

TITLE

THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN EVANGELISM,

CASE STUDY OF SELECTED WOMEN

EVANGELISTS IN

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
EAST AFRICANA COLLECTION

NAIROBI AND KIAMBU, KENYA

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DECLARATION

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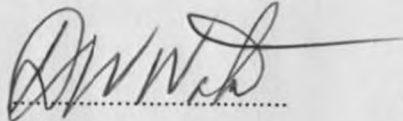
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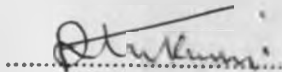
This thesis has been submitted for examination with our approval as University Supervisors.

Professor. D.W. Waruta



DATE—08/09/09

Dr. P. Mumo



DATE—09/09/09

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my family.

My children Muiruri, Mwega and Nduta for their prayers and encouragement. God bless you all

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to acknowledge with deep gratitude and appreciation the contributions of all those who enabled me to carry out the research leading to the thesis.

First of all, I wish to express my gratitude to the University of Nairobi for the Scholarship and research grant it made available to me without which this study would not have started and progressed.

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There are many others whose names I need not mention here. but to all of them I extend a word of appreciation.

ABSTRACT

This study is an investigation into the role of women in Evangelism. The study has looked at the discrepancy between the churches general attitude towards the role of women in Ministry and their actual involvement in ministry. The study also sets out to establish the Greco-Roman, Jewish and African cultures on the role women play in the church.

This study also looks into the challenges women evangelists encounter in their service to the church as well as their achievements.

Mary Akatsa, Wairimu Nelson, Judy Mbugua and Margaret Wangari were the selected women evangelists in Nairobi and Kiambu districts. These women hold their meetings and crusades in Nairobi where they draw large crowds. Most of the people who attend these meetings do so in the hope that they will receive faith healing and other miracles. The gift of charisma and divination that are common amongst these evangelists act as a magnet to draw people to these meetings. Many people allege that they are cured or healed of many diseases, some of which are known to have no cure. For instance, many people have alleged to be cured of HIV/AIDS at these meetings.

This study concluded that women evangelists have responded to the needs that have arisen as a result of social disintegration. Many victims of rural-urban migration and consequently this disintegration is characterized by misery, unemployment, poor living conditions and disease. The people who attend these meetings and crusades have a collective desire for freedom and complete salvation. These women evangelists have succeeded in filling this void of despair in the lives of many. The achievements by the selected women evangelists is a clear indicator that women have moved beyond the ascribed limits of sex –linked status, reaching for equal partnership with men and sharing responsibilities and privileges together.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

Charisma – charisma or charism is a spiritual gift or talent granted by God to the recipient not primarily for his or her own sake but for the sake of others. Paul in *1Corinthians 12:7* defines Charisma as the manifestation of the spirit for the common good, thus for the benefit of others.

Evangelism:

Evangelism is regarded as synonymous with the word mission.

Literally the word means the preaching of the gospel.

Mission is an activity of God and has its origin in the Holy Trinity. The God of the Bible is a sending God: he sends messages, prophets and leaders to his people. Finally he sends his son to bring in the Kingdom of God through preaching, exorcism and healing.

The sending mission of Jesus begins with the sending out of the apostles' and the seventy to proclaim the imminence of the Kingdom *Mark 6:7-13*. However, the real mission begins only in the power of the risen Christ.

F.E.M - Faith Evangelistic Ministry

LHSF - Ladies Homecare Spiritual Fellowship

J.C.C -Jerusalem Church of Christ

A.C.F - Ambassadors of Christ, Fellowship

N.P.C - Nairobi Pentecostal Church Valley Road

A.E.A -Association of Evangelicals in Africa

PACWA -Pan -African Christian Women Alliance.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN EVANGELISM IN NAIROBI AND KIAMBU

1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

We are living at a time of the rising tide of evangelism. Nothing in the religious realm is more evident than the worldwide interest in evangelism. This phenomenon cannot be overlooked and its impact can be seen in the many independent churches that are coming up especially in Africa.

From the times of the early church to the present, women have been involved in various church activities. There is a lot of evidence in the Bible that women have been involved in evangelism and other church activities [*John 4:39, Luke 3:1-3, Romans 16: 3-4*]. In the contemporary society some women have gained pre-eminence in the church activities at a time that gender equality is being advocated for in all spheres of life. Some women evangelists such as Wairimu Nelson among others have been very successful in their Ministries and have been able to draw large crowds to their meetings. However, despite the fact that it is evident that the involvement of women in evangelism has been widespread, it has not been properly understood and appreciated by the general church leadership. This lack of appreciation and understanding raises many questions in the minds of many Christians such as:

Whether women should be involved in the mainstream activities of the church, for example preaching, teaching, guidance and counselling.

Whether they should be ordained as ministers.

Whether their role in evangelism is well understood and appreciated.

What impact has women evangelist had in the spread of the gospel?

What are the limiting factors and challenges that women evangelists encounter in their work that prevents them from achieving their full potential

What is the contribution of women evangelists in the modern church? And finally

Whether the African culture has a role in the position women find themselves in the church.

This study has conducted an intensive investigation in the issue of the role of women in evangelism, the extent in which women are involved in church activities and the impact women evangelists have had in our society. It has also looked at the discrepancy between the church's general attitude towards the role of women in ministry and their actual involvement in ministry. The study highlights the challenges women evangelists' experience and their contribution to the Christian ministry of preaching the good news of the kingdom of God

1.2 SCOPE OF STUDY AND LIMITATIONS

The main area of focus was Nairobi province and parts of Central Province. This area was chosen because that is where the Faith Evangelistic ministry which is headed by Wairimu Nelson hold their monthly meetings. The monthly meetings are held every second Sunday of the month at Uhuru Park. F.E.M also holds overnight monthly meetings at St. Stephens Church Jogoo Road every second Friday of the month. Banana Hill in Kiambu District. Central Province is the Headquarters of Margaret Wangari's Ministry of Ambassadors of Christ Fellowship. It is also her home area. The other evangelists selected also hold their meetings in Nairobi or are residents of Nairobi. Mrs. Judy Mbugua's heads Ladies Homecare Spiritual

Fellowship Ministry that meets at the All Saints Cathedral. They have monthly meetings, which take place every last Saturday of the month. Jerusalem church of Christ of Mary Akatsa is also in the Kawangware estate in Nairobi. Our area of focus, Kawangware and Banana Hill, are accessible by public transport.

The researcher experienced a few problems in the course of her research. One of the major problems encountered was that few of the evangelists like Wairimu Nelson refused to be interviewed. Members of her ministry were also reluctant to fill in the questionnaire because they were aware that their evangelists had refused to be interviewed. The researcher attended many of Wairimu's meetings at Uhuru Park as well as many of her monthly overnight meetings at St. Stephen Jogoo Road but it was impossible to get to her. However, the researcher had to travel to the F.E.M offices at Ufungamano in 1995 and at Hurlingham in 1996 in order to have the questionnaires answered.

Eventually members of F.E.M filled in the questionnaires but some members of this Ministry requested anonymity. However, the evangelist, Wairimu declined to fill the questionnaire. The information the researcher has about this evangelist has been gathered from what she has seen and heard at Wairimu's monthly meetings at Uhuru Park and at the overnight meetings at St. Stephen's Jogoo Road and from people who attend her crusade meetings at Uhuru Park.

The other problem was failure of some of the evangelists to keep the appointments they had given the researcher. The researcher had to make several trips to Banana Hill to interview Margaret Wangari. In most cases Margaret did not keep the appointments although eventually

the researcher got to interview her. The other problem experienced was the failure of some members of these ministries to return the questionnaires. For instance the questionnaires given to members of the Ambassadors of Christ fellowship were not returned. The researcher had to photocopy more questionnaires and administer them to members of this Ministry during Sunday service for several Sundays.

1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The study from the field research and the literature review hoped to:

1. Establish the influence of culture on the role of women in the church.
2. Determine the extent in which women are involved in Church activities especially in evangelism and the impact Women evangelists have had in Kenya
3. Identify the problems and challenges that women evangelists encounter in the service of the church.
4. Understand the influence that gender awareness has had on women in their roles as evangelists
5. Determine the contribution of women evangelists to the preaching of the good news of the Kingdom of God

1.4 RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

Ambiguity abounds supreme on the role women should play in religious matters. With the background of the spiritual gifts outlined in the Bible [*1Cor: 1:12*] it becomes evident that people gifted in various ways should use their gifts to edify the body of Christ. It is also true that both women and men have received these gifts from the Spirit without regard to their sex. Also, in the gospels we see Jesus' vision calls for the elimination of structures of domination and submission. Jesus in his manner and teaching accords women the dignity, freedom and responsibility of a human being. The very bible in the book of *Timothy* and *Corinthians* cautions women to be silent in the church. This brings about confusion as to what role women should play in the church.

Some church denominations on the other hand have persisted in maintaining male dominance in the church especially in pre-eminent positions and women in humble positions. This also causes or brings about confusion as to how these appointments are made and what criterion is used to eliminate women from leadership positions in the church.

The gender advocacy in the church has also raised suspicion on the motive behind women wanting to occupy leadership positions. That is whether they want leadership for prestige or they want it in order to serve. The gender advocacy should uphold the principle of merit, that is one should be a leader because of his or her merit but not because one is male or female.

The special significance of women in the spread of the Christian faith in the first century and beyond has been stressed in many exegetical books. However we have many unsung African

women who have done a lot in the spread of the Christian faith. This study hopes to fill this void that exists.

This study is important in underlining the Biblical principles of selecting church and secular leadership as well as arrainging various concerns that have been raised regarding the role of women in church Ministry.

The challenges women evangelists experience in the cause of their work as well the contributions they have made in the spread of the good news of the kingdom of God will be highlighted and discussed.

1.5 LITERATURE REVIEW

The issue of women in church and society constitutes perhaps the single most important theological question of the twentieth century. Indeed some scholars have compared it to the Gentile question in the early days of Christianity. Not surprisingly, arguments rooted in scripture were used to sustain the practice of forcing Gentiles to undergo circumcision as a condition of salvation: so too today scriptural arguments are advanced to justify the age-old practice of excluding women from certain leadership and ministerial roles in church and society.

Elizabeth Clark in her book **Women and Religion** shows how the Old Testament depicts Hebrew women as the chattels of their husbands or their fathers. Many stories in the Old Testament and numerous laws invite this interpretation. She gives the example of David's seduction of Beth Sheba [2 *Samuel* 1-12], which is primarily viewed as an offense against her

Husband Uriah. She continues to say that Hebrew women were not considered capable of adult responsibility in matters of inheritance, the taking of vows or initiating divorce. They were excluded by virtue of their sex from many cultic acts.

This is in part due to women's biological function of menstruation and childbirth, which were thought to render them ritually unclean [*Lev.12: 15*].

Elizabeth also points out that all priests in Judaism were men, this is cited by many people so as to exclude women from leadership roles.

In the New Testament, (*1Corinthians 1: 8-9*) has on occasion been used to bolster the theory that woman is inferior to man and should therefore be designated to fulfil a secondary role in the church. Paul's injunction in (*1 Timothy 2: 1-2*) that women should not speak publicly in church is often cited in support of this discriminatory position. The fact that the apostles of Jesus were men is also used to exclude women from priesthood and leadership position. However, if we reasoned like this we would also claim that there were no Gentiles, no Samaritans and no slaves as far as can be ascertained. With this kind of reasoning we would find ourselves faced with the inevitable question of whether Jesus intended to establish a criteria for office with respect to race, ethnic identity and social status; if not why then should his choice be used to exclude women from leadership positions in the church? Moreover, except for the appointment of the twelve men, we have nothing from Jesus to order and ordination. His concern was not with structures or forms but with life. Jesus crashed through many barriers as he related to women without a hint that he feared for his reputation. He talked openly with women contrary to established customs and accepted teachings. He also accepted the services of women and he honoured women with a primary role in proclaiming his resurrection from the dead, which

essentially is the basic message of the gospels preached by the apostles. Thus the argument used by the church to exclude women from priesthood position in the church holds no water.

Christianity spread in the Roman Empire, so naturally the church adopted the Greco- Roman model of structures, for example diocese and parish. The church also set up structures that almost entirely excluded women. Leonard Swidler in his book **Biblical Affirmations** observes that restrictive attitude toward women was fostered in Christianity by the fact that early Christians in Greco-Roman world faced the worship of the goddess in strong resurgence from the worship of mater magna or kybele throughout Asia minor even in Rome to the cult of Isis and her veneration under many names, De meter, Athena, Venus, Ceres

Leonard continues to say that the Isis cult promoted sexual excesses of promiscuity which it was widely rumoured to do, and thus, the effect of seeing women priests of Isis among the early Christians was just as negative as if were true.¹

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Margaret Howe in her book **Women and Church Leadership** notes that the middle ages of the church was an interesting period because it was a time of extreme social and intellectual unrest, and contradicting developments. The time Thomas Aquinas was asserting the inferiority of woman to man, Dante was affirming their superiority. Margaret adds that Aquinas in his **Summa Theologies** links women's subjection to the male to her inferior reason. He argues that even at creation before the fall, Eve was subordinated to Adam. " Woman's weakness and subjection" are also the reason Thomas gives for her exclusion from priesthood. Thomas' view however, has heavily influenced the Catholic Church's exclusion of women form priesthood.

This tradition that women are to be excluded from the priesthood is cherished and adhered to up to the present time. The declaration signed by Paul VI a vow that the ruling of *Gaudium et spes* (7 Dec 1965) still holds true. In part, the ruling stated that the Roman Catholic is opposed to all discrimination, in particular, that based on sex. The declaration also recognizes that the patristic authors strongly influenced the policy of excluding women from leadership position in the Catholic Church. It also acknowledges that this writer had prejudices unfavourable to women. However, since that period and up to our time this practice has enjoyed peaceful and universal acceptance.²

Unlike the Roman Catholic Church where women cannot be ordained to priesthood, within some of the Protestant churches, the ordination of women to priesthood is well established. But some churches as Margaret Howe points out "have never been into terms that women can be ordained to ministry".³

Margaret also notes that some Pentecostal Churches have always assumed that as God gives the Holy Spirit irrespective of the sex of the recipient, so Ministries conferred by the Spirit are exercised irrespective of the sex of recipient. This principle, however, is not always clearly reflected in the statistics of the church structures. Likewise, in the Protestant churches women have to contend with humble positions as Sunday school teachers.

The above situation is rather sad, because like Paul Jiwett points out in his book **The Ordination of Women**, women are human beings in the image of God and are capable of performing their duties just as their male counterparts if not better. He also notes that history

especially church history has always had her great women whose lives have witnessed to the woman's potential as an achiever. However putting them in the category of the exceptional and charismatic has ignored women. In the new creation in Christ, the barriers of race (Jew and Greek) class (bond and free) and sex (male and female) are done away with. Men and women partner in sharing privileges and responsibilities together.⁴

In our African society, we also have women who have exceptional abilities, for example Maichaza of Messianic Church and Alice Mulennya. Alice, a peasant woman, set out on a mission of healing, proclaiming the observance of the law of God as prescribed in the Decalogue. She also composed hymns and baptized many. She like Maichaza exerted a lot of influence on her followers. This shows that women in the African setting were important in religious and social life and they have played a leading role in the expansion of Christianity.

However, John C.B in his book **The Church and Women in the World** notes that these new religions in which women have played significant roles are by products of processes of rapid social change and development. He continues to say that the transitions and shifts in society prompt new reflections about the church and the position of women and their role. He urges women to participate beyond the ascribed limits of sex – linked status, reaching for equal partnership with men in following Christ into a renewed spirituality.⁵

Margaret Jean Hay in her book **African Women South of Sahara**, points out that gender differences penetrated the process of the spread of Christianity in Africa. She notes that the Christian Missionaries brought with them to Africa strong belief in the "separate spheres of male and female activities but the context of the spheres was different"⁶ She points out that

Africans also separated male and female activities but the content of the spheres was different. For the 19th Century Victorians, the role of women was that of mother and wife, to preserve the home as a haven from the world of capitalist competition in which women operated. Politics belonged to the world of men, as did the running of the church, itself.

In the course of the development of Christianity in Africa, various groups split off. In some cases they objected to European control of church governance⁷. This new religion represented a synthesis of Christianity and traditional religious like the Harist movement in which women played a key role.⁸

As mentioned under the section on theoretical framework, African tradition helped foster the belief that women are inferior and consequently the roles they played in the past and which they continue to play point to the fact that they have been discriminated against. Practices such as the paying of bride price- price is a commercial word helped create the impression that women could be "bought and sold enjoying neither sympathy nor respect" The ideas about the characteristics of and relationships between men and women are represented in various ways, for example, symbolically, the idea of female infertility is conveyed through taboos. Owing to this notion the ordination of women in the ministry has been non-existent until very recently.

Neither modern Christianity nor traditional African religion has recognized the potential that women possess and their abilities in leadership both in society and religious circles. There's obviously a need to explore their talents, which have been ignored, even suppressed for a long time. This study is aimed at making its contribution to this task.

1.6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is working under the theory that the Christian Ministry of faith is for the whole community of believers. that is, the church ministry depends on believers. both male and female. This study therefore seeks to explore the basis of the theory that men and women are created equal in the image of God and they benefit equally from the Christian ministry of faith. The God of the bible is the god of life and liberation .The Biblical Story is one centred on Gods liberation from slavery and oppression. Jesus social milieu was marked by hunger. sickness and oppression. Jesus addressed his message to the poor: the sick and the oppressed and he choose to create his community among them despite the criticism to which he was subjected. He broke down barriers among people by forming community, sharing at meals with outcasts, encouraging women followers defending prostitutes, respecting and reaching out to Samaritans. lepers and the handicapped all considered at that time to be sinners.

Jesus bears the message of liberation for all especially for the disadvantaged. In the Jewish society women were given inferior status. but Jesus esteemed them and gave them equal status to men. Jesus Christ restored the original relationship between women and men first established by God at creation. Nowhere in Christ's life do we find him distinguishing between men and women as children of God .By the regard and treatment he gives them in word and act, by purity and universality of his love, and ministry. Jesus Christ erased all lines of superiority and inferiority between men and women and placed all on the same level.

From its earliest days Christianity has been characterized by active female involvement in the ministry. In the New Testament period this activity is spoken of in the gospels, the book of Acts and throughout the Epistles. In the post Apostolic period there are also references to female involvement in the evangelistic ministry. In our contemporary society we have had women founders of new religious movements.

In the gospel of John, the story of the woman at the well reminds us of the importance of a woman's witness to Christ. Many of the Samaritans from the town believed in him (Christ) because of the woman's testimony.⁹ (John 4:39)

Women also gave the first testimony to the resurrection of the lord. Each of the gospels mentions the women but Luke includes the typical male response. *"But they did not believe the women, because their word seemed to them like nonsense"*¹⁰ (24:1)

We cannot forget to mention those women who played supporting roles in the missionary work. We recall that several women accompanied Jesus on his Missionary travels and supported him financially (Luke 8:1-3) Paul also mentions a number of women who worked with him. They are mentioned *"along with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers"* (Romans 16:3-4) Priscilla and Aquila are mentioned as Paul's fellow workers in Christ. Given these Vignettes we are left with no doubt that women were internally active in the spread of the gospel during the period of the New Testament. Indeed the whole of the New Testament shows clearly that all people are called to serve God irrespective of their sex. In (1 Peter 2:9-10), all are called to be

priesthood of believers.¹¹ Women and men alike are priesthood of believers. Women and men alike are called to be priests with Christ Jesus.

The post apostolic church through the fourth century also had her great women. Women who were involved in the spread of the gospel some were even persecuted because of their faith. Vibia Perpetua and Felicitas are worth mentioning. They died because of their faith. The others are like Monica, Augustine's mother who had a lot of influence on turning her son to Christ. There are many other women during the period that participated in the spread of the gospel. Given these few examples cited above, it is clear that women were involved in fulfilling the great commission and played significant roles in enhancing the spread of the gospel. It is also evident that Jesus Christ called all, both men and women to be witnesses of the kingdom.

The African traditional society also had her great women. They were recognized and accorded their respect, despite the fact that the African culture was used to keep women down. Sometimes these African women were regarded as second hand citizens and were often oppressed, degraded, exploited and handled as personal property. However, despite this social status of women, there were women who had liturgical functions just like men, depending on their calling. In the traditional act of worship, women displayed commitment to the community by their services irrespective of the capacity in which they served. The roles of professionals among them was that of ministering the needs of the community, for instance pouring libations, healing the sick, the barren and generally offering prayers for the community. This participation of women in rituals reflects their role in society and church. Nevertheless, like mentioned earlier on, the African culture was used to keep women down. There were traditional taboos that excluded women from positions of authority. Even women founders of churches were

excluded women from positions of authority and from playing certain roles in the church.
(Mercy Oduyoye 1988)

In light of the above, the New Testament has often been used against women. The most common argument against women playing a leadership role in the church is that women are divinely decreed to be subordinate to men and thus there was no basis for their ruling over men in whatever capacity. Paul's injunction in (*1 Timothy 2: 1-12*) that women should not speak publicly in church is often cited in support of this discriminatory position. The subjective role of wives to their husbands as taught in the Bible is sometimes taken to indicate their subordinate role in the larger community.¹²

Mercy Oduyoye in her book **The will to Arise** points out that perhaps the lowly status of women in Jewish society was carried over to the early Christian idea of women's role in religious ceremonies and assemblies. She is quick to point out that the ministries in which women have demonstrated remarkable leadership and priestly gifts however, have aptly helped the situation.¹³

Sara Bentley in her book **Women's Liberation and the Church** observes that in our contemporary society women comprise the large majority of active church members and are the sustaining force in almost every congregation. However, they have virtually no power within the structures, which is usually dominated by male clergy and male church officers. As in the larger society, they are viewed as helpers for the man, their only real talent seen to be in working with children. Thus it is apparent that the woman is child centred with no interest in ordained ministry.¹⁴

Despite the above position, Nasimiyyu in her book **Mission in African Christianity** observes that women are criticizing political- cultural, social and church structures that have perpetuated the gender role segregation without the consideration of the talents and giftedness of the individual.¹⁵

From the findings of the research we have a basis from which we can determine the merits and or demerits of the above stated theory.

1.7 WORKING HYPOTHESES

1. People's cultures, Jewish/ Greco-Roman and African cultures have played an important role in determining the position of women in the church.
2. Biblical principles have been misused in understanding the role of women in church ministry.
3. Women's involvement in evangelism is motivated by desire to serve and not by selfish ambition.
4. Women effectiveness in evangelistic work is an indicator of their leadership qualities.

1.8 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is primarily based on library and field research as well as relevant literature on women and evangelism from various libraries. Primary and secondary sources of information have been used in the study.

Interviews and questionnaires methods were used to collect data in field research. Interviews were conducted on an individual basis with two categories of people, namely the women evangelists and church adherents. The women evangelists were selected using purposive sampling. This is where the researcher used her own expert judgement and purpose to decide whom to select into her sampling frame. Twenty respondents drawn from the various ministries headed by the women evangelist were randomly selected and interviewed in relation to the role women evangelist play. The aim was to get views of a cross section of society. Information adduced from interviews was recorded in note form because all the informants did not like the idea of being audio taped for reasons known to them. About 90 questionnaires were administered to the church adherents of the different ministries represented by the women evangelists in the study.

The questionnaire method was used to complement the interview methods. The two sets of questionnaires were given to two categories of people, church adherents and the women

evangelists; however, one of the women evangelists declined to fill the questionnaires. The questionnaires administered were composed of open-ended questions.

Participant observation method was also used. The researcher attended many meetings conducted by the selected women evangelists and made notes from the observations she made at the meeting. The researcher also participated in the worship services.

FOOTNOTES

1. Leonard Swidler. **Biblical Affirmations of women** Philadelphia, West minister press 1979,
Pp354
2. Margaret Howe. **Women and Church leadership** Michigan, Zoderna Co-operation Grand
Rapids 1982 pg 105
3. **Ibid** pp 129.
4. Paul Jiwett. **The Ordination of Women** pp98
5. John C.B. **The Church and Women In The World** Pp105
6. Margaret Jean Hay. **African Women South of Sahara** pp92
7. **Ibid**. Pp92
8. Appiah Kofi Kobi. **The Importance of Independent Churches in Evangelization in Africa**
.AACC Nairobi 1973 pp 67.
9. John 4:39
10. Luke 24:1
- 11.1 Peter 2:9-10
12. Mercy Oduyoye **The Will to Arise** Ibid. Pp210
13. Sarah Bently. **Women liberation and the church**. association press. New York pp63
14. Nasimiyu. **Mission In African Christianity** pp158

CHAPTER TWO

INFLUENCE OF GREECO-ROMAN CULTURE AND THE BIBLE ON THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN EVANGELISM

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Women's role in society is a subject that is much discussed. At the present time our society has been ambiguous in its understanding of women and the dignity and value it attributes to them. Some scholars view women as weak and incompetent on the one hand. others view women as the purest revelation of God on the other hand.

Our modern civilization is the result of two major influences the Greco-Roman world with its emphasis on philosophy and the Judeo- Christian world with its emphasis on religion. In order to understand the Biblical attitudes towards women. we must first look at the attitudes of Greeks, Romans. ancient Hebrews and the early Christians. Just as the ancient Hebrews had to contend with the Mesopotamian culture so did the early Christians have to contend with the Greco- Roman culture. The Bible is a very important book for both Jews and Christians. It influences their ideas and behaviour. For Christians and Jews it is the word of God. Seen as such. everything in the Bible is seen as the absolute truth and the final word from God and should thus be obeyed without much ado.

However, we know that the Israelites could not develop a civilization without the influence of the civilization of their neighbours the Egyptians, Babylonians and the Assyrians. These people were developing in the same place the bible was produced. How much influence they had on Israel cannot be ascertained and that the influence has not been disentangled from the Hebrew culture. For instance people find parallel in the code of Samurais and the Decalogue.

The gospel of John in the New Testament shows clearly that his Greek environment influenced the writer. Some people say that the gospel was written for the Hellenised Jews especially those in Ephesus. The idea of the 'logos' in the gospel is a platonic idea. In fact the gospel came to be known as 'Alogoi'. This shows clearly that their neighbours influenced both the ancient Jews and the early Christians. It is evident then that their worldviews and ideas about many issues including the status of women were influenced by these cultures. It is therefore important to bear this fact in mind as we proceed to the next section on the Greco- Roman culture and their attitudes towards women.

2.1 GRECO- ROMAN CULTURE AND ITS INFLUENCE ON WOMEN

Both Greece and Rome were patriarchal societies. The families were like miniatures states governed by rigid code under the authority of the Pater Familias. The family head had almost absolute power. He could sell the members of his household onto slavery and even put them to death. His death as Kress points out gave the adult males their personal freedom. However, women could never escape male tutelage. As long as a woman was unmarried, she was subject to her father. If married, she was the subject of her husband and if widowed, she belonged to her son or some relative ¹.

In Greece, infanticide was widely practiced after 200 B.C in order to achieve a stable population. Infanticide applied selectively to girl babies and crippled males.

Kress Robert also points out that in Greece the restriction of women to the home was generally greater than it was in Rome. For the Greek males, womanly companionship, wit and charm was provided by prostitutes. In Greece, a woman was regarded as a nymphomaniac, only sexual errancy is to be expected of her therefore she must be kept at home. And if she cannot be kept

physically within the wall of the home. then some sort of mobile home must be provided. the ample robes for the body and the veil for the face.²

Roman women in regard to property ownership and freedom of movement in society enjoyed much independence than the Greek women. This liberation of the Roman women later came to be a problem, especially to St Paul. The liberation was accompanied by a wide-ranging sexual freedom, which led to the license and deterioration of family.

The estimation of women found in poets and philosophers gives a vivid picture of the real position and status of the Greek women. Homers dictum is extremely valuable testimony.” *There is no more vile and devilish creature than a woman whose heart is bent on evil.*” Plato was grateful not to have been born a woman.³

All in all this culture had great influence on the people who came into contact with Romans and Greeks. Greco –Roman culture influenced their worldview and the Greeks and Romans influenced attitude towards women. How much their culture and attitudes influenced the Israelites and the writing of the bible is difficult to ascertain. Nevertheless it is clear that their culture and attitudes towards women influenced their neighbours because there were interactions between the different cultures.

2.2 WOMEN IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

Scholars in general have believed that women had a low status in ancient Israel. Writers of the Old Testament with the exception of a few have stressed the subordination of daughter and wife to the father and husband. Some scholars argue that throughout most of the history of the Hebrew people, men have been the more prominent sex. These ideas have prevailed and a few

examples such as the Biblical Deborah only serve to emphasize the secondary position of women.

John Otwell in his book **And Sara Laughed** notes that only free male had legal status in ancient Israel and so had the right to appear before the elders in court. He continues to say that all other persons whether women, children or slaves were in effect regarded as the personal property of the heads of the households ⁴. Robert Kress in his book **Wither Womankind** also notes that woman was man's property and could even be used by him in his own defence (*Genesis 12:19-20, Judges 19*). The last incident in *Judges 19*, the Levite gave his concubine to a crowd of evil men who were threatening the house where he was staying, allowing them to use and abuse her sexually throughout the night. This story in *Judges* shows the most gruesome description of male exploitation of woman in history.

Robert Kress also mentions that a further lowering of the status of women in the Old Testament is noticeable in the Exodus version of the Ten Commandments. Woman is included among the man's property. You shall not covet your neighbour's wife or his manservant ⁵(Exodus 20: 17). The legal status of women among the Hebrews was possibly poorer than among other citizens of Mesopotamia ⁶

The story of creation of man and woman in the opening chapters of *Genesis* has had profound influence from early antiquity to our own day. It has been accepted and passed on in writings, instructions as well as sermons. Many people quote (*Genesis 2:18*) and claim that Eve was inferior to Adam because she was created as his helpmate. She is also alleged to be subordinate to Adam because she is said to have been created from his rib. Adam is also reported to have named the woman twice. (*Genesis 2: 23, 3:20*) and this is widely understood to be an exercise

of authority over Eve. This is the second creation narrative and is usually assigned to the Yahwist source J. However, the first account of the creation narrative, that is, the priestly version, there is no hint that woman had subordinate status in the description of her creation. Humanity is created male and female. One sex is not elevated above the other even though both are placed over all forms of life.

A segment of the scholarly community has long held that women were virtually excluded from the worship of the God of Israel. Although women did not enjoy full access to temple worship and knowledge of the Torah, they were not simply and totally excluded. Robert Kress notes that their singing and dancing were a Major contribution to religious celebration (*Exodus* 15: 20, *Plams* 68:25). They were also able to take part in the great cultic festivals (*Deuteronomy* 13:12), women were presented at weddings and funerals, (*Psalms* 45:15 *Jeremiah* 16:7). They had some access to the sanctuary, even if it was restricted to festivals. (*Deuteronomy*- 13:12). Women also participated in the sacred meals of the priests. (*Leviticus* 10: 14 *Exodus* 12). The era of the judges also witness to the importance of a woman could have. As a judge and a prophetess Deborah officially dispended justice.

In the name of Yahweh (*Judges* 4:4-10) she commanded the chosen people; she even marched to the battle with the soldiers assembled by her command. There are other famous women in the Old Testament. Sarah and Rebecca are usually referred to as mothers of Israel. Rahab is also famous because she served Yahweh by hiding his spies. Her deed is interpreted as her faith by the apostle in the (*Hebrews* 1:3)

There are also a number of women named in the Old Testament functioning as prophetesses, Miriam, Deborah, Hilda the wife of Isaiah and Noadiah.

Sacrifice was also an important part of the cult a priest normally officiated. The story of the birth of Samuel provides a report of a woman bringing a sacrifice.

However, as **Elizabeth Testlo** rightly points out women were excluded from priesthood and from full participation in the temple cult because of their frequent ritual impurity. They were also kept in a distance and were seated in the area segregated from men.

In conclusion, it must be admitted that by and large the history of Israel is male dominated. The marginality of women in Hebrew culture indicates that few sources exist for judging their roles and those that can be found were generally recorded by males thus display male bias. Even those written by women were preserved by a male cultural system as **Rosemary Reuther** observes. On the other hand we have seen that women were not entirely excluded from the religious rites and functions of the Israelite religion. We have seen that some women played very important roles.

2.3 NEW TESTAMENT POSITION ON THE ROLE OF WOMEN

Christianity was born into a complex syncretistic world. The society of this world that is Jewish and Greco-Roman cultures advocated the traditional role of subordination and silence of women as the ideal. The Bible reflects the culture of the times in which it was written and thus assume the subordinate position of women. However, in the New Testament there were no ministries of men and women. There were only ministries of Jesus in which both men and women served. The stories told in the gospels began to take into account the services performed by women for Jesus himself. St Luke states clearly that they provided for him out of their own resources (*Luke 8:13*). Peter's mother began to serve Christ as soon as she had recovered

(*Luke 4: 39*). Martha and Mary regularly welcomed him into their home and offered him food and a resting place (*Luke 10:38-42*). The Samaritan woman performed a very feminine service for Christ (*John 4:5-11*) and several women waited upon him as servants and anointed his feet with precious ointment (*Luke 2:55*) Women were also the first to receive the good news of his resurrection. It is therefore clear that Jesus treated women as equal human persons. His follower's men and women left their usual social ties, which included family to follow Christ.

Women also played an important role in founding the church and promoting house churches. **Rosemary Ruether** in her co-edited book **Women of spirit** points out that this house church was a decisive factor in early Christianity. In the house churches, the early Christians celebrated the Eucharist (*Acts 2:46, 20:70*) and preached the gospel (*Acts 5: 42*). Rosemary Ruether continues to say that, this assembly was called the house of God, the new temple because the spirit dwelt in it⁶. Wealthy women converts (*Acts 17: 4-12*) exercised decisive influence on these gatherings (*Acts 12: 2*)

Paul mentions women as his missionary co-workers. The text gives no indication that these women were dependent on or subordinate to Paul. The common terms such as co-worker (Prisca) brother/ sister (Apphia) diakonos (Phoebe) and apostle (Junia) are found in reference to women.

Paul in his letters admonishes the addresses to be subject to every co-worker and labourer and to give recognition to such persons in (*Romans 16:6,12*) he commends Mary Tryphena, Tryphosa and Persis because they have laboured hard in the lord.

Paul also affirms that women worked with him on equal basis. (Philippians 4:2) states that Euodia and Syntyche have contended side by side with him as in an athletic competition. These texts indicate that these women missionaries commanded the same respect as their male co-workers in the missionary communities.

Rosemary also points out that Prisca and Aquila were most prominent co-workers of Paul. They founded and led house churches in Corinth, Ephesus and Rome. When Paul sends greetings to the couple (*Romans 16:37*) he addresses it to Prisca first, indicating that she is the leading figure (*2 Timothy 4: 19*). Under Prisca's leadership, Appollos learned the way of God accurately (*Acts 18:26*). The text assumes that Prisca was the catechist and teacher.

However Rosemary points out that the writings of Paul transmit the injunctions of a patriarchal reaction, which on theological grounds decree the subordinate role of women⁹. She notes that the household codes of the Deutro-Pauline literature uphold the Patriarchal order of the family. The rules of conduct were universally accepted in Judaism and Hellenism and soon became part of Christian theology. Women express and practice their Christian faith by observing the social-patriarchal order. (*1 Timothy 2:9-15*) women were commanded to keep silent and behave modestly and were forbidden to teach or to have any authority over men.

It is therefore evident that leadership roles in the early Christian Church were diversified and were based on actual function and service. It is later when they were gradually institutionalised. These early Christians adopted the institutional forms of the surrounding patriarchal culture Charismatic leadership rooted in the experience of and in obedience to the spirit was gradually

replaced by patriarchal office and cultic ministry. This development, which played down women's role or made it marginal, is worth noting. The writings of the early church were shaped by these cultures and attitudes towards women.

2.4 POST APOSTOLIC POSITION ON THE ROLE OF WOMEN

The literature of the early Christianity, which includes the text written between the second and sixth centuries, is immense. For this reason this section cannot be thorough but a brief representation of the main aspects of the role of women in Christian ministry.

The office of prophecy was very important in the early Christian community. Prophets played an eminent role and from the beginning they functioned as inspired oracles of the resurrected Lord. Their authority was based on divine revelation and communicated by the spirit. Asia minor recognized women as prophetesses even in the second and third centuries. Priscilla and Maximilla and Montanus were leading prophets. Rosemary Ruether in her book **Women of the Spirit** notes that most literature against Montanist focused its attack especially on the leadership of women. Montanist admitted women to church offices because of Maximilla and Priscilla. Didymus maintains that the women prophetesses in Montanism taught and prophesied in the assembly of the community.

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In the first persecution of the church reported in Acts 8:1-3 women shared with men in suffering. Paul not yet converted laid waste the church and entering house after house, dragged off men and women and committed them to prison ¹⁰ (Acts 5)

Tacitus the historian also talks of the persecution of Christians engineered by emperor Nero and worth mentioning is the fact that Christian women suffer their share in the persecutions. Felicitus and Perpetua are good examples of women who suffered martyrdom because of their faith.

Roger Gryson in his book the **Ministry Of Women In The Early Church** notes that women especially widows had a very important position in the writings of the apostolic fathers. Ignatius of Antioch made it clear that in the Christian community widows should not be neglected and he warned Polycarp to take care of them. Justin holds similar view as Ignatius¹¹. The shepherd of Hermes is a text that mentions woman to have assumed a more or less official mission in the community. Hermes like Justin mentions that widows as well as orphans need to be assisted.

In the heterodox sects of the second century, the role of women was important. For evidence of this role; Roger says one can consider the place occupied by women of the gospel in the Gnostic literature. The following women were very important in the Gnosticism, Mary Magdalene, Martha, Salome and others. The Gnostics tended to listen to prophetesses such as Jezebel, who according to the Apocalypse was doing her evil work in the church of Thyatira by trying to win the faithful to the Nicolaitan doctrines¹².

Some of the great Gnostic teachers had a prophetess by their side. The literature concerning Simon Magus associated him with a woman Helena, whom he presented as the first thought of his mind¹³. In the same way Simon was worshipped by members of the sect as Jupiter, she was adored as Minera.

Roger also notes that according to St. Jerome, Marcion before going to Rome to try his chance, he had sent a woman envoy to prepare the people to receive his errors. Apelles a former disciple of Marcion strongly supported the influence of a prophetess named Philomena and wrote her revelations.

Roger also mentions the montanists as another sect in which women seem to have played a prominent role. As mentioned previously Maxilla and Priscilla were famous prophetesses in Montanism. In fact they were not inferior to the Montanus himself, the founder of the group. Proud of these illustrious predecessors, women always held a significant place in the life of the Phrygian prophetic sect.

The Nassenes pretended that they had received the doctrines from a certain Marianna who they said had received them from James the brother of the lord. The acts of Philip introduce Marianne as a sister of the Apostle and associate her with the postulants just as the Acts of Paul associate Thecha with the Ministry of the Apostles of the gentiles. The acts of Paul also introduce numerous other prophetesses: Theoric, Strtonicer, Eubuall, Artenilla nympa and phila¹⁴.

Tertullian is of interest to this study because he also wrote a lot concerning women. He lived at the end of the second century and the beginning of the third and was deeply marked by the influence of the Montanists. Jean La Porte in his book **The Role Of Women In Early Church** notes that Tertullian made use of certain texts of the Pauline Corpus which limited the activity

of women in assemblies or even imposed silence on them. Going beyond interdictions in Ministry he attacked women with such bitterness that it became anthropological aberration¹⁵. Jean also notes that in his **De Baptismo**. Tertullian forbids women to baptize and remarks in the same on the impudent boldness of women, which can be seen only in Heterodox sects¹⁶. In his other book *De Cultu Feminarum* he refers to women as devil's gate way.

*'You are the unsealer of that forbidden tree, you are the first deserter of the divine law'*¹⁷. This is evident that Tertullian did not tolerate women, especially women pretending to teach or discuss. He denied them the right even to exorcise demons.

Roger also notes that Tertullian could not find words vehement enough to stigmatise the abusive pretensions of women in the heretical sects he opposed¹⁸. According to Tertullian, the right to confer baptism belonged to the bishop, if he is absent, then to presbyters and deacons with the agreement of the Bishop. However, it is important to note that Tertullian ranked the widows among the clergy. This official position appears concretely in the fact that widows occupied a place a part in the assemblies of the community.

Thomas Aquinas' views on the role and position of women in the church are discriminatory.

Thomas lived in the medieval times. Hans - Kung in his book **Great Christian Thinkers** notes that Aquinas did not understand women, children and art due to his Monastic way of life. He also points out that Aquinas was contemptuous of women because in his **Summa Theologia** he writes that woman *'is something deficient and unsuccessful compared with man'*¹⁹. Thomas also points out that woman cannot preach because it is the condition of the female sex to be

subject to the male. Teaching as a public office in the church is a matter for those set over others and not subordinates. However, Hans Hung rightly points out that the Bible and the philosophical authority of his time, Aristotle, influenced Thomas.

This section will be concluded with the following remark quoted from **Women of Spirit** by Rosemary Ruether. That the apostolic constitution of the fourth century categorically declared we do not permit our women to teach in the church but only to pray and hear those that teach. The above situation came in gradually. The paraousia didn't come as expected and the church was called upon to deal with questions of orthodoxy and organization. As Bonnie Bowman points out in his book **The Widows A Women's Ministry in the Early church**, the church was also forced to conform to the society around it and some of the original radicalism that enabled it to live as though the kingdom were at hand waned. Eventually the church began to give two divergent messages, equality in Christ and the practise of subordination of women. Bonnie also notes that the heresy problem combined with social pressure caused the church to form community structures challenging society norms to a patriarchal structure enhancing them.²⁰

Women today are struggling to come out of this quagmire. Many are trying to understand what role they can play in the churches. Some have even moved a step ahead. They are not tied down by these cultures and they are trying to find their original position and role in the church that is priests with Christ Jesus. They are well aware that they are a priesthood of believers. They have a role to play in the spread of the gospel.

END NOTES

1. Robert Kress. **Wither womankind**. Indiana Abbey Press 1975 Pg 52.
2. **Ibid**. Pp 53
3. **Ibid** .Pp 54
4. John Otwell, **And Sarah Laughed**. Philadelphia U. S. A. The Westminster Press Pp 10
5. **The Bible** Exodus 20:17.
6. Robert Kress,op. cit. pp 32.
7. Rosemary Ruether and Eleanor, **Woman of spirit** New York. Simon and Schuster 1979 Pp
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- 8.**Ibid**. Pp 32
- 9 **Ibid**. Pp 36
- 10.Acts 8:1-3
11. Roger Gryson. **The Ministry of women in the Early church**. Minnesota. Liturgical press
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- 12.**Ibid**. Pp 12
- 13.**Ibid**. Pp15
- 14.**Ibid** .Pp 16
- 15.Jean La Porte. **The Role of women in the Early church**. New York. the Edwin Meller
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- 16.**Ibid**. Pp 27.
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- 18.Roger Gryson. **The Ministry of women in the Early church**. Minnesota. Liturgical Press
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CHAPTER THREE

WOMEN IN AFRICAN TRADITIONAL SOCIETY

3.0 INTRODUCTION

A lot of debate has been going on concerning women participation in African Society. Many conferences have noted women's achievements in various fields and data on their participation has been collected and documented. However, the area of women's participation or role in traditional society has been poorly presented, the reason being lack of written material portraying African women positively. Since most of African history was orally transmitted until the coming of the European culture.

The scanty literature written on women by colonial scholars depicts the African women as an unhappy beast of burden and slave of man who neither enjoyed sympathy nor respect from society¹. However, oral traditions differ from historical records. They present a picture of a happy woman, one who was consulted before important decisions were made, a woman who had a place in traditional religion and a woman whose social and legal rights were clearly defined². This chapter will explore the true position of the African woman in traditional society and the role she played.

3.1 THE STATUS AND THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN AFRICAN TRADITIONAL SOCIETY

The diversity of African peoples implies a diversity of customary laws and culture. The division between Matrilineal and Patrilineal societies characterizes the African culture.

In a traditionally patrilineal society, a woman has no inheritance rights. She is neither entitled to own any land or cattle nor is she allowed to participate in any debate or negotiation concerning property. As a permanent minor she does not qualify for a legal certainty not so in person not even if she is directly involved, she must always be represented by her father, brother or husband³.

In Matrilineal societies, for example, among the Ashanti, a woman enjoys precise inheritance and property rights besides being the custodian of the community treasures. Before taking a decision the community always consults elderly women, inferior as Ashanti women may appear to foreign eyes, she is really the final decisive factor in all. This is in the activities of the man as well as the arbiter of good and evil for the entire community⁴.

Polygamy is an almost universal institution in Africa. In the patrilineal system, children belong by rights to the paternal clan. This system favours polygamy. The clan will be more willing to make the necessary sacrifice for the acquisition of other wives. It feels sure about the legal possession of the children.

The Matrilineal system views polygamy much less favourably. The Matrilineal system is frequently characterized by the husband status of relative dependence on his wife's family and consequently on his wife herself⁵.

African religion was interwoven with tradition and social customs of the people. Therefore all members of the community were customarily considered to have acquired during their childhood teaching all that was necessary to know about religion and custom. Peoples in traditional Africa acquired their religion by being born into and brought up by their society, not an act of personal adherence. Traditional religion was not systematized and was therefore capable of absorbing ideas from outside or reconciling its won beliefs and practice with those of the people.

The women had a great role to play in the up bringing of their children. It was their duty to impart knowledge to the children as they were looked upon as the official ministers of religion, ethics and social customs.

Kenyatta in **Facing Mount Kenya, Agikuyu Traditions way of life** observes that education among the Agikuyu began at the time of birth and ended with death. Mothers played important roles in educating their children. The child had to pass various stages of education until he reached the stage of tribal education. Through these stages the mother saw to it that the child got the necessary teachings to enable him to live and fit in the society. It was the responsibility of the mother to educate the very small children⁶. Education was carried on through the medium of lullabies. It was easy for the child to assimilate the early teachings without strain.⁷

The mother was also responsible for teaching the child the correct speech and to acquaint him with all the important names in the family. It was also the responsibility of the mother to teach her daughter all things concerning the domestic duties of a wife in managing and harmonizing the affairs of a homestead⁸. They were also taught the laws and customs especially those governing the moral code and general rules of etiquette in the community. The teaching was carried on in the form of folklore and tribal legends. The father also had the responsibility of teaching his son various things. He took his boy with him for practical training, he learnt the names of various plants and roots and their uses. The father taught the son about agriculture, family, clan and tribal lands. It is thus clear that women played an important role in the education of their children in the African traditional society.

Women also played important religious roles. They could be ritual specialists for activities that pertained to women affairs or concerned fertility .For example, the Omu among the Igbo of Nigeria controlled medicines and performed sacrifices to ensure the safety and success of the market place where women were active traders. Among the Lovetu of South Africa, the queen was responsible for bringing rain when needed and guaranteeing the fertility of both the soil and the population.

Women also acted as mediums. For example, among the Bunyore the social status of women was low, but as mediums they commanded attention and respect as well as providing for themselves if they practice divination with a substantial source of income⁹.

Women also played the role of priestesses in traditional society. For instance the Toro clan priestess the Nyakategera could communicate with one or two of the clan's ewezi spirits. She directed the construction of shrines, advised on their maintenance, offered prayers on periodic visits to homesteads, invited, and initiated cult members, singers, and musicians to participate in the rituals¹⁰.

Women functioned as diviners. For example, in Nkore a female diviner Nyabuzan possessed land and a palace at Ibanda Hill in Mitoma. She performed ceremonies at each new moon and directed a four-day ritual of spirit worship that became an important part of the royal accession ceremonies. In addition, she functioned as a source of information to the king on the movements of his enemies and bewitched other chiefs to facilitate their defeat. Her prestige allowed her to walk about in her ceremonial dress and claim any cow she wished.

Women also played the role of seers. For example, among the Kamba one of the greatest seers to emerge was a woman by the name Syokimau. According to historical accounts, the seers who were mainly women emerged 1840 – 1860. Syokimau is claimed to have predicted the arrival of the white man and historical records have that J. Kraft a German was the first man to arrive at Ukambani in 1847¹¹.

The Iveti hills (Women Hills) was Syokimau's place of birth. Oral accounts indicate that the hills were thus named because of the influence women such as Syokimau commanded along the hills and beyond. Syokimau was consulted when certain important decisions were to be

made¹². Her ability to predict future events protected the Akamba especially from surprise attacks from the Maasai.

Among the Agikuyu, there was a Wambui wa Kimere popularly known as Njuguru. Njuguru was a great woman from the Mangu area of Gatundu in Central Province. Several incidents indicate that Njuguru's power of divination came to be highly regarded by the people as her predictions always turned out to be true. People began to view her as someone especially gifted and much favoured by God. She was also a healer¹³. Given these few vignettes, it is clear that African women played a vital role in the religious affairs in Africa society.

In her book Kikuyu women, **The Mau Mau Rebellion and Social Change**. Cora Ann notes that women played an important role on ceremonial occasions acting as witness and participants in rituals of primary importance to the community¹⁴. When land south of Chania River was first acquired from the Wadorobo, the original forest dwelling owners, the ceremony of transfer was not complete without the presence and involvement of the Kikuyu participants' wives in the ritual that finalized the transfer of land¹⁵.

Cora Ann gives another example of women's inclusion in important rituals of purification ceremonies. When a property owner wished to cleanse his homestead after the infringement of a taboo, which had rendered the homestead and its inhabitants virtually unclean, the wives of the owner had to be present¹⁶. In another case when the elders wished to purify a village, women's participation in the ceremony was required. However, like Kenyatta points out they

had to be old women. They must be those who had passed childbearing age for they were considered immune from worldly mischief¹⁷.

All in all women played vital roles in the African traditional society. They were also accorded respect that they deserved.

3.2 NEGATIVE FACTORS THAT AFFECTED WOMEN IN PLAYING THEIR ROLES IN TRADITIONAL AFRICAN SOCIETY

There were traditions and customs that were oppressive to the women in the African traditional society. As Cora Ann points out, in most African Societies women are constrained by gender specific taboos and prohibitions which did not apply to the males¹⁸. She further says that women were also scapegoats, they were blamed for unfortunate happenings and accused of causing misfortunes.

In his book **African Women Liberation**, P. N. Wachege notes that the oppression of women in the Kuria tradition is as vivid as in other ethnic communities. He observes that traditionally Kuria women were not supposed to sleep with their husbands during war, because women were considered to bring misfortunes¹⁹. He continues to say that a man going out for war believed that he could be killed if he allowed his wife to say anything to him concerning the battle. It was believed that in situations like this, women were misfortunes carriers and this could result in calamities and catastrophes²⁰.

Among the Agikuyu, Wachege notes that discrimination of women started right from birth. He notes that a woman who had delivered a new born baby boy was given first class treatment while not so a girl. women ululated five times for the boy while if a girl was born, the ululation was done four times²¹.

Nasimiyu Wasike in an article **Christology and an African Woman's experience** also observes that there are some cultural hardships that African women experience. For instance, in Africa, there are taboos, which restrict women. Women should not talk when men are having a conversation. Women were not taken seriously at times; they are belittled by men with regard to their intelligence²². She continues to say that they are customarily looked upon as child bearers and servers and often cruelly oppressed when their child dies²³. Nasimiyu also notes that despite their nurturing, maintaining and serving life for the survival of human communities, women are always marginalized and given inferior status.

Hinga T. M. in an article in the book **Moral and Ethnical issues** also argues that in most African cultures women were mere slaves who were treated like dirt. She gives the example of the Banyankole of Uganda. Traditionally a woman had very little to do in society. Even if she did something wonderful it did not get much publicity²⁴. A woman was supposed to be inferior to her husband. She had to accept what her husband said as a sign of good manners. In the house the father and the male children exercised authority and made decisions²⁵.

Cora Ann also points out that in most African societies women were constrained by gender specific taboos and prohibitions, which did not apply to males²⁶. Among the Luo for instance, some parts of chicken were only eaten by men.

However, despite oppression African women have learned tolerance. They try to integrate all their experiences so that they appreciate life. The African woman holds the whole society together. She gives birth to life, maintains it and continues to nurture it.

Women were also expected to do most of the routine work of the household and the fields but they were not admitted to social intercourse with the men even to the point of exclusion from meals, which they had cooked. Custom varied from tribe to tribe.

In conclusion, our African women today are able to pick out the positive aspects of their traditional society. For instance, the fact that they played certain roles in religious rituals is a positive aspect in the African Culture that can encourage women. This fact encourages them to move forward like those African women heroes of old and some, like the selected women evangelists, of this study, stand out as women who can achieve a lot. As for the negative aspects of the African culture, our women are still struggling to make a breakthrough in this area and a few are making it. Alice Lenshina is a case in point. Her status in her church in many respects is similar to that of a woman chief. Mai Chaza is also another example of a woman who has led a messianic church. It is evident from the religious standpoint that it is the women who participate most assiduously in everything organized by the church, worship, social

assistance and catechism. Women transmit religious values and belief and are the operational manuals.

In spite of the negative light in which women in traditional Africa society are depicted. Women are encouraged by the few exemplary women of old who held senior and serious positions in the traditional worship.

The gender activism and special attention and consideration being given to the girl also seem to bear fruit. Many more women are confident and are aspiring not only for religious positions in the churches as pointed out and discussed in the next chapter, but are aspiring and vying for political positions in the country. An area that has been as a man's domain in the past.

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CHAPTER FOUR

CASE STUDIES OF SELECTED WOMEN EVANGELISTS IN NAIROBI AND KIAMBU: MRS.JUDY MBUGUA, MARGARET WANGARI, WAIRIMU NELSON AND MARY AKATSA.

4.0 INTRODUCTION.

Wairimu Nelson, Margaret Wangari, Judy Mbugua and Mary Akatsa were selected for this study because they are women and they stand out as women evangelists. They were also selected because they have attracted many people to their meetings. The researcher chose women because for a long time women have been ignored despite the fact that they play significant roles in the spread of the gospel. The researcher also wanted to know the contributions women have made in the spread of the gospel, as well as the problems they encounter in their work. The researcher's other objective was to find out what motivates them to carry out evangelistic work and what other options they have other than the ministry of evangelism. That is, if women are in evangelism by choice or they are in evangelism because it is the only acceptable option they have.

4.1 MRS JUDY MBUGUA

Mrs. Mbugua is a middle-aged lady and she is married to Richard Mwangi an Accountant working with the civil service. She has five children. Mrs.Mbugua is the founder and Chairlady of Ladies Homecare spiritual Fellowship (LHSF). She is also the Co-ordinator of Pan African Christian Women Alliance PACWA.

Mrs. Mbugua started her career in public sector where she first secured a job as a secretary and undertook a number of courses at Government Training Institute in Kenya. She initially worked for eight years at the treasury under the Ministry of Finance and then moved to Minet ICDC as an Administration Manager where she worked for twelve years. She became a born again Christian in 1967. Around 1980, Mrs. Mbugua felt that God was calling her to pray for families. She recalls that in 1980 it appeared to many of them that families were experiencing a lot of problems, both socially and economically which sometimes led to marital break ups. ‘We were a group of ladies with a similar desire to see our households turn to God. Why not invite others and pray together for our common good?’¹ During this time she was a member of Nairobi Pentecostal Church Valley Road. Judy asked a few members of NPC if they could pray together for their families. Twenty-five ladies joined her and they formed the Ladies Homecare Spiritual Fellowship (LHSF).

From the humble beginnings the ladies embarked on a unique spiritual ministry whose greatest challenge was to keep their families peaceful and stable from any possible evil disturbance that often led to break up, divorce and separation.

Mrs. Mbugua believes that God made marriage for the purpose of spiritual and physical gain and not for material provisions.

LHSF was formed specifically for praying for families, that is, husband, wives and children. The LSHF started their monthly meetings and the next meetings they had seventy members. Within three years over three hundred women were meeting to pray for their loved ones.

Mrs. Mbugua then realized that there was more to just praying. She also realized that she needed to know the word of God. This realization drove her to have the ministry registered and so in 1985 LHSF was registered. Today there are fourteen branches of LHSF all over Kenya. As they increased in numbers, Judy felt the need for the fellowship to pray for the whole nation. She had to choose the book of (*Acts 16:31*) as the theme of the ministry. They replied, 'Believe in the lord Jesus and you would be saved – you and your household'².

Judy's love for families and her desire to see men come to the lord drove her to come up with a strategy to involve men in their fellowships. In order to reach the men, they decided to have two dinners of international status annually. The dinners are held in five star hotels in the months of June and December. They have had these dinners since 1984. During the dinners, the gospel is preached; it is also a good opportunity to bring the older children to church and to the fellowship. These dinners have been a great blessing because many people have come to know the lord. LHSF has had the opportunity to have the first lady of Uganda Mrs. Janet Museveni as a speaker in their December 1994 dinner.

Mrs. Mbugua explained to the researcher that LHSF persistently prays for homes in Kenya because of the realization that Satan knows that if he destroys homes he will destroy members

of the church and ultimately the society. It is therefore important for Judy and members of her fellowship to look at themselves as soldiers in battle and casualties are inevitable.

Judy also explained to the researcher that it is the obligation of the fellowship to pray for the country and its leaders so that God may give them wisdom for good governance. LHSF had the privilege of visiting President Moi in state house Nairobi. LHSF also prays for world evangelism because they feel it is their obligation as Christians to fulfil the great commission that Jesus gave to his disciples 'go therefore and make disciples of all nations' ³ Mathew 28:18.

Judy Mbugua is also PACWA continental coordinator. She explained to the researcher that PACWA is involved in evangelism under five tracks. They are involved in networking, where they try to see what women are doing. They identify women ministry models, co-workers and resource people in each country or region in order to establish a network of existing ministries and relationships. They are also involved in research in which they find out some of the ungodly practices going on like female circumcision, why and what its effects are. They also educate women on their legal rights. They get Christian lawyers and Christian doctors to teach these women.

Judy explained to the researcher that PACWA is also involved in the role of women in ministry. They go through the word of God to know what the Bible says about women and ministry. They also find out why many churches do not allow women to preach and what it means to be in the ministry and to be an evangelist. Judy believes that to be a woman in the ministry one needs to share the word of God with one's family. She also believes that if God calls one to be

an evangelist then one should go out and preach. Judy encourages women to minister to their families. She also encourages women to be important before God since man and woman are equal in the eyes of God. She also believes it is important to be trained in theological colleges and encourages women to evangelise, to hold crusades and open air meetings. Judy has been able to hold crusades and preach in many churches in Kenya. At one time she had a crusade in Madagascar where more than seven hundred people came to know the lord.

Mrs. Judy Mbugua explained to the researcher how the idea of PACWA came to be 'the idea was born out of the 5th general assembly of A.E.A held in Lusaka Zambia September, 1987'. Women delegates at this assembly saw the need for a continental gathering of evangelical Christian women for a time of fellowship in order to consider and pray about the challenges that face the church in Africa how to respond to them as Christian women.

PACWA was also conceived because women are 'not only the majority in the church in Africa, but they are also the most committed and active. However, the irony is that they are the most ignored and marginalized'. Mrs. Mbugua also believes that women are the 'strength and moral backbone of many of the churches in Africa but decisions at most of the critical levels is the mandate of men'⁴. PACWA therefore tries to encourage the role of Christian women to get involved; it also tries to enhance 'family spirit for evangelical women in Africa'. Judy as the continental coordinator of this organization has tried to encourage many women not to give up on ministry and she also encourages women who feel called to be evangelists not to shy away but be bold and preach the gospel without fear. She also encourages women to join theological training colleges so that they can be effective ministers or evangelists.

4.2 MARGARET WANGARI

Margaret Wangari was born in 1955 in Banana Hill Kiambu. She is the first child of the late Paul Ngugi and Mrs. Priscilla Wanjiru Ngugi's seven children. Christian parents in the Anglican Church brought her up. Since her childhood she was very prayerful and in the local primary school (Muthurwa) she attended she was always called upon to lead the whole school in prayer. Due to her size and age she was usually placed on top of a table so that the whole school could see and hear her as she prayed.

Margaret Wangari explained to the researcher how she acquired the healing power of God while attending a Christian Camp in Njoro in April 1974. Then she was a form two student at Karuri High School. She had been invited to attend the youth camp at Njoro but she did not have bus fare. She had only five cents. She prayed to God and God told her not to worry about how she reached her destination. In all the buses she boarded, the conductors told her that they knew her case. So she did not pay even a cent for the journey.

Margaret arrived in Njoro safely and went to the camp where the meetings were held. While in the meeting she was called by one of the organizers of the camp to collect her receipt.

Margaret does not know who paid the camp fee for her; however, she believes that it was an angel sent by God. Another strange thing happened at the camp. Rev. Manasseh Mankuleyoli was the man preaching at the camp and after this sermon he made an alter call. He called people to come forward and repent their sins and accept the lord. Others with other needs were

also prayed for. Margaret went forward and in the midst of a prayer on her behalf, she heard the voice of God and saw a vision. In the vision she saw this crippled woman, 50 year old Afigael who was her own grandmother kneeling down next to her. The 27-year-old Stephen Waiya who was mad was kneeling down next to her. 'I felt a convulsion run through my body, I felt a certain power and I told them you are healed. Then I saw a large number of people getting healed and crowded my vision⁵.

When Margaret returned to Banana from Njoro, she felt her newfound power 'go beyond my control'. On the following day she went to see her grandmother Afigael Kanyi.

Afigael Kanyi had been sick since 1938 suffering from rheumatoid arthritis and was completely incapacitated during the pregnancy of her seventh child Michael. She developed collapsing legs and joints that were opening up'. On the day before Margaret went to her, she had been experiencing some ominous signs. One of her crutches had mysteriously broken and she was getting restless about something. 'Granny, I will pray for you and you will get cured. Will you believe me?' Margaret told her. Margaret prayed for her. She was thumping the handkerchief she had bought from Njoro and joined hands with some of Afigaels children and her husband encircling her at the centre. They prayed raising up their clasped hands for 10 minutes, and then she started running and jumping. The children started to scream mother you are cured.

Stephen Waiya had been sick since 1969. He was severely mentally handicapped. Margaret prayed that she would meet with him on the way. She found him seated in the kitchen. 'I greeted him and placed my pullover on his head, he began shaking while I prayed for him'. He collapsed on the floor. 'Who are you?' Margaret asked him, I am Lucifer replied Waiya. 'Whom do you think you are talking to?' Margaret asked. You are the servant of God, Waiya

replied. Then he stood up and declared he was healed. Before his healing Waiya was a well known man suffering from a mental disease and he used to run around half naked screaming in the streets of Nairobi and streaking in churches. He was totally healed. Unfortunately Waiya died recently after abandoning his faith and his earlier illness had struck him again in 1996.

Since that day, the small but ordinary hut, that is Margaret's home became the centre of pilgrimage for hundred upon hundred of men, women and children. Margaret explained to the researcher how people travelled miles to come and see for themselves these miracles.

Initially, Margaret conducted her healing sessions at the grandmother's compound since it was more spacious than her parents. But as word went round about her activities, the crowds became uncontrollably large and the sessions were moved to Karuri High School.

She later visited other parts of the country in the company of some other evangelists including Rev. Manasseh.

Margaret became a household name with many healings being attributed to her. She could not continue with her studies at Karuri High School for she had become much sought after by Newsmen and other people who flocked into her compound for interviews.

In 1978 Margaret went to study for a Diploma in Theology at Christ For All Bible Institute in Benin City Nigeria. Until 1980 she had been invited on a preaching mission in Lagos and Kaduna. *'While at Kaduma I met Archbishop Benson Idahasa of Benin Church of God who gave me the scholarship'* she explained to the researcher⁶. Upon her graduation in 1980 she returned to Kenya only to find the people she had entrusted with the administration of her

young church having turned the tables on her. *'I realized that people would generally oppose a woman's leadership for no apparent reason.'*⁷ she said.

Margaret resolved to start a new church/sect from scratch. Thus did the Ambassadors of Christ Fellowship Church of the Lord (Kanitha wa Mwathi) begin. It now has thirty branches countrywide in places as far as Narok, Kakamega, Loitokitok, and Muranga. She decided to move from the Anglican Church because it could not accommodate her new spiritual experience. Margaret has travelled far and wide and preaches in many countries including European countries like Germany, France, and Sweden. She now hopes to be ordained as a bishop of her church.

Recently she went on a preaching mission in Rwanda. She has also preached in many African countries like Nigeria, former Zaire now Congo (DRC) Kinshasa and Uganda.

She preaches liberation theology – The coming of Jesus Christ. She delegates her duties in the church.

4.3 MARY AKATSA

Mary Akatsa is the founder of Jerusalem church of Christ. She is from western province of Kenya and was born in December 1964 at Kima Mission Hospital of the Church of God. Her birth was through an operation and three hours later her mother was pronounced dead. After her mother's death, Mary was to stay at the hospital nursery for two months before she was handed over to her father, Stanley Jogoo. Mr. Jogoo was a police inspector and a polygamous man with over one hundred wives and concubines in spite of this, it is alleged that Mr. Jogoo

was very angry because he had incurred the loss of a wife after having paid dowry to Veronica's family (Mary's mother). Her death was a big blow since the offspring she had left behind was a baby girl who was of no benefit to him⁸.

When the baby was given to its father, none of Jogoo's wives or concubines were willing to take care of the infant. Although he had accepted the custody of his daughter from the hospital, Jogoo was not willing to exercise this responsibility.

Mary Akatsa's father is said to have sought various ways and means of disposing his infant daughter. He abandoned his daughter in a distant forest. A day before this inhuman act, Jogoo is alleged to have approached a senior pastor of the village Pentecostal Assembly of God (P.A.G) church pastor Shem Sirima to take care of the three month old baby Sinaida, since he was a born again leader. The Pastor declined to take the baby and Jogoo decided to dump her naked in the forest where she stayed for three days and three nights⁹.

During this time Veronica, Mary Akatsa's mother approached her mother Lorna Sangolo in a dream and instructed her to rescue her baby from the forest. The dream revealed that the baby would be the house of God on earth. She was also given detailed directions to the place where the baby had been dumped.

Following the instructions in the dream Lorna found her granddaughter where she had been dumped. The baby was still crying albeit with difficulty as some insects had bitten her on the nostrils, ears and mouth. Lorna took her granddaughter and removed the insects from the

baby's body and bathed it. The baby fed on porridge and after sometime it recovered from the insect bites. Sangolo Lorna struggled to bring up her mysterious granddaughter. She earned her living through selling of sugarcane and salt. Lorna was a pious member of Isiringo Pentecostal Assemblies of God and she regularly attended the church services with her granddaughter Sinaida who was given the name Mary at her baptism in this church¹⁰.

Mary went to Itabaly a nursery and primary school near Emutete. At the age of seven she joined both the children and the adult's choir at the P.A.G church Isiringo. She continued to attend primary school at Ibalaya and she claims to have been very bright. Her fame in the location and attracted her father's attention.

Jogoo made effort to reach his daughter. He was convinced that her maternal grandmother rescued her daughter either coincidentally or miraculously; hence he used his influence as a police officer to fabricate stories concerning her daughter's childhood so that he could have her back. There was a case about her custody. He claimed that he was the rightful parent to Mary Sinaida and that Lorna Sangolor had stolen the child from him after the death of his dear wife Veronica Akoye. She was asked to choose whom to stay with and Mary decided it was her grandmother but her father used his office to win her custody.

Life in the hands of her father was a nightmare. Her father and his wives constantly beat her. She was denied food and even fed on remains. Her father never took her to school. She went through such a horrifying experience that she contemplated drowning herself in the nearby Eleyekubu river but before she could do so, she heard the voice of her grandmother

commanding her not to commit suicide; she went back home shut herself in her room and prayed. After this she fell asleep.¹¹

She heard the voice of her maternal grandmother once more and this time it came along the wall of her room loud and clear. Before she could grasp what was being said, she realized it was the voice of God talking to her. The voice told her that she had been chosen for the important mission of spreading the word of God on earth. She was assured of protection and guidance she was instructed to begin a church which should be known as 'Jerusalem church of Christ. The church was to be the mother of all the churches on earth and was to prepare people of all races, religious and creeds for heaven, which was imminent. After God had made his will known to Mary, Jesus also appeared to her, subsequently the Holy spirit came upon her and she started speaking in tongues. This was around 1972 and it marked the birth of her church.

After this Mary found herself filled with extra-ordinary powers that enabled her to foresee other peoples lives and detect the origins of evils within her surrounding. She could identify witches in public and reveal what they had done in the past¹².

In 1977, Mary ran away from her father's home and married Francis Akatsa. By then Mary was thirteen and Francis was seventeen. The newly weds went to Khwisero in Kisa location where they met an old woman Sarah Mukhana who took them in and gave them a piece of land on which to build a house. During this time, Mary's prophetic powers were increasing and she was considered a threat in the neighbourhood. Mary and Francis had their first child, a boy in 1982. The boy did not live long because while she and her husband were away at a church

service unknown person strangled the boy. Mary's enemies paid the killer 300 shillings. The same murderer later poisoned Mary and she fell very ill. She could not eat or swallow anything and she was taken to different hospitals but they failed to treat her and she was taken to her father's home to die.

It is alleged that Mary Akatsa died in March 1983 and went straight to heaven. That heaven is more beautiful than our own earth and it is filled with happy white robed people. It is said that while she was dead, she heard mourners wailing and talking but she could not respond. In heaven, she found a long line of people waiting to be weighed. She said that if a person weight did not reach a certain requirement, he or she was immediately taken by Satan and there was yelling and tribulations for those who were condemned to hell. Those who tipped the scales and reached the required weight were taken by waiting angels and given white robes. When the turn for Mary to be weighed on the heavenly scales she encountered Jesus Christ who came to her and told her that she could not be weighed and that she should go back to earth to complete the mission she had been assigned. Mary claims that when she woke up from her death, everybody who came to mourn her except her father, husband and grandmother ran away in fear. She was taken to Victoria hospital where she was operated and a wild snake removed from her stomach. Mary became alive and healthy once more and her prophetic power redoubled and she continued to reveal the evils of the villages around, church leaders, religious specialists and the local administration all ganged up and finally expelled her from the village with her husband¹³.

Without money the couple travelled to Nairobi by train. They arrived in the city in 1980. They young couple met Njoki Njoroge who lives in Kikuyu as God had revealed in a dream. The

couple took Mary and her husband and lived in Kikuyu for 2 years. by this time her acknowledged faith healing powers were already widely known in the area.

In 1985 Mary moved to the Muslim village of Kawangware area to continue with her mission. This was in accordance with God's directive to her because Kawangware was full of sins hence it badly needed salvation. She rented a room along Muthiora road where she continued prophesying and praying for people and soon her presence dominated the whole compound. In Kawangware, Mary travelled around, praying and performing her faith healing and her reputation grew.

While at Kawangware, she occasionally joined members of P.A.G African Divine Church ADC and church of Bethlehem East Africa COBEA for Sunday services. Finally she joined COBEA as an ordinary member. In COBEA, Mary dominated everything due to her prophetic power and faith healing leaders of COBEA viewed her with suspicion and dislike, which finally boiled down to a split between J.C.C and the COBEA in 1989. In October 1990 her church was registered.

4.4 WAIRIMU NELSON

Trying to get Wairimu to interview her was an uphill task. The researcher attended many of her monthly Uhuru Park meetings in order to get her to have an interview, but it was impossible. The researcher also attended many of her monthly overnight meetings at St. Stephen church Jogoo road but to the surprise of the researcher many faithful went to the church as early as five o'clock in order to secure strategic positions to enable them have a good view of the

charismatic Wairimu Nelson. Even at these meetings it was impossible to get her. The researcher has never seen anybody so shielded and protected like this evangelist.

Finally the researcher decided to give out questionnaires to the members of her Faith evangelistic Ministry F.E.M. Initially they were reluctant to fill the questionnaires and explained to get permission from their leader. This researcher had to travel to the F.E.M offices at Ufungamano in 1995 and at Hurlingham in 1996 in order to have the questionnaires answered.

Eventually, they answered the questionnaires and some of the members of this ministry requested anonymity. The evangelist Wairimu however, declined to fill the questionnaire and the information the researcher has on this evangelist has been gathered from what she has seen and heard at Wairimu's monthly meetings at Uhuru park and the overnight meetings at St. Stephen's Jogoo road, and from people who attend her crusade meetings at Uhuru park.

Wairimu Nelson was born in 1956 at Waithaka Nairobi. She heads the Faith Evangelistic ministry and holds her monthly meetings at Uhuru Park where she draws a big crowd. She is separated from her Swiss husband after they had a son and a daughter. In one of her crusade meetings she explained how heartbreaking her marriage had been. Her former husband took custody of the son and daughter. She also claims to have suffered the loss of all her possessions and rejection by many.

In a testimony Wairimu said that she was called to join the Christian ministry in a very dramatic way. God made his presence known to her by shaking her house and filling it with smoke before talking to her and commissioning her to the ministry after which she says she discovered she had healing powers.

Often at the Uhuru park meetings there are many sick people who come from far and wide in order to receive their healing miracles. At these meetings Wairimu claims to pray for sick people and they are healed. She also claims that barren women conceive after she prays for them. One such interesting case was that of a Kamba woman who had been married for over eighteen years. In 1988 and 1989 this woman known as simply Mama Faith wrote to Wairimu asking her to pray for her. She was prayed for and she believed that God heard her prayers¹⁵. She immediately started buying maternity dresses and baby clothes and knitting sweaters for the baby who was not even conceived.

In 1995 Mama Faith and her husband went to an invitation for partners meetings at St. Stephen's church Jogoo road. At the meeting, the couple asked evangelist Wairimu to give a prayer of thanksgiving since they believed they were going to be blessed with a child although there were no visible signs of one. Wairimu prayed for this couple and told them that if by March 1996 they did not have a child, she would question her God. Just a few hours to March this lady at the age of thirty-seven gave birth to a baby girl. Faith was born on 29th February 1996.

Mama Faith is a lady the researcher talked to and had the privilege of holding the miracle child in 1996 August. Mama Faith is one of those faithful who believe that Wairimu prays for people and they are healed.

At the Uhuru park meetings, one will notice that many people bring along sick relatives to these meetings hoping that they will get miraculously healed. When the healing session begins Wairimu seems like a person possessed, and after fervent prayers, she declares those she has prayed for immediately cured. She will then ask the sick people to tell the crowd what God had done for them. Among those cured are the numerous Aids victims, cancer patients. At one of the overnight meetings at St. Stephens jogoo road, 'Masaduku' a comedian in the programme 'Vioja Mahakamani' claimed how, after he received his salvation, Wairimu Nelson prayed for him, as he was suffering from Aids and he was cured. Nevertheless he died later on.

At the Uhuru park meetings the crowd is usually seated mainly on the terraces under myriad umbrellas with elaborate colours. The crowd is held captive by the goings-on on the spacious stage from which Wairimu will eventually preach. Wairimu will, with the help of assistants work up the crowd to frenzy and calm it just as easily.

Wairimu Nelson is able to hold her audience captive during the preaching up to the healing session, which is the climax of the meeting. During the preaching, sometimes Wairimu goes into personal details. For instance, during her meetings, she will talk of how she tends her flower garden during her free time. At another meeting she told the audience how huge her T.V. set is. She also said at another meeting that one does not need to go to theological college

to become an effective preacher. She also boasts how she can heal any disease through the power given to her by God. She also talks of her ability to tell who is sick and with what.

Most people, especially the fervent followers of Wairimu Nelson, believe in the claims that Wairimu makes. However, there are those who claim that Wairimu does not have the healing power she claims to have. Some people argue that there are very many sick people in Kenyan hospitals and if she is a genuine miracle worker then she should visit the sick in hospitals and intercede for them to get healed¹⁶.

However, despite what cynics might say about evangelist Wairimu, the truth is that she is a good orator and she is able to draw large crowds to her meetings. She is able to hold the attention of thousands for hours during her meetings. She also has a sense of humour.

Wairimu also uses her mysterious gift of revelation to attract people to her meetings. This gift of revelation or prophecy enables her to see through people's lives and to reveal the truth about them. It is very common for Wairimu to identify Aids patients, barren women, and cancer patients in her meetings. These charismatic gifts of healing and prophecy have attracted many people to Wairimu's meetings.

Analyses of the respondents interviewed indicate that the majority of the followers of these women evangelists are of low education except for few exceptions like one lecturer from the University of Nairobi who was interviewed. A majority of the respondents felt that they gained

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Analyses of the respondents interviewed indicate that the majority of the followers of these women evangelists are of low education except for few exceptions like one lecturer from the University of Nairobi who was interviewed. A majority of the respondents felt that they gained

spiritual nourishment and encouragement from the ministry. They are also in no way opposed to women carrying out evangelistic and leadership roles.

However many respondents emphasised the need for the evangelists to be role models as well as God fearing persons.

The other critical issue that seemed to emerge was the fact that evangelism and the big crusades that are conducted by these evangelists act as business openings. Never the less when i mentioned that to Margaret she defended the evangelists saying that the ministries had to be run and without funds it is challenging to carry out the work. She was quick to point out that her ministry depended on the contributions given by its members.

Many respondents felt that in a way the African culture was not supportive to women in ministry mainly because of the way many men have been socialised that a woman should only be seen and not heard. African culture is seen to play a significant role in placing women in the humble positions they hold in the church and in the larger society.

Many respondents felt that the different ministries headed by the women evangelist under study were successful and that more women should be encouraged to emulate the women evangelist.

4.5 CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED BY WOMEN EVANGELISTS

The problems women evangelists encounter as they go about their duties are as many as they are varied. They are also peculiar to each evangelist in the sense that what one evangelist envisages as real problem might be dismissed by another as trivial or not so serious a problem.

However, the major problem that is encountered by most of the evangelists interviewed is cultural. Cultural in the sense that they feel, culture or tradition is to blame for the insignificant positions they hold in churches and in the larger society.

For instance Mrs. Mbugua felt that in the African traditional setting women were to be seen and not heard. They were also seen as second-class citizens. There were duties that women could not perform due to the mere fact that they were women. For example, they could not buy or sell land or cattle.

Many followers of the Faith evangelistic ministry felt that the African culture suppressed women. Women could not be allowed to be in the forefront of anything except the home. This suppression is reflected in the leadership of our African churches.

Margaret Wangari also concurs with this opinion. *'I have realized that women leadership especially in African churches is not readily accepted.'*

Another problem experienced by the evangelists is lack of support from the church and even from women. Wangari explained to the researcher that throughout her twenty-one years of evangelism she has been assisted more by men more than by women. However, she points out that *'it is still the men who gave me the greatest problems.'* Some pastors also feel threatened and instead of encouraging the evangelists in their work they begin to mistrust them. Usually the evangelists feel alienated and end up starting their own churches. Wangari's experience with the Anglican Church is a good example. The Anglican Church could not accommodate her new spiritual experience, which was purely foreign to Anglicanism.

Mrs. Judy Mbugua cites the lack of equal opportunities as another problem women evangelists' experience. If training opportunities arise in the churches, women are denied the opportunity

to train as pastors while men are ordained to priesthood. Women in the churches too do not support their own. They feel that evangelism; priesthood is best suited for men.

Mrs. Mbugua cited the lack of enough time, as another problem woman evangelists have to deal with. The woman evangelist is torn between her call to evangelistic work and her call to be a mother and wife which is also demanding and time consuming. However, she pointed out that evangelism is best suited to single women or women with grown up children. A young mother might not cope with both duties as they are demanding and time consuming.

Mrs. Mbugua and Margaret Wangari pointed out that sometimes lack of finances was also a problem they had to contend with. Margaret Wangari explained to the researcher that in order to overcome this problem of finance, she encourages the members of her congregation to contribute to the church. She has also seen members of her church give donations to the church. Some have given away pieces of land to Wangari so that she can put up a church. She said that unlike many ministries, and churches which are funded by foreign countries, her church is what it is today because of its members. She claims that foreign missionaries have never funded her.

Rejection is another problem experienced by women evangelists. For a couple of years, Wangari pointed out that she had to fight the feeling of rejection because she is a woman. She told his researcher that men looked down upon her and didn't respect what she had to say. However, the story of the Samaritan encouraged her a lot. Despite the much criticism she faced, she left everything to God, to fight the battles. She says that today she has resolved

many of the challenges she had to deal with. Wairimu Nelson in a testimony she gave said that she had experienced the feeling of rejection by many but she has overcome that now. Even Mary Akatsa experienced the same problem while she went about preaching the gospel and exposing the witches. Many people viewed her with suspicion and eventually the local people from her village made her travel to Nairobi where today she draws big crowds to her meetings.

Father Muiruri laments that *'Women are poorly represented in the local church councils and synods. Often times, women activities are inauspiciously limited to being Sunday school teachers, cleaners of the church building, compounds and singing in the choir'*. He says that denying women a voice in the church is also denying them a voice in politics, which at the bottom of it all is abusing their rights as human being.

4.6 CONTRIBUTION BY WOMEN EVANGELISTS IN NAIROBI, KENYA

Women evangelists have contributed to the spread of the gospel. They have taken it upon themselves to fulfil the great command to *'go therefore and make disciples of all nations.'* *Mathew 28:19.*

Mary Akatsa for instance preaches the gospel of the good news. In her message, she preaches the good news to liberating people from disease and poverty. She has broken the barrier of race and sex. People of different races and ethnic communities attend her preaching sessions at Kawangware. Problems of barrenness bring many women to this church. Other people with different problems come to this church to be liberated from this evil. The big numbers that come to this church in itself speak of success. Many barren women allege that they have been able to conceive after they were prayed for by Mary. Sick people also allege that they have also

received healing miracles at Mary Akatsa's church. Other than performing these miracles, people with financial problems are assisted by Mary Akatsa. Mary is able to see into the life of a person and is able to tell somebody the reason they have come to her church. There is a police constable who had travelled from Kisii to Nairobi to collect a cheque to pay school fees for his children. Unfortunately the cheque was not ready and didn't have money to travel back to Kisii. He came to Kawangware where Mary was conducting a service. She called him by name and explained to him the reason he had come to Nairobi. She could see through the problems he had. Mary gave this constable, a stranger to her, twenty thousand shillings to pay school fees for his children.

Mary is also known to assist people in times of need. If a member of this church is bereaved, Mary takes it upon herself to make all the necessary arrangements for the burial. She assists the family both materially and spiritually.

Mary also preaches repentance and asks her listeners to repent and come to Jesus since the Kingdom of God is at hand. Many people have come to know the lord through her church.

Mrs. Judy Mbugua is the founder chairlady of the LHSF and she is also the continental co-ordinator of PACWA, which is involved in evangelism.

Under LSHF Mrs. Mbugua usually hold retreats in August. She arranges for speakers who give very informative lectures on topics like women ministries, husband and wife relationships, youth and drug abuse. Mrs. Mbugua and the LHSF organize youth retreats and seminars. The

seminars are for teenagers between thirteen and eighteen years. The purpose for these seminars is to cultivate meaningful dialogue between parents and their children.

LHSF in September of every year organizes a harambee and each committee member is required to raise about fifty thousand shillings. In 1994, the LHSF harambee was able to raise approximately 900,000 shillings. In addition to these monies, Judy has been able to get three plots for the Homecare in Nairobi. One is Buruburu, another in Kiambu Road and another in Karen. The Homecare intends to develop a plot in Karen to build the 'Home' with facilities for retreats.

LHSF during its tenth anniversary did Radio preaching in the Kenya Broadcasting co-operation programme 'LIFT UP YOUR HEARTS' and 'EPILOGUE'. Judy Mbugua, Loise Manuudu, Loise Mwangi, Damaris Muchiri and Grace Onyango did these programmes.

During their tenth anniversary LHSF collected items like clothing, food and household items. These items were given to several needy groups like Kuwinda Women Group. This group of women from kuwinda slum village in Karen Langata lost all their possessions in a fire. Now they had bibles so that they could read the word of God for themselves.

Upendo children's group is a group of destitute children who meet regularly at Kenyatta market benefited from these collections. Some refugees mainly from Rwanda and a needy group from Kawangware slum area were also beneficiaries.

LHSF has branches in Thika, Mombasa, Kiambu and Ngong. The Nairobi branch attracts up to 500 people with several of them having accepted the lord as their saviour. The branch helps the needy who attend the fellowship at All Saints Cathedral every fourth of the month. At these monthly meetings, discussions covering family matters and topics like single parenthood, sex outside marriage are discussed.

Mrs. Mbugua explained to the researcher that her success in this organization has been due to hard work and commitment. Through prayers, Mrs. Mbugua has managed to overcome stress and other pressing demands of the modern day lifestyle and maintain her family in line with Christian doctrines.

'My family members have been the source of inspiration in the ministry of evangelism'.

Margaret has tried to live teach and preach the gospel of the good news. The gospel of good news of liberation: Liberation from disease and discrimination be it racial or gender. Margaret has travelled to places like Nigeria, Zaire, Uganda and Europe to preach this gospel. During the Rwanda genocide, she travelled to this country to preach and pray for the victims of the genocide.

Margaret has established many churches-Ambassadors of Christ fellowship throughout the country. Her churches are in Ngong, Narok, Muranga and Nairobi. In these churches, there are men and women pastors who are under her. She is the general overseer or bishop of her church.

Today she is still travelling far and wide to fulfil the great commission '*go and make disciples of all nations*'. In her church are old and young men and women and children. She still attracts people to her church because of her ability to prophecy and of her word of knowledge. People with different illness and different problems come to her to be prayed for and others with marital problems come for counselling.

All in all, these women have made great contributions to the ministry of evangelism. They have awakened and stood against the harsh reality that has for centuries excluded them from the full dignity of human persons, namely, their culture and the patriarchal structure of the church, which hinder the application of equal personhood and equal discipleship of men and women. Many people have come to know the lord through these women. Many people have been healed through the prayers of these women. They have also assisted needy people in their ministries. The large crowds that these women attract, is an indicator of success.

ENDNOTES

1. Interview Judy Mbugua, LHSF office, Nairobi. 1996 May
2. Acts 16:31
3. Mathew28: 18
4. **op. cit.** Judy Mbugua May 1996
5. Interview, Margaret Wangari, Banana Office, Kiambu, 1996 August
6. **op. cit** Margaret Wangari. Banana Office, Kiambu, 1996 August
7. **op. cit** Margaret Wangari. Banana Office. Kiambu. 1996 August
8. Jacob Nandi. M.A thesis, The Jerusalem Church Of Christ. UON. 1993
9. **op. cit.** M.A Thesis. The Jerusalem Church Of Christ, UON, 1993
10. **op.cit** M.A Thesis. The Jerusalem Church Of Christ. UON, 1993
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12. **op. cit.** M.A Thesis. The Jerusalem Church Of Christ, UON, 1993
13. **Op.cit.** M.A Thesis. The Jerusalem Church Of Christ, UON, 1993
14. Interview, Jane Njoki. Uhuru park.1996 September
15. Interview mama Faith Buruburu, Nairobi. 1996 September
16. Interview Joseph Njoroge Uhuru park Nairobi, 1996 September

CHAPTER FIVE

5.1 SUMMARY CONCLUSION

As indicated in chapter one, this study had four objectives and five hypotheses and the findings are summarized before stating the conclusion.

This study hoped to set out the influence of culture, that is Jewish, Greco-Roman and African cultures on the role women play in the church. Chapter two of this study dealt at length on the influence of Greece-Roman and the Jewish cultures on the role women play in the church. We have seen that Greco-Roman culture and even the Jewish culture play a significant role in influencing the role of women in the church today.

As mentioned in chapter two, the early Christians were influenced by the Greco-Roman culture just as the ancient Hebrews were influenced by the Mesopotamian culture. These cultures advocated the traditional role of subordination and of silence of women as the ideal. However, we also see Jesus Christ in the New Testament breaking these barriers of sex. There were no ministries of men and women. There were only ministries of Jesus in which both men and women served. Jesus accorded women the respect they deserved. In spite of this fact, some churches preach two divergent messages. On the one hand equality in Christ is preached, on the other hand the practice of subordination of women. The latter message is more prevalent and acceptable and that is the reason we have many women playing insignificant or peripheral roles in the church, such as Sunday school teacher or choir member. These women evangelists who stand out as successful like Wairimu Nelson, have had to fight cultural battles to make it to

the position they hold. A good example is Margaret Wangari who notes that people will generally oppose a woman's leadership for no apparent reason.

Many of the adherents who were interviewed also claim that culture especially our African culture does not encourage women to stand out in front of men and teach or preach. Women were supposed to learn in silence.

Chapter three also dealt with the role of women in traditional African society. We have noted that the African culture has not bolstered the position of women or the role they play in the church. As noted in this chapter, in some communities, women were considered to bring misfortunes and calamities. Among the Agikuyu we saw that discrimination of women started right from birth for example when a boy was born five ululations were made to welcome him while the girl only got four. There were also taboos that restricted women, for example, women were not to talk when men were having a conversation. This discriminatory position has had adverse effects on many women. The African culture has not assisted women to stand up and pursue their goals. It has only brought down women who would probably be doing very well in many sectors of life.

The second objective was to determine the extent to which women are involved in church activities, especially in evangelism and the impact women evangelists have had in Kenya. From our findings in chapter four, we have noted that women are involved in various church activities. They also constitute the bigger percentage of the congregation. Some of the women interviewed were involved in various church activities. Majority were Sunday school teachers.

There were others assisted in the cleaning of the church and the church compound. Some women also ministered the word to the congregation. For instance in Margaret Wangari's church the ambassadors of Christ fellowship there were several women pastors and the researcher had the privilege of listening to one of them preach the gospel in the Sunday service. Wairimu Nelson almost always was the one to preach the gospel in all the meetings the researcher attended at Uhuru Park. In the ladies homecare spiritual fellowship, the women were involved in all the church activities from preaching to counselling and singing. However, this is not a wonder since it is a ladies fellowship. From our findings it is evident that women who were involved in Evangelism like our selected women evangelists have had great impact. They have drawn large crowds to their meetings. The large size of the crowds they are able to draw, in itself speaks of success, if we determine success in numbers.

The third objective was to understand the problems women evangelists encounter in their service to the church. From our findings in chapter four, we have seen that women evangelists experienced interviewed were cultural. Cultural in the sense that cultures or tradition was to blame for the insignificant and humble positions women hold in the churches and in the larger society. As indicated in chapter two and three, Greco-Roman culture Hebrew culture and the African culture has played a significant role in placing women in peripheral positions, they find themselves in. The bible has also been used to suppress women even more. However, as mentioned earlier, we saw that Jesus came to destroy these discriminatory barriers. Few women evangelists have risen above these barriers and have made it. Since in Christ's kingdom there is no male or female and all are called to be labourers in Christ Jesus.

This study was also testing the hypothesis that biblical principles have been misused in understanding the role of women in church ministry. From our study we have seen that more often than not, the bible has been used to discourage women from aspiring for leadership positions in the church. The scriptures are used to discourage and even place women in humble positions. We have seen Paul's injunction in the book of Corinthians and the letter to Timothy, cautioning women to be silent in the church. We have also seen that arguments like, Jesus did not appoint any women to the office of apostle are advanced to justify the practice of excluding women from leadership and ministerial roles in church and society. Another hypothesis that this study was testing was that women are involved in evangelism because it is the only available and acceptable option for them. From our study we have seen that there are various church activities that women are involved in. We have seen that there are women who have played the role of Sunday school teacher, women are also choir members, we have seen that some are even pastors like in Ambassadors of Christ fellowship. We have seen that evangelist Margaret Wangari is awaiting to be ordained Bishop of her church. It is therefore evident that there are many options available and acceptable for women in the Christian ministry. The women evangelists interviewed, joined evangelistic ministries because they did not have another alternative.

The study also tested the hypothesis that women effectiveness in evangelistic work is an indicator of their leadership qualities. From our findings, we have seen that women have been effective in their evangelistic work. A good example is evangelist Wairimu Nelson. She has been able to draw thousands of people to her monthly meetings at Uhuru Park and many more people have been born again or converted in these meetings. Mary Akatsa has also drawn

thousands of people to her meetings at Kawangware. Margaret and Judy have also been effective as evangelists because each has a good number of people who are followers or members of their ministries.

This is an indicator of leadership qualities because these women are leaders of their ministries which require good leadership skills. Therefore, women are effective in their evangelistic leadership qualities. This confirms the hypothesis that women effectiveness in evangelism is an indicator of their leadership qualities.

This study set out to establish the influence of culture on the role of women in the church. From the literature review and data collection, it emerged that to a certain extent the African culture in some aspects have influenced the role women play in church and the larger society. From the literature review it is evident that the Bible has been influenced by the cultures and traditions of the Israeli neighbours and the fact that some of this cultures like the Greco Roman cultures looked down on women. This might explain why parts of the Bible like Paul's letters seem to look at women as lower to the men and the positions that women held in the first Christian churches a test to this. Nevertheless, the gospels portray a different story where Jesus is seen breaking barriers, racial, gender and other by associating with all irrespective of their gender social status or otherwise. To a certain extent we can say that culture has played an important role in determining the role women play in the church. The scripture have also been misused in understanding the role women play in the church and ore often than not are used to make women take up lowly positions in the church. Paul's letters attest to this.

This study also set out to determine the influence of gender awareness has had on women and the roles they play. The study was not able to establish this because there was no explicit question to address this. However from the literature review gender awareness has contributed to the self realization of women as achievers and leaders and this might have given confidence to a number of the women evangelists to move forward and exercise their God given abilities to lead the multitudes of crowds and congregations that they lead.

In conclusion, women evangelists have responded to the needs that have arisen as a result of social disintegration which are characterized by misery, unemployment and poor living conditions. These people at Uhuru Park or Kawangware have a collective desire for freedom and complete salvation. Wairimu Nelson, Mary Akatsa, Margaret Wangari have succeeded in filling this void of despair in the lives of many. These evangelists have acted out the role of counsellors within their congregation and the congregation looks up to these women for healing, liberation and salvation. As we noted earlier the main motive behind the ever increasing visits of the people to Uhuru park or J. C. C Kawangware is the healing of the sick.

Divination services or the word of knowledge as Margaret would call it to members of these ministries have also attracted many people. Wairimu Nelson, Margaret Wangari have power, through revelations to detect causes of people's suffering, diseases or misfortunes.

Women-led ministries should be seen as a contribution to the great mission of Jesus Christ, of bringing salvation in all spheres of life. We have noted that these ministries have risen in response to the conditions that people find themselves in. These women evangelists have made attempts at giving hope to many people in the midst of despair. This is a clear indication that

women evangelists have made great contributions in the preaching of the good news of the kingdom of God.

This study was relevant to the contemporary society where women are fighting for equal rights with men in secular and religious spheres of life. We have seen that women have done well in their ministries if not better than their male counterparts. It has helped us appreciate and understand the challenges women evangelist encounter in the course of their work. We have also seen that all the women evangelist are motivated to do evangelism out of the conviction that the field is large with few labourers and felt the calling to attend and care for the lost sheep without a shepherd. This confirms the hypotheses that women evangelist are involved in evangelism work out of the desire to serve and not selfish ambitions.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

Women evangelists and women church leaders deserve respect like their male counterparts. They should be encouraged to strive even harder to fulfil the great commission of bringing salvation to humanity. They should be encouraged to aspire for leadership positions even in religious and other spheres of life, because their success in their ministries is a good indicator of their leadership potential.

Women evangelists should be well trained so that they can enhance their gift of preaching the gospel. The national and international bodies should assist these women in training them in theological colleges. There is a marked difference in the way a trained evangelist approaches certain issues of life, and one who is not trained. For instance Margaret Wangari and Mrs. Judy Mbugua's training in theological colleges gives them an edge over their counterparts Mary

Akatsa and Wairimu Nelson who have not received any theological training. The J.C.C. and F.E.M leadership is charismatic and the leadership revolves around the personalities of Mary Akatsa and Wairimu Nelson. It would not be a wrong assumption that the death of any of these two personalities would also mark an end to their ministries. It is therefore important to have enlightened leadership as in the case of Margaret Wangari and Mrs. Judy Mbugua, in order to promote and sustain these ministries even in the eventuality of death.

We have also noted that these ministries have arisen in response to the unbearable conditions and needs of many people in the urban setting. These women led ministries should make contributions to the mission churches by re-examining their methods of preaching or evangelisation in the light of African needs and aspirations. There is need for reflection and re-examination on the part of the church on its teaching. Women should continue to struggle and participate in church matters reaching for equal partnership with men in following Christ, sharing responsibilities and privileges together.

The women evangelist should be encouraged to develop structures in their ministries for continuity of the good work they do especially in the event of death of some of these evangelists that would mark the end of their ministries. However with good governance structures in place the ministries would be able to continue and thrive even in the absence of the founders.

The women evangelist are good role models and they can be encouraged to mentor upcoming evangelists to improve on the preaching and any other relevant training that would be useful in the edifying the body of Christ.

The challenges that the women evangelist have encountered would be useful lessons learnt for many women joining evangelistic ministries.

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APPENDIX

1) Questionnaire – administered to adherents

2) Questionnaire – Administered to Evangelists

3) List of respondents

APPENDIX 1

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE ADHERENTS

1. Name: _____

2. Age: _____

3. Tribe: _____

4. Marital Status: _____

Educational level: _____

Occupation: _____

Which is your church affiliation? _____

Are you a member of this ministry? _____

Why did you join this ministry? _____

What are the basic requirements for membership in this ministry?

Do you attend the ministry meetings?

If so, how often?

If you don't, why so? _____

What do you gain by attending ministry meetings if you do? _____

Are you in favour of women playing evangelistic roles? _____

What qualities do you think an evangelist should have? _____

What is your opinion regarding appointments of women evangelistic positions in the church ministry? _____

Would you say that this ministry has been a success? Give reasons

for your answer. _____

Do you think the African culture has encouraged women in

Evangelism? Give reasons for your answer. _____

Are you satisfied with the present state on the role of women in the

Ministry of the church and if not why? _____

APPENDIX 2

QUESTIONNAIRES FOR EVANGELISTS

1. Name:

2. Address:

Age:

Marital Status:

Name of the Church Ministry:

Date of foundation:

What is your church affiliation?

How did your ministry begin?

Where do you hold your meetings? _____

How often do you meet? _____

How many people attend your meeting? _____

What importance to you attach to evangelism? _____

What is expected of the membership of this ministry? _____

Would you say your ministry has been a success and if so why?

What problems do you encounter as an evangelist? _____

What special aptitudes (gifts) do you have which enable you to function as evangelist

16. Are there any aspects of church ministries you feel a woman can handle better than a man? _____

17. Are you satisfied with the present state of the role of women in the ministry of the Church and if not why? _____

18. Did you choose to be an evangelist? If yes, why? _____

19. What training does an evangelist receive? _____

20. In your opinion, has the African culture encouraged women in evangelism? _____

21. What message do you have for those women and men who aspire to be evangelists?

List of some of the respondents

No.	Name	Date of interview
1.	Dr. Nguhi	14/11/1996
2.	Margaret Wangari	17/11/1996
3.	Judy Mbugua	4/2/1997
4.	Jane Mwaura	3/2/1997
5.	Joseph Njoroge	14/11/1996
6.	Kamau Macharia	18/11/1996
7.	Joyce Njoki	18/11/1996
8.	Ann Nduta Njoroge	18/11/1996
9.	Thomas Chege	18/11/1996
10.	Mary Kinuthia	18/11/1996
11.	Mary Wanjiku	18/11/1996
12.	Francis Wanyoike	3/2/1997
13.	Mama Faith	3/2/1997
14.	Nelson Otieno	3/2/1997
15.	James Wafula	3/2/1997
16..	Naomi Gathoni	21/11/1996
17.	Lucy Waithera	21/11/1996
18.	Greg Musyoka	21/11/1996
19.	Antony Wachira	21/11/1996
20.	Florence Njeri	5/2/1997

21.	Miriam Wainaina	5/2/1997
22.	Joshua Mwaniki	5/2/1997
23.	Carol Wairimu	5/2/1997
24.	Charity Mungai	5/2/1997
25.	Martin Wanyama	5/2/1997