

THE AKURINU CHURCHES: A STUDY OF JHE HISTORY AND
SOME OF THE BASIC BELIEFS OF THE HQLX-flHQST_CHURCH
OF EAST AFRICA 1926-1980.

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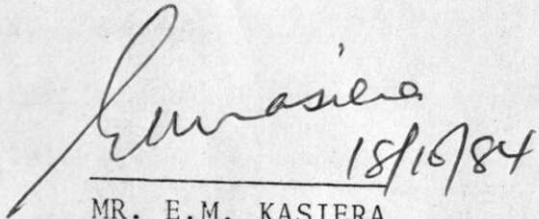
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2.	The Colonial setting.	
	(a) <u>Missionary occupation of East</u>	
	Africa	40-47
	(b) <u>The Colonial society; colonisation</u>	
	of Kikuyuland	47-53
	Footnotes	54-56

Chapter Three: THE RISE AND SPREAD OF THE AKURINU
 MOVEMENT 1926-1980 AND THE
 ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE CHURCHES.

1.	<u>Introduction</u>	57-58
2.	The Founder: Joseph Ng'ang'a and his conversion to Christianity 1926-1934	58-66
3.	The Akurinu Movement between 1937-1952-	66-69
4.	"Religion of Jesus Christ" or The <u>"Jesu Christo" Movement</u>	70-73 /
5.	The growth and spread of the <u>Akurinu</u> during the Emergency, 1952-1960	73-78
"6.	Factors in the development of <u>Akurinu</u> Churches 1926-1980	78-88 w-/
/7.	The Organisational Structure of the <u>Holy Ghost Church of East Africa</u>	88-90
8.	<u>Pattern of Church Service</u>	90-91 •
	Footnotes	98-10b

Section Three:Chapter Four: SOME MAJOR BELIEFS AND PRACTICES
OF THE HOLY GHOST CHURCH OF EAST
AFRICA.

1. Sources of their beliefs: A brief outline--	107-112
2. (a) The Holy Spirit	112-114
(b) The nature and role of the Holy Spirit in the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa	/
(c) The role of the Holy Spirit in Salvation	114-119
(d) The Holy Spirit as Spirit of God	119-124
(e) The Holy Spirit as giver of God's power	124-127
. Footnotes	127-128
	129-131

Chapter Five: PROPHECY: A GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT
AND ITS FEATURES, DREAMS AND VISIONS.

1. The Prophetic Phenomenon	132-136
2. Prophecy in the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa	136-142
3. The contents of prophecy in the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa	
(a) Choosing of Church Leaders	142-143
(b) Marriage :	143-144
(c) Baptism	144-145

4. Dreams and visions: Channels for	
prophetic insights	145-155
<hr/>	
Footnotes	156-159
<u>Chapter Six:</u> BAPTISM IN THE HOLY GHOST CHURCH OF	
EAST AFRICA.	
<hr/>	
1. The Baptismal Rite	160-161
(a) The context in which baptism occurs	161-164
(b) The mode of baptism	164-171
(c) The meaning and function of baptism	171-178
(d) Baptismal Names	178-180
(e) The effects of Baptism	180-182
(f) Infant Baptism	183-184
Footnotes	185-187
<u>Chapter Seven:</u> THE CONCEPT OF RITUAL UNCLEANNES OR	
THAIU:	188-189
<hr/>	
1. Definition	189-190
2. Nature of Thahu: The Kikuyu	190-207
Footnotes	208-212
<u>Chapter Eight:</u> CONCLUSION	
Assessment of Holy Ghost Church of East Africa's	
Impact on Society	213
1. Political Involvement, Economic Participation	
and Social Integration	213-218
2. Evaluation of the Holy Ghost Church of East	
Africa's Religious Dynamism	219-231

	<u>Page</u>
Footnotes	232-233

Appendix:

A. Miscellaneous	234-267
B. Sources	267-291
C. Photographs	292-299

Maps:

- (i) Distribution of Akurinu Churches in Kenya
- (ii) Distribution of Akurinu Churches in
Kiambu District.

ABBREVIATIONS

A.I.M.	Africa Inland Mission.
C.M.S.	Church Missionary Society.
C.S.M.	Church of Scotland Mission.
G.M.S.	Gospel Missionary Society.
H.G.C.E.A.	Holy Ghost Church of East Africa.
A.I.P.C.A.	African Independent Pentecostal Church of Africa.
A.O.C.	African Orthodox Church.
D.C.	District Commissioner.
P.C.	Provincial Commissioner.

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ABSTRACT

This study is an investigation of the history, beliefs and practices of Holy Ghost Church of East Africa; a spirit type church that belongs to the movement popularly known among the Kikuyu of Central Kenya as, Akurinu. The period chosen is 1926-1980. Among other factors, this study was instigated by the observation that African Christianity and particularly Kenyan Christianity, is characterised by a multiplicity of denominations. These new denominations or sects are today referred to as African Independent Churches.

In the last few decades there have been surveys of some areas or of groups of such Churches as indicated in the Literatures-Review. These studies have provided outlines of the history, beliefs and practices of some of these Independent Church movements. Some of the studies have also addressed themselves to the question of the causes which have led to the emergence of these churches. However, little attention has been paid to the theological factor as a cause of Church Independency. This study therefore, attempts to highlight among other factors, the theological factor in the emergence of the Akurinu movement.

From the study of all the available information from the field and from both primary and secondary sources on

the Akurinu Movement and particularly the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa, three important facts have been established.

v

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Firstly, that the Akurinu Churches have been in existence since 1926 and the causes of their emergence are many and varied. Secondly, that their beliefs and practices were developed from both the Bible and the Kikuyu religious heritage and they have undergone changes since 1926. Thirdly, that disagreement on theological issues is an important causative factor of African Church Independency.

In order to establish the above facts, the study begins in Chapter, One with an examination of the existing views on the rise of Independent Churches. Most of the material in this chapter is collected from written sources. Chapter Two outlines the Kikuyu traditional background, its religion, social organisation and the effects colonialism and western culture had on this society. This chapter concludes that the Akurinu Churches are to a certain extent products of the conflicts and tensions created by the economic, political, social, religious and cultural pressures of the period 1830-1930.

Chapter Three discusses the origin, history and development of the Akurinu Churches and their organisational structure, and also gives a brief history of the chief founder of the Church between 1926-1934.

Chapters Four, Five, Six and Seven discuss the major distinctive beliefs of the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa, namely, the Holy Spirit, the concept of prophecy, spirit baptism and the concept of ritual uncleanness or Thahu. These beliefs are significant because the Akurinu churches differ from other churches in the way they hold and understand these particular beliefs. It was also on account of their understanding and experience of the Holy Spirit that some of the founder members were expelled from the African Inland Church, Kijabe in 1927.

i <

Chapter Eight is the conclusion and sums up the main findings of the study. This study is not exhaustive and it is pointed out that there is still much that requires *i* to be researched especially on the other beliefs and practices of the Akurinu churches, such as marriage, ordination, funeral rites, and community life. Their theology can also be studied from an analysis of the beliefs and practices as well as their hymn book, Nyimbo cia Roho Mutheru.

SECTION I

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1. PROBLEM STATEMENT AND RATIONALE:

The phenomenon of independency has of late received great attention from scholars of religion and social sciences. Psychological, sociological, political and economic bases of this phenomenon have, however, received considerable attention at the expense of the theological basis which has accidentally or intentionally been ignored. It is, therefore, important that since independent churchesⁱ profess to be christian, their theology also receives special attention. These independent churches may have an important contribution to make in the quest, by christians of all denominations for a theology uniquely African. Perhaps the attempt at present to indiginize Christianity or to integrate African value systems and morality into Christianity could be enhanced by an understanding of these independent churches.

These independent churches continue to emerge and their causes have been perplexing to scholars of religion. In Kenya, Christianity is particularly characterised by diversity, division and denominationalism and this increase in schism is looked upon by some scholars as "sinful" and bordering on "national disunity".[^] John Mbiti, commenting on the religious situation in Kenya, laments that;

Christianity in Kenya has... now turned into a messy soup. This excessive

denominationalism is absolutely scandalous. It could well generate confusion and strife among christians..."²

Reasons given to explain the tendency to schism are many and complex. It is generally agreed among scholars of religion that independency is a result of the Africans' reaction against the cultural-political, imperialism implicit in the' imposition of Christianity upon them. David Barrett addresses himself to this question in his \

3

book Schism and Renewal in Africa. In it he attempts to assess the phenomenon of independency in Africa. His explanation is that independent churches in Africa are partly schism and partly renewal. He gives several factors as causes, like, social, political, cultural, missionary mistreatment of the Africans and missionary distortion of christinaity.[^]

Generally as noted above, most scholars attribute the phenomenon of Independency to the African reaction to British and other imperialism. This is the approach taken by such scholars as Vlttorio Larternari. He views independent church movements as a manifestation of political, social and economic discontent and frustration.⁵ Bengt Sundkler takes a similar approach when he sees the independent movements in South Africa as the "logical reply to the white policy of segregation and separation. F.B. Welbourne sees these movements in Kenya as a quest for psychological and spiritual satisfaction. He argues that independency should be understood as an institutional expression of a

severe criticism of the christian society as a whole. He
»
further adds that the independent churches are an attempt
by Africans to form a

> , church tribe, some place where among
the debris of the old tribal life,
still unassimilated to the west,
Africans can feel at home."7

* 1

A similar observation is made by Ayandele who attributes
African independency to the misrepresentation of Christianity
to the Africans by Europeans. He argues that Christianity
was presented in a completely foreign manner and hence became
spiritually unsatisfactory. The African could not see its
relevance to his life and the result was an ambivalent
spiritual life. In times of crisis the believer would
revert to his traditional practices. The need of a spiritual
revolution became therefore urgent. Therefore, these movements

Sought to establish the Christianity of
the Bible as they saw it, devoid of its
European accretions and in harmony with
Africa's cultural heritage. (these)...
movements have provided the much longed
for spiritual home for African christians.

j As already pointed out, most scholars agree on the
sociological, political and economic factors as causes of
independency; however only a minority regard religious
and theological factors as behind the emergence of these
churches. Little notice has been given to the theological
foundation on which these churches are built, yet their
theology is of great interest and significance. This study
has
come to the conclusion that, independent church

movements are primarily religious movements striving for cultural integrity and spiritual autonomy and in most cases emerge as a reaction to what they consider distorted missionary Christianity.

It is primarily along the lines of theological factors that we seek, in this study, to discuss the formation of the Akurinu group as an independent church. Secondly as will, be seen in the course of this study, the Akurinu explain the emergence of their church theologically. They claim that their church emerged as a result of divine intervention. One informant, Elijah Kinyanjui, states that,

during a state of "spiritual dryness and emotional and psychological distress.⁹ God raised up prophets from among the Kikuyu people, after he had given some the gifts of prophecy, dreams, seeing visions and speaking with tongues.¹⁰

The Akurinu found fault with missionary Christianity. They particularly felt that the role of the Holy Spirit and his manifestations in dreams, visions, prophecy and spirit baptism was ignored, and so too, the observation of the levitical laws of the Old Testament. The Akurinu sincerely believe in observing scripture to the letter and it is because of this belief that the original founders of the movement left whatever denominations they followed. The belief in the Holy Spirit, as will be seen in Chapter Four, is at the heart of the beliefs and practices of the Akurinu churches.

Due to the above points we can conclude that theological factors were behind the emergence of this group. However we will not underplay the role of political, economic, social and cultural factors, taking into account also that the whole movement sprang in the turbulent years of the late 1920s and early 1930s. This disturbed period saw the emergence among the Kikuyu, of African Independent Pentecosted Church of Africa (ALP.C.A.) and African Orthodox Church (A.O.C.). The Akurinu however, adopted a totally different form in their beliefs and practices, from these other two independent churches."^

2. OBJECTIVES:

Against this background, we proceed to examine the causes that led to the emergence of this group. This involves us in a historical sketch of the formation of the Akurinu churches, as well as a brief sketch of their organisational structure. Secondly, in our study, we intend to discuss briefly the Kikuyu society, its people, religion and social organisation for we believe that it is necessary to view the Akurinu in their social, political and cultural setting and as products of a certain period of history, and in the light of their traditional African setting. This is because a look at Akurinu beliefs and practices reveals some Kikuyu religious influences.

Thirdly bearing in mind that the Akurinu believe firmly in the third person of the trinity and apparently

elevate him above, God the Father and Jesus, it is our fourth, fifth and sixth objectives to discuss the Akurinu belief in the Holy Spirit, the mode of divine revelation in dreams, visions and prophecy, and the concept of spirit baptism. This is with the view of comparing these beliefs with the biblical teaching on them.

Their observance of the levitical laws will be studied in Chapter Seven giving more weight to the concept of ritual uncleanness or Thahu. A study of this practice is significant because the fact that the Akurinu attribute their emergence to divine revelation makes them set themselves apart. The rules on ritual uncleanness are observed very strictly. This has made the Akurinu people appear withdrawn and many people think that they do not like to mix with non-Akurinu. This has earned them pejorative attitudes from non-members, who on this account consider them as pharisaical.¹² They on their part are suspicious of non-Akurinu whom they regard

13

as nominal christians. ' However, living with them has revealed to the author that the Akurinu are no different from other christians and neither do they wish to be so isolated.

These laws of ritual uncleanness reveal some Judaic and Kikuyu religious influences. The study seeks to establish to what extent this practice and the beliefs are influenced by Judeo-christian and Kikuyu religions.

In conclusion, the study attempts to explain the

emergence of the Akurinu churches. It also attempts to show that, though some Akurinu beliefs and practices may to the outsider appear syncretistic (that is an amalgamation of Kikuyu and Judeo christian beliefs and practices), they are essentially christian or biblical. Since the Akurinu movement has experienced schisms over theological issues since its inception, the study concludes that a more comprehensive and ^hollistic approach to studying and teaching scripture is necessary if schism is to be avoided. Though leadership disputes are more prominent currently in the Akurinu and other independent churches in Kenya, theological disputes are not lacking particularly when a leader is expelled from a church o^ account of his moral conduct or "misinterpretation" of scripture to suit his sect.

In this study the term Akurinu (singularly Mukurinu), will refer to the group of independent churches that sprang between 1926 and 1930 at Limuru in Kiambu district of Central Kenya, under the leadership of Joseph Ng'ang'a. They were called by a variety of names that were and are at times confusing. Some of them are, "watu wa mungu", (People of God), Arathi (prophets or seers), Aroti (dreamers) and "Arata a Roho" (Friends of the Spirit). The names and titles applied to these groups, will be discussed at the end of this chapter in greater detail. To-datethere are over twenty registered Akurinu churches. However for the purposes of this study we shall concentrate on one

church namely the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW:

The phenomenon of Independency is not new, it has been there since the beginning of Christianity. In reviewing "enthusiasm" from the first century to the eighteenth century, Knox says of Schism:

the pattern is always repeating itself,
not only is outline but in detail....
almost always schism begets schism....
It is a fogal melody that runs through
the centuries.¹⁴

Since scholars of religion, theology, sociology, anthropology history and political science have addressed themselves to this phenomenon, there is therefore a wealth of literature on it, some of which we shall review in our efforts to establish a theory of independency in which the Akurinu fit. Two types of literature will be reviewed, namely: (i) those that deal with independency in Africa generally, and (ii) those that deal with the Akurinu in particular.

Speaking on the phenomenon of independency, in Africa David Barrett says that by 1968 there were more than 6,000 independent churches. The churches had a total membership of approximately seven million to be found in more than two hundred and seventy five African ethnic groups. /

G.C. Oosthuizen says that these schisms are taking place on a scale unparalleled in the history of Christianity.^{i A}

M L Daneel suggests that the whole movement of Independent churches grows at a rate of approximately three to four

17

thousand members per year,' At this rate of development it seems, the combined Protestant and Catholic membership in Africa might be surpassed in the future,

Since the phenomenon is not new and continues to develop it should be treated with respect and not suppressed .; as was the practice of government in the colonial period, particularly in Kenya,¹⁸ Kenya, like all other nations that experience independency, has had its share of independent; movements. Barrett says that by 1966 there were over one hundred and sixty independent churches,*⁹ By now the number has exceeded the 1966 figure- Ip May, 1979 even the government of Kenya refused to register any new breakaway churches.
20

As already mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the question of independency has been perplexing to scholars and various explanations of the tendency to schism have been propounded. As mentioned, most scholars have tended to emphasize the social-political factors as the fundamental causes. Thus Sundkler, Lanternarri and Welbourn suggest that social disruption caused by the apartheid policy in Southern Africa,²¹ and the clash of traditional cultures in colonized regions and Africa, created tensions that manifested themselves in religious forms, '

Another scholar, Katesa Schlosser, argues that the

appearance of prophets is due mainly to economic and political reasons and veix^ejJhm exclusively to religious

22 reasons. However, Adrian Hastings says that independency is a revolt against imperialism whether the basic causes

23

are religious, political or social. He mentions the Akurinu or "Watu wa Mungu" as products of this and describes their movement as one "of withdrawal, rejection of western dress, medicine and education..."²⁴

J.V. Taylor on the other hand, views the existence of these churches as a result of the spiritual life in the established churches and adds; "it is good we should see in these sects the expression of a demand for the church

25

to be more African." He is in agreement with F.B. Welbourn who views these churches as "places where Africans can "feel at home" spiritually".^{7A}

Reasons given to explain the rise of independency are therefore varied. One should not however, point at one single cause as the reason for the rise of any movement because no cause is satisfactory in itself. Economic, political and social causes seem to dominate the views of most scholars. While it is not undeniable that each of these factors ;nay be present at the rise of any movement one should not overlook the existence of other factors which together with the above combine to create a situation where schism is the only way out. This conclusion is fairly applicable to the Akurinu movement whose causes

were very complex.

G.C. Oosthuizen and H.W. Turner have written theological assessments of independency particularly in West Africa. In Oosthuizen¹'s book a realistic treatment of lack of missionary empathy towards Africa is followed by a summary
27
description of independent churches in Africa. H.W. Turner in a two volume analysis of the Aladura churches in West Africa discusses the beliefs and practices of these churches in detail. He sees them as churches with something of value to offer to Christianity and therefore agrees with Barrett that independent churches are movements of renewal.²⁸

In other parts of Africa, there are books on this
29
topic published by such authors as M.L. Daneel, M.L. Martin/⁰ B.G.M. Sundkler³¹ and T.O. Ranger.³²

There is a great deal of literature available at present on independent churches in Kenya. In almost every history book dealing with Kenya, especially during the colon.a. period, mention is made of one or more independent churches. It would be impossible to review all the available literature, therefore only a few that concern us will be mentioned.

F.B. Welbourn and B.A. Ogot have dealt in detail with the origin, ministry and present structure and theology of the Church of Christ in Africa and the African Israel Church

Nineveh ³³ F.B. Welbourn again deals with the Kikuyu independent churches, the Africa Independent pentecostal church, and the female circumcision controversy among the Kikuyu of 1929 to 1932. Bildad Kaggia in Roots of Freedom, gives his relations with the Church Missionary Society and the start of the "Dini ya Kaggia". Audrey Wipper examines the political, psychological and sociological causes of the Dini ya Ivfeambwa and the cult of Mumbo. Other unpublished information exist on Independent Churches in Kenya as theses or articles in journals. At this point we shall review the literature that deal with the Akurinu directly.

The literature pertaining to the Akurinu churches is astonishingly scarce. When in 1938 J. Kenyatta published Facing Mount Kenya, an anthropological study of the Kikuyu he drew attention to the appearance of new religious sects among them. He mentioned briefly the independent and

Karing'a schools ^c which combine religious and educational activities", but wrote in greater detail about the movement known as "watu wa mungu", "Arathi" and "Aroti". He drew attention to the fact that the nature and activities of this movement needs to be investigated. Upto now negligible work has been done on the "watu wa Mungu" by scholars.

Perhaps, the earliest references to the "Watu wa Mungu" apart from Kenyatta's work, are in administrative records that appear in archival material of the Kenya National

Archives. These administrative records date from 1929 to independence (1963) and throw light on when exactly the movement drew attention of the colonial administration and the ordinary people. They also show the relationship that existed between "Watu wa Mungu" and the colonial administration. They however depict the followers of this group as subversive elements and say nothing about their beliefs and practices.

Kenyatta devotes a whole chapter in his book to this group which he entitles "The new religion". He gives a brief account of the rise of the "Watu wa Mungu", their beliefs and practices. He describes them as a protest group, that amalgamated both Kikuyu and Christian beliefs, and incorporated in their religion most of the "ritualistic points" which the missionaries condemned, and rejected all that the missionaries upheld and advocated. His assertion that the "Watu wa Mungu" were received with hostility and were "looked upon as simply a bunch of lunatics..." by government and ordinary people, echoes what is in the administrative records.^{4^} However, the present "Watu wa Mungu" deny that they were ever syncretistic in their religion or political in their outlook.

In 19[^]9 Negley Farson published a book, The Last Chance in Africa, a joiihalistic report on Kenya in 1947 and 1948. In it he devotes a whole chapter to the "Watu wa Mungu". Here he discusses the "Watu wa Mungu" and the "Dini

ya Jesu Kristo", ⁴¹(religion of Jesus Christ), and includes a copy of a document by H. Lambert, the Kiambu District Commissioner in 1942^on various sects in Kiambu. Unfortunately, Farson's account, which covers the Gatundu Murders of December 1947 by some members of the "Dini ya Jesu Kristo" has served to perpetuate the belief that the spirit churches are violent.

F.B. Welbourn in his book, East African Rebels points out, in passing, that the "Watu wa Mungu" were accused of

42

"immorality and disregard for tribal authority". He says nothing about their origin, beliefs and practices except that they emerged in 1930. Rosberg and iNothingham have mentioned them too, but in connection with the Gatundu murders of December 1947.^

The only writer who seems to have written anything of considerable length is Jocelyn Murray. Her article

44

'Kikuyu Spirit Churches", helps us in reconstructing the history of the movement from the 1920s to 1974. In addition to giving us some historical background to the movement, the article also enlightens us on the causative factors of the "Watu wa Mungu". The article also sheds some light on the characteristics of the Akurinu churches in the early stages of the movement which helps us understand their characteristics today. She identifies sociological, theological and economic factors as causes for its emergence. She also briefly discusses the theological

factors. This latter factor, is not well developed, for she only ends up discussing the idea of prophecy and the concept of ritual uncleanness as they are understood by the Akurinu today but not as causative factors for the emergence of the church. Her stress too on the adverse material conditions of the original Akurinu. as basic to the form the movement took is unsatisfactory. The author maintains that theological factors were a major determinant of the emergence of the movement. In another article in the Kenya Churches Handbook, Murray provides some historical background to the movement and its beliefs and practices.⁴ ⁵ This is however very brief for the beliefs and practices are only mentioned, with hardly any discussion.

Elijah Kinyanjui, a prophet and founder of the Akurinu church named, Chosen Church of the Holy Spirit has written an article in the Kenya Churches Handbook, entitled, "The ' rise and persecution of the Aroti Prophets, 1927-1948",⁴⁶ In it he also briefly discusses the origin of the 'Aroti", and their persecution at the hands of the colonial administrators. This is also very sketchy because it is only an outline history in the period 1927-1948.

i '

It appears from the literature review, that the Akurinu movement has escaped proper attention. The movement is only discussed incidentally and only the negative feature of the movement have been focused on, thereby denying it of any positive significance, This *is*

true of all independent movements in Kenya, particularly during the colonial period. Missionaries were hostile to these churches. What was written about them was from the point of view of westerners. Journalists have tended to depict them as mysterious movements with weird beliefs and practices, the type which provides material for a sensational story. These attitudes have now subsided and the independent churches are today seen as positive and healthy developments of Christianity.

4. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY:

This study was instigated by the fact that although the Akurinu have been in existence since 1926 and it is a significant church among the Kikuyu, very little is known about it. It is therefore important that its history be recorded. This church has undergone several changes and experienced splits since its emergence. and it is our feeling that if no study is made, the original history and development of this church will be obscured with time.

Another significant factor is that the Akurinu arose among the Kikuyu of Central Kenya. This area is noted for its high concentration of churches both western and independent. The Akurinu number over 20,000 members, a number large enough to warrant a study, particularly on the attractions of the movement.

Finally the study is significant because of the fact

of indigenisation. The Akurinu churches provided a type of Christianity that was relevant to them. They adapted it to their indigenous situation and hence created a community where they could feel psychologically and spiritually at home. The former missionary churches have been trying to indigenize their churches in terms of hymns, liturgy and every aspect of worship, It is the view of this study that the Akurinu churches have something to offer to Christendom in its efforts at indigenisation in Africa,

⁵- METHODOLOGY:

For this study, both literary and field research were used, As already noted in the section on literature review above, archival materials especially in Kenya National Archives were consulted. Two months were spent going through records. Another month was spent going through files of all registered Akurinu churches at the offices of Registrar of Societies, The membership figures since 1956 were obtained, However, again as already noted, written literature on the Akurinu churches is very little, Egr this reason, the author had to depend more on field research.

Area of Focus:

The area of focus for this study, was Limuru and Kikuyu divisions of Kiambu District', other districts were also visited in order to get an overview picture of the

Akurinu churches. These districts were, Nakuru, .\yandarua and Murang'a. The study restricted itself to one churchj namely, the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa". This church has its headquarters at Murengeti Village in Limuru and a large following in Githiga, Gatundu, Ndeiya, Muguga, and other parts of central Province. The group was chosen because it has the largest membership compared to other Akurinu churches. It also claims to be the oldest of all existing Akurinu churches. It has also been consistent in terms of leadership. The Akurinu movement has experienced schisms in its history, hence the rather large number of sects (see Chapter 3). However this group has experienced very little schisms- this is probably due to its strict discipline.

The choice of Kiambu District as the area of field work was favoured because of its accessiblity in view of the limited time and funds available.

(b) Participant Observation:

During the period of field work, the author was able to participate in worship services held weekly by the Akurinu in all the areas visited and particularly in Kikuyu and Limuru divisions. The author managed to attend about twenty services, ten in both Limuru and Kikuyu and the rest in Nakuru, Silibwet, Leshau Pondo, Kamukabi, Kandara and Nairobi. In the services, members, particularly the church leadrs, made verbal expressions of their beliefs

in the sermons, prayers and testimonies. This enabled the author to come to some conclusion about the Akurinu beliefs. The author was able to attend the following different types of services and ceremonies; baptism, marriage, ordination of preachers, prayer leaders, baptizers and church elders; receiving a mother back to the congregation after her seclusion following delivery, (purification ceremony); funeral, and opening and blessing of a church building.

(c) Interviews:

Another method used was interviews. Members discussed freely (but after a lot of persuasion), any matter pertaining to their church, including their faith and rituals. The interviews were organised for the author by the Secretary-General and the prayer leaders (Ahoi) with the permission of the Chief leader (Mutongoria). Contacts with other sects was organised by members within the Holy Ghost church of East Africa. Some of the interviews were single while others were group interviews. Group interviews did not prove to be helpful because, generally the talking would be left to a few of the less reserved. Therefore, the author relied on those who were willing to discuss at length.

For the early History, the author relied on those above fifty years old who were also old in the church. The

younger members were more elaborate on the beliefs. These could be relied on to offer a balanced understanding and interpretation of the churches' faith as understood by the members of the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa. Altogether, the author managed to interview fifty members and all these interviews are recorded on tape. These informants are from all the areas the author visited. A list of these informants, their biographical data and dates of interviews is available in the appendix. Photographs of leaders, church buildings, Sunday Services and a funeral ceremony were taken and are included in the appendix.

(d) Research Problems Experienced:

It has already been noted that the Akurinu are a reserved group. This reservedness leads to certain problems to an enquirer who may wish to reconstruct their history and theology. However despite this apparent shortcoming the Akurinu proved to be very friendly and undoubtedly, the author's experience with the Akurinu adherents was the most interesting and exciting part of the research. The author lived with some of them in their houses and enjoyed their hospitality, kindness and generosity.

Apart from this initial reservedness, which was finally overcome after the author had managed to see the Mutongoria (who was never available until three months after the research had commenced), another problem encountered was in collecting data in the services. It was

impossible to take down notes during a service, therefore, one had to try and commit everything to memory. This was because the author could embarrass some members who did not feel that it was proper to write down notes inside the church. However, with the understanding of the Secretary-General, the Chief Baptiser (Mubatithania) and the Muntongoria, the author was allowed to use the tape recorder. The author would sit among the congregation and record sermons, hymns, prayers and any other relevant parts of the service.

Another problem encountered was related to the reservedness of the group. This was evident in the interviews. Though the informants were friendly, co-operative and ready to give information, some were only ready to do so on condition that the author agreed to join their church. Their argument was that "the word of God is foolishness to unbelievers".⁴⁷ The author could not therefore understand their beliefs and practices without the gift of the Holy Spirit. Their silence was therefore justified and it was an eloquent indication that matters of faith are only to be discussed in the context of faith and not for academic purposes. Others showed open hostility. This was displayed by the leader of the Nakuru Church, Elijah Kinyanjui. Elijah argued that it was absurd to seek information about their church and faith for academic purposes. He felt that researchers like journalists have suspicious intentions, and some of them were out to undermine the growth and development of independent churches. ^{A8} The fact that he

himself, being an early member of the movement, experienced harassment, at the hands of administrative authorities between 1934 and 1956, may have contributed to his bitterness. All the same he was the most resourceful of all our informants, particularly on the history of the movement.

Another obstacle encountered is the fact that the author is a woman. This church strongly holds the Pauline and Old Testament view of women. To them, a woman has been denied the ability to grasp some mysteries of the christian faith. Therefore, the author's desire to know, for instance, what happens every time the leaders seclude themselves for seven to fourteen days before every important ceremony, was denied her. Neither was she allowed to enter certain parts of the church when service was in progress, nor to participate in some functions in which women are prohibited from participating.⁴⁹

0. NAMES AND TITLES:

A note about names and titles is necessary when talking about the Akurinu churches. Kenyatta in Facing Mount Kenya, spoke of "Watu wa Mungu", "Arathi " and "Aroti".^ These seem to be the earliest names the members gave to themselves. In the first reference to the movement found in administration files, early in 1931, the District Commissioners spoke of the "false prophets". ^ By 1934 the term "Watu wa Mungu" was accepted as the title for this group and this appears on file covers.⁵² The early

members of the sect still surviving, confirm that they were known as Arathi and Aroti, but it is the colonial authorities who named them "Watu wa Mungu" on account of their claim that they lived in total submission to God's will.

The name by which adherents are today mostly known by outsiders is Akurinu. It is not certain when the term appeared in use; most likely it was in the 1940's. This term is given various interpretations and seems to be a coined word, for the word does not exist in the Kikuyu language other than in this context. Some "kurinu say the term is derived from the phrase "MUKURI-NU?" (who

54

is the redeemer?) . Others say it refers to the growling noises made by the early Akurinu when possessed by the spirit. Even today, when a/ukurinu growls or roars on account of being spirit - filled, the act is described by others as "GUKURINA". "GUKURINA" is understood by some Kikuyu to mean to prophesy. One member of the early days, Elijah Kinyanjui, is of the opinion that the term was used in a derogatory sense on the Arathi by non-christian Kikuyu. In this sense it means "lunatic" or "an outcast". He also adds that, to the "Arathi" themselves a ukurinu is a man who is "very energetic and strange in doing anything which he has been commanded by God to do".⁵⁶

In a report on the Golden Julilee held in November 1980 for all ftkurinu and Roho Churches of Western Kenya,

the A-Airinu Churches were collectively referred to as the

57

"Church of the holy Ghost". All these churches believe in the guidance of the Holy Ghost. Scholars who have attempted a study of the Aj^ZHLH Churches have also coined titles that seem to summarize the whole movement.

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Jocelyn Murray refers to them as "Kija^y-u Spirit Churches". She notes that each Akurinu sect has the term Holy Spirit or Holy Ghost in its title, which indicates something alio i* : . ir beliefs, that they are directed by the Holy Spirit. When in 1955 the government required registration or exemption from registration for all societies, the Akurinu (depending on their geographical location, leaders etc) , registered themselves under various titles each bearing the words "Holy Spirit" or "Holy Ghost Church". Examples are;

- (i) Holy Spirit Church of Zayon.
- (ii) Holy Ghost Church of East Africa.
- (iii) Christian Holy Ghost Church of East Africa.
- (iv) African Holy Ghost Christian Church.

Members of these churches and particularly the leaders are known as prophets or dreamers. For the purposes of this study, the term Akurinu will be used to refer to the whole movement which, as explained in Chapter Three, emerged between 1926 and 1934. The title Holy Ghost Church of East Africa will be confined to the Church under study.

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 1970; p. 9.

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10. Elijah Kinyanjui, Interview.
11. The Akurinu then rejected western education, medical care, and anything else European.
12. "Pharisaical", is derived from the term pharisee.
 In the Jewish Society and Religion, Pharisees were a sect who kept themselves apart on account of their "piousness".
13. "Nominal Christians" refers to those not so committed christians. They are christians only by name
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17. M.L. Daneel, Zionism and faith healing in Rhodesia: Aspects of African Independent Churches. (Paris: Moukton, 1970) p. 9.

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20. Kenya Gazette 17 May, 1979.
21. B.G.M. Sundkler, op.cit. pp. 1-38
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43. G.C. Rosberg and J. Nottingham. The Myth of Mau Mau Nationalism in Kenya (Nairobi, EAPH, 1966) p. 327.
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46. Ibid., Elijah Kinyanjui "The rise and persecution of the Aroti Prophets, 1927-1948. pp. 124-127.
47. RSV Bible, ICor:1:17-25 .
48. Elijah Kinyanjui, interview.
49. Women are not allowed to perform any rites although they are very much respected in this Church. They are only allowed to lead hymns and give testimonies. They are precisely ^ other respects, passive participants.
50. Kenyatta op.cit. "New Religion" pp. 269-79.

51. KNA DC/F.H.2/1/4 "False Prophets".
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52. PC. Central Province, 30th March, 1931.
53. Elijah Kinyanjui, Samuel John Chege, Timotheo Kihungi,
Interviews, Nyahururu, January, 1981.
54. Gideon Mwaura, interview.
55. Elijah Kinyanjui, Interview.
56. Elijah Kinyanjui, Interview.
57. Typed statement to the Akurinu Churches by Samuel
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SECTION ,11

CHAPTER TWO

BACKGROUND TO THE AKURINU MOVEMENT:

1. THE KIKUYU PEOPLE: (a) THEIR GEOGRAPHICAL SETTING,

The Akurinu religious movement is established among the Kikuyu mainly in Central Province and in urban areas as in the Rift Valley. The overwhelming majority of its members are therefore Kikuyu. The history of the Kikuyu people as revealed in their traditions and clarified in recent years by the results of modern research is of relevance for the study of the story of the Akurinu church in their midst.

The Kikuyu are the largest ethnic group in Kenya. In 1979 their population was 3,500,000.¹ What was the traditional Kikuyu land is almost in the middle of the country and is today divided into five administrative districts, To the North is Nyeri, to the South is Kiambu, to the East is Nyandarua and Kirinyaga and at the Centre is Murang'a district which is traditionally considered to be their ancestral and spiritual home. However, the political divisions were rather vague and indeterminate at the turn of the century and indeed only became well defined during the colonial period and later after independence in 1963.

Kikuyu land is well endowed with fertile soil, moderate temperatures and good rainfall. It is very productive and was well utilized by the agriculturalist Kikuyu, 'They were also pastoralists and kept an appreciable number of livestock,

chiefly sheep, goats and cattle. The goats played an important role in the life of the ordinary Kikuyu. They were slaughtered during various ceremonies and sacrifices; they were paid as dowry* and their skins provided bedding as well as clothing. The Kikuyu had therefore a mixed economy and beside pastoral and agricultural pursuits, some specialised in iron-work, tannery and trade, especially external trade,²

Cb)' THE TRADITIONAL KIKUYU SOCIAL ORGANISATION:

The tribal identity of the Kikuyu people and their social organisation were maintained by two governing principles, namely the kinship and the age-grade systems, The principle of kinship finds its most direct expression in the family group known in Kikuyu as Mbari or Nyumba (house), Mbari is the basic social unit. It consists of the land

owning founder of a family, his wife or wives and their children. It may extend beyond the third generation if the land owned by the family is expensive and its founder is a man of renown, However, in some cases, the conflict of interests among the members of the family eliminates the original group identity and creates new families headed by the sons or grandsons. In this way, Mbari, groups multiply,

The Mbari is also the basic economic unit, being the largest local kinship group. Land was owned by the Mbari and its administration was entrusted to a Muramati (custodian) who was the nominal head of the Mbari, This Mbari ownership was reinforced by the people's religious

beliefs, especially reverence for ancestors which fostered a deep attachment to ancestral lands. Hence the land had more than economic value; not only was the land the provider and sustainer of people's material needs, but it had a religious significance, for it was the abode of the ancestors. Communion with the ancestors was maintained and perpetuated through various rituals and through contact with the soil in which the ancestors of the tribe were buried.

livery male member of a Mbari was entitled to his share of the family estate. It did not matter that one had land elsewhere, if at all one moved from the family estate. In this way, kinship ties were maintained by a system rooted in the kinship rights and obligations. This system also guarded against exploitation of one by the others because the landless were given cultivation rights by those who owned land. Hence in a society in which communal solidarity was essential for survival, the welfare of the less fortunate members was ensured by the rest of the community.

Kinship interests were bound together by another principle which cut across clan and family bonds, that of the age-grading system. Irrespective of clan or family affiliation, all Kikuyu, both male and female were admitted by circumcision to membership of an age-grade at some suitable time after reaching adolescence. Each grade membership carried with it a powerful obligation of brotherhood and sisterhood towards all other members, thus unifying the clans and family groups of that particular

age-grade.^

The Mbari was also a territorial unit. In its territorial and political aspect it was called Ituura (pi. Matuura). Jomo Kenyatta and C.W. Hobley call it "Village". Since land was occupied ridge by ridge, by the various Mbari founders, the dwelling place of a Mbari tended to be territorially as well as politically and ritually distinct.

The foregoing depicts the Kikuyu society as one that boasted of a life of social cohesiveness. However, with the coming of Christianity and colonialism, the traditional set up was disrupted and consequently demolished. The missionaries condemned some aspects of the Kikuyu way of life while the colonial administration brought about social, political and economic changes that destroyed their basic social and political institutions.

As will be seen later the Kikuyu had a religion which however, unlike Christianity, was not organised as a distinct and separate department. Rather it was inseparably bound with every₄ aspect of life: social, economic, political and personal. The Akurinu religion later, displays a sense of commitment to community that is reminiscent of the traditional Kikuyu religion and community. This too is characteristic of all African Independent Churches, for example, the Legio Maria in Western Kenya, Africa Israel Church Nineveh and the Aladura Churches of Nigeria. The centrality of this strong sense of community is seen in worship and

in personal relationships. The principles of mutual responsibility, honesty, sharing, love and kindness permeate the Akurinu community. As Jocelyn Murray observes, the Akurinu have created a "church tribe",⁵ where mu[^]al help apparently expresses the interdependence of the group members and where spiritual kinship replaces blood and age-grade relationships.

This spiritual kinship is reinforced as well by the desire to maintain wholeness in both communal relationship and in their relationship with God. This desire for wholeness is well expressed in the concept of Thahu Thahu is defined as "ritual uncleanness ... generally incurred through the performance, voluntary or involuntary, of certain acts, some of which are inevitable in every day life.^{M^} This concept dominates the life of the Akurinu just as it did that of the Kikuyu, but with a difference as is explained in Chapter Seven. Through these ethical and ceremonial laws and prohibitions, sometimes called taboos, good relationships with each other and with the cosmos was maintained and still is among the Akurinu.

(c)

KIKUYU RELIGIOUS HERITAGE:

For the Kikuyu as for most African people's, there was no division between religion and other aspects of life such as political, economic or social. Religion was interwoven into the total fabric of life. The fear of God meant at the same time both loving and respecting one's

fellow human being and showing active concern for his well

7

being. Six areas of belief can be identified ;n Kikuyu religion.

(a) Belief in God (Ngai) and a living awareness of his transcendant presence. God is also believed to be immanent, all-powerful, wise, benevolent, good, just, all-knowing and all-present (omni present). He is also mysterious.

(b) Belief in spirits. To a non-Kikuyu, the belief in spirits, commonly known as spirits of the departed or ancestral spirits, appears to dominate Kikuyu religion. This is especially because of the practice of daily communion with the spirits. However, as Jomo Kenyatta points out, the two sets of beliefs and the practices associated with them cannot be separated (i.e. belief in God and belief in spirits); "Gikuyu religion has two departments, both are really vital; they function in unison, but in different spheres... When a sacrifice is made to the high God on an occasion of National importance the ancestors must join in the sacrifice". The term Guthaitha Ngai, was used to mean "worship" or "beseech God", while the terms Guitangira ngoma njohi and Guthinjira ngoma, were used to mean, "to pour libation" and "to slaughter to the spirits". Therefore the approaches to God and the spirits were different. The spirits had no concrete form and were believed to manifest themselves in dreams or in concrete things, for example, wild cats and squirrels, by temporarily entering them in order to reveal themselves to the living."¹

They were viewed as guardians of society. Even though they were elevated to a position of honour and respect and were in a mysterious and invisible existence, they were distinct from God. The spirits were considered as part of the human community, hence the pouring of libations to them, and sharing of food and meat with them. The evil spirits were appeased.

There were three types of spirits,

(i) Parental spirits (Ngoma cia Aciari) to whom the living made offerings of food and drink as tokens of fellowship and with whom the members of the family, through the head communed.

(ii) Spirits of the clan (Ngoma cia Muhiriga) whose concern was the welfare of the clan in both the corporeal and spirit worlds.

(iii) The third category was that of age group spirits (Ngoma cia Riika), whose concern was the well being of the tribe as a whole, and who were approached by the appropriate leaders, of the living age-grade. ^

(c) Sacred rites connected with the various beliefs already mentioned. The most important ones were of two types,

(i) Those to do with the worship of God, e.g. sacrifices at sacred trees. (ii) Those rites to do with ancestral spirits. These rites were in form of animal and food offerings and libations to them.

(d) Rites of passage: that is, rites performed at the most crucial turning points in the life of every individual,

especially birth, initiation into adulthood and death.

There was also another important pre-initiation rite, called the second birth or "retching the child into the womb"

(Gucokia mwana ihu-ini).

(e) Ethical and ceremonial laws and prohibitions (so-called -taboos).

(f) The practice of medicine and magic. This is the domain of such specialists as herbalists, diviners and diviner - doctors. These helped the people with their health problems.

Physical, psychological and spiritual, and other related misfortunes.

To sum up, belief in Ngai is the major aspect of Kikuyu religion. Ngai is believed to have created man and everything which exists, including the earth. He is the creator of life, giver of land and all that man requires for his sustenance. He controls the spirits and death is in his power too. Ngai is mysterious and is not to be pestered, but he might be approached in moments of crisis. God is one, the Kikuyu people believe. In this respect, the Kikuyu religion resembles Jewish religion. It is not surprising that in the new religion (Christianity) the new converts found a continuity between the traditional God - Ngai, worshipped by their forefathers and the christian God. To that extent there was continuity of the most fundamental

12

aspect of their old faith. When the Akurinu movement began in 1926, the Akurinu rejected everything European or Drought by the Europeans except the Bible. The Karing'a movement too, which rejected the

education offered in mission schools sang protest songs which indicated that they had not rejected the Bible and the God taught in the Bible. One verse in particular said:

"Mwathani twohere tiwe twarega, ni
kirore turarega".¹³

(lit. Lord forgive us we are not rejecting
you but the thumb print).

All these indicate that the Karing'a and Akurinu converts, like the converts to mission Christianity saw the continuity of their traditional belief in Ngai, in the "New religion".

Another aspect of Kikuyu religion that features in the Akurinu faith is the importance of prayer as a m^{eans} of communicating with God. In this church, prayer is very central in worship. Although this is typical of all christian churches one notices in this church an ardency that is not so conspicuous in other churches. Prayer is conducted in a conversational style unlike in some churches e.g. Catholic where in prayer, direct petitions are made to God. To them God is always near and with them. God revealed his will to the prophets in Kikuyu religion through dreams and vision?, this he did as well in the old testament. In the Akurinu churches, this is very central in their belief system. All these will be dealt with in detail in Chapter Five.

Such were the characteristics of the Kikuyu religion and way of life at the turn of the century, when the completion of the Uganda Railway opened it to infiltration by the western world. This exposure brought forth a

confrontation between the west, particularly Britain, and Kenya that altered the Kikuyu way of life in all its aspects.. With respect to religion this confrontation created confusion in the Kikuyu mind. Some adopted or embraced Christianity due to the benefits it offered, for example, education, while others rejected it totally with all its benefits. Others embraced only its faith and rejected its appendages that is, modernisation, education, medical care etc. The latter were supposed to make a clean break with their cultural heritage on receiving education and becoming christians.

At this juncture, a brief discussion on the planting of Christianity in Kenya and the ensuing confrontation will be useful.

2. TIE COLONIAL SETTING:

(a) MISSIONARY OCCUPATION OF EAST AFRICA:

The Akurinu movement cannot be seen outside the context of the coming of Christianity and "western civilization" to East Africa and their impact, -on the Kenyan scene, and particularly the Kikuyu people, among whom the movement sprang and has an ardent following to this day. Therefore, to understand the movement it is necessary to go a few steps back in time and examine the colonial society and Christianity in Kenya before 1926.

Though Christianity had been in Africa long before, it spread to Europe, it had only been concentrated in Ethiopia and Egypt in the first four centuries A.D., and did not spread elsewhere in Africa. It was not until the 15th Century when Catholic Spain and Portugal were the dominant world powers that Christianity was introduced at the East African Coast. The East African Coast was an important

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trade link with the East. The work of Portuguese Roman
Catholic missionaries between 1498-1542 did not take root
because the Coast was a Muslim dominated area. It was
therefore not until the 19th Century that Christianity
penetrated into the heart of East Africa, with the coming
of the European era of exploration and colonisation.

The real centre of interest for the explorers was
Buganda, and its position as the source of 'the River Nile.
Four different types of travellers were interested in
Buganda: Arab traders, western explorers, missionaries and
emissaries of European governments. Arab travellers were first
on the scene. They sought for ivory and slaves and passed
through southern Kikuyu land on their way to Buganda.
Explorers like David Livingstone, Henry Morton Stanley and
Joseph Thomson wrote to Europe about their discoveries in
Central and East Africa. The reports of the activities of
explorers aroused the interests of European powers who were
still busy with the partition of Africa. The Anglo-Cerman
agreement of 1880 secured for Britain, Uganda and the East
African Protectorate (now Kenya). Uganda Protectorate
comprised of present Uganda and the whole of Western Kenya
and part of the Rift Valley up to Naivasha. The borders
were only changed to their present state in 1902. Britain
assumed full responsibility of these areas in 1894 and 1895
14
respectively.

Alth

ough as noted above, the people at the Coast had
encountered Christianity from 1498, it was not until the
dawn of the era of missions, from 1844, that Christianity began

to penetrate to the Kenyan interior. The first missionaries inland were Dr. Ludwig Krapf and John Rebmann, They were Lutheran missionaries under the sponsorship of the Church Missionary Society (CMS) . Their work was restricted to the Coast. Initially Krapf had a mission to reach the Galla in Ethiopia, the oldest region with some christian influence. But due to the hostility of the Galla and their (missionaries unpreparedness for the natural hindrances like diseases; Krapf sought permission from the Church Missionary Society to try and reach the Galla from the South - Mombasa. Later Rebmann joined him and together, they opened a station at Rabai fifteen miles inland.¹⁵

It was David Livingstone who however^ gave impetus to the missionary invasion in East Africa. Livingstone had been working as a missionary explorer in Central Africa, sent by the London Missionary Society (LMS) , "as an emissary of the then prevailing objective of humanitarianism towards the heathen."^{1^} In his journeys and travels through Central and East Africa, he saw and was appalled by the evils of the slave trade. He was convinced that the evils could be stopped if European settlement was encouraged in these areas. Slave trade together with poverty and ignorance were the

17

chief obstacles to Africa's civilisation. He therefore called upon Britain to save Africa by opening it up to Christianity and commerce. In 1859, in an answer to his call, various agents were sent out to Africa namely, the Settler, Missionary and Colonial Administrators. They all came prepared to further their own interests. The alien colonial admini-

strators had imperial interests. Britain particularly which was undergoing an industrial revolution, saw an opportunity to expand her market and obtain raw materials required by her industries. France, Germany, Italy and Holland had similar interests. The missionaries responded to Livingstone's call "to heal the sore" in Africa and win their souls for Christ.

The spread of Christianity continued as an influx of missionaries set in during the latter half of the 19th Century. In East Africa Christianity was initially spread by Protestant missionaries. Catholic missionaries followed later. By 1877, Christianity had reached Buganda.

Among the missionary societies that settled in Kenya the Church of Scotland Mission (CSM), was the first to begin their evangelistic work among the Kikuyu, in 1898. They had first settled in Kibwezi in 1891. They later evacuated the station due to unhealthy climate and scarcity of population. The African Inland Mission (AIM) had reached Kijabe from Kibwezi in 1901, while the Church Missionary Society (CMS) reached Kabete in 1901. It later spread out to found other stations at Weithaga (1903) and Kahuhia in 1906. The United Methodist Mission (UMM) reached Meru in 1901 from the Coast, while the Gospel Missionary Society, a non-denominational society from America, had settled at Thimbigua in Central Kiambu by 1899, under the directorships of Reverend and Mrs Knapp. By 1901 they were invited further north by Kikuyu elders and established a station at Kambui. Stations were opened later at Ng'eenda,

kihumbu-ini and in other regions of North Kiambu. AIM too moved inland and opened stations at Kandara (Githumu) and Mataara. C3M moved to Tumutumu in Nyeri in 1900 and later to Chuka - Mwimbi in Meru. Catholic missions too established stations in Central Province particularly in Nyeri and Kiambu districts from 1902. This was the work of Consolata Fathers and the Holy Ghost Fathers respectively.

The building of the Kenya-Uganda Railway linking Mombasa to Lake Victoria and subsequently Kampala, facilitated the occupation and administration of the interior. Along this railway, missionaries moved to western Kenya. By 1907, the CMS, AIM, Friends African Mission (FAM) and Seventh Day Adventists (SDA) had all started work there. It is apparent from the occupation of both Central and Western Kenya by missionaries, that different missions were very close to each other. With this kind of proximity of denominations, holding varying doctrines, denominational rivalry and antagonism were inevitable. This rivalry that was also evident in Europe and America manifested itself even among the African converts. The converts to both the various Protestant denominations and Catholic Church, were taught not to associate with rival Christians and to mistrust them. This created strife among people who were otherwise brothers bound up by the Kikuyu kinship and age grade system. This characteristic feature of missionary Christianity is lamentable and regrettable. This principle of divisiveness made the Africans question the value of Christianity. From

God's own book they learnt that God's message is unitive not divisive. This therefore made them desire for a faith that was better than the false Christianity that the missionaries portrayed.^

Another characteristic feature of missionary Christianity was its intellectual character. In all the stations manned by the various denominations, evangelistic work was done mainly through literacy skills. Schools were established and were used as centres for teaching the catechism. Africans were taught how to read and write and it is not surprising that they called Christians Athomi (readers). The purpose of learning to read and write, was to enable the Africans to read the Bible for themselves. For people whose aim was to receive education, this early Christianity had no personal commitment on their parts. For them receiving literacy skills was the primal goal. The fact that baptism could only be obtained after memorising certain texts, namely the Creed and certain doctrines, made early Christianity be identified with education because only those who could memorize these facts could receive baptism, regardless of their spiritual preparedness. Spiritual preparedness was therefore not emphasized or tested.

19

Christianity also tended to be nominal i.e. to do with names. As long as one acquired a new baptismal name, you ceased to be a "heathen". Those who did not qualify for baptism could not get new names. Furthermore, others joined the mission for the sake of a new foreign name. The Akurinu are very much preoccupied with acquisition of new names at.

baptism. Getting a new name implies a change in a person
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and a commitment to emulate whoever one is named after.
At the beginning baptism and acquisition of a new name
implied a rejection of the African way of life and the
adoption of missionary values, which happened to be European.
Though some reasons for adopting new names are no longer valid,
the fact remains that missionary Christianity introduced this
element which still survives in African Christianity. The
importance of names is also emphasized out of proportion
today, in the spirit churches.

¶The missionaries who evangelised the Kikuyu regarded
them as a clean slate on which everything could be written
without resistance. They expected the Kikuyu to adopt
Christianity wholesale. This misconception, plus the nominal
and intellectual character of Christianity and also the
disruption of the Kikuyu spiritual, political, cultural,
social and economic aspects of life combined to create a
spiritual lethargy and material deprivation which was bound
to lead to the rebellion, out of which as will further be
explained in Chapter Three independent churches and
nationalist groups emerged. The East African Revival
movement arose at the same time, approximately between 1927-45.
- But whereas this revival movement remained within the churches,
the independent dissidents seceded from the churches and
attracted followers both from within the churches and from
the non-Christian population. The independent groups
created their own church communities where they could

"feel at home".²⁰ Let us now see how the colonial society
 * created a situation in which Schism was inevitable.

(b) THE COLONIAL SOCIETY: COLONISATION OF KIKUYULAN|D:

During the same period of missionary occupation, the colonial society was also created. Whereas in many parts of Africa, missionary entrance into the interior of Africa preceeded that of the alien administrations; among the Kikuyu, the alien administration came first. This was in the form of the Imperial British East African company which was operating from the Coast from the 1870s. By 1890, this company was using the northern route to reach Uganda, and this route passed through the southern parts of Kikuyuland. This company had a stopping station at Dagoretti in 1891 from which the employers and caravans of the company received a supply of food and men to serve as porters. This same company initiated the establishment of the Scottish African Industrial Mission that was later to become the Church of

21

Scotland Mission. It is therefore apparent tfyat collaboration existed between the company and the mission. This company later relinquished its stations at the Coast and the hinterland to the foreign office, (British), and later, the British government declared what was before British East Africa, a Protectorate in 1895.

The southern part of. Kikuyuland (Kiambu) was occupied by the company and later by white settlers, by g. process of punitive expeditionsThis means that Africans were forced by the company to supply it with food'or land.

MacPherson describes an incident in which thirty villages in Githiga, including their crops and livestock were destroyed and taken in one such expedition led by a Mr. Purkiss (n 1892.²² The church of Scotland mission also, acquired land from prominent elders in southern Kiambu by an agreement in which the missionaries presented themselves as merely Ahoi (tenants), not permanent owners, However, in most cases this land was never returned to the Africans. In fact after 1895, the colonial administration assisted the missionaries to acquire more land by issuing legislations. One informant Petro Maina lamented how his father lost his land through this process. He allowed the AIM to use part of his land at Kijabe, but only as tenants. This man was one of the early Arathi.²³

The taking of Kikuyu people's land was followed by another injury. The missionaries required students in their schools as well as labourers, for the small farm that Dr. Scott had started at Kikuyu. This was to become a bone of contention in European/African politics (See Chapter Three).

The punitive expeditions drove the Kikuyu to the forests, coffee and tea plantations and also mission stations); anywhere they could find refuge. Whereas before 1900 alienation of land to the colonists and missionaries was through either such expeditions or direct negotiations with the Kikuyu elders, after this, their method was abolished "because the local officials feared that the Kikuyu would

become victims of unscrupulous settlers and Europeans. The government therefore assumed control of the alienation of land. In 1901, the East African land ordinance was passed. This order defined the crown lands as "all public land subject to the control of the Majesty¹." In 1902, the crown lands ordinance was passed. This ordinance considered all supposedly unoccupied land as crown land, and assumed that the "Natives" did not own it. African's rights to the land was ignored.

25

During this same period after the missionaries had settled, settlers were invited by the then Kenya Governor, Sir Charles Elliot, to settle in the fertile Kikuyu highlands and in the Rift Valley. This resulted in the displacement of thousands of Kikuyu families from their ancestral lands. This forceful eviction was followed by a policy of forced labour for men, women and children in order to supply the labour needs of the European farmers.

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In Kiambu, particularly in the Lari, Limuru and Githiga areas, more than 60,000 acres of land was alienated between 1903 and 1905. According to the report of the Kenya Land Commission, more than 11,000 Kikuyu families were the rightfu

27

owners of this land. The white settlers were only required to pay the owners of this land two rupees per acre for the land that was cultivated and two rupees per house. The money was hardly ever paid. The evicted families were given forest land in Kereita. The houses of those who refused to leave were set on fire.

28

The policy of native reserves, issued by Sir Donald Stewart (Governor) affected the Kikuyu and other ethnic groups especially in the highlands, adversely. The idea was to herd the people in reserves to create ample land for alienation. The Native reserves were also to serve as a source of constant cheap labour for European farmers, administrators, businessmen and missionaries. It seems that the British administration was prepared to stop at nothing to dislocate the Africans geographically, socially, economically and culturally. The mission stations were used as centres of western civilisation and Christianity and the missionaries collaborated in most cases with the colonial administration.

The elders in Murang'a, Kabete and Nyeri, were opposed to what was happening and even forbade the opening of new mission stations. Between 1900-1914, the CSM and CMS and AIM

29

received protests from various communities. The missionaries opposed the Kikuyu form of marriage, dancing and burial and tried to make them accept their own concept of family and individualism. For example at the CMS Kabete a rule was made that members would be dismissed if they took part in

30

native dancing^ While the CSM at Thogoto went as far as drawing out a code of regulations against certain "sins" as

31

a condition for baptism. It is out of this situation of misunderstanding and conflict which culminated in the circumcision controversy of 1928-1929 that independency in Kikuyu land arose.

Alienation of land dealt a severe blow on the Mbari Land unit, with all the religious and cultural beliefs and practices attached to it. Forced labour and going to work on European farms shook the social foundations of the Kikuyu society for family lineages and clans were scattered. Taxation which was later introduced, forced people to seek employment; refusal to do communal labour or pay taxes was a crime punishable with a fine equivalent to the labourers gross income for one to three months.³² To add insult to injury the Africans were compelled to carry identity pass book (Kipande) which included records of employment and tax receipts. This relegated them to an inferior status for Europeans and Asians did not have to carry a Kipande. This Kipande, which was introduced in 1919, also served the purposes of facilitating the collection of taxes and control of movement of Africans. The documents which constituted this identity pass book (Kipande) were originally put in a metal case, and all African male adults (above 16 years old) were required by law to carry it and produce it on demand by any government official, employers

After the first World War, when soldiers were issued land again through alienation, the Africans felt insecure and some formed an association to forward their grievances to the colonial government in 1920. This association named, the Kikuyu Association, mainly composed of local chiefs, was rural oriented and not radical in its demands. However, Harry Thuku, a former student of GMS Kambui, together with others formed a Young Kikuyu Association, a radical association

comprising former mission educated people.³³ This association, formed in 1920 agitated for representation in the Legislative Council, and the abolition of forced labour, taxation, kipande system and alienation of land. The association was banned and due to missionary influence, Thuku was detained. Kikuyu Central Association (KCA) was formed after this, 1925 and continued Thuku's battle.

By 1927-1929 relations between the Africans and missionaries and the colonial government were recognised as deplorable. The Christian Kikuyu, non-Christian Kikuyu and the KCA, all joined together in protest against the injustice they felt they suffered. Following a ban on female circumcision in the CSM, churches and schools, many christians left the 'mission churches (AIM and CMS) and formed independent schools and churches.³⁴ The Arathi movement which began during this troubled period (1926) was now crystalising into a separate society of believers, and many ex-missionary followers, joined the Arathi.

It has already been observed that the Arathi movement started in Limuru. This area suffered severely from the colonial administration and the missionaries. As will be noted in Chapter Three, most of the early Arathi were people whose land had been alienated. They were, thus people who lived in reserves, or became squatters in lands that were previously theirs before alienation. They were people who directly experienced the oppressive nature of colonial rule through, taxation, kipande system, forced labour and

imprisonment, if they refused to carry the kipapde, work adequately on the farms or pay taxes. At this stage we shall now discuss the rise of the Akurinu movement in the late 1920s to 1980, in the following Chapter.

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CHAPTER THREETHE RISE AND SPREAD OF THE AKURINU MOVEMENT 1926-1980AND THE ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE CHURCHES:i) Introduction:

The Akurinu churches share a common historical origin. They all trace their origin to the . turbulent years of late 1920s and early 1930s. These were unsettled and unhappy years for all peoples in Kenya, but most particularly the Kikuyu. They suffered under various burdens. Their grievances included alienation of land, forced labour, too high taxation, kipande system and cultural pressures.¹ Those years saw an anti-mission and anti-government movement focussed on the issue of female circumcision. Though in existence from 1926, the Akurinu attracted very little notice from the missions or government and their first time to be noticed by the government in 1931, was just noted in passing

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as an "appearance".

The first mention of the Akurinu in government records occurs in 1931. In February of that year, the Kiambu District Commissioner, sent back to Fort Hall a group of five men and three women who had been arrested for holding illegal meetings in Kiambu. "They professed to be evangelists of a new faith and were on a pilgrimage to the Ngong' Hills.^ A note on the same letter in pencil, indicates that some of the group had been arrested and cautioned in 1930. A memorandum of the Church of Scotland Mission (CSM) on female

circumcision⁴ also mentions 1930 as the year the prophets "appeared".

tb) THE FOUNDER: JOSEPH NGA'NG'A AND HIS CONVERSION TO CHRISTIANITY. 1926-1934.

All the evidence from administrative sources at the time, and from present day Akurinu informants, point to one, Joseph Ng'ang'a as the chief founder of the movement. He is said to have come from Mang'u area, in the vicinity of the Gospel Missionary Society station at Kambui in North Kiambu. He is also said to have acquired some education in mission schools, being literate in both Kikuyu and Kiswahili. He is remembered as a brave and very strong man. One informant spoke of him as a teacher.⁵

None of the surviving informants remember the exact date of his birth, but in 1926, he was in his early twenties, one of the generation born and grown to maturity within the colonial period. Elijah Kinyanjui[^] describes him as a prayerful person who was full of the Holy Spirit. In 1926, a crisis occurred in his life. One informant connected it to illness and another one to a bout of drunkenness. After a drunken party, while asleep,

He heard a voice calling his name, and he realised that it was God's voice. The surprising thing was that the voice called him by his baptismal name, but he was not baptised at that time. In the morning he looked for footsteps but found none, and he was greatly astonished because he realised that God had called him. He took his beer and everything that was used for brewing it

and threw it away. Then God spoke to him and told him to pray that he might be saved. Later, God spoke to him and told him to pray for his people, that they might be liberated from their colonial rulers.⁷

Another informant recalls also how Joseph heard God's voice during this same period before his conversion, while he was working in a settler's farm in Gatundu, North Kiambu. One day around 4.p.m. while coming from work, he heard a voice calling him, "Joseph"! He was holding a shovel which he had taken from the farm without permission. He was ordered by the voice to discard it for what he had done was not right. From then on, he was taught new ways of interpreting scripture with the help of the Holy Spirit and how to pray with his hands aloft. From then on, he secluded himself in a cave in Ndaragu Forest (Gatundu) from 1926-30. During this time he occupied himself solely with reading and studying the Bible and praying. After this seclusion, he became a preacher and preached to people all over Gatundi, Limuru and Murang'a.

In this recollection by a present day leader of Akurinu church,⁹ Samuel John Chege traces to the hero elder several themes which are of continuing importance in the Akurinu churches. Joseph Ng'ang'a was called and his baptismal name revealed through a dream. He was also later taught how to pray with his hands raised and to interpret the scriptures with the aid of the Holy Spirit. These three are significant beliefs and practices in the Akurinu churches.

Ng'ang'a's call was first to a personal salvation with abstinence and honesty emphasized. But God spoke to him also about the condition of his people, the Kikuyu, suffering under alien domination and crying for liberation. This is significant because the Akurinu claim to be non-political. Some sects, for instance the Christian Holy Ghost (urcli o East Africa, have even gone to the extent of refusing to vote in national elections. This church was founded by Joshua Mburu in 1960 and headed by h.n until in 1976 when he died.

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After 1930, Ng'ang'a engaged himself in evangelisation. He went to Mountain tops where he prayed and all along the Spirit of God was with him. He also preached in Kirinyanga and many other parts of Central Province. Their journeys (he and other converts) to these places were done on foot for days and weeks. They did not fear to be molested by strangers or attacked by wild animals.

One by one, through individual contact, a small band of converts was built up. They were very bold and as they became more conspicuous in their movements in 1931, excuses to arrest them were not hard to come by.** They were easily identified by their white Cukas (sheets) having been guided by the Holy Spirit to discard all forms of European clothing. In his missionary endeavours, Joseph was always accompanied by Samuel Muinami and John Mung'ara. These two came from Matathia, Kijabe, and are said to have been cousins. With Musa Muchai, an older man and already married, they became

known as leaders in the Kijabe escarpment area, as Joseph was in the Gatundu area.

Meanwhile in Fort Hall another group of Akurinu was crystalising under the leadership of Musa Thuo who was a former member of Kikuyu Central Association. He later became a member of Kenya African Union.

There were other prominent personalities in Murang'a. While Musa Thuo was recognised as the leader of the Ithiru area, Johana Maina led those in Kirigu-ini. In Nyeri particularly in Ihururu and Mukurweini the Akurinu won converts. The leaders in these areas were, Elijah Gichuhi, Isaac Ndiangui and Jacob Nderito. In Meru, Elijah Kinyanjui observes that, Jonestone M'Kiambati was the leader in the

12

Chuka-Mwimbi areas.

The preaching of Arathi was considered subversive and the District Commissioner for Fort Hall appealed to his Provincial Commissioner in March 1931 for the deportation of the leaders from his district.¹⁵ Some clergy in the missions (CSM, CMS, AIM) also complained about the Akurinu to the administration. They saw them as a group of lunatics

14

practising a misguided faith. One informant, Jeremiah Wanginyi, says that missionaries were very hostile to them and in most cases they were the ones who pestered the colonial government to put an end to them and their movement. They saw the Akurinu as a threat to their work. The (Arathi) Aku at this time objected to further building of churches by missionaries, wearing of European clothes, receiving baptism

at mission stations, and attending mission schools. A letter from the Provincial Commissioner, Central Province to the D.C.s, Kiambu and Fort Hall districts, will serve to depict the colonial administrators' views and attitudes towards the Akurinu:

The "Watu wa Mungu" appear to be the same sect as those which were troublesome in 1930 and 1931 in the Kiambu and Fort Hall Districts. They were known as prophets and used to roar like lions and bark like dogs ... they were believed to entertain anti-government feelings. They were obviously under some kind of hysteiya and were followed by young girls with whom they had free love relations.¹⁵

It would appear from the above that the Akurinu were harassed on account of their being members of an unknown sect, "harbouring anti-government feelings" and supposedly being immoral. The attitude towards the Akurinu and their subsequent persecution seems to have been based on suspicions and a lack of understanding of the group. To the Akurinu, the colonial government was out to frustrate any efforts to establish an indigenous church. Another reason was that they used to sing throughout the night; beating drums. They also used to carry weapons,- bows and arrows for their protection during their trips to mountains, Longonot, Kenya, Kilimambogo

16

and Ngong hills to pray. The Akurinu also refused to associate with people other than other Akurinu. For all these reasons, they were persecuted after 1930, and were imprisoned, beaten and ridiculed by the colonial administrator

These persecutions culminated in the murder of three

people by police in the evening of February 2, 1934. The three
 were Joseph Ng'ang'a, Samuel Muinami and John Mung'ara. The
 story of how and why the three founders died is unclear and
 the whole truth will probably never be recovered. In his
 account of the circumstances surrounding their death Elijah
 Kinyanjui mentions that the police had been looking for
 Joseph Ng'ang'a and his companions due to another confronta-
 tion they had had with them at Tigoni in January that year.
 During this instance, the Akurinu stubbornly refused to be
 arrested. However, police evidence at the magisterial
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 enquiry was that the killing was done in self-defence. The
Akurinu treat these deaths with some reverence. Elijah
 Kinyanjui claims that Joseph Ng'ang'a expected his death,
 because he had completed his work of laying the ground for
 future evangelisation. These three martyrs are very highly
 regarded in all Akurinu churches as the founder fathers
 of the movement. Joseph Ng'ang'a is said to have kept on
 "roaring" till the moment he died. He is said to have been
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 so spirit filled that he had extraordinary powers.

In spite of the drawback to the movement, brought about
 by the deaths of the three leaders, the Akurinu teaching and
 preaching continued to spread especially along the Kikuyu-
 Limuru borders of Kikuyu country, and the Thika-Chania river
 areas, and in the Rift Valley.

The deaths of the three founders generated fear in the
 government, and finally in May 1934, orders were issued under
 the Nat
 ive Authority Ordinance (Chapter 2a) separately for

33

Kiambu and Fort Hall, which made it illegal to hold or to attend meetings of the "Watu wa Mungu". There followed a period of harassment of all the Akurinu. "Those who had beards were punished by forcibly burning their beards, the possessions of Akurinu were destroyed and many more were

20

imprisoned". These and related acts of torture and punishment were carried out by the chiefs and headmen. Elijah ih recalls how he and six others were imprisoned at Dagoretti in April 1934, for allegedly holding illegal meetings. His colleagues in jail were, Musa Muchai, Johana Waweru and

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Samuel Thuku. Samuel Thuku was until then a student at African Inland Church (AI0) Kijabe, but after becoming a prophet (Murathi) he dropped out of school. Later in 1949 he became the founder and leader of the Akurinu sect known as, "God's word Holy Ghost Church". Johana Waweru founded "African Mission of the Holy Ghost Church in 1950 which has its headquarters at Kandara. He is now dead.

Throughout 1935, suspicion and persecution continued. However a major incident occurred between 1935 and 1936 when a large group of the Akurinu migrated to the Chuka-Mwimbi

22

area of Meru District. The reason for this, was probably to escape persecution, for they were no longer tolerated in Kiambu and Fort Hall. The Akurinu however believe that this was the Holy Spirit's way of moving them to evangelise the

23

Meru. The immigrants, included four of those who had been imprisoned in April, 1934 at Dagoretti. Two of them were Hezroni Njoroge and Elijah Gitau. They made contacts

with the dissidents who left the church of Scotland mission at Mwimbi during the female circumcision crisis of 1929-1930.

The Akurinu from Kiambu, led by Musa Muchai contacted the Meru independents led by Johnstone M'Kiambati, at their centre in Tungu and spread out in Meru and Embu districts, finding places to cultivate. Later in 1936 Elijah Kinyanjui, Samuel Thuku and others followed Muchai to Meru and evangelised there as well. Before embarking on the Meru campaign, Elijah had preached far and wide in the surrounding villages, that is, Matathia, Muguga, Ngarariga, Kereita, Kimende, Ndeiya and Githiga, between 1934-1936. He also preached in Magina, Korio and Manguo. All these villages are in Limuru and Kikuyu Divisions. Among those to whom he preached and they got converted were, Hezroni Tumbo, Johana Wang'endo, Elijah Gachuki and Paul Kuniara.^ All these became founder leaders of the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa. This church therefore, although it owes its origin to the initial founders of the Akurinu movement, traces its origin to 1934 when its founder leaders, were converted. However, they claim to be the main off-shoot of the original movement.^{- 25}

According to Elijah the Akurinu were expelled from Meru by the colonial administrators in 1937. This was due to the fact that the administrative officials spread propaganda among the Meru that, the Kikuyu were going to disinherit them of their lands. It has already been noted earlier that the Akurinu acquired land in Meru and started cultivating.

After the expulsion from Meru, they returned to Magina. Musa Muchai remained in Meru for a while and settled himself at Gategenye in Chuka-Mbwimbi. He later returned to Magina when his group diminished.

End

3. THE AKURINU MOVEMENT BETWEEN 1937 and 1952:

On returning home, the Meru group received a cold welcome. They could not regain the leadership of those in Magina because Elijah Gachuki had consolidated his powers as the leader of the Magina-Limuru group, assisted by fiezroni Tumbo and Johana Wang'endo. Elijah Kinyanjui therefore migrated to other Kikuyu inhabited areas in the Rift Valley particularly among squatters. Elijah is said to have quarrelled with the leaders in the Limuru group and was hence excommunicated from that group. He therefore left and formed his own church "Chosen Church of the Holy Spirit" which has a small following that extends from Nakuru to Kisumu and Kakamega districts.

26

The events of this period are unclear but one thing is certain, that after the Meru exodus, divisions arose among the Akurinu both in Kiambu and Fort Hall. Basically the old and young generations had disagreements. This young versus the old generations controversy, centred around observance of certain traditional Kikuyu practices, for example, polygamy, sacrificial practices and other sacred rituals (Magongona). This problem had not arisen in the early years but now, it became an issue which threatened to lead to

separation. The young under Samuel Thuku, adamantly affirmed that God forbids the practice and observance of traditional rites and rituals. They argued that in the Bible, such practices as consultation of diviners, eating of animals used for ceremonial and sacrificial purposes, eating of blood and meat from strangled animals are forbidden. To them, the Kikuyu were guilty for they practised all these, Samuel Thuku, due probably to this conflict remained in Magina while Musa Muchai strengthened his Meru ties. However, in 1949, Samuel Thuku also left for Kahiriga in Murang'a. He settled there and his group (God's Word Holy Ghost Church)

27

is now centred at Rusiru, Njoro. This group today allows polygamy and the piercing of the ear lobes, both traditional Kikuyu practices of cultural significance. They also practise circumcision for both sexes. It is ironic that Thuku should allow the observance of certain Kikuyu practices, while he initially separated from the Magina group on some of these issues. It is not known why he changed.

The church in Limuru under Elijah Gachuki, Johana Wang'endo and Hezroni Tumbo also experienced conflicts which culminated in the resignation of Elijah Gachuki as leader. Johana Wang'endo joined Samuel Thuku at Kahiriga and therefore the leadership of this group was left to Hezroni Tumbo, the
28
current leader of the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa. This schism occurred in 1947. At this point we can therefore identify several groups of the Akurinu. All these groups are registered today under different names.

THE DIFFERENT GROUPS BY 1947: THEIR CURRENT TITLES.

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|---------------------------------------|---|
| (a) Limuru-Manguo-Magina group | - Holy Ghost Church of East Africa. |
| (b) Meru - group | - This group never developed into a church. |
| (c) Kahiriga - group | - God's Word Holy Ghost Church. |
| (d) Ithiru-Kandara-Nyeri group | - Foundation of the Prophets' Church. |
| (e) Nakuru/Kisumu/Kakamega group | - Chosen Church of the Holy Spirit. |
| (f) Kandara group under Johana Waweru | - African Mission of the Holy Ghost Church. |

Between 1942 and 1946 the Arathi increased in numbers particularly in the Rift Valley, Kiambu and Murang'a. However, the District Commissioner's (D.C.) reports made in June 1942 gives a contrary picture. They saw the sect as stagnant and no longer a danger to law and order. The D.C. observes that "though their (Akurinu) activities were not criminal they were embarrassing to the government..."³⁰ In the Rift Valley, farmers still complained about them. But all the same they commended them for being "clean, quiet and

"31

good workers. In the Limuru area, farmers complained that they actually discouraged the flow of labour. This was due to the Akurinu belief that they are subjects of the Holy Spirit first and only secondly of the state. Therefore although they did not actually flaunt authority openly, there did appear a difference of opinion between them and the state

as to which authority was paramount. If any conflict arose between the demands of the state and those of the Holy Spirit, the latter would prevail. This was a kind of protest against colonial rule and from 1927 onwards, the Akurinu kept on prophesying the end of colonial rule and the coming of a just reign under African leadership, since Independence in 1963, their preaching has become entirely spiritual.

The Akurinu continued to refuse to take medicine, and to kill rats with the rest of the population when bubonic plague broke out, and all this was regarded as subversion

32

by the colonial administrators. The fear that they were a cover for "subversive elements" was always present in a Kenya where, following the end of the Second World War, nationalistic-political consciousness and general unrest were again on the increase. Though the Akurinu did not consider themselves subversive or rebels in any way, their growing numbers and the religious nature of their movement were puzzling to the colonial administrators, and were enough to raise suspicions about the objectives of the movement. A letter from the D.C. of Fort Hall to the Provincial Commissioner (P.C.) of Central Province in 1938 expresses this suspicion:

I am of the opinion that if these pseudo religious fanatics are allowed to wander around the countryside...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.³³

4 . "RELIGION OF JESUS CHRIST" OR THE 'JESU CHRISTO" MOVEMENT

This fear and suspicion seemed to be confirmed by the emergence of a sect within the Akurinu at Londiani station which was rather violent. This sect called itself "Dini ya Jesu Kristo" (Religion of Jesus Christ) or "Watu wa Ngozi", (People of Skins). They were also known as "J-Christo". These people had discarded European clothing and even the cotton Cukas (sheets) worn by the early "Watu wa Mungu", in favour of hides and skins.

Little is known about this group. In a journalistic account on Kenya it has been identified as a development of the "Watu wa Mungu", and other writers have seen them as at

34

least a "similar group". Some Akurinu categorically deny associations or connections with them, while others concede to there being a relationship. One informant, Timotheo kihungi observed that Reuben Kihiko, the founder of the "J. Kristo" movement was until the emergence of this movement in 1945, a Murathi (Prophet), among the Londiani Akurinu.³⁵ This evidence is corroborated by a story that appeared in

29

Mumenyereri, the Kikuyu Newspaper, in February 1948 . In this article, the author records some information about Reuben Kihiko and the movement he started:

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" (Arott) . 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 on the farm of a European called "Raki"...³⁶

Kihiko is described in this article, as a mad man who deceived people that he was a godly person so that they could donate money to him. Timotheo recalls that one day while at Maji MazurL, Kihiko claimed to have had a revelation from Jesus Christ that all "Arathi" should have a cross and the names "J Kristo" sewn on their clothes; plus a red band on each sleeve. Zaphron, the leader of the Arathi in this area refused to do these things and this is another reason why Kihiko left and went to Londian:.

At Londiani he preached that he haA been sent by God to deliver his people (the Kikuyu) from bondage "and whoever believes

38

... shall wear a badge consisting of a cross and an arrow..."

Kihiko managed to get followers and when in 1947 all Akurinu in the Rift Valley were deported to their homeland, all "J. Kristo" followers went to Gatundu and settled on Kihiko's land.

The real clash with the authorities however, occurred on 21st December 1947 at Kiganjo (Gatundu). On this day, a party of African police under a European sub-inspector were sent to intervene in a dispute between the group and an African tailor, Mwenje, who was said to have refused to sew a flag for them. Kihiko and his men attacked Mwenje with simis. The police party was ambushed in a village by the "Watu wa Ngozi", and three of the police, sub-inspector Mortime (a European) and two African constables were killed. For this murder seventeen youths and men were arrested following a chase through the forests of the Aberdares and Mount Kenya. Four of them including the leader,

39

Reuben Kihiko, were executed. Some Arathi were arrested on being mistaken for "Watu wa Ngozi" but they were later released.

Since there is no clear evidence that "Watu wa Ngozi" and "Watu wa Mungu" were one and the same group we can only conclude from the above that, the founder and some of his followers were previously "Watu wa Mungu", who ceased to be so, on forming the "J. Kristo movement". The Aku -inu today will not openly discuss Reuben Kihiko and his movement and they totally refuse to be associated with this movement. However the mention of the "J. Kristo" movement here, serves to show how the Akurinu movement has experienced crises and consequently schisms in its history and development.

It is evident that many of the elements present in the making of the Akurinu movement also existed here - young semi-literate men who were migrant labourers of squatters, rejection of European ways, and reading the Bible. The nature of the incident discussed above and what the group preached come close to the Dini ya Msambwa, with which Reuben may have had contact if he had been living in Lonciani. Otherwise it does not sound like that of the Akurin of the 1940s who had become less militant and apparently more religious. Timotheo Kihungi commented that the "J. Kristo" movement turned violent because they had become impatient with waiting for political independence. They felt they had waited long enough for the white man to leave and so the only way to get rid of him was by violence. It is true in the history of independence that some movements that were essentially religious became political and violent when they felt that their demands were (are) not met. ^ Dini ya

J. Kristo group still survives in Ndumberi and Riabai-Kiambu districts but they are no longer violent. Some still wear skins while others wear a typical traditional Kikuyu dress but in cloth not skins.

Since 1934 there had been no cases of Akurinu carrying or using any arms. Their arrests had been mainly for holding illegal meetings but their general behaviour was circumspect. Suspicions of subversion were often expressed, but the real issue was just that they were felt to be a

41

"common nuisance" and an "antisocial menace".

1947 also saw the formation of another sect in Ndeiya - Limuru by Jacob Muiru.⁴² This faction fell under the influence of Seventh Day Adventists and became a Sabbate:ian sect. The D.C. of Kiambu during this time, alleged that, they were influenced by Seventh Day Adventists of Western Kenya.⁴³

THE GROWTH AND SPREAD OF THE AKURINU DURING THE EMERGENCY, 1952-1960.

The declaration of a state of emergency in 1952, marked a crisis for all Kikuyu and had special implications for a group that aimed at keeping itself separate. It is not clear to what extent the Akurinu were actively involved in the struggle for independence. This, like many other questions about this period, is not easily answered. If they did participate in the struggle, they did so as individuals and not as a group. All the Akurinu interviewed, insisted that they did not take up arms or the oath; but all

the same they were continually harassed because of the ongoing feud between them and the missionaries. They however agree that certain individuals, especially Kenya African Union members, like Musa Thuo retained their political affiliations and involvement throughout. Musa

44

Thuo even took the oath with some of his followers.

Timotheo recalls how the Akurinu used to pray in caves, forests and on mountain tops for the liberation of the Kikuyu and consequent departure of the white man with his oppressive government and religion. He further adds that the Akurinu used to wonder what kind of God, God is if he should allow his people to suffer so. They would therefore wake up very early in the morning (three O'clock), to beseech God to drive out the white man, before the "missionaries beseeched God to perpetuate their stay in Kenya". In

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their prayers addressed to Ngai while facing Mount Kenya, one notes what Kibicho calls the "radical continuity" of the Kikuyu conception of God (Ngai) in a christian context.

46

The Kikuyu have always regarded Ngai as the supreme being and Kikuyu christians identified him with the biblical God. During the emergency they also identified Ngai with their struggle and quoted the Bible, particularly Lamentations in relation to their suffering. All this is a good indication that to them like the Jews, God is a God of history, always concerned with his people's welfare. Some of their prayers went as follows:

The wild foreign fig is overgrown and is replacing the genuine fig.

(Mutamaiyu wa kiriti ni ukurite muno ukeheria mutamaiyu wa mugunda....")

This means that the foreigner (wild fig) has overstretched his welcome by the Kikuyu and has displaced the rightful owners of the land. It is clear from these appeals that Ngai would understand their problems and help them.

The emergency gave the Akurinu a chance to legitimize their organisation. During this time, the government required the registration or exemption from registration for

47

all societies, including religious bodies. Various Akurinu groups which had their focus around particular leaders, and were often also identified with different geographical areas, made decisions to register as special bodies. "The various splits into Saturday and Sunday groups, polygamists and anti-polygamists, those with and without Luhya connections, were thus institutionalised and in

48

addition new divisions appeared".

The major division was among the orthodox Akurinu of Kiambu, who had rejected polygamy, observed Sunday and had not made any affiliations with the Luhya sects. One faction had its location in the Limuru area and was led by Hezroni Tumbo; the other one led by Joshua Mburu had been centred in the Rift Valley particularly in Subukia Nyahurumand

49

Kmangop, where he preached. When all the Kikuyu living in the Rift Valley were repatriated to Kikuyu reserve during the emergency, Joshua Mburu, formerly from Murang'a, decided

to settle in Kiratina, North Kiambu. Kiratina is the headquarters of his Church, to this day. Joshua is said to have contacted Hezroni Tumbo for a compromise, but in a meeting held in 1958 to work out their differences no compromise was reached. Their difference centred on the issue of strictness to be maintained in the observance of the levitical laws. Joshua argued that the laws should be observed to the letter while Hezroni adopted a more liberal approach. Hezroni therefore registered his Church as the Holy Ghost Church of Kenya in February 1958. He was the leader (Mutongoria), Joseph Karugia Secretary General and Samuel Gitau, treasurer. In 1960 Joshua Mburu registered his group as christian Holy Ghost Church of East Africa. By 1903 other churches were registered.

The Holy Ghost Church of Kenya changed its name to Holy Ghost Church of East Africa in 1970. Implicit in this name is its open attitude to all peoples despite the term East Africa. Despite their wish for all to join them, this church, like all other Akurinu and independent churches in Kenya, has a local emphasis. It is very rare to find a non-Kikuyu Mukurinu. Even where the church is established in non-Kikuyu areas, only immigrant Kikuyus are members.

Between 1955 and 1963 evangelistic crusades were organised by this church. Paul Kuniara and Daudi Ikigu preached all over Kiambu district to all the areas they had preached in the 1930s and others. They won many converts many of whom are ardent members to this day. Such a one is Joshua Njuguna who today is a baptizer in the church.

Gedion Kariage and Zakayo Mungai are also leaders in the church who have evangelised and won many converts. The Akurinu were no longer harassed by the administration and after 1963 they were free to preach any where and practise their faith as they wished as long as they did not infringe on any state laws. The freedom of worship that is enshrined in the Kenyan constitution, protects all churches whether independent or former missionary. The church continues to spread through evangelisation but not many people are being converted; while the youth continue to leave the church after getting advanced formal education. (This will be treated in more detail in Chapter Eight).

Since its official registration in 1958, this church has founded branches in almost all areas of the republic. There are branches all over central province (as already stated), in Meru, Nairobi, Embu, Eldoret, Mau Summit, Nakuru, Matunda, Kitale, Kakamega and some parts of North-

52

liastern province. Despite this widespread distribution, the church has a fairly small following. To date it has slightly over 6000 members, men women, and children. Probably the church's strict discipline, among other things, has contributed to its low appeal to the public. The majority of its followers too are in the rural areas.

However, this church has a very well organised leadership system, a code of ethical behaviour and its own liturgy. Since 1958 it has experienced some schisms though not major ones. It is furthermore apparent that although

schisms were prevalent in the middle period of the movement's history, between 1937-1958, the main factor which led to registration under different names for so many groups was a geographical one. This is the fact that the followers were scattered all over central province and the leaders in all the areas could not, due to transport problems, come together and agree to be registered as one group under one leader. All the same leadership disputes as well as theological ones were present and cannot be ignored.⁵³

At this juncture we shall examine the factors behind the emergence of this movement and then its organisational structure.

FACTORS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE AKURINU CHURCHES

1926-1980:

The foregoing outline history of the Akurinu movement itself explains little of why the movement emerged and why it took its particular form. Superficial likeness to the Roho Churches of Western Kenya are great, so much so that outsiders fail to differentiate them. Yet they differ in important ways. They came into existence in the same period, as already noted, with the African Independent Pentecostal Church of Africa (AIPCA), and the African Orthodox Church (AOC). If discontent with colonial rule, mission attempts to change Kikuyu customs and the land situation were the sole factors, we might ask why then another movement of such a radically different type should

have appeared.

Who were the "Arathi" really? Were they mission excommunicants or were they those among the non-christian Kikuyu who rejected Christianity totally? The answers to these and other related questions can help us explain the sociological factors behind the "Arathi" (Akurinu) movement if any. The Akurinu themselves provide theological explanations as to why they emerged. First we shall examine their side of the story.

The Akurinu claim that they emerged due to divine intervention. Elijah Kinyanjui says that during a state of spiritual dryness and material distress^ God raised up prophets from among the Kikuyu people after giving some of them the Holy Spirit. They got the Holy Spirit's gifts of prophecy, dreaming, seeing visions and speaking in tongues. These are all aspects of divine revelation. On the origin of the Church Elijah says:

Concerning the origin of the church, God gave gifts to his people. Some got the ability to demand freedom for our land. Others who are dreamers (Aroti) became so in 1927. That is when Roho worked among the Akurinu. He talked to those he chose by way of visions and whoever was so chosen was directed to where we were all gathered at Musa Muchai's home in Magina-Limuru.⁵⁵

The above question shows that the Akurinu movement emerged after a period of experiencing the Holy Ghost on the part of the chosen "Arathi" unlike the AIPCA and AOC who were sparked off mainly by cultural and political factors which culminated in the female circumcision controversy.^{5^}

All this happened between 1926-1927. During this time, the Arathi claim, individuals all over Limuru, Gatundu, Murang'a and Nyeri received the Holy Spirit, each in their own unique way. Each, by inspiration, went to iMusa Muchr s home and lived there for three years, between 1926 and 1930, reading, studying the Bible and praying ardently. It is because the Akurinu movement was founded under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, that the Akurinu call themselves, the Church of the Holy Ghost.

In the preamble to the rules of the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa is stated that, "reasons for the emergence of this church can be found in Acts 2:17, 1:8; Joel 2:28
58"

Hebrews 8:10-13 and Jeremiah 31:33-35. A look at these verses reveals an eschatological tendency, and an emphasis on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, two themes that are very prominent in the Akurinu faith. It goes without saying that for a people with a knowledge of prophecy and experiencing crises, that the prophecy of Joel and Jeremiah had a great impact on them. They felt that the eschatological age prophesied by Joel had come, and all had received the gifts of the Spirit. To the traditional Kikuyu idea of a Murathi as a person to give advice in times of crises and communicate with Ngai, was added the new and reinforcing teaching from biblical sources. This was the gift of the Holy Spirit not only to specialist elders but also to "young maidens", "servants", "men" and "women" when the time came, that is, in the last days. The book of Hebrews was particularly

appealing "They shall not teach everyone his fellow. . .for all shall know me from the least to the greatest."

(RSV: Heb:8:10-13). Taken together, these verses emphasize what is perhaps an important characteristic of prophency that the message comes, not to those who are rich or prominent, but to those open to receive the spirit. Therefore the spirit of the Lord will fall on all, the young, the old the rich and the poor and none will teach the other about God for everyone will know God by the spirit he received.

In 1926 the New Testament was published in the Kikuyu language. While the Old Testament was available in Kiswahili, some books of it, like the book of Jonah, were available in the Kikuyu language. Other literature in the Old Testament stories was also available in Kikuyu, for instance, Mohoro ma Tene (Stories of long ago) and Karirikania (Reminder). It is not surprising therefore that Joseph Ng'ang'a and his companions studied the Bible in the period 1926 to 1930. It is no wonder that the Akurinu in Musa Muchai's house during this period read the above verses which influenced them very much. Elijah Kinyanjui reckons that it was while they were here that these (verses) and others were revealed to them by the Holy Spirit. As they read on they found a lot of discrepancy between the missionary interpretation and understanding of the scriptures and their own. They also noted that the Gospel was misrepresented by the missionaries. They realised that the missionaries overlooked the importance of the Holy Spirit and his manifestations in prophecy, dreams and visions. They also realised that the

levitical laws of the Old Testament were ignored. These are very central beliefs in these churches to this day. Again the missionaries were assaulting their institutions, "but biblical religion emphatically upheld the family, land, fertility and the importance of women, and also appeared to endorse polygamy and respect for family

„ 59

ancestors".

A point worth noting at this stage is David Barrett's observation of the influence of the appearance of the Bible in the vernaculars (African) as a causative factor of independency.[^] Some Akurinu also say that other reasons for their emergence can be traced to the time when some followers of African Inland Mission (AIM) at Kijabe and Church Missionary Society (CMS) at Weithaga were expelled from these churches as a result of their experience of the Holy Spirit. It is not clear from them or Archival material where actually this idea of the Holy Spirit originated. But one record in the communications between the Provincial Commissioner of Central Province and the District Commissioners of Kiambu and Murang'a, observes that "Watu wa Mungu" were originally a religious sect founded by some American Missionary enthusiasts, but now merely carry out certain rituals, the meaning having been completely lost..."⁶¹ This researcher has not found any corroborative evidence anywhere else and we therefore cannot treat this as conclusive. Between 1926 and 1930 the Akurinu in Central Province had not had contacts with Western Kenyan Holy Spirit Churches,

although this was the same period that revival occurred in the Friends African Mission Church at Kaimosi, under Arthur Chilson. Spirit or Roho Churches sprang up during this period in Luo country, Meru and Kikuyu country, and we agree with Anderson that some sprang independently of others.

Contact between Kikuyu and Luhya and Luo Roho Churches started in the 1940s not earlier. Elijah Kinyanjui comments that people in Western Kenya and Central Kenya received similar spirit experiences but neither preached to the other. Elijah even visited and personally knew Roho Church leaders of Western Kenya, like Japhet Zale, Daniel Sande and Zakayo Kivuli. He even constantly went to Bokoyani in the 1940s.

To conclude this section, one would not be mistaken to take the Akurinu at their word for it is not uncommon for God to reveal Himself to people who have not experienced His presence before as evidenced in the call of Abraham. As will also be seen in Chapter Five experiences of the Holy Spirit are a common phenomenon during times of crises and this was not absent in the Kenya of the 1920s and 1930s.

At this point we shall now consider the answer to the question: Why did the Akurinu movement take the form it adopted? In examining the context in which the movement arose, we shall get the socio-political and economic factors behind the emergence of the Akurinu. An examination of the Akurinu of the 1920s and 1930s, as noted in Chapter Two, reveals that the founders were people who had not been converted to Christianity. They were people who had had

little contact with missionaries except in working for their, as labourers in their stations or for European settlers in their farms. Musa Muchai and Elijah Kinyanjui never attended mission schools and even Joseph Ng'ang'a's contact with the Gospel Missionary Society was not intensive. Daudi Ikigu, Paul Kuniara, Elijah Gachuki, Johana Wang'endo and Uezroni Tumbo all never went to mission schools. They taught themselves to read.⁶⁶ They all lived with their parents as squatters in European farms and they also worked in these farms. Many informants said that they never showed any interest 'in missionary Christianity or education. As already noted in Chapter Two, most Arathi came from the areas recently alienated for European settlement.

The Akurinu also emerged in a background of crises. The early "Watu wa Mungu" were of the first generation to grow up completely within the colonial regime. Apart from Musa Muchai, the others like Samuel Thuku and those mentioned above, were all young men in their teens or early twenties in 1930. This can be borne out by the fact that many of those still alive are in their 60s and early 70s. Some however like Samuel Thuku, Musa Thuo, and a few others had been in the mission churches particularly the African Inland Church at Kijabe. In 1927 some followers of this church were expelled after experiencing the Holy Spirit and they joined the Akurinu.

Joseph Karugia observes that spiritual lethargy existed in the missionary churches in the 1920s and therefore

spiritual revival was necessary. The country was also experiencing a lot of problems and changes. As noted in >Chapter Two, much of Kikuyuland had been alienated to the European -settlers particularly in Limuru where most of those who became "Arathi" lived. Forced labour, high taxation, the carrying of the Kipande and the banning of certain Kikuyu traditional practices like female circumcision, polygamy and ceremonial dancing and drinking, by missionaries, all odmbined to create tension and conflict .in colonial Kenya. The Akurinu experienced all these and as Adrian Hastings observes, they "were nearer the margins of society - the poorest, least educated of classes, their leaders not men who had any sustained experience of mission church or school."⁶⁸

Due probably to all these pressures the Akurinu becamc withdrawn, rejected Western dress, medicine and education. They advocated retention of Kikuyu traditional culture and religion but in a different way from Karing'a.⁶⁹ Like the Karing'a they demanded political and social - cultural independence. They were also opposed to missionary- interference with Kikuyu customs. During this time, the Akurinu were as nationalistic as the Karing'a. They idealised Kikuyu culture by sanctioning polygamy, and lived a communal type of life. Kenyatta observes that they even

70

believed in ancestral reverence. However, the Akurinu were also very religious in the Christian sense. They were ardent readers of the Bible and found inspiration in its

teaching. In fact, everything they did was justified biblically, using both the Old and the New Testaments. And although they tried to idealise Kikuyu culture they saw no other meaning in it, apart from the cultural and religious

71

satisfaction it gave them. Due to their apparent fanaticism, the Akurinu developed some behaviour patterns that made non-members regard them as strange people. For example, they would not shake hands with non-members " and when they, prayed they roared and shook violently. These practices are still practiced by the Akurinu today.

72

We can conclude from the foregoing that, the Akurinu movement took its particular form because of the suffering the early Arathi had, socially and politically. Being marginal groups, they seem to have suffered more directly the European injustice prevalent in the country. It is true that many other Kikuyu worked under similar conditions but did not become Akurinu.

While the AIPCA and AOC members rebelled against missionary education and religion at the missionary's terms, the Akurinu rejected totally anything European and chose to withdraw and create a community of their own in which they felt psychologically, culturally and spiritually at home. Unlike the AIPCA who continued to worship in a pattern similar to that of the missionary churches from which they had broken away, and who also continued to provide education in schools that they built themselves; the Akurinu structured their own pattern of worship and

community life and refused to send their children to school. They continued to refuse medical help although they accepted western dress. This dress was a long tunic

73

made of plain white sheet and a turban, for men. Women wore a long white pleated dress and a white head cloth. However, after the emergency and particularly after independence in 1963, they all agreed to take their children to school. Before the emergency only a few took their children to school.

The Akurinu still live a very communal type of life. This strong sense of community extends to their church services and is very evident in worship. They still reject western medicine though not as strictly as before. Some sects allow their members to receive medical help but the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa still rejects it. They believe in prayer and faith healing.

To sum up this section, we have noted that, the Akurinu emerged due to theological^social, political, economic and cultural reasons. Theologically they found fault with missionary Christianity particularly in its lack of emphasis on the Holy Spirit and his manifestations in dreams, visions and prophecy. They (the Missionaries) also failed to uphold the levitical laws of the Old Testament pertaining to food and relationship with God and one another. The Holy Spirit showed them how to read the Bible and from it they created a liturgy, code of ethical behaviour and a new spiritual community. In all these, the theological factor stands out as most significant. They also experienced economic, social',

political and cultural pressures like the rest of the population in Kenya. But among the Kikuyu, they are the only group who took a form characterized by great emphasis on the Holy Spirit.

They withdrew from society and rejected everything foreign. They are said to have built themselves grass houses to avoid using roofing material that came from Europe. However, unlike the Karing'a movement which adopted many aspects of Kikuyu cultural and religious traditions, the Arathi consciously adopted only three such traditions, namely, belief in Ngai, the idea of Thahu and the practice of prophecy. They still hold today, as they held before, that they are not interested in any political involvement.⁷⁴

All Akurinu churches whatever names and titles they have given themselves, are basically the same. They share similar beliefs and practices, and they all regard themselves as church of the Holy Ghost. They only differ in their manner of dress, observance of certain practices like shaking of hands, eating of certain fats, medical help, polygamy, and other small things of minor importance. These practices, they claim, have not at all influenced or changed their faith; it is basically the same in all their branches

THE ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE HOLY GHOST CHURCH
OF EAST AFRICA:

The Holy Ghost Church of East Africa has a well organised hierarchy of leadership and membership. This

is typical of all the other Akurinu sects. The church is open for membership to all people in East Africa who repent their sins and accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour.⁷⁵

Church government functions and is organised at two levels. There is an official hierarchy for purely administrative duties, and a religious one for purely spiritual matters. The former involves general administration, like building of more churches, liaising with the local authorities and government on all official matters, and matters relating to the welfare of the entire community, while the latter involves evangelical work, discipline, organising and officiating at ceremonies like baptism, marriage, ordination of priests and funerals.

The chief officials therefore are: Chairman, Secretary General and a Treasurer. Alongside these are leader (Mutongoria), Baptizer (Mubatithania) and Preacher (Muhunj Prayer Leader (Muhoi). One can hold two offices for instance, one can be secretary general and a preacher at the same time. The chairman is always the Mutongoria. This is the national administration of the church. There is however a corresponding hierarchy in the local congregations with the exception of Mutongoria who is the overall head of the church. All these posts have assistants. There is also a Council of Elders for the whole church and one for each congregation. The duties of the Mutongoria are to pray for the congregation and officiate at ceremonies, particularly marriage, ordination, baptism, and opening of newly built churches.

The work of a baptizer is to baptize and lay hands on all those baptized, as well as lead the service for burying

the dead.⁷⁷ He is also recognised as a leader in the local congregations and supervises church services. A Muhoi only leads prayers in the congregation while a preacher's duty is that of evangelising and giving sermons during Sunday services. Other leaders exist in the church, like, prophets, and hymn leaders, but they are not given any prominence.

With the exception of the Mutongoria all leaders work part-t[^] in the church. No payment is given to the officers but it is the joint responsibility of the whole church to see that

78

the Mutongoria is fed, clothed and lives comfortably.

All the unmarried young men and women in the church except those in schools, live in houses constructed specially for them near the churches. These houses are known as Garu (a kimeru term for a hut for an old man or young men).

While here, the youth cook, wash clothes and keep the house for the Mutongoria. They also see to the cleanliness of the church and spend the rest of their time in prayer.

LWHRN OF CHURCH SERVICE:

A visitor to one of the Akurinu churches will be impressed by the atmosphere of joy that he finds at a church service. When coming to the service all the members dress in their white church uniforms. Women and girls wear long pleated white dresses and white headscarfs, while the men and boys wear long white tunics and turbans. Small boys

79

wear white caps. Many take their turbans off inside the church, though, in order to observe the rule from

1Cor:11:4 and 7 which says that a man ought not to pray or prophesy with his head covered. They also remove their shoes before entering the church. This is said to be a sign of humility before God and in this way they follow the example of Moses when he was commanded by God to take off his shoes in front of the burning bush (Ex.3:5).

The movement of many people, all in white gives the impression of a closely knit group. However to an outsider, for the first time, they look disorganised particularly when individually they experience the Holy Spirit. This impression seems to be so when the pattern of church services is studied. At first sight, the meeting appears to be relatively unstructured. Whatever is done at the service appears to the visitor to happen spontaneously. People seem to do as the spirit moves them, uncontrolled by fixed liturgical patterns. This is particularly apparent in the African Mission of the Holy Ghost Church at Kandara. However, after attending a few church services in most Akurinu churches, the visitor soon realises that, what at first sight appeared to happen spontaneously does indeed follow a pattern, and a rather fixed one. The sequence of the various elements of the service is approximately the same from one meeting to another and each one of them is carried out in much the same way every time. The various elements usually follow the following order: opening hymn, prayer, hymns, prayer, sermon, hymns, prayer, testimonies, prayer, hymn, announcements, closing hymn.

Church services begin between 10.00 a.m. and 11.00 m. and always end between 2.00 p.m. and 3.00 p.m. When people enter the church they kneel and pray individually and silently in order to prepare themselves for the service. After that follows a number of hymns. Every service usually starts with the hymn, "God's book is holy" (Mbuku ya Ngai

81

ni theru).[^] This is started by the officiating Muhoi or whomever he selects to lead the hymn. Hymns and songs form an integral part of the worship in all Akurinu churches. These are sung with much enthusiasm and vigour. The singing is accompanied by drumming, clapping of hands and joyous dancing. In the established churches hymns are what Sundk er ⁸² calls a "versified statement about certain religious facts"/ He observes that in African Independent Churches, the character of the hymns of former mission churches is*,> changed, so that this statement of religious facts is no longer the main purpose of the singing of hymns, as it was in the mission churches.⁸³ The clapping, the rhythmic movements aid the repetition of whole songs or of the chorus in these churches, also indeed add an important new dimension to the former mission churches' hymns. They no longer only serve the purpose of giving the teachings of the church. They are also the means of expression of the church members' joy and praise to the Lord, and through them the feelings of the congregation can gradually rise to the point where they enter a trance and thereby reach a high stage of ecstatic communion with God. Their own original hymns are composed in such a way that they fit well into their pattern of

rythmic singing. According to the hymn writer, Daudi Ikigu,^t he has composed the hymns himself using his knowledge of the Bible and through inspiration by the Holy Spirit.

However, many members claim that Daudi receives the songs

84

in dreams, but he denied this allegation. They also sing hymns from the former mission churches to which some of the members belonged. They use three hymn books, (i) their own, Nyimbo cia Roho Mutheru,⁸⁵ composed by Daudi, (ii) Nyimbo cia kuinira Ngai⁸⁶ and Nyimbo cia Kiroho,⁸⁷ which are both used by most other Kikuyu speaking protestant churches, such as the Church of the Province of Kenya,ⁱ Presbyterian Church of East Africa (both former mission Churches) and the AIPCA and AOC.

Continuing with the service, after two or three hymns, the Muhoi calls people to prayer. They all kneel down with their backs to the altar. All the windows and doors are closed to shut off evil spirits and to minimize distractions^o and hence ensure total concentration/ The Muhoi raises his hands and all the men do likewise. The women do not raise their hands but spread them as if ready to receive something.⁸⁹ The Akurinu explain that this posture in prayer is recommended by God as seen in Psalms 134:2.

Lift up your hands to the holy
place, and bless the Lord.
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It is also found in 1 Timothy 2:8. Men therefore raise the hands to ask for God's blessings, while the women spread open their hands to receive God's blessings.⁹⁰ The prayers which are addressed to "Jehova", "God of Israel", God of

of our fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob," rotate around the themes of asking God to strengthen them in their faith and to correct their weaknesses and cleanse them totally from evil thoughts and actions. While prayers are going on some members experience the Holy Spirit. They become ecstatic and roar. This happens to both men and women. All prayers start with a refrain that is repeated three times. The refrain goes as follows:

Prayer leader: "I bessech God the father, the spirit and
Jesus Christ our Saviour" (x3)

Congregation: "Amen".

Prayer leader: "God our father bless us". (x3) .

Congregation: "By your willingness and that of the spirit
and that of Jesus Christ our Saviour".

(The Lord's prayer is also said three times).

After this, the Muhoi leads the congregation in a long prayer. After this prayer the officiating baptizer asks one elder, a young man and a young woman respectively, to pray on behalf of the congregation in turns. After these prayers are offered he calls upon the preacher to deliver the sermon. After the sermon, the whole pattern is repeated another two or three times.

The preacher, preaches on a theme from the scripture, or from daily experiences, trying to relate the verses chosen for the day to daily experiences and comparing or interrelating them with other similar biblical situations. Much emphasis during preaching is laid on the need for

repentance, good conduct by obeying God's commandments, and the role of the Holy Spirit who is regarded as presently in charge of these "last days". After the sermon, singing and praying, anybody with something to share is allowed to "greet" the congregation: There is no time limit for this

91

activity and one can talk for as long as one wishes.

After these testimonies, a few more songs are sung and then any messages and announcements for the week are made. The Muhoi concludes the meeting with a long prayer for all, including the needs of the members, the sick in general and the society around them and the nation as a whole. The Holy Ghost Church of East Africa appears to programme their services. In other churches, particularly the African Mission of the Holy Ghost Church, the Holy Spirit is regarded as the real leader of the meetings and therefore the elders must take care not to impose a programme but to leave room for the Holy Spirit to conduct

92

the meeting. This freedom of the Holy Spirit is illustrated by the trances that appear at various stages of a church service. People may be seized by the Spirit at any time or they may be asked to deliver a message by the Spirit which has to be done no matter what is currently going on, singing, preaching or testimonies.

There are no written prayer books, for the members of the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa, and generally all Akurinu. They argue that prayers should be spontaneous and according to one's needs, hence they are opposed to the formalism of most missionary founded churches. However, for

certain ceremonies e.g. marriages, funerals and opening

93

of churches, the Anglican book of common prayer, is used particularly for the relevant readings.

Their Sunday services are held in churches. These churches are constructed in much the same way as other christian churches. The first church, for this group, was built in 1948 at Murengeti. Before this, they used to worship in members' houses or in the open air. The church is constituted of an altar, which they call "sacrificial place", (Kigongona), a vestry on each side of the altar where the Mutongoria and other church elders change into the ceremonial roles, for worship. The rest of the church is partitioned into two by a central passage. One side has seats for men and the other for women and children. At the end of the church are two other rooms where men and women respectively change into their worship clothes. Every church member, adults and children, must wear these clothes before entering the church. These clothes are all white. Collection to aid the church is done after service, outside the church. For the Akurinu, money should not be handled inside the church. In fact as people enter the church whether members or not, they leave their money and shoes in these rooms, where a trusted person guards them. They argue that Jesus condemned the practice of handling money inside the church, when he "cleansed" the temple in Jerusalem by evicting money changers.

We have seen that this church has as well organised pattern of leadership which has created a stable and unified

community of believers. Despite this however, lack of proper theological training has led to varied interpretation and understanding of the Bible among the church members. Although this has not led to major schisms, it is discernable when each preacher or member stands to deliver a sermon or testimony. This is because each person is "directed" by the spirit, to preach and they do not always agree in the way each interprets a scripture reading. On the other hand there is a noticeable consensus in ritual. There is a sense of community feeling and this keeps the members together as one united group. Despite their literal and very fundamental approach in interpretation of scripture, one can say that the Akurinu have developed a unique understanding of several biblical concepts such as, the ideas of the Holy Spirit and community.

FOOTNOTES.

1. "Cultural pressures" refers to the condemnation of polygamy by the churches, female circumcision and other beliefs and practices of the Kikuyu.
2. KNA DC/F.H./1/1: letter of D.C. Kiambu to D.C. of Fort Hail, 17th February, 1931.
3. Ibid.
4. Memorandum prepared by the Kikuyu Mission Council on female circumcision, Kikuyu. Church of Scotland Mission, Mimeo. 1931. Quoted in J. Murray "Kikuyu Spirit Churches" article in Journal of Religion in Africa Vol. 5 1973. p.
5. Elijah Kinyanjui, Interview.
6. Kinyanjui, interview.
7. Kinyanjui, interview.
8. Samuel-John-Chege, interview.
See also interview with Joshua Mburu in 1976, in J. Murray op.cit. p.
9. Chege, interview.
10. See the constitution of the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa. (Appendix A) Rule No. 2.
11. KNA DC/KBU/3/2 letter of Provincial Commissioner, Central Province to the District Commissioner, Kiambu and Fort Hail, 19th February, 1934.

12. Johnstone M'Kiambati was the leader of the dissidents who broke away from the church of Scotland Missi in Chuka, during the female circumcision controversy. Some of them joined the Akurinu but later left. See also F.B. Welbourn: East African Rebels: A Study of some independent churches. (London, SCM Press, 1961.) pp. 155-156.
13. KNA DC/KBU/3/2, op.cit.
14. Kinyanjui, interview.
15. KNA DC/KBU/3/2.
16. The Akurinu favoured mountain tops because of the peace and quiet that was found there. The fact that Ngai was said to live on mountains may also have been a reason for praying to him there.
17. The East African Standard; report of magisterial enquiry on the Ndaragu Forest Affray. 20th February, 1934.
18. Kinyanjui, interview.
19. See KNA DC/F.H.2/1/4 for Fort Hall Order No. 1 and 2 of 1934; see PC/CP.8/7/12 for corresponding Kiambu orders.
20. Chege, interview.
21. Kinyanjui, interview.
22. Kinyanjui, interview. See also KNA PC/CP.8/7/3, report from Police Periodical, June 28th, 1935.

25. Kinyanjui, interview.
24. Hezroni Tumbo, interview.
25. Tumbo, interview.
20. J. Niuguna, interview.
27. The Church today is headed by Johana Wang'endo.
23. Elijah Kinyanjui, Hezroni Tumbo, interview
29. The (i) Holy Ghost Church of East Africa was founded in 1934 but was registered in 1956. Its leader founder is Hezroni Tumbo.
- (ii) God's word Holy Ghost Church was founded by Samuel Thuku in 1' 49 and was registered in 1960. Its current loader is Johana Wang'endo.
- (iii) African Mission of the Holy Ghost Church was founded in 1950 by Johana Waweru and was registered in 1961. Its current leader is Daniel Muchiri.
- (iv) Chosen Church of the Holy Spirit was founde. by Elijah Kinyanjui and registered in 1968. He i still its leader.
- (v) African Holy Ghcst Christian Church is headed by Daniel Nduti, it troke off from Foundation of the Prophets Church in 1968.
30. KNA DC/F.H.2/1/4: letter from D.C. Kiambu to P.C. Central Province, 15th June, 1942, reproduced in Negley Farson, Last chance in Africa (London, 194'.) pp. 223-S.

31. J. Murray op.cit., p. 213.
32. Negley Farson, op.cit. p. 217.
33. KNA PC/CP.8/7/3. Letter of DC Fort Hall to PC
Central Province 8th January 1938.
34. Farson op.cit. p. 222-230. See also Rosberg and
Nottingham: The Myth of Mau Mau Nationalism in
Kenya, (Nairobi, EAPH, 1966). pp. 327-28.
35. Timotheo Kihungu, Interview.
- 31>. KNA 8/106. Intelligence security (Newspaper resorts)
Mumenyereri, 1947-1950. Letter by Paul Kiarie
Thiong'o to the editor, Mumenyereri 24/2/1948
"How the People who committed the crime were
misled by Kihiko".
37. Ibid.
38. Ibid.
39. Kihungi, Interview, See also Farson op.cit. p. 9.
- 40'. See Audrey Wipper: Rural Rebels: A study of two
Protest Movements in Kenya, Nairobi, OUP, 1977.
On the "Dini ya Musaibwa" and the "Cult of Mumbo".
41. KNA PC/CP.8/7/3. Secretar/ of Ndondori Farmers
Association to Commissioner of Labour, Nairobi
8/4/1946.
42. Today this church is known as Seventh Day Adventist
Missionary Church. Jacob Muiuru is still its
leader.

43. Farson op.cit., pp. 213-215. Also KNA/DC/FH.2/2/4/4
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Letter from DC Kiambu to PC Central
Province. 15/6/1942.
44. Kinyanjui, Interview.
45. The Kikuyu prayed Facing Mount Kenya, for they believed
it to be the most important earthly abode
of God in their land. The Akurinu adopted
this way of praying. See also J. Kenyatta
Facing Mount Kenya: 274 .
46. See S.G. Kibicho, The Kikuyu Conception of God
its Continuity into the Christian Era, and the
Question it raises for the Christian idea of
revelation.
47. J. Murray op.cit., p. 216.
48. ibid., p. 216.
49. See pages 10-12.
50. This church had been registered as 'Akurinu' Holy
Ghost Church of Kenya in 30th June 1956, with
Hezroni Tumbo as leader or Chairman, Paul Kuniara,
Secretary-General and Elijah Gachuki Treasurer.
Today Johana Kariuki is the Treasurer and
Joseph Karugia, Secretary-General', according to
their 1983 Annual Return in the Office of the
Registrar of Societies. H^Toni Tumbo remains the
Leader.

- 1.1. God's word Holy Ghost Chur'ch. (1960).
 2. African Mission of the Holy Ghost Church (1961).
 3. Kenya Foundation of the Prophets Church (1960).
 4. Holy Spirit Church of Zion. (1963).
 5. East African Israel Church (1964).
 6. Seventh Day Adventist Missionary Church (1961).
2. When the Church was registered in 1956, the records show that it had 5,000 members. It is apparent that not many today join the Church as before 1960.
- 3. Such disputes centred on certain practices like polygamy, and strictness to be maintained in observing levitical laws.
- >4. Kinyanjui, interview.
55. Kinyanjui, interview.
- >6. See F.B. Welbourn op.cit. pp. 135-143.
- >7. Samuel-John Chege, Interview.
58. A type-written manuscript, "Constitution and rules of the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa". Kept by Joseph Karugia.
59. D.B. Barrett: Schism and Renewal! in Africa: An analysis of six thousand contemporary religious movements. (Nairobi OUP, 1968), pp. 127-134.

60. Ibid, p. 127.
61. KNA- PC/CP.8/7/3.
62. W.B. Anderson: The Church in East Africa. 1840-1974.
(Nairobi, Uzima Press Limited, 1977). p. 119.
63. Ibid, p. 120.
64. Kinyanjui, Interview.
65. RSV Bible, Genesis 12: 1-9.
66. Joseph Karugia, Joshua Kamau, interviews.
67. Kinyanjui, interview.
68. Adrian Hastings: A History of African Christianity.
1950-1975. (London, Cambridge University Press
1979). p. 79.
69. Karing'a is the same as African Orthodox Church (AOC) .
The word means Orthodox or Pure. This group
advocated a return to the traditional Kikuyu
way of life. See Welbourn: op.cit. , p. 149.
70. Kenyatta, op.cit. p. 276.
71. The Author's concussions.
72. The reason why they adopted this practice of not
shaking hands with r. >n-Akurinu is to avoid being
contaminated with sin. To them, the non-christian
population were still practising certain practiccs
that to them had been forbidden by the Holy Spirit.

73. This form of dress, they claim, is recommended in the Bible for the priests. (Exodus: 28:114) The Akurinu regard themselves as God's priests.
74. Kenvatta, op.cit. p. 277.
75. Karugia, interview. See also the constitution Appendix A.
76. For the official duties, see the constitution. Other sects do not use these terms. Instead they use, Archbishop, Bishop, Pastor, Elder. An example of such a church is African Holy Ghost Christian Church. Its Archbishop is Daniel Nduti. It has branches in Silibwet, Leshai* Podo in Nyandarua. Its Headquarter is in Gachogi-ini Kandara, Murang'a.
77. J. Njuguna, interview.
78. The Mutongoria of this church, Hezroni TumbQ, is not married. He choose not to be. However other sects, Atongoria are married.
79. Participant Observation of Church Services in May 1981.
80. Ibid.
81. "Mbuku ya Ngai ni Theru" Nyimbo cia Kuinira Ngai (Nairobi, Uzima Press Limited 1974) Hymn No. 56, p. 36.

82. B.G.M. Sundkelr T Bantu Prophets in South Africa
(London: OUP 1961) p. 196.
83. *ibid.*, p. 196.
84. J. Njuguna, Zakayo Mungai, Interviews.
85. Daudi Ikigu: Nyirobo cia Roho Mutheru Kijabe,
(Kijabe Printing Press, 1980).
N
86. Nyimbo cia Kuinira Ngai; *op.cit.*
87. Nyirobo cia Kiroho: (Nairobi, Evangel Press, 1980).
88. Participant observation: Nov. 1980-June 1981, at
i
Limuru, Muguga, Nakuru and Nyandarua.
89. Participant observation. ,
90. NjUguna, Interview. <
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91. Participant observation.
92. Participant observation.
93. Ibuku ria Thara, (Nairobi, Uzima Press Limited, 1979).
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94. R.S.V. Bible, Luke 19:45-46.

SECTION III

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CHAPTER V Om1. SOME MAJOR BELIEFS AND PRACTICES OF THE HOLY GHOSTCHURCH OF EAST AFRICA:SOURCES OF THEIR BELIEFS: A brief outline:

In the previous chapters we maintained that, what the Akurinu believed in the 1930s was evolved both from the Bible and the traditional Kikuyu religious background in which they grew up. Although they rejected western religion and education, they could not retreat into a purely traditional way of life. The time for that had gone. Neither did they totally reject everything the Europeans brought, for they still retained the Bible. It is out of this Bible that they drew many of the Beliefs and practices which they still adhere to today.

The Bible is their foundation, strength and only source of inspiration. Their sermons, hymns and testimonies confirm this fact, for they are usually punctuated by the words, "the Bible says, "God says" and so on. In the words of a Mukurinu Pastor, "We adhere firmly to all that is written in the book (of God)."¹ It is very clear from this that the Bible has a very central position in the faith of this church. That period of three years, when the original founders gathered at Musa Muchai's house, was characterised by prayer, reading the Bible and submitting to the will of the Holy Spirit.

Under his guidance, through revelation in dreanjs, visions and prophency, the Akurinu developed the beliefs which feature prominently in their faith and which distinguish it from that of the other churches. Such beliefs and practices include, belief in the Holy Spirit and his manifestations in dreams, visions and prophecies; prayer, final judgement, baptism and ritual uncleanness. Since these beliefs and practices are very irany and extensive, they cannot all be discussed in this study. We have therefore chosen only those we consider important to this study, namely: the Holy Spirit and his manifestations in dreams, visions and prophecies; baptism and the concept of ritual uncleanness.

It is not clear how some of these beliefs and practices evolved and became part of the Akurinu faith and ethic. However it is probable that when the early Akurinu were confronted with theological problems, particularly when their beliefs clashed with traditional Kikuyu practices, the Akurinu resorted to scripture for inspiration and answers. There is evidence of controversies in the church that centred on certain traditional practices. The Akurinu were strongly vocal against sorcery, witchcraft, adultery and red rituals (Magongona) of the Kikuyu. Daudilkigu recalls how his brother Paulo Kuniara, the first and most effective evangelist of this church, destroyed charms, amulets and other ritualistic and magical objects whenever he preached to and converted those already steeped in these practices.² He taught from tm

Bible that God abhors these practices and that all those who believe should approach him with repentant and contrite hearts. He branded all these objects and practices, "Jies" and preached

3

that God was the only truth.

This attitude and denouncement of these evil practices, was to cause the church many problems which at times led to schism. There is very little information on the early preaching of the Akurinu, neither are there any written documents or creeds from which one can determine or deduce this group's beliefs and practices. The only sources available are their sermons, testimonies, prayers, hymn books and constitution and rules. The K'nyia National Archives, administration files have some vague information on the beliefs of the Akurinu in the period 1330-1958. Here they were regarded as "evangelists of a new faith" by the administration officials. It is also noted in these files that the Akurirj, claimed to be divinely inspired and to be in direct communication with God through dreams, visions and prophecy. God speaking to them or calling them by divine revelation is a significant feature of the church and is even stated in their constitution. "God speaks to us as he did to the prophets." (Gen:26, 27 12:7-10, 2 Kings 3:11-12).⁵ As already noted, the early Akurinu claimed to have been called this way.

Kagana wa Chege, an early Mukurinu, received his calling in a similar way as Joseph Ng'ang'a. His calling is the only preserved record of what actually took place when a Kikuyu was converted to the "new faith". Chege was a farm labourer

who attended an out-school at Kijabe as a boy and had gone to work in the Rift Valley in 1921. Later he attended night classes at an Africa Inland M'ission (AIM) farm school near Turi where he became literate in Kiswahili. Inevitably, he would have received some kind of religious instruction with the Bible as text-book, at both the AIM schools he attended. His testimony does not make it clear whether or not he was baptized. In age, occupation and education, he seems to be typical of many of the early Akurinu.

In 1930 he began to experience dreams in which he heard a voice urging him repeatedly to read verses from the Bible. Kagana relates the experience as follows;

I was asleep in my house... I had a dream.... I heard a voice calling me. It said "you must read verses 10 and 11 in the 8th chapter of the epistle of Hebrews". In the morning I remembered my dream and wondered very much at it. I read the indicated passage, "they shall not teach everyone his fellow... for all shall know me from the least to the greatest."

The second dream message which Kagana received directed him to read some verses from Acts 2:17-21,

In the last days... I shall pour my spirit on all flesh, and your young men shall see visions and your old men shall dream dreams, ye and on my men servant and my maid servants in those days, I will pour out my spirit and they shall prophesy."⁶

Another passage he was asked to read was Joel 2:28-30 from which Acts 2: 17-21 is quoted. Joel's and Jeremiah's prophecies, as noted in Chapter 3, had a great impact upon a people to

whom prophecy was not a new idea. Prophecy will be discussed in greater detail in the next chapter. Due to the political, economic and social conditions in the country, prophecy took on a new meaning, predicting a better future; and what could be more appropriate than a declaration of the imminence of the last days as prophesied by the prophet Joel?

It is evident from the foregoing that most of the major beliefs of the Akurinu were there at the start of the movement in the period 1926-1934. Therefore the belief in the Holy Spirit, his manifestations in dreams, visions and prophecy, spirit baptism,⁷ and ritual uncleanness⁸ are as old as the Church and are the features that distinguish it very much from other churches. Teachings about Christ are not prominent. The Holy Spirit features prominently over and above God the Father and the Son. This dominance of the Holy Spirit in their belief system, has earned the Akurinu labels like "People of the Spirit" (Watu wa Roho), from non members. Up to today, the Akurinu regard themselves as "friends of the Holy Spirit" (Arata a Roho Mutheru). Elijah Kinyanjui says in relation to the role of the Holy Spirit in Akurinu churches, "The Holy Spirit was given to us at the beginning to be our guide, in all ways, and in whatever the Almighty God wants us to do, as commanded in the Bible."⁹

Despite the peculiar characteristics noted above, the Akurinu in general and the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa in particular, share the basic Christian beliefs and practices with other older churches. They use the same hymnal as the other churches. However, as noted in Chapter Three, they have also composed

their own hymnal. In this chapter we attempt to discuss the belief in the Holy Spirit.

2. (a) The Holy Spirit:

The Holy Ghost Church of Hast ATrica, and all Akurinu churchi 3S in general, is founded on the belief in the guidance of the Hcly Spirit. This belief is discernable the moment one enters an Akurinu church or discusses their faith with one of them. Their hymns, sermons, testimonies and prayers constantly dwell on this belief. Their beliefs therefore centre around their experience of being spoken to by the Holy Sp rit. They see his presence most clearly in speaking in tongues, in dreams, visions and prophecy Through these phenomena they feel the presence of God himself, through his Holy Spirit and through them they receive his power to overcome temptations and to lead a sound moral life.) The necessary condition for receiving the Holy Spirit is a pure and contrite heart. For one to be cleansed of all sin and evil, one needs to repent and be forgiven. This cleansing has been made possible by the death of Jesus Christ. His death was also the event that made possible the cominr, of the Holy Spirit. Jesus Christ is therefore the one who has instituted the way of Salvation for man.

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This church is therefore structurally spiritualistic. The Holy Spirit is an active and living force. Everything done in this church is attributed to the H^ly Spirit. It is the -Holy Spirit that inspires the preaching of the Gospel, the conversion of people, healing and even speaking in tongues, seeing visiors,

dreams and prophecy. It is this same spirit who filled the first prophets and inspired the emergence of this church. He also guided these prophets to understand and interpret the scriptures wisely. The churches therefore teach perfect obedience and complete submission to the dictates of the Holy Spirit.

The Akurinu churches and particularly the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa, (to go back a bit in History, see also Chapter Three) came into being as a result of the controversy with Africa Inland Mission (AIM), over the question of possession of the Holy Spirit. Other factors may have contributed to the split in the years after 1926, but the fundamental theological difference between them which caused the separation was to be found in their attitudes to the manifestations of the Holy Spirit* Elijah Kinyanjui^ recalls that between 1926-27 some members of the AIM experienced an outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Like the apostles on the day of Pentecost, they spoke in tongues, saw visions, prophesied and even roared like lions due to the power of the spirit that seized them. The AIM while believing in the importance of the Holy Spirit, refused to recognize such phenomena as

12

true manifestations of his presence. This compelled the AIM to throw out of the church all those who had this experience. However this controversy was not as distinct as that which brought into existence the Holy Spirit Church of East Africa. This church came into existence after a controversy with the Friends African Mission (FAM) at Kaimosi

over the baptism with the Holy Spirit as distinguished by

13

speaking in tongues. On the other hand, the Akurinu are adamant that although some of their early prophets were expelled from the AIM, many other prophets, then and later, got the Holy Spirit outside the churches. Though some had contact with the missions, many others were from the non-converted Kikuyu. Many joined due to a vision received or seen in answer to a disturbing problem like sickness, drunkenness or general immoral living. When asked why they joined the Akurinu church and not any other, many Akurinu of all known sects give a theological reason : "I was called meaning that their joining was in answer to a divine calling

Throughout the history of the Akurinu churches since 19 members tell of individual, and corporate experiences of the Holy Spirit.

(b) The Nature and Role of the Holy Spirit in the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa:

When one decides to become a Mukurinu it is said that he has "believed" (Gwitikia). This entails confession of sins, repentance, forgiveness and God's sign that one has been forgiven. This sign is being spirit-filled which is evident in the change of one's life style by living in Christ. Such a spirit-filled person cannot sin again because¹ he has the spirit of God to lead and guide him. Who then is this Holy Spirit or Spirit of God?

One informant, Elijah Kinyanjui, describes the Holy

Spirit as "something unknowable", except to those who possess it.

Roho ni kiundu gitangimenyeka, ni kincju giukaga na njira ya mundu uria wariirio.

The spirit is something unknowable. It is something that comes in a manner peculiar and known only to the person who has been spoken to.¹⁵

Another informant, Joseph Karugia, describes it this way,

The Holy Spirit has no body, he is not: tangible. He dwells in men's hearts, directing all they do. He is not like Jesus or God when he rested on Mount Sinai and talked to Moses. He cannot be seen.¹⁶

Hezroni Tumbo describes him as breath-like and he is also a reconciler:

He dwells in people's hearts and minds.

He is also a reconciler between man and Jesus.

That is why it is written that whoever abuses the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven.¹⁷

Hezroni also adds that the Holy Spirit acts as the conscience, for he checks people from doing wrong. He also teaches believers about God. He too compares the spirit to a dress. Just as one wears a dress to cover himself, when one "believes" he receives the Holy Spirit, to clothe him. But when one sins the dress of the spirit disappears and he is left naked. The spirit is therefore, a "dress for the heart" (Nguo ya ngoro). Adam and Eve felt themselves naked after

Sinning, because the spirit left them .¹ -

According to Daudi Ikigu, the Church's theologian, the Holy Spirit is truth. "He is the one who protects people from sinning and is the "Good News". He is Jesus implanted

19

in people's hearts." "Once you have the spirit", Daudi continues, "You have God and Jesus in you as well, for God, Jesus and the spirit are one, they are all made one by truth." Certain hymns depict this relationship between the three persons of the Trinity. One such hymn says of them,

Jchova ni mulhamaki
Jesu ni kigongona.
Roho mutheru ni maai
Magutheragia andu oothe.^0

Jehova is the King
Jesus is the sacrificial altar,
.The Holy Spirit is water to be cleansing
all people.

From this song, the Holy Spirit is seen as the one integrating all the people and unifying them through cleansing. The Akurinu reiterate that the Holy Spirit is reigning currently and is accomplishing the work of salvation that Jesus had started. Jesus sits at the right hand of "The Father" (God) waiting for the day of Judgement.²¹

The Holy Spirit, is therefore understood as "breath-like," "dress-like," conscience, a reconciler between man and Jesus Christ; a witness to every believer at the day of judgement and the sign that one is eligible for salvation. All

informants agreed that to them the spirit was a mysterious power (kiundu). When it caught one, he could not get rid of it and one just felt the urge to receive the word of God. The experience of this kiundu always manifested itself in an ecstatic manner; that is why some roared like lions, others cried and others spoke in incomprehensible languages. It is only when the early Arathi were commanded to read portions from scripture that they understood that this kiundu was from God. Due to this experience many more were expelled from

22

other churches, for example Karing'ain 1934. Jeremiah wanginyi is one of those who were expelled from this church at Manguo on account of experiencing the Holy Spirit. The spirit possessed all men, women and children, depending on the extent of one's faith in God.

Unlike in the Africa Israel Church Nineveh, where it is still thought desirable for every member to receive the Holy Spirit, and where if this has not happened after a number of years of membership, it is regarded as proof that one has not truly confessed all his sins; the Akurinu do not insist
2
on everyone receiving the Holy Spirit. To them, as scripture has it, the Holy Spirit is God's gift and he dispenses it freely to whomever he wills. The gift of the spirit is not necessarily a second experience. It may not be simultaneous to or consequent upon receiving baptism. One can possess it even before baptism and therefore be regarded as a christian. In such a case, one is said to be more strengthened in the faith after baptism. Such a spirit-filled person is likely

to get a responsibility in the church as baptizer, prayer leader or a preacher.

Apart from the gifts of speaking in tongues, seeing visions, dreams and prophecy, the Akurinn recognize other gifts of the spirit. Such are, ability to compose hymns, to pray over the faithful, to preach and pray for the sick. In this respect, the Holy Spirit plays a big role in the church and in the lives of members. The Akurinu also recognise other subjective gifts of the spirit that manifest themselves in moral transformation.

The Holy Spirit also plays a big role in marriage, ordination of pastors, elders and other helpers in the church and baptism. Concerning marriage, members are encouraged to make private enquiries to the Holy Spirit about their mates. There is nothing strange in this because everyone christian or not may be inclined to seek knowledge about such a vital stage of his life from the supernatural. However since in this church, revelation from the Holy Spirit is very necessary as a go ahead before one embarks on any important

24

thing, enquiry to the Holy Spirit is here important. Appeals to the Holy Spirit are also made in relation to other areas of life such as, the married state itself, child bearing for women, employment and business or prosperity for men.

Concerning ordination of church leaders, leaders are chosen, not by human knowledge, but by the power of God

ICor: 1:17-30). The whole church and particularly the leaders have to pray ardently to God so that he can show them, through the Holy Spirit, who is eligible for leadership. If chosen, an officer would therefore take his office very seriously remembering that his responsibility was not to any congregation, and not to any minister but to none other than the Holy Spirit. Where baptism is concerned, (as shown in Chapter 6) the Holy Spirit plays a major role since one cannot be baptized before the Holy Spirit has revealed his baptismal name. This is done through a dream or a voice. Members too, pray ardently so that their names may be revealed. A dream - revealed name therefore, seems to constitute baptism in the Akurinu churches.

This church (HGCEA), like the Aladura churches in Nigeria, has been founded on the belief that God has broken through to his people in Kenya in a new revelation available
25
to everybody who is a believer." The promise fulfilled for the Jewish people and the early church on the day of Pentecost, has now been fulfilled for the Church in Kenya.²⁶

(c) The Role of The Holy Spirit in Salvation:

Salvation, the Akurinu say, is a process which starts with the realisation of one's sinfulness and the appropriate repentance. This condition of salvation is regarded as "believing" (Gwitikia) and Hezroni agrees that this can be equated with what revivalists regard as "being saved"
27
(Kuhonoka). "Believing" and "Conversion" mean the same

thing also. On being converted, one receives the Holy Spirit. The Akurinu say that one can also receive the Holy Spirit before conversion. The spirit works in believers through inner inspiration rather than in visible possession and speaking in tongues. The work of the spirit is also seen in good moral living, christian fellowship and generally in the moral quality of one's life.

The role of the Holy Spirit in salvation is assurance and guidance. The possession by the Holy Spirit is seen as necessary for salvation and a follow up of conversion. Having the Holy Spirit is seen as a guarantee that one has been accepted by God and will therefore inherit eternal life, that is be saved.

The Holy Spirit also effects salvation by helping the believer in the daily struggle against sin and temptation. He is equated with the conscience, for he is in our hearts and minds, ensuring that they do not sin. In fact, the spirit occupies a person's heart after conversion but he can desert him if he resorts to sinning. But every one with the spirit has the ability to distinguish right from wrong.

After believing... one undergoes a total transformation. The spirit that possesses him enables him to do the right thing. He also gets the power to resist. However if a christian sins, we remove him from the church because we believe in one sin deliberately.

The spirit speaks directly to the Akurinu. As well as being in every believer's heart (Jer 31:33-35) he is present

in the church as a power from God. Attempts to conceal sins are futile for the spirit can reveal the sinner in public. However, though public confession of sins is not advocated in this church, everyone is required to confess to God and avoid sin as much as possible because God cannot heed prayers from a sinful person. Sin alienates man from God. Church leaders, therefore reiterate that purity of heart, mind, body and soul are required of all believers in their efforts to communicate with God. Refusal to confess sins leads to consequences such as death. Therefore, as in the Africa Israel Church Nineveh, and the Holy Spirit Church of East Africa, there is a deep rooted belief in cleanness, purity and purification in this church.

The salvific role of the Holy Spirit is well illustrated by one hymn:

1. Roho mutheru oimire iguru
Agiuka gutongoria
Andu aria mageraga njira
ya guthii matu-ini.

Chorus: Roho nive utuhoyagira
Agatuthaithanira
Na mucayo utangigweteka,
Akoiga, Awa Baba.

2. Roho ni aikurukiire atumwo
mari Jerusalem
Akigarura ngoro ciao
Akimahe hinya.
3. Roho mutheru atonya ngoro,
Ahehenjaga ciiga
Agatharia nyumba ya tene,
Agaka ingi njeru.⁹

(Lit.) The Holy Spirit came from above (heaven) •
to lead those people who seek the way
to go to heaven.

Chorus: The spirit prays for us and pleads with God on our behalf with a concern that is beyond mention and says, Aba, Father.

2. The spirit descended on the Apostles at Jerusalem, changed their hearts and gave them strength.
3. When the spirit enters hearts he destroys the old house (body) and builds a new one.

Here in the hymn the Holy Spirit is depicted as one who gives strength to believers recreates them a new and guides them to the way of eternal life. He is therefore actively involved in the salvation of believers and all mankind who are open to receive him.

Y In their conception of salvation, the Akurinu believe that salvation means a more positive life of love, fellowship, victory and protection. All this is preparatory for a better life in the future. They are convinced that faith in God and victory in this life over: sin and temptation will lead to a life that is much better when they die.

In their conception of sinfulness, and sin and forgiveness, the Akurinu distinguish between errors and sins (Mahitia and Mehia) - while errors are transgressions against neighbour, sin is a direct transgression against God and is therefore very serious. Since sin alienates man from God, it cannot be erased easily. On the other hand, errors are minor offences for example insulting someone. Such can be erased through reconciliation of one with the offended party. Paul's letter to the Hebrews is quoted. The epistle of St. John too emphasizes the enormity of sin. It insists that no other

blood shall be shed, to save mankind and neither is forgiveness an act that can be repeated. One informant, Zakayo Mungai is epjjhatic and adamant that salvation is a once for - all event, therefore if one sins after he has "believed", he is doomed. Errors can always be excused and forgotten but not sins. Forgiveness only applies to sins and comes from God to those who have repented sincerely.

When asked to mention those sins that alienate man from God, the members mention, adultery, fornication, avarice and drunkenness. Mark: 7:18-22 and Galatians 5:19-21 are referred to for those evils which cannot be forgiven if committed after conversion. Thahu on th; other hand is ritual uncleanness. It can be cleansed or purified through observance of certain rites. (This will be discussed fully in Chapter 7).

The work of saving belongs to God. However, we can still distinguish in the New Testament between the role of Jesus Christ, the role of the spirit and that of the individual, in effecting salvation which is God's gift. Th3 New Testament emphasizes that God's gift of salvation is mediated through Jesus, whose very name means Saviour.' Je?us Christ himself sees his own role as that of a mediator of salvation in his life and ministry. Christ's death is seen in terms of sacrifice, a price that was paid for man's salvation. His resurrection too is seen as effecting man's salvation through Christ's defeat of death. The individual's role in this salvation is acceptance of it by faith. And as

the Akurinu always reiterate, without God's saving grace man cannot be saved. Hence their saying "God saves whomever he wills". The Holy Spirit not only evokes faith in the believer, but he also helps in guiding the believer and sustaining him in the life of faith. However it is nowhere suggested in the New Testament that the Holy Spirit dictate ; the actions of the individual such that he is incapable of going wrong. Even when one is confident he has the Holy Spirit, he is still required to walk with the spirit, making his own conscious decisions. In sermons and testimonies, members are urged to avoid the ways of satan for he alone hinders christians from hearing God's words and hence going to heaven. They are also urged to live up to the vows they took at conversion and to persevere in the face of tribulation and suffering. They are also constantly reminded of the presence of the Holy Spirit in their midst and that he will give them strength in their faith. To sum up this section Zakayo's information will suffice³ to depict the Akurinu's conception of the Holy Spirit and Salvation.

A person who is led by the spirit never falters or changes his life-style after "believing". One who is not led by the spirit falters. Once one falls, that is his end, because one who lives in him does not sin (1 Jn: 3:1-6).³⁰

(d) The Holy Spirit As Spirit of God:

The tendency to regard the Holy Spirit as a mysterious power, a mystical entity, capable of providing them with the power to overcome evil is apparent among the Akurinu.

Therefore, leaders make a point of emphasizing the connection between the Holy Spirit, God and Jesus. The official teaching of the Church stresses that, there is an intimate relationship between the Holy Spirit and the two other persons of the Trinity. This relationship is sometimes seen as so intimate that people make no clear distinction between the role of God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit. The spirit may be referred to as "Sa/iour" and may also be described as parallel to Jesus in this respect. There is also constant repetition of the spirit's role as mediator and reconciler between God and man. This same role is also ascribed to Christ. H.W. Turner, in his analysis of the beliefs of the Aladura churches in Nigeria, makes a similar observation. His explanation, however, attributes this fact to the influence of spirits and lesser gods as mediators of

31

God and man in Yoruba religious heritage. In the Aknrinu case, it is improbable that this is the case, for Kikuyu traditional religion has no place for lesser gods although the idea of mediation is there. It is not however, as strong as in Yoruba religious tradition. One of the Akurinu hymns points this idea clearly:

"God Jesus, and the spirit will all bring
together all the nations and the angels, to
assemble for judgement".²

Leaders therefore emphasize the close relationship between God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit. The difference

33

between them is often expressed in chronological terms, (ideon Kariyege describes the chronological relationship this

v

way;

God worked with the prophets,
Jesus worked with the apostles,
these days are the times of the
spirit.

The distinction between the times of God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit is made very often by different leaders and also other members in their testimonies, and it illustrates both the parallelism between the persons of the Trinity and the superior importance attached to the Holy Spirit. For the people living now, the spirit gives them power to overcome all evil, as already noted earlier. It is absolutely essential that people recognise and receive the Holy Spirit because he is the one whom they will cling to or depend on, to go to heaven. He will be the witness to every believer for he is implanted in every believer's soul. He is therefore a "Saviour" or precisely the ticket to heaven. Without the Holy Spirit, people would have no hope of salvation, but with him they have the assurance that God is near them with all his power, to overcome the evil forces that threaten human beings. Zakayo's exclamation "I have a hope of inheriting eternal life!" reflects the joy and the assurance of salvation which has been brought to these people through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Ever since the early days of the movement the Akurinu could not be induced by outsiders or other Christians to deny the validity of their experience of the Holy Spirit because through it they felt the reality of God's presence/ They continually reiterate God's intervention in their affairs that they are happy. They stress that for them God is near all the time. This is so

has a parallel in the Kikuyu conception of God as both immanent and transcendent.

(e) The Holy Spirit as Giver of God's Power:

As already observed, the Akurinu recognise that the Holy Spirit gives his power to whomever he chooses. All the gifts mentioned by Paul in I Corinthians: 12 may be cited by these believers as gifts that are of great importance in their church. While they do not emphasize these gifts as a sign of a second baptism, it is evident that they do distinguish or lay emphasis upon the gifts of hearing God's voice, dreams and visions as proof of being spirit-filled. While under the influence of the Holy Spirit, members experience his power working in them, they also feel strengthened. People constantly pray for this power and are always urged by the leaders to be full of the Holy Spirit. The power they receive is to overcome evil and temptations. The spirit (as already observed), leads people to follow the ways of God; and his power enables them also, to overcome sickness. Sickness is said to emanate from sin. It can also be inflicted on one, to test his faith, for example Job's experience in the book of Job. The power of God may be described in more mysterious ways as when a pastor said he did not know how to read, but after he received the Holy Spirit, he was suddenly given the ability to read the Bible. Prayer is of central importance in this church and is taken as a vehicle of communication between God and man. The power for effective prayer is also supplied by the Holy Spirit.

It can be concluded therefore that, the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa lays great emphasis on the belief in the Holy Spirit. This belief was the foundation of the church, for the early Arathi originally left the African Inland Mission (AIM) at Kijabe on account of their experience of the Holy Spirit. Thereafter, they were joined by others with similar experiences. However, the spirit only dwells in pure and contrite hearts. He can desert one when he sins. It is therefore important that one lives up to the promises he made to God at conversion. The spirit should be the armour and conscience of the believers. He is observed in members, by their good moral living, fellowship and concern for others. He is also the giver of the

gifts of healing, prophecy, preaching, praying, leadership and many others. His presence is also manifested in dreams and visions. At this point we shall now discuss the prophetic phenomenon in detail in the following chapter.

FOOTNOTES

1. Joshua Njuguna, interview.
2. Daudi Ikigu, interview.
3. Ibid.
4. See chapter 3 for causes of schism in the Akurinu church due to observance of traditional practices like polygamy and divination.
5. Constitution of the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa p. 1. This is a type-written manuscript in the possession of Joseph Karugia, the Secretary-General of the Church. See appendix.
6. KNA DC/KBU/32, 1984. Evidence of Kagana wa Chege.

See chapter 3 on the theological factors in the emergence of the Akurinu Church.
8. See chapter 7 on the concept of ritual uncleanness.
9. Elijah Kinyanjui, interview.
10. This refers to Nyimbo cia Roho Mutheru by Daudi Ikigu, Kijabe Printing Press. 1978.
11. Elijah Kinyanjui says that he attended school at AIM Kijabe for one year but was never baptized in that church.

12. J. Wanginyi, E. Kinyanjui, interviews.
13. See A.M. Rasmussen, The History and Present characteristics of fojr African Independent Churches in Western Kenya. Unexamined MA Thesis: (Nairobi University, 1976).
14. Elijah Kinyanjui, interview.
15. E. Kinyanjui, interview,
- 1b. Joseph Karugia, interview.
17. Hezroni Tumbo, interview.
18. Hezroni Tumbo, interview. See also Genesis 3:10-11 (RSV Bible).
19. Daudi Ikigu, interview.
20. Daudi Ikigu, Nyimbo cia Roho Mutheru op.cit. hymn No. 143, p. 127.
21. Ibid. Hymns No. 175, 477, 85.
22. Jeremiah Wanginyi, interview.
23. Joshua Njuguna, interview. This is also derived from listening to sermons, testimonies and prayers by the author, in the services attended.
24. Joshua Njuguna, interview.
25. Joseph Karogia; Elijah Kinyanjui, interviews.

26. Elijah Kinyanjui, interview.
27. Hezroni Tumbo, interview.
28. Joshua Njuguna, interview.
29. Daudi Ikigu, Nyimbo cia Roho Muthuru op.cit.,
Hymn No. 477, p. 411.
30. Zakayo Mungai, interview.
31. H.W. Turner, African Independent Church: The Life and
Faith of the Church of the Lord (Aladura) London
OUP, 1967) Vol.2, p. 123.
32. Daudi Ikigu, Nyimbo cia Roho Muthuru op.cit.,
Hymn No. 143, p. 127.
33. Chronological terms refer to the idea that each of
the three beings of the Trinity come after the
other in time, respectively, God, Jesus, and the
Holy Spirit.
34. Gideon Kariège, interview.

CHAPTER FIVEPROPHECY: A GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, AND ITS FEATURES,DREAMS AND VISIONS:

The Holy Spirit makes himself manifest to the Akurinu through prophecy. In this manner he exhorts and edifies the church. In this chapter, we examine prophecy as a gift of the Holy Spirit and its role in the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa. The Kikuyu and biblical concepts of prophecy will be referred to constantly because, firstly the early Akurinu called themselves Arathi (Kikuyu for prophets; singular, Murathi), and secondly because they saw themselves as prophets in the same manner as the Old Testament prophets like, Moses, Elijah, Jeremiah and others.

1. The Prophetic Phenomenon:

Arathi is what the members of the "new religion" called themselves from the beginning and the administrative officer wrote of them as "false prophets".[^] In Kikuyu usage a Murathi was a prophet or seer. \ Murathi could be a diviner and a seer, but the two positions were distinct. The prophet received his message and its interpretation from God directly through special revelation or vision. Kenyatta states that a Murathi "uses no magic or medicine in interpreting the message or instructions given him by God". The position of a Murathi was not a profession like the diviner and he received no pay for it.

It was a calling that was unique and higher than any other calling such as that of a mere diviner. Whereas a diviner used his divining paraphernalia in his divination, for God imparted to him the required knowledge through such paraphernalia, the prophet on the other hand received his message and its interpretation from God directly through special inspirations or visions. Norm **Lily**, a Murathi was especially consulted in times of crisis such as drought, famine and war, to find out the reason, and when to make a sacrifice of the type of animal acceptable. Kenyatta speaks of the famous Kikuyu prophet, Mugo wa Kiburu as being a "Medicine man", but states explicitly elsewhere¹ that the two roles are distinct. Therefore although some medicine men (Andu ago) were also Arathi, not all Arathi were Andu ago.

The gift of prophecy was normally possessed by those in the grade of elders who qualified to officiate at sacrifices. But young men and women could also possess the power. This was rarely so, but there are cases where a son inherited the gift from his father although as I.S.B. Leakey has observed, Arathi (prophecy) and Ugo (art of divination) had nothing to do with heredity.

C.W. Hobley in 1911 interviewed a man living in Southern Kiambu who had a wide reputation as a Murathi. "This man, Thaga wa Wairumbi wa Kauri claimed that his grandfather and father were Arathi and that he himself received the prophetic power, shortly after his circumcision, that is long before he could have been an elder."⁴ Therefore, although

generally a Murathi was a member of the council of elders, it was not impossible for a young unmarried man (Mwanake) to become a Murathi.

Leakey gives an account of a woman prophetess from North Kiambu.⁵ He notes that women were not normally seized or possessed by Ugo, but where a woman became a mundu mugo, she would become a famous prophetess, or seer. Like their male counterparts, they would receive messages directly from God. Some indeed, were reputed to be taken up into the sky to receive their messages. Trances and dreams were features of prophecy.⁶ Thiga wa Wairumbi related to Hobley how he used to receive messages from God once or twice in a year, while in a deep-trance-like sleep. The prophetess Leakey talks about, frequently had trances in which she vividly saw future events

7

which would happen to people whom she had never met. Prophets and prophetesses were consulted on all the usual anxieties of life, like marriage, undertaking of a journey, raids for cattle and many others. However, Hobley and Leakey and Kenyatta's material, suggest that prophecies were not only made in response to a request from the community at a time of crisis, but might also be a spontaneous outcome of a personal revelation. This is especially the case when Mugo wa Kibiru received the colourful details, in a trance from Ngai,
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concerning the European conquest of Kikuyuland. The Kikuyu were convinced that a prophet received messages from God. This office had its risks. The prophet had to be very careful since he had to be completely certain that the messages and

instructions he felt he received were from God and not mere self-deceptions or illusions, before he declared them to the people. His prophecies had to be verified by their fulfilment, thus proving they were from God. Otherwise he would be regarded as a false prophet and possibly face death for pretending to be a prophet.⁹

If Urathi often emerged in times of crisis then it is not surprising that in that decade of great crisis, 1921-1931, new prophets arose among the Kikuyu. To the traditional concept of a Murathi, who might give advice in such a period was added the new and reinforcing teaching from the new religion, Christianity. Certain biblical verses which were revealed to the early Arathi and are quoted to this day, by present day Arathi (Akurinu), as a theological explanation why this church emerged, have to do with this gift of prophecy.¹

In chapter three, we noted that those who joined the Arathi movement, did so by divine inspiration. Joseph Ng'anya, Kagana wa Chege and many others had a spiritual experience in which they dreamt or heard God calling them while in a trance. In this manner, their calling had similarities with the calling of such biblical prophets as Elijah, Isaiah and Amos.¹¹ Through dreams they received verses to read concerning the contents of their faith, practices and form of worship. Some of the verses received include, Joel 2:28-30, Hebrews:8:10-11, Acts 2:16-21 and Jeremiah 31:35-37. Putting ourselves in the social context of the period, we may gain some insight and conception of how vividly the Kikuyu scriptures spoke to the

young men like Elijah Kinyanjui, Kagana wa Chege and Joseph Ng'ang'a who now made the claim that they were prophets in direct communication with God and entrusted with the message for all the (Kikuyu) people.

The impact of this realization that they were Arathi is well expressed by Elijah Kinyanjui:

During the period of seclusion (1927-1930), the Arathi spent that time in earnest studying of the Bible and praying as a result of which many people began to claim that they had been spoken to by God in dreams. It was a situation which fitted the verse in the Bible that God has called the illiterate. Many among the Akurinu were not learned.¹²

Kenyatta says of the Akurinu then;

"Watu wa Mungu"... assume the role of Holy men, they claim to have direct communication with Mwenenyaga (God). They claim too that Mwenenyaga has given 'hem power to know the past and present, and to interpret his message to the community at large, hence their name, Arathi.¹³

This quotation may indicate that the Akurinu saw themselves like the Kikuyu Arathi. Their role was similar to the Kikuyu and biblical prophets, that of receiving messages from God and interpreting them to the people.¹⁴

2. Prophecy in the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa:

The Akurinu are very certain that they have a firm scriptural basis for their practices and experiences of prophecy, dreams and visions. Those are more central in their life than healing. From the beginning those converted

to the "new religion" regarded themselves as prophets. Elijah Kinyanjui ascertains that there was no particular way that all the prophets were called by God to serve him. Some experienced dreams, others saw visions or just heard a voice calling them. A prophet, the Akurinu say, is a person who is able to predict what will happen in the future. Michael Paul Wanjau, of the Foundation of the Prophets Church in Nyeri, defines prophecy as the foretelling of the future about themselves and their church.⁶ He further adds that it also involves prediction of affairs outside their church, that is the social, political, economic and spiritual affairs of the whole nation. Another informant, Elijah Kinyanjui, mentions as an example that in the early days of the movement, one of them had prophesied that the Europeans would some day leave this country. They also used to predict the end of the world and the establishment of a millenium with them only,

17

surviving. This idea is still dominant in the God's woul Holy Ghost Church. The members of this sect as noted in chapter three, pierce their ear-lobes in the traditional Kikuyu fashion. This is supposed to identify them during the millerium, because only they will reign with Christ after the rest of the world is destroyed. Those who do not pierce their ear-lobes can alternatively extract two of their front lower teeth, again a traditional Kikuyu custom.¹⁸

However, the most usual answers to the question, what is the role of a prophet(s) in this church can be summarized as follws: prophets are the people who are able to

interpret dreams and visions and to see the hidden sins of other people. Generally speaking, they can see that which is hidden from ordinary people, and this faculty enables them to see the meaning hidden behind the dreams and vision ; of church members, and to explain their significance for the individual or for the church as a whole.

Joshua Njuguna says that, the role of a prophet is to

19

guide and give moral direction to the church. Without their assistance in this respect the church would be at a loss. Prophets who may be women, children, young men and women or elders, have the ability to see what is hidden to other members and to reveal that which is of God and of satan. Therefore, for a properly organised church, the gift of prophecy is indispensable. Michael Paul Wanjau says that in his church (and this is typical of most other Akurinu churches) , the prophet is very highly ranked and respected. He need not be a church leader, priest or bishop. Wanjau also points out that hearing God's voice, dreams and visions are all features of prophecy and are therefore classified as prophecy. All those who dream, see visions or hear God's

20

voice are called Arathi or Anabii (**Kiswahili** for prophet). All the Akurinu **leaders who were interviewed agreed** that prophecy, dreams and visions are prophetic insights and serve significant roles in the churches. H.W. Turner observed the same about the Aladura churches of Nigeria.²¹

Prophecy is regarded as a gift of the Holy Spirit in all Akurinu churches. It is through this gift that God's

will is revealed or made **known** to the church members. Prophetic insights may also be revealed through dreams and visions. This may be the case, for example, when baptismal names are given by the spirit to a member. Other kinds of messages may also come through dreams. Joshua Njuguna says that though any member can experience dreams and visions, some people have more experiences of these phenomenon than others. Such ones are the real prophets and are recognized as such by the whole church.²²

In the early days of the movement, all the Arathi saw themselves as God's messengers. Like the Jewish prophets, they felt and were convinced that they had something to proclaim. Even their method of preaching as Elijah notes,²³ was one of announcement and admonishment. Like Jeremiah, Ilosea and Amos they would announce God's will and demands to the people. In the fashion of the Hebrew prophets they would say, "repent, believe in God..." or "you are being asked..." Even today the Akurinu still believe that they have a special relationship with God. This might explain certain titles they have given themselves like "the lost²⁴ tribes of Israel", "**Chosen Church of the Holy Spirit**," and "**Friends of the Holy Spirit**".

In the early days too, all those who were called to the "new religion" were called "prophets", as noted. However, one notes a change in today's Arathi. Not all Akurinu today as noted, are .regarded as Arathi. They strictly emphasize

that prophecy is a gift of the Holy Spirit like any other, and has no ascendancy over the other gifts. Zakayo Mungai, maintains that the most important gift of the spirit is love. No amount of prophesying can equal this gift. Observing God's commandments is also very vital. He however continues to say that the prophetic gift is only found among the most pious. These may not be official church leaders, yet they play a vital role in exhorting Christians and preserving the faith. These qualities in the prophets make them quite outstanding in the church. Elijah Kinyanjui reiterates the centrality of prophecy in his church when he says:

"We do not do anything without God having told us".²⁵

(Gutiri undu twikaga, ngai atatwirite).

This echoes Amos 3:7,

"Surely the Lord God does nothing, without revealing his secrets to his servants the prophets".

Asked to explain their prophetic experiences, the present day Arathi say that the experience itself is inexplicable. They describe it as an "event" (kiundu) that seizes a person and makes him , roar **and** prophecy. It enables one to reject evil, choose good and detect sinners who may have refused to confess all their sins. They further explain that at the beginning, even the Arathi themselves did not know what had got into them. But after reading the prophecies of Joel and Jeremiah and the < -

corresponding passages in Acts and Hebrews they understood that they had had an experience of the Holy Spirit, and prophecy is one of his gifts. This gift plus that of seeing visions and experiencing dreams with a spiritual significance, were to be given to those who deserve them during the "last days".²⁶

Through prophecy, the early Arathi were called by God to declare the end of colonialism and call for a spiritual renewal. Elijah recalls how he was called in a dream. He knew that his dream was no ordinary dream but one from God. This dream recurred several times over a long period. In the dream, he and others (probably non-arathi) were engaged in a difficult mission. At times they would be trapped in very deep pits or in a valley where they had to struggle to get out. In another occasion he alone managed to escape and floated in the air like a bird. Elijah explains that, the fact that he alone managed to escape was a sign that God had chosen him. The struggles he underwent were trials. Despite, this Kinyanjui refused the challenge. God's voice called him more persistently this time. He became ill till finally he accepted the call and the illness disappeared.²⁷

All Akurinu relate their **person:1 experience of God** through the gift of prophecy at one time or other in their lives. For those who were called at the beginning, Elijah recalls, their mission was clear:

God chose some people to go to the mountains,
people to teach others the Bible, some to pray
for others and the nation. The spirit chose

those he knew had a good heart, deep faith; some were to speak in tongues and others to interpret those tongues.²⁰

Prophecies are generally pastoral advice or spiritual exhortations cast in a form that indicates that the advice is divine. The latter fact makes them get closer attention. When looking at prophecy in its contents it appears that its functions have gradually come to cover a more and more limited field. Prediction of future events is still mentioned, but the emphasis seems to lie on the prophet's ability to interpret dreams and visions especially on their gift to disclose sins of others. In the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa however, emphasis is not placed on disclosure of sins but on the edification of the church. This corresponds to the development common to all Pentecostal prophecy as described by W.J. Hollenwegger. He writes that generally, prophecy is seen as the ability to reveal future events and that its reliability can be recognised from the signs that it is fulfilled in due time. But older Pentecostal denominations reject prophecies as the foretelling of the future and permit it only as edification.²⁹

3. The contents of prophecy in the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa:

(a) Choosing Church Leaders.

Hezroni Tumbo, the Mutoria of the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa says concerning the contents of prophecy:

God tells us who is fit for the job. All what we do is directed and ordered by God. If there is a good person fit to be elected he lets us know. He reveals who it is he wants. We then give him the support he requires. If God says this man is right in his eyes to conduct certain duties in this church, we read to him what the Bible says about leadership and explain through using biblical characters like Abraham, Moses and the apostles, the demands of leadership and service to God's people. Then we pray for him.³⁰

This revelation of someone's fitness to lead the church in whatever capacity occurs either through hearing God's voice or through dreams. Usually, a good leader's quality can be observed by all the members. However God's confirmation of such a one is sought. A church elder, priest or a child may be used as a channel through which God reveals his choice of a leader. This prophecy must however be verified by three or more people before it is accepted as from God. Church elders then look at it and try to judge whether what has been revealed is beneficial to the church.

(b) Marriage:

There are also prophecies concerning marriage. As already noted earlier enquiries are made to **God** directly by every christian in relation to the **usual** anxieties **of** life and problems such as selecting partners in marriage, employment, financial problems, strife in the family and at work and many others. Christians try to find answers for all these through prayer, but solutions are expected by way of revelation. Unlike in the Aladura churches, described by

H.W. Turner, people do not solicit revelations from prophets, and in any case, prophetic activity is not an institution or department in the Akurinu churches.

Those ready for marriage are supposed to pray, beseech God to choose for them and show them their brides to be or bride-grooms to be. In most cases, this is revealed through dreams. The validity of this practice is questionable. In the early days of the movement revelation of spouses through dreams was used to bad advantage by not so committed Akurinu. In fact the Akurinu w*re accused of immorality by non-Aknrirm in cases where somebody joined the church for the purpose of someone he or she was attracted to. After "dreaming" that God wishes him/her to marry such and such a person, they would get married and later leave the church. This brought disgrace to the church. Today this practice is not encouraged. However it is not uncommon for someone to get a spouse in this manner.

31

(c) Baptism:

Baptismal names are also revealed through prophecy as already noted, in this chapter, but mostly, through dreams. Joshua Njuguna says that, revelation through dreams is more common in the church. Hezroni emphasized that, the Akurinu receive messages (Uhoru) in the same way as Zacharia, Abraham, Moses and others. Just like Zacharia was informed about the birth of his son John the baptist, so too does the spirit inform the Akurinu before hand about births of their children,

Baptismal names, misfortunes to befall an individual and such like tilings. Even death is revealed. One can know through dreams that so and so is going to die. Baptism will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

Through prophecy, Hezroni Tumbo was told by God to construct stone church building in areas where the Holy Ghost church of East Africa has a following. He heard a voice tell him, in the 1930s, "My house is in Kiambaa. Hezroni's church ground at Kiarbaa has a big bore hole from where other villagers will fetch water and carry it to

32

their homes..." This, Joshua believes was a revelation that Kiambaa branch should be the first church to build a permanent church building. All other churches (in other regions) would follow suit. Today there are quite a number of permanent church buildings in all Holy Ghost Church of East Africa branches and other Akurinu groups. It is interesting to note that the spirit would allow them to build such permanent structures whereas in the 1930s and 1940s he was opposed to such structures. At that time, they worshipped either in the open or in mud structures.

33

4. Dreams and Visions: Channels for Prophetic Insights.

Like prophecy, dreams and visions are channels of God's revelation. When asked about the nature of dreams and visions church leaders say that they are basically the same kind of revelation. The only difference is that while dreams occur during sleep, visions occur when one is awake. The contents

of visions are very clear and so is the message they convey. Therefore, visions do not require interpretation. The contents of dreams, on the other hand, require interpretation. For example, Elijah's dream in which he was struggling to get out of a pit was interpreted as trials in preparation for him to enter God's ministry. Visions may occur in private meditation or prayer, or during any part of corporate worship, and members may be ready to relate what they see during the sermon, prayer or hymn to the church elders at the end of the service. In the visions, members may see angels, Christ or things that they may identify as supernatural. Speaking in tongues happens in the same way. A prophet or prophetess may receive a message from the Holy Spirit in the middle of a sermon and he/she expresses it, speaking in an unknown tongue. Those gifted with translating, tongues translate what is being "prophesied" through the tongues or visions. This is typical of what happens in a Sunday service in the African Mission of the Holy Ghost Church. In the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa, speaking in tongues is not encouraged. In fact, in most cases, church leaders interrupt roaring and groaning by some members when they became spirit-filled. **We** actually noticed church leaders silencing such members. **The** most likely explanation for this curb is that such "seizures" culminate in activities like groaning, roaring, crying and screaming that were and are still misunderstood by many. This therefore led to the tarnishing of the reputation of all Akurinu.

It was rumoured then, that whenever the Akurinu gathered for prayer and worship they would commit various kinds of crimes under the influence of the spirit. It is most likely that in the early days of the movement, this aspect of the manifestation of the spirit was very widespread, otherwise members would not be so concerned to put an end to it.

All members are encouraged to record their dreams and prophecies. They are then related to the elders at an appointed time who review and interpret them. This is done in order to control false prophecy. Joshua says that there are cases of false prophecy especially when a prophecy may contradict biblical teaching, for example if one dreams that God advises so and so to leave his wife and marry

35

another. This is false prophecy for God does not allow this to happen. The interpreted dream, vision or prophecy, may contain pastoral advice or words of exhortation.

In the early days anybody who received prophetic insights was required to stand up and relate it to the congregation. This is still practised in the African Mission of the Holy Ghost Church. **In** this church, members relate their prophecies as they receive **them and the** channel is almost always through tongues. There is a permanent interpreter who interprets the message to the congregation. In the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa, dreams, visions and "God's voice" are the main channels.

Joshua makes a distinction between ordinary dreams and dreams with a supernatural influence and significance. Ordinary dreams are those whose contents have to do with every day activities and experiences. Such dreams require no interpretation and are very plain. Dreams with a supernatural influence are full of symbols and church related content. But he also admits that even the plainest dream may have some message concerning one's spiritual state or that of the church. One informant said that misleading dreams come from the devil while good ones come from the Holy Spirit. At this point we can distinguish three categories of dreams in the Akurinu churches.

- (i) ordinary dreams - for example, these concerning the dreamer himself.
- (ii) Those from the Holy Spirit (God).
- (iii) Those from the devil.

B.G.M. Sunkler makes a similar distinction when describing the dreams that he has collected from Zionist churches in South Africa. He points out that those dreams that are regarded by the Zionists as being of importance follow a pattern with certain elements being repeated from

36

one dream to the other. H.V.^T. Turner in his study of the Aladura churches of Nigeria, points out that among the Aladura, dreams include varying content from western elements like clocks, cars, to many traditional features like

rivers, hills, animals and so on, and an abundance of biblical and ecclesiastical symbols like the rainbow, live coals, white angels, crosses and altars.³⁷

The Akurinu treat the contents of dreams with utmost secrecy, therefore it is very difficult for an outsider to get them. In fact even other members cannot get it because only church elders get to know them. However, the contents of dreams usually centre around the themes of making the choice between belonging to the church or to the world, defeating adversaries and of going to heaven.³⁸ Sundkler notes this too in the Zionist churches.³⁹

Dream contents also reflect the beliefs of the church and this serves to strengthen the group solidarity by giving individuals a sense of belonging. When the church characteristics are seen to be sanctioned by the Holy Spirit himself through the dreams of members these dreams become important factors for the integration of the church. It has already been noted in chapter four that some of the Akurinu beliefs and practices were revealed to them during the period of seclusion (1927-1930) at Musa Muchai's home. While praying and experiencing the Holy Spirit, revelations would be revealed through dreams, visions or hearing God's voice. Therefore dreams played a vital role in the early days in providing guidance to the young church. The form of worship described in chapter three (praying with hands aloft) dates to this period. During this time, they were also instructed to be clean of heart, mind and body before

worship and to remove their shoes before entering the church as a sign of humility. Elijah Kinyanjui further explains that this practice was instituted by God and so also, all the good laws that the Akurinu observe. As already noted in Chapter Three, wherever a problem relating to faith occurred, the Holy Spirit would intervene by instructing a Murathi to read a certain verse in scripture that was authoritative on the issue.

In the sense that dreams in the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa are regarded as instructions to perform certain things, we can compare them to the way dreams were regarded among the Kikuyu. Not all dreams were significant though, and they were regarded as channels through which messages from the ancestral world reached the living. Leakey observes in this respect that "most dreams were manifestations of the

40

spirit world". Jeremiah Wanginyi recalls that, "dreams, long ago, were feared. Whenever somebody dreamt he would retell his dream in the morning, on doing so, I used to see people take a live charcoal from the fire and allow it to burn

41

itself out..." This was probably a way of destroying the evil that the dream portended. Just as the Kikuyu believed that the dreams they dreamt were messages from their ancestors, so too do members of the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa believe that in dreams the Holy Spirit brings to them messages from God. There was no expert among the Kikuyu who was believed to possess the ability to give authoritative interpretation. However there did exist a set pattern for

interpretation. For example, some dreams were accepted as they were, literally. For example, if a man dreamt that he was assisting his father to slaughter a goat, he knew it was a message that he should slaughter a goat for his

42

father. In other dreams, the meaning of the dream lay in doing its opposite.

Prophecy as found in the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa appears to have similarities with prophecy in the Kikuyu traditional set up. The Kikuyu Murathi predicted future events with inspiration from Ngai just as the prophet in the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa predicts future events and reveals hidden sins with inspiration from the Holy Spirit. Although the Kikuyu Murathi was consulted, as earlier indicated in this chapter, the Mukurinu prophet is not consulted, he therefore does not serve the role of a medium or a diviner as the Kikuyu Murathi. His prophecies are always spontaneous revelations from God. However the Holy Spirit Church of East Africa in Western Kenya displays this characteristic in their prophecy. Members solicit prophecies from prophets and even go to the extent of seeking for this gift over others, although God wilfully and freely provides the gifts. Rasmussen observes that, prophets in this church play the role of traditional diviners by declaring through

43

revelation the hidden sins of others. However, she further observes, consulting diviners is forbidden to church members, for this would be a denial of their christian faith and a return to the worship of spirits.⁴⁴ Where a parallel to

divination is found in the Aladura churches, Turner is quick to point out that "general divination and interpretation of the will of the God-head need not be magical if it is done in the spirit of devotion and submission rather than coercion and manipulation."⁴⁵ Like all other christians, the members of the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa are opposed to consultation of diviners and most other traditional practices, as indicated in chapter three.

It is significant to note that prophecy is a characteristic and significant feature in independent Churches in Africa. This probably is an indication that, the African Christian seeks to know God's will and experiences his guidance through this phenomenon, which for him is a natural means of communication between God and man. By accepting the significance of these phenomena and incorporating them into their lives the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa helps to integrate the traditional thought patterns of their members into the whole of their christian experience.

Since the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa (members) have a firm biblical basis for their belief in prophecy, they see their prophets in the light of Old Testament prophecy. The prophets of Israel had a special and unique experience of God. For example, Isaiah experienced the Holiness of God (Is. 6:1-12) and felt himself a man of unclean lips. The prophets of Israel specifically stated that God called them and gave them a command to prophecy. Amos stated about his

call, "... the Lord took me from following the flock, and the Lord said to me "Go prophecy to my people Israel," (Amos 7:14). Sometimes the prophet did not welcome the call, Jeremiah is a good example of such a prophet. He pleaded with God that he was too young and such a poor speaker to be a prophet, "Oh Lord God behold I do not know how to speak, for I am only a youth..." (Jer 1:6). But in spite of this he had to proclaim God's word whether pleasant or not.

The word of God came to them in visions and voices, but most of it was by internal inspiration; sometimes occasioned by quite ordinary circumstances like the sight of an almond branch (Jer: 1:11). Equally various were the methods the prophets used to convey their message, like prose narratives, sermons, proverbs, exhortation;;, and many other such ways.

The prophets of Israel were thus messengers of God and their knowledge of God was revealed. They interpreted God's will to the people. Kikuyu prophets on the other hand merely announced God's will to the people and in most cases their prophecies were mysteries. For example Mugo wa

46

Kibiru's prophecy about Europe in conquest of Kikuyuland though very sad was left as a mystery to be explained in time. However both Kikuyu and biblical prophecy had elements of prediction though the former hid more of it. The prophets of Israel as messengers of God had a special task of being witnesses of his presence and salvation to the nations. The Jews had a part to play in what in Judaic-Christian tradition

is called, the history of salvation. It is in this context that biblical prophecy is regarded by christians as in a class by itself or as special.

Several of these characteristics are prevalent in the Akurinu churches and particularly in the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa, although not in the same depth and detail. As indicated above, in patterns similar to those of the Hebrew prophets, God revealed things to the Kikuyu people through his prophets, long before they ever took place. This too he does in the Akurinu churches. The early Arathi, as already indicated in chapter three, were men of no social standing and neither were they converts to the christian religion. They experienced God in their status in life as squatters or other, and it is not surprising that they felt they had a unique relationship with God. The passages from Joel and Jeremiah helped to strengthen this belief. Then, their role was to interpret God's word to the people, a role that they still have today. They experienced God's power like Ezekiel and they had to announce God's message.

To strengthen their belief in prophecy, the Akurinu point to an incident in the Bible, where God rebuked Miriam and somebody else who were backbiting Moses. He told them that he had a personal relationship with Moses, but to others he can only speak to them in dreams. The exact biblical reference could not be traced, but this notwithstanding the

Akurinu have a firm biblical basis for their belief in

47

prophecy. Their belief in prophecy as seen compares with the Kikuyu concept. We have tried to let Akurinu prophecy stand by itself, but at the same time, we cannot fail to point out some similarities between it and Kikuyu prophecy, because the Arathi arose in a background already familiar with the prophetic tradition. Therefore, what the Arathi read in the Bible about prophecy, reinforced their traditional idea of prophecy.

FOOTNOTES:

1. Kenya National Archives (KNA) Files.
DC/F.H.1/1. Letter of District Commissioner,
Kiambu to District Commissioner Fort Hall,
17th February, 1931.
2. Jomo Kenyatta Facing Mount Kenya: the Traditional
Life of the Gikuyu, (London, 1938, reprinted by
lleinemann Educational Books 1978), p. 242 .
3. LSf. Leakey: The Southern Kikuyu before 1903, Vol.3
(London, Academic Press 1977) p. 1113.
4. C.W. Hobley. Bantu beliefs and magic. (London 1938:
Francass and Co. Ltd. 1967) p. 36.
5. Leakey op.cit., p. 1114.
6. C.W. Hobley op.cit. , p. 36-37.
7. Leakey op-cit., pp. 1114-1115.
8. Kenyatta op.cit. pp. 41-44.
9. Ihid. p. 242 .
10. See chapter Three, ^Theological Factors in the Development
of the Akurinu".
11. See RSV Bible, Amos 7:14, Isaiah 6:1-9, 1 Kings
Chapter 17.

12. Elijah Kinyanjui, Interview.
13. Kenyatta op.cit. p. 273-74.
14. C.f. Activities of Mugo Kibiru in Kenyatta op.cit.
pp. 41-44 and Amos, Jeremiah and Lzekiel, in the
books bearing their names, R.S.V. Bible.
15. Kenyatta op.cit. See chapter on "Now Religion"
pp. 269-279.
16. Michael Paul Wanjau, Interview.
17. Timothy Nyaga, Interview.
18. Nyaga, Interview.
19. Joshua Njuguna, Interview.
20. Wanjau, Interview.
21. II.W. Turner: African Independent Church: The life and
faith of the Church of the Lord (Aladura) Vol.1.
(London, Oxford University Press 1967) pp. 123-137.
22. Njuguna, Interview.
23. Kinyanjui, Interview.
24. Kenyatta op.cit. p. 274.
25. Kinyanjui, Interview.
26. Kinyanjui, Interview.

27. Kinyanjui, Interview.
28. Kinyanjui, Interview.
29. W.J. Hollenwegef: The Pentecostals. (London SCM Press Ltd., 1972) , p. 345.
30. Hezroni Tumbo, Interview.
31. Njuguna, Interview.
32. Njuguna, Interview.
33. An example of such* a structure is the former Murengeti Church, built in 1948. This building is still standing although a permanent building was put beside it in 1980.
34. Wambui Kioi, Interview. She is not a member of the church, but she has known the Akurinu for the last twenty-five years.
35. Njuguna, interview.
36. B.G.M. Sundler, Bantu prophets in South Africa (London, . SCM press, 1962) p. 265. »
37. Turner op.cit. p. 124.
38. Njuguna, Interview.
39. Sundkler, np.rit. p. 266.

40. Leakey, op.cit. p. 1116.
41. Jeremiah Wanginyi, Interview.
42. Leakey. on.cit. pp. 1116-1117.
45. A.M.B. Rasmussen: The History and Present Characteristics of four African Independent Churches in Western Kenya. Unexamined M.A. Thesis, (1976, University of Nairobi). pp. 266-276.
44. Thid. p. 266-276.
45. Turner op.cit. p. 124.
46. Mugo wa Kibiru had prophesied the occupation of Kikuyuland by whites and its consequent alienation. This prophecy was very sad, particularly because the Kikuyu were advised not to resist the occupation. See Kenyatta op.cit., pp. 41-44, 46, 47. and S.G. Kibicho: The Kikuyu Conception of God, its continuity into the christian era, and the question it raises for the christian idea of revelation. Ph.D. Thesis, Vanderbilt (University, 1972). pp. 22-38.
47. Njuguna, Interview.

CHAPTER SIX

BAPTISM IN THE HOLY GHOST CHURCH OF EAST AFRICA:

Baptism is one of the sacred rites, (Magongona), that the Akurinu observe. The other sacred rites are marriage, ordination, confirmation, praying for the sick (healing) and funeral. Though some of these are sacraments, (baptism, marriage, ordination and confirmation) the Akurinu do not use the term sacrament. We shall therefore use the term they use, sacred rite. Baptism is here chosen because of its centrality in the faith of the church and because of its being linked with the Holy Spirit. Through baptism, each believer is initiated into the faith of the church and incorporated into the body of Christ."'' It is also through baptism that one becomes eligible to receive the other

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Magongona. It is worthwhile to note that all Akurinu do not observe the Eucharist. To them, what Christ meant, by his "body" and "blood" at the last supper, was the word of God. Therefore, the symbolism of bread and wine, as observed by the Catholics and by most Protestant churches is absent.

The Akurinu are opposed to the use of symbols or any such paraphernalia in their administration of the Magongona (sacraments). They believe that the usage of such paraphernalia is tantamount to idol worship.³

. The Baptismal Rite:

The Akurinu churches differ from other churches in their

practice of baptism, particularly the major missionary-founded churches. This is one of the practices that the Holy Spirit taught them in the early days of the movement. Whereas all the major missionary-founded churches practice water baptism, by either emersion or sprinkling, the Akurinu practice spirit baptism. They regard themselves as the ones who understand the meaning of the rite correctly. We have already noted their concern about the present period in history, as the reign of the Holy Spirit. It therefore follows that, water baptism, which was John's baptism, belongs to the period before the spirit was poured on all believers. That was a baptism for repentance, but spirit baptism is "unto Christ".^ What will be discussed now is the mode of baptism, its meaning and functions.

(a) The Context in which baptism occurs:

The Akurinu have no organised catechitcal instructions for would-be believers like most other churches. Their instructions are different. It is necessary, although it is not explicitly stated, that the believer knows the decalogue, the Lord's prayer and the rules and regulations of the church, before being baptized. These rules and regulations pertain to food laws, moral conduct, marriage funeral and other beliefs and practices of the church/¹ The believer too has to continually and consistently attend services and ceremonies. In this way, through sermons, prayers and testimonies, he learns more about the faith of

the church. Through contact with other members, he can also observe generally, the life of the church and of the believers, . fr,

individually.' No testing of this knowledge is done particularly by the "baptizer" (Mubatithania). At this point, the Holy Spirit is left to test and reveal the believer's state of belief for admission into baptism. The spirit reveals this information through prophecy, dream or vision. «
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Baptism occurs in the context of faith. Nobody is accepted into the body of believers before he has repented and is forgiven. This is conversion and the Akurinu call it "Gwitikia" (believing). "Believing" qualifies one for membership and baptism.

The process of conversion begins with preaching. The word of God is preached to the people. Preachers (Ahunjia) engage in evangelistic cursades. It is assumed that, those preached to are in a state of sin. Sin is viewed as a wilful transgression of what is forbidden by God. It ranges from breaking the ten commandments to drunkenness, jealousy, licentiousness, laziness and pride. All these and more are forbidden. When people hear the word of God, ponder over it, accept it and incorporate it into their lives, by observing the ten commandments, they are said to have "believed" and therefore, converted. The conversion comes after repentance. Once the persjOfi* realizes that he has been living in sin, he confesses his sins to God. They also realise that God has done something to save them out of this

sinful situation by sending his only son to die for the salvation of mankind.

After repentance, forgiveness ensues and also God's assurance that he has forgiven the believer. This assurance is being filled with the Holy Spirit. The spirit is evident and observable in the life of the believer because he ceases to do all the sinful things he did before conversion. The spirit is also evident in the ability to roar. Only those who are spirit-filled, roar. The believer also, witnesses Christ's presence through better relationship with his fellowmen and participation in the affairs of the church. The life of the believer is, in a word, guided and directed by the Holy Spirit. Steadfastness in faith is also observable in the life of such a christian.

In this state, a believer remains in the church and awaits baptism. This happens when his name is revealed. He is not regarded any less a christian, because he is not baptized, since he possesses the Holy Spirit. As regards this Joshua Njuguna says;

After "believing" one gets the spirit, that is, the spirit that enables him to roar. I was given the spirit long before I was baptized. I got baptized one year after "believing". I was still regarded as a christian. We have actually performed funeral rites for very many unbaptized believers in our church.⁷

After "believing", a believer is tied a turban by a preacher. This, when tied on the head, distinguishes him as

a member of the Akurinu church. The turban is white and must be worn every time except in church and while praying. Women receive white head-scarfs. Asked why baptism takes long to occur despite the fact that the spirit has revealed someone's state of belief by giving him the ability to roar and to have good moral living; the Akurinu say that only God knows why he keeps the names of some members for a long time. One informant, Philip-Eliud Wambu, took twenty-eight years to be baptized/ Due to the fact that the Akurinu have no organised catchism classes, the delay in baptism, probably serves as a check or a probation period for the adult believer. Children do not take so long to be baptised, they do not need a probation period.

(b) The Mode of Baptism:

The Akurinu use no elements in their baptismal rite. Asked why they practise spirit baptism, Joseph Karugia says:

We practise spirit baptism because after reading the scriptures, we realised that water baptism was John's baptism, whose purpose was to make men repent, but Christ's baptism was different. He never baptized with water.⁹

Joseph contends that Jesus did baptize, although the evidence in John's Gospel, to this effect is quite scanty and is later denied.[^] However, the major emphasis is on the day of Pentecost and after. These being the end times, and Christ having poured his spirit on all men; water baptism

is therefore redundant. Their Argument is apparently logical and as will be seen, their emphasis is really not on how baptism is conducted, but the meaning of the whole process of conversion. Baptism, they say, is just a sign, a rubber stamp that only confirms what is already there, that is, moral and spiritual change.

The baptismal service is conducted twice in a year, normally in June and November. This is such a very great ceremony that every Mukurinu looks forward to it. The ceremony is always held at Murengeti and every member of the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa, convenes here. The ceremony is for all those infants, children and adults whose names have been revealed. All branch leaders present names of their candidates to the headquarters, two weeks before

 the ceremony. Elders of the church who can spare their time, gather at Murengeti, two weeks before the ceremony, and live there in seclusion, praying and worshipping. The purpose of their praying is to seek God's blessings for the coming ceremony. While secluded they can concentrate their task without any distractions. This way they can also remain pure in thoughts and body.

Individuals have no say as to which name they would wish to have. Nevertheless, they pray ardently to God, that he may see it right that their names be revealed and hence receive baptism. Baptism as already seen, qualifies one for office, marriage and other Magongona. Candidates are not

normally aware whether their, baptismal names have been revealed or whether they are eligible for baptism. It is not uncommon therefore, that many whose names have been revealed are absent from the ceremony. Such have to wait for the next baptismal session. However, if the elders wish to, they can disclose this information to the candidates, so that those who are to be baptized prepare themselves beforehand, for the ceremony.¹¹

The authority to baptize is confined to the higher ranks of the hierarchy, the Baptizers (Abatithania) and prayer leaders (Aho_i). During the ceremony which begins with prayer, singing and a small, sermon, every branch leader, call out the names of all the candidates in his church. They all gather at the front of the altar (Kigongona). Children are brought by their God mothers and sometimes real mothers too. Sometimes names of children are revealed before a child is born. At the calling, of each name, a hymn is sung that is related in theme to baptism, particularly the idea of initiation and justification. The baptizer then holds the hand of the candidates and shakes it three times saying;

Wanjiku, nindakubatithia, ndagwita
Mary, na ritwa ria ithe, na ria
muriu, na ria roho mutheru. Amen.

(Wanjiku, I baptize you; I call you Mary.
In the name of the father, and of the son,
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen).

The candidate then moves to where another Mubatithania is. Here she is confirmed by having hands laid on her:

This Mubatithania too, greets the baptized person and utters the following words;

Mary, nindakuigirira moko, Omiririe
ritwa-ini riu, riria wi guku thi ino.
Ngai akurathime, akumenyerere, ritwa-ini
ria ithe, na ria muriu, na ria roho Mutheru.
Amen.
Kuragira ritwa-ini riu, Ngai
Akurathime na akumiririe. Wabatithio,
nigetha giiko kiu, Gikuhotithie kuhotha ciiga.

(Mary, I lay hands upon you so that you can be steadfast and strong while in this world. May God bless you and care for you. In the name of the father and of the son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Grow in that name, may God bless you and strengthen you. The baptism you have received will enable you to offer your body as a sacrifice to God).

Josphat Mwangi says that, the laying on of hands is

12

a finishing touch to baptism. Therefore, confirmation, is inseparable from baptism. People are prayed for to get the right spirit, that means, to be self-giving, steadfast and unwavering in their faith. Various other songs are sung after each person's baptism is over. These songs are sung with much vigour and enthusiasm and reflect the happy occasion. One hymn struck the author because it was repeated over and over again; Ngoro ya ma ni githima. A few verses will express its significance to the ceremony.

1. Ngoro ya ma ni githima githerukaga muoyo,
ni gitina githeru wira-ini wa ngai.

Chorus: Maya nimo maritwa matheru,
kuuma iguru na thi ni matheru.

2. Mwendu ngai ni ritwa ri bata,
na mwendi andu, ndangiciria uuru
na ngoro yake.
 3. Ungitwo wa Ma kana witwo
Utheri ni wega. ni ritwa riega
gwitwo muthingu na Muhoreri.
 4. Gukiriririanakiririkano.rii
maritwa mega, mundu ahetwo
ni ngai, ngoro-ini akarumia.
 5. Roho wa ngai abatithagia andu
maritwa mega Meru, amaciaraga
hindi ya keru, matige mehia.13
1. The right heart is a spring, that
brings forth life. It is a holy foundation
in all God's work.

Chorus : These are the holy names,
from heaven and earth, they are holy.

2. Lover of God is an important name,
and a lover of people, he thinks
no evil in his heart.
3. If you are called truthful or light,
this is good. It is a good name
to be called righteous and humble.
4. Patience and remembrance are good
names, when one is given them by God
and he holds them tightly in the heart.
5. The spirit of God baptizes people good,
new names. He gives birth to them a
second time, so that they may abandon sin.

This is a lovely hymn that reflects the meaning of
baptism for the Aknrinn. It stresses the meaning of baptism
and its effects and totally ignores the mode or formulas.

Other hymns sung in the ceremony are;

14

1. Andu Agikuyu ukai kuri ngai (Kikuyu people come
to God).

2. Gutiri ritwa riega, ta ritwa ria mwathani*^
(There is no other good name, like that of the Lord).
3. Uhoru wa gukena.*^ (Good news).
17
4. Andu a guku thi, riria maremire. (When the people on earth disobeyed God) .

Although the water symbolism (that is interpreted as cleaning and a sharing in the dying and rising with Christ, Rm. 6:3) is not present in this type of baptism, the basic meaning is the same. Baptism entails change. The baptised person is urged to be righteous, truthful, steadfast, patient and humble. He is urged to leave sin and be a light to the church. Therefore, receiving the spirit during baptism, and the confirmation of one's faith implies a total burying of past deeds and a renewal in someone's life-style. One is born again to a new, transformed life. Revelation of names is very important. An outsider would conclude that names constitute baptism in this church. This is not so. A Mukurinu is supposed to emulate the character of the person he is named after. Most of the revealed names are biblical. However, as the hymn says, the most important "names" are the changes that occur in the baptized person.

After the ceremony, the Muhoi leads the congregation in prayer. In the prayers, God is asked to look after his newly initiated children and shower blessings on them so that they

may be strong in their faith. Also, that they may be freed from the bondage of satan, and be full of the Holy Spirit, so that they can have a true rebirth in the newness of life.

After baptism, the instruction of the baptized candidate continues and is still informal. To the literate, the constitution of the church and the rules and regulations are available. Samuel John Chege, says that, believers are taught (before and after baptism):-

- (i) To observe the ten commandments,
ex. 20: 1-18; Dait: 5:1-22.
- (ii) To take proper care of their bodies.
They are therefore not to defile themselves by eating unclean food, for example, pork
Lev: 11:1-9; Deut: 14:3-9;
Isaiah: 65:4-6; 66:17-18.
- (iii) That they should not eat blood;
Gen; 9:3-7; Deut; 22:22-26; Lev: 3:17,
17; 10-16; Acts: 15:19-21; 15: 28-30;
21: 25-26.
- (iv) That they should not eat food that has been used in sacrificial ceremonies.
Lev: 31:17, Gen: 29:4-6:
- (v) That they must not take bang, snuff, alcohol, cigarettes and modern medicine. Numbers; 6:1-6

Is: 6:22; Mt. 24:49; Lk: 21:34;
Romans 13:13; Eph: 5:18.¹⁸

Since a Mukurinu has set himself apart for God, he should do nothing or take anything that would defile him. They take very seriously the christian teaching that the body of each christ

ian is the "temple of the Holy Spirit", ICor: 6:6. They refuse to participate in gatherings where beer is served or any form of dancing is performed, proverbs 51:1-9. To do so, would be tantamount to approving and accepting such practices. Such behaviour makes the spirit unwelcome in a person's heart. As the believer grows in the church he learns all this. The foregoing has discussed what goes on in the baptismal ceremony. The shaking of the hand and the laying on of the hands, and the words uttered thereof, constitutes spirit baptism. We shall now examine the function and meaning of baptism.

(c) The meaning and function of Baptism:

In searching for the inner meaning of baptism in this church, it is natural to turn to the hymn-book, but here we find complete absence of a baptismal section, except for a few hymns as already noted. It is when we turn to the scriptural passages associated with baptism and which form the basis for preaching at the ceremony, that some clues appear.

Genesis	17:1-6		
	17:15-16	John:	6:14-15
	32:24-29	Acts	3:1-6
	35:9-11	1 Peter	9:17-19
Numbers	13:16-17		3:2;
Mathew	1:23-24		
	3:1-6		
	3:13-17	#	£
Mark	3:4-8		
	1:9-11		
Luke	7:29		
Luke	6:14-15		

These are all passages in support of baptism that the church leaders keep in their personal note-books. Two of these passages, Mt. 3:13-17; Mk:1:9-11, refer to the baptism of Jesus Christ with the Holy Spirit. The first Matthean text, **Mt:** 1:23-24, and the Old Testament ones (Genesis and numbers) refer to the change of names for .Jesus (Emmanuel), Abraham, Sarah, Jacob and Joshua. Luke: **0:**14-15 refers to the naming of Simon Peter while Acts: 9:17-19 refer to the baptism of Paul. The Akurinu link this to the change of Paul's name from Saul to Paul. The petrine and other Lukan texts (7:29) speak of baptism in association with the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Johannine text, emphasizes rebirth and renewal. These are effected in baptism.

The Akurinu themselves define baptism as follows;

Baptism means to be born again;
to be changed into a new personality.
When one is baptized he gains entrance
into the life of a christian and will
inherit eternal life. Baptism entails
cleansing.¹⁹

Gideon Kariage adds;

Baptism makes one a member of the church.
It is a preparation for a journey. Those
on the journey to the Lord have to be
cleansed, so that they may become sons
of God.²⁰

Josphat Mwangi says;

Baptism is in itself a imbber stamp.
We believe that people are baptised
before hand. The pastor only puts a
rubber stamp. To be baptized is to
bury the old life-style.²¹

And _akayo Mungai, has a similar understanding;

Baptism is salvation. It means that
all christians have been born through
one sacrifice and are therefore sons
and daughters of the father. All the
baptized have been allowed to eat
at the same table with God and to go
on a heavenly journey with God.²²

-akayo also sees baptism as dying and rising with Christ.

It signifies renewal in the new life.

From the above quotations we get a summary description
of what the Akurinu understand baptism to be. Baptism
is a symbol of entry into the christian fellowship and
community. It is closely linked with repentance and with the

reception of the Holy Spirit, although the latter is not simultaneous with baptism, as already stated. Baptism follows upon "hearing" the word of God and "believing" in it;

Baptism is for the individual who has repented totally and truly. One who has given Jesus his soul. Such a person, even without having water poured on him, is baptized; for God has built his house in him. It is the heart that we consider to be baptized. This means that if you were a liar you become truthful, if you were a thief, you cease to be so and become truthful as well.²³

One's baptismal name has to be revealed too, through a dream or prophecy, for actual baptism to take place. Baptism is by the spirit. The Akurinu argue that, the distinction that John the baptist made between his own baptism and the one that would be performed when Jesus came (Mk:1:8), suggests that, in the new dispensation, water baptism has been superceded.

Baptism is also understood as dying to sin and rising again to a new moral life. Joshat Mwangi's assertion, quoted above that, "to be baptized is to bury the past life-style and actions", expresses this point.

Baptism too is a purification which cleanses the baptized person once and for all, in the name of the saviour and through the spirit. This purification is not exclusively individual but has also a communal nature (1Cor:6:11). Baptism is a new birth in the' spirit (Jn:3:5), a birtli of regeneration and renewal in the lioly Spirit, who makes the baptized a

child of God. Baptism implies total conversion, an entire self-giving to Christ which transforms one's whole life. In the song already quoted total conversion is emphasized and hence the idea of newness of life. The song urges the baptized to be truthful, steadfast, righteous, humble and patient. In the song these qualities are personified implying that it is not enough to be called Mary or Joseph, that your life must display these qualities. These qualities are the actual names for a baptized person.

Baptism qualifies one to inherit eternal life. The assurance for receiving eternal life is given through the gift of the Holy Spirit. According to the Akurinu, it is very important to get this assurance because that is the whole purpose of salvation; to be joined to Christ at the

24

"end of one"." The idea of baptism as a "passport" to embark on the journey to heaven is repeatedly stressed in sermons. The statement "we are on a journey", is very common in both sermons and prayers. Hymns also hammer this point. This kind of theology seems "heaven bound".

Many informants that were interviewed were in agreement that baptism is a sharing in the death and resurrection of Jesus; (Romans 6; Col. 2:12-14; Ph. 2:3; Heb:2:14-18 and 1pt:2:4). It seems clear that the idea of baptism as a sharing in the death and resurrection of Christ, which is explicitly proclaimed by Paul in Romans 6; is prominent in the mind of the church. However, since the Akurinu do not

practice baptism by emersion the symbolism of being buried with Christ does not seem to come out strongly in their rite. Nevertheless, the meaning of this symbolism is certainly stressed namely in their assertion that, it is the actions and deeds one performed before "believing" and baptism that are buried in the name of Christ. This understanding of baptism is the official position of the church. In Jesus' discussion with Nicodemus (Jn.3:5 J, Jesus emphasized, in his speech, the importance of spiritual renewal. He said, "... unless one is born with water and the spirit... he cannot enter the Kingdom of God." The appearance of water together with the spirit in this passage, is what makes the Aknrinu insist that spirit baptism is what Christ meant. Since water and the spirit symbolise the inward spiritual cleanness, therefore the rite is not that important. It is the spiritual condition of the believer as Daudi says, that matters. For the Akurinu real water is not involved in baptism, because "water" as mentioned, in the gospel, only indicates the purifying action of the spirit. The Bible, however, suggests the real use of water in baptism, and if we take Jn.3:5 as a reference to baptism and faith then "begetting of water and spirit are two coordinate exigencies
25
for entering the Kingdom of-God". Other New Testament references for instance, Rm. 6:4 and 1st. 3:24, imply water baptism. While we cannot dispute the Akurinu understanding of baptism we cannot ignore the fact that their practice of the baptismal rite is different from the one mentioned in

particular denomination. This is possibly a practice that has been carried over from the major denominations.

One can also be baptized twice or three times. Joshua Njuguna explains that this is a special favour from God. It is not a common practice, but if one's name is revealed for a second or a third time, God's will must be done. God alone knows why this happens. However, a second baptism does not nullify the first one.

(d) Baptismal Names:

To be baptized, one must receive a new name through the spirit. These names must be names of biblical characters, and who are known for certain virtues. It is implied that the baptized person will benefit from the name chosen particularly by emulating the person. Names also signify that one has become a new creature in Christ, and henceforth growing to become more and more like Christ in character. Peter the apostle was so named because of the job he was to perform; being responsible for the growth and development of the church.

The Akurinu seem to stress so much the importance of acquiring a dream - revealed name, that one wonders whether this practice has any theological significance. The custom of taking a new name was not unusual in the early church, but it became common in the third century after Christ.²⁸ When

Christianity came to Kenya, brought by western missionaries, those who became christians, through baptism, were given new names. These names were usually either, French, English Italian or German, and in some cases, biblical. Therefore in belonging to a particular church (denomination) one displayed his affiliation to a foreign culture. One was expected to display a total change in terms of religion, culture and behaviour. It therefore seemed that baptism was equated with getting a foreign name. It also meant cultural transformation and not spiritual renewal. For the Akurinu, baptism has nothing to do with culture and their idea of getting biblical names is purely theological. In the early days of Christianity in Kenya, African converts were very concerned with getting foreign names as a sign that they are not pagans.²⁹

•Abraham, Sarah, Joshua, Jacob, Peter and Paul had their names changed not in baptism, but in other circumstances. Paul's name is a hellenistic rendering of Saul and was more convenient to use in gentile lands. He did not receive it at baptism. In fact he was baptized before he changed his name. Peter was actually baptized before he was named Cephas by Christ (Mt:16:18-19; Jn.1:42, Mk:3:16, Lk:6:14). Abraham, Sarah, Jacob and Joshua got new names to signify a certain experience in their relationships with God, but this had nothing to do with baptism, since baptism was not instituted during their times.

All the same, although there is nothing in the Gospels and Epistles to indicate that **one** changed his name on baptism there is a positive aspect **of** naming. Where one emulates the character of the person he is named after, getting a new name at baptism is very meaningful. Its significance is also seen in the implied renewal and change on receiving baptism. All in all, baptism should not be equated with acquiring a new name.

(e) The Effects of Baptism:

As already noted, baptism demands total conversion. It marks the beginning of a new life. One is baptized into the body of Christ; therefore baptism has both an individual and communal dimension. One becomes a member of a community characterised by sharing, brotherly love and understanding. One also becomes a member of the "family of God" or the body of Christ. In this community, each member's pain is corporately felt, and each member's joy or sorrow is corporately shared.

Entering baptism is also understood in terms of victorious living. After conversion and baptism one is expected to conquer satan and all his evils. These evils are seen in terms of temptations to sin. Sickness or other calamity are seen as satan's attempts to make a christian weak in his faith.

The Akurinu are sure of victory over satan because of two things. One, they *feti* that the battle against satan

has already been fought and won by Jesus on the cross.

Secondly they have been given the Holy Spirit to help and

30

guide them. He is supposed to show the individual that such and such a thing is wrong or right and also enable him to do the right thing. For these two reasons, the Akurinu. therefore believe they cannot sin. It appears as if the spirit dictates the actions of the individual. They assent that, the Holy Spirit is God in them, and as the scriptures say,

No one born of God commits sin;
God's nature abides in him and he
cannot sin because he is born of
God. (1Jn. 3:9).

One wonders to what extent an individual can be held responsible for his actions, if the Holy Spirit dictates what he does.

Zakayo Mungai and Josphat Mwangi do however state that, the rebellion of the flesh remait> after baptism, but this

31

rebellion is no sin unless one wilfully consents to it. Therefore, it is up to the individual, with the help of the holy Spirit to avoid things and situations that can tempt him to sin. If one sins, the Holy Spirit deserts him. lie can never be forgiven for as is stated the epistle to the Hebrews, no more blood shall be shed because Christ's dying was a once and for all event, (Heb.:10:26) .

Accordingly, the Akurinu hold that, those who reall,y possess the spirit of God cannot sin. Some members like hezroni Tumbo and Daudi Ikigu are regarded as people who do

not sin.³² These two have dedicated their whole lives to God's service.

Baptism therefore bestows sanctifying grace and the infused virtues. The new life in baptism is also seen in terms of providence and protection. There is, among the Akurinu, a quiet confidence and assurance that a person who is saved can rely entirely on God to provide health, wealth and protection even from physical dangers. One often hears in church fellowships and services members encouraging each other by narrating incidents of what God has done for them by way of providence and protection. One person narrated that God revealed to him once in a dream, that he would be involved in a car accident. This happened the following day,

33

exactly the way it had happened in the dream. This was a way of preparing him for the danger ahead.

This confidence, that in the new life there is divine protection, is also evident in the way they are joyful even

34

in times of tribulation and pain. Some, due to this, rely entirely on God to remove disease, which is attributed either to evil trying to tempt the Christian or to the result of hidden or unrepented sin. The Holy Spirit guides the believer and helps him in his daily battle against sin. The spirit is in effect equated with the conscience. The spirit is also the source of spiritual gifts* like prophecy, healing, preaching, and speaking in tongues.

(f) Infant Baptism:

In the Akurinu church, as already noted in this chapter, infants and children receive baptism too. This is justified on the basis that Apostles baptized whole households (Acts 16:33) and the fact that Jesus promises his Kingdom to children, meaning that, he did not mean to exclude them from the sacrament of regeneration. The question arises, since children cannot proclaim their faith which is ,J a prerequisite to baptism, how is their faith professed? How can a child receive faith in baptism when it plainly remains unable to exercise faith till the age of reason? The answer to the first question is that their ,God parents and parents are responsible for the child's upbringing until it attains the age of reason. For the second one the child does receive the Holy Spirit. He therefore has the capacity for faith just as a sleeping person has the capacity of a certain habit which he can exercise when he wakes up. Therefore, a child belongs to the community of faith and will properly exercise this faith when he grows up. The same is true of the spirit he possesses. Even infants are confirmed immediately they are baptized just like adults.

To sum up, baptism makes the recipient a member of the "body of Christ" and of the church and makes it possible for f * ' » him to receive the other Magongona. It is a necessary means of salvation (Mk: 16-10). Baptismal regeneration is not a static manner of being acquired once and for all; it is entry into a dynamic superior life whose spirit must

not wane; hence the need of a constant spiritual effort to render always more effective the death to sin, and the restoration "to the new life in God. Baptism occurs on "believing" (conversion) and after one's baptismal name has been revealed by the spirit in a dream, vision or prophecy.

16. Nyimbo cia kuinira ngai. (Nairobi, Uzima Press, 1974). Hymn No. 269 p. 136.
17. urtuai iKigu, Nyimbo cia Roho Mutheru. Hymn No. 21, p. 19.
13. Samuel-John Chege, interview. See also Appendix A, for iules ana regulations of some Akurinu churches.
19. Samuel Kibia, interview.
20. Gideon Kariege, interview.
21. Mwangi, interview.
22. Mungai, interview.
- 2j. Uaudi Iki^u, interivew.
24. See Chapter Four on the Holy Spirit and salvation.
25. R.E. Brown: The Gospel According to John. (New York: Doubleday and Co. Inc. 1966), p. 144.
26. See, Jn. 3:5, Rm. 6:14, Acts 8: 36-37.
27. cf. U.K. Turner: African Independent Church. The 3 i fe and faith of the church of the Lord (Aladura). Vol. 2 London OUP, 1967, p. 196.
28. William li. Addis and Thomas Arnold: A Catholic Dictionary. London, Routledge and Keegan Paul Ltd., 1960 p. 64.
29. Joseph karugia, Jeremiah Wanginyi, Samuel-John Chege, interviews.

50. Zakayo Mungai, interview.
31. Mungai, Mwangi, interviews.
32. Mungai, Gideon Karege, interviews.
33. This happened to Joshua Njuguna in December 1980.
34. See funeral photographs in Appendix wJ.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE CONCEPT OF RITUAL UNCLEANNESS OR THAHU;

It has already been observed that the Vknrinn are apparently withdrawn and do not mix with nnn-Ak ijrin. On this account, non-Akurinu have developed pejorative attitudes towards them and consider them pharisa ical. What makes them appear so is their strict observance of the levitical laws of the Old Testament which are not observed by the established and most other Independent Churches.* The Akurinu. on their part, regard christians wljo do not observe the levitical laws as somewhat deficient in their faith. They Oirgue that Jesus Christ did not advocate the abolition of the old laws and rules in the Old Testament, therefore no true christian should avoid observing them.

Some of the levitical laws that the Akurinu observe,
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and which distinguish them from the other Kikuyu Independent Churches, relate to the concept of ritual uncleanness, Thahu. The levitical laws are the laws, found in the third book of the Bible (Leviticus) which formed the legal basis for the organised civil and religious life of the chosen people. Information on this practice of ritual uncleanness is scarce because the Akurinu were reluctant to give, information on it. The informants would not discuss the issue directly. The author however was fortunate in that she witnessed two occasions where the idea of Thahu featured and cleanness was observed. The rest of the information was gathered indirectly

and with much difficulty, in the interviews and from living with an Akurinu family; this gave the author an opportunity to observe their behaviour.

In this chapter, we discuss this principle of thahu. It will be seen that although thahu is incurred by contact with persons, objects and places considered to be unclean, and also the performance, voluntary or involuntary of certain acts that are ritually unclean, it also entails a moral impurity. To some extent, therefore, Thahu and sin are similar. We shall briefly examine this relationship as well as the Kikuyu and biblical concepts of ritual uncleanness, making the Akurinu concept stand by itself.

(1) Definition:

Thahu has been defined/ as "ritual uncleanness... generally incurred through the performance, voluntary or involuntary of certain acts, some of which are inevitable in every day..."² Thahu might be caused also¹ by magic, sorcery or through the curse of a parent. Thahu loomed very large in the spiritual life of the Kikuyu. On the contraction of thahu, L.S.B. Leakey says,

Thahu could be contracted either with or without the knowledge of the person contracting it. It could be contracted through the actions of the person himself or through the acts and agency of some other person, and it was contagious, so that a person who was in the condition whether the thahu had become visible or not, could pass on that thahu to other people in a variety of ways.³

kiama Gathigira says that, "thahu is that which defiles a
 4
 person when it is done". He adds that, it is synonymous
 with Migiro, that is, taboo. He lists a number of ways in
 which thahu can be contracted. M.N. Kabetu^ lists nine
 different ways while C.W. Hopley lists sixty-eight.^ Their
 lists are in no way exhaustive.

The result of thahu, if not removed, was said to be
 a wasting away of the body without any visible cause, resulting
 in death. This condition was seen in both human beings and
 livestock. Removal of thahu demanded "ceremonial cleansing
 with either a medicine man (mundu mugo) or the elders of
 the council officiating. The ceremony; was known as
Gutahikia (causing to vomit), and ceremonial cleansing was
 a central part of the ritual which would sometimes include
 offering a sacrifice.⁷

(2) Nature of Thahu: The Kikuyu, Biblical and Akurinu

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 x

Concept of Thahu:

When we look at the various actions said to incur
thahu, they seem to be of a mixed sort. A number involve
 some kind of contact with corpses, whether of human beings
 or animals, contact with discharges from the human body
 and food prohibitions. Others relate to relationships among
 relatives, friends, age-mates and with animals. Many
 appear, unclassifiable particularly the ones relating to
 animals. To make sense of thahu, the author finds the

principle suggested by Mary Douglas useful, when she discusses the Levitical Laws. She notes:

Any interpretation will fail which takes the do-nots of the Old Testament in piece-meal fashion. The only sound approach is to forget hygiene, aesthetics, morals and instinctive revulsion... and start with the text. Since each of the injunctions is prefaced by the command to be holy, so that must be explained by that command. There must be contrariness between Holiness and abomination which would make overall sense of the particular restrictions.[^]

Later she says, "we conclude that holiness is exemplified by completeness. Holiness requires that individuals should conform to the class to which they belong. And Holiness requires that different classes of things shall not be confused."⁹

This principle helps us to interpret an otherwise meaningless thahu like that which results from eating from a cracked pot or letting a calabash fall and break, jumping or stepping over one's husband/wife or someone else and passing under a pole that supports a banana plant. The above mentioned acts that incur thahu are also regarded as Migiro or taboo. Wholeness, as Jocelyn Murray observes, is required in everything; material things, in the family, clan or circumcision age-group. There are those things which must be united. That which mixes and confuses outside its own category causes thahu; that which is not whole within causes thahu.¹⁰

Therefore, a number of thahu/migiro are concerned with matters relating to mixing, in some way, of people belonging to the Kikuyu and Maasai circumcision groups of the tribes - sections circumcised according to different rituals; "if one woman is circumcised according to Maasai fashion and another, Kikuyu fashion, and the child of the latter is suckled by the former, the child contracts thahu"¹¹. "If one man circumcises his children according to Maasai fashion and another according to the Kikuyu fashion, and if the former should eat meat killed by the latter, the former incurs

12

thahu and vice-versa". Even a Kikuyu child suckling another woman other than his mother incurs thahu. Neither should those of the same circumcision group quarrel or fight. "If a son curses his father seriously he (incurs) thahu..."¹¹

"Thahu is a concept that sets boundaries for human behaviour and provides remedies when the boundaries are overstepped, whether by accident or with intent, setting a standard of wholeness and cleanness in relationships which have been broken. .For example, the taboo against passing under a banana pole-support, was probably instituted in order to prevent accidents. Passing under the support can, therefore, be dangerous to a child and if the banana fruit was to drop before it was ready, that would deprive a family of food and is also wastage and destruction of a plant.

In the levitical command, the idea of thahu was expressed by God's command that, "Be holy for I am holy".^{1*1}

To avoid the disintegration of the community, a system of taboos was very essential. Hence taboos were necessary to ward off destructive elements. Alor[^]d[^] °?! f-prescrv;. tic.i as the fundamental reason for laws regarding thahu, a wide variety of secondary reasons finally account for any particular object being regarded as unclean. In birth, death and intercourse, mysterious forces are at work and purification rituals are associated with these phenomena. Anything repulsive, like discharges from the body; abnormal or distorted objects were likely to be treated as unclean.

With this Kikuyu background of thahu in mind, it is not surprising that the Bible spoke, so clearly to the Arathi on the subject. Although the Kikuyu translation of the Old Testament did not appear until 1951, the Arathi used the Kiswanili translation which has vocabulary similar to the Kikuyu word thahu in meaning. The Kiswahili translation uses the word Najisi, in the levitical and analogous passages

In the New Testament two Greek words for "unclean", "impure" and the corresponding nouns and verbs are found. "AkaoagptOs" and "Koivos", which also include the meanings
 1S
 "common", "profane" and "polluted". The Hebrew terms are tahSr or t<Tmc² for clean and unclean respectively. The Kikuyu translations of these concepts vary. The roots thuku ("dirty", "spoiled") and giko ("dirt", "filth") are used and also negative circumlocutions like "Haundu maria matari matheru" (things that are not clean, liolv)." In two places

only thahu is used to translate koiv in the sense of polluted (Rm: 14:14; Hebrews 9:13). The Kikuyu word "theru" means "clean" and is also applied to refer to "holy".

Hebrews 9:13 reads:-

For if the sprinkling of defiled persons with the blood of goats and bulls and with the ashes of a heifer sanctifies for the purification of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

In Kikuyu Bible "defiled persons" is rendered "andu aria magiaga na thahu" (people possessing tliahu) and the whole passage is vivid when read in the light of the Kikuyu tradition. Sprinkling and sacrifice were essential parts of the cleansing ceremony and the writer to the Hebrews does not dismiss the Old Testament practice as worthless but rather as superseded by the New Covenant, "How much more... shall the blood of Christ purify your conscience...?"

Romans 14:14 also uses the term thahu and might seem to outsiders to negate the effect of Hebrews 9:13ff. It says, "I know and I am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean (thahu) in itself; but it is unclean for anyone who thinks it is unclean", yet the whole passage which may be taken by those to whom ritual uncleanness is not a problem as opening the way for complete freedom, may be taken also by those who have observed ritual prohibitions as a mandate for their continuance: "everything is indeed

clean, but it is wrong for anyone to make others fall by what he eats; it is right not to eat meat or to drink wine or do anything that makes others fall by what he eats; it is right not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything that makes your brother stumble. "Rm: 14:20 ff*

Ritual prohibitions are thus, not surprisingly, retained by the Akurinu notwithstanding a sincere belief in the purifying blood of Christ. The Akurinu insist that the blood of Christ purifies one on conversion and baptism. And this purification is a liberation from sin of every kind. The obedience of one in faith is necessary for this to happen (1 Peter 1:22; Jn. 15:3). However it is not the traditional kikuyu taboos that are observed in this church; it is actually the levitical prohibitions that are laid down in the Aratlii teaching. Nevertheless, there are some striking cases where a Kikuyu thahu and a levitical law coincide, notably in connection with death, menstruation and the eating of some wild animals. These are not observed because they are Kikuyu, but rather because the Bible, which is God's book, prohibits such practices. It is God who commands that his people be clean and holy. A good example, of such similarity is the law regarding touching of dead bodies.

Coming into contact with a corpse or burying it "If a person touches a dead body or buries one, holds or steps on a dead body's bone or grave he shall stay separate from the company of other people for seven days. He must cleanse

himself on the first, third and seventh days. After that lie goes to the house of God where prayers are offered for them".²¹

On this sort of uncleanness, Hobley says:

If a man touches or carries a corpse, he becomes thahu until he is cleansed... stepping over a corpse inflicts thahu of a very serious nature, and the person contracts a sickness called Mangu (leprosy).²²

Numbers 19:11-12 on the same subject says:

He who touches the dead body of any person shall be unclean seven days; lie shall cleanse himself with the water on the third day and on the seventh day and so be clean.

Another rule related to child birth says:

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 back to the church for prayers.²⁴

Leviticus 12:1-8 states concerning this subject:

If a woman conceives and bears a male child... she shall be unclean for 7 days; ... then she shall continue for thirty-three days in the blood of her purifying, she shall not touch any hallowed thing, nor come into the sanctuary until the days of her purifying are completed. But if she bears a female child, then she shall be unclean two weeks... and she shall continue in the blood of her purifying for sixty-six days. When the days of her purification are over,... she shall bring to the priest at the door of the tent of meeting a lamb a year old for a

burnt offering, and a young pigeon or a turtle dove for a sin offering;... and the priest shall make atonement for her and she shall be clean.

The fact that Jesus and his mother followed this procedure as laid down in the law of Moses, is used by the Akurinu to confirm the relevance of this practice. It should however, be noted that Joseph was a man who always did what was expected of him according to the law of Moses, honestly

25

and uncomplainingly. And, furthermore, this was before Christ spoke about the Mosaic law. During his ministry, Jesus attacked these laws (Mk. 7:14ff) and called for obedience to God and sincerity in worship.

We may note that, the Akurinu law is virtually identical to the levitical command and, in this case (as regards corpses), identical to the Kikuyu traditional thahu. Child birth for the Kikuyu did not involve thahu in ordinary cases, and no ritual purification was necessary.²⁶ But the Akurinu observe rigidly the levitical laws regarding child birth. Others involve keeping the sabbath, in most cases interpreted as Sunday; including prohibitions against cooking,

27

menstruation (Lev: 15:ff; 19-25; Jude 1:23), and discharges from the body; eating of certain foods, for example, pork things strangled and from blood, (Gen. 9:4-7, Acts 15:20-22;

78

Lev: 17:10-16, Deut 12:22-26) . Keeping these laws leads to further restrictions, such as not shaking hands, not eating in public eating houses, not sitting in the house or on chairs of non-Akurinu, lest thahu be incurred.

However, not all the ^JkiizlniL groups existing today observe the same laws or observe them with the same strictness. Liberalisation has taken place and still continues to take place in several rules, but food prohibitions and menstrual and childbirth thahyi and also that relating to dead bodies seem to be observed by all.

It is not clear at what point this matter of thahu became important to the Arathi. Early administrative reports make no mention of such teachings but only of the negative aspects of the sect; seclusion, refusal to wear western-type clothing and to use western manufactured goods

29

and non-co-operation towards administration. * It is most likely that the teaching on thahu developed as the Arathi continued to read their Bibles alone and with one another. Tho thahu laid down in their rules and regulation date in the 1940s. The teaching of this thahu was derived from incidents whereby the believers related or were relating to their non-believing neighbours. For example, the Akurinu would be invited to a wedding ceremony or help their non-believing fellow villagers in certain chores such as, building, cultivating and others. A traditional custom like slaughtering a goat is observed and one of the Arathi present is given a revelation based on the Bible about the incident; which becomes a principle accepted in the end as a law for

30

the whole church. It is through this same manner, as already described, that certain other practices were revealed to the early Arathi and became part of their beliefs and

practices.

It may be asked, what type of consequences the Arathi expected if they incurred thahu and were not cleansed in the required way. Illness or death was thought to follow, but the central theme appears to be that when a person has become defiled he is unacceptable to God. His prayers will not be heard, and it is only after acknowledging the thahu and keeping the required days of seclusion and being prayed for publicly in the congregation that the fellowship with God and co-believers is restored. {Vkiirini} are insistent that sickness is a punishment for unrepented sin and it is only when the sin has been confessed that one gets cured. It may be seen that thahu has both a cultic and moral basis. It is both external (for thahu is viewed as dirt) and internal (moral).

At this point we shall examine in more detail a few of the different types of thahu mentioned as they are observed by the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa. The Akurinu argue that Jesus did not abolish the law of Moses, that in fact he strengthened it, therefore all that is laid out in the law

31

of Moses is still valid. Matt: 17 is quoted to support this point. They also believe that they are a special group, set apart to serve God in the tradition of the levites. Therefore, for people like them, who are in constant contact with God, cleanness of the highest degree is required. So the Akurinu, like the Israelites, should reflect in their

community life the character and actions required by a holy God. Since God is holy, just and full of steadfast love and mercy, these qualities should also be prevalent in the Akurinu, in their lives as individuals and in their relationships with one another. Their garments which are long flowing white robes and a turban, are also similar to those worn by the levites in the Old Testament (Exodus: 28:4). This indicates that they are a priestly group. In the words of Elijah Kinyanjui, "a Mukurinu is a person set apart (by God)" (Mukurinu ni mundu mwamure).

Due to all these, the Mukurinu, will not eat pork or any other animal held as unclean in the Bible (Lev:11:1-9; Dent: 14 3-9; Isaiah: 65: 4-6, Isam: 6: 17-18). God has also forbidden the eating of blood. Neither should they eat meat offered to idols: (Acts 15: 28-30; Lev: 31:17; Gen: 29: 4-6).

When asked about their understanding of Peter's vision of the sheet lowered from heaven containing all types of animals, all of which the divine voice pronounced clean and fit for consumption (Acts 10: 10-16), they are insistent that it was not a mandate to abandon the food laws but rather to allow gentiles into the church. It should be noted that there was a controversy in the early church in Galatia over whether Gentiles wishing to become christians should first of all undergo circumcision and bccome Jews (Gal:5). The Akurinu, however, still hold that

food taken into the human body if unclean represents a potential source of defilement and hence those who have consecrated themselves to God should not touch it. Since thahu is contagious the "clean" people should avoid contact with the "unclean" people, objects and situations.

This is why the Akurinu will not shake hands with non-Akurinu, sit on their stools, enter their houses or mix with them in any such way. They will also not eat fat sold in the shops, because they are not sure that it has not been mixed with pork fat. Instead, for cooking oil, most use margarine or butter. Elijah Kinyanjui and Joseph karugia also mention that one who is so defiled cannot earnestly and sincerely pray to God, neither can his prayers be answered; such a one is troubled spiritually. The breath of a person who eats unclean food, for example, pork, blood, or meat used in traditional ceremonies is unclean; his hands and the whole body are also unclean. To associate with an unclean person implies approval of the unclean person's behaviour. God therefore demands purity in every respect, moral, spiritual and physical. The injunction, "you shall be holy for I the Lord your God I am holy" is here evident in the 'belief and practices of the Akurinu.

As already noted, the Akurinu observe the levitical law concerning the dead. A corpse is abhorred. However, death is welcomed very joyously as the beginning of a new life in Christ for the dead person. Jews, on the contrary, did not

believe in an after life. The levitical practice in Numbers 19: concerning burial of the dead is observed. A corpse should not enter the church (Kihoero - lit. the place of prayer) because this defiles it. Since a corpse is unclean no Mubatithania (baptizer) or Muhoi (prayer leader) should touch it, even of his own relative. Although not everything outlined in the book of Numbers is carried out, the procedure is very much the same. A few volunteers dig the grave and bury the corpse after being prayed for; they are then separated from the rest of the congregation. They then cleanse themselves with water on the third and seven days after the burial and are then received back into the congregation with prayers. At the burial the relevant biblical passages are read, the sermon is delivered and there is much joyous singing. A corpse is considered unclean because it has no blood and therefore no life. It is also something repulsive and nauseating because it decomposes.

The idea of cleanness is observed even in the sacrament of marriage. The third rule of the Holy Ghost Church of Last Africa's rules and regulations states;

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.³⁴

To avoid uncleanness through adultery or fornication the youth are observed strictly by their parents and church elders. Those who do not go to school live in a house, Garu, near the church. Anybody suspected of making passes

at a Mukurinu girl is excommunicated immediately.

As already noted earlier, there are laws relating to childbirth. The mothers are considered unclean. Until they are cleansed 40 (fourty) and 80 (eighty) days after delivery if the child is a boy or a girl respectively. After the period of seclusion is over, she washes herself with water; she also washes her belongings and household utensils. Her women friends then escort her to church where she and her child are prayed for by the officiating Muhoi (or pastor) and many hymns are sung.^ This way, she is cleansed.

Cleanness is also required in church leaders always and particularly when an important ceremony like baptism and marriage are about to take place. For two weeks before the ceremonies, the elders are not supposed to have sexual intercourse with their wives. They therefore seclude themselves in the Garu and pray ardently during those two weeks. In this atmosphere of quiet and peace they can concentrate on prayer, for there are no distractions that could make the elders have evil thoughts.

Another rule of this church states that, "beer drinking and smoking is not allowed in our church". Drinking and smoking are believed to pollute the body and also lead one to^ evil behaviour. God's people should not defile themselves (Gwithahia) for their bodies are "the temple of the holy spirit" - (1Cor:6:6). Those who are considered to have thahu

are also regarded as sinful because they can not approach God while their minds and hearts are unclean. As in the Old Testament (cf. Lev: 5:3-4,) the Akurinu view uncleanness as sin. For sin one was required to repent in "sackcloth and ashes" and humble himself before God, for forgiveness and reconciliation with God to be attained. In Kikuyu tradition, reconciliation was brought about through purification by ceremonial cleansing. This brought an end to everything. In the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa, as in leviticus:5:3-4, it is held that moral iniquity is a form of uncleanness of which the source is the inner life of the sinner and unless forgiveness of the sin is got from God, the source of defilement remains. Deliberate and unrepented sin is consequently a continuing source of defilzment. The Akurinu also insist that for moral iniquity (sin) , forgiveness comes only once, upon the initial repentance during conver-

38

sion.' On being converted the Holy Spirit enters one's heart and guides his life. Such a person can not therefore sin. Those who sin after conversion are not strong believers and can not be forgiven and saved because "to sin is to return Jesus on the cross; and no more blood shall be shed for deliberate sinners."³⁹

As already observed, not all Akurinu hold the rules regarding cleanness and uncleanness with the same strictness. For example, members of African Mission of the Holy Ghost Church do not display the same aversion to corpses as those of the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa. Daniel Muchiri says

that since Jesus visited the tomb of Lazarus (Jn:11:vi) and did not contract uncleanness, so they too can not contract it. So they do not observe these levitical laws although they will not bring the corpse into the church. Concerning receiving of a mother into church for purification after delivery, Daniel says that in their church, the mother returns to church at her own convenience and is prayed for, but not in the manner stipulated in the book of Numbers.⁴⁰

Some of these rules are sometimes observed to the point of absurdity. When asked whether the Akurinu can continue being different when life today requires that they mix with the rest of the population in public transport, schools, meetings, market; Joshua Njuguna says that although their attitudes and behaviour are changing, the rules concerning thahu may still remain the same, although time may modify them. Every night Joshua prays to God to cleanse him if through contact with people he may have contracted thahu.

In the Old Testament the idea of these prohibitions was to protect Israel from believing in idols and idolatrous practices, or to rid them of such practices where they are already in existence. Admittedly when the idea of cleanness is overemphasized it leads in the final analysis to a ludicrous degree of formalism. This in fact had already taken place before the time of Christ. It is this formalism that divorced worship from morality that prophets like Isaiah, Amos (4:1-5), Hosea 6:6 were opposed to.. Jesus Christ

too opposed it. He dealt a blow to the idea of ritual cleanness and uncleanness and in its place advocated the basic principle of moral disposition (Mk.7:14). It is therefore on the basis of one's moral disposition that one can be judged either clean or unclean.

In addition to this, the Jewish dietary laws were concerned, among other things, with maintaining good physical health. The pentateuchal medical code recognised that healthy individual existence involved certain fundamental principles of hygiene "that by nature required acceptance at both an intellectual and an emotional level".^ It is true according to Elijah that animals that do not chew the cud

42

could cause serious illness if eaten. Although Elijah Kinyanjui mentioned that hygiene is observed through the observation of the dietary laws and others in the pentateuch, many Akurinu can not explain the relevance of these laws to their faith except that God requires that they follow them.

It seems that the body of doctrine on thahu and other beliefs and practices was built up gradually in a period when Kikuyu traditional codes were falling into disregard. Many Kikuyu dealt with this problem of values by either combining new and old customs when convenient or reverting to traditional customs at certain points but in many circumstances adopting new ways of behaviour altogether. Thus a wedding came to include traditional christian and western practices; a circumcision ceremony was stripped of

all ritual and became nothing but a mere physical operation Thahu concepts have not disappeared but they no longer function as a way of securing wholeness and unity, (as in the traditional society) in an increasingly fragmented society.

The Arathi here, however, built up a totally inclusive system of behaviour, a new "church tribe", in the midst

43

of the old disintegrating tribe". Because the Arathi are virtually confined to one language/culture group, and because of their initial attitude of seclusion and rejection of western amenities, they were able to maintain their purity through separation. Their replacement of traditional thahu with biblical thahu has provided them with an all encompassing code of conduct. One wonders whether this will continue with the generations which are becoming more and more educated and also as non-Kikuyu are being encouraged to join the church.

Despite all the reasons advocated for the retention of the idea and role of thahu in the Akurinu belief and practice; and although it might appear like the Akurinu theology conceives of uncleanness in quasi-physical terms, there can be no doubt that the purification of water performed for the people fulfills an important psychological function. The purification relieves the worshippers of the debilitating sense of guilt and mediates a sense of cleanness and forgiveness.

FOOTNOTES

1. The Akurinu adhere to the teachings of the Old Testament to a very large extent compared to other Kikuyu Independent Churches. Some Kikuyu Independent Churches, particularly the African Orthodox Church (Karing'a), observe some of the teachings but not strictly. They do not however observe the levitical Laws regarding blood or death, according to Joseph, Karugia.
2. John Middleton: The Central Tribes of the North-Eastern Bantu. (London: International African Institute, 1956) p. 69-70.
3. UxB. Leakey: The Southern Kikuyu before 1903. Vol. 3. (London Academic Press, 1977) pp. 1232-33.
4. Kiama Cathigira MilCarire ya Agikuyu: (Customs of tlve Kikuyu) (Nairobi Equatorial Publishers 1968). p. 39.
5. Mathew Njoroge Kabetu. Kirira kia Ugikuyu ("Kikuyu Customs and Traditions of the Kikuyu people"). (Nairobi, East African Publishing House 1966), pp. 105-108.
6. C.W. Hobley: Bantu Beliefs and Magic. (London: Franc Cass and Co. Ltd. (1938) (1967, revised edition) Chapter VIII "the curse and its manifestations" pp. 103-158.

7. Ibid, p.- 134-7.
8. Mary Douglas, Purity and Danger: an Analysis of the Concept of taboo, (London, 1966) p. 49.
9. Ibid, p. 49.
10. J. Murray "Kikuyu Spirit Churches". Journal of Religion in Africa. Vol. 5: 1973, p. 230.
11. Hobley op.cit. p. 112.
12. ibid, p. 109.
13. Ibid, p. 116.
14. Murray, op.cit. p. 230.
15. **RSV** Bible, Leviticus 11:44.
16. George Arthur Buttrick Ed. "Uncleanness", The Interpreters Dictionary of the Bible Vol. (New York, 1967) pp. 641-648.
17. Fredrick Jackson: A Standard Swahili - English Dictionary; (London, 1963. (1st Edition 1938). p. 329. Najisi: (a) generally unclean, dirty, impure, profane. Strictly anything which makes a person unclean until he has purified himself by ceremonial washing. Najisi is used in the Swahili Bible, Union version, 1950, to translate "Unclean", where thahu is used in Kikuyu. e.g.. Leviticus 5:2.

13. See Robert Young: Analytical Concordance of the Holy Bible, (London 8th Edition, 1953.) p. 192, 241, 1012-3
19. J.B. Baur Ed. "Clean and Unclean", Encyclopediae of Biblical Theology Vol. I. (London, Sheed and Ward, 1970), pp. 118-121.
20. See "Laws laid down by the African Holy Ghost Christian Church" Mss. In the possession of Samuel John Chege. See also J. Murray, op.cit. p. 230.
21. Law No. 6, in the laws laid down in the Christian Holy Ghost Church. A manuscript in possession of the church, dating 3.3.50.
22. Hobley, -op.cit. p. 106, 107, 103.
23. RSV Bible, Numbers 19: 11-12.
24. Rule No. 9 in the Rules and Regulations of the African Holy Ghost Christian Church. See Appendix A.
25. E.M. Blaiklock, commentary on the New Testament, chapter by chapter exposition. (London, Hodder and Stoughton.) p. 56.
26. J. Murray. op.cit. p. 232. Also Elijah Kinyanjui, interview.

27. Rule No. 11, 10 and 12 of the African Holy Ghost Christian Church. Appendix A.
28. Samuel-John Chege, interview.
29. Kinyanjui, interview.
KNA PC/CP.3/7/3. Letter of DC Fort Hall to PC Central Province, 8th January, 1938, KNA/DC/KBU/3/2.
30. Kinyanjui, interview. See also Murray op.cit. p. 232.
51. RSV Bible, Matt. 5:17 says, "Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfil them."
32. Kinyanjui, Joseph Karugia, interviews.
33. Hezroni Tumbo, interview.
34. Rule No. 3 in the Rules of the Holy Ghost Church of Last Africa. Manuscript in possession of Joseph Karugia. See Appendix A.
55. See pages 196-197.
56. Samuel-John Chege, interview. Also participant observation of this particular ceremony in January 1981 at Leshaw Podo.
37. Rule No.6, of African Holy Ghost Christian Church.
38. Zakayo Mungai, interview.

39. Zakayo Mungai, interview.
40. Daniel Muchiri, interview.
41. R.K. Harrison, Introduction to the Old Testament.
(London, Tyndale Press 1970) p. 604.
42. Such animals are general^, carnivours like lions,
leopards, dogs etc. They are not eaten by other
people, leave alone Jews and Akurinu.
43. J. Murray op.cit. , p. 233.

CHAPTER EIGHTCONCLUSIONASSESSMENT OF THE HOLY GHOST CHURCH OF EAST AFRICA'S
IMPACT ON SOCIETY:

In concluding this study, we should take note of several points which came out clearly in the last seven chapters . Firstly, this study has led to the conclusion that, the Akurinu movement is a product of the social, political, economic religious and theological upheaval of the late 1920s and early 1930s. As such its emergence had an impact on the society in both religious and secular spheres of life. The secular sphere refers to the social, political and economic aspects of life. The religious sphere will be discussed later in this chapter.

1. POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT, ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION AND
SOCIAL INTEGRATION.

Throughout its early history, the Akurinu movement was subjected to harassment and persecution by the colonial authorities on account of its being suspected of subversion. Many of its leaders were imprisoned and the adherents harassed in every possible way. Kenyatta observes that the Arathi were not political;

' "Watu wa Mungu do not indulge in politics, nor do they belong to any political organization, they devote their time to religious activities. But the government

suspected them of having planned to defy authority. Some of their shrines were closed down... on the assumption that they had political character."¹

So they were merely suspected, meaning they were not actually political. During the emergency (1952-1956) they were suspected of helping freedom fighters. They claim that, they merely prayed for freedom and liberation but they never took up arms. Today the constitutions of all Akurinu churches state that the Akurinu are not interested in political involvement.³ But they do pray for continued peace and stability in the country.⁴

However despite this stand then and now, the Akurin.. movement and particularly the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa are deeply involved in development in the country. One of the objectives of the African Holy Ghost Christian Church states,

To encourage the church followers to be active, to interest themselves in trade and industry and also in the country's development.⁵

They therefore participate in the building of harambee schools, cattle dips, churches, planting of cash crops for example coffee, pyrethrum, tea and fruit trees (in Limuru). All the same the Akurinu's attitudes to political and social economic activities are ambivalent. While they encourage their members to be actively involved in development they

keep reminding them that their primal concern is their spiritual welfare. The present life is regarded as:
 r *
 transitory and therefore one should live a life that will eventually lead him to acquire his own salvation and not to involve himself totally with the chores of this life, for this world will eventually end.^ Probably this attitude is an advantage to the church because the Kenya Government objects to churches involving themselves with public issues or being too involved in politics.

Today the church encourages its members to educate their children and improve their standards of living. Two
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- (i) To establish religious schools, churches, educational and social institutions for the uplifting of all Akurinu.
- (ii) To teach the followers of the church to have more education, upto the higher standards, healthy clean nutrition and to have better home together with self
 7
 respect.

During the 1940s through to early 1960s, the Akurinu were generally regarded as lazy and anxious to evade work. They refused to own property, for they regarded all activity as

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S2i\ and money as the root of ail evil. Lo then, everythin belonged to nwene nyaga (Ngai) and having been chosen to

serve him, they had no need of acquiring or accumulating
 Q
 wealth. In the 1940s, Kiambu DC, H. Lambert commented
 that though the attitudes of the 1940s Arathi towards work,
 the affairs of this world and the colonial government had
 changed, they still showed no signs of encouraging themselves
 in any beneficial occupation, whether inside or outside
 their "native lands"¹⁰

However, despite these attitudes, after Independence
 (1963) the Arathi adapted themselves to the changing
 circumstances. No longer could they remain isolated in a
 society that required co-operation from one and all in the
 government efforts to improve the welfare of the people,
 through provision of clean drinking water, better medical
 care, improved productivity through self-help projects and
 co-operative societies, effective use of fertilizers to
 produce more, literacy programmes to clear ignorance and
 also the improvement of the whole personality through
 harmonious interracial, inter-tribal relationships and
 mutual tolerance, irrespective of religion, race, creed
 and personal achievement.

Today the Akurinu have tried to live up to their
 objectives. They no longer isolate themselves and they
 take advantage of adult literacy programmes and encourage
 their children to get more education. They have built
 many permanent church buildings in most of their branches,
 they are members of co-operatives and contribute generously

in any harambee activities. The Akurinu in Nyahururu formed an Akurinu Farmers Association in 1978 for the purpose of purchasing a farm from which the church can gain income. They ultimately succeeded in buying 4,500 acres of land at Rumuruti.

The Akurinu ethic encourages wise investment and the virtues of honesty, obedience, love, generosity and kindness. They also emphasize hard work and discipline in order to hold the values of the group. These virtues have helped a great deal to uplift their standards of living for they apply them to their work; religious and secular. Whereas they were previously regarded as lazy, they now have an enviable reputation as good agriculturalists and work men. The Akurinu community which is characterised by ^concern for $y^{\wedge}twfv_mVc-s^{\wedge}y$ each others welfare, is reminiscent of the early christian communities. They have created a community in which, unlike in the traditional community where relationships and social bonds were dependent on kinship; members are tied together by a common faith.

In conclusion the Akurinu and mostly, the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa, have made a significant contribution to the economic development of the country, on account of their acceptance of education and attempt at alleviating poverty among its members.

On the other hand, most groups, the Holy Ghost Church

of East Africa included still refuse medical care. Others prevent their children from going to school and others still bar their members from obeying certain government policies. Such behaviour, runs counter to government demands of its citizens and therefore hinders its efforts to improve the quality of life. It therefore amounts to policy ridicule. Certain beliefs and practices will have to undergo change still, if the Akurinu are to be deeply involved in national development.

It was observed in Chapter Three that the changes that occurred in the 1930s created a confused society. The social structures and religious foundations of the society were undermined and the old structures proved inadequate to cope with the changing times. The AOC and AIPCA filled the vacuum for those Kikuyu in mission schools and churches, but for the Arathi who had no social standing and basically came from the margins of society, the Akurinu movement filled the vacuum. The movement provided members with a sense of stability, cohesion and belonging, and a "place to feel at home". In this society, those who could not fit in the missionary establishment found refuge. As shown in the study, the Holy Spirit showed that he does not discriminate. To these people was given the gift of prophecy and many revelations on beliefs and practices that were not observed in the mission churches.

2. EVALUATION OF THE HOLY GHOST CHURCH OF EAST AFRICA'S RELIGIOUS DYNAMISM.

In spite of the many setbacks that the Akurinu churches have suffered, they have continued to grow and spread. It may be asked whether it is not necessary for schism to occur for the benefit of Christianity itself. Although the Akurinu belief and practice appeared weird and strange to the colonial administrators and missions, the very existence of the movement was a corrective measure of an imbalance in the missionary churches. The early Akurinu saw this imbalance when they read the scriptures and observed the absence of the belief in the Holy Spirit and his manifestations in dreams, visions and prophecy, and the observance of the levitical laws. What doctrine and ethic the Akurinu produced therefore, effected a degree of renewal.

Independent Churches in Africa are numerous and still continue to emerge. Their emergence and continuance shows that they do serve a purpose for their adherents. Attitudes towards these churches have changed since the last forty years and they are regarded as part and parcel of Christianity. The Independent Churches have tried to indignize Christianity something that the mission founded churches are still trying to do.

However, since the Akurinu church evangelized only the Kikuyu people it appeared narrowed and this is still

a shortcoming of this church. In this section we shall assess the religious renewal and relevancy brought about by the emergence of the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa, which still persist today, as evidenced in the beliefs and practices already discussed.

This study has led to the conclusion that the early Akurinu lived in a society that was already experiencing change in its religion, social, political and economic set up. They were faced in these changing circumstances with the option of traditional religion which was itself threatened by the changing circumstances. Christianity attracted quite a number of people but because it abhorred certain Kikuyu practices, most people either remained nominal or quit the church. Of what relevance was the Akurinu church in these circumstances?

The movement though christian in name and content, developed strong Kikuyu religious belief and practice. It accepted the Kikuyu concept of God (Ngai)[^]prophecy and ritual uncleanness (Thahu). It also emphasized the importance of small religious communities which provided outlets for emotions. At first, as Kenyatta notes, it was tolerant of

13

polygamy and veneration of ancestral spirits. The movement also developed its own liturgy, code of ethical behaviour and doctrine. They also developed a prayer pattern very close to the traditional Kikuyu prayer pattern, and they have also borrowed certain elements from certain protestant churches. They have in this respect adopted the book of

common prayer which is used at certain ceremonies, for example, marriage, funeral, purification, blessing of newly built churches and ordination. They have also adopted the Old Testament Judaic practices concerning food taboos and the rituals connected with burial and purification. The Akurinu beliefs and practices have therefore been evolved from their Kikuyu heritage and Judeo-Christian elements. The Akurinu are however insistent that although some Kikuyu and Jewish practices are identical (Food taboos, and Thahu connected with touching dead bodies) they are not observed because they are Kikuyu, but because they are biblical. That it is the biblical teaching concerning them that reinforced their continuance (in the Akurinu belief) and not that they carried them forward from their Kikuyu religious heritage. The Akurinu belief and practice today, is not therefore sycretistic as was thought by some people like Kenyatta."^ This is also true of the concept of prophecy. The biblical teaching on prophecy (See Chapter Five) reinforced an already existent concept. Whereas among the Kikuyu prophecy was confined to a few people who were called by God, and who usually happened to be elders, the new "prophecy" was open to all who were ready to receive the Holy Spirit regardless of their social standing in society.

The Akurinu Church in its two-fold aspects, traditional and Judeo-Christian was relevant to the kind of people who became members. Due to its relevance the movement attracted

many people in a short time and managed to win the acceptance of those who became members.

In spite of this initial dynamism the rate of growth has slowed down and the movement has not appealed much to other ethnic groups. Foreign elements in the mission-founded churches have decreased and this is probably why many people are not attracted to the Akurinu church. Therefore factors that attracted the early converts are not there any more. Splits continue to occur in these churches due to their refusal to change certain practices and the young continue to leave the church after attaining modern education. Only very few individuals join the church compared to the early days up to 1963 when converts were won in masses.

The Akurinu, we can however conclude, have tried to make the Gospel message understandable to them by integrating it into their culture. They have made a contribution to Christianity by showing a way to indigenisation through their liturgy, ^ code of ethical behaviour and doctrine.

The Akurinu movement too tried to answer the need for religious renewal that was active among a section of the Kikuyu. The renewal required a break with the past. Hence the Akurinu rejected Kikuyu sacrificial practices, divination and many other beliefs. In order to break with the past they had to experience conversion and receive spirit baptism. The belief in the Holy Spirit that was not emphasised in the mission-founded churches was greatly emphasised in the

Akurinu Churches especially when an outpouring of the Holy Spirit was experienced by some of the early Akurinu between 1926-1930. The Holy Spirit taught them ways of interpreting scripture, how to pray with hands aloft, spirit baptism and gave them many other of the beliefs they hold today. He plays a role of guidance to the individuals and the church and is understood as the giver of God's power and the one who effects salvation. The Holy Spirit brought a much needed renewal to these believers and the church in general for as many believers testified, there was a lethargy in the church in the first quarter of this century.

Coupled with this renewal was the institution of a system of laws and prohibitions (See Chapter Seven) to help the new convert to live in the newness of life. Hence the levitical and other laws. The world of evil was renounced and the traditionally irrelevant religious practices which would soon lose validity, discarded. The members in this Akurinu community joined a new religious community and adapted themselves to this new outlook.

The movement demanded a new and great commitment. The members displayed an astonishing zeal in participating in the new communal activities: attending religious meetings, evangelising, helping one another in social and economic matters and fellowships which were characterised by prayer and much joyous singing and dancing. The members were very enthusiastic it seems, in their efforts to "preach to all

nations". This is today one of the objectives of the church; to win converts from non-Kikuyu people, hence making the church universal.

3. THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCH:

The Akurinu movement viewed in itself is not a strong force inspite of its initial almost spectacular successes, and of the many attractions which it still holds for its adherents. The reasons for its present weaknesses are many and varied.

First it lacks the enlightened and dynamic leadership that might significantly promote its further expansion. A closer look at the 1920-1952 Arathi reveals that they were men (See Chapter Three) who were poorly educated. Most of them infact were illiterate. Most also belonged to the squatter and labourer class, therefore they came from marginal groups. Being therefore illiterate and so socially disadvantaged the founders lacked the knowledge to organise training for leadership. The early Arathi were more concerned with worship, prayer and other spiritual matters having subjected themselves to the will of the spirit. Lack of proper organised leadership, that would ensure consensus in belief, faith and practice was the cause of schism in the early days of the movement. Diversity in the interpretation of scripture existed since everybody felt that the Holy Spirit guided each individual in understanding

and interpreting it. The Akurinu's grasp of scripture was and is generally still very literal and fundamental and it is no wonder that diversity occurs.

Today as it was in the early days, this lack of firm guidance and control from well trained leaders, is the cause of tensions among leaders which have also led to the splitting of groups. It should be recommended that the leaders get good training in theological colleges, and those recruited for these positions be carefully assessed. If leaders are properly trained, they will have a comprehensive understanding of the Bible and Christianity and therefore avoid presenting it to the congregation in piecemeal fashion. It is the conclusion of this study that a more whollistic understanding and presentation of scripture is necessary in order to minimise schism in these churches and others.

Secondly, the Akurinu movement and particularly the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa is essentially a movement for one ethnic group in Kenya and in its present condition one does not expect it to develop national dimensions. Although the church has spread to non-Kikuyu regions like Kakamega, Eldoret, Kitale, Turkana and Meru, it is only among the immigrant Kikuyu there that it has taken root. Only about less than ten members of the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa are non-Kikuyu or non-Meru.¹⁽¹⁾ Such keep dropping out on finding fchat they do not fit in the Kikuyu cultural set-up. The Akurinu movement seems to have taken the trend

taken by most mission-founded and Independent Churches in Kenya. For example, the Presbyterian, Methodist, Anglican, Africa Israel Church Nineveh and Legio Maria Churches, are limited to certain ethnic groups.

Thirdly the Akurinu church movement is still the object of contempt and sometimes ridicule within Kikuyuland and the nation as a whole. They are known everywhere by the fact that they will not shake hands (some of them), eat food and meat in non-Akurinu homes, sit in non-Akurinu houses, vote at elections, send their children to school and accept medical care.

It maybe reasonably be expected that the movement will not expand significantly in the future despite the fact that some young educated people still remain in the church. Most young people however drop out of the church on realising that certain careers that they may be interested in (for example, nursing, secretarial and medicine) are incompatible with the churches' policies. Recently, in 1980, all Akurinu educated youth formed a Youth Association aimed at reviewing certain practices and beliefs which they feel will have to change if the church is to survive. It therefore seems that if the church leadership will ever go into the hands of this upcoming youth, enlightened leadership will occur and probably make the faith appeal to other people like at the beginning. It is the opinion of the youth that some attitudes that the Akurinu hold are based on ignorance.

Their belief particularly in faith healing is valid. But there are certain illnesses that are not controlled by the mind and the patient therefore requires medical attention. There have been cases of women bleeding to death after delivery and other members dying of pneumonia, cholera, malaria etc., lives which could have been saved if medical attention was sought.¹⁷

The church therefore has to respond to the needs of the times and adjust itself accordingly if it has to receive wide acceptance today. If this does not happen, only a few individuals will continue to be recruited while others continue to defect. For the current members nevertheless, the movement has provided extraordinary cohesion and a Christianity relevant to them.

This study has also come to the conclusion that the Akurinu movement fits within the context of independency in Africa. These movements have striking similarities. Their development as seen in the literature review, was a result of a combination of factors; religious, theological, sociological, anthropological, economic, political, cultural and psychological. However as seen in chapter Three, theological factors were dominant in the emergence of the Akurinu.

The movement as a phenomenon, can be seen as a movement with a bearing on the past, present and future. It reacted

against certain aspects of the past, the Kikuyu traditions. It aimed at an encounter with the present (although they withdrew from society then) and devised a movement that however deficient met with the existing needs and aspirations. The Judeo-Christian aspects expressed its desire to break with the traditional and join the modern trends.

From the above certain conclusions emerge that are significant to the church. That the situation in which people are, their needs, their hopes and aspirations should be considered and determine the approach taken to encounter the people. It was wrong for missionaries and colonists to assume that certain practices and beliefs among the Kikuyu were wrong before they understood the people. Today the Church universal is faced with the problem of how to relate to the traditional culture. The current efforts at indiginisation show that the church has accepted its obligation to minister to the people in their present state and be meaningful and relevant to them. This is what some scholars call the incarnational power of the Gospel and what Paul meant by saying that;

"For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.
(Galatians 3:27-28).

If the church universal too is to retain its dynamism it has to relinquish outdated forms and incorporate new trends,

safe-guarding the essentials and the unity of the church itself. New approaches will have to be in step with a developing and changing society. As a phenomenon the Akurinu movement implies renewal and relevancy too.

Finally to conclude the study, we have noted that the Akurinu movement emerged between 1926 and 1930. Its causes were a pointer that if missionary methods were not changed in future, even more break-aways from the missions would occur. The movement itself has developed schismatic tendencies which are an indication of further splintering and divisions. The current causes of schism are leadership disputes or strict moral discipline in the churches. These conflicts and tensions do not seem to have any permanent solution. The Holy Ghost Church of East Africa has maintained strict discipline of its members and has had negligible break-aways since 1934.

The movement maintains a close relationship with other churches in central province. This in away enhances ecumenism at the local level. However it has not received much recognition and prestige and in the course of its history, it has become more and more isolated. This is probably due to the fact that, the church still attracts to a large extent the poor and the unemployed who are not in a position to foster any dynamism in the church.

Yet, the movement has given its followers a satisfying

form of security that has enabled them to adjust to their environment. The Akurinu movement fulfils a definite function for its members and therefore its end would have harmful effects for a section of the Kikuyu population. The members have been able to participate in developmental activities in the country and therefore enhance national development. Several members are successful farmers and businessmen while others hold responsible positions in both private and public sector.

By its concern to provide for the existential needs of its members who were disoriented by the confusing trends of a society in transition the Akurinu movement has developed certain emphasis that deserve to be studied. It has emphasised community life and the virtues of honesty, kindness, love, concern for others' welfare and obedience. These are features that make the movement attractive to members and non-members. The Akurinu have won the confidence of their employers and society as a whole. It would be necessary to study their approach to Christianity that makes them uphold the above virtues so strongly. Probably such a study would provide other churches certain guidelines towards Africanisation or rather indiginisation of Christianity

The Akurinu have contributed a new understanding of the Bible by the fact that Bible passages (particularly the Old Testament) that are problematic or ignored by many European and American Churches are perfectly understandable

to them. An analysis of their hymn book, "Nyimbo cia Roho Mutheru" can reveal the theology of this church. This church emphasises community and morality rather than abstract ideas. The material culture of this movement can also be studied. All the beliefs and practices of the Akurinu churches and particularly the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa could not be covered here because they were beyond the scope of this study. It is the suggestion of the author that ample study and research be carried out in the areas pointed out and others like marriage, burial^ ordination etc. before a proper assessment of the movement can be made. The beliefs and practices already noted could act as a useful guide to such a research.

FOOTNOTES

1. J. Kenyatta: Facing Mount Kenya p. 278.
2. Timotheo Kihungi, Interview.
3. See constitutions of some Akurinu Churches in
Appendix A.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Samuel-John Chege, Joseph Karugia, Interviews.
7. See the constitutions of Holy Ghost Church of East
Africa, and African Holy Ghost Christian Church,
Appendix A.
8. Kenyatta, op.cit. p. 274-275.
9. Ibid, p. 275.
10. N. Farson, Last chance in Africa p. 8.
11. This refers to the God's word Holy Ghost Church.
12. This refers to the Akurinu in Meru who in 1978
refused to have themselves registered and issued
with identity cards on the pretext that it was
against their faith.
13. Kenyatta, op.cit. 277.

14. Ibid, p. 277.
15. See Chapter Three for the ways of worship of the Akurinu.
16. Joseph Karugia, Interview.
17. "Sect member bound over". Daily Nation, May, 1980.
In the incident reported here, a young mother died of bleeding after delivery. See also "Burnt child was denied treatment". Daily Nation 1st September, 1984.

APPENDIX A (MISCELLANEOUS)(i) 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".

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:

1. The society is established with the following objectives:

- (i) To be representative of all Akurinu residing in Kenya in general,
- (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 134 LIMURU. (a)

1. This church started in 1929. Reasons of the origin of this church may be found in, Joel 2:23; 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, ITim 2:8-9, IKings 8:22-23.
5. In our church, men do not sha e their beards or heads. ICor. 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:4:36, Jn.4:1-4. 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. Bej^r 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 forbidden.
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.

The 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
 KeT^ita Forest , Ndeiya
 Gikuni
 Fort Hall
 Kisumu
 Nyeri
 Embu
 Kirinyaga
 Kitale

(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 Satjjath. Ex:16:22-27; 28, 20: 8-12; 35:2-4.
2. We pray God everyday, morning, evening 3.00 am-6.00 am and also at 4.30pm. 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 staked 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; 1Kor: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 worship, and wash our heads and feet, before entering God's house.
Ex:19:10-17; Gen:35:2-3.
12. On entering the church all men raise their clean hands while praying and recite the Lord's prayer, three times. ITim:2:8-9; IKings:8:22-23; Mt:6:9-14.
13. We wear white turbans on our heads (men and women) for God's desires so 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 women of the covenant (Mutumia wa Kirikaniro) is only one. Gen: 2:24; Malechi 2:14-16; 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. Who ever adulterers, we excommunicate him.
6:9-11, Ephesictns 5:3-5.
16. We do not like thieves or witches or anybody who (kwi hia Mathani) or any other law or rule Christ commended - 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, Hoseah 5:13-14, 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, IKings 13:27-32, 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 cia gutungatira Ngoma) . 1 Cor-: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, Acts 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, 1Kings13:2-3.

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) 1 Cor:11:16-17,
Deut:17:12-14.

25. We pray for our leaders as the letters 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.

(iii) RULES OF AFRICAN HOLY GHOST CHRISTIAN CHURCH:

1. CHURCH PRAYING ASSEMBLIES: We hold prayers every morning from 3.00 a.m. to 6.30 p.m. and evening from 6.30 p.m. to 9.00 p.m. Luke 18-122; 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 Previnent 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 member of this church do not make fire on Sunday. We rest without doing anything we eat cold food and cold drinks, we rest Sabbath of the Lord, See Exodus 35-2-4: 16-27-28 Genesis 2-3-4: Luke 23-56; Hebrews 4-4-9.

4. We attend and gather in our church every Friday in order to pray and to remember the death of our Saviour Jesus Christ. Isaia 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, feet, and faces; See Genesis 35-2-3+ Exodus 19-10-17; Psalms: 26-4-5; John 13-5-10 K; Lsvitio s: 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; 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: 13-415; Genesis 2-24; 1 Cor:7-1-4,

8. The followers of this church do - not play polygamy and if any gentleman or girl commits adultery or have two more wives this is the sin and the church should discharge and expell such person from the church, the church shall not be responsible for ' such marriages and no wedding of such person can be done in the church. Mathew: 5-27-31; 19-6-10; Exodus:20-14-15; Leviticus 21-7-9; 1Corinthians: 5-11-13; Malakki: 3-5: Gallatia 5-19-22.

9. NEWBORN: 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

to enter in the house of God (Church) while they are in their monthly period, therefore this church prevents 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 any meet slaughtered by Muslim, neither eat meat 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 pig*s meat or any other unclean animal meat e.g. Rabbit etc. and our church followers are not entitled to touch its meat or fat. See Leviticus: 11-7-9 Deuteronomy 14-3-9; 2: Corinthian 6-17; Isaia: 66-17-18.
13. We do not take any kind of medicine 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: Hoseah 1-5-13-14; If our members are sick or gets illness we go in his house and pray our Almighty God, we believe in 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 prohibit, intoxicated persons not to enter in the church and if any members take this things we have to suspend him. See Leviticus: 10-8-12; Proverbs 23-31-35; Effesian 5-18-19; Isaia: 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 turban 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: Deuteronomy: 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 the public 2:John 1:-10-12:2-10 2The salonians 3-6-7: 2: Athamaki, (2Kings) 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: Corinthian: 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, wherever available and we do usually sing beating drums. See Psalms : 18-1-6 ; Psalms 150-1; Mathews: 10-5-16; 28-16-18; Mareo:16-15-17
21. The followers of this church should abide by teaching of the Holy Bible both New and Old Testaments so as to maintain ten God's Commandments, Exodus: 20-1-20. Deuteronomy: 5-1-33; Mathews: 19-16-23; Roma: 13-9-11.
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 out, his turban.
23. If any member of African Holy Ghost Christian Church disagrees 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 anymore. I: Corinthian: 5-13; Hzeza; 6-11-12; Numbers: 15-30-32; Deuteronomy 17-12; Psalms: 19-13; Hebrews: 10-26-28.

AFRICAN HOLY GHOST CHRISTIAN CHURCHCONSTITUTION AND RULES

1. NAME: The name of this church shall be called AFRICAN HOLY GHOST CHRISTIAN CHURCH hereinafter referred to as the "Society".

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 - (b) The African Holy Ghost Christian Church shall have its Headquarters in Gichagi-ini. Location 3, Kandara Division, Murang'a District in Republic of Kenya.

2. AIMS AND OBJECTS: 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 teach its followers and the public the words of our Almighty God together with our Saviour and his begotten son our Lord Jesus Christ.
 - (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 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 upto to the higher standard, health, clean, nutrition and to have better houses together with selfrespect.
- (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 be interested in trade and industry and also of the countrys development.

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 faith, subject to the approval of the Church Leaders becom^Sa member of

- (b) the church, and he shall pay an entrance fee of Shs.10/- (Shillings ten only) in order to be a member.
- (b) Every member of the church shall pay a monthly subscription of Shs.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 2/3 majority of the members present that such a member should be expelled on the grounds that his conduct has 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 notwithstanding such suspension a member whose exp[^]. sion is proposed shall have the right to address the General Meeting at which his expR sion 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 refund of his subscription or any part thereof or any moneys contributed by him at any time.
- (f) Any member 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 Committee may however at its discretion reinstate such member on payment of the total amount of subscription outstanding.
4. OFFICE BEARERS: There will be Church office bearers,
WJTO
 who are known as Church Leaders and_kstarted 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.
2. Bishop.
3. Reverend.
4. Pastor.
5. Minister.
6. Deacon.

all of whom shall hold office from the date of election until the succeeding Annual Church General meeting and shall be fully paid up members.

- (b) The Church Committee shall at once automatically cease any office bearers to be a member of the church thereof.
- (c) The Church committee may remove any office bearers from office in the same way as it is laid down for the expulsion of members in rule 3(4) and vacancies thus created shall be fitted 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 wedding ceremonies, baptising ceremonies and all other church works. And also to preside over all

church meeting 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 churches ceremonies, prayers assemblies and to advertise to the public. He shall always consult with the Right Priest Bishop and 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 committees.
- (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 Chyrch 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 Headquarters. 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 Central Church Committee shall meet at least

once in every four (4) months and any casual vacancies for members of the church committees caused by death or resignation shall be filled by the Church Council until the next general Meeting of the African Holy Ghost Christian Church.

ARTICLE 7. 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 as to the manner in which within the law they shall always perform their duties. The Church committee shall have the 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 African 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 2/3 of the members.

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 Meeting.
- (b) A quorum of the Church General Meeting shall be instituted by two thirds of the members of the church which must include three main office bearers, this Church General Meeting shall be held not later than 15th December, in each year. Notice in writing of such Annual Church General meeting accompanied by the Annual Church statements 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
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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).

Such other matter e.g. Church management , prayers assemblies, wedding and baptising ceremonies with other shauris as the church committee may decide or as to which notice shall have been given in writing by a member or members to the Secretary (Reverend) at least 14 days before the date of the meeting.

Any other business or church prayers will always meet on the church in every morning and evening and shall be conducted by the Right Priest Bishop or either Bishop or Pastor or any other elder who may be authorised by the Bishop. Every church work will be going on after and when approved by the Right Priest Bishop as the Chairman.

There shall be a Special church General Meeting which may be called for any specific purpose by the Church Committee. Notice in writing of such meeting shall be sent to all members not less than 7 days before the date thereof and where this church's special general committee shall be held at Gichagi-ini Headquarters.

A special church general meeting may also be requested for a specific purpose by order in writing to the Secretary (Reverend) of not less than two thirds (2/3) members and such meeting shall be held at Gichagi-ini

headquarters, Kandara Division - Murang'a District. The notice in writing of such meeting shall be sent to all members before 21 days of the date for such meeting shall be shown in rule 3(c) and the matter shall be discussed other than that stated in the regulation.

- e. The church quorum for any church general meeting shall be not less than 2/3 of the registered members of the society.

9. PROCEDURE AT MEETINGS:

- (a) The Right Priest Bishop as the Chairman or in his absence the Bishop as the Vice Chairman or in the absence of both three officers, any member selected by the meeting shall take the chair at all meetings of the church.
- (b) The Right Priest Bishop, as the Chairman may at his discretion limit the number of persons permitted to speak in favour of and against any motion.
- (c) Any resolution of the church shall be decided by simple voting by a show of hands. In the case of equality of votes, the Chairman shall have a second or casting vote.

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, pn 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 vapancies occuring by removal, resignation or dpath can be filled at the same or next church general meeting.

(b) The Trustees shall pay all income received from property vested in the Trustees to the Treasurer of the Church. Any expenditure in respect of such property which is, inU*opinion of the Trustees 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. AUDITOR:

(a) The African Holy Ghost Christians Church shall have an auditor and an auditor shall be appointed for the following year at 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 payments and statements of assets and liabilities made 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 clarify that they 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.

A copy of the auditor's report on the accounts and statement together with such accounts and statement shall be furnished to all members at the same time as the notice that convenes the annual church general meeting is set out. An auditor may be paid such honorarium for these duties as may be resolved by the Church Annual General Meeting appointing him.

No church auditor shall be an office bearer or a member of the society.

The funds of the church in the society may only be used for the following purposes:-

- (i) To build churches and all church development management.
 - (ii) The payment for expenses of the administration of the church, including the Auditor's fees.
 - (iii) Such other allowances to members in case of death, old age, sickness, accidents etc.
- (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 committees.
- (c) No church payments shall be made out of the bank accounts without a resolution of the church committee authorising such payment to be paid and all churches' cheques on Such bank account shall be signed by the Chairman, Secretary and the Treasurer of the church
- (d) The Church Treasurer of the Church may keep a sum not exceeding Shs.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.

BRANCHES:

The church shall have branches outside districts, and the branches of this church shall be formed on a application and approval of the church committee and Registrar of society and they will adopt the same constitution as that of the Gichagi-ini Headquarters the following exception:-

- (a) The aim and object will not include the formation of branches except one main body of the Headquarter.

- (i) No branch church may amend the constitution, but the amendments to the constitution can only be made by the Headquarter of the church in accordance with the provision of rule No.14.

The provision of the rule 15 shall apply to our branches but in addition the branches will not be dissolved without consultation with Gichagi-ini Headquarters.

AMENDMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION:

The church amendments to the constitution shall be approved by at least 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 Societies obtained upon application to him in writing and signed by the three Office bearers.

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 later. Notice of these meetings shall be given to all members of the society at least 14 days before the date of the church meeting, quorum for this second meeting shall be 2/3 the number of members present and these meetings shall be held at Gichagi-ini Headquarter.

(b) Provided however that no dissolution shall be effected without prior permission in writing of the Registrar obtained upon application which is 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 of any office bearers of the society in connection with the aims of the society other than to get in and liquidate for cash all 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.

APPENDIX BSOURCES

(i) Oral Evidence: (List of informants and their Biographical Notes).

1. HEZRONI TUMBO:

Born: 1912.

Occupation: He is the chief leader (Mutongoria) of the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa. He lives at Muguga in the church compound. He was converted in 1934. He has been the Mutongoria since 1947. He is not married for he decided to dedicate his life to the service of God and the church. Interviewed at Muguga, January 11th, 1981.

2. JOSEPH KARUGIA:

Born: 1922.

Occupation: Farmer. Shopkeeper.

He lives in Ngarariga - Limuru. He became a Mukurinu in 1939 and got baptized on 15th May 1942. He was previously a Catholic and received primary education. He was at Kamirithu Primary School. He also attended Independent School Manguo which he left in 1938 to join Githunguri Teachers' College. It is while here that he experienced the Holy Spirit and was directed by the spirit to Akurinu meetings. He left school, joined the Akurinu and has been an ardent follower since 1939. He is also the Secretary-General of the Church, a post

he has held since 1958. He is also a prayer leader (Muhoi). Interviewed at his home in November 1980.

3. JOSHUA KAMAU:

Born: 1916.

Occupation: farmer/businessman. He lives in Limuru.

He joined the church in 1942, after conversion, and was baptized on 5th February, 1943. He was originally a Karingh. covert. He received education up to Standard 4. He found the Karingk faith unsatisfactory and that is why he left. He found fulfillment in the Akurinu church and has been a firm follower since conversion. He is the chief prayer leader (Muhoi Munene) in this church. He was interviewed at Ngarariga - Limuru in November, 1980.

4. PETRO GITUIKU:

Born: 1931.

Occupation: farmer. Originally he was a salvation army follower, between 1946-1947. He received primary school education. Then he lived at Subukia, in the Rift Valley. He was preached to by Joshua Mburu and became a Mukurinu in 1947. On 15th August 1949, he got baptized. Petro is a church elder as well as a Muhunja in the Kiambaa-Mpguga branch. He was interviewed at Ngarariga - Limuru in November, 1980.

5. SAMUEL KIBIA:

Born: 1943.

Occupation: store-keeper with Limuru Dairy Farmer's Union. He lives at Limuru. He is a young man, and one of these born and brought up in the Akurinu faith. He was baptized as a child on 19th June 1945. He has attained form four level education. He is presently a church elder at Murengeti church, Limuru. Due to his education and open mind, we were able to obtain valuable information from him particularly on the beliefs and practices of the church. Interviewed at Ngarariga in November, 1980.

0. JEREMIAH WANGINYI:

Age: 73 years.

Occupation: farmer. Lives in Limuru. He joined the church in 1934 and received baptism on 30th January 1935. Before conversion he was a traditionalist. His first contact with Christianity was from the Karing'a church at Manguo. While here, he received the Holy Spirit and was expelled from the church. On being expelled, he joined the Arathi, who entertained such experiences. He is an elder and Muhoi in the Murengeti church. Due to his age and experience, we were able to get from him valuable information on the early history of the church. Interviewed at Murengeti church, November, 1980.

GIDEON M1VAURA:

Age: about 54 years old.

Occupation: farmer. He lives in Murengeti. He "believed" in 1942 and got baptized in 1944. He joined the Akurinu as a result of an experience in his life. His elder brother, (Now A Mukurinu) fell seriously sick in 1941. No possible treatment could cure him. It is only when the Arathi prayed for him that he got cured. Since then the whole family "believed" and they are strong Akurinu to this day. He is a church elder at Murengeti and is usually the church's master of ceremonies whenever there is a function. He received very minimal education. Interviewed at Murengeti church, November, 1980.

STEFANO:

Born: 1939.

Occupation: Originally he was a baptist between 1950-52.

His joining the Arathi stems from admiring them particularly during the emergency (1952-1956). He admired their strong faith despite the sufferings they underwent. He joined the Arathi in 1953 and was baptized in 1980. He holds no church office and lives in Nakuru. Interviewed at Murengeti, November, 1980.

JOELI MIVANIKI:

Born: 1932.

Occupation: farmer. He "believed" in 1938 and got

baptized the same year, He lives in Murengeti. He holds no church office. Interviewed at Murengeti. November, 1980.

10. DANIEL MIIRU KAMAMATHI:

Age: about 40 years.

Occupation: farmer, shopkeeper. He comes from Kinyogori near Murengeti. He "believed" in 1952 and got baptized in July 1960. He was not a christian before joining Akurinu, but has been a strong follower since 1952. He received formal pducation at Kinyogori and Kamandura primary schools between 1954 and 1962. Interviewed at Murengeti, November, 1980.

11. SAMUEL NCUGI:

Age: about 69 years. Lives in Ngarariga.

Occupation: businessman. He "believed" in 1934. He was originally a Karinga follower at Manguo. He is just a church member. Interviewed at Murengeti, November, 1980.

12. PHILIP MUCHIRI:

Age: about 64 years.

Occupation: farmer. He lives in Murengeti. He "believed" in 1953 and got baptized in 1954. He is a church -elder in the Murengeti church. Interviewed at Murengeti, November 1980.

13. ZAKAYO MUNGAI:

Born: 1923.

Occupation: farmer. Lives in Ndeiya. He "believed" in 1942 and got baptized in 1945. Previously he was a seventh Day Adventist follower at Karura, and although he attended some catechitical classes, he had not yet mastered the lessons to qualify for baptism. He also received elementary schooling there. He was preached to by Paul Kuniara and Johana Ndume. He is a preacher and elder at the Muguga church, interviewed at Kiambaa - Muguga, December, 1980.

14. GIDEON KARIEGE:

Age: about 65 years.

Occupation: unemployed. Lives in Muguga. Before conversion, he was a traditionalist.

However, he used to attend Karing'a services periodically but he never joined the church. He "believed" around 1956. He is a preacher in the Kiambaa - Muguga church. Interviewed at Kiambaa - Muguga, December, 1980.

15. SIMEON MWAURA:

Age: about 55 years.

Occupation: farmer. Lives at Kipipiri. Previously, he was a Karing'a follower, which he joined in the late 1940s, to fight the white man. He was detained in 1958 and on being released, he went to live at Kiambaa -

Muguga, with relatives. While here, he attended Arathi preaching sessions and got converted. He is just a member. Interviewed at Kiambaa - Muguga, December, 1980.

16. LUCAS:

Age: about 49 years. He lives in Kiambaa - Muguga. He believed in 1965 and got baptised the same year, he is just a member. Interviewed at Kiambaa - Muguga, December, 1980.

17. JOSHUA NJUGUNA:

Age: about 51 years.

Occupation: Driver with Kenya Railways, Nakuru. He lives at Kiambaa - Muguga with his family. He "believed" in 1958 and got baptized on 30th December, 1959. Joshua was a traditionalist before conversion. He has no formal education but he taught himself to read and write. Joshua was our key informant. It is due to him that we were able to meet all the informants, so far mentioned. He is the chief baptizer in the whole church, a preacher and elder. Interviewed at Kiambaa - Muguga, December 1980, and January and May 1981.

18. DAUDI IKIGU:

Age: about 68 years.

Occupation: unemployed. Lives in Kiambaa - on the church compound. He was born and brought up in Limuru.

He never received any formal schooling, but he taught himself to read and write. He "believed" in 1936 after being preached to by his brother, Paul Kuniara and got baptized in 1938. Daudi is the song writer* of the church and is also a baptizer. His hymns have been published, Nyimbo cia Roho Mutheru, and are used by nearly all Protestant churches in the country. He started writing hymns in 1941 and continues to do so. He is unmarried for he decided to dedicate his life to the service of God and the church. He can be described as the theologian of the church for his hymns, and sermons are quoted periodically in preachings and testimonies. From him, we were able to get a lot of information on the belief and practice of the church. Interviewed at Kiambaa - Muguga, May 1981.

19. SAMUEL JOHN CILEGE:

Age: about 54 years.

Occupation: farmer. Lives at Silibwet, Nyandarua.

Previously, he was an African Inland Mission (AIM) convert in Nyahururu, where he was baptized and named John. He left this church and joined the Akurinu church in 1951 after undergoing a tremendous moral transformation. He is the secretary-general of the African Holy Ghost Christian Church which has its headquarters at Gichagi-ini, Murang'a. It has a large following in Nyahururu. He is also a Bishop and head of the Silibwet

branch of the church. Due to his knowledge and kindness, we were able to get a lot of information, particularly on the various sects and also on the History of the Akurinu movement. He also directed us to other informants who proved very valuable. Interviewed at Nyahururu town, January, 1981.

20. JOSPHAT MWANGI:

Age: about 57 years.

Occupation: farmer. He lives at Wanjohi. He "believed" in 1948. Prior to this, he had attended Karing'a and Anglican services but was not converted to any faith. He is a church elder and the treasurer of both the Silibwet branch, and the Akurinu Farmers Association. He furnished us with information on the rites and beliefs of his church. Interviewed at Nyahururu, January 1981.

21. TIMOTHEO KIHUNGI:

Age: about 63 years.

Occupation: farmer/mason. He lives in Leshao Podo. He is a preacher in the African Holy Ghost Christian Church and youth leader. He "believed" 45 years ago and has preached all over Central and Rift Valley provinces and won many converts. Interviewed at Nyahururu, January, 1981.

22. EZEKIEL KARANJA:

Age: about 50 years.

Occupation: A full time Evangelist. He lives at Nakuru. He is the chief preacher in the African Holy Ghost Christian Church. He "believed" in 1956.

Interviewed at Nyahururu, January, 1981.

23. LUDIA JOSHUA NJUGUNA:

Age: about 48 years.

Occupation: Housewife/farmer. She is the wife of Joshua Njuguna. She "believed" in 1958. She was a practicing christian before her conversion. She participates in various women's activities in the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa. Interviewed at Kiambaa - Muguga, December, 1980.

24. SARAH WAIRIMU:

Age: about 60 years.

Occupation: Housewife. She is the wife of Joseph Karugia. She "believed" when she was 16 years old, after a dramatic experience of the Holy Spirit.

Interviewed at Ngarariga, November, 1980.

25. JULIAH LUCY:

Age: about 47 years.

Occupation: Singer/shopkeeper. She lives in Nairobi. She belongs to the African Holy Ghost Christian Church

and has produced and recorded many hymns. Interviewed at Nairobi, January/February, 1981.

26. MICHAEL PAUL WANJAU:

Age: about 38 years.

Occupation: primary school teacher. He lives in Ihururu-Nyeri. He belongs to the Foundation of the Prophets Church at Ihururu. Previously, he was a Catholic. He is just a member, he holds no official position. Interviewed at Pesi-Ndaragwa, August, 1980.

27. PETRO MAINA:

Age: about 68 years.

Occupation: Farmer. He lives at Kamukabi - Murang'a. He "believed" when he was a young boy of about 15 years old. He belongs to the Kamukabi branch of the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa. Interviewed at Kamukabi, April, 1981.

28. PANELI NJOROGE:

Age: about 67 years.

Occupation: Farmer. He lives at Kamukabi. He is the leader (Mutongoria) of the Kamukabi branch of the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa. His father was one of the early Aroti. He migrated to Murang'a from Limuru when he became an adult. Interviewed at, Kamukabi, April, 1981.

29. FRANCIS KIARIE:

Age: about 45 years.

He is a member of the Kamukabi Church. Interviewed at Kamukabi, April, 1981.

30. PHILIP - ELIUP WAMBU:

Age: About 48 years. Originally he was a Catholic.

He left this church in 1952 when he joined the Akurinu. He was baptized in 1980. He is also the secretary-general of the Kamukabi branch and a primary school teacher. Interviewed at Kamukabi, April, 1981.

31. TIMOTHY NYAGA:

Age: About 27 years.

Occupation: Surveyor. He was born and brought up in Njoro. He is one of the young, educated men, born and brought up in the Akurinu faith. His father is an elder/preacher

in the God's word Holy Ghost Church at Njoro. He is a survey graduate of the University of Nairobi. Interviewed at Nairobi, May 1982.

32. JOHN NJUGUNA:

Age: About 32 years.

Occupation: Veterinary Doctor. He lives in Nairobi. He hails from Murang'a although he was brought up and educated in Nairobi. He belongs to the African Holy

Ghost Christian Church. He is also born* and brought up in the Akurinu faith. Interviewed at Nairobi, April, 1982.

33. ELIJAH KINYANJUI:

Age: About 75 years.

Occupation: Archbishop of the Chosen Church of the Holy Spirit. Elijah is a founder of the Akurinu faith. He was born and brought up in M[^]tathia, Limuru. Currently he lives in Nakuru, where he moved in 1940. Before becoming a Mukurinu in 1926 Elijah was a traditionalist although he had come into brief contact with the AIM Church at Kijabe. Most of the interview references are to him. Due to his age and experience he furnished us with a lot of information on the rise of the Akurinu movement and its spread. Also the beliefs and practices. He is the founder of the above named church. Interviewed at Nakuru, January, 1981.

34. DANIELI MUCHIRI:

Age: About 58 years.

Occupation: Shopkeeper. He lives at Muruka, Kandara. He is a founder Bishop of the African Mission of the Holy Ghost Church. He has been a Mukurinu for the whole of his life. Interviewed at Muruka, Kandara, May, 1981.

OTHERS INTERVIEWED, WERE:

35. Ezra Muchiri, Muruka, May 1981.
36. Tabith Muchiri, Muruka, May 1981.
37. Elijah Mwangi, Murengeti, December 1981.
38. Eliud Muchiri, Nakuru, January, 1981.
39. Johana Karanja, Nakuru, January, 1981.
40. Samuel Macharia, Nakuru, January, 1981.
41. Philip Kamau, Nyahururu, January, 1981.
42. Hillum, Nyahururu, January, 1981.
43. Wambui Kioi, Kiambaa-Muguga, February, 1981.
44. Timotheo Ndung'u, Kiambaa-Muguga, December, 1980.
45. Hanna Njeri, Kiambaa, December, 1980.
46. Hanna Joshua, Kiambaa, December, 1980.
47. Jeremiah, Murengeti, November, 1980.
48. Elijah Kang'ethe, Murengeti, November, 1980.
49. Elijah, Murengeti, November, 1980.

(ii) Archival Sources:Unpublished Official Documents.

Kenya National Archives; Administrative files.

- (a) Information on "Watu wa Mungu", DC/KBU/3/2.
- (b) Political Unrest (Watu wa Mungu, Dini ya Msambwa;
1934-1952. PC/CP.8/7/3.
- (c) Political Unrest, (Watu wa Mungu) 1932-1934
PC/CP.8/7/12.
- (d) False prophets (Watu wa Mungu) 1934-1960 DC/FH/1/4
- (e) Intelligence security (Newspaper Reports) Mumenyereri.
1947-1950. 8/106.
- (f) DC/FH/1/1.

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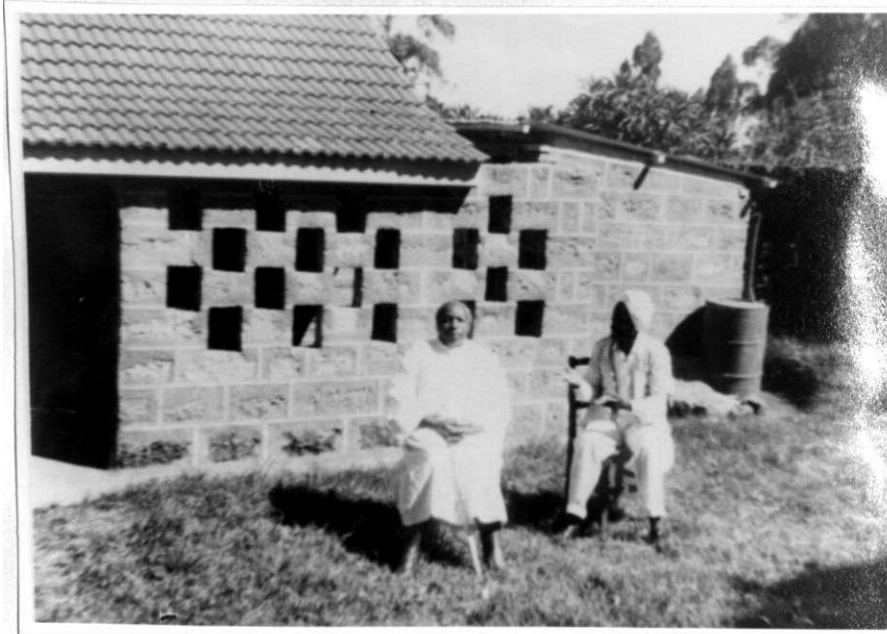
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appendix c

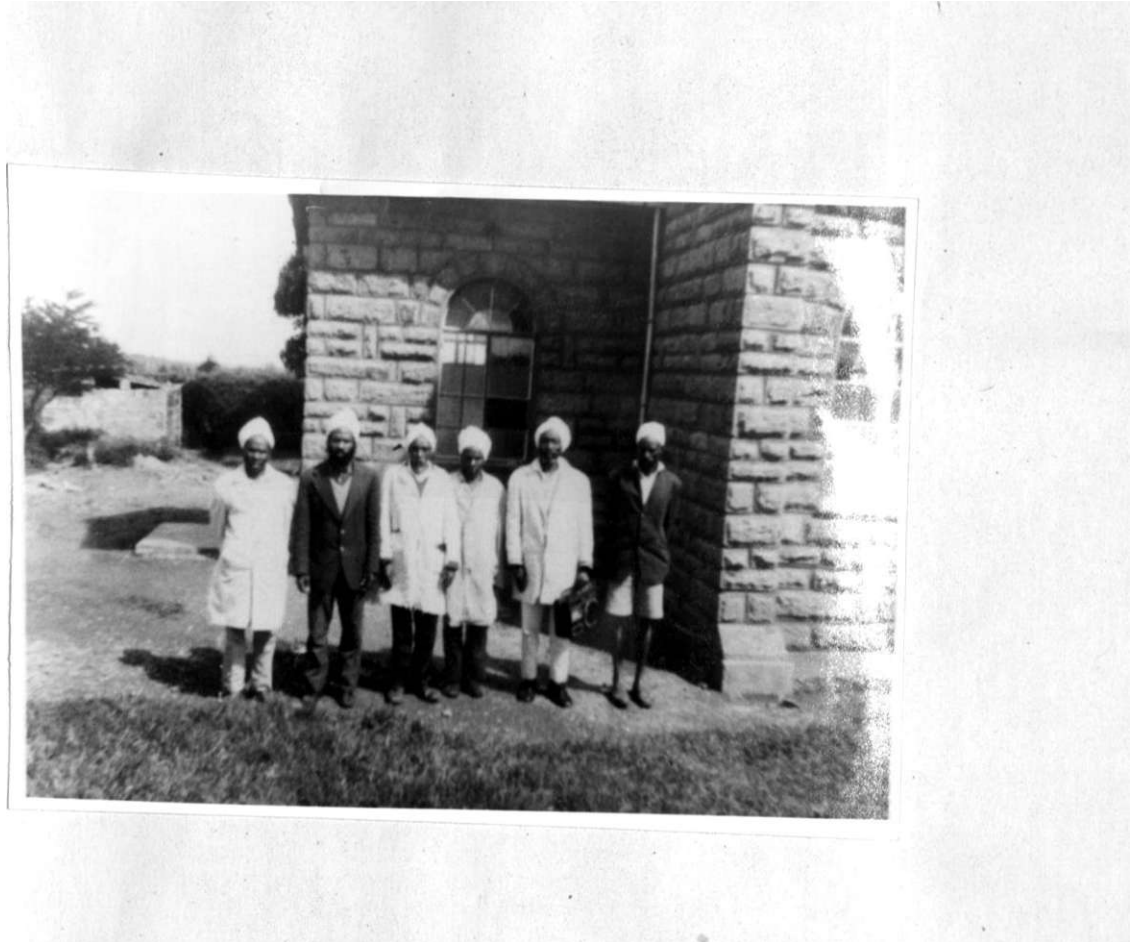
photographs and maps:



KIAMRAA - MUGUGA CHURCH



HEZRON I TUMBO (WITHOUT TURBAN) AND JOSEPH
KARUGIA OUTSIDE HEZRONI'S HOUSE AT KIAMBAA - MUGUGA.



MURENGETI CHURCH

FROM LEFT TO RIGHT, GIDEON MWAURA, STEFANO, JEREMIAH
WANGINYI, JEREMIAH, JOSEPH KARUGIA AND ELIJAH.



^ UNHRA j J C E S S I O N . J ^ S K U A - N J L I G U N A - I N - T H B
H O L . n T N G A R E D B O O K .



FIINF.RAL. NOTICF. THE JOYOUS SINGING, ALSO.
THE FORM OF DRESS FOR BOTH MEN AND WOMEN. DAUDI IK_L
IS AT THE FRONT.



ELIJAH KINYANJUI, A R C H B I S H O P ^ ^ ^

HOLY SPIRIT. HE TM WORSHIP CLOTHES.



^ O L T H H J ^ ^ ^

ELIJAH KINYANJUI.



THE AUTHOR GREETING THE CONGREGATION. NOTICE ~~THE~~
MEN ARE WITHOUT TURBANS.

The Distribution of Akorino Churches In Kenya.

