CHURCH AND CULTURE: A CASE STUDY OF CHURCH OF GOD AMONG THE IDAKHO, KAKAMEGA COUNTY, KENYA, 1890-1972

BY

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DECLARATION

DECLARATION BY CANDIDATE

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree or diploma in any other university.

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This thesis is the candidate's work and has been prepared with our guidance and assistance; it has been submitted with our approval as official University Supervisors.

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the Idakho culture during pre- colonial period and the social transformation when they interacted with Christian values by focusing on Church of God Mission. The spread of Christianity and western education in Idakho had a broad impact as an approach to reinforce evangelization and to win converts. Education as taught by missionaries of Church of God led to the emergence of pioneer teacher evangelists and the educated elite who had comparatively well paid jobs as professional teachers, clerks, local administrators and farmers. These pioneer educated elite and their children consolidated their social and economic power, both in the church and the Kenyan Government. This study attempted to assess the role of the Church of God in the transformation of Idakho. The specific objectives of the study were to; examine the culture of the Idakho before the coming of Christian missionaries, examine the establishment of the Church of God in Idakho, explore the responses of the Idakho to Christianity and identify and analyse the role of Church of God mission in Idakho societal transformation. The study spans through three phases namely; pre-colonial Idakho, which saw the political, social and economic organization of the Idakho before they interacted with Christian values; 1905-1935, which saw the establishment of the Church of God in Idakho, the Idakho conversion to Church of God and the emergence of Church of God pioneer teacher-evangelists; 1935-1953, which saw the emergence of Church of God educated elite who were also professional teachers, clerks as well as commercial and agricultural elite; 1953-1972, which witnessed the impact of the Church of God as an instrument of transformation in Idakho and the transfer of power and property from the Church of God Missionary board to the indigenous African. The initiatives and the struggles of the Idakho for betterment of their educational status is also given special attention. Methodology for this study involved data collection from secondary sources and mostly primary data derived from archival and field research. Data analysis was done along the lines of conflict functionalism theory. The study concludes that the difficult financial situation that had faced Church of God missionary board hindered the expansion of the church in Idakho. Therefore the survival of the Church of God in Idakho depended on the influence of the teacher-evangelist and the educated elite. Moreover, the early success of education and other programs like health and agriculture led to the development of the educated elite who became agents of transformation.

DEDICATION

To my grandfather Philip Nabwangu Shiholo

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACIM	African Compound and Interior Mission.
BKKB	Bunyore, Kisa, Kakamega and Butsotso
COG	Church of God.
CMS	Church Missionary Society.
DC	District Commissioner
FAM	Friends African Mission
KNA	Kenya National Archives
KNL	Kenya National Library
KTC	Kima Theological College
LNCs	Local Native Councils.
MHM	Catholic Mill Hill Mission.
MTL	Margret Thatcher Library.
MTT	Mwihila Teacher Training
USA.	United States of America.
PC	Provincial Commissioner

CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

The word culture is a universal phenomenon and a fundamental heritage of all societies. Many scholars have defined the term culture in different ways. Most definitions describe it as, "the way of life of a certain group of people in a particular society". Culture includes norms and values of a society; their religion, political, economic, medicine, marriage rules, songs and dances, laws, eating habits and artefacts".[i] Culture, as Gathogo observes, is found in all aspects of human life, it shapes a peoples' social life, politics, and their economies.[ii] All these cultural expressions influence and shape the life of each individual in a society, and in turn an individual makes a cultural contribution to the community through participation in its activities and in some cases through creative work. As years pass by, changes within culture take place. Therefore, some habits once practised by the past generations get modified, changed or abandoned altogether by succeeding generations.[iii] Cultural change is, therefore, a historical phenomenon which involves the historian's perception of change over time.

For a number of reasons, the question of how Christianity influenced African culture is of prime importance. It caused certain customs and beliefs to be modified, such as African dance, at the same time it caused others to be retained such as male circumcision and African names while on another level, new alternatives were accepted such as western education and medicine.[iv] Although, some of the Christian missionaries were imbued with the spirit of racism and therefore condemned every African culture, for instance dance,

arts, names, religion, polygamy systems of inheritance among other, Christianity is credited for the tremendous impact it had on the advancement of western education in Africa.[v] Moreover, Christianity also introduced western medicine and opportunities such as wage labour. All these transformed African culture. The impact of the early missionaries was at first limited to their mission stations. Churches were built, schools and hospitals started at the mission stations, but their efforts were often met with resistance especially where they conflicted with African customs and traditions.[vi]

Missionary work in Kenya was first introduced by Ludwig Krapf and Johann Rebman in 1844 and 1846 respectively.[vii] These "pioneers" came on behalf of the Church Missionary Society (CMS) and established the famous mission at Rabai near Mombasa. Their main objective at that time was to introduce Christianity into the interior of East Africa. It was only after the construction of the Uganda Railway (having started in 1896 from Mombasa and reaching Port Florence (Kisumu) in 1901) that gave new ardour to this effort.[viii] Uganda railway was an immensely important infrastructural factor, responsible for the movement of missionaries to the interior. It was therefore from that direction that the missionaries moved into Western Kenya.[ix]

Missionary work of the Church of God (COG) originated from the initial missionary outreach of Africa Compound Interior Mission (ACIM) under the directorship of Mr. A. Baker. The mission established itself in Western Kenya in 1905 at Kima among the Bunyore (a sub-group of Luyia community). The missionaries selected Kima as a possible location for their mission station because of its high elevation and especially dense population.[x] In addition, the location was among what the missionaries termed as

"friendly and receptive people" led by Otieno Ndale, the chief of the (*Nyore*).[xi] However, due to lack of funds to meet the additional cost of expansion of the church in East Africa, the entire church of ACIM was transferred to the COG Missionary Board in America in 1926.[xii]

Specifically, this study attempts to assess the role of the COG in the transformation of Idakho. Idakho was one of the areas among the Luyia that had earlier contact with the COG, thus, this study affords an opportunity to examine the Church's role in transforming the area of contrasting historical circumstances, social and physical environments. This study argues that it was reluctance and the presence of other mission particularly Catholic Mill Hill Mission (MHM) that hindered COG missionaries to think of establishing a station in Idakho. Despite the reluctance by majority of the Idakho to embrace the COG, nevertheless the COG went ahead and established a station at Bushiangala in 1919 in the area. It was from this station that COG missionaries hoped to transform Idakho culture so as to convert them to Christianity. Christianity would involve not only an acceptance of the gospel, but also the adoption of western culture. The converts were thus expected to abandon their traditional ways of life, and adapt Christian values.[xiii]

Missionaries of the COG thought that Christianity would not take root until the Idakho learned new methods of education, medical care and agricultural skills. The presupposition underlying this view was that, if the Idakho were trained on the above attributes, they would find it easier to accept the gospel. The provision of education, medical care and agriculture skills, as approaches to evangelization, and their effects, therefore constitute the theme of this study.

This study therefore, argues that it was COG education that would have a long lasting impact on the Idakho. For the COG missionaries, education was a deliberate, systematic and sustained effort to transmit new ideas which would ultimately lead to the transformation of the Idakho society.[xiv] It was thus education that produced the pioneer teacher-evangelist, who in turn worked hard to transform the society. The efforts of the pioneer teacher-evangelists in the propagation of the Christianity values is also noteworthy. These pioneer Christians established a Christian village at Bushiangala, which they used not only to house the increasingly number of converts, but also as a centre of new innovations, particularly the development of education. Consequently, the effects of the efforts of teacher-evangelists and the colonial demands like wage labour requirements all meant that an increasingly minority among the Idakho began to enrol in schools. Idakho thus increasingly began to view missionary education as a method of adapting to the new colonial situation. It was through this elite class, together with the pioneer teacher-evangelists, who became agents of the transforming of the Idakho. The establishment, development and the role of the COG in the transformation of the Idakho, is therefore, the main theme of this study.

1.2 The Study Area

The Idakho are a Luyia sub-ethnic group that resides in Kakamega South district within Kakamega County, Kenya. The Idakho occupy the area between the Maragoli and Isukha.[xv] Kakamega South district was one of the four districts curved out of the larger Kakamega District at the start of 2008 that made up Western Province.[xvi] The district boarders Mumias District to the west, Kakamega East District to the east, Sabatia District
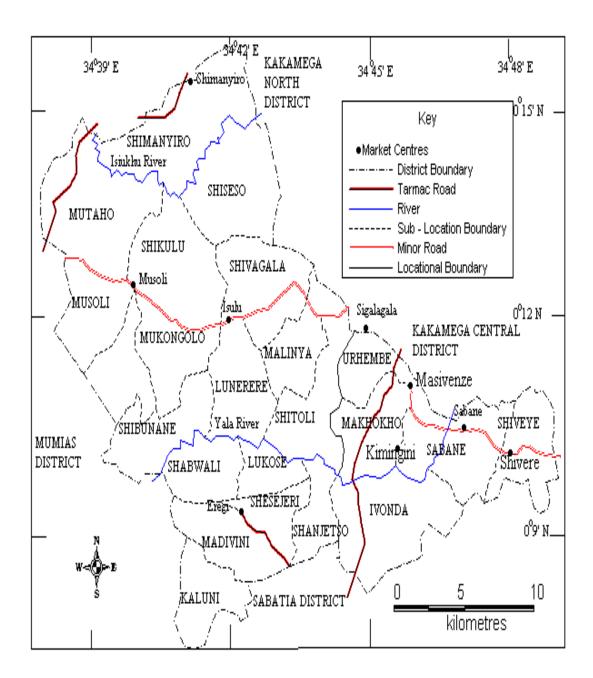
to the South and Kakamega Central to the North.[xvii]According to the 2009 Kenya population and housing census, the population of the district was 104,699.[xviii]

Politically, the district has only one parliamentary constituency namely Ikolomani which is within the jurisdiction of Kakamega county.[xix]Administratively, the district has two divisions namely; Ikolomani North and Ikolomani South with six locations and twenty two sub locations. The district lies between longitudes 34^0 20', and 35^0 east and latitudes 1^0 15', and 1^0 north of the equator. The district has a varying topography with altitudes ranging from 1250 metres to 2000 metres above sea level.[xx]

Temperatures are evenly distributed throughout the year with annual temperature ranging from 28^0-32^0.[xxi] The minimum temperatures range from $11^0$and 13^0.[xxii] There are two rainy seasons in the district, the long rains and short rains. The long rains start in March and end in June while the short rains commence in July and end in September with a pick in August.[xxiii] Generally, rainfall varies from 1000 mm to 2400 mm.[xxiv]

The major economic activity is small scale farming. Resident produce tea and sugarcane as the main cash crops. Maize, beans, sweet potatoes, finger millet, cassava, bananas, fruits and vegetables are mainly grown as food crops, while livestock rearing is practiced by a few individuals in the district.[xxv] One of the main rivers found in the district is Yala which originates from the Nandi Hills, east of Kakamega East District. It flows westwards through Kakamega forest to the southern part of Kakamega South district. The area has poor physical infrastructure due to heavy rainfall, poor maintenance and low funding.[xxvi]

Map 1: Map of Kakamega South District as the Study Area

Source: GIS Lab, Geography Department, Moi University.

Map 2: Map of Kakamega County showing the Location of the Study Area, Kakamega, South District

Source: GIS, Geography Department, Moi University.

Map 3: Map of Kenya showing the Location of Study Area, Kakamega South

District

Source: GIS,   Geography Department, Moi University.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Missionary work of the COG originated from the initial missionary outreach of ACIM under the directorship of Mr. A. Baker. The mission established its first post in 1905 at Kima Bunyore. The church expansion on its earliest stages involved converts immediately participating in Bunyore Kisa Kakamega (Idakho and Isukha) and Butsotso (BKKB) region. It was through the witness of these new Christians that the COG spread out among the Idakho and established its first church in 1919.[xxvii] Missionaries of the COG thus planted new religion and culture, implemented education, health care and agricultural skills 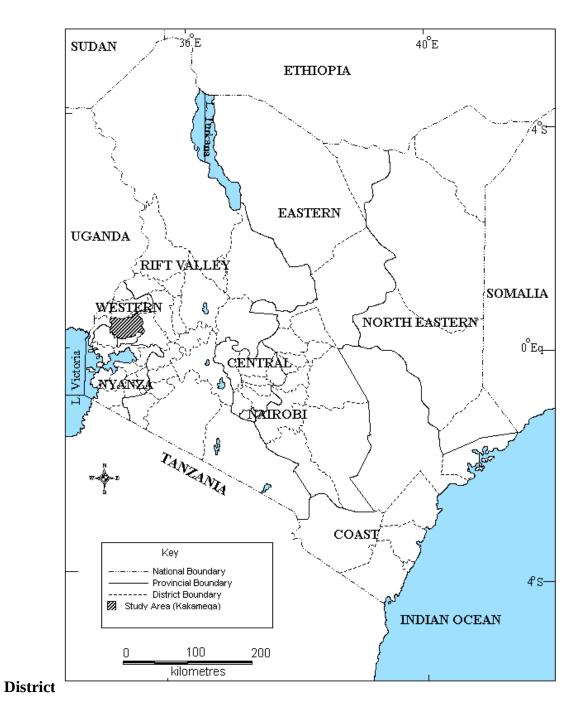in the area. Despite the COG being in this area for more than hundred years, the Idakho have a rich cultural set up. The *Isukuti* dance, burial customs, alcohol drinking, polygamy and the cattle drive *shirembe* are popular beyond its borders. While there were many Idakho who joined the church they did not part away from their customs. This research sought to establish why certain customs among Idakho did not die after many years of COG strong external influence in the area. The study thus, seeks to answer two key issues; the impact and establishment of COG in Idakho and the role of pioneer converts of COG in Idakho.

1.4 Aim of the Study

The aim of the study was to establish the impact of the COG among Idakho.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

To achieve the aim of the study, the researcher was guided by the following specific objectives:

1. To examine the culture of the Idakho before the coming of Christian Missionaries.

2. To examine the establishment of the COG in Idakho.

3. To explore the responses of the Idakho to Christianity.

4. To identify and analyse the role of COG Mission in Idakho societal transformation.

1.6 Research Questions

The following questions were formulated in order to guide the study

1. How did the COG impact on the pre-colonial Idakho culture?

2. How did the Idakho people respond to Christianity?

3. What were the other agents of change in Idakho apart from the COG?

1.7 Assumptions/ Hypotheses

The study proceeded from the following assumptions:

1. That changes in the culture of the Idakho community was an on going process even before both before Christianity was introduced into Idakho.

2. The introduction of the COG into Idakho further contributed to changes in Idakho.

3. That colonial administration was also an agent of transformation in Idakho.

1.8 Scope of the Study

The period of the study is justified because it is long enough to facilitate analysis of change in the culture of the Idakho people. This study therefore, spans from 1890 to provide a background of the Idakho culture before they interacted with Christian values.

By studying the culture of the Idakho during this time it helped to historically appreciate changes that came later after the arrival of the COG Mission in the area. The year 1972 is justified by the fact that by then, the Idakho had been subjected to Christianity and COG missionaries and their strategies had interacted with Idakho culture, with the official handing over of leadership and management of the church to the local African in East Africa. The study mainly focused on examining the impact of the COG in the Idakho community. To this end, the study examined the COG contribution to education, health facilities, agricultural skills and converting the Idakho to Christianity.

1.9 Justification of the Study

From the existing literature, the Idakho have not constituted a substantial subject of the study on the impact of the COG in Idakho, none illustrates the important role played by the pioneer converts of COG in the transformation of the area. For example Makokha's study on the COG, as an innovator and agency of change concentrated on the historical development and evangelism at Kima with very little on Idakho yet the area was one of the region that had earlier contact with the COG missionaries. The writing of this history therefore arose from two reasons:

1. To find out the contribution of COG in education and health services in Idakho, only to find out an alarming dearth of written records.
2. Due to the rapid passing of the first generation believers who had the primary information leaving those unfamiliar with earlier years of the church. Hence there arose a need to capture available information from those who were still alive.

The researcher picked on the Idakho, one sub-ethnic group out of sixteen sub-ethnic groups of the Luyia; to enables us understand a profound analysis of a concrete case of social change. At the micro-level this fits the time constraints that a masters program entails. This study, therefore, was significant as it attempted to contribute to our knowledge of understanding the culture of Idakho before they interacted with Christian values. The study also attempted to broaden our understanding of Idakho reaction to the COG when it was established in the area. Lastly, the study on its part addressed the impact of the COG in Idakho and the active role that the Idakho pioneer converts of the COG played in the history and development of the church in the area. The issues discussed therefore, help in making a critical judgement on the impact of the COG among the Idakho.

1.10 Theoretical Framework

In attempting to understand the interface between culture and the COG among the Idakho, no single theory was found to capture all the elements under study in a holistic form. As a result, this study utilised the conflict functionalism theory on social change in analysing the changes that occurred in Idakho when the COG established a presence in the area. However, the paradigm of functionalism was also utilised in order to fortify the argument therein.

Functionalism theory is a sociological perspective which seeks to explain a social element or cultural pattern in terms of its consequences for different elements as well as for the system as a whole.[xxviii] Durkheim is often cited as the dominant influence on the development of this theory for his argument that social institutions exist solely to fulfil

specific social needs.[xxix] In functionalism, society is conceived as a system of interrelated parts in which no part can be understood in isolation of the whole. A change in any part is seen as leading to a certain degree of imbalance, which in turn results in change in other parts of the system and to some extent to a reorganization of the system as a whole.[xxx] In analyzing how social systems maintain and restore equilibrium, functionalists tend to use shared values or generally accepted standards of desirability as a central concept.[xxxi] According to this theory, disorder only occurs because of conflict between the parts that make up the society and therefore balance and peace must be restored.

The theory provides considerable insight into how a society works and why institutions and customs exist. The theory can explain the reasons behind resistance to change that a society considers alien and disruptive to its culture. It examines the way a society is organized and the role played by such institutions as family, clan, social classes and the state. Each structure and every part within the larger structure is conceived to have a function in assisting the society to operate and preserve itself. The different structures of the society are integrated and co-ordinated so as to preserve the unity of society as a complete system like that of living organisms.[xxxii] Further, functionalism theory has been of great help in making comparative studies of societies in various stages of development. Therefore, this theory will widen our perspective concerning the possibilities of various forms of development.[xxxiii] For example, in Idakho there may not have exist, the complex economic structure of the type we are familiar with, functionalism theory, therefore, widens our perspective and broadens our horizon "concerning the possibilities for variation in the forms of social life".[xxxiv]

The theory however, emphasizes social control over social change so that it analyzes adjustive but ignores disruptive change and overemphasizes the importance of security and the "needs" of society at the expense of interests and objectives that cannot be met without social change.[xxxv] Further, functionalism theory has been criticized on the concept of systems as giving far too much weight to integration and consensus, and neglecting independence and conflict. The theory, therefore, tends to give an impression that everything which exists in a society at any given time is easily assumed to be there, hence it can be changed or abolished without endangering the system.[xxxvi]Despite its limitations, the theory is still relevant in explaining resistance to aspects of change that society feels are disruptive to the social system. This paradigm and its distinctive features and attributes were used to explain why the Idakho resisted the COG since they viewed it as disruptive to their social norms.

Lewis Coser's perspective of conflict functionalism will be relevant in this study. Unlike the functionalism theory, conflict functionalism theory concerned itself with antecedent history, and competition, and change in society. Coser is intellectually indebted to Karl Marx and Georg Simmel having borrowed and broadened their ideas by bringing the element of functionalism to conflict theory. Coser's functional approach to conflict is primarily based on the assumption that institutionalised conflict makes a positive contribution to the adaptive capacity of the social system.[xxxvii] Social change occurs only when the conflict relations within a society co-operate with the unifying forces.[xxxviii] Coser laments that conflict prevents the ossification of the social system by exerting pressure for innovation and creativity.[xxxix]

According to Coser, conflict allows expression of hostility and the mending of strained relationships. It leads to elimination of specific sources of conflict between parties and enables redress of grievances through the establishment of new norms or the affirmation of old ones. Hostility towards the out-group unifies the in-group. When the need for greater solidarity is felt, members of the in-group tend to exaggerate conflicts with the other group, and where such conflict exists, any deviation from the group norms is severely condemned.[xl] Conflict functionalism theory has however, been subjected to criticism for its neglect of social stability. Some critics acknowledge that societies are in a constant state of change but point out that much of the change is minor.[xli]

Despite this limitation, Coser notes that social conflict generates new coalition and alliances, they facilitate the release of tension and frustration and enables the social system to adjust itself.[xlii] He further notes that different conditions in society lead to maintenance, change and adaptation to the environment. These factors when viewed in relation to the Idakho with the introduction of Christian values where Africans had to abandon their socio-cultural setting to adopt to a new situation brought by the COG required a definition which entailed change in lifestyle for example, in education, health facilities and agricultural extension. Coser's perspective of conflict functionalism is relevant to this study as it will explain dissent, conflict, adaptation and integration among the Idakho when they interacted with Christian values through the COG.

1.11 Literature Review

Of the studies so far done on the Luyia culture, none has dealt with the problem of the impact of COG in Idakho. This represents the gap that this study intends to fill. The

literature below examines the introduction of Christianity into Idakho and the response of the Idakho to Christianity.

Were's[xliii] works provide information on the early history of the Luyia. In his work, he traced the migration patterns and subsequent peopling of the Luyia. In addition, he examined the relationship between the Luyia and neighbouring groups such as of the Bagishu, Kalenjin, Luo and Teso. The study ends in the 1930s only mentioning the colonial attempt to establish the Wanga hegemony over the rest of the Luyia. However, his work provides insight on the migration and settlement of the Idakho clans.

Wagner,[xliv] in his book *The Bantu of North Kavirondo Vol I* is anthropological and not historical, but has adequately covered the traditional religious practices among the Luyia before the colonial period. Wagner's analysis was not representative of the Luyia communities as it was primarily based on two dominant sub-groups the "Maragoli and Bukusu". His work is however useful because it gives detailed information on the social, political and economic organisation of the Maragoli and Bukusu during pre- colonial. Like many general works on culture in Kenya, it pays no attention to the Idakho community. Although, Wagner based his analysis on an examination of Maragoli and Bukusu communities, it constitutes a significant source of data on political, economic and social organisation on the Luyia in general.

Wagner[xlv] also asserts that Christianity made the traditional family of the Bantu of western Kenya to undergo changes. Since some of these changes affected the entire "native" community, their range of influence was essentially limited to a small section which for various reasons was either more exposed to them or had shown greater

initiative in responding to the new opportunities that western civilization offered. Wagner's work makes it possible to examine migrant labour as an agent of change that brought about new colonial order the Idakho had to adjust to.

Mission activities had the most direct impact on the colonized people. In his study, Bode[xlvi] noted that the missionaries preached a new faith and inculcated new forms of behaviours and new values among the Luyia. Further, Bode observed that mission education had the greatest impact on the Luyia communities. He noted that mission education created what colonial administrators termed as "political dissidents" among the Luyia. These were the pioneer nationalists who were to participate in various ways in the politics of the area. However, Bode's concerns were placed on leadership and politics among the Luyia, while the social changes that accompanied politics are scarcely discussed.

Odwako[xlvii] stated that in an attempt to protect converts from the non-believers, mission villages were established in western Kenya. Odwako did not give an analysis of the implications of this form of mission organisation for the cultural practices of the people. Odwako's work, sheds light on the development of Christian village as an agent of change that replaced Idakho village life through adoption of church structure as the basis of unity and cooperation.

Just like Wagner, Mbula[xlviii] specifically discussed the transformative impact of Christianity on the family among the Akamba. The study provides insights on how Christianity transformed various communities. Mbula shows that though Christianity was one of the major agents of change among the Akamba, she stresses how different

missionaries' societies in Kenya utilized different methods to evangelize and convert Africans. Some were keener on establishing schools, while others specialised in agriculture, industrial development and medical provision. Her study is invaluable to the present study particularly in the influence and competition of missionaries to win converts in Idakho. The same was true of Idakho in reference to the establishment of schools by the missionaries.

Shilaro's[xlix] thesis focused on the changes that occurred in the religious beliefs and practices of the Kabras people as they interacted with Christianity and western education. The study demonstrated that the dynamism of the Kabras society occurred through interaction with physical environment especially with its neighbouring communities and they therefore adopted elements which enriched its religious beliefs and symbolism. Shilaro notes that the Kabras community both rejected and borrowed cultural values, beliefs and practises from its neighbours, depending on whether they endangered or enhanced the integrity of the society.

Gimode's[l] thesis has provided a historical analysis of the evolution of the Maragoli culture and their religion. According to him, the introduction of Christianity among the Maragoli marked the evolution of the Maragoli religion. The religion did not simply displace the indigenous religion but rather, it blended into the indigenous religion which further enriched the Maragoli religious experience. The Maragoli, he argues, embraced Christianity because it was seen as the key to success in the new colonial state. Gimode points out that: "Maragoli responded positively to Christianity not because of spiritual appeal but because of economic constraints at the close of the nineteenth century and at the opening of the twentieth century".[li] The Maragoli, therefore, looked at the

missionaries as convenient partners for their survival to benefit materially and as individuals in the emerging colonial economic order. Although Gimode's work focuses on the Maragoli, it is valuable to this study, particularly on the aspect of how COG was an instrument for socio-economic changes on Idakho.

Ogutu's[lii] thesis examines the origin and growth of the Roman Catholic Church in western Kenya. In addressing why the Catholic Church appeared to have made serious progress to win converts among the Luyia, he stated that the Catholic Church tolerated the local customs and permitted the converts to retain their traditional practices such as dancing, smoking and alcohol drinking. His work is invaluable to this study particularly in the influence and competition between the COG and the Catholics to win converts in Idakho. The presence of Roman Catholic Mission provided the Idakho with an alternative to COG mission by legitimising the idea that the Idakho could enjoy some of the fruits and status of Christian membership without being forced to completely turn their backs completely on their past. Ogutu's work explains, particularly in the aspect of understanding of why the Catholic Church was preferred by the majority of the Idakho.

Sangree,[liii]on the other hand examines the inter-relationship of religion, traditional custom and socio- political structures among the Tiriki. The study gives an account of Tiriki social structure and the main currents of change and social innovations that occurred among the Tiriki, primarily as a result of European contact. It includes an examination of the conflict between FAM (Friends African Mission) and traditional authority. He revealed that Tiriki men rejected Christianity because of their liking of beer. The same was true of the Idakho. The MHM compared to COG made few demands from their

converts and tended to be more tolerant to the Idakho culture. This study explored how the situation manifested itself in Idakho with the coming of the COG Mission in the area.

Rowe,[liv] on the other hand, argues that the Luyia resisted conversion to Christianity because of their traditional religious belief. Just like Sangree, he notes that religion was an integral part of the entire society and the first Africans, who embraced Christianity, were the exceptional and essentially non-conforming individuals. He argues that in introducing a number of industries such as brick-making, lumbering and furniture manufacture, the missionaries hoped to teach Africans how to improve their standard of living. Missionaries believed that preaching Christianity alone would not be effective in the long run in creating a local African church. It was, therefore, necessary to change the patterns of village life if African traditional beliefs were to be uprooted.

Rowe also notes that the early Christian converts were handled harshly by the non-believers. However, after nearly two decades of colonialism, the wave of conversion to Christianity increased among the Luyia. This argument is better elaborated by Rowe as he writes; "The traditionalist who had been able to repel the individual of FAM missionaries could not escape the combined forces of mission, money, wage labour, new properties, laws and urban centres".[lv] These forces gradually influenced and eroded the traditional economic, social and political bases of the Luyia communities. Rowe's analysis is a fair and just assessment of why the Idakho accepted COG. This study, therefore, focussed on the extent to which the situation duplicated itself in the area of study.

Painter,[lvi] while writing about FAM movement in East Africa disparages the indigenous Luyia religion and culture to justify the coming of Christianity as redemptive. Furthermore, Painter points out that it was because of the advantages of education that Christianity offered to the changing social structures of African society, which left Africans with no choice but to embrace Christianity. Painter's study can be used to explain the fact that the children of the pioneer converts of the COG in Idakho joined schools that were not only established by the COG Mission but by other missions located outside Idakho area. Consequently, this study inquired into how the situation manifested itself in Idakho with the establishment of COG in the area.

In his book, *A History of the Church of God in Kenya, East Africa: An indigenous perspective*, Makokha[lvii] gives some good account of the various activities of COG Mission in East Africa. Although an important source for this study, the book has not illustrated the important role played by the Idakho's initiatives in influencing and directing church related activities. Africans were not simply passive recipients but were also able to influence and sometimes control church related development. This study, therefore, seeks to establish the active role that the pioneer converts of the COG in Idakho played in the history and development of the church in the area.

In yet another work, Muchanga[lviii] examined the migration, settlement and the evolution of socio-political institutions of the Isukha and Idakho during the period 1850 to 1945. The study investigated the impact of economic activities on the ecology of the Isukha and Idakho societies. The study focuses on issues of economic exploitation and environmental destruction, belief systems and their eventual breakdown. This work is important for the present study as it provided an insight for the analysis of migration,

settlement and the evolution of socio-political institutions in Idakho during pre-colonial period. However, he placed emphasis on economic activities and ecology of Isukha and Idakho, to the exclusion of social-cultural aspects that are the subject of the present study.

The study by Bogonko[lix] is a critical analysis of the history of western education in Kenya since 1895. The book deals with general issues like the African indigenous education and lslamic education. The introduction of western education into Kenya and the roles played by the colonial government and missionaries in the provision of education are emphasised. According to Bogonko, the education that was provided by the missionaries was largely religious that met missionaries' needs as well as the colonial government demands. The missionaries imposed their own culture on Africans under the pretext that African culture was "primitive". This led to cultural conflict between Christianity and African culture slowing down the spread of Christian education. African views and contribution to promote education are dealt with expansively with little attention and mention of Idakho. This particular study is however helpful to the present one since it underlines major landmarks on development of education in Kenya in a period of almost one hundred years.

Ochwada[lx] had a different view about western education. His study was based on the fact that western education was aimed at socializing Africans in western cultural values. African boys were provided with western education that prepared them towards participating in the colonial economy and to pay taxes. African women embraced household duties that were performed by men for example clearing of bushes as a result of men joining wage labour. The same was true in Idakho in reference to the introduction

of taxation by the colonial government. Thus, Ochwada's work shed some light on the extent to which the situation manifested itself in the area of study.

Chinua Achebe's[lxi] treatment of missionaries and the "coming of white man" can be viewed as a historical critique of colonialism as well as an analysis of the way Christianity affected the Igbo religious and political systems. Though considered a work of fiction, *Things Fall Apart* is also a literary ethnography of Igbo culture and a semi historical novel implicitly addressing the late nineteenth and early twentieth century development in Igbo. Achebe represents the cultural roots of the Igbos in order to provide self confidence, but at the same time he refers to them as universal principles which vitiate their destruction potential.

Achebe presents missionaries as "agents" of cultural change for whom religion was the ultimate justifying goal. The missionaries were not portrayed as simply a group of intruding white men, but as agents of the colonial system, that destroyed the Igbo political and social structure. *Things Fall Apart* is, therefore, an attempt to revise those assumptions, especially regarding the notions of "primitivism" and religious simplicity. Therefore, Achebe challenges Eurocentric depiction of African culture. This work is relevant to the present study in the context of trying to understand the value the Idakho attached to their culture and how this impacted on their perception of Christianity.

1.12 Research Methodology

This was a historical study, which utilized the historical methods of analysis to investigate and interpret past events in order to understand the present. As a result, much of the analysis revolves around primary and secondary sources. The primary sources utilized were oral information gathered from the field as well as archival sources, which

were accessed at Kenya National Archives (KNA) in Nairobi. The library research included a review of both electronic and non electronic books, journals and dissertations. These information were accessed in major libraries in Kenya namely; Margaret Thatcher library (MTL) at Moi University and Institute of African Studies at University of Nairobi, Egerton University Library, Kenyatta University Library and Kenya National Library in Eldoret town (KNLS) were visited in search of information relevant to the study.

For the purpose of the study on the impact of COG in Idakho, the interview method was the most appropriate. In this method there is a choice of doing "narrative" interviews that gives the interviewees maximum room for telling their personal story or to do "semi-structured" interview that all follow a set of questions in more or less the same order. The narrative approach was chosen for the first question which was intended to learn something of the life history of the interviewee. The questions following after that were then asked within the framework of a semi- structured interview.

The key informants included:

1. Elders from the Idakho community whose age consisted of seventy years and above. They were very useful in providing valuable information on the culture of Idakho.

2. Those who worked closely with the COG, for instant Church administrators and church elders. They provided useful information on the role of COG Mission played as agents of change in the area where they established a presence. They also provided information on how the church functioned and the doctrine of the COG.

3. Church representative and some COG converts who played a crucial role as agents of change. They provided information on the teachings of the COG.

During field work, purposive sampling technique and snowball technique were used. A COG pastor was of much assistance, who through her connections in Idakho was personally known to many of the church leaders. She was able to advice on who to visit and where to find the desired interviewees. In terms of study population and sampling procedures, the sample size of the study consisted of a population of twenty one informants.

Most of the interviews were done in Idakho language, which the researcher was able to speak and understand to a passable extent. For the purpose of overcoming the limitation of geography of the region, the service of a guide was engaged. The criteria for the above mentioned companion having the exceptional knowledge of the area. The interviews were all recorded on voice recorder. Questionnaires were in two sections:

1. The history of the Idakho before the coming of Christianity.
2. The introduction of the COG into Idakho.

Some limitations were encountered during oral interviews. For instance, there were distortions and variations of information on personal recollections, posing many of the problems that arose while dealing with more formal and oral interview. The other limitation encountered while collecting data from oral evidence was that the interviewees were not able to provide a specific date when an event occurred. This was eventually settled by recourse to corroborative evidence from archival sources. Knowledge of the area, limited finances were also some of the challenges encountered during oral interview.

Additionally, the primary materials that were derived from KNA in Nairobi included annual, quarterly and monthly reports on North Kavirondo district which were examined during the period under study. The archival materials on missions that extended their activities into the locations of the Idakho were examined, emphasis being placed on the archival materials of the COG Mission. Data analysis was done in the form of content analysis along the conflict functionalism theory. The theory informed this study as a synthesis between the two conflicting cultures of the local people and missionaries. At the same time, the study analysed the issue of attitude of the Idakho on the COG in the process of integration. The collected information being descriptive in nature, the study largely employed qualitative analysis of the data.

1.13 Conclusion

This chapter has argued the need for the study to assess the role of the COG in the transformation of the Idakho. The chapter has identified the COG as one of the innovators in transforming Idakho society. It has also argued the use of conflict functionalism theory on social change to serve best in the analysis of change of Idakho when they embraced Christian values through the COG. The chapter has also reviewed related literature that exposed significant gaps of knowledge about the impact of converts of COG and the church that justify the necessity to investigate the transformation of the Idakho. Apart from the literature review, the study has raised the methodologies that informed this study on the impact of the COG by presenting evidence adduced from data collected from Idakho people. The next chapter analyses the pre- colonial culture of the Idakho.

CHAPTER TWO

PRE- COLONIAL IDAKHO CULTURE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter seeks to illuminate aspects of pre-colonial Idakho history that are important for understanding changes that took place as a result of the introduction of Christianity in Idakho. An attempt is made to trace the migration, settlement pattern and the early history of the Idakho in their present homeland. The relation between the Idakho and their neighbours is also highlighted to show the nature of their interaction during the pre-colonial era. The chapter further analyses the Idakho social, political and economic organization before they interacted with western values. This will serve as a background against which succeeding chapters will be analysed to understand the process of change that occurred among the Idakho when the area interacted with Christian values through the COG Mission.

2.2 Migration and Settlement

Before the British rule was established in East Africa in the 19th century, the Bantu people known today as Luyia were a collection of at least sixteen autonomous sub-ethnic groups namely; Maragoli, Bunyore, Tiriki, Idakho, Isukha, Butsotso, Samia, Tachoni, Bukusu, Khayo, Wanga, Marachi, Marama, Kisa, Banyala and Kabras.[lxii]Based largely upon common social, cultural and linguistic identity, people who once considered themselves distinct groups came to identify themselves as Luyia. Each society consisted of a loose collection of clans that did not consider themselves as part of any larger ethnic group but rather as people of Idakho, Isukha, Maragoli, etc.

Within the Luyia community, there is at the popular level, an existing cultural distinction. There appears to be an established set of attitudes, which allow members of the various sub-ethnic groups of the Luyia to perceive themselves as belonging to a single cultural entity while acknowledging internal distinction in terms of dialect and to a lesser extent some cultural aspects. A good example of difference in cultural practice is the practice of payment of bride wealth. Whereas the Bukusu people have set figure of thirteen cows while according to the Idakho, this was negotiable.[lxiii]

The Luyia have not always been called by this name. An earlier label applied to the people was "Wakavirondo," though like the term Luyia, its origin was uncertain and was not apparently a local term.[lxiv] Wagner records that the inhabitants of Kenyan coast referred to all inhabitants of western Kenya as "Wakavirondo" which implied that the term was applied by Arab traders who had contact with some areas of the region before the coming of Europeans. There is no agreement as to the introduction of the word Luyia. Wagner, however, sheds some light on the gradual rejection of the term "Kavirondo". "He posits that owing to the constant use by Europeans, the locals adopted it but they used it with reference to the geographical region rather than themselves.[lxv]

Kesby states that: "Luyia is a modern term, not in use in 1900, which evolved to denote peoples in Western Kenya who spoke one language although they had formally no sense of similarity and recognised a diversity of groups among themselves…..European Administrators and missionaries recognised the linguistic unity of the group and coined a common name Luyia, before they did it themselves".[lxvi] It may be argued that the demand for contemporary political manoeuvring led to the adoption of new names to cover groups which did not have a common name. Osogo explains that the word Luyia

(*Okhuyia*) meant "to burn". He further explains that the Luyia used to hold campfires to establish their presence in a particular area. Whenever a stranger came to their camp, he would be asked to which (*Okhuyia*) he belonged and in that way they would identify who were their clan men and who were not.[lxvii] Thus, Luyia literally means those of the same fire.

We can draw a conclusion from the various positions on the term Luyia that in the past, there did not exist one ethnic group called Luyia. In the past, the sixteen sub- ethnic groups were not grouped together. The name came to be used much later to combine all the sub ethnic groups of Luyia. However, culturally, to a large extent, there is homogeneity among the Luyia. The remarkable diversity is clearly manifested in cultural and dialectical difference. Early British colonial rule in their homeland to the north east of Lake Victoria reinforced the separation identity of clans by subdividing the area into small "locations" whose boundaries attended to encompass all persons of a particular group. Each location was placed under the direction of a British appointed chief and local politics in the district increasingly pitted one location against another. This study will, therefore, focus closely on the Idakho community as a single entity in order to establish the background of their culture during pre colonial period.

The Idakho as already been pointed out, are one of the Luyia sub- ethnic groups in the present Kakamega County, Kenya. They are part of the Southern Luyia cluster of sub ethnic groups which includes the Isukha, Maragoli, Bunyore and Tiriki.[lxviii] Although the Idakho clans speak related languages, have similar pattern of living and enjoyed common cultural practices, there have not been traditional founders and ancestor common to the whole Idakho nor a traditional common alliance which covered the whole Idakho. This is

good contrast with the case of the Maragoli.[lxix] Each Idakho clan has its own peculiar tradition of ancestors and migrations, which suggests that the Idakho have been a congregation of various people who came from all directions and at different times. Each clan is ideally more independent and consider themselves as people of Idakho despite the fact that they are actually different in size.[lxx]

The Idakho settlement in Kenya, did not take place all at once, it occurred over a period of time. The clans occupied the area from diverse places and arrived at different times. They came from Eastern Uganda then migrated to Busia before they settled in their present land.[lxxi] The people who lived in the area before being occupied by Idakho were small groups of Nandi and Maasai, who came from the Eastern direction and were living in the area that was later occupied by the Idakho. Many of the Nandi and Maasai were therefore forced to migrate to distant places, while those who opted to remain were bantunised and lost their original language and culture.[lxxii] Their descendants variously called Abashimuli, Abamuli, Abashisha, Abashirotsa, Abashikunga, Abakondi and Abashikulu clans today live in Idakho.[lxxiii] This is better illustrated by Kizito when he stated: "For instance, even the layman cannot escape noticing the odd forms of so many place names in this region. For-example (*Chirovani, ingolomosio, ileho, lubao, shisaini, iluchecho, kakamega and ididi*) which are Maasai and Kalenjin in origin and meaning".[lxxiv]

The acculturation process among the groups of Kalenjin as well as the Maasai resulted in various clans that formed the Idakho. From the foregoing, the assertion that the Idakho arrived in one wave of migration is not convincing. They were made up of different clans who came to identify themselves as Idakho people. The migration of the Idakho was

enormously influenced by the agricultural potential of the environment. Cognisant of many enemies, the Idakho, therefore, lived in groups and made friends mainly with the Isukha to fight off the Nandi and the Maasai who raided their livestock. In addition they made friends with the Isukha for intermarriage purposes.

Muchanga[lxxv] noted that the Idakho are composed of thirty clans while Mwayuuli[lxxvi] noted that the Idakho are composed of fifteen clans. This is contrary to the present evidence derived from oral interviews, informants mentioned 54 clans. It can, therefore, be argued that this must remain largely speculation, until more research is carried out regarding Idakho clans. All the informants stated that each clan had its own history of migration and settlement. The clans that were mentioned during oral interview were:

Abashimuli, Abamusali, Abashilika, Abakhwang'a, Abakase, Abatula, Abashikulu, Abashiangala, Abashisalachi, Abakhondi, Abamastisti, Abashitsiula, Abammbale, Abanzali, Abakhaya, Abashirikaya, Abandabu, Abasakala,Abashitanyi, Abasichiti, Abamanyisi, Abamachina, Abamalava, Ababukha, Abakwesa, Abasalwa, Abamakambe, Abavyanishi, Abachista, Abalaneshiri, Abashiasuli, Abanasio, Abaterema, Ababwanishili, Abamahani, Abanyika, Abasilwa, Abanyishi, Abanyama, Abayila, Abamuhuya, Abashiluka, Abamuli, Abashisha, Abashirosta, Abashikunga, Abamasava, Abamuhali, Abayemi,Abahuli, Abakhubi, Abashitanyi, Abashikanang'a and Abamasungu.

The common clan name bore a rule, of the personal name of the founder of the clan. However, among the Idakho, clans were also named after the women whose sons seceded from their former clan and thus became the founder of the new clan. Among the clans

mentioned in this category was Abashimuli. However, these clans were named after the woman only if this happened to have been a person of great influence.[lxxvii]

2.3 Political Organisation

During pre- colonial days, the Idakho didn't have a chief. The Clan (*litala*) was therefore an effective political, social and economic unit. Each clan was headed by a clan head whom they referred to as (*Omwami*).[lxxviii]A general prerequisite, however, for obtaining leadership among the Idakho was advanced age which was socially marked by the institution of age-mate circumcision rites. It was always the oldest member of a group of kinsmen whose opinion carried the greatest weight on matters concerning that group.[lxxix]

The authority bestowed by old age was further strengthened by the notions connected with ancestor cult. One of this was that old age was regarded as a necessary condition for officiating at sacrifices. The other notion was that spirits remembered the treatment accorded to them while they were still living persons and that they either haunt and trouble or spare or helped their living relatives according to the treatment received. Old men, therefore, were respected, which considerably added to their authority.

Clan head (*Omwami*) was expected to encourage unity when legal disputes were discussed by the Idakho elders. When homicides or murder was committed and kinsmen of both parties threatened to go to war, he mediated between the two parties. Another important function of the clan head among the Idakho was to officiate during sacrifices. Moreover, on the occasion of important family sacrifices, the clan head was invited in addition to or in the place of an elder of the lineage.

Apart from the clan head, a renowned warrior of the clan was also recognised as a leader, through the reputation gained as a warrior. Their respective successes were measured in terms of the number of enemies killed and the head of cattle raided by them or under their lead. The more a man during his youth or in the prime of his life excelled as a warrior, the more weight his opinion was respected. When later as a clan- elder, he joined in the discussion as to whether a raid should be undertaken, a clan–feud terminated, or an alliance formed with another clan. As long as he was still an active warrior, he could act as a leader in a warfare, but could not yet enjoy any authority in the council of elders. The warrior did not always submit to the wishes and decisions of the old men but at times engaged in raids and wars either without consulting the elders or even against their advice.

Another indispensable condition for attaining a leadership position in the clan among the Idakho during pre-colonial era was through economic status. One who possessed a large herd of cattle, whose granaries were always filled, and who had several wives and retainers that could brew beer and wait on his host, would find enough people to sing his praise, and his homestead became the favourite gathering- place of all clansmen, especially the elders. The wealthy man could at any time offer beer to the guests and at frequent intervals serve his guests beef and other delicacies. In addition, a wealthy man gained a more definite influence over some of his clansmen by lending them a goat or a sheep for a sacrifice and a basketful of grains if they ran short of food.[lxxx]

Lastly, among the Idakho during pre-colonial period, a medicine man was also recognised as a clan leader. He was a man who was able to wield a great deal of influence over the people in his clan. In many cases, leadership was handed down from father to son within

one clan. The medicine man was a friend to the clan, accessible by everybody and at all times. In many cases, medicine person passed on the profession to one of his sons.[lxxxi]It was also the duty of the medicine man to purge witches, detect sorcery, remove curses and control the spirits of the dead from doing harm on the living. They had access to the forces of nature and other forms of knowledge unknown by ordinary people. Therefore, the clan entrusted them with the duty of removing what could harm the community.[lxxxii] The Medicine man, therefore, symbolized the hopes of good health, protection and security from evil forces, prosperity and good fortunes and ritual cleansing when harm or impurities had contracted the clan.

In pre colonial Idakho, the clan head (*Omwami*) had a group of advisers called council of elders. The council formed the inner council and assisted the clan head (*Omwami*) in resolving matters affecting the clan. In most cases, it was the elders (men) who listened to cases and delivered judgement. However, women were only invited to give evidence. Although old women were not directly involved in settling disputes, they were an integral part of the verdict for it was not given before they were consulted. It, therefore, appears that the actual hearing of cases was a deliberate attempt by the Idakho to massage men's ego when in real sense both men and women agreed on the verdict. [lxxxiii]

2.4 Economic Organisation

The economy of the Idakho in general during pre-colonial era was basically a mixed economy consisting of livestock keeping and crop production. They were at the same time involved in trade, hunting, gathering and handicraft. In the pre-colonial period, land in Idakho, as was the case in general among the Luyia belonged to the clan. This was because whenever a section of land was invaded, the whole clan was expected to defend

the land and not to leave it to an individual family. Land allocation was through transmission from father to son. When a father died, his land was handed either to his eldest son or divided among the sons by the clan elders. Usually, while a father was still alive he allocated land to each of his married sons. The remaining land would be allocated to the unmarried sons.[lxxxiv]

 Land was basically valued for the purpose of crop production and livestock keeping. It was a means of production. The Idakho valued land because everybody depended on land for survival. Food was derived from land through crop and livestock production. As long as land was abundant in relation to the needs of the occupants, it had no exchange value. Within the clan land, an individual could cultivate any piece of land that had not been cultivated before. The first person to cultivate such a virgin land claimed ownership and would continue cultivating it as long as he wanted. In addition to the clan lands, a major proportion of land in each clan area was designated as communal grazing land and remained reserved for the general use by the community.[lxxxv]

In pre-colonial Idakho, the agricultural implement used, was a wooden hoe. It was used for clearing the bushes from the field. A new imported iron hoe however came into use in pre-colonial Idakho acquired from the Bunyore, a sub-section of the Luyia.[lxxxvi] The introduction of iron-hoe in Idakho before the imposition of colonial rule expanded agricultural activities. The staple crop that was widely cultivated in Idakho was finger millet (*bulee)*. It was the main dish and was also used to brew traditional beer. In addition, the Idakho also grew sweet potatoes (*amabwoni*), beans (*amakanda*), bananas (*maremwa),* monkey beans (*tsimbande*) and Cassava (*muhoko)*. The harvest was stored in granary (*shiyache*) or in a special pot called (*isikha*). The harvest was reserved for the

family to be utilized when food shortages occurred. Maize was probably a recent introduction in the 1890s to the people of Western Kenya as it still had a very limited use.[lxxxvii] Perham and Bull, point out that when Lord Lugard visited Kavirondo in 1890, he saw "little or no maize".[lxxxviii] Grant study, argues that travellers to Uganda first noticed the existence of maize in Central Buganda and Bunyore by 1862, in Acholi by 1880.[lxxxix] Thus it seems possible that maize travelled along the main trade routes from Buganda and Bunyoro to Mumias[xc]and spread from there into Idakho.

Most informants were in agreement that agriculture was the more important economic activity compared to livestock keeping. A study by Wagner revealed that Luyia were both pastoralists and agriculturalist, however, cattle-keeping was far more important than agriculture in the northern part among the Bukusu while agriculture was more predominant among the southern ethnic groups of the Luyia community.[xci] Livestock nevertheless played an important role in the economic life of the Idakho. In his study, Makana stated that: "Livestock among the Bukusu, was significant in rituals ceremonies particularly goats and sheep were frequently used in sacrificial feast".[xcii] This was also true among the Idakho. One informant revealed that "the slaughter of cattle and smaller stocks formed an important part of ritual occasions such as marriages, funerals or divination ceremonies".[xciii]

In addition, the people of Idakho derived their essential products such as milk, meat and hides from livestock. Apart from providing food, other animal products such as skins were used as clothing and making shields while cattle manure was used for smearing houses. One of the significant uses of livestock in pre-colonial Idakho was for acquiring a wife or wives. Under normal circumstances, marriage involved a complex system of

individual transfers of cattle and goats between the two families. Just as Hay's study among the Kowe demonstrates, cattle were acquired through raiding the enemies.[xciv] This was also the case among the Idakho who raided their enemies' cattle especially the Nandi or captured them through victory in battles.[xcv]

Onduru[xcvi] in his study, observes that cattle accompanied mourners at funerals to pay their last respect to the dead since they were regarded as part and parcel of the community. This study also reveals that among the Idakho cattle accompanied mourners at funerals specifically of respected old men in what they termed as "cattle drive" (*shilembe*). This was to please the spirit of the deceased while he was not yet in the grave.[xcvii]

Markets developed independently in direct response to the growing needs of the people of Idakho. Informants noted that there were two kinds of trade in pre-colonial Idakho, local trade and regional. Local trade took place among the Idakho clans and with neighbouring Luyia communities such as the Maragoli, Isukha, Kisa, Marama and the Bunyore.[xcviii] Informant observed that regional trade was more active between the Idakho and the Kalenjin from whom they received livestock in exchange for grain, mainly sorghum.[xcix]

Although hunting and various food gathering activities were practiced, these occupied a comparatively insignificant place in the hierarchy of the economy of the Idakho. Hunting was undertaken by men. These activities were meant to supplement the daily diet. Sometimes men hunted during pre-harvest in order to protect crops from birds and wild animals such as buffalos and elephants.[c] In addition, the Idakho also engaged in pottery

that was restricted to the Abasilwa and Abashisalachi clans, who were reluctant to teach it to outsiders for fear of competition.[ci]

2.5 Social Organisation

Among the Idakho, the individual family constituted the basic social group that co-operated most widely and intensely in their activities of everyday life. It consisted of a husband, wife, and unmarried children. There was a clearly defined division of duties within the family. Both men and women played a significant role. However, this was only possible if one was married. The woman was partly the co- owner of the land that belonged to her husband. It may appear that women did much of the domestic work. This gave women power over the home. Although this was a patriarchal society where men inherited land from their fathers thus accorded them a superior status,

There was a clear division of labour between the sexes. Men for instance, cleared virgin land and helped women plant crops while women would weed crops. In essence, the duties carried out by men complemented those done out by women. Men and women needed one another's labour for social production. Table 1 graphically represents some of the gendered responsibilities on the sexes.

Table 1: Division of duties within the family group in Idakho

DUTIES FOR MEN	DUTIES FOR WOMEN
Hunting, providing security to the family.	Taking care of the home.
Clearing the forest	Second digging of the land.
Breaking the ground	Weeding
Offering sacrifices on behalf of the family.	Singing on public occasions.
In charge of the security.	In charge of the domestic chores.
Negotiating dowry	Asking for brides.
Socialising boys and taking boys for circumcision.	Socialising daughters.
Taking cattle, goats and sheep to the grazing field.	Gathering firewood.
Serving chicken	Serving food except chicken
Slaughtering an animal.	Cooking and entertaining female guests.

Source: Primary Research.

The outlined gendered division of labour was reinforced by a set of taboos that governed the family unit. The old men were usually useful in oral traditions, narrating stories to the young men. It was also their duty to settle difficult cases especially those involving land ownership and traditional customs. The old women were useful in a similar manner, but

they were usually concerned with advising women and girls. It is worth noting that most of the informants acknowledged the fact that the worst curse that one could ever receive came from a woman. This involved a woman, mostly elderly, stripping naked. This act was followed by utterances of condemnation from the women.[cii] It was, therefore, every man's desire never to push a woman to that level, be it one's wife or relative. Taboo, therefore, seemed to have existed almost like a constitution among the Idakho. The following are some of the gender- inflicted taboos among the Idakho. It was a taboo:

- For a man to spend time sitting in the kitchen.
- To ridicule an old person.
- For a married man to sweep his own house.
- For a woman to sit on her husband's stool.
- For women to dig a grave.
- For a woman to serve chicken from "the mans" pot".
- For a woman to eat chicken or eggs.
- For a daughter –in-law to take milk to one's father –in-law's house.
- For a newly wedded wife to drink sour milk before bearing a child.
- For a woman to milk cows.
- For a woman to visit a witch doctor.

Source: Informants.

These taboos governed the way of life of the Idakho.

Children were trained at an early age to share the duties of family life. At about age six, boys began to herd sheep, goat and cattle, a duty which they outgrew after being circumcised. The girls assisted their mothers in the daily work of fetching water, gathering firewood, wild roots and vegetables and above all, in the weary task of grinding

finger millet (*bulee*). During pre-colonial period, men used to wear hides and skins. It was passed under the armpit and fastened with a strap- over the opposite shoulder. In addition to skins, the wealthier people put on other items of dress such as shells (*emisango*). Women used to wear necklace (*liboya*) made from banana or a goat's skin (*shivoya*). The necklace was worn around the waist and looked like a kind of apron hanging in front and a tuft of sisal or hair strings hanging behind.[ciii] It was a special dress worn by women on occasions of marriage and birth of children.

Women also wore bangles (*ebitiiri*) on their ankles and some wore other rings and wires around their necks or arms. They also liked decorating themselves: some made holes in their ear lobes; they also had tattooed (*tsisare*) cutting of the body as a sign of beauty. This was done around the waist, at the forehead, abdomen and at the back. Both men and women removed two front teeth (*uvula)* on the lower jaw for beauty. In a family which had one male child, one of his ears was pierced as a sign of protection and symbolizing the only source of security to his family.[civ]

In pre-colonial Idakho, one of the most cherished rituals was that of male circumcision. This was the single most important event in Idakho and a male had to go through the rituals to be accepted as a member of the community. Those who resisted were initiated by force. The socialisation of Idakho boys involved indoctrinating them on the significance of the ritual. An Idakho boy, therefore, grew up knowing that at some stage he would go through the ritual. It was a significant ritual that marked a transition from childhood to adulthood. After initiation, one was allowed to marry, to own property and formed an age group to whom a bond was established that lasted a lifetime. Those

initiated shared the same knife and this was the single most important symbol of their bond.[cv]

A number of reasons as to why the Idakho initiated their boys as noted by one of the informant was that; it was partly for cleanliness; that initiated boys would be clean at all times. Secondly, the teachings after the rituals especially in seclusion huts instilled courage to the boys as a symbol of maturity. It prepared boys for war and lastly, it was a time of getting formal education or learning the existential problems of life and how to solve them according to clan custom".[cvi] Ultimately, it prepared them for marriage. The decision to hold the circumcision rites was taken by the elders of the clan when they saw that sufficient time had passed since the last circumcision for a new generation of young men to have reached the age when they were fit to become warriors. Old men of the community arranged when circumcision would take place.

After the candidates had been ritually prepared by the observance of taboos, by confessions and purification rites and after their morale had been tasted and boosted by singing war songs, they were now ready to undergo the operation. The expert who performed the operation (*omushevi*) was a man of high social status. Successor to the office of (*omushevi*) was restricted to his sons. The Idakho operators belonged to the (Abamasava) clan which was said to have held the office exclusively from the distance past. They did not only circumcise all the candidates of their clans, but they also did the same in the neighbouring communities of the Maragoli and the Bunyore who had no operators of their own.[cvii]The operators were not supposed to amass wealth through the performance of the operation, as they gave away most of the fowls and goats which they were given as tokens for the operation on the candidates.

The operator's attire was very much the same among the Luyia sub-groups He dressed in such a way as to appear as fierce and awesome as possible. His face, the upper part of his body, and his arms and legs were painted; round his face he tied a head – dress of colobus monkey skin (*enduviri*) round the waist a leopard skin and iron rings round his legs. Among the Idakho, the operation was performed in a large open field. It was surrounded by a larger group of onlookers of either sex and all ages who shouted encouraging remarks at them and closely watched for any signs of flinching or faltering.[cviii]

The candidates lined up for the operation in several concentric circles which they formed round a special giant tree (*musembe*) or (*musustu*). It gave the youngsters an age- grade (*bakhochi*) who had been circumcised under it, and it later served as a meeting place for its members.[cix] The age- grades provided the bases for social solidarity. The members of various age sets supported one another in everyday activity including courtship and marriage activities. Girls were not circumcised but their ages were known from the age of their husbands. Circumcision was, therefore, part of socialisation process in which subtle signals of what constituted good behaviour for both girls and boys were sent out. It was also a time when boys were taught about marriage and other obligations.

An individual who wished to obtain a maximum degree of protection by the community in which he lived and to attain influence and prestige in it aimed at securing for himself a prominent place in the elaborate network of kinship relation. This could only be done through marriage and procreation, for matrimony and parenthood were necessary steps in the process of acquiring status. A bachelor was seen as an incomplete man. A similar,

though, milder perception of incomplete man was directed towards childless couples. It was almost an abomination for a woman not to get married. An unmarried woman, who remained in the clan, was a target of hostility even from her own brothers. She had no role or status in the clan and was denied access to certain occasions. Marriage and birth of children were thus occasions for celebrations and festivities. [cx]

The preparation of marriage started early. As noted earlier, the act of circumcision was one way of preparing boys for ultimate goal of marriage. The choice of a partner was done sometimes through parents or relatives. Sometimes a young man would identify a girl and inform his parents about her. The parents would then start investigations of the girl and later there would be negotiations with the family of the girl. It is notable that it was the boy's mother and aunts who were sent to request for the girl.

As regards marriage, this study shows that similar distinctions were made between persons of the same clan where marriage was ruled out under any circumstances no matter how large the clan and how distant the actual relationship between the two persons concerned.[cxi] The Idakho were forbidden from marrying into or from the same clan. Taboos existed to reinforce marriage prohibitions. One of the informants pointed out that " children born in a relationship involving relatives would "ripen" like bananas and die"[cxii]. Such a marriage was doomed. Marriage among the Idakho during pre colonial period, therefore, brought together couples from two different clans.

One of the treasured aspects of marriage was virginity. A girl was expected to remain a virgin until she got married. This demand was not put on boys. Great honour was bestowed on the girl and her family if she was found to be a virgin at marriage. Her

parents would receive gifts of good will from their son in-law. Among the Idakho, payment of dowry was made to members of the bride's family since the girl had to leave her own clan and be married into another, her family and the clan had therefore lost a useful member.[cxiii]

Cows and bulls were paid as bride wealth in instalments. The number of cattle demanded for a girl depended on the number of cattle possessed by the bride's father. Since the Idakho were predominantly agriculturalists, cattle were not in plenty. Therefore, two or three cows were given as bride wealth.[cxiv] In most cases, therefore, a wealthy man's son married a wealthy man's daughter. While owing to the territorial grouping of clans the people who intermarried were only in expectation cases close neighbours. The dowry was therefore an important custom for it not only sealed the marriage bond, but also distinguished the man as a dignified member of the community. If at all the woman died before dowry was paid to her parents, her body was taken back to her parents' home.[cxv]

The groom's parents made part of the payment of dowry to the brides' family at the time of the marriage. This underscored the fact that the girl got married into the clan and not to an individual. The girl was, therefore, not perceived as a market commodity or a slave. The payment was taken as an appreciation for the gift of the new member of the family.[cxvi] The cows were in turn used by the girls' family to finance the marriage of their sons. This made the girl to be appreciated by her brothers, since they facilitated their marriage.

Once the full contract of marriage was executed, it was extremely difficult to dissolve it. There were, however, few instances in which divorce was sanctioned. For instance, if a woman was a witch this meant that the woman would endanger the life of her husband. In

case of sterility on the part of the husband, another man was asked to sire children for him. If the woman was barren, the man married a second wife for the purpose of producing children but retained the barren wife.[cxvii]

Polygamy was a common practice among the Idakho during pre colonial period. To some extent, it was perceived as having to do with giving security to the man. Another reason advanced in support of polygamy was that a man's wealth was measured in terms of the number of wives, children or livestock he had.[cxviii] A man who was wealthly was respected. It was, therefore, prestigious to have many wives. Wife inheritance was one of the cherished institutions among the Idakho. A woman once married belonged to the clan. The death of the husband in some sense loosened the ties that bound the woman to the clan. A clan member or an age mate to the deceased husband was asked to inherit the woman. Thereafter, elaborate rituals were performed. [cxix]

The person who died left one "phase" of his existence to enter another not only as regards his own individual existence, but also as regards the place they occupied among the living. The Idakho performed many complicated ceremonies connected with death and burial. When one died, people wailed, and beat drums. The body of a dead person was kept inside the house for a day. The body was laid on an animal skin and covered with a skin or with banana leaves, and if it was a prominent man, a leopard skin was used. Neighbours and relatives brought beer and food, some played musical instrument, and others sung funeral songs and dances. This was intended partly to appease the spirit of the dead person and partly to comfort the bereaved family.[cxx]

The procedure followed when burying a person showed a number of variations according to the sex, age and social status as well as certain peculiarities of the deceased. Among the Idakho, the burial of an ordinary person took place the next day, so that there was one full night for keeping the body and to permit even those of his relatives who lived far away to come and view the body before burial. Elders of higher social status were buried on the second or third day. And in the case of a clan head and clan leaders, the burial was delayed until the fourth day.[cxxi] Such a delay was founded on the belief that it would appease the spirit of the deceased to remain in the company of the living as long as possible, so that he may see the mourners and watch the performance of the "cattle drive" (*shilembe*) and the mock fight before he could be buried. [cxxii]

During the ceremony of "cattle drive" (*shilembe*) cattle were gathered and decorated with weeds or grass, people painted their faces with white clay and adorned war gear for instance hides, leopard skins or grasses, and carried spears, clubs, shields and sticks. The songs that were sung included war songs, marriage songs, dirges, that praised the deceased and appreciated the contribution he made to the clan. This ceremony was intended to drive away the spirit of the dead man, so that it did not linger around the homestead as to cause misfortunes. Infants and small children on the other hand, were usually buried a few hours after they had died, a custom which was in accordance with the prevailing notion that spirits of children were "powerless" and that it was therefore unnecessary to take much trouble over them.

The Idakho evolved an elaborate form of worship through ancestors that proved by far the most important part in their religious lives. The Idakho religion recognised the power of ancestral spirit in their cosmology. Sacrifices involved a white male goat with horns.

The rituals were presided over by the traditional diviner. The elders then roasted and ate the whole meat. It was, however, notable that the elders were men and not women. Members of the various clans made sacrifices to the ancestors beseeching them to solve societal problems. On such occasions, sacrifices were for purposes of appeasing the clan's ancestral spirits who were believed to be unhappy, because of wrong doing in the society or for being neglected. The clan elders took their spears and visited the graves, of the clan heroes. They observed a commemoration, which involved singing and dancing in praise of the ancestors.[cxxiii]

The Idakho religion recognised the power of the ancestral spirits in their cosmology. They venerated this spirit to promote good health and the welfare of the community and family. The veneration of the Idakho ancestor at the family level centred on three sacrificial stones. The stones were about a foot high and stuck in the ground so that they formed a triangle. On all important occasions in the life of an individual from birth to death, the sacrificial stones (*musabwa*), constituted the centre of their relationship with the living dead. On such occasions, relatives met to offer sacrifices. The stones were placed only in homes of married men with children.[cxxiv] The Idakho, therefore, believed in the existence of God approached by men through the medium of spirits of the dead to whom private respect was paid.

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to discuss the Idakho society during pre colonial period. It has shown the migration pattern of Idakho and how they settled in their area. The main focus has been on the review of their political, economic and social organisation. The whole process of these organisations was very important as it is these levels that indigenous

culture reached its highest degree of its consciousness. The study has demonstrated the dynamism of the Idakho by showing that through interaction with the physical environment; it adopted elements which enriched its culture. The process was accelerated by interaction with neighbouring communities. Here, it has been shown that the community both rejected and borrowed cultural values, beliefs and practices from their neighbours depending on whether they endangered or enhanced the integrity of the society. Given this context, in the analysis of Christianity as an agent of change, the next chapter proceeds to examine the establishment of the COG and the reaction of Idakho towards the church.

CHAPTER THREE

INTRODUCTION AND THE EARLY PHASE OF THE CHURCH OF GOD INTO IDAKHO, 1905-1935

3.1 Introduction

The establishment of the COG stations in Kenya was a slow process. The early missionaries endured hardships such as uncertain safety as strangers in a foreign land, personal tragedies and diseases. The first two decades of the COG's work were thus primarily a pioneer homesteading operation. By the 1920s, however, the COG had established vibrant and growing Churches among the Luyia, in Bunyore. It was from this Bushiangala station that the COG missionaries sought to transform the Idakho society. This chapter examines the following three issues; the establishment of COG Mission in Kenya in general and particularly in Idakho, the reactions of the Idakho towards the COG and lastly the initial impact of the COG in Idakho.

3.2 Arrival of the Church of God in Idakho

In the early 1900s the ACIM, having established itself in South Africa, began seeking expansion opportunities into East Africa. A missionary, Baker, was sent from South Africa to explore mission opportunities in East Africa. His expedition led him to Bunyore, at Vihiga County, Kenya, where he appropriated a large parcel of land where the missionaries were to set up a church.[cxxv] Baker returned to South Africa and another missionary, Robert Wilson together with his wife, were sent to begin the work in the area.[cxxvi]

Consequently, in 1905, Robert Wilson together with his wife and their two sons and some Ugandan porters[cxxvii] went to Bunyore. Upon their arrival, the chief of the (*Nyore)*, Otieno Ndale, received Wilson warmly and after consultation with the elders, identified the specific location for the land, locally known as (*esikomooli*) a fig tree for the establishment of the mission post. This location later came to be known as "Kima" a Swahili word meaning, "monkey" because of the presence of monkeys that populated the adjacent hills. In addition, Robert Wilson was moved by the Bunyore's high elevation and especially dense population.[cxxviii]

Sizeable pieces of land, owned by different people in Bunyore were identified and allocated to the missionaries. The Wilson's began working immediately. As soon as they had pitched a tent, they started looking for building materials with which to put up a church to evangelise the surrounding community. They offered salt to the Bunyore in exchange for grass for thatching the house. The local men under chief's direction donated trees and offered labour for the construction of the wall and the roof structures while the women provided labour to mud the walls and smear the floor. Thus, the Wilson missionary outreach among the people of Bunyore had began in earnest.[cxxix] A cathedral was put up at Kima to serve BKKB and from there, it initiated the spread to the neighbouring communities. Notably, the church's expansion from its earliest stages involved converts immediate participation in BKKB region.

Whereas, the work of the mission flourished in the area of BKKB, Baker realised that ACIM was busy ministering among the miners in Johannesburg and did not have sufficient funds at its disposal to meet the additional costs for impending growth and expansion of the Kenya based ministries. Baker, therefore, considered the transfer of

ACIM to someone else with the appropriate doctrinal, adequate financial resources and organisational network, to run the church in East Africa. Consequently, the ACIM was compelled to cede its East Africa mission to the auspices of the United States of America (USA) based COG, headquarter at Anderson in the State of Indiana.[cxxx]Subsequently, in 1926, the entire church of ACIM was transferred to the COG Missionary Board in America. From 1926 to 1972, the Church continued to be headed by the white missionary Board of the COG until 1972 when leadership responsibilities and properties were transferred to the indigenous General Assembly of the COG in East Africa (Kenya).[cxxxi]

As we have already noted earlier, it was through the witness of the new Christians evidenced by their words and deeds within their respective communities and among those they sent ministered that the COG spread out to the neighbouring communities of Bunyore.[cxxxii] The mission established its first station in Idakho, in 1919.[cxxxiii] Converts of the COG in Idakho had found Kima to be far, and therefore demanded the establishment of a Church in Idakho. Land was, therefore, identified at Bushiangala for the establishment of the church that served (*Abakakamega*) (Idakho and Isukha) region.[cxxxiv]

Controversy however surrounds the question of the establishment of COG in Idakho. According to Makokha, the Church reached the area through a convert from Kisa (a neighbouring community of the Idakho) Joshua Amunga, who went to Bushiangala in 1919.[cxxxv] While according to informants they pointed out that it was through Alfaso Makhosi, Timothy Lihala, Thomas Etemere, Harun Shimenga, Saul Aluvala, Ruben Kizikwa, Stephan Maleche, Noman Ingonga and Nelson Luseso Shiramba, Idakho converts of COG, who pioneered the establishment of the church in the area. [cxxxvi]

These pioneers, led by Alfaso Makhosi and Thomas Etemere, went to Henry Kramer (a white missionary who by then was in charge on the management of COG Mission at Kima) to allow them to establish their own church in their area. Kramer was impressed with their proposal and he approved the establishment of the church in Idakho.[cxxxvii] It is probable that this contact with the early converts of Idakho attending the services at Kima, is what facilitated the establishment of the church in the area because of the long distance they travelled to attend the church service at Kima.

There are, however, several accounts for why Bushiangala was chosen for COG. First, it was because of availability of land about 33 acres that was initially a communal land for holding public meeting (*baraza*). Secondly, Bushiangala being located near Kima, made communication and management of the Church easier. Further, no missionaries had established themselves at Bushiangala and this made it conducive for the mission activities. Lastly, the people of Bushiangala had responded positively to the establishment of the COG.[cxxxviii]

However, converting the locals was not without considerable obstacles. This is best illustrated by Makokha when he wrote: "the Friends church headquartered at Kaimosi never wanted the church at Kima to infiltrate Idakho. The local chief Shivachi, (a Quaker but later converted to Catholicism) maintained that Kima –based church was meant to evangelise in Bunyore; that if it penetrated his area, it would cause his people to come under paramount chief Mumia who at the time had administrative authority over the Wanga, Bunyore, Kisa, Butsotso and Marama."[cxxxix]

One of the informant noted that when the COG mission was established at Bushiangala, chief Shivachi sent his assistant chief, Mukoto Shiamwama, with his (*Askaris*) (local police attached to the chief) to beat up the believers at Bushiangala, who identified with the Kima based church and even set their houses on fire.[cxl] Some of the believers were arrested and confined at the chief's camp. Church members went to Kakamega to report the matter to the District Commissioner (DC) who instantly sacked Mukoto for his action. He also directed that the Church adherents at Bushiangala were to freely congregate for worship under a tree for four years before putting up a permanent church. Later, Henry Kramer, from Kima visited the believers to mark out the plan for the church to be constructed. Then the DC on his own accord sent some prisoners from Kakamega to help the believers at Bushiangala in their construction work. [cxli]

COG Mission activity at Bushiangala in Idakho was, therefore, a poor stepchild to the parent post at Kima, and it operated for a while without resident missionaries. The steady loss of the establishment of the COG in Bushiangala area was compounded by the establishment of a Roman Catholic Church at Eregi in 1913, having established itself in Idakho area.[cxlii] This constant friction and dogmatic squabbling between the Catholic Church and COG became a challenge and hindered the COG Mission from establishing a strong presence in Idakho.[cxliii]

Precise comparative records however, are unavailable, but the converts of COG interviewed reported that Catholics gained the larger followers in Idakho compared to COG.[cxliv] But the COG had somewhat better schools. Catholic toleration of local customs also made a strong appeal among the Idakho making it difficult for the COG to win converts among the Idakho. Catholic converts were permitted to retain their social

pastimes of dancing, smoking and beer drinking while COG sternly insisted that all their converts had to reject such pursuits for them to be members of COG.

3.3 Bushiangala Station

Due to competition from the Roman Catholic Church and the lack of enthusiasm shown by the Idakho towards the work of COG, the latter converts decided to spread their network in mission influence in the eastern part of Idakho among the Bushiangala where it was well received. At Bushiangala, however, the COG was plagued by aggressive proselytizing from the Roman Catholic missionaries who complained of obstructionist tactics employed by the COG as well as by the FAM at Musingu in Idakho. Colonial administrators too complained about recurrent problems that had to be moderated between antagonistic missions. This was embarrassing to missionaries and administrators alike, since colonialists sought to present to Africans with the illusion that Europeans formed a solid front towards the indigenous population.[cxlv] It was such situations that compelled the colonial administration to establish spheres of influence, granting each denomination exclusive rights to certain regions. In 1913, a government directive stated that "no two mission stations could be established at a distance of less than 10 miles (16 kilometres) from one another", though already established mission stations were exempted from the rule.[cxlvi] This was to prevent competition for converts and duplication of efforts and expenditures.[cxlvii]

Likewise, the protestant missions in Kenya had been well aware of their common rival with MHM of the Roman Catholic. Such realisation made the competitors to come together and agree on which areas to evangelize, lest the Catholics exploit their differences. For instance, they called a comity conference at Maseno, towards the end of

1907, at which they resolved that CMS should concentrate on the Luo and FAM together with the COG should work among the Luyia. However, the Catholics, not being party to the agreement, considered themselves free to establish mission stations anywhere, depending on the availability of missionary personnel.[cxlviii]

In 1909, another Missionary Conference was held in Nairobi, at which there was unanimity among the protestant missions, over the need to divide Kenya into spheres of missionary influence. But since this was a protestant meeting, the Catholics opposed this view claiming that missions should be free to establish station anywhere in Kenya.[cxlix] The government however supported the spheres of influence policy, including the separation of Protestant and Catholic missions, in order to avoid such religious conflict as had been witnessed in Uganda in 1892.[cl] Consequently, in 1910, the government divided the Kisumu and North Kavirondo Districts (the present Vihiga, Kakamega and Bungoma Counties) among the Protestant Missions allocating the western part of Idakho among the FAM and the eastern part among the COG.[cli] Thus, theoretically, the COG had gained the right to exert unchallenged religious influence over the eastern half of the Idakho region. With the demarcation of spheres of influence among the Protestants, conflict among COG and the Roman Catholic quickly emerged. COG had been established in the eastern part of Idakho, while the Roman Catholic Church considered themselves free to establish mission stations anywhere depending on the availability of missionary personnel. This friction persisted and was a major factor in limiting the influence of the COG in Idakho area.[clii]

All the missionaries concerned apparently had the goal of converting the "heathen and saving the Soul".[cliii] The Catholics compared to COG "made few demands from their converts" and tended to be more tolerant to the Idakho culture. Consequently, the Catholics made serious inroads into the COG efforts to win converts. As already been pointed out, Catholic converts were permitted to retain traditional practices such as dancing, smoking and beer drinking while the COG sternly insisted that their converts had to stop such practices. Further, the question as to whether members of polygamous families could be accepted as converts brought a lot of controversies among the Idakho. The hard stance that was taken by the COG towards the issue of polygamy was the source of grief and annoyance among the Idakho. It was not only the polygamous men that were excluded from baptism, but also the second and subsequent wives, and even their children. This factor militated against the total acceptance of COG among the Idakho, since polygamy was essentially an integral part of their culture.[cliv]

However, the real success of COG mission effort in Idakho largely depended on Idakho pioneer converts such as Thomas Etemere, Alfaso Makhosi, Timothy Lihala and Saul Aluvala who became evangelists among their people and propagated the gospel from Bushiangala station to other parts of Idakho. Infact these pioneers became the first teacher-evangelists among the Idakho and were credited for establishing preaching centres at Bushiangala, Shikunga, Imusali, Ishikumu and Burendwa.[clv] It was therefore at Bushiangala station that provided the nuclei of COG mission work and converts in Idakho area.

3.4 Early Converts of COG

Christianity may be defined as a form of religious conversion, by means of a radical transformation of the self.[clvi] Conversion occurs when a previously non-Christian subscribes to some forms of Christianity which primarily involves the belief or faith in God, repentance of what Christians perceive Jesus Christ as the son of God and saviour. While conversion to Christianity may simply involve a personal choice of identity with Christianity rather than with another religion, many Christians understand it to mean that the individual attain eternal salvation by a genuine conversion experience or act.[clvii] Consequently, in order to be truly converted, COG missionaries demanded that the Idakho reject those cultural practices that were deemed to be opposing Christian tenets. These included rejection of the practice of the ancestral propitiation, prohibition of traditional dancing, drinking alcohol, and polygamy, seeking out the assistance of diviners or traditional healers among others.[clviii]

The pioneer missionaries at Kima, therefore, argued that if African leadership was to be realised, an effective educational programme needed to be developed along with direct evangelization. From its inception, missionaries put an effort to evangelize the people of Idakho, a commitment to provide education so as to ensure a lasting response to the gospel. The first objective of the missionaries of the COG was to teach the Africans to read the bible, in Swahili. The term "catechetical school" was often used to designate these early literacy classes, where Arithmetic, reading, writing and religion (3RS) were taught as inter- related subjects. The Idakho had acknowledged the importance of western education which was mainly provided by missionaries groups and colonial government. Further, the reputation the COG missionaries had on the neighbouring communities in Bunyore and Kisa during the early periods, attracted many to learn how to read and write,

and to be able to teach with conviction, as they saw the missionaries doing in Bunyore.[clix] Others came seeking employment, having learned of wage labour opportunities, such as working on the establishment of the mission station. They were also eager for money with which to pay taxes.[clx]

The Christian teachings of the COG that the converts were taught, however, remained somewhat of a mystery to the converts. After life on earth, a person had to take, two roads; "one leading to heaven and the other to a great darkness, where people wait for a fiery judgment".[clxi] To become a convert and to go through literacy and catechism was a form of training. The literacy and catechism classes thus involved living their homeland and going to stay at the village school at Bushiangala station to avoid mixing with other members who were not members of the COG. Emphasis was placed on memorizing biblical verses. Hymns were learned along with other practices of Christian worship. [clxii] Considerable emphasis was placed on the life one had to conform to in order to be counted among the true believers. A complete break from the past "pagan" practices was required, and the specifics of what this entailed were made very clear to the pupils.[clxiii] Teaching of Christian marriage and family was emphasized as was instruction on the significance of Christian baptism. Finally, the importance of sacrifice in giving of one's efforts as well as one's produce for the advancement of the church was stressed. Prospective converts were taught that there was no earthly pay that could sufficiently compensate them for the work they were being trained to perform, but that God would richly reward them in heaven for their efforts. Upon successful completion of training, pupils were baptized at Kima (in a ceremony that eventually became a large annual event), after which they became teacher-evangelists.[clxiv]

At the mission station, any breach of the moral code was quickly dealt with. Culprits would be brought before the missionaries and the elders of the church if accused of smoking, drinking, stealing, lying or adultery. A guilty person who confessed, could remain in the community but were prohibited from the holy communion for several months. If they didn't repent, they were immediately evicted from the station. However, the rate of conversion among the Idakho was low despite the efforts of preaching and concerted attempts at conversion by the missionaries. Consequently, though a few of Idakho including Zakaria Shiholo, Joshua Imbai, Agumba Ikakasi, Daudi Luteya, Makumba Likhasashe Jeremiah Manuni, and Musungu Andambi were put on probation status of those who were yet to be baptized they resisted attempts by the missionaries to change their lives and the rate of conversion subsequently remained low.[clxv]

But why did the COG mission in Idakho experience such delayed success? Several factors can explain the delayed success. The central hindrance was the financial constraints that the mission faced since the establishment of the COG in the area. As already noted, the COG mission was supposed to come to Kenya as ACIM and due to lack of finances, the management was transferred to COG Mission Board in USA in 1926. The salaries of evangelists, the cost of building the churches and accommodation for evangelists were supposed to be met by ACIM. Further, the chronic financial problems were reflected at the level of staffing and logistics; the church depended on COG board in Anderson for churches and other necessities like financing medical care and education. Lack of finances, therefore, forced Bushiangala to hold their services under a tree a number of years before they built their own church.[clxvi]

Secondly, when the COG began its work in Idakho in 1919, the staff of missionaries consisted of African evangelists without a white missionary. The presence of the COG depended on fund donations by the Idakho. The number of evangelists employed were four between 1925 and 1929, and a fifth one in 1932 was directly linked to funds available.[clxvii] Purchases such as benches depended on donations from members and fund raising. The shortage of staff meant that a few people had to cover a great distance and above all, there was the problem of alternatives offered by the Roman Catholics, which created the problem of continuity for COG converts.[clxviii]

Evidence of COG missionary intolerance of Idakho practice of polygamy, alcohol drinking and arrogance significantly influenced the attitude of many Idakho. One informant complained that COG evangelists were quick to attack and condemn "wrong doers". He noted that evangelist needed to respect people more. What the COG neglected was to take into consideration the significance the Idakho attached to their cultural practices as well as the positive role that alcohol drinking and dances played in their lives.[clxix] While there were many Idakho who wanted to join the church, they did not want to abandon traditional their customs.[clxx]Certainly, many Idakho abandoned COG because of this problem. In addition, The influence of Chief Shivachi, that if the COG into penetrated Idakho it would cause his people to come under Paramount Chief Mumia who at the time had administrative authority over Wanga, Bunyore, Kisa, Butsotso and Marama, played a significant role to undermine the spread of the COG into Idakho.[clxxi]

Lastly, the geographical factors combined with population density explain the reason for the delayed success of COG in Idakho. The occupation of the COG in Bunyore meant that the church was quite moved by Bunyore dense population unlike Idakho which was

sparsely populated.[clxxii] Statistics indicated that Bunyore had a population of 29,612, while Idakho which neighbours Bunyore had a population of 14,149.[clxxiii] Therefore, the occupation of the post at Bunyore meant that the COG now had a foothold among the densely populated Bunyore people. This qualified the COG to take the lead in setting pace in Bunyore unlike in Idakho. Crowded domestic conditions also appear to have given the Bunyore impetus to find alternative sources of livelihood. "Bunyore was near Kisumu, a railway terminus and for the steam ship services with Uganda and all regions bordering Lake Victoria". This proximity to Kisumu enabled the Bunyore to easily engage in trade. For example, the Bunyore took their surplus commodities to buyers in Kisumu, where they obtained higher profits than Idakho. The Bunyore were thus exposed to colonial economy, earlier than Idakho, to the pressures undermining traditional clan society. Thus, the COG missionaries considered the Bunyore as the most eager group for new learning unlike the Idakho.[clxxiv]

3.5 Christian Village

After the establishment of the COG at Bushiangala, early converts and pioneer teacher-evangelists began to convert more followers in the hope of "obtaining and establishing a self supporting local church".[clxxv] Initially, however, the Idakho conversion to Christianity was slow. For instance, they preferred their children to continue contributing labour to the family compounds rather than "waste time" in the classroom. The families depended on boys and girls providing household chores. Parents and grandparents alike were also eager to preserve their cultural heritage for the future generations. Children were thus put under a great deal of pressure to submit to these wishes lest they jeopardize the well-being of the entire lineage and clan.[clxxvi]

Thus early converts were inevitably banished from their families, since they were considered "sellout" to their own people. Opposition to such pressure required a very strong will-power or great inducement. Consequently, early converts were drawn from marginalised groups in the traditional society. Variably, the early converts were orphans, strangers or people escaping from punishment, and forced marriage and widows. To abandon traditional belief for the uncertain, ill understood and unappreciated beliefs of Christianity was a step few in the Idakho community were willing to take.[clxxvii]

As a result of slow acceptance of Christianity among the Idakho, in the late 1920s, COG missionaries established a Christian village at Bushiangala. The village was a deliberate attempt by the missionaries to encourage their growing flock to leave within the confines of the mission station, and to live together as a Christian family. Unlike the traditional village, whose basis was kinship affiliations, the Christian village was made up of Christians from a particular location, not necessarily related.[clxxviii]

Leadership of the Christian village was shared by a council of church elders, headed by the senior- most teacher evangelist. Christian village leaders of the COG enjoyed a strong influence in recognition of their training and learning. The Christian village was only meant for the believers who built houses close to one another around the church. The end result of such village was the formation of Christian communities where the Christians would constantly be in close relationship with one another. Rules were rigidly enforced within the community. For serious transgressions, members were placed on probation and if they did not transform, they were dropped from the church.[clxxix]

The Christian villages were thus an attempt by the missionaries to replace African village life, by adopting the church structure as the basis of unity and cooperation. The Christian village was thus perceived as a centre of change. The forms of cooperation in traditional and Christian society were similar, although the social relationship that provided the rationale for co-operation was different. In establishing the Christian village COG also made possible a new social mobility and brought together people of different clans in new communities. The village church became the "family altar" and the church elders assumed the functions of kinship heads in the training of children, the maintenance of discipline and the organization of social and economic life.[clxxx]

Male converts learned how to make bricks and applied the new knowledge in the construction of a permanent church building at Bushiangala. Women converts helped each other with the care and teaching of children, the sick were visited and food was shared with those in need. This new relationship was demonstrated in the organisation of many forms of economic and social cooperation.[clxxxi] Land for the setting up of Christian village in Idakho used to be communial meeting places (*barazas*). In addition, other individuals with influence and access to wealth who lived near the mission station donated their own land for the building of the Christian village and school at Bushiangala station. This was the case of Zakaria Shiholo, Luhambi Muyeka, Andrea Shitendesa, Imunga Amunambi, Nicodemus Likakhasi, Mwetete Indiaka and Kalabai Kambasi who were able to arrange for the building of the Bushiangala church.[clxxxii]

COG missionaries and pioneer teacher-evangelists encouraged the development of Christian village for a number of reasons. First, the COG felt that as new Christians emerged from the protection of mission station further separation from the non-converts

could prevent them from succumbing to temptation of practice of ancestral propitiation; prohibition of traditional dancing, drinking alcohol beverages (or even participating in the making of such beverages), polygamy, seeking out the assistance of diviners or traditional healers. Self contained communal life would provide mutual support and lessen the chances of backsliding into traditionalism. COG missionaries and the early teacher evangelists also felt that separation from the unconverted was a commitment to Christianity.[clxxxiii] The Christian village was created as a shield against spiritual powers. In most cases, this feeling was reinforced by the hostility shown towards young Christians by members of the families and clans they had separated from. This hostility was so great that at times, converts were forced to relocate to their areas.

Secondly, the missionaries also believed that these pockets of Christian influence would help to evangelise the Idakho more rapidly. Christian village was seen as a necessary preparation for outreach to the Idakho community, through prayer, preaching and teaching. Finally, to the missionaries at Bushiangala, the development of Christian village was a means of training Idakho in self support. Since, Christian communities were in the near future expected to undertake the financing of education programmes in their locations. Consequently, the Christian village in Idakho had developed into a model of new forms of social transformation in education, agriculture and medical care. Women were trained in new methods of maternal care, hygiene and preparation of a balanced diet. Christian village thus acted as an agent of change by transmitting western culture to the rest of the Idakho.

Even though the importance of Christian village slowly declined in the mid 1930s, they were still instrumental for the establishment of churches among the Idakho. Indeed, by the early 1930s, conversion to Christianity no longer led to isolation. For example, when a convert joined the church and moved to the Christian village, he still retained his land and the inheritance rights of his lineage. Births, weddings and funerals also continued to be occasions when family and kinship bonds were renewed. Christian village thus marked an attempt by the COG to create an institution that guided its members, through the church, to accept a new Christian way of life.

Land pressure and the changing patterns of land ownership were major contributors to the decline of the Christian village in Idakho in the mid 1930s. Land in the Christian village had been haphazardly allocated, with little basis either customary or colonial law. Many who moved into the Christian village simply squatted on land owned by others. Little thought was given to individual rights of tenure. As the new community mushroomed from simple dormitories housing young unmarried Christians into the Christian village of family homesteads, little time was taken to consider the changing economic relationships and the demands of individual rights.[clxxxiv]

And as land pressure increased, the Christian village became reduced to a few of the faithful who owned land around the church. The increased awareness of the monetary value of land also led to disputes over compensation and families who refused to pay rent to the land owners on which the village was built were evicted from the Christian village. Furthermore, the emergence of individual land ownership coupled with the spirit of competitiveness, led to the breakup of the Christian village in Idakho in the mid 1930s.[clxxxv]

3.6 Western Education

Literacy introduced the Idakho converts to a new "world" and a different sense of self. Literacy meant a paying job, better social status and authority over those who could not write. The COG missionaries felt that converts needed to be literate in order to be able "to read the bible and to serve as teacher-evangelists". Pupils were also engaged in a variety of training, which gave them manual skills. Such training included brick-making, building modern and improved houses, hygiene and improved crop production.[clxxxvi] It was through such industrial training that the COG missionaries intended to introduce more than just the Bible to the Idakho.

The COG missionaries were chiefly concerned with reaching out to the youth, although they always consented to educate everyone who showed an interest in learning. The emphasis on the youth was due to the belief that young people were less entrenched in traditional beliefs and activities and, therefore, were more open to new ideas. It should be noted from the onset that majority of the Idakho displayed little interest in the missionaries of the COG and their work. The COG missionaries, despite resistance against them by the conservative Idakho elders, worked in collaboration with colonial administration to get parents enrol their children in schools. Accordingly, the early converts of the COG saw education as an important step towards acquiring a better paying job. This was attested to by the fact that the children of COG evangelists joined schools that were not only established by the COG Mission but by other missions, some of which were located outside Idakho area.[clxxxvii]

As the advantages of western education became apparent, an increasing number of the Idakho began to demand for more access to educational opportunities. Education was regarded as means of social mobility.[clxxxviii] Several reasons can explain this increased demand. The first was the experience that Africans had acquired from the First World War. The war had shown that Africans could only compete effectively in the colonial situation if they acquired western education, leading to an increasing number of Idakho who desired to share in the white man's civilization.[clxxxix]

The demand for western education was further crystallized by the introduction of the special labour circular which made Africans, particularly Christian converts, to demand an education that was functional, which could equip them with training such as teaching, clerical work; jobs that were paying and prestigious according to the village standard rather than doing manual labour on European farms.[cxc] In the early 1920s, for instance, clerks could earn as high as Shs 17/- per month while farm labourers were earning only Shs. 3/- per month.[cxci] Since education provided a most important avenue in the acquisition of better paying jobs, the Idakho therefore increasingly joined mission schools.

At the end of World War I, there had emerged a growing hostility to the denominational control of education and a frustration that missionaries had done little to develop education. Educated elite began to perceive that manual training and agricultural education could only lead to manual employment, and hence subordinate and low paying positions in the emerging colonial order. The income of the elite then meant that they were financially able to send their children to superior schools, where they received the highest education then available to Africans.

Young men in Idakho thus wanted to join schools not only to know how to read, write and do arithmetic, but also to get well- paying employment. Consequently, a growing number of converts of the COG were going outside COG institutions like FAM school at Musingu in Idakho and Kaimosi, to obtain more advanced education since education had become an important tool for economic betterment. More parents, therefore, began to send their children to schools in the hope that they would benefit from expanding colonial opportunities.[cxcii] The other reason for the increased interest in and demand for education was the development of Christian village. With the abolition of Christian villages, the converts immediately began to organize schools in Idakho.

The COG missionaries also made a major contribution to western education in Idakho by insisting that boys and girls should have equal access to education. According to the Idakho culture, women and children were considered as "objects and not subjects." For instance, most of the Idakho traditions stated that "women and children shall be given care and protection." Consequently, when the male head was not at home, his wife would say "there is no one here except me and the children." [cxciii] This traditional view is what was opposed by the COG missionaries. When they instituted education for women, the COG missionaries thus viewed women as "subjects". Accordingly, women were now supposed to be given privileges which they were previously denied for example, the right to eat chicken and eggs.

The COG thus faced "resistance from the Idakho elders difficult to overcome, particularly regarding girl child education. Idakho men believed that women were to perform domestic duties and not "waste" time in class. The COG however, encouraged girls to go to schools where reading and writing, elementary arithmetic, cooking, knitting, laundry

and child-care were taught. However, changing the community's perception towards girl child education was not that easy. This was largely due to the fear that educated women might "question the privilege of elders to select husbands for them."[cxciv] Initially, women seeking education were those who had convinced their fathers that education was necessary for a girl child or who had run away from home in order to pursue education at missionary centre. But after the 1930s, fathers who had converted to Christianity and received COG training began to push for the education of their daughters and sent them not only to Bushiangala school, but also at Bunyore girls at Kima and Butere Girl school.[cxcv]

The initial growth of schools was not spectacular. The North Kavirondo report of 1925 indicated that the number of schools that were maintained by COG Mission were 35 compared to FAM which had 129 while Roman Catholic Church maintained 103. Further, the report indicated that education was mainly maintained by missions.[cxcvi] By 1930, the COG Mission had established one school in Idakho that provided daily classes. In the school, therefore, the most pressing problem was availability of teachers. Due to shortage of teachers, the most promising   pupil served as a monitor cum-teacher, for the beginners.[cxcvii]

Another problem that confronted the pioneer school of COG at Idakho was learning materials. Lessons focussed primarily on reading and writing skills, although during the mid 1930s, village schools also imparted agricultural knowledge. Few books and supplies were available in the classroom. This forced students to go to Kima to access textbooks. Lessons were run with the aid of charts and pencils being used by pupils for writing. The bible was used for reading. The classes were also rounded off by hymns singing and praying.[cxcviii]

The third problem, perhaps the most serious one was that the COG mission saw literacy classes as an instrument of conversion. This meant, of course, that if conversion generally was failing, such a school was also likely to suffer. Similarly at Bushiangala station, the pupils attended day and night classes where they were taught to read and write and thereafter, the pupils were baptised. Pupils were expected to not only accept conversion but had also to abstain from alcohol. [cxcix]Yet interest in literacy appears to have been one of the principal factors that attracted the Idakho to the church and not the other way round. Missionaries without exception exploited this opportunity and required all their pupils to attend prayer meetings and church services. They treated schooling as an inherently Christian affair.

But despite these teething problems, the expansion of the COG can be attributed to several factors; the influence of evangelist- teachers, the influence of educated elite and the influence from the neighbouring communities such as the Bunyore, Kisa and Butsotso. Early converts of the COG took an active interest in the social welfare of their workers and provided classrooms, desks, chalk and chalkboards from their own funds. Although the COG at Kima played a role in financing education, it was slowly diminishing as the Idakho were now being employed as teaching staff. Literacy was a source of power and influence in Idakho. At best, a literate person stood a chance of obtaining white collar jobs, or clerical and other better paying jobs within the colonial system. Despite poor educational standard in the COG schools, the mission laid the foundation for future educational development in the area. And largely, due to their efforts, education transformed Idakho.

3.7 Medical Care

The COG, like other missionaries, was very much interested in evangelization through medical work. When the COG began its work at Kima in 1905, one of its challenges was how the missionaries could reach out to Africans through modern medicine.[cc] It was during this time that the North Kavirondo district report indicated that the district was ravaged by numerous diseases. Reports indicated that smallpox, malaria, venereal diseases, elephantiasis, leprosy, dysentery, pneumonia and yaws were prevalent in the district.[cci] Against all these maladies, Nyanza had only one government medical officer stationed at Kisumu. Thus most of the medical work was carried out by missionaries from their various stations.[ccii]

Nonetheless, medical work as a part of the COG ministry on the mission field started with the arrival of a white missionary, John Sheldon Ludwig,[cciii] who was accompanied by his wife Twyla Ludwig at Kima in 1927. The COG missionary Board at Anderson had become aware of the demanding medical needs in the field. So the board plugged into the system that would help missionary candidates prepare for the situation that awaited them in the field. [cciv] The local women at Kima, excited about the prospect of a place for medical care, pitched in to help. They advised the Ludwigs where they could put up a dispensary at Kima. It thus became the first medical centre of COG centre. As the care of patients quickly picked up, expectant mothers from BKKB including the Idakho, developed confidence and trust in western medicine and they gradually accepted to be treated at the dispensary at Kima.

The building of the dispensary was fully justified by the large attendance of patients.[ccv] Through interactions with the sick, the Ludwigs and those who assisted them became aware of the odds their patients (especially women) faced in the villages and thereby felt the need for education of the girl child in the community. Girls were drawn from BKKB, and apart from receiving medical attention, they were taught housewifery, sewing, knitting, nursing, agriculture and literary work.[ccvi]

By early the 1930's, Kima was a place bubbling with activity. But since Kima was located in a densely populated area, where scarcity of land became rapidly evident, there was no prospect for additional land to accommodate a larger hospital for additional medical services. An alternative site for the envisaged hospital facility was sought at Mwihila in Kisa, where land was available. In addition, the mission also set up a dispensary at Ingotse in Butsotso.[ccvii]

However, due to lack of funds, the Missionary Board of the COG could not embark on large scale medical services at Idakho. But due to demand for medical services at Idakho, the COG at Kima allowed the midwifery qualified individuals from Kima, who visited Idakho a few days each month. Element of child malnutrition, food taboos for women at home or village brawls leading to physical injuries, and superstitious tendencies were some of the common problems handled at Bushiangala station when the midwifery mission visited the area.[ccviii] The increment in the demand for medical services showed that Idakho were beginning to accept western medicine, at the expense of their traditional medicine.

3.8 Initiatives in Agriculture

Industrial and agricultural features of evangelisation were also introduced by the pioneer COG missionaries, with the hope of developing, "self-governing, self-supporting and self- propagating African churches". Baker argued that the Christian message could not be effectively proclaimed in a social vacuum. COG missionaries were, therefore, convinced that an industrial programme would provide an opportunity for Christian witnessing on a manner that most Africans could understand. While the Mission board insisted on industrial work as a necessity "in the founding of a Christian civilisation", it did not send more specialists to undertake the programme. This situation created confusion and delays in achieving the core aspect of evangelisation and the development of a Christian culture among the Idakho.

In 1913, the government began to direct part of its effort towards promoting western agriculture among the Idakho.[ccix] Indeed, the government encouraged "some of the more ambitious chiefs" to send some of their children to the government farm at Kabete (Kikuyu) to learn agricultural development, particularly the use of ox-drawn.[ccx] Further, COG mission board at Anderson, relied on Mr Ludwig to train BKKB converts on medical care and agriculture.

COG missionaries at Kima were convinced that an industrial programme would provide an opportunity for Christians witnessing in BKKB region in a manner that most could understand. Thus, the industrial feature was supposed to work hand in hand with evangelism. Twyla Ludwig had been particularly helpful in working with the women converts of COG in BKKB, she believed industrial training, would contribute to the training of Africans in manual skills, medical care and in agriculture. Due to limited

personnel and financial resources from the COG board, most of the Idakho converts went to Kima where the industrial programmes were offered.[ccxi]

The industrial programmes were however, important. They provided the Idakho with vocational skills with which to improve their lives. Marbel Baker (daughter of Baker) together with Twyla Ludwig taught converts, especially women, what they termed as "better" agricultural methods like planting crops in regular rows. Using the knowledge acquired from the mission station at Kima, COG converts in Idakho put a large acreage under cultivation by planting fruit and vegetables (cabbages, tomatoes and oranges) trees, and maize.[ccxii]

3.9 Initial Societal Transformation

Missionaries' efforts at winning converts and "civilizing" them in the Christian ways met with some resistance. However, those who had been converted took their new learning and experience back to their village beyond the mission stations reach. A good example is Thomas Etemere, who left the mission station at Kima and established his own evangelical team among the Idakho. For this study the reason why the Idakho converted to COG rests in its relation to the intersection between religious conversion and economic transformation. The first and most frequently mentioned explanation for conversion is that it allowed people to escape economic deprivation at personal and societal levels. Converts joined the mission in search of wage labour. Missionaries offered employment opportunities at their station and this prompted some of the pioneer converts to become Christians so as to continue earning a wage and living at the mission stations as cooks, teachers or construction workers.[ccxiii]

Missionaries also used economic enticement such as food and clothing to win converts.[ccxiv] These items made the converts stand apart from the rest in the community and thus became an envied class. For instance, the administrative report of 1918 noted that, "The natives as a whole were anxious to be taught and a marked advance in civilization is noticeable among mission pupils. Clothes were becoming the rule rather than the exception; this was partly due to mission influence."[ccxv]

Since conversion was a pre-condition for receiving clothing and education, a number of the Idakho initially began to see the economic advantages that accrued from the new religion. Moreover, through education, early converts became teacher- evangelists. Teacher evangelists were "generally more informed than the average locals. They were better clothed and more polite".[ccxvi] Carpenters and masonries also enjoyed considerable higher salaries and they were able to write and read. Consequently, the early converts became a wage- earning class and an incipient elite, with money to buy European commodities. Consequently, these early Idakho pioneer Christians used Christianity to demonstrate the role of conversion as a means towards social betterment and advancement.[ccxvii]

Marginalized members of the society e.g. witches, women escaping from forced marriage converted to COG with the aim of gaining a new identity. To these people, therefore, conversion constituted a therapeutic act of self- aggrandizement. Where an individual with a strong drive to affirm himself or herself could not achieve adequate gratification of that drive utilizing traditional socio-cultural means, conversion to a new religion in the face of a strong disapproval became the beginning of achieving the greatest gratification. Consequently, in the 1930s, the COG operation in Idakho, social prestige could be gained

through service in religious matters and the association with COG. Social prestige was thus used by the early Idakho converts to attract more Idakho to this new religion.[ccxviii]

Among the early Idakho converts, religious conversion set in motion various processes of change that manifested themselves in socio-economic advancement.[ccxix] To the new converts, their lives were now ordered on what was perceived to be a Christian life and hence "modern" way of life, replacing traditional training and socialization. As Christianity took root among the pioneer minority, conversion and association with the new Christian culture began to be seen as a means of economic advancement and success which, in turn, created inequalities in the society. Consequently, the perceived economic and social benefits of conversion were attractive and the new converts were important for attracting others into the new faith. Pioneer converts claimed that they became better individuals after conversion. For instance, Thomas Etemere who was among the first teacher-evangelist of COG in Idakho, gained by acquiring items like European type permanent houses and gaining knowledge of reading and writing he set the stage that economic and social benefits could be gained through service in religious matter and with the association with missionaries.[ccxx]

The acquisition of western education and material items turned them into some of the most influential people in their modern techniques in agriculture, investment in trade, and other activities, leading to economic prosperity and societal transformation. Acceptance of missionaries education by the minority pioneer Christians meant that the Idakho were open to many new innovations that helped to ignite the process of cultural transformation. By breaking with traditional beliefs and organizations, pioneer converts of COG opened themselves to the possibilities of contact with new groups and ideas. Their frequent

relationship with western missionaries thus opened their previously confined world. For example, early Idakho converts' contact with COG missionaries sometimes led to an economic payoff, since such exposure increased Idakho Christians' circle of contacts, enabling them to hear of educational, job or marketing opportunities that they could take advantage of.[ccxxi]

In fact, many pioneer converts enthusiastically reported positive post-conversion, economic changes and prosperity. Even those who did not experience any personal financial improvement were quick to identify with other beneficial changes like better health, less anxiety, stronger marriages, a new self-confidence, new insights as parents, or greater peace with Christian neighbours. Converts, therefore, interpreted their decision in a positive light and believed that their lives had improved in important ways because of their new faith.

3.10 Conclusion

This chapter set out to examine three key issues; namely, the establishment of COG in Idakho, the reaction of the Idakho towards the COG and the effects of COG programs on the social life of those who had converted to Christianity. The COG had very little success in winning converts. The lack of success was due to the problems associated with limited personnel and financial constraints from COG mission Board on full sponsorship of management of the church in Idakho. Strength of Idakho culture, and the new alternative offered by the Roman Catholic Church also proved more effective in realizing conversion in Idakho. Those converted during the COG initial stages in Idakho, were thus, non- conformist individuals of independent character, who were willing to leave

behind their homes and customary way of life. But the vast majority of Idakho remained conformist.

The enlightenment occasioned by Africans participation in the First World War, reinforced the importance of education. Also considering the fact that education was mainly provided by the missionaries, most Idakho ended up joining the church in order to be educated. Secondly, the material advantages that accrued to pioneer converts had demonstrative effect that encouraged others to join the church and school in order to gain the benefits. The early success of education together with other programs like health and agriculture were primarily viewed by missionaries as closely bound up with the central aim of saving souls, and creating an African self- supporting church. Education thus led to the emergence of advocates of modernity among the Idakho who became agents of social transformation. It is the development of this class that the next chapter will examine.

CHAPTER FOUR

CHURCH OF GOD AND THE EDUCATED ELITE, 1935-1953

4.1 Introduction

This chapter seeks to examine how Christianity increasingly became a religion of choice and a dominant aspect of the Idakho culture. Secondly after the 1940s, the educated Idakho replaced the ageing pioneer converts and were able to represent the views of the Church at a large and for mission and Church support for education. Acceptance of Christianity also led to increased demand for education. After the 1940s, education became increasingly universal and included a growing desire for secondary schools. The end product of the rapid acceptance of Christianity and education was broader economic transformation in the post-war period. Idakho saw education as an avenue for accumulation of wealth, through employment as teachers and government employees as well as through involvement in commercial activities.

Education led to the emergence of a small but growing middle class, who not only demanded the growing of high priced cash crops like Arabica coffee, but also became entrepreneurs, leading to the emergence of social classes among the Idakho. The growing of cash crops, and entrepreneurship, thus represented avenues for mitigating poverty and enhancing economic development for the educated elite. The critical factor, after the Second World War, was therefore how the educated could use their leadership positions to harness economic influence in Idakho and the related effects to these initiatives which this chapter examines.

4.2 Education in Idakho

The cumulative impact of several decades of socio- economic changes that had occurred, or were still going on in the family and kin led to an increasing number of the Idakho to conclude that conversion to Christianity was increasingly appropriate to their new needs. Among these new needs was the provision of education, which was becoming inseparable with the community development. Indeed, the population pressure witnessed in the post war years had made education a necessity. Post secondary training thus became the education demand of the emerging COG educated elite.

The efficacy of Christian missions in detaching Africans from their indigenous societies and reorienting them towards the needs of the newly imposed colonial culture was well established. Margery Perham views mission education as "an acid that eats away at the mortar of ancient structure."[ccxxii] Christianity provided the framework for the restructuring of the new order which colonial rule was imposing upon Africa.[ccxxiii] Consequently, the walls of traditional society began to crack. Some of the Idakho then began to accept western culture including Christianity and educational ideals as a means of adapting to the new order.

The development of education paralleled the expansion of Christianity. During and after the Second World War, there was increasing demand for education and included a growing desire for secondary and even university education among the Idakho.[ccxxiv] As a result of the Second World War, COG the, educated Idakho began to espouse divergent views on education. Thus, as the advantages of the COG became apparent in the interwar

period, an increasing number of the Idakho began to demand more access to educational opportunities.

In the early 1940s, Idakho religious tolerance was enforced by the administration and the protection of spheres of influence was effectively ended. Tolerance had one important effect on the Idakho society. At the level of the missions' educated elite, the effect was a new unity, cutting across denominational lines and which presented unified demands for educational development. There was a growing feeling among the Idakho elite that educational development in their area had been neglected. The demands for advanced educational opportunities were thus intensified.

From the time of its establishment, the COG mission had mainly focused its programs at Kima in Bunyore. This made Kima to be an academic centre of the COG. Further, inadequate funding from COG missionary board limited the mission's operations in Idakho. Therefore, Bunyore Girls School and Kima Central School (a boys' school) were the only known intermediate secondary schools run by the COG in the 1940s.[ccxxv] These schools, however, admitted selected students from several primary schools. Only the very bright and sometimes lucky pupils from Idakho managed to be admitted to the two secondary schools at Kima. Many times, it recruited students from its neighbouring locations of Maragoli, Kisa, Butsotso, Isukha Marama, Samia, and Marachi while other students came as far as Mount Elgon and Luoland.[ccxxvi]

To address their concern in the 1940s, a number of educated elite of the Idakho belonging to FAM, COG and Roman Catholic Church introduced a system whereby pupils of different backgrounds would be able to associate in games and education with one another.   By 1935, for instance, COG had built one sub-elementary school at

Bushiangala, with no primary schools that offered standard IV, V and VI levels of education.[ccxxvii] Besides, many of the pupils in Idakho had to raise the required fees since no government grants were available, and the Missionary Board grants of COG had been withdrawn during the depression years of North America.[ccxxviii] Similarly, the only agricultural training centre in the district was at Bukura.[ccxxix]

Shortages of funds and missionaries personnel in COG meant that the mission had to increasingly rely on African teachers, headmasters and educational supervisors, with limited training to run the schools. The situation forced COG missionaries to lobby before various planning committees and education officials for permission to secure full secondary schools in Idakho with better trained teachers. To achieve the goals, the COG leaders in Idakho sent some of its teacher- evangelists to Kima for further training. They were trained essentially as community development agents with some knowledge of health and agriculture and were expected to work partly through the school, but not to become school- oriented. Among the teachers who were sent to Kima were Victor Aluvala in 1936, Francis Andabwa and Richard Shireche in 1937, and Patrick Likobele and James Kubasu in 1938.[ccxxx]

The COG missionary Board trained African leaders to help in supervising COG schools. Such a need was strongly voiced by the church, with the support of the missionaries in the field. Ot'ichilo became inspector of schools in Bunyore, Herbert Khayo in Kisa and Butsotso and Nathan Mbwabi Likhaya supervised schools in Kakamega (Idakho-Isukha), in 1942.[ccxxxi]Curriculum and educational policy were not simply imposed on an amenable people. In practice, they developed and grew as a result of a bargaining process between all parties concerned. Issues like the role of the COG converts in educational

committee members in advancement of education, Local Native Council (LNCs) educational resolutions and initiatives, threats of desertion to other missions, request for funds and financial leverage all contributed to the evolution of COG and government educational policy.

In the post-war period, the overriding priority of the new elite was the development of secondary education. With the growing intrusion of the money economy and the need to employ educated Africans in the expanding colonial bureaucracy, a more advanced academic education became the key to financial and economic success for many among the Idakho. Consequently, the enlightenment, brought about by the Second World War, not only allowed the educated elite to steadily rise to prominence, but also actively undermined vestiges of traditional Idakho society.[ccxxxii]

Apart from the considerations for constant pressure on the government and COG to expand the outlets on education, the Idakho also demonstrated a willingness to tax themselves to the limit to provide more funds for schools in the area. Even when the government or COG appeared unable or unwillingly to meet their demands, the Idakho occasionally attempted to fulfil them on their own through LNCs.[ccxxxiii] Consequently, in public (*barazas*) and LNCs, the Idakho increasingly demanded greater access to better and higher education, including opportunities for overseas university training.[ccxxxiv]

The 1945 North Nyanza Annual report indicated that "the demand for education by Africans as previously stated, has no limit, and despite all our effort in organization and finance, will not be met for very many years to come".[ccxxxv] Consequently, Idakho educational aspirations, although partly realized, had to contend with financial realities

and the policies of the mission and government. The 1940's, therefore, saw the growth of a sizeable and prosperous educated elite appear on the scene, assuming positions of influence and responsibility in the church and beginning to gain local prominence. This new middle class used the church as a means of developing secondary education in the area. [ccxxxvi]

4.3 Social Classes

Church of God missionaries had been and were essential to the introduction and expansion of the mission in BKKB region. But without the devotion and drive demonstrated by the early Idakho converts, the COG mission would probably not have been accepted in Idakho. These pioneer Idakho converts and teacher-evangelists formed the basis of new Idakho elite that helped transform Idakho society in the 20th century. The early school of COG at Bushiangala was never intended to provide formal academic education. It was one part of an integrated learning system, whose purpose was to socialize and educate the Christians in a new way of life, for a new existence, dedicated to teaching and evangelizing others. As already been noted, education was virtually denied to non- Christians because affiliation was a condition of entry into the church school. Much of the school literature was based on Christian religion. But during the inter-war period, converts of COG leaders consolidated their position and became more successful in pressing for its demands.

Education thus, became part of a new value system less identified with transmitting Christian values and beliefs, and more with providing access to new occupational and social status. Education was valued for its cash returns and pupils were encouraged to study and generally become rich and influential in the new society in order to follow the

example of the highly qualified and well paid teachers such as Patrick Likobele, Richard Shireche and Francis Andabwa.[ccxxxvii] In addition, more and more women joined the churches during the period. With the frequent absence of men, who had left their villages to seek wage labour in urban areas or settlers' farms, the decline of traditional institutions and uncertainty arising from changes in society, more women joined the COG in search of a new vision of the world.[ccxxxviii] Christianity thus created new roles for women, apart from modifying the traditional ones.

The Idakho women who went to Kima were taught rudimentary methods of maternal and child care, nutrition and home-making. When these pioneers returned to Idakho, they shared the new skills they had learned.[ccxxxix] One of the women teacher- evangelists was Gladys Etemere who became a primary teacher at Bushiangala School. In addition, women who went to school initiated the beginning of a wage earning class of women among the Idakho, and it reflected the widening transformative impact of Christianity and its agencies. With the success of the pioneer working class women, Idakho encouraged their daughters to go to school not only in Idakho but also other areas such as, Bunyore Girls in Kima, Girls Boarding School at Kaimosi and Butere Girls. Subsequently, girl child education, just like that of boy child education, was seen as a future investment. Parents therefore, were willing to pay school fees for their daughters.[ccxl]

Church of God also produced an incipient commercial elite class, "entrepreneurs" which was significantly different from the ordinary agricultural peasants. This new class was made up of the commercial, clerical and agricultural elite. The new elite possessed "modern knowledge", wealth and power and hence, influence. They slowly, but increasingly became the reference point for the young and the old alike, and spearheaded

Idakho demands for social reforms, better educational facilities and the growing of cash crops. The group earned their wealth and status due to the positions they held in the mission establishment and their investment in the colonial economy. They may not have been powerful as the colonial ruling elite, but those who held positions in the mission as evangelists, teachers, and successful businessmen were at least wealthy as some of the African colonial administrators.[ccxli]

Entrepreneur group, thus, owned their wealth and status to their positions at the mission and their involvement in the market economy. Entrepreneurship, therefore, represented another avenue for accumulation for wealth. They established shops in Idakho where they sold agricultural produce as well as agricultural implements that the local people purchased from them. Given limitations on capital accumulation inherent in the colonial economy, the main outlets for entrepreneurial initiation among the Idakho was limited to produce trade and the establishment of maize mills. The greater emphasis of the production and sale of maize thus provided opportunities to enter produce buying and other forms of commerce.[ccxlii]

All those who became commercial farmers specializing in extensive production and selling of maize accumulated land holdings that were quite sizeable compared to those of ordinary peasants. Among these were Francis Andabwa, Jacob Litala and Thomas Etemere, these better farmers used their land to grow maize.[ccxliii] In Idakho, however, there is evidence that settlement in relatively unpopulated land during this time was pioneered, not by the landless poor, but by the enterprising farmers and teachers all who saw a chance to maximize their incomes through expanded production, trading in maize and general commerce.[ccxliv]

However, Idakho commercial entrepreneurs continued to face huge obstacles in the form of competition from Asian traders and a largely hostile colonial state. The state limited the number of traders for the sake of reducing competition and improving the quality of produce. To achieve and maintain these quality standards, closer control and supervision of the traders were required. What was much less pressing, though, was state assistance to African traders. Consequently, most Idakho traders continually lacked access to credit facilities and even while the demand for goods grew in the post-war era, the colonial state and commercial bank still turned a deaf ear to most Africans who applied for loans. Observing the success of the pioneer entrepreneurs, influenced more Africans in North Nyanza and indeed Idakho to apply for trading licences. For instance, between 1944 and 1947, the LNC approved licences for more than 170 new shops in the district. Most of these licences were for general trade in goods, hotels, maize (*posho*) mill and carpenter shops.[ccxlv]

But as the number of those who engaged in trade increased, there was an increasingly limited chance for many to prosper in commerce due to escalating competition. Many individuals thus lost out in commercial capitalism, while a few who remained did on a small scale, not for profit making but as a source of prestige.[ccxlvi] Examples of these successful entrepreneurs in Idakho, were Francis Andabwa, Harun Kasokha, Richard Shireche. They were mostly educated and wage labourers and succeeded in using entrepreneurship to accumulate wealth.[ccxlvii]

Two distinct social classes emerged among the Idakho as a result of conversion to Christianity. First there were the educated elite who had increasingly attained the status of

a middle class and there were the peasants. Salaries of the educated elite not only provided them with the means to maintain and expand their holding, but also allowed them to expand into cash crop production. They also invested in business and trade such as butcheries, (*posho*) mill and shops- which further contributed to accumulation of wealth.[ccxlviii]

Their new social status reflected in accumulation of resources, the construction of European –style houses and a demonstrated commitment to progress, through educating their children and taking advantage of the available economic opportunities in their areas. In all locations, it was the elite who pressed most determinedly for the establishment of schools for their children, better health care, and more government aid to finance African education and medical services.[ccxlix]

The elite's dominance of local colonial institutions further reinforced the advantages accruing from government policies. Friends and relatives of LNCs officials, or the officials themselves, were more often recommend for loans or licences to operate business, favourite among which was expansion of agricultural production. Thus, the elite's positions in the LNCs or their friendship with councillors gave them an edge over the peasants when it came to securing a loan or licence.[ccl]

Having clearly enjoyed certain advantages over the peasants, the elite were beginning to pass these on to their offsprings. The elite's wealth and education ensured that their children would receive a high level of training, which was increasingly becoming necessary if the Africans were to secure well- paying jobs. For instance Effie Andabwa Owuor, a Lawyer and James Nabwangu a medical doctor[ccli] were both children of the

pioneer COG teacher-evangelist Francis Andabwa. Indeed, education was quickly becoming the critical avenue for securing not only formal employment, but also entrance into the elite class, especially through admission into the better and higher learning schools such as Bunyore Girls at Kima and Kima Central Boys. But for the poor, payment of school fees increasingly became difficult. For instance, by 1953, it was reported that:

> "Many pupils had been sent away and several schools closed as a result of the short period given to parents to pay fees. It was shown that parents found it very difficult to pay fees all at once for all their children and at the same time pay poll tax and licences. At that time, it was reported that "the cost of keeping a pupil in a secondary Boarding School for a year is Shs. 1000."[cclii]

This was money that most poor households could not raise in a year; hence they could not educate their children sufficiently so as to compete favourably in the colonial economic system. Consequently, it was the children of educated elite who increasingly benefited from education during the colonial era.

4.4 Wage Labour

Labour in pre-colonial Idakho economy was largely controlled by kinship ties and responsibilities within the clan, which was the most important unit of social organization. Significant changes in labour use were brought about in Idakho by the Colonial Administration and as the pace of the take-over of lands for European settlement accelerated in Kenya. Among the authoritative works on Kenya labour history is that of Van Zwanenberg, which discusses wage labour, its evolution and consequences on African groups. He asserts that the establishment and growth of settler agriculture was key in the development of wage labour.[ccliii] In his view taxation "(*Kipande)* system" and force

assisted the colonial government to provide the much needed labour on the European farms.[ccliv]

The European farms remained predominately for European settlers with Africans as labourers and taxation on the other hand forced some of the Idakho to seek wage labour on these farms or in urban areas in order to be able to pay taxes, school fees and meet other colonial demands. Opportunities for wage employment in smallholder agriculture were nearly non-existent whereas the rapidly-expanding white settler economy was dependent on labour supplies for agricultural expansion and development. Therefore, the introduction of settler agriculture greatly changed socio-economic set up, in Idakho.

The colonial economy forced some Idakho men to seek employment in European economic ventures and forced them to abandon their pre-colonial economic responsibilities. Women realised that they did not only have to fulfil their traditional duties as women, the loss of male labour forced them to take on the duties previously carried out by men. The loss of male labour was often in the form of male migrant labour where men left their homes to seek employment in European plantation in Trans Nzoia plantations, Kericho tea plantations, while some went to Central Kenya at Ruiru coffee plantation. Consequently, the burden of coping with the difficulties of peasant farming and responding to new demands of the changing rural economy largely fell on women, who were forced to experiment and innovate in order to surmount accumulating problems. This led to both social and economic impacts on the women.[cclv]

The removal of males from their homes led to the destruction of family. Household no longer had father, brother, uncles and nephews thus leaving a void where the male used to reside. Male participation in the traditional roles in ceremonies rites and rituals was

distorted. The responsibilities older males had of guiding and steering young males was abandoned as many went to urban centres. Women could not rely on the social support and protection men offered them and in many cases became the defacto heads of the households.[cclvi]

Moreover, women found that they had to hire labour to substitute the absent male household members. With the continuous absence of men, many women acquired more responsibilities in order to contribute to the family financial kitty. These responsibilities demanded new initiatives, like applying new methods of farming and formation of women co-operatives groups within the church. These cooperative groups pooled resources together and engaged in commercial activities like pottery making, provision and buying and selling of agricultural produce, not only to feed their families, but also to safeguard the education of their children, as insurance for their old age.[cclvii]

Problems posed by male migrant labour were exacerbated by changes in bride wealth arrangements. In Idakho bride wealth had emerged from being a payment made in livestock to a cash exchange. As a result bride wealth was inflated and became a way of putting monetary value on the bride price. Thus, instead of the bride's wealth process being one that affirmed the woman's worth, it became one that judged the woman's worth. This inflation on bride wealth meant that most young men were unable to pay it and thus moved to urban centres to seek employment to be able to pay bride wealth.[cclviii]As stated earlier, the Idakho regarded the payment of wealth as a symbolic exchange of gifts between families. With the new financial constraint's experienced by males especially in the form of heavy taxation, wealth became a source of income that

males sought to control. This change represented a woman as a commodity and a value to her family.

Although, education changed the status of women in Idakho, a minority of women, particularly the wives of pioneer teacher-evangelists, had attended schools in the period before the 1940s.[cclix] After their education, they became school matrons, teacher evangelist and teachers. The advancement of girl child education was, however, not equally successful in Idakho where the COG had established a presence. For example, in the 1940s many of the Idakho were still refusing to send their daughters to school. Women were valued more for their labour contribution as cultivators than as teacher. In Idakho, a large number of girls would complete the first two years of education but were almost completely absent thereafter.[cclx]

Majority of women were peasant farmers largely depending on money sent by their husbands from urban centres for subsistence. In essence, while the educated were prospering, peasants' households became recipient families, with male members living outside the region and earning money upon which the rural households were dependent. Consequently, in contrast to the educated elite, the mass of the peasants, given their limited resources and their growing needs, had to struggle to simply maintain their standard of living at a minimum subsistence level. Indeed, lack of employment opportunities for the uneducated in Idakho forced thousands of peasants, predominantly males, to seek employment in towns and on European settlers' farms as migrant workers. Wage labour involved those with minimum or no education, and those with little or no land.

A labour census taken at the end of 1944 thus showed that about 46,952 Luyia were employed as wage earners.[cclxi] Lack of employment opportunities for the uneducated, undoubtedly contributed to the high and probably expanding levels of wage employment, as parents sought to meet their families' needs and sons sought an alternative source of livelihood. This pressure also noticeably changed the character of labour migration. Before the Second World War, while the percentage of men working outside their locations had been high, the time spent away had been short, averaging six months to a year. In comparison, after the Second World War, men spent longer periods away from homes and in some instances, took up permanent residence at their places of work. The long-term absence of the men made its impact felt on the sexual division of labour where women and children had to assume a greater share of the agricultural work than ever before. Towards the late 1940s, more and more of the absentee labourers began to send their wives money with which to employ someone to help with clearing, hoeing or weeding.[cclxii]

Others tried to make ends meet, by engaging up businesses. But the initial capital costs, subsequent operating costs and general low turnover of goods meant that few Idakho could expect to meet all their needs from a shop or trade. Wage labour became a crucial activity for most Idakho. Economic needs, particularly the inadequate returns from possible agricultural production and commerce, thus acted not only as necessary and sufficient propellants for increasing involvement in wage labour, but also spurred the motivation to acquire more education and hence attain better paying jobs.[cclxiii]

As Hay argues in her study of Kowe,[cclxiv] the involvement of the wage labourers in Idakho gave them opportunities to travel and hence coming into contact with great numbers of

people and so they were able to hear about various innovations before their relatives at home. These early migrants who were sometimes but not always COG converts, greatly increased mobility and range of contacts with Europeans missionaries and with other Africans. Some of the implements that were introduced into the area included ploughs and narrows.[cclxv] Their earnings outside Idakho allowed them to return home with a variety of different consumer goods. Their range of contact with other people and cultures, as a result of migrant labour, also influenced the adoption of new crops particularly white maize.[cclxvi]

Many of the innovations which spread during the late 1930s and afterwards were valued primarily for their labour-saving characteristics. This was true of the improved hoe blades, hand grinding mills and ox-drawn plough. By 1945, a large number of the Idakho had come to feel that the only real economic security lay in primary education and long-term wage employment outside the home.[cclxvii] However, a full- fledged class conflict did not emerge. This was because, after the Second World War, the educated elite still remained guided by the same concerns for hospitality and generosity. To a large extent, therefore, the growing wealth of the elite did not always lead to resentment among the peasants but rather emulation, or a wish to attain the same income and status.[cclxviii]

4.5 Agriculture in Idakho

As in education, the COG educated elite also increasingly began to challenge government policies on African agricultural development. For instance, during the early 1940s, the colonial government took a number of measures aimed at increasing African agricultural production. The first was the demand for the World War II for greater production of food stuff by Africans, particularly in fertile districts like North Nyanza, in support of the war

effort.[cclxix] The second was the need to avert food shortages that had been occasioned by the 1943 famine in Western Kenya. The cause of the famine could be traced on the environmental factors that prevailed in the North Kavirondo district.[cclxx] The causes of the famine could also be found in the limited access to adequate land which afflicted many households, particularly among the Maragoli of North Nyanza district, where population density per square mile had reached over a thousand people in some areas. On the ground, such figures translated into shrinking land holdings, soil degradation and decreasing yields.[cclxxi]

The government thus declared food security and soil conservation as the major priorities for North Nyanza district. Consequently, the agricultural staff while advocating for increased food production introduced an intensive soil conservation programme, warning that African farmers should not be allowed to imagine that the government was no longer concerned how the land was utilized, food efforts of the war notwithstanding. Indeed, it was argued that increased production of foodstuffs was not possible in the absence of measures aimed at promoting soil fertility.[cclxxii]

To achieve soil control and conservation in the district, H.E. Lambert, a retired administrator and Norman Humphrey, an agricultural officer, advocated using local authorities like clan elders who had existed among the Luhyia in the pre-colonial period and who were charged with regulating land use. Consequently in 1945, the North Nyanza DC identified traditional clan institution of the previously neglected village elders in organising communal labour for soil conversation.[cclxxiii]

In Idakho, control over the allocation of land and its use had traditionally been vested in the clan elders whose power included the trusteeship of unoccupied land and authority to arbitrate over land disputes both within the area of control, and with respect to boundary disputes with neighbouring clans. Since they exercised traditional authority over clan, the village elders, as possible agent for the dissemination of improved farming practices in the post-war years subsequently attracted the attention of the agricultural department.[cclxxiv]

However, the conditions that had previously been allowed for his intervention in the cycle for agriculture as distinct from allocation of land and the settlement of disputes had long ceased to exist and attempts by local agricultural officers to revive and use the village elder (for propagation of improved farming practices) proved a failure. This failure was a result of two factors. First, the traditional powers of the village elders had long been eroded by the gradual evolution of African local government structure (particularly the LNCs), coupled with the capitalist transformation in rural Kenya.

Africans were "more individualistic than ever before and would regard as an attempt to frustrate their individual enterprise, any communal or co-operative suggestion".[cclxxv] Consequently, while the village elders may have had control over land in pre-colonial period, this was not the case in the 1945 and most people no longer attached much importance to the authority of the village elders. Furthermore, the village elders were expected to offer their services voluntarily, though most of them turned their authority into money-making projects, through imposing a system of fines and punishments. Moreover, the insistence on government policy, without offering rapid benefits, was simply untenable. Consequently, the continued emphasis on soil conservation as the agriculture department's top priority resulted in militancy, particularly among African

peasants' farmers. This militancy took various forms, including mass resistance to agricultural policies.[cclxxvi]

In light of these protest, the government was forced to adopt a new policy which sought to encourage the improvement of agricultural techniques and prevent food shortages through diversification. Planting of cassava, sweet potatoes, sorghum and beans, was also encouraged rather than maize alone.[cclxxvii] Likewise, the basic aim of veterinary officers in North Nyanza became the introduction of good animal husbandry through the maintenance of healthy cattle in numbers appropriate to the capacity of the land, whether for improved breeding or for sale of animals products, such as meat, hides and skins, milk and ghee. But in order to ensure a healthy livestock population, the veterinary department had to take preventive measures against diseases endemic to the area like rinderpest, pneumonia, anthrax, foot and mouth, fasciolliasis and trypanosomiasis.[cclxxviii] Consequently,an agricultural officer argued that by combining animal husbandry and agricultural production, mixed farming would protect the soil while providing the farmer with improved standards of living.[cclxxix]

In order to realize the set objective in soil conservation and food security, the agricultural department adopted an individualistic approach to agricultural development. This method attempted to introduce improved farming practices through offering rewards under the betterment funds to "progressive Africans farmers".[cclxxx] The policy behind better farming "was to make use of progressive Africans farmers in the various parts of the district to initiate and demonstrate improve methods of farming and the use of new crops".[cclxxxi]Consequently, to qualify for the betterment agricultural fund, a farmer had to demonstrate to an agricultural officer that he had in cooperated soil conservation measures, adhered to a planned crop- rotation and exhibited good animal husbandry.[cclxxxii]

On being awarded a certificate of good husbandry, a "better farmer" could obtain farming equipment, like ox-drawn and a wheelbarrow that enabled him to apply manure to his land from LNCs at subsidized prices, and he could also sell his produce directly to the maize and produce inspection Centre. Other privileges available to better farmers included bonuses of ksh.2.10 per bag on maize prices and access to educational tours.[cclxxxiii] According to the agricultural department the aim behind the introduction of the betterment scheme was, "to make use of progressive African farmers, in the various parts of the district to initiate and demonstrate improved methods of farming and the use of new crops."[cclxxxiv]

Among the beneficiaries of these loans were Idakho COG educated farmers like Thomas Etemere, Harun Kasokha Timotheyo Yalaha and Jacob Litala[cclxxxv] who responded to betterment farming incentives. They applied for betterment loans and began moving towards individual and land holdings.[cclxxxvi] Even with the betterment funding, however, African farmers particularly, the better farmers in Idakho pressed for more government support especially for the growing of the high yielding and more lucrative Arabica coffee.[cclxxxvii] Africans had demanded the right to grow Arabica coffee since the early 1930s. When the permission to start planting coffee was granted in 1935, it was for robusta coffee, which was lower in market value than Arabica variant. The latter was reserved for white settlers and Africans were discouraged by colonial officers.[cclxxxviii]

There were several reasons for this negative colonial state attitude. For one, Agricultural officers and administrative officials had come to believe that Arabica coffee was not an appropriate crop for the area's climate. However, behind such concerns lay the even more pressing issue of food security. Households were encouraged to feed themselves and halt

soil degradation. Consequently, the state gave priority to policies aimed at promoting food security, including soil conservation and land reclamation. No thought was given to innovations, such as the introduction of high-value cash crop like Arabica coffee in Luyia, so as to ensure that the region was, and remained, a reservoir of cheap labour for the wider colonial economy.

Furthermore, there was also the perennial hostility of Europeans (settlers) coffee growers to any planting of Arabica coffee by Africans. Settler planters had monopolized the crop since its first planting in Kenya and they had successfully blocked Africans from planting it, even though the colonial state had neither enacted nor introduced any legal sanctions on coffee growing by Africans. But since the colonial government did not intend to provoke opposition from European coffee growers, it supported the settlers' views.[cclxxxix] Consequently, most of the coffee produced in the 1940s was roasted and consumed by the owners, or sold locally.

This situation defeated the objective of using coffee as a means of increasing household income. Moreover, during the war period with its heavy demands on the production of food crops, the state was unlikely to reconsider its position on Arabica coffee. Indeed, the famine of 1943 served to emphasize the primacy of food security in the minds of most agricultural officers. And thus, coffee planting was not considered as a viable answer to agricultural problems mostly found among the Idakho. [ccxc] However, the Idakho educated Idakho elite continued to press the government to allow its growing in their area[ccxci]

With continued pressure from the Africans, and having the desire to win the support of "better farmers" in implementing government agricultural policies, in February 1949, the

director of agriculture announced that growing of Arabica coffee by Africans should be allowed "in areas where coffee was known to grow well".[ccxcii] Consequently, the colonial agricultural officers initiated the growing of Arabica a coffee in North Nyanza District in 1951, though initially restricting it to better farmers with plots of at least seven acres.[ccxciii] This requirement was informed by the consideration that: In order to grow coffee a farmer had to have adequate land for food crops, fodder and cash crops for compost. It was therefore necessary to put a minimum to the acreage necessary for a person to grow coffees.[ccxciv] Agricultural officers in North Nyanza argued that most peasant farmers with low acreage had not adopted the improved farming methods, and risked producing low quality coffee. Indeed, strict regulations introduced regarding the planting, weeding, pruning and harvesting coffee meant that only a few farmers benefited from its growing.

4.6 Conclusion

The chapter has argued that the result of increased acceptance of Christianity and education contributed to the transformation of the Idakho in the post-war period. Education produced a commercial and agricultural elite. Increasingly, therefore, two distinct social classes emerged among the Idakho. First there were the educated COG elite who attained the status of a middle class. Their new social status was reflected in accumulation of resources. It was also instrumental in wealth accumulation, especially through engagement in entrepreneurial activities as well as pushing for education of their children and the community. Secondly, there were the peasants. In most cases, peasants had no education and little or no land and thus forced to seek wage labour outside Idakho, a factor that led to the development of remittance household families. Thus, the chapter has shown that after the war the church increasingly became an arena of sectional economic interest. These concluding remarks, with all the previous discussion in view,

appropriately brings to the point of examing in the next chapter some of the cultural dynamics that have interplayed with aspects of the COG development in Idakho.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN IDAKHO, 1953-1972

5.1 Introduction

By 1953, the COG had become an important agency of innovation among the Idakho. The COG reinforced the emerging post-war educational configuration where education was replacing both the church and the family as the dominant source of values and aspiration. As the church tried to adapt and maintain its role in interpreting the educational experience of its members, it found itself facing two forces, namely the educated and the peasants, which were drawing further and further apart. The Church of God seemed to interpret its role as one of supporting the aspirations of its African middle class and church leaders. But it was the provision of western education that proved most crucial in transforming Idakho society that this chapter examines.

5.2 Demands for Education

In the decade preceding independence, the Idakho's concern was the creation of greater opportunities for post- primary education. After 1953, funds for secondary schools expansion became limited, largely due to the government's diversion of funds to combat the Mau Mau. The Mau Mau insurgency, seen as a Kikuyu revolt against the colonial government, was specifically blamed on Kikuyu's independent schools, which were widely believed to have become centres of sedition. Consequently, during the emergency, many independent schools were closed. Although the colonial government argued that

uncontrolled and unsupervised expansion of independent schools might breed a similar upheaval elsewhere in the country, it would be equally dangerous for the administration to appear to be deliberately blocking African educational progress.[ccxcv]

Government officials were thus willing to lend a cautious ear to the proposals to establish new schools and even encouraged some independent schools to open, if they promised to avoid the alleged extremes of the Kikuyu independent schools, and if they desisted from asking for additional funding from the government.[ccxcvi] Government officials further encouraged missions to tame political activism of the Mau Mau type, through instilling Christian spiritual development into the Africans' education.

The COG Mission board sent a white missionary to Kima, Calvin Brailler,[ccxcvii] who became the educational secretary for the COG Mission in the mid 1950s. Brailler's responsibilities bore a strong inspectoral component by visiting the schools sponsored by COG regularly to check on their operation and to ensure that harmony and efficiency were maintained. Such visits enabled him to identify, rectify, or solve in time problems that surfaced among teachers. Some problems pertained to management; others involved relations among the teaching staff, and between the school and their respective surrounding communities. Brailler hired and paid teachers on behalf of the sponsoring Church and the government; planned the schools' physical development and kept the government informed about each of the schools managed by the COG.[ccxcviii]

In 1963, Kenya attained independence and immediately after independence, many far reaching changes in education were made to meet the demands of nation building. For example, there was a need for more teachers training colleges to train more teachers for the schools which were soon to increase in numbers and enrolment. Many secondary

schools were urgently needed to meet the output of the ever swelling primary and intermediate schools. Missions sponsored educational institutions in the country were made aware of the significant role education was to play in Kenya's path to national sovereignty and modernization.[ccxcix]

The government further desired to amalgamate smaller (private) teachers' colleges into larger ones in order to accommodate more trainees. College sponsors were given the opportunity to consider and agree among themselves regarding the prospect and manner of merging facilities. Indeed, Mwihila Teacher Training (MTT) of COG located at Kisa was eventually phased out in 1961 and the centre was converted into a Teacher training Centre. The other COG schools affected in the process were Bunyore Girls' School at Kima, Emusiire Boys' intermediate School at Kima and Ingotse intermediate school in Butsotso. They all became secondary schools in keeping with the post-independence restructuring of the country's system of education.[ccc]

Indeed, the contribution of mission schools to Kenya's education had gained such significance that a mission-government partnership became essential. The government committed itself to providing grants to: pay teacher's salaries, construct needed buildings, including teachers' houses (at the secondary level) and buy books, classroom and office supplies, as well as science equipment. The mission on the other hand supervised the management of the schools. Its responsibilities included: recruitment of teachers, provision of religious instruction materials and care of the students, monitoring teachers conduct and ensuring the maintenance of general discipline and appointment of school committees through which decision affecting the on-going life of each school were implemented.[ccci] Even though some of the schools were still undergoing the terrific pains

of growth, they made astounding progress, both on the development of physical facilities and academic performance.[cccii] During this period, Idakho had one Intermediate school at Shikunga that was being sponsored by the COG with no secondary school and two primary schools at Bushiangala and Iburendwa.[ccciii]

5.2.1 Girls Education

In the period between 1953 and 1963, the most notable development in Idakho was the changing status of women as reflected in the interest in girl child education, a development in which the COG took the lead. The COG leaders in Idakho emphasized that education for their daughters was not only an investment, but also an investment in the family's social security. This was from the evidence found at Kima which indicated that a high proportion of girls who had gone to school tended to use their education to help siblings and were more concerned with contributing to siblings' school fees than boys who tended to emphasize acquiring capital to buy land.[ccciv] The success of these female education made more parents begin to view girl child education equally important as that of boys. Indeed, educated women attracted a higher bride wealth. This was because like men, educated women were employed in various sectors where they earned salaries and attained the status of the elite in their own right. This attitude clearly reflected the new contrasting roles of Christian women and men, in the new economic situation of the 1950s.

However, the development of a COG girls' schools was never established in Idakho. There was only one girls secondary school within the COG sphere of influence at Bunyore. Many Idakho girls who passed the intermediate examination were forced to find secondary education either at Bunyore Girls and other mission schools such as

Butere Girls' Secondary School, Girls Boarding school at Kaimosi or African Girls High School, Kikuyu. A few joined either teacher training or nursing colleges, which were then ranked, lower than secondary education.[cccv]

5.2.2 Overseas Education

Africans and colonial officials also sought to expand opportunities beyond secondary education. In the mid 1950s, educated young converts in the region strongly voiced their concern to the missionaries the desire for further education abroad, given the limited opportunities in the country.[cccvi] The COG missionaries were flatly opposed to the ideas. The majority of key COG elders of BKKB in the General Assembly at Kima embraced the missionaries position on the matter. It was elders like Silas Akhahenda and Melkizadeck Matende who insightfully came out strongly in support of the young converts' request.[cccvii] For a moment, it appeared as though the missionaries and the majority of elders wanted to get their position sustained.

But a few years later, at the start of the 1950s, the COG at Kima selected a few Africans from BKKB and sent Jairos Asila and Ellison Eshitemi to Warner Pacific College in Portland, Oregon, USA, for a short theological course.[cccviii] The small step cracked the window of scholarship opportunities for the church's youth. At the turn of the 1960s, the COG at Kima also sent Paul Asila, James Nabwangu, Watson Omulokoli, Oliver Ob'bayi and Amelia Litondo at the USA under the auspices of the church to pursue their studies in fields other than theology. Among the students selected was James Nabwangu from Idakho who however opted for medicine.[cccix]

Indeed, the 1960s witnessed many young Idakho converts going to USA, Western Europe, Russia and India for higher education. The flow coincided with the government's programme of sending many students abroad for various responsibilities in many (public and private) sectors of post-independent Kenya. Consequently, the government began "awarding bursaries to students, whose missions recommended them as suitable for overseas education".[cccx] Indeed, if trained African men and women were to work for the independent government, they needed additional training, more than the facilities then available locally. University facilities in the country were dismally inadequate and, therefore, could not cope with the urgent and enormous need for advanced education.

These successful efforts in securing additional training and overseas study opportunities meant that when Kenya attained independence in 1963, both the new government and COG would have the services of a growing list of highly educated persons. It is, therefore, creditable that the COG colleges in the USA played a significant role in education development by accepting some of the COG youths, as well as those without a COG background for advanced educational opportunities. Many of the students came back equipped with various skills. Nelson Inginia, Zablon Sal'lenga, Green Oketch, Jonathan Olembo, Samuel Wakhu, Joseph Muyeka, Joy Makokha, Boaz Ombonyo, Adam Asiachi, Berida Samuel Ambundo are examples.[cccxi]Once back in Kenya, some assumed positions in the church while others held various positions in the civil service.

5.3 Development in Agriculture

It is also significant to point out the critical role the COG missionaries played in the promotion of agricultural production in the area. The Church of God had emphasised agricultural production by encouraging their converts to be engaged in agricultural

production. Women handled much of the agricultural work. However, the teaching of missionaries changed this practice. Many men began to share these agricultural activities which had previously been considered women's work. Changes in African farming during this period was also taking place. Many Africans could easily cultivate cash crops. They could also keep grade livestock. In addition, many African farms were demarcated and some farmers even had title deeds.[cccxii] Since Kenya was moving towards independence, it was necessary to improve living standard of people. Secondly, the Mau Mau war had made the British government to alter its plans concerning African development. As a result, the Swynnerton plan increased the development of African agriculture in the country. [cccxiii]

The permission to grow high income cash crops, particularly Arabica coffee in 1951 did not bring to an end the controversy between agricultural officers and Africans. Cultivation of coffee was initially restricted to farmers with plots of at least seven acres. But due to protests from better farmers, the minimum acreage was reduced to four acres in 1954.[cccxiv] Consequently, the mid 1950s witnessed many protests, against colonial agricultural policies. These protests, together with the emergence of the Mau Mau, made the colonial government become more responsive to the African's agricultural needs. The colonial government renewed systematic efforts to develop African agriculture. These efforts were given a major boost through the $ 5million made available by the Swynnerton Plan of 1954.[cccxv]

 Swynnerton Plan was a colonial agricultural policy that appeared as a government report in 1954, aiming to intensify the development of agricultural practise in Kenya. The plan was geared to expanding Africans cash-crop production through improved markets and

infrastructure, the distribution of appropriate inputs, and the gradual consolidation and enclosure of land holdings. The plan drawn up by the Deputy Director of agriculture, R.J.M Sywennerton, took advantage of the availability of colonial Development and Welfare Funds. It represented an abandonment of the earlier efforts to constrain the development of African commodity production of coffee and tea among other crops. Along with land consolidation and registration campaigns, the plan was to provide the essential elements of Africans agricultural development. It sought to consolidate and enclose land holdings, establish individual land tenure systems, provide capital and services, encourage extended production of cash crops and improve livestock, to enable farmers derive income from their land holdings beyond subsistence. Indeed, Swynnerton had argued that as a result of the plan "able energetic or rich Africans will be able to acquire more land and poor farmers less, creating a landed and a landless class".[cccxvi] The argument here was to create a stable African landowning class, with access to capital and income to be derived from the growth of cash crops previously a reserve for white farmers. The Swynnerton plan thus prompted agricultural officers to adapt to a new approach to farming techniques, aimed at developing production of export crops by African farmers.[cccxvii] Notably for the Africans, the Swynnerton Plan permitted more Africans to grow the high priced cash crops particularly Arabica coffee. And for the first time, Africans were allowed to grow tea after 1954.[cccxviii]

Better farmer benefited from these new government initiatives in agriculture. For instance, government reports indicated that there was a general awakening amongst farmers in their desire to consolidate and enclosure their land, a trend which was spreading throughout the district.[cccxix] Through the consolidation and enclose of their land,

COG farmers in Idakho like Francis Andabwa, Thomas Itemere, Harun Kasokha, Timotheyo Yalaha and Jacob Litala had accumulated more land and were among the leading farmers in the area. Further, apart from growing coffee, they also began to grow tea thus allowing accumulation of more land and resources, well above what their peasant neighbours could achieve.[cccxx]

5.4 Medical Department

Kima, the COG first established a presence, was developed earlier and more extensively than Idakho and it hosted most of the departments run by the church. The COG missionaries had built a hospital at Kima that served people of BKKB. Due to high demand for medical services, COG missionaries established a second hospital at Mwihila.[cccxxi] These hospitals expanded quickly, with a maternity unit following soon after their establishment. The Idakho on the other hand only received limited services at the station where the COG had established itself at Bushiangala, further the Church did not have a resident doctor of the COG in the area. This meant that for the most part, the Idakho received medical services at Kima. Because of lack of funds, the Missionary Board could not embark on large- scale medical services at Idakho. The best that the church did was to let Lehmer and Hansen (trained nurses of the COG) from Kima to visit Bushiangala for a few days each month to carry out some dispensary work alongside evangelism.[cccxxii]

During their visit at Bushiangala, the nurses encouraged converts, with majority of patients being women, more so expectant mothers who had developed confidence and trust in what the nurses offered.[cccxxiii] Foodstuff such as powered milk, corn meal and cooking oil were given to each mother and child that attended the clinic at Bushiangala

when the nurses visited the area. Besides providing medical care, the nurses also used

songs to attract women in Idakho.[cccxxiv] Traditionally, music was an innate expression in

Idakho. Singing consoled excited and encouraged the Idakho to face life situations. Thus,

situational singing other than celebratory occasions facilitated some significant

accomplishment or victory over an otherwise unnerving drudgery. So mourning at

funerals, rejoicing at harvesting crops, grinding of sorghum or going to and returning

from battle, were occasions the Idakho translated into opportunities for vivacious singing.

Songs of the COG eventually attracted Idakho to learn the new songs while the nurses

performed their tasks. Indeed, these proved to be a successful incentive that attracted

Idakho women to the church.[cccxxv] Music thus, became an essential part of evangelistic

efforts that the COG used to attract converts in Idakho, especially women to receive

medical services. This can be better illustrated as one of the informants recalled:

> "The Roman Catholic Church in which her husband was a member did not
> attempt to make peace between her and the husband. Instead, the leaders and
> some members of the church in the area accused her of being unsubordinated
> to her husband. She decided to go to Bushiangala, as she had heard about the
> white missionary nurses who visited the place to offer medical services and
> who were keenly aware of the hardship women faced in the villages. So she
> went to Bushiangala and the first thing that attracted her attention was the
> songs sung to praise God by the women who had gone to receive medical
> training. It was these songs that influenced her to join the COG, given that
> her husband was so violent to her."[cccxxvi]

Moreover, the application of music to evangelise the Idakho it also introduced literacy

among the people as the songs were provided in manuscripts. Following Kenya's

independence, most of the work of COG missions in Kenya, including hospitals was

gradually transferred to the local management.[cccxxvii] Idakho on the other hand with no

dispensary or a hospital sponsored by the COG in the area, continued to receive medical

services at Kima. The COG leaders from Idakho therefore, agitated for the establishment

of their own dispensary. In addition, they also complained about the management of the

hospitals at Kima and Mwihila and distribution of medical grants from abroad. They specifically observed that most of the managers and workers at the hospitals were from Bunyore and Kisa. The Idakho however, got their first dispensary sponsored by the COG in 1976.[cccxxviii]

5.5 Peasants, Urban Migrants and Women

The educated elite played an important role in bringing about the process of change in Idakho. For the educated elite, the church had provided a vehicle for economic development. Church membership, therefore, not only provided the elite and their children access to higher education, but also practical experience in administrative procedures and behaviour according to new social norms. These were important skills for holding responsible positions in local government. In many locations in Idakho, administrative officers were men who had attended mission schools.[cccxxix]

By the time the missionaries board were handing over the management of the church to the local, the COG no longer encompassed a single community, but rather a series of interrelated though increasingly separate communities comprising of the elite, women and the youth. Thus, its programmes tended to serve clanl interests. In the 1960s, COG support became increasingly directed towards the concern of the middle-class leadership's based on education, business ventures, urban employment and the domination of the position of economic influence among the Idakho.[cccxxx]

As these new economic patterns developed, women and children increasingly dominated church membership among the Idakho converts. Yet, the male educated elite still controlled the most influential positions in the COG and directed its attention to the needs

of the educated. For instance, although there were qualified COG women teachers in the 1960s, none of them was a head-teacher. Although women could preach or lead prayers and hymns in the church at the local level, but they rarely sat on the important finance or nominating committees. One major limit to the power of women though was the dissent especially in their views about women exercising leadership over men. In this conflict, COG did little to serve the needs of women whose roles were seen by the African leadership as one of performing a supportive role in the church development.[cccxxxi]

In one way or another, missionaries of the COG were great innovators in Idakho. Becoming a Christian brought considerable material advantages; 'modern', 'progressive' sector with paid jobs such as teachers and the pursuit of wealth or wider knowledge. The gradual shifting from economic self sufficiency within the family to increasing dependence on outside markets and a money income from wage labour affected both division of labour and social cohesion of the family. With regard to division of labour where increasing demand for a cash income was met by a more intense cultivation of the soil for the production of commercial crops, women had to bear the brunt of extra work while men were out on wage labour.

The economic part played by the wife in the household economy became quite different from that in the traditional family. She was no longer tied down to so many daily duties of the family, provided her husband was wealthy enough to afford hired labour, women gained a new freedom. They were relieved to most of field work and hence devoted more time to bringing up her children and to a more elaborate house- keeping, with the demand for a higher material standard of living.[cccxxxii] In many ways, this weakened the economic case of polygamy. At the same time many young men accustomed to looking after

themselves through the life of urban towns or as wage labourers on Europeans plantation led to a bachelor life and postponed marriage until the late twenties. Moreover, widowers, who formerly were forced for economic reason to remarry often stayed single.[cccxxxiii]

Apart from Christianity, the establishment of colonial rule in Kenya provided some insights to some women in Idakho who came to know their rights within the new social environment. During pre-colonial era, women were totally submissive to their husbands. But with the establishment of colonial rule, new social and economic development occurred which drastically changed the position of women in Idakho. COG preached against some cultural practices such as polygamy and other related anti-Christian practices.[cccxxxiv] Women converts therefore, demanded that they should not be bound by such customs that were contrary to Christianity. At the same time, women were able to generate their own cash income as wage labourers and some became teachers, matrons and evangelists in the area. All these opportunities allowed women to acquire some degree of independence.

The COG had expressed their desire to improve the lives of women and their families through education and had recognized that without female education, progress would be hindered. COG leaders, notably James Kubaso, Luhambi Muyeka and Francis Andabwa, strongly supported increasing the responsibility of women in church affairs and also encouraged greater equality between husbands and wives, insisting that domestic decisions be made jointly, or even that certain decisions be delegated to the wives.[cccxxxv] Despite such progressive ideology, women's leadership roles did not increase to any greater extent in the church and schools. One major limit to the power of women, though

was the dissent among themselves, especially on their views about women exercising leadership over men. Moreover, they rarely sat on the important finance or nominating committees.[cccxxxvi] In this conflict, COG did little to serve the needs of women, whose role was seen by the Africans leadership as one of performing a supportive role in church development.

Besides Christianity, the colonial administrators such as DC and chiefs who were in charge of their respective administrative units also played an important role in bringing about the process of change in Idakho. Of all these, chiefs were very central in bringing about the process of change in Idakho. The chief acted as a link between the people and the colonial administration. As government employees, chiefs in particular were required to develop their locations. The majority welcomed the new ideas.[cccxxxvii] They encouraged new farming methods and construction of schools in the area.

In addition, another group that played an important role in bringing about the process of change in Idakho were those who had engaged in migrant labour. The engagement of many house holds in Idakho as migrant wage labourers had a range of impacts on the local population. The main agents of change were the youth who were less conservative than the older generation who opposed change. Youth wanted to alter some of the traditional customs and introduce new ones that met the more advanced ideas that they had acquired from the places where they were employed.[cccxxxviii] A majority of young unmarried men from Idakho engaged in migrant wage labour in order to acquire wealth and to be independent from pre-colonial control. Lastly, migrant labourer came with new food and cash crops that they had become familiar with in places they had been to. Their

presence in the area persuaded the Idakho people to integrate such new crops in their

agricultural systems and modern farming.[cccxxxix]

5.6 COG leadership and Conflict

As the younger better educated sons of pioneer teacher-evangelists took control of the

church, their views regarding the role of the church in the society contrasted with those

held by their fathers. This generational conflict had a significant impact on the church

leadership in Idakho. The leading positions were increasingly coming under the control of

the educated youth. Church meetings were chaired by the elderly men who had achieved

a new legitimacy and status through the church.

The youth continued to give dedicated and selfless service to the church without derailing

from principles laid down by the first new areas COG settlements.[cccxl] However, Church

elders were increasingly getting out of step with the views and aspirations of younger

members of the church. While the Church elders insisted that only those who received the

"inward light" were called to leadership and could exercise such leadership on a

voluntary basis, the younger leaders saw the positions in church as a form of salaried

employment.[cccxli]

Tension between the Church elders and the youth in COG church developed and

increased. As the youth in the church expressed their desire to actively participate in the

church programmes, not only by merely being present at some given church functions but

also by assuming responsibilities in the local churches. The elders held that young people

could not be trusted with church responsibilities. However, in the mid 1950s a young

missionary, Calvin Braillier,[cccxlii] came to Kenya and immediately became involved with

the supervision of COG sponsored schools. As he supervised the schools, he interacted with young people in the Church who were also involved in education. Braillier's previous experiences included some involvement with Christian youth in the USA. What he had learned about American Christian youth enabled him to identify with what the African youth in the church were seeking. Gradually, he started to share the youth's aspirations and concerns with the earlier missionaries and the African elders.[cccxliii] Therefore, organisation of a youth fellowship was a distinct advancement for the COG. A conscious attempt was being made to give more attention to the needs of young people in the church. In the late 1960s, a full-time missionary worker was appointed at the General Assembly, through the Youth Council of the COG headquarter in Bunyore and the first youth camp was organized in the region involving the BKKB. Boys and girls were allowed to meet and discuss issues that affected the youth of the COG and schools. Elders of the COG were therefore, discouraged from preaching against the habits of the youth.

Elders of COG also accused the American missionaries of introducing evil practices like dancing during worship in the church. Consequently, a schism developed between the educated youth and Idakho elders. Some of the elders even began to openly preach against the educated. The reaction among the educated was to avoid attending the churches where the elders were in charge. But with more pastors graduating from the Kima Theological College (KTC), church leadership increasingly came under the control of young pastors, who now favoured the youth.

The COG did not wholly condemn practices of the Idakho. Some of the Idakho practices were accepted by the church for example, bride-wealth, circumcision and the retention of their African names after baptism. More problematic but no less important was the issue

of polygamy. Although a few Idakho challenged the doctrine of polygamy, majority of converts of COG accepted the rule of monogamy as part and parcel of Christian teaching. Moreover, once pledged to monogamous relationship through by membership to the church, reversion to polygamy was not only sanctioned by loss of social and religious status but by material disadvantages as well. For the teachers and preachers of COG economic dependence on the mission meant the loss of their job, and for the ordinary members, it meant expulsion from the church.

The growing scarcity of land finally led to an increasing fragmentation of holdings, a fact which indirectly worked in favour of monogamous marriage. In addition, women, particularly those who had been in school, became opposed to polygamous in a way they were not before.[cccxliv]And with the transfer of power from COG missionary to Africans in 1972, the church organisation came under the management of the young educated Africans. These young church leaders used the church to propagate their economic interests and the philosophies of the pioneer elders, concerning the spirituality of the church, increasingly became irrelevant.[cccxlv]

5.7 Transfer of COG's Power and Property

Because of the prevailing political atmosphere around the world in the 1950s and 1960s, in relation to colonialism, movements toward independence, the Missionary Board of COG decided to transfer the work of leadership to the local people. This process was finalized in 1972.[cccxlvi] Voices calling for independence from colonial domination were heard, especially in Ghana. The impending political changes prompted missionaries and their sponsoring Boards to urgently consider self governance of the Churches. The COG churches were not an exception.

Before the mid-1960s, the missionary Board at Anderson and executive council of the church in Kenya had started to deliberate modalities for the transfer of the work from the Board in USA to the General Assembly in Kenya.[cccxlvii] Besides, young men who had graduated from KTC were considered for leadership of the church. By the time of transfer of power from COG missionary board to local leadership at the end of 1972, the COG was managing over 262 Churches, four secondary schools, 80 primary schools, 2 hospitals and a dispensary and one theological college.[cccxlviii] Kima in Bunyore, being the headquarter of COG benefited in much of the activities of the church on the part of financial support. Limited funds to support church programs in Idakho especially in health and education hindered the COG work in Idakho.

5.8 Conclusion

This chapter has shown that during the 1950s, there was an increasing demand for secondary education particularly overseas training. In response to this demand, COG missionary Board at Anderson sponsored qualified COG students to get placements in European and American Universities. As in education, the Idakho made new demands in the agricultural field. Government efforts were given a major boost through Swynnerton Plan of 1954. The plan sought to encourage cash crop production among the African farmers, which enabled them to derive substantial income from land holdings. Idakho was also characterized by a further distinction in social classes. Indeed, with the transfer of property from COG Missionary board to African leadership, the Church came under the control of the educated elite. The elite who had monopolised access to higher education and the new economic opportunities increasingly used the church as a vehicle for economic gain and drew upon their own ranks to determine the future role of the

church. The chapter has thus demonstrated that the church increasingly became an arena of social transformation.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study examined the impact of the COG in Idakho. It specifically examined the role of the COG converts in Idakho transformation. The study utilized conflict functionalism theory that explained the adaptation and integration among the Idakho when they interacted with Christian values through the COG. Apart from chapter one, the subsequent chapters have shown changes that took place in Idakho society when they interacted with Christianity. Specifically, chapter two undertook an overview of the Idakho aspects of the political, economic and social organization during the pre-colonial period. Chapter three focused on the establishment of the COG and the response of Idakho to the church. Chapter four focused on the role of the COG elite in the development of education in the area. Lastly, chapter five directed inquiry on the development and change in the Idakho society as a result of Christianity.

The migrations, settlement and the evolution of the social, political and economic institutions of the Idakho in their newly acquired country was also reviewed. It is revealed that migrations and settlement of Idakho took place between 15th and 17th Centuries. In addition, the study reveals that though the Idakho spoke related languages, followed similar pattern of living and enjoyed common cultural practices, there wasn't a common ancestor of the whole Idakho. Each clan had its own peculiar tradition of ancestors and migration. It further suggests that Idakho had been a congregation of various people who came from all directions and at different times.

In the analysis of Christianity as an agent of change, it has been shown that the area came into direct mission contact as from 1913 when the Roman Catholic Church established its mission station at Eregi. By this period, the Idakho had already developed complex economic, social and political institutions, which were all cemented by traditional culture. Indeed, there was no aspect of community life that could be removed from the context of their culture. Such beliefs also permeated the thought and conduct of an individual. Thus, when the COG established its first church in Idakho, they encountered a society that had already interacted with Christian values.

The COG however, established its station among the Idakho in 1919 at Bushiangala where it was well received. The traditional social structure of Idakho society and its inherent values definitely weighed more heavily in shaping their reactions to Christianity. The Catholic tolerance of local customs was a hindrance to the COG efforts to win converts among the Idakho. Catholic converts were permitted to retain some of their traditional practices such as dancing, alcohol drinking and polygamy, while COG converts insisted that all their converts were to stop such pursuits.

It was this reluctance and in some cases hostility, shown by the Idakho towards COG that partly forced a change of strategy among the missionaries. First, the missionaries intensified the notion that the preaching of the gospel alone could not transform African culture. The missionaries, therefore, introduced western education and medical care, which combined the conversion of Idakho with the secular goal of "raising their material standard of living" through the provision of western education and medical facilities.

The study also sought to unravel the factors that led to increased Idakho conversion, increased demand for COG education and health that provided opportunities to the COG mission to win converts in the area. For a variety of reasons, successive elite groups found advantage in being allies of COG mission in promoting their secular concerns especially education. Indeed, it was through education that the Idakho would embrace, and then demand, for provision of medical services from the COG.

The missionaries introduced mission village in which intense campaigns against Idakho culture were conducted. Although the Christian village rapidly proliferated in Idakho in the mid 1930s, it soon became a major source of conflict- both among converts and non-converts. The Idakho resisted the radical changes including the challenges posed to kinship relations, burial customs, divination, polygamy and circumcision and a myriad of other Idakho practices including food norms. The result was the "double life" Christian who while professing Christianity, secretly participated in the traditional belief system and practices.

Converts at the Christian village at Bushiangala, became the patrons who built schools, supervised their operations and in the process provided compelling proof that the Idakho could profit from innovations that accompanied colonial rule. The Idakho elite played a prominent role, as partners in shaping the COG secular policy. The new elite began a renewed promotion of education in the region. Under their prodding and direction, schools were established in the area. This personnel force complemented other impersonal forces, such as finance and technology, also associated with the development process.

The partnership that grew between the pioneer Idakho elite and COG missionaries was clearly a two way process. The missionaries at Kima came to rely on the Idakho teacher evangelists to spread the Christian message. Church of God missionaries also depended on local communities to build and maintain the net work of school, to pay the teachers, and to oversee many of the routine operations of the out schools with little or no missionary intervention. In turn, the Idakho depended on COG educated elite for services and support. Idakho strong financial support, local initiatives and repeated requests, were ways through which they demonstrated their concern for accelerating educational progress. Thus, COG elite not only shared in shaping the development of education, but also in the social transformation of their progress.

Taxation and the (*Kipande)* system forced Idakho men to join wage labour on the European settlers' farms. The removal of male from Idakho profoundly affected women, the loss of male labour forced women to take on the duties previously carried out by men. For example women had to hire labourers substitute for absent male household this cost added to the economic strain of the family. Problem posed by male migrant also meant that most young men were unable to pay bride price, thus, many men in Idakho had to seek employment in urban areas in order to earn enough money to make the payment Women thus lost husband economic support at the onset of marriage, thereby putting them in a disempowered economic status from the beginning of marriage. In addition to wage labour, another group that played a significant role in facilitating the process of changes were the entrepreneurs. They established shops in Idakho where they sold agricultural produce that the local people purchased from them.

When COG missionaries arrived in Kenya they intended to provide both literacy and vocational training in order to realize their religious goal. The ldakho converts also came to share the missionaries concern for making schools the agent of the church, though they increasingly held other ideas about education. Any Idakho youth or parents with aspirations for mobility in colonial Kenya perceived that a certain kind of education were essential. The Idakho realized that if education was to open doors of opportunities for them, then they needed to have academic studies and even higher levels of training including university education.

Education thus became an important transformative force among the Idakho. One major result of this transformation was the creation of Idakho educated elite, who used the church to pursue economic interests. In the 1950s, the emerging middle class was able to monopolize access to higher levels of education and new economic opportunities which the government provided. The educated elite also used their influence in the church to ensure that their privileges of their groups were passed on to their children by educating them. The church continued to draw the majority of its membership from the underprivileged, particularly the women, whose future very clearly remained that of peasant farmers. To some extent, they shared in the general economic prosperity brought about by the church. But they had an increasingly limited voice in many of the decisions which most affected them. Women, in particular, still valued the church as a vehicle for wider contact and communication, as a stimulus to self- help and as a source of support in time of hardship or need. Often, the church was still the only form of community organization in the rural areas and the only institution capable of bridging the gap between the village and the outside world.

Consequently, when the COG arrived in Idakho, education was set forth as a means of not only gaining adherents, but also of changing the society. Through education, COG missionaries hoped to produce a band of Christian converts who would, in turn, convert their fellow Africans. As education produced the first modern elite among the Idakho, many families began to see the advantage of education in the colonial situation and consequently, sent their children to school. Missionary education thus produced the elite among the Idakho. These elite who were driven by capitalistic tendencies of accumulation, worked hard to transform Idakho.

6.1 Recommendations

Muchanga noted that Idakho had thirty clans while Mwayuuli noted that Idakho had fifteen clans. This is contrary to the present evidence derived from oral interviews, informants mentioned 54 clans. Further, the study has shown that all clans acknowledged their migration from outside Idakho. But what was more interesting was that some clans first ancestors claimed to be Maasai and Nandi e.g. Abashimuli, Abamuli, Abashisha, Abashirotsa, Abakondi, Abashikulu clans, they belonged to a linguistic group other than Bantu. The extraordinary thing with above clans informants surprisingly detailed process of assimilation. It can, therefore, be argued that this must remain largely speculation, until more research is carried out regarding the Idakho clans.

Based on the findings of this study, it has come out clearly that although COG was one of the missionaries that had earlier contact with Idakho community. The Idakho were evangelized by other mission groups such as FAM and Roman MHM as shown by the study. The study has pointed out how the MHM were active to win converts in this area. It would be vital on further research on the contribution of MHM in Idakho social

transformation and to investigate nature of competition and variance on winning converts among the Idakho.

The study has also shown that COG missionaries intolerance of Idakho practice of polygamy, alcohol drinking, burial customs, divination and a myriad of other practices significantly influenced the attitude of many Idakho. While there were many Idakho who wanted to join the church they did not want to part with their customs. Some aspects of traditional Idakho culture still exist to date. A study is needed to establish why certain customs do not die even after many years of strong external influence. Moreover, as much as the COG is credited for the tremendous impact it had on the advancement of western education, COG however, lagged behind in wining converts in the area. Missionaries of the COG planted new religion, education and culture where they urged Idakho to do away with their culture, traditions and religion which created animosity between COG Missionaries and Idakho. On the basis of this implication therefore, the study recommends that any reform and innovation in a society local people should be involved for it to succeed. A study should be done to evaluate if there were problems that COG brought to the Idakho converts and non converts.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

SCHEDULED ORAL INTERVIEWS
Interview Schedule for Elders of Idakho Community.
Interview Date_____
Place of birth_____
Clan_____
Occupation_____
Sub-location/village_____
Gender_____
Age_____

A) Origin and Early Relation

1.   How   long   have   you   lived   in   Idakho?
_____
2.   Which   homeland   did   the   Idakho   originate   from?
_____
3.(a)   Briefly   let   me   know   what   you   know   about   Idakho   clan   ?
_____
_____
_____

(b). Who is the idakho founding ancestor?_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

4 (a) .Were the Idakho related to any other ethnic group strongly in the beginning?
_____
_____
_____
(b)   Describe the relationship?_____
5. What people did the Idakho come to encounter during the early times that is their
neighbour?_____

6. How did the Idakho relate to them in:

   a) Language?_____
   b) Customs?_____

B. Indigenous Customs

1. What were the characteristics of the traditional Idakho society?
_____
_____

2. Do the Idakho have any borrowed cultural practices?
_____
_____
_____

3. If yes, what customs did the Idakho borrow from their neighbours and whom did they borrow   from?
_____
_____
_____

C. Encounter between Idakho Culture and Christianity

1. When did the Christian faiths first appear in Idakho?_____
_____

2.Which missionary groups made the first appearance?
_____
_____

3. What was the differences between these churches?
_____
_____
_____

4(a) How did the Idakho respond to these new religions?
_____

b) Did they welcome them?_____
_____
_____

c) If they did why?_____-
_____
d) Other than religion what did the Christian missionaries encouraged?
_____
_____

4. How did they differ from one another?_____
5. (a) Who are the people who first accepted Christianity?_____

b)Which Christian denomination did they belong?_____
_____

6. Which Christian denomination does the majority of Idakho belong?
_____

7. (a) Briefly tell me the areas where the Church of God is found in Idakho?_____
_____

(b)How did it reach?_____

8 (a) What activities did the Church of God bring to the areas where it had established itself? _____

(b) What were the activities in this area before the church?_____

(c).Why did it spread to these area.?_____

9. Are there any preaching that Church of God preached against the Idakho culture?

_____

_____

_____

10. What was the Idakho reaction?_____

_____

APPENDIX II
Interview Scheduled for spiritual leaders of the Church of God in Idakho Community.

Interview Date_____

Name of Informant_____

Place of birth_____

Clan_____

Sub location/village_____

Gender_____

Age_____

Position_____

1 How long have you lived in Idakho? _____

2. Why did you choose to attend the Church of God and not another church?
_____

3. Briefly describe the nature of your work at the Church of God?
_____

4. When and where did the Christian faith of the Church of God first appeared in Idakho?
_____

5.(a) Briefly tell me the areas where the Church of God is found in Idakho?
_____

(b) How did it reach?_____

6. Which missionaries from the Church of God in particular made the first appearance?
_____

7. Describe their activities among the Idakho?_____

8. How did the Idakho people respond to the Church of God?_____

9.Did they welcome it?_____

10. Did the Idakho people abandon their indigenous customs or did they incorporate the new faith into their indigenous culture and religion?
_____
_____

Which were the cultural beliefs/practices that conflicted with the vision of the Church of God?
_____
_____

12. Specifically what was dropped from the old culture and what was retrained?
_____

13. Did they take everything Church of God introduced if not, how can we tell this?
_____

14. Who were among the first converts of Church of God?
_____

15. Which area did the Church of God first established itself?
_____

    a) Why was this area chosen?_____
_____

B) Separatism

1. At what stage did the believers of the Church of God came to pull themselves out of the church?

_____

_____

2.(a) Are there any specific Idakho personality associated with these differences?

_____

_____

   (b) Give them_____

3.(a) What were the issues which brought differences to ahead them?

_____

_____

   (b) Give details?_____

4. Were there any Idakho cultural practices accepted by the Church of God?

_____

_____

5. How did the Church of God come to accept those cultural issues that differed with their teaching and incorporated them in the church?

_____

_____

6.(a) Were there any activities introduced by the Church of God?

_____

_____

_____

(b) If yes what impact did this activities have on Idakho?

_____

_____

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[cxxvii] Ibid., 2. Many Ugandans used to carry cotton on their heads from Uganda to Kisumu to be transported by rail to Nairobi and to Mombasa. While in Kisumu, therefore, these Ugandan porters would be involved with some other chores in Kenya for their livelihood.

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