice and raise his hands towards Kiri-Nyaga (the mountain of mystery) and the Lord of Nature will come to his assistance."⁹

Among the Gikuyu, whenever elders prayed, they faced Mount

Kenya with their hands raised.¹⁰

As we noted in chapter three, the early Arathi were given the guiding commandments from Mount Kenya. The fourth commandment required them to go back to their traditional Gikuyu customs. It is therefore, likely that the elders adopted this practice to fulfil the commandment without having to explain to the rest of the members. In any case, as we have mentioned before, the content of the Uhoru wa Kirima, (the message from the mountain) commonly referred to as Mundwa, is known by very few surviving members. So we can conclude that this practice is based on the Gikuyu way of worship.

Some members however search for scripture passages in order to justify their turning towards Mount Kenya with raised hands. The Bible is rich in examples of God meeting some chosen people on mountains. Mount Sinai is outstanding for it was here that God revealed himself to Moses, (Ex. 3:14); entered into a covenant and gave the laws (Ex. 20). Moses was commanded to warn the people not to get near the Holy mountain or to touch it otherwise one would die (Ex 19:12). Prophet Elijah is reported to have challenged the prophets of Baal at Mount Carmel (I Kings 18:30 - 46) The Bible in this case confirms what was already a Gikuyu practice and therefore the early Arathi could see themselves as perpetuating the true worship of God which the mission churches had neglected.

It should however be pointed out that other than facing towards Mount Kenya, the Akurinu do not make pilgrimages to this mountain. Thus, it is not regarded as an earthly Zion as it is the case with some mountains among other independent churches.¹¹

The only association of Mount Kenya with Zion was in 1935 during the Meru Exodus. The participants, as mentioned earlier, believed that they were going to settle at Zion, but with the disastrous ending of their mission, the notion of an earthly Zion came to end.

So far, we have looked at the external aspects of the Akurinu Church buildings. Since worship takes places inside the building, (where such buildings have been constructed) it is important to describe the inside aspect as well. An ordinary Akurinu church has no seats or pews. Other than the seats in the Sanctuary for the senior prayer leaders and a bench for the ordained elders in front of the sanctuary, the rest of the members sit on the floor which is covered with a thick layer of dry grass or banana leaves. There are various reasons given for the use of grass and the absence of pews in the church.

Firstly, the grass acts as a substitute for the seats. Most churches have uncemented floors and the grass or banana leaves are used to cover the dust. Akurinu services are usually long taking an average of four

to five hours.¹² Sitting on the grass for such a long period is more comfortable than sitting on benches. It is common to see people change sitting positions or even stretching their legs as they service proceeds.

Secondly, the preference of grass to pews is based on the Akurinu view of thahu or ritual uncleanness. If a person with thahu sits on a chair or a pew, it should be washed with water before another person can sit on it. The use of grass makes the task of such cleansing simple, for it requires the removal of the grass with thahu and the replacement with a fresh bundle.

Thirdly, worship among the Akurinu involves a lot of singing characterised by vigorous dancing and jumping. The grass-covered open floors offer an ideal ground for such activities. The pews would curtail the free movement and dancing by the members which is considered to be an important aspect of praising God during worship. Furthermore, during moments of Spirit possession, some members are thrown to the floor.¹³ It is safer when they land on the grass.

Some Akurinu churches, however, are adopting the use of pews. In the case of the African Holy Ghost Christian Church, Samuel John Chege says that it was the youth who vehemently insisted, from 1980, that there should be seats in the church.¹⁴ After much discussion, the elders finally reluctantly gave in to the demand. But even where

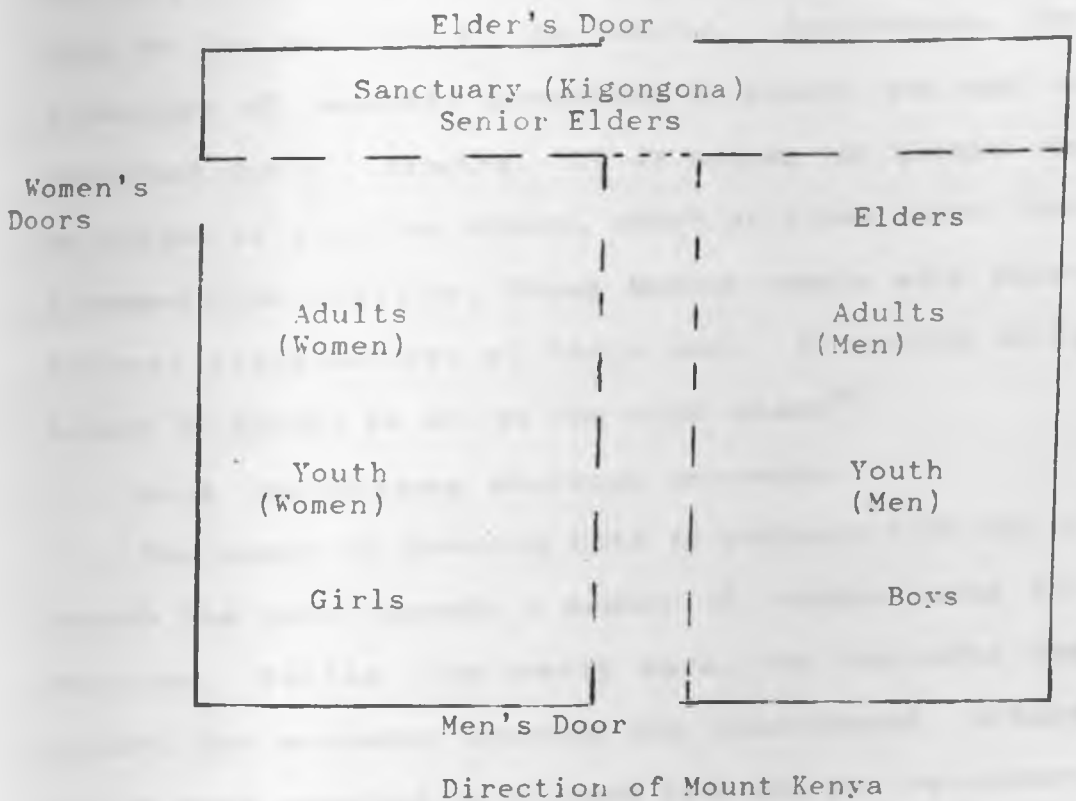
there are pews in modern stone buildings either grass or mats are spread on the floor.

No church building is regarded as complete without an extra one or more smaller buildings. Among the Akurinu the church building should only be used for worship purposes. Meetings to discuss other church affairs even by the elders should be held elsewhere. This is unlike some other Christian communities where the church building could be used for example, as a nursery school during the week. Their justification for such a stand is to keep the house of God holy. To cater for other non-ecclesiastical meetings, every Akurinu church should have an extra house or houses called gaaru. The term gaaru is a Meru word for a hut for a man or boys. It is the equivalent of a thingira among the Gikuyu. According to John Muhia, the Arathi who went on the exodus to Meru found this term to be short and beautiful to pronounce.¹⁵ After their return from Meru in 1940, they continued to use it for the huts they built adjacent to their churches. Today the term has acquired a broader connotation for women have their gaaru as well. Apart from being used as a meeting place, the gaaru is also used as a changing room especially in cases where a church has no vestry. Among the groups where money is not allowed in the church, members leave it in the gaaru. Ideally, the church building should not be left unattended. There should be someone residing in the gaaru

as a caretaker¹⁶. Among some groups, like the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa, African Holy Ghost Christian Church and God's Word and Holy Ghost Church, the leaders live in the gaaru at the headquarters of these churches¹⁷. The gaaru is also used as a guest house for Akurinu who are on safari. The one at Siribwet in Nyahururu has about twenty beds¹⁸. In the urban areas where housing is a major problem, the working young men and women do reside in the gaaru of their respective churches. Thus, the gaaru is multipurpose and has become an integral part of the church.

5:2 Order in the Church

The order in which people enter and sit in the Akurinu church is worth examining as it reveals some features that are not found in other churches. The following diagram shows the position taken by the congregation on the basis of gender, age and status.



Dig. II Seating arrangement in the church.

Every Akurinu church has a minimum of three doors as indicated in the above diagram. The men and boys use the front door while the women and girls use the door on the left side. The senior elders use their own door leading to the Kigongona (Sanctuary). It is interesting to watch men and women part ways on getting to the church in order to enter through their respective doors.

Inside the church, there is a path dividing it into two parts, the left side being for women and the right for men.¹⁹ On top of that, people on each side sit according to their age with the adults taking the front part followed by the youth and the children sit at the

back. As noted earlier, age is an important factor among the Akurinu. The pattern reflects the stages one has to pass through in the life of the church until one gets to the position of the adults. Furthermore, the groupings of members according to gender and age is important during singing. It is common for groups to be called to sing for others, which at times turns into a competition activity. Young babies remain with their mothers irrespective of their sex. A visitor will always be guided to sit at the right place²⁰.

5:3 Dressing during worship

The manner of dressing both in ordinary life and in church has gone through a number of changes among the Akurinu. During the early days, the converts who joined the movement wearing the traditional Gikuyu attire were required to discard them and put on western clothing. Maritha Mwhaki for example recalls how rings and beads were thrown away on her arrival at Musa Mucai's home in 1929²¹. Thus, although the Akurinu were opposed to the European cultural invasion, they were equally opposed to some Gikuyu customs which they viewed as unchristian.

After the church had taken form, it became necessary to have some uniform to distinguish the members. They began to wear two white sheets (manjoho) which were tied on the shoulders and criss-crossed on the chest. A girdle was used to tie the two sheets around the waist²². Initially

the turbans were for the Ahoi or prayer leaders. This was based on the consecration of Aaron and his sons to priesthood by Moses (Lev. 8:1ff). The older members were at first reluctant to wear the turbans for it made one too conspicuous during a time when they were facing persecution from the colonial administrators. According to Elijah Kinyanjui, the young men also began to wear the turbans and by 1940, it had become part of their uniform.²³ The women were putting on a white head scarf.

As mentioned earlier, when a group of Akurinu led by Elijah Kinyanjui visited the Roho church in Kakamega in 1940 they were given Kanzus which they brought back with them.²⁴ These were easier to wear than the sheets (manjoho). Joshua Mburu who had come from Muranga and joined the Akurinu at Gathumuri (Kiambu), had some skills in tailoring. He converted the sheets into tunics which became the official Akurinu dressing.²⁵

Although the western clothing was allowed, there were limitations which members had to observe. For example they were discouraged from wearing impressive clothes. Men were required to cut their trousers above the knee so that they became a pair of shorts which was referred to as "Karobo tatu".²⁶ So when one put on a dust coat the shorts could not be seen. Ties and shoes were not allowed. Members then resorted to using sandals made from old tyres or even wooden ones.²⁷ Such a simple way of dressing was seen as

an expression of their non-worldly attitude. The men who dressed impressively were described as ciumbani or womanisers, a behaviour that could not be entertained among the Akurinu.

As more young people joined the Akurinu movement, the question of dressing became a problem in the church. According to Ezekiel Karanja, he refused to cut his trousers after joining the church and argued that, "the Holy Spirit called him while he was in trousers".²⁸ So, the young people could not see any theological justification for not wearing shoes, ties or suits. In 1960, there was a revelation through a prophet that God did not want men to go to church in shorts.²⁹ Those who were wearing shorts discarded them and reverted to trousers. Today, members who can afford suits and ties are wearing them. It should however, be noted that there are some older members who still observe the simple form of dressing.

As regards the dressing during worship, the Akurinu fall under two categories. Firstly, there are those who have uniforms which all worshippers must wear while in church. For example in the Holy Ghost church of East Africa, the Christian Holy Ghost Church and God's Word Holy Ghost Church, men wear white Kanzus and the turban while women wear long white dresses and head scarfs.³⁰ Secondly there are those groups like the African Holy Ghost Christian Church where only the ahoi (the prayer leaders)

and the ordained clergy wear the white robes while the rest remain in their normal clothes. The white turban and head scarf must however, be worn. In the African Mission of Holy Ghost Church, the colours for the worship robes vary from person to person. It is not a member who chooses the colour. The Holy Spirit through a prophet reveals the colour or colours for each person. It is common to see a robe with several colours such as white, green yellow or pink. There are some who are told to put on veils of a particular colour while in church." This is a major difference between this church and other Akurinu groups.

The vestments for the clergy are the same except in the African Mission of Holy Ghost Church. The ahoi or prayer leaders wear the white kanzu and turban. In the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa and God's Word and Holy Ghost Church, one can only identify the ahoi by their seating position for they dress like the rest of the members." In the African Mission of Holy Ghost Church the Archbishop has special decorated robes, a pointed cap and more significantly, a collar. This is a clear imitation of the mission churches. The bishops retain the white robes but put on caps while in the church. According to Jacob Nderitu, the current Archbishop of this church, he was commanded through a prophecy to be dressing in this manner together with his bishops."

Another feature to note in the African Mission of Holy

Ghost Church is that members have numbers, letters or other symbols like stars, triangles sewn on their robes. These are said to have been revealed through prophets and are considered to be special gifts given to individuals by the Holy Spirit. While no specific meaning is given for these symbols it appears that among these people, they carry an eschatological implication. Among the Akurinu as in other churches there is emphasis on the existence of the Book of names kept in heaven which will be used on the judgement day. Members who already have the symbols, numbers or letters consider themselves as already written in the Book of heaven. People are aware of the importance of personal reference numbers either on the national identity cards, in the co-operative society or in employment. The symbols then serve as one of the criteria for the identification for the citizens of heaven.

The wearing of white robes by the Akurinu is based on the common belief among Christians that white colour symbolises purity or holiness. The Bible has several examples of holy men appearing in white. During the transfiguration the garments of Jesus became intensely white (Mk 9:2 - 3). The two men who appeared to the disciples after the ascension of Jesus were dressed in white (Acts 1:20). The book of revelation has many references where those who are eligible for eternal life will be clothed in white robes (Rev. 3:4, 3:18, 7:9,

19:14). On this basis, some groups like the Christian Holy Ghost Church, who are more conservative and legalistic, go to the extent of wearing white clothes at all times. Some even put on white shoes in order to have a complete uniform.³⁴

Apart from the dressing there are other accompaniments carried during worship which are worth mentioning. During such ceremonies like baptism, marriage and burial the elders (ahoi) carry cotton cloth bags which are suspended from the shoulders. Some will carry two of such bags one from each shoulder. In the bag is a copy of the Bible and a hymn book.³⁵ The Bible symbolises the law for which the elders are the custodians. The elders are indeed the witnesses and any promises made in such ceremonies are taken seriously. The hymn books have a similar significance to the Bible for the hymns among the Akurinu express their religious convictions.

In the African Mission of Holy Ghost Church it is common to see members carrying guiding rods both in church and even outside. These are said to be gifts given to some people by the Holy Spirit.³⁶ The shape, size and colour of the rod is specified during the revelation. There is no explanation given for these rods but it may be based on the miraculous rod that Moses carried during the exodus.³⁷

Before we conclude this section, it should be noted that among the Akurinu any item to be worn such as clothes

or shoes either for religious or normal use must be prayed for first by a muhoi. This is a form of cleansing of the items just in case they had contracted thahu or uncleanness during the manufacturing process, which would otherwise be passed over to the owner. The vestments of the ahoi, prayer leaders, are handled with great care. They are washed by a man in a special basin and are normally left in the vestry or gaaru ³⁸. Women are not supposed to wash them for this would render them unfit for use in the kigongona. According to one informant, Peter Kigera, he used to go from Nairobi to Muranga on Saturdays to wash the vestments of Jassan Kanini, a senior muhoi, for nobody else would touch them³⁹.

With younger people taking up leadership posts as well as the pressure from the educated youth, some of the rules pertaining to the manner of dressing will have to change. The groups that will remain rigid will undoubtedly lose the majority of their youth members to the more liberal churches.

5:4 The Akurinu Liturgy

The Sunday worship is an important occasion which all members are expected to attend. It is a long lively ritual during which both the ordained and the laity are actively involved. In a fully developed church, there are five clergy men who normally preside over worship. They include the mutongoria (leader of the congregation), the muhoi. (prayer leader)

the mubatithania (baptiser), the muhunjia (preacher) and the mugai wa githomo (the programmer). In some small congregations one person can play two roles. Some churches like the African Mission of Holy Ghost Church, make a distinction between the baptiser and the one who lays on hands, Muiganiriri moko on the baptised persons.⁴⁸ Equally important during worship is the hymn leader, muinithia who is chosen due to his outstanding ability in singing.

The procedure followed during a Sunday service is the same among all the Akurinu, a testimony to their common background. Services begin at 10.00 or 11.00 a.m. and continue upto 2.00 or 3.00 p.m. It is not unusual to find some services going on up to the evening. There are two forms of opening the Sunday service depending on the occasion. In a normal service, the members who arrive early wait for others either outside the church or in the gaaru. When a quorum is made, and especially with the arrival of the pastor, the members in churches that have uniforms, change into their worship robes. Some modern churches have vestries for the ordained attached to the kigongona while other two rooms at the men's entrance act as changing rooms for men and women respectively.⁴⁹

At the doors, the members remove their shoes as a sign of their reverence for the house of God. This is in keeping with what Moses did at the burning Bush (Ex. 3:5). It should be noted that in some churches like the Holy

Ghost Church of East Africa, money is not allowed in the Church so members either leave it in the gaaru or in the changing rooms where someone keeps guard.⁴² According to Elijah Kinyanjui, all Akurinu were not entering their churches with money. They argued that they could not pray for the departure of the white man while at the same time they kept the money with the crown of the European king, in their pockets.⁴³ Today, those who do not allow money in the church justify the practice by referring to the incident when Jesus chased away the traders and money changers from the Temple, thus cleansing it (Mt. 21:12 - 13).

The second form of entering the church pertains to the occasions when there are ceremonies like marriage, ordination or joint fellowships, which are normally attended by members from other places. In such occasions, the senior elders (ahoi) present get into the church about fifteen minutes before the rest. They hold prayers in the kigongona at the end of which they sing a hymn to notify the members to be ready to enter. At this juncture they sing the responsorial hymn which involves both those inside and outside the church. The hymn is sung in the following manner;⁴⁴

1. Question (by those inside)
Mwathii ku agendi aya,
mwi na thanju na rigu?

Response (by those outside)
Ni rugendo tunyitite,

Twirituo ni Ngai witu,
Twona kuru twona kwega,
Rugongo kana kianda,
Tuguthii gwake mucii.

2. Question:
Kai Mutangitigira,
Mutakiri aingi?

Response;
Aca - ni tutiri guoya,
Twi na arata hakuhi,
Araika aingi me ho,
Na Mwathani Jesu Kristo,
Niwe mututangiri.

3. Question:
Riu tondu muguthii,
Muguthii gukora ki?

Response:
Ni managi o managi,
Mwathani agatuhe,
Tutigacoka guthina,
Ni kwa Ngai tugatura,
Mithenya yothe yothe.

4. Question:
Tungigiuka na ithui,
Hihi uguo mwathura?

Response:
Aca-ni mutingireguo,
Uguo toguo wega ma,
Jesu Kristo niamwitaga,
Nake no amwetereire,
Mucii ucio muthaka.

5. Verse four is repeated but the question is asked by those outside and the response is given by those inside.

(The translation of the hymn would run as follows)

1. Question (by those inside)
Where are you pilgrims heading to,
with walking sticks and food?

Response: (by those outside)
We are on a pilgrimage
Commanded by our Lord.
Whether we get good or bad places,

A ridge or a valley,
We shall go to his city.

2. Question
Aren't you afraid,
Since you are just a few?

Response:
No, we have no fear,
For we have friends nearby,
Several angels are around,
And the Lord Jesus Christ,
Is our supporter.

3. Question:
Now that you go,
What shall you find?

Response:
It is the precious, only precious gifts,
That the Lord will give us,
We shall not be poor again,
We shall live with God,
Forever and ever.

4. Question:
And if we also come,
Would that be wrong?

Response:
No, you cannot be rejected,
That would be really good,
Jesus Christ keeps calling,
And he is waiting for you,
In that beautiful city.)

By the time they sing the last verse they are already getting into the church. This particular hymn is known among the Akurinu as Ruimbo rua kwarahura, (the awakening hymn.)⁴⁵ Kwarahura or awakening in this case involves four things. Firstly, it is a form of exchanging greetings between the two groups. Secondly, the hymn acts as a gesture of welcoming the outside group into the church. Thirdly, it is meant to spiritually awaken all the members

especially when they are reminded of their eschatological home in heaven where Jesus is waiting for them. Finally there is emphasis on the need for unity during the pilgrimage while in this world as illustrated in the fourth verse which is sang by the two groups in turns. It should be noted that any persons who arrive after the service has began also sing the awakening hymn before getting into the church following the above pattern.

This pattern of entering the church seems to have developed quite early among the Akurinu. According to John Muhia, they were singing this hymn in 1936 during their exodus to Meru.⁴⁶ The participants of the Meru exodus regarded themselves as pilgrims heading for Zion (Mount Kenya). Later, the hymn continued to be sang whenever groups of Akurinu met as well as on Sunday meetings. Today, it is characteristic of even a single Mukurinu to kwarahura before entering anothers house during a visit.⁴⁷

After getting into the church all join in vigorous singing and dancing accompanied by drumming and clapping of hands. About three hymns are sung and sometimes more, starting with hymn 119 from the Kikuyu hymnal Nyimbo cia kuinira Ngai.⁴⁸ These are supposed to set the mood for the day's worship.

The programmer then calls for the congregation to prepare for the opening prayer. This will apply to all services and ceremonial occasions. The preparation

involves the removal of the turbans by the men for they should not pray with their heads covered. The Pauline teaching that men should have their heads uncovered while women should cover their heads during prayers is observed in all the Akurinu churches (1 Cor. 11:4 - 7). The congregation then turns their backs towards the Kigongona and face the direction of Mount Kenya. As mentioned earlier, there is no biblical basis for facing Mount Kenya and therefore, it can only be based on the Gikuyu way of worship. The hymn leader, muinithia then starts the prayer hymn. The hymns for prayers are hymn 8, Nyimbo cia roho mutheru and hymn 11, Nyimbo cia kuinira Ngai. As soon as the singing begins, doors and windows are closed, creating an atmosphere of awe. This is further heightened by the fact that there is no drumming, dancing or clapping and the voices are kept relatively low during the prayer hymn. As the hymn comes to an end the congregation kneels down. The men raise their hands while women stretch theirs in front in a receiving position.⁴⁹

The biblical basis for this practice is Ps.134 where the psalmist says,

"Come bless the Lord,
all you servants of the Lord,
who stand night after night,
in the house of the Lord.
Lift up your hands in the Sanctuary
and bless the Lord.
The Lord maker of heaven and earth bless you
from Zion."

Another justification for the raising of hands during

prayer is found in Paul's advice to Timothy where he states;

" I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarrelling...."(II Tim, 2:8)

The older members, however, say that they were taught to raise hands during prayers by the Holy Spirit.⁵⁰ It should be noted that the Gikuyu elders were also raising their hands as they faced towards Mount Kirinyaga (Mount Kenya) during prayers.⁵¹ Thus, the Akurinu have retained an old Gikuyu practice which they justify with the biblical parallels.

There is a set pattern for starting prayers, which is a responsorial refrain which runs as follows;

Muhoi Ndahoya Ngai na Roho na Jesu Kristo
 Mukuri witu x3

Andu othe Kwendaini gwaku na kwa Roho na kwa
 Jesu Kristo Mukuri witu Amen x3

Muhoi Ngai Baba turathime x3

Andu othe Kwendaini gwaku na kwa Roho na kwa
 Jesu Kristo Mukuri witu Amen x3

(Prayer Leader I beseech God the Father, the Holy
 Spirit and Jesus Christ our Saviour.x3

Congregation By your love and of the Holy Spirit and of
 Jesus Christ our Saviour, Amen x3

Prayer Leader God our Father have mercy on us x3

Congregation By your love and of the Holy Spirit

and Jesus Christ our Saviour, Amen. x3

Prayer Leader God our Father bless us x3

Congregation By your love and of the Holy Spirit
and of Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.
x3)

The Lord's prayer is then recited three times by the whole congregation.⁵² The prayer leader then leads the congregation in a long prayer which dwells on various aspects of life. During the prayer, the congregation also joins in and each person prays loudly, an expression of the Akurinu belief in universal priesthood whereby each person can approach God in prayer. During prayers, there is no discrimination between men and women. Another feature common during prayers is the possession of some members by the Holy Spirit. The men usually roar loudly while women scream or make hissing sounds while others speak in tongues. At the same time some members keep responding to the prayer leader in acknowledgement of his prayer by making chorus responses like, "Uguo no guo", (that is true), "ini" (yes), or just "Amen". Thus everybody is actively involved in the prayer in one way or another making it a corporate activity. At the end of the prayer the doors and windows are opened and the congregation turns towards the kigongona.

According to one informant, Samuel John Chege, the Akurinu close doors and windows during prayer because they

do not close their eyes.⁵³ The closed church offers a suitable atmosphere for concentration in the prayers. Another reason given is that Jesus taught his disciples not to expose themselves when they pray (Mt. 6:6). Njeri has suggested that the closing of doors and windows is meant to keep off evil spirits.⁵⁴ None of the informants gave this as a reason for the closing of doors and windows.

Several hymns are then sang in preparation for the sermon. Previously, all Akurinu would start their sermon by reading the Ten Commandments (Ex. 20), as an indication of their concern to keep the Law.⁵⁵ This pattern is changing and according to Samuel John Chege, pastors in the African Holy Ghost Church "are being encouraged to use other scripture readings instead of repeating EX.20 all the time."⁵⁶ In the African Mission of Holy Ghost Church, they still observe the reading of the Law which must be read before noon. The importance of the Law is expressed in the words of one preacher who told the congregation that, "if a person misses the reading of the Law, he or she has missed the sermon of the day."⁵⁷

The preacher then delivers the sermon of the day. He need not have a prepared sermon since the Akurinu believe in the guidance of the Holy Spirit in selecting the themes and biblical references appropriate for each day. It is common to see a preacher organise himself as the singing proceeds. There is much use of local human experiences and

application of the scripture to the daily needs and problems of the people. Emphasis is put on the need to remain firm in keeping of the Law in preparation for the Parousia, the return of Christ.

Then there follows the testimonies which take a lot of time for there is no limit to the number of people to testify. Confessions and testimonies revolve around personal experiences such as rescue from spiritual enslavement by Jesus, miraculous cures of various diseases, the joy for having one's name written in the Book of life and praises to God for giving the Holy Spirit who guides and protects them. Those who testify normally read scripture passages or sing hymns related to their testimonies.¹⁸

Among the Akurinu, visitors are taken seriously due to the belief that some could be envoys sent by the Holy Spirit to deliver some message. Thus, they are given a chance to greet the congregation. It is usual for them either to read a biblical passage or to sing a hymn as part of the greetings. Some may claim to have been sent by the Holy Spirit to deliver a message, a scripture reading or a hymn to the congregation.¹⁹ The announcements are then made at this point.

The last part of the service is the collection of the offerings. As mentioned earlier, the Akurinu have different teachings about the handling of money within the

church. For example the African Holy Ghost Christian Church allow contributions to be given in church while the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa and God's Word and Holy Ghost Church conduct the collections outside the Church after service. Whether done inside or outside, the prayer - leader leads in a thanks giving prayer for the offertory, followed by a final prayer to end the service. In the African Mission of Holy Ghost Church, the last prayer, is said at 3 p.m. The keeping to this hour is not clear but it could be an attempt to observe the third Jewish hour of prayer.

It is worth noting that throughout the service, the prophetesses and prophets (Anabii) are usually very active with some receiving revelations and talking in tongues while others give the interpretations. When a revelation is received, the service is stopped for a time to allow the prophet to reveal the message. One observes a tense atmosphere as people wait for the interpreter to give the message. Such revelation could be on the misdeeds of a member, the colours for the robes of a person, warnings, or the names of unbaptised persons. This feature is more common in the African Mission of Holy Ghost Churches.⁶⁰ The gift of prophecy will be dealt with further at a later stage in chapter seven.

In concluding this section we make the following observations. Firstly, the Akurinu have developed an

original form of liturgy which is a synthesis of the Judeo-Christian and Gikuyu ways of worship. Secondly, the formalism of using prepared sermons and prayers does not exist in the Akurinu churches for they believe in the guidance of the Holy Spirit in selecting the scripture reading relevant for the day as well as in spontaneous prayers. This is why some groups are opposed to the idea of sending pastors for theological training for it is tantamount to underrating the guidance of the Holy Spirit in their work. Thirdly, Akurinu services are lively occasions during which all members are actively involved. This is to ensure that each person shares with others the gifts given by the Holy Spirit in praising God during worship. Finally, the whole service is a long ritual marked by joyful, vigorous singing and dancing and intermittent moments of serious prayers and preaching. Sundkler's observation on the impact of African heritage on the ritualistic tendencies in the independent churches is worth mentioning as he puts it,

"The African heritage shows itself in the fact that the anti-ritualistic programme of the mission is replaced by a tendency to move to the other extreme, to lay a strong emphasis on the importance of ritual"⁶¹.

5:5 Other weekly and annual prayers

The early Arathi considered themselves as a Church chosen to reawaken the community to the true worship of

God. As prophets, (Arathi) they were to be exemplary. It is for this reason that they spent most of their time in prayers to God following the example of the Old Testament prophets and the early Christian community. The first Akurinu community which lived at Musa Mucai's home at Magina in Kiambu for four years spent most of their time in prayers.⁵²

After 1932 the members left Mucai's home and returned to their homes. They were however meeting one Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays for communal worship. Gradually there emerged a weekly pattern of worship. Such meetings would extend into the night to cater for those who were employed. According to Zablon Gichuki, the Akurinu in the settler farms in the Rift Valley could only meet after work or during the night for the Wednesday and Friday prayers.⁵³ They were however, accused by the colonial authorities for such night meetings which were regarded as forums for anti-government activities. The non-Akurinu would further complain of the disturbances caused by the drum-beating as the Akurinu sang their hymns.

As more Akurinu took up jobs and others engaged in business after independence, the three-day pattern of weekly prayers is no longer maintained. Furthermore, the school going children cannot afford the time for such prayers. It is thus left for individuals, especially the unemployed, who can afford the time. Paul Muriuki for

example, says that he realized that he is all alone in the church on Wednesday and Friday and has therefore decided to pray at home.⁶⁴ Sunday, then, is the main day when most members meet for worship.

There are two groups, however worth mentioning as regards their weekly prayers. The God's Word and Holy Ghost Church (Kahiriga) at Rusiru has maintained their weekly pattern of worship. This has been possible partly because of their communal living which they have upheld since 1949. As we mentioned before, the Rusiru headquarters operates like a monastery with the High priest and some elders living permanently in several gaaru within the church compound in order to devote all their time to prayers. A description of the weekly pattern of worship at Rusiru will illustrate their life of prayer.⁶⁵

Every morning the drum is sounded a few minutes to 6 a.m. to give the members time to arrive at the church. Those who live far from the church start their journey earlier. The morning prayers are held daily between 6 and 7 a.m. Then, in the evening, the drum is sounded at 3 p.m. and members converge in the church between 3.30 to 4 p.m. for the evening prayers daily.⁶⁶ All those who can afford to attend are expected to be present during those prayers dressed in their white worship robes and dresses.

Friday is observed both as a day of rest and worship in the God's Word and Holy Ghost Church. Apart from those

in school and the employed members the rest are expected to abstain from performing heavy duties and attend prayers in the church. They stop working at 6 p.m on Thursday and resume at 6 p.m. on Friday.⁶⁷ The reason given for resting and worshipping on Friday is that there was a prophecy in this church which revealed that an important event will take place on this day in future. Thus, members await anxiously and in prayer for the fulfilment of this promise which will make Friday a great day.⁶⁸ One can possibly see elements of Good Friday, the day Christ was crucified as the background on which such hope is based. But any suggestion of the Parousia taking place on a Friday was not supported by these members.⁶⁹ Whatever event they expect remains therefore, one of the unknown mysteries of God.

The Christian Holy Ghost Church of East Africa at Wanyororo (Nakuru) also observe Friday as a day of worship during which no work should be done. As in Rusiru there are some old men, young men and women who reside in the gaaru at Wanyororo. Since most of the members in this group are unemployed, it is possible for them to assemble for their Friday prayers.⁷⁰

For members who live far from the church, they hold their weekly prayers at home. Zablon Gichuki for example, says that he has never changed the pattern of worship which he was taught by John Muhia when he joined the movement in 1939.⁷¹ Thus, other than the daily prayers, he observes the

Friday worship in his gaaru at home. He also prays three times in the night at 9 p.m., 12 midnight and at 3 a.m. daily.⁷²

Despite variations in the patterns of weekly worship, it is evident that the Akurinu lay a lot of emphasis on prayers both at the individual and communal levels. Their belief in universal priesthood requires one to be prayerful at all times irrespective of the set days of formal worship.

Apart from the weekly prayers, the Akurinu have three important communal annual prayers which are held in January, July and December. According to one informant, these prayers are based on the Deuteronomic laws given to Moses (Deut. 16:16) in which the Jewish males were to hold thanksgiving prayers to God three times in a year. Each Akurinu church selects a place where the chosen elders converge and remain in the gaaru for the whole duration of the prayers which last about a week.

The participants range from six to twelve elders representing different areas. They must be free from all forms of thahu before they attend these prayers. This requirement re-echoes the conditions which were observed by the Gikuyu elders who were chosen to pray to Ngai. Kenyatta summarises these conditions in the following words:

"The elders entrusted with these sacrificial duties are not allowed to have any sexual

intercourse or to sleep in their wives' huts during the preparation and performance. This period covers eight nights, six nights before the offering of the sacrifice and two nights after the sacrifice is offered."⁷³

In the gaaru, a young man or one of the newly ordained pastors does the cooking for the elders.

The main theme in these prayers is on thanksgiving to God. The January prayers for example, are meant to thank God for the New Year and to seek for his guidance and blessings. The mid-year prayers held in July are for thanking God for caring for his people during the past half of the year while the end of year prayers in December are for thanking God for his protection in the past year.⁷⁴

As a thanksgiving occasion and in accordance with Deut. 16:16, no elder should come empty handed to these prayers. Each one of them brings a gift in form of money, animals or farm produce. Such gifts include the contributions by members which the elder presents on their behalf. The gifts are used for the upkeep of the elders during the period of the prayers.⁷⁵

The procedure during these annual prayers is worth noting. The first day is preparatory and each elder engages in personal prayers seeking for forgiveness in order to be fit to pray for others. On the other days, there are five prayer sessions on each day held at a three-hour intervals. The elders pray in the kigongona at 6 a.m, 9 a.m, noon, 3 p.m and at 6 p.m. The rest of the time is

spent by the senior elders giving deeper instructions to the junior elders in matters of church life. Taken together with the weekly prayers, the annual prayers add to the special significance of prayers among the Akurinu.

5.6 Literature for worship

The Akurinu, like most other independent churches have no written literature for worship of their own. The only material they have is a hymnal which was produced in 1977 by Daudi Ikigu⁷⁶. They have therefore used the literature that was produced by the mission churches.

The Bible is the main text used during worship. Since the rise of the Akurinu Churches the Bible has been a major factor in shaping the life of this church. It is worth noting that the rise of this movement coincided with the translation of the New Testament into the Gikuyu language in 1926. As some writers have observed, the Bible in vernacular contributed significantly to the rise of the independent churches in Africa⁷⁷. The ability to read the Bible in vernacular was like a discovery to new spiritual gates as Mbiti has rightly put it;

"As in Acts 2, the local christians now for the first time hear each of us in his own language,... we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God(Acts 2:6-11). The Spirit of God unlocks ears and people hear the word of God, speaking to them in its most persuasive form. Local christians cannot remain the same after that"⁷⁸. (Emphasis mine).

Such was experience of the first generation of the

Akurinu. Joseph Ngang'a, the first to receive the Holy Spirit went into seclusion in his hut and studied the Bible for three years.⁷⁹ John Mungara also spent one year in a store, studying the Bible after his call to become a murathi in 1927.⁸⁰ According to John Muhia, the Arathi who stayed at Musa Mucai's home for four years (1929 - 1932) spent most of their time studying the Bible.⁸¹ Those who were literate would read and interpret the scripture for the illiterate members. It was in a sense a beginners' Bible class.

Since the Akurinu did not want to imitate what the European missionaries were teaching, they turned to the Bible from where they got their guidance on how to organise their new movement. John Muhia recalls that during the formative years, they searched in the Bible and identified the teachings and practices which are observed by the Akurinu to the present.⁸²

We mentioned earlier that one of the Mount Kenya commandments required the Akurinu to avoid anything of European origin and revert to their Gikuyu customs. The Bible must have been instrumental in supporting such a view because there is much parallelism between the Jewish custom as recorded there and the Gikuyu customs. In this regard, the Bible offered a confirmation that what the Arathi and their forefathers were doing was the right thing acceptable to God. The use of the Bible by African Christians in

justifying their cultural heritage is well put by Mbiti when he writes;

"Africans hear and see a confirmation of their own culture, social and religious life in the life and history of the Jewish people as portrayed and recorded in the pages of the Bible."⁸³

Among the Akurinu the Bible is regarded as one whole unified text from Genesis to Revelation. Such remarks as would indicate a distinction between the Old and New Testaments are rarely made. To them, the Ibuku (the Book), as they refer to the Bible, contains the Word of God which is timeless. According to one informant the word remains relevant at all times.⁸⁴ This explains why the Sinaic Laws of Moses are read every Sunday in some churches, for they are as applicable today as they were in the Old Testament period. Another informant remarked that since God does not change so is his Word as contained in the Bible.⁸⁵

When making decisions in matters of the church, the Bible is used as the final authority. Anything that does not conform with what is in the Book is rejected. For example the question of the ordination of women to priesthood does not arise among the Akurinu because the Holy Book does not approve of it. The authority of the Bible is well illustrated by the remarks of Samuel John Chege who put it thus;

"Uhoro ungiruga ciugo, O na ukoruo uthonndeketwo ni mundu uri na ndingiri tutingiwitikia Londu gutiri ukirite uhoro ucio way Ibuku."⁸⁶

(If any teaching is contrary to the Word even if it is from an educated person holding a degree we can not accept it because no teaching is greater than what is in the Book).

The Bible symbolises the armoury of a mukurinu in the fight against Satan. The following verse of a hymn which was popular in the early days illustrates this point;

"Agano na Ijiri nicio itimu na ngo tutikahotwo turi na cio."⁸⁷

(The Old and the New Testaments are the spear and shield we shall not be defeated since we have them.)

The Bible is at times used as though it transmits some mystical power which makes things happen or effective. For example, during important ceremonies like baptism, ordination, marriage and burial, the presiding elders carry Bibles in their bags hang from their shoulders. The importance of the Bible is further demonstrated during ordination whereby a candidate is given a copy of the Bible on top of the priestly robes.⁸⁸ This symbolises that he is now authorised to propagate and interpret the Word to other people.

Since the Akurinu do not have prepared sermons, it is usual to have several scripture readings from different books during a single service. Furthermore, when giving their testimonies, members normally request for certain scripture passages to be read as an elaboration or emphasis of their testimony. Visitors will likewise 'greet' the congregation by reading a verse from the Bible. Thus, in worship, the word in the Bible becomes the main item to be

shared among the members. We should hasten to mention that even the illiterate members take pains to master some verses which they readily quote when they give their testimonies.⁸⁹ Moreover, it is common to find them carrying copies of the Bible as they go to church. If need arises they can always request a literate member to read for them.

Great reverence is observed in the handling of the Holy Book. Whoever reads it in church must do so while standing. Women are not allowed to read it in church but they can request a man to read on their behalf. This as mentioned earlier, is based on the Pauline teaching on the conduct of women in the church. (ITim 2:11 - 12)

Apart from the Bible the Akurinu use the Anglican Book of Common Prayer, (Ibuku ria Thaara) especially when conducting ceremonies. They however use it selectively omitting sections which they consider to be irrelevant. Some groups have extracted the relevant sections for such ceremonies like marriage and ordination for ease of using them.⁹⁰

The singing of hymns is an important aspect of worship among the Akurinu. For a long time the only hymn book they were using was the Anglican Kikuyu hymnal Nvimbo cia kuinira Ngai, published in 1935. The Akurinu, however, in their endeavour not to rely on what the European missionaries had compiled, came up with their own original

hymns. The literate members kept note books in which each new hymn was added. Zablon Gichuki, for example still keeps his notebook which contains over three hundred handwritten hymns dating back to 1940.⁹¹

Among the outstanding people in the field of composing hymns among the Akurinu is Daudi Ikigu. He joined the movement in 1936 as a young boy and immediately demonstrated his talent in singing.⁹² By 1941 he had begun composing hymns for use in the church. Some members claim that he receives the hymns through dreams.⁹³ But the composer says that he relies both on his knowledge of the Bible and the inspiration through the Holy Spirit.⁹⁴ Ikigu is always armed with paper and pen wherever he is just in case he is inspired to compose a new hymn. An interesting observation is that by the time he writes a hymn he has a tune for it and he immediately teaches other members how to sing it.

Observing the Akurinu when they are singing, one would conclude that it is an ecclesiastical requirement for each member to master all the hymns by heart. It is rare to see them refer to the hymn books. In any case, one would not be able to beat the drum, dance or jump effectively while reading from the hymn book. The ability to commit the hymns to memory could partly explain why Ikigu saw no need for publishing them. But the hymns were not sang by the Akurinu alone. Other Christians especially those in the

Protestant churches have used them for worship. With time, some of the hymns were altered either in their oral or in written form. It was for this reason that Ikigu decided to have them published in 1977 in order to make them available in their correct versions to all Christians.⁹⁵

The hymn book which carries five hundred and fifty four hymns, thus forms part of the literature for worship among the Akurinu. Although the hymns are not categorised, the members know which ones to sing for different occasions and ceremonies. Apart from the written ones, there are others that have been composed awaiting publication. According to Ikigu, he intends to have volume two of the hymn book published soon.⁹⁶

It is in the area of hymns that the Akurinu have made a great contribution to the Christian life. Other Protestant churches like the Church of the Province of Kenya, the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, African Independent Pentecostal Church of Africa and the African Orthodox Church use these hymns. Their relevance to the local problems, needs and exposition of biblical themes make them popular among the non - Akurinu. Daudi Ikigu is hopeful that these hymns will in future be translated in Kiswahili to enable the other communities to use them.⁹⁷

In addition to the two hymn books mentioned above, the Akurinu also use a third one, Nyimbo cia Kiroho which is used by other Protestant churches.⁹⁸ The hymns, like the

Bible, are a unifying factor among the Christians. During occasions like weddings and funerals when joint fellowships are held, one observes the Christians sing these Akurinu hymns, an indication of their influence and acceptance.

Apart from composing hymns, Daudi Ikigu has embarked on composing Psalms which he says will be used during worship.⁹⁹ He has several of these Psalms in manuscript form and has already taught a youth choir at Murengeti Holy Ghost Church of East Africa, how to sing some of them. The Psalms are based on biblical themes which are applied to various aspects of contemporary Christian living.

Before we conclude this chapter, it is important to note that unlike in the past, the Akurinu today fellowship with other Christians. For example during funeral night vigils in the villages different churches are given chances to console the bereaved family and if there are Akurinu they are also invited.¹⁰⁰ The African Holy Ghost Christian Church at Siribwet in Nyandarua District, has even gone further in this ecumenical development. According to Samuel John Chege, four churches, the C.P.K, P.C.E.A, A.I.P.C.A, and the Akurinu have formed an organisation called "Ushirika wa Makanisa" (Co-operation of the churches) of which he is the chairman.¹⁰¹ These churches hold common fellowships as well as assisting one another. For example they agreed to build one church at a time starting with the Akurinu and today each has a modern stone

church. The Co-operation of these churches is well summarised by Samuel John Chege in these words;

"Whenever any of these churches have a ceremony, all the others are invited to attend. We go there and share the service or ceremony. We do not carry our teachings there but share the common christian message."¹⁰²

To summarise this chapter, we make the following remarks. Firstly, the Akurinu have demonstrated their creativity by developing an original form of worship which is a synthesis of Judeo-christian and Gikuyu elements. Secondly, they have made remarkable contribution to the spread of the Gospel through their hymns which are relevant to the local situation. This contribution will even be greater when these hymns are translated into other languages. Finally, the Akurinu have proved that the African churches need not rely on the literature tailored in Europe or America. Left on their own, they are capable of developing worship materials relevant to their African Christians.

NOTES ON CHAPTER FIVE

1. Elijah Kinyanjui. op. cit.
2. Michael Wanjau, op. cit.
3. Elijah Kinyanjui, John Muhia, op. cit
4. Several examples are available for people who have given land for church buildings. The Murengeti church stands on land previously donated by a brother of Daudi Ikigu. Jacob Nderitu gave the land on which the church at Kamakwa stands. Joshua Kingori of Endarasha (Nyeri) has a church on his shamba and similarly Michael Wanjau of Muhotetu (Laikipia West).
5. Joshua Kingori, op.cit.
6. This observation was made after visits to several Akurinu churches in Central Province, Rift Valley and in Nairobi.
7. Samuel John Chege op. cit.
8. Ibid.
9. Kenyatta op. cit.p.3.
10. Ibid. p. 246.
11. See for example Sundkler B.G.M., Bantu Prophets in South Africa, London Oxford University Press, 1965 p. 111, where he describes Shembe's Nazarite church's earthly Zion at Ekuphakameni, where annual festivals are held. Also the Kimbanguists of Zaire have their earthly Jerusalem at N'kamba (see Hastings A. African Christianity London, Geoffrey Chapman 1976, p. 26) The Legio Maria also have Amoyo as their earthly New Jerusalem in South Nyanza, Barret et al ed. Kenya Churches Handbook, Kisumu, Evangel publishing House 1973, p. 137).
12. Participant observation Kamakwa, 15/9/91; Birisha 24/3/91.
13. Ibid.
14. Samuel John Chege, op.cit.
15. John Muhia, op.cit.

16. For example at Shauri H G C E A, (Nyahururu) they have a weekly caretakers' duty roster so that there is someone in the gaaru each day.
17. Participant observation at Murengeti (Limuru) 3/3/92
Gichagi-ini (Muranga) 26/2/92 and Rusiru (Njoro) 26/1/92
18. During the field work, the researcher spent three nights in the Siribwet gaaru and also in Nakuru, (Free Area):
19. This separation is not peculiar to the Akurinu for other churches like the AIPCA and Catholic's follow a similar seating arrangement.
20. Participant observation, Birisha, 6/10/91
21. Maritha Mwhaki, interview, Nakuru 8/2/92
22. John Muhia, op. cit
23. Elijah Kinyanjui, op.cit.
24. Ibid.
25. Joshua Mburu had acquired the skill from Jeremiah Mutu who was a tailor.
26. John Muhia interview.
27. Some members of God's Word and Holy Ghost Church at Rusiru still use the wooden sandals. See Appendix V photograph, VI.
28. Ezekiel Karanja, op.cit.
29. Ibid.
30. See also Njeri op.cit p.90 for a similar observation.
31. Participant observation - Kamakwa 15/9/91
32. Participant observation - Rusiru 27/1/92
33. Jacob Nderitu, op.cit.
34. Participant observation, Shauri, 22/9/91
35. The commonly used hymn Book is one written by a Mukurinu, Daudi Ikigu, Nvimbo cia Roho Mutheru,

(Kijabe, Kijabe Printing Press) 1977.

36. Jacob Nderitu op.cit.
37. In the case of Jacob Nderitu, the Archbishop of AMHGC, he holds his rod throughout the service.
38. At Siribwet, the robes and the basins are left in the church.
39. Peter Kigera - interview, Kangema, 14/2/92.
40. This distinction will be discussed further under the section on baptism.
41. The Murengeti and Shauri HGCEA have such rooms.
42. Participant observation - Shauri, Nyahururu 27/10/91 see also Njeri op. cit p 96
43. Elijah Kinyanjui, op. cit.
44. See Nyimbo cia Kuinira Ngai (London SPCK) 1971 ed. p 99, Hymn No 116
45. Participant observation, Birisha, 6/10/91.
46. John Muhia, op.cit.
47. Participant observation, Muhotetu, Laikipia, 29/2/92
48. The theme of this hymn is on the heavenly land where the good people will live happily and every Christian is anxious of getting there.
49. Participant observation, Birisha 6/10/91.
50. Gathimba, Ezekiel Njai, S. Machango, op.cit.
51. See Kenyatta op.cit p.246.
52. Sometimes it can be repeated six times although it is not a common practice.
53. Samuel John Chege, op.cit.
54. Njeri op.cit p. 93.
55. John Muhia op.cit.
56. Samuel John Chege op.cit.

57. Participant observation, Kamakwa 15/9/91.
58. Participant observation, Iruri, Mathira 14/12/91.
59. See also Njeri, op.cit. p. 95.
60. Majority of the Anabii are women.
61. Sundkler op.cit. p. 181.
62. Elijah Kinyanjui, John Muhia op.cit.
63. Zablon Gichuki op.cit.
64. Paul Muriuki, op.cit.
65. Participant observation Rusiru 27/1/92.
66. Ibid.
67. Ibid.
68. Gathimba, Ezekiel Njai - op.cit.
69. Ibid.
70. The Wanyororo group is a conservative community whose members keep to themselves and even avoid taking the National Identity cards.
71. Zablon Gichuki, op.cit
72. Ibid.
73. Kenyatta op.cit. p 246; see also Gathigira op. cit p 32.
74. Samuel John Chege, op.cit.
75. Ibid.
76. See Daudi Ikigu op.cit.
77. See for example Barret D.B. Schism and Renewal in Africa (Nairobi, Oxford University Press) 1962, p 109 - 134.
78. Mbiti J. Bible and Theology in Africa, (Nairobi, Oxford University Press,) 1986 p.26
79. By 1927, the Bible was available in Kiswahili and

NGAMIA is reported to have been able to interpret the readings into Gikuyu during his preaching.

80. Elijah Kinyanjui, John Muhia op.cit.
81. Ibid.
82. Ibid.
83. Mbiti op.cit. p 26
84. Samuel John Chege op.cit.
85. Ezekiel Njai op.cit.
86. Samuel John Chege, op.cit.
87. The hymn was sang to the researcher by Elijah Kinyanjui who recalled that they used to sing it for encouragment in the face of persecution during their evangelistic missions. Nakuru, 18/1/92.
88. Participant observation Eldoret, 4/10/92.
89. Ibid.
90. This was observed during an ordination ceremony in the frican Holy Ghost Christian Church at Eldoret, 4/10/92
91. The notebook was shown to the researcher and is among the treasured literature kept by Zablon Gichuki, Shamata, 6/2/92.
92. Daudi Ikigu, op.cit.
93. See Njeri op.cit p 93.
94. Daudi Ikigu, op.cit. See Appendix V, photograph, X.
95. Ibid.
96. Ibid.
97. Ibid.
98. See Nyimbo cia Kiroho, Nairobi, Evangel Press Ltd 1980.
99. Daudi Ikigu, op.cit.

100. Participant Observation, Truri, Matt'ra, 12/12/91.
101. Samuel John Chege op.cit.
102. Ibid.

CHAPTER SIX

THE MAIN RITUALS

In the Akurinu churches like other religious communities, every member is required to undergo certain rituals which qualify one to become a full participant in the life of the church. We noted in Chapter four, for example, that a man can only be chosen to become a muhoi ,(prayer-leader), after marriage. In this chapter we shall focus on the main rituals that a member has to go through between birth and death.

6.1 Rites Connected with Birth

After a woman has delivered, she is considered to have contracted thahu. or ritual uncleanness. She has therefore to seclude herself together with the baby. In some homes there is a separate room in the house with a back door in which the woman stays during the seclusion. It is also common to have two latrines one of which is reserved for members who are in seclusion¹. This is to safeguard other members from contracting thahu through sharing such a facility with the defiled person.

The Levitical Laws provide a biblical basis for the observance of the rites connected with birth (Lev. 12:1-8). In the case of a baby boy, the woman remains unclean for seven days and for a baby girl she is unclean for fourteen days.

During this period she is not supposed to do any work neither can she attend any ceremony or go to church. She should avoid any contact with the holy books as well as the robes of a muhoi even if he is her husband². Thus, as far as it is practicable, she should remain in her room to minimise the chances of having other people contract thahu through contact with her.

At the end of the seven or fourteen days as the case may be, prayers are held in the home after which the mother can perform some duties like preparing her own food. The following description of such a prayer for a mother who had delivered a baby girl will serve as an illustration³;

"The ceremony was to take place on a Sunday evening, so the members had been asked to attend the prayers by the muhoi (pastor) of the local church during the service. About fifteen members availed themselves including the pastor and two elders. Inside the house, men sat on the right side while women sat on the left forming a semi-circle. At the centre was spread a mat which was to be used during the ceremony. All this time the mother and her baby were in the bedroom. A number of hymns were sang joyfully to mark the occasion accompanied by drumming and clapping. The pastor then called for the mother to come. She came holding her baby in the hands and was directed to kneel on the mat. The pastor then read Lev.12:1-8, which explains the purpose for this ceremony. This was followed by a hymn, Wendo wa Jesu ni Mweka muno. (There is no love like the Love of Jesus)³. An elder was then asked to lead in a thanksgiving prayer for the baby and the mother. This was followed by reciting of the Lord's prayer

the ceremony. The pastor concluded the ceremony with a prayer thanking God for the gift of the baby and asked for its protection and the well being of the mother. The members were then welcomed to a meal which had been prepared for them⁴.

From the above description we note that the woman is not allowed to mix with other members during the prayers. There are no handshaking during the greetings and the baby is not handled by the visitors or even the elders. There is emphasis on the keeping of the law as this will ensure God's blessings to both the baby and the mother. This ceremony is preliminary awaiting the final one which is performed later in the church.

The mother continues to seclude herself for another thirty three days in case of a boy and sixty six days in case of a girl in accordance to the Levitical Laws (Lev. 12:4-5). At the end of this period, she goes to church for the final rite by which she is declared ritually clean and thus resumes her normal life. This practice is not peculiar to the Akurinu for other African independent churches observe these Levitical laws upon the birth of a baby⁵. Usually the muhoi is informed in advance that the days of seclusion are over for the woman so that he can incorporate her prayers in the next church service.

The following description will serve as an illustration of a churching ceremony for a mother and the baby;

"When the mother arrived, she remained outside with her baby. The church service started in the normal way but before the reading of the scriptures the muhoi announced that there was a baby to be presented to God in accordance with the Law. One of the ceremonial women was sent out to fetch the mother. She was led to the front and stood facing the kigongona (sanctuary) while holding her baby in her hands. The pastor then came forward accompanied by one elder to where the woman was standing. He directed the ceremonial woman to take the baby from her mother and give it to the attendant elder who said a prayer for the well being of the baby. The pastor then read the following scriptural verses which provide an explanation for this rite; Lev.12:1-8; Ps. 127:3-5; and Lk 2:21-23⁶. The pastor took the baby in his hands and prayed to God for its health and protection. He then gave the baby back to the ceremonial woman. The mother was then told to kneel before the pastor as he read Ps. 116:1-19. This was followed by a thanksgiving prayer to God for the well being of the mother. The pastor then shook the mother's hand three times in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. She was then given her baby back and told to join the rest of the congregation. The pastor then prayed for the attendant ceremonial woman and shook her hand three times in the name of the Trinity after which she joined the rest.

From the above description, it is clear that the purification ceremonies concern the mother and the baby. The father does not participate in them at all. It should be noted however that if for some unavoidable circumstances the husband cannot stay separately from the wife during her

period of seclusion, then he also contracts thahu. This occurs for example through sharing of the same bed, seats or eating food prepared by the wife during her seclusion. In such a case, the man also secludes himself and does not go to church or attend any ecclesiastical functions⁸. On the day the woman goes to church for her purification, the husband also accompanies her although no prayers are held on his behalf. He is supposed to have washed his clothes and his body in water and then pray for himself to remove the thahu he incurred through contact with his wife.

We noted in chapter three that the early Akurinu were opposed to Western medical services provided in the hospitals. Their wives therefore continued to be assisted during delivery by the traditional mid-wives. The Akurinu were however very uncomfortable with some of the practices of the mid-wives and more so with the fee they were to pay them in the form of foodstuffs⁹. In fact the very association with non-Akurinu mid-wives entailed a contraction of thahu. According to Elijah Kinyanjui the Akurinu prayed to God for a solution to their problem. Their prayers were answered in 1950 when Maritha Mwhaki was chosen by God through a revelation to become a mid-wife¹⁰. Maritha Mwhaki recalls that although she had not assisted

any woman during delivery before, she had no problem when she began her new profession¹¹. She was however told that she should not charge any fee for her services, lest she incurs God's wrath. Today Mwhaki assists not just the Akurinu women but also those from other tribes in her neighbourhood at Njoro in Nakuru.

At this juncture it is important to note the similarity between the Gikuyu and the Jewish rituals connected with birth. Among the Gikuyu a woman was unclean for four days after the birth of a baby girl and five days in case of a baby boy. The husband was supposed to stay in his hut¹². At the end of these days, a purification ceremony was performed after which the woman resumed her normal life. Thus, the Levitical Laws connected with birth were not new to the Akurinu as they were already familiar with the Gikuyu customs.

In concluding this section, we note that the main objective of the ceremonies connected with birth is for thanking God for the baby as well as the well being of the mother during the delivery. Turner's observation in the Aladura church provides a fitting summary when he writes:

"The central note is that of thanksgiving to God for victory over the perils of childbirth and of dedication and blessing of the child"¹³.

As in other rituals, the Akurinu use the Thaara, the Anglican Book of Common Prayer selectively during the purification ceremony. While Thaara has only Ps. 116 and 127 recommended for the occasion, the Akurinu start off the ceremony by reading the Levitical Laws (Lev. 12:1-8) and Lk. 2:21-23) as a justification for the ceremony. In this respect, it is not just a thanksgiving occasion but also a fulfilment of the requirement of the Mosaic Law.

6.2 Baptism and Confirmation

A lot of literature has been written on these two Christian sacraments¹⁴. The abundance of this literature can be accounted for by the fact that these rites are so significant in the initiation of new converts into the Christian fellowship such that they should be properly understood. Secondly, and more important there has been a lot of debate throughout around these sacraments. The main issues raised are on the age and the manner in which the sacraments should be administered and whether they should be administered at the same time or as two different sacraments¹⁵.

The New Testament is not conclusive on the manner and age when these two sacraments should be administered, the consequences of which various methods have been employed in different churches.

Some Christians baptise both infants and adults while others baptise adults only. Some sprinkle water while others baptise by emersion yet others do not use water at all but baptise through the Holy Spirit. Similar variations occur in relation to the sacrament of confirmation or the laying on of hands. The debate on these sacraments is beyond the scope of this study. Our concern is to find out how the Akurinu understand and administer these sacraments to their members.

Among the Akurinu the term sacrament is not used. For them the common term used for the various religious rituals is magongona (sing. igongona). According to Kenyatta, this term could refer to sacrifices or rituals and ceremonies". He goes on and observes that,

"Igongona (sing.) is the only Gikuyu word which can possibly be translated "religion" although maambura (lit, sacred) is practically synonymous with it"¹⁷.

It is in this sense of a sacred ritual that the Akurinu use the term igongona, since it is performed at the Kigongona (the sanctuary), by the ahoi (prayer leaders). Thus whether it is the churching of a mother after birth, baptism or marriage all these are magongona(pl.). Failure to use the term sacrament in no way reduces the sacramental nature of these rituals. With the

youth taking up theological training the vocabulary of Sacraments may in future be introduced among the Akurinu.

Baptism was practiced among the Akurinu from the early years of these churches. According to Elijah Kinyanjui, the three evangelists Joseph Nganga, Samuel Muinami and John Mungara used to baptise people before they were killed in 1934¹⁸. John Muhia was chosen after their death to be the baptiser, a role he plays to the present day¹⁹. To become a baptiser one must have qualified as a senior elder. In the fully developed congregations, the role of baptising is performed by a specific elder called a mubatithania or baptiser.

Baptism is administered to the new converts who have accepted the Akurinu faith. Before baptism, one must have gone through the rite of being accepted in the church, gutoiyio-ruruini (to be taken into the flock). This occurs after a new member expresses a desire to join the Akurinu church. Such a person is said to have believed, gwickia²⁰. Some people believe and request immediately for a turban to be put on their heads. In such a case, a member who has a spare turban gives it to the new convert. If a spare one is not available, a member with a big turban will cut it

into two and give a half to the new member. The muhoi then prays for the turban and then it is tied on the new convert. The tying of the turban is accompanied by an outbreak of joyous and vigorous singing which is an expression of joy in having an extra member added to the church. It is also an indication of the defeat of Satan by the Holy Spirit and the new member is expected to uphold the war against Satan. The following hymn is a popular one during this ceremony:

Hymn 453²¹.

1. Aria mari na hinya na aria me na witikio,
Ni aria makurua mbara ino,
Nanii ninguigua ngitwo ngatuike muthigari,
Nginyagire aria mari mbere,

Ninjohuo mathaita ngarue mbara,
Ndarua ndahota ngaheo tanji,
Thu ciitu no imenye irai andu othe,
Ndi wa ngerewani ya Jehova.

2. Ndiruaga mbara ndi na hinya wa Jesu,
Tondu ari na hinya wakwa wothe,
Nikio ndikitigira o na kundu gwi gikuu,
O nginya ngaloria shaitani.

1. Those who are strong and those who have
faith,
Are those that will fight in this war
I myself I hear a call to become a soldier
To follow those who are ahead.

Put armour on me so I can go to war
When I fight and win I will be given a
crown,
Our enemies should know, tell all
people,
I am in the army of Jehova.

2. I will be fighting in the war with the power
of Jesus,

Because he has all my power
This is why I cannot fear even places of death
Until I defeat Satan.

From these verses, it is clear that conversion among the Akurinu is seen as a call to become a soldier of Christ in the fight against Satan. The putting on of the turban is therefore symbolic of a soldier putting on the armour in preparation for a looming war, in this case the war against the enemies of Christ. After getting the turban, the person later on goes to church to be officially accepted as a member²².

Among the Akurinu there is no catechism nor any form of testing as a pre-requisite before baptism. Instruction on the meaning of baptism takes place informally during the normal sermons in the church and during the baptismal ceremony. The lack of formal instruction may partly be due to the fact that among the Akurinu, it is not an individual who decides on what name to take or when he will be ready for baptism. Names are revealed by the Holy Spirit through the Anabii (Prophets). According to some informants, some people can have their baptismal names revealed immediately after joining the church while others can take years before they are given names²³. The delay in getting names is not peculiar to the Akurinu. Turner has made a similar observation in the Aladura churches in West Africa:

"Some become active church members and remain without the baptism of this church for quite a long time without feeling that their position is irregular--"²⁴.

In the God's Word and Holy Ghost Church, the members claimed that they usually know the baptismal names of the unborn babies. They were even emphatic that no baby has reached the stage of presentation in the church without a baptismal name²⁵. Thus, in a church where names come from the Holy Spirit, the members might not find it necessary to have organised instruction because a name might be revealed before one has gone through the instruction or remain for years after the catechism without a name being revealed which would make the instruction meaningless to the convert.

Another factor which may explain why formal instruction before baptism lacks among the Akurinu is the believe in the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The person who becomes a mukurinu is regarded as having been called through the Holy Spirit. Some informants reported on how they were filled with the Spirit and manifested such actions like roaring, crying, and seeing visions long before they got baptised²⁶. In this case they were already aware of the new life they were to lead in the new faith. Baptism, then comes later as an endorsement of what has already been experienced, namely the fruits of the Holy Spirit.

As mentioned earlier, no one decides on the baptismal name. The choice is wholly the prerogative of the Holy Spirit. The only role that members play is to ask the Holy Spirit through prayers to reveal the names. It is mainly through dreams and visions that such revelations take place. According to Elijah Kinyanjui, the ahoi (elders) pray for people whose names have not been revealed²⁷. This is especially common in churches where there are organised baptismal seasons²⁸. In such a case the birth names of the candidates are written down and the elders then seclude themselves to pray for the baptismal names to be revealed. On the day of baptism, they will call the names of those whose names were revealed. Failure to hear one's name is an indication that no name was given and the person should continue to pray.

When the day is set for the baptismal ceremony the elders and the candidates are supposed to assemble a day before at the selected venue. This is to give them time to cleanse themselves, gwittheria by praying throughout the night preceding the ceremony. The cleansing is necessary so that the igongona will be acceptable to God²⁹. It is also an occasion for instructing the candidates on how to go through the ceremony. The precautions taken in relation to the baptismal

ceremony reveal the significance of this rite for without baptism other subsequent rites like marriage and those related to elderhood cannot be performed.

The ceremony is carried out on Sunday and attracts several people who come to witness it. It starts with the elders going into the church first for prayers after which the normal entry procedure is followed. After the preparatory stage marked by the singing of hymns and prayers for the blessings of the occasion, the candidates are then called and stand in two rows, men on the right and women on the left, in front of the kigongona. The baptiser then asks each candidate the following questions;

Baptiser: Will you leave Satan and all his works and pride and pleasures of this world, and also the desire of the body and not to follow them or to be led by them?

Candidate: I will leave all of them.

Baptiser: Do you want to be baptised in this faith?

Candidate: That is what I want.

Baptiser: Will you be doing the things that God wants you to do and keep His commandments and follow them and keep them all the days of your life?

Candidate: I will be doing that.

With his right hand, the baptiser holds the candidates right hand and with his left hand placed on the candidates head, he says,

"Kariuki nindakubatithia ndagwita Samuel,
thiini wa ritwa ria Ithe na ria Muriu na ria
Roho Mutheru"

(The congregation joins in saying the 'Amen')
(Kariuki I baptise you, I call you Samuel in
the name of the Father and the Son and the
Holy Spirit 'Amen').

As the baptiser pronounces the baptismal name, in
the name of the Trinity, he shakes the hand of the
candidate thrice.

After the baptism the candidate proceeds to
the next elder, muiganiriri moko, the one who lays
hands on, and who stands next to the baptiser. He
is the one who confirms the candidates by greeting
them three times while uttering blessings for them.
After that the candidate joins the congregation.

For children, the greetings in the Trinitarian
formula are not applied. The baptiser instead
holds the baby in his hands and says,

"Wanjiru nindakuiyukia mokoini na ritwa ria
Rahabu, thiini wa ritwa ria Ithe na ria Muriu
na ria Roho Mutheru- Amen".

(Wanjiru I have received you in the arms with the name of Rahab in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit- Amen).

According to Rufus Gichuki, young children are not baptised but are received, kuiyukio, in the name they have been given³⁰. The rationale behind this practice is that babies cannot respond to the questions, kwiitaria and therefore they have to be confirmed later when they are old enough to speak for themselves. It should however, be noted that if a name of a baby is revealed before its birth, people will call the baby by that name without having to wait for the baptismal ceremony.

At this juncture we look at the significance of baptism and confirmation in the Akurinu Churches. From the above description it is clear that the Akurinu do not use the water baptism. They argue that water baptism was practised by John the Baptist, (Mk.1:5) as a preparation for the complete baptism by the Holy Spirit. John himself warned his followers that "I have baptised you with water but [the one to come] will baptise you with the Holy Spirit" (Mk 1:8, Jn 1:33). The incident at Ephesus (Acts 19:1-17) is popular in justifying the superiority of Spirit baptism over water baptism in this church.

The meaning of baptism is contained in the Akurinu hymns. The following verses will serve as an illustration.

Hymn 14 Verse 5.

5. Iguai anake na airitu na tukenge,
Mwarikia guciarua ni kigongona,
Turagai mwendanite.

(Listen young men and women, even infants
After being born by the Sanctuary,
Keep loving one another).

Hymn 23 (verse 6)

Anake na airitu, muthenya uria,
Mwaciarinuo ringi ni kanitha,
Mukibatithio mariitwa meru,
Aira marungii ho.

(Young men and women the day,
You were born again by the church,
And were baptised new names.
With the witnesses present).

Hymn 143 (Verse 1)

Jehova ni muthamaki,
Jesu ni kigongona,
Roho mutheru ni mai,
Magutheragia andu othe.

(Jehova is the Lord,
Jesus is the sanctuary,
The Holy Spirit is the water,
For cleansing all people).

Hymn 184 (Verse 2)

Roho mutheru amuciarire,
Mutuike a lthe umwe,
Na mutuike a nyina umwe,
Na muhiriga umwe.

(The Holy Spirit gave birth to you,
To be of one father,
And of one mother,
And of one clan).

Hymn 200 (chorus)

Ubatithania wa Roho andu ake,
Amabatithagia meciria,
Mathiage na mithiire ya kumbura ati,
Andu aya ni a Roho.

(The Spirit baptism, his people,
Are baptised in their thoughts,
To follow ways which reveal that,
These people are of the Spirit.)

Hymn 205 (Verse 7)

Roho wa Ngai abatithagia andu,
Mariitwa meru,
Amaciaraga hindi ya keru,
Matige mehia.

(The Spirit of God baptises people,
New names,
They are born for a second time,
To keep away from sins)³¹.

From these verses the following observations can be made. Firstly, baptism is seen as a re-birth of the convert (Hymn 23 verse 6). The individual is spiritually re-born and is therefore given a new name to mark the change in him. The rebirth entails the 'death of the old person and the 'resurrection' of the new one.

Secondly, baptism is seen as a cleansing of a person by the Holy Spirit which is the substitute for water (Hymn 143 verse 1). The Akurinu as we shall see in the next chapter are very particular about ritual uncleanness or thahu. Washing of both the body and the clothes in water after a person has contracted thahu is compulsory. In baptism then the 'old person' living in sin is similarly

'washed' by the Holy Spirit.

Thirdly, baptism leads to a newness of life characterised by a transformation of the person (Hymn 200, chorus). Through word and deed, the baptised person should be an example in witnessing the fruits of the Holy Spirit. The strict moral requirements among the Akurinu based on the Levitical Laws is evidence of their concern for the newness of life.

Fourthly, baptism is regarded as a deliverance from evil (Hymn 205 verse 7) Those who have been baptised are expected to desist from all forms of evil. Having been cleansed by the Holy Spirit, one should not revert to the old ways of living. It is for this reason that the Akurinu are reminded to cleanse themselves, gwitheria, all the time through prayers³².

Fifthly, baptism is a means of uniting an individual with the community of the Holy Spirit or the church (Hymn 184 verse 2). One becomes incorporated into the community of believers or what Paul calls the body of Christ (1 Co.12:13). The act of greeting a candidate should also be seen as a gesture of welcoming the new member by the pastor. Moreover, the joy expressed by the Akurinu through singing and dancing when a new convert is

baptised is reminiscent of the celebration that was held when the prodigal son returned home (Lk 15:11-24).

Finally, baptism should be seen in the context of eschatology among the Akurinu. There is emphasis on the Book of names which is kept in heaven and will be used in identifying those fit for rewards (Rev.3:5-6). During prayers, it is common to hear members pleading for their names to be written in that Book of life. It would appear that they expect their baptismal names given by the Holy Spirit to appear in the Book on the day of judgment.

An important aspect to note about baptismal names among the Akurinu is that they are all biblical names of outstanding personalities. Men have such Old Testament names like Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Joshua, Elijah, Samuel and Jeremiah. Women have such names like Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, Naomi, Ruth, Deborah, and Miriam. From the New Testament a few names like Peter, Paul, Elizabeth and Mary are also used. Some of the biblical names were given to symbolise a new character in the person. For example we have names like Abraham (Gen. 17:5,) Sarah (Gen 17:15) Peter (Mk 3:16) and Paul (Act 13:8). It is on this basis that the Akurinu interpret their new names as pointers to

the new qualities or abilities that the Holy Spirit has given to the bearers of the baptismal names. One informant put it thus;

"God understands and knows every believer's qualities. Thus, each person is given a name of a biblical figure whose qualities will be manifested by the believer³³.

Names then are not mere labels for they challenge the bearers to emulate the character of the biblical persons after whom the name is derived.

The Akurinu practice re-baptism of members who join them from other churches. The rationale behind the re-baptism is that the water baptism that the person went through in the previous church was inadequate. The person has to be given a name through revelation after which he is given a Spirit baptism. This re-baptism does not apply to a new member from the Roho churches who have similar baptismal practices like the Akurinu³⁴. A Mukurinu can also be given a second baptismal name through revelation. This is seen as another gift for the work the person has done for the church. A good example is that of Rufus Gichuki. He recalls that when he joined the Akurinu church, he was given the name Jonathan. After preaching in several parts both in Central and Rift Valley Provinces, word came through a prophet that his new name

should be Rufus³⁵. Several other members have two baptismal names. In such a case, only confirmation is administered on the member for he was already baptised in the Holy Spirit when he was given the first name.

As regards the laying on of hands or confirmation, the Akurinu treat it as an aspect of baptism and the two rites are therefore performed simultaneously³⁶. In chapter two, we noted that some of the early Akurinu had received the Holy Spirit long before they were baptised for they could see visions, prophesy and speak in tongues. This may have led them to perform the two rites of baptism and confirmation at the same time. Logically, if one had already received the Holy Spirit, then there was no justification of postponing the laying on of hands to a later date. Thus, the laying on of hands can be seen as an endorsement for those who have received the Spirit but also as a giving of the Spirit for members who have not yet received it.

As an initiation rite, baptism gives members a new identity both socially and spiritually. At the social level, the individual becomes an accepted member of the church while spiritually, the new name provides the believer with a tool by which he strives to lead an upright life with the hope of a

reward at the end of times. Through baptism members are allowed to undergo other magongona in the Akurinu churches which are discussed in the following sections.

6.3 Circumcision Rites

The next rite after baptism for those born in Akurinu families is circumcision. In chapters one and two we noted that it was through circumcision that one qualified to become a full member of the community among the Gikuyu. The reaction to the missionary churches which attacked female circumcision attest to the importance of this rite among the Gikuyu. In this section we shall look at how the Akurinu continue to practice this rite both to boys and girls.

From the information given by some informants in justifying the rite of circumcision, the Akurinu can be grouped under three categories. Firstly, there are those who see the Gikuyu circumcision of boys as similar to the Jewish practice except for the difference in age³⁷. The Abrahamic covenant required the Jews to circumcise their male children on the eighth day whereas among the Gikuyu the rite is performed during adolescence. As regards female circumcision some informants argued that, "the topic was deliberately left out by the authors

for God would not have catered for boys only and forget the girls"³⁸.

Secondly, there are Akurinu who argue that the fourth of the Mount Kenya commandments required them to do away with the teachings of the Europeans and revert to their Gikuyu customs. The elders who take these commandments seriously will inevitably continue with the circumcision of both boys and girls. Moreover, some Akurinu like Musa Thuo were former members of K.C.A. which was advocating the continuity of female circumcision. Others had been excommunicated from the mission churches for refusing to sign the anti-female circumcision forms during the 1929 controversy³⁹. According to some informants some of the early Arathi at Musa Mucai's home had been excommunicated from the AIM church Kijabe. Such members would readily see the Mount Kenya commandments as a divine endorsement of their age-old custom.

Finally, we note that among the Kahiriga group, (God's Word and Holy Ghost Church) on their arrival at Kahiriga in Muranga District, during their exodus, they were specifically commanded to circumcise both boys and girls⁴⁰. This was a condition for God's fulfilment of the promises he had made with them concerning the liberation of the

country from the colonialists. These attempts to give either a biblical or a divine authority as a justification for the circumcision of boys and girls illustrates the importance attached to this rite among the Akurinu.

In the early days, the Akurinu were facing the problem of circumcisers since they did not have their own. It should be noted that among the Gikuyu as in other African communities, the circumcisers belonged to particular families and formed a restricted profession. In describing the training of operators among the Gikuyu, Leakey observed that anyone who wanted to join the profession,

"had to become an apprentice to the masters for at least seven years and he had to pay a fee of thirty ordinary goats and sheep and several stall-fattened animals before he was entitled to start practising on his own"⁴¹.

The rigorous training notwithstanding, the Akurinu would not have accepted to be trained by practitioners who were still deeply entrenched in the traditional customs some of which the Akurinu abhorred. On the other hand, they could not take their children to hospitals for circumcision for they were opposed to Western medicine. It was therefore due to lack of a better alternative that they had to turn to the traditional circumcisers.

When a man had a grown up son or daughter, he

would consult other Akurinu who might also be having children ready for the ceremony. An arrangement would be made for the candidates to be taken to one homestead or gaaru according to their sex. On an appointed day, a circumciser either for boys or girls would be invited in the home to perform the operation⁴². Although the Akurinu were against the ceremonies accompanying circumcision such as dances and sacrifices, they however, held prayers prior to, and after the operation.

After the operation, the initiates were considered to be ritually unclean for they had shed blood. They were therefore to seclude themselves for one month. During this period they could neither go to church nor touch any holy book or vestment. They were given sponsors to take care of them. On the eighth and fourteenth day, for boys and girls respectively, prayers were held for the initiates which were led by a junior prayer-leader⁴³. At the end of the seclusion period, the initiates went to church for prayers after which they resumed their normal life.

Among the Gikuyu, the circumciser was paid a fee by the parents of the child for the services rendered to them. Cases of non-payment were unheard of for it was feared that any complaint from the circumciser would affect the initiate

adversely. According to Leakey, the circumciser,

"received a fee of a piece of iron or a goat skin from the parent of the candidate. These the operators later sold for the things which he or she required or battered them for sheep and goats"⁴⁴.

The Akurinu were not comfortable with these forms of payments. Elijah Kinyanjui for example says he "was frustrated by these pagan practices and demands by the traditional circumcisers"⁴⁵.

During the time when Kinyanjui and John Muhia were left to lead the Akurinu in Kiambu between 1935 to 1936, he advocated for two changes in relation to circumcision. Firstly, he wanted boys to be circumcised on the eighth day like in the Jewish custom. His argument was that if a child died before he was circumcised on the eighth day he was regarded as a kihuno or a miscarriage and no funeral ceremony would be held for such a child. On the other hand, if the child died a day after the circumcision, he qualified for a full burial ceremony like an adult. Secondly, Kinyanjui advocated for the abolition of female circumcision since he could not get any biblical justification for it. The elders however rejected his proposals on the ground that;

"they asked God if it was proper to circumcise baby-boys after eight days and to stop female circumcision but the Holy Spirit told them 'NO'⁴⁶.

So, it was Kinyanjui who was in the wrong. The issue of traditional circumcisers was solved in 1950 through what the Akurinu regard as God's response to their prayers. There was a revelation that God had appointed two circumcisers, Samuel Mahehe and Damaris Wambaire for boys and girls respectively⁴⁷. Having their own operators was a great relief. The two were confirmed by Musa Thuo, the Senior Muhoi. Although they had no prior experience, they began their profession without any difficulties. An important thing to note about them is that they were commanded not to charge any fee for their services. The skill was a free gift from God and they should in turn offer their services freely⁴⁸. Whoever would attempt to exact a fee would be inviting God's wrath. If, however, a parent came later to thank the circumciser and brought a gift of any kind including money, this was acceptable as it was voluntarily given⁴⁹.

The choice of a female circumciser is of particular interest. We noted in chapter three how some Akurinu tried to justify female circumcision. The fact that God had chosen a female circumciser would be seen as a divine acceptance of the practice. Damaris Wamabaire is still active in her profession and operates not only the Akurinu girls but also those of non-members who are brought

to her⁵⁰.

With the rise of several Akurinu groups, each with its rules and regulations, there is no common policy as regards circumcision. For those who now accept Western medicine they will allow their children to be operated in the hospitals whereas the conservative members will have their children operated at home. As regards female circumcision, it is today more of an individual affair for few members are willing to discuss it. But the fact that practitioners like Damaris Wambaire are still active is evidence of the continuity of female circumcision among the Akurinu. In the God's Word and Holy Ghost Church (kahiriga) it is madatory since it is part of the cleansing rituals after birth and is performed on the fourteenth day on the baby girls. It is moreover in keeping with the commands that this group was given by God during their exodus. A common feature among all the Akurinu is the holding of prayers before the ceremony followed by a period of seclusion for the initiates and the final prayers in church after which the initiates resume their normal life. This procedure is followed irrespective of whether the operation is carried out at home or in the hospital⁵¹.

As we have already pointed out in chapter two, the initiation rite was the conditio sine qua non for the individual to gain access to the core of the belief and cultural system of the Gikuyu. The conservative Akurinu such as the God's Word and Holy Ghost Church have upheld this value pertaining to initiation for both boys and girls. Initiation is thus a requirement that has to be fulfilled before a person is allowed to undertake the next igongona.

Marriage

Among the Akurinu marriage is of great importance to both the man and the woman because it not only uplifts them socially but, also promotes them to a higher status in ecclesiastical affairs. In the seating pattern in church for example, they leave the space of the youth and sit in the space of the married people⁵². For a man, he cannot aspire to be ordained as an elder if he is not married⁵³. So, in this respect, marriage carries an ecclesiastical dimension which explains why the rite is handled with a lot of care and seriousness. In the African Holy Ghost Christian Church for example, it is stated in the constitution that one of the objectives of the church is; "to make wedding ceremonies for gentlemen and ladies wherever is available"⁵⁴.

For a long time, the Akurinu have been criticised about the manner in which they conduct their marriage ceremonies. Marriage was a major cause of conflict between the early Akurinu and the Gikuyu elders. The accusation of having free love with girls was common during the colonial period. Reporting on the Arathi in 1934, the D.C. of Muranga (then Fort Hall) wrote,

"they were obviously under the influence of some hysteria and were followed about by young girls with whom they had free love relations"⁵⁵.

During the same year, in the attempt to stump out the movement from the District, the Muranga Local Native Council proposed,

"to sue the False Prophets civilly under the native law and custom for appropriating young girls without paying marriage dowries"...⁵⁶.

An informant who was interrogated by the police in Kiambu in 1934 in connection with the activities of the Akurinu described them in the following words;

"They refuse to pay dowry to the wazee for their women but entice them to follow them"⁵⁷.

During a meeting in Kangema in Muranga, held in 1954, a councillor described the Akurinu as "a menace to the district--- as they enticed young girls from their homes"⁵⁸.

From the above reports it is clear that the Akurinu were seen as a social threat to the age-old Gikuyu customs pertaining to the procedure in marriage⁵⁹. Most of the informants however, denied that they had free love with the girls nor was there any seduction⁶⁰. As we noted earlier, the first generation of Arathi were called through the Holy Spirit individually and only later did they get together to form a church. Due to their conviction that they were chosen by God for a mission like the Israelites, they tried to live according to the Mosaic Laws. From the view point of the demands of the Levitical Laws, it is unlikely that the Akurinu would have engaged in such promiscuous love affairs with the girls. Moreover, as we noted in chapter three, even those who were married treated their wives like their sisters during the four-year stay at Musa Mucai's home at Magina⁶¹. It was after returning to their homes in 1932 that they resumed sexual relations with their spouses.

The Akurinu do, however, accept that there were occasions when a marriage would take place without the man having paid the dowry. Such cases occurred when a girl had been chased away from home by her parents after becoming a Mukurinu and sought refuge in the homes of other Akurinu. If the

time came for the girl to be married and her non-Akurinu parents refused the marriage negotiations, then the Ahoi would go ahead and organize the marriage ceremony. Elijah Kinyanjui observes that,

"At times the girls parents would be opposed to the marriage deal because they considered the Akurinu to be a lost group. In such a case the Akurinu elders would proceed with the marriage ceremony. They argued that a church wedding does not depend on dowry since it is God given"⁶².

Even those Akurinu who paid the dowry, were according to Gikuyu customs, doing it in a substandard manner. The traditional marriage negotiations included several ceremonies involving the two families and were characterised by feasting and dancing⁶³. The Akurinu avoided the feasts and dancing and requested the girl's father to calculate such dowry items like njohi (beer) in monetary terms. This was seen as an erosion of the significance of the marriage ceremony.

At this juncture, let us look at how marriage is organised among the Akurinu in the present day. When a young man feels that he is ready to marry, he approaches one of the elders in the church and discusses the matter with him. The elder will immediately inform the other elders who will in turn examine the request and if they are satisfied

give their consent. We note here that the man does not seek consent from his parents even if they are Akurinu. This is contrary to the Gikuyu custom where parental consent is sought before a man starts marriage deals.

The next stage is the choosing of a girl for marriage. The selection must be from the Akurinu members for they do not intermarry with non-members. In the past it was the responsibility of the elders to choose a girl for the man. The ahoi would resort to prayers and a revelation would be made to one of them about the suitable girl for the man. Alternatively, a Munabii (or prophet) would receive the name of the girl through a dream. This method of identifying marriage partners, popularly know as kuroteruo, to be dreamt for, has been a major cause for dissatisfaction among the Akurinu youth. The marriage partners have no role to play in the selection. Furthermore one cannot reject a partner given through divine inquiry even if the chosen girl was not the type the man would have liked. This has been one cause for the youths leaving the Akurinu Churches in order to make their own marriage choices⁶⁴.

At present the above procedure of choosing marriage partners has been modified in an attempt

to retain the youth in the church as well as giving them some freedom in identifying their marriage partners. The common practice today is to allow the man to make the initial choice. Once the elders have accepted the man's request, he is given a letter allowing him to go to the girls and talk to them in order to choose a marriage partner. He will be told by the elders which girls have already been approached by other men. In the meantime the girls are also informed by an elder that the man has been allowed to talk to them. It should be noted that other than during this time of choosing a partner, Akurinu do not allow two youths of the opposite sex to be seen talking together. Neither is courtship nor trial marriages allowed.

When a man gets a suitable partner who accepts the proposal, she signs on the letter as a proof of her consent. The man takes back the letter to the elders who then arrange for a day when the two are summoned for an interview to establish whether the girl was forced to sign the letter or whether she did it voluntarily. It is usual for the girl to read the section of the letter to the elders which shows that she is willing to get married to the man which runs:

"Uhere ucio wa kuhikio ni (Samuel) ti
kuringiririo ningiririirio. Ni nii mwene
ndimwitikirite"⁶⁵

(This matter of getting married to (Samuel) has not been forced on me. It is myself who has accepted him).

After the girl's consent, prayers are said seeking God's guidance in the marriage deal. There follows a one month period during which the Anabii (Prophets) make divine inquiry concerning the intended marriage. If a prophet or any other member reports that he had a dream in which it was revealed that the girl is not the right one, then the matter is stopped at that point. The man is given another letter to look for another marriage partner⁶⁶. It may happen that during the dream the prophet was given an alternative name of the girl who should be married to the man. The man is then advised to take the letter to the girl chosen for him by the Holy Spirit.

When the one month period is over and no message of objection is reported then the man and the girl are called back to the church and prayed for. Until this time both the man and the girl are not supposed to divulge their intentions of marriage to their parents. Even if their parents come to know about it through other people, they should treat such information as unofficial and should not discuss the matter either with their son or daughter⁶⁷. It is after the second prayer held after one month that both the man and the girl

inform their parents about their intended marriage. The delay in announcing the marriage proposal to the relatives is necessary in order to avoid embarrassments if a revelation were to come rejecting the union.

The man is then given an elder who accompanies him to the girl's home to report his intention to marry the girl. Such an elder is especially important if a Mukurinu girl's parents are non-Akurinu. He is expected to protect the man from being made to do things which are contrary to the Akurinu faith⁵⁸. If the girl's father gives his consent, then the marriage negotiations and the paying of dowry begins. In case the girl's parents ask for njohi (beer) as part of the dowry, the escorting elder is expected to intervene and request the father to convert the beer into money. When the father is satisfied with the dowry payment, he is required to give the man a letter as a proof to the church that he has allowed him to go ahead with the wedding arrangements.

The setting of the date for the wedding is done in consultation between the church, the parents of the man and more important the girl herself. The church and the parents can only propose the month when the wedding will take place.

but they will consult the girl for the appropriate day. This is important because the wedding day should not coincide with the time when the girl is on her period for according to the Levitical laws she is ritually unclean and should not go to church or participate in any igongona.

The announcement for the wedding is normally made three months before the set day. This is to give the church and the families concerned enough time to prepare for the ceremony. It is common nowadays to find pre-wedding parties being organised both at the man's and girl's home during which the relatives and neighbours are invited. In the past Akurinu ceremonies were attended by their members only but today non-Akurinu are invited in such ceremonies and participate fully in the wedding preparation.

During this period, the man chooses the best man who will escort him on the wedding day as well as assisting him during the preparation. While in other churches the bridal party may comprise of unmarried men and women, among the Akurinu there is only the best man and his wife⁶⁹. The married couple are considered to have had some experience in family affairs and are therefore capable of advising the new couple on how to begin their married life.

The Akurinu weddings take place on Sundays. There are two possible reasons for choosing the Sunday. Firstly, a wedding is an important igongona, a religious ritual, similar to other rituals like churching of a mother and child after birth or baptism which are held on Sundays.

Secondly, some informants say that during the colonial period, Sunday was the only day when the Akurinu could afford to meet in large numbers for their ceremonies⁷⁰. This was particularly the case in the Rift Valley where the Akurinu were squatters employed in the European settler farms. Thus, wherever there was a wedding or a burial ceremony, they would arrive on Saturday evening after work, conduct their ceremony during the night and by Sunday morning the ceremony would be over and they would be returning to their places of work. The night ceremonies were further enhanced by the persecution of the Akurinu by the colonial authorities. Since they were not given permits for their meetings, they had to hold them in the night and depart early in the morning before they were discovered⁷¹.

The climax of the wedding ceremonies comes on the wedding day. It is characterised by joyful singing throughout the previous night. The youth

in particular sing and dance in praise of the couple who are about to leave their company and join the married group. Several Akurinu from distant places come for the occasion. Unlike in the past, non-Akurinu members from the neighbourhood also attend, some out of curiosity to see how an Akurinu wedding is conducted.

In the morning, the bestman and his wife accompanied by a party of other Akurinu, sets out to get the bride. It is usual to have the girl brought to a nearby Akurinu home on the previous day to avoid any unnecessary delays. On her arrival, a muhoi prays for all the items that she will wear or use which include the clothes, shoes and even the flowers. This is in accordance with the Akurinu practice that nothing should be worn before it is prayed for and blessed⁷².

In the meantime the senior ahoi get into the church for prayers. When word comes that the bridal party is near, the rest of the people get into the church and start singing vigorously. On arrival, those in the church start singing the welcome song. "mwathii ku agendi aya? (where are you pilgrims heading to?) The bridal party then enters through the men's door. The bridegroom and the bestman go first and stand facing the sanctuary. The bride and the best maid then follow

and they stand next to the men. The men put on white kanzus over their suits and retain their turbans while the women have long pleated dresses and white head scurfs. Today it is common to see the bride in gloves and also with the face covered with a net. Previously nets and gloves could not be used in the Akurinu churches. The bride's face was covered by a cotton piece of cloth⁷³. The rest of the ceremony runs in stages as follows:

(i) Opening prayer by a senior muhoi.

(ii) Scriptural readings related to the wedding ceremony. They include Gen.2:18, 18:22;19:14; Jn 3:29; II Cor. 11:2; and 1 Pet.3:5. The readings are meant to show the significance of marriage and to advise the couple. Great emphasis is particularly put on the need for the woman to humble herself towards her husband (1Pet.3:5).

(iii) Hymn No. 14 (Nvimbo cia Roho Mutheru) is then sang by the whole congregation. It is meant to supplement the Bible readings as the following verses illustrate;

Verse 1.

Jehova arikia kumba thi,
Ona indo ciothe niombire,
Adam na akiumba Hawa,

Chorus

Ngai na Jesu na Roho,
Maturaga mendanite,
Maiyuiruo ni uhoro wa ma,
Gutiri ucambagia uria ungi.

Verse 4

Athuri na atumia,
Mwehitanira he Ngai,
Turagai mwendanite,
Kinya muthenya wa gukua.

(After Jehova created the world,
And all the things, he created,
Adam and also created Eve,
To comfort one another.

Chorus

God, Jesus and the Spirit,
Are always in unity,
They are filled with truth,
None talks evil of the other.

Verse 4

Men and women,
When you make promises before God,
Remain in love,
Until the day you die,

(iv) A second prayer is led by a senior muhoi followed by the singing of hymn No.9 which shows the seriousness of the kigongona (sanctuary) and any ceremony performed before it⁷⁴. The hymn is meant therefore to remind the couple about the seriousness of the promises they make in the presence of God and the elders who are the witnesses.

(v) At this juncture, the bishop (or pastor) follows the Anglican Book of common prayer,

Thaara⁷⁵. After the questions and promises the bishop leads in another prayer to thank God since no one raised an objection against the wedding ceremony.

- (vi) The elders at the kigongana put on their bags on their shoulders and then sing hymn No.173 while the rest of the congregation listen. There is no drumming during the singing of this song, thus it is treated like the prayer hymns. It is worth looking at this hymn which runs thus;

Verse

- (1) kigongonaini iguru mbere ya Ngai,
Na mbere ya Roho na araka,
Na mbere ya anabii nii ningatuika,
Muiru wa uhiki uyu wa umuthi.
 - (2) Ithuothe tunganite nyumba ya Ngai,
Tuigwe muhiki na muhikania,
Makihitanira eri mbere ya Ngai,
Kigongona kimarugamiriire.
 - (3) Aira na inyui tegai matu murumie,
Mihitwa iria mekwihitanira,
Ni undu nimugatuika aira he Ngai,
Ciira utuiruo uria ukamithukia.
 - (4) Athuri na atumia thikiririai,
Na anake na airitu na tukenge,
Uria uii uhiki uyu ti mutheru,⁷⁶
Umuthi niombure mbere ya andu.
- (1) (At the sanctuary in heaven before God,
And before the Spirit and angels,
And before the prophets I will be,
A witness of today's wedding.

- (2) All of us have met in the house of God,
To hear the bride and the bride groom,
Making vows to one another before God,
The sanctuary standing by their side.
- (3) Witnesses open your ears and keep,
The vows they will make,
Because you will be witnesses before God,
Judgement will be upon whoever will break
them.
- (4) Old men and women listen,
And the young men and women and children,
If anyone knows that this wedding is not holy,
Today should reveal it to the people).

This hymn is sung before the giving away of the lady by her father and the making of vows by the couple. It is clear from the hymn that the elders and the whole congregation are witnesses to those vows and will therefore be answerable in heaven if they allow an unholy wedding to take place.

(vii) The bishop then calls for the father to come and give his daughter away for marriage. He holds the daughter's hand and hands her over to the bishop who in turn gives her to the man. It is at this point that the veil covering the girl's face is removed.

(viii) The couple then makes vows to each other. Hymns No.37 is then sung by the congregation, which details the qualities of a good wife as exemplified by such biblical women like Sarah.

Rebecca, Leah, Naomi, Hanna and Esther. From the New Testament, Mary and Elizabeth are taken as characters worth emulating by the bride.

(ix) A senior muhoi then produces the chest cloth (rithu) and prays for it before handing it to the bridegroom to put it on the bride. This is the sign that he has married the lady and is the equivalent of a ring used in other churches⁷⁷. The woman does not put anything on the man.

(x) After that there follows the declaration of the wedding by the bishop followed by the final prayer.

An important feature to note about the wedding ceremony is the dramatised separation between the new couple and their former company of the youth. The bridegroom is supposed to give away his old turban to the unmarried men while the girl gives away her belt to the unmarried girls. This normally takes place on the night preceeding the wedding day. The giving away of these items is indeed a declaration by the newly married couple that they have graduated to a higher status and at no time should they revert back to their former company.

After the wedding the couple is given a month of rest during which they are not supposed to do any work, neither attend church services. It is during this period that they come to know one another as husband and wife⁷⁸. They are normally given a girl to assist them in the domestic chores. At the end of the one month, the couple accompanied by the best man and his wife, go back to church for prayers after which they resume their normal life.

We should note that the Akurinu differ as regards polygamy. Some groups practice it while others are opposed to it. In its constitution, The Kenya Foundation of Prophet Church for example states that;

"The church does not restrict its members to marry more than two wives. See Gen. 16:3-4; I Sam. 1:1-5; IKings 1:4-5.⁷⁹"

These biblical references offer a justification for upholding the Gikuyu custom of polygamy. The Kahiriga group, (God's Word and Holy Ghost Church) practice polygamy as part of their obedience to God's command to revert to the Gikuyu customs. Other groups like the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa and the African Holy Ghost Christian Church are opposed to polygamy. In its constitution, the African Holy Ghost Christian Church states;

"The followers of this church do not play(sic) polygamy and if any gentleman or girl commit adultery or have two or more wives this is a sin and the church should discharge and expel such person from the church. The church shall not be responsible for such a (sic) marriages and no wedding of such person can be done in the church. Matthew 5:27-31; 19:6-10; Exodus 20:14 Lev.21:7-9; I Cor. 5:11-13; Mat.3-5; Gal.5:19-26"⁸⁰.

If a member joins the church having married more than one wife, he will be accepted together with his wives. Should such a member request for a renewal of their marriage in church, he will only be wedded with his first wife, while the other wives stand behind her in a chain⁸¹. This is to indicate that those other wives are under the eldest wife for she is supposed to have consented to their being married.

Before leaving this section, we need to mention that some of the youth are dissatisfied with the way marriage is conducted. Their responses to two of the questions put to them during the field work illustrate their dissatisfaction:

Questions 4

"What problems do the youth face in the Akurinu church?"

The following responses which refer to marriage were given by different informants.

- (i) Marriage decisions are made by elders.
- (ii) No freedom in the choice of marriage partners.
- (iii) Their weddings are done in the way the old men want.
- (iv) They are denied the freedom to mix with other youths.
- (v) They fear the dreams about their husbands or wives-to-be for they are not given the freedom to choose their own partners.
- (vi) There is no freedom for someone to marry a non-mukurinu Christian.
- (vii) Backsliding for lack of a suitable marriage partner among the Akurinu.
- (ix) No keeping of friends before marriage.

Out of a sample of forty two youths comprising of young men and women, 36% gave the above points as problems affecting the youths.

Question 6

"What changes would you recommend in order to attract more young people in the church?"

The following suggestions which touch on marriage and free association were given.

- (i) Allow boys and girls to mix
- (ii) Allow inter-denominational marriages
- (iii) Marriage regulations should be changed
- (iv) The youth should be allowed to choose their marriage partners.

(v) Encourage boys and girls to be free with each other.

These responses were given by 30% of the members interviewed. It indicates that some of the young people leave the Akurinu Churches in order to exercise their freedom in choosing their marriage partners. Furthermore, the above responses to questions four and six clearly show that there are some practices among the Akurinu which cause dissatisfaction among the youth members. It is therefore an area that requires serious consideration by the elders if they are to retain and attract more young people into the Akurinu churches.

In concluding this section, we make the following observations. Firstly, marriage is taken seriously among the Akurinu as illustrated by the divine inquiry and the accompanying prayers. Secondly, since the Akurinu marry among themselves, it makes them a socially exclusive community. It is not therefore surprising that some youths would like to be free to marry outside the Akurinu community as noted above. Thirdly, the Akurinu have retained some aspects of Gikuyu marriage customs such as payment of dowry and the practice of polygamy by some groups. Finally,

today Akurinu are open to the rest of the community since they not only perform their weddings during the day but also invite non-members to participate in their ceremonies.

6.5 Death and Burial

Burial is the last rite for a mukurinu. Unlike marriage ceremonies which attract people from far, burial is normally left to the local congregation unless it involves a prominent prayer-leader. Throughout their history, the Akurinu have been accused of burying their dead secretly. It has even been alleged that when they close church doors and windows, they are burying someone either in the church or in the house⁸². Much of this accusation and suspicion is mainly based on ignorance about the Akurinu funerals. In this section we shall deal with burial and the accompanying cleansing rituals.

For a proper understanding of the Akurinu funeral ceremonies, it is necessary to have some background both of the Mosaic and the Gikuyu laws on death and burial. As with other rites so far discussed, the Akurinu have retained elements of Gikuyu burial practices although they give them a biblical justification.

Among the Jews, when a person died the whole household and anyone else who entered that house

became ritually unclean. Even the uncovered utensils were also considered unclean. Anyone who touched the dead body, or a bone of a person or stepped on a grave also contracted the uncleanness and remained so for seven days. The Law required such persons to cleanse themselves by washing both their bodies and their clothes with water on the third and seventh day after which they would go through a purification ceremony (Num. 19:11-22). Failure to go through the purification rites meant instant expulsion from the rest of the community and from religious ceremonies. Such an unclean person, it was argued, would not only defile others through contact but would also make unholy the places of worship (Num. 19:20).

The Gikuyu had similar purificatory rites associated with death and burial⁸³. After death, the whole family was regarded as having contracted thahu and were therefore to seclude themselves while outsiders kept off from the home of the deceased. Burial was performed by the sons or immediate family members. This was followed by an elaborate purification ceremony for those who had buried the body as well as the rest of the family members⁸⁴. The early Arathi were therefore familiar with the Gikuyu funeral customs, which after reading the Bible they found parallel

accounts. In their endeavour to keep the Law, they retained the Jewish funeral customs but at the same time they were perpetuating an old Gikuyu custom.

Previously the Akurinu were not attending hospitals for treatment. Their members would therefore die at home. Immediately it was known that a person had died, no Mukurinu would enter that house to avoid contracting thahu. All the people present in the house when the person died and every thing else in that house were considered to have contracted thahu of death⁸⁵. It was therefore important that word was sent round to warn other Akurinu about the death to avoid cases of unsuspecting visitors entering such house. Today, most Akurinu will take their relatives to hospital especially when they are in critical situations. When death occurs in the hospital, it saves the family members the ordeal of going through the cleansing rituals.

As mentioned earlier, the Akurinu were not allowed to hold any meetings during the colonial period. Thus, when death of their member occurred they would organise the burial to take place during the night to avoid harassment by the colonial authorities⁸⁶. The practice of night burials was also based on the belief that if one saw the

corpse, even without touching it, he also contracted thahu and would have to go through the cleansing ceremony. Since no coffins were used in those days, the safest way to avoid people seeing the corpses was to bury them during the night.

After the registration of the Akurinu churches, they were allowed to hold meetings and they began to bury their dead during the day. Some conservative groups like the Christian Holy Ghost Church (Kiratina) however, continued with the night burials which caused a lot of suspicion from the community. In 1979, a large group of their followers led by Ezekiel Karanja defected from this group due to disagreements over the night burials and joined the African Holy Ghost Christian Church⁸⁷. Their demand to have burials performed during the day was rejected by the elders and they decided to move into a church which practices burial during the day.

Unlike other churches where several people participate in the preparation of the body for burial, in the Akurinu church only a few men carry out this task. This is to minimise the number of those who would contract thahu by getting in touch with the corpse. Normally, about four to six men are chosen to perform the burial. Whether the

death occurs at home or in the hospital, they are the ones to wash the body, dress it and place it in a coffin while the rest of the members keep their distance⁸⁸. A senior muhoi will be buried by other senior elders while for an ordinary member some young men will be chosen. A Mukurinu has to be dressed in the worship robes. For an elder of the kigongona, his bag containing the Bible and the hymn books will be placed by his side. If an elder had been given a guiding rod by the Holy Spirit it may also be placed by his side in the coffin⁸⁹.

It should be noted that the Akurinu do not take bodies into the church for prayers because this would render the holy building unclean together with all the people present⁹⁰. Burial prayers are therefore conducted by the graveside or outside the home of the deceased.

Since burial is an igongona, the elders present put on their bags and stand in a semi circle with the coffin in front of them. The rest of the members surround but keep their distance. Those who prepared the body seclude themselves to avoid mixing with the rest. Hymns from both the Akurinu hymnal (Nyimbo cia Roho Mutheru) and the Protestant hymnal (Nyimbo cia Kuinira Ngai) which express the hope of a future life are sung. The

Protestant hymnal (Nyimbo cia Kuinira Ngai) which express the hope of a future life are sung. The preaching at this point emphasises the hope of resurrection and eternal life and is based on such verses like Jn.11:25-26; Job19:19-26; Ps.90; I Cor.15:15-20; 2Cor.4:16-18; Rev.7:9-17. The joyous singing during this time gives the impression that the Akurinu are not afraid of death.

An important thing to note is the orientation of the grave. It must always take an East-West direction. The body is thus laid with the head to the West and the legs to the East. The explanation given for keeping the body in this position is that during the Parousia, when the dead will be resurrected, one should rise up facing the direction of the East, from where the Messiah will appear⁹¹. Efforts to establish how this belief came into being were fruitless but it is likely that it is based on the Matthean account of the Maggi who were guided by a star from the East (Mt.2:1-3).

The procedure at the graveside follows the Anglican Book of Common Prayers, Thaara⁹². The lowering of the coffin is done by the chosen men. Previously they were the ones to dig the grave and fill it. Today some groups like the AHGCC allow other members and even non members to assist in the

digging of the grave and in the filling of the soil⁹³. But care is taken that they do not touch the coffin or its bearers.

After the burial, the men who handled the body and all those who were in the house (if the person died at home) seclude themselves for seven days. The men normally seclude themselves in a gaaru where they are either provided with food or cook for themselves. All those in seclusion wash on the third and seventh day after which they go to church to be prayed for⁹⁴. It is after the prayers that they are declared clean and can therefore resume their normal life. For those who are employed, they can report for duty but return to the gaaru in the evening for they are not supposed to mix with other members.

In a situation where a member dies at home, all those present in that house and everything in it have to be cleansed on the third and seventh day respectively. The people have to wash themselves and their clothes and then wash the items in the house usually by way of sprinkling water on them. The house has to be prayed for while the people have to go for the purificatory prayers after the seven days.

From the foregoing, it is clear that among the Akurinu just like among the Gikuyu, death is a paradox. Although they are not afraid of it, they

however keep away from the dead. Death carries a contagious thahu or defilement. It indeed 'separates' God and man for a dead body is not to be taken in a holy place or in the church for it would defile the kigongona. The examples of Jesus having touched dead bodies during his ministry and never went through purification rites seem to have no impact on the Akurinu (Lk.7:11-17, 8:49-56). To the Akurinu death is a turning point on their pilgrimage to heaven whereby one is transformed from a physical to a spiritual form. The Akurinu view of the soul will be discussed in the following chapter under eschatology.

In conclusion, we have seen that the Akurinu are very particular in observing the Mosaic Law when carrying out the various rites. We have however, noted that where a traditional Gikuyu custom such as female circumcision has no biblical support some Akurinu apply a prophetic justification so that in the final analysis it is seen as a divine command. As mentioned earlier much of the Gikuyu customs which are similar to the Jewish customs are upheld by the Akurinu for two reasons. Firstly, there are those who observe them in fulfilment of the Levitical Laws. Secondly there are those who, on top of keeping the Laws,

also retain them in fulfilment of the fourth of the Mount Kenya commandments which required all the Akurinu to revert to their Gikuyu customs.

NOTES ON CHAPTER SIX

1. Participant observation, Ngorano Mathira 10/12/91.
2. Samuel John Chege, Rufus Gichuki, op. cit.
3. Participant observation - Birisha.
4. Nyimbo cia Kuinira Ngai op. cit. Hymn No.110.
5. See Turner op. cit. p. 186 where he calls the rite 'the churching of the mother and child' Sundkler op. cit. p.205, also observes a similar practice in the Zionist churches of South Africa.
6. The mother is supposed to recited this Psalm but since women do not read the Bible in church among the Akurinu, the pastor reads on their behalf.
7. The churching ceremony described took place at Kamakwa African Mission of Holy Ghost Church on 9/12/91.
8. Rufus Gichuki, op. cit.
9. For a detailed account on birth among the Gikuyu see Leakey L.S.B. The Southern Gikuyu Before 1903 Vol.2; (London: Academic Press, 1977) p.512-532. also Kabetu op.cit. p.5-16; Gathigira op.cit. p.19-25.
10. Elijah Kinyanjui, op. cit.
11. Maritha Mwihaki op. cit. She is the wife of Elijah Kinyanjui.
12. Leakey op. cit. p.578
13. Turner op. cit. p.188.
14. See Flemington The New Testament doctrine of baptism, London SPCK 1964; Jeremiah J. Infant Baptism in the first four centuries, London SCM Press, 1960, Macquarrie J. Principles of Christian Theology London SCM 1975 ed.

13. For some of the views on these sacraments see for example Flemington W.F. op. cit. p.119. Macquarrie J. op.cit p.415.
14. Kenyatta op. cit. p.233.
17. Ibid.
18. Elijah Kinyanjui, op. cit.
19. John Muhia, op. cit.
20. The 'believing' in this case is in reference to the Akurinu faith and practice. According to one informant, Rufus Gichuki, during baptism a candidate is asked, "Do you want to be baptised in this faith? meaning the Akurinu faith.
21. Daudi Ikigu op. cit. p.390.
22. This acceptance may be done during the putting on of the turban if the conversion took place in Church.
23. John Muhia, Joseph Wahome, op. cit. See also Njeri op. cit. p.163.
24. Turner op. cit. p.190.
25. Samuel Gathimba, Ezekiel Njai, Stephano Machango, op. cit.
26. Jasan Wagura, op. cit.
27. Elijah Kinyanjui, op. cit.
28. For example in the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa, baptism is done twice in a year in June and November. See also Njeri op.cit. p.165.
29. Rufus Gichuki - op. cit.
30. Ibid.
31. Daudi Ikigu Nyimbo cia Roho Mutheru.
32. The exhortations to remain free from evil is common in the Akurinu service, for example such phrases as ikaragai mwitheretie, (keep yourselves ritually clean, or free from evil) are used.

33. Joseph Wahome, op. cit.
34. Samuel John Chege, op. cit.
35. Rufus Gichuki op. cit.
36. Different churches treat these as two separate rites with confirmation coming at a later stage. For the different views on confirmation see Flemington op. cit. p.148-152, also Macquarrie J. op. cit. p.414-416.
37. On the basis of this similarity, some Akurinu especially from the God's Word and Holy Ghost Church argue that the Gikuyu ancestors had some relation with the Jews at one time in their history.
38. Samuel Gathimba, Ezekiel Njai, Stephano Machango, op. cit.
39. Ayub Nduti, Gichagini, Kandara interview, 26/2/92.
40. See chapter three
41. Leakey op. cit. p.621.
42. Maritha Mwihaki, Elijah Kinyanjui, op. cit.
43. Joseph Wahome - interview Nairobi, 19/3/91
44. Leakey op. cit. p.621.
45. Elijah Kinyanjui, op. cit.
46. Ibid.
47. Maritha Mwihaki op. cit.
48. The same command was given to Maritha Mwihaki, the midwife.
49. Today Samuel Mahehe lives at Subukia and Damaris Wambaire is at Bahati, Nakuru. Both still perform circumcision to both Akurinu and non Akurinu youths.
50. Isaac Mwangi op. cit. (He is a son of Damaris Wambaire).
51. Joshua Kingori, - op. cit.

52. See diagram 2 for the seating pattern in the Akurinu church.
53. The only exceptional cases known of ordained unmarried elders are those of Hezron Tumbo and Daudi Ikigu both of the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa, who were ordained after declaring that they had dedicated their lives for the service of God.
54. AHGCC Constituion Article 2 (C) under Aims and Objectives.
55. DC/FH/2/1/4. (KNA).
56. Ibid.
57. KNA, DC/KBU/3/2.
58. KNA, PC/CP/8/7/3.
59. For a detailed account on marriage among the Gikuyu see Leakey op. cit p.747-818, Kabetu op. cit. p.39-48; Kenyatta op. cit. p.163-185, Gathigira op. cit. p.13-18.
60. John Muhia, Elijah Kinyanjui, Joseph Wahome, op. cit.
61. Hannah Wambui, Maritha Mwhaki, op. cit.
62. Elijah Kinyanjui, op. cit.
63. Kenyatta op. cit. p.163-174.
64. Mburu Machua - interview, Nairobi,
65. Participant observation-Birisha, 30/5/93.
66. Harun Waibochi- interview, Birisha, 13/8/91
67. On one occasion during the first prayers, the pastor told the man and the lady to go home as if nothing had happened and to avoid any discussion about their marriage plans. Participant observation - Birisha, 30/5/93.
68. Joseph Wahome, op. cit.
69. Participant observation, Birisha, Nyeri 31/8/91, Nairobi, 22/12/91.
70. Zablon Gichuki, op. cit.

71. This explains why non-members could not be invited for fear that they might inform the authorities.
72. Participant observation; Makutano, Laikipa 5/6/92.
73. According to Samuel John Chege, the elders were overpowered by the youth and allowed them to use these modern items.
74. Nyimbo cia Roho Mutheru. No. 91.
75. See Thaara op. cit. p.125-129.
76. Nyimbo cia Roho Mutheru, No.173.
77. According to Kezia Wangari, the elders who went to Mount Kenya to receive the commandments in 1930, were told to remove their rings on their way back. Interview, Kangema 13/2/92.
78. When a person engages in sexual intercourse, he has thahu and remain unclean the following whole day. So, to avoid undue inconveniences on the part of the new couple, they are exempted from religious ceremonies and are treated as though they were in seclusion for one month.
79. Kenya Foundation of Prophets Church- Constitution Article 12. See Appendix ID.
80. African Holy Ghost Christian Church, Constitution-Article 12. See Appendix IE.
81. John Muhia, op.cit.
82. Ezekiel Karanja, op. cit.
83. For a detailed account of the funeral ceremonies among the Gikuyu see Leakey op. cit. p.935-953. Gathigira op.cit. p.
84. Leakey Ibid. p.943.
85. Samuel John Chege, Joseph Wahome, op. cit.
86. Ezekiel Karanja, Zablon Gichuki op. cit.
87. Ezekiel Karanja op. cit.

88. Participant observation, Iruri (Mathira), 12/12/91.
89. Rufus Gichuki - *op cit.*
90. Samuel John Chege, *op. cit.*
91. Rufus Gichuki, Michael Njangi, interview, Birisha, Nyeri, 21/3/91.
92. See Thaara p.145-146.
93. Participant observation - Iruri (Mathira) 13/12/91.
94. For a similar practice in other independent churches see Sundkler *op. cit.* p.219.

CHAPTER SEVEN

ASPECTS OF AKURINU THEOLOGY

In the foregoing chapters we have looked at the historical background and the life in the Akurinu churches. Reference has been made to some of their doctrines. In this chapter we shall deal with the main Christian doctrines and find out how the Akurinu interpret them. As mentioned earlier, there are few written documents on the Akurinu Churches which include the constitution and the hymnal, Nyimbo cia Roho Mutheru¹. Thus, much of their theology can only be deduced from their sermons, testimonies and hymns.

7:1 The concept of God

In chapter two we observed that the Gikuyu religion was a monotheism based on the worship of Ngai (God). The early western Christian missionaries to Gikuyuland, due to their preconceived ideas about Africans, did not readily accept the God of the Gikuyu to be the same God they had come to preach to them. Among such prejudiced missionaries was Bewes T.F.C who as late as 1953 could write,

"The Kikuyu idea of God is a curious mixture of the personal and the impersonal. He is Ngai Baba, Father God, and yet they use the neuter form, Ngai ni nene (the God It is great): Ngai ni nguru, (the God, It is powerful) and will normally use the personal prefix "Mu" only when they come under Christian influence"².

So, according to Bewes, the Gikuyu conception of God which was 'curious' had to be improved through the teachings of the missionaries. As to why the missionaries adopted the Gikuyu name of God (Ngai) Bewes remarked that "the content had to be different".³ This implied that the Ngai of the Gikuyu was not the same as the Christian God. In the thinking of such missionaries as Bewes when they called the Gikuyu to turn to God it meant leaving the Gikuyu Ngai and turning to the Christian God.

Some missionaries after living among the Gikuyu and studying them with a positive attitude came to discover that their monotheism was founded on a clear conception of a one God, Ngai. For example, Father Cagnolo after living among the Gikuyu for thirty years observed that,

"since our arrival among this people we found that the Gikuyu believes in a supreme Being Spiritual, Ruler and Governor of the Universe. He believes also in the survival of the souls. Like all the other Bantu tribes they distinguish exactly two orders of the ultramundane beings: Ngai... with the singular only... as Supreme Being and source of all things, and the Ngoma or the innumerable spirits of the dead with no connection with God but with us."⁴

Cagnolo attributed the success of the missionaries' evangelistic work in Gikuyuland to the Gikuyu knowledge of the one God:

"The new doctrine found a suitable soil for growth, monotheism, therefore the graft took hold and thrived"

Other scholars have made similar observations about

the Gikuyu monotheism. Kibicho, for example, has argued in his study that those Gikuyu who converted to Christianity continued to uphold the pre-Christian Gikuyu conception of God:

".... the Gikuyu conception of God remained fundamentally unchanged even for those who were converted to Christianity".⁶

He further argues that this position has not changed for the Gikuyu Christians basically continue to conceive of God within the traditional framework. In Kibicho's words,

"Even to this day the Kikuyu converts to Christianity believe that the God they worship in Christianity is the same one True God (Ngai) who was known and worshipped by their pre-Christian forefathers in the traditional Kikuyu religion."⁷

Like other Gikuyu converts to Christianity the Akurinu have continued to conceive of God from the traditional viewpoint. The following hymns illustrate this point.

"Ngai wa Iburahim na wa Isaka,
Na nowe wa maithe maitu ma tene,
Niwe watuheire muoyo wa thi ino,
Na nowe ugatwitia muoyo wa thi ino."⁸

(God of Abraham and of Isaac,
Is the same God of our forefathers,
He gave us the life of this world,
And he is the one who will take it away.)

Here, the universality and eternity of God is implied. The God who was with the Jewish patriarchs is the same God (Ngai) of the Gikuyu ancestors. The eternity of God is further illustrated in the following refrain,

"Hoyai ma thaithai ma,
Ni amu Ngai no uria wa tene"

(Pray earnestly, beseech earnestly,
For God is the same God of ancient times)

We noted in chapter two that according to the Gikuyu myth, God (Ngai) took their first ancestor, Gikuyu, to the top of Mount Kenya (Kirinyaga) to give him the land and also made some promises.¹⁰ In chapter three, we noted a similar event when some early Akurinu elders were directed through a prophecy, to go to the same mountain where God gave them the guiding commandments.¹¹ To the Akurinu the event was proof enough that the God who had taken their ancestor Gikuyu to the same mountain had in the same manner revealed himself to them for the purpose of upholding the promises he had made with Gikuyu about the land. On the other hand, the Mount Kenya commandments could be seen as proof of God's universality. He is not restricted to a particular community neither does he change with time. He remains the same, with the people as the following verse illustrates.

Hymn 15 "Ngai nieruhagia irikaniro,
Igatuika njeru kuri riuu,
Na ndone Kirima kana nduma,
Cia kumugiria agiuka kuhingia,
Tondu Ngai etaguo gutoria."¹²

(God renews promises,
They become brighter than the sun,
And he finds no,
Mountain or darkness,
To hinder him as he comes,
To fulfil the promises,
Because God is called Victory).¹³

The Akurinu history is characterised by promises which they claim were revealed by the prophets (Anabii). For

example we noted in chapter three the prophecy about a coming suffering foretold in 1945 and which turned out to be the Mau mau war of independence according to the Akurinu interpretation. The twenty year exodus of the God's Word and Holy Ghost Church (Kahiriga) is also seen as a proof of the on-going revelation of God to his people. This group believes they were guided in the same manner the Israelites were guided during their exodus. Furthermore, God gave them conditions to be fulfilled before the country was put back in the hands of the Africans. The most outstanding one was the ceremony of piercing of their ears at the Mukurue wa Gathanga, the mythical cradle of the Gikuyu.¹³ For this group, the God who had led the Israelites through the exodus to the promised land was the same Ngai of their fore fathers, who was directing them on what to do and where to go for worship until the country was liberated from the colonial enslavement.¹⁴

In summarising this section, we should note the following observations. Firstly, the Akurinu like other Gikuyu Christians, have retained the Gikuyu names of God.¹⁵ But they have also taken up the Biblical names such as Jehovah which is commonly used together with Ngai. This then confirms our argument that to the Akurinu, like other Gikuyu converts, the Biblical God is the same Ngai of their forefathers. Secondly, the Akurinu have retained a strong reverence for God and anything associated with Him.

This is observed for example in their removal of shoes before entry into the church or prayer - ground, keeping off the kigongona except for the Ahoi (Prayer leaders) and in avoiding holding discussions in the church. Finally, the Akurinu emphasize on direct communication between God and man. Through prayer, man reaches out to God. Thus, even when a prayer leader (Muhoi) leads in prayers during worship, all the members also engage in personal prayers which are said loudly, at times drowning the voice of the Muhoi. The Akurinu do however acknowledge the second person of the Trinity.

7:2 The person of Jesus

The Gikuyu monotheistic religion provides no basis for the understanding of the Christian Trinitarian doctrine. Ngai is in a class of His own and does not use other beings to reveal Himself to human beings. The Akurinu christology then, is based on the New Testament teaching about Jesus.

The difficulties of comprehending the doctrine of the trinity is manifested in other independent churches in Africa. As far as the person of Christ is concerned, there is the problem of emphasizing either a theocentric or an anthropological christology. Some of the churches which have emphasized the humanity of Jesus have stripped him off all his divinity so that Jesus becomes an ordinary man. One leader of an independent church is reported to have said,

"Our church is a unique sort of church in that we do not accept that Jesus is God, but we recognise him as one of the God sent prophets because we believe God vested him with that grand name of being His son who came to accomplish what other prophets had preached before, especially the laws of Moses and God's covenant to our Grandfather Ibrahim (Abraham)"¹⁶

Other independent churches in Africa have even substituted the historical Jesus with their own Black Messiahs. For example the late leader of the Legio Maria church in Kenya, Holy Father Simeo Lodivicus Malkio Messiah Ondeto had attained such a status as he is reported to have said, "my followers call me the son of God they know best."¹⁷ Simon Kibangu, the founder of Kibanguism in Zaire was also hailed as a Messiah.¹⁸ Similarly, Isaiah Shembe, the founder of the Nazarite church of South Africa was regarded as a Black Messiah by his followers.¹⁹

The Akurinu accept Jesus as the son of God and they have no human substitutes for him. As mentioned earlier they have neither an earthly Jerusalem nor a deified Black Messiah. They have retained the Fact of Christ as taught in the Gospels. But like other Christians, they do have difficulties in interpreting the mystery of Christ namely his divine and human nature.²⁰ An analysis of their hymns show that although they do not deny the historicity of Jesus, as a true man, emphasis is on his divine nature. This may have been due to the fact that the historical Jesus operated within a period of time after which he ascended. So, Jesus in his divine nature is in heaven

(Acts 3:21) awaiting the Parousia.

The Akurinu resort to different christological paradigms in their preaching and in testimonies in an attempt to make the mystery of Christ intelligible and meaningful to their members. The seven Johannine christological paradigms which are attributed to Jesus himself, form a biblical basis from which the Akurinu like other Christians have added their own. In John's Gospel, Jesus is said to have referred to himself as "the bread of life (Jn 6:35) the light of the world (8:12): the door of the sheep (10:7): the good shepherd (10:14): the resurrection and the life (11:25), the way, the truth and the life (14:6) and the true vine, (15:1)".

Among the Akurinu, Jesus is seen as a farmer who requested his father to be allowed to descend to the world in order to weed and manure the fruit trees. He used his own blood to water the trees. So, now he is waiting for the harvest time which will come during the Parousia. As a farmer, Jesus is depicted as using the Law for his weeding tool as the following verse illustrates:

Hymn 88:

"Ruhia rua Jesu rua kurima,
Mugunda wa Ngai,
Ni watho wa ibuku riake,
Waheiruo atumwo ni mwathani."³¹

(The knife of Jesus for cultivating,
The garden of God,
Is the Law in his book,
Which was given to the Apostles by the lord)

Jesus as an ideal farmer is a relevant example for an agricultural community like the Gikuyu who know the farming procedure and the times for different activities like planting and harvesting. The incorporation of the law as the weeding tool implies the continuity of the Mosaic law through the work of Jesus as far as the Akurinu are concerned.²² Jesus is portrayed as a leader in the battle against Satan. He demonstrated his victory through his ministry, death and resurrection. His followers, the Akurinu included, now form the army of Christ and are fighting the powers of evil. Jesus will return and take the victorious ones as the following verse illustrates.

Hymn 2:

"Gaturume akehumba,
Gutorania gwake,
Niagatongoria andu aria,
Moimite mbara - ini,
Makahota ndamathia,
Na muhianano wayo,
Makeruo aya ni thingi,
Nyamuranie na thi"²³

(The lamb will put on his victory,
He will lead the people,
Who have come from the war,
And have defeated the dragon,
Together with his idols,
And will be told these are the saints,
Separated from the world).

A common christological symbol is that of a judge. Jesus is portrayed as the one who will preside over the last judgement. In that capacity Jesus has three books in which he keeps records of each person and which he will

refer to when making the judgement as it is implied in the following verse:

Hymn 110:

"Mabuku ma wira mothe,
Me mokoini make,
Ria watho na ria mariitwa,
Ningi na ria muoyo."

(All the books for the work,
Are in his hands.
The book of Law and of the names,
And also the one of life)

The view that Jesus will be the Judge, with the records for each person is based on what goes on in the law courts in the contemporary society. The important thing to note, however, is that each person will have a fair judgement since Jesus will refer to the individual records.

The notion of Jesus as a High priest is well developed by the author of the Book of Hebrews. He is not only the priest (4:14ff) but also the sacrifice itself (7:27). The Akurinu add a third dimension to the priesthood whereby Jesus is also the altar upon which the High priest offers the sacrifice. The following chorus brings out this idea:

Hymn 146:

"Muthamaki Jesu,
Kigongona githeru,
Gia kuhoreria ngoro ciothe",²⁴

(Lord Jesus ,
The holy altar,
For pacifying all the hearts.)

Thus in Jesus the three aspects of a priest, the sacrifice and the altar find their fulfilment.

Jesus is also portrayed as a house or Temple into which he is inviting people to enter and take refuge just as Noah invited people into the Ark before the flood (Gen 7: 1-23). The following hymn describes him thus;

Hymn 50

"Menyai Jesu ni nyumba,
Nyamure ni Jehovah,
Niatuiruo hekaru' theru,
Ya ritwa ria ithe witu,
Ya kurathimirwo andu aria,
Matari uHINGA ngoro,
Riria maturitie maru,²⁵
Magithaitha Jehovah."

(Know that Jesus is a house,
Set aside by Jehovah,
He was made a holy 'Temple'
For the name of our Father,
For the blessing of the people.
Who have no hypocrisy in their hearts,
When they kneel beseeching Jehovah)

The sense of security provided by Jesus is implied. But Jesus is more than a house for he is the Temple in which his followers worship God.

Finally, Jesus is portrayed as a living stone. The notion of a living stone has several biblical reverences. During the exodus, Moses was commanded to strike a Rock so that the Israelites could get water (Ex. 17: 1-7). Jesus had referred to himself as the stone which the builders had rejected but which became the cornerstone (Mk. 12:10 -11). He had also given Simon a new name, Peter, which means Rock (Mt. 16:18). When Jesus is referred to as a living stone.

the emphasis is on his eternity as well as the life that proceeds from him. The following verse carries this idea, Hymn 72;

"Nduriri ni iguitwo Kirimaini,
Kiigiriiruo ihiga rii na muoyo,
Ningi ni gi theru Roho niwe, kirima,
Kinene gukira irima ciothe"²⁶

(All nations are called to the mountain,
Where the living stone is placed,
It is also holy, the Spirit is the mountain,
Greater than all other mountains).

It is clear from these verses that the Akurinu, like other Christians are trying to present Christ in a manner intelligible to their members. This is an aspect of theology which African theologians have identified as necessary. It is aimed at making the Gospel message relevant and meaningful to the Africans within their social political and economic situation.²⁷ To achieve this goal, scholars are now advocating the inculturation of the gospel message whereby Jesus becomes one of them and speaks to them through their own experiences. The process of inculturation calls for christological models which place both the historical and the Jesus of faith within the African understanding. Nyamiti has pointed out that this process is not really new for it must have began far back when the evangelization of Africans started, though it was not systematically carried out.²⁸ According to him the time has come for serious studies on African christological models to be taken, as he puts it:

"Therefore, serious scientific research of this subject in African communities would reveal various authentically African christologies from which all could profit in many ways. The existence of similar christologies in today's African independent churches confirms this hypothesis.²⁹

From our analysis of the Akurinu hymns, it is clear that the process of inculturation has always existed among them. Their christological models are based on their experiences not only from their Gikuyu background but also in the contemporary living. Thus, as Nyamiti suggests, a study of the African independent Churches could reveal more christologies which are not as yet known to other Christians. We hasten to add here that starting with the studies of such churches might be a more valuable approach than the abstract academic theorising on the christologies.

In summarising this section, we have noted that while the Akurinu accept Christ as the second person of the Triune God, they however tend to emphasize more on his divinity at the expense of his humanity. Jesus as present here and now appears to be eclipsed by the Holy Spirit to which we turn in the next section.

7:3 The Holy Spirit

From the observations made in the foregoing chapters, it is clear that the Akurinu church is pneumatological. It has rightly been categorised as a Spirit church³⁰. To the Akurinu, the Holy Spirit is a driving force in their

churches. Thus, the members refer to themselves as Andu a Roho, (People of the Spirit).³¹ One of the names used for their movement in the earlier days was Arata a Roho Mutheru, (Friends of the Holy Spirit).³²

In chapter three it was noted that the early Akurinu claimed that they were called through the Holy spirit. They believed in the guidance of the Spirit, a feature that is observed even today. The name prophets (Arathi) implied that they were filled with the spirit who enabled them to prophesy, speak in tongues, dream and to see visions. It is on this basis that they considered themselves a chosen people who were given the Holy Spirit just like the disciples on the Day of Pentecost (Act.2:1 - 13). It is not surprising, therefore, that the Akurinu manifest the Pentecostal phenomena remarkably.

While the Akurinu like other Christians acknowledge the reality of the Holy Spirit as the third person in the triune God, they do encounter difficulties in trying to describe him. One informant, Joel Githua, remarked that only those who have received the Spirit can exchange views about him."³³ At one point another informant cautioned the researcher not to engage in a discussion on the Holy Spirit because, "unless one has received the Spirit, one cannot know or understand the Akurinu churches."³⁴

Such remarks notwithstanding, there were some informants who gave their understanding of the Holy Spirit.

Elijah Kinyanjui observed that "the Spirit is a mystery (Kiundu) which is beyond human description"³³ Reflecting on his own call in 1929, Kinyanjui equated the Holy Spirit with "a power that grips a person so that one is no longer under his own control."³⁶ Thus, they conceive of the Holy Spirit as an invisible entity, incorporeal in nature yet real in the sense that its effects are seen and felt at the personal and communal level.

The Akurinu hymns reveal better their conception of the Holy Spirit. So far, in the absence of other written literature, hymns form a fruitful source of their oral theology. So we shall look at some of the hymns which make reference to the Holy Spirit.

Hymn 5 (verse 6)

"Niokire na agikua na akiriuka,
Na akirikanira na arutwo ake,
Ambata nake Roho nieguka,
Wa gutuma matuikie utheri wa thi,
Ningi atuire nduriri ciira.

(He (Jesus) came died and resurrected,
He promised his disciples that,
After ascending the Spirit would come,
To make them become the light of the world,
And also to judge the nations.)

Hymn 6 (Verse 8)

Jesus ari matu - ini githinjiro - ini,
Niwe muthinjiri wa ngoro ciothe,
Nake Roho embara - ini thiini wa ngoro cia andu.

Lit (Jesus is in heaven at the altar,
He is the high priest for all hearts,
The Spirit is at war in the hearts of people.)

Hymn 8 (verse 1)

Ngai wa aria me muoyo,
Thikiriria wi iguru,
Roho agiguikaira, ni undu wa thina.

(God of the living,
Listen from heaven,
The Spirit pleading because of the suffering.)

Hymn 18 (verse 4)

Riria Roho akaringia indo,
Rui rua thi ruothe,
Niagakeneruo ni araika,
Mohete hiu ciao

(When the Spirit will take all things,
Across the river of the world,
He will be praised by the angels,
With their swords fastened)

Hymn 22 (verse 4)

Muthenya uria Roho akoiga,
Nindanina magetha,
Njangite mugunda wothe,
No mahuti ndatiga,
Menya thi niikahihio,
Naindo ciothe iria iri kuo.

(On the day the Spirit will declare,
I have finished harvesting,
I have wandered all over the farm,
Only the waste have I left,
Know that the world will be set on fire,
And all that will be in it.)

Hymn 36 (verse 1)

Aria meguthambia nguo,
Na thakame ya mwathani,
Magatongorio ni Rcho,
Matwaruo mbere ya Ngai.

(Those who wash their garments,
With the blood of Christ,
Will be led by the Spirit,
And will be taken before God).

Hymn 46 (chorus)

Roho uria mwekiriruo ruri nagueo,
Mutikanamuiguithie uuru,
O nginya hindi muthenya ugoka,
Wakuhonokio kwa andu aria othe atheru.

(The Spirit that was used to put marks on you,
Never make him angry,
Until the day comes,
For the salvation of the righteous ones).

Hymn 73 (verse 7)

Nianinite hinya wa gikuu,
Gikuu gitiri na uthamaki,
Ngoro ciothe niigoce Ngai,
Ciihumbite nguo ya Roho.

Lit (He has overcome the power of death,
Death has no power,
All hearts praise God,
Adorned in the cloth of the Spirit.)

Hymn 97 (verse 6)

Roho acuthiriirio ni araika,
O na agacuthiririo ni Jehovah,
Jesu no kiriro ari githinjiro-ini,
Wui Roho wakwa ari ugwati - ini,

Lit (The Spirit is being watched by angels,
And is also being watched by Jehovah,
Jesus is weeping at the altar,
Wo! my Spirit is in danger.)

Hymn 175 (verse 4)

Andu athingu kenai,
Na andu a ma muigue wega,
Tondu Roho ndakoya,
Ihaki agitua cira.

Lit (The righteous ones rejoice,
And people of truth feel relieved,
Because the Spirit will not accept bribes,
When making the judgement.)³⁷

From these verses we note that the Holy Spirit is depicted as a co-worker with Jesus. He came to complete the salvific mission which Jesus had started (hymn 5). Jesus as the experienced farmer, had done the planting and the weeding, so the Holy Spirit is now harvesting the fruits (hymn 22). In so doing, he has to identify the good from the bad ones. In this case, the Spirit becomes an instrument which makes a mark on the followers of Christ

to distinguish them from the non-believers pending the Judgement when they will be separated (hymn 46).³⁸ Some statements made during services such as "Ithui turi amure, (we have been set aside), or "Turi na ruri rua Roho" (We have the mark of the Spirit) are a further evidence about the Akurinu that it is the Holy Spirit who identifies and puts a mark on the faithful people.

The salvific mission is a risky undertaking for it involves a struggle with the powers of Satan. The Spirit is therefore at war with Satan who is trying to lead astray the followers of Jesus (hymn 97). The Spirit leads the Christians in their fight against Satan and will also be their guide to heaven after they win victory (hymn 36).

The Holy Spirit is also depicted both as a judge as well as witness. During the eschatological judgement, day, it is the Spirit that will give evidence before God and Jesus concerning the deeds of each person (hymns 137).³⁹ In this regard, it is the Spirit who knows each and every person having been with the people. Furthermore, the Spirit is the 'garment' which the Christians put on during their pilgrimage to heaven (hymn 73).

The reality of the Holy Spirit is further expressed through the testimonies by members of their experiences of the Holy Spirit.⁴⁰ We have made reference in chapter six to how baptismal names and marriage partners are given by the Spirit. The Spirit is therefore seen as a dynamic

power directing the Akurinu church in all its affairs. According to John Muhia, "Were it not for the Holy Spirit, the Akurinu Churches would have died long time ago."⁴¹ Another informant says that "the Spirit empowers the members in their struggle against the evil powers and also regulates their behaviour so that they remain upright,"⁴² Thus, the Holy Spirit is the moral conscience of the Akurinu churches. One of the roles of the prophets and prophetesses (Anabii) whose power is attributed to the Holy Spirit is to maintain morality in the churches.

An important observation to note concerning the Akurinu conception of the Triune God is that they use a trinitarian formula different from the traditional one. Instead of the "Father, Son and Holy Spirit" formula they have "God, Holy Spirit and Son". Thus the Spirit takes the second place while the Son takes the third position. This is demonstrated during their prayers where it runs thus:

Prayer leader - "Ngai Baba twiguire tha;

Congregation - Kwendaini gwaku, na kwa Roho na
kwa Jesu Kristo mukuri witu, Amen.

Prayer leader - Ngai Baba turathime,

Congregation - Kwendaini gwaku; na kwa Roho na kwa
Jesu Kristo Mukuri witu, Amen.

Prayer leader - God our Father have mercy on us,

Congregation - By your love and of the Holy Spirit
and of Jesus Christ our Saviour Amen x3

Prayer Leader - God our Father bless us.
Congregation - By your love and of the Holy Spirit
and of Jesus Christ our Saviour,
Amen".x3⁴³

As with other practices of this church, the informants could only justify this formula by saying that it was revealed to the early founders by the Holy Spirit.⁴⁴

The Akurinu conception of the Trinity appears to be focused on a temporal spatial basis. While the Son and the Holy Spirit derive their authority from the Father, He has allowed each of them to be operative in the world at a given period. Thus, the Holy Spirit is at present the one at work among the Akurinu while the Father and the Son, though with him, are paradoxically in heaven waiting for him to complete his mission. But at the same time the Akurinu emphasize on the unity of the Triune God as the above prayer shows.

To the Akurinu, then, God is present among them through the Holy Spirit who acts as a mediator between God, Jesus and people. They regard themselves as the eschatological community appropriating the fruits of the Spirit promised by Jesus to his disciples (Act 2:1, I Cor 12^{1ff}).

7:4 Prophecy

Prophecy is an important feature among the Akurinu and is regarded as a gift from God through the Holy Spirit. Prophecy was not however foreign to the early Akurinu for it was also found among the Gikuyu. During the rise of their movement in 1929, the prophecy of the great Gikuyu prophet, Cege wa Kibiru, which had detailed the colonization of Gikuyuland by the white man was familiar to them.⁴⁵ The early Akurinu, like the Gikuyu prophets, considered themselves to be in direct communication with God.⁴⁶ It was for this reason that they were referred to as Arathi (Sing. Murathi) or prophets. The missionaries and the colonial administrators however ridiculed them as "False prophets". The following police report in 1934 illustrates the skepticism about the Akurinu prophecy:

"They all appear to be quite sincere and fanatical. Certain of them tried prophesying but this has not been very successful".⁴⁷ (emphasis mine)

The Akurinu considered themselves to be endowed with the Spirit of God which enabled them to interpret the social and political crisis which was prevailing in Gikuyuland⁴⁸.

Although the term Arathi (prophets) was used for the Akurinu movement in general, not all the members were prophets in the strict sense of the word. Even today a few members stand out as the prophets proper and are referred to as Anabii (sing. Munabii).⁴⁹ It is the role of the

prophet proper, Munabii, that is discussed in this section.

The role of the Anabii in these Churches is comparable to that of the Old Testament prophets who mediated between God and the house of Israel. Just as each of the Biblical prophets was called to become God's messenger, the Anabii consider themselves to be a link between the people and God. It is important to note that the Akurinu believe that the gift of prophecy is conditional. It will be effective in a person so long as the recipient remains faithful to the Law and upright in his doings. According to one Munabii informant, Michael Wanjau,

"the moment one defiles himself, (gwithahia) God withdraws the Holy Spirit. After that the Munabii becomes ineffective and no longer receives messages from God."⁵⁰

The common causes of thahu are contact with a corpse, adultery, contact with a woman during her period, taking of alcohol, eating of pork and blood.

Prophecy, then, is a gift as well as a challenge for the recipient to remain upright and free from thahu. Many examples are given of Anabii who have gone astray and have subsequently lost their prophetic gifts. In the case of Michael Wanjau, he recalls that he was given the gift to replace an earlier Munabii who had lost the gift after committing evil.⁵¹

The Anabii receive their message direct from God through a voice (mugambo). The message received in a voice is normally plain and clear. For example the message in

1935 directing the Akurinu to go to settle in Meru, the one of 1948 directing the Akurinu to go to Kahiriga in Muranga and that of Laban Nduhiu's disastrous journey were all given in clear prophetic revelations.⁵²

Some messages may also come through dreams and visions. Such a message may at first be unclear but the Anabii are said to be able to interpret it. For example the suffering of the Gikuyu during the state of emergency from 1952 - 1960, had been prophesied by a munabii back in 1945 through the following vision,

"A great impassable vault will appear between mount Longonot and Naivasha. God will then bring a great disaster on the land such as has never been seen before. So let those in the Rift Valley return to their homes in Gikuyuland before that time comes."⁵³

The symbolism of the great vault and the disaster that would befall the land were not clear at that time but they underscored the seriousness and hopelessness of the time to come. More so, was the urgency for the Akurinu (and Gikuyu in general) to take refuge while there was still time. The two symbols became clear during the Emergency and the Mau mau uprising. The vault was the restriction on movement from one Province to the other and especially between the Rift Valley and Central Province. One had to have a 'Pass Book' in order to be allowed to cross to either side. The suffering and deaths accompanying the Mau mau war was the disaster which had not been witnessed in Gikuyuland before.

Other members do receive dreams and visions but it is

normally the Anabii who have the ability to interpret them. Most of the dreams and visions are pastoral in nature and concern the well being of the church. The following account of a dream by a member will serve to illustrate;

Last night I had a disturbing dream. I was waiting for a bus to take me to town. The first bus to appear was moving very fast and the driver was playing with a passenger next to him. So I refused to board it. After a few metres I saw the bus overturn and the driver and the passenger he was talking with died.⁵⁴

A munabii then explained that the dream was about the pastors and their work. Some of them are like the careless driver who could not concentrate but engaged in discussions with passengers. Such pastors not only discourage new converts from joining the church but also lead the church astray.

In the life of the church, the Anabii play a significant role. We noted in chapter five that they are consulted in connection with baptismal names, and also in making enquiries about the marriage partners. Their impact is particularly felt through their ability to identify and reveal evils among the members. It is common for a Munabii to call upon a member during service and instruct him or her to confess or repent for having committed evil deeds. To illustrate this practice we take the following two incidents:

- (1) "The hymn leader renown for his ability and masterly in singing was unable to conduct a hymn, and neither could he maintain the drumming rhythm. The Bishop stopped the singing and

directed that it should be repeated and sang properly. But even then, the hymn - leader could not conduct the singing. By this time two Anabii had become restless. One of them lifted his guiding rod as a gesture to call the congregation to order and listen to his revealed message. He disclosed that the hymn-leader had defiled (gwithahia) himself the previous day in engaging in a domestic quarrel with his wife. This was the reason why he was unable to conduct the hymns. The hymn - leader admitted the revelations and together with his wife, were told to repent and be prayed for. After the prayers he resumed his role and did not have problems in conducting the singing for the rest of the service."³⁵

- (ii) "About half of the candidates had been baptised and it was now the turn for a young woman to be baptised. As she approached the kigongana (sanctuary) where the baptizer stood, a munabii began speaking in tongues and the only audible words were "yes Jehovah, sorry Jehovah." At the same time tears were involuntarily running down her cheeks. This experience brought the woman to a standstill and the pastor also stopped to await the outcome. A tense atmosphere filled the church which a few minutes ago was joyfully singing as they received the newly baptised members. One of the ceremonial women (Atumia a kigongona) led the woman out of the church. From where she stood, one could see her in deep prayers. It was after all the rest were baptised that she was called back and asked to repent after which she was baptised."³⁶

From these two examples it is clear that the Anabii act as the custodians of morality among the Akurinu. Members are aware that their secret acts will finally be revealed in public. Sundkler has observed a similar practice in South Africa and has rightly concluded that,

"In this way prophesying also becomes the means of watching over and safe guarding the chastity of young and old in the congregation."³⁷

The gift of prophecy is not restricted to a particular

sex or age. Men, women and children can be called to become Anabii. During the field work it was however, observed that most Anabii are women. It was also noted that about two thirds of those who speak in tongues during Spirit possession are also women. It was observed in chapter four that women hold no ecclesiastical posts in the Akurinu churches. They are therefore marginalised in decision making and have to follow the decisions of their male leaders. Through prophecy and Spirit possession, however, the women seem to compensate for their lowly positions in the church. Their voice become louder than that of the men. At times they bring to a halt the proceedings of a service and even the prayer - leader (Muhoi) has to succumb to their authority during such moments. In this respect, the women acquire a latent power which they demonstrate through prophecy and Spirit possession.⁵⁸ The phenomenon of women emancipation through the appropriation of the Spirit is not peculiar to the Akurinu churches. Hinga, in her study of the Legio Maria church has made a similar observation.⁵⁹

The seriousness that was attached to prophecy in the early days of the Akurinu movement appear to be fading away. This is mainly due to some prophets who manuplicate the gift for their personal gains. The misuse of prophecy is however found in other churches. Sundkler for example has described the case of a Zionist prophet who wanted to

take a girl as a second wife and attributed his action to a revelation which members doubted.⁶⁰

According to Bishop Samuel John Chege, there are some prophets who prophesy things which never occur.⁶¹ He therefore argues that such prophets are overtaken by the Spirit of Satan which is as strong as the Holy Spirit."⁶² In most Akurinu churches prophecies are at present scrutinized before they are accepted as authentic. The choice of marriage partners was identified by most informants as an area in which prophecy has been greatly misused.⁶³ Bishop Samuel John Chege says he does not accept a prophecy on its first revelation. He waits for some time to see if it recurs and possibly from a different prophet.⁶⁴

Other churches have developed a system in which members record their prophecies, dreams and visions with a chosen elder.⁶⁵ The elders then scrutinize the prophecies after which they are disclosed to the congregation. According to Micah Njogu, the purpose of recording the prophecies is to identify those that are reported by more than one munabii and also those that have been repeated and therefore require immediate attention of the elders.⁶⁶ Such recording is also a way of discouraging the rise of false prophets for none would like to be associated with prophecies that never come true.

Prophecy then, is seen as the work of the Holy Spirit in the Akurinu churches. The Anabii are the agents who

moderate with divine inspiration the behaviour of the members. But in so doing, they are expected to be exemplary in their conduct. The gift is freely given and a Munabii should never charge any fees for his services lest the gift be withdrawn.

7:5 Faith Healing

The Akurinu churches have had confrontations with the Government authorities over the issue of medical treatment for its members. Some of the members have been forcefully taken to hospitals for treatment by the Administration against their wish. In this section we shall look into the background to the Akurinu rejection of modern medicine and how they rationalize their belief in faith healing.

We have noted in this study that some of the Akurinu practices are attributed to a divine command which was given to the founders. Today, such practices are accepted without much questioning for they have become part of the traditions of the church. For example few members would think of questioning how the turning during prayers or the reciting of the Lord's prayer three times came about. Faith healing and the rejection of modern medicine are also accepted in the same manner.

The practice of Faith healing and the rejection of modern medicine among the Akurinu goes back to the early days of their movement. According to one informant, James Thuo, the elders who went to Mount Kenya to receive the

commandments in 1930 were told to reject the European medicine.⁶⁷ The reason for not taking the medicine was the suspicion that the white man would use it to eliminate the future leaders of the Gikuyu and thus remain in the country forever. It was moreover feared that if expectant mothers sought help from the mission hospitals their baby-boys would be killed the way the Egyptians' mid-wives were supposed to kill the Jewish baby boys (Ex 1:15 - 22). The above reason for not taking medicine is collaborated by another informant Ezekiel Karanja who wanted to know how the issue of medicine arose and was given the same explanation by Jeremiah Mutu, one of the few surviving early Akurinu.⁶⁸ He however remarks that "the elders do not reveal this information to the youth"⁶⁹

Other early Akurinu concur with the above explanation and add that when they were told not to use western medicine, the Holy Spirit revealed to them that through prayers they would be healed.⁷⁰ Thus, while some of their members were given the power to prophesy others were given the gift of praying for the sick. The healing ministry of Jesus and of the Apostles must have influenced them further. Kenyatta writing in 1938 about the Akurinu observed that,

"Watu wa Mungu, being the chosen people, naturally believe that they possess these powers and they go about trying to heal the sick. Sometimes they succeed in doing so and this gives them more prestige among the indigenous population."⁷¹

The Akurinu became noted in the Government circles for their rejection of modern medicine, The Central Provincial Commissioner writing in 1946 described them in these words:

"They are also an anti-social menace in that they refuse to take medicine for minor ailments or to be taken to hospital for major ones."

During the registration of their churches the Akurinu stated their official stand regarding medicine as follows in their constitutions:

- (i) Holy Ghost Church of East Africa: Rule No. 8.

"We do not take medicine or receive medical care. When any one of us falls sick, we pray for him/her. James 5:3 - 16."

- ii) Christian Holy Ghost Church of East Africa. Rule 17.

We do not use modern medicine (or injection or any medicine) neither do we consult medicine men. We pray Jesus Christ and he helps us. Jer. 46:11 - 12, Rev, 18:23 - 24; Hos. 5:13 - 14; if any one of us is ill we pray for him."

- iii) African Christian Holy Ghost Church. Rule 13.

"We do not take any kind of medicine or inoculation, and we are not connected with African witch - craft Doctors; see Deuteronomy 18:9 - 16; Jeremiah 46:11 - 12; Numbers 6: 1- 5; Revelation 18: 23 - 24; Hosea 5:13 - 14. If our members are sick or get illness we go in his house and pray our Almighty God, we believe in that. See Jacob (James,) 5:14; John 11:25, Acts 19:12 - 13."

The above official statements show a common stand towards medicine and apply to other Akurinu groups as well.

It is note worthy that they use the Bible to justify their dependence on Faith healing and there is no mention of the original purpose for the rejection of modern medicine. Moreover they disassociate themselves with the traditional medicinemen. Faith healing through prayer is to them their only resort. In the past any member who broke the rule was expelled.⁷⁶ Despite their official stand about their rejection of medical care, cases of sick Akurinu being taken to hospital forcibly either by the Government authorities or their non - Akurinu relatives are reported.⁷⁷

A decisive showdown between the Administration and the Akurinu concerning medical care, took place in 1968. According to Samuel John Chege, a team of medical staff accompanied by the police invaded a church in Kinangop, Nyandarua District, and forcibly inoculated all the Akurinu worshippers.⁷⁸ This act caused a lot of bitterness among all the other Akurinu groups. It was seen not only as a sacrilegious act but also a denial of their freedom of worship. Chege took up the matter and sought an explanation from the then Nyandarua DC. Mr. John Etemesi. But the response he received proved that it was the DC who had ordered the inoculation exercise for he told Chege, "to go and educate his people on the value of modern medicine."⁷⁹

Chege decided to take up the matter with the higher authorities in Nairobi where he presented his grievances to

the office of the Attorney General. He was told to put his grievances in writing and also attach the list of the members who had been inoculated. After consultations between the Attorney General's office and the Central Provincial Commissioner, it was resolved that the DC should not repeat such an act for as Chege put it,

"There is no law which requires a person to be inoculated by force. If a person refuses to be inoculated he should be prosecuted, tried and convicted. Only when one is in jail or custody can he be inoculated or given medicine by force."⁵⁰

But the Kinangop affair had far more reaching effects on the Akurinu Churches as a whole. Apart from solving the immediate problem in Kinangop, the Akurinu and the Government came to a compromise that would solve the issue of medicine once and for all. In Chege's words,

"We agreed with the Government that we should not make it an ecclesiastical requirement that none of our members should go to hospital. Those who want to go should be free to do so. But on the other hand the Akurinu who trust on the Holy Spirit for their healing should not be forced to go to hospitals."⁵¹

So, the Kinangop affair at least brought a reform among the Akurinu. Those who wished to go to hospital would now do so without fear of being excommunicated. At present then, the Akurinu fall into two categories. There are those who are conservative and do not accept modern medicine. For example the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa and the Christian Holy Ghost Church of East Africa fall under this category. On the other hand, there are those

who combine modern medicine and Faith healing. The African Mission of Holy Ghost church allow their members who wish to go to hospital to do so.⁸²

Among themselves however, those who go to hospital are seen as lacking in faith . According to Michael Wanjau, "to take medicine is to defile oneself and is also tantamount to doubting the power of God to heal."⁸³ Another informant, Joseph Wahome, even concluded that the "Akurinu die more today than when they were relying on prayers."⁸⁴

Faith healing among the Akurinu falls under two categories. The first type is the healing which is conducted during church service. The second type is done by a Munabii gifted with the power to heal, either at home or in church. The following two incidents which were observed during the field work will serve as illustrations:

- (1) "Before the end of the service a man approached an elder and indicated that he wanted to be prayed for as he was sick. The elder in turn consulted with the Bishop and then announced that it was time to pray for the sick. Several people including men, women and children went and knelt at the front facing the kigongana (sanctuary). They were told by the Bishop each to pray individually first. Then he asked each person to touch the paining part or organ of the body and each person put the hand on a part of the body some pointing to more than one part as an indication of multiple suffering. While in this position the Bishop prayed for them with his hands stretched over their heads. The elders in the kigongona also prayed individually but loudly with their hands raised. The junior elders were surrounding the sick people with raised hands as the Bishop prayed. The prayer was concluded in the following manner:

Bishop - Ugai maro kiriruo

Congregation	- Marokiriruo
Bishop	- Ugai Marorekeruo
Congregation	- Marorekeruo ⁸⁵
(Bishop	- say forbearance be shown to them
Congregation	- may forbearance be shown to them
Bishop	- say they be forgiven.
Congregation	- may they be forgiven.)

This type of healing is formal in nature and the outcome may not be necessarily immediate. Although the prayer - leader does not carry out a diagnosis of the cause of the individual cases, it is clear from the responsorial conclusion of the prayer that the sufferers are believed to be in a state of sin which requires both God's patience and forgiveness. The individual prayers are meant to show personal repentance. It is not unusual during those prayers to see some of the sick people weeping, some loudly, which could be interpreted to imply a personal realization of ones state of sinfulness which has brought about the sickness. It is also important to note that during the prayers, the prayer - leader uses the phrase "shaitani ahotwo", (Let satan be defeated) which the whole congregation repeats forcefully. This implies that the suffering of the people is attributed to the evil works of satan.⁸⁶

ii) There are some sicknesses that require a diagnosis before a cure is prescribed. Such problems then call for the services of the Anabii (prophets). The following incident illustrates such a case:

"Before the end of an open air service a woman

brought forward her daughter to be prayed for. She explained that the girl gets hysterical and at times falls on the fire. So the Anabii, two men and three women got together and began prayers which gradually turned into a session of speaking in tongues. One of the women began writing on the ground with her finger while a man, an interpreter, got closer to record the message on a piece of paper. He then explained that the girl was suffering because the parents had engaged in evil deeds and quarrels. Also they had dressed the girl according to their will and had not waited for the Holy Spirit to give the colours for her worship robe. At this point he removed a red ribbon from the girl as an exhibit. Another Munabii then called the mother and directed her to kneel and confess and also repent her sins while the Anabii prayed for her daughter."⁸⁷

This incident shows that sickness can be caused by the evil deeds committed by other people and especially relatives. It also shows the relatedness of Faith healing and the gift of prophecy among the Akurinu. The Anabii are believed to have the ability to diagnose the cause of the sickness and prescribe the remedy. The cure involves, as in the above case, confession and repentance by either the patient or those with him or her.

The second type of Faith healing is through private consultations.⁸⁸ This type of healing revolves around a prophet (Munabii) who is considered to have been gifted in healing through prayers. Such consultations take place at home although sick people will look for the Munabii even on Sundays in the church. The following account about prophetess Ruth Muthoni will serve as an illustration.

Muthoni uses prayers for her Faith healing but at times she places the Bible on the patient as

she prays. She has to be in her worship robes with her shoes removed. The prayer hours are at 9 a.m, 3 p.m, and 9 p.m from Monday to Saturday unless an emergency case comes up. On Sunday she has to be at church. Observing Muthoni at work in her borrowed one room house cum clinic is both interesting and fear-instilling. The following healing sessions are more revealing;

"It was the 9.00 a.m healing session and being a Monday, several people were streaming in, some having spent the night in Muthoni's house. She checked at her watch and announced that it was time and all the people (about ten) were told to get inside and remove their shoes. At 9.00 a.m she began to pray and would often break into speaking in tongues. Then she began to reveal to each person the cause of the sickness or other forms of suffering. This she did openly as all those present listened. For some, they were informed that their messages had not been received and should wait for the afternoon session. It is after identifying the cause of the problem that Muthoni prays for the sick individually".³²

Apart from praying for the sick Muthoni also deals with problems related to barrenness, domestic quarrels and even unemployment. She attributes human suffering to the work of Satan. As a full-time prophet - healer Muthoni depends on the goodwill of her patients though she says that she was commanded never to charge any fees for her services.³³

The Akurinu, like other Christians give four explanations to human sickness. Firstly, it is seen as a test for a person's faith. In this case, Job's suffering is seen as a Biblical support for this view. Secondly, sickness is seen as God's punishment. Thirdly, sickness is caused by a person's sins. Finally, sickness is viewed as

the work of Satan⁹¹. But the works of Satan are considered to be the root cause for all human suffering for it is he who leads people to sin. Hence, if the cause of sickness is Spiritual then, logically the cure should also be Spiritual in nature.

Faith in the power of the Holy Spirit becomes the main instrument in healing the sick and solving other human problems. Through prayer, the Akurinu call upon the Holy Spirit to intervene and overcome the evil spirits (ngoma). This is similar to Milingo's approach in his healing for he believes, like the Akurinu, that when one calls upon the Holy Spirit "he really does come."⁹² For the Akurinu then, the forces of evil are real and they have to be confronted in practical ways through faith and prayers. Mbiti's observation aptly summarises this section when he writes;

"For African peoples, these powers of evil are concrete realities. Faith has to take on concrete forms in order to effectively confront them, combat them and prove victorious over them..."⁹³

7.6 The Eucharist

The Christian sacrament of Eucharist or Holy Communion is based on the Last Supper which Jesus shared with his disciples before his death. In the early Christian Church, it was celebrated as part of the get-together feasts until Paul brought a stop to the practice and separated the feasts from the Lord's supper (I Cor. 11:17 - 22) Ever since that time, there have been several changes in the

manner in which this Sacrament is observed in different churches. At present the order, text and frequency of the Eucharistic rite vary from one church to another.³⁴ The Akurinu do hold quite a different interpretation of the Eucharist as will be shown in this section.

Unlike other churches where the Eucharistic meal comprises of the sharing of Bread and Wine which symbolises the Body and Blood of Christ, the Akurinu do not use these items. Neither do they have any substitute tangible items. They do, nevertheless, claim that they observe the Holy Communion. For example, the African Holy Ghost Christian Church in its constitution has the following article:

"Holy Communion: we gather and hold prayer assemblies of convenient Christian church thrice (3) a year just to thank God in the beginning of the year, July and at the end of the year, December. See Exodus 23:14 - 18."³⁵

From the article, it is clear that the objective of the three annual prayers is to thank God at the beginning, in the middle and at the end of the year.³⁶ It is moreover an attempt by the Akurinu to keep the law as commanded to the ancient Israelites. So, strictly speaking, these prayer sessions do not carry the same meaning as the Eucharistic rite. Furthermore, we noted in chapter five that not all members participate in these annual prayers for only a few representative prayer - leaders (ahoi) take part.

According to one informant, Elijah Kinyanjui, the

early Akurinu were commanded by the Holy Spirit to be holding common meals in the middle and at the end of the year.³⁷ They would slaughter lambs and cook other foods for the feast. Such feasts however, seem to have been an extension of the annual prayer meetings and not Eucharistic as such.

There are some members who maintain that the Akurinu do share the Holy Communion. Timothy Nyaga, for example says that "the Word of God is the Bread which the believers share when they meet."³⁸ Another informant, Michael Kiama argues that "the Word is the Bread which Jesus referred to, but not the actual bread."³⁹ Most Akurinu hold this view that they participate in the Eucharist when they meet for worship and share the Word of God. As a justification for not using bread and wine, they refer to the incident of Jesus temptation in the wilderness where he told Satan that "Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God", (Mt 4:4).

The absence of the Eucharistic meal in the Akurinu church can be explained on the basis of the following factors. Firstly, the Gikuyu did not have any pictorial or material representation of God. Thus to think of bread and wine as symbolising the Body and Blood of Jesus may have created a difficulty to the Akurinu with a Gikuyu background.

Secondly, as we noted in chapter three, the Akurinu

were opposed to western customs and anything of European origin.¹⁰⁰ Bread, for example was rejected because they claimed that it contained drugs such as yeast which defiles a person.¹⁰¹ Wine, likewise has alcohol and they are prohibited from taking alcoholic drinks. So, there was a problem with the elements used in the Eucharistic meal.

Thirdly, the early Akurinu were conservative deeply influenced by the Levitical laws. They avoided acts which would cause ritual uncleanness (thahu), such as handshakes in greetings or mixing with other people. The ahoi, (prayer-leaders) were to be more austere in observing these laws. For such conservative groups, it would have been difficult for them to share the same cup during the Eucharist for fear of contracting ritual uncleanness.

The Akurinu then, do not have the Eucharistic meal and even what they call the Holy Communion does not bring out the notion of the death and resurrection of Jesus which is central in the rite. But as noted earlier in this chapter, the Akurinu put more emphasis on the divinity of Jesus who is now in heaven and less on his presence in the church. It is the Holy Spirit who is operative now in guiding the believers in their pilgrimage to heaven while at the same time waiting for the Parousia, about which we now turn our attention.

7:7 Eschatology among the Akurinu

The Literature on the Christian doctrine of

eschatology is enormous. Scholars have held varying views on this belief concerning the end of the present world order and the introduction of a new order.¹⁰³ For purposes of this study, we need only mention the three main schools of thought as regards the eschatological views. Firstly, there is the school of Consistent eschatology which is associated with Johannes Weiss and Albert Schweitzer. According to this school of thought, Jesus taught of a kingdom that was to come during his return in glory as the Son of Man.¹⁰³ Secondly, there is the school of 'Realized eschatology' championed particularly by C.H. Dodd who was reacting to the views of the first school. He argued that the kingdom had fully come in the person and ministry of Jesus.¹⁰⁴ Thirdly there is the school of thought which attempts to harmonize the extreme views of the first and second schools. Hunter for example proposes the term 'Inaugurated eschatology' to show that the kingdom has made a beginning through the coming of Jesus but its full consummation is yet to come.¹⁰⁵ In this section we try to find out how the Akurinu understand this doctrine.

The Akurinu lay much emphasis on the theme of eschatology both in their preaching and in their hymns. The early founders of the movement were convinced that they were the last Christian community to be founded by the Holy Spirit after which the Messiah would return.¹⁰⁶ It was for this reason that they did not concern themselves with

earthly affairs but spent most of their time in prayer and Bible reading. In this respect, they were similar to the Thessalonians who had expected the Parousia to occur soon after their conversion by Paul (II Thess. 2:1 - 4). The whole idea of living together, as in the early church, was based on this hope of an immediate return of Jesus.

Some members did not see the need of undertaking long term projects for Jesus would come back for them before the benefits of such projects were realized. Some informants for example, recall that when they wanted to plant some trees around their church at Gathumuri in Kiambu, a young man called Ezekiel Njai was totally opposed to the idea for he argued that "there would be no one left to use the timber by the time the trees matured for Jesus would have come back for them."¹⁰⁷

The Akurinu readiness to undertake journeys to unknown destinations, claimed to be directed through divine revelation, should also be seen in the light of eschatology. For example, those who went on the exodus to Meru in 1935 were convinced that they were going to Zion.¹⁰⁸ This is why they left their lands in Kiambu to go presumably to a better place that God would show them. The Akurinu have retained the eschatological features and consider themselves a pilgrim church as illustrated by the welcome hymn:

"Where are you heading to pilgrims?"

With food and walking sticks?
We are on a journey,
Having been called by our God."¹⁰⁹

As noted in chapter five, this hymn is a form of greetings among the Akurinu. It is however a constant reminder to each member that although they are in this world, they are not of this world. Their life here, both individual and corporate, is of a temporary nature since their destiny is to get into heaven.

The Akurinu eschatology is further expressed in their hymns.¹¹⁰ Out of 554 printed hymns, 227 (or 41%) carry some eschatological elements.¹¹¹ The following verses provide some insight concerning their eschatological views;

Hymn 53 (verse 3)

Nduriri cia guku thi,
Andu aria me irima iguru,
Na aria me ituri cia thi,
Mwathani ni akoya ibuku,
Magatuiruo ni Roho,
Ngai amaikie kwa ngoma.

(The nations of the world,
And those on the mountain tops,
And all those in the corners of the world,
The Lord will take the Book,
They will be judged by the Spirit,
God will throw them in hell.)

Hymn 81 (vers 3)

Ithuothe ni twetereiruo,
Giti-ini gia ciira,
Kiria kirigiciirio,
Ni iti cia athuri aria,
Miringo iri na ana,
Mehumbite uthingu,
Na magekira thumbi,¹¹²
Cia thahabu mitwe.

(All of us are awaited,
At the judgement seat,
Which is surrounded,

With the seats of the twenty four elders,
Clothed in righteousness,
And have crowns made of gold,
On their heads.)

Parousia is conceived in terms of the resurrection of the dead followed by judgement and rewards. The New testament has numerous references to the eschatological judgement. (Mt. 3:11; 5:21; 13; 40 - 42; Mk 9;43 Jn 15;6). In the Akurinu church, the judgement is yet to come for the Parousia has not taken place.

The main concern of the Akurinu, like other Christians is the consequence of the judgement. According to Jesus teaching the faithful will get into the kingdom while the evil doers will be thrown in hell (Mt 13:40 - 43). Several symbols are used to depict heaven. It is referred to as a country in which the New Jerusalem is located (Rev. 21:1). The Akurinu likewise see heaven as a country which is the destiny of their pilgrimage as the following verses illustrate:

Hymn 63 (chorus)

Tugakena muno muno,
Twaringa rui rua gikuu,
Tuthii iguru,
Bururi wa andu aria atheru.

(We shall be very happy,
When we cross the river of death,
And we go to heaven,
In the country of the righteous people.)

Hymn 210 (verse 3)

Rugendo rua guthii iguru bururi utari gikuu,
Ti ruhuthu wihotore mucibi ukiriirie.

(The journey to heaven, the country without death,
Is not easy tighten you belt and be patient)

Hymn 451 (verse 1)

Nikuri bururui mweга ma,
Uthondekeiruo andu aria atheru,
Na niugatonywo ni mwiregi,
Witikirite kuutonya.

(There is a very good country,
Made for the righteous ones,
And it will be entered by one,
Who has denied himself,
One who has decided to enter it.)

Heaven is thus depicted as the place of righteous people who have denied themselves earthly pleasures. It is a place where death does not exist. Hence it is a country worth getting into for there are no human sufferings.

Heaven is also portrayed as a city or a home (Mucii). The New Jerusalem referred to in Rev. 21 provides a biblical basis for this belief. Among the Africans towns are associated with higher living standards, white collar jobs, better infrastructure and all that goes with luxurious living. It is for this reason that rural - urban migration remains a major problem in many African countries. This is despite the fact that towns are at the same time where one finds a greater number of crimes, poverty stricken jobless people as well as beggars. Heaven as a city is seen in the positive and attractive aspect of the earthly cities. The New Jerusalem above is thus devoid of crimes and suffering and every Mukurinu therefore aspires to get there.¹¹³

The belief in heaven as a home (mucii) is based on Jesus' assurance to his disciples when he told them, "In my father's house are many rooms, if it were not so would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? (Jn 14:1 - 2). Each believer then expects to get a room on arrival in the heavenly city. The following verses express the Akurinu hope of getting into that city.

Hymn 16 (chorus)

Uguo niguo gugakenuo,
Ni njamba iria ikahota thi,
Uthamaki - ini wa iguru,
Jerusalem Njeru.

(That is how there will be joy,
For the brave ones who have overcome the world,
In the kingdom of heaven in the New Jerusalem)

Hymn 512 (verses 4 and 5)

Gukena ni uria witituo giathi - ini,
Ni gaturume uhiki - ini na agetika.
Agathi atonye thii-ini na ma,
Jerusalem njeru iguru.

(Happy is the person who has been invited,
By the lamb for the wedding and responded.
The person will go and for sure enter,
The New Jerusalem above).

For those who get into the heavenly country or New Jerusalem, there awaits for them the great reward of eternal life which the Akurinu like other Christians hope to be given when they arrive in heaven. During preaching and in their testimonies, the reference to eternal life (Muoyo wa tene na tene) is a common phrase. Several hymns make reference to eternal life or kingdom of God as the awaited for reward kept in heaven. For example.

Hymn 184 (verse 4)

Giai thayu mwirigiriire,
Muoyo uria utagathira,
Na gikeno kiria muigiiruo,
Mucii wa matu-ini.

(Have peace and have hope,
For the eternal life,
And the happiness kept for you,
In the heavenly city.)

Hymn 204 (verse i)
Ririkana amuthenya uria,
Wetiiruo muoyo ni Roho,
Waiyuririo wendo ngoro,
Tigaga kuriganiruo.

(Remember the day,
The Spirit invited you to get life,
You were filled with love in your heart,
Do not forget.)

Hymn 210 (verse 1)
Nigukiriria gwaku,
Gugatuma ugairuo,
Muoyo wa tene na tene,
Toria Jesu oigire.

(It is your patience,
That will make you get a share,
Of the eternal life,
As Jesus said.)

Apart from being everlasting, the life in heaven will be characterised by immense joy and singing. The following hymn gives a revealing summary of the nature of the life of heaven.

Hymn 171

1. Matu - ini muigiiruo ki?
Uthamaki wa ma.

Chorus:

Kenai muiyuritwo.
Ni Roho Mutheru,
Tondū nimuguiririio,
Bururi wa iguru.

2. Ningi mukaheo ki?

Muoyo utagathira.

3. Hihi mimukarira?
Aca no gikeno
4. Mugaikara atia iguru?
Tutikaigua kieha
5. Murimu ugaikara atia?
Gutikaruaragwo
6. Gikuu gutikagia - ni?
Tugathwo ni muoyo.
7. Mugaceraga na u?
Na araika aria a theru.
8. Gukageragiruo ha?
Njira cia thahabu.

1. (What is kept for you in heaven?
The true Kingdom.

Chorus: Rejoice filled,
By the Holy Spirit
Because to you it is revealed,
The country in heaven.

2. And what will you be given?
Eternal life
3. How will you live in heaven?
We shall not be sorrowful
4. Will you probably cry?
No, it will only be joy.
5. What about sickness?
There will be no sickness.
6. There will be no death?
We shall be ruled by eternal life.
7. With whom will you be walking?
With the righteous angels.
8. Where will people be walking?
(On golden paths.)

While heaven is the place of the faithful people, hell

is the home of Satan and his followers. Life in hell is the opposite of what goes on in heaven. It is depicted in frightening symbols such as a hot everlasting fire accompanied by mourning and weeping. Thus hell is a place to be avoided by all means as illustrated in the following hymn:

Hymn 146 (verse 6)

Gwa Shaitani andu akuo,
Matikahorerio, makoiga,
Mbu muthenya na utuku,
Makarira makae,
Iyai iyai,
No Jesu ndakamang'ethera.

(Those in Satans' place,
Will not be comforted,
They will scream and shout,
Iyai, iyai,
But Jesus will not turn to them.)¹¹⁵

From the above hymns of the Akurinu, it is clear that their eschatology is futuristic. They consider themselves as pilgrims heading to heaven where the reward of eternal life or kingdom of God is kept for them. The belief in eternal life as a reward stored in heaven is enhanced by the symbolic and materialistic language used in the New Testament and which has been taken literally by the Akurinu as well as other Christians.¹¹⁶ Mbiti, in this connection has rightly observed that;

".....the New Testament generously employs materialistic images as a means of conveying aspects of eschatological truths which cannot otherwise be easily or as effectively expressed."¹¹⁷

But he hastens to add that failure to identify the

eschatological truths behind the symbols leads believers to escape from physical reality to a largely fictitious reality and their faith is embarrassingly immature."¹¹⁸

This is a danger that the Akurinu like other Christians have not escaped. We noted in chapter three that in the early days of the movement, they were more of an other worldly community. They saw no reason of taking their children to school or build permanent homes and churches for they were to be taken to heaven soon. At least John Muhia, who claims to have shaped the life of the Akurinu church, today admits that some of their biblical interpretations were wrong and especially their understanding of the Parousia.¹¹⁹ The problem of taking eschatological symbols literally is not peculiar to the Akurinu or Akamba Christians. Sundkler has also identified the same trend in the Zionist churches of South Africa.¹²⁰

The responses given by some of the members reveal their belief in a futuristic eschatology. Asked whether a Christian can enter the kingdom of God while in this world, Harun Waibochi responded, "you cannot hope for what you have achieved."¹²¹ This implies that one can not attain eternal life while in this world. Isaac Mwangi argued that "it is the last judgement that will determine whether one will be rewarded."¹²²

Although the Akurinu do not venture in dating the Parousia, they do affirm that this is the end time. The

signs foretold by Jesus as preceding the end of the World in Mk 13 are said to have been seen. These include natural disasters like earthquakes, eclipses and famines, wars both at the national and international levels have been fought causing untold suffering to the people. The Gikuyu suffering during the Mau mau war is recalled vividly as a case in point. The current ethnic clashes in parts of the country are interpreted in the same way. It is on this basis that during preaching, people are reminded on the need to remain ritually clean and observe the law because Jesus can return any time.

It is worth noting that the Akurinu have modified some of their earlier views about the Parousia. Today they have built permanent churches, take their children to school and also engage in business. But they do affirm during their preaching that they are still pilgrims heading to heaven.

To summarise this chapter, the following observations should be noted. Firstly, although the Akurinu acknowledge the Triune God, Jesus seems to play a silent role among them for it is the Holy Spirit who is in operation at present. Jesus will take over after the Parousia. The Eucharistic meal which sustains the memory of Jesus among Christians is also lacking among the Akurinu. Secondly, salvation among the Akurinu depends on the observance of the law. This is why services have to start with the reading of the LAW (EL 20). In this respect, Jesus

teaching does not replace the law but compliments it. Thirdly, the Akurinu eschatology is futuristic in that they await to be rewarded with eternal life in heaven after the Farowela. Thus, at present they are pilgrims heading to heaven their eschatological destiny.

NOTES ON CHAPTER SEVEN

1. The Hymn Book was compiled by Daudi Ikigu in 1977
2. See Kibicho S.G. op.cit. p. 68 when he quotes Bewes.
3. Ibid. p.28.
4. Cagnolo op.cit. p. 26 - 27.
5. Ibid.
6. Kibicho op.cit p.1.
7. Ibid. .
8. According to Elijah Kinyanjui this was a popular hymn during the early days of the Akurinu church.
9. Kibicho op.cit.
10. See Kenyatta op.cit p 3.
11. For details of the Mount Kenya commandments see chapter three
12. Nyimbo cia Roho Muthuru.
13. Gathimba, Ezekiel Njai, Stephano Machango - op.cit.
14. The Akurinu believe that it was through their prayers to God that brought about the liberation of the land from the colonialists.
15. For the Gikuyu names of God see chapter two.
16. Mcveigh M.J. "Theological issues related to Kenya religious independency" in Barret D.B.; et al ed. Kenya Churches Handbook, Kisumu Evangel publishing House. 1973 p. 136.
17. Ibid p. 137.
18. See Martin M. L. Kimbangu Oxford, Basil Blackwell 1972, p. 141.
19. Sundkler op.cit. p.291.

20. The pronouncement of the Council of Chalcedon in 451 A.D show the difficulties the early church had to go through in harmonising the divinity and humanity of Christ. See Clarkson J. F et all ed. The Church Teaches, Illionis, TAN Books and publishers 1973 p 172
21. Nyimbo cia Roho Mutheru hymn 88
22. In chapter five, it was noted that the Akurinu often start their church service by reading the Law (Ex 20).
23. Nyimbo cia Roho Mutheru - hymn 2.
24. Ibid. Hymn 146 (verse 1).
25. Ibid. Hymn 50 (verse 6).
26. Ibid. Hymn 72 (verse 4).
27. See Mugambi and Magesa ed. Jesus in African Christianity (Nairobi Initiatives Ltd, 1989) Introduction.
28. Ibid. p 35.
29. Ibid.
30. See Murray J. "Kikuyu Spirit churches." in Journal of Religion in Africa vol v 1973, p 198.
31. This is a common phrase during their services.
32. See chapter Three for other names of the Akurinu. See also Kenyatta op.cit p. 274.
33. Joel Githua, interview, Naromoru, 17/2/91.
34. Elijah Gaitho op.cit.
35. Elijah Kinyanjui op.cit.
36. Ibid.
37. All these hymns are from the Akurinu hymnal Nyimbo cia Roho Mutheru.
38. The idea of making marks is based on the marking of the houses of the Israelites with blood before the angel came to kill the first-born of the Egyptians (Ex 12:21 - 29).

39. The theme of eschatology is discussed later in this chapter.
40. Participant observation. Nakuru 11/5/91; Kamakwa 10/3/91
41. John Muhia op.cit
42. Michael Kiama op.cit.
43. Participant observation during the services. See chapter five for the worship pattern.
44. When reading from the Book of Common Prayer, the traditional formula is followed.
45. See Kenyatta op.cit. p 41 - 44 for a full account of the prophecy.
46. Ibid p. 264
47. KNA DC/FH/2/1/4
48. See chapter three for prophecies on the restoration of the land to the Gikuyu.
49. Munabii is a corruption of the Kiswahili word nabii for a prophet. It is the term used in the Gikuyu Bible.
50. Michael Wanjau op.cit.
51. Ibid.
52. For details of these journeys see chapter three. See also Appendix IV map II.
53. John Muhia op.cit.
54. The dream was given by Cyrus Nyuguto and explained by Michael Kiama during a service.
55. Participant observation - Kamakwa, 10/11/91
56. This was observed during a baptismal ceremony at Birisha, Nyeri - 29/5/93
57. Sundkler op.cit p. 259
58. Lewis I.M. has explained how Spirit possession is used by marginalised groups to emancipate themselves, a view that is applicable to the

Akurinu. See Lewis I.M. Ecstatic religion,
(Penguin, 1971) Chapter four.

59. See Hinga T. M., "Women Power and Liberation in an African Church. A theological case of the Legio Maria Church in Kenya." Ph.D Thesis, Lancaster University, 1990.
60. Sundkler op.cit. p.274.
61. Chege op. cit.
62. Ibid .
63. Mburu Machua, interview, Nairobi, 16/3/91, Isaac Mwangi op. cit.
64. Chege op. cit.
65. See Njeri op. cit. p.147.
66. Micah Njogu - interview, 9/12/91 He records the prophecies in the African Mission of Holy Ghost Church, Kamakwa, Nyeri.
67. James Thuo op.cit.
68. Ezekiel Karanja op.cit.
69. Ibid.
70. John Muhia, Elijah Kinyanjui op.cit.
71. Kenyatta op.cit p.276.
72. KNA PC/CP/8/7/3
73. Holy Ghost Church of East Africa, constitution.
74. Christian Holy Ghost Church of East Africa, constitution.
75. African Holy Ghost Christian church, constitution.
76. Kezia Wangari op.cit
77. Ezekiel Karanja recalls that he was once seriously sick at home and was taken to hospital by force by the police. Doctors of the Rift Valley Provincial Hospital Nakuru could not diagnose his problem . But Karanja

knew the cause of it. He had refused to obey God's order to return to the gaaru at Free Area which he had deserted after a church quarrel. He requested the police to take him to the gaaru where he recovered having taken no medicine.

78. Samuel John Chege op.cit
79. Ibid.
80. Ibid.
81. Ibid.
82. Jacob Nderitu, Ezekiel Karanja, Rufus Gichuki op.cit.
83. Michael Wanjau op.cit.
84. Joseph Wahome op.cit.
85. Participant observation, Kamakwa Nyeri; 10/11/91
86. The belief in human suffering being caused by evil Spirits is well illustrated in Milingo's healing mission in Zambia. See Haar G. T. Spirit of Africa, The Healing Ministry of Archbishop Milingo of Zambia, London, Hurst and company 1992.
87. Participant observation at Thika 17/3/91 during an open service presided over by Archbishop Jacob Nderitu and attended by representatives from all branches of African Mission of Holy Ghost Church.
88. Appiah - Kubi has mentioned two other methods used in the independent churches in Ghana namely healing through emersion and healing through correspondence. See Mbiti, Bible and theology in African Christianity, Nairobi, Oxford University Press, 1986, p. 114.
89. Participant observation, Gataragwa, 1/9/91.
90. Ruth Muthoni, interview, Gataragwa. 2/9/91
91. Rufus Gichuki, Joel Githua, Joseph Wahome op.cit. See also MacVeigh in Barret D.B. et al, ed. Op.cit. p 140.

92. See Haar G. T. op.cit. p 32.
93. Mbiti op.cit p 114.
94. For a summary of the changes in the Eucharist, see Doughlas J.E. ed. New Twentieth Centuryv Encyclopedia (Michigan, Baker Book House 1991) p 55 - 517.
95. African Holy Ghost Christian Church, Constitution.
96. For the organisation of these annual prayers see chapter three.
97. Elijah Kinyanjui, op.cit.
98. Timothy Nyaga op.cit.
99. Michael Kiama op.cit.
100. See chapter three for details of the Akurinu rejection of western cultural values.
101. John Muhia op.cit.
102. For some views on eschatology see Bright J.B., Covenant and Promise, (London, SCM Press 1977); Clements R.E. Prophecy and Covenant, (London, SCM, 1965); Mowinkle S. He that cometh, Trans. by G.W. Anderson, Oxford, Blackwell 1959); Davies W.D. ed. The Background of the New Testament and its eschatology (Cambridge University Press 1964); Dodd C. H., The parables of the Kingdom (London S.C.M. 1935).
103. See Weiss J., Jesus proclamation about the kingdom of God, Trans. by R.H. Hiers and D. L. Holland (London SCM 1971.)
104. See Dodd C. H. The parables of the Kingdom (London SCM 1935)
105. Hunter A.M., Introducing New Testament Theology (London SCM 1935)
106. J. Muhia, Elijah Kinyanjui, op.cit.
107. Ibid .
108. Muhia op.cit.

109. For a full version of this hymn, see chapter five. The Bible and the hymn book in the bags symbolise the food for the pilgrims.
110. It has been mentioned elsewhere in this study that other than the hymn book which was written in 1977, the Akurinu do not have any other written literature.
111. According to Daudi Ikigu, there are other hymns which are not yet written and he is planning to have them published as "Nyimbo cia Roho Mutheri part II"
112. Other hymns on the theme of judgement include hymns; 81, 91, 97, 175 and 219.
113. Other studies show that other African Christians share the same view about the heavenly city as the destiny of the faithful Christians. See for example Mbiti, J. New Testament eschatology in an African background (London, O.U.P.1971) p. 76; Also Ndungu, N.W. op.cit. p. 110.
114. See also hymns 15, 264, 261, 262, 280.
115. Other hymns on suffering include hymns 41, 92,
116. See Ndungu N.W op.cit chapter five.
117. Mbiti. op.cit p. 62.
118. Ibid . P. 80
119. Muhia op.cit
120. Sundkler, op.cit p.291. See also Ndungu N.W op.cit where the A I P C A members have a similar understanding of eschatological symbols.
121. Harun Waibochi op.cit.
122. Isaac Mwangi op.cit.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSION

The present study has sought to establish the origin of the Akurinu movement and its theology. In order to achieve this objective it was necessary to reflect on some features of the Gikuyu culture and religion together with the historical factors which acted as catalysts in the development of the Akurinu movement. The study has arrived at several findings and conclusions.

The rise of the Akurinu movement should be seen as a consequence of the socio-economic, political, cultural and religious upheavals which were caused by the colonisation and the planting of Western Christianity in Gikuyu country which is discussed in chapter two. It was indeed a reaction to the white man's onslaught on the Gikuyu as evidenced by the Akurinu anti-European teachings and their prayers for the departure of the colonialists. In this respect, the Akurinu shared the same objective with the Kikuyu Central Association namely to liberate the country from the oppression of the colonialists. Their approaches were however different, for the Akurinu resorted to prayers whereas the Kikuyu Central Association finally took up arms during the Mau mau war of liberation.

The study found that the Akurinu on their part attributed the rise of their churches to the work of the Holy Spirit as discussed in Chapter three. Their conviction that they are led by the Holy Spirit has sustained this movement over the years through every form of persecution. It is on this basis that they regard themselves as a specially chosen people by God. But this theological factor should be seen in conjunction with other social political and cultural factors which affected the Akurinu like the rest of the Gikuyu and other ethnic groups in Kenya.

This study has revealed that the Akurinu are developing a theology which is based on their interpretation of the Bible as well as their experience of God through revelation during their history. In chapter five, for example, it was observed that the Akurinu show great concern for the keeping of the Mosaic Law. The observance of the Levitical Laws is to safeguard the Akurinu from contracting thahu (ritual uncleanness). They find no contradiction in observing the Old Covenant based on the Law and the New covenant based on the Blood of Jesus. In chapter seven, it was observed that the Akurinu have a Trinitarian formula in which the Holy Spirit follows the Father and Son comes last. This should be seen as an attempt by

these churches to express their view of the Trinity. It was also noted that the Akurinu do not celebrate the Eucharist in the same way it is done in other Christian churches. To them, the sharing of the 'Word' as revealed by the Holy Spirit during their services constitutes the 'Bread and the Wine'. This is an important theological insight which attempts to re-interpret the traditional concept of the Eucharistic meal. As pilgrims in this world waiting for the return of Jesus, the 'Word' as found in the Bible provides the Spiritual nourishment.

As noted in this study, a majority of the founders were either illiterate or semi-literate individuals who were ex-mission expellees or followers of the Gikuyu religion. Without any prior training, they made use of the Bible to formulate the beliefs and practices of their new movement. In so doing they found that the Old Testament had a lot of similarities with the Gikuyu customs. Indeed, it was endorsing what they had believed and practised long before the arrival of the Western missionaries. It is for this reason that the Akurinu lay much emphasis on the Old Testament and particularly on the Levitical Laws.

It has also been found in this study that the Akurinu have retained some traditional Gikuyu

customs. For example in chapter four, it was noted that the ecclesiastical roles are held by men. Moreover, only the married men are given leadership posts in these churches. This is unlike some churches where not only are the unmarried given leadership posts but women are ordained. In chapter five it was noted that the Akurinu have retained the Gikuyu pattern of worship. The Akurinu build their churches facing Mount Kenya. During prayers, the worshippers turn and face Mount Kenya with men having their hands raised in the manner the Gikuyu elders prayed to Ngai (God). The Gikuyu respect for age is demonstrated in the seating arrangement in Akurinu churches whereby the older members take the front part and the children take the back space. In chapter six we noted that the Akurinu observe the main rites of passage as was the case in the Gikuyu custom. Thus birth, initiation, marriage and death are part of the religious rituals a Mukurinu goes through. Female circumcision which was the centre of the 1929 controversy between the Gikuyu and the Protestant missions is still practised by some Akurinu. The God's Word and Holy Ghost Church for example circumcise their baby girls on the fourteenth day as part of the cleansing ceremonies after birth. In Chapter seven, it was noted that the Akurinu have

retained the Gikuyu conception of God (Ngai) This explains why they still associate Him with Mount Kenya during their prayers. To them, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is the same God of their ancestors, Gikuyu and Mumbi.

At this stage we look at how the above findings correlate with the hypotheses which were set out at the beginning of this study. The findings support the first hypothesis that the Akurinu churches appeal mainly to people with low educational standard. It was noted in chapters three and four that a majority of the members are either illiterate or semi-literate. The Akurinu refused to send their children to schools in order to avoid any contacts with the teachings of the Western missionaries. Yet they never built their own schools like the AIPCA and the Karinga groups. This explains why they have ranked low in terms of educational standard. At the same time, the few educated youths have been leaving the churches after getting to secondary and university in the past¹. With the reforms taking place in these churches there is hope now of retaining the educated youths.

Secondly, the hypothesis that the Akurinu beliefs and practices have been influenced by the Gikuyu traditional beliefs and practices is well

supported by the findings of this study. For example, as observed earlier in this section, the Akurinu conception of God and their prayer pattern facing Mount Kenya with raised hands are traditional Gikuyu customs². Moreover, the rites of passage which are still observed among the Akurinu are fundamentally based on the Gikuyu traditions although they are given biblical support especially from the Old Testament. The female circumcision which has no biblical support is attributed to divine revelation. Similarly the piercing of earlobes and the removal of the lower middle two incisors practised in the God's Word and Holy Ghost Church were traditional Gikuyu customs³. Furthermore, this study has shown that polygamy is officially accepted by some Akurinu groups, a practice that is otherwise condemned in the mission founded churches⁴.

Thirdly, the findings in this study do not support the hypothesis that the Akurinu are concerned more with the life to come at the expense of life here and now. It is clear, from this study that the Akurinu, like most other Christians hold a futuristic view of eschatology. They look forward to be rewarded with eternal life when they get to heaven. At first, the early Akurinu thought that the eschatological end of the world would come very

soon and Jesus would then conduct the last judgment. Due to this belief, the early Akurinu saw no need of engaging in worldly affairs for they would soon leave the world. But the Paraousia did not come as was expected and they changed their mind and began participating in community affairs like other Christians. Today some are prosperous farmers, businessmen, while others have taken up employment in various fields.

Fourthly, the findings in this study confirm the hypothesis that the future of the Akurinu churches will depend on the reforms which will encourage the youth to remain in these churches. This study has shown that several reforms have taken place especially after independence (1963). The issue of dressing has been resolved and one can now dress in western clothing without fear of being ex-communicated. Young men can now be seen in suits and ties a practice that was forbidden in the past. Young men are today given some freedom in the choosing of their marriage partners. The elders only come in later to confirm through the Holy Spirit whether the girl is the right one. In the past the choice was made by the elders, a practice that led many young men to leave these churches. Other reforms include the relaxation of rules pertaining to foods, greetings with non-members and

the freedom to go to hospitals. With these reforms, the Akurinu churches can today boast of having some members who have attained university education⁵. The retention of such young educated members gives hope for the future of these churches.

Finally the findings of this study confirm the last hypothesis that the ridicule of the Akurinu churches by outsiders is due to ignorance and lack of interest in understanding these churches. The Akurinu churches are organised communities with their own doctrines, liturgy and hymns like other churches. It was noted that there was a lack of interest in other Protestant churches about the Akurinu Christians. Much of the criticism levelled against the Akurinu are mainly based on prejudice. For a long time Christians in the mission founded churches have shared the missionaries' conviction that the independent churches were out to destroy the church of Christ. Hence they have tended to treat independent churches as obstacles in the evangelisation mission. The time has come for such Christians to re-evaluate their stand and to consider the independent churches, like the Akurinu, as Christian communities and churches fulfilling in their own way the very command of Christ of spreading the gospel to all humankind.

In conclusion, it is important to point out some of the contributions of this study. Firstly, this study is of relevance to those interested in the development of an African Christian theology⁶. The last three decades have witnessed a shift in the theological concern in Africa. Both the church and the African theologians have realized the "need for the church in Africa to become culturally authentic"⁷. This concern for developing an African Christian theology emanates from the realization that there is a missing link between the African cultural background and the kind of Western Christianity which was brought to Africa by the Western Christian missionaries. African Christian theology is aimed at enhancing the expression of the Christian faith through the African culture. In the words of Kwesi:

"The [Christian] faith can be meaningful only when Christ is encountered as speaking and acting authentically, when he is heard in the African languages, when culture shapes the human voice that answers the voice of Jesus"⁸.

To achieve this objective the Gospel has to be well rooted in the African culture through the process of inculturation⁹. This study has revealed that inculturation has been going on since the rise of the independent churches like the Akurinu.

They have evolved a theology which conforms to their social and cultural background. This study provides practical illustrations on how the Akurinu have incorporated both the Gikuyu cultural values and the Gospel message.

The study will contribute in the understanding of the Independent church movement in Africa. To date only a few of the seven thousands of independent churches in Africa have received detailed studies despite the fact that they have large followings and have been in existence for a relatively long time.

This study has revealed that the Akurinu have also made a noteworthy contribution in the growth of the Christian Church through their hymns. It was noted that the Akurinu hymns have been accepted in other churches due to their relevance to the Africans' expression of their spirituality. Their impact could even be greater if they were translated into other African languages.

For the Government administrators, it is hoped that this study will help them to understand the Akurinu better in a positive manner. This would minimise the conflicts and harassment which the Akurinu have experienced during the colonial period as well as in independent Kenya.

Lastly, we conclude this study by suggesting some aspects of the Akurinu Churches which require further study. Firstly, this study has shown that the Gikuyu Christians find the Jewish customs as recorded in the Old Testament similar to their own traditional customs. There is need therefore for a study on the Gikuyu and Jewish customs which would possibly reveal the basis for such similarities. Secondly, there is need to study the factors which contribute towards some Christians leaving their churches to join the Akurinu churches. Such findings will help the affected churches to re-assess themselves in order to retain their members. Finally, it is important to carry out a deeper study on the practice of faith healing in the Akurinu Churches. It has been noted that up to now there are some members who do not go to hospitals for treatment but rely on prayers. Studies detailing the success or otherwise of faith healing would be of interest to the medical professionals and the rest of the community in general.

NOTES ON CHAPTER EIGHT

1. Mburu Machua and Moses Maina for example, both from the Christian Holy Ghost church of East Africa (Kiratina) left the church after joining the university of Nairobi in 1983 and 1990 respectively.
2. See Kenyatta, op,cit. pp.238, 246 and 258 for the various forms of prayers among the Gikuyu and which compare with the Akurinu pattern of prayer.
3. Kabetu, op.cit. p.16.
4. See the constitution of the Kenya Foundation of Prophets church, Appendix ID.
5. Some of the informants in the youth group are graduates from different universities.
6. For the various views on African Christian Theology see for example; Kwesi, A.D. Theology in Africa, London, Longman 1984; Gehman, R.J. Doing African Christian Theology, Nairobi, Evangel Publishing House, 1987; Mugambi J.N.K. African Christian Theology, Nairobi, Heinemann, 1989; Nthamburi, Z; The African Church at Crossroads; Strategy for Indigenization, Nairobi, Uzima Press 1991; Pobee, J.S. and Hallencreutz, F. (EDS); Variations in Christian Theology in Africa, Nairobi, Uzima Press, 1986.
7. Kwesi, A.D.; op. cit p.2.
8. Ibid. p.5.
9. For a detailed discussion on theological pluralism see Walaggo, J.M. et al. (eds.), Theological Pluralism: Its meaning and Urgency. St Paul's Publications 1986.

GLOSSARY

Bururi;	Country
Chaka	white cloth; sheet; unprinted calico cloth (cf. Kiswahili "Shuka")
Gaarui;	A hut for a man or boys. Among the Akurinu it refers to houses for men and women which are built within the church compound and used as changing rooms, and also as hostels.
Gicuhi (sing.). Icui (Pl.)	A ring.
Githaka (Sing). Ithaka (pl.)	Land in general sense; bush-land
Githomo;	Education; Christian worship service.
Gukurina;	To convert to the Akurinu church; to become a Mukurinu.
Gwicokera;	To re-examine oneself; to repent.
Gwithahia;	To defile oneself hence one becomes ritually unclean.
Gwitheria;	To purify oneself from ritual uncleanness.
Ita;	A band of warriors; a raiding party.
Ituura (sing); Matuura (pl.)	Village; town; city.
Ituika;	A secret ceremony which marked the handing over of the government from one ruling generation to the next.
Kamatimu;	Elders of lesser grade; lower rank of the Kiama in which the elders carried spears instead of the ceremonial staffs.
Kang'eit;	A woman with no circumcised child or children.

Kiama;	A council; council of elders.
Kigongona;	A sanctuary.
Kihuno;	A still-birth, miscarriage.
Kioneki (sing.) cionekei (pl.)	A vision.
Kipande;	This was an identification document carrying a persons' particulars which was introduced in 1919 by the colonial government. It was carried in a metal box by Africans on their necks.
Kirembe (sing.) Irembe (pl.)	Turban.
Kirima (sing.) Irima (pl.)	Mountain.
Kirore (sing.)	A thumb print; (A corruption of the Kiswahili word 'kidole').
Kiumbani (sing.) Ciumbani (pl.)	heart-breaker; lady-killer.
Kugaya;	To divide, distribute.
Kuiyukio;	To be taken.
Kurota;	To dream.
Kwarahura;	To awaken; used among the Akurinu to refer to spiritual awakening.
Kwiyaria;	To speak out for oneself; to confess.
Manjoho;	The two calico sheets which the early Akurinu were wearing after they rejected the European clothing.
Matathi;	Leaves from the shrubs of <u>clansena anisita</u> . The leaves were ceremoniously carried by the elders of the council of two goats, (<u>Kiama kia mburi</u> <u>kiri</u> or <u>kiama kia matathi</u>).

Maturanguru;	The leaves of a woody herb called <u>mutaranguru</u> . (<u>Vernonia holstii</u>). The elders of the highest council carried the <u>maturanguru</u> leaves for ceremonial purposes.
Mbari;	Family group, sub-clan.
Mburi;	Goat or goats.
Methamba;	Act of ritual washing especially before entering the church and after a journey, among the Akurinu.
Mubatithania (sing.); Abatithania (pl.)	A baptiser.
Mucii (sing.); Micii (pl.)	Homestead, village, town.
Mugambo (sing.) Migambo (pl.)	A voice.
Mugendi (sing.); Agendi (sing.)	Traveller, pilgrim
Mugiro (sing.); Migiro (pl.)	Taboo; something forbidden under the threat of defilement.
Mugunda (sing.); Migunda (pl.)	A plot of land, a farm.
Muhingo;	Closed period for circumcision. This applied only to boys as girls were circumcised every year.
Muhoi (sing.); Ahoi (pl.);	One who makes a request; One who prays; tenant-at-will on land outside his own family land.
Muhunjia (sing.); Ahunjia (pl.)	A preacher.
Muhiriga (sing.); Mihiriga (pl.)	Clan
Muiritu (sing.); Airitu (pl.);	A young unmarried woman; a circumcised girl.

Mukiru;	A sterile male; an impotent person.
Mukurwe (sing.) Mikurwe (pl.)	Albizia guminifera; the wood of this tree was used for firewood, making of beehives and troughs for cattle.
Munabii (sing.); Anabii (pl.)	A prophet or prophetess (It is a corruption of the Kiswahili word 'Nabii').
Mundwa (sing.); Miundwa (pl.)	A lump of cooked food or pot clay.
Muoyo (sing.); Mioyo (pl.)	Life.
Muramati (sing.); Aramati (pl.)	A caretaker; guardian of family holding.
Murata (sing.); Arata (pl.)	A friend.
Murathi (sing.); Arathi (pl.)	A prophet or prophetess.
Muroti (sing.); Aroti (pl.)	A dreamer.
Mutamaiyu (sing.); Mitamaiyu (pl.)	<u>Olea Africana</u> ; African Olive tree.
Muthamaki (sing.); Athamaki (pl.)	Judge; ruler, spokesman.
Muthami (sing.); Athami (pl.)	One who is given cultivation and building rights on another man's land.
Muthigi (sing.); Mithigi (pl.)	A staff of office carried by the elders of the <u>kima</u> .
Muthomi (Sing.); Athomi (pl.)	A reader; one who attends school; one who becomes an adherent of a Christian Church.
Mutongoria (sing.); Atongoria (pl.)	A leader.
Mutumia (sing.); Atumia (pl.)	A married woman.

Mwaki (sing.); Miaki (pl.)	Fire, A number of villages closely on the same ridge.
Ndundu;	Private discussion; inner circle committee, secret council.
Ngoma;	Spirits, ancestral spirits; used by Christians to refer to Satan, and evil spirits.
Ng'uki;	Misfortune, calamity caused by violation of ceremonial prohibition.
Njama;	A potential task force; a council dealing with the affairs of a particular group of people or age-group.
Nyakinyua;	A woman who has a circumcised child or children.
Nyumba:	Hut, house, family group, lineage.
Riika (sing.); Mariika (pl.)	An age-set.
Rithu;	A chest cloth worn by married Akurinu women which is equivalent to a ring.
Rugongo (sing.); Ng'ongc (pl.)	A ridge
Ruru (sing.); Nduru (pl.)	A flock or herd.
Shaitani:	Satan.
Thahu;	Ceremonial uncleanness incurred through breaking of a taboo.
Thingira:	A hut for a man or boys (see gaaru).
Uhoro:	News, message;

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APPENDIX I

CHURCH CONSTITUTION

A (1) CONSTITUTION OF THE HOLY GHOST CHURCH OF EAST AFRICA

The Association shall be called, Akurinu, the society of the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa and is hereafter referred to, as "The Society"¹.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1. The society is established with the following objectives:
 - (i) To be representative of all Akurinu residing in Kenya in general².
 - (ii) To foster the social, moral, intellectual and religious advancement of all Akurinu.
 - (iii) To establish religious schools, churches, educational and social institutions for the uplifting of all Akurinu.
 - (iv) Generally, to do all such things as are intended to or conclusive to the attainment of the above subjects.

2. MEMBERSHIP :

Membership of the society shall be confined to all African tribes in Kenya who are desirous of following the faith of the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa, founded on the teachings of Christianity.

3. A candidate for membership must send a written application to the Secretary of the society and must agree to be bound by the rules and regulations of the society if admitted. The application shall be brought before the committee of the society at the next or any subsequent meeting when the majority of the members of the committee, then present, may admit him as a member.
4. Any member wishing to resign from membership may do so on giving, not less than fifteen days notice of such intention, expiring on the last day of a calendar month; and after expiry of such period, such a person shall, provided that his subscription is not in arrears, cease to be a member of the society.
5. Members shall be expelled from membership if deemed unfit by present members and shall be expelled on voting by members at any convened meeting, annual or, otherwise, of the society.
6. Society business shall be managed by a committee composed as follows:-
 - (i) Chairman
 - (ii) Vice Chairman
 - (iii) Secretary General
 - (iv) Vice Secretary-General
 - (v) Treasurer

(vi) Vice Treasurer

and four other persons, members of the society, elected to be members of such a committee.

7. SUBSCRIPTION

Subscription of membership is ten shillings, Kshs:10, payable at admission and thereafter a monthly payment of Kshs:2; payable in advance or on the first day of each calender month, beginning with the first day of the month, following the month of election.

(ii) RULES AND REGULATIONS OF THE HOLY GHOST CHURCH OF EAST AFRICA (AKURINU) P.O. BOX 184 LIMURU.

1. This church started in 1929. Reasons of the origin of this church may be found in, Joel 2:28; Acts 1:8-22, Jeremiah 31:33-35; and Hebrews 9:10-13.
2. When people enter the church, they should be clothed in white (robes). Ex.29:8-9, Leviticus 8:7-8. Revelation 7:13-14.
3. People should not wear shoes or have money in church. Jn.2:14-17, 3:5-6.
4. We pray God with our hands raised in the air, 1Tim 2:8-9, 1Kings 8:22-23³.

5. In our church, men do not shave their beards or heads 1Cor. 11:6-7 and Numbers :6:5-7.
6. We wear turbans on our heads but we remove them when in church, particularly while praying. James:5:13-16.
7. We only eat the meat we have slaughtered ourselves because we do not eat meat from strangled animals. Acts:15:20-21, Gen:9:4-7.
8. We do not take medicine or receive medical care. When any one of us falls sick, we pray for him/her. James 5:3-16.
9. If one of us dies, we bury him according to the "book:", Jn.19:38-41, Acts 8:2-3.
10. Who ever joins our church, is baptized, Acts 19:4-7; Jer:4:3-6; Jn4:1-4. We also marry those in our church who wish to do so. Mk.10:6-10; Gen.2:24-25.
11. Each one of our members contributes money for whatever purpose the church has like building new churches. Lk:21:2-3; Gen:2:24-25.
12. There are young people who live near our churches in Garu and their work is to pray to God.
13. We all go to the church on Sundays. We also pray to God in the church every morning and every evening. We also meet for prayers,

every 15th and 30th of the month.

14. We have our own preachers whose duty is to preach to Evangelize everywhere. Mt. 28:19-20.

RULES (b)

1. Beer drinking is not allowed in our church.
2. Contact with one who eats pork meat or fat is a great blunder.
3. Making passes at a Mukurinu girl by a member or a non-member is a great offence. Such an offence is dealt with by church elders.
4. Contravention of any of the ten commandments, leads to excommunication.
5. Polygamy is forbidden⁴.
6. It is a great insult to force a Mukurinu to remove his turban.
7. We do not smear our members reputation if in error, we deal with it ourselves.

This religion is to be found in the following particular places:-

Headquarters - Limuru Division at Murengeti

Githunguri, at Githiga

Komothai,

Eldoret,

Gatundu,

Nakuru,

Gakoe,

Meru,

Karangi,

Muguga,

Kereita Forest,

Ndeiya,

Gikuni,

Muranga,

Kisumu,

Nyeri,

Embu,

Kirinyaga,

Kitale,

**(B) CHRISTIAN HOLY GHOST CHURCH OF
EAST AFRICA**

**THE CONSTITUTION AND ORDERS FOR
SPREADING AND PREACHING THE WORD OF
GOD AN LORD JESUS CHRIST AND HIS GLOBY**

1. This Religious society shall be called the Christian Holy Ghost Church of East Africa, hereafter referred to be a society.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

2. The religion or society is established with the following objects viz:
- a) Spreading and Preaching the Glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, and representative of all members of this church residing in Kenya.
 - b) To Baptise whoever with the society to foster the social, moral, intellectual and religious advancement of all members.
 - c) To establish Religious Schools, Churches, Educational and Social Institutions for the uplift of all members of the CHRISTIAN HOLY GHOST CHURCH OF EAST AFRICA⁵.
 - d) The church will not indulge in or encourage political activity.
 - e) The Church will form branches when and where deemed desirable.

3. MEMBERS

- a) Members of this society both sexes (males and females) shall be of all races over 18 years; African or any other races living in Kenya or East Africa who are desirous of following the faith of Christ but not in force, every member of this society shall confess his will.
- b) The subscription of a membership is sh.10 (ten only) as an entrance fee, payable in advance of sh.5/- at a time and thereafter monthly payments of sh.1/- (one only) payable on or before 15th day of the calendar month. beginning with the time when the member was elected by the committee to be a member of the society.
- c) Any member desiring to resign from this society shall himself acknowledge either by writing or by personal interview to the Minister or Secretary together with church committee and thereafter the committee and Minister as Secretary may consider his resignation.
- d) Any member of the society shall be expelled from this Society if the church committee recommends and if General Meeting of the society shall resolve by 2/3. If any member contravenes or goes against any of the Ten

Commandments of GOD or any of the provisions of these constitutions and Rules shall be expelled from the society.

e) No persons who resign or be removed from membership of this society shall be entitled to a refund of his subscription or any part thereof or any moneys contributed by him at any time.

f) Every member of this society who fall into arrears in respect of monthly subscription for more than six months, the church committee may consider such a case, discussing whether such a member shall automatically cease to be a member of the society. Any member of this society can give the church anything on his own will if possible is alright⁶.

OFFICE BEARERS

The officers of the society shall be as follows:

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|
| (1) High Priest | Chairman |
| (2) Minister | Vice Chairman |
| (3) Pastor | Secretary |
| (4) Preacher | Asst. Secretary |
| (5) Deacon | Treasurer |
| (6) _____ | Asst. Treasurer ⁷ . |

DUTIES OF OFFICE BEARERS:

- a) Chairman as High Priest, his work in the church is to Baptise people, arranging wedding ceremonies and shall unless prevented by illness or other sufficient cause preside over all church organisations and meetings for the church committee and at all general meetings.
- b) Vice Chairman as Minister shall perform all church work and duties of the High Priest as the Chairman in his absence.
- c) Secretary 'Pastor' shall deal with all church correspondence of the society, preaching, looking after sheep of the Lord and to consult with public and know what is going on in the church and then acknowledge High Priest (Chairman) what is going on if he is not available then may announce to Vice Chairman-Minister. Any decision reached shall be subject to ratification or otherwise at the next Committee Meeting. He shall issue Notices conveying all Meetings of the committee and all General meetings of the society and shall be responsible for keeping minutes of all such meetings and for the preservation of all records of preaching of the society and of the committee. He shall

also be responsible to the other office bearers for the proper maintenance of the register of members of the society.

- d) Asst. Secretary or 'Preacher' in the absence of the pastor as secretary the preacher shall perform all duties of secretary (The Pastor) and such other duties as shall be assigned by the pastor and such other duties assigned to him by the committee whether the pastor is present or not.
- e) The Deacon as Treasurer shall receive and shall also disburse under the direction of the church committee all moneys belonging to the society and shall issue receipts for all moneys received by him. He must preserve vouchers for all moneys paid by him. The Deacon as Treasurer is responsible to the church committee and to the members that proper book of account of all moneys received and paid by the society are written up preserved and available for inspection.
- f) Asst. Treasurer shall himself perform such duties as may be specifically assigned to him by the Treasurer and in the absence of the Treasurer shall perform the duties of the Treasurer.

(ii) RULES OF JOSHUA MBURU'S CHURCH.
THE CHRISTIAN HOLY GHOST CHURCH
OF EAST AFRICA.

1. We rest on Sundays. We do not eat food cooked on Sundays neither do we light fires. We eat cold food because Sunday is the Lord's Sabbath. Ex:16:22-27; 28, 20:8-12; 35:2-4.
2. We pray God everyday, morning, evening 3.00 am - 6.00 a.m. and also at 4.30 p.m. We also worship God on Fridays in remembrance of our Lord's death. Lk:18:1-2; Lev:16:29, Isaiah:53:4-6.
3. We hold prayers for elders of the church, three times in a year, January, July and November. We thus give thanks to God for one or two weeks. Ex:23:14-18; Deut:16:16.
4. This religion was started in 1929 when the Holy Spirit was poured upon us and leaders to preach God's word were selected. The Lord said that the reasons for the emergence of this church could be found in Acts: 1:8-22; Jer:31:33-35; Heb.8:10-13 and Joel:2:28.
5. We do not eat meat slaughtered by others, but ourselves, for we do not eat blood. We pray for the cow or goat before it is slaughtered. Gen.9:47; Lev.17:10-16; Deut:12:22-26.

Acts:15:19.

6. We dress in white while worshipping God and even for everyday wear for God ordered his people thus in Exodus, 29:8-9; Lev:8:7-8; Rev:7:9-10.
7. We remove shoes while entering a place of worship. We do not also carry any money on us while entering the church. Ex:3:5-6; Joshua:5:15; Acts:7:33-34; Jn.2:14-16.
8. Members of this church do not shave their heads or beards. Lev.19:27-28; 21:5-6; 1Cor:11:6-7.
9. We do not allow drunkards to enter our church for it is not right. Lev:10:8-12; Isaiah 5:11-13.
10. We do not eat pork, or allow anybody who has eaten pork to encounter us; including other taboo animals. Neither do we touch such animals' meat. Lev.11:7-9; Isaiah 65:4-7; Acts:10:12-16.
11. We bathe, change in clothes of worships, and wash our heads and feet, before entering God's house. Ex:19:10-17; Gen.35:2-3⁸.
12. On entering the church all men raise their clean hands while praying and recite the Lord's prayer, three times. 1Tim:2:8-9; 1Kings:8:22-23; Mt. 6:9-14.

13. We wear white turbans on our heads (men and women) for God so desires as his book says, we require everyone to do so and only remove it while praying (men), Lev:8:9-10, Ex.29:6-7. We also wear a white cap inside the turban; Lev:8:13-14.
14. This church forbids polygamy. Anybody who does so is excommunicated for the woman of the covenant (Mutumia wa Kirikaniro) is only one. Gen.2:24; Malachi2:14-16; Mt. 19:5. But if one "believes" (angitikia) while polygamous he is not forced to divorce them.
15. We forbid our members male and female (young and old) to play around with girls or women for adultery is a grave crime. Whoever commits adultery, we ex-communicate him. 6:9-11. Ephesians 5:3-5.
16. We do not like thieves or witches or anybody who (kwihiya Mathani) or any other law or rule Christ commanded - we excommunicate him. Ex.20:1-17; Numbers 15:30-32 Heb:10:26-28.
17. We do not use modern medicine (or injection or any medicine) neither do we consult medicine men. We pray Jesus Christ and he helps us. Jer.46:11-12, Rev.18:23-24, Hosea5:13-14, if any of us is ill, we pray for him.

18. If any of us dies, we bury him according to the Christian tradition, for he is a Christian, 1Kings13:27-32, Mt:27:57.
19. After "believing" we baptize our members as required in Mt.:28:18; Acts 16:14-16.
20. We marry our members, old and young believers, but only if they have not committed adultery. Heb:13:4-5.
21. For our young who marry in church, marriage regulation go as far as dowry but we refuse to offer sacrifices (ngoima) for these are sacrifices of the devil. (indo ta mikwa, njohi, ngoima, ciondo, tutirutaga undu ni dia gatungatira ngoma). 1Cor.10:19-23, Ex.34:12-17.
22. We do not greet with hands each time Lk:10:4-5 2Jn.1:10-11. But we greet people when baptizing and marrying them. Ex.27:18, Act 13:2-4, Galatians:2:9-11.
23. In this church when a child is born we do not give them (Maritwa ma nduire) traditional names, but we baptize the child and give him a Christian name. Mt.1:13-14, 1Kings 13:2-3.
24. We like our members to listen keenly to preachers and these rules, whoever contravenes any of these rules is liable to excommunication. We also hold fund-raising

meetings when we have need (church)
1Cor.11:16-17, Deut:17:12-14.

25. We pray for our leaders as the letter of Paul require, Jer.29:7-8, 1Tim:2:1-3
26. While on their periods our women and girls are not allowed into the church, even when a woman has given birth. Lev.12-1, 15:19-25, Lk:8:43-47.
27. Rape or any other related play is taboo - in this church, we can even sue such a person - may he be a member or not.

(C) CONSTITUTION AND RULES OF GOD'S
WORD AND HOLY GHOST CHURCH

Rule 1: NAME AND TITLE:

The name of the society shall be GOD'S WORD
AND HOLY GHOST CHURCH hereinafter called the
society.

Rule 2: AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

(i) To preach the word of God, Most High, our God
Almighty and Gospel which is Holy Bible and also
educate children.

(ii) Baptising all those who join the church

(iii) To provide all possible facilities for
members to obtain training both theoretical and
practical in matters in connection with the
society.

Rule 3: MEMBERSHIP

a) Membership shall be open to all men and women
and children in the world.

b) The membership fee shall be ten shillings and
then the member shall pay sh.2/- for the
first, 3/50 for the second, sh.4/50 for the
third time after which if one wishes to wed,
will do so and will have pay sh.5/- to the
society.

- c) The entrance fee or membership fee and payment for the first second, and third time shall not in any case or circumstance be refundable.
- d) No money shall be received or accepted by this society without giving a receipt for the money received.
- e) Every member of this society shall be required to give one tenth (1/10) of his/her property to the society. Should the one tenth of a member's property be in cash, the cash shall be under the care of the Head Office of the society and all the money received shall be banked.
- f) The property given to the society by a member shall in no circumstances be refundable.
- g) The money received shall be banked under the signature of the chairman (The High Priest), Secretary and the Treasurer and no money shall be withdrawn without the Signature of the Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer.

Rule 4: APPLICATION OF FUNDS

The funds of the society shall be applicable to any or all of the following purposes.

- a) General administration expenses including where approved by the High Priests Council.

- b) To make grants to alleviate hardships amongst members of the society.
- c) Expenses in connection with training of members under Rule 2 clause (iii)

Rule 5: HIGH PRIEST'S COUNCIL

- a) The High Priest's Council shall be the Supreme authority of the society and shall have all the power and authority and shall be responsible for the proper administration and organisation of the society. It shall be composed of the High Priest (as the Hon. Chairman) the Minister (Hon. Secretary) the Bishop (Hon. Treasurer) and nine other councillors.
- b) The councillors in the High Priest's Council shall be elected by the members themselves and only a member with the rank of a Bishop shall be elected as a councillor. The councillors shall be elected by the members of the society in any way which will be ordered by the High Priest himself.
- c) The councillors shall be in office for the period of two years after which they will be eligible for re-election. Should any of the councillors fail to be re-elected, he shall carry on his duty as a Bishop.

- d) The meetings of the High Priest shall be arranged by the Minister.

Rule 6: BISHOP COMMITTEE

Bishop committee shall be made up of pastors and prominent members of the society. The work of the committee shall be to deal with Christian and church matters. This committee shall also have power to keep any member of the society who shall break the commandment of God out of the Church for six months.

Rule 7: PASTORATE COMMITTEE

Pastorate committee shall be made up of pastor as chairman of the committee and church elders from other churches chosen by the members of the society. The Pastoral Committee shall have the power to keep out any member who shall be found guilty of breaking God's commandment out of church for not more than three months.

Rule 8: CHURCH ELDERS COMMITTEE

This shall be the church committee and it shall be made of church elders of the church chosen by the members of the society. There shall be twelve elders in this committee among whom there shall be a Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer.

The committees work shall be to look after the Christians and if there is any trouble or need by the Christians they shall send the matter to the Pastor of the people.

Rule 9: OFFICE BEARERS

- a) Only those of the members of the society who shall be or who keep the commandment of God shall be elected as office bearers.
- b) The nomination of office bearers shall be made by the High Priest's Council.
- c) High Priest (Hon. CHAIRMAN). The High Priest shall be in overall charge of the society and shall be under the control of the High Priest Council. He shall ordain Pastors, Bishops etc. He shall stay in office throughout his life as until such a time that he shall be unable to perform his duties due to old age, also means that he can stay in office throughout his life provided he keeps the commandment of God. The High Priest shall be the Chairman of the society.
- d) MINISTER (HON. SECRETARY)
The minister shall remain in office throughout his life provided he keeps the commandments of God. His work shall be to deal with all matters affecting the society and shall report the progress of the society to the High Priest

Council. He shall also be responsible of organising and arranging of meetings and other matters including office routine. He shall also act in the absence of the High Priest in Church matters.

(e) BISHOP (HON. TREASURER)

The Treasurer who shall be of the rank of a bishop shall be chosen as the Treasurer of the Council and shall be working as other Bishops in Church duties and also as the Hon. Treasurer of the Society. He shall be Bishop in charge of Headquarter church.

Rule 10: TRANSFERS OF BISHOPS, PASTORS, DEACONS
PREACHERS, ETC

- a) Bishops, Pastors, Deacons, Preachers etc shall be transferred from one place to the other. Everybody in the society and who works in this society shall be liable to transfer anywhere in the world with an exception of the High Priest, Minister, Hon. Treasurer⁹.
- b) Transfers shall be arranged by the Minister himself.

Rule 11: OFFERTORY

- a) Any person can bring an offering willing outside the Church, and such a person shall not bring offerings inside the church and such

offerings shall be used by the Church Elders of the society.

- b) The society shall have buildings which shall be used for the attainment of the society's aims and objectives.

Rule 12: DISOBEDIENCE

- a) If a member of this church breaks the God's Commandments shall be brought before the Church Elders and if found guilty, he shall be punished by the Pastorate Committee by being suspended from the church for a period of three months after which the particular member shall come back and confess or repent then only shall the church elders pray for him or her and accept him/her back.
- b) If a pastor finds that a member had committed a greater sin, he shall send the matter to the Bishop of that place and the Bishop shall have the authority to suspend such a member for a period of six months. Should the matter or sin that can make a member be suspended, for a period of more than six months, the matter shall be sent to the High Priest Council which shall have the power to expel such a member from the society.

Rule 13: BRANCHES

- a) A branch may be established in any place in the world.
- b) Each branch shall be governed by a Branch committee which shall meet as often as may be decided upon and this committee shall be controlled by the High Priest Council.
- c) Branch officers shall be members with the rank of either a Bishop or Pastor and the Branch Committee shall be elected by the members themselves.
- d) The Branch funds shall be common property of the society.

Rule 14:

The above rules shall be subject to alteration by the High Priest Council in the interest of the Society and the registrar of Societies shall be informed of such alterations.

THE FOLLOWING ARE THE RULES (ORDERS) OF THIS SOCIETY

WE OFTEN FOLLOW THE HOLY BIBLE

1. Everybody of this society must fulfil the orders which God presented to Moses (Ex. 20:10) if anyone destroy one of this commandment we present it to the church elders.
2. If anyone plays with a girl or a woman of this society we have to accuse him before the

court.

3. We do not drink wine, smoke or sniff if anyone drink wine or sniff we prosecute him/her before the church elders and if disobey them we expel him/her away.
4. We do not have WAR or fight against somebody. We fight only Shaitani, Devil and evil matters.
5. We circumcise on the eighth day after birth of a child ¹⁰.
6. When a person joins this society we thrust his/her ear. Deutronomy 15:11-17¹¹.
7. We do not eat unclean beasts, Leviticus 11:1 So that we slaughter for ourselves because we want always to be sure whether meat is clean.
8. We do not eat meat which its blood is eaten also we do not eat blood of any beast.
9. We do not take medicine, we drink not even native medicine. We do not have or drink any kind of medicine. James 5:14, Mark 5:25-29; Luke 8:43-45.
10. We do not shave or cut short our hair and beards. And also nobody is wanted to touch them. Numbers 6:2-10.
11. Our excreaters are not thrown carelessly on ground, but we pass it through the latrines

and when we are on Safari and go in a bush to pass excreaters we must cover it with soil. Deuteronomy 23:12-14.

12. We keep away or we are separated among women when they are with monthly periods. They stay in their hut seven days.
13. When a woman born (sic) a child she stays away separately 33 days if is a boy and if is a girl she has to stay separately for 66 days.
14. We do not eat food which is left by a person if at all was eating it or if the food is touched by somebody. we do not eat. Which is touched by hand is unclean.
15. On Friday we do not do any work we only pray our Lord.
16. Our church is not entered with money or shoes. When a person wants to enter in our church must keep money away and wear off his shoes.
17. A woman or a girl of this religion does not wear off or take off her head dress. Their heads are always covered.
18. All men of this religion must have a mitre on their heads. Exodus 28:4. Lev. 8:9.
19. Not unlawful to marry more than one wife.
20. It is prohibited to eat fat oil and meat on Sabbath days. Also on Fridays and Wednesdays.
21. Whenever one of our religion¹² dies, we go

there at once and take the dead body and bury it.

22. If our baby stops to suck, the father or mother makes a feast.
23. When we sing Hyan or Praise God, we always hit drums, Psalm 150:1.
24. We go through the roads matching to preach and also we go through the villages and streets singing and preaching the word of God.
25. No one of this religion is allowed to be a politician. Matthew 6:24.
26. Anyone who will destroy or disobey these rules of this religion which are above would be dismissed from it.

(D). KENYA FOUNDATION OF PROPHETS
CHURCH
RULES AND OBJECTIVES

1. NAME: The name of the Church shall be : The Kenya Foundation of the Prophet Church. The Headquarters will be situated at Kaguthi village in the Fort Hall District. (Murang'a)
2. MEMBERSHIP: The church shall be open to all Africans in Kenya by birth or adoption.
3. AIMS: The Church shall promote unity among all the followers of the Kenya Holy Spirit and Prophet Church and will aspire to the following objects:
 - a) Preach the name of the High Almighty in Heaven and his Gospel.
 - b) Keep and encourage continuance of good customs of the followers of the Church.
 - c) Adopt good customs, changing obsolete customs so as to fit the Church followers into a progressive changing world¹³.
 - d) Baptise all the followers of the Church and teach them honesty and obedience.
 - e) Encourage the Holy Bible Literature amongst all the Church followers and endeavours to fight against "Satan" by all possible means.

- f) Promoting the Welfare of the Church Followers in the following spheres:-
- i) Education in higher, secondary and primary stages.
 - ii) Health, nutrition, clean and better houses, self-respect,
 - iii) Family Life: Fight against child delinquency in all stages.
- g) Self Help: Encouraging the Church Followers to be active, to interest themselves in trade and industry. The main aim in this being to encourage members of the church to have will to progress.
- h) Discouraging and stopping the "Church Followers" from joining irresponsible bodies and taking part in irresponsible politics.
- i) Disassociating the Church Members and completely stop any further occurrence of a subversive movement or activity like the "Mau Mau" or "Kiama Kia Muingi"¹⁴.
4. RULES : There will be church Foundation Members, some of them will be those who started the Preaching of the Gospel since the inception of the HOLY PROPHETS CHURCH on the 1st June, 1927. Their names are:-¹⁵.

Mr. Musa Thuo Chege (High Priest)

" Mishek Kiguru (Priest)

- " Joel Wamwea Githuku (Priest)
- " Manase Githinji (Priest)
- " Samuel Kinyua Sila
- " Samuel Mwangi Kinyoro.

The above Members have the right to propose and second or accept by a vote of the majority, any proposed member of the "Prophet Church".

- ii) Any member of the Church may be suspended from his membership if he/she contravenes the rules of the Church for six months.
- iii) A member may be expelled from the Church by a 2/3rd majority in a Church General Meeting.
- iv) FEES: The entrance fees for both males and females shall be sh.10/- payable in three equal instalments viz: sh.2/-, sh.3/50, and sh4/50. If a member of the Church wishes to marry, he will pay shs.5/- to the Church for Marriage fees.
- v) In case of expulsion from the Church of any member, no fees are refundable.

MEETINGS

- i) There will be at least two General Meetings of the Foundation Church in each Calendar year.
- ii) A quorum of a general meeting shall be constituted by one-quarter of the members of

the Foundation Church, which must include four main office bearers.

iii) There will be a Central Church Committee which will consist of the following:-

1. The High Priest
2. The Vice High Priest
3. The Hon. General Secretary
4. The Hon. Vice Secretary
5. The Hon. Treasurer
6. The Hon. Vice Treasurer
7. Twelve other elders will be elected to represent the Outside Churches.

iv) These will be elected by a secret ballot once every year by a general meeting of the Church.

v) The Central Church Committee will meet at least once in every three months.

vi) The Prayer Assemblies will meet on the following days each week: Wednesdays; Fridays; Saturdays; and Sundays (in the mornings or evenings).

vii) Any member of the Church may be elected or re-elected in the General Church Committee.

viii) Church Prayer Assemblies will be conducted by the High Priest or Pastor, or any other Church elder who may be detailed by the High Priest.

ix) The other Church Gross Rules which shall be followed by all Church followers are contained

in Appendix "A" attached. All members of the Church must comply with these rules.

6. BRANCHES: (i) On application and approval of the church Foundation Members, there may be formed in other district "Holy Spirit & Prophet Churches" affiliated to the Kenya Foundation of the Prophet Church.
- ii) A branch must be constituted by at least 12 Church members.
- iii) Every Branch will be approved by 3/4 majority of the Church at a general meeting.
- iv) The Outside Churches' Rules shall be those of the main Foundation Church.
- v) Every outside church should send at least four representative members to the general meeting of the Foundation Church at least once a year.

REMARKS: i) All the Church money shall be deposited in the bank. There will be at least three trustees to the Banking Accounts, and the trustees will check all cash and cash books and other Accounts at least once per month.

ii) The Hon. Treasurer shall keep in safe custody all books of Accounts, of the Foundation Church.

(iii) Money received by outside churches shall be sent to the Hon. General Treasurer at Headquarters, Kaguthi Fort Hall [Murus'ia].

- iv) The Outside Church Treasurers must not keep more than forty shillings in their possession.
- v) All treasurers must issue Church Official Receipts for all monies received by/and for the Foundation Church or outside Churches.
- vi) All treasurers will keep signed receipts for all money paid out, showing the necessary details.
- vii) The trustees for the bank account shall be:-
 - a) The High Priest,
 - b) The Hon. Treasurer
 - c) The Hon. General Secretary
- viii) All withdrawals shall be signed by the three trustees.
- ix) The Foundation Church shall appoint an auditor who will audit all the Church books of accounts half-yearly and submit his report to the Central Foundation Church Committee, who in turn must publicise it to all church members.
- x) The Hon. Treasurer shall prepare a half-yearly Balance Sheet before the end of each half financial year.
- xi) The Foundation Church's financial year shall commence on the 1st January and clear on the 30th June.

xii) Copies of the Balance Sheet shall be sent to all outside churches of the Foundation Church and shall be available for the general meeting.

All the secretaries of the Foundation Church shall keep Minutes of all proceedings in Committee Meetings and the Hon. General Secretary shall keep Minutes of the Central Foundation Church Committee Meetings of the Church.

All correspondence shall be addressed to the Hon. General Secretary of the Kenya Foundation of the Prophet Church.

1. The High Priest, The HON, Secretary and the Hon. Treasurer shall be executive Officers of the Foundation Church.
2. The high Priest shall prepare a report of the Church's dealings and activities at the end of each half-financial year.
3. The report as per Para.11 above, shall be read at the following General Meeting.
4. The church, may by a resolution passed by at least a two thirds majority of members at a general meeting resolve that it be dissolved.

Signed

High Priest

Musa Thuo Chege

Signed

Secretary

Samuel Kinyua Sila

Dated at Thika

This day of 13th October, 1959

APPENDIX "A"

CHURCH GROSS RULES WHICH SHALL BE FOLLOWED BY
THE FOLLOWERS OF THE KENYA FOUNDATION OF THE
PROPHET CHURCH

The Followers of this Church are directed to
the following Church Rules (instructions):-

1. Twelve elders will be representing the church,
wearing white kanzus and turbans (see
Leviticus 8-2-8 and also Leviticus:8-9-10;
Deuteronomy 27:9-15; Joel 1-13-15.
2. All prayers will be conducted as per
instructions contained in Isaiah 64-4-13;
Jacob 2-1-9; Leviticus:19-18-29; Timothy
(1)2-8-12.
3. The Voice of God and the Prophet - See Gen.
26-2-7; Gen: 12-7-10; Kings (II) 3-11-12' Amos
2-11-14.
4. Baptism and the Holy Communion- See Isaiah
10-2-7; Matthew 3-11-13 Numbers 6-21.

5. All church followers must follow the Holy Bible. See Gen:1-1-16, Exodux 20-1.
6. God Sacrifices; See Lev.10-1-4; Hebrew 13-15-18; Lev.8-1-4; Le: 16-1-6.
7. MARRIAGES: See Hebrew 13-4-6; Lev.21-7-9; Numbers 27-1-8.
8. Hair and Beards: See Numbers 6-5-7; Samuel (I) 1-11-13; Ezekiel:44-20; Timothy (I) 2-9-10; Corinthians (i) 11-6.
9. Church Donations: See Numbers 18-11-13; Tim: (II) 5-18-23.
10. NEW BORN: When a mother brings forth a baby boy, she has to stay for 33 days before she goes into the Church. If a girl, she has to stay for 66 days. See Lev: 12-1, Luke:2-21-29.
11. SHOES: Church Followers are not authorised to go into the Church wearing shoes, boots and sandals. See Acts 7-32-36; Exodus 3-4-7.
12. RESTRICTIONS OF MARRIAGES; The church does not restrict its members to marry more than two wives. See Gen.16:3-4; Samuel (i) 1-1-4; Kings (1) 3-4-5.
13. PILGRIMS: The church Followers shall go on pilgrimages into cities and towns or villages, preaching the Name of Almighty the God: beating the drums and singing. See Matthew

10-5-16; Psalms 150-1.

14. Church Followers are not allowed to eat evil meat, such as pork or meat soiled with blood, or meat of a dead animal or meat of an animal which has been killed by means of thumbing. See Deut.14-2-22 Lev.11-1-9; Acts 15-19-22.
15. The Church has no colour or racial discrimination. See Jacob 2-19; Lev.19-17-20; Deut: 1-17-18.
16. Church Followers are not allowed to take any kind of medicine, See Psalms 50-15-16; Jacob 5:13; Mark 6-13-14.
17. Church Followers must honour the Leaders. See Gen.49-10-11; Numbers 24-17-18.
18. Church Followers are not allowed to drink any type of beer; or take snuff, or smoke any kind of smoking. See Isaiah 5-11-12; Ephesians 5-17-19; Numbers:6-2-6.
19. Church members are not allowed to preach unless they are ordained in the church. See Tit. 3-10-12; Act:1-21-23.
20. If a church Follower elopes a girl, he must be suspended from the church and prosecuted. See Deut.22-28-30.
21. All church Followers (of either sex) are not allowed to enter the Church dressed in red. Deut.27:26.

Signed

(High Priest)

Musa Thuo Chege

Signed

(Secretary)

Samuel Kinyua Sila

Dated at Thika

This day of 13th October, 1959.

APPENDIX E

AFRICAN HOLY GHOST CHRISTIAN CHURCH CONSTITUTION AND RULES;

1. NAMES: The name of this church shall be called AFRICAN HOLY GHOST CHRISTIAN CHURCH hereinafter referred to as the "Society".
2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES: The Church shall promote unity among all the followers of the African Holy Ghost Christian Church and that it will aspire to the following objects;-
 - a) To preach and teaching it's followers and the words of our Almighty God together with our saviour and his begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Chrirt.
 - b) To baptise all the followers of the church through the name of Jesus Christ.
 - c) To make wedding ceremonies between gentlemen and ladies whenever is available.
 - d) To encourage the Holy Bible Literature amongst all church followers and to teach the honesty, obedience and to love each other together with our Government.
 - e) Keep and encourage continuance of good custom of the followers of the church.
 - f) Teaching the followers of the Church to have more education up to the higher standard, health clean, nutrition and to have better houses together with self-respect.
 - g) Discouraging and stopping the Church followers from joining irresponsible bodies and to teach them to be aware of political parties.
 - h) Self-help: Encourage the church followers to be active to interest in trade and industry and also of the country development of progress.
3. MEMBERSHIP: The African Holy Ghost Christian Church shall be open to all people in Africa of all races, over the age of 18 years.
 - a) Every member of this Church after being converted and saved on his own will and faith,

subject to the approval of the church leaders become a member of the church and he shall pay an entrance of Kshs.10/= (shillings ten only) in order to be a member.

- b) Every member of the church shall pay a monthly subscription of Ksh.1/= per month not later than 15th of each month.
- c) If any member desiring to resign from the church shall inform or submit his resignation to the Reverend known as "the Secretary" together with church Committee and the resignation shall take place with effect from the date of receipt by the Reverend of such notice.
- d) Any member of African Holy Ghost Christian Church may be expelled from membership if the Church committee together with Right Priest Bishop (Chairman) recommends and if a General Meeting of the Society shall resolve by a majority of the members present that such a member should be expelled on the grounds that his conduct had adversely affected the reputation or dignity of the Church rules. The Church Committee shall have power together with the Right Bishop to suspend any member of the church until the next General Meeting of the Church following such suspension but not withstanding such suspension a member whose expulsion is to be considered.
- e) Any member who resigns or is removed from the membership of the African Holy Ghost Christian Church shall not be entitled to a refund of the subscription or any part thereof or any moneys contributed by him at any time.
- f) Any members of the African Holy Ghost Christian Church who falls into arrears with his monthly subscription for more than six months or else who fails to conduct with our church constitution and God commandments shall automatically cease to be a member of the church and his name shall be struck off the register of church members. The church committee may however at it's discretion reinstate such member on payment of the total amount of subscription outstanding.

4. OFFICE BEARERS: There will be church Office Bearers who are known as Church Leaders who started

preaching the Gospel since the beginning of Holy Ghost in the early days in 1926 when the Church of Holy Ghost started. The Office Bearers are as follows:-

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Right priest Bishop | 4. Pastor |
| 2. Bishop | 5. Minister |
| 3. Reverend | 6. Deacon. |

All of whom shall hold Office from the date of election until the succeeding Annual Church General Meeting and shall be full paid up members.

- b) The Church Committee shall at once automatically cease any Office bearer to be a member of the Church thereof.
- c) The Church committee may remove any Office bearer from the Office in the same ways as it is laid down for the expulsion of members in rule 3
- d) And Vacancies thus created shall be filled by persons elected at the church General Meeting resolving the expulsion.

5. DUTIES OF OFFICE BEARERS:

- a) The Right Priest Bishop of the Church shall always, unless prevented by illness or other sufficient cause preside over all church prayer assemblies baptising ceremonies and all other church works. And also to preside over all church meetings and at all church general meetings.
- b) Bishop of the church regarded as the Vice - Chairman shall perform any duties of the Right Priest Bishop in his absence.
- c) The Reverend of the Church regarded as the Secretary shall deal with all church correspondence and church management under the general supervision of the church committee, in case of urgent matters and also it is his duty to make arrangements for the church e.g. wedding ceremonies, all church ceremonies, prayers assembles and advertise to the public. He shall always consult with the Right Priest Bishop and any decision reached to him shall be subject to ratification or otherwise. He shall issue notices convening all Meetings of the church and shall be responsible for Keeping minutes of all

such meetings and for the preservation of all records of proceedings of church and of the church committee.

- d) Pastor regarded as the Asst. Secretary in the absence of Reverend (Secretary) shall perform all duties of the Reverend and such other duties as shall be assigned to him by the church committee wherever the Reverend is not present.
- e) The Minister regarded as the Treasurer shall receive and disburse under the direction of the Church committee all moneys, goods belonging to the African Holy Ghost Christian Church and shall issue receipts for all moneys received and preserve vouchers for all moneys paid by him. The Treasurer (Minister) shall be responsible to show the Church Committee and to the Members the proper books of account of all moneys received and paid by the Church are written up, preserved and available for inspection.
- f) Deacon regarded as the Asst. Treasurer shall perform such duties as may be specifically assigned to him by the Minister or by the Church Committee and in the absence of the Minister he shall perform the duties of the Minister.

6. THE CHURCH COMMITTEE:

- a) There shall be at least two church General Meetings of the African Holy Ghost Christian Church in each year and the General Meeting shall be held at Gichagi-ini Head-quarters. The Church Committee shall consist of all office bearers of the church and twelve (12) other members elected at the Church annual General Meeting.
- b) The General Church Committee shall meet at least once in every four (4) months and any casual vacancies for members of the church committee caused by death or resignation shall be filled by Church Committee until the next General Meeting of the African Holy Ghost Christian Church.

7. DUTIES OF THE CHURCH COMMITTEE:

- A) The Church Committee of African Holy Ghost Christian Church shall be responsible for the

management of the church and for that purpose may give directions to the Office bearers to the manner in which within the law they shall always perform their duties. The church Committee shall have power to appoint such a sub-committee as it may deem desirable to make reports to the church committee upon which action shall be taken as seems to the church committee desirable.

- b) All moneys disbursed on behalf of the Africa Holy Ghost Christian Church shall be authorised by the Right Priest Bishop and two other Office bearers together with church committee.
- (c) The quorum for meetings of church committee shall not be less than 12 members.

8. GENERAL MEETINGS:

- (a) There shall be at least two church General Meetings of the African Holy Ghost Christian Church in each year. Annual Church General Meeting and special Church General Meetings.
- (b) A quorum of the Church General Meeting shall be constituted by two thirds of the members of the church, must include three main Office bearers, these church General Meetings shall be held not later than 15th December in each year. Notice in writing of such annual General Meeting of the Church accompanied by the Annual Church statement of account and the agenda for the meeting shall be sent to all members by the Secretary, (Reverend) not less than 21 days before the date of the meeting.

The agenda for the church annual general meeting of the African Holy Ghost Christian Church shall consist of the following;-

- (a) Confirmation of the minutes of the previous church annual General Meeting.
- (b) Election of the Office - bearers and the Church Committee members and these shall be elected by a secret ballot in accordance with rule 10 (a).
- (c) Appointment of Auditors in accordance with rule 11 (a).
- (d) Such other matter e.g. Church managements, prayers assemblies, wedding and baptising ceremonies with other shauris as the church committee may decide or as

10. (a) All land, moneys, building and other immovable property and all investments and securities which shall be acquired by the Church shall be vested in the names of not less than three (3) Trustees who shall be members of the church and shall be appointed at an annual church general meeting for a period of three years. On retirement such trustees shall be eligible for re-election. A church general meeting shall have the power to remove any of the trustees and all vacancies occurring by resignation or death shall be filled at the same or next church general Meeting.
- (b) The trustees shall pay all income received from church. Any expenditure in respect of such property which is in opinion of the Trustees is necessary or desirable shall be reported by the trustees to the church committee which shall authorise expenditure of such moneys as it thinks fit.
11. AUDITORS:
- (a) The African Holy Ghost Christian Church shall have an auditor and an auditor shall be appointed for the following year the Church annual General Meeting. The Church accounts, records and documents shall be open to the inspection of the Auditor at any time. The Treasurer shall produce an account of his receipts and payment and statements of asset and liabilities made up to the date which shall not be less than six weeks and not more than three months before the date of the church annual general meeting. The Auditor shall examine such annual accounts and statements and either certify that are correct duly vouched and in accordance with the law, report to the church in what respect they are found to be incorrect, unvouched or not in accordance with the law.
- (b) A copy of the auditor's report on the accounts and statements together with such accounts and statements shall be furnished to all members at the same time as the notice convening the annual church meeting is sent out. An Auditor may be paid such honorarium for his duties as may be resolved by the church Annual General Meeting that appointed him.
- (c) No Church auditor shall be an office bearer or a member of the Society.

12. FUNDS:

- (a) The funds of the church as the society may only be used for the following purposes:-
 - (i) To build churches and all church development managements.
 - (ii) Such other allowances to members in case of death, old age, sickness, accident etc.
 - (iii) The payment for expenses of the administration of the church including the Auditor's fee.
- (b) All moneys properties and funds of the church shall be recovered and paid to the church Treasurer and shall be deposited by him in the name of the Church in any bank or banks approved by the church committee.
- (c) No church payment shall be made out of the bank account without a resolution of the church committee authorizing such payment to be paid and all cheques on such bank account shall be signed by the Chairman Secretary and Treasurer of the Church.
- (d) The Church Treasurer of the church may keep a sum of not exceeding sh. 100/= for petty disbursement of which proper account shall be kept.
- (e) The Church Committee of the Church shall have power to suspend any office bearer or any member who it has reasonable cause to believe is not properly in church rules, God's commandments in which we follow and also if he is not properly accounting for any funds or property of the church and shall have power to appoint another person in his place. Such suspension shall be reported to a church general meeting to be convened on a date of such suspension and the church general meeting shall have full power to decide what further action should be taken in the matter.
- (f) The financial year of the church as the society shall be from 1st January to 31st December.

13. BRANCHES:

The Church shall have branches outside districts and the branches of this church shall be formed on application and approval of the church committee and Registrar of Societies and they will adopt the same constitution as that of the Gichagi-ini Head-quarters with the following exception:-

- (a) The aim and objects will not include the formation of branches except one main body of the Headquarters.
 - (i) No branch church may amend the constitution, but the amendments to the constitution can only be made by the Head-quarters of the church in accordance with the provision of rule No. 14.
 - (ii) The provision of the rule 14 shall apply to our Branches but in addition the branches will not be dissolved without consultation with Gichagi-ini head-quarters.

14. AMENDMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION:

The Church amendments to the constitution shall be approved by at least $\frac{2}{3}$ majority of members at a church general meeting of the church. They cannot however implement without the prior consent in writing of the Registrar of society obtained upon application to him in writing and signed by the three office bearers.

15. DISSOLUTION:

- (a) The church shall not be dissolved except by a resolution passed at a church general meeting of members by the vote of two thirds of the members. The quorum at the church meeting shall be as shown in rule No. 8(e).

If no quorum is obtained the proposal to dissolve the society shall be submitted to a further church general meeting which shall be held one month's later. Notice of these meeting shall be given to all members of the church meeting, quorum for this second meeting shall be the number of members present and these meetings shall be held at Gichagi-ini head-quarters.

(b) Provided however that no dissolution shall be effected without prior permission in writing of the Registrar obtained upon application which made in writing, and signed by three office bearers.

(c) When dissolution of the society has been approved by the Registrar no further action shall be taken by the Society or committee or any office bearer of the society in connection with the aims of the society other than to get in and liquidate for cash and the assets of the church subject to the payment of all the debts of the church, the balance thereof shall be distributed in such other manner as may be resolved by the meeting at which the resolution for Dissolution was passed.

16. INSPECTION OF ACCOUNTS AND LIST OF MEMBERS

The books of account and all documents relating thereto and a list of members of the society shall be available for inspection at the registered office of the society by any officer or member of the society on giving not less than seven days notice in writing to the society.

RULES OF AFRICAN HOLY GHOST CHRISTIAN CHURCH:

1. CHURCH PRAYING ASSEMBLIES: We hold prayers in every morning from 3.00 a.m. to 6.30 a.m. and evening from 6.30 p.m. to 9.00 p.m. Luke 18 - 12; and we pray raising our hands up 1; Timothy 2 - 8 - 9; 1: King 8 - 22 - 23; Mathew 6 - 9 - 14.
2. HOLY COMMUNION We gather and hold prayers Assemblies of Prevenient Christian Church thrice (3) a year, just to thank God in the beginning of the year January, middle of the year July and at the end of the year December. See Exodus 23 - 14 - 18; Deuteronomy.
3. The members of this Church do not make fire on Sunday. We rest without doing anything, we eat cold food and cold drinks, we rest a Sabbath of the Lord, See Exodus 35 - 2- 4; 16 - 27 -28; Genesis 2 - 3 - 4; Luke 23 - 56; Hebrews 4 - 9 - 9.
4. We attend and gather in our church every Friday in order to pray and to remember the death of our Saviour Jesus Christ. Isaiah 53 - 4 - 6; Luke 22 - 15 - 21; John 19 - 1 - 28.

5. We do usually wash our bodies after day hard work before we enter to the church, above all we wash hands, foot and faces; See Genesis 35 - 2 - 3; Exodus 19 - 10 - 17; Psalms 26 - 4 - 5; John 13 - 5 - 10; Leviticus 19 - 2 - 3.
6. BAPTISM: We baptize people in Holy Spirit if they confess and teach them not to do evil deeds. John 3 - 3 - 10; Mathews 28 - 19 - 20; John 3 - 13 - 17; Acts 16 - 14 - 16; 19 - 4 - 7; Jeremiah 31 - 33.
7. WEDDING CEREMONIES: We conduct wedding ceremonies for the Gentlemen and Ladies, and we renew wedding for old persons who did not make wedding during their marriages. Hebrew 13 - 4 - 15; Genesis 2 - 24; Effesis 5 - 22 - 30; Korinthian 7 - 1-4.
8. The followers of this Church does not play polygamy and if any gentleman or girl commit adultery or have two or more wives this is a sin and the church should discharge and expell such person from the church. The church shall not be responsible for such marriages and no weddings of such person can be done in the church. Mathew 5 - 27 - 31; Malaki 3 - 5; Galatian 5 - 19 - 28.
9. NEW BORN: When a woman of this Church brings forth a baby she has to stay 40 days and if a girl she has to stay 80 days without entering the church, and when these days become finished she has to go to the church for the prayer. See Leviticus 12 - 1 - 8; Luke 2 - 21 - 29.
10. The Holy Bible restricts and prohibits all females not to enter in the house of God (church) while they are in their monthly period, therefore this church prevent all unclean people either male or female to enter in the church. See Leviticus 15 - 16 - 16; 15 - 19 - 25; Jude 1 - 23.
11. GENERAL CONSUMPTION: We do not eat meat slaughtered by Muslim, neither eat mixed with blood, and therefore we take or eat meat when we slaughter ourselves. Because wherever we kill an animal we first pray God through Jesus Christ. Genesis 9 - 4 - 7; Acts 15 - 20 - 22; Leviticus 17 - 10 - 16; Deuteronomy 12 - 22 - 26.
12. We do not take any pigs meat or any other unclean animal meat e.g. Rabbit e.t.c. and our church followers are not entitled to touch it's meat or fat.

See Leviticus 11 - 7 - 9; Deuteronomy 14 - 3 - 9; 2
Corinthian 6 - 17; Isaiah 66 - 17 - 18.

13. We do not take any kind of medicine inoculation and we are not connected with African witch-craft Doctors; See Revelation 18 - 23 - 24; Hosea 5 - 13 - 14; If our members are sick or ill or gets illness we go in his house and pray our almighty God we believe that. See Jacob 5 - 14; John 11 - 25; Acts 19 - 12 - 13.
14. The followers of this church do not take liquor, wine, cigarettes snuffing and we therefore prohibits intoxicated persons not to enter in the church and if any members take these things we suspend him. See Leviticus 10 - 8 - 12; Proverbs 23 - 31 - 35; Effesian 5 - 18 - 19; Isaiah 15 - 11 - 13; 1 Corinthian 6 - 9 - 14; Revelation 7 - 6 - 7.
15. If any member of this Church dies we take his body and bury him in christianity condition. See Mathew 27 - 57 - 62.
16. CHURCH DRESS UNIFORM: This church members are always wearing white Taburn on head males and female wear white clothes on head. We also wear white dresses (Kanzus) while we are praying; Mathew 22 - 11 - 13; Revelation 3 - 18 - 19; 7 - 9 - 10; Leviticus 8 - 7 - 8. The followers of this church are not allowed to wear black or red clothes, Deutronomy 22 - 11 - 13.
17. We do not shave hair, beard or mustache, Leviticus 21 - 5 - 16; 19 - 27 - 28; 1 Corinthian 11 - 6 - 7 and we are not shaking hands whenever we greet to the public 2 John 1 - 10 - 12; 2 Thesalonian 3 - 6 - 7; Athamaki 4 - 29 - 30; Luke 10 - 4 - 6.
18. Our Church is not entered with shoes or money by ourselves or by the public, see Acts 7 - 33 - 34; Exodus 3 - 5 - 6; Joshua 5 - 15 - 16; John 2 - 14 - 21.
19. CHURCH DONATION: We do have church contribution and if any individual wants to give any donation to the church he can do so. See Exodus 25 - 1 - 10; 2 Corinthians 9 - 7 - 10; 16 - 1 - 4; Exodus 35 - 4 - 10; Luke 21 - 2 - 3.
20. CHURCH PREACHING PROGRAMME: This Church shall go on programming to preach the word of Christ to the centres, villages, Towns and to the cities, when available and we do usually sing beats. See Psalms 18

- 1 - 6; Psalms 150 - 1; Mathews 10 - 5 16; 28 - 16 - 18.

21. The followers of this church should abide by the teaching of the Holy Bible both New and Old Testament so as to maintain ten God's Commandments, Exodus 20 - 1 - 20; Deutronomy 5 - 1 - 33; Mathews 19 - 16 - 33; Romans 13 - 19 - 11.
22. All the members of this church are requested by the church leaders to honour and love the President of our Republic together with his Government and also to respect all Government laws and also this church shall pray for Government leaders and our Country at all times. See 1 Timothy 2 - 1 - 3; Ezera 6 - 10 - 13; Romans 13 - 1 - 8; 1 Peter 2 - 13 - 18 (and if any member refuse to admit and respect all these rules he is liable to be expelled from the church and the church must order him to take **off our turban**).
23. If any member of African Holy Ghost Christian Church disagree and fails to comply with one of the above mentioned rules and refuse to respect it he is therefore liable to be expelled from this church and he may not be a member any more. 1 Corinthians 5 - 13; Ezera 6 - 11 - 12; Numbers 15 - 30 - 32; Deutronomy 17 - 12; Psalms 19 - 13; Hebrews 10 - 26 - 28.

NOTES ON APPENDIX 1

1. The Constitution appears here as they are found in the office of the Registrar of Societies.
2. The Holy Ghost Church of East Africa was the first to be registered in 1958 and it appears there was hope that all other Akurinu would join it.
3. The Akurinu, apart from raising their hands also face the direction of Mount Kirinyaga (Mt. Kenya) during prayers.
4. This is one cause of division among the Akurinu because others like the Kenya Foundation of Prophets Church and the God's Word and Holy Ghost Church allow polygamy. (See their Rules 12 and 19 respectively).
5. Unlike the AIPCA and AOC who started their own independent schools in Gikuyuland the Akurinu did not build any schools.
6. It has been observed in this study that some members have given pieces of land for church building.
7. These titles are rarely used in the church. The common titles are either a senior or a junior prayer - leader (Muhoi munene or Muhoi munini).
8. This practice is not observed by other Akurinu groups.
9. No such transfers were observed during the field work. As noted in this study the clergy are not salaried in the Akurinu Church. They offer their services as part of their call to serve God freely.
10. For girls, circumcision is done on the 14th day in this church.
11. This refers to the piercing of the earlobes a practice that is more of a Gikuyu custom.
12. This is referring to their members.
13. This objective explains why for example the members of this church practice polygamy as an aspect of

promoting the Gikuyu customs which they consider to be good.

14. It should be noted that the founder of this church, Musa Thuo, was an active member of the K.C.A and even collected money from some Akurinu for the Mau man oathing exercise. This objective was to show the colonial Administration that the Akurinu were a non-political movement.
15. It is unlikely that Musa Thuo had started his church in 1927. Moreover the precision of the date (1/6/27) makes it even more suspect. No other record makes reference to this date.
16. The constitution of the African Holy Ghost Christian Church was written in 1968 after the others had been written. Thus it is more elaborate in comparison with others from which some ideas may have been borrowed.

**APPENDIX II
LIST OF INFORMANTS**

ADULT MEMBERS

- Ayub Nduti - is about 80 years. He holds the rank of an Archbishop and also the leader of the African Holy Ghost Christian Church. He was interviewed at Gichagini, Muranga, on 26/2/92.
- Christopher Kariuki is 43 years and is the National Treasurer in the African Mission of Holy Ghost Church. He is a driver. He was interviewed at Kamakwa, Nyeri, on 9/12/91.
- Cyrus Nyuguto is about 45 years and is an elder in the African Holy Ghost Christian Church. He is a carpenter. He was interviewed at Kiawara, Nyeri, on 23/3/91, 13/10/91.
- Daudi Ikigu is about 76 years and joined the Akurinu as a boy in 1936. He began composing hymns in 1941 and published the first Akurinu hymnal (Nyimbo cia Roho Mutheru) in 1977. He was interviewed at the Holy Ghost church of East Africa Headquarters at Murengeti; Kiambu on 3/3/92 and 17/3/92.
- Daniel Gichere, is about 65 years and is an elder in the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa. He is a farmer. He was interviewed at Mikundi, Nyeri, on 17/12/91.
- Daniel Rukwaro is about 55 years and is a pastor in the God's Word and Holy Ghost Church. He became a member in 1971. He is a farmer. He was interviewed at Ndima-ini, Nyeri, on 10/12/91.
- Daniel Thuku is 38 years as is a son of Samuel Thuku, the founder of God's Word and Holy Ghost Church. He is the Minister (Hon. Secretary) of this church. He is also a primary school teacher. He was interviewed at Nakuru on 26/1/92 and 27/1/92.

Elijah Gaitho is about 50 years and is a pastor in the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa at Nyahururu. He is a prosperous businessman. He was interviewed at Shauri, Nyahururu, on 27/10/91.

Elijah Kinyanjui is about 88 years. He joined the Akurinu movement in 1929 and played a leading role as an evangelist (muhunjia) between 1935-1941 both in Gikuyuland and in Meru. He is the leader (Archbishop) of the Church he founded, 'Chosen Church of Holy Spirit'. He was interviewed at Nakuru on 16/1/92, 17/1/92, 18/1/92.

Ezekiel Karanja is about 53 years. He joined the Akurinu in 1956 and is currently a pastor in the African Holy Ghost Christian Church, at Nakuru. He visited Israel in 1980 to familiarise himself with the Jewish traditions. He was the Chairman of the Committee that raised funds to support the two trained Akurinu pastors during their stay at St. Paul's United Theological College between 1990-1993. He is a driver. He was interviewed at Nakuru on 21/5/91, 23/1/92 and at Birisha, Nyeri on 31/8/91.

Ezekiel Mugi is about 85 years and is an elder in the God's Word and Holy Ghost Church. He is a farmer. He was interviewed at Rusiru, Nakuru on 25/1/92.

Ezekiel Njai is about 75 years. He joined the Akurinu movement as a young boy in the 1930's. He is an elder in the God's Word and Holy Ghost Church and lives in the gaaru at Rusiru and assists the Archbishop. He is a farmer. He was interviewed at Rusiru, Nakuru, on 25/1/92, 26/1/92.

Gideon Matu is about 63 years. He is an ex-mukurinu of the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa. He left the Akurinu church due to disputes after he went to hospital for treatment. He was a prayer-leader (muhoi) before he

left. He is a farmer. He was interviewed at Nyahururu, Nyandarua on 1/1/92, 2/1/92.

Hannah Wambui is about 75 years and is one of the wives of Samuel Thuku, the founder of God's Word and Holy Ghost Church. She participated in the Giiitwa Exodus, 1949-1969. She was interviewed at Rusiru, Nakuru, on 25/1/92.

Harun Waibochi is 36 years. He is a junior elder in the African Holy Ghost Christian church and also the chairman of the Akurinu Youth Convention, Nyeri Branch. He is a water attendant at Kamwenja T.T.C. He was interviewed at Kamwenja, Nyeri, on 31/8/91, and at Birisha, Nyeri, on 15/9/91.

Jacob Ndiritu is about 77 years and is the leader (Archbishop) of the African Mission of the Holy Ghost Church. He donated the plot on which the church is built at Kamakwa. He is a farmer. He was interviewed at Kamakwa, Nyeri, on 15/9/91, 10/11/91.

James Thuo is 39 years and is the son of Henry Maina, one of the elders who went to Mount Kenya to receive the commandments to guide the Akurinu. He keeps the file containing the commandments which was handed to him through a solemn ritual by his father before he died. Though a Mukurinu, he does not associate himself with a particular church, and is against the Akurinu divisions. He is the first Mukurinu to take up an administrative job as an Assistant Chief. He was interviewed at Kangema, Muranga, on 13/2/92; 22/2/92.

Joel Githua is about 70 years and is a senior prayer leader in the God's Word and Holy Ghost Church. He played a significant role in the spread of the Akurinu movement in Nyeri. He is a farmer. He was interviewed at Naro Moru, Nyeri, on 17/12/91.

John Muhia is about 89 years, and became a mukurinu in 1930. He was the first to have a wedding among the Akurinu. He played a great role in the spread of the Akurinu faith as a Baptist. He took part in the Meru exodus, 1936-1940. He is a senior elder (Bishop) in the African Holy Ghost Christian Church although he believes the Akurinu are one church and he therefore presides over ceremonies in other Akurinu groups when invited. He was interviewed at Eldoret on 11/1/92, 12/1/92; Nakuru on 11/5/91, 15/1/92, 16/1/92, 17/1/92.

Jannah Gichuki is about 65 years and is an elder in the African Mission of Holy Ghost Church. He is a farmer. He was interviewed at Kamakwa, Nyeri, on 15/9/91.

Joseph Wahome is about 65 years and one of the earliest converts to the Akurinu movement in Nyeri in 1940. As a senior prayer-leader (Bishop) he has contributed greatly in the development of the Akurinu movement in Nyeri. He is a carpenter. He was interviewed at Nairobi on 5/3/91, 19/3/91.

Joshua Kariuki is 36 years and is a member of the Kenya Foundation of the Prophets Church. He was the chairman of the Akurinu Youth Convention. He was interviewed at Nakuru on 16/1/91.

Joshua Kingori is about 75 years and is a senior elder (Bishop) in the African Holy Ghost Christian Church, Nyeri Branch. He has given the Church a piece of Land on which the Endarasha Church is built. He is a farmer. He was interviewed at Endarasha, Nyeri, on 18/2/91.

Joshua Mathenge is 38 years and is the hymn-leader (Muinithia) in the Kamakwa African Mission of Holy Ghost Church. He was interviewed at Kamakwa on 10/3/91.

Julia Lucy Mwaura is 46 years. She is a member of the African Holy Ghost Christian Church. She composes and records Gospel music and owns a music shop in Nairobi. She was interviewed at Nairobi on 10/9/91.

Kezia Wangari is about 85 years and is the wife of Jassan Kanini one of the elders who went to Mount Kenya to receive the commandments from God in 1930. Today, she prays at home. She was interviewed at Kangema, Muranga, on 13/2/92.

Laban Kariuki is 71 years and is an elder in the God's Word and Holy Ghost Church. He is a farmer and was interviewed at Rusiru, Nakuru on 26/1/92.

Maritha Mwhaki is about 78 years and is the wife of Elijah Kinyanjui, the leader (Archbishop) of Chosen Church of Holy Spirit. She was appointed to become a midwife through the Holy Spirit in 1950, a role she prays to the present day. She joined the Akurinu at the same time with her husband in 1929. She was interviewed at Nakuru on 8/2/92.

Micah Njogu is 54 years and is a pastor in the African Mission of Holy Ghost Church, Nyeri Branch. He is a carpenter and was interviewed at Kamakwa Nyeri, on 9/12/91.

Michael Njangi is 41 years and is a junior prayer-leader in the African Holy Ghost Christian Church, Nyeri Branch. He was interviewed at Birisha, Nyeri, on 6/10/91.

Michael Wanjau is 47 years and is a junior-prayer leader in the African Holy Ghost Christian Church, Laikipia Branch. He is a Munabii (prophet) and also a Primary school teacher. He was interviewed at Muhotetu, Laikipia, on 31/12/91.

- Musa Matu is 35 years and is a member of the African Mission of Holy Ghost Church. He was interviewed at Nyahururu on 1/1/92.
- Paul Muriuki is about 71 years and is a senior prayer-leader in the Christian Holy Ghost Church of East Africa, Nyeri Branch. He is a farmer. He was interviewed at Ngorano, Nyeri, on 10/12/91.
- Peter Kigera is about 60 years. He used to go to Kangema from Nairobi to wash Jasan Kanini's worship garments. He is a farmer and was interviewed at Kangema, Muranga, on 14/2/92.
- Petro Nyaga is 57 years and is a senior prayer-leader (Bishop) in the African Mission of Holy Ghost Church Nyeri Branch. He is a mason. He was interviewed at Kamakwa, Nyeri, on 10/11/91, and at Kihuyo, Nyeri, on 12/12/91.
- Simon Peter Mugwe is 39 years and is a preacher in the Christian Worship Church of Kenya. He is a businsseman. He was interviewed at Eldoret on 12/1/91.
- Solomon Waigwa is 36 years. He is one of the first two trained pastors in the history of the Akurinu church and is a Youth leader in the African Holy Ghost Christian Church. He is a trained primary school teacher. He was interviewed at Nakuru on 11/5/91, Eldoret on 4/10/92; Nairobi on 15/10/93.
- Stephano Machango is about 71 years and is an elder in the God's Word and Holy Ghost Church. He participated in the Giiitwa exodus between 1949-1969. He is a farmer. He was interviewed at Rusiru, Nakuru, on 25/1/91, 26/1/91.
- Rufus Gichuki is 54 years and is a Pastor in the African Holy Ghost Christian Church, Nyeri Branch. He has made many converts in Nyeri as a preacher. He

is a farmer and also a driver. He was interviewed at Birisha, Nyeri, on 24/3/91, 6/10/91, 5/6/92.

Ruth Muthoni is about 57 years. She is a munabii (prophetess) in the African Mission of Holy Ghost Church and practices faith healing. She was interviewed at Kiawara, Nyeri, on 1/9/91, 2/9/91.

Samuel Gathimba is about 85 years and is the current High Priest in the God's Word and Holy Ghost Church. He spends his time in prayer in the gaaru at Rusiru Headquarters. He took part in the Giitwa exodus between 1949-1969. He was interviewed at Rusiru, Nakuru, on 26/1/91.

Samuel John Chege is about 64 years. He first joined the Christian Holy Ghost Church of East Africa in 1951. In 1968, he left and teamed with Daniel Nduti to form the African Holy Ghost Christian church in which he is a senior elder (Bishop). He is the chairman of the All Akurinu churches Assembly. He has played a significant role in the development of the Akurinu Church due to his education, having graduated from the Kenya Teachers College (Githunguri). He organised for the training of the first two Akurinu Pastors at St. Paul's United Theological College. He is a farmer. He was interviewed at Nakuru on 12/15/91; Nyahururu on 16/9/91, 17/9/91 and 18/9/91.

Samuel Wagura is 34 years. He is preacher in the Church of Prophets but was formerly in the African Mission of Holy Ghost Church. He is a farmer. He was interviewed at Othaya, Nyeri on 21/12/91.

Timothy Mwangi is 36 years and was a member of the God's Word and Holy Ghost Church before changing to the Kenya Foundation of Prophets Church. He holds a B.Sc. from the University of Nairobi and is a private surveyor.

He is the secretary of Free Area African Holy Ghost Christian Church at Nakuru. He was interviewed at Nakuru, on 18/1/91.

Timothy Thiuri is 53 years and is a pastor in the God's Word and Holy Ghost Church in Nyeri. He is a tailor. He was interviewed at Ruringu, Nyeri, on 10/12/91.

Wilson Nyaga is 64 years and is an elder in the God's Word and Holy Ghost Church. He participated in the disastrous journey led by Laban Nduhiu in 1952 and was one of the three men who attempted to cross River Tana on foot. He was interviewed at Rusiru, Nakuru, on 26/1/92.

Zablon Gichuki is about 82 years and is a senior elder, (Bishop). He joined the Akurinu movement in 1939. He is opposed to the divisions in the Akurinu church although he is using the registration of the God's Word and Holy Ghost Church. He is a farmer. He was interviewed at Shamata, Nyandarua, on 6/2/92.

THE YOUTH

Apollo Kangethe is 33 years and was born in an Akurinu family. He is a member of African Holy Ghost Christian Church and was interviewed at Nakuru on 18/1/92.

Charles Muthui is 22 years and became a Mukurinu when his parents joined the Akurinu church in 1981. He is a member of the God's Word and Holy Ghost Church. He was interviewed at Muhotetu, Laikipia, on 31/12/91.

Cleopas Kimani is 29 years. He was previously a member of the A.I.P.C.A. Church before he received a vision urging him to join the Akurinu Church in 1982. He is a member of the African Holy Ghost Christian Church. He was interviewed at Makutano, Nyeri on 5/12/92.

Daniel Maina is 20 years and is in secondary school. He is a member of Holy Ghost Mission and was interviewed at Nakuru on 16//2/92.

Daniel M. Ndegwa is 30 years and was born in an Akurinu family. He is an evangelist in the Christian Worship Church of Kenya. He was interviewed at Nakuru on 25/2/92.

Daniel Ndirangu is 14 years and was born in an Akurinu family. He is a member of the God's Word and Holy Ghost church and was interviewed at Nakuru on 25/2/92.

Dorcas Wambui is 18 years and was born in an Akurinu family. She is a member of the God's Word and Holy Ghost Church and was interviewed at Nakuru on 25/2/92.

Esther Wanjiku is 21 years and decided to join the Akurinu Church in 1976. She is a member of the African Holy Ghost Christian Church. She was interviewed at Nakuru on 18/1/92.

Ezekiel John Maina is 30 years. He was previously a member of the Roman Catholic Church before he received the Spirit and became a Mukurinu. He is a member of the African Holy Ghost Christian Church. He was interviewed at Makutano, Nyeri, on 5/12/92.

Hanah Wanjiku is 21 years and joined the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa in 1991. She was interviewed at Nakuru on 6/2/92.

Isaac Mwangi is 26 years and was born in an Akurinu family in the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa. He was interviewed at Nakuru on 22/2/92.

Isaac Mwangi Thige is 30 years and was born in an Akurinu family. The mother was chosen to become a circumciser of girls in 1950, by the Holy Spirit. He was a member of the African Holy Ghost Christian Church but has now joined the Christian Worship Church.

He was interviewed at Bahati, Nakuru on 16/1/92.

Isaac Njoroge is 28 years and was born in an Akurinu family. He is a member of the Kenya Foundation of Prophets Church. He was interviewed at Nakuru on 20/1/92.

Isaac Njoroge Nyaga is 21 years and was born in an Akurinu family. He is a member of the God's Word and Holy Ghost Church. He was interviewed at Nakuru on 21/2/92.

Isaac W. Muraya is 25 years and was born in an Akurinu family. He is a member of the African Holy Ghost Christian Church. He was interviewed at Nakuru on 27/1/92.

Isaac Wairegi is 28 years and was born in an Akurinu family. He is a member of the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa. He was interviewed at Nakuru on 19/1/92.

Jacob Gitonga is 23 years and was born in an Akurinu family. He was interviewed at Nakuru on 21/1/92.

James Nganga is 28 years. He joined the Akurinu church in 1987 and is a member of the Maranatha Mission. He was interviewed at Nakuru on 11/1/92.

James Maina is 25 years and was born in an Akurinu family. He is a member of the God's Word and Holy Ghost Church. He was interviewed at Nyeri on 10/12/91.

John Kabaiko is 25 years and was born in an Akurinu family. He was interviewed at Nakuru on 6/2/92.

John S. Mwangi is 18 years and joined the Akurinu church in 1986. He is a member of the Holy Ghost Mission. He was interviewed at Nakuru on 24/1/92.

Joseph Gathamba is 26 years and was born in an Akurinu family. He is a member of the African Holy Ghost Christian

Church. He was interviewed at Nakuru on 15/1/92.

Joseph Waigwa is 21 years and joined the God's Word and Holy Ghost Church in 1978. He was interviewed at Nyeri on 10/12/91.

Joshua K. Machango is 33 years and was born in an Akurinu family. He is the Nakuru Youth Branch Chairman and a member of the God's Word and Holy Ghost Church. He was interviewed at Nakuru on 12/1/92.

Joshua Wangenye is 28 years and became a Mukurinu in 1980. He is a member of Kenya Foundation of Prophets Church. He was interviewed at Kangema on 13/2/92.

Leah Gaitho, is 19 years and is a daughter of a pastor in the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa. She was interviewed at Nyahururu on 6/2/92.

Mary Mwihaki is 27 years and became a Mukurinu after receiving a vision in 1972. She is the secretary of Akurinu fellowship in Nakuru. She was interviewed at Nakuru on 24/1/92.

Miriam Wanjiru is 28 years and became a Mukurinu in 1985 through conversion. She is a member of African Holy Ghost Church. She was interviewed at Nakuru on 19/1/92.

Moses Maina is 22 years and was born in an Akurinu family. He left the Christian Holy Ghost Church of East Africa after joining the University of Nairobi in 1991. He was interviewed at Ngorano, Nyeri, on 11/12/91.

Naomi N. Nyaga is 26 years and was born in an Akurinu family. She is among the few university women graduates among the Akurinu and is a member of the God's Word and Holy Ghost Church. She was interviewed at Nakuru on 18/1/92.

Naomi W. Ndung'u is 18 years and was born in an Akurinu family. She is a member of Holy Ghost Mission. She was interviewed at Nakuru on 21/1/92.

Peter Theuri is 18 years and was born in an Akurinu family. He is a member of the God's Word and Holy Ghost Church. He was interviewed at Othaya, Nyeri on 10/12/91.

Philip Mwangi is 18 years and was born in an Akurinu family. He is a member of God's Word and Holy Ghost Church. He was interviewed at Nakuru on 17/1/92.

Rachel Wanjiru Kiarie is 21 years and was born in an Akurinu family. She is a trained primary school teacher and a member of Christian Holy Ghost Church of East Africa. She was interviewed at Nyeri on 28/3/91.

Rebecca M. Karanja is 22 years and was born in an Akurinu family. She is a member of the African Holy Ghost Christian Church. She was interviewed at Nakuru on 11/1/92.

Samuel Kinyanjui is 18 years and was born in an Akurinu family. He is a member of the African Holy Ghost Christian Church and was interviewed at Nakuru on 22/1/92.

Samuel Samson Karanja is 23 years and was born in an Akurinu family. He is a member of the African Holy Ghost Christian Church and was interviewed at Nakuru on 17/1/92.

Simon Mbugua is 27 years and got converted to the Akurinu church in 1984. He is a member of the Kenya Foundation of Prophets Church. He was interviewed at Nakuru on 18/1/92.

Tabitha Wanjiru is 21 years and joined the Akurinu church in 1988. She is a member of the Holy Ghost Mission Church. She was interviewed at Nakuru on 17/1/92.

Zablon Gichohi is 30 years and he joined the Akurinu church in 1982 after leaving the A.I.P.C.A. Church. He is a member of the African Holy Ghost Christian Church and was interviewed at Makutano, Nyeri on 5/12/92.

Zachary Mungai is 29 years and was born in an Akurinu family. He is a Youth leader in the Holy Ghost Mission Church and was interviewed at Nakuru on 27/1/92.

Zakayo Joseph Mbari is 34 years and was formerly a member of the Roman Catholic Church before he joined the Akurinu in 1985. He is a member of the African Holy Ghost Christian Church and was interviewed at Makutano, Nyeri on 5/12/92.

APPENDIX III

THE QUESTIONNAIRE

(a) FOR ADULT MEMBERS

PERSONAL INFORMATION

- (i) NAME
- (ii) DATE OF BIRTH
- (iii) MARITAL STATUS
- (iv) EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS
- (v) OCCUPATION(s)
- (vi) POSITION IN THE CHURCH
- (vii) DATE YOU BECAME A MUKURINU
- (viii) PREVIOUS CHURCH (OR) CHURCHES IF ANY

SECTION 'A'

BIBLICAL CONCEPTS

- (1) How does God reveal Himself to the people in the present times?
 - (i)
 - (ii)
- (2) What does God require of man?
 - (i)
- (3) What are the causes of people's suffering?
 - (i)
 - (ii)
- (4) Who is Jesus Christ?
 - (i)
- (5) What is the relationship between Jesus and mankind?
 - (i)

- (6) Do members of this church share the Holy Communion?
If No, give reasons.
(i)
(ii)
(iii)
- (7) Who is the Holy Spirit?
(i)
(ii)
- (8) How does the Holy Spirit help people to know God better?
(i)
(ii)
(iii)
- (9) What is the relationship between God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit?
(i)
- (10) How does a person experience the presence of the Holy Spirit?
(i)
- (11) How is a person saved?
(i)
- (12) What do you understand by the term "Kingdom of God?"
(i)
- (13) Can a person enter the Kingdom of God while in this world?
YES/NO
- (14) Give reasons
(i)
(ii)
(iii)
- (15) Who are eligible to enter the Kingdom of God?
(i)
(ii)
(iii)
- (16) Can material wealth hinder a person from getting eternal life?
(i)

- (17) Do you think the world will come to an end?
(Give reasons)
(i)
(ii)
(iii)
- (18) What happened to people after death?
(i)
(ii)
- (19) Is there any relationship between the dead and the living?
(i)
(ii)
- (20) Give examples of Books in the Bible which members use to justify their religious life style.
(i)
(ii)
(iii)
(iv)
- (21) Between the Old Testament and the New Testament, which one appeals more to the members of this church?
(i)

PART 'B'

THE CHURCH

- (22) How does a person become a member of the Akurinu Church?
(i)
(ii)
- (23) How are the church leaders chosen?
(i)
(ii)
- (24) What are the main rituals a member of this church has to undergo?
(i)
(ii)
(iii)
- (25) In what ways does the Holy Spirit help you in

your daily life?

- (i)
- (ii)
- (iii)
- (iv)

(26) Does your church allow its members to interact freely with non-members.

YES/NO

(27) If no, give reasons

- (i)
- (ii)
- (iii)

(28) Are there certain jobs the members of this church do not do?

YES/NO

(29) If YES, give examples and reasons for not doing those jobs.

JOB

REASONS

- (i)
- (ii)
- (iii)
- (vi)
- (v)

(30) Do the members go to hospitals for treatment?
YES/NO

(31) If No, give reasons

- (i)
- (ii)
- (iii)

(32) What is your opinion about the educated people?

(i)

(33) Are there foods which the members should not eat?

YES/NO

(34) If yes, give examples of those foods:

- (i)
- (ii)

- (iii)
 - (iv)
 - (v)
- (35) What are the reasons for not eating those foods?
- (i)
 - (ii)
 - (iii)
 - (iv)
- (36) Can one get eternal life while in this world or will it be in the world to come?
- (i)
- (37) What causes suffering and sickness?
- (i)
 - (ii)
- (38) Is it necessary for the youth to pursue their education after Kenya Certificate of Primary Education?
YES/NO
- (39) Give reasons for your answer
- (i)
 - (ii)
 - (iii)
 - (iv)
- (40) Can a member of this church marry a non-mukurinu? YES/NO
- (41) If NO give reasons.
- (i)
 - (ii)
 - (iii)
- (42) What do you think about earthly riches?
- (i)
 - (ii)
 - (iii)
- (43) If a child went to a boarding school, where there is no choice of foods what should he do?
- (i)
 - (ii)
 - (iii)
- (44) Are there any development projects this church

has established?
YES/NO

(45) If Yes give examples.

- (i)
- (ii)
- (iii)
- (iv)
- (v)

(46) Are there activities or ceremonies the members are not allowed to attend?
YES/NO

(47) If YES, give examples and reasons.

	Example	Reasons
(i)		
(ii)		
(iii)		

(48) Should people practice family planning?
YES/NO.

(49) If Yes, what methods should the Akurinu members use?

- (i)
- (ii)
- (iii)

(50) What preparations should one make for the coming end of the world?

- (i)
- (ii)
- (iii)
- (iv)

(51) When do you think the end of the world will come?

- (i)

(52) Should people use artificial methods to improve their farm produce?

(53) Do you think anyone has a right to question the religious practices of a church?

- (i)

(54) Should children of this church be excepted from some activities such as drama, and games while at school?

YES/NO

(b) QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE AKURINU YOUTH

Name

Age

Church (e.g. AHGCC)

Position in the Church (if any) e.g. Youth leader

1. When did you become a member of this church?
2. How did you become a member?
 - (i) By being born in an Akurinu family
 - (ii) By conversion through preaching
 - (iii) Through a vision or a dream
 - (iv) Through my personal decision.
3. Do the youth hold any responsibilities in the church?
If yes give examples
 - (i)
 - (ii)
 - (iii)
 - (iv)
4. What problems do the youth encounter as members in this church?
 - (i)
 - (ii)
 - (iii)
 - (iv)
5. Why are the young people few in this church?
 - (i)
 - (ii)
 - (iii)
 - (iv)
6. What changes would you recommend in order to attract more young people in the church?
 - (i)
 - (ii)
 - (iii)
 - (iv)

7. What church activities are performed by the youth?

(i)

(ii)

(iii)

(iv)

8. Do the elders in the church accept the ideas and suggestions of the youth?

(YES) (NO)

9. Are there problems the Akurinu youth encounter while in schools?

(YES) (NO)

If Yes give examples

(i)

(ii)

(iii)

(iv)

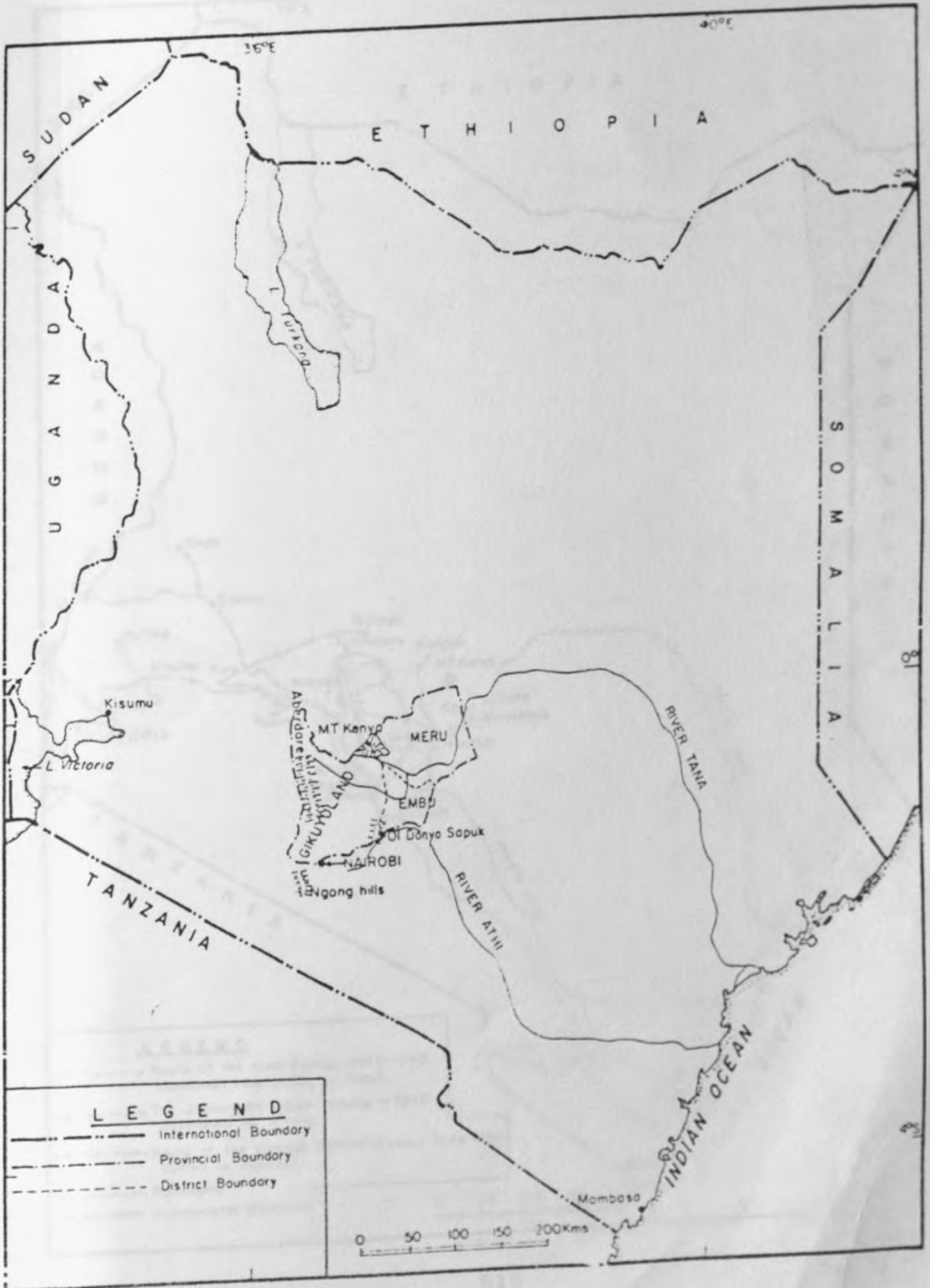
10. Do you think it is necessary to have trained pastors in this church?

(Yes) (No)

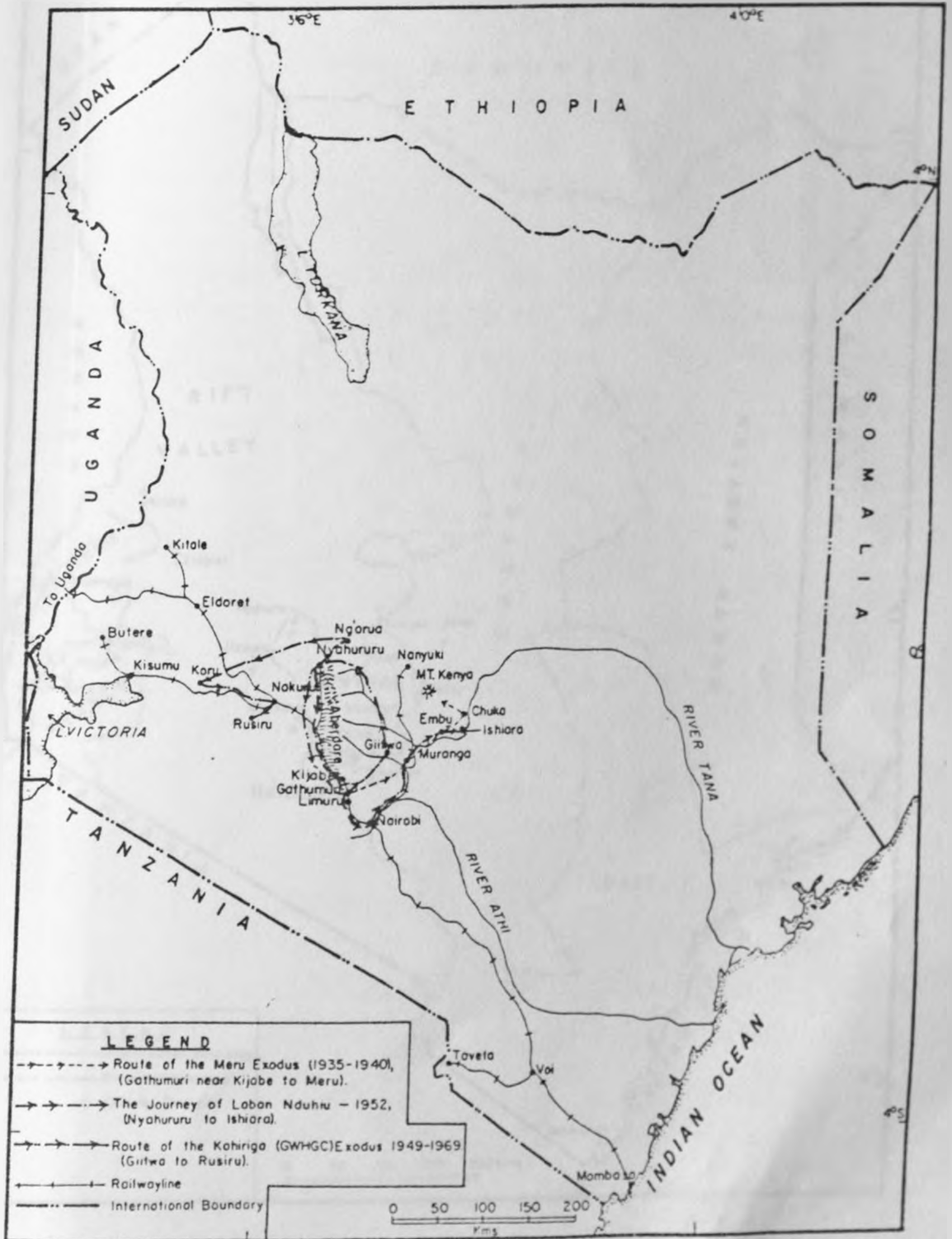
Give reasons for your answer

APPENDIX IV - MAPS

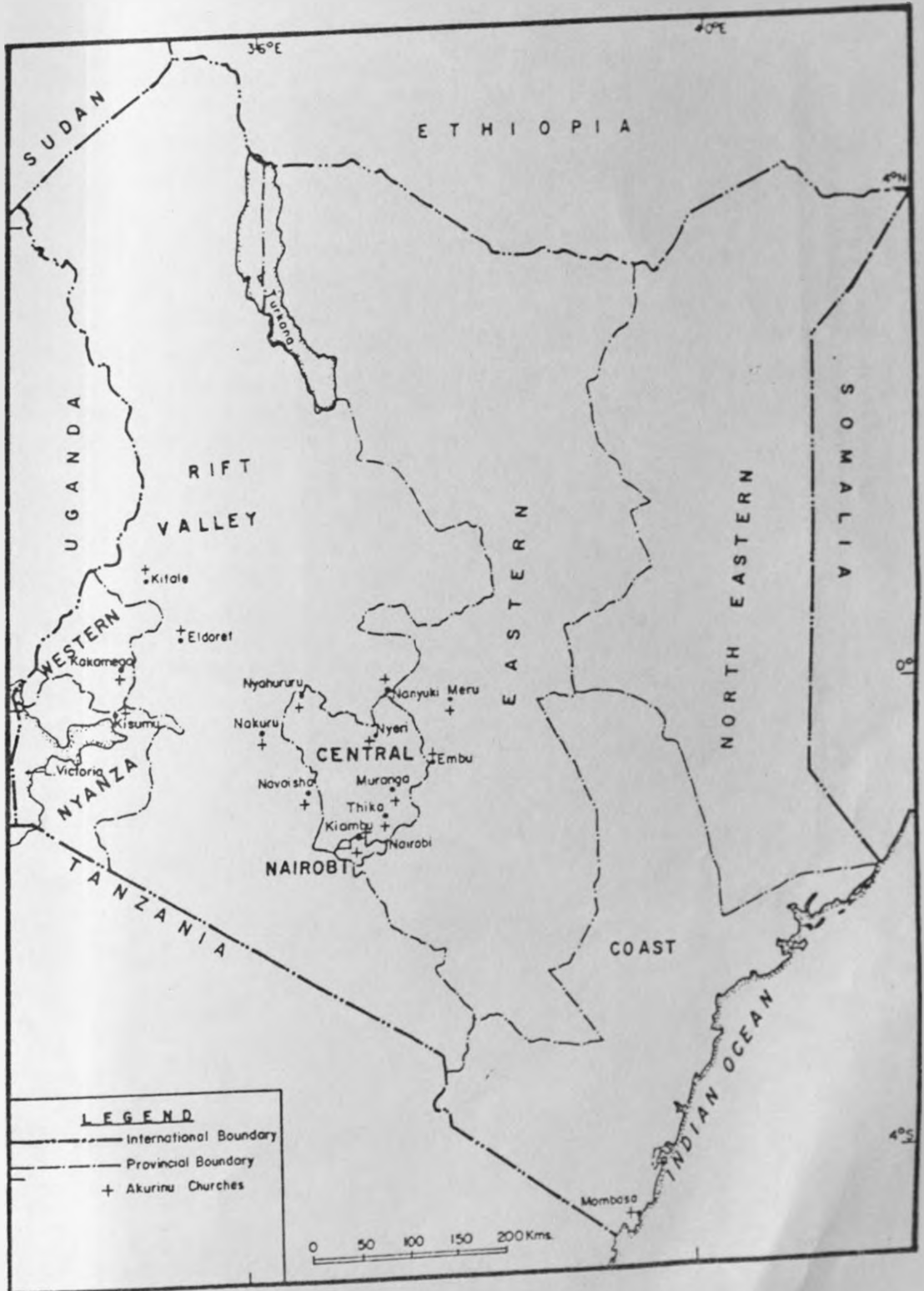
MAP 1: GIKUYULAND AND THE FOUR SACRED MOUNTAINS BEFORE THE COMING OF THE EUROPEANS.



MAP II: THE ROUTES OF THE THREE JOURNEYS MADE BY THE EARLY AKURINU.



MAP III: DISTRIBUTION OF AKURINU IN KENYA



APPENDIX V
PLATES



PLATE 1. TWO OF THE EARLY AKURINU
LEFT - ARCHBISHOP ELIJAH KINYANJUI
RIGHT - BISHOP JOHN MUHIA



PLATE II. ARCHBISHOP ELIJAH KINYANJUI IN HIS WORSHIP ROBES. (WITH HIM IS HIS WIFE MARITHA MWIHAKI).



PLATE III. THE RESEARCHER WITH MARITHA MWIHAKI (SHE WAS CHOSEN BY THE HOLY SPIRIT TO BE A MIDWIFE IN 1950). NOTE THE CHEST CLOTH (RITHU) WON BY MARRIED WOMEN.



PLATE IV. THE GOD'S WORD AND HOLY GHOST CHURCH (KAHIRIGA) CONGREGATION AT RUSIRU, NAKURU. THE HIGH PRIEST, SAMUEL GATHIMBA IS ON THE EXTREME LEFT (WITH A STICK) WHILE THE RESEARCHER IS FOURTH FROM THE LEFT. NOTE THE WHITE WORSHIP ROBES (WOMEN ARE MORE THAN THE MEN).



PLATE V. IN SOME CHURCHES MONEY IS NOT ALLOWED IN THE CHURCH. MEMBERS ARE SEEN COMING OUT OF THE RUSISU GWHGC AFTER SERVICE TO GIVE THEIR OFFERING IN THE CARTON OUTSIDE.



PLATE VI. STEPHANO MACHANGO IS SEEN WEARING WOODEN SANDALS AT RUSIRU. IN THE PAST AKURINU USED THEM AS A SIGN OF SELF DENIAL. (SEE ALSO THE ELDERS ON PLATE V).



PLATE VII. THESE ARE SOME OF THE GAARU AT
RUSIRU. THE HIGH PRIEST OF THE
GWHGC, RESIDES IN ONE OF THEM.



PLATE VIII. WHERE THERE ARE NO CHURCHES, THE MEMBERS WORSHIP IN THE OPEN OR UNDER TREES. NOTE THAT SHOES HAVE TO BE REMOVED DURING WORSHIP.



PLATE IX. YOUNG CHILDREN ARE TRAINED IN SINGING AND DRUMMING. PASTOR RUFUS GICHUKI OF THE AHGCC IS SEEN AT THE BACK.



PLATE X. THE MAIN COMPOSER OF THE AKURINU HYMNS, DAUDI IKIGU, IS SEEN AT WORK OUTSIDE THE HGCEA, MURENGETI LIMURU. NOTE THE MODERN STONE CHURCH BUILDING AND ALSO THE USE OF MODERN TECHNOLOGY IN THE RECORDING OF THE HYMNS.