

**AFRICAN INLAND MISSION AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION IN MACHAKOS
DISTRICT, KENYA, 1895-1971**

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Requirements for the Master of Arts Degree in History of Egerton University**

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DECLARATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Declaration

This thesis is my original work and to the best of my knowledge, it has not been presented for any academic award in this or any other institution.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my Mum, Theresia Musyoki.

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I thank God Almighty for granting me health, strength and wisdom during the time of this study, may His Name be exalted and glorified. I would like to express my gratitude to Egerton University, through whom my supervisors: Prof. Reuben Matheka and Dr. Mary Chepchieng.

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed at analysing the impact of African Inland Mission (AIM) on social transformation in the Machakos District in eastern Kenya from 1895 to 1971. Specifically, the study sought to outline the growth of the mission in the district and how it influenced social change as well as analysing the challenges that faced this denomination in transforming society in Machakos District. Consequently, the study outlines the elements of the Kamba traditional life before the coming of AIM missionaries in the district besides tracing the origin and the growth of the mission in the district between 1895 and 1971. It also analyses the subsequent transformation as a result of the mission's presence in the district. In addition, the study examines the challenges that the mission faced as it initiated social changes in the district. The study was guided by the following research questions: How did AIM influence begin and spread in Machakos District in the 1895 to 1971 period? How effective was the mission in promoting social change in the district? What challenges did the mission face? The structural- functionalism theory formulated by Herbert Spencer and developed further by Emile Durkheim was used to analyse the role of AIM in influencing social change in Machakos District. The qualitative research design involving the use of in-depth interviews with key informants was used. A target population consisting of local residents, former administrators and African Inland Church (AIC) leaders was interviewed. The study used the purposive method of sampling. A sample size of sixty informants was used. Primary data was collected using in-depth oral interviews as well as from archival records while secondary data was obtained through a thematic review of literature related to the topic of study. Consequently, the study gathered important information on the AIM social transformation in Machakos District in the colonial and the early post-colonial periods. The findings of the study therefore provide important information on the role played by AIM in social transformation, especially in Machakos District

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS

ABC	African Brotherhood Church
AIC	African Inland Church
AICA	African Inland Church Archives
AHC	American Home Council
AIM	African Inland Mission
BEAM	British East African Mission
BFBS	British Foreign Bible Society
BHC	British Home Council
CCC	Central Church Council
CED	Christian Education Department
CLB	Central Lands Board
CYF	Christian Youth Fellowship
CMS	Church Missionary Society
DC	District Commissioner
DEB	District Education Board
EASM	East African Scottish Mission
GFBC	Gospel Furthering Bible Church
GFF	Gospel Furthering Fellowship
GNCA	Good News Church of Africa
IBEAC	Imperial British East African Company
IMA	International Missionary Alliance
KNA	Kenya National Archives
KTTC	Kangundo Teachers' Training Centre
LNC	Local Native Council
LLB	Local Lands Board
NCMO	Native Christian Marriage Ordinance
NLTO	Native Lands Trust Ordinance
NCWO	Native Child Welfare Organization
PC	Provincial Commissioner
PMC	Philadelphia Missionary Council
RCC	Regional Church Council
RCM	Roman Catholic Mission

SA	Salvation Army
STC	Scott Theological College
TTC	Teacher Training Centre
UBC	Ukamba Bible College
UDCC	Ukamba District Church Council
UMCA	Universities Mission to Central Africa
URCC	Ukamba Regional Church Council

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

<i>Aimu</i>	Kamba term for ghosts
<i>Andu Awe</i>	Traditional Kamba spiritualists
<i>Asomi</i>	Term used to refer to the first recipients of Western education in Kenya, i.e. the educated elite
<i>Atumia ma Ithembo</i>	Term used to refer to the Kamba men's council that was in charge of worship in the shrines; also <i>king'ole</i>
<i>Iko</i>	Term used to refer to the hearth in the Kamba traditional kitchen/house
<i>Itaa</i>	Term used to refer to the Kamba traditional bed
<i>Ituni</i>	Kamba word for heaven
<i>Ithembo</i>	Kamba word for shrine
<i>Kitemu</i>	Term used to refer to the Kamba traditional costumes worn during the <i>kilumi</i> dances
<i>Iweto</i>	Kamba word for a woman married by another woman
<i>Kiimu</i>	Term used by the traditional Akamba to refer to a newborn before being taken through the normal rituals that made him or her a 'normal' human being
<i>Ikolino</i>	Kamba word for cactus
<i>Kilumi</i>	A spiritual women's dance among the Akamba
<i>Kioko</i>	Kamba word for morning; also <i>Kwakya</i>
<i>Kisukuu</i>	Term used to refer to the traditional Kamba hut which was grass thatched and made of circular walls using mud
<i>Kithembe</i>	Kamba word for drum
<i>Kithitu</i>	A form of an oath among the Akamba

<i>Kituto</i>	A specially prepared place among the traditional Kamba where the community's youths would hold their dances
<i>Kivalo</i>	Kamba word for village
<i>Kiveti</i>	Kamba word for a woman
<i>Kuasya/Ngasya</i>	Kamba word for dowry payment ceremonies
<i>Kwathiisya</i>	Term used to refer to the traditional Kamba prayers that often accompanied offering and sacrificing sessions
<i>Kuete kikw'u musyi</i>	Term used to mean bringing death back home among the traditional Akamba
<i>Kukulw'a</i>	Term used by the traditional Akamba to refer to promotion of an individual to be attending the shrine ritual sessions
<i>Kumya kikwu</i>	Term used to refer to driving death away by the traditional Akamba
<i>Kunengwa wii</i>	Term used to refer to the act of a man being given the permission to sire children with a widow or with a woman whose husband is unable to do so due to impotence
<i>Kuthenga</i>	Term used to refer to the beer drinking sessions among the traditional Kamba elderly men
<i>Kuusya</i>	Kamba word for divination
<i>Kuvukya</i>	Kamba word for making something impure
<i>Kuvyuviwa</i>	Term used to refer to the cooking activities for a mother who has just given birth
<i>Kwaika mwana</i>	Means circumcising a child
<i>Kwausya</i>	Term used to refer to seeking divination from a diviner
<i>Kwikiia mwana ithaa</i>	Kamba term for the ritual done to protect a newborn from harmful people with charms
<i>Mawioo</i>	Kamba word for evening also <i>syua yathua</i>

<i>Mbalya</i>	Term used to refer to a type of dance done by the youth among the traditional Akamba
<i>Mbeni</i>	Closely related to the <i>mbalya</i> which was performed by the youth among the traditional Akamba
<i>Mukondu</i>	Kamba word for the Sodom apple plant
<i>Mulungu</i>	Kamba word for God. Also <i>Mumbi</i> , <i>Mwatuangi</i> or <i>Ngai</i>
<i>Mundu mue wa ng'ondu</i>	Term used to refer to the traditional Kamba health practitioners who specialized in cleansing individuals from sins that were termed as evil in the community
<i>Musonge</i>	Term used to refer to the traditional Kamba huts which were grass thatched from top to bottom
<i>Musingi</i>	Kamba word for a candidate for circumcision
<i>Muthenya</i>	Kamba word for daytime, also <i>syua yi kati</i> , or <i>katambanga</i>
<i>Muti</i>	Kamba word for a plant; some plants were used to extract substances for medicinal and ritual purposes
<i>Mutumia</i>	Kamba word for an elderly man
<i>Muumo</i>	Kamba word for a fig tree
<i>Muvwikii</i>	Term used to refer to individuals who chaperoned circumcision candidates among the traditional Kamba
<i>Mwaa</i>	Term used to refer to luck or omen among the Akamba
<i>Mwaiki</i>	Kamba word for a circumciser
<i>Mwaitu</i>	Kamba word for a mother
<i>Mwisithya</i>	Kamba word for a midwife
<i>Ngui</i>	Term used to refer to song composers and soloists among the Akamba

<i>Nthakame ya Mwei</i>	Term used to refer to monthly periods by the Akamba
<i>Thavu</i>	Kamba word for sin
<i>Thome</i>	A men's meeting place in a traditional Kamba homestead.
<i>Utuku kati</i>	Kamba word for midnight
<i>Utaa</i>	A specially prepared structure in traditional Kamba houses for storing items such as utensils and foodstuffs
<i>Wakana</i>	Kamba word for Thursday
<i>Wakatano</i>	Kamba word for Friday
<i>Wakatatu</i>	Kamba word for Wednesday
<i>Wakeli</i>	Kamba word for Tuesday
<i>Wakwambiliilya</i>	Kamba word for Monday
<i>Wakyumwa</i>	Kamba word for Sunday
<i>Wathanthatu</i>	Kamba word for Saturday
<i>Wasa</i>	Kamba word for a male cousin
<i>Wathi</i>	Term used to refer to the youth dances among the traditional Akamba. It can also mean a song
<i>Nzaiko</i>	Kamba word for circumcision
<i>Nzama</i>	Kamba word for council
<i>Nzevu</i>	A form of powdered stuff believed to have magical powers among the Akamba whose application is done by placing it at the palm of the hand and then blowing it towards the target object or individual to cast a spell

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

One of the main agencies of social change in Kenya, and indeed Africa, from the late nineteenth century has been the church. Representatives of various Christian denominations, together with agents of colonial administrations, were responsible for social transformation in many parts of Africa from the late nineteenth century. These foreigners brought with them historically formed institutions and norms, which conditioned their actions towards Africans.¹ Christian missionaries from various denominations can therefore be said to have played a major role in influencing African communities. Much more than any other agents, Christian missionaries and their converts were the prime movers of social change among African communities.² Thus the social changes that many African communities have experienced since the late nineteenth century to a large extent are a product of missionary activities on the African continent.

Through the introduction of Christianity, modern education, modern healthcare, and Western culture, Christian missionaries were able to transform African societies in ways hitherto unknown. The missionaries viewed African social systems and practices such as religion as primitive and therefore in need of transformation. They believed that Africans had only a vague idea of God and therefore there was a need to effect a radical change in African religion and culture.³ As a result of these missionary views on African religion, Christianity was introduced as a substitute.

For successful transformation of Africans, missionaries and colonialists considered literacy important. Western education was therefore introduced in Africa as part of the ‘civilising’ mission pursued by these new agents of change. This education was considered as a quick and easy way of transmitting Western cultural values and norms to African societies. As a result, Western education, which was deeply infused with European cultural values, was introduced to meet the demands for transforming Africans.⁴ The education basically involved writing, catechism, music

¹ J. F. Munro, *Colonial Rule and the Kamba: Social Change in the Kenya Highlands 1889-1939* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), p. 7.

² J. N. Mugambi, *Christian Theology and Social Reconstruction* (Nairobi: Acton Publishers, 2003), p. 83.

³ G. Wamue, ‘The use of European Traditions in the Study of Religion in Africa: East African Perspectives’, in F. Ludwig and A. Adogame (eds), *European Traditions in the Study of Religion in Africa* (Verlag: Gottingen publishers 2004), p. 366.

⁴ Munro, *Colonial Rule and the Kamba*, p. 98.

and arithmetic. The missionaries, together with the colonial administrators, believed that through the provision of this education, evangelization would be made easier. Since Western education was used as a bait to win converts to Christianity, the close connection between evangelization and literacy persisted even beyond the colonial period.⁵ Besides Western education, the agents of social change initiated transformation in healthcare and other aspects of the African culture.

Among the regions that were greatly influenced by these transformative activities was Machakos District where the African Inland Mission (AIM) was quite influential. Before the arrival of this mission in the district, the inhabitants practised their traditional religion, which was the bedrock of their culture.⁶ Many ceremonies such as childbirth, naming, initiation, marriage, burial and rainmaking involved traditional religious practices. Consequently, the Akamba traditional religion played a central role in the life of the individual from birth to death. With the coming of AIM to the district, the Machakos Akamba experienced changes in many aspects of their social life, a condition that left the inhabitants of the district with new perceptions of their immediate social environment by the time the mission was localised in 1971.

AIM was founded by Peter Cameron Scott, a Scottish American missionary who dedicated much of his life to Christian service and evangelization. As an individual who wished to see many lives brought to Christ, Scott opted to actualise his dream by exercising his call mainly on the African continent. His goal was to establish mission stations in the interior of Africa where Christ was unknown. It is no wonder that when Scott came to Africa, he moved inland where he set up mission stations.⁷ His attempts to realize this dream started in December 1895 when he established his first station in Africa at Nzau in what became Machakos District.⁸ This marked the beginning of the work of AIM not only in Kenya but also the rest of Africa. Subsequently, AIM opened more stations in Machakos District such as Sakai, Kilungu and Kangundo before expanding its activities to other parts of Kenya such as Kijabe among the Kikuyu, Laikipia among the Maasai, Eldama Ravine among the Tugen, Kapsabet among the Nandi and Nyakach among the Luo.⁹ The mission further expanded its influence to German East Africa in 1909, the Belgian Congo in 1912, Uganda

⁵ Wamue (2004) *The use of European Traditions in the Study of Religion in Africa*, p. 6.

⁶ E. K. Muiu, *The Kamba Culture and Missionary Struggle* (Kijabe: Today in Africa Publishers, 2011), p. 173.

⁷ R. Gehman, 'The African Inland Mission: Aspects of its Early History', *Journal of Evangelical Theology*. Vol. 23, No. 2 (2004), p. 119.

⁸ (Kenneth, 1968) *Garden of Miracles, A History of the African Inland Mission* (London: Victory Press, 1968), p. 21.

⁹ *Ibid*, p. 22.

in 1918 and French Equatorial Africa in 1924.¹⁰ Recently, the mission has opened stations in Sudan, Namibia, Mozambique, Angola, and Madagascar, among other countries in Africa.¹¹ Machakos District can therefore be considered as the cradle of AIM not only in Kenya, but also the African continent.

In Kenya, AIM existed as a mission from 1895 to 1971. However, from the late 1920s there was increasing dissatisfaction among African converts over the mission's practices in Kenya.¹² As a result, the African converts started demanding for the Africanisation of the mission. These demands led to the formation of the African Inland Church (AIC) in 1943. From then on, AIM and AIC existed in Kenya as two autonomous bodies their roles were related. However, pressure on AIM to Africanise persisted. The pressure culminated in the merger of AIC and AIM in 1971 following a recommendation to that effect by the AIM Field Council led by Frank Frew. AIM missionaries became part and its operations.¹³ The AIM now became a department of the AIC. This marked the end of the AIM activities in Kenya.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Machakos District of Kenya was the cradle of the AIM in Africa. This study analyses the role of AIM in socially transforming the Akamba of Machakos District from 1895 to 1971. This is significant because the activities of AIM in Machakos District have not received much scholarly attention since the establishment of the mission in the district in 1895 up to the time of its merger with AIC in 1971. Many studies on the AIM have tended to use this district as the starting point of this mission in Kenya before they shift their attention to other areas without showing the social influence of the mission in the district.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of this study was to analyse the impact of AIM in the social transformation of the Machakos Akamba from 1895 to 1971. The specific objectives were:

- (i). To examine the elements of the Akamba social life before the coming of AIM missionaries into Machakos District.

¹⁰ Gehman, 'The African Inland Mission', p. 128.

¹¹ Ibid, p. 129.

¹² F. Lionel Young III (2017), 'The Transition from the African Inland Mission to the African Inland Church in Kenya, 1939-1975', (PhD Thesis, University of Sterling, 2017), p. 39.

¹³ Gehman, 'The African Inland Mission', p. 140.

- (ii). To outline the origins and expansion of the AIM in Machakos District in the period 1895 to 1971.
- (iii). To assess the impact of AIM in influencing social change in Machakos District.
- (iv). To analyse the challenges that AIM faced in its attempts to transform the people of Machakos District in the period 1895 to 1971.

1.4 Research Questions

The study was guided by the following questions:

- i). What were the major elements of the Akamba social life in Machakos District before the arrival of the AIM missionaries?
- ii). How did the AIM begin and spread in Machakos District in the period 1895 to 1971?
- iii). What impacts did the AIM have on the people of Machakos District over the period 1895 to 1971?
- iv). What challenges did the AIM face in its efforts to transform the Machakos Akamba from 1895 to 1971?

1.5 Justification for the Study

Many studies on the history of AIM in Kenya have tended to overlook how the mission influenced the Akamba of Machakos District despite the district being the cradle of the mission's work in Kenya and Africa. More attention has been paid to the areas the mission expanded into after the establishment of its early stations in Machakos. Despite the first AIM stations having been established in Machakos District, there is no comprehensive study that has been done on the social influence of the mission in the district.

This study therefore sought to provide an account of how AIM transformed the Akamba of Machakos District since its establishment in the district in 1895 up to the time of its merger with AIC in 1971. The findings of this study have filled the gap in knowledge that existed on the influence of AIM in Machakos District in the period between 1895 and 1971. In addition, the findings have constituted part of the history of AIM in Kenya.

1.6 Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study focused on the influence of AIM in social transformation among the Machakos Akamba from 1895 to 1971. The former date is when the initial AIM station was set up at Kalamba in Nzau in the district while the latter date is when AIM merged with AIC. The basic assumption of this

study was that the respondents would co-operate and give the required information and thus make the study a success. The study was limited by a shortage of informants who knew the full history of the mission in the district. This challenge was overcome through reliance on archival records which complimented the information from the few available informants. In addition, some of these few available informants were not able to give the desired information especially concerning the exact times when some of the events took place due to their old age. This challenge was overcome by corroborating the informants' insights with documentary evidence which the researcher gathered in the course of the study.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

Black Seat	A seat in the AIM churches usually reserved for the converts who were convicted by the mission of having gone against the its teachings
Inquirer's Class	An AIM induction group of the already baptized locals
Missionary	A person sent out to do religious or charitable work in a territory or foreign country
Mission Station	A centre from which missionary work was carried out.
Native	A local resident
Social Change	Societal transformation in its various dimensions such as cultural, social, political, economic etc. Also social development
Social influence	The way in which individuals change behaviour to meet social environment demands
Social Structure	It is the distinctive, stable arrangement of institutions whereby human beings in a society interact and live together.

1.8 Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

This section presents the literature related to this study and the theoretical framework. The focus of the literature review involves a selective and critical examination of scholarly works on social change engineered by Christian missionaries in Africa generally and in Kenya in particular. Specifically, this review aims at showing how different Western missionary groups from the West flocked in the African continent from the late nineteenth century and the subsequent social developments initiated by these missions. Since AIM was one of these missions, the literature also shows the paucity in scholarly knowledge concerning the influence of this mission in Machakos District of Kenya.

Literature Review

The church in Africa today is a product of the European missionary enterprise that can be dated back to the nineteenth century. Since then, the church has greatly transformed many African societies. This transformation of tropical Africa has mainly been spearheaded by the Christian missionary enterprise.¹⁴ Although there were other forces that influenced these social developments in the continent, Christian missions can be said to have played a vital role in the process of initiating change in the continent. Among these Christian missionary enterprises are the European and the American churches that have been the prime movers of social transformation in Africa to such an extent that, an attempt to deny or reverse its effects would utterly be futile.¹⁵ From the spread of Christianity to the establishment of health facilities and the introduction of Western education, African societies changed in ways unknown before the coming of Western Christian groups.

One way in which the European and the American missionary enterprise brought social change was through the introduction of Christianity among African communities. This was mainly realized through the establishment of churches which acted as new venues for propagating the new religion. By doing so, the church would win converts from these communities. The early adherents of these churches tended to be individuals ostracised by their communities for one reason or another or a few individuals whose curiosity got the better of them.¹⁶ Through the churches,

¹⁴ (Mugambi, 2000), *Christian Theology and Social Reconstruction*, p. 83.

¹⁵ W. Nasimiyu and D. Waruta, *Mission in African Christianity: Critical Essays in Missiology* (Nairobi: Action Publishers, p. 127.

¹⁶ Anderson, J. (1970). *The Struggle for the School: The Interaction of the Missionary, Colonial Government and Nationalist Enterprise in the Development of Formal Education in Kenya*, Nairobi: Longman, p. 15.

missionaries would teach the Christian doctrines which often varied from one missionary group to another. As African communities welcomed Christianity and its teachings, there was a gradual shift from the traditional African religious beliefs to Christian ones among many members of the communities that the Western affiliated church had come into contact with.

One of these missionary enterprises was led by the AIM. This mission was a non-denominational group under American leadership and strongly influenced by evangelical Baptists and Adventists.¹⁷ It was established with the aim of reaching the inland parts of Africa to spread Christianity. Consequently, Machakos District of Kenya became the starting point of the mission's evangelization on the African continent. When the mission arrived in the district in December 1895, it established its first three mission stations in Nzau, Sakai and Kilungu areas of the district.¹⁸ It then spread to other areas of the district such as Kangundo, Mumbuni, Mbooni and Mukaa where it established among other institutions, hundreds of churches during its operations in the district. The church is an important agent of social change in the society where it thrives. As Mugambi has observed, churches have a direct contact with individuals and communities at all levels of the social fabric and is thus subject to influencing these communities.¹⁹ However, despite the mission establishing these churches in the district, there is a lack of a sufficient study on the subsequent influences that the churches through the mission brought in the district hence the gap the current study tries to fill.

The introduction of Christianity brought remarkable changes to various elements of African social life. The missionary church viewed African beliefs, norms, traditions and customs as crude and thus it had a duty to transform them. This church did not bother to understand African religious ideas, thought forms and practices.²⁰ Instead, it viewed African religious ideas and thought forms as inferior and thus subject to transformation. As Vierra points out, the missionaries took the conventional features of their culture, building churches and schools in the European style and imposing the habits and ethos of Western Christian civilization on their converts.²¹ For instance, they introduced church rituals such as the Holy Communion and baptism which were new practices

¹⁷Anderson, *The Struggle for the School*, p. 15.

¹⁸ Omulokoli, W. (1995). 'Foundational History of the African Inland Church, (1895-1903)'. *African Journal of Evangelical Theology* Vol.14, No.2, (p. 50).

¹⁹ Mugambi, *Christian Theology and Social Reconstruction*, p. 59.

²⁰ Okullu, *Church and Politics in East Africa* (Nairobi: Uzima Press Limited, 1974), p. 53.

²¹ Vierra, P. (2007). *Christian Missions in Africa and their Role in the Transformation of African Societies* (Bratislava: Institute of Oriental Studies, p. 257.

to the converts. To African societies the new practices and beliefs were interesting and this prompted them to allow the missionaries to settle in the midst. This would in turn bring a change in the society's beliefs and customs and Machakos District, which was initially a sphere of influence of the AIM, was no exception. However, there is not enough documented evidence to either show how this mission transformed the beliefs, norms, traditions and customs of the people of this district or the drawbacks that the mission faced in the transformation of these elements of the Kamba social life hence the need for this study.

The introduction of Western education was another way used by the mission church to influence social change in many African societies. Before the introduction of Western education, African traditional education was the main form of socialisation in many African communities. Among the Akamba, this education could be imparted at places such as the *thome* where elderly men would sit with their sons and educate them on matters of life, as they got older.²² With the coming of the Christian missionaries, a new type of education was introduced which gradually took pre-eminence in many African communities that had come into contact with the missionary church. This new type of education was deeply infused with European cultural values which the African had to adopt.²³

In many cases, wherever the missionary established a central mission station he would as well establish a school. This, according to Anderson, was a deliberate policy by the missionary to get a foothold in an area.²⁴ Although this education was not readily received in the early years of colonialism, there was a gradual improvement in Africans' desire for the new type of education as the missions gained a foothold in their respective areas of influence on the African continent. As Munro observes, Africans increasingly became aware that education held a key to understanding, using and possibly even controlling the political and economic systems.²⁵ This explains why Africans' desire for education continued to improve with time.

In the provision of education, the missionaries played the leading role by espousing a conservative, fundamentalist and strongly evangelical brand of Christianity.²⁶ They aimed at spreading formal

²² Muiu, *Kamba Culture and Missionary Struggle*, p. 57.

²³ Munro, (1975). *Colonial Rule and the Kamba*, p. 98.

²⁴ Anderson, (1970). *The Struggle for the School*, p. 108.

²⁵ Munro, (1975). *Colonial Rule and the Kamba*, p. 147.

²⁶ Tignor, R. (1976), *Colonial Transformation of Kenya: The Kamba, Kikuyu, and Maasai from 1900-1939*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, p. 112.

education as widely as possible with an ultimate goal of winning African converts. As Mbukeni points out, schooling was used by the church and the state to provide moral guidance to the poor in the metropole urban centres, and to try to convert locals in the colonies to Western values and norms.²⁷ This new type of education also led to the emergence of African elites. These elites were looked at as special people by the society as a result of the transformation that they had undergone in the missionary established schools. As they became more acquainted with the newly introduced type of education in the African societies, they became agents of change in the villages.²⁸ This was a major step forward as far as missionary schools as agencies for social transformation were concerned. The acquisition of this education transformed the elites by opening routes to upward social mobility for them. As Micheni has observed, most of the Africans who passed through the school system not only acquired knowledge but also wealth, power and influence, and thus a better life.²⁹

Gehman looking at the aspects of AIM's early history acknowledges the role of the AIM in socially transforming communities through the provision of education by saying that the most successful avenue of evangelism by the AIM was through the establishment of schools.³⁰ In the provision of this education, the AIM had a main mission school in the main central station and several Out-schools around the main mission station. For instance, by 1926, the AIM had four main schools and seventeen Out-schools in the whole of Machakos District.³¹ However, there is scarcity of information concerning how the education offered in these AIM schools transformed the Akamba of Machakos District as well as the difficulties faced by the mission in the provision of this education hence the reason for this study.

The establishment of medical centres such as clinics, dispensaries and hospitals where African patients could be treated was a common trend among many missionary denominations that had come to spread Christianity in Africa. African communities were encouraged to visit these medical centres so that they could be cured of their diseases.³² Before the introduction of Western medicine

²⁷ H. Mbukeni, (1998). *Education as a Social Institution and Ideological Process: From the Negritude Education in Senegal to Bantu Education in Southern Africa*. New York: Waxmann Verlag GmbH, p. 86.

²⁸ Micheni, S. (1988), "The Contribution of Christian Missionaries to Education in Meru", (MEd Thesis, Kenyatta University, p. 139.

²⁹ Ibid, p. 139.

³⁰ Gehman, 'The African Inland Mission', p. 131.

³¹ Munro, *Colonial Rule and the Kamba*, p. 149.

³² Muga, E. (1975). *African Response to Western Christian Religion: A Social Analysis of African Separatist Religious and Political Movements in East Africa*, Nairobi: East African Literature Bureau, p. 96.

in Africa, many traditional African communities relied on traditional medicine whose main providers were the traditional health practitioners in these communities.³³ Although the effectiveness of these African traditional approaches to healthcare cannot be downplayed, Western medicine was more effective and reliable than African traditional medicine. Consequently, with the introduction of Western medicine among African communities, there was a growing tendency to embrace it at the expense of the African traditional medical practices. The introduction of Western medical practices thus transformed African communities in unprecedented ways.

Among the missionary groups that spearheaded the introduction of Western medical practices among African communities was AIM. When the mission arrived in Kenya, it established various medical centres in its spheres of influence in Ukambani, Kikuyuland, Kalenjinland and Luoland. For instance, among the Kikuyu, the mission introduced medical work as part of its multi-phased strategy of reaching the community.³⁴ As a result, in 1915 AIM missionaries established a small outpatient clinic in Kijabe which was then called Theodora Hospital and later renamed AIC Kijabe Mission Hospital. This clinic offered medical services to the Kikuyu community living around. This medical work greatly improved the lives of the Kikuyu through practices such as immunization and vaccination. AIM also played a major role in expanding medical work among the Marakwet community.

Medical facilities also served as centres for spreading the gospel.³⁵ With this expansion of medical work in various parts of Kenya, the influence that the AIM had on the provision of medical care among the Akamba of Machakos district has not received much scholarly attention. Though a number of studies have indicated that AIM established a number of health facilities in Machakos District in the twentieth century, such as the Mukaa, Mbooni and Kangundo dispensaries, the above studies have not adequately explained how these health facilities transformed the district by the provision of health services as well as the challenges the mission faced in the provision of these health services and thus a knowledge gap that the study intends to fill.

³³ Mbiti, J. S. (1969). *African Religions and Philosophy*. London: Heinemann Publishers Limited, p. 166

³⁴ Karanja, J. (2007). *The Missionary Movement in Colonial Kenya: The Foundation of the African Inland Church*, Cuvillier Verlag: Gottingen Publishers, p. 131.

³⁵ Kibor, Z. (2005). 'The Growth and Development of the African Inland Mission and the African Inland Church in Marakwet, Kenya', *African Journal of Evangelical Theology* .Vol.1.No.4.), p. 109.

Another social development that can be attributed to the Christian missionaries on the African continent was the change in the living standards of the Africans who came into contact with the missionaries. Although the new type of education played a primary role in the improvement of these standards, the missionaries went ahead and introduced a special kind of education in the form of technical education to help the locals acquire various skills that would help them earn a living. The provision of this kind of education in many instances took place simultaneously with the literacy education that was offered in mission schools.³⁶ The church offered this technical education with a view to helping Africans advance their living standards. This is because missionaries considered Africans as people whose livelihoods needed to be improved.³⁷ A good example of this initiative can be seen through the activities of the Universities Mission in Central Africa (UMCA). In its bid to improve the lives of freed slaves in that region of Africa, the mission undertook the task of equipping the slaves with various skills.³⁸

AIM played a major role in improving the standards of living of its converts in Africa in general and Kenya in particular. One way it did this was through the establishment of an industrial school at Kijabe to train its converts in various trades. This was made possible when the colonial government granted the mission 2,500 acres of land at Kijabe in 1906 to begin a trade school to train Africans in shoe-making, printing, stone cutting, black smithing, tailoring, carpentry and tanning.³⁹ With the establishment of this institute, many locals were able to acquire various skills that improved their standards of living. However, despite the mission having schools in Mumbuni, Kangundo, Mukaa and Mbooni in which technical education was part of its curriculum there is scarcity of documented evidence on how the mission improved the standards of living of the Machakos Akamba through the provision of technical education in the district.

Another area in which missionaries influenced African communities was the conception and management of time among these communities. Through the provision of Western education, the missionary influenced the way the African would conceive time. In addition, the missionary church influenced the way African converts would spend and manage their time. Before then, the African concept of time revolved mainly around events and occurrences in their immediate environment. With the coming of the missionaries and the subsequent introduction of the Western conception of

³⁶ Muga, (1975). *African Response to Western Christian Religion*, p. 87.

³⁷ Peter, J. (2005). *Religion and Poverty: Pan-African Perspectives*, London: Duke University Press, p. 215.

³⁸ Muga, (1975). *African Response to Western Christian Religion*, p. 87.

³⁹ Gehman, 'African Inland Mission', p. 131.

time, there was a change in the way the African would view time and spend it. For instance, there was the introduction of the concept of the week to the African. A week was no longer eight or ten days but rather seven days long with one-day set aside for Christian worship. Additionally, with the introduction of Christianity, African converts had to set several days in the shorter seven as opposed to eight or ten day week to participate in church events such as choir practice, and other monthly or annual events such as the preparation for communion, thanksgiving and church holidays among others.⁴⁰ With the coming of the AIM in Machakos District and the subsequent influences as a result, there is scarcity of evidence on how the mission influenced the Machakos Akamba conception and management of time and thus the reason for this study.

Naming is an important element of the African culture. Besides identification, it helps create a sense of belonging, preserving the community's culture as well as developing a sense of patriotism and loyalty among the members of the African communities. As in many African communities, the naming of a child among the Machakos Akamba attached much significance to the spirits of their ancestors.⁴¹ However, with the Westernization of the Machakos Akamba by the mission church, there was a change in the way the convert was to identify himself and his children. The Kamba convert had to have a 'Christian' name after baptism. This name could in turn become a status symbol among the recipients signifying that they were socially superior because of their new religion and names.⁴² This was an aspect of social change which the mission initiated among the Akamba of Machakos District. But how AIM perpetuated this aspect of social change among the Machakos Akamba has not been properly studied hence the reason for the current study.

The spread of literacy and the broadening of perspectives of the educated by the missionaries can be said to be another major social development that influenced the African societies. Many Africans who were living in the Christian mission stations could be taught how to read and write in their languages besides learning to write and speak the foreign languages such as English. The learning of these languages was an important prerequisite for religious instruction and the preparation of religious texts.⁴³ This was a major milestone in evangelization work as the African could now read the religious texts brought by the missions such as the bible, hymn/ prayer books

⁴⁰ Ambe, J. (2006), *Tradition, Culture and Development in Africa: Historical Lessons for Modern Development Planning*, Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing Company, p. 43.

⁴¹ Muiu, *Kamba Culture and Missionary Struggle*, p. 172.

⁴² Muga, (1975). *African Response to Western Christian Religion*, p. 98.

⁴³ Vierra, P. (2007). *Christian Missions in Africa and their Role in the Transformation of African Societies*, p.255.

in his own language. This would in turn not only help him understand these religious texts intended to aid his Christian life, but also be used by the mission church in persuading other members of his or her community to convert to the new religion. Consequently, the advancements made in African languages in terms of reading and writing by the missionary church greatly influenced the development of these languages. In addition, the missions standardized the local languages through the adoption of particular dialects.

Among the many African communities that were influenced by this transformation in local languages were the Akamba of Machakos District. With the district mainly being a sphere of influence of AIM missionaries, there were many influences that were made on the Kamba language as a result. For instance, AIM initiatives on Kikamba left the Akamba with an alphabet that they had not conceptualized before the coming of these missionaries.⁴⁴ Besides the developments in Kikamba phonology by this mission, there were other advancements that the mission made on Kikamba that have not been adequately documented, hence the reason for carrying out this study.

The observation of rites of passage among African communities was core to the preservation and advancement of the communities' social life. Among the rites of passage that were closely observed in these African communities was initiation. This important rite of passage not only inducted the youth to community life generally but also prepared them for adult life.⁴⁵ It also gave the community an opportunity to educate their youth on important matters of their life in the community such as sexuality and marriage. Among the traditional Akamba, an individual who had not undergone this rite of passage could not be allowed to transit into adulthood. According to Muiu, there were three stages of initiation among the Akamba: *nzaiko ya kavyu*, which meant the physical circumcision, *nzaiko ila nene*, which meant the educative aspect of circumcision; and *nzaiko ya aume*, which meant the transition from boyhood to manhood. The role of religion in the initiation ceremonies among the Akamba was fundamental as the making of libations and food offerings to ancestors was core to the ceremonies. Each individual mkamba had to undergo circumcision before he or she could be regarded as a full member of the Kamba community.⁴⁶

With the introduction of Christianity, initiation practices changed, especially for converts. Converts now underwent Christian initiation to make them full members of the church. According

⁴⁴ Muiu, *Kamba Culture and Missionary Struggle*, p. 159.

⁴⁵ Mbiti, (1969). *African Religions and Philosophy*, p. 121.

⁴⁶ Mbiti, (1969). *African Religions and Philosophy*, p. 122.

to Muiu, Christian initiation entailed learning catechism, getting baptized and being confirmed as a full member of the church.⁴⁷ Though AIM was one of the dominant missionary groups in Machakos District, there is scarce knowledge concerning how the mission influenced the initiation rites of the Machakos Akamba. In addition, the challenges faced by the mission in its endeavours to influence these initiation rites have not received much scholarly attention hence the reason for this study.

For many years, African communities have respected the dead. As Mbiti points out, the ‘cult’ connected with the living dead is deeply rooted in African life and thought.⁴⁸ Therefore, to the African, the living dead held a special place in his life and therefore deserved to be honoured. This involved descent burial of dead members of a family as per their status in the family.⁴⁹ This ensured a smooth transition from the world of the living to the spiritual world and the subsequent good relationships between the living and the living dead thereafter.

Among the Akamba, death was not conceived as disappearance to hell, but rather a “transformation” of the living in order to play a different role.⁵⁰ During this transformation, various rituals attached to a particular meaning had to be performed to ensure a smooth transition. For instance, in case of the death of a husband, the widow had to sleep with the dead man’s cousin (*wasa*) in order to forestall another death in the family.⁵¹ With the coming of the missionary church, all this changed especially among converts as honouring the dead was regarded as mere superstition by the church. This had far-reaching consequences to the African communities who had embraced Christianity as they were forbidden from these non-Christian practices. Consequently, there was a knowledge disparity on how AIM dealt with the Akamba belief on death and its associated practices. This is what this study intended to bring out.

Transformation in religious leadership and religious mobilization among the Akamba of Machakos District can partly be attributed to the activities of AIM in the district. Before the coming of AIM missionaries, religious leadership and mobilization mainly fell in the hands of the traditional health practitioners called *andu awe*. These persons were a very important category of special people in

⁴⁷ Muiu, *Kamba Culture and Missionary struggle*, p. 172.

⁴⁸ Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, p. 70.

⁴⁹ Muga, (1975). *African Response to Western Christian Religion*, p. 107.

⁵⁰ Ndeti, K. (1972). *Elements of Akamba Social Life* (Nairobi: English Press, 1972), p. 174.

⁵¹ Muiu, *Kamba Culture and Missionary Struggle*, p. 70.

many African societies. As Mbiti observes, they were the greatest gift and the most useful source of help in times of need.⁵² Many health problems affecting African communities would be solved through the initiatives of the African traditional healers. In most cases, integration of both natural and supernatural solutions restored the patient's health.

Before the arrival of AIM missionaries in Machakos District, *andu awe* were the sole religious leaders in the district.⁵³ Consequently, many matters concerning the community's religion as well as the well-being of its members were in the hands of these religious leaders. They symbolized hope for good health, protection and security from evil forces, prosperity and good future, and ritual cleansing in case of contamination.⁵⁴ However, the role of *andu awe* started to diminish with the introduction of Christianity in Machakos District by AIM missionaries and thus a transformation in religious leadership and mobilization in the district. This transformation has however not received much scholarly attention, thus justifying the current study.

The consumption of beer (*uki*) among the Akamba was another aspect of social life that attracted the attention of AIM missionaries. Many Kamba social activities involved beer consumption.⁵⁵ Beer consumption, which was the preserve of the older men in the community was an important source of bonding. Drinks such as *uki wa kuatiia mbui* (beer that follows goats), *uki wa kuthaitha ithe wa mwiitu* (beer for entreating the father of a bride), *uki wa kwikia mwana ithaa* (beer of putting the necklace on the child) were integral to Kamba social life.⁵⁶

Beer consumption among the Machakos Akamba was an issue of concern to AIM missionaries. Although the practice underlined the cooperative principles of the Kamba society, AIM missionaries and the other colonial agents were alarmed by beer consumption, which, besides being anti-Christian in the eyes of the missionaries, led to the avoidance of wage-employment.⁵⁷ However, neither the measures taken to reduce beer consumption, nor the challenges AIM missionaries faced in tackling it have received much scholarly attention hence the reason for this study.

⁵² Mbiti, (1975). *African Religions and Philosophy*, p. 166.

⁵³ Munro, (1975). *Colonial Rule and the Kamba*, p. 110.

⁵⁴ Mbiti, (1969). *African Religions and Philosophy*, p. 170.

⁵⁵ Munro, (1975). *Colonial Rule and the Kamba*, p. 83.

⁵⁶ Penwill, D. J. (1951). *Custom and Tradition in East Africa: Kamba Customary Law*. London: Macmillan and Co. Ltd, pp. 2-9.

⁵⁷ Munro, (1975). *Colonial Rule and the Kamba*, p. 88-89.

In summary, the literature reviewed has not adequately indicated how AIM activities influenced the Akamba of Machakos District. Specifically, the origins and expansion of this mission in the district has not received much scholarly attention. In addition, neither the impact of this mission in influencing social change in the district nor the response of the Machakos Akamba to the mission's work in the district have been analysed. In short, the available literature has not fully addressed the social influence of the AIM in Machakos District and thus, the justification for the current study.

Theoretical Framework

This study sought to analyse the influence of the AIM in social transformation in Machakos District since the mission's establishment in the district up to the time of its merger with the AIC. To achieve this goal, structural functionalism theory was used. This theory was formulated by an English philosopher, Herbert Spencer, in the nineteenth century and further developed by an American sociologist, Robert Merton. The theory views society as a complex system of interrelated parts working together to maintain stability.⁵⁸ Thus, a society, according to the theory, is a system of interrelated, interdependent structures working together to maintain stability in a society. These structures include schools, churches, healthcare, sports teams, funeral rites, laws and languages.

The structural functionalism theory was further advanced by the ideas of Emile Durkheim who was concerned with how societies function. Therefore, the central concern of the theory is a continuation of the Durkheimian task of explaining the apparent stability and internal cohesion of society that are necessary to ensure continued existence over time.⁵⁹ As a result, this theory focuses on how different structures within a society are functional in the sense of working together to achieve an equilibrium state in the society.

In a social system, there are different parts that make up the whole system and thus enable it to achieve stability. For this stability to be attained, the structures in that social system rely on each other. As Wallace and Wolf point out, in a social system, the various structures are interdependent.

⁵⁸ Kathy, S. (2005). *The Basics of Sociology* (London: Greenwood Press, p .23.

⁵⁹ Crugan, R. (2006). *Introduction to Sociology*. London: Black Street River, p. 28.

The system has a “normal” healthy state of equilibrium, analogous to a healthy body.⁶⁰ In case some part of the social system is disturbed, the whole system is affected. The system will therefore need to respond to these disturbances through re-organization and re-adjustment.⁶¹ Consequently, the society is always striving to achieve a state of equilibrium regardless of the disturbances and instabilities that may arise.

According to Kathy, the structures in a social system include education, religion, culture, healthcare, economy and family.⁶² These different structures are always in a state of equilibrium when the society is in its normal state. When any of the structures is disturbed, the society will adjust itself in order to restore the equilibrium state thus a social transformation. Therefore, structural functionalism theory looks at society in that perspective.

As a result of the above, structural functionalism theory will therefore be used in this study to explain the social transformation experienced by the people of Machakos District under the influence of AIM missionaries. Before the coming of these missionaries to the district, the society had its own functional religion, culture, education system, healthcare system and a law enforcement system, among others. These systems made the Machakos Akamba to be in a stable state before the coming of AIM missionaries.

The coming of the AIM missionaries in Machakos District led to the introduction of a new religion, a new educational system, a new language, a new conception and management of time, a new culture and a new healthcare system, among others resulting in social change. The introduction of these new systems disturbed the Kamba social system, causing disequilibrium state. The structural functionalism theory holds that when disequilibrium occurs in a society, the society readjusts and reorganizes itself to accommodate the change that has taken place. Consequently, the Kamba society had to readjust and reorganize itself by embracing these newly introduced practices and in the process, social transformation occurred. The study therefore intends to use this approach to show how the Machakos Akamba stabilized again as a result of the transformation.

⁶⁰ Wallace A. & Wolf, A. *Contemporary Sociological Theory: Expanding the Classical Tradition* (Washington: Prentice Hall, 1999), p. 18.

⁶¹ Ibid

⁶² Kathy, *The Basics of Sociology*, p. 22.

1.9 Research Methodology

Research Design

This study is based on historical research design which is qualitative. The purpose of this design is to collect, verify and synthesize evidence to establish facts that test an hypothesis. As Laurentina and Melchor point out, research design is a critical inquiry of the whole truth of past events using the critical method in the understanding and interpretation of facts which are applicable to current issues and problems.⁶³ Through this design, a researcher systematically and objectively aims at reconstructing the past by collecting, evaluating, verifying and synthesizing data to test a given hypothesis

Area of Study

This study was carried out in Machakos District of Kenya as it existed before it was split into Makueni and Machakos Districts in 1992. In 2010, these two districts became the Machakos and Makueni Counties, respectively. The original Machakos District was bordered to the west and south by Kajiado District, Kiambu District in the north and Kitui District to the east as shown in figure 1.1. The district was divided into two reserves namely: Ulu Reserve in the north and Kikumbulyu Reserve in the south. In terms of administration, the district was divided into location each under a gazetted chief. The locations were further divided into sub locations, each under a headman.⁶⁴ The district was mainly inhabited by the Akamba. The choice of Machakos District as the area of study is because it is the cradle of AIM in Africa. From Machakos, the AIC which was born out of AIM, spread to other parts of Kenya and the African continent.

⁶³ P. Laurentina and C. Melchor, *Research Methods and Thesis Writing* (Manila: Rex Book Store, 2008), p. 68.

⁶⁴ KNA, PC/CP/1/3/2, Machakos District Record Book No.2, 25 May 1911.

Sample and Sampling Procedure

This study used the purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling is a type of sampling whereby a researcher picks samples basing them on a particular purpose. Under the purposive sampling technique, the snowball approach, in which key informants lead a researcher to other potential informants, was used. The key informants were identified through church and community leaders.

Sample Size

This study is based on the historical research design which is qualitative. According to Emmanuel, there are no guidelines, tests of adequacy or power calculations available to establish sample size in qualitative research.⁶⁵ Consequently, the statistical techniques of power analysis used to determine a sample size in quantitative research were not applicable in this study as it is qualitative. Litchman has also argued that because the goal in qualitative research is to describe and interpret rather than to generalize, there are no hard rules about how many participants one should study.⁶⁶ He suggests that determining a sample size is a matter of judgment.⁶⁷

As a result of the above, this study used a sample of sixty informants. This sample was divided into three categories, each with twenty informants. These categories had twenty former/current AIM/AIC church leaders, twenty local administrators and twenty local residents of Machakos District.

Data Collection Instruments

To collect primary data, interview and observation schedules were developed. The interview schedules were used to obtain information from key informants such as the local residents, former and current AIM/AIC leaders as well as former and current administrative officers. The observation schedules were used to collect data from AIM/AIC establishments and other monuments. Both audio and visual data recorders were used during the field work respectively.

Data Collection

Both Primary and Secondary sources were used in this study. Primary sources included archival documents at both the Kenya National Archives (KNA) and the AIC Archives both in Nairobi. In

⁶⁵ N. Emmanuel, *Sampling and Choosing Cases in Qualitative Research: A realist Approach* (London: Sage Publications, 2013), p. 146.

⁶⁶ M. Litchman, *Qualitative Research in Education: A User's Guide* (London: Sage Publications, 2013), p. 193.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

addition, primary data collection entailed in-depth oral interviews with key informants and observation AIM/AIC establishments and monuments. Secondary sources included published books, journal articles, newspapers and magazines as well as papers presented in seminars and conferences. These sources were accessed from both public and private libraries. Public libraries included the Egerton University Libraries at Njoro Campus as well as the Kenya National Library Services libraries in Nairobi and Mutiyambua in Makueni County. Private libraries included personal home libraries. The study also consulted various internet sources. The sources were also subjected to both external and internal criticism. External criticism was done to determine if the sources were genuine while internal criticism was done to determine accuracy of the information provided by the sources.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Data analysis was carried out in tandem with the field study. Analytical frames such as theoretical reflections, content analysis, documentary reviews and chronological analysis were used in the interpretation of the data. Theoretical analysis involved the use of the selected theoretical framework in the analysis of the data. Content analysis and documentary review included the corroboration of information from the various sources. The analysis was based on the objectives of the study and the research questions. An assessment of the findings was also done based on the objectives of the study.

Ethical Considerations

Firstly, the researcher obtained research permits from all levels ranging from Egerton University Board of Postgraduate Studies, the National Council for Science and Technology and the Machakos and the Makueni county governments. Voluntary participation and informed consent were key to this study. This was done through the signing of a consent form by the informant before participation. As a result, the researcher ensured that all the informants involved chose to participate of their own free will and that they were fully informed regarding the interview process. This entailed briefing them on the purpose of the study, their roles, and the freedom to withdraw at any point for whatever reason. Besides this, the researcher ensured that respect for the dignity of research participants was observed. Any type of communication in relation to the research was done with honesty and transparency. Misleading information as well as the presentation of findings in a biased way was avoided.

1.10 Summary

This chapter has focused on various sections of this study that includes the background to the study, statement of the problem, and the objectives of the study, the study questions, justification of the study, the scope and limitations of the study, the literature review, theoretical framework and the research methodology. In the background to the study, the study has provided background information of the influence of Christian missionaries to African societies. In the subsequent sections, the study has highlighted the problem under investigation and the objectives that have guided the researcher to address the problem in question efficiently. The chapter has also focused on explaining why it was necessary to carry out this study, the scope and the expected challenges as a result. The chapter has also presented historical studies concerning the research problems that have been carried out before. In this review, the knowledge gap has been identified whereby the major limitation of the works reviewed was the inadequacy in highlighting the influence of the AIM among the Machakos Akamba thus necessitating the reason for this study. In addition to the review, the chapter has also highlighted the theoretical framework and the research methodology that have guided the researcher in coming up with this work. The next tentative chapters are concerned with filling or aiding the filling of the gap in knowledge identified in the literature review concerning the social influence of the AIM in Machakos District between 1895 to 1971. The next chapter will focus on the elements of the Machakos Akamba social life in a bid to show how the Machakos Akamba social life looked like before the AIM intervention.

CHAPTER TWO

ELEMENTS OF KAMBA SOCIAL LIFE BEFORE FOREIGN INTERVENTION

2.1 Overview

This chapter discusses elements of the Kamba social life before the arrival of the AIM missionaries in Machakos District. This discussion will aid in understanding the forms of life that the Machakos Akamba led before the mission rolled out its activities that played a prominent role in changing the way of life of Machakos Akamba. It examines the major features of Kamba social life and how they were influenced by missionary activities. Generally, the Kamba community social life was common regardless of whether they lived in Machakos, Kitui or in the diaspora. These common features included the nature of their traditional religion, their rites of passage, healthcare and medicine, their conceptualization and management of time, their education systems, language and communication, architecture and clothing as well as art forms such as music and dance.

2.2 Kamba Traditional Religion

Like many African societies before the European intrusion in the continent, the Akamba of Machakos District had a well-developed religious system that provided for the needs of the people. As Ndeti has observed, these people were homo-religious to the extent that in the traditional social order, to be non-religious was inconceivable.⁶⁸ Religion dominated almost every aspect of the Kamba social life. Only a few social activities within the community would proceed without the integration of religion in these activities. As a result, it can be said that religion played a critical role in the social life of the Machakos Akamba.

The Kamba traditional religion mainly revolved around spirit worship, which was crowned with a time-to-time reference to a supreme being.⁶⁹ Consequently, the Akamba would pledge all their religious allegiance to the duo who were believed to influence the lives of the living to an extent that failing to recognize their existence would have detrimental effects on the community's existence. These effects were believed to

⁶⁸ Ndeti, *Elements of Akamba Life*, p. 172.

⁶⁹ G. Lindblom, *The Akamba in British East Africa: An Ethnological Monograph* (Uppsala: Appelbergs Boktryckeri, 1920), p. 210.

manifest themselves to the community through calamities such as incurable diseases, persistent droughts and famines, perpetual attacks by enemies as well as poor harvests among others.⁷⁰ As a result, the making of unfading references to the duo was an integral part of the community's life.

Like many pre-colonial African communities, the Akamba believed in the existence of a supreme being on whom their existence depended. The community had developed various names, which they would refer to the being, and this in most cases depended on the region of the district. The most common names included *Mulungu*, which meant the one who is above the spirits; *Ngai* which meant the one who lives alone and does no harm; *Mwatuangi*, which meant the one who cut their limbs into shape and *Mumbi*; which meant the creator.⁷¹ Despite the use of these different names, many Akamba believe that the names referred to the same being. Consequently, it can then be said that the Akamba of Machakos District were monotheists before the coming of the AIM missionaries.

Although some scholars of the Kamba traditional religion such as Lindblom and Muiu agree that the Akamba did not have a clear concept on the existence of this Supreme Being, hence the reason for his limited worship as compared to the spirits, the community had developed several beliefs about him that formed the core of their reference and worship to him. Among these beliefs were that he was an invisible male who lived high in the *matuni* (clouds). He was the creator of everything and was more powerful than the ancestral spirits. If they wanted to reach him for help, they would do so through the spirits whom they had frequent fellowships with.⁷²

Between the Supreme Being and the people were the ancestral spirits. These spirits were commonly known as *aimu* and were believed to influence the life of an individual and the community generally.⁷³ Because of that, the Akamba were bold worshippers of these spirits for the assurance of their well-being and existence. Some of the spirits worshipped by the community included *Muvite*, the wind spirit; *Kathambi*, the female water spirit inhabiting rivers, streams; and *Kitundumo*, the thunder spirit. There were also foreign

⁷⁰ Wausi Nginya, OI, 14/12/2018.

⁷¹ Muiu, *Kamba Culture and Missionary Struggle*, pp. 18-19.

⁷² Mutiso Mutua, OI, 4/8/2018.

⁷³ Muoti Mbaluka, OI, 6/12/2018.

spirits, especially from neighbours of the Akamba such as the Maasai, the Waswahili and the Kikuyu, who were believed to influence the existence of the community.⁷⁴ Due to the above, the spirit cult was deeply rooted in the community's existence in such a way that the Akamba entire life almost depended on their relations with spirits.

Due to the influential nature of the spirits to the lives of the living, many social activities within the community would not proceed without the recognition of these spirits as their behavior in most cases relied on the activities of the living towards them. The spirits would show a great interest in the living race and were believed to keep themselves informed on everything that happened in the community.⁷⁵ Failing to recognize them in most of these activities was unheard of in the community. In some cases, the spirits would be vengeful through the sending of misfortunes to the community until their wishes were granted. During such cases, the Akamba ritualists played a major role in identifying the desires of the spirits and passing them to the members of the community involved for immediate action.⁷⁶ These actions would take the form of sacrificing, giving offerings or doing any other activity as directed by the ritualists that would please the spirits.

A good example of the influence of ancestral spirits on the lives of the Machakos Akamba can be seen in the Akamba rites of passage. In all these rites of passage, starting from birth to the death of an individual, ancestral worship was very core. During pregnancy and birth, they would influence among other things the sex and name of the child.⁷⁷ Failing to give a name desired by these ancestral spirits for example would bring so many discomforts to the family until the new-born would be named according to the wishes of these spirits. As one informant who doubles as a medicine woman at Matetani, area of Kangundo recounted:

I was and have for many times been brought new-borns who cry excessively for no apparent reason. When I ask the parents the reasons for this, most of them are always unable to tell the cause even after trying all the means possible. After doing my *kuusya* (her normal way of getting divinations), I usually advise the parents to name the new-born after a particular dead relative and immediately the excessive crying stops.⁷⁸

⁷⁴ Munro, *Colonial Rule and the Kamba*, p. 99.

⁷⁵ Lindblom, *The Akamba in British East Africa*, p. 211.

⁷⁶ Ruth Kamandi, OI, 2/8/2018.

⁷⁷ Muthio Mune, OI, 3/8/2018.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

This clearly indicates that ancestral spirits influenced the naming of some new-borns among the Machakos Akamba. The same applied during the initiation ceremonies held in the community. As Muiu has observed, circumcision was accompanied by dancing, eating, drinking and sacrifices, which were all done to celebrate and appease the spirits of the departed ancestors in order to protect the candidates.⁷⁹ Marriage ceremonies in the community could also not be complete without the integration of ancestral worship. The pouring of libations during these marriage ceremonies such as animal blood and the traditional beer was a way of ensuring that the ancestral spirits had been involved in the whole process for their well-being. When death occurred in the family, a purification ceremony meant to cleanse the family from the spirits of death would be held after the burial ceremony was over.⁸⁰

Ancestral spirits were also believed to influence other areas of the community's social life such as healthcare. Though the community believed that some of the diseases that infected individuals in the community had natural causes, there were others that were caused by supernatural powers and thus the integration of ancestral worship in the treatment ailments was necessary.⁸¹ Consequently, besides the traditional medical practitioner giving the patient their normal natural prescriptions in the form of *miti* (herbs), they would also give spiritual prescriptions for total healing and protection from such illnesses by the respective spirits.

Because of the important roles the spirits were believed to play in the community, there were well-developed systems of ensuring that spirit worship had been integrated in the community's life? One of the main ways through which the community did this was through sacrifices and offerings. According to Mbiti, a sacrifice is where an animal's life is destroyed in order to present the animal in part or in whole to God, supernatural beings, spirits or the living dead. On the other hand, offerings refer to the remaining cases, which do not involve the killing of an animal such as the presentation of foodstuffs and other items.⁸² The Akamba of Machakos District were diligent when it came to this form of

⁷⁹ Muiu, *Kamba Culture and Missionary Struggle*, p. 51.

⁸⁰ Lindblom, *The Akamba in British East Africa*, p. 108.

⁸¹ Ndeti, *Elements of Akamba Life*, p. 138.

⁸² Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, p. 58.

worship, which could either be done at the communal or individual level.⁸³ The aim behind this form of worship varied from time to time and it involved issues such as thanksgiving for a good harvest, requesting for favours such as rainfall and protection from calamities among others. This meant that the Kamba idea of sacrificing and giving offerings was purposeful and it could not just take place with no apparent reason.

One of the main ways in which these sacrifices and offerings could be done was through the time-to-time pilgrimages to the *mathembo* (shrines). These *mathembo* were special places under trees such as *muumo* (fig) or on rocks in the areas where such trees could not be found.⁸⁴ Though in most cases the sacrificing and offering done in these *mathembo* was a result of the community's ritualist's directive, they hardly took any important roles during the actual ceremonies. The key players in these ceremonies were the *atumia* and *iveti sya ithembo* or *nzama* (men and women's council) who ensured that the whole process went on smoothly.⁸⁵ Some of the activities that dominated the *mathembo* sessions included the killing of animals such as a goat or a bull whose contents would be poured on the ground as libation to the spirits. They would also eat and leave some foodstuffs in the *mathembo* for these spirits to feed on.⁸⁶

There were several customs that surrounded the *mathembo* worship sessions and varied from one area of the district to another. One of these customs concerned the youths, as they were not allowed to attend the *mathembo* sessions because of among other reasons, their perpetual sexual relations with their peers that was believed to be a sign of impurity (*kuvukya ithembo*).⁸⁷ For the recently married men, they had to go through a process called *kukula* in which one became eligible after the circumcision of his first-born. This process entailed his father giving him a bull to kill and celebrate with his friends to be allowed to be attending the *mathembo* sessions. On the other hand, in some parts of the district, only women who had reached menopause would be allowed to attend the *mathembo* sessions.⁸⁸ In essence Machakos Akamba placed a lot of emphasis on maturity as a pre-requisite to shrine worship, which was a major aspect of their life. Sexual purity

⁸³ Muthio Muneo, OI, 3/8/2018.

⁸⁴ Lindblom, *The Akamba in British East Africa*, p. 219.

⁸⁵ Muthembwa Kitavi, OI, 16/8/2018.

⁸⁶ Muthio Muneo, OI, 3/8/2018.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Muthike Ndeto, OI, 5/8/2018.

was also highly observed especially after the *mathembo* worship sessions. This explains why sexual intimacy among the attendees of the *mathembo* worship sessions was discouraged regardless of their being husbands and wives.⁸⁹

Besides the occasional sacrifices and offerings that used to take place in the *mathembo* among the Machakos Akamba, there were other day-to-day occasions when such forms of worship could be done either at the individual or communal level. For instance, before taking meals, a small amount of food or drink that was being taken would be poured as libation to the spirits.⁹⁰ During the Kamba traditional dance, *kilumi*, these forms of worship were also common. Some participants would get possessed by the spirits to an extent of depicting supernormal behaviours such as stepping on a red hot piece of iron without getting burned. Others would speak in unfamiliar languages that were believed to belong to the spirit world.⁹¹ In other instances, the spirits could visit during *kilumi* dances especially during the night to commune with the dancers. As one informant observed:

During the night, you could see a group of people approaching speaking in a language that no one could understand. You could also see some elderly women who normally seemed to be very weak making very high jumps during the *kilumi*.⁹²

These perennial visits show the extent to which ancestral spirits were close to members of the community and thus failing to commune with them as a member was inevitable. A common feature during these worship sessions in the community were the prayers that accompanied the sacrificing and offerings. In most cases, these prayers correlated with the intended purpose of the whole worship sessions. They were often short and precise and did not have a specific predetermined way of saying them. According to one of the informants, this practice was called *kwathisya* and involved uttering words as you perform the act of worship such as the offering libation on the ground.⁹³

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ambrose Muia, OI, 15/8/2018.

⁹¹ Mutavi Nzyoka, OI, 4/8/2018.

⁹² Mbondo Mutiso, OI, 4/8/2018.

⁹³ Muthike Ndeto, OI, 5/8/2018.

One common feature of Kamba traditional worship sessions is that it was an activity preserved for the adults. Though there were cases where the young people had their own shrines for worshipping especially in the Matetani area of Kangundo, the young members of the community rarely featured in most of these worship sessions in many parts of the district.⁹⁴ This meant that the Machakos Akamba ways of worship went hand in hand with maturity though this does not mean that the young people were not worshippers as they could do so through their elders in the community.

From the foregoing illustrations, it is clear that the Akamba of Machakos District had a religion even before the coming of the AIM missionaries. With this religion, they would find a lot of meaning to their existence as the religion among other roles tried to answer many questions in their society regardless of the effectiveness of the kind of answers the religion provided.

2.3 Kamba Rites of Passage

Rites of passage involve the transition of members of a society from one social stage to another in a society. In many social settings, the transition from one social stage to another is a common phenomenon, which helps in the creation of social order in that particular social setting. The primary purpose of rites of passage is to transfer the collective cultural wisdom of a people to the members of a group.⁹⁵ This in turn helps the society to sustain its social development through the various means put forward for the advancement of that given society. Rites of passage are a common feature in the growth of an individual in many African societies. Though these rites of passage may differ from one social set up to another, there is a lot of correlation in the way the rites of passage processes are carried out in these societies. According to Kasomo, rites of passage can be classified into pregnancy and birth, birth and childhood, that is; initiation, betrothal and marriage and funerals.⁹⁶ Among the Akamba of Machakos District, these four rites of passage were very common in the community's social set up. In each of these rites, there were procedures and customs that had been put in place to oversee the success of each

⁹⁴ Muthio Mune, OI, 3/8/2018.

⁹⁵ L. Goggins II, *Bringing the Light into a New Day: African Centred Rites of Passage*, 2nd Edition (Ohio: Saint Publications, 2012), p. 1.

⁹⁶ D. Kasomo, 'An Analysis of the Rites of Passage and their Relation to Christianity', (Research Paper, Maseno University, Department of Religion, Theology and Philosophy, 2009), p. 2.

rite. The participation in these rites was a compulsory activity to all the members of the community and therefore acted as a prerequisite for acceptance within the community.

Like in many African societies, the Akamba of Machakos District observed pregnancy and birth as the first rite of passage for individuals in the community. Consequently, pregnancy marked the start of a new life and the expectant mother had to be treated in a special way.⁹⁷ The community's customs required the wife to inform the husband of the pregnancy in which they would have sexual intercourse once and then abstain until after the birth of the child.⁹⁸ The Akamba had a negative view of sex during pregnancy and that is why it was avoided at all costs. They believed that it would lead to making the developing foetus impure, an act they called *kuthokoanya mwana* (making the baby impure) and that is why couples were advised to refrain from sexual intimacy till the baby was born.⁹⁹

As mentioned earlier in this study, ancestral spirits were believed to play a major role in the life of the developing foetus. Among other things, they were believed to protect the unborn child as well as creating and shaping the unborn baby. They were also believed to be the key determiners of the sex of the child.¹⁰⁰ As a result, the expectant mother and the family at large had to ensure good relations with the ancestral spirits for a safe pregnancy and delivery.

Upon a safe delivery, the community believed that the child was not a real human being and therefore called him *kiimu* (a form of a spirit).¹⁰¹ Because of that, the new born had to undergo a spiritual transition from the spirit world to the real world. This process was known as *kwikia mwana ithaa* and after its completion, the new born was now declared a true human being.¹⁰² The integration of ancestral worship during and after the birth process continued to feature during this period. Among these forms of integration is the feasting that took place after the birth of the child, which was often accompanied by the

⁹⁷ Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, p. 110.

⁹⁸ Muiu, *Kamba Culture and Missionary Struggle*, p. 38.

⁹⁹ Ruth Kamandi, OI, 2/8/2018.

¹⁰⁰ Lindblom, *The Akamba in British East Africa*, pp. 29-30.

¹⁰¹ Muthike Ndeto, OI, 5/8/2018.

¹⁰² Ndoti Musoko, OI, 12/8/2018.

offering of sacrifices as a way of giving thanks to the ancestors for granting the family a new member.¹⁰³

During this period, not all the community members were allowed to access the new born as some were believed to have ‘bad eyes’ commonly known as *kyeni* which was believed to bring misfortunes to the newborn. Consequently, the new born would be kept away from them.¹⁰⁴ It is also during this period that the naming of the child took place. The Akamba of Machakos District had well developed procedures that were followed when naming infants. This included naming an infant after a dead member of the family, naming according to the times and events of the day, month or year when the child was born and naming according to the place of birth among others.¹⁰⁵ The parties involved in the naming process had to be cautious as in some instances, improper naming could lead to diseases and even death.

There were other practices that were often carried out during this period of birth and naming. One of these practices was the *kualyula mwana* custom, which was often observed from the fifth night after the birth of the child. During this period, the child’s parents would have the first sexual encounter since birth. After this sexual event, the child would be placed on the mother’s front side when sleeping at night. After the next *nthakame ya mwei* (menstruation), the child would now be placed at the mother’s back if she was a girl and at the father’s back if he was a boy.¹⁰⁶ This custom would often be observed during the sleeping time at night.

It was the community’s desire for every family to have children. However, there were other instances where a family could not manage to have kids due to issues such as barrenness or impotence. In such instances, the community had come up with measures, which were aimed at covering this misfortune among its members. When such instances arose, the first step was to seek for the services of the traditional medical practitioner who would solve the problem especially if it had to do with supernatural or natural causes that

¹⁰³ Lindblom, *The Akamba in British East Africa*, p. 33.

¹⁰⁴ Katiwa Kyaka, OI, 2/8/2018.

¹⁰⁵ Muiu, *Kamba Culture and Missionary Struggle*, pp. 43-44.

¹⁰⁶ Muthike Ndeto, OI, 5/8/2018.

were within his ability.¹⁰⁷ In case of incapacitation, the health practitioners would do referrals, which varied according to the sex of the party involved. In the case of impotence, the family would find a man who would sire children on behalf of the impotent man. This was commonly known as *kunengwa wii* (permission to have children with the impotent man's wife).¹⁰⁸ However, the children sired belonged to the impotent man and not their biological father.

On the other hand, the case of barrenness would be solved through other ways such as polygamy. This would happen either in two ways. In the first way, the barren woman would marry another younger woman commonly known as *iweto with* whom her husband would have children.¹⁰⁹ Alternatively, the husband would remarry and have children with the second wife. All these measures were taken by the community because of the value it attached to procreation as it was important for the community's continued existence.

After birth, the child entered into the childhood phase of life. This period proceeded up to initiation, a phase that marked the transition from childhood to adulthood. In this phase, the Machakos Akamba had a well-organized system of celebrating this transition rite through initiation. The most common form of initiation in the community was *nzaiko* (circumcision) which went beyond the cutting of one's body parts. It was in this phase where the community's youths were introduced to the art of communal living.¹¹⁰ All the members of the community whether male or female had to go through initiation to qualify as full members of the community. Besides that, this phase was a prerequisite for marriage and one would find it hard to get a spouse should they skip this phase.

Among the Machakos Akamba, circumcision was divided into three phases that is *nzaiko ila nini* (minor circumcision), *nzaiko ila nene* (major circumcision) and the *nzaiko ya aume* (circumcision for males).¹¹¹ Both boys and girls had to undergo the minor and the major circumcision while the latter *nzaiko* was preserved for the boys only after undergoing the first two. The minor circumcision entailed the removal of the foreskin in

¹⁰⁷ Kithome Kiili, OI, 17/8/2018.

¹⁰⁸ Muthike Ndeto, OI, 5/8/2018.

¹⁰⁹ Aaron Nthali, OI, 17/8/2018.

¹¹⁰ Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, p. 121.

¹¹¹ Mutiso Mutua, OI, 3/8/2018.

the case of boys and the removal of the labia minora and preputium clitoridis in the case of girls.¹¹² On the other hand, the major circumcision involved educating the young men and women on the customs and traditions of the community.¹¹³ It actually took place after the small circumcision and the community's non-formal education took the center stage during this period. Lastly, the third circumcision which as mentioned earlier was reserved for the boys who had undergone the minor and the major circumcision entailed the holding of secret meetings where the boys would be trained on various issues of importance to their survival in the community such as their way of thinking, their way of responding to emotions and feelings among other key aspects of the community that the boys needed to know during this stage of their lives.¹¹⁴

There were five key players during these circumcision exercises. The first key players were the *asingi* (candidates) who were the boys and girls whose parents felt they were mature enough to transit to adulthood. The other key players were the parents who often arranged for their children to be circumcised by the *aiki* (circumcisers) and their assistants who were the third and fourth parties respectively. The fifth parties were the *avwikii* who included older men and women who volunteered to be chaperons of the candidates. They were the ones entrusted by the community to oversee the education of the candidates in the customs and traditions of the community.¹¹⁵

Ceremonies to mark this important phase of the candidates' lives accompanied the nzaiko activities. The candidates would put down all their ornaments and perform dances, which were often accompanied with beer drinking.¹¹⁶ In addition to that, religion played a major role in this rite of passage. Besides the dancing which was a partly a form of ancestral worship, sacrifices and offerings would be integrated in the process to appease the ancestral spirits who were expected to protect and preserve the candidates. For instance, before the onset of the beer drinking sessions, the *mwaiki* would pour out a little beer on the ground as a way of communing with the ancestors on this occasion.¹¹⁷

¹¹² Lindblom, *The Akamba in British East Africa*, p. 42.

¹¹³ Muiu, *Kamba Culture and Missionary Struggle*, p. 53.

¹¹⁴ Ibid, p. 58.

¹¹⁵ Mutiso Mutua, OI, 3/8/2018.

¹¹⁶ Lindblom, *The Akamba in British East Africa*, p. 44.

¹¹⁷ Muiu, *Kamba Culture and Missionary Struggle*, p. 51.

The role of sexual intercourse during the *nzaiko* process could not be downplayed. For instance, during the eve of the day when the minor circumcision was being conducted, the candidates' parents had to have sexual intercourse an act that the Akamba called *kwaika mwana*, which means circumcising the child. This act was repeated after the physical circumcision and was believed to have a negative influence on the candidates' wounds if not performed as required.¹¹⁸ The same applied to the conductors of the *nzaiko* who had to get intimate with their wives or husbands on the eve of the minor circumcision day. The same act could be repeated on the third day of the *nzaiko*. This was a covenant that would ensure the success of the circumcision process.¹¹⁹

After circumcision, the initiates were now considered as mature people who, among other things, could become either husbands or wives. As in many African communities, marriage among the Machakos Akamba was a requirement by the community in which everyone had to participate. As Mbiti has observed, failure to get married under normal circumstances meant that the person concerned had rejected the society and the society ought to reject him in return.¹²⁰ As a result, the initiated graduates were expected to prepare for betrothal and marriage to avoid such scenarios. At this stage, parents played a critical role to ensure that their daughters and sons got the right marriage partners.¹²¹ This ranged from advising them on the best families where to get a good wife or husband to even making efforts to ensure that their sons or daughter married persons of their parents' choice.

Betrothal and marriage among the Machakos District Akamba was a process that usually started immediately after a suitable suitor had been identified either by the person intending to marry or by his or her parents. From then, the necessary arrangements, which included *kuoka* (first visit to the girl's home by the boy's parents) and *kuasya* (dowry payment) among others, were made until the time when the bride and the groom married.¹²² During this process, festivities, which were usually accompanied by religious

¹¹⁸ Mutiso Mutua, OI, 3/8/2018.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, p. 133.

¹²¹ Martin Mwaka, OI, 14/8/2018.

¹²² Mutiso Mutua, OI, 3/8/2018.

customs, featured, as they were perceived as an important part of the betrothal and marriage process.

Upon successful betrothal, new relations between the two families involved were established. Consequently, new forms of behaviours had to be observed between these two families. For instance, a man and his mother-in-law could not mention each other by name. In case the man visits his father-in-law's home, he could not enter his mother in law's hut as long as she was inside.¹²³ In addition to that, there was a change in the way members of the two families would call each other. For instance, the man and his parents-in-law would call each other *athoni*. Respect between the two families was propagated in this one way.

In some parts of the district, marriage among the sons in a family followed a sequence that was mainly influenced by the age and the order in which the sons within a family were born. As a result, a younger brother would not marry until his elder brother married first.¹²⁴ Although this sequence often caused delays to the younger sons especially in cases whereby their elder brothers were reluctant to get wives, it created a lot of order in the family when it came to the betrothal time of the sons in that particular family. However, as civilizations within the community continued to advance, this trend died over time and only few families would observe such a sequence. The same case applied to the exogamy custom that was highly observed in many parts of the district before the influence from Western culture. Before then, marriage among members of the same clan was discouraged because of the blood ties.¹²⁵ However, the strength of this custom has died over time and cases of people of the same clan marrying have emerged with time though in most cases the blood relationships have always been distant.

A common feature of the marriage institution among the Akamba before the advent of Christian missions was polygamy that was commonly practised in the district. Polyandry and polygyny were legitimized practices in the district. However, there were several reasons that the community had advanced to justify this behaviour, one of them being to solve the problems of childlessness within the family as mentioned earlier in this chapter.

¹²³ Lindblom, *The Akamba in British East Africa*, p. 89.

¹²⁴ Aaron Nguta, OI, 4/8/2018.

¹²⁵ Musili Muteti, OI, 20/8/2018.

In other instances, desire to augment a family's labour force would lead to such kinds of marriages. For instance, a wife who was overwhelmed by the daily activities of the family would advise the husband to marry a young woman who would help with the household chores.¹²⁶ However, the two could not enjoy the same status as the first wife was considered superior to the younger one. This explains why the younger wife would call the older one *mwaitu*, a term which means mum among the Akamba.¹²⁷

Sometimes, men would become polygamous because of the customs put forward by the community regarding marriage. For instance, as mentioned earlier in the chapter, in many parts of the district, sexual intercourse between a husband and a wife during pregnancy was restricted. As a result, the husband had to look for another woman to marry so as to act as a substitute for sexual intimacy when one of the wives was pregnant.¹²⁸ This in turn helped to alleviate cases of promiscuity in the community. Too much wealth in a family was also a motivating factor for polygamy. Men who had amassed a lot of wealth in the community would sometimes marry many wives because of this situation.¹²⁹ The death of a spouse would also culminate to polygamy, as the affected parties would sometimes remarry especially if they were still in their productive ages of their marriage.

Wife inheritance was also a common feature of Kamba social life. This behaviour was common in a family where a son had died before having enough children with his wife. In such circumstances, the wife would be inherited by one of the husband's brothers or cousins to sire children on behalf of the deceased.¹³⁰ However, the children would be called after their deceased father but not after their biological father. This helped to secure the dead man's lineage even in his absence. It would also save the deceased wife from engaging in promiscuous behaviours, which were highly discouraged in the community.¹³¹ Though divorce and separation were discouraged in the community, there were instances when they could be legitimized. For instance, laziness, barrenness,

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Mutie Mulinge, OI, 17/8/2018.

¹²⁹ Muthio Muneo, OI, 3/8/2018.

¹³⁰ Musili Muteti, OI, 20/8/2018.

¹³¹ Ibid.

infidelity or even bad cooking habits of a wife would trigger the husband to either separate or divorce his wife.¹³²

The fourth and the last rite of passage among the Machakos Akamba was death. Among the Akamba of Machakos District, death had various causes, which were not limited to spiritual and natural causes as the popular saying in the community; *mukamba ndakusaa mana*, which means a Kamba person, does not die without an underlying reason.¹³³ The death of an individual in the community marked the start of spiritual life and was therefore not the end of an individual's existence. Consequently, in the district, death was not conceived as a disappearance to hell but rather a transformation of the living in order to play a different role.¹³⁴ As a result, the community highly honoured the dead, as they were still being perceived as part of the whole community.

The Akamba of Machakos District had developed their own ways of handling this rite of passage, which ensured a smooth transition of the individual from the physical world to the spiritual world. Though these ways partly differed from one part of the district to another, the community ensured that what was put forward to aid in the transition of the life of the departed individual was a way they would not bring unpleasant experiences as a result of a bad send off.¹³⁵ The death of an individual in the community marked the onset of this rite of passage. Consequently, burial arrangements, which lasted for one or two days before the individual was buried, were made. This study has established that the Akamba of Machakos did not have a definite time of the day of burying their dead. Some people could be buried in the early morning hours, others in the midmorning hours while others in the afternoon. However, no one could be buried during the night.¹³⁶

There was a very clear distinction in gender roles during this time of death and burial preparations. In most cases, the whole process was male dominated and women hardly featured except in rare cases.¹³⁷ Besides the male domination, age mattered a lot in this

¹³² D. Penwill, *Custom and Tradition in East Africa: Kamba Customary Law* (London: Macmillan and Co. Ltd, 1951), p. 17.

¹³³ Musili Muteti, OI, 20/8/2018.

¹³⁴ Ndeti, *Elements of Akamba Life*, p. 174.

¹³⁵ Mutiso Mutua, OI, 3/8/2018.

¹³⁶ Muia Kimu, OI, 14/8/2018.

¹³⁷ Mbondo Mutiso, OI, 3/8/2018.

whole process. Only the *atumia* (elderly men) would participate in the process except in cases where the services of the young men would be required such as digging the grave.¹³⁸

In most cases, the departed were buried on the front side of their homesteads although there were exceptions to this. For instance, a member of the family who had not lived up to the family's expectations would be buried outside the homestead. Such individuals included those men and women who had reached the marriage age but remained unmarried and girls who had children before marriage.¹³⁹ The reasoning behind this was to ensure that people of such kind would not crop up again in the community. It also acted as a warning to the living that unwanted behaviours in the community would lead to a bad end of an individual and thus all the members in the community should meet the society's expectations.¹⁴⁰ Besides these two venues of burying individuals, there were also other cases where a dying member of the family would be carried to the forest and be left there to die and be fed on by wild animals.

During death, various customs and traditions that had been advanced by the community on handling death could be observed. These customs were mainly observed in the cases where the departed were buried in their homesteads. For instance, the direction in which an individual was buried facing mattered a lot. It was the community's custom that individuals be buried while facing eastwards as facing a direction such as westwards where the sunsets meant that more people in the family would start disappearing the way the sun disappears in the west and thus more deaths in the family.¹⁴¹ During the period of mourning, the community had placed strict measures related to sexual relations for close relatives of the departed. For instance, marital sex would be suspended during this period as it could bring death back to the family again (*kutunga kikw'u musyi*).¹⁴² Consequently, all the family members were expected to avoid sex at all costs during this period. The community believed that death was communicable. This meant that it could easily be passed from one family to another and thus outsiders were expected to take precaution lest they 'transmit' death to their families. For instance, they would be discouraged from

¹³⁸ Mbondo Mutiso, OI, 3/8/2018.

¹³⁹ Wausi Nginya, OI, 14/8/2018.

¹⁴⁰ Kasivi Kaula, OI, 14/8/2018.

¹⁴¹ James Mulinge, OI, 3/8/2018.

¹⁴² Ruth Kamandi, OI, 3/8/2018.

having sexual relations with any member of the deceased family for fear of *kuete kikw'u musyi*, which meant bringing death to the outsider's family.¹⁴³

Death among the Machakos Akamba like in any other society dreaded. Consequently, the community had developed various traditional ways of preventing its occurrence. Among these measures was *kumya kikw'u musyi* (casting death out of the family). This measure was realized in different ways in various parts of the district. For instance, in Mbooni, there were men who had specialized in driving death out of bereaved families. This would happen by having sexual intercourse with a woman from the bereaved family. A good example is Mukunyi Musembi who was well known for driving death out from the bereaved families by having sexual intercourse with a female member of the family.¹⁴⁴

Because of the belief in the communicable nature of death in the community, those who had participated in the burial of a deceased person were cleansed before resuming to their normal routines. In such circumstances, the services of *Mundu mue wa ng'ondu* (a ritualist who specialized in cleansing activities) would be sought so as to prevent the participants from carrying with them death to their homes.¹⁴⁵

One peculiar feature concerning death among some Akamba that this study has noted concerned the ability of some individuals in the community to influence their time of death. These individuals would get sick to the extent of rotting completely but would not die until the time they wished to. As one informant from Kangundo recounted:

I saw my grandfather during his last days. He got sick to a point of rotting but he would not die. My uncles kept on persuading him to show them where his *kithitu* (the talisman that kept him alive) was so as to end the suffering he was going through then he would not. However, after continued persuasions, my grandfather asked them to cut an amulet that had always been on his neck and that's when he died.¹⁴⁶

The explanation for such a scenario was that such experiences were because of the influence of powerful charms that the particular individual possessed. Consequently, it

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Aaron Nguta, OI, 4/8/2018.

¹⁴⁵ Muthike Ndeto, OI, 5/8/2018.

¹⁴⁶ Mbondo Mutiso, OI,3/8/2018.

meant that the individual had died a long time ago and appeared alive because of the charms he had.¹⁴⁷

After the burial of a dead person, the community continued to commune with the spirit from time to time. This could be done through offerings, sacrifices or prayer to them. The spirit of the deceased would be invoked during family rituals for various reasons.¹⁴⁸ This maintained a close bond between members of the family and their ancestors.

2.4 Kamba Traditional Healthcare System

Throughout history, healthcare systems have been important to societies across the globe. At different stages of a society's civilization, the problem of disease outbreak, which destabilizes the people's physical, mental and emotional well-being, has always been an issue of concern. As a result, different societies at different periods of their civilization have developed mechanisms to address this problem. In African, before the advent of European influence, societies had well developed ways of addressing health issues. As Ambe has observed, Africa has the longest history of healing in the world and African traditional healthcare methods have spread through time, space and cultures.¹⁴⁹ Although these techniques have received a lot of criticism especially from the West, most of them were effective in addressing health issues that affected Africans before the introduction of Western medicine.

Among the Akamba of Machakos District, healthcare was at the heart of the community. Though disease outbreaks were not as common as today, the Machakos Akamba had a well-developed healthcare system that ensured the well-being of individuals in the community. This healthcare system integrated both natural and supernatural means of restoring and protecting an individual's health as ill-health was believed to have both natural and supernatural causes.¹⁵⁰ As a result, the form of healthcare that was provided to the Machakos Akamba addressed both natural and supernatural concerns.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Ndeti, *Elements of Akamba Life*, p. 175.

¹⁴⁹ Ambe, *Tradition, Culture and Development in Africa*, p. 144.

¹⁵⁰ Ndeti, *Elements of Akamba Life*, pp. 137-138.

The healthcare system among the Akamba of Machakos District mainly revolved around the traditional healthcare practitioners. These practitioners were the hope of the community's health and well-being. When someone got sick, he/she would visit the practitioner who would discover the source of the illness and give the necessary natural and supernatural prescriptions. Traditional medical practitioners among the Machakos Akamba varied in terms of specialization as well as expertise just as the modern healthcare practitioners vary.¹⁵¹ Consequently, it was the responsibility of the patient to identify the traditional medical practitioner who was suitable and able to treat a particular ailment. Specialization among the health practitioners ranged from treating people against black magic, treating people suffering from natural illnesses, protection against certain ailments, and purification for those who were deemed impure in the community as well as telling fortunes among others.¹⁵² This is to say that the areas of specialization of these medicine men were as many as the number of issues of concern that required their attention. However, in most cases, multitasking among these practitioners was a common feature in their profession.

Although not all forms of illnesses attracted the intervention of a traditional healthcare practitioner, their services would be sought when the patient felt that he/she was in need of their services. In such situations, the patient would visit the medical practitioner who in most cases operated at his homestead in a specially prepared structure for his consultations.¹⁵³ On arrival, the practitioner would cross examine the patient in a bid to identify what the problem was. However, there were some other medical practitioners who through their own expertise could discern the problems with their patients even before the consultations were made.¹⁵⁴ The most common step that followed after the consultations was divination in a bid to identify what was affecting the patient. That is how the specialist could identify whether the problem required a natural or supernatural treatment.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵¹ Mbondo Mutiso, OI, 3/8/2018.

¹⁵² Mutiso Mutua, OI, 3/8/2018.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Muthio Munee, OI, 3/8/2018.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

In case of a natural treatment, the healthcare practitioner would use *muti* (plural; *miti*) or herbs to treat ailments. Herbs therefore formed the basis for treating the diseases that were affecting the Machakos Akamba. For instance illnesses such as malaria, pneumonia and indigestion would be treated using plants such as *ikulinu* (cactus) and *mukondu* (Sodom apple) respectively.¹⁵⁶ Alternatively, there were other items that could be used by the medical practitioner to treat these ailments. For instance, wounds could be treated using powdered lizard faeces, *kiathi* which involved vomiting blood would be treated using sheep's urine while scalds and burns could be treated by applying maize flour.¹⁵⁷

Concerning birth there were expert midwives in the Kamba community. These women were called *esikya* (*mwisikya*; singular) and had developed their own procedures of facilitating child delivery, which were in most cases effective.¹⁵⁸ Upon a successful delivery, there were after birth medical activities that ensured that the life of the mother and her child were safe. For instance, some herbs would be administered to the mother. A special meal could also be prepared for the mother (*kuyyuviv'a*) to enable her regain her strength. In addition, she would be given sufficient time to rest before she could resume her normal duties.¹⁵⁹ The new-born's navel cord would be carefully cut by the birth attendants and a special medicine in the form of soot would be applied to the cut to facilitate the healing of the wound.¹⁶⁰

Besides the art of midwifery, the Akamba traditional medical practitioners had also developed their own ways of addressing ailments that were as a result of the supernatural causes. They would provide both preventive and curative treatments of these ailments which ensured that the individual's health status was well protected from the ailments. One common form of these treatments were the services that were offered by *mundu mue wa ng'ondu* (a ritualist who specialized in purification). In the community, there were acts that were termed as unclean when committed by an individual and therefore required the intervention of *mundu mue wa ng'ondu*. Without that, the victim was considered unclean and unsafe to interact with the rest of the community lest misfortunes start

¹⁵⁶ Ndeti, *Elements of Akamba Life*, pp.138-139.

¹⁵⁷ Beatrice Mumbi, OI, 3/8/2018.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰ Ruth Kamandi, OI, 3/8/2018.

affecting them.¹⁶¹ For instance, when a family was bereaved, women from that family who were menstruating had to be cleansed (*kuuwa*) by the *mundu mue wa ng'ondu* before the burial proceedings could take place. Those also who participated in the burying of the deceased had to be cleansed by traditional health practitioners as mentioned earlier a process that was called *kumya kikw'u* (exorcising the spirit of death).¹⁶²

The *muti* (herb) cult was another form of treatment that took the center stage of the medical field among the Akamba of Machakos District. As mentioned earlier, the *muti* played a major role in treating physical ailments that affected the members of the community. Besides that, there were supernatural roles that the *muti* would play in the community. Though this stuff was made from plants, it was believed to have magical powers that would help one to address several issues that they felt were afflicting them.¹⁶³ Consequently, it can be said that the Kamba *muti* was for both physical and spiritual treatment to individuals. For instance, there was *muti wa wende* that could make one someone successful in love matters, *muti wa wia* that could make one successful in trade, *muti wa kivinguo* that could heal a person who was bewitched and *nzevu* that would improve someone's persuasive powers among others.¹⁶⁴

Closely connected with the Akamba traditional medicine was belief in omen (*mwaa*). An omen is an event or happening or a phenomenon that indicates destiny and its occurrence gives a clear message about the future for a particular person or groups of persons.¹⁶⁵ Among the Machakos Akamba, omens can be classified into two: good and bad omens. While good omens were believed to bring fortunes or luck among the Akamba, bad omens were precursors of misfortunes and had to be avoided at all costs.¹⁶⁶

The Machakos Akamba placed a lot of weight on the influence of omens on their daily activities such that corrective measures had to be taken to avoid the misfortunes awaiting an individual, especially in the case of bad omens. One common characteristic of the belief in omen was the variation in the meanings that were attached to the occurrences

¹⁶¹ Muthio Munee, OI, 3/8/2018.

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ B. Diwivedi, *Study of Omens* (New Delhi: Diamond Pocket Books Limited, 2005), p. 9.

¹⁶⁶ Mutiso Mutua, OI, 3/8/2018.

that were believed to either have a positive or a negative impact on someone's life. In other cases, the occurrence may have no meaning at all. This variation mainly depended on the region of the district to which such meanings were derived. Good or bad omens could be because of things such as human and animal behaviour or even natural changes.¹⁶⁷ For instance, sneezing could portend a particular omen. To many ritualists, a boy's sneezing early in the morning was a good omen as they believed that they would have many patients on that day.¹⁶⁸ A hunter who carried salt when going on a hunting trip could ruin a hunting expedition and this was likely to render the mission unsuccessful. As a result, the carrying of salt during hunting expeditions was discouraged. Additionally, meeting a woman early in the morning when going hunting or to the market was considered ill-omen.¹⁶⁹

Animal behaviour also played a major role in this omen cult among the Akamba. Some animal behaviours were considered good omens while others were believed to be bad omens. For instance, the appearance of a woodpecker was considered to be a good omen as some Akamba believed that it was carrying a good message from the ancestral spirits.¹⁷⁰ This was contrary to the appearance of an owl, which signified possible death of a family member. As a result, the family involved had to consult with a traditional medical practitioner conversant with the interpretation of these omens lest the misfortune catches up with them.¹⁷¹ Natural occurrences could also depict either good or bad omens among the Machakos Akamba. Although the scientific explanation behind these natural occurrences would totally mismatch the locals' conceptualization of these occurrences, there was a strong belief among the locals that these occurrences would influence their lives in a particular way. For instance, the appearance of the rainbow was believed to impede the coming of rainfall and thus a bad omen.¹⁷²

The services rendered by the Kamba ritualists in Machakos District in most cases attracted a form of payment. To some physicians, their ability to address different issues regarding the physical, emotional and spiritual well-being of the members of the

¹⁶⁷ Mutie Mulonzi, OI, 14/8/2018.

¹⁶⁸ Lindblom, *The Akamba in British East Africa*, p. 291.

¹⁶⁹ Mutie Mulonzi, OI, 14/8/2018.

¹⁷⁰ Lindblom, *The Akamba in British East Africa*, p. 294.

¹⁷¹ Kithome Kiili, OI, 17/8/2018.

¹⁷² Ndoti Musoko, OI, 12/12/2018.

community was an economic activity and thus many of them would earn a living through that. Most of the patients who visited these Kamba traditional medical specialists had to pay a fee whose value depended on the problem that the patients had, their income as well as the modes of payment of the traditional health practitioner in question.¹⁷³ The most common forms of these payments were through the use of the animals that were being domesticated in the Akamba homesteads. This explains why some of these medicine men had amassed large sums of wealth in the form of livestock.¹⁷⁴

2.5 Kamba Concept of Time

Osita Gregory in his justification of the concept of time in Africa defines time as an observed phenomenon, by means of which human beings sense and record changes in the environment and the universe.¹⁷⁵ Different societies across the world have had different conceptions of time that have helped them to manage their activities and events within their society. Before the influence of European and American civilizations on Africa, African societies had their own conception of time that helped them to periodize their existence. The understanding of this African conception of time is very significant in contextualizing the African ontology, attitudes and general way of life.¹⁷⁶

According to Mbiti, the African concept of time is a comparison of events, which have occurred, those that are taking place now and those that are about to occur.¹⁷⁷ Consequently, among many pre-colonial African societies, the concept of time revolved around events and activities that took place in that particular society. There were no customized equipment such as calendars and watches for measuring time. Nevertheless, these African societies were able to manage time in their own ways leading to order in these societies. African societies did not have much interest in when an event occurred but the event itself.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷³ Kithome Kiili, OI, 17/8/2018.

¹⁷⁴ Mutiso Mutua, OI, 3/8/2018.

¹⁷⁵ G. Osita, 'Justification of the Concept of Time in Africa', <http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/og.v.121.16>, p. 254, Accessed on 21/12/2018.

¹⁷⁶ Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, p. 17.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

¹⁷⁸ A.I.Kanu, J.S. Mbiti's African Concept of Time and the Problem of Development (Department of Philosophy, University of Nigeria), p. 130, <http://dx.doi.org/10.15242/ICEHM.ED0115034>, Accessed on 26/1/2019.

Just like other pre-colonial African societies, the Akamba of Machakos District relied on events, activities, and changes in natural phenomenon to conceptualize time before the introduction of Western civilization in the district. For instance, time would be measured in a day by observing the behaviour of animals as well as the movement of natural phenomena such as the sun. Early morning time would be based on the crowing of the cock. This crowing implied that it was almost dawn and thus people were to start getting ready for the morning time, which could be marked by the rising of the sun. This period could be called names such as *syua yaa*, *kioko*, *masuiluni* and *kwakya* among others depending on the area of the district.¹⁷⁹

The next distinct time that the Akamba could conceptualize after the morning time was the noon time which was often measured through ways such as observing the ‘movement of the sun’. When the sun was overhead then it was the middle of the day for the Akamba. In addition, the simultaneous mowing and baying of animals in other areas of the district such as Mbooni at such times would imply that it was midday. This time was commonly called *syua yi kati*, *katamabanga* or *muthenya wi kati*.¹⁸⁰ The last distinct time of the day before the coming of the night was the evening that would in most cases be marked by the setting of the sun or the returning of domestic animals such as chicken back into the huts. This time could be called names such as *syua yathua* and *mawioo* among others. After this followed the night whose most distinct time among the Machakos Akamba the midnight commonly called *utuku kati*.¹⁸¹

The concept of the week was non-existent among the Machakos Akamba before the introduction of Western civilization in the district. However, they would conceptualize time that involved a couple of days to a maximum of five days or so. The day before yesterday would be called *iso*, yesterday would be called *iyoo*, today would be called *umunthi*, tomorrow would be called *uni* while the day after tomorrow would be called *auke*.¹⁸² The concept of time beyond these two extremes would include *matuku mavitu* which meant days past or *matuku mokite* which meant days to come. In addition, the movement and the shape of the moon (*mwei*) would play a significant role in the

¹⁷⁹ Mutiso Mutua, OI, 3/8/2018.

¹⁸⁰ Muthike Ndeto, OI, 5/8/2018.

¹⁸¹ Ndoti Musoko, OI, 12/12/2018.

¹⁸² Theresia Muviti, OI, 13/12/2018.

measurement of time that especially involved a couple of days. For instance, as Ndeti has observed, the behavior of the moon could be used by women to predict their menstrual periods.¹⁸³

Another method that the Machakos Akamba would use to measure time was by observing the different seasons that usually occurred because of weather changes. This was common especially in the measurement of long periods. Consequently, terms such as *ivinda ya mbua ila nene* (the long rain season), *ivinda ya mbua ila nini* (the short rain season) *ivinda ya thano* (the dry season), and *ivinda ya nundu* (the cold season) were common when the Akamba wanted to explain different times of the year.¹⁸⁴ Besides the usage of seasons to describe different times of the year, the Akamba would as well use past occurrences and events to describe time in the past. One of these major occurrences was famines. Consequently, they would describe time in the past by relating that particular period with the famines that were rampant during that period. For instance, terms such as *ivinda ya yua ya nikw'a ngwete* (the famine of dying while having money to purchase food that was unavailable), *ivinda ya yua ya ngovo* (the famine of borrowing), *ivinda ya yua ya kiasa* (the long famine), *ivinda ya yua ya ndata* (the star famine) often feature when the elderly people in the district are referring to past events. Significant events of the community's history also played a major role in the conceptualization of time. For instance, people who were born during the First and the Second World War use those events to describe the times when they were born. The terms *mbee wa* (before), *oyu* (now) and *itina wa* (after) were also significant in the measurement of time in the community.¹⁸⁵

2.6 Music and Dance

Music and dance was important aspects of life among the pre-colonial Akamba of Machakos District. The most common forms of music and dance among the Machakos Akamba were the *kilumi* and *wathi*.¹⁸⁶ The two mainly varied in terms of the age of the participants, purpose and place of performance. The *kilumi* was a form of dance that was mainly preserved for the elderly women and some men. Children and the youth were never part of it. In most cases, it was held at the homes of these elderly women either

¹⁸³ Ndeti, *Elements of Akamba Life*, p. 183.

¹⁸⁴ Mutiso Mutua, OI, 3/8/2018.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

voluntarily or through a directive made by a ritualist to have it there. In some other instances, the *kilumi* dances would be held at the homes of the ritualists.¹⁸⁷

The *kilumi* dances were held for various reasons. Firstly, they could be held to provide a form of entertainment to the participants. Secondly, it was a form of worship either through which the participants would pray to their gods for something, or seek a revelation about something or even give thanks to their spirits for something good that they might have done in the community.¹⁸⁸ Thirdly, it was a way of uniting the members of a particular *kivalo* (village) hence supporting harmonious existence among the members. The dance style of *kilumi* was a hilarious one. As Ndeti explains:

...the dancing consists of spinning shoulders up and down, laterally and rhythmically (*kutulila*). From time to time, a dancer rests his temple against his partner's and they transmit rhythm to each other for a few minutes and then part...¹⁸⁹

Among all the purposes that the *kilumi* dances were held for, ancestral worship took pre-eminence during these *kilumi* sessions. For instance, during the sessions, people would get possessed by the spirits to an extent of performing supernormal actions. As one informant narrated:

During *kilumi*, the spirits were so powerful that you could make someone step on a red-hot piece of iron or even get into fire without being burnt. You could see an elderly woman whose energy is long gone jumping as high as four fit and get amazed.¹⁹⁰

In other cases, especially during the nights as mentioned earlier, the spirits who were in most cases speaking in languages that no one could understand would make impromptu visits and join the participants in dancing.¹⁹¹ In addition, towards the end of the *kilumi*, there were revelations that could be made to some participant(s) by the supernatural on any plan of action that needed to be taken. For instance, the revelation could mean that in the next few days, they were required to make a visit to a particular *ithembo* and offer sacrifices to their spirits. It is also during these *kilumi* sessions when revelations on any

¹⁸⁷ Muthike Ndeti, OI, 5/8/2018.

¹⁸⁸ Ann Munyao, OI, 6/8/2018.

¹⁸⁹ Ndeti, *Elements of Akamba Life*, p. 168.

¹⁹⁰ Mbondo Mutiso, OI, 4/8/2018.

¹⁹¹ Mutavi Nzyoka, OI, 4/8/2018.

epidemics that were likely to affect the community in the future were revealed to some of these participants who in turn reported to the rest.¹⁹²

The main accompaniments of the dancing during the *kilumi* sessions were musical instruments, singing and special costumes commonly called *itemu* that were prepared for that purpose.¹⁹³ The most common musical instrument for dancing the *kilumi* was the *kithembe* (drum). This instrument, which often had a skin cover on one end and open on the other end, was beaten by a drummer who often used to sit on the *kithembe* while playing it.¹⁹⁴

On the other hand, the other form of music and dance among the Machakos Akamba, the *wathi*, was mainly a preserve of the youth. The two main forms of *wathi* were the *mbalya* and *mbeni* and both were mainly for entertainment.¹⁹⁵ The periods for holding the *wathi* differed from one area of the district to another though in most areas this could happen at times when there was little work to be done by the youth in the farms or even after a day's work. There were special venues for the performance of the *wathi*, which were called *kituto* whereby all the attendees would converge.¹⁹⁶ The *wathi* was a collective activity and all the youths in a particular *kivalo* were expected to attend.

One peculiar feature of the *wathi* was the legitimization of pre-marital sex among the participants during its performance. In each of the *wathi* sessions, there was a well-planned time set aside for sexual intercourse among the attendee youths. However, special care was taken to avoid pregnancies, which was one of the main risks of pre-marital sex as sexually transmitted infections were uncommon.¹⁹⁷

The Machakos Akamba were also adept in the making of musical instruments that played a major role as accompaniments in the *kilumi* and *wathi* sessions. As mentioned earlier, the *kithembe* was the instrument that was used as an accompaniment during *kilumi* sessions. There were other instruments such as *mbalya*, *mukanda*, *soo* (trumpet), *mutulilu*

¹⁹² Muthio Munee, OI, 3/8/2018.

¹⁹³ James Mulinge, OI, 3/8/2018.

¹⁹⁴ Ndeti, *Elements of Akamba Life*, p. 158.

¹⁹⁵ James Mulinge, OI, 3/8/2018.

¹⁹⁶ Muthio Munee, OI, 3/8/2018.

¹⁹⁷ Muthike Ndeto, OI, 5/8/2018.

(flute), *kititi*, *nzumali*, *kiamba* and *mbeve*.¹⁹⁸ The *mbalya* was like the *kithembe* though it was smaller but longer than the *kithembe* and it was usually played by placing it in between the drummer's legs unlike the *kithembe* which was sat on. The *mukanda* was a type of drum with both ends covered and would be hung around the drummer's waist while playing it by beating the ends. The *soo* and the *mutulilu* were wind instruments mostly made from a bamboo tube and were mostly played by boys by blowing.¹⁹⁹ The *kititi* was a kind of gourd with stuff such as grains inside it and was mainly used by the medical practitioners in their *kwausya* activities.²⁰⁰ While the *nzumali* and *mbeve* were instruments that were made from animal horns, *kiamba* were sound producing iron pieces tied together in a string and were mainly worn at the ankles in which they would produce the desired sounds depending on one's rhythmic stomping effect.

2.7 Kamba Traditional Education

Before the coming of the AIM missionaries to Machakos District, the Machakos Akamba had a system of education which had formal and non-formal aspects. This education was lifelong and no one could claim that they were learned enough not to learn anymore.²⁰¹ Despite the lifelong education, there were some stages of an individual's life where this education was more emphasized than others. It can be said that during these stages, the education adopted a formal approach as there were specific venues that acted as classrooms and specific instructors who acted as teachers. In addition, the content that was taught during these times was to some extent structured to fit the particular age group in question.

Education among the Machakos Akamba was mainly offered during childhood, circumcision and marriage.²⁰² For instance, during childhood, boys would converge in the evening to a place in their homestead called *thome* where their male elders would offer important lessons about the community. On the other hand, girls would converge in the kitchen with their female elders where they could also be taught on various matters concerning girl life in their community.²⁰³ During initiation, special separate lessons were

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹⁹ Ndeti, *Elements of Akamba Life*, p. 158.

²⁰⁰ Muthio Munee, OI, 3/8/2018.

²⁰¹ Mutavi Nzyoka, OI, 4/8/2018.

²⁰² Muthio Munee, OI, 3/8/2018.

²⁰³ James Mulinge, OI, 3/8/2018.

offered to the initiates especially during the major circumcision. This role as mentioned earlier in this chapter was played by special people called *avwikii* who acted as the new mentors of the newly initiated lot of both the boys and the girls. In the case of the newly circumcised boys, the education went beyond the major circumcision. This education was aimed at helping the boys to acquire knowledge that would make them transit from boyhood to adulthood.²⁰⁴ During betrothal and marriage, education among the Machakos Akamba was also highly emphasized. This education took the form of pre-marital counselling aimed at preparing the young man and woman for responsibilities in both the family and the society.²⁰⁵

Among the Machakos Akamba, the elderly people in the community were the main instructors whose pedagogical approaches depended on one's experience.²⁰⁶ As in any education system, this experience varied from one elder to another. The first teacher within the Kamba society was the mother, commonly called *inyi'a wa kana*.²⁰⁷ This is because, after birth, the new born spent more time with the mother than with any other member of the family. He/she would first learn the language of the community through the mother before other members of the community would come in to influence the growth of the child's language. As the child learned to walk, the mother in collaboration with the immediate family members such as elder brothers and sisters would facilitate the learning. The immediate family members within the child's presence could move all the objects that were considered dangerous to the child as he/she learned how to walk.²⁰⁸

As the child grew older, he or she would start interacting with members of the extended family. This interaction would intensify in polygamous families as the child usually had an opportunity to interact with a large number of people within his or her environment.²⁰⁹ Consequently, these members become integrated in the child's learning environment. The family members would use methods such as storytelling and riddles which not only provided entertainment, but also enabled the child to learn aspects of his community's language and culture. This frequent interaction between the child and his or her

²⁰⁴ Penwill, *Custom and Tradition in East Africa*, p. 61.

²⁰⁵ Mutavi Nzyoka, OI, 4/8/2018.

²⁰⁶ Mutiso Mutua, OI, 4/8/2018.

²⁰⁷ Mutavi Nzyoka, OI, 4/8/2018.

²⁰⁸ Wausi Nginya, OI, 14/12/2018.

²⁰⁹ Muthio Muneo, OI, 3/8/2018.

immediate environment continued throughout his or her life and therefore would be said to have gone through the community's education system.

One important feature of Kamba traditional education was its organization. Despite the organizational deficiencies that were witnessed in the education system, it can be said that this education had some degree of organization. Firstly, the education that was offered to the Kamba youth during initiation, marriage (in the form of pre-marital counselling) as well as during the evening sessions with their grandparents had some degree of organization. This was because it was offered at specific times of the day or stage in an individual's life. For instance, the evening sessions at the *thome* and in the kitchen were mainly fixed at such times and could not be shifted to any other time of the day. In addition, the initiation education sessions were mainly fixed to be done during initiation seasons and could not happen at any other season.²¹⁰

Another form of organization regards the content that was being offered to the learners in the community. Though this content hardly had pre-formal planning, it contained some degree of organization that made it easier for the recipients to grasp it. For instance, children were taught on things that were relevant and easy to understand at their age. This was the same with the youth and those preparing to have families as well.²¹¹ Concerning the methodological approaches, a similar scenario could also be witnessed. While methods such as storytelling and music were mainly preserved for the young people in the family, methods such as the use of proverbs and analogies would mostly be applicable with the youth and adults.

Part of the traditional Kamba education was also organized along gender lines. Boys and girls would be separated especially when they were being instructed on their gender roles and the community's expectations. This was very common especially during the evening sessions with their grandparents as well as during initiation. In addition, activities such as collecting firewood, fetching water and even thatching houses would only be taught to girls only as they were expected by the community to later perform these roles as female members of the community. On the other hand, instructions on herding and hunting were

²¹⁰ Mutiso Mutua, OI, 3/8/2018.

²¹¹ Mutavi Nzyoka, OI, 4/8/2018.

only given to boys as that was the community's expectation on them.²¹² Besides gender-based education, the Kamba traditional education also paid attention to inclusivity. All the members of the community were expected to receive this education regardless of their individual differences. Therefore, no one could be excluded from the learning process, as the purpose of the education was to produce a rounded individual who would function well in the social, economic and political life of the community.²¹³

The Kamba traditional education system employed diverse methods for its learners to acquire the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes. These methods included language, music, dance, proverbs, religion and learning through specialists. For instance, through the use of Kikamba at the early phases of a child's growth in the community, the child would be able to understand his/her environment by identifying various things that surrounded him or her in the language of the community.²¹⁴ Later as the child grew up, he or she would be introduced to the community's music, which besides providing him or her with entertainment, would help the child continue to develop his or her language. This would be coupled with the regular riddles and stories that the child would be exposed to by the immediate members of his or her family.²¹⁵ These oral traditions would help the child understand his or her community better by acquiring knowledge relating to the community's socio-economic and political life. As the individual approached adulthood, he or she would be introduced to matters regarding the religion which could either be done in one-on-one conversation or even through observation.²¹⁶

Finally, just like in any learning environment, the learning outcomes are very important as they help to determine whether the learning goals were achieved or not. Although there were no formal methods of assessing the learning outcomes of the Kamba traditional education system, the community employed various measures to determine whether these goals were achieved. One major method that was employed to assess learning outcomes was observation. An individual was considered to have achieved the desired education if his or her behaviour would gradually conform to the trade that he/she has been taught.²¹⁷

²¹² Ibid.

²¹³ James Mulinge, OI, 3/8/2018.

²¹⁴ Jonathan Mbwesa, OI, 14/12/2018.

²¹⁵ James Mulinge, OI, 3/8/2018.

²¹⁶ Jonathan Mbwesa, OI, 14/12/2018.

²¹⁷ Pius Munguti, OI, 14/12/2018.

In case of under-achievement, remedial steps would be taken. For instance, a boy who was trained on how to hold the bow and arrow during hunting expeditions and had not mastered the skill properly would be re-trained either by his peers or elders until he acquired the skill.²¹⁸

2.8 Language and Communication

Pre-colonial African languages were perhaps the most important markers of their identity.²¹⁹ European agents such as colonialists, explorers, traders and Christian missionaries used these languages to identify the ethnic communities. It is no wonder that the classification of these African communities has mainly revolved around the linguistic aspect of the Africans. One common feature among African languages was the non-existence of the written versions of languages prior to this European intrusion. Nevertheless, these African communities used the spoken versions of their language to facilitate communication among the members of their communities.

Among the African languages was the Kikamba, which falls under the Bantu linguistic speakers of Africa. This was the main language spoken in Machakos District before the coming of AIM missionaries in 1895. This language was in the verbal form. This is because the art of writing had not been developed among the Machakos Akamba and therefore verbal communication was the only mode they would use to communicate using the language. The Kikamba is classified as a central Bantu language together with Kikuyu, Kimeru, Kiambu, Kitharaka and Kimbeere.²²⁰

One common feature of the Kikamba morphology was the dialectical differences in the language. According to Mutiga, Kikamba dialects can be classified into five categories which are the eastern, central and northern Kitui dialects as well as the Machakos and the Kilungu dialects.²²¹ The dialects that were spoken in Machakos District included the Kilungu dialect that was called Kikilungu and the Machakos dialect, which was called *Kimasaku*. Between these two dialects, the *Kimasaku* dialect is the one that was widely

²¹⁸ Jonathan Mbwesa, OI, 14/12/2018.

²¹⁹ C. M. Fyfe, *Introduction to the History of African Civilization: Pre-Colonial Africa*, Vol. 1. (New York: University Press of America, 1999), p. 10.

²²⁰ J. Mutiga, 'The Tone System of Kikamba: A Case Study of Mwingi Dialect' (PhD Thesis, University of Nairobi, 2002), p. 9.

²²¹ Ibid, pp. 3-4.

spoken in the district. In the present day, this dialect is mainly spoken in the Machakos and parts of the Makueni counties. It is no wonder that this dialect has been used as the basis for developing standard Kikamba especially in the developing of Kikamba literary materials for both school and general use.²²² On the other hand, the *Kikilungu* dialect was spoken in the present day eastern parts of Makueni County commonly known as the Kilungu hills.

Since the onset of European intrusion into Machakos District, more than 120 years ago, Kikamba has gone through several developments-especially its written form. The history of the writing of Kikamba dates back to the mid-1850s. The first attempt to write Kikamba was by Krapf in 1850 when he produced a book containing the vocabulary of six African languages among them Kikamba. A. Shaw made the second attempt in 1885 when he produced a small dictionary of four Bantu languages: Kiswahili, Kitaita, Kinyika and Kikamba. This was followed by J. T. Last's work titled *Grammar of the Kamba language*, which was also produced in 1885. In 1900, S. Watt produced a work in Kikamba titled *vocabulary of the Kikamba language*. This was followed by another work produced in 1901 by J. Hofman of the Leipzig Mission whose short-lived area of influence was Kibwezi in the Kikumbulyu reserve. Three years later, H. Hinde produced another work that had both Kikamba and Kikuyu languages. In 1905, E. Brutzer produced a handbook of Kikamba. This was then followed by the translation of Mathew's gospel into Kikamba by the BFBS in 1909.²²³ These publications were complimented by works by the AIM and later the other European groups such as the Roman Holy Ghost Mission and the colonial government in the district.

Up to the early 1910s, most of the endeavours to develop a Kamba script were geared towards benefitting the newcomers from Europe and America. This was very important as they needed to learn the language of the locals in the district to facilitate their interaction with them. The endeavors that were mainly made to benefit the locals started when the Christian missions among them the AIM began to teach the language in their schools to whose initial aims were geared towards bible literacy. One challenge that was common with these Eurocentric developments of the written form of Kikamba was the

²²² Ibid, p. 4.

²²³ G. Lindblom, *Notes on Kamba Language* (Uppsala: Appelberg Boktryckeri Aktiebolag, 1926), pp. 7-8.

inclusion of non- Kikamba words in these editions that were even not known by the locals.²²⁴ This made the editions non-reliable to the Akamba who wanted to learn the written form of their mother tongue.

2.9 Architecture and Clothing

The pre-colonial Akamba had two styles of erecting their living shelters. The first and the original Kamba house was called *kisukuu*.²²⁵ This was a grass-thatched structure from top to bottom. It was made by sticking pliable sticks on the ground in a circular manner. The other ends of the sticks not stuck on the ground would then be joined together at the top using strong cords. Other pliable sticks called *ngonzo* would be fixed crosswise around the vertical sticks from the bottom to the top. Upon completion, the structure would then be covered with grass from the top to the bottom. A strong pole could be placed at the centre of the hut and joined at the top with the vertical sticks. This pole was mainly meant to support the structure.²²⁶ Most of these huts hardly had windows but just some opening somewhere for ventilation purposes. The materials used to close the opening used as the door varied from one hut to another. However, the most common form of door making was the use of sticks that were firmly tightened together by the use of cords made of materials such as sisal fibre. In some other cases, families would just use a bushy tree branch, which could act as the door.²²⁷

The second form of shelter among the pre-colonial Akamba was the *musonge* hut which the Akamba adopted from the Agikuyu of central Kenya. The *musonge* differed from the *kisukuu* in that, while the *kisukuu* was fully grass thatched, the *musonge* was mud walled at the bottom and grass thatched at the top.²²⁸ In many Kamba families, these huts could be used as the cooking, dining and sleeping quarters. As a result, one would find a location in the hut that was set aside for cooking. This place was commonly called *iko* in which a fire for cooking could be lit surrounded by three stones called *mavia*. There were the sleeping quarters that were called *wii* purposely made for spending the night. The sleeping could either be on the ground or on a specially constructed bed called *itaa*

²²⁴ Ibid, p. 8.

²²⁵ James Mulinge, OI, 3/8/2018.

²²⁶ R. Ochieng, and R.M. Maxon, *An Economic History of Kenya*, (Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers, 1992), p. 25.

²²⁷ James Mulinge, OI, 3/8/2018.

²²⁸ Ibid.

(plural; *mataa*) which was supported by four y-shaped short poles. There was also a place for keeping and storing utensils and cooked food, which was called *utaa*. In some homes, there could be a similar but separate structure that would act as the kitchen.²²⁹ As a result of polygamy, a Kamba homestead could have several huts, each housing one wife and her children.

The construction of these huts was the product of collaborative efforts among the family members. Consequently, the division of labour among the family members played a crucial role in the construction of these huts. While men collected the building sticks and fixed them on the ground vertically and horizontally, women would engage in cutting the grass and later thatching the structure.²³⁰ However, there were some other instances when the services of neighbours and relatives would be required in the construction of these huts. For instance, when a family's hut was destroyed by fire or strong wind and the family was in an urgent need of shelter, neighbours and relatives would help the family construct a new hut.²³¹ The size of the huts depended on the size of that particular family. In some instances, domestic animals such as goats would be housed in these huts at night and therefore required the family to construct a spacious hut.²³²

On the other hand, the main forms of dressing among the pre-colonial Machakos Akamba revolved around animal skins. In this case, a cow skin (*kithuma*; plural *ithuma*) would be used as bedding while a goat skin (*ua*) could be used for daily clothing. Sometimes, people would walk naked with just a small piece of animal skin covering the loins.²³³

2.10 Summary

This chapter has examined pre-colonial elements of Kamba social life. The chapter has demonstrated that before the arrival of AIM missionaries in the district, the Machakos Akamba had a social system that bound the society together. This included a functional religion, a healthcare system, an educational system and rites of passage at every stage in an individual's life. From this demonstration, it has been clear that the Akamba social life was in many ways free from the Western European and American influence during the

²²⁹ Mutiso Mutua, OI, 3/8/2018.

²³⁰ Ochieng, *An Economic History of Kenya*, p. 25.

²³¹ Muthike Ndeto, OI, 5/8/2018.

²³² Ibid.

²³³ Mutavi Nzyoka, OI, 4/8/2018.

pre-colonial period. Despite the few contacts that the Machakos Akamba had had with the West before the 1900s, their social life was dominated by traditional practices. The next chapter will focus on tracing the origin and the development of the AIM in Machakos District.

CHAPTER THREE

ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT OF AIM IN MACHAKOS DISTRICT, 1895 – 1971

3.1 Overview

This chapter outlines the origin and expansion of the AIM in Machakos District. It examines the formation of the mission as well as the subsequent developments it initiated in Machakos District. The first part of the chapter shows the formation of the mission back in the United States of America and its initial attempts to spread Christianity in central Africa. The second part of the chapter examines the arrival of the mission in Machakos District and its early times of struggle. The third part of the chapter examines the mission's resurgence in the district and the consequent exponential expansion until its merger with the AIC in 1971.

3.2 Formation of AIM

AIM was a non-denominational mission founded in America in 1895 with a vision of spreading Christianity in the interior of the African continent. Peter Cameron Scott founded this mission with the help of A.T. Pierson and Charles Hurlburt who were members of the Philadelphia Missionary Council (PMC), a missionary supporting organisation in America in the late 1800s.²³⁴ Born in March 1867, Scott was an American immigrant from Glasgow in Scotland since November 1879. He attended the New York Missionary Training College where he studied theology before entering the mission field on the African continent.²³⁵

Scott's first missionary enterprise in Africa was in the western coast of Central Africa in the present day Congo under the International Missionary Alliance (IMA). He started this enterprise in January 1891 with the help of his brother John Scott who joined him later during the year.²³⁶ However, that part of Africa proved to be unfavourable for missionary work as these two missionaries faced a number of challenges, the main one being perennial infestations with tropical diseases. Scott's brother died of malaria and black-water fever just a few months after the start of the enterprise. Shortly afterwards, Scott himself suffered from the same diseases.²³⁷ Faced with

²³⁴ R. Gehman, *From Death to Life: The Birth of the African Inland Church in Kenya, 1895-1945* (Michigan: C-M Books Publishers, 2013), p. 20.

²³⁵ Omulokoli, *Foundational History of the AIC*, p. 46.

²³⁶ Gehman, *From Death to Life*, p. 15.

²³⁷ *Ibid*, p. 15.

this condition and the consequent demoralization, Scott returned to Philadelphia in 1893. His Congo mission enterprise had failed.

The unsuccessful Congo mission gave Scott an opportunity to reconsider his interest in evangelizing Africa. Having understood the nature of the continent through first-hand experience in the Congo as well as through the writings of pioneer explorers-cum-missionaries such as David Livingstone and John Krapf, Scott launched AIM in 1895 as an agency for pursuing his missionary interests in Africa.²³⁸ This mission was to work under PMC, which was led by A.T. Pierson. AIM was established as a faith-based mission that drew its workers from a variety of protestant denominations such as the Anglicans, Presbyterians, Methodists and Baptists.²³⁹ It could therefore not be associated with any particular protestant denomination. Although PMC played a major role in AIM's formation and initial administration, the council had no control over the mission's activities beyond America.²⁴⁰ This meant that AIM was responsible to no one as it operated in the interior of Africa.

3.3 Expansion of AIM into the interior of Africa

By August 1895, a few months after its formation, AIM was ready to send missionaries. On the African continent, the mission intended to establish well-manned mission stations that would act as centres of evangelism. With these stations, the mission would then train locals who would assist it in spreading Christianity. Upon the success of the above, the mission would then establish a self-supporting and self-governing indigenous church.²⁴¹

Before moving to Africa, the mission organized its leadership in line with its intended operations in the interior of Africa. Peter Cameron Scott was elected as the superintendent of the mission, with Fredrick Krieger as the assistant superintendent, Willis Hotchkiss as the secretary, and Margaret Scott, (who was Peter's sister) as the treasurer.²⁴² The main target area of this mission was the interior of Africa, starting from East Africa. Therefore, it can be said that the mission had little interest in evangelizing the African coast. Consequently, on 17 August 1895, the first group of AIM missionaries led by Peter Cameron Scott left New York for East Africa. This group

²³⁸ Gehman, *African Journal of Evangelical Theology*, p. 119.

²³⁹ Young, 'The Transition from African Inland Mission to African Inland Church in Kenya', p. 34.

²⁴⁰ Gehman, *From Death to Life*, p. 22.

²⁴¹ Ibid, p. 185.

²⁴² M. James, 'Hearing and Doing' in R. Gehman, *From Death to Life*, p. 22

consisted of seven other missionaries who included Peter's sister (Inna Scott), Bertha Reckling, Minnie Lindbergh, Lester Severen, Fredrick Krieger, William Hotchkiss and Walter Wilson from Britain who joined them later on their way to East Africa.²⁴³

It took two months and twelve days for the AIM group to reach the East African coast from New York. Consequently, on 27 October 1895, the first AIM delegation to Africa led by Peter Cameron Scott arrived at the Kenyan coast.²⁴⁴ Since their interest was in the inland parts of Africa, preparations to travel into the interior started immediately. The mission's concern during this preparation period was on how it would get into the interior safely and their source of supplies for food and water, taking into consideration the prevailing insecurity and drought along the route to the interior at that time. Finally, with the aid of the British Consul General, the missionaries managed to secure fifty-two porters, forty-two camels, camel riders, one cook, two headmen, five boy servants and some British soldiers.²⁴⁵ This facilitated their penetration into the interior by providing the necessary support in terms of transport, security and food supply. In this period of preparation, the AIM group was being housed by the Church Missionary Society (CMS) at their station in Frère town.²⁴⁶ With the preparations over, the AIM, men left the coast for the interior on 12 November 1895, leaving the women missionaries behind because of the security threats that were being experienced along the journey.²⁴⁷

On 29 November 1895, the AIM caravan arrived at Kibwezi in the Kikumbulyu reserve of Machakos District where the East African Scottish Mission (EASM) had established a station. In this station, the caravan camped for eight days.²⁴⁸ As a result, the caravan was able to rest after a long, tiresome and life threatening journey of eighteen days. Finally, on 12 December 1895, the AIM caravan arrived at the Nzau area of Machakos District. At that time, Nzau lay along the routes used by traders entering the interior of East Africa. As a result, it was considered the entry point to the interior of British East Africa. It is in this area of Machakos District where AIM missionaries wished to start their evangelization in the East African interior.

²⁴³ Ibid, p. 25.

²⁴⁴ Young, 'The Transition from African Inland Mission to African Inland Church in Kenya', p. 45.

²⁴⁵ Gehman, *From Death to Life*, p. 26.

²⁴⁶ Ibid, p. 25.

²⁴⁷ Ibid, p. 25.

²⁴⁸ Omulokoli, 'Foundational History of the African Inland Church', p. 49.

The AIM delegation in this caravan consisted of five male missionaries: Peter Cameron Scott, Lester Severen, Fredrick Krieger, Willis Hotchkiss and Walter Wilson. With the aid of the accompanying porters, these missionaries were able to erect a temporary grass thatched structure measuring fourteen by thirty feet to shelter themselves from the prevailing adverse weather conditions in the area.²⁴⁹

3.4 Start of Missionary Enterprise in Machakos District

At the time AIM missionaries arrived in the Nzau area, Machakos District was under the administration of a British District Commissioner (DC) who was based at the present day Machakos town. Consequently, the next step this mission did was to seek permission from the DC John Ainsworth whom the locals called Nzueni, to start its operations in the district. Consequently, the mission superintendent, Peter Cameron Scott, travelled to the Machakos colonial outpost on 19 December 1895 to seek permission to settle in the Nzau area, which the DC granted him.²⁵⁰ Besides the permission, a cordial relationship between the mission and the colonial administration in Machakos District was also established.

Despite opposition from the local people and challenges the mission faced in Nzau during this period, the area was generally secure for missionary work. After making the necessary preparations for settlement, Scott embarked on a trip back to the CMS station in Frère town in Mombasa to get the lady missionaries who they had left behind. Unfortunately, on arrival, Scott found that one of them, Miss Reckling, had returned to America after an attack of the Frère mission station. However, he was able to pick the remaining two women missionaries and on 3 February 1896, they were able to leave the CMS station for Nzau.²⁵¹

Meanwhile, the AIM missionaries left behind in Nzau were familiarizing themselves with the area, its people, culture, language etc. They were able to learn that the Akamba of this area had had little encounter with Christianity. This was because up to that point, Christianity had not gained a foothold in Machakos District. The only parts of the district that had been exposed to Christianity by then were Kibwezi and Ngelani areas but none of the attempts made to spread the religion had borne fruits. In Kibwezi, the EASM under the leadership of Sir William MacKinnon, a British Christian-cum-businessperson, who also happened to be the chairperson of the Imperial British

²⁴⁹ Gehman, *From death to Life*, p. 28.

²⁵⁰ Ibid, p. 28.

²⁵¹ Ibid, p. 98.

East African Company (IBEAC), had attempted to spread Christianity from 1888 to 1896. However, his missionary enterprise was unsuccessful.²⁵² In the Ngelani area, a mission loosely sponsored by the CMS under the leadership of Stuart Watt had attempted to spread Christianity in 1893. This missionary endeavour had also failed.²⁵³ These failures made Machakos District a fertile region for AIM missionary work. Besides the AIM missionaries learning that the Nzau Akamba had no idea of Christianity, they also discovered that the local culture and language was quite different from their own.

On 26 February 1896, twenty-three days after they left the CMS station at Frère town, Scott and the two women missionaries arrived in Nzau. This meant that the mission now had seven missionaries in the district ready to start their evangelization activities within the district. Just like many other missions on the African continent, AIM considered their expansion within the district and beyond successful through the establishment of mission stations that would act as centres of their activities. AIM therefore embarked on setting up mission stations throughout the district. Scott in particular visited various parts of the district in a bid to locate suitable sites for the establishment of these mission stations.

One of the visits that Scott made was on 11 March 1896 to a place called Sakai in the present-day Kisau area of Makueni County.²⁵⁴ To the inhabitants of Sakai, the arrival of the AIM missionaries was a strange event leading to resistance to the intrusion. However, the AIM missionaries managed to overcome the inhabitants' hostility as Scott captured their attention with an exhibition of juggling, tumbling, balancing sticks, axes, and knives.²⁵⁵ As a result, Scott was able to entice them and thus got an opportunity to accomplish his intentions in the area. This enabled the mission to establish a station in this area and Willis Hotchkiss, one of the male missionaries, was put in charge.²⁵⁶

Because of the AIM missionary efforts in these areas, the mission had successfully established two stations in Machakos District by March 1896. This was a step forward as far as the expansion of this mission the district was concerned. The mission's next move was directed to the Kilungu hills

²⁵² F. Frank, *Between Two Mountains: A pilgrimage from Kamba Traditional Beliefs to Christian Community 1895-1970* (Scarborough, Thomas Nelson Publishers), 1984, p. 27.

²⁵³ Ibid, p. 28.

²⁵⁴ Omulokoli, 'Foundational History of the African Inland Church', p. 50.

²⁵⁵ Gehman, *From Death to Life*, p. 29.

²⁵⁶ Omulokoli, 'Foundational History of the African Inland Church', p. 50.

in the district. Unlike the warm areas of Nzau and Sakai, Kilungu was cold. Being hilly, cool and wet, Kilungu was favourable to the white missionaries. Consequently, on 11 April 1896, in the company of several porters, Scott travelled to Kilungu to open the third AIM station in the district.²⁵⁷ However, he was unable to accomplish his task on that day, probably due to exhaustion, considering that most of his journeys were on foot in an unfamiliar environment which was prone to disease outbreaks. In his diary, Scott wrote:

April 14, feeling very feverish today but doing my best to work it off. Occasional showers all day. Two of my porters down with fever...15 April was compelled to go to bed for an hour and half this afternoon and try to sweat the fever out of me.²⁵⁸

From the foregoing, it is evident that Scott was not quite healthy at this time, which was a drawback to the missionary work he was undertaking. Scott's complaints of fever marked the beginning of a sickly life that culminated in his death later in the year. Despite these challenges, Scott, with the help of his porters finally erected a building in Kilungu for the mission using timber and grass and put Fred Krieger as the missionary in charge.²⁵⁹ This raised the number of the AIM stations in Machakos district to three.

In October 1896, the AIM missionary enterprise in Machakos District was boosted by the arrival of eight new missionaries who included Jacob S. Toole and Mr and Mrs Thomas Allen-all from Canada. Others were Mr and Mrs John Scott, who were Peter Scott's parents, and Ina Scott, who was Peter's sister. The rest were Jennie Edwards and John W. Codd.²⁶⁰ With these new arrivals, the whole of the Scott family was now in Machakos District. Eventually, the number of AIM missionaries in the district grew to fifteen, which was a strong enough team to pursue missionary work in the district. Indeed the three mission stations were able to have more missionaries, with Mr and Mrs Scott joining the Nzau station while Ina Scott, Mr and Mrs Allen, and Jacob Toole were posted to Kilungu.²⁶¹

With the establishment of three mission stations, the mission looked farther for more expansion. Consequently, in October 1896, the mission expanded to Muisuni in the Kangundo area of

²⁵⁷ Gehman, *From Death to Life*, p. 28.

²⁵⁸ M. James, 'Hearing and Doing' in R. Gehman, *From Death to Life*, p. 30.

²⁵⁹ Frank, *Between Two Mountains*, p. 44.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid*, p. 375.

²⁶¹ *Ibid*, p. 48.

Machakos District exactly where the old government post used to be.²⁶² The opening of this Kangundo station was facilitated by John Ainsworth, the then Machakos DC in a variety of ways. Firstly, he offered the mission an already established government house, which the mission was to pay a lease of five Rupees per annum.²⁶³ Secondly, prior to the establishment of this mission station, the inhabitants of Kangundo area were fierce resisters of the colonial agents. This is evident by the fact that a number of the colonial agents who were residing in the colonial post at Kangundo had been murdered by the residents who were led by Kikuvi Ngotho, Mwana-a-Muka and another resident called Nzuuna as a way of resisting their presence in the area.²⁶⁴

With the prevailing resident hostility, it was neither easy to administer nor possible to establish a mission station in the area. In order to solve this, Ainsworth and the other colonial agents were advised to marry Kamba girls.²⁶⁵ This would in turn suppress the resident hostility since according to Kamba custom, the Akamba do not fight with their in-laws. Ainsworth and his fellow Europeans had no choice than to 'marry' Kamba girls. As a result, the resident hostility against the whites ended. This paved the way for the coming of the AIM missionaries in the Kangundo area.

On 3 October 1896, the first AIM missionaries arrived at Muisuni in Kangundo. Peter Cameron Scott led these missionaries. They were Mr and Mrs John Scott, their two daughters (Margaret and Ina) and Lester Severen.²⁶⁶ Kikuvi Ngotho who by now had made friends with Ainsworth and changed his perception towards the whites warmly welcomed them. When general preparations were made to make the already existing shelter habitable, Scott left for Nzau via the colonial outpost in Machakos leaving behind his father, mother, sisters and Lester Severen.²⁶⁷ Lester Severen was missionary in charge of the newly established Kangundo station.

Later in the month of October, Scott returned to the Kangundo station this time with the other missionaries in charge of the other two AIM stations, Willis Hotchkiss and Fred Krieger.²⁶⁸ Up to that point, AIM's bid to expand in Machakos District had made some progress despite the many challenges it was facing then. Consequently, the missionaries came together to assess their

²⁶² KNA, PC/CP/1/3/2, Machakos District Record Book, No.2, 1896.

²⁶³ Gehman, *From Death to Life*, p. 32.

²⁶⁴ J. Somba, *Wananchi Mashujaa wa Imani* (Kijabe: Kesho Publications, 1985), p. 4.

²⁶⁵ *Ibid*, p. 4.

²⁶⁶ Gehman, *From Death to Life*, p. 30.

²⁶⁷ Somba, *Wananchi Mashujaa wa Imani*, p. 6.

²⁶⁸ Gehman, *From Death to Life*, p. 33.

progress this far. This culminated in an annual general meeting which all AIM missionaries in the district attended.²⁶⁹ With the meeting over, and some progress having been made, the missionaries returned to their respective stations. Little did they know that the next thirty years or so would be a period of struggle to thrive in the district?

3.5 AIM's Early Struggles in Machakos District

By October 1896, AIM missionaries in Machakos District had made an impact in the district through the four missionary stations. Though the mission had not converted any resident to Christianity by this time, these four mission stations gave the mission's future endeavours in the district a lot of hope. However, this was not the case as in the next thirty or so years, the mission suffered to survive in the district to an extent of getting extinct in the district.

This period of struggle can be said to have kicked off on Friday 4 December 1896 in the evening when the mission's superintendent Peter Cameron Scott died of black water fever at the Nzau station.²⁷⁰ Scott's death came with the dilemma of whether to bury him in the African soil or to take his body back home in America. However, considering the numerous challenges that the missionaries had encountered to reach Nzau, it was hard for it to transport Scott's body back to America. Consequently, funeral arrangements for Scott were made and on 5 December 1896, he was buried in the Nzau station just next to his little grass hut.²⁷¹

Scott's death was indeed a sad moment for the AIM fraternity not only in Machakos District, but also back in America. His death adversely affected the AIM missionary activities in the district in the formative years of AIM's activities in the district. For instance, by the end of the following year, seven missionaries had left the mission either by resigning and going back to America or by engaging in other activities in the district. Those who resigned included Fred Krieger the missionary in charge of the Kilungu station and Walter Wilson who resigned due to sickness. Others included Minnie Lindbergh and the remaining four members of the Scott family who moved to the Machakos colonial outpost to work as colonial government employees.²⁷²

²⁶⁹ Ibid, p. 33.

²⁷⁰ Omulokoli, *Foundational History of the African Inland Church*, p. 51.

²⁷¹ Gehman, *From Death to Life*, p. 34.

²⁷² Ibid, p. 35.

With the 1897 missionary resignations, the number of the AIM missionaries remaining in the district fell to eight. This was a major setback to the mission's activities in the district. In addition, the Kilungu station had no missionary in charge following the earlier resignation of Fred Krieger. Consequently, in September 1897, Willis Hotchkiss, the missionary in charge of the Sakai station, left the Sakai station and moved to the Kilungu station.²⁷³ This movement marked the closure of the Sakai station. This closure can be attributed to the numerous challenges that Hotchkiss had encountered in the area, among them perennial threats by locals and starvation caused by the *yua ya ngeli* famine, which was just gaining momentum in 1897.

The closure of the Sakai station meant that the AIM functional stations in Machakos District had fallen to three. With the death of the mission's superintendent, a leadership vacuum in the mission's leadership had been created. Consequently, the American Home Council (AHC) appointed Charles Hurlburt as the new superintendent of AIM.²⁷⁴

In 1898, the mission's struggle in the district continued as more challenges in the form of sicknesses, deaths, missionary repatriations, famine and even closure of mission stations became common. The first five months of the year witnessed two missionary deaths in which one of the AIM missionaries from Canada Jacob Toole died on his way home on 31 January 1898. This death took place at the Tsavo railway station where he was also buried.²⁷⁵ Two months after his death, Thomas Allan, an AIM missionary stationed at the Nzau station, also passed away and was buried at the station just next to Scott's grave.²⁷⁶

The death of these two missionaries early in 1898, coupled with the famine that was affecting the district, during this period can be said to have fuelled missionary repatriations and closure of the Kilungu and Nzau stations. Omulokoli has observed that the AIM station in Nzau closed down immediately after Allan's death.²⁷⁷ This prompted the two missionaries remaining in the station, Mrs Allan and Lindbergh who were already sick to leave the Nzau for the Kilungu station on 4 March 1898.²⁷⁸ Two days after their arrival at Kilungu, they left for the USA, leaving Hotchkiss

²⁷³ Omulokoli, *Foundational History of the African Inland Church*, p. 51.

²⁷⁴ Gehman, *From Death to Life*, p. 40.

²⁷⁵ Frank, *Between Two Mountains*, p. 52.

²⁷⁶ Omulokoli, *Foundational History of the African Inland Church*, p. 50.

²⁷⁷ Ibid

²⁷⁸ Ibid, p. 51.

in the Kilungu station.²⁷⁹ In the following month, Toole's wife also left for Canada following her husband's death early in the year. In June the same year, the missionary in charge of the Kangundo station, Lester Severen, also left for the USA because of ill-health, leaving Kikuvi Ngotho in charge of the station.²⁸⁰ As a result of the deaths and missionary exits, Willis Hotchkiss, who by then had moved to the Kangundo station was the only remaining AIM missionary by July 1898.



Figure 3.1 The Graves of Peter Cameron Scott and Thomas Allen at Kalamba in Nzau.²⁸¹

Source: Photo Taken by the Researcher on 17August 2018.

Despite the drastic decline in the number of AIM missionaries in Machakos District during 1898, the mission's enterprise in the district was boosted towards the end of the year when the acting AIM superintendent Charles Hurlburt together with another missionary William C. Bangert arrived in the district. Both of them were housed by Hotchkiss in the Kangundo station.²⁸² However, Hurlburt's visit in the district was short lived as he just left after a short stay leaving behind Hotchkiss and Bangert in the Kangundo station. Nevertheless, the Hotchkiss- Bangert Company did not last for long in the station when in the following year, Hotchkiss resigned from the mission and returned to America.²⁸³ Hotchkiss was the only AIM missionary who had so far

²⁷⁹ Ibid

²⁸⁰ Somba, *Wananchi Mashujaa wa Imani*, p. 6.

²⁸¹ The Makueni County Government reserved these Graves by Building a Structure on them in 2014.

²⁸² Omulokoli, *Foundational History of the African Inland Church*, p. 51.

²⁸³ Somba, *Wananchi Mashujaa wa Imani*, p. 7.

served in the district for the longest period by then. The mission was now left in the hands of one missionary and with just one mission station in the district.

In October 1899, Elmer Bartholomew and C.F. Johnston arrived in the Kangundo mission station.²⁸⁴ They joined Bangert who was the only remaining AIM missionary in the district. Their efforts in the district were later boosted during the year by the return of Lester Severen who had left the mission field in 1898 due to his deteriorating health.²⁸⁵ Their arrival in the Kangundo station gave hope to the mission's activities in the district. Though the number of missionaries had now increased to four in the Kangundo station, there only remained one mission station in the district and no conversion from the mission by then and thus an under performance of the mission in the district. Despite the situation, the mission's effort to serve the Kangundo society cannot be under rated as by the end of 1899, the mission was running an orphanage for children whose parents had died of the just ended famine in the district.

The new century started with high hopes for the mission. Though one of the missionaries Bangert returned home in 1900, there came a fresh team that would transform the mission's activities not only in the district, but also in Kenya and beyond. The transformation efforts kicked off with the arrival of the mission's superintendent in the Kangundo station Charles Hurlburt in 1901. Hurlburt was accompanied by seven members of his family and other four missionaries Mr and Mrs Lee Downing, Emily messenger and Dr. E. Anderson. Of these new missionary arrivals in the district, one of them, Dr. E. Anderson was a medical doctor who would help the mission in conducting evangelization through the provision of medical care services in the district.²⁸⁶ This team, led by Hurlburt, can be said to have been the team that pioneered the expansion of the mission in the district and beyond.

With this new AIM leadership in the district, especially in the Kangundo station, the first church building in the district was erected at the Kangundo station. The church building which was established in the Muisuni area of Kangundo, was named 'the door of hope'.²⁸⁷ This is because the building laid the foundation for the establishment of more AIM facilities not only in Machakos District but also elsewhere in Kenya and the rest of Africa where the mission or its agents have

²⁸⁴ Frank, *Between Two Mountains*, p. 62.

²⁸⁵ Omulokoli, *Foundational History of the African Inland Church*, p. 52.

²⁸⁶ Somba, *Wananchi Mashujaa wa Imani*, p. 8.

²⁸⁷ Frank, *Between Two Mountains*, p. 82.

operated to date. This new church would now open the doors of conversion in the district that the mission had been yearning for the last eight years.

By 1902, the Kangundo station had laid a foundation expanding its influence to other parts of the district. Consequently, in May 1902, the mission expanded to the Mumbuni area, just one and half kilometres away from the government fort at Machakos.²⁸⁸ This meant that AIM now had two operational stations in Machakos District. Just like the Kangundo station, the opening of the Mumbuni one was facilitated by the then DC of Machakos, John Ainsworth, who, through Chief Mathendu of Iveti Location, showed Johnston where to set up the Mumbuni station. In addition, the DC offered Wambua Kiatu and Ngui Kang'eti to Johnston as workers to help him settle down in the new site.²⁸⁹ Kiatu and Kang'eti later became some of the earliest converts in the Machakos District.

Up to that point, the Machakos Akamba had been reluctant to embrace AIM's activities despite having interacted with the missionaries for eight years. However, attitudes of the Akamba towards the new religion were changing-though slowly. As Frank has observed, in 1902 one Kilungu resident by the name Mutwanyaa trekked from his home to the AIM station at Kangundo to plead with the mission to return to Kilungu.²⁹⁰ This showed the Kamba attitude towards the AIM activities were gradually changing. Mutwanyaa's request would be granted three years later when an AIM missionary, George Rhoad, reopened the Kilungu station.

In 1903, more AIM missionaries arrived in the district to facilitate missionary work at the two stations. The first group of missionaries arrived early in the year and included Jean Fowler, Clara Fowler and Ann Compton.²⁹¹ Later in the year, Mr. and Mrs. George Rhoad also arrived in the district. These new arrivals renewed hope in AIM's activities in the district as not much had been achieved despite the mission having been in the district for nine or so years. Even with the arrival of new missionaries, the mission continued to experience losses, repatriations, deaths, resignations or furloughs which undermined the efforts being made. This entrance-exit pattern among the AIM missionaries in the district can be said to be one of the reasons as to why the mission's growth in the district was very slow in the early years. For instance, when the five new missionaries arrived

²⁸⁸ Ibid, p. 89.

²⁸⁹ Somba, *Wananchi Mashujaa wa Imani*, p. 48.

²⁹⁰ Frank, *Between Two Mountains*, p. 92.

²⁹¹ Ibid, p. 99.

in the district in 1903, one of them Clara Fowler died just a month later while Emily Messenger who had come in 1901 left for home.²⁹²

Despite all the challenges the mission was going through, missionary work in the two stations was making good progress. In the Kangundo station, Elmer Bartholomew was doing evangelistic work in the villages surrounding the station in a bid to win converts for the mission.²⁹³ In addition, the orphanage in the Kangundo station had so far absorbed more than twenty-five orphans. These orphans were being introduced to new ways of life such as dressing, feeding habits, cleanliness and above all a new religion. These mission's activities in the Kangundo station culminated in the first AIM baptism ceremony in the district in which three Kamba residents were baptized. These new converts included Kikui Ngotho, Kamau Wambua and Kikui's daughter (Katei Kikui).²⁹⁴ This was a major breakthrough for this mission in the district.

In the Mumbuni station, C. F. Johnston, with the help of George Rhoad, who was then camping in the station, was making a positive impact in the mission. In 1903, the mission built a chapel for holding worship services besides other activities such as catechism and weekday learning activities for the residents.²⁹⁵ This was a good move for enticing the locals who had been reluctant in accepting the mission's religion. Besides the normal Sunday worship services, Johnston and Rhoad were holding weekday morning and evening services coupled with frequent visits in the surrounding villages for prayers and preaching.²⁹⁶ This commitment by these missionaries in the station greatly influenced the Mumbuni area for more than one hundred and fifteen years, as the station did not close like the initially established stations.

By mid-1903, the mission had laid a firm foundation for its activities in Machakos District. Consequently, in a bid to pursue its aim of establishing a chain of mission stations in the interior of Africa, under the leadership of Charles E. Hurlburt, the mission opened a new station outside the district at Kijabe in July 1903. Before the opening of this new station, the Kangundo station acted as the mission's headquarters not only in the district, but also in Kenya. With the opening of the Kijabe station, Hurlburt transferred the mission's headquarters from Kangundo to Kijabe in

²⁹² Frank, *Between Two Mountains*, p. 99.

²⁹³ Gehman, *From Death to Life* p. 129.

²⁹⁴ Somba, p. 8.

²⁹⁵ KNA, PC/CP/1/3/2, Machakos District Annual Report, 1911.

²⁹⁶ Frank, *Between Two Mountains*, p. 102.

which more than seven residents from Kangundo escorted him. Besides this transfer, the mission also established a six-month language-training course at Kijabe for all AIM missionaries wishing to work in Africa.²⁹⁷ This would equip the coming new missionaries with the language expertise required before engaging in any missionary activities in Kenya.

The transfer of the mission's headquarters from Kangundo to Kijabe meant that the mission's activities in the district would be managed from outside the district. This transfer can be said to have retarded the mission's development agenda in Machakos District by distracting the mission from the earlier developments it had started in the district and thus the reason why it was taking too long for the mission to expand in the district.

Despite this shift to Kijabe, the mission's activities in the district continued though at a slow pace. In January 1904, the AIM station in Mumbuni was dedicated to God at a Bible conference and service that was held in the station.²⁹⁸ In the following year, the mission made some progress in the midst of the many challenges, the main one being the entry–exit syndrome of the missionaries. By then, the mission was in the process of establishing elementary schools in the Mumbuni and Kangundo stations in which the locals would attend for basic literacy education. In addition, the mission had so far converted about twenty-five residents to Christianity which was a good gesture considering the prevailing drawbacks that the mission was facing during the period.²⁹⁹ These new converts would later play a major role in influencing the expansion of this mission in the district.

Towards the end of 1905, the mission's expansionist vision continued to develop when George Rhoad and his newly married wife left the Mumbuni station and re-opened the Kilungu station.³⁰⁰ This was the station that had been left by Willis Hotchkiss six years previously on account of malarial fever. With Rhoad's movement, the Mumbuni station was left in the hands of C.F Johnson and his wife who had just returned from leave in 1904. Within the year, the AIM superintendent stationed at Kijabe Rev. Hurlburt had toured the stalled Nzaui and the Kilungu stations in a bid to assess the situations prevailing in the old stations.³⁰¹ Hurlburt's visit to these stalled stations

²⁹⁷ Gehman, *From Death to Life*, p. 200.

²⁹⁸ KNA, PC/CP/1/3/2, Machakos District Annual Report, 1911.

²⁹⁹ Frank, *Between Two Mountains*, p. 107.

³⁰⁰ KNA, PC/CP/1/3/2, Machakos District Annual Report, 1911.

³⁰¹ Gehman, *From Death to Life*, p.78.

showed how eager the AIM was to evangelize them. This explains why George Rhoad was able to reopen the Kilungu station later in the year.

In 1906, the mission's activities in the district continued to advance. Firstly, Mrs C. F. Johnston started an elementary school in the Mumbuni station, which was being conducted along kindergarten lines. Small children started to attend this school but gradually the older ones also started to enrol, reluctantly.³⁰² The establishment of this school created an opportunity for the mission to achieve its primary goal of evangelization. In addition, Kamba attitude towards the imposition of Christianity was gradually changing as the first church wedding for an African couple took place during this year. This happened when two of the early converts in the Kangundo station wedded in the church.³⁰³

However, despite the developments achieved by AIM so far, the entry-exit syndrome continued to stall its activities in the district. As Frank has observed, out of the ten AIM missionaries that were present in the district by 1906, five left the district for the Kijabe station, the two Fowler sisters died, while Ann Compton returned abroad. This was coupled by the death of Elmer Bartholomew's wife at the Kangundo station, which prompted him to resign from the mission.³⁰⁴ Consequently, the Kangundo station's workforce became depleted as Richard Evans left the station for Kijabe. The station was left in the hands of an early local convert called Mumo.³⁰⁵ Without an adequate workforce in the station, managerial problems were inevitable.

As AIM's activities in the district continued to expand, the Kilungu station re-opened two years previously became unsustainable. As mentioned earlier, the Kilungu area of the district was prone to malaria attacks that hampered missionary work. Consequently, George Rhoad closed the station in 1907 and moved to Mbooni.³⁰⁶ This being his fifth year in the district, Rhoad was familiar with the local environment including Kikamba, an important prerequisite for evangelistic work. Rhoad's first visit to Mbooni amazed the inhabitants of the area. His first base in mbooni was in a place called Mbanya. One resident recalls his arrival thus:

³⁰² KNA, PC/CP/1/3/2, Machakos District Annual Report, 1911.

³⁰³ Somba, *Wananchi Mashujaa wa Imani*, p. 13.

³⁰⁴ Frank, *Between Two Mountains*, p. 111.

³⁰⁵ Ibid.

³⁰⁶ KNA, PC/CP/1/3/2, Machakos District Annual Report, 1911.

On that day, we were just doing our daily activities when we saw a man with a funny skin colour that none of us had ever seen approaching through the Mbanya hill. He was riding on a mule and he could speak Kikamba.³⁰⁷

Rhoads entrance into Mbooni was not easy as he faced a lot of opposition from the locals. Little did they know that the man they were rejecting would later influence their lives in ways they could never have imagined.

In 1907, Machakos district experienced an influx of more AIM missionaries who boosted the mission's work in the district. Among the missionaries who arrived that year were Mr and Mrs Arthur Watcher, (who were initially stationed in Mumbuni but later moved to Mbooni), Clara Cook, William Wright and Edith Norton who was a bible translator.³⁰⁸ The mission's efforts to retain Kilungu station did not end with the exit of George Rhoad from the area. In 1909, Clara and William Wright attempted to re-open the station for the second time. However, for the third time, the station proved unfavourable for mission work.³⁰⁹ This was indeed a hard time for the mission as it struggled to remain relevant in the Kilungu area. This problem was solved in 1910 when the CMS gave up its station nearby Mukaa and AIM took it over. With the new station, AIM was now able to influence both the Kilungu and Mukaa areas of the district.



Figure 3.2 An Early Church Building at the Mbooni Mission Station

Source: Photo Taken by the Researcher on 6 August 2018.

³⁰⁷ Muthike Ndeto, OI, 5/8/2018.

³⁰⁸ Frank, *Between Two Mountains*, p. 376.

³⁰⁹ *Ibid*, p. 112.

One of the results of AIM's continued influence in Machakos District during this can be seen when Theodore Roosevelt, the recently retired American president visited the mission's headquarters in Kijabe in 1909. During this visit, Benjamin Kithome Mutyanthuku, an early AIM convert from Machakos District was among those who were selected to entertain the American president.³¹⁰ Despite Machakos District being represented by one local convert in this event, Mutyanthuku's participation clearly shows that the mission was slowly influencing the Machakos Akamba to an extent of producing converts who could participate in such important affairs. Besides Mutyanthuku's achievements, another AIM convert John Maveke of Kangundo took a personal initiative to start a church and a school at Sengani area of Kangundo.³¹¹ However, this influence was generally slow as many Akamba continued to hold on to their traditional lifestyles.

As a result of the slow Kamba response to AIM overtures, the mission changed its approach to the community. One way in which the mission did this was through engaging the community in non-evangelistic activities. For instance, by 1909, George Rhoad of the Mbooni station was involving locals in road construction activities.³¹² Such engagements paved the way to winning converts.

Another non-evangelistic activity that AIM engaged in during this period was medical work in which missionaries treated locals of various ailments that were afflicting them. The mission also continued to initiate literacy programmes among the locals in a bid to woo them for conversion. For instance, through the colonial government, the mission initiated a policy in which chiefs were required to lead in embracing the mission's activities by sending their children to the mission schools. As a result, in 1911, five of the thirteen pupils in the Mumbuni elementary school were sons of chiefs Mathendu, Ngovi and Nthiwa wa Tama.³¹³ This approach forced chiefs to set an example to locals by sending their children to school, thus providing an avenue for conversion. But the approach faced severe challenges, as chiefs' sons were reluctant to attend the schools. For instance, by the end of 1911, all the sons of chiefs attending the AIM elementary school at the Mumbuni station had dropped out except Chief Mathendu's son.³¹⁴

³¹⁰ Somba, *Wananchi Mashujaa wa Imani*, p. 13.

³¹¹ Gehman, *From Death to Life*, p. 67.

³¹² KNA, DC/MKS/1/1/1, Machakos District Annual Report, 1908-1909.

³¹³ KNA, PC/CP/4/2/1, Ukamba Province Annual Reports, 1910-1915.

³¹⁴ Ibid.

Another strategy applied by the mission to woo converts during this period was through the publishing of Christian materials. In 1910, one of early AIM missionaries in the district, Lester Severen, published a Kikamba booklet with twenty-three hymns, the Apostles' Creed, the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer and two chapters of the book of Psalms. Besides Severen's booklet, the mission also produced another booklet in 1910 with scripture verses outlining the way of salvation and virtual truths.³¹⁵ These booklets mainly targeted the new converts who had received some formal education, as they would use them to help the mission in converting their colleagues in the villages. To the mission, conversion through locals was an easier way of increasing the number of its followers in the district and beyond.

Despite the foregoing challenges, the mission presses on with its expansionist agenda in the district. This expansion took the form of establishing mission stations in which Christianity, education and healthcare services would be provided. For the mission to establish a station in a particular place in the district, it had to work closely with the colonial administration as well as the community through their Local Native Councils (LNCs). The initial procedure was for the mission to identify a suitable site for a mission station or an outpost where there was no other Christian body within a radius of ten miles.³¹⁶ Upon identifying such a site, the mission would seek approval to set up a station from the DC who would in turn send the location chief to survey the site in consultation with the LNCs for matters such as compensation. Once the government's conditions were met, the mission would go ahead and establish itself on the particular site.

AIM influence in Machakos District continued to progress during the first quarter of the twentieth century. By 1911, the Kangundo station had a dozen boys attending the elementary school in which an educated African conducted most of the teaching.³¹⁷ This teacher was one of the porters who escorted Peter Scott when he made his initial journey from the coast to the interior. Supervision of AIM work was now in the hands of Harrison, who was then the missionary in charge.

At the Mumbuni station, the mission's attempt to lay a foundation for formal education had also started bearing some fruits. By the end of the year, thirty-eight locals were attending elementary school at the station.³¹⁸ The Mumbuni station was also in the process of extending its influence

³¹⁵ Frank, *Between Two Mountains*, p. 137.

³¹⁶ KNA, DC/MKS/10A/4/2, African Inland Mission, 1914.

³¹⁷ KNA, PC/CP/1/3/2, Machakos District Record Book, No.2, 1896.

³¹⁸ Ibid.

and C.F. Johnson obtained permission to open an elementary out-school in headman Mbuta's location under one of the local converts.³¹⁹ This would ease the locals' burden travelling all the way to Mumbuni station to attend classes. With the help of his wife, Johnson was also able to build a permanent house for his family. Earlier in the year, the station's bid to provide health-care services was boosted by Dr. Elwood Davis and his wife Bernice Davis, who were health workers by profession arrived at Mumbuni.³²⁰ These missionaries-cum-medics provided healthcare services at the mission station and in the neighbouring villages.

At the Mbooni station, hope for progress increased when Miss Norton as well as Mr Watcher and his wife joined Mr and Mrs George Rhoad in the station.³²¹ By the end of 1911, the station's infrastructure had taken a different shape. This was after a chapel, a school and a boarding house to accommodate about fifty boys who were attending the school were constructed.³²² In addition, the mission opened a school five miles away from the Mbooni station where an African evangelist was in charge.³²³ In the following year, AIM identified a site in Matungulu area for establishment of a boys' school. However, the local residents led by chief, Kikuvi Ngotho who by now had denounced his Christian faith, objected to the missions' move.³²⁴ This halted the mission's endeavour to expand into the Matungulu area in 1912.

As more AIM missionaries continued to flock into Machakos District and the rest of Kenya, communication continued to be a challenge as the new missionaries hardly understood the local languages. Consequently, AIM introduced language classes at Kijabe for new missionaries from 1913 to enable them learn the languages of the areas they would be posted. These classes involved exams that were to be done at an interval of six months over a period of one and half years.³²⁵

The four AIM stations in Machakos District continued to influence development in the region throughout the World War I period. By the onset of the war, all the mission stations had missionaries who were initiating various programmes in their areas of jurisdiction. In the Kangundo station, four missionaries manned the station until 1915 when one of them left. In the

³¹⁹ Ibid.

³²⁰ Ibid.

³²¹ Ibid.

³²² KNA, PC/CP/1/3/2, Machakos District Record Book, No.2, 19114-1915.

³²³ Ibid.

³²⁴ Gehman, *From Death to Life*, p. 63.

³²⁵ Ibid, p. 201.

Mumbuni station, three missionaries were in charge just like in the Mbooni station. Besides the church and the school, the Mbooni team was running, it had also established an orphanage that had fifteen children by the end of 1915. Dr. and Mrs E.L. Davis and Miss Klen Goosen were then manning the Mukaa station.³²⁶

In 1915, AIM leadership in Machakos District was re-organized to facilitate effective management of its activities. C.F. Johnson was appointed superintendent in the district while Rev. L.H. Downing became the mission's field director.³²⁷ Early in 1914, the mission restarted efforts to expand its influence in Kilungu at places such as Nthaeni and Kilala. The proposed Kilala station was to be set up between the stalled Nzaui and Sakai stations. Consequently, in March 1914, the DC Machakos District accompanied a group of four AIM missionaries led by George Rhoad visited the Kilungu site for a survey.³²⁸ The local residents welcomed this move but demanded for compensation for their land. However, the establishment of the proposed mission stations was abandoned in 1915 when AIM realised that there were less congested areas in the district where the mission needed to establish itself.³²⁹

By the end of 1915, the mission had made several achievements, including the publication of a Kikamba version of the book of Mark.³³⁰ The publication eased evangelism especially among new converts who were trying to win other locals as they could all read the scriptures in their own language. In what the mission saw as a way of increasing, AIM's field council set aside three months every year during which the missionaries and the converts would go out to the unreached parts of the district to evangelize.³³¹

In 1916, AIM's growth trajectory continued to take shape as more and more Machakos Akamba embraced its activities. By this time, community education in the district which was generally elementary, was predominantly in the hands of the mission. The curriculum mainly revolved around reading, writing and arithmetic with a fee of ten cents per term being charged.³³² By the

³²⁶ KNA, PC/CP/4/2/1, Machakos District Record Book, No. 2. 1914-1915.

³²⁷ KNA, DC/MKS/10A/4/2, African Inland Mission 1914-1915.

³²⁸ Ibid.

³²⁹ KNA, DC/MKS/10A/4/2, African Inland Mission 1914-1915.

³³⁰ Gehman, *From Death to Life*, p.186.

³³¹ Ibid, p. 188.

³³² KNA, DC/MKS/10A/10/2, Ukamba Province Annual Report, 1915-1921.

end of the year, the number of residents who had enrolled in AIM schools had increased to 363.³³³ With increased numbers in the main mission stations, the AIM opted to open out-schools to curb overcrowding of pupils in the mission station schools. These out-schools also lessened the burden of locals having to travel for long distances to get to schools at the mission stations. Of the four mission stations, Mukaa led in the opening of out-schools by 1917.

AIM's achievements in Machakos District in 1918 were a clear indication of increasing popularity of the mission's activities among the Machakos Akamba. By 1918, the number of AIM missionaries in the district had increased to thirty one.³³⁴ Increase in the number of missionaries translated into increased AIM influence in the district. Indeed the mission expanded its activities to new areas in the district such as Thumbi, Iiyuni, and Thue.³³⁵ Though several out-schools such as the ones the mission had earlier established in Nzau, Kaumoni and Kisau were closed, there was a steady growth in the number of out-schools as more were established in this period under the supervision of local teachers.³³⁶ At the Mbooni station, the plight of girls from the surrounding villages who had left their homes citing mistreatments from their family members was under consideration by the missionaries. By the end of the year, four out of the twenty-eight girls housed at the station had been converted and baptized while another eighteen were attending the inquirers' class.³³⁷

Despite the progress, AIM's activities in Machakos District faced numerous setbacks especially the 1918 influenza, dysentery and the bubonic plague which affected the district and the areas beyond it. Owing to these calamities, two missionaries (William Wright of the Kangundo station and Guilding's wife) lost their lives. Wright, who was instrumental in initiating AIM programmes at the Kangundo station, was buried just a few metres from where the first AIM chapel in Machakos District was erected.

³³³ Ibid.

³³⁴ KNA, PC/CP/4/5/1, Ulu District Annual Report, 1918-1919.

³³⁵ KNA, DC/MKS/1/1/10, Machakos District Annual Report, 1917-1922.

³³⁶ KNA, DC/MKS/1/1/11, Ulu District Annual Report, 1918-1919.

³³⁷ Gehman, *From Death to Life*, p. 77.



Figure 3.3 William Wright’s Burial Site at the Kangundo Mission Station

Source: Photo Taken by the Researcher on 3 August 2018.

Towards 1920, the AIM started making efforts towards expanding the provision of Western healthcare services in Machakos District.



Figure 3.4 A Section of the AIM Dispensary at the Mbooni Mission Station

Source: Photo Taken by the Researcher on 6 August 2018.

In the Mbooni station, AIM was in the process of extending its original land by four acres to create space for the establishment of a hospital as well as a residence for a physician.³³⁸ The establishment of the hospital would play a major role in improving the health of the local community in dealing with the various ailments that were affecting them. This dream was realized by the construction of a dispensary to serve the Mbooni residents.

Table 3.1 Expansion of AIM's Activities by 1920

Mission Station	Number of Baptized Adherents by 1920	Adherents Taking Catechumen Classes in 1920	Average Sunday Service Attendance in 1920	African Evangelists in the Mission Station in 1920	Number of Residents Attending AIM Dispensaries in 1920	Number of Pupils in AIM Schools in 1920
Mukaa	26	30	120	4	1349	-
Kangundo	44	39	60	8	2427	91
Mbooni	33	7	80	6		87
Mumbuni	27	56	155	7	-	64
TOTAL	130	132	103	25	3776	242

Source: AICA, AIM Statistical Report, 1912.

Table 3.1 illustrates the development of AIM activities in Machakos by the end of the second decade of the twentieth century. From the table, it is evident that the mission was influencing the Machakos Akamba mainly through evangelism, provision of medical care as well as education. However, the influence was rather low considering that the mission had been working in the district for twenty-five years. Moreover, residents seem to have embraced some of the mission's initiatives in the district more than others by 1920. The most appreciated initiative being the provision of medical care. Though a number of residents were willing to attend the Sunday services, few were interested in either becoming full members of the church through baptism or being part of the local evangelist teams. In addition, though the mission had established a number of out-schools in the district beside the mission station ones, residents were yet to embrace the mission's educational initiatives fully.

³³⁸ KNA, VQ/10/1, Land Grant to Missions: African Inland Mission, Mbooni.

In 1921, AIM intensified its activities in Machakos District leading to further growth and more influence. Among the developments was the opening of new-outstations in the Kinoi area. In addition, the Kangundo station started the process of opening out-schools in the locations administered by Chiefs Kikuvi, Mbuli and Muthiani.³³⁹ These out-schools were expected to serve.

Residents of areas far from the main school at the mission station. AIM's attempts to transform girls' lives in the district by training them on various trades was also bearing fruit. In the Mukaa and Mbooni stations, the number of girls attending these classes improved in 1921.³⁴⁰ The other areas where the mission was making major strides was in the provision of health services to locals. This can be attributed to the gradual change of residents' attitudes towards the Western healthcare services as well as an increase in the number of qualified AIM medical personnel in the district.³⁴¹

The mission's educational activities were highly influenced by the road construction projects that were taking place in the district during this period as attendance of school depended on whether there were on-going road work activities in the district or not. A good number of youths would attend school to avoid participating in road construction activities but fail to show up in school when there was no roadwork taking place in their villages.³⁴² This habit not only affected the mission's educational activities, but also evangelism as the mission was using school attendance to evangelize to the residents.

In 1922, AIM finally opened a school and a church at Matungulu area under Chief Kikuvi's jurisdiction. With the help of African evangelists-cum-teachers Samuel Mwanzia Nzyoki and Aaron Kivuva Kitusa, AIM used the two institutions to open the Matungulu area to its transformative activities.³⁴³ In the same year, the AIM station at Kinoi, which was temporarily being manned by a missionary called Stevenson, proved to be inaccessible by road. Consequently, AIM moved its activities to Kilungu which was accessible by the motor-road linking Kilungu to Mumbuni station.³⁴⁴ Other developments made by AIM in Machakos District during this period included the continued indigenization of evangelism through the production of community-friendly materials so as to ease the spread of Christianity. As a result, in 1922, the mission produced

³³⁹ KNA, 1564/17/21, Letter Written by the DC to Reply Farnsworth of Kangundo Mission Station, 1921.

³⁴⁰ KNA, DC/MKS/1/1/10, Ulu District Annual Report, 1921.

³⁴¹ Ibid.

³⁴² Ibid.

³⁴³ Somba, *Wananchi Mashujaa wa Imani*, p. 10.

³⁴⁴ KNA, DC/MKS/1/1/10, Ulu District Annual Report, 1922.

two Kikamba booklets: One for general Christian teaching and the other for teaching of catechism.³⁴⁵ These two booklets not only helped African evangelists, in their teaching, but also facilitated self-evangelization, especially among literate residents.

In 1924, the Mumbuni station, established a permanent brick chapel, which has served both AIM and the local congregation. The chapel which could accommodate more than five hundred worshippers, shows the extent to which the mission had influenced Mumbuni residents to have such a big congregation by 1924.



Figure 3.5 AIM Mumbuni Chapel Erected in 1924

Source: Photo Taken by the Researcher on 14 August 2018.

As table 3.5 shows, the number of AIM adherents in Machakos District was still increasing by 1925. From the table, it is clear that by 1925, missionary work in Machakos District was entirely in the hands of four missionary groups: AIM, Roman Catholic Mission (RCM), British East African Mission (BEAM), and Salvation Army (SA). Though this study was unable to establish the number of AIM adherents for Mukaa in 1925, it is evident that much of the missionary work in Machakos District was mainly in the hands of AIM by 1925.

³⁴⁵ Frank, *Between Two Mountains*, p. 138.

Table 3.2 Machakos District Mission Statistics of 1925

Mission Station	Denomination	No.of Adherents	No. of Baptized Adherents	Average Sunday Attendance
Mumbuni	AIM	750	130	475
Mbooni	AIM	-	100	490
Kangundo	AIM	363	159	376
Mukaa	AIM	-	-	-
TOTAL	AIM	1113	389	447
Kilungu	RCM	298	195	170
Kabaa	RCM	148	60	100
TOTAL	RCM	446	255	135
Kamuthanga	BEAM	200	9	120
TOTAL	BEAM	200	9	120
Maindo-Indo	SA	60	25	85
TOTAL	SA	60	25	85

Source: KNA, Mission Statistics, 1925.

From the statistics in table 3.1 and 3.2, it is also evident that there was a rise in the number of AIM adherents between 1920 and 1925, and thus a growth of the mission. Despite this increase, most of the adherents were still reluctant to embrace some of the mission's practices such as baptism, which was a confirmation of full membership of the mission. This shows that many of the adherents were comfortable with attending Sunday services but had no motivation for becoming full members. This reluctance can be attributed to issues such as the strict discipline that the mission expected its adherents to conform to which was a challenge to the adherents as conversion meant a complete turnaround in one's conduct and behaviour.

In the 1920s, the benefits of embracing Western education became evident as it was the educated who assumed social, political and economic leadership roles in the district. Consequently, there was a gradual increase in the demand for mission education, which was predominantly in the hands of AIM Machakos district. Table 3.3 illustrates the situation of missionary education in the district by 1925.

From the table, it is also evident that missionary education in Machakos District by 1925 was entirely in the hands of AIM and RCM, with the former leading in the provision of this education. Though this study was unable to acquire the statistics for Mukaa station in 1925, it can be said that there was a general improvement in AIM's endeavour to provide education since 1920. This improvement is demonstrated by an increase in the number of AIM's out-schools, which translated to an increase in the number of residents in the district receiving education from the mission. By 1925, AIM had opened more than fourteen out-schools in Machakos District. In addition, though the number of teachers in these schools was still low, there was an overall increase in their number. This was complemented by AIM's interest in providing education to girls especially at the Mbooni station.

Table 3.3 Machakos District Mission Education Statistics for 1925

Mission Station	Denomination	Number of Out-schools	No. of pupils Attending School	Average Daily Attendance	Number of Teachers	Number of Girls' in Training
Kilungu	RCM	5	183	21	8	None
Mbitini	RCM	None	25	15	1	None
Kabaa	RCM	1	138	31	3	None
TOTAL	RCM	6	346	22	12	None
Mumbuni	AIM	2	344	82	7	None
Mbooni	AIM	6	836	57	19	34
Kangundo	AIM	6	599	33	6	None
TOTAL	AIM	14	1779	57	32	34

Source: KNA, Mission Education Statistics, 1925.

These developments not only show how the Akamba of Machakos District were gradually gaining interest in mission education, but also show how AIM continued to use education as a tool for transforming resident's lives. One of the reasons for this general improvement in the provision of Western education by AIM can be attributed to the recommendations of the Phelps Stoke Commission in 1924. The commission recommended, among other things, the expansion of out-schools to increase opportunities for residents' education.³⁴⁶ Before then, AIM had not been

³⁴⁶ Barret and Mambo et al. (Eds) *Kenya Churches Handbook*, p.24.

serious about provision of education to residents as it perceived such work as a destruction to its core purpose of evangelism.

In 1926, AIM suffered a blow when one of its leading figures among the Machakos Akamba, George Rhoad of the Mbooni station resigned from the mission³⁴⁷. Rhoad, who later established his own mission, the Gospel Furthering Fellowship (GFF), in 1936 among the Akamba of Mbooni in Mbanya area, was instrumental in transforming the lives of the Mbooni Akamba.³⁴⁸ This transformation was facilitated through establishment of various schools, improvement of children's welfare through the Native Child Welfare Organization (NCWO), road construction and environmental conservation through tree planting.³⁴⁹

An evaluation of AIM's expansionist strategy in Machakos District by the end of 1926 shows that the mission had expanded beyond the main mission stations. From Mumbuni station, AIM had expanded surrounding areas such as Ngelani, Kaseve, and Kaliluni while from Mbooni station, the mission had expanded to Kivani, Tututha, Musoa, Kaumoni, Nzeveni and Utangwa. From Kangundo station, AIM had so far impacted the mission had so far impacted Matungulu, Kakuyuni, Kanzalu, Sengani and the Manyatta areas while from Mukaa station, the mission had expanded to Kitaingo, Ndolo, Kiongwani and Nunguni.³⁵⁰

Up to the late 1920s, the mission was unconcerned about local issues, especially those that had nothing to do with the spread of the gospel. This is clear in areas such as education where AIM was only involved up to the elementary level unlike the other missions in the district.³⁵¹ Since the arrival of AIM missionaries in the district, the mission's African teachers-cum-evangelists were financed by the mission and its foreign partners to undertake their activities in the district. But in 1927, AIM stopped financing these evangelists-cum-teachers and encouraged them to adopt the self-reliance policy of the mission.³⁵² This was a major to the African-evangelists-cum teachers and hampered their activities in the district. Moreover, AIM changed its policy in its schools so

³⁴⁷ KNA, DC/MKS/1/1/22, Machakos District Annual Report, 1928-1930.

³⁴⁸ P. Mumo, 'A Study of Theological Education in Africa Inland Church –Kenya: Its Historical Development and its Present State', (PhD Thesis, University of Nairobi, 1997), p. 57.

³⁴⁹ Aaron Nguta, OI, 6/8/2019.

³⁵⁰ KNA, DC/MKS/1/1/22, Machakos District Annual Report, 1928-1930.

³⁵¹ Tignor, (1976) *Colonial Transformation of Kenya: The Kamba, Kikuyu and Maasai, from 1900-1939*, (Princeton: Princeton), p. 74.

³⁵² Frank, *Between Two Mountains*, p. 175.

that they would subsequently be financed through the fees paid by learners and grants from the LNCs.³⁵³

As the foregoing paragraph shows, AIM's expansion in Machakos District by 1928 focused more on evangelism than secular matters such as education and healthcare. This is because the mission only supported activities which would advance evangelism. It is no wonder that AIM established the first Bible Training College today known as the Ukamba Bible College (UBC), in Machakos in 1928 to prepare African evangelists for future leadership roles in a localised church. Henceforth, developments such as in the field of education received little support from the mission. This is evident with the limited financing of its schools, the low-level elementary education and the poorly staffed schools as compared to the other missions.

Because of the poor support to community education, locals began initiating their own ways to supplement AIM's transformation efforts. Consequently, in 1928, a group of converts started a programme for education and church expansion in Machakos District.³⁵⁴ But the initiative faced opposition from the mission which was encouraging the initiators to seek financial support from the localised church.³⁵⁵ As a result, residents began to resent the mission which did not appear keen in indigenising the church.

Nevertheless, the mission continued to propagate various developments in the district. In the newly established UBC, Guilding, the first missionary teacher of the college was conducting bible classes in subjects such as Bible Doctrine, Homiletics, Church History and Pastoral Theology to the four local converts.³⁵⁶ Three of the trainees came from the Kangundo, Mbooni and Mumbuni stations respectively, while the fourth came from the newly opened Mulango AIM station in Kitui District.³⁵⁷

Despite the foregoing developments, the Akamba started lobbying for indigenization of the church so that they could be free from AIM influence. One reason for the pressures to indigenize the church was the mission's reluctance to fully address the welfare of locals, especially in the

³⁵³ Ibid, p. 277.

³⁵⁴ Ibid, p. 276.

³⁵⁵ Ibid.

³⁵⁶ Inland Africa, 'British (IAB) Organ of the British Home Council of the AIM', in Gehman(ed), *From Death to life*, p. 229.

³⁵⁷ Gehman, *From Death to life*, p. 222.

provision of education. Despite the pressure, indigenization of the church during this period progresses slowly. In 1928, a Regional Church Council (RCC) for spearheading AIM's programmes in Machakos District was formed. A mission committee was also formed to revise the 1919 church regulations. This revision led to the abolition of the "Black Seat" which the AIM had been using to punish converts who backslide.³⁵⁸ Before these changes, AIM had in 1922, initiated a few measures to indigenize the church including the formation of a committee to formulate a constitution for an indigenous church.³⁵⁹ Another development that took place in AIM in 1928 was the formation of the Ukamba District Church Council (UDCC), which later became the Ukamba Regional Church Council (URCC). This council was established with a view to uniting all the mission stations that AIM had established in Machakos District.³⁶⁰

In 1929, AIM personnel in the district was boosted by the arrival of new missionaries who included George and Claudia Wepler who later took over the Mbooni station after the resignation of George Rhoad. The others were Bretta C. Johnston, Norman Johnson and Francis Johnston.³⁶¹ This raised the number of missionaries in the district to fourteen. By then, the newly established UBC was taking shape with the number of students in the college increasing to ten. However, there was increasing pressure from the Akamba to indigenize the college.³⁶²

By 1931, the number of AIM missionaries in Machakos District had decreased to twelve. But the decrease had little impact as all mission stations remained fully operational. Missionary influence in the district could then be seen in the villages surrounding the mission station; there was increased construction of houses following the Western architectural designs as well as intensification of agriculture.³⁶³ This influence could also be seen in the education field. Though AIM continued to be reluctant to give locals education beyond elementary level, the number of girls enrolled in its schools continued to increase with average attendance being ninety-two girls by the end of 1931.³⁶⁴ This was a major achievement considering that residents had been opposed to taking their

³⁵⁸ Frank, *Between Two Mountains*, p. 180.

³⁵⁹ Gehman, *From Death to life*, p. 192.

³⁶⁰ Frank, *Between Two Mountains*, p. 217.

³⁶¹ *Ibid*, p. 377.

³⁶² Somba, *Wananchi Mashujaa wa Imani*, p. 10.

³⁶³ KNA, DC/MKS/1/1/23, Machakos District Annual Report, 1930.

³⁶⁴ KNA, DC/MKS/1/1/24, Machakos District Annual Report, 1931.

daughters to school exclusively run by male staff. Although the Machakos Akamba continued to show interest in missionary education, they still lagged behind compared to the Kikuyu.³⁶⁵



Figure 3.6 A Brick Chapel Erected by AIM at its Pioneer Station at Nzau in 1932

Source: Photo Taken by the Researcher on 17 August 2018

The return of AIM the Nzau area in 1932 provided a good foundation for the expansion of its activities in the surrounding areas of Nziu, Malooi, Matiliku and Kilili which had been deprived of the mission's influence since the closure of the Nzau station in the late 1890s. In addition, AIM's resurgence during this period was also affirmed by the erection of a chapel at the Kangundo station.



Figure 3.7 An Extension of the AIM Chapel (Door of Hope) at the Kangundo Mission Station

Source: Photo Taken by the Researcher on 3 August 2018.

³⁶⁵ Tignor, *Colonial Rule and the Akamba*, p. 277.

Between 1931 and 1934, AIM opened prayer houses in Ngoleni in Mitaboni, Muani in Sultan Hamud and Inyokoni in Kilungu. In addition to these, there was an on-going survey and demarcation of the mission's mission stations in the district by the Local Lands Board (LLB) in conjunction with the Central Lands Board (CLB) in 1935.³⁶⁶ The mission also suffered a blow during the year when one of the missionaries C.F. Johnson, who had left for America together with his wife, died. This was a great loss for the Mumbuni station, which Johnson had founded thirty-three years previously. As a result of Johnson's death, John Guilding, who had been the missionary in charge of UBC, took over the Mumbuni station.

In the late 1930s, there was a feeling in the AIM fraternity that the Kikamba version of the New Testament translated towards the late 1920s was not meeting the evangelistic needs of residents satisfactorily. Consequently, in 1937, AIM, led by Mrs Guilding of the Mumbuni station, embarked on re-translating the New Testament into Kikamba.³⁶⁷ Guilding had a good command of Kikamba after living in Machakos for seventeen years.

3.6 Resurgence of AIM in Machakos District

Towards the end of 1930s, AIM took drastic measures to indigenize the mission in Machakos District. In January 1939, the British Home Council recommended organization of the church that would see AIM establish an indigenous church that would be self-reliant in terms of administration and governance.³⁶⁸ However, this was not the first time AIM was initiating such measures. The desire to establish a self-reliant church started in 1922 when the mission formed a constitution for an indigenous church.³⁶⁹ The problem with AIM initiatives is that they were taking too long to materialize. However, the 1939 British Home Council recommendation re-ignited the dreams for the establishment of an indigenous church that was self-reliant. The pressure AIM to surrender control of activities to the residents of Machakos District was one of the driving forces that made the mission to hasten the indigenization of the church.

As a way of preparing for the establishment of an indigenous church, the mission intensified its bid to expand in the district from the late 1930s. This expansion took the form of a massive establishment of prayer houses and out-schools in various parts of the district. Supported by this

³⁶⁶ KNA, DC/MKS/1/1/25, Machakos District Annual Report, 1935.

³⁶⁷ KNA, MSNS 31/5, Extract from the Governors Tour of Inspection in the Central Province, August, 1937.

³⁶⁸ Gehman, *From Death to Life*, p. 316.

³⁶⁹ *Ibid*, p. 192.

was the willingness on the side of the locals to support this initiative through means such as the provision of land for the construction of these institutions. Some of the places that were affected by this AIM's intensified expansion plans as early as 1939 include Kibauni Miu and Tawa, all within the Mbooni station's jurisdiction. Others included Muvuti, Ngaa, Myondoni, Kiima Kimwe, Iiuni, Kaewa, and Misakwani in the Mumbuni area of jurisdiction.³⁷⁰ In these areas, the mission opened prayer houses as some locals such as Kisaa wa Katoni of Kivauni offered land to the mission.³⁷¹

In 1940, beside the pressures to establish an indigenous church, there was intensified resentment on the side of the locals on the mission's position in the provision of African education.³⁷² The locals had realized the progress that the other missions such as the Roman Catholic HGM had made as far as the provision of African education was concerned and started to question AIM's position on the matter. This is because up to this time, the only AIM sponsored education that went beyond elementary level was theological. Locals who wished to acquire education beyond elementary level in AIM schools had to join the government schools to further their education. The mission was also still not accepting grants from the government in its schools for fear of government interference on its control of these schools.

As 1940 proceeded, reforms towards the indigenization of the mission continued to be initiated. During the year, the church structure was drawn in which the local churches established by the mission were to be managed by local leaders but under the mission's supervision. The overall governance structure was also drawn in which the church was to be managed at three levels: the local, central and general levels.³⁷³

With these reforms taking place, the mission continued to intensify its expansion in the various unreached parts of the district. The most common forms of expansion during this period took the form of the establishment of out-schools as well as prayer houses in these unreached parts of the district. These establishments were initiated either by the mission or by the locals who by now had started embracing the activities of the missions in the district. In 1941, the mission initiated plans to open prayer houses in Kiu and Mumela in Mukaa, Kisani and Kawala in Mbitini, and Ititu in

³⁷⁰ KNA, DC/MKS/17/8, Land for Missions, 1939.

³⁷¹ KNA, MSNS 31/5 Letter from AIM Mbooni to DC Machakos, 1939.

³⁷² Gehman, *From Death to Life*, p. 308.

³⁷³ *Ibid*, p. 315.

Mbooni.³⁷⁴ Through this initiative, Christianity was able to reach these areas of the district in 1941. In addition to these, AIM Field director in charge of Ukambani was in the process of getting permission from the PC Central Province to erect prayer houses in Nguluni, Itheuni, Kithongoni, Katheka and Miini-all in Kangundo.³⁷⁵ Between 1942 and 1943, the Kangundo station extended its influence to Kawauni, Kiua- Nzukini, Mathunthini, Kaliluni and Tala. The Mbooni station opened a sub-elementary school at Misakwani.³⁷⁶ This school acted as a feeder school to the main school in the Mbooni station.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, since the early 1920s, the locals had been pushing for the indigenisation of the mission through the establishment of an indigenous church. Despite many attempts being made, the dream to have an indigenous church had not been realized two decades later. However, the locals were still persisting on the formation of an indigenous church that would be run by locals. These pressures increased towards the end of the 1930s and the early 1940s with the mission showing more concerns on the matter. Consequently, in 1943, these pressures bore fruits when an indigenous church, the AIC, was established.³⁷⁷ This meant that the church and the mission would be operating as two autonomous bodies. However, the establishment of AIC did not neutralise AIM's influence. What AIM did was to devolve some of its activities to the AIC but the overall control was still in the hands of the mission. What followed from this was a period of wrangles between the AIC and the mission in which AIC was advocating for a church that was free from the mission's influence.

Despite these wrangles that continued from the early 1950s to late 1960s, the mission in conjunction with the church continued to make numerous developments in Machakos District. In the early 1940s, the first African evangelists in the district to be licensed to administer the Lord's Supper and baptism were ordained.³⁷⁸ Though this development was long overdue considering that the mission was about to celebrate its golden jubilee just two years from then, it was a good move as far as the development of the indigenous church leadership was concerned.

³⁷⁴ KNA, DC/MKS/17/8, Letters for Application and Approval of Prayer Houses in Machakos District, 1941.

³⁷⁵ KNA, DC/MKS/17/8, AIM Field Director to PC Central Province, 1941.

³⁷⁶ KNA, DC/MKS/17/8, Land for Missions, 1943.

³⁷⁷ Gehman, *From Death to Life*, p. 317.

³⁷⁸ AICA, Farnsworth's Letter to the Missionary Home Council, 1943.

By 1944, the mission's position in the provision of African education in the district continued to be challenged by the locals. They started demanding for the mission to drop its go-slow policy on African education in the district as many of them had started losing faith in the mission.³⁷⁹ Consequently, the residents opted to take their children to the government schools or even other missions' schools that were then offering a better education as opposed to AIM's. These pressures on the mission to review its attitude on African education led to the mission dropping some of its policies on African education. By 1944, six of the mission's schools in the district were receiving grants-in-aid from the government. This was contrary to the mission's earlier position of not accepting any grants from the government.³⁸⁰ The mission saw that a continued failure to accept these grants would lead to a loss as it was paying taxes to the government without fully benefiting from its incentives.³⁸¹

As these reforms in African education continued to unfold, the mission extended its expansion to new areas in the district during the year. By the end of the year, the mission was in the process of establishing new out-schools cum prayer houses in Tulimani and Ngaa in Mbooni, Kaseve, Kaani, and Mbaikini in the Mumbuni station and Kwa Mutula, Kunikila and Kakuyuni in the Kangundo station.³⁸² During this period, the mission through its field council can be said to have been at its expansion peak since its establishment in the district forty eight years ago. Around one year, the mission had reached Ing'ethu, Ngamba, Mango and Mukandoni in the Kangundo station and Mumela and Ngoto all under the Mukaa station. The mission also re-opened the Kaumoni prayer houses which it had closed a few years ago citing health issues.³⁸³

In 1945, the mission made major changes regarding the provision of education in Machakos District. One of these changes led to the establishment of Teacher Training Centres (TTC) in the district.³⁸⁴ These teacher-training centres would later supply the mission's schools that were being accused of having unqualified staff with trained teachers and thus improve the delivery of education in the district. Consequently, the mission established a TTC at Kangundo.

³⁷⁹ KNA, DC/MKS/17/8, Letter from AIM Mumbuni Central Committee to the AIM Field council, 27/11/1944.

³⁸⁰ KNA, DC/MKS/1/29, Machakos District Annual Report, 1944.

³⁸¹ KNA, MSS/3/568, African Inland Mission Education, 1945.

³⁸² KNA, DC/MKS/17/8, Letters on Application of Prayer Houses and Out-Schools, 1944.

³⁸³ KNA, DC/MKS/17/8, Letters on Application of Prayer Houses and Out Schools, 1945.

³⁸⁴ KNA, MSS/3/568, African Inland Mission Education 1945, p. 19.

In the same year, there was a landmark progress in the mission's endeavours to transform the district. The mission was able to produce the first batch of Kamba pastors fifty years since its establishment in the district.³⁸⁵ Though this production was long overdue, it can be argued that it was a good move by the mission towards the indigenization of the church among the Machakos Akamba. However, the mission's influence in the district started to face more competition with the establishment of the African Brotherhood Church (ABC) in the district on 8 April 1945.³⁸⁶ The ABC, which was a Kamba independent church, was formed partly because of the locals' dissatisfaction with AIM's position in the district regarding evangelization. As a result, the denominational warfare in the district, which over the years had been between AIM and the Roman Catholic HGF, went a note higher with the intrusion of the ABC in the evangelization field.

Towards the mid twentieth century, Machakos Akamba interest for education continued to grow. In 1946, AIM began opening elementary schools in Thinu in Iveti, and Kee in Kilungu.³⁸⁷ Up to this time, the mission could not allow the locals to start schools on their own. As a result of the much pressure piled on the mission to open many new schools, the mission requested the District Education Board (DEB) to look at the matter to ease the pressure.³⁸⁸ Besides the pressure on the establishment of schools, there were rising conflicts on the establishment of prayer houses and schools in the district during this time and thus a solution had to be sought. The rise in these conflicts can be attributed to the increasing number of locals wanting these institutions to be established in their locations. Consequently, in 1947, the DC directed that before a prayer house or a school was constructed, the consent of the landowner, the local people, the LNC, the LLB and the PC had to be sought. The DEB and the director of education also had to be involved in the case of the construction of a school in which after all the parties were satisfied, the establishment of these institutions would be gazetted.³⁸⁹ The laying down of these procedures led to a decline in the number of conflicts that resulted from the establishment of these institutions.

The increasing pressure on the establishment of these institutions led to the establishment of more than seven elementary schools and nine prayer houses in the district in 1947. The mission also reopened its schools that it had closed earlier in Isovya in Kilungu, Kaewa, Ititu, Tawa in Mbooni

³⁸⁵ Gehman, *From Death to Life*, p. 221.

³⁸⁶ Barret and Mambo et al (Eds) *Kenya Churches Handbook*, p. 25.

³⁸⁷ KNA, DC/MKS/17/8, Letters on Application of Prayer Houses and Out-Schools, 1946.

³⁸⁸ KNA, LND/10/2, L. E. Davis Letter to DC, Machakos, 1946.

³⁸⁹ KNA, LND/16/7/10, District Commissioner Machakos on Missions, Vol.1, 1947.

and Kalamba in Nzau.³⁹⁰ In the Mumbuni station, classes for AIM evangelists who wished to be ordained as pastors were ongoing in the station. However, due to challenges of their daily upkeep needs, they had resulted in farming in the mission's garden to sustain themselves in the mission.³⁹¹

In 1948, the mission's grip on the residents continued to face challenges as many continued to secede and enter the ABC denomination.³⁹² One of the reasons for the loss of grip was because of the strictness that was associated with the mission's institutions. In addition, the mission's schools suffered to be so many but having too little equipment and insufficient qualified teachers. Regardless of the above, the mission managed to expand to Kikelenzu in Masii and Kawethei in Matungulu during the year through the establishment of prayer houses in the areas.³⁹³ By 1950, the mission had reached Mukuyuni and Kauti in Kilungu, Nziu and Kilili in Kalamba, Miu in Kisau, Vulueni in Mbitini and Mwanyani in Iveti.³⁹⁴

Besides the above developments, the mission also opened a TTC in the Kangundo station in 1949 for the purpose of training teachers who would be deployed in the mission's schools.³⁹⁵ The establishment of this TTC was a major achievement for AIM education in Machakos District considering that in the previous years the mission had been criticized for opening many schools run by unqualified staff. In the evangelization field, the mission had facilitated the ordination of nine African pastors who now became registrars of marriages under the Native Christian Marriage Ordinance (NCMO).³⁹⁶ This translated into an increase in the number of AIM African-pastor officiated weddings in the district. This in turn increased the demand for African Christian marriages.

In 1951, the mission marked its fifty-fifth year since its establishment in the district. In these fifty-five years, the mission had transformed Machakos District in ways hitherto unknown through the introduction of a new religion, new education system, new medicine and healthcare and new infrastructure among others. This transformation continued to unfold during the third quarter of

³⁹⁰ KNA, DC/MKS/17/8, Letters on Application of Prayer Houses and Out Schools, 1947.

³⁹¹ KNA, LND/16/7/1/314, District Commissioner to Commissioner of Lands, Mines and Surveys, August, 1947.

³⁹² KNA, DC/MKS/1/1/30, Machakos District Annual Report, 1948.

³⁹³ Ibid.

³⁹⁴ KNA, DC/MKS/1/1/30, Machakos District Annual Report, 1950.

³⁹⁵ Ibid.

³⁹⁶ KNA, W. Guilding Letter to DC, Machakos, 1950.

the twentieth century in ways that it was never like before. The mission continued to increase educational opportunities for the locals by opening more schools and upgrading the existing ones.

During the year, the mission reached Kavatanzou in Kilungu and Mutumboni in Nzau location. This was after the Native Lands Trust Ordinance (NLTO) gave the mission two acres of land in each of these two locations to open new schools.³⁹⁷ In addition, the mission was in the process of expanding schools in Kiteng'ei and Kaathi in Iveti, Katwanyaa and King'atuani in Matungulu, and Kyeengai in Kisau location. The expansion of these schools involved incorporation of prayer houses.³⁹⁸ The acquisition of new sites for the mission's establishments required the mission to compensate the owners of the land. However, some locals were willing to offer free land to the mission so that they could receive the full benefits of the mission's activities in their areas. For instance, in 1951, two residents Kalelo wa Kisiu of Kiteng'ei and Daniel Mutunga Musyoki of Kithungo in Kisau, gave land to the mission to construct prayer houses in their areas.³⁹⁹ Consequently, the mission was able to impact these areas through these Africans.

In 1952, the mission's agenda to expand in the district and beyond through the training of African evangelists who would in turn evangelize the Machakos Akamba in the mission's unchristened areas made a step forward. This was after the mission opened a bible-training institute at the Mbooni station during the year. The opening of this bible-training institute made the mission to offer evangelical training at the local level and thus supplement the UBC in the provision of evangelical education in the district.

From 1952, the quality of teaching offered in the mission's schools started to take a new shape though at a very slow pace. This was after the mission's TTC at Kangundo produced its first bunch of trained teachers who were to be deployed in the mission's more than fifty-nine schools in the district.⁴⁰⁰ This was an important development in the mission's provision of education in the district considering that most of its schools were flooded with untrained African teachers whose input was low. However, the production of this new group of teachers was met with the challenge of new schools that the mission was opening in the various parts of the district. For instance, by

³⁹⁷ KNA, Kenya Official Gazette, Government Notice No. 214, 1951.

³⁹⁸ Ibid.

³⁹⁹ KNA, DC/MKS/3/133, Land for Missions, 1951.

⁴⁰⁰ KNA, DC/MKS/1/1/30, Machakos District Annual Report, 1952.

1953, out of the 221 schools in the district, the mission owned eighty-two of them.⁴⁰¹ As a result, AIM was leading in the provision of African education in Machakos District during this time, as the number of schools owned by the mission in the district were more than the DEB government owned schools. As a result, there was a need for more trained teachers in these schools if quality education was something to go by.



Figure 3.8 Some of the Structures of the Mbooni Bible Institute

Source: Photo Taken by Researcher on 6 August 2018.

During the year, Walter Guilding, the missionary who had served as the principal for UBC for twenty-six years retired and thereafter left the district.⁴⁰² Guilding is credited for the mission's evangelical transformation agenda in the district for the many African evangelists that passed through his hands. During his reign, the college's enrollment increased from three students in 1928 to more than one hundred by 1953. Most of these trained African evangelists in the district joined hands with the missionaries to influence the district through Christianity, education, healthcare and infrastructure among others. This explains why from the late 1930s there was an increasing demand for the mission's services in many locations in the district.

⁴⁰¹ KNA, DC/MKS/1/1/31, Machakos District Annual Report, 1953.

⁴⁰² Gehman, *From Death to Life*, p. 228.

Between 1954 and 1957, a number of developments that took place in the mission's teacher TTC at Kangundo continued to revolutionize the quality of teacher training by the mission in the district. The centre started admitting African ladies who would train as teachers for the mission in the district.⁴⁰³ This in turn would help to solve the problem of the locals' reluctance to take their girls to the mission's school to be left in the hands of male teachers whom some residents distrusted. The results of this admission started to manifest in 1956 when these trained African lady teachers were posted to the mission's schools as the standard of domestic education provided to girls in these schools went high.⁴⁰⁴ Coupled with this development was the new demonstration school that was established in the TTC in 1957. This school facilitated the local teacher trainees to hold their demonstration classes there as part of their training.

On the other hand, the mission's evangelization agenda continued to flourish during this period. In 1956, the mission in conjunction with the BFBS translated the whole bible into Kikamba.⁴⁰⁵ This was a major evangelization breakthrough for the African evangelists as it not only made it easy for them to evangelize, but also gave the locals who had received the mission's literacy education to read the bible in their language and by themselves. In addition to this, in 1957, the mission opened a prayer house in Athi River, in the plot that had been measured and marked with a sisal fence by the DC in 1955. In the same year, two residents from Mitaboni area of the district gave the mission a 1.25-acre plot in Myumbuni for the construction of a church house in the area.⁴⁰⁶

More expansion of the mission through the opening of schools and prayer houses in the district continued towards the end of 1950s. By then, the mission had started offering intermediate education to some of its initially established elementary schools despite its long time go-slow policy in the provision of African education beyond the elementary level. Among the reasons that prompted the mission to provide education beyond the elementary level was the stiff competition that the mission had started facing from the Roman Catholic HGM as well as the government in the provision of education in the district. This competition posed a threat to the mission's schools as most of the locals who wished to continue with their education beyond the elementary level tended to join the DEB schools that were offering intermediate level of education.⁴⁰⁷ In addition

⁴⁰³ KNA, DC/MKS/1/1/30, Machakos District Annual Report, 1954.

⁴⁰⁴ KNA, DC/MKS/1/1/33, Machakos District Annual Report, 1956.

⁴⁰⁵ Barret and Mambo et al (Eds) *Kenya Churches Handbook*, p. 25.

⁴⁰⁶ KNA, DC/MKS/1/1/33, Machakos District Annual Report, 1957.

⁴⁰⁷ Mbondo Mutiso, OI, 4/8/2018.

to that, in 1959, the mission made progress in the provision of religious education in its schools by producing a curriculum that would provide a guide in the provision of this education in its schools. In 1959, the mission also expanded to Kitangani and Ekalakala in Yatta B, by establishing prayer houses after the LLB board approved the occupation of these two sites in 1958.⁴⁰⁸

In the 1960s, the mission continued to initiate more reforms in the provision of African education. These reforms took the form of opening secondary schools that would absorb its intermediate level graduates. In the Mukaa station, schools such as Mukaa, Mumela, Kamuthini and Kitaingo were in the process of being elevated to the rank of secondary schools.⁴⁰⁹ In the church, Christian education was also experiencing reforms from the early 1960s. As Frank has observed, there was increased awareness during this time of the need to educate church people of all ages and prepare them for active Christian service in independent Kenya.⁴¹⁰ As a result, AIM/AIC had taken several steps during this period in a bid to meet this demand. In 1961, the mission in conjunction with the church started a training course in the Kangundo station that would train AIM/AIC men and women to oversee the implementation of Christian education in the AIC churches.⁴¹¹

During this period, more reforms in the provision of theological education to African pastors and evangelists continued to unfold in the district. This was after the mission established Scott Theological College (STC) in 1962 at the Mumbuni station to offer advanced theological training.⁴¹² This college, now Scott Christian University (SCU), was named after the mission's founder, Peter Cameron Scott, as an appreciation for the role he had played in the formation of the mission and its impact not only in Machakos District but also in Kenya and beyond. The formation of this college was a further boost of the mission's efforts to provide theological education in the district. Before then, the mission's theological education in the district was being offered in UBC and the two bible institutes that the mission had established earlier on at the Mukaa and the Mbooni stations.

⁴⁰⁸ KNA, DC/MKS/1/1/33, Letter from District Commissioner T.D.W. Molander to AIM Mumbuni, 1959.

⁴⁰⁹ KNA, DC/MKS/3/261, Mukaa Locational Council Minutes, 1961.

⁴¹⁰ Frank, *Between Two Mountains*, p. 314.

⁴¹¹ Ibid, p. 311.

⁴¹² Barret and Mambo et al. (Eds), *Kenya Churches Handbook*, p. 27.

The college started with an enrolment of sixteen students among them Stanely Mbithi and Edward Nthiwa.⁴¹³ The four presiding teachers were AIM missionaries led by Ray Wolfe who acted as the principal until 1971 when AIM was merged with AIC. The college started by offering a three-year theological training whose main medium of instruction was English.⁴¹⁴ Over the years, the college has experienced exponential growth in terms of enrollment, staff and infrastructure to university level.



Figure 3.9 The Gate into Scott Christian University at Mumbuni

Source: Photo Taken by Researcher on 21 August 2018.

Besides these developments in the provision of theological education in the district, the mission in conjunction with the indigenous church established the Christian Education Department (CED) of the church in 1962 to initiate education programmes in the church.⁴¹⁵ The CED had interest in special groups within the church such as women, boys' groups commonly known as battalions and girls' ones commonly known as cadets. With the creation of the CED, the mission was preparing the locals for future leadership roles in the church considering that the church was still exerting a lot of pressure to the mission to completely indigenize church leadership. It is from these initiatives that other structured special groups such as women fellowship commonly called in Swahili as

⁴¹³ Mumo, 'A Study of Theological Education in African Inland Church-Kenya: Its Historical Development and its Present State', (PhD Thesis, University of Nairobi, 1997), p. 128.

⁴¹⁴ Ibid.

⁴¹⁵ Frank, *Between Two Mountains*, p. 311.

Ushirika wa Wanawake, Christian Youth Fellowships, Bible Clubs and Sunday Schools continued to pop up in the church during this period.⁴¹⁶

The results of the mission and church initiatives in the provision of advanced theological education continued to manifest when STC released its first diploma graduates in 1964.⁴¹⁷ During this period, the church was in dire need of African elite leaders and thus the theological college played a pivotal role in the provision of these leaders who were being deployed for leadership roles within various departments of the church. Besides the mission developments in theological education that were taking place in the district, developments in school and church establishment were at their highest in the district since the establishment of the mission more than seventy years ago. For instance, by 1969, the mission had established four secondary schools in the district.⁴¹⁸

With the growing number of AIM sponsored schools in the district, the mission continued to initiate reforms to inculcate religious education with secular education in its schools. As Frank has observed, by 1965, the mission had fully developed teacher's guides and pupils' workbooks to be used for the teaching of Christian education from class five to seven.⁴¹⁹ This clearly shows how the mission was taking advantage of the increasing demand for Western education in the district to evangelize the young population and thus meet its primary goal in the district. This initiative was further boosted in 1966 when the mission developed other materials such as maps, songbooks and bibles to facilitate the teaching of Christian education in these schools.⁴²⁰

Up to the late 1960s, the use of traditional Kamba musical instruments like the drum in the mission/church services was prohibited, as most of them were associated with traditional activities that were contrary to the teachings of the church. However, there was a growing change of attitude towards this perception as we approached the 1970s. This growing change of attitude can partly be credited to a group of then Scott theological college students who initiated a programme in 1969 to start using some of these African musical instruments in churches.⁴²¹ The use of these instruments can be said to have played a major role in the revolution of church music during this

⁴¹⁶ Ibid, pp. 313-314.

⁴¹⁷ Mumo, *A Study of Theological Education in Africa Inland Church-Kenya*, p. 179.

⁴¹⁸ Frank, *Between Two Mountains*, p. 293.

⁴¹⁹ Ibid, p. 310.

⁴²⁰ Ibid.

⁴²¹ Barret and Mambo et al (Eds) *Kenya Churches Handbook*, p. 70.

period. In addition, this revolution boosted the on-going process of the indigenization of the mission, which was at its climax during this period.

Since the establishment of the mission in the district seventy-six years ago, the mission was being run by missionaries and later in conjunction with African pastors who in most cases played subordinate roles. The highest rank an AIM convert could rise to in the mission/church circles by 1970 was that of an ordained and licensed pastor. However, on 23 October 1970, this trend took a different turn when the first Kamba pastor, Wellington E. Mulwa, was ordained as AIC bishop.⁴²² Mulwa not only became the first AIC bishop for Kenya and the rest of Africa where the mission/church expanded to.

The creation of the post of African bishop clearly showed the steps that the mission and the church were undertaking to completely localise the church. Besides the creation of this post, several other measures had been taken to see this initiative come true including the structuring of the church governance into various cadres as shown in figure 3.10. The initial four AIM stations became District Church Councils (DCCs). Gradually, they gave birth to other DCCs. For instance, the Kangundo station became Kangundo DCC and by 1971, it had given birth to Mwala DCC. Mbooni station became Mbooni DCC, which gave birth to Kiteta DCC while Mukaa station became Mukaa DCC and gave birth to Makueni DCC by 1971.⁴²³

The LCC governed the church at the local church level; the DCC governed the church at the district level while the RCC governed it at the regional church level. The CCC was the overall governing body of the whole church in Kenya.

⁴²² Somba, *Wananchi Mashujaa wa Imani*, p. 56.

⁴²³ Frank, *Between Two Mountains*, pp. 363-368.

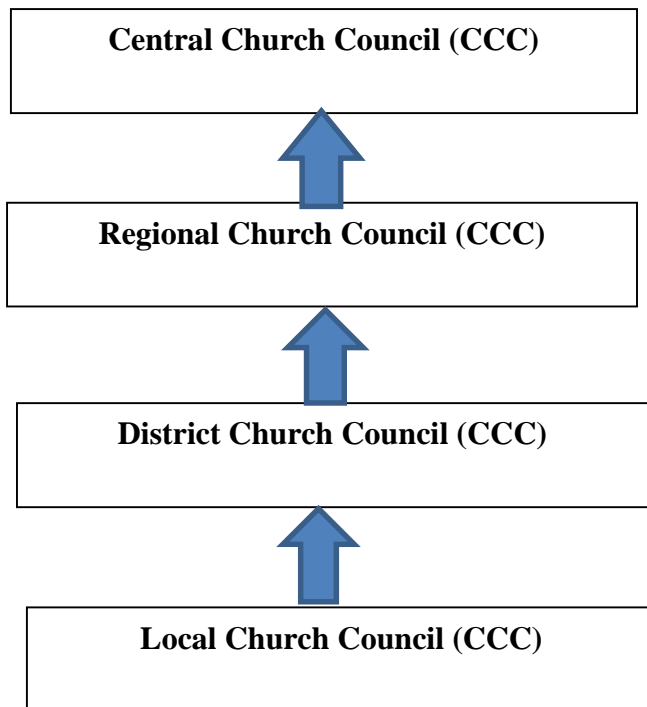


Figure 3.10 Governance Structure of the AIC in 1971

Source: Gehman, From Death to Life

The foregoing efforts to restructure the mission and church governance culminated in the complete localisation of the AIC leadership in October 16, 1971 in a large gathering held at the former AIM station at Mumbuni in Machakos District which was attended by Daniel Arap Moi, then the Vice President of the Republic of Kenya.⁴²⁴ AIM then merged with AIC and most of the mission's property was handed over to the AIC as the mission became a department within the AIC.

The expansion of the mission in the district from 1895 to 1970 can be summarized as shown in table 3.4. From the table, it is clear that by the time AIM was merged with the AIC, it had influenced the district by opening more than 315 churches. Besides these churches, the mission had opened 193 Sunday schools, which grew into churches. In most of the places where these churches had been established, there was an AIM sponsored school as the evangelization and schooling always worked together among many missionary groups in Africa.

⁴²⁴ Somba, *Wananchi Mashujaa wa Imani*, p. 60.

Table 3.4 Distribution of AIM Churches in Machakos District by 1971

District Church Council	Number of Branches	Number of AIM/ AIC Churches	Number of AIM/AIC Sunday Schools
Kangundo	4	60	-
Mwala	5	56	15
Mumbuni	6	57	47
Mbooni	2	28	-
Kiteta	4	35	51
Mukaa	4	34	43
Makueni	3	45	37
TOTAL	28	315	193

Source: Frank, pp.363-368

3.7 Summary

This chapter has discussed the formation and the development of AIM in Machakos District between 1895 to 1971. The first part of this chapter began by examining the formation of AIM as a missionary group. This part has shown that AIM was a missionary group that was launched in the United States of America with the aim of spreading Christianity in the interior of the African continent. The part has also discussed how the mission found itself starting its missionary activities in Africa specifically in Machakos District of Kenya, and the challenges that dragged it to the verge of extinction in its early years in Machakos District. With this challenging missionary environment, the first part of this chapter has shown the control measures that were taken by the mission to resurge and soldier on with its evangelist activities in the district despite the overwhelming losses that it was facing in its early years in Machakos District. The second part of this chapter has examined the blossoming years of the mission in the district. It has shown how the mission managed to recover from the early years of struggle in the district and the subsequent exponential growth made by the mission in the later years of its tenure in the district. This expansion which was mainly in the form of the establishment of churches, prayer centres and Sunday schools as well as the reformation of its education system led to its dominance in the provision of these services in the district by 1971. The next chapter focuses on the influences of the Kamba social life as result of the coming of a Western affiliated agency, that is, AIM in the district.

CHAPTER FOUR

AIM AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION IN MACHAKOS DISTRICT

4.1 Overview

This chapter discusses the social transformation that was experienced in Machakos District due to the influence and activities of AIM. Although AIM was not the only agent of social change in the district, it played a vital role in the process, as it was the pioneer organisation from the West that initiated most of the developments before the arrival of other Western groups. The chapter mainly examines the social life of Machakos Akamba before and after the coming of AIM and outlines the social developments that occurred as a result. The chapter does this by comparing aspects such as the Kamba religion, rites of passage, medicine and healthcare, the concept of time, education, music and dance as well as architecture before and after the coming of AIM missionaries.

4.2 AIM and Religious Transformation in Machakos District

Before the arrival of AIM missionaries in Machakos District in 1895, the Machakos Akamba had their own religion that helped them to conceptualize everything concerning the supernatural. As mentioned in chapter two, Kamba traditional religion made the Machakos Akamba realize who they were, how to behave in different situations and how to solve their problems.⁴²⁵ However, with the coming of AIM missionaries and the subsequent introduction of a new religion, the Akamba of Machakos District experienced a transformation that influenced their religious beliefs, customs and traditions of subsequent generations in the district. Although these changes were gradual, they influenced the people's conception of the supernatural in ways that had never been experienced in the community before.

First and foremost, as mentioned in chapter two of this study, the Kamba traditional religion revolved around ancestral worship with frequent reference to a supreme being, *Mulungu*. AIM initiative to indigenize Christianity among the Machakos Akamba came with a new conception regarding the Supreme Being and the supernatural. Though the new religion recognized the existence of a supreme being, just like the Kamba traditional religion, it brought new perspectives concerning the being that the new converts were expected to worship. Unlike the traditional Kamba Supreme Being, whose worship and reverence was limited, the new religion introduced a new supreme being called *Mwai*, whose worship and frequent reverence was expected of all the

⁴²⁵ J.S. Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion*, (Long Grove: Waveland Press, 1975), p. 15.

converts.⁴²⁶ The new religion preached against ancestral worship. As a result, Kamba converts in the district were taught about the need to refrain from referring to their dead ancestors in worship. Only the Christian Supreme Being was supposed to be referred to during worship sessions among the converts.

Although there were some similarities in the two religions regarding the existence of a supreme being, there were differences that the Christian religion brought concerning this being which were supposed to be internalised by all converts in the district. For instance, there was the introduction of the doctrine of holy trinity in the conceptualization of the Supreme Being. Thus, the newly introduced supreme being of the Christian religion was made up of three: God the father, the son and the Holy Spirit, who were to be conceived as one God.⁴²⁷ Unlike their traditional religion, which had intermediaries between the Supreme Being and the people, the newly introduced religion did not have mediators who could intercede for the people. This meant that converts could connect directly with God.⁴²⁸

Conversion to Christianity meant abandoning traditional forms of worship. The convert had to cease consulting ancestral spirits. Nor would he or she participate in communal rituals involving ancestral worship.⁴²⁹ Consequently, the practice of making annual pilgrimages to the Kamba traditional shrines to worship or even making offerings and sacrifices to the spirits of the dead at any point of their life ended to the newly converted resident.

The introduction of a new perspective of the Supreme Being among the Machakos Akamba by AIM missionaries came with other changes regarding how the converts would relate to him. Special places for worshipping such as churches and prayer houses were established. Unlike the shrines that the new converts used to gather before to worship, AIM missionaries set up churches which replaced the shrine worship. Attendance to these newly established churches became a weekly activity unlike the previous time-to-time shrine attendance by the Akamba. In addition, the attendance of these church sessions was open to all. The elderly, the youth and children were all allowed to be part of the church services after conversion. There were no age restrictions to those who would join the church services unlike in the shrines where only the elderly would be allowed

⁴²⁶ Julius Mutwota, OI, 21/8/2018.

⁴²⁷ Pius Muindi, OI, 16/8/2018.

⁴²⁸ Charles Maliti, OI, 16/8/2018.

⁴²⁹ Julius Mutwota, OI, 21/8/2018.

to attend.⁴³⁰ Furthermore, there were no strict customs to be observed before and after the church services such as sexual abstinence as the Kamba converts used to do before accepting the new Christian religion.

Although worship in the traditional Kamba religion was not restricted to the shrines only, new developments concerning the day-to-day worship that the Akamba were doing emerged. For instance, before the taking of meals, it was normal especially for the elderly Akamba to make libation as a way of sharing with the living dead.⁴³¹ After conversion, this practice was replaced by a short thanksgiving prayer to God. Consequently, new daily schedules of worship replaced the previous Kamba daily worship sessions. For instance, besides praying before the taking of a meal, the new AIM convert would be expected to have morning prayers as a way of giving thanks for the new day to God. The convert would also have night prayers before retiring to bed as a way of thanking God for the well spent day. In addition, prayers became an important tool during the opening and closing of many functions within the converts' circles.⁴³²

The honouring of the dead in the traditional Kamba religion had a price to be paid especially to those who failed to adhere to this custom. As mentioned earlier in chapter two of this study, the living dead were believed to influence the lives of the living and thus never ending honours were to be made unto them for personal and communal well-being. Failure to honour them was believed as a form of disobedience whose repercussions included calamities happening to the disobedient parties and their close relatives in the community. However, with the new advent of Christianity, abandoning of traditional religious practices did not affect converts in any way.⁴³³

As mentioned earlier in the chapter, among the different ways through which the pre-colonial Akamba would worship in their religion was through the making of sacrifices and offerings. While sacrificing entailed the killing of animals, offerings involved the presentation of foodstuffs and other items for the purpose of worship.⁴³⁴ However, with the introduction of Christianity by AIM missionaries, there was a turn around on the way these two forms of worship were to be conducted by the convert.

⁴³⁰ Julius Mutwota, OI, 21/8/2018.

⁴³¹ Muthio Mune, OI, 3/8/2018.

⁴³² Julius Mutwota, OI, 21/8/2018.

⁴³³ Jeremiah Kioko Kyeva, OI, 6/8/2018.

⁴³⁴ Mbiti, *Introduction to African religion*, p.58.

Firstly, the advent of Christianity did not recognize the idea of killing of animals as a way of sacrificing to God. This religion came with the belief that their God was made a sacrifice once and for all and thus its followers do not need to sacrifice anymore.⁴³⁵ Consequently, the belief in frequent sacrificing as a way of worship to the newly converted Akamba ended. They would neither kill nor participate in the killing of an animal as a way of worshipping. On the other hand, there was a transformation concerning the making of offerings as a means of worship. It became a requirement for every convert to make an offering whenever there was a church gathering that required him or her to do so.⁴³⁶

This study has established that there was no big change in the kind of offerings that would be offered by the converts to God, as raw foodstuffs were a common form of offering before and after conversion. However, these offerings of foodstuffs would not be left in the newly established places of worship as it used to be in the traditional Kamba religion. Instead, they would be used either by the church leaders such as pastors for their daily upkeeps or distributed to those who were in need.⁴³⁷ Later, with monetisation of the economy, AIM converts started using money as offering in the church.

Besides the sacrificing and giving of offerings, the introduction of Christianity by AIM missionaries in Machakos District coincided with the adoption of intensive singing and praying as new ways of worship among the Machakos Akamba. Before then, singing as a form of worship was only featured during the *kilumi* dances. Hardly any singing took place in the shrines during the worship sessions that took place there.⁴³⁸ As a result, singing among the Machakos Akamba was more of entertainment in nature rather than worship. On the other hand, though prayers were a common way of worship in the traditional Kamba religion, they were in many cases short and would usually accompany sacrifices and offerings. There were no structured prayers or even creeds to be recited in traditional Kamba prayers.⁴³⁹

With the introduction of the Christianity and the subsequent conversions in the district, there were new developments regarding singing and praying as approaches to worship. Singing became part

⁴³⁵ Pius Muindi, OI, 16/8/2018.

⁴³⁶ Jeremiah Kioko, OI, 6/8/2018.

⁴³⁷ Paul Mutuku, OI, 7/8/2018.

⁴³⁸ Muthike Ndeto, OI, 5/8/2018.

⁴³⁹ Aaron Nguta, OI, 4/8/2018.

of any worship service. In the early years of the mission in the district, the commonest forms of singing in AIM worship services was through the use of hymn books which were later followed by the composition of Kikamba choruses.⁴⁴⁰ As a result, the converts had to attend worship sessions carrying with them hymn books. On the other hand, the art of praying in a bid to worship became more structured. Recitation of the Apostles' Creed and the Lord's Prayer were introduced to converts. The length of prayers that the new convert would say became longer and would feature the timeless mentioning of God unlike traditional prayers. With eyes closed at any given moment of praying, these prayers would in most cases end with the word 'amen' something that never used to be in the traditional Kamba prayers.⁴⁴¹

Besides sacrificing, making offerings, singing and praying, there were other changes that accrued to the whole process of worship among the Machakos Akamba AIM converts. For instance, the worship sessions became more formal and structured unlike the Kamba traditional religion worship sessions. There was observation of body posture during these worship sessions. The converts would be expected to show honour to the Christian Supreme Being by doing activities such as kneeling, standing or sitting in respectful silence.⁴⁴² Worship programmes were also developed to be followed during the new church worship services. Unlike in the traditional Kamba religion where *atumia ma ithembo* would worship sessions in the shrines, new religious leaders called pastors, catechists and evangelists emerged and took over the Kamba converts' worship sessions.

In the Kamba traditional religion, the elderly people were the main source of religious instructions to the rest of the community members.⁴⁴³ All religious knowledge within the community would be passed from one generation to another by the elderly people through methods such as formal teachings or observations. With the introduction of a new religion in the district by AIM missionaries and the subsequent gradual conversion of the Machakos Akamba to Christianity, there was a new development regarding the source of these religious teachings. Though the role of the elderly people in giving instructions in Christianity cannot be downplayed, a new religious book; the bible was introduced to act as the principal source of instruction to the converts. Though

⁴⁴⁰ Ann Kaindi, OI, 21/8/2018.

⁴⁴¹ Julius Mutwota, OI, 21/8/2018.

⁴⁴² AIC Theological Advisory Group, *Worship Guide for Pastors and Elders: How to Improve Worship in the AIC Church* (Kijabe: Kesho Publications, 1991), p. 11.

⁴⁴³ Mutiso Mutua, OI, 3/8/2018.

observation as a method of delivering this Christian instruction cannot also be downplayed, preaching became the principal method of delivering these instructions to the new Kamba converts. Christianity held that preaching was dissemination of divine truth from the bible spoken with the mouth through the personality of the preacher for the purpose of calling men and women to make a decision for their Supreme Being.⁴⁴⁴ Consequently, there was a gradual change of the adoption of the bible as the main source of religious instructions among the converts which gradually replaced the traditional Kamba methods which were often characterized by a lack of uniformity as they came from different people from different parts of the districts and thus differences in religious teachings were inevitable.

One key feature of these new religious teachings was the introduction of new and definite religious laws. These laws commonly known as the Ten Commandments were introduced to the AIM Kamba convert and were supposed to act as the new blueprint for all the newly adopted religious customs. Though most of these laws correlated with the teachings of the traditional Kamba religion, there were others that were non-existent in the religion and therefore new to the convert of which he was supposed to observe. For instance, within the newly introduced laws, the AIM convert was expected to honour the new Supreme Being on Sunday. This would take the form of resting from the daily activities and even attending a worship service on that day; a new lifestyle that the converts suddenly adopted. Besides these definite religious laws, new annual religious feast days such as the Christmas and Easter holidays were introduced.

Christianity also played a prime role in transforming the converts' understanding of afterlife. Before the advent of Christianity, the Akamba believed in life after death. However, this belief was tied in the concept that once an individual in the community had died, he or she would become a spirit and continue influencing the lives of the living in different ways.⁴⁴⁵ Nonetheless, Christianity brought a different view on the whole concept of afterlife as it held that the dead had no power over the living. The new converts were therefore expected to adopt this conception. In case of any attempt by the living dead to influence the lives of the living converts, prayers were made the solution to these influences as opposed to the previous ways of addressing these influences, which included meeting the demands of the living dead.⁴⁴⁶ This new concept played a

⁴⁴⁴ AIC Theological Advisory Group, p. 55.

⁴⁴⁵ Ndeti, *Elements of Akamba Life*, p. 115.

⁴⁴⁶ Julius Mutwota, OI, 21/8/2018.

major role in transforming the Machakos Akamba understanding of life after death and the consequent decline of the spirits playing an influential role in the lives of the living.

Besides the new doctrine of afterlife introduced to the Machakos Akamba by AIM missionaries, a new perspective concerning eschatology was introduced into the Kamba religious belief system. This concept held that the end point of humanity is either hell or heaven depending on one's actions on earth. This meant that once an individual had died, there would be a time when he or she shall be resurrected and join the living in which all of them shall be taken through a judgment process. Consequently, their destiny shall be determined where they shall spend the rest of their life time.⁴⁴⁷

The above new doctrine was non-existent in the Kamba traditional religious belief. The Machakos Akamba had no idea of a place they would go after death called heaven or hell depending on their conduct on earth before death. As a result, the new converts started abiding by this new doctrine. With the subsequent gradual conversions coupled with the new generations born from the converts' families there was a transformation among the Machakos Akamba on their religious view towards their destiny after death, which really started to influence their conduct on earth in a bid to conform to the promised end.

Christianity also brought a shift in the management of religious activities in the district. Before the arrival of missionaries in the district, religious leadership and mobilization lay in the hands of the experienced members of the community such as the *atumia ma nzama* (men's council) and the traditional health practitioners. They were the ones who played important roles in guiding the community on matters related to Christianity.⁴⁴⁸ However, the introduction of Christianity came with new forms of managing religious institutions in the district. New religious mobilizers such as pastors, evangelists and catechists took over in guiding the converts on matters to Christianity.

In addition to the above, qualifications for religious leadership changed from being based on domains such as age and experience to formal training and callings. For instance, in 1945, for one to qualify to be a licensed pastor to lead the converts in the district, they had to go for a three-year diploma in theology. In addition, they had to be of a proven character and have a calling to serve the people.⁴⁴⁹ Therefore, there was a growing tendency of a shift from relying on the traditional

⁴⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁸ Aaron Nguta, OI, 4/8/2018.

⁴⁴⁹ Gehman, *From Death to Life*, p. 320.

Kamba religious leaders to the newly groomed religious leaders from the mission. Councils such as the *atumia ma nzama* which played a major role in guiding the traditional society during the offering of sacrifices in the shrines were gradually replaced by new councils such as the LCCs and DCCs that started to manage the religious affairs of the people. With the continued expansion of the mission in the district, the traditional Kamba religious mobilizers continued to lose their influence on the newly converted members of their community to the newly established AIM mobilizers.

For many years in the history of the Machakos Akamba, the *kithitu* oath played a major role during dispute resolution in the district. As mentioned in chapter two of this study, this oath was the ultimate arbiter in a dispute. Even with the establishment of the colonial courts in the district, the *kithitu* oath continued to play a major role in settling disputes in these courts.⁴⁵⁰ However, with the expanding influence of AIM in the district, there was a growing discontent with the mission on its converts taking the *kithitu* oath during dispute resolution sessions in the district. Consequently, the bible was introduced as a new oath-taking tool to replace the *kithitu* among the Machakos Akamba converts. With the expanding influence of the mission's teachings in the district, there was a gradual decline on the reliance of the *kithitu* oath during dispute resolution sessions in the district, which can greatly be attributed to the initiatives of AIM in the district.

Among the Machakos Akamba, purification was an important practice for individuals who had committed certain offences that made the individual unfit to fellowship with the other members of the community. These abominations included actions such as young people insulting or showing disrespect to an elderly person like his or her parents and adultery. When such abominations occurred, the individual was said to have committed a sin commonly known as *thavu*.⁴⁵¹ For that reason, the sin had to be cleansed by a ritualist so that the individual could be accepted back into the community. With the introduction of Christianity, there was a sudden change in the way the converts would approach such issues.

Firstly, the role of the ritualist in cleansing the culprit ended. Instead, the mission initiated new ways of dealing with sins like public confessions in the church by the parties involved. These confessions were often crowned with prayers and the concerned parties would now be allowed

⁴⁵⁰ Ibid, p. 204.

⁴⁵¹ Muthio Muneo, OI, 3/8/2018.

back to fellowship with the rest of the congregation.⁴⁵² Because of this, as the mission continued to expand in the district, there was a growing tendency of a decline in the purification services offered by the ritualists in the district which were often replaced by the mission's new initiative.

4.3 AIM and Transformation of Kamba Rites of Passage

As mentioned earlier in chapter two of this study, the Machakos Akamba had a well-developed rites of passage system before the coming of AIM missionaries into the district. These rites, which included birth and naming, initiation, marriage and death, underwent transformation because of the influences caused by the mission in the district. The transformation mainly entailed a change in the way these rites were performed. In addition, the mission introduced new rites of passage which its converts had to undergo besides the reformed traditional ones.

One of the changes to the Kamba rites of passage regarded the process of birth and naming. As mentioned in chapter two of this study, ancestral spirits had great influence on the community and therefore their recognition was before and after a birth. This involved honouring them in various ways such as the giving of offerings and naming of the new-borns after them in some instances. With the growing influence of AIM in the district, there was a gradual change in the way the birth and naming process would be conducted among the converts.

Firstly, all forms of prenatal and postnatal ancestral worship ended among the converts.⁴⁵³ A new belief that ancestral spirits had no influence on the life of an individual before and after birth took hold in the lives of AIM believers. The new-born would no longer be considered as a spirit (*kiimu*) and thus he or she would not be taken through the spiritual transition practices that used to take place before. Some practices such as *uki wa mbingi* (beer taken to celebrate the birth of a child) gradually lost relevance among those who embraced Christianity as the mission strongly opposed beer drinking. Other customs related to the birth of a child such as *kualyula mwana* as well as the abstinence from sex during pregnancy gradually declined among the AIM adherents.⁴⁵⁴

Although the issue of naming infants after the living dead continued to feature even in the lives of converts, there was a change in the way converts conceptualized naming of children after dead members of the family. Converts could no longer conceive naming a child as a way of worshipping

⁴⁵² Johnson Mating'i, OI, 21/8/2018.

⁴⁵³ Benson Kitinga, OI, 21/8/2018.

⁴⁵⁴ Patrick Mutala, OI, 14/8/2018.

ancestral spirits but as a way of remembering them through their children especially for the critical roles they played in the family's lineage.⁴⁵⁵ The unpleasant experiences that affected the family because of failure to name a child after the living dead members of the family continued to decline in the converts' lives.

Besides the traditional Kamba approaches to naming of children mentioned in chapter two of this study, there was the introduction of a new system of naming by AIM missionaries. Converts were required to have a new name adopted from the newly introduced religion in the district.⁴⁵⁶ Consequently, the new AIM adherents would now have a Christian name on top of their traditionally acquired names. As the mission continued to expand in the district, the adoption of these Christian names became a status symbol.⁴⁵⁷ As a result, there was a rush among the locals to have these Christian names by embracing the developments of the mission in the district. This explains the origin of the Machakos District inhabitants having names of Western origin besides their Kamba names.

As a result of the mission's continued influences in the district, there was a gradual change in the community's approach to barrenness and impotence among the Machakos Akamba. Customarily, as mentioned in chapter two of this study, the Akamba had well developed ways of addressing these misfortunes. While impotence would be solved through the involvement of another man in siring children for the infertile man, the marrying of another woman could help to solve the problem of barrenness in a family. With the adoption of Christianity by the Machakos Akamba, there was a gradual change in the way these misfortunes could be handled in the community.

Firstly, Christianity opposed traditional Kamba approaches to solving impotence and barrenness in the community.⁴⁵⁸ Consequently, the convert would neither marry a second wife nor get another person to sire kids on his behalf. A new belief that the inability to get children was not a curse but an act of God started to dominate the lives of the converts.⁴⁵⁹ Coupled with the new civilization as a result of the mission's initiatives in formal education there was a continuous decline in the use

⁴⁵⁵ Julius Mutwota, OI, 21/8/2018.

⁴⁵⁶ Aaron Nguta, OI, 4/8/2018.

⁴⁵⁷ Johnson Mating'i, OI, 21/8/2018.

⁴⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁹ Jeremiah Kioko, OI, 6/8/2018.

of these Kamba traditional methods to solve the problems of barrenness and impotence in the community.

Besides the mission's influence and the consequent changes in birth customs among the Machakos Akamba, there were new developments that influenced the Akamba approach to initiation in the district. These developments can not only be attributed to the new religion in the district but also to the mission's influences in the fields of education and healthcare. Among the influences on initiation made by the mission in the district was the abolition of female circumcision among all adherents.⁴⁶⁰ In addition, while the mission recognized the importance of male circumcision among its adherents, it put a lot of regulation among its adherents on the matter. The male circumcision could now be arranged by the missionary in charge and the church elders without any traditional ceremonies or practices.⁴⁶¹ In addition to these new regulations put forward by the mission concerning the convert's approach to initiation, the mission penalised adherents who violated the initiation regulations. As a result, frequent suspensions from church membership were common for adherents who went against the mission's stand on the initiation.⁴⁶² With the continuing influence of AIM in the district, there was a gradual change in the traditional Kamba initiation processes in which the new AIM influences continued to take pre-eminence in the district.

As a result of the mission's activities in the district, there were also new changes in marriage rites of passage among the Machakos Akamba. These changes were twofold. Firstly, there was the abolition of traditional practices that the mission felt went against the ethos of their religion. Secondly, there was the integration of new practices that converts had to abide with so as to become full members of the new religion. As a result of the abolition and integration, marriage rites of passage among the converts took a different direction that was non-existent before then.

Before the coming of the mission in the district, the Akamba had a different approach to marriage ceremonies. The ceremonies that were characterized by feasting, dancing, beer drinking and honouring the dead made the Kamba marriage ceremonies meaningful and complete. With the introduction of a new culture by the AIM missionaries, there was a gradual change in the way these ceremonies could be conducted by converts. Firstly, the mission discouraged traditional

⁴⁶⁰ Gehman, *From Death to Life*, p. 193.

⁴⁶¹ Gehman, *From Death to Life*, p. 193.

⁴⁶² Frank, *Between Two Mountains*, p. 192.

practices that featured in the rite of passage. For instance, the mission forbade its adherents participating in the marriage ceremonies that involved ritual practices such as dancing, honouring the dead and beer drinking.⁴⁶³ In addition, the mission became involved in the performance of this rite of passage among the converts. For instance, the mission regulated the converts' choice of marriage partners. No adherent would be allowed by the mission to marry a non-convert.⁴⁶⁴ During the marriage negotiations between the two families involved, the integration of Christian principles in these negotiations became key.

Among the traditional Akamba, the bride and the bridegroom would be declared husband and wife immediately after successful dowry negotiations, which were often accompanied by celebrations. Consequently, the two individuals were ready to start a new family in the bridegroom's home.⁴⁶⁵ However, with the changes introduced by AIM missionaries, there was a change in this custom especially among the mission's adherents. There was the introduction of church weddings, which involved the two parties holding a ceremony in the church premises in which an ordained and licensed AIM pastor would officiate. During these wedding celebrations, vows would be made by the two parties in front of the church congregation and were often crowned by the exchange of rings which the newlyweds were expected to wear.

Among the traditional Machakos Akamba, the marriage rite of passage was a prerequisite for participation in practices such as the attendance of shrine sessions. With the integration of new ways of carrying out this rite of passage among the Machakos Akamba AIM adherents, practices such as weddings became a prerequisite for participation in various activities initiated by the mission. For instance, no adherent would participate in the mission's church governing councils if he or she was not married through a church wedding. In addition, he or she would not participate in some church rites such as the Holy Communion.⁴⁶⁶

Besides the new developments made in the officiation of marriages among the Machakos Akamba by the AIM, there were other changes related to the marriage institution that took place alongside these developments. One of these changes regards polygamy among the mission's adherents. The mission regulated remarrying by reducing the chances of this practice taking place among its

⁴⁶³ Johnson Mating'i, OI, 21/8/2018.

⁴⁶⁴ Ngei Mutala, OI, 14/8/2018.

⁴⁶⁵ Muoti Mbaluka, OI, 16/12/2018.

⁴⁶⁶ Julius Mutwota, OI, 21/8/2018.

adherents. The only instance when the mission would allow one to remarry is when either of the parties in the marriage institution passed away. In such instances, one would be allowed to remarry especially if their partner had died while their marriage was still young.⁴⁶⁷ All the other forms of remarrying that were being practiced by the traditional Machakos Akamba before the arrival of the mission were abolished by the mission among its adherents regardless of the predisposing factors that the Machakos Akamba had put forward to validate the practice. Strict sanctions were imposed to discourage converts from indulging polygamy. For instance, any convert who entered into a polygamous marriage was to be expelled from the church.⁴⁶⁸

Besides the rules put forward by the church to discourage polygamy, the mission initiated policies that barred polygamists from becoming part of its membership. For instance, in the early 1920s, although a man having more than one wife would be allowed in the mission's catechumen classes, he would just attend these classes as an inquirer. He could never become a candidate for baptism while still a polygamist. The only way he could be allowed to become a candidate was by divorcing his wives. However, the challenge with this reprieve was that the wives sanction the divorce besides the husband being required to continue providing for them.⁴⁶⁹

Closely associated with polygamy was the issue of wife inheritance among the AIM adherents. Among the traditional Kamba, a man would inherit his dead brother's or other relative's wife.⁴⁷⁰ As mentioned in chapter two of this study, this mainly happened to ensure continuity of the deceased's family especially if he or she died young. With the new developments brought about by the AIM in the district, there was a change in the way this scenario would be approached. If a young married man or woman among the adherents was bereaved, the mission allowed them to remarry someone of their choice but within the church circles. However, they could not get married to a relative of the deceased as was the practice of traditional Kamba.

Other changes brought by mission in the district, especially in the field of education played a key role in the decline of the Akamba orderly approach to marriage within the family setting. As mentioned in chapter two of this study, the traditional Akamba valued the sequence in which the sons in a family would marry. Accordingly, younger sons would not marry if their elder brothers

⁴⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁸ Gehman, *From Death to Life*, p. 193.

⁴⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁰ Mutiso Mutua, OI, 3/8/2018.

had not. However, with the growing influence of the mission's activities, coupled by other factors such as colonialism, as well as the later influence of other missions, there was a continuous decline on this orderly approach to marriage in many Machakos Akamba families.⁴⁷¹ As a result, younger sons within a family would not be barred by their elder brother's behaviour regarding their marrying time. Another aspect of Machakos Akamba marriage rite that faced the above influence was the issue of exogamy. In many parts of the district, this custom was strictly observed among the traditional Kamba. Consequently, all the sons and daughters within a particular clan were expected to marry outside the clan.⁴⁷² With the growing influence of the AIM through its initiatives in the district, coupled by the later effects of colonialism and other Christian missions, there was a gradual decline in observing this custom among the Machakos Akamba.

The activities of the AIM in Machakos District also influenced the way the residents approached death as the final rite of passage in the community. The death of an individual in the community marked the start of funeral arrangements. One common feature of these arrangements were the customs that the Machakos Akamba observed during this period as mentioned in chapter two of this study. With the arrival of the AIM the observation of these customs started to decline as the mission's influence in the district intensified. For instance, customs such as the *kumya kikwu* in which the Kamba would drive away death from the bereaved family through sexual intercourse ended among the converts.⁴⁷³ In addition, the purification practice which often took place after the burial of the deceased to protect the participants in the burial from carrying death to their homes could no longer be practiced in the converts' families. This was replaced by the new belief that death was not communicable and thus the interaction with bereaved persons could not necessarily transmit death to another person.⁴⁷⁴

Before the introduction of Christianity by the AIM missionaries in the district, there were no well-organized funeral programmes for the deceased members of the Akamba. As mentioned in chapter two of this study, the organization of funerals among the Machakos Akamba varied according to the status of the dead person as well as the area of the district in which the death occurred. Some people about to die would be carried and be left in the forest and left there to die. Others would be buried near their homesteads in a ceremony, which was often short, less organized, and in most

⁴⁷¹ Titus Muli, OI, 14/8/2018.

⁴⁷² Aaron Nthali, OI, 17/8/2018.

⁴⁷³ Julius Mutwota, OI, 21/8/2018.

⁴⁷⁴ Jonathan Kalii, OI, 17/8/2018.

cases male dominated.⁴⁷⁵ With the developing influence of AIM in the district through the introduction of new cultures, several changes were witnessed in the approach to death and funerals.

Firstly, the use of prayers coupled with singing as a way of comforting the family of the bereaved converts started to gain momentum among the converts. Once death had occurred in a convert's family, fellow converts would start converging in the deceased's homestead to pray to God who was believed to be a source of comfort to the deceased family. This praying was often accompanied by singing as a way of comforting the bereaved converts. In other instances, bible reading, which was often accompanied by preaching focused on Christian teaching of death would accompany the singing and praying.⁴⁷⁶ On the day of burial, converts would converge in the deceased's homestead to offer him a Christian send off in which prayer; bible reading, singing and preaching dominated the whole process. There was no restriction on the attendance of these funerals as was the case in the traditional Kamba funerals where women, the youth and children were barred.⁴⁷⁷ After the burial, follow up activities which involved visits to the family of the deceased convert would be made. In these visits, Christian worship through bible reading, praying, singing and preaching were dominant. In addition, the visiting converts would carry with them water, firewood and any other items that would be useful to the deceased convert's family.⁴⁷⁸ All these new developments were mainly influenced by the initiatives of the AIM in the district.

With the continuing influence of the AIM in the district, there was a change in Kamba beliefs on life after death, especially by the converts. The belief that the soul of a dead person could influence the lives of the living disappeared among the AIM converts.⁴⁷⁹ There was also a change in the view of the destination of an individual's soul after death. Before the introduction of Christianity by the AIM missionaries in the district, the Kamba belief of life after death revolved around the *aimu*. Once an individual had died in the community, he was believed to have joined the spirit world where his soul would live eternally.⁴⁸⁰ However, Christianity brought the concept of resurrection after death among converts. Converts were expected to believe that after an individual died there was a possibility of meeting him or her again during Christ's second coming when those who had died would be resurrected and together with the living, they would face judgement before

⁴⁷⁵ Mbondo Mutiso, OI, 4/8/2018.

⁴⁷⁶ Jonathan Kalii, OI, 17/8/2018.

⁴⁷⁷ Pius Muindi, OI, 16/8/2018.

⁴⁷⁸ Benson Nzyoka, OI, 6/8/2018.

⁴⁷⁹ Julius Mutwota, OI, 21/8/2018.

⁴⁸⁰ Aaron Nguta, OI, 4/8/2018.

God.⁴⁸¹ After the judgment, one would go either to either heaven or hell depending on how they had lived while on earth. While heaven would be the destination for those who had lived holy lives, hell would be his destination for sinners.⁴⁸² This new belief started to play a prime role in the conduct of the convert's behaviour on earth as there was a judgment waiting for him on judgement day.

Besides the modifications that were made in Kamba rites of passage, there was the introduction of new rites of passage for converts. These new rites of passage were meant to fully integrate the convert to Christianity.⁴⁸³ The first new rite of passage was the conversion. This entailed accepting the Christian Supreme Being as the sole controller of the convert's life as well as denouncing all beliefs that the individual ascribed before conversion.⁴⁸⁴ Upon going through this new rite of passage, the convert would now start leading a Christian life that was free from all influences of the Kamba traditional religion. He or she would then be enrolled for catechism classes in which he or she would be taught the ethos and doctrines of the AIM as well as the Christian religion.⁴⁸⁵ This marked the second rite of passage among new converts. This rite could take between six to twenty-four months depending on the prevailing rules of the indigenous church.

Towards the end of the catechism sessions, oral exams would be administered to the convert who upon a passing the exams, would be allowed to move to the third rite of passage, which was baptism. Besides successfully completing the catechism classes, there were other conditions that the convert had to meet to qualify for baptism. For instance, in the early 1940s, the candidate had to be approved by the DCC, have knowledge of the fundamental teachings of the bible, and demonstrate knowledge of God by leading a Christian life and witnessing to others.⁴⁸⁶ When all these conditions were satisfactorily met, the convert now became eligible for baptism, which entailed being immersed into a pool of water by an ordained or licensed AIM missionary or pastor. Consequently, the convert became a full member of the AIM.⁴⁸⁷ Baptism permitted the convert to be eligible for the next rite of passage, which was receiving of the Holy Communion. For the effectiveness of the administration of the Holy Communion, the mission in conjunction with the

⁴⁸¹ Pius Muindi, OI, 16/8/2018.

⁴⁸² Charles Maliti, OI, 15/8/2018.

⁴⁸³ Julius Mutwota, OI, 21/8/2018.

⁴⁸⁴ Ambrose Muia, OI, 15/8/2018.

⁴⁸⁵ Julius Mutwota, OI, 21/8/2018.

⁴⁸⁶ Gehman, *From Death to Life*, p. 316.

⁴⁸⁷ Ibid.

indigenous church devised a register for all communicants and issued them identity cards.⁴⁸⁸ Upon successful passage of the foregoing rites, the new convert was in the right standing with the mission and later the AIC. Consequently, he or she would be eligible for privileges such as church leadership and a Christian wedding.

Apart from the above Christian rites of passage, there was another rite of passage which mainly applied to new-borns. This rite, commonly known as baby dedication, was a way of presenting the young ones to the church as a commitment by the convert family to help their children to grow in the knowledge of the teachings of Christianity.⁴⁸⁹ Eligibility to this rite of passage depended on the standing of the child's parents in relation to the church.

4.4 AIM and Transformation in Education

Up to 1968, the AIM was leading in the provision of Western education in Machakos District. The mission owned the largest number of institutions for learning ranging from elementary, intermediate, secondary and colleges for teachers and bible training in the district. Consequently, much of the transformation related to Western education witnessed in Machakos district before 1968 was as a result of AIM's influence. Though other agents such as the colonial government and the HGM also contributed to this transformation, the AIM was the prime contributor transformation in the district through the provision of education.

Before the coming of the mission in the district, the form of education that was popular among the Machakos Akamba was the traditional type that was offered mainly within the home environment. But with the coming of the AIM missionaries, the way education was offered in the district changed greatly. This contributed to a literacy revolution that was witnessed in the district during the mission's reign and beyond. Firstly, there was a shift in the venue for providing this education from the home environment to the school environment. Although this shifting did not mark the end of the provision of education within the home environment, the school as a venue for the provision of education took the centre stage.⁴⁹⁰ Consequently, the mission established elementary, intermediate and later secondary schools as well as higher institutions of learning in many different parts of the district to offer education to the Machakos Akamba. Besides the change in the venues of offering this education, there was also the construction of special buildings in the form of

⁴⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁹ Ambrose Muia, OI, 15/8/2018.

⁴⁹⁰ Jonathan Mbwesa, OI, 15/8/2018.

classrooms in which the teaching and learning was being conducted. This was contrary to the traditional Kamba education where there were no classrooms in which teaching and learning would be conducted.⁴⁹¹

In this new school environment, the provision of education became more organized. Grading of learners according to their level of learning became more distinct as opposed to the traditional Kamba system of education. In addition, transition from one level of learning to another became definite and this was often marked by the introduction of formally set exams as opposed to the previous system of education where there were no formal ways of assessing learning. A new curriculum with structured syllabuses became the driving force of this new system of education. The delivery of instructions in the newly established school environment became professional and formal, as the instructors would be trained on the pedagogical aspect of delivery. This was contrary to the traditional instructors who hardly had any formal training. Though the family, clan and the community continued to play a vital role in the education of children, new key players such as the AIM missionaries joined the traditional Machakos Akamba in the provision of this education.

Another main feature of education transformation in the district initiated by the mission was the introduction of the art of reading and writing among the Machakos Akamba. Before the arrival of the AIM missionaries in the district, the Kamba traditional system of education hardly offered any form of reading and writing to the Machakos Akamba. With the newly introduced system by the mission, the Machakos Akamba who attended these schools learned how to read and write.⁴⁹² This was a major breakthrough as far as literacy was concerned in the district. Firstly, communication between the AIM missionaries and the locals as well as among the locals themselves became easier. This is because previously, the use of language in communication was only limited to the verbal form of communication. However, when the art of reading and writing was introduced among the Machakos Akamba, the earlier ways of communication were boosted. In addition, new ways of communication such as the use of letters became more common among the Machakos Akamba.⁴⁹³

Apart from the new ways of communication, the art of reading and writing also came in with new developments in language. For instance, the locals' language; Kikamba, now became more

⁴⁹¹ Pius Muindi, OI, 16/8/2018.

⁴⁹² Mutiso Mutua, OI, 4/8/2018.

⁴⁹³ Patrick Mutala, OI, 14/8/2018.

developed as it could be put down in writing as opposed to its previous oral form. In addition, new languages such as the English language were introduced among the Machakos Akamba.⁴⁹⁴ This opened the locals who embraced the mission's education initiatives to the global communication scene, as they would now communicate with people from the outside world. Internal communication between the AIM missionaries, colonialists and the Africans also intensified as the locals learned the foreigners' language and vice versa.

The coming of the AIM missionaries in Machakos District coincided with the onset of a commercialized education in the district. Before then, the traditional Kamba education never attracted any payments in the form of fees. With the arrival of the AIM missionaries and the subsequent establishment of schools in the district, the residents were required to pay a particular amount of money in the form of fees to get the missionary education. The more one advanced from the mission's elementary schools to the intermediate schools, the higher the amount they would pay to get this education.⁴⁹⁵ Besides the introduction of a commercialized education in the district, the mission introduced boarding schools in which the residents in some parts of the district would go for days within the schools' premises without having to make frequent daily journeys to and from school. Among these early AIM boarding schools in the district included the Kangundo and Mbooni girls' school. Although the mission did not make huge expansions in boarding education, the early attempts to establish these few boarding schools brought a change in the way education was being carried out in the district.

The kind of education that the AIM missionaries provided in Machakos District during this period can be categorized into secular and religious education. While secular education was very common in the school setting, it was not limited to the school environment as the missionaries would enter into the villages and teach the locals on various matters concerning their lives such as tree planting, road construction and farm management practices among others. Within this school setting, a variety of secular subjects could be offered by the mission ranging from basic arithmetic to sciences and language education.⁴⁹⁶ On the other hand, religious education was mainly offered in the schools, churches as well as in the bible training institutions in the district. In the mission's schools, religion was an integral part of learning. The mission introduced pastoral programmes, which ran from standard one to standard seven, in the 1960s in all its elementary and intermediate

⁴⁹⁴ Jonathan Kalii, OI, 17/8/2018.

⁴⁹⁵ Mbondo Mutiso, OI, 4/8/2018.

⁴⁹⁶ Ibid.

schools in the district. By 1966, the mission had developed a variety of resources in the form of books, maps and bibles to facilitate the implementation of this programme in its schools.⁴⁹⁷

The provision of religious education by the mission expanded into the churches during this period. Besides the normal teaching, which would take place during the Sunday and in some other instances weekday sermons, the mission initiated educational programmes for the converts within the church environment. To effectively implement these educational programmes within the church environment, the mission formed a Christian Education Department (CED) in 1962 whose top leaders included Jason Kilee Nguta of Kangundo and Rodger Coon, an AIM missionary.⁴⁹⁸

With the formation of this new department, education programmes, which were often, age and gender based started being initiated in the church. Young girls were placed in an educational group that was called the cadet.⁴⁹⁹ In this programme, the girls would make weekly visits to the AIM churches near their homes where they had trainers who besides giving them bible lessons, they would also teach those Christian songs and games such as plays. Other lessons that could be offered to these girls included cooking, good citizenship, childcare, housewifery, music, Christian service and sewing lessons.⁵⁰⁰ With the rising demand for girls to join this programme, the mission started to conduct cadet leadership training courses in the district. Among the major trainers included Mrs Martha Julius from Masii area of the district whose training of district cadet assistants went up to the national level in the 1960s. This training was coupled with the production of award cadet badges and mimeographed books for cadet girls and cadet leaders at the CED headquarters in Machakos.⁵⁰¹

On the other hand, the mission also developed an education programme for boys within the church setting. This programme commonly known as the battalion ran parallel with the girls' cadet programme. However, as Frank has observed, its pace of growth in the district was slower compared to the girls' programmes which had a lot of following.⁵⁰² Most of the lessons offered to the boys' battalion group almost matched with the girls' cadet lessons except the gender related ones. As the boys and girls grew past the adolescent age, they would join a youth educational

⁴⁹⁷ Frank, *Between Two Mountains*, p. 310.

⁴⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁹ Jonathan Kalii, OI, 17/8/2018.

⁵⁰⁰ Frank, p. 312.

⁵⁰¹ Ibid.

⁵⁰² Ibid, p. 313.

programme that the mission had designed for converts of that particular age group. This programme, which was commonly known as the Christian Youth Fellowship (CYF) in the 1960s involved weekly meetings by the youth often, conducted after the Sunday services. Guests would be invited to speak on various matters that were affecting the youth at that particular age bracket such as sexuality and relationships as well as community service.⁵⁰³ Later, expansions in this youth programme were made to include a one-week retreat, which was often conducted during the school holidays. These youth retreats, which were commonly called youth camps, involved intensive training on a variety of topical issues that were affecting the youth in different ways in the community.⁵⁰⁴

The AIM also designed an educational programme for women in the church in which the women converts would converge together and discuss various matters affecting them in their lives. The AIM education programme for women started as normal women's meetings, which would be held after the normal Sunday services in the AIM churches. However, in 1963, the mission's CED initiated a co-ordinated women's educational programme that was commonly known as a women's fellowship within the AIM.⁵⁰⁵ The mission used these women fellowships to educate the women converts on different matters of concern on women. These included child upbringing, housewifery, home management, community service, hospitality and management of marital affairs among others. In a bid to show solidarity and also a sense of belonging, these women initiated the designing of their own uniform, which they would wear from time to time during various church functions.⁵⁰⁶

Besides the basic education that the mission provided in the district through its churches as well as its elementary, intermediate and later its secondary schools, the AIM also ventured in higher education in Machakos District. This was through the establishment of bible colleges, institutes and teacher training colleges. The first bible institute to be established by the mission in the district was the UBC that was established in 1928 as mentioned in chapter two of this study. The college that was established in the Mumbuni AIM station and later moved to the Katelembo area of Machakos town was mainly offering a theological type of education to the Kamba converts who wished to be leaders in the AIM/AIC church.

⁵⁰³ Mbondo Mutiso, OI, 4/8/2018.

⁵⁰⁴ Jonathan Kalii, OI, 17/8/2018.

⁵⁰⁵ Frank, *Between Two Mountains*, p. 313.

⁵⁰⁶ Ann Nthemba, OI, 6/8/2018.

In 1952, the mission established a bible institute at the Mbooni station, which supplemented UBC in the provision of theological education among the Machakos Akamba who wished to advance their bible knowledge. Ten years later, the mission expanded the provision of theological education in the district by opening the Scott Theological College now Scott Christian University in the Mumbuni station. These bible institutes played a major role in training many converts who wished to be AIM/AIC church leaders in the district and beyond. Consequently, in the 1960s, a couple of graduates from these institutes were working in various parts outside the district. Among these included Timona Itumange from the Mukaa area of Machakos District who volunteered in the 1940s to go and evangelize in the areas unreached by Christianity in Kitui and Tharaka Districts.

Another graduate from these theological education institutes who pursued evangelism outside the district's borders was Pastor Paul Mulwa Kisakwa, an AIM/AIC pastor who left the district in the 1940s and went to evangelize in Kajiado District among the Maasai. Rev. Jeremiah Kyeva Kyaka from Mukaa was among the Kamba missionaries nurtured by the AIM to spread the gospel in Kinango in the South Coast of Kenya. Other coastal areas that were impacted by AIM nurtured evangelists from Machakos District include Shimba hills, Tudor, Lungalunga and Malindi among others. In the early 1960s, Rev. Peter Mwaluko and his wife Rhoda Mwaluko who had been stationed by the AIM/AIC in the Kalawa area of the district began evangelization activities among the Turkana of Kenya and the Taposa of Southern Sudan.⁵⁰⁷ The AIM trained evangelists from Machakos District also extended their influence outside Kenya to other countries such as Tanzania, Congo and Southern Sudan.⁵⁰⁸ This is a clear indication that the social transformation brought by the AIM in Machakos District did not only impact the district but also other parts of Kenya and neighbouring countries.

Besides the higher education that the AIM provided in the district through the establishment of bible colleges and institutes, there were other higher institutes such as Teacher Training Centres (TTC) established in the district by the mission. Among these TTCs was the Kangundo Teachers' Training Centre (KTTC) that was established by the mission in the late 1940s for the purpose of training African teachers to curb the rising shortage of teachers in the mission's established schools.⁵⁰⁹ Consequently, the establishment of this TTC boosted the provision of African

⁵⁰⁷ Frank, *Between Two Mountains*, pp. 217-245.

⁵⁰⁸ *Ibid*, p. 315.

⁵⁰⁹ KNA, DC/MKS/1/1/30, Machakos District Annual Report, 1949.

education by the mission in the district, as at the end of every year, trained teachers would be deployed to mission schools in the district to oversee the implementation of the mission's education programme.

In both types of education that the mission provided in the district, the three dimensions of learning that include the formal, non-formal and the informal dimensions were very common. Among the first beneficiaries of the AIM education in Machakos District were the Akamba who were working or living around mission stations. For instance, in the mission's Kangundo station, the first African recipients of the AIM education were Kithome Mutyanthuku and twenty-four others who had found themselves in the mission because of the escalating late 1890s famine in the district.⁵¹⁰ In the Mukaa station, the early recipients included two elderly men namely Kyalo and Kimwalu. In the Mbooni station, Thyaka wa Itaa was among the first recipients of the mission's education in the area. Other early recipients of the AIM education in the district were the sons of chiefs and headmen such as Nthiwa wa Tama and Kioko wa Muthiani.⁵¹¹

4.5 AIM and Transformation in Healthcare

The arrival of the AIM missionaries in Machakos District marked a change in the way medical and healthcare provision was carried out in the district. Before the arrival of these missionaries in the district, the provision of medical care was mainly in the hands of the traditional Kamba healthcare practitioners who integrated both physical and spiritual methods to treat different ailments affecting the Machakos Akamba as mentioned earlier in chapter two. With the coming of the AIM missionaries, there was a gradual shift in the way healthcare matters were being addressed in the district.

One major transformation as a result of the coming of these missionaries was the establishment of central locations in the form of health centres where the Machakos residents would visit for treatment. These health centres were firstly established in the Kangundo, Mumbuni, Mbooni, and the Mukaa stations. Before then, the only centres for treatment that the Machakos Akamba would visit were mainly the homes of the traditional Kamba medical practitioners.⁵¹² With the establishment of these centres, many Machakos Akamba would daily flock in them for the treatment of various diseases that were affecting them. Treatment for diseases such as influenza,

⁵¹⁰ Somba, *Wananchi Mashujaa wa Imani*, p. 14.

⁵¹¹ KNA, PC/CP/1/3/2, Machakos District Record Nook No.2, 1911.

⁵¹² Mbondo Mutiso, OI, 4/8/2018.

dysentery, smallpox, malaria and pneumatic fever among others that were prevalent in the early years of the mission in the district would now be carried in these newly established AIM health facilities in the district.⁵¹³ Apart from the medical services that the AIM missionaries would offer in these medical centres located in the mission stations, they would make frequent visits to the villages to treat the locals of various ailments that were affecting them. For instance, as early as 1911, Dr. Elwood, an AIM missionary stationed in the Mumbuni station, would travel hundreds of miles in the district to treat people with illnesses related to their eating habits, lifestyle and insufficient clothing in the cold seasons.⁵¹⁴

Besides the establishment of these health facilities, there was also a change in personnel regarding the attendance of the sick Machakos Akamba. Before then, the traditional Kamba medical practitioners were the main attendants of patients of different ailments. Most of these practitioners had acquired their expertise either through inheritance or from observation and training by other traditional practitioners in the community.⁵¹⁵ Consequently, they would attend to the Machakos Akamba ailing residents. This attendance took the form of consultation, examination, diagnosis, treatment and the prescription to the relevant plants believed to treat the particular ailment.⁵¹⁶ With the introduction of Western medicine, professionally trained healthcare personnel started to take over these roles from the traditional Kamba health practitioners. This in turn brought a big change in the process of attending to patients in the district.

The establishment of health centres in the district by the AIM missionaries coincided with the introduction of new approaches to the treatment of various ailments in the district. The use of manufactured drugs to treat ailments took the centre stage in these mission's health centres. This would take the form of injections, smearing and even swallowing of these manufactured drugs.⁵¹⁷ Before then, as mentioned earlier in this study, the Akamba relied on plants and other locally available substances to treat the various diseases that were affecting them. Although the use of these substances in the treatment of these ailments did not die off in the district, there was a gradual change from this as the use of Western medicine in the treatment of diseases continued to be embraced by many Machakos Akamba. Furthermore, the introduction of these manufactured drugs

⁵¹³ KNA, PC/CP/4/5/1, Ulu District Annual Report, 1918-1919.

⁵¹⁴ Gehman, *From Death to Life*, p. 74.

⁵¹⁵ Muthike Ndeto, OI, 5/8/2018.

⁵¹⁶ Jonathan Kalii, OI, 17/8/2018.

⁵¹⁷ Mbondo Mutiso, OI, 4/8/2018.

coupled with the new approaches to the treatment of the various diseases affecting the Machakos Akamba played a major role in the reduction of the diseases that were affecting the community.⁵¹⁸

Among the Machakos Akamba, as mentioned earlier in chapter two, the integration of religion in the prevention, treatment and the curing of various diseases played a major role in the Kamba health sector. Besides the use of the herbs and other naturally occurring substances in the treatment of various ailments, the Akamba would include other measures that were believed to influence the occurrence of these diseases. For instance, the time-to-time sacrifice in the shrines was believed to protect the community from various misfortunes such as diseases.⁵¹⁹ In addition, after the Kamba traditional health practitioners were done with the treatment of a patient by the use of herbs and other naturally occurring substances, they would prescribe to him or her some activities or even substances which had a spiritual connotation in them for a complete healing. For instance, some amulets given to the Akamba by the traditional healthcare practitioners were believed to protect them from diseases while others had a healing belief attached to them. Furthermore, through divination, the healthcare practitioners were able to foretell the coming of infectious diseases.⁵²⁰

With the introduction of Western medical practises in the district by the AIM missionaries, there were new developments in the way these medical practices in the community would be practiced. Firstly, the mission forbade all its converts from seeking the supernatural medical services of the Kamba traditional healers in case of an illness.⁵²¹ Instead, they were to get treatment from the mission's established health facilities. Although the attendance to these newly established health facilities was mainly possible to those residents who lived near the mission stations, there was a gradual decline in the reliance of Kamba traditional healers for treatment as the mission's continued to gain popularity in the district. Consequently, the integration of the Kamba traditional religion into the treatment of various ailments started to lose popularity among the converts. Prayers among the converts became a substitute to the religious practices that were involved in the treatment of various ailments by the Akamba before conversion.⁵²²

⁵¹⁸ Julius Mutwota, OI, 21/8/2018.

⁵¹⁹ Muthio Mune, OI, 3/8/2018.

⁵²⁰ Lindblom, *The Akamba in British East Africa*, p. 287.

⁵²¹ Jonathan Kalii, OI, 17/8/2018.

⁵²² Julius Mutwota, OI, 21/8/2018.

The AIM education in the district played a major role in the transformations that were being experienced in the medicine and healthcare sector among the Machakos Akamba. In the mission's schools, health education was a core subject.⁵²³ Consequently, the locals who attended these mission schools were able to learn basic hygiene practices such as washing of hands before and after meals as well as after visiting the toilet. Sound health practices such as proper waste disposal started to influence the locals to dig pit latrines in their homes instead of using bushes as disposal points of human waste. Consequently, it was common to find an extra structure in the form of a pit latrine in the homes of the early recipients of this missionary education in the district.⁵²⁴

Through this education, the locals were also able to demystify some of the practices that the Kamba traditional healers were using to address various ailments. For instance, they would realize that the treatment of mumps which involved dancing around some indigenous trees had no scientific basis for the treatment of the ailment. Consequently, this practice started to lose meaning among these early recipients of mission education as they became more inclined to the application of the scientific knowledge they had acquired in this newly introduced education in solving health issues in their lives.

Generally, due to the introduction of Western medical practices by the AIM missionaries in Machakos District, there was a continued decline in many traditional Kamba medical practices. For instance, the purification offered by the *mundu mue wa ng'ondu* started to decline as the mission's education gained popularity in the district.⁵²⁵ This can be attributed to the enlightenment that came with the missionary education which rendered this practice insignificant among the African elites. In addition, as mentioned earlier in the chapter, the mission considered this practice anti-Christian and thus barred its converts from participating in it. Other practices that continued to lose relevance among AIM converts was the *muti* belief. These included the *muti wa wia*, *muti wa wende* and the *nzevu* which the mission also considered anti-Christian and thus discouraged its adherents from practicing.⁵²⁶ The continued decline in the reliance on the Kamba traditional medicine translated to an increment in the number of locals seeking Western medical remedies. For instance, in the Mukaa station dispensary, the number of locals seeking medical attention increased from 1349 patients in 1920 to 3887 in 1927. In the Mbooni station dispensary, the

⁵²³ Mbondo Mutiso, OI, 4/8/2018.

⁵²⁴ Patrick Mutala, 14/8/2018.

⁵²⁵ Mbondo Mutiso, OI, 4/8/2018.

⁵²⁶ Jonathan Kalii, OI, 17/8/2018.

number of locals that flocked into the mission's dispensary to be treated of various ailments in 1927 alone was 4,315 patients.⁵²⁷

4.6 AIM and Transformation in the Concept of Time and its Management among the

Akamba

Before the coming of the AIM missionaries in Machakos District, the Akamba had a different conception of time. Besides that, they had their own ways of managing time that were free from Western influence. As mentioned in chapter two of this study, the Akamba of Machakos District viewed time in relation to events and activities. Their management of time also revolved around the prevailing circumstances. With the arrival of the AIM missionaries in the district, there was a gradual change in the way the Akamba conceived and managed it.

One factor that can be attributed to these new developments in the conception and management of time in the district was missionary education. In the schools that the mission established in many parts of the district, time was an important aspect in the managing and running of these schools and institutions. Firstly, the new concept of time would be taught by the missionaries in these schools as a topic in the syllabus.⁵²⁸ As a result, the Machakos Akamba were introduced to new ways of measuring time through the use of various instruments such as watches, clocks and calendars. Parameters such as the minutes and hours became the new tools for determining what time of the day it was. This replaced the observation of the movement of objects such as the moon, the sun or the behaviour of animals to measure time during the day.⁵²⁹

The concept of the week was also introduced to the Machakos Akamba. Before then the Akamba had no idea of this concept. As mentioned in chapter two of this study, the most common form of measuring time involving a few days was yesterday (*iyoo*), today (*umunthi*), tomorrow (*uni*) and the day after tomorrow (*auke*) approach. Nevertheless, a new way of conceptualizing time that involved a few days was introduced to the locals in the form of a week of seven days. In the new week concept, each day had its own name in which the locals later translated these new names into Kikamba. These new names included *Wakwambililya* or *Wamondi* (Monday), *Wakeli* (Tuesday),

⁵²⁷ Gehman, *From Death to Life*, p. 78.

⁵²⁸ Mbondo Mutiso, OI, 4/8/2018.

⁵²⁹ Patrick Mutala, OI, 14/8/2018.

Wakatatu (Wednesday), *Wakana* (Thursday), *Wakatano* (Friday), *Wathanthatu* (Saturday), *Wakyumwa* (Sunday).⁵³⁰

Besides the concept of the week, new ways of measuring time beyond the week such as the month and the year were introduced to the Akamba in the mission's schools. Before then, the Akamba had an idea of the concept of the month which was often measured by the appearance and the movement of the moon.⁵³¹ With the influence from missionary education, there were new developments concerning the Kamba conception of the month. Consequently, the measurement of time during the month took the form of counting the number of days which would range from twenty-eight to thirty-one days. A couple of twelve months then formed a year. To improve the effectiveness of measuring time during the month and the year, the calendar was introduced to the locals. Apart from the teaching and learning of these new concepts of time by the Akamba in the AIM established schools, the Akamba who interacted with the missionaries either in the school, church or even in the villages were able to learn the new understanding of time as they observed the way these missionaries would conceive time.⁵³² Consequently, because of these changes in the understanding of time, the Machakos Akamba gradually continued to embrace the new system as their old system of conceiving time continued to take a back seat especially, among the convert elites.

Coupled with the new developments in measuring time was the transformation in the way the Akamba would manage their time. School and church days were introduced among the Machakos Akamba. For instance, during the week, five days would be for school attendance for those who had enrolled in the mission's schools while the seventh day was set aside for worship. In the newly introduced religion, this was a day of rest and converts would converge in churches for the purpose of worship. Before then, there were no specific days for school attendance, rest or worship within the Kamba society.⁵³³ By observing how events in the school and the church were organized on the basis of time, the locals would learn new ways of organizing their daily activities according to the time available. This was made possible by the programmes that had been drawn in the schools in the form of timetables that would often dictate how the daily activities would progress. In

⁵³⁰ Pius Muindi, OI, 16/8/2018.

⁵³¹ Mutiso Mutua, OI, 4/8/2018.

⁵³² Mbondo Mutiso, OI, 4/8/2018.

⁵³³ Mbondo Mutiso, OI, 4/8/2018.

addition, there was a bell that would rung to signify the start and the end of the various activities carried out in the schools.⁵³⁴

Besides these school and worship days, the mission introduced other activities that would be carried out during the week such as fellowships. In such days of the week, the converts would converge either in the mission churches or at the homes of the adherents. In addition, the social groups that were formed by the mission within the church such as cadets, Sunday schools, and battalion, youths and women fellowships among others did meet at various times of the week. After the church services on Sundays, they would hold evangelistic crusades that were aimed at winning more converts.⁵³⁵ To those who had taken positions of leadership such as African evangelists and pastors, they were expected to be available for six days in a week for ministry as the church was expected to meet their needs.⁵³⁶

Besides the weekly activities that influenced how the locals would spend their time, there were monthly and annual events organized by the mission. For instance, in the later years of the mission in the district, the members of the church councils at the local and district levels would hold meetings concerning the progress of the church.⁵³⁷ New annual events such as annual cadet, battalion and youth rallies were also organized by the mission for the particular converts. In the school set up, holidays were introduced during which learners in the mission's institutions would take a break for several weeks.⁵³⁸ These breaks, which often took place three times a year, gave learners an opportunity to rest as well as engage in other activities in their homes and churches. These new developments brought by the AIM church in the district not only influenced the way converts would manage their time but also controlled their behaviour.

The integration of other ways of spending time among the Machakos Akamba by the mission also came with the diminution of other ways of spending time that the converts were practising before the arrival of the mission in the district. For instance, the convert would no longer spend his or her time attending the offering and sacrificial activities in the shrines or even the daily beer drinking sessions especially among the *Atumia* among other activities that the mission considered anti-

⁵³⁴ Gehman, From *Death to Life*, p. 77.

⁵³⁵ Ibid, p. 280.

⁵³⁶ Frank, p. 173.

⁵³⁷ Julius Mutwota, OI, 21/8/2018.

⁵³⁸ Beatrice Mumbi, OI, 2/8/2018.

Christian.⁵³⁹ The time that the convert would spend visiting the traditional healers when sick would be spent visiting the mission dispensary. Time previously set aside by the community for dances such as *kilumi* and *wathi* would be utilized for other activities as the mission barred converts from engaging such activities.

4.7 AIM and Transformation in Language and Communication

As a result of the initiatives made by the AIM in the provision of education in Machakos District, there was a great revolution in language and communication among the Machakos Akamba. As Allyward has observed, language is a key aspect of culture. Just like the work of other Christian missions in Africa, the decision by AIM to standardise Kikamba as well as introducing the English language did not only help to preserve the Kamba culture but also helped integrate the community into the modern world and enabled it to relate with other cultures at wider levels.⁵⁴⁰ Among the reasons why the mission was interested in standardising Kikamba was because the language was an important tool for evangelisation of the community.

One of the major measures that the mission took to develop Kikamba as mentioned earlier in this chapter was the establishment of the written form of Kikamba. The mission did this through the introduction of Kikamba lessons in all its elementary schools in the district.⁵⁴¹ Through this initiative, the Akamba who enrolled in the mission's schools would not only learn how to read their language but also put it down in writing. They would get an insight of the phonology, morphology and the syntactical dimension of their language. Later, when the mission established its first bible college in the district in 1928, missionary Guilding who had then learnt Kikamba would use it as a medium of instruction.⁵⁴²

Another measure taken by the mission to develop Kikamba was through the publication of materials in the language. For instance, by 1900, the AIM missionaries in the district had translated eight hymns into Kikamba.⁵⁴³ This aided in singing of these hymns in the mission's churches. In 1915, the AIM missionaries translated the Gospel according to Mark into Kikamba. By 1920, the missionaries had published the whole of the New Testament into Kikamba.⁵⁴⁴ That way, literate

⁵³⁹ Jonathan Kalii, OI, 17/8/2018.

⁵⁴⁰ A. Shorter, *Christianity and the African Imagination* (Nairobi: Paulines Publications, 1996), p. 26.

⁵⁴¹ Mbondo Mutiso, OI, 4/8/2018.

⁵⁴² Gehman, 'The African Inland Mission: Aspects of its Early History', p. 132.

⁵⁴³ Ibid, p. 124.

⁵⁴⁴ Frank, *Between Two Mountains*, pp. 209-210.

Akamba could not only read the New Testament by themselves, but also use it to evangelize to the rest of their members in the community. Among the AIM missionaries who were at the forefront in these translations and publications was C.F. Johnston of the Mumbuni station and George Rhoad of the Mbooni station. While Rhoad translated the books of Mark, John and Mathew into Kikamba, Johnston managed to translate the book of Luke into Kikamba besides preparing various readers for the same.⁵⁴⁵ Through this, they would minister to the AIM adherents in their respective stations and their environs with ease a factor that contributed to the exponential growth of the mission's activities.

As a result of the influence publication of materials in Kikamba had on the mission's work in the district, the mission continued to produce more materials in Kikamba that were of great impact to the development of the language not only in the Machakos, but also in Kitui and the Kamba diaspora. During the early years of the mission in the district, two AIM missionaries, Miss Newman and Mrs Rhoad, published the first Kikamba grammar.⁵⁴⁶ This was an important milestone as far as the development of the language was concerned as it helped the new missionaries flocking in the district to learn Kikamba easier. More developments in the Kikamba grammar were made in the 1940s when one of the AIM missionaries Ms Emma Farnsworth wrote and published another Kikamba grammar book of eighty lessons that was being used by the missionaries in Ukambani in the 1940s.⁵⁴⁷

As a way of improving the communication means among the Machakos Akamba, the mission introduced English as a new language that the mission's adherents would learn and communicate in apart from their local language. Although the mission was not the sole contributor in the development of this language in the district, it can be said to have played a key role in the spread of this language in the district as it was taught in all its elementary, intermediate, secondary and tertiary institutions. Consequently, the introduction of this new language among the Machakos Akamba did not only ease communication between the AIM missionaries and the locals, but also the outside world. As many locals continued to show interest in learning and communicating in the language, the ability to communicate in English became a status symbol and thus many locals continued to develop interest in the language.

⁵⁴⁵ Gehman, *From Death to Life*, p.72.

⁵⁴⁶ Ibid, p. 75.

⁵⁴⁷ Frank, *Between Two Mountains*, p. 213.

The arrival of AIM missionaries in Machakos District and the subsequent engagement with the Machakos Akamba in various activities saw a marked improvement in communication in the district. Besides the developments in language that the mission made in the district, new modes of communication such as the writing of letters were introduced in the district. Coupled with new developments in transport networks like roads, the traditional ways of communication in which individuals would travel from one part of the district to another to deliver a message began to decline. The elite Africans would send written information in the form of notes and letters instead of having to travel from point to point to pass a communication.⁵⁴⁸ The construction of roads increased interaction among the Machakos Akamba, as there was now free movement of people in the district.

4.8 AIM and Transformation in Transport Networks

The AIM played a major role in opening various parts of Machakos District for socio-economic and political development. One way it did this was through the facilitation of the construction of road networks within the district. These road networks not only improved social interaction within and outside the district, but also facilitated the provision of social and economic services by other agents of social change in the district such as the colonialists and other missionary groups. As mentioned in chapter two of this study, before the coming of the mission to the district, the major transport networks were just simple footpaths. The rest were trade routes that had been used for many years by the Machakos Akamba to facilitate trading activities among themselves as well as with other communities. Consequently, there were no developed roads that could facilitate the use of modern means of transport such as vehicles.

The coming of the AIM in the district witnessed a change in the development of transport networks in the district especially in the areas where the mission had established stations. Although the AIM was not the major contributor in the construction of these road networks in the district it played a critical role in that field. Among the areas of the district that were impacted by the mission's initiative to open up Machakos District to modern means of transport was the Mbooni area. Under the leadership of the AIM missionary George Rhoad, the area witnessed a massive construction of road networks that linked Mbooni to Kilungu and Mumbuni areas of the district.

⁵⁴⁸ Jonathan Kalii, OI, 17/8/2018.

When George Rhoad arrived in the Mbanya area of Mbooni in 1907, he was riding on a mule because of the nature of the Mbooni terrain and the consequent lack of roads.⁵⁴⁹ After the establishment of the station, apart from evangelism, one of the things that George Rhoad embarked on was the opening of the area through road construction. His main aim being to link the Mbooni area of the district to the Kilungu and Mumbuni areas of the district with a better transport system, Rhoad oversaw the construction of roads and paths that facilitated easy movement of people living in these areas. By 1909, Rhoad had made about fifty miles of roads in the Mbooni area.⁵⁵⁰

Among the first road construction projects that were initiated by Rhoad was the road that linked the Mbooni station to the Mumbuni station via Mutanda, Yiatwa, Kisyani, Kalawani, Tututha, Kyamithenge, Kiima Kimwe to Mumbuni. Another road passed through Kalawani, Ngwasi, Kwa Njema, and Kimutwa. This road met with the other one from the Kilungu area of the district at Katumani area then passed through Katoloni to the government fort at Machakos.⁵⁵¹ By linking Mbooni area to the Kimutwa area of Machakos, the Mbooni station and surrounding areas could now be accessible from the Mumbuni station a short distance from the government fort at Machakos. Part of this road network was later developed by the colonial and post-colonial governments in Kenya and up to the present day they serve the people of this area by linking them from Machakos to Mbooni and vice versa.

To link the Mbooni area to the Kilungu area of the district, Rhoad initiated the construction of another road via Tuvilani, Kangethani, Ng'alikya, Kikima, Ithamaa, Mwanyani, Utangwa to Kyambalasi were at the present day the Wote Machakos road passes. From Kyambalasi, this road extended to Makongo and Kivani where AIM had temporarily opened a station. Later, the road extended to Kola, Kee, Kilungu to the Mukaa station.⁵⁵² The road construction initiative continued in the surrounding areas of the Mukaa station. While most of these constructions were just paths that linked the Mukaa station to its schools and churches, some major roads in the area were initially overseen by the mission. Among them is the Mukaa-Uvete road constructed in 1959 to link the Mukaa station and Uvete where the mission had various establishments.⁵⁵³ Through its

⁵⁴⁹ Paul Mutuku, OI, 6/8/2018.

⁵⁵⁰ KNA, DC/MKS/1/1/1, Machakos District Annual Report, 1909.

⁵⁵¹ Paul Mutuku, OI, 6/8/2018 .

⁵⁵² Ibid.

⁵⁵³ KNA, DC/MKS/3/261, Mukaa Location Council Minutes, 1959.

adherents, the mission also initiated the construction of transport networks that linked its other outstations in the area such as Kitaingo, Maiani, Kamuthini and Mumela.

Generally, most of the roads found in the areas where the AIM established itself in the district during the colonial period are AIM-initiated roads.⁵⁵⁴ These roads played a major role in the lives of the Machakos residents who inhabited these places. Firstly, they were able to reap the benefits of the mission's initiatives such as schools and health centres in these locations. Social interaction among the locals increased as it became easier for them to travel from one place to another. Consequently, the spread of ideas and information within these areas also improved. This improvement did not only facilitate the evolution of the Kamba culture, but also the assimilation of Western values.

4.9 Transformation in Music and Dance

The coming of the AIM missionaries in Machakos District had a great influence on Kamba music and dance. This influence can be attributed to the transformation in religious and educational activities that the mission initiated in the district during its tenure. As mentioned in chapter two of this study, before the coming of this protestant missionary group to Machakos District, the Akamba had their own conception of music and dance which often revolved around the *kilumi* and *wathi*. The arrival of this mission and the consequent influences it made on the Machakos Akamba brought many changes in the way the community converts could celebrate music. For instance, the conversion of the Akamba to Christianity translated to the abolition of all forms of participation of the converts in either the *kilumi* or the *wathi* dances.⁵⁵⁵ As a result, the AIM adherents in the district could not be involved in any form of grouping that was associated with the traditional *kilumi* and *wathi* dances as they were perceived to be un-Christian by the mission. This made the *kilumi* and *wathi* dances unpopular among converts.

The abolition of *wathi* and *kilumi* dances among the AIM converts in Machakos District coincided with the introduction of new forms of Western music among converts in the form of hymns.⁵⁵⁶ This music which was religious in nature was mainly made for worshipping the God and provided less entertainment than Kamba traditional music, which was more of entertainment than worship. Before the arrival of AIM missionaries in the district, it was normal for the Machakos Akamba to

⁵⁵⁴ Paul Mutuku, OI, 6/8/2018.

⁵⁵⁵ Julius Mutwota, OI, 21/8/2018.

⁵⁵⁶ Beatrice Mumbi, OI, 2/8/2018.

complement their singing with dancing as well as the playing of different musical instruments. The introduction of hymns among the AIM adherents did not come with the above accompaniments in the early years of the mission in the district as was the case in the traditional Kamba music. As a result no dancing or instruments would accompany the singing of the newly introduced hymns.⁵⁵⁷ In the mission's churches, the singing would be a solemn activity.

The content of the Kamba traditional music dealt with various themes depending on the occasion, time and the purpose of the singing. For instance, if the song intended to praise someone in the community because of his brave acts, it would include a content to meet that particular purpose.⁵⁵⁸ Songs and dances that were intended to provide entertainment would be made to serve that purpose through the inclusion of entertainment themes. On the other hand, the newly introduced hymns were narrowly thematic. In many instances, these hymns had themes that represented various biblical truths and would encourage the adherents to be steadfast in their walk with God.⁵⁵⁹

The introduction of Western music in Machakos District in the form of hymns experienced transformation as the mission continued to expand in the district. When the mission was in the initial stages of establishing itself in the district, most of these hymns were still in the English which many converts rarely understood. To facilitate the full adoption of the new music by converts, the mission embarked on translating the hymns into Kikamba so that AIM adherents could easily sing and internalise the content.⁵⁶⁰ Later in the 1960s, various changes relating to the new music were witnessed. Among these developments was the introduction of choruses that supplemented the singing of hymns in the mission's churches.⁵⁶¹ In addition, structured ways of singing which involved particular groups such as choirs started to crop up in the mission's churches. Consequently, it was common to find groups of the mission's adherents practicing choir music in the church compound on particular days of the week.

In the late 1960s, the indigenization of church music in AIM churches through the adoption of some Kamba traditional musical instruments started to take shape. This initiative, which was started by some students from Scott Theological College in 1969 saw a great revolution in the

⁵⁵⁷ Mbondo Mutiso, OI, 4/8/2018.

⁵⁵⁸ Mutiso Mutua, OI, 4/8/2018.

⁵⁵⁹ Frank, *Between Two Mountains*, p. 136.

⁵⁶⁰ Gehman, *From Death to Life*, p.124.

⁵⁶¹ Julius Mutwota, OI, 21/8/2018.

AIM church music. Before then, most Kamba musical instruments were associated with the traditional religion and were therefore not accepted in the church.⁵⁶² As a result of these initiatives, traditionally designed instruments started being used in the mission's churches.

4.10 Transformation in Architecture and Clothing

The AIM played a prime role in the development of new forms of shelter and clothing among the Machakos Akamba. Before the coming of this mission in the district the most common forms of housing in the Kamba homesteads was *musonge* and *kisukuu*, which were constructed with materials such as tree poles, grass, strings and mud.⁵⁶³ With the introduction of a new civilization in the district by this mission, there was a gradual rise of new forms of architecture in the district. These new forms took on Western architectural designs that were hardly present in many parts of the district before the arrival of the mission.⁵⁶⁴ Consequently, the arrival of this mission in the district sparked a growth in these Western architectural designs. Although there were other agents of Western culture such as the colonial government and other missions like HGM that played a role in the development of these designs, AIM was the major contributor in the spread of these designs in the district by the end of the mission's activities in 1971. This was because of the big number of structures of Western style that the mission had established in the district in the form of prayer houses, health centres and schools.⁵⁶⁵ The many structures established by the mission in the district meant that it had a high following and thus a tremendous influence among the Machakos Akamba.

The AIM and other establishments were centres for the spread of these Western architectural designs among the Machakos Akamba.⁵⁶⁶ In these centres, the mission constructed houses using materials that had hardly been used by the Machakos Akamba before. It was common to find houses with brick walls as well as timber and metal sheets. Outside these houses, there were concrete water tanks that had been built for harvesting and storage of rainwater for use within that particular mission centre.⁵⁶⁷ Special care and maintenance could be taken on these houses. These

⁵⁶² Barret and Mambo et al, *Kenya Churches Handbook*, p. 70.

⁵⁶³ Ann Nthemba, OI, 6/8/2018.

⁵⁶⁴ Mutiso Mutua, OI, 4/8/2018.

⁵⁶⁵ Frank, *Between Two Mountains*, pp. 363-368.

⁵⁶⁶ Pius Muindi, OI, 16/8/2018.

⁵⁶⁷ Frank, *Between Two Mountains*, p. 162.

included regular cleaning by the servants taken from the Kamba villages and employed by the mission to perform various duties in the stations.⁵⁶⁸

Through frequent visits to the mission's centres, the Machakos Akamba would observe these newly introduced structures in their society. Others would be involved in the construction of these structures through activities such as carrying the building materials.⁵⁶⁹ The mission also started training some of the locals on how to build these structures. A good example of these residents was Kithome Mutyanthuku of Kangundo who was trained by the AIM on the building of these Western architectural structures in the early 1900s. He later started training others in this new trade, which influenced the spread of these new structures not only in Machakos but also in the neighbouring Kitui District.⁵⁷⁰ With this growing involvement of the Machakos Akamba with Western architectural designs, the designs gradually started cropping up in the Kamba villages as the traditional architectural designs continued to lose popularity, especially among the new generations influenced by the mission's activities in the district.

Apart from the transformations experienced in the district because of the growing development of new shelter designs, the AIM also influenced how the Machakos Akamba dressed. Previously, many Machakos Akamba mainly wore traditional attire which involved the use of items such as hides as clothing.⁵⁷¹ With the arrival of the mission in the district, there was a growing change in the way of dressing of the Akamba. The AIM did this through a variety of ways. Firstly, the education and religion offered by the mission influenced the Akamba to embrace these new forms of clothing. As one informant observed, it was easy to identify a resident who had embraced the mission's initiatives in the district and those who had not through the kind of clothing they wore. While the locals who had embraced the mission's initiatives wore clothes of foreign origin, the one who had not usually wore the traditional Kamba clothing.⁵⁷²

Besides the influences made by the mission's initiatives to adorn the Machakos Akamba in the Western styles of dressing, the mission went ahead to provide some of its adherents with cloths. For instance, as early as 1911, Mrs Ellwood Davis, an AIM missionary stationed at Mumbuni

⁵⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁶⁹ Muthike Ndeto, OI, 5/8/2018.

⁵⁷⁰ Somba, *Wananchi Mashujaa wa Imani*, p. 14.

⁵⁷¹ Mutiso Mutua, OI, 4/8/2018.

⁵⁷² Aaron Nguta, OI, 4/8/2018.

station was training women from the area on how to sew their own clothes.⁵⁷³ This not only boosted the mission's efforts to entrench Western dress codes among the Machakos Akamba, but also improved the social status of the converts who embraced the mission's initiative. By the end of the mission's life in the district in 1971, most of its adherents had embraced the Western styles of dressing as a result of various forces, most of them initiated by the mission's transformative agenda in the district.

4.11 Summary

This chapter has discussed the social developments that were influenced by the coming of the AIM missionaries to Machakos District. This has been done through the examination of the various elements of Akamba social life before and after the coming of AIM missionaries to the district. The chapter has demonstrated that AIM really influenced the different aspects of Kamba social life such as their religion, rites of passage, education, medicine and healthcare, the conception of time, language and communication, music and art and architecture. This influence took various forms ranging from the introduction and integration of new ways of approaching various social issues among the Akamba to the improvement of the existing ones that saw the society transformed largely by the time the mission officially exited Machakos District in 1971. The next chapter will focus on the challenges that were faced by the mission in the district in the process of initiating the foregoing social developments.

⁵⁷³ Gehman, *From Death to Life*, p.203.

CHAPTER FIVE

CHALLENGES FACED BY AIM IN MACHAKOS DISTRICT

5.1 Overview

With its establishment in Machakos District in 1895, AIM embarked on a journey that was mainly aimed at Christianizing the district mainly through evangelism. This Christianization led to a transformation in other ways of life of the Machakos Akamba. However, in the process of expanding its influence in the district and the consequent changes that came up as a result, the mission encountered numerous challenges that played a major role in delaying its expansion especially during its early years in the district. These challenges ranged from the internal struggles within the mission to others that were because of various circumstances that emerged in the process of expansion. This chapter examines the challenges that the mission experienced in Machakos District as it endeavoured to execute it. The first part of the chapter outlines the organizational challenges that the mission faced and the consequent influences of its expansionist strategy in the district. The later part of the chapter examines the non-organizational challenges that influenced the expansion of the mission in the district.

5.2 AIM and Logistical Challenges

The organizational structure of AIM exposed the mission to a number of challenges in Machakos District. While some of these challenges were as a result of the mission's policies on a number of issues, there were other aspects in the mission's organizational structure that negatively affected its operations in the district. This in turn hindered the activities of the mission in the district, thereby slowing the pace of growth.

Firstly, the mission did not have a definite plan on how to approach the Machakos Akamba, considering that there had been no prior contacts between the two sides. Consequently, the missionaries sought the help of the Swahili porters who ushered them into the region, a move that made the mission to encounter problems when reaching out to Machakos Akamba. In addition to that, when the mission's superintendent, Peter Cameron Scott, made his first trips to Sakai and Kilungu to check on the possibility of establishing stations there, he was accompanied by these Swahili porters who besides playing their roles in these journeys as porters, helped the mission to erect temporary shelters in these newly opened stations. Little did the AIM missionaries realize that the Swahili had previous bad relations with the Akamba and the latter did not trust the word

of any Swahili man.⁵⁷⁴ This Kamba distrust of the Swahili and AIM's use of Swahili porters made the mission unpopular among the Akamba who consequently resisted the mission's early activities in Machakos District.

Another organizational challenge within the mission that affected its development in Machakos District related to the missionaries' lack of knowledge on the Machakos Akamba. The AIM missionaries were ignorant about Kamba culture, language and religion, which hampered the mission's enterprise. The first seven AIM missionaries in the district in 1895 were not married yet they wanted to woo the Akamba elders to convert to Christianity.⁵⁷⁵ According to Kamba culture, unmarried men were considered young and inexperienced and thus unfit to advise elders on matters to do with culture and religion.⁵⁷⁶ The missionaries could not advise their elders without being accused of disrespecting the community's authorities. Indeed, Kamba elders expected the youthful missionaries to consult them regarding the community's religion and culture. Nonetheless, the youthful AIM missionaries embarked on Kamba elders on the need to change their religion and embrace Christianity.

From the establishment of the mission up to the time of its merger with the AIC, more than one hundred missionaries had come into the district to boost the mission's missionary work. Most of these missionaries came from the USA with a few coming from Canada and Britain.⁵⁷⁷ Despite this high number, most of these missionaries did not spend sufficient time in the district as to have had much influence because resignations, repatriations, defections and deaths. For instance, when Peter Cameron Scott died in 1896 in the Nzau station, the four members of the Scott family who were left behind resigned.⁵⁷⁸ This resignation may be attributed to the frustrations the missionaries had faced considering that they had so far lost two family members in the mission field. This trend continued throughout the mission's period in the district.

Frequent missionary entry-exits were also very common during the mission's tenure in the district. These short-lived stays of AIM missionaries impacted the mission's enterprise in the district negatively as most of them would leave some of the developments they had started uncompleted,

⁵⁷⁴ Gehman, *From Death to Life*, p. 27.

⁵⁷⁵ Frank, *Between Two Mountains*, p. 33.

⁵⁷⁶ Mutiso Mutua, OI, 3/8/2018.

⁵⁷⁷ Frank, *Between Two Mountains*, pp. 375-379.

⁵⁷⁸ *Ibid*, p. 51.

thus slowing development. While some of these exits were missionary furloughs, there were others that were neither furloughs nor resignations. The missionary entry-exit trend started immediately when the mission established itself in the district. Missionary William Bangert who arrived in the district in 1898 left after serving for only two years. Emily Messenger who arrived in the district in December 1901 left after a period of less than two years while Mr and Mrs Lee Downing, who had arrived in 1901 left after serving for three years only. Other missionaries who did not serve for a long period in the district included Minnie Lindbergh, Mr and Mrs Richard Evans, Mr and Mrs Fred Mckenrick, Mr and Mrs Arthur Waecker, Mr. and Mrs Tom Haney, Mr and Mrs Brad Scudder and Mrs Elbonne Sjoblem.⁵⁷⁹ Most of these missionaries served for less than three years. This meant that the activities they were conducting in the district stagnated, especially in cases where there was no missionary to succeed them. This in turn stalled the progress of the mission's agenda in the district.

The problem of missionaries leaving after serving for a short period can be attributed to the mission's lack of a definite policy on the length of stay in particular missionary fields. Besides, AIM did not have a clear policy on replacement of missionaries who left the missionary field. Consequently, there was a perpetual shortage of missionaries in the district. As a result, local converts who did not have the necessary skills were left in charge of some of the mission's establishments in the district. For instance, in 1898, when the missionary in charge of the Kangundo Station, Lester Severen, left for the USA, the station was left in the hands of one of the local residents Kikuvu Ngotho. By 1911, of all the AIM stations in the district, Kangundo had the highest staff turnover.⁵⁸⁰ Similar occurrences had taken place in Kilungu when Willis Hotchkiss, the then missionary in charge, left the station in the hands of a Swahili and moved to Kangundo in August 1898. This resulted in the closure of the Kilungu station.⁵⁸¹

As a result of discontinuity in missionary work in the district, supervision of AIM establishments by inexperienced locals was inevitable. This practice continued through the mission's programme in the district. In 1930, the AIM station at Mukaa and the outpost at Kivani in Kilungu were being manned by local converts.⁵⁸² In 1933, five years after the establishment of UBC at the Mumbuni station, management problems arose due to lack of a missionary to run the college. This was after

⁵⁷⁹ Frank, *Between Two Mountains*, pp. 375-379.

⁵⁸⁰ KNA, PC/CP/1/3/2, Machakos District Record Book No. 2, 1911.

⁵⁸¹ Gehman, *From Death to Life*, p. 37.

⁵⁸² KNA, DC/MKS/1/1/23, Machakos District Annual Report, 1930.

John Guilding, the then principal of the college, went on leave.⁵⁸³ Consequently, the college was temporarily closed, halting evangelist training of locals that had been going on since 1928. Mbooni station too did not have a resident missionary for the whole of 1934.⁵⁸⁴

Coupled with the mission's inability to provide personnel to run its activities in Machakos District was the problem of inadequate funds for its activities. From its inception in 1895, the mission did not have a clear procedure for raising funds for its activities on the African continent. Instead, the mission adopted the policy of making its financial needs known to anyone interested in helping it.⁵⁸⁵ Consequently, financial constraints were inevitable. As early as 1898, the mission owed US \$ 1800 to the Smith Mackenzie Company for the transport services offered to AIM missionaries during the travel from the coast to the interior in 1895.⁵⁸⁶ By then, only one missionary, Willis Hotchkiss, was in the district overseeing all the activities that the mission had started two years previously. As Frank has observed, it was hard for the mission to pay this debt as funds were provided to support its work from abroad as funds were channelled through the Scott's family account yet the family no longer worked for AIM.⁵⁸⁷

As a result of the financial challenges, it became hard for the mission to carry out its evangelization activities in the district smoothly. As late as 1947, the mission was still operating from grass thatched structures.⁵⁸⁸ Indeed, most of the mission's out-schools and prayer houses in the district were built of mud due to the lack of funds to erect permanent buildings. Sometimes, the mission was struggling to sustain its African evangelists, making them to engage in other income generating activities for sustenance. Zacharia Ngongo, one of the African evangelists, remembered getting a chicken and later four shillings as his monthly remuneration.⁵⁸⁹ The situation worsened in 1927 when the mission through C.F Johnston, the missionary in charge of Mumbuni station, initiated a self-supporting policy for local evangelists and teachers. AIM followers at the station responded by withholding offertories and boycotting Lord's Supper and ultimately suspending church attendance.⁵⁹⁰

⁵⁸³ Gehman, *From Death to Life*, p. 230.

⁵⁸⁴ KNA, DC/MKS/1/1/25, Machakos District Annual Report, 1934.

⁵⁸⁵ Gehman, *From Death to Life*, p. 23.

⁵⁸⁶ Frank, *Between Two Mountains*, p. 55.

⁵⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸⁸ KNA, DC/MKS/17/8 Guilding's Letter to Penwill; DC, Machakos District, 1947.

⁵⁸⁹ Somba, p. 49.

⁵⁹⁰ Gehman, *From Death to Life*, p. 190.

When the AIM embarked on establishing itself in Machakos District, it did not factor in the issue of language and communication as an important aspect of their interactions with the locals before launching its evangelistic activities. This exposed the missionaries to a tough period of struggling to communicate with the Machakos Akamba who did not understand the missionaries' language. Consequently, the missionaries had learned Kikamba first before engaging in any meaningful missionary work in the district, which was time consuming. As Frank has observed, the missionaries' attempts to learn Kikamba was an arduous undertaking which induced serious bouts of discouragement and frustration.⁵⁹¹ By then, little progress had been made on the writing of Kikamba language and grammar, which could have made it easier for the missionaries to learn the language. As Scott wrote in his first report in 1896:

...We know nothing of the language of the people among whom we have come to labour. We have been steadily pegging away.⁵⁹²

To solve this language problem, the mission started a six months' language course at Kijabe in 1903 for training missionaries before they embarked on their assignments. In 1907, the mission also embarked on preparing a Kikamba dictionary that would aid the missionaries in learning the language.⁵⁹³ Nevertheless, communication challenges continued to feature in the missionaries' activities in the district as the six months' language course was too short for a foreigner to become fluent in Kikamba. Only a few missionaries who stayed in the district for long, such as C.F. Johnson and George Roads, were able to be fluent Kikamba speakers.

The AIM enterprise in Machakos District mainly involved evangelization through the church and the school. For the success of this enterprise, the availability of trained personnel was necessary. However, this was not the case in the mission's enterprise in the district as most of its workers had either partially been trained while others did not have any training. Though there were some untrained AIM staff that performed their missionary duties well, the lack of training posed a challenge to the mission in the delivery of its mandate in the district. The first AIM missionaries did not have any background training on matters such as African cultural anthropology and languages which were necessary before embarking on missionary work in Africa. Led by the mission's superintendent Peter Cameron Scott, who dropped out his missionary training in the New York Missionary Training College, the missionaries came to Machakos District with little

⁵⁹¹ Frank, *Between Two Mountains*, p. 34.

⁵⁹² AICA, AIM Annual Report 1896.

⁵⁹³ Gehman, *From Death to Life*, p. 200.

knowledge on how to run a mission in the African setup.⁵⁹⁴ Consequently, challenges such as communication barriers and the subsequent rejections by the locals as a result of interfering with their culture were inevitable. The mission would get individual missionaries directly from home and put them in charge of mission stations in the district. Most of these missionaries lacked the necessary qualifications or experience necessary in dealing with the Machakos Akamba.⁵⁹⁵ This approach contributed greatly to the mission's slow growth in the district.

Inadequate knowledge and understanding of the local culture caused by the lack of preliminary training led to never ending friction between the AIM missionaries and the inhabitants of Machakos District that was intense in the early 1910s, especially in Kangundo. During this period, the missionaries in charge of this station, Mr and Mrs Edwin Harrison, were on bad terms with the locals as Harrison was perpetually accused of meddling with the locals' affairs and, in some instances, taking sides in local disputes. Harrison would also impose fines in cases in which he was an aggrieved party and appropriating such fines for his own use.⁵⁹⁶ These acts, which can be attributed to lack of necessary missionary qualifications, were contrary to Christian teachings which this mission was propagating in the district. This habit in turn caused a lot of resentment among the locals who could not embrace the mission's initiatives because of the mistreatments.

In other instances, the lack of a clear boundary on the extent on which the missionaries would perform their duties made some of them to indulge into activities that had little connections with the core mandate of the mission in the district. These acts, which can be attributed to the lack of missionary training, made the AIM missionaries in Machakos District to interfere with the local politics and affairs.⁵⁹⁷ This in turn fuelled acts of disloyalty between the locals and colonial government officials.

In most of the educational institutions that the mission started in the district during its tenure, the problem of having unqualified staff was outstanding in these institutions. This problem was evident since the establishment of the mission in the district up to the time of its merger with the AIC and beyond. For instance, in 1937, out of the six African teachers deployed by the mission at

⁵⁹⁴ Ibid, p. 15.

⁵⁹⁵ KNA, PC/CP/1/3/2, Machakos District Record Book No. 2, 1911.

⁵⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁹⁷ Ibid.

the AIM school at Mumbuni, only three had basic teaching qualifications.⁵⁹⁸ By the 1950s, the mission had the largest number of educational institutions in the form of schools in the district. However, this number of schools came with the challenge of the availability of qualified teachers to teach in these schools. With the limited number of teacher training opportunities for the missions' school teachers in the district, cases of the mission's schools having unqualified teaching staff were very common. This was made worse by the strict discipline subjected to the teachers working in the mission's schools that made the trained teachers to fall off from the missions' schools. As a result, this problem would keep on recurring. This problem of having unqualified AIM officials in the district played a major role in dragging behind the mission's agenda in the district. From untrained missionaries to untrained African evangelists cum pastors and teachers, the mission became ineffective in delivering its mandate to the locals.

Besides that, the AIM was naturally not affiliated to any specific Christian denomination until it formed its own; the AIC. This meant that the missionaries who joined the mission had different denominational backgrounds and experiences. Owing to these past denominational experiences and backgrounds, the performance of these individual missionaries in the missionary field despite them being required to adhere to the doctrines of the mission. As a result, internal conflicts and disagreements between these missionaries while in the missionary field were inevitable. These internal differences started as early as the mission established its first four mission stations in Machakos District when one of the missionaries, Willis Hotchkiss, resigned from the mission in 1899 due to a different philosophy of missionary activity.⁵⁹⁹ Consequently, he later joined the Friends mission in which together with his other two friends, Arthur Chilson and Edgar Hole, started missionary work in western Kenya.

In 1903, when the mission's headquarters were transferred from Kangundo to Kijabe among the Kikuyu, disagreements arose among the AIM missionaries on the mission's move. The then mission superintendent, Charles Hurlburt, was challenged by the AIM missionaries in Machakos District led by C. F. Johnston on the decision to expand the mission outside the district even before it had laid a strong foundation.⁶⁰⁰ Though Johnson was later forced to drop this matter, it was clear that the mission's leadership was sometimes insensitive to the issues raised by its staff, thus delaying its progress in the district.

⁵⁹⁸ KNA, MISNS 31/5, 1929-1955.

⁵⁹⁹ Gehman, *From Death to Life*, p. 41.

⁶⁰⁰ Frank, *Between Two Mountains*, p. 155.

In addition, in the early 1900s, there was a general feeling among some AIM missionaries in the district that the mission's control of missionary activities in the district was hindering the missionaries' performance among the Machakos Akamba. These missionaries who were led by William Wight and C.F. Johnston and were dissatisfied by the lack of autonomy among them challenged the mission's leadership on the matter only to be accused of introducing a form of Ethiopianism, which was a South African Separatist movement which advocated for full authority for churches to run their own affairs.⁶⁰¹ But the mission was adamant in adopting these suggestions and resulted in issuing threats to the missionaries concerned so as to drop the idea. Consequently, William Wright and C. F. Johnson who went for their furloughs in 1913 barred from returning to the district by the American Home Council until they changed their attitudes on criticizing the mission. As a result, these two AIM missionaries from the Kangundo and Mumbuni stations respectively had to compromise their views and were thus allowed back to the mission field.

Conflicts among AIM missionaries also continued to feature on the mission's approach to the financing of African education in the district. Since its establishment in the district in 1895, the mission's stand on the financing of African education was not to accept government interference of its schools by accepting the government's grants- in- aid. Consequently, the African schools were to be self-supporting besides receiving regular financial boosts from the LNCs.⁶⁰² However, some AIM missionaries were of the view that the mission should accept these government grants, as they were necessary in boosting the provision of African education in the district and thus it was pointless for the mission to reject them. Although this issue was later settled in the mid-1940s, in which the mission started accepting these government grants, it can be said to have played a major role in making the AIM provision of African education in the district lag behind for more than four decades.

One of the consequences of these conflicts among the AIM missionaries in Machakos District was defections from the mission by its missionaries and local followers. In 1927, one of the long serving AIM missionaries among the Akamba of Mbooni, Rev. George Rhoad, defected from the mission and formed his own; the Gospel Furthering Fellowship(GFF) now Gospel Furthering Bible Fellowship Church (GBFC). Rhoad who had served with the AIM for more than twenty four years disagreed with the mission on its policies which he found too inhibiting for him to serve

⁶⁰¹ Ibid, p. 156.

⁶⁰² Tignor, *Colonial Transformation of Kenya*, p. 277.

better as a missionary.⁶⁰³ Consequently, he opened an indigenous church at Mbanya in Mbooni just a few kilometres from his initial AIM. Rhoad who had not only influenced Mbooni with Christianity but also in other ways such as opening the area to development through road construction and tree planting had a large following in the area. Consequently, many AIM converts defected from AIM and joined GFF.⁶⁰⁴

The mission station question also influenced the growth of the AIM in Machakos District. The mission evangelized in the district mainly through its four stations. Although these stations played a major role in the growth of this mission in the district between 1895 and 1971, it posed a great challenge to the growth of the mission. One of these challenges was monopolization of leadership in the stations. This is because in these four stations, almost all the activities revolved around the missionary-in-charge who was always a man.⁶⁰⁵

The missionaries in charge of the first three unsuccessful AIM stations in Nzau, Sakai and Kilungu were Peter C. Scott, Willis Hotchkiss and Fred Krieger respectively. In the formative years of the mission in the district, male missionaries such as William Bangert, Charles Hurlburt, George Rhoad, Elmer Bartholomew, Richard Evans C. F. Johnston, Harmon Nixon, John Guilding, and L. E. Davies dominated the leadership of the mission's four stations in the district as missionaries in charge. As Frank has observed, women missionaries were never given the title missionary-in-charge with its normal responsibility of being the chairperson of the local and district church councils even when they were the only ones assigned to a station.⁶⁰⁶ With this male domination of the mission station's leadership, women missionaries could not participate in the making of important decisions regarding the mission in the district hence hindering progress. It is no wonder that even after the indigenous church was formed, women were side-lined in the LCC's as all the seven members were still men.

Besides male domination of the mission's leadership in the stations, the centralization of power on the missionary in charge in the mission's stations was very common. Consequently, delegation as a leadership strategy was rarely pursued. Much power had been vested on the missionaries in charge such that besides them being the chairpersons of the LCCs and DCCs, they were also the

⁶⁰³ Frank, *Between Two Mountains*, p. 168.

⁶⁰⁴ Benson Nzioka, OI, 6/8/2018.

⁶⁰⁵ Frank, *Between Two Mountains*, pp. 164-165.

⁶⁰⁶ Ibid, p. 164-165.

treasurers and administrators of the churches. As a result, in case of their absence, nothing of significance could proceed until they were back.⁶⁰⁷ This would in turn delay the initiation of programmes that were critical for the mission's growth in the district.

The failure of the mission's leadership to delegate some responsibilities to the subordinate missionaries can also be seen in the mission's failure to open more mission stations in the district. For about seventy-five years in the district, the mission successfully managed to establish only four mission stations. This number was far too low for the mission to successfully impact this large district with Christianity. In addition, the rigidity tied to the limitation of the major activities to these mission stations gave the converts a hard time in benefitting from them.

For the better part of the mission's stay in the district, activities such as district and Regional Church Council (RCC) meetings, counting and depositing of church offerings, administration of church practices such as the holy communion and weddings among others were done in the mission stations and later in central locations.⁶⁰⁸ This was a big burden for the mission's converts as they had to trek over long distances so as to get the services. For instance, Jonathan Kalii, an AIM convert from Kalamba would trek from Kalamba to the Mukaa station after every Sunday service to deposit the local church offering besides delivering reports on the progress of the Kalamba local church.⁶⁰⁹ This phenomenon was very common in all the AIM outstations in the district. These treks were not only tiresome but also dangerous as the converts carrying the offerings risked being robbed on their way to these mission stations.

Failure of the mission to decentralize some of its activities like the celebration of practices such as the Holy Communion to mission outposts meant that some converts like the sick and old would not benefit from them. This is because the long distances to the mission stations impede them from trekking to where the stations were located as walking was the commonest means of reaching them. In addition, low turnouts during the celebration of these practices in the mission stations and the subsequent discouragements to turn back into the old ways of life by the locals were inevitable.

The AIM programme in Machakos District was also characterized by a lack of dynamism in its leadership. As a result of this rigidity, the mission took too long to initiate important reforms that

⁶⁰⁷ Ibid, p. 165.

⁶⁰⁸ Ibid, p. 164.

⁶⁰⁹ Jonathan Kalii, OI, 17/8/2018.

were very crucial for its growth in the district. One of the areas that the mission showed rigidity in its leadership was in the establishment of an indigenous church. Though the idea of indigenization of the mission started as early as 1922, it took the mission more than twenty-two years to implement this idea. Besides this, after the formation of an indigenous church in 1943, the mission's leadership was too rigid in granting the locals full control of the church. It took the mission another twenty-nine years to grant the locals their wishes.

Coupled with the mission's reluctance to fully indigenize the mission and later the indigenous church was the unwillingness of the mission to bring internal reforms especially on some of its policies. For instance, in the conducting of Christian marriages to its converts, the mission required one to be an ordained and gazetted pastor in order to officiate these marriages.⁶¹⁰ The challenge of this requirement was that becoming an ordained and gazetted pastor was another uphill task especially for the local evangelists. It took the mission fifty-one years to ordain the first Kamba pastors in the district. Before then, converts who wished to have a Church wedding in the early years had to travel to the Mumbuni or Kangundo stations tens of kilometres away especially for the converts from the lower parts of the district such as Mukaa, Nzau and Mbitini.⁶¹¹ This accounts for the low number of African Christian weddings in the early years of the mission in the district.

AIM's rigidity can also be seen in its stand on the provision of African education in the district. From 1895 up to the mid-1940s, the mission was adamant about the revolutionization of African education in the district. One of the reasons behind stagnation of African education was tied to the mission's policies. To AIM, education came second to proselytizing.⁶¹² The mission stressed on evangelism as their core business in the district. Education and other activities such as medical care were auxiliary according to the mission. Rose Horton, one of the AIM missionaries in the district, noted in 1931:

I cannot believe that God brought us out here to educate these people in worldly wisdom so that they can get big salaries as clerks...God called us to give them the gospel and there our duty begins and ends.⁶¹³

As a result of the mission's stand, African education in Machakos District went through many hurdles which hindered its growth. In 1911, the Provincial Commissioner, C. W. Hopley, wrote:

⁶¹⁰ Frank, *Between Two Mountains*, p. 167.

⁶¹¹ Ibid.

⁶¹² KNA, DC/MKS/1/1/31, Machakos District Annual Report, 1923.

⁶¹³ Tignor, *Colonial Transformation of Kenya*, p. 277.

The instruction imparted in the schools is narrow and restricted and of little educational value. Much of it follows mechanical and parrot like lines and little appeal is made to the boys' imagination or interests. The curriculum includes neither games, gymnastics, drill nor industrial training and the effect is to be seen in the slovenly dull appearance of the school boys and almost total absence of all school discipline.⁶¹⁴

This shows how African education in Machakos District under the leadership of the AIM started in a deplorable state. The results were a type of education that could not meet the needs of the locals but met the needs of the mission as it was seen in the subsequent years of the mission's stay in the district. Besides, no funds from the mission's home organizations could be used to finance African education in the district, leaving the LNCs and the locals the sole responsibility of financing the African education.

Additionally, AIM could not accept grant-in-aids from the government for its schools until the mid-1940s. This is because AIM missionaries believed firmly that God had brought them to Africa to evangelize and paying too much attention to other things was abdication of the main role.⁶¹⁵ This in turn slowed the development of the mission's elementary schools that were the most in the district by then. Furthermore, AIM education in the district never went beyond elementary level until the 1950s when the mission started establishing intermediate schools. One reason for this was that an elementary level graduate was able to read the bible and evangelize others. Therefore, for more than fifty years, the AIM gave the Akamba of Machakos District an education not to satisfy their needs, but to enable the mission to achieve its core mandate in the district, which was evangelism.

By the early 1950s, the mission had only established about ten intermediate schools in the district.⁶¹⁶ These schools were few compared to the big number of elementary schools the mission had established in the district. Consequently, transition levels from AIM elementary schools to the AIM intermediate schools were negatively affected, creating the problem of low literacy in the district.

⁶¹⁴ KNA, PC/CP/1/3/2, Machakos District Record Book No.2, 1911.

⁶¹⁵ Frank, *Between Two Mountains*, p. 170.

⁶¹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 286.

The mission's failure to initiate reforms in African education in the district for a long time had significant negative effects. One of these effects was that the mission risked losing its followers. This was common in cases where graduates from the mission's elementary schools joined the government intermediate schools. Another negative effect was increased resentment of the locals to the mission's attitude towards African education. For instance, in 1928, some AIM Kamba converts from the Mumbuni station attacked the missionary in charge of the station, C. F. Johnson, for failing to provide them with schools similar to those that existed in the AIM controlled areas in Kikuyuland.⁶¹⁷ Regardless of this attack, AIM remained reluctant to initiate educational reforms in the district as it continued offering the locals a bible-based education.⁶¹⁸

By 1944, the residents were still trying to compel AIM to initiate reforms in its education system. Consequently, in November 1944, the central school committee of AIM Iveti location wrote to the AIM field council concerning the matter. Part of this committee's issues of concern was on the alarm of the education policy adopted by the AIM in the whole of Ukambani. As the committee viewed:

Looking back to the year 1895 when the pioneers of this mission came to this country... we cannot help thinking that the policy followed by this mission in matters of education is a danger to us and especially our children. We are sorry to say that we have missed much of the benefits of Christian education. We believe that radical changes are now necessary and that the go-slow policy of this mission should be dropped.⁶¹⁹

Although these pressures from the residents bore some fruits in the subsequent years of the mission's stay in the district, the mission did not give full attention to the matter that would have brought tremendous reforms in African education. The mission started establishing its first secondary schools in the district in the 1960s. This was long overdue considering that the mission had been in the district for more than sixty years. With these rigid policies of the AIM on African education in the district, the mission's education lagged behind compared to the other missions such as the RCM that came later in the district.

The AIM played a major role in the development of a team of African evangelists, teachers and pastors that would take the evangelization mantle further after the mission's exit from the district.

⁶¹⁷ Tignor, *Colonial Transformation of Kenya*, p. 278.

⁶¹⁸ Ibid.

⁶¹⁹ KNA, MISN 29/2, AIM Machakos Central School Committee Minutes, of 27 November, 1944.

Besides this team, the mission had its own missionaries who were pioneering its work in various parts of the district. As mentioned earlier in the study, the mission did not have a definite source of income to run its activities in the district. Consequently, financial constraints that would lead to the subjection of the mission's team in the district to poor terms of service was inevitable. As Gehman has observed, wages for AIM African teachers and evangelists were far below those paid by the other missions in the district. The poor terms of service for the AIM workers had adverse effects on the mission's work in the district. One of these effects was demoralization leading to defections with an aim of looking for better terms of employment.⁶²⁰

AIM's history in Machakos District is also characterized by strict policies on the converts. Though it is normal for an institution to have its own rules and regulations that aid it to run its affairs, AIM rules and regulations regarding the converts were so strict that they discouraged retention of converts. One form of this strictness were the corrective measures that the AIM initiated to manage the converts who had sinned. In 1915, the missionary in charge of the Mumbuni station, C. F. Johnson, proposed to the Kenya Field Council to introduce a 'Black seat' of shame in all the mission's chapels. This seat was to be occupied by those who had been sanctioned by the local church committee.⁶²¹ With the approval of Johnson's proposal, convicted converts would sit on this seat during Sunday services. For instance, in 1924, one of the AIM converts at the Mukaa station, Mukonyo, was sentenced to sit on the Black seat for one year for taking one of her daughters for circumcision.⁶²² Though this method of disciplining converts was abolished fourteen years later, it not only embarrassed the convicts, but also scared off converts. In addition, the practice was discriminatory, as convicted white missionaries were not subjected to the treatment.

Furthermore, in 1920, when the constitution for the indigenous church was approved, the public confession policy adopted by the mission would deter the locals willing to be Christians from converting for fear of being subjected to such. In this policy, wherever the convert committed a serious offence, the culprit was to express repentance to the missionary in charge and the local church council in which he or she would be reinstated back.⁶²³

⁶²⁰ Frank, *Between Two Mountains*, p. 172.

⁶²¹ Gehman, *From Death to Life*, p. 192.

⁶²² Ibid, p. 194.

⁶²³ Ibid, p. 192.

Although Gehman notes that the method was biblical, it would deter some locals, especially the older generation, from becoming converts. This was common in situations where an old man or woman had committed a sin like adultery and then wanted to confess publicly to the local church council members who were of his or her children's age. This was not only an embarrassment to them but also a sign of disrespect to the old man or woman according to the dictates of Kamba culture.⁶²⁴ Consequently, they would rather refrain from being converts than confessing their offence to a youngster.

AIM put strict measures on its converts concerning their involvement in political activities in the district. Part of the mission's tenure in the district coincided with a period in which the locals were forming political associations in quest for their independence from the British colonial government. To tame this habit, the AIM initiated harsh measures on its converts besides instilling in them the Christian teaching of being obedient to authorities such as the government. No AIM convert was allowed to participate in any form in the activities of these political associations as the mission threatened the converts with excommunication.⁶²⁵ This would deny the locals their right to fight for their independence which had been compromised not only by the mission but also by the colonial government.

One of the ways in which a resident would become a full member of AIM in Machakos District was through baptism. Besides being a full member of the mission, the convert was given a Christian name, which also gave him a status among his or her peers back in the village. However, the conditions set by the mission for the acquisition of this membership were too strict for some of the locals to achieve, hence the low number of baptized converts. For instance, in the early years of the mission in the district, no convert would be baptized if he or she did not know how to read the word of God.⁶²⁶ This meant that for a convert to qualify for baptism, he or she also had to attend the literacy classes offered by the mission in its schools. Consequently, the attendance of AIM elementary schools became a prerequisite for baptism. Besides, the convert had to attend catechism classes and pass exams. This practice contributed to the mission's delayed growth in its early years in the district.

⁶²⁴ Mutiso Mutua, OI, 3/8/2018.

⁶²⁵ Frank, *Between Two Mountains* p. 185.

⁶²⁶ Ibid, p. 190.

The conditions that the mission imposed on polygamists who wished to be baptized were even worse. A polygamist could not be baptised before divorcing the additional wives.⁶²⁷ Though the measure was employed by the mission to curb polygamy, it hindered the mission's growth in the district, as the practicality of the regulation was hard to these polygamists. The main challenge of this mission's stand was that it could not allow a polygamist to put away his wives against their will and without providing for them.⁶²⁸ Consequently, a polygamist willing to be a full member of AIM during this period had to divorce his extra wives who had to be willing to be divorced. This meant that their refusal would hinder the polygamist from being a full member of the mission through baptism.

Regardless of the above restrictions on baptism, the convert was not off the hook even after baptism. This was common in cases where the baptized convert was found having committed sins such as adultery and fornication as they would be suspended from membership of the church until there was evidence of genuine repentance.⁶²⁹ The effectiveness with this regulation was hard to achieve, as the mission could not establish accurate parameters to measure how genuine the repentance was.

The situation was not different when it came to African Christian weddings under the AIM in the district. Firstly, in the early years of the mission in the district, the regulation was that the parties wedding had to have been baptized in addition to being AIM converts. This meant that a man or woman would not marry non-converts regardless of the love bond between them. Consequently, in a scenario where one of the parties was not a convert and was willing to marry a convert, their conversion was mandatory. As a result, they had to go through catechism classes and pass the exams which would often take a long period and thus delay the wedding. In addition, the parties wedding had to identify a best couple that was baptized and qualified for partake of the Lord's Table.⁶³⁰

These strict regulations made many converts who could not meet them unable to have Christian marriages despite the mission's desire to have as many converts having Christian marriages. The situation had been made worse by the registrar general's directive to churches that Christian

⁶²⁷ Ibid, p. 193.

⁶²⁸ Ibid.

⁶²⁹ Ibid.

⁶³⁰ Frank, *Between Two Mountains*, p. 194.

marriages be restricted to churches with permanent buildings and registered for that purpose.⁶³¹ Consequently, by 1913, only the Kangundo and Mumbuni chapels had met these conditions and thus any AIM convert wishing to have a Christian wedding could only hold it in these two AIM stations in the district. This meant that the converts of the locations far from these two mission stations such as Mbooni, Nzau, Matiliku, Mukaa and Mbitini among others had to travel to Mumbuni so as to get the service. This barred many converts from having Christian weddings and thus eligible to enjoy some privileges within the church such as the local church leadership during this period.

5.3 AIM Struggles against Kamba Hostility

When the AIM established itself in Machakos District in 1895, it came into contact with a new group of people whose ways of life were different from those of the missionaries. These differences were language and art, music, traditions, customs, values, practices and religion among others. Consequently, AIM intended to transform the ways of life of these people to conform to the Western culture. However, in the process of transforming the lives conflicts between these two groups were bound to rise. The conflicts greatly influenced the growth and development of the mission in the district.

One form of hostility that the mission faced regarded the settlement of the mission in the interior of the district. The physical appearance of these white missionaries was strange to the inhabitants of Nzau area as few of them had had past contacts with whites. This ranged from the colour of their skin to their dressing codes that differed with that of the locals. Consequently, this created fear and suspicion among the Nzau Akamba who were afraid of welcoming the whites to their territory. Fuelled by this were the activities of the Kamba traditional leaders such as Syombesa, a Kamba from Nzau area whose perpetual warnings to the Akamba regarding the whites resulted in the mission having difficulties in settling in the Nzau area.⁶³² Thirty-six years later when the mission returned to the area to revive its missionary activities, the locals still resented the mission's attempt to establish itself again in the area. One way in which the locals did this was denying the mission suitable land to erect a building. Despite the area having suitable sites fit to erect a building for missionary work, the residents gave the mission a rocky site for the erection of a church

⁶³¹ Ibid, p. 167.

⁶³² Frank, *Between Two Mountains*, p. 40.

building.⁶³³ This was meant to discourage the mission from re-settling in Nzau. Regardless of this rocky site, the mission managed to erect a small chapel for worship in 1932 that exists up to date.

After the initial settling of Nzau and the subsequent opening of another station at Sakai, the Kamba hostility against the mission continued to feature in the mission's activities in the district. The establishment of the Sakai station was characterized by hostility by the locals who did not want the mission's presence in the area. As Scott wrote in his diary when he visited the area:

No one seemed to want us, and the chiefs kept passing us on, on to the other until I got tired...the Wakamba promised to fight us... a noisy crowd assembled, and they talked loud enough to frighten anyone that was inclined to feel that way...⁶³⁴

Despite this overwhelming hostility, Scott finally managed to facilitate the erection of a building in the location. The days that followed were characterized by frequent threats to the missionary in charge, Willis Hotchkiss, who wrote:

Opposition of the people was very bitter for the first few months, and I saw many trying experiences ... Several times I was threatened with death if I did not leave 'at once'; they threatened to tear down my house, and finally as a last resort tried to starve me out by withholding all food supplies for nearly a month, but through it all His tender compassion failed not.⁶³⁵

This hostility played a major role in the subsequent closure of the station in September 1897.

At the Kilungu station, Scott faced opposition from the moment he stepped in the area when he met a group of men who rejected his initial attempts to camp near one of the Kamba traditional shrines.⁶³⁶ As a result, Scott was forced to relocate to another site in Kilungu where he finally managed to facilitate the erection of a shelter for missionary settlement. Similar situations were experienced by the mission in the establishment of the Kangundo, Mbooni and Mumbuni stations.

Besides the locals' opposition to the mission's attempt to establish stations in the district in the early years, there were other instances where the locals would deny the mission land to erect prayer houses and schools. For instance, by 1941, the mission had established an elementary school in Mbitini in a plot whose owner was Nzeke Munasya. The mission occupied this plot on a leasehold

⁶³³ Jonathan Kalii, OI, 17/8/2019.

⁶³⁴ Frank, *Between Two Mountains*, p. 41.

⁶³⁵ Gehman, *The African Inland Mission*, p. 121.

⁶³⁶ Frank, *Between Two Mountains*, p. 43.

basis. However, as the mission was impacting the area through the provision of Western education, the Nzeke Munasya refused to give more lease for the AIM school on his land. When the mission sought the intervention of the LNC in the matter, the council agreed that the school had no right to be there.⁶³⁷

Consequently, the mission closed down the school, hampering its efforts to influence the Mbitini area with Western education. A similar case arose in 1945 when the mission wanted to erect a church and a school in a two-acre plot in Kivani in Kilungu. Despite the LNC agreeing to give the mission this plot to erect structures for its activities in the area in 1935, the owner Joseph Mutiso later changed his mind and denied the mission the plot.⁶³⁸ This move negatively affected the activities of the mission in the area, as the mission had to look for an alternative that often delayed its development in the area. Five years later, the mission wanted to erect a prayer house at Kilili in Nzau, in which Kinyili Muli gave the mission land for the purpose. However, this did not happen as his father barred him from giving out the land.⁶³⁹ In the following year, the mission wanted to erect a church building at Kiteng'ei in Iveti location. However, the owner Nzau wa Kalelo refused to give his land to the mission.⁶⁴⁰

In 1953, a similar case occurred in the AIM Matungulu church. The sons of Kikuvi wa Ngotho, the owner of the land at Matungulu where the mission had already established a church building were demanding their land back despite the mission having occupied the land for more than thirty two years.⁶⁴¹ These incidents show how some Machakos Akamba were hostile towards the mission's activities in the district. Although the mission would seek for alternatives in such instances, this hostility delayed the mission's expansion in the district.

Another kind of hostility expressed towards the AIM by the Machakos Akamba was in the form of ostracism. Some of the converts who had embraced the mission's activities in the district would be rejected by the community, especially in the areas where the mission's initiatives were being rejected. One of the victims of this ostracism among the early converts was Josiah Munyaka Kivanguli of Kangundo who had embraced the activities of the AIM in the Kangundo area by

⁶³⁷ KNA, DC/MKS/17/8, Land for Missions, 1941.

⁶³⁸ KNA, DC/MKS/3/133, Land for Missions, 1945.

⁶³⁹ KNA, DC/MKS/3/133, Land for Missions, 1951.

⁶⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁶⁴¹ KNA, LND 16/7/1, Norman Johnson to DC, 8 June 1953.

1912. His new lifestyle after conversion became an object of ridicule by his immediate family members to an extent of being threatened by his father of death if he continued associating with the AIM missionaries stationed at Kangundo.⁶⁴²

John Maveke Ntheketha, another early AIM convert in Matungulu area also underwent rejection by his immediate family because of his conversion to Christianity. As Somba has observed, when Maveke embraced the AIM Christianity, his father cursed him and chased him from home.⁶⁴³ This shows how his immediate family members were against attempts by AIM to convert the Machakos Akamba to Christianity. Worse still were the Akamba who had embraced AIM education in the district. This lot was despised and looked down upon by the rest of the Machakos Akamba who were anti-AIM. Their new lifestyle often became an object of derision, persecution, animosity, hostility and segregation. Their extended families considered them lost and renegade.⁶⁴⁴ This form of hostility often had a negative influence on the expansion of the mission in the district. It often discouraged the locals who were willing to embrace the initiatives of the AIM in the district for fear of being segregated by the rest of the community. Consequently, it would cost the mission a lot of mobilization in order to overcome the challenge that in some instances would take a long period of time before significant results could be attained.

5.4 AIM and Environmental Challenges

Environmental factors have an influence on the activities taking place in a given locality. While some of these influences are positive, others often have a negative influence on the activities that are taking place in the locality in question because of the challenges they are likely to pose to these activities. The AIM activities in Machakos District were highly influenced by the environment of the district. While some of these physical environmental factors did not last for long, others lasted for a long period, thus influencing the mission's initiatives in the district?

One of these environmental factors was the tropical diseases that were negatively influencing the mission's work in the district from time to time. The effect of tropical diseases on the AIM missionaries in the district started as early as the missionaries were arriving in their first destination in Nzau. During this period, the whole AIM crew was sick with malaria, something that forced them to delay for a week to recuperate before proceeding to Nzau where they were to establish

⁶⁴² Somba, *Wananchi Mashujaa wa Imani*, p. 15-16.

⁶⁴³ Ibid, p. 18.

⁶⁴⁴ Frank, *Between Two Mountains*, p. 75.

their first post.⁶⁴⁵ On arrival and the subsequent arrangements made for settling down, almost all the AIM missionaries were in it again fighting for their lives because of infections. As Frank says:

Soon this group of neophytes to Africa was experiencing chronic, debilitating bouts of fever, for which they had no effective treatment. At any time, three of the seven missionaries were confined to bed due to debilitating fever.⁶⁴⁶

Though all the missionaries recovered from this fever, the never ending illnesses among the missionaries had adverse effects on the future of the AIM in Machakos District. These effects include deaths and repatriations. Among the missionaries who lost their lives as a result of these tropical diseases Peter Cameron Scott, who died in 1896 suffering from Black Water Fever Jacob Toole and Thomas Allan who died in 1898 from malaria, Jean Fowler who died in 1903 and William Wright who died in 1918. These deaths not only affected the work that was being done by these individual missionaries, but also their close acquaintances as some of them got frustrated and demoralized and they left the mission field. For instance, as mentioned earlier in this study, when Scott died in Nzaui the rest of the family members got discouraged and left the missionary field. Similarly, when Thomas Allen died in Nzaui in 1898, his wife Mrs Evelyn Thomas, left for home.⁶⁴⁷ William Bangert also left the mission field in 1898 because of his deteriorating health.

Besides deaths and repatriations, tropical diseases also led to the closure of some of the establishments that the AIM had started in Machakos District. For instance, since the establishment of the mission, Kilungu area was its most preferred area of influence in the district. However, despite the mission's desire to own a station in this area, it was unable to fully establish itself there because of susceptibility to tropical diseases.

Another environmental factor that challenged the activities of AIM in Machakos District was drought and famine. For a long time, the district has been associated with drought and famine. For instance, Gehman has observed that history among the Akamba has been punctuated by thirty-nine dreadful famines between 1791 and 1980.⁶⁴⁸ The first time for the AIM missionaries to encounter this phenomenon was the devastating drought of 1898 to 1899. This famine that was commonly known as *Yua ya Mvunga*, adversely affected the activities of the mission in the district to an extent

⁶⁴⁵ Ibid, p. 29.

⁶⁴⁶ Ibid, p. 37.

⁶⁴⁷ Ibid, p. 53.

⁶⁴⁸ Gehman, *From Death to Life*, p. 39.

of a complete closure of the mission in the district.⁶⁴⁹ When the famine started, the Kangundo station was the only surviving AIM station in the district. The missionary in charge Willis Hotchkiss was forced to abandon his evangelistic activities to feed the starving Kangundo population. When Hotchkiss' successor William Bangert arrived in the Kangundo station in 16 October 1898 accompanied by Charles Hurlburt, he noted:

Go in any direction and you are bound to stumble onto dead bodies...it is getting so awful that I really dread to leave the station, even for the plain. The drawn, agonized look on these faces plainly speaks of horrors of a death of starvation. The locals with few exceptions are existing entirely on a little root berry about the size of a pea, which they dig out of the sand and grows under a kind of weed. Where these are to be found, you will see hundreds of pitiable specimens imaginable, poor, thin, bony men, women and children with mouths besmeared with dirt squatting about digging out these roots and eating them as fast as they are found. Thus, they manage to keep body and soul together for a time, but eventually are obliged to give up the struggle and die. You will notice them growing thinner and thinner and finally miss them entirely...⁶⁵⁰

With famine decimating the population that AIM missionaries wanted to convert to Christianity, there was little the mission could do to advance their evangelism agenda in the district during this period. Consequently, the 1898 to 1899 famine hindered the activities of AIM as few of the starving residents could pay attention to the mission's evangelistic activities. Besides, the famine caused numerous deaths, leading to a reduction of the potential population that the mission would evangelize to. An estimate of twenty to twenty five per cent of the Kamba population died because of this famine.⁶⁵¹ This famine also created the problem of having many orphans in the district, which was an extra burden to the mission.

The subsequent droughts and famines that occurred in the district had a negative influence on the mission's activities, which included the closure of some of the mission's establishments. For instance, the AIM elementary school in Iiyuni in Kalama location was closed down in 1942 following the drought conditions that hit the location during the year.⁶⁵² This temporarily stalled down the mission's attempts to provide the locals with formal education whose demand throughout the district was increasing. In other instances, the mission found it hard to establish itself in some

⁶⁴⁹ Frank, *Between Two Mountains*, p. 40.

⁶⁵⁰ Gehman, *From Death to Life*, p. 41-42.

⁶⁵¹ Frank, *Between Two Mountains*, p. 70.

⁶⁵² KNA, DC/MKS/17/8, Land for Missions, 1943.

areas of the district due to drought conditions. This was prevalent in areas such as Kivauni where the mission's attempt to establish a prayer house in 1942 stalled due to water scarcity.⁶⁵³

Besides the drought factor, the AIM missionaries came to Machakos District at a time when there were no well-established transport networks. Though the construction of the Kenya-Uganda railway eased transport of the AIM missionaries between the Kenyan coast and the district, the railway could not meet all the commuter needs of the missionaries as it passed through the borderline of Machakos and Kajiado Districts and not in the interior where it could ease transport. There were no well-developed roads in the interior of the district except the caravan routes that had been used by Kamba traders over the years. The rest were footpaths that were created for herding, hunting and gathering activities in the interior of the district. Consequently, this lack of a well-developed transport system posed a great challenge to the activities of AIM in the district.

The co-ordination and the subsequent establishment of the first seven AIM stations was mainly done either on foot or through the use of pack animals which was often a cumbersome engagement. For instance, when Peter Cameron Scott was arranging for the opening of the Kangundo station, he would make frequent trips between Nzau and Kangundo on the undulating, rocky and sand pathways across the interior, which was often an exhausting experience.⁶⁵⁴ The same was very common to the other AIM missionaries who were engaging in evangelistic activities in the district such as preaching and identifying sites for establishment of outposts. In addition, the AIM converts who were seeking for the services at the mission stations such as baptism and Holy Communion faced this challenge of travelling over long distances. As one of the early AIM converts from Mbooni recounts:

Walking from here (Mbooni) to Mumbuni bare foot was often a long journey but we would manage to travel to the station and back to Mbooni within a day.⁶⁵⁵

Besides the long distances, the physical terrain of some of the parts of the district often made the journeys long and stressful. For instance, the hilly Kilungu terrain (where the AIM had interests since its arrival in the district) was really difficult. Scott recounted:

⁶⁵³ Ibid.

⁶⁵⁴ Frank, *Between Two Mountains*, p. 50.

⁶⁵⁵ Aaron Nguta, OI, 4/8/2018.

I found it a stiff, hard climb but finally got to the top...my legs feel pretty shaky after the climb...⁶⁵⁶

The same was true of the Mbooni hills where the mission had established a mission station and several outposts. As early as 1909, George Rhoad, the pioneer AIM missionary in Mbooni had to shelf his initial evangelization ambitions and started engaging the inhabitants in road construction activities to make the region accessible from both Kilungu and Mumbuni areas where the mission was establishing itself.⁶⁵⁷ Although engagement in these non-evangelistic activities such as road construction often played a major role in winning converts and opening the area to the mission's activities, it often consumed a lot of time, influencing the pace at which the mission was expanding in the district. In addition, the construction of these road networks did not fully solve the transport problems of the time since there were no vehicles, which would at least aid in shortening the distances that the missionaries would cover as they moved from one area of the district to another.

Coupled with this transport challenge were the dangers that wild animals posed to the AIM missionaries as they moved from one area to another in the district in a bid to woo the locals to Christianity. Firstly, the AIM missionaries arrived in the district at a time when the man-eating lions of Tsavo were a threat to people passing through the Tsavo area to the district especially before the construction of the Kenya-Uganda railway.⁶⁵⁸ Besides these man-eating lions, the interior of Machakos District was full of other dangerous wild animals and thus a threat to the mission's activities in the district. Furthermore, as mentioned earlier in the study, the AIM missionaries started their activities in the district at a time when footpaths were the main forms of road transport. In some of these footpaths, it was common to come across life threatening wild animals such as snakes, hyenas, buffalos and leopards which would often threaten the missionaries' lives.

5.5 AIM and the Challenges Posed by Kamba Cultural Practices

The establishment of the AIM in Machakos District and the subsequent conversion of part of the population to Christianity left the converts in a state of conflict between their past life and the new form of life that the new religion was propagating. Christianity was against many of Kamba cultural practices. Consequently, converts were expected to immediately abandon all cultural practices that the mission was against, something that was difficult for most of the locals. For

⁶⁵⁶ Frank, *Between Two Mountains*, p. 44.

⁶⁵⁷ KNA, DC/MKS/1/1/1, Machakos District Annual Report, 1908-1909.

⁶⁵⁸ Gehman, *From Death to Life*, p. 40.

instance, as mentioned in chapter two of this study, before the coming of the AIM missionaries in the district, the Machakos Akamba were strong believers in spirits and ancestral worship. These spirits played a major role in the religious lives of the Machakos Akamba including helping them to solve most of the problems that were beyond human capability. With the introduction of a new religion by the AIM missionaries in the district, the converts were expected to shun all forms of association with their community's spirits. Although this would make them acceptable in the new religion, it made them objects of ridicule by their immediate community members who viewed them as outcasts.⁶⁵⁹ Besides, these new converts found themselves struggling to conform to the spiritual life of the new religion and thus drifting to their old ways of worshiping their traditional spirits was inevitable.

Among the Machakos Akamba, the taking of oaths was a common practice such as during dispute resolution as a way of binding the oath takers to be truthful in the whole dispute resolution process. This Kamba oath (*kithitu*) was a charm put in an antelope horn and was believed to be disastrous especially to those who went against its ethos.⁶⁶⁰ However, the AIM missionaries forbade their converts from taking this oath either in their family or in the colonial government law courts but instead used the bible in such circumstances.

This teaching was quite challenging to the convert whose immediate family members had not embraced the mission's teachings. For instance, during the oathing sessions in the convert's family, the convert was required to take the *kithitu* oath that was against his beliefs as the non-converts rarely recognized the bible as another swearing tool. In cases where the convert refused to take the *kithitu* oath, then he was considered guilty of the offence in question even if he was truthfully not.⁶⁶¹ On the other hand, if the convert took the *kithitu* oath and the mission got to know, then he would be subjected to the mission's ruthless disciplinary systems which could lead to excommunication from the church.

As indicated in chapter two of the study, before the coming of the AIM missionaries in Machakos District, the Machakos Akamba had well developed forms of medical care which addressed both physical and psychological problems.⁶⁶² The community also believed that not all diseases had a

⁶⁵⁹ Somba, *Wananchi Mashujaa wa Imani*, p. 15.

⁶⁶⁰ Ndoti Musoko, OI, 12/12/2018.

⁶⁶¹ Kimeu Mutua, OI, 13/12/2018

⁶⁶² Mutiso Mutua, OI, 3/8/2018.

natural cause. While the diseases that had a natural cause could be treated by the use of herbs, the ones that challenged the Kamba natural medicine were treated as having some spiritual implication. Consequently, religion would play a major role in the treatment of these ailments. In some cases, the patients would offer a sacrifice to a higher order such as the ancestors so that their health could be restored.⁶⁶³

With the introduction of Christianity, converts found themselves at crossroads as regards their use of traditional medicine as the mission's teachings were against some of the Kamba traditional medical practices such as the offering of sacrifices to ancestral spirits to protect individuals from various illnesses. Though the mission provided alternative forms of medical care through the establishment of health facilities in the various parts of the district, these facilities would not satisfactorily address all the healthcare needs of the people. Consequently, the reliance of the converts on the traditional medicine which in many ways had aspects of the Kamba traditional religion inculcated in it was inevitable despite Christian teachings. This prevented converts from full adherence to Christianity due to its inability to fully provide reliable alternatives. Consequently, converts found themselves practising synchronism.

The Kamba traditional religion played a major role in all the rites of passage of the community. Rites of passage such as birth and child naming, initiation, marriage and death would not be complete without the integration of the Kamba traditional religion. For instance, as mentioned in chapter two of this study, a new-born child among the Akamba was not considered a real human being, but a spirit (*kiimu*) until some rituals were performed to make the new-born a real human being.⁶⁶⁴ While these religious practices were normal to all the members of the community, those who embraced Christianity were expected to refrain from traditional religious practices during the rites of passage ceremonies.⁶⁶⁵ In addition, the mission did not immediately provide practical alternatives for some of these practices. As a result, the converts found themselves still practising some of these religious activities that were against Christian teachings. Consequently, the mission's attempts to convert the locals to full Christians was almost impossible, as the mission did not provide viable alternatives forms to some of the rituals that it was barring its converts from practising.

⁶⁶³ Ndeti, *Elements of Akamba Social Life*, p. 138.

⁶⁶⁴ Ann Kaindi, OI, 14/8/2018.

⁶⁶⁵ Benson Nzyoka, OI, 6/8/2018.

Among the Machakos Akamba, polygamy was a normal practice. However, with the coming of the AIM missionaries into the district, the converts were not allowed to continue with this practice. By 1903, the mission's stand on polygamy was that those who converted to Christianity while still polygamous would not be forced to put away their extra wives. As the mission's superintendent wrote:

A large majority of the mission feels that the only right basis is to insist that converts take no more wives, if young that they marry but one, but that wives shall not be put away unless they are willing to go and marry other men...while we shall set premium on monogamy by withholding official privileges from those who have more than one wife.⁶⁶⁶

Although the mission's policy on polygamy in the early 1900s gave the polygamous an opportunity to be converts, they would not enjoy full benefits of church membership. One of the mission's privileges that the polygamists would not enjoy as mentioned earlier was baptism. This policy which was passed in 1908 during the AIM annual missionary conference was a big blow to the polygamists who wished to be full members of AIM.⁶⁶⁷ This is because their inability to access baptism meant that they would also not be allowed to take the Holy Communion or have church weddings, as baptism was a prerequisite for the latter two.

This in turn posed a challenge to the mission's progress in the district as the convert polygamists would feel side-lined by the mission and see no need of converting if could not be allowed to be full members of the church. The only way they would enjoy these privileges is when, in the case of polygamous men, the extra wives decide to leave, because as mentioned earlier, the mission could also not allow these convert polygamists to divorce their extra wives for fear of the mission becoming unpopular in the polygamy-dominated community.⁶⁶⁸

There were cases where the extra wives decided to leave voluntarily or amicably after agreeing with their husbands. This was common where the polygamist man had two or three wives.⁶⁶⁹ Although this exit gave the initially polygamous man an opportunity to be a full member of AIM, not forgetting the privileges he was bound to enjoy afterwards, it broke the family unity that the polygamous family was enjoying previously. Furthermore, the man's social status in the

⁶⁶⁶ Gehman, *From Death to Life*, p. 63.

⁶⁶⁷ Ibid, p.192.

⁶⁶⁸ Ibid, p. 63.

⁶⁶⁹ Kivuva Muange, OI, 22/8/2018.

community dropped as many wives meant many children, who were a status symbol in the community besides being a labour resource.

Beer drinking among the Machakos Akamba also posed a challenge to the expansion of AIM in the district. As mentioned in chapter two of this study, the consumption of traditional beer accompanied many social activities in the community. Birth, naming, initiation and marriage ceremonies would never be complete without the integration of beer taking in these ceremonies. Besides this, it was a legitimate leisure activity for the mature men in the community. As one of the informants recounts:

It was normal for the older men (*atumia*) to engage in beer taking (*kuthenga*). They would take breakfast and leave the women and children doing the family chores to go for beer taking and return in the evening.⁶⁷⁰ Though this was a normal and common practice among the Machakos Akamba, AIM missionaries preached against it to their converts, some of whom had been beer drinkers for many years.⁶⁷¹ This meant that the *atumia* converts would leave beer taking for leisure. They would also not participate in the beer taking traditional ceremonies during birth, naming, initiation and wedding. While this made them staunch followers of the mission, it also brought division in the community as these beer drinking sessions helped to strengthen bonds among the partakers. In addition, the converts found engaged in these beer drinking sessions, which in some instances they found themselves into but not necessarily drinking, risked being excommunicated from the church.⁶⁷²

Male and female circumcision among the Machakos Akamba was an important element of Kamba culture. While the AIM in Machakos District recognized the value of this kind of initiation, it was against some of the practices associated with the practice. Among the initiation practices which the mission preached against in the district despite its legitimacy among the Machakos Akamba was female circumcision.⁶⁷³ In addition, as mentioned earlier, the mission was against the Kamba religious practices inculcated into initiation ceremonies. The mission was also against the way the male circumcision ceremonies were being conducted in the district. Consequently, the mission initiated reforms on how the initiation was to be conducted especially among converts. In these reforms, the circumcision of the male adherents was to be left in the hands of the mission but not the Akamba traditional initiation officials.⁶⁷⁴

⁶⁷⁰ Masila Katua, OI, 22/8/2018.

⁶⁷¹ KNA, DC/MKS/1/1/22, Machakos District Annual Report, 1926.

⁶⁷² Patrick Mulwa at Mumbuni on 20/8/2018.

⁶⁷³ Frank, *Between Two Mountains*, p. 192.

⁶⁷⁴ Gehman, *From Death to Life*, p. 192.

Though these reforms in initiation by the mission were alternative forms that the mission provided to its converts so as to go through this rite of passage, some converts who adopted the mission's way of initiating boys would feel that they had not gone through the complete process as the community wished them to. The converts' children would be ridiculed by their peers as they were seen as incomplete men in the case of boys.⁶⁷⁵ Worse still were the converts' daughters who had not embraced the Kamba traditional female circumcision. Besides them being laughed at by their peers who had been circumcised, they would find it hard to get husbands outside the church circles as female circumcision was a pre-requisite for marriage for traditional Machakos Akamba.⁶⁷⁶

5.6 Summary

This chapter has discussed the challenges that AIM faced in Machakos District in its endeavours to expand by the spreading of Christianity, Western education and healthcare among other ways. It has shown that AIM faced numerous challenges in the district that influenced the mission's growth in the years that it was influential in the district. In the first part of the chapter, the internal challenges that hindered the mission's activities in the district are discussed. This part shows that logistical problems such as the missionaries' inadequate knowledge of the language, culture and climate among other factors greatly posed a challenge to the mission's activities in the district.

In addition, challenges such as the frequent missionary entry-exit problem and the consequent shortage of personnel, internal wrangles among the missionaries, as well as shortage of finances greatly hampered the activities of the mission in the district. The later part of the chapter has examined the other non-logistical challenges that influenced the activities of the AIM in Machakos district. It has shown how hostility to the AIM missionaries influenced the growth of the mission in the district. This part has also examined the influence of cultural and environmental factors on the activities of AIM in Machakos District. From this examination, it has been realized that the Kamba culture as well as other environmental factors such as prevalent droughts and famines, slowed the growth of the mission in the district.

⁶⁷⁵ Kivuva Muange, OI, 22/8/2018.

⁶⁷⁶ Mutiso Mutua, OI, 3/8/2018.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Overview

This chapter discusses the summary, conclusions and recommendations of this study. The first part of the chapter gives an overview of the content of the study. This includes the problem that was under investigation, the objectives of the study, the theory applied by the study as well as the research methodology. The second part of the chapter gives the conclusions that the study was able to come up with based on the objectives of the study. The third part of the chapter gives recommendations for further study in areas where the study was not able to do an extensive exploration.

6.2 Summary

This study was an historical analysis of AIM and the social transformation it caused in Machakos District of Kenya from 1895 to 1971. The study was based on a number of objectives. Firstly, the study intended to examine the various elements of the Machakos Akamba social life before the coming of AIM missionaries in the district. Secondly, the study sought to outline the origins and expansion of AIM in Machakos District. Further, the study wanted to assess the impact of AIM in influencing social change in Machakos District between 1895 and 1971. Finally, the study analysed the challenges that faced AIM in Machakos District in the process of initiating the social developments that the mission oversaw in the district.

The study employed the structural functionalism theory, which views a society as a system of interrelated and interdependent parts working together to maintain stability in a society. This is because before the coming of AIM missionaries into the district, the Machakos Akamba had some degree of social stability. With the influences brought by the AIM missionaries, the society became unstable. Consequently, it started working out for the achievement of the previously experienced stability even after adopting and integrating the new social developments due to the mission's activities in the society.

The study was based on the historical research design and was carried out in Machakos District of Kenya. The study constituted the local residents as the target population. Additionally, the purposive sampling technique was applied in identifying key informants in the district. Data

collection instruments such as interview and observation schedules were used in this study. To collect primary data, primary sources including archival documents and in-depth oral interviews with informants were used. To analyse the data, analytical frames such as theoretical reflections, content analysis, documentary reviews and chronological analysis were used in the interpretation of data. The research also observed all ethical considerations regarding the study.

6.3 Conclusion

In relation to the first objective, the study concluded that before the coming of AIM missionaries to Machakos District, the Machakos Akamba had a distinct social life that was to a greater extent free from external influences especially from the outside world. They had their own religion which besides helping them find meaning in their existence, helped them deal with many matters related to the supernatural. This religion was one of their main sources of pride and gave the locals a sense of belonging. The study also noted that the Machakos Akamba were well organized in overseeing the growth and development of the individual by devising various rites of passage that the individual would go through from infancy to death.

Besides the rites of passage, this study has also observed that the Machakos Akamba had a developed healthcare system that mainly revolved around the traditional healers who besides using plants to treat the various ailments affecting the locals, they would also integrate religion into the treatment of the ailments. Furthermore, the study has noted that before the arrival of AIM missionaries at Machakos District, the Machakos Akamba had an education system that helped the society to socialise its people on various matters of importance to the community for full integration. Besides the above, the study has also observed that the Machakos Akamba also had their own conception and management of time, architectural designs, modes of dressing, their own ways of celebrating music and dance, language and own ways of maintaining law and order in their society which in most cases were free from the influence of the outside world.

Out of the second objective, the study concluded that the AIM expanded widely in Machakos District from 1895 to 1971. This expansion was mainly in the form of the establishment of mission stations, which were often supplemented by outstations in the form of churches and prayer houses. Besides the mission stations and prayer houses, the mission expanded through the construction of institutions of learning such as elementary, intermediate and secondary schools as well as institutions of higher learning. Further, the mission expanded in the provision of western healthcare

services in the district through the establishment of a number of health centres where the Machakos Akamba could be treated for various ailments. In addition, the mission oversaw the development of various transport networks in the district through the construction of roads that eased the movement and interaction among the Machakos Akamba and with their neighbours. Although this expansion was at a slow pace in the first three decades of the mission's tenure in the district, there was a substantial expansion in the last four decades of the mission's existence in Machakos District. Because of the many institutions that the mission was running in the district by 1971, this study concludes that the AIM was one of the most Western affiliated institutions that had dominated the lives of the Machakos Akamba by 1970.

In relation to the third objective, the study concludes that AIM played a major role in influencing the social life of the Machakos Akamba between 1895 and 1971. The mission influenced the Kamba approaches to religion in the district by introducing Christianity. This was mainly through the establishment of centres of evangelization such as mission stations, prayer houses, schools and even health centres. Consequently, by the time the mission was merged with the AIC in 1971, Christianity, dominated the lives of the Machakos Akamba and thus a social transformation. Besides the introduction of the new religion, this study has observed that the AIM influenced the Machakos Akamba rites of passage. This influence took place in two main ways. Firstly, the mission amended some of the Kamba rites of passage by ensuring that they conformed to the teachings of Christianity which they introduced to the Machakos Akamba. For instance, the mission influenced the Machakos Akamba adherents' ways of naming their children by introducing the Christian way of naming. Secondly, the mission introduced new rites of passage to the Akamba it had converted to Christianity. These new rites of passage included baptism and the Holy Communion.

Besides the above social developments, the study observed that AIM also introduced Western education in the district. The mission mainly achieved this through the establishment of formal learning institutions in the form of elementary, intermediate, secondary and higher institutions of learning. Consequently, by the time the mission was in the process of merging with the AIC in 1971, it was the leading provider of formal education in the district. Further, this study concludes that the AIM played a major role in developing the healthcare systems among the Machakos Akamba through the introduction of Western modes of treating ailments in the district. By establishing health centres in the district, many Machakos Akamba were able to learn on the

reliance of new ways of treating ailments besides the ones they would get from the traditional Kamba healers. The study also found that the AIM influenced the management and the conception of time among the Machakos Akamba. This was through the introduction of new ways of conceiving time that as a result were integrated in the Machakos Akamba. In addition, the study has noted that the introduction of various activities and programmes by the AIM in Machakos District influenced how the residents who embraced the mission's initiatives would spend their time.

This study also established that the AIM influenced the development of language and communication in Machakos District. This development took various forms, which included the transformation of the locals' language, Kikamba, through the development of its written form. This was mainly achieved through the production of Kikamba written materials as well as teaching the language in the mission established institutions such as schools. Besides the development of the written forms of Kikamba, the mission introduced new languages such as the English to the locals which not only helped to break down the communication barriers which existed between the missionaries and the locals, but also opened communication between the Machakos Akamba and the outside world. The developments in language because of the mission's initiatives further improved ways of communication and interaction among the Machakos Akamba. The use of new and improved methods of passing information such as the use of letters developed among the locals hence boosting communication in the district. This was coupled with the improvement in transport networks by the AIM in some parts of the district.

In relation to the fourth objective, the study concluded that the AIM experienced numerous challenges as it embarked on transforming the Kamba society in Machakos District. These challenges ranged from the internal organization of the mission to external challenges. While the internal organizational challenges revolved around issues such as inadequate trained personnel, never ending missionary exits, and disagreements among the missionaries, among others, the external challenges involved matters such as Kamba hostility and prevalent tropical diseases, leading to deaths, among others. This study has established that these challenges played a prime role in influencing the pace at which the mission was expanding in the district. While most of these challenges were prevalent in the early years of the mission in the district, there was a gradual reduction of the challenges in the later years of the mission in the district. This explains why the mission's growth in its later years in the district was faster than in the earlier ones.

6.4 Recommendations

In the course of the study, there were new insights that emerged which could not be addressed adequately in this study. Consequently, further research can be directed to a number of areas. Firstly, little research is available on the rise of independent Christian groups that were born out of AIM in Machakos District. Despite the rise of these splinter groups such as the ABC, GFBC and the GNCA among others, there is little research on them. Secondly, the influence of other missionary groups such as the Roman Catholic HGM and other Roman Catholic affiliated groups in Machakos District needs to be studied. This is because this influence has not been studied in a significant manner despite the Roman Catholic Church being one of the missionary competitors of the AIM in the district. Further, there is a need to study the influence of the AIC among the Machakos Akamba after the exit of AIM from the district. This is because the church continued to intensify its influences among the residents of the district yet there are no substantial studies of the influences.

SOURCES

A. LIST OF INFORMANTS

NO.	NAME	AGE IN YEARS	DATE OF INTERVIEW	OCCUPATION	RESIDENCE
1.	KAINDI, ANN	81	14/8/2018	FORMER AIM LEADER	MUTITUNI
2.	KALII, JONATHAN	103	17/8/2018	FORMER AIM LEADER	KALAMBA
3.	KAMANDI, RUTH	83	2/8/2018	AIC MEMBER	KANGUNDO
4.	KAMULA , ISAAC	86	20/10/2018	FORMER HEADMAN	KASIKEU
5.	KATUA, MASILA	86	22/8/2018	FORMER HEADMAN	MATILIKU
6.	KAULA, KASIVI	79	16/8/2018	PEASANT	MBITINI
7.	KIAMBA, JOYCE	102	20/10/2018	AIM/AIC MEMBER	KASIEKU
8.	KIETI, NICODEMUS	71		PEASANT	KILINGU
9.	KIETI, PROTUS	91	14/8/2018	FORMER ASSISTANT CHIEF	MUKAA
10.	KIETI, RACHEAL	77	14/8/2018	AIM/AIC MEMBER	MUKAA
11.	KIILI, KITHOME	92	17/8/2018	FORMER HEADMAN	KALAMBA
12.	KILUVA, MARTIN	81	15/12/2018	FORMER HEADMAN	KILUNGU
13.	KIMU, MUIA	74	14/8/2018	FORMER HEADMAN	MBITINI
14.	KYEVA, JEREMIAH	81	6/8/2018	FORMER AIM/AIC MEMBER	MBOONI

15.	KITAVI, MUTHEMBA	103	16/8/2018	PEASANT	MBOONI
16.	KITINGA, BENSON	42	21/8/2018	AIC PASTOR	MUMBUNI
17.	KYAKA, KALOKI	74	3/8/2018	PEASANT	KANGUNDO
18.	KYAKA, KATIWA	91	2/8/2018	PEASANT	KANGUNDO
19.	KYENGO, MARK	71	6/9/2018	PEASANT	KILUNGU
20.	MALITI, CHARLES	79	16/3/2018	FORMER AIC LEADER	MUKAA
21.	MATING'I, JOHNSON	96	21/8/2018	FORMER AIM LEADER	MUMBUNI
22.	MBALUKA, MUOTI	91	16/12/2018	PEASANT	MUKAA
23.	MBITHI, STANLEY	48	27/8/2018	AIC PASTOR	MATILIKU
24.	MBWESA, JONATHAN	80	16/12/2018	AIM/AIC MEMBER	MBITINI
25.	MUANGE, KIVUVA	91	22/8/2018	FORMER HEADMAN	MATILIKU
26.	MUIA, AMBROSE	84	15/8/2018	PEASANT	MUKAA
27.	MUINDI, PIUS	94	16/8/2018	AIM/AIC MEMBER	KILUNGU
28.	MULI, TITUS	65	23/8/2018	AIC SECRETARY	MUMBUNI
29.	MULINGE, JAMES	68	3/8/2018	PEASANT	KANGUNDO
30.	MULINGE, MUTIE	91	17/8/2018	FORMER HEADMAN	KALAMBA
31.	MULONZI, MUTIE	69	14/8/2018	FORMER ASSISTANCE CHIEF	MBITINI
32.	MULWA, DAVID	82	17/9/2018	FORMER HEADMAN	NDOLO
33.	MULWA, PATRICK	68	20/8/2018	AIM/AIC MEMBER	MUMBUNI
34.	MUMBI, BEATRICE	87	2/8/2018	AIC PASTOR	MUMBUNI

35.	MUNEE, MUTHIO	90	3/8/2018	TRADITIONAL HEALTH PRACTITIONER	KANGUNDO
36.	MUNGUTI, PIUS	71	15/12/2018	PEASANT	MBITINI
37.	MUNYAO, ANNE	84	6/8/2018	FORMER AIM LEADER MBOONI	MBOONI
38.	MUSOKO, NDOTI	91	12/12/2018	PEASANT	MBITINI
39.	MUTALA, PATRICK	78	14/8/2018	AIM/AIC MEMBER	MBITINI
40.	MUTETI, PATRICK	71	21/8/2018	FORMER AIC LEADER	MUMBUNI
41.	MUTIE, PAUL	87	13/7/2018	FORMER AIC LEADER	TAWA
42.	MUTISO, KAVATA	92	27/12/2018	PEASANT	MBITINI
43.	MUTISO, MBONDO	69	4/8/2018	AIM/AIC MEMBER	KANGUNDO
44.	MUTUA, MUENDO	76	16/12/2018	AIM/AIC MEMBER	NZIU
45.	MUTUA, MUTISO	120	3/8/2018	FORMER AIM EMPLOYEE	KANGUNDO
46.	MUTUKU, PAUL	86	6/8/2018	FORMER AIM MEMBER	MBOONI
47.	MUTULA, NGEI	67	14/8/2018	AIM/AIC MEMBER	MBITINI
48.	MUTWOTA, JULIUS	68	21/8/2018	FORMER AIM/AIC PASTOR	MACHAKOS TOWN
49.	MWAKA, MARTIN	102	14/8/2018	PEASANT	KILUNGU
50.	MYOVE, MWIKALI	87	14/8/2018	FORMER AIM/AIC LEADER	MUTITUNI

51.	NDETO, MUTHIKE	119	5/8/2018	PEASANT	MBOONI
52.	NDUNDA, FAUSTINE	51	3/9/18	PEASANT	KALAMA
53.	NDUTA, ANN	71	21/8/2018	FORMER AIC LEADER	MUMBUNI
54.	NGINYA, WAUSI	86	14/8/2018	MEDICINE WOMAN	MBITINI
55.	NGINA, CAROLINE	82	13/12/2018	FORMER AIM LEADER	KISAU
56.	NGUTA, AARON	94	4/8/2018	FORMER AIM LEADER MBOONI	MBOONI
57.	NGUTA, SIMEON	107	16/8/2018	FORMER HEADMAN	KILUNGU
58.	NTHALI, AARON	89	17/8/2018	PEASANT	KALAMBA
59.	NZYOKA, BENSON	70	6/8/2018	FORMER AIC LEADER	MBOONI
60.	NZYOKA, MUTAVI	72	4/8/2018	PEASANT	KANGUNDO

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Letter of Introduction

My name is Muia Musyoki, a student at Egerton University. I am currently doing a Master of Arts degree course in History. I am collecting data on the influence of the African Inland Mission on social transformation in Machakos District. This study is important because it intends to examine the impact of the AIM on the Machakos Akamba. I am therefore requesting to interview you concerning this issue.

The data and information collected from you will not be used for any purpose outside the objectives of this study. If at any time you wish to withdraw from participating in this study, you are free to do so. You are also free to ask questions on matters regarding this study which are not clear to you.

I, the undersigned, have understood the foregoing and agree to participate in the study.

Name of the Informant _____

Signature _____ **Date** _____

Appendix II: Interview Schedule for Local Residents

Name _____ Age _____

Sex _____ Occupation _____

Location _____ Place of Residence _____

Date of Interview _____

Interview Questions

1. What were the traditional religious practices of the Akamba like?
2. How were religious teachings among the Akamba perpetuated before the coming of the AIM missionaries?
3. Was participation in the Kamba religious practices optional or compulsory before the coming of the AIM missionaries?
4. What were the main Kamba cultural beliefs and customs before the missionaries came?
5. Did the Akamba believe in a supreme being before the coming of the AIM missionaries?
6. How did you carry out worship practices before the coming of the AIM missionaries?
7. What was the role of magic in the Kamba society before the coming of the AIM missionaries?
8. What were some of the traditional medical practices of the Akamba?
9. How were birth rites conducted before the coming of the AIM missionaries?
10. How were initiation/transitional rites among the Akamba carried out before the arrival of the AIM missionaries?
11. How was puberty handled before the coming of the AIM missionaries?
12. How was punishment and reward carried out among the Akamba before and after the coming of the AIM missionaries?
13. How were the following communal rituals conducted before the coming of these missionaries?
 - a. Rain making rituals?
 - b. Agricultural rites
 - c. Purification rites?
14. How were the following issues addressed in the marriage institution among the Akamba before the coming of the AIM missionaries?
 - a. Marriage ceremony?
 - b. Dowry/ Bride price payment?
 - c. Dispute resolution?

- d. Polygamy?
 - e. Husband's conduct during wife's pregnancy?
 - f. Barrenness?
15. What was the community's stand on extra marital sexual relations?
 16. Did the Akamba belief in life after death before the coming of these missionaries?
 17. Were there any rituals pertaining to death before the coming of the AIM missionaries?
 18. How did missionary activities affect Kamba traditional religious practices?
 19. Were there special days such as days of rest from work before the coming of the AIM missionaries?
 20. How education was conducted among the Akamba of Machakos district before the coming of the AIM missionaries?
 21. What strategies did the AIM missionaries use to evangelize the people of Machakos?
 22. How did the people of Machakos respond to the work of the AIM missionaries?
 23. What challenges did the AIM missionaries encounter during their evangelization work?
 24. Who were the early converts and how did they benefit from the conversion?
 25. Did the AIM missionaries establish any institutions among the Machakos Akamba?

Appendix III: Interview Schedule for Local Administrators

Name _____ **Age** _____

Sex _____ **Occupation** _____

Location _____ **Place of Residence** _____

Date of Interview _____

Interview Questions

- i. How did the AIM conduct their activities in this area?
- ii. Did the activities of the AIM missionaries affect the administration of this area?
- iii. How did the Christian missionaries influence this area?
- iv. In what way did the administrators of this area respond to the missionary activities?
- v. Was there any formal administration in Ukambani before 1895?
- vi. Was there a change in culture and beliefs after the coming of the missionaries?
- vii. Besides evangelization, what else were the missionaries interested in doing within the community?
- viii. How did the residents of this area respond to their work?

Appendix IV: Interview Schedule for Former/Current African Inland Mission Leaders

Name _____ **Age** _____

Sex _____ **Occupation** _____

Location _____ **Place of Residence** _____

Date of Interview _____

Interview Questions

- 1 For how long did you serve as a leader under the AIM?
- 2 What strategies did the AIM missionaries use to reach out to the people of Machakos in their activities?
- 3 What challenges did the AIM missionaries face in this area? How were the challenges overcome?
- 4 How did the people of Machakos District respond to the activities of the AIM?
- 5 How did those who embraced Christianity benefit?
- 6 What strategies did the AIM use to win converts?
- 7 Besides Christianity, how did the people of Machakos District benefit from the activities of the AIM missionaries?
- 8 Was there a difference in the modes of evangelization between the white AIM missionaries and those of their African successors?
- 9 Who were some of the early converts of the AIM?
- 10 Did the AIM missionaries influence the development of Kikamba in any way?
- 11 How did Christian teachings influence morality among the Akamba.
- 12 What was the AIM teaching on punishment and reward on the new converts?
- 13 What was the AIM teaching on life after death?
- 14 What was the source of religious teaching to the new converts?
- 15 Was participation in the AIM religious practices optional or compulsory among the members of the convert's family?
- 16 What impact did Christian teachings have on the Kamba customs and traditions?
- 17 How were the following issues addressed in the marriage institution among the Akamba after the introduction of Christianity by the AIM missionaries?
 - a). Marriage ceremonies?
 - b). Payment of dowry?
 - c). Resolution of disputes?
 - d). Polygamy?

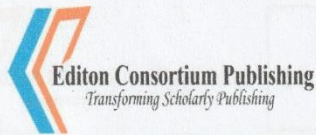
e). Husband's conduct during wife's pregnancy?

APPENDIX V: Observation Schedule for AIM Establishments and Monuments

Name of Establishment	Observations to be made
Early AIM Station at Kangundo	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are there any AIM buildings in the compound? 2. What kind of buildings are they? 3. When were the buildings established? 4. Are there any AIM missionary graves? 5. Are there any other signs of early missionary presence in the area?
Early AIM Station at Kalamba	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are there any AIM buildings in the compound? 2. What kind of buildings are they? 3. When were the buildings established? 4. Are there any AIM missionary graves? 5. Are there any other signs of early missionary presence in the area?
Early AIM Station at Mukaa	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are there any AIM buildings in the compound? 2. What kind of buildings are they? 3. When were the buildings established? 4. Are there any AIM missionary graves? 5. Are there any other signs of early missionary presence in the area?
Early AIM Station at Mbooni	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are there any AIM buildings in the compound? 2. What kind of buildings are they? 3. When were the buildings established? 4. Are there any AIM missionary graves? 5. Are there any other signs of early missionary presence in the area?

Early AIM Station at Mumbuni	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are there any AIM buildings in the compound? 2. What kind of buildings are they? 3. When were the buildings established? 4. Are there any AIM missionary graves? 5. Are there any other signs of early missionary presence in the area?
Scott Theological College at Mumbuni	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are there any AIM buildings in the compound? 2. What kind of buildings are they? 3. When were the buildings established? 4. Are there any AIM missionary graves? 5. Are there any other signs of early missionary presence in the area?
Ukamba Bible College	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are there any AIM buildings in the compound? 2. What kind of buildings are they? 3. When were the buildings established? 4. Are there any AIM missionary graves? 5. Are there any other signs of early missionary presence in the area?

Appendix V: Publications Abstract



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Musyoki, A. Muia et al., *Editon Cons. J. Arts., Humanit. S. Stud.*, *Double-Blind Peer Reviewed Journal*

The Impact of the African Inland Mission (AIM) On Social Change between 1895 and 1971 in Machakos District, Kenya

**Musyoki A. Muia; Prof. Reuben Matheka; Dr. Mary Chepcheng
Egerton University, Kenya**

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Abstract

This study aimed at analysing the African Inland Mission and social transformation in Machakos District of Eastern Kenya from 1895 to 1971. It sought to establish how the elements of the Akamba social life underwent a social change as a result of the mission's presence in the district. The study was guided by the question: How effective was the mission in influencing social change in the district? The structural-functionalism theory formulated by Herbert Spencer and developed further by Emile Durkheim was used to analyse the role of the African Inland Mission in influencing social change in Machakos District. The qualitative research design involving the use of in-depth interviews with key informants was used. A target population consisting of local residents, former administrators and African Inland Mission/church leaders was interviewed. The study used the purposive method of sampling. Primary data was collected using in-depth oral interviews as well as from archival records, while secondary data was obtained through a thematic review of literature related to the topic of study. This study has provided sufficient knowledge on the African Inland Mission and the social transformation in Machakos District in the colonial and the early post-colonial periods of Kenyan history. In addition, the findings have constituted part of the historiography of the African Inland Mission in Kenya.

Key Terms: Mission Station, Social Change, Social Structure

How to cite this article in APA (6th Edition)

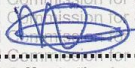
Muia, M. A., Matheka, R. & Chepcheng, M. (2020). The impact of the African Inland Mission (AIM) on social change between 1895 and 1971 in Machakos District, Kenya. *Editon Cons. J. Arts., Humanit. S. Stud.*, 2(1), 171-186

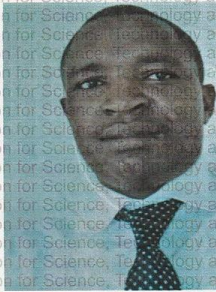
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Appendix VI: Research Permit

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT: **Permit No. : NACOSTI/P/19/59185/28585**
MR. ATHANAS MUIA MUSYOKI **Date Of Issue : 13th March,2019**
of EGERTON UNIVERSITY, 0-90132 **Fee Recieved :Ksh 1000**
Sultan Hamud,has been permitted to
conduct research in Machakos
Makueni Counties
on the topic: AFRICAN INLAND MISSION
AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION IN
MACHAKOS DISTRICT, 1895-1971
for the period ending:
12th March,2020


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