

The Persistence of Indigenous Traditional Religion in the Catholic White Father's Mission of Bukumbi-Mwanza 1883- 2010

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ABSTRACT

The paper intended to examine the persistence of indigenous traditional religion in Catholic White Father's Mission of Bukumbi. On the process of evangelizing Bukumbi society, White Fathers' missionaries realized that the society had their own organized religion as believed in Lyuba as the creator. Various methods were used to consolidate Christianity in this society. This study used historical Materialism theory which was developed by Karl Marx on 1818-1883 to trace changes in society of Bukumbi based on religion. The study used historical research design while qualitative research approach was applied. The main argument of this study is based on traditional religion, consolidation of Christianity and persistence of tradition religion at Bukumbi. Documentary review and Interview were used. Moreover, data concludes that, Bukumbi society continued and continuing practicing Sukuma traditional religion through various practices. The study suggests other study to be carried on Projects established by Catholic White Fathers' missions at Bukumbi.

Keywords: Sukuma, Indigenous traditional religion, Catholic White Fathers', missionaries, Christianization and Social services.

INTRODUCTION

Sukuma believed in one God, creator and provider, who received a whole list of names and attributes. It is reported that Lyuba is the God revealed by Sukuma society had connection with the sun which provides light for life on the world.¹ It is supported that religion in Sukuma was formed and organized from belief of their dead in the families and the graves of chiefs.² It was a belief that in conception of ancestor worship, there was no idea of the immortality of the body, as the dead are disembodied spirits.³ Among the Sukuma, dead were buried but the living did not regard the graves as the home of the dead that is why, spirit house was built within their compound as sign of the present ancestor.⁴ It is added that Bukumbi society in time of distress offered prayers and materials such as Iwanga (local alcohol) to their ancestors' spirit house.⁵

Bukumbi traditional religion was interrupted by missionaries in 19th century. Kagwa supported that the consolidation of Christianity in Bukumbi was influenced by the abolition of slave trade.⁶ This trade was stabilized in 19th century by Arabs helped by Indigenous authorities. It is reported that plantations and

¹ Manyama Ignatius Pambe, Symbols and Change in African Beliefs, Religious Symbols and the Leader Sukuma-Nyamwezi of Tanzania, A Dissertation, Rome, Gregorian Pontifical University, 1978, pp. 110-112

² E.A.C, R. E. S. Tanner, Tanganyika Notes and Records, Nos 50-53, 1958-1959, EAF. Per DT 436-T3, . P.57

³ Ibid

⁴ Ibid

⁵ Historia ya Ujio wa Imani ya Kanisa Katoliki, Jimbo Kuu la Mwanza, Dar Es Salaam, 2019, p.14

⁶ Kagwa Frances, Historia ya Ujio wa Iman ya Kanisa Katoliki, Jimbo kuu Mwanza, 2019

highly need of ivory for luxury industries in capitalist countries influenced slave trade.⁷ The Arabs led slave trade in East Africa. These were Sultan Sayyid Said in Zanzibar, Sayyan and Musa Mzuri in the Lake zone, while at Kageye were Songoro bin Tarib a Swahili, Sungura, Said ibin Seif, and Mansur bin Salim.⁸

Furthermore, Industrialization in Europe led highly need of raw materials, areas for investments, market and cheap labour. This forced Europeans to overflow in Africa as reported that foretold of colonialists were explorers, missionaries and traders.⁹ Moreover Christianity, civilization and commerce were David Livingstone's 3Cs in point and rallying cry to combat slave trade in order to establish "Legitimate" trade.¹⁰

The investigation of East Africa in the Lake zone and the report from agents of colonialism about East Africa forced Europeans to overflow in Africa. Data reported that formation of congregations' societies in Europe took place and missionaries overflowed in East Africa, this were Holy Ghost Fathers' in Zanzibar on 1860, Benedictines of St. Ottilien at Lukuled Makua land on 1895.¹¹ The Catholic White Fathers' missionaries at Bukumbi in 1883.¹² Therefore the history of Christianity penetration in Bukumbi is rooted to Europeans penetration especially in line with slave trade abolition which is linked to the rise of industrial competitive capitalism in the late 18th and early 19th centuries.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Pre-colonial Sukuma society of Bukumbi believed in one God called Lyuba, the God revealed by Sukuma who was a protector and provider of everything.¹³ Nolan supported the above argument that Kamoga, a minister of Mtemi Kiganga of Bukumbi chiefdom, told missionaries; we do worship Lyuba the God revered by the Sukuma as the same Fathers worshiped.¹⁴ Continued by saying Kiganga explained that his remedies for drought and sickness were similar to the fathers' prayers and medicine.¹⁵

It is pointed out that families of Bukumbi turned to their ancestors in time of crisis for help who were remembered by spirit houses which were built within their compound.¹⁶

Traditional religion of Bukumbi was interrupted on the coming of Catholic White Fathers' missionaries and established permanent settlement at Bukumbi under the protection of Ntemi Kiganga in 1883.¹⁷ It is supported that Boma (house) was built in 1884 at Bukumbi.¹⁸ Ibrahim Ngasa said that White Fathers at Bukumbi established other social services which become part of evangelization such as Bukumbi become center for ex-slave refugees and orphanage center.¹⁹ The three above studies prompted the researcher to study various group occupied the missions and social services were provided and became part of evangelization.

⁷ Ngasa Ibrahim, Kageye a Global emporium of the Great Lake Regions, 1850-1890, M.A, History Dissertation St. Augustine University of Tanzania, 2021, p.115

⁸Ibid, pp. 115, 119, 120, 123, 125 and 128.

⁹ Sharkey, History African History, Oxford University Press, 2013, p.1

¹⁰ Sundkler Bengt and Christopher Steed, A History of the Church in Africa, Cambridge University Press, USA, 2004, p. 513

¹¹ TEC, 150 Jubilei ya Miaka 150 ya Uinjilishaji, Furaha ya Injili, Tanzania, 2018, p. II

¹² Method Kilaini, Jimbo Kuu la Mwanza, Vicariati ya Nyanza, 2021, p. 2

¹³ Manyama Ignatius Pambe, Symbols and Change in African Beliefs, Religious Symbols and the Leader-Specialist Among the Sukuma-Nyamwezi of Tanzania, Missiology A Dissertation, Rome, The Gregorian Pontifical University, 1978, pp. 110-112

¹⁴ Nolan Francis, Mission to the Great Lakes, The White Fathers in Western Tanzania 1878-1978, T.M.P Book Department, p. 15

¹⁵ Ibid

¹⁶ Kagwa Francis, op, cit, p.2

¹⁷ Baraza la Maaskofu Tanzania (TEC), 150, Jubilei ya Miaka, 150 ya Uinjilishaji Furaha ya Injili, 2018, p. 27

¹⁸ Kagwa Francis, op, cit, p

¹⁹ Ngasa Ibrahim, op, cit, p.135

The above literature based on the pre-colonial society in religion, coming of White Fathers' missionaries, establishment of social services which became part of evangelization. However, continuing of traditional religion among Sukuma of Bukumbi is overlooked. The goal of this study was to close the aforementioned gap.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study picked historical research design which studied past events about pre-colonial society of Bukumbi based in Indigenous traditional religion and Christianity. Through the use of qualitative research methods, data were gathered through interviews and documentary reviews. Documents were reviewed and provided primary and secondary data according to specific objectives. Primary data were collected at Kigongo-Chiefs area, Bukumbi Parish, Kawekamo centre and Tanzania National Archives. Secondary data were obtained from Libraries of Dar Es Salaam and St. Augustine Universities, Bujora Cultural heritage, White Fathers' centres and online sources. Interview method was guided by questions constructed from specific objectives. Most of the interviewees used Kiswahili, few used Kisukuma and English language. A voice recorder was used to record the interviews and later on data were translated to English and written in the notebook. The two methods collected the correct data which used to analyse events in Bukumbi society.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Society of Bukumbi.

Authors views about the origin of Sukuma speaking Bantu group differs. It is pointed out that the ancestors of Bantu speaking people began their moves from Northwest to east Africa on 3000 B.C.²⁰ Mirambo Immaculate.²¹ Bessire Mark.²² The two authors viewed the origin of Sukuma on the movements of similarity of clans like Balongo, Basega, Bakwimba, Bangolo and Babiza.²³ Somer John supported Bessire by saying that the first clan to rule chiefdom of Bukumbi was called Basega.²⁴ The arguments above had some similarity elements such as the mentioned clans.

This society engaged in production as in the beginning people obtained food from nature through hunting and gathering.²⁵ Kagwa pointed out that in Bukumbi Chief Ilago the first, killed few buffaloes by using spears with medicine, roasted meat and the remaining divided it to people for their families.²⁶ Furthermore crops were produced such as sorghum and millet.²⁷ On line to that simple exchange took place due to uneven distribution of commodities where by Ihanzu and Sukuma society exchanged salt from Lake Eyasi and Iron hoes from Sukuma land.²⁸ Moreover, all production determined communal mode of production as stated that both modes of acquiring and ownership were basically communal.²⁹ Politically, pre-colonial

²⁰ Maxon M. Robert, East Africa, An Introductory History An Introductory History, U.S.A: West Virginia University Press, 1986, p. 46

²¹ Mirambo Immaculate, Oral Literature of the Sukuma, doi; 10.7592/ FEJF 2004. P.2

²² Bessire H.C. Mark, Sukuma Chiefs and Royal History, Sukuma Museum Bujora Cultural Center-Kisesa Mwanza Tanzania 1995, P.1

²³ Ibid

²⁴ Somers John, op, cit, p. 28

²⁵ Machangu Mathias Hamis, Elderly Women and Witchcraft Killings among the Sukuma of Northern Tanzania; 1880s to the présent.Nos 18 and 19, 2011 pp. 181-198, p. 5

²⁶ Kagwa Frances, op, cit, p.10

²⁷ Machangu Mathias Hamis, op, cit, p.5

²⁸ Bruijn De Mirjam and Dijk Van, Mobile African Changing Patters of Movement in Africa and Beyond, Boston, Brill Lenden, 2001, p.3

²⁹ Mpangala P. Gaudence, Major Issues in Tanzania Economic History, Pre-Colonial Economy and Social Formations, Tanzania Dar es Salaam University Press, 1992, p.4

Sukuma society of Bukumbi was based on Chiefdom while structured from chief, Banangoma, Wanangwa, Elders of the village and family.³⁰

The term religion came from Latin words as Ligare (bind), Relegere (unite) and Religion (relationship). The word “religion” is a link established between two persons, the human person and the divine person believed to exist.³¹ Bukumbi society believed that dead were buried but the living did not regard the graves as home of the dead, instead spirit houses were built within their compound as offering of prayers and materials like Iwanga (Alcohol mix of millet flour and water) for their ancestors.³² Therefore, the model ancestor from the family became intercessor between Lyuba and the family.³³ It is reported that chiefs, banangoma and Bafumu were dominant function of rituals.³⁴

White Fathers’ and Christianity at Bukumbi 1870s-1880s

Christianity was established by Catholic White Fathers’ at Bukumbi.³⁵ This congregation was founded by Cardinal Lavigerie in Algeria.³⁶ It is pointed out that on 19th October, 1868 novitiate was opened.³⁷ The novices were under Fr Vincent, a Jesuit as a novice master and Fr. Gillet taught the novices theology.³⁸ Moreover on 1st October, 1872 the first twelve missionaries took their oath.³⁹

Slave trade which was taking place in the great Lake Zone prompted Lavigerie to send White Fathers’ missionaries and became among the abolitionists.⁴⁰ Therefore, Cardinal Lavigerie organized the first caravan on 17th April, 1878 who set out in the “Yangtse” from Marseilles for equatorial Africa.⁴¹ On 30th May, 1878 in Zanzibar, in Bagamoyo were received by Holy Ghost Fathers on 11th June, 1878 and Tabora on 12th September, 1878.⁴²

Then two groups were formed; first group headed to Ujiji and the second to Uganda which comprised Fathers Livinhac, Lourdel, Rudovic Girault, Barbot and Br. Amans.⁴³ It is noted that on 23rd December, 1878 they arrived at Malya and on 24th December 1878 first mass of vigil Christmas was done.⁴⁴ The place was renamed mount of Virgin Mary Queen of Missionaries, passed Kageye and arrived in Uganda on 17th February, 1879 by using canoe of fisheries in the Lake Victoria as means of transport.⁴⁵

Nevertheless, in Uganda missionaries encountered political instability which led Chief Mutesa Kabaka of Uganda to throw out the Catholic White Fathers missionaries in 1882.⁴⁶ Therefore, White fathers

³⁰ Interviews with Kaphipa Alex and Kaphipa Scholar on 25 June, 2022 at Usagara

³¹ Ndbusisi Christopher Ibenwa, Influences of Christian Religion on African Traditional and Value System, Social Sciences Unit, School of General Studies, (University of Nigeria, Nsukka Vol.4, 2014), p. 1

³² E.A.C, R. E. S. Tanner, Tanganyika Notes and Records, Nos 50-53, 1958-1959, EAF.Per DT 436-T3, Sukuma Ancestor Worship and Its Relationship to Social Structure, P.57

³³ Ibid

³⁴ EAC, Tanganyika Notes and Records, Sukuma Ancestors Worship and its Relationship To Social Structure, 1957-1961, p.54

³⁵ Historia ya Ujio wa Imani ya Kanisa Katoliki, Jimbo Kuu la Mwanza, (Dar Es Salaam, 2019), p. ix.

³⁶ E.A.C, Elizabeth Mary Matheson, Founding of the White Fathers’ Society An Enterprise So Perilous, Mellifont, EAC, BV 2300. W5M3, pp. 15-19

³⁷ Ibid

³⁸ E.A.C, Elizabeth Mary Matheson, op, cit, pp. 15-19

³⁹ Ibid p.19

⁴⁰ Kagwa op, cit, pp 3, 9

⁴¹ Ibid, p. 22

⁴² Baraza la Maaskofu Tanzania (TEC), op, cit, pp.4-6

⁴³ Kagwa Francis, op, cit, p.7

⁴⁴ Ibid

⁴⁵ Ibid

⁴⁶ Sipalla Humphrey, Charles Lwanga, (Paulines Publications Africa, Kenya, 2005), p.5

Missionaries set up their journey back to Lake Zone accompanied by soldiers from Uganda, orphans and freed slaves while carrying materials like goats, sheep and nine ivories.⁴⁷ On 4th January 1883, they arrived at Kageye, were supported by Said ibin Seif on their way to Bukumbi with materials like chickens, honey, rice and beans.⁴⁸

White Fathers' missionaries arrived at Bukumbi and were received by pre-colonial authority. This proved by the rock which is found in the cemetery of the early Chiefs at Kigongo-Bukumbi. It is written Padre Girault na Lourdel, walifika hapa tar 13.1.1883 na kupewa mahali pa kujenga Kanisa katoliki na Mtemi Kiganga.⁴⁹ Father Girault and Lourdel arrived here on 13.1.1883 and were given an area for constructing Church by Mtemi Kiganga). (Translated by a researcher). The first photo below represents documented rock on the date of arrival missionaries.

Documented Rock on Date of Arrival of White Fathers



Source: The photo was taken by a researcher at Kigongo-Bukumbi July 28, 2022.

Moreover, in the same area there are other reference of documented rock which is written on 14-1-1883 AD three major events took place; first to receive first missionaries, second were permitted to build church, and third were welcomed officially in the family of chief Kiganga.⁵⁰ This is a translation from Kiswahili to English by a researcher (see the below photos).

Documented Rock



⁴⁷ Kagwa Francis, op. cit, p. 9

⁴⁸ Kagwa Francis, op. cit, p.9

⁴⁹ Kigongo Chiefs' Area, Documented Rock: Padre Girault na Lourdel, walifika hapa tar. 13.1.1883.

⁵⁰ Kigongo Chief Area, Documented Rock: On this Rock; on 1-14-1883 BK, Three Major events took Place.

Source: The two photos were taken by a researcher at Kigongo-Bukumbi, September 28, 2022

Community of Bukumbi explained that the above documented rock was the pre-colonial court which was used by the authorities of Bukumbi.⁵¹ On that date in the same rock Chief Kiganga and Fr. Lourdel made a covenant by mixing blood in alcohol and drunk as a sign of peace, unity and brotherhood.⁵²

Chief Kiganga did this covenant with reason; first to establish close relationship with White Fathers' missionaries like a child and a father, second needed help from missionaries for strengthening political system and finally Chief Kiganga needed help in war which was taking place among the chiefdoms like Bulima, Nyegezi and Bukumbi.⁵³ Data indicate that in most occasions chief Kiganga received from missionaries a quantity of gun-powder, the services of a group of Ganda soldiers and his people were provided by clothes.⁵⁴

White Fathers' missionaries established social services which became part of evangelization. It is pointed that large tembes (houses with flat roofs) were built for the mission of evangelization as orphans were taught literacy and numeracy in Kiswahili as well as religion.⁵⁵ Moreover frequency political conflict among chiefdoms influenced Fr Blanc and Br Amans to establish permanent house (Boma) in August 1884.⁵⁶

The house comprised church, house for priest, visitors and became centre for educating young ex-slaves and orphanages mostly from Buganda.⁵⁷ Moreover it comprised carpentry workshop and blacksmithing, medicine shop, chicken house, rooms for baking bread, kitchen, hurts for cows, got, donkeys and a well of water.⁵⁸ It is reported that schools for children at Bukumbi were established to teach religion, read and write.⁵⁹ It is added that the mission of Bukumbi became safe for refugees from Uganda such as fathers and Christians.⁶⁰

Christianity during colonial period in Bukumbi 1890-1960

This is the period were the society of Bukumbi experienced high changes. German colonial rule was established in present-day Tanzania in 1890 and lasted up to the end of WWI.⁶¹ The abolition of slave trade was intensified by Germans government. This was supported by missionaries as stated on 9th October, 1890 the military expedition was send against the Arabs of Masanza as 40 slaves were left at the mission of Bukumbi to be taken care.⁶² Moreover, freed slaves' children were collected to the mission as they grew up, were settled in Christian villages.⁶³

In 1890, Emin Pasha and his army mistreated the community of Bukumbi and the Arabs when they threatened the Catholic White Fathers missionaries.⁶⁴ Moreover in September 1894, Longheld, a German

⁵¹ Interviews with Alex Kaphipa and Scholar Kaphipa on 25th June, 2022, Usagara.

⁵² Kagwa Francis, op cit, 10

⁵³ Somers John, op, cit, p.7

⁵⁴ Nolan Francis W.F, *Mission to the Great Lakes, The White Fathers in Western Tanzania 1878-1978*. P. 14

⁵⁵ Nolan Francis, op, cit, p. 14

⁵⁶ Kagwa francis, op cit, p. 15

⁵⁷ Ibid

⁵⁸ Ibid Ibid

⁵⁹ Somers John, op, cit, p.12

⁶⁰ Ibid

⁶¹ Laurent Sebastian Carl, and Politics in Tanzania, The 2010 General Elections and Mwanza Region, University of Helsisinki, 2012, p.12

⁶² Ngasa Ibrahim, op, cit, 130

⁶³ Oliver Roland, op, cit, p.45

⁶⁴ Buluda Itandala, "Africa Response to German Colonialism in East Africa", *Ufahamu A Journal of African Studies*, The Cases of Usukuma 1890-1918, p.5

and his army arrived at Bukumbi by canoes invaded men and children, scattered cows of the mission, and forced people to do some work, the situation decreased number of Christians later, Monseigneur Hirth complained.⁶⁵

Missionaries established social services as stated in Bukumbi dispensary was built on 1911.⁶⁶ This was influenced by medicine shop which was opened in 1884. It is reported that people visited mission of Bukumbi for treatment and priest used iodine, carbolic acid and ointment to treat people.⁶⁷ Moreover on 1912 school for girls and kindergarten were established.⁶⁸

On 1919-1960, this is the period of British. British government shifted labour force from food to cotton production in Sukumaland which led scarcity of food.⁶⁹ People suffered from various sicknesses like small pox, stomach pain, spinner-cord, influenza while Germans stopped the service of vaccination of small pox at Lihealth instead was found in the missions' dispensaries.⁷⁰ It is added that in 1918 Bwana Malole (Fr. Spectacles) of Bukumbi parish distributed food in time of famine which led eightfold increase number in baptism.⁷¹ It is supported that the number increased as follows on 1919 were 175, 1920 were 115, 1921 were 282 and 1922 numbered 155.⁷²

Social services during British rule. In 1957 dispensary was well-staffed by white sisters who established maternity-unit and children.⁷³ Apart from that, in 1957-1960 the present Bukumbi hospital was completed.⁷⁴ Furthermore, despite the health service which was provided also sacrament of baptism was dispensed to new babies and adults in danger of death.⁷⁵ In addition to that the present Bukumbi primary school was built in 1928.⁷⁶ The above social services become among of the ways for evangelization.

In 1940 the government exempted White Fathers from paying tax as the accountant General of Dar es Salaam letter No. G. 2469/17 reported the following fathers Ebinder, A Funker, M. Koeney, Van Loosdreg, Van Rooy, Br. Ecilot Unger, Falhan Jan Blekemolen, R.F.P. Butzelaar, Hasler Swiss, Br. Ame, and R. F. P. Kuipers.⁷⁷ This facilitated the mission of evangelization in Bukumbi and other areas as missionaries could move free.

Christianity after Independence in Bukumbi 1961-2010

After independence, Catholic Church centred on the enlightenment of Vatican II which based on Africanizing Christianity.⁷⁸ Vatican II was the Council which held in Roma in 11th October, 1962 to 1965.⁷⁹ It is results affected Africa especially Bukumbi-Tanzania. This led the church to increase participation in the

⁶⁵ Kagwa Francis, p. 25

⁶⁶ Kawekamo Centre, File.196, Bukumbi Hospital, Annual Report 1962

⁶⁷ Kagwa Frans, op, cit, p.24

⁶⁸ Somers John, op, cit, p.34

⁶⁹ Little Marilyn, The Geographical Review, Colonial Policy and Subsistence in Tanganyika 1925-1945, Vol. 81, No. 4 October, 1991, p.1

⁷⁰ Kagwa Francis, op, cit, 54

⁷¹ Walter Sarah, p.31

⁷² Bukumbi Parish, Exercise Book, File: L.C. YR. 1896-1954.

⁷³ Kawekamo Centre, File.196, Bukumbi Hospital, Annual Report 1962

⁷⁴ TEC, Kilaini Method, op, cit, p. 8

⁷⁵ Bukumbi Parish, Baptism Book, File: Bukumbi hospital A.I.M BKBi Hos 1951-1963

⁷⁶ EAC, 1924-1930, Annual Report Tanganyika Territory, 1928, p.50

⁷⁷ TNA, A Letter of Accountant General to District Officer, Letter No. 2469/17, dated on 29/1/1940.

⁷⁸ Jong de Albert, The Challenge of Vatican 11, The 1969 Seminar Study Year in Tanzania, East Africa, Paulines Publications Africa-Nairobi, 2004, p. 39

⁷⁹ Mbonju S. Christina, The Endurance of the Makua Traditional Religion Amid Roman Catholic Christianization in Masasi, 1890-1970s, MAH, History Dissertation, SAUT, Sept 2021, p.79

society as data indicate that people faced ever-greater economic, social-political dimensions and spiritual crisis.⁸⁰

The church of Bukumbi founded an organization called Pastoral Institute of Bukumbi (P.I.B) in 3rd October, 1966.⁸¹ This prepared Seminar Study Year (S.S.Y) which based on Africanizing Christianity.⁸² Various courses for women were provided like reading, sewing and cutting out garments, hygiene, child care, cookery and arithmetic for women.⁸³ This is the period when Sukuma traditional religion was recognized in the Catholic Church.⁸⁴

Moreover, other organization was called The Church Development Office of Kalwande (Bukumbi) (C.D.O.K) in 1981.⁸⁵ The C.D.O.K, enabled people to realize their needs, gave people means, knowledge to satisfy their needs, emphasized Christians for development and people were employed.⁸⁶ In 1982, horticulture was established.⁸⁷ Therefore, through their daily activities in mission some joined catechism and were baptized.

Persistence of Sukuma Tradition Religion in Bukumbi

However, more than a century Catholic White Fathers' present in Bukumbi but still some people are practicing traditional religion. The early catholic White Fathers' missionaries aimed at cultural religious implantation in the pre-colonial Sukuma society. In Bukumbi, at the beginning of evangelization, White Fathers' missionaries wanted to dismiss Sukuma traditional ancestors' cults as the worship of devils from their ancestors.⁸⁸ This was impossible to uproot completely because the whole life of the community was rooted and still the community practicing Indigenous traditional religion.

Data revealed spirit houses (Mishigabulo) in some compound of people at Bukumbi. For Sukuma spirit houses are built to represent their ancestors who had connection in their families and mediators between Lyuba and the family.⁸⁹ In family, there are people responsible with religion practices; these are father, mother, grandfather or grandmother use to perform practices by offering alcohol (mixed of millet flow and water) iwanga in time of crisis calling for help.⁹⁰ Moreover every morning they take water in mouth and sprinkle to spirit house as sign of respect while prayers are said for prosperity of the families.⁹¹

Traditional doctors (Bafumu). In Bukumbi, despite the discouragement from the church, schools and hospital which washed some beliefs and cultures among people, herbalist still exist and they have enough customers.⁹² People use to visit specialist as they believe that all malevolence which attack their families

⁸⁰ TEC, Catechetical Department, General Correspondence, Nov, 1960 to October, 1966, Closed on ,2011

⁸¹ TEC, Catechetical Department, General Correspondence, Nov, 1960 to October, 1966, Closed on ,2011

⁸² Jong De Albert, *The Challenge of Vatican 11 In East Africa, The 1969 SSY in Tanzania*, (Pauline Publications African Nairobi, 2004), p. 90

⁸³ TEC, S. 72/64, Mary, Seminar Maendeleo and It is Effectiveness as a Pre-Catechists Instrument Talk, Catechetical Seminar Held at the Pastoral Institute Bukumbi, 7th October, 1964.

⁸⁴ Lupande M. Joseph et all, *The Sukuma Sacrificial Goat and Christianity, A basis for Inculturation in Africa*, p.1

⁸⁵ TEC, Circular, Church Development Office Kalwande to all Christians, July'84, C.D.O, No 451/3-928, dated on 8/12/1983

⁸⁶ TEC, File No. 2.018 Education Department, C.D.O. Kalwande, Archdiocese of Mwanza, p.4

⁸⁷ TEC, Agriculture/Irrigation and Animal husbandry Department, p.3

⁸⁸ Kagwa Francis, p. 11

⁸⁹ Interview with Chief Dotto Bulime Itale, Age 72 Retired teacher, Held on 25th June, 2022 at Nganza-Nyegezi.

⁹⁰ Interview with Alex Kaphipa, 73 years old, retired agriculture officer, Interviewed on 27th June, 2022, at Kigongo-Bukumbi

⁹¹ Interviews with Juma amd Alex Kaphipa, held at Bukumbi, 28 June, 2022

⁹² Interview with Mabula Richard, Age 58, Native doctor, on 19 September, 2022 at Bukumbi

like sickness, death, drought, and famine are caused by offended ancestors or witches. Therefore, to solve the problem Bafumu are consulted to establish good relationship with ancestors who intercedes for them.⁹³

Data indicate that chiefs in Bukumbi were heavily influenced by traditional healers, diviners, rainmakers and Banangoma.⁹⁴ This is a special group which own natural power and could communicate with the creator for prosperity of the chiefdom. Moreover, findings reveal that these practices and functions still exist up to date, where by on the day of electing chief in the chiefdom; there are special people for calming angry ancestors.⁹⁵

Moreover, in early cemetery of chiefs are found three important things: first documented rock which represents date on the arrival of White Fathers, second cross on top of the rock and third plates made by cement placed near to the graves. People explained that when chiefs, Bafumu, rain markers and members of the chief family offers prayers, sacrifices and pay worship to their ancestors, normally to the end, they use to keep medicine on these plates.⁹⁶ Varkevisser supported that traditional religion among Bukumbi society is still practiced whereby the early graves of Chiefs of Bukumbi are still used for worship in time of crisis as people offers materials for sacrifices like cows, got and sheep to please their ancestors.⁹⁷

Varkevisser supported the point that in Bukumbi, the graves of the chiefs are still venerated to date, especially during the rainy season.⁹⁸ Continued by saying that on October a group of farmers was distressed by tardiness of rain.⁹⁹ Later on two cows were brought to the former chief's residence with the request to proceeds with traditional ritual to make rain occur.¹⁰⁰

White Fathers' missionaries introduced Christians of Bukumbi to use holy rosary instead of charms (Lupingu in Kisukuma) for protection and as remedies. Children of Bukumbi attended catechism every day at 2:00 pm and prayed rosary.¹⁰¹ Moreover, at Bukumbi during WW1, a settler run away and left the shop to a Christian.¹⁰² When chaos started, Maasai wanted to kill him but he was saved by Ugandan solders when he was found with necklace rosary. Following the event, society of Bukumbi bought and used necklace rosaries.¹⁰³ Furthermore during this study, the researcher encountered herbalist and some children with charms worn on their waist, necklace or bracelet. People reported that charms are still used for protection and as remedies.¹⁰⁴

The early church of Bukumbi was burnt in 1951.¹⁰⁵ Data revealed that, from begging White Fathers were occupied with the Ugandan and later Bukumbi mission became the centre of evangelizing and developing other areas while Bukumbi society was forgotten.¹⁰⁶ Therefore, the society of Bukumbi did not see the

⁹³ Ibid,

⁹⁴Bassire Mark, Sukuma Museum, Bujora Cultural Centre- Kisesa Mwanza, Tanzania, 1995

⁹⁵ Varkevisser Corlien, op, cit, p. 56

⁹⁶Varkevisser Corlien, op, cit, p. 56

⁹⁷ Ibid p. 33

⁹⁸ Ibid

⁹⁹ Ibid

¹⁰⁰ Varkevisser M. Corlien, op, cit, p. 33

¹⁰¹ Somers John, op, cit. p.12

¹⁰² Kagwa Francis, op, cit, p.53

¹⁰³ Ibid

¹⁰⁴ Interview with, Richard Mabula, Age 60, Native doctors, held at Bukumbi, on 29 June, 2022

Somers John, op, cit, p.32

Interview with Ferdinand Nyanda, John, Alex Kaphipa, Scholastica Kaphipa, at Usagara-Bukumbi 29th June, 2022

contributions of missionaries in their life. This forced people to react by banning the first church, so that they could continue with their Sukuma traditional religion.¹⁰⁷

CONCLUSION

Generally, the life style of Bukumbi society was woven in Sukuma traditional religion. This religion became an ideological tool which protected, maintained and controlled people in their life. People of Bukumbi believed that Ntemi were rituals, sacred figure who reigns rather than rule, calls for invisible world, the world of power, to rescue, bring harmony and desired order to the visible weak world as sacred to come to aid.¹⁰⁸ The coming of White Fathers' missionaries interrupted this religion through evangelization mission. Social services were established and become part of the ways which used to erode and suppress traditional religion through transplanting western education, Christianity, health services and Western culture to people of Bukumbi. Despite the effort was made to erode and clear Indigenous traditional religion in Bukumbi. People continued and still believe in traditional religion through renaming children after their ancestors, using charms for protection and as remedies.

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