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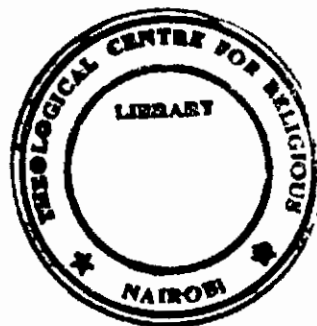
**TO INVESTIGATE THE CULTURAL
PRACTICES IN MORAL EDUCATION
AMONG THE AMERU PEOPLE.**

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STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the material used in this essay has not been submitted for academic credit to any other institution. All sources have been cited in full.

Signed..... *Mjagi*

Date..... *13/2/98*

General Introduction

In the first chapter of my essay, I will look at a few views about morality. This is in view to broaden the definition of morality and to serve as an introduction to my topic of study. The different moral views illustrate methods and the understanding of morality vary but the end of any morality is the desired human action.

In the second chapter I will summarise the practices used to achieve the moral development or education among the Meru community. Though the practices take many years to implement or happen, the goal is to shape the attitudes of the people to have the desired moral values. This enables them to behave in ways acceptable to others and the community in general.

In chapter three I will consider some of the moral views, in chapter one, which favours the moral values of the Meru community. This is to support my argument that the Meru moral values attained in moral development are good and should be maintained. The moral values and practices should be incorporated in moral teachings and pastoral action, when dealing with the community.

The last part of the essay is the conclusion where I draw several observations.

CHAPTER ONE

MORALITY:

In this first chapter of my essay I will deal with the general meaning of morality and then embark to discuss the various views about morality. This will serve as an introduction to my topic.

1.1 Introduction

Is the study of the nature of value concepts "good" "bad" "right" "wrong" "rules" "beliefs" which guide man¹

From the above then its clear that morality deals with why man deals or behaves in certain ways. Because of rules whether written or not, man is able to pursue goals and ideals, using either the right or wrong course of action. His beliefs motivates him to act in a given way in each given circumstances where man just following rules without reflecting first then that is unreflective morality. The reason being as children people are taught not to lie, not to be selfish etc. Morality remains at the level of do's and don'ts . However if he asks the question why? before acting then it is reflective morality.²

¹ Patrick N. Smith Nowell , "Religion and Morality" in The Encyclopedia of Philosophy Vol.7 (new York: The Macmillan Company & the Free Press, 1967). pp.11.

² Ibid., pp. 11-12

1.2 Socrates on Moral Education

Socrates I would say was not troubled by the problem of moral education. In his days moral education was conceived as "teaching virtue and producing in our children the kind of behaviour called virtuous"³. Therefore for him and his contemporaries it meant having the right knowledge to do good or bad and passing this on to the young generation. However the question arises then, why do people who have undergone all the training to acquire the right knowledge act or behave in a contrary way sometimes or why do virtuous parents produce siblings full of what is regarded as vice?

In my own opinion I would state human beings sometimes act depending on the circumstances or being directed by what they think is right and might not be so or out of fear or to pursue personal gain regardless of the mitigating circumstances. This explains why two brothers or sisters may be completely opposites in behaviour.

1.3. Descartes on Morality:

Descartes on his side was disturbed by the fact that moral education was viewed as "handing on a knowledge of good and evil, so that our children conduct will conform to this"⁴ When this is well considered the goal of morality here is to produce unquestionable obedience. In my personal view also its like training an animal, which just acts according to the way it has been trained.

Back to descartes he remarks God could have produced individuals with

³ Ibid., p. 13

⁴ Ibid., p.18

unquestionable conduct but he chose not too ... some societies which are primitive or totalitarian have desired to produce a society of people who conform to rules and behave according. But when you analyse their methods you find.

One, a restriction on freedom of action, speech and thought,

Two, use of severe sanctions, which includes prohibition to exposure of new knowledge and situations, use of propaganda etc. This have been used in countries like Russia, Sparta etc.

In this kind of moral attitude what I find disturbing is the use of evil means to get or arrive at the so called good. The end cannot justify the means. When you prevent peoples creativity its no longer morality or even when you interfere with their freedom.

1.4 Aristotle on Morality

Morality must be able to "put the child in the position of being able to decide what to do in each situation he may come up against."

So from this understanding of Aristotle I agree that morality must equip the child with the knowledge for one cannot decide without knowledge. However the view is wider than knowledge for one can possess knowledge but be unable to apply the knowledge. So principles are also vital and this makes his view different from the one of Socrates. This means one faced with a situation to decide has a kind of mental syllogism. For example this is the problem, I know this about the problem therefore what do I do here and now. (The emphasis is mine).

From the views of Socrates, Descartes and Aristotle what I would conclude is

that the methods of morality must be moral. For example the actions of parents in dealing with their children must themselves be right by moral standards. Since the end of morality is virtue or good this does not mean every means is justified. The use of immoral means is bound to destroy the realization of the end when the end is morality.

So is it wrong for parents or societies to pass rules principles it holds dear? Not at all. In fact its an asset if they can be able to build on them and be spared the agony of too much scouting in the dark.

1.5 Education and Indoctrination

Indoctrination is an activity intended to produce a state of mind in which an individual has either no grasp of rationale underlying beliefs or a type of foundation which encourages no criticism or evaluation of beliefs.⁵

Therefore from the above definition its clear indoctrination is not education. In education one is able to reach a stage of making his own decision about issues. This means the person is already morally autonomous. They are free and responsible in whatever action they undertake.

1.6 Moral Standards are the Distinguishing Mark of Man

There are certain characteristics and activities which primarily belong to man. Life of a good man will show by example the development of this moral standards.

⁵ Frankena W.K., "Towards a philosophy of moral education" in Moral Education (New York: The open University Press 1973) pp 25-28.

According to Aristotle, man's distinctive feature is the ability to shape his actions, reduce conflict of his desires by use of reason. The implications of this statement are many. It means living in society, man uses reason to order in a coherent manner all his potentialities into a harmonious whole. What I do mean here is that man without reason would only behave like any other animal which do use the survival instinct. But this is not the case for man uses this moral standard of reason to put together talents of even others for the good of all. The end result of this is happiness in life.⁶

1.7 Egoism

Egoism is defined as "theory that our actions are always caused by the desire to benefit ourselves".⁷ Under this morality agents act so as to best serve their own interest. What this means or what I understand is that they are ready to promote the self at the expense of anyone or anything else. For example if a person following this doctrine finds that his interests conflict with those of his friends or mother, child etc, one is bound by his moral principles to do what benefits him. This I view as being selfish for morality is not a personal thing but involves others as well.

However the Egotist themselves object and state
People who obey the authoritative and better part of themselves, do so
not because they seek self-interest but because they see that morality
right actions and attitudes are not possible unless they acquire through

⁶ Ibid., pp.69-74

⁷ Robert B. Loudon, Morality and Moral Theory A Reappraisal and Reaffirmation. (London: Oxford University Press, 1992) p. 16.

their own efforts the requisite intentions.⁸

What they are saying is that they do not view others as means towards their own goals but recognise that the good of the others do, in and by themselves, provide morally compelling reasons for actions.

This sounds contradictory to me. One who is pursuing self benefits cannot at the same time be advocating the benefit of the other.

1.8. Utilitarianism

In the narrowest sense utilitarianism is defined as "the moral principle which seeks the greatest happiness of the greatest number"⁹ What this moral view advocates is happiness which means absence of pain. So in each situation this principle is supposed to apply and if there is pain in the process or the result is pain, then there is no happiness.

On another understanding utilitarianism holds also. "the rightness or wrongness of an action always depends on the consequences of the action on its tendency to lead to intrinsically good or bad state of affairs."¹⁰

If this principle of utilitarianism is allowed to dictate peoples life, then life itself will be at stake. Take for example if one big group of people decides to attack a small nation and commit genocide. This action will be justified for it benefits or brings pleasure to the majority. Its a moral position which I would personally not

⁸ Ibid., p.17

⁹ Bernard Williams , Morality An Introduction to Ethics, (New York: Cambridge University Press 1972) pp.95-96.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 97.

accept for in morality only the good should be promoted.

1.9 African Traditional Morality

The basis of traditional morality lies in the strong belief in the unity of the cosmos. The world as seen by African eyes is made up of super natural invisible realities, the world of plants, animals, the earth, stars moon and all other beings. All these it is believed belong together by virtue of their having been created and their being sustained by the supreme being. They derive their unity from that common origin which forms the basis of traditional morality. The unity of the cosmos defies any attempt to separate the "secular" from the "Sacred"¹¹

For most African communities, one must always live in fellowship with the family community. As far as traditional thought is concerned the good life is with and among people, your people. Community leaders are charged with responsibility to ensure the Sacred character of life through ritual and other means. The individual person lives in presence of the supreme Being, the living and dead and the community. To exist is in a community, and a part from one's community one is non-entity¹²

¹¹ Ambrose Moyo, "Traditional Morality / World view" in Moral and Ethical Issues in African Christianity, Mugambi J.N.K. & Nasimiyu A. eds., (Nairobi Initiative Publishers 1992) P.50.

¹² Ibid., p. 52

2.0 Education in Traditional African Society

Education in Traditional African Society aimed at producing persons who upheld the values that helped the society to remain integrated. These were values of peace and harmony, respect for authority respect for and fear of supernatural realities. Since a society is defined by the kind of individuals who constitute it, education has also aimed at inculcating personality values, which helped the individuals to be integrated in themselves. Personality values were such moral values as honesty and reliability, generosity, courage, temperance humility and justice.¹³

A Society which was educating people for life and for its own welfare necessarily emphasized the need for people to be the best that they could be. This does not mean there were no immoral people. Immoral people existed, but the society distinguished them for what they were and dealt with them through a vigorous judicial system and strong public opinion. It paid to be moral¹⁴

2.1 Cognitive-Development theory of Moralization

Almost all psychology textbooks which discuss moral development treat it as the product of internalization of norms and values of parents and the culture through a process of identification, reward or punishment. However findings concerning stages of growth reject this view¹⁵

Notions of stages are assimilated to a conception of natural biological growth

¹³ Hannah W. Kinoti, "Education in Traditional African Society" in Moral and Ethical Issues in African Christianity, J.N.K. Mugambi & Nasimiyu, eds, (Nairobi: Initiative Publishers 1992) p.80.

¹⁴ Ibid., p.81

¹⁵ Sullivan E.V., Moral Education-Interdisciplinary Approaches (New York: Newman Press 1971) p.41

unfolding. In the area of morality, such maturational theories lead to a conception of giving the child freedom to grow in his own way. This is far however from the implications of moral stages. Therefore, the "cognitive-developmental" theory of moralization attempts to explain universals and natural trends in development without assuming these trends are the innate unfolding of nervous system which specifies the kind of environmental conditions necessary to facilitate moral development.¹⁶

There are two assumptions of our theory which shall be stressed here. One, the assumption that moral development has a cognitive core. This assumption is central to any interjective approach to moral education and contrasts sharply with irrational emotive theories.

The second assumption is of the interacting origins of morality. This assumption is central for an intellective approach to moral education as not a process of transmission of fixed moral truth but rather a stimulation of the child's restructuring of his experience¹⁷

Then is there universal core structure of morality? Sure. Although societies have very many institutions of morality. What theorist extract from them is one rules, two sympathy, or concern for welfare consequences to others, and three Justice. Developmental theory conception of role taking embraces all three, in the sense that all morally relevant rules and institutions are conceived of as interpreted through the process of role taking directed by concerns about both welfare and justice.¹⁸

¹⁶ Ibid., p 43

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 51

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 52

CHAPTER TWO

1. MORAL EDUCATION AMONG THE MERU

Moral education among the Ameru People was something which went on hand in hand with the elaborate cultural practices. Through interviewing several people I came to know most of the moral teachings surrounding the cultural practices and rites.

Circumcision and marriage came out as the rites of most significance. To maintain a logical flow of ideas I would begin at the first stage of life that is birth.

1.1 Birth of a new life (baby)

When a married woman realized she was pregnant she chose a midwife. This was a person of good reputation, one approved by the whole community. One who also had assisted in many such occasions. No gossipier or sorcerer or barren-woman could be given such a big responsibility. The reason behind this was to avoid contaminating the innocent life to be born. For the midwife by extension became another mother to the child to be born. Later in life the child would be emulating his/her midwife's qualities especially those to do with generosity.

When the day of delivery arrived there was great feasting as the village women, relatives would have organized all kinds of food. What remained was the ululations from the women, plus the midwife attending to the expectant mother. As soon as the child was born and it cried, the women would fill the air with five ululations, if it was a boy or four if it was a girl. Though there was a bias in the fact people were more happy with a male child, a child was a child. A girl would add more wealth to the family through bride-wealth whereas a boy will become a defender

of the people or clan.

Everybody then joined in the feasting including those who were enemies. The real moral impact came out here. To accept to feast with your enemy meant forgiveness and no more harbouring of ill feelings. There was a strong belief that whoever accepted this while still having a grudge will be cursed by the spirit of the ancestors. Refusal to take part in the participation was a clear sign to the whole household that serious problems needing investigations and address were afoot.

Another moral aspect coming from a birth occasion was the respect for male or female privacy. Only a woman could see the nakedness of another woman. Therefore only women could assist in a delivery. In fact, it became or is still a taboo even today for "wameru" to be seen naked in public.

Then from the day the child was born up to about six months all the relatives, friends and village women started visiting the new born child and the mother. They brought presents and congratulated the mother and wished her good health and ability to bear more children. Here the popular saying was they were coming to "comfort or hold" the baby. The significance of this gesture was that a child belonged to everybody and it was the duty of everyone to see that it was brought up in the best moral uprightness. More a child was also regarded as a visitor calling for everyone's hospitality.

During this time also, after the burial of the placenta, there was cleansing or purification of home and the mother. What happened was that after seven or eight days after delivery, the mother was shaved and allowed to go and take a bath. This symbolised the fact that the uncleanness associated with giving birth was over and

she could resume her active life in the community.

During the same period the child was given a name. This was highly significant for it symbolised the type of personality the child was expected to become.

Moreover it showed acceptance into the whole community. It also made other children especially older ones from the same family to have a sense of solidarity and brotherhood right from their tender age.

The last event surrounding a child's birth was shaving of the baby's hair. This was a mark of the end of its infancy and a symbol to the parents they could resume their sexual life again. A pregnancy occurring before this period was over was viewed as a bad omen, for the child and the concerned parents. The parents themselves in return were made to pay a big fine as an act of cleansing. However the real reason for this regulation was to help regulate child spacing, give the mother enough time to look after the new born and regain her health. It also disciplined the husband to be responsible as a Father.

All in all, although the child learned very little the sense of trust always developed at this time. Even today children not cared for and loved as infants grow to trust and love nobody themselves.¹

¹ The above information is got from the interviews of the following people.

Mary Mukwanjiru, Munga, Interviewed on July 1977.

Joseph Mbae, Muthambi. Interviewed on July 1977.

2. Between Puberty and Circumcision

After puberty one did not mature overnight. According to one's sex, one went through various secret group training which enhanced bravely, independence etc as outlined below.

2.1 "Kuruta Njuthii" (literary it means to remove pebbles from one's body).

What happened here was when one was between ages 7 - 9 years old, you found boys keeping to their own small groupings. This made those left out to be jealous and they requested to join the small groups. This was accepted but through a slight ceremony of rubbing the back of the palm of the new comer until it started bleeding. The boy would cry in pain but what counted was whether he would report this back to his mother. If he did this, he was chased away by the rest being advised to go suckle more. He was not yet mature to be detached from his mother. However for those who endured they got accepted and became ready for the next stage.

2.2 Gukuura Nyaki (literal meaning is to uproot grass).

This was a very embarrassing stage. The candidate was tricked as follows. Boys would collect human waste or that of a dog and place it in heaps of three groups. In each heap would be planted a grass (stick). The newcomer will be challenged to pluck out the first with his hands and may be even the second one. However when it came to the last one he would be challenged to have his hands tied from the back first. Then he was instructed to bend forward and pluck the grass with his teeth. As he did this someone pushed him from the back and one actually submerged all his face with

this someone pushed him from the back and one actually submerged all his face with the dirty stuff. All the rest of the boys would burst out laughing. Later they would wait to hear whether the incident was reported to any woman. If this happened the culprit was expelled and would be lucky if he escaped a beating as well. If one endured he was ready for the next stage, the scouting stage.

2.3. **"Kuminchia"** (literal meaning is the blindness stage).

The first aspect of this took place away from home in the bush. Some items would be hidden in the bush and one would be given instructions to find them. Also marks would be made on rocks and trees and one would be required to identify them and find his directions. If you succeeded, then you would be required to name and interpret various parts of the body. Normally this stage occurred when one was in the age of 12-14 years old. Since it dealt more on knowledge, elders were sometimes involved in evaluating those undergoing it. Again it was not something which one undertook and passed in the first time. Boys who failed were given more time to go and learn more. It was only after this stage that one entered the last stage before circumcision. For one had learnt to respect his agemates and elders stopped playing with small children and stopped sleeping in his mother's hut.

2.4 **"Gatuuri"**

The last stage "Gatuuri" occurred from the age of over 16 years old. One was severely beaten to test endurance of pain. No crying or movement was expected. This group was respected by everyone in the society, elders, the circumcised and children alike.

The lessons here centered on trust, dignity of a mature person, obedience, respect for girls and boys etc. All in all I would sum up by pointing out the moral lessons intended to be achieved through this secret groups. To produce people who could be trusted and able to keep secrets. The graduands should be devoted to the community, be self autonomous and disciplined. The person also should be brave and courageous for many duties would call this to function etc. All this made the society in general to remain in peace with members keeping high moral standards.

3. Circumcision

The most elaborate ceremony, apart from marriage, among the Ameru was and is still circumcision. Formally it involved both girls and boys but now-days many girls have opted out. There was the preparation and the ceremony itself as I shall narrate below.

3.1 Preparation

The preparation begun when one was over sixteen years old, having passed the "Gatuuri" stage as already mentioned before. All those boys who were over sixteen and willing to become grown ups reported or informed their fathers. Then the Father, especially if the boy was the first born would throw a party to his agemates and relatives. This was symbolic in the sense that the father would also change his status. He would be regarded as a junior elder for circumcision enables the initiate to be recognised in the society with rights and duties. More the first born would be paving

way for others (sons) who could not be circumcised before him.

Then following this opening ceremony the medicine-man was informed to do his job. He was supposed to use his divinisation skills to consult the ancestors opinion. In case it came out that they were offended he was also responsible for offering the atonement sacrifices to make things straight. If the ancestors were happy it was still his duty to offer them the thanksgiving offerings. This ensured their protection especially when the candidate would be undergoing the surgical operation and at the time of recuperation.

About three or four weeks before the date of circumcision, all the candidates started their immediate preparations marked with dances and singing. The aim of this dances was to provoke the people in general and the close relatives in particular to realize the said candidate had become of age. It also provoked the already circumcised but not yet elders to start organising things quickly.

Moreover as the candidate went from house to house, he was given gifts which would become his first property to own. All this dancing also took place during the day time. The following is an example of song sung during this period.

Oh my maternal uncle
maternal uncle.
I am told I am not yet old
Am I going to get ripe.
Like bananas to be known I am old
ooh no, no no, ...

The song is repeated over and over with new names of relations replacing the one of the maternal uncle as he soloist may deem necessary. This was supposed to provoke them to come to his defence in case any unforeseen obstacles came along to

hinder his circumcision.

Another preparatory aspect was making of the seclusion hut. This was done by the initiate elect. The purpose was to show they were mature and responsible and could be relied upon in future to build, maintain and expand houses, granaries etc in their own homes. The seclusion hut was normally built away from the main homestead, where possible, right in the middle of the bush. This was supposed to be kept from the general public eyes especially children and women. Moreover the hut was temporary, built with dry banana leaves and was burnt down after the seclusion period was over.

Another very important aspect was the choosing of the "small father". The small father was the guardian who was supposed to take care of the initiate when he was healing. His role was not only of playing nurse but to instruct on all matters which will enable the young person become a useful member of the community. Therefore, his choice did not depend on the candidate alone but involved his parents as well. This was the case because they knew who in the society was a person of high integrity worthy playing the role of a model. This person once chosen continued guiding his "small son or the candidate even in later life, hence the seriousness of the choice. In fact if one lost his biological father this man was considered on the same level as the uncles. For this significant role families tended to maintain one or two "small fathers" for all their sons. Their services were never paid for apart from the gourd of beer the candidate presented to the person after the choice was made. The job itself was of high prestige and it was a great honour in itself.

3.2 Seeking Permission

Consulting the maternal uncle was most important. This is the uncle whose explicit permission was needed if the ceremony was to take place. So when the candidate went to seek his permission, he went with a big he-goat and a gourd of honey. He went singing and if possible accompanied by other candidates. This was a symbol of solidarity with his agemates which formed a bond which would be everlasting throughout one's life.

On reaching his uncles homestead, and since he (uncle) had already been informed in advance, he came out to meet his nephew holding a special mat which one was supposed to walk on. This symbol is important for it means that the permission is granted. After this the uncle went ahead to interrogate the nephew, why exactly he is seeking to be circumcised. This is also important for it shows one's eagerness and willingness. That one is ready and mature to continue the family name and dignity which comes through marriage. However, marriage is not possible if circumcision did not take place. Marriage is not sanctioned by the community if the young man is not circumcised.

When the interview was over the uncle gave the nephew a she goat or heifer according to how wealthy he was. This will form part of the property the young man was to own later.

3.3 Day of Circumcision

After visiting the uncle, everything was set for the big day itself. The young men chose and prepared the arena where all those to be circumcised will undergo the

surgical operation. Once chosen the place remained under the guard of the young men for people feared interference from wicked people like the wizards.

Also the same day, that is one before circumcision, there was great feasting by the whole community. This symbolised the happiness of everybody that the ranks and file of the grown up will be added to. More at this time the candidates shaved all their hair of the head and the pelvic. This symbolised they were entering a new phase of life and leaving the one of childhood all together.

Throughout the night the candidates danced together with all the people. Even women were not excluded from this dances. It was farewell time and people would see the candidates again after some time. Moreover the candidates would come back with changed status. The only ironical thing about this great feasting was the candidates themselves who were not allowed to eat anything during this night. The reason was only known later. It was to help control bleeding the following day, though children were cheated that the initiates were being tested on their perseverance of hunger.

Very early in the morning, all the candidates were taken to the river for their final bath. The following song normally was sung by the young who normally were dressed as if they were going for war.

Young man, who will tell you
the circumciser is an enemy
Young man who will tell you
Your mother is an enemy
Young man who will tell you
Your father is your enemy etc.

This chorus is repeated with many names and events being added to form the melody.

The purpose is just to symbolise the young person is no longer the sole property of

his parents, relatives but the whole community. Moreover as the song continued, scaring words were added to test the courage of the candidates. Other words had moral overtones like the initiates being advised to respect parents and parents also cautioned they should treat the young men as they would their own sons. The candidates were advised to avoid improper dealings with girls that could bring shame to his agemates. More instructions were given during the seclusion period.

3.4 Seclusion

After the surgical operation the initiates were taken to their resting and healing quarters. Here they were left under the care of their "small fathers whose main duties were to see to the healing and impart the necessary knowledge.

Some of the instructions the circumcised received were on proper manners. He was supposed to be a gentleman first by his manner of walking. He was not supposed to keep on looking behind but to turn with his whole body. He was never to go looking for food alone from his mothers house but in company of his agemates. This brought the element of solidarity with his agemates and being for others. In case his parents scolded him or physically molested him he was to run away and never hit back. He was also supposed not to deal with newly married women. This put in check any incidence of adultery which might crop up. The way of greeting the elders, agemates and children was also taught at this time. One was also instructed on the duties one would undertake as a biological father later on.

To make the newly circumcised really get hardened, there were organized beatings both by the "small fathers" and one's own agemates. All kinds of excuses were taken to justify this and differentiate it from terrorism. For example excess food

would be served and failure to finish or vomiting would earn one a thorough beating.

Another reason would always come up during the oral instructions on the tribal history and wisdom. Forgetting part of this instructions would mean being beaten so as to be reminded. In this way someone became a keen listener and patient.

As regards to the female circumcision I have only scanty ideas. This is because the practice is dying slowly among the Ameru today. Those old generation women were very reluctant to share their experience. It is still taboo for a female to disclose female secrets especially to a male.

To wind up, after circumcision the young man now was regarded as mature. He remained in seclusion for a period of 3 to 6 months where he took on a new name, counselled further on humbleness, trustfulness, responsibility and marriage. These all touched one's morals and integrity.²

MARRIAGE

In the traditional Meru community, the type of marriage practised was the traditional marriage. It was a marriage whose main purpose was to continue the family names and propagate the community at large. To ensure marriages continued on smoothly, there were many practices and rule (unwritten) to guide them.

² The above information was got from the following interviews of the following people.

- Desderio Njeru, Njiina, Interviewed on July 1977.
- Evasio Kaburu, Mitheru, Interviewed on July 1977.
- Benjamin Miriti, Muthambi, Interviewed on June 1977.
- Nderi N'bauni, Mitheru, Interviewed on August 1977.

1st practice; Rules for the choice of marriage partner:

Some clans or groups were classified as untouchable. So feared were these groups that there was a general belief, whoever married from them would meet misfortune and have disaster in life. The practice was to keep away from them and anybody who defied this norm was immediately declared a social misfit and expelled from the community.

Another rule required anyone intending to marry to investigate the family background of the partner to be. This was to check whether some of the family members suffered from diseases like mental illness, tuberculosis, blindness etc. It also ensured the same members did not have some deviant behaviours like theft, or practised witchcraft and sorcery. This practical guidelines were supposed to ensure one got the best possible partner.

2nd practice; Choice of partner:

Sometimes the parents would arrange for their son or daughter to be married to a particular family or clan. This happened when those concerned were still young infants. As they continued growing things like dowry was paid so that immediately they became grown-ups, they just married. In this case the choice was done by the parents.

There was the practice where the boy himself made the choice. When a young man spotted a girl he liked, either in seasonal dances, through enquiries, he immediately informed his agemates. This was to help him get as much information about the person as possible. It also checked against any public ridicule in future

where two agemates might find they are engaged to the same girl.

3rd practice; courtship

This began with the boy visiting the home of the girl of his interest. It was the time of making the approach declare one's intentions.

The boy would request one of his agemates to accompany him to the home of the girl. When they arrived, one of them would sneeze loudly to attract attention. This call would normally be answered by one of the girl's in that homestead. When this happened the young men would request to be served with water, if the girl of choice is the one who answered their call. If not they would simply tell whoever came to tell the particular girl to serve them with water. (This practice ensured the girl or girls knew who was chosen) Then the young men would simply walk away without saying anything more.

During the second, third and even fourth visit the same thing would be repeated. The only difference was the young man would be accompanied by a different agemate each time. This ensured that the girl would know who is interested in her by seeing the constant person always. All this visits also enabled her to make up her mind by consulting her mother and agemates about the boy.

When the boy felt sufficient time had commenced, he came carrying a spear which he planted firmly in the ground before requesting for water. The girl would come serve water and carry the spear with her if the proposal was accepted. (If not the boy would go back with his spear to try his luck somewhere else)

After his proposal was accepted the boy intensified his visits to the girls home. This is when the boy made more scrutinies on the girl. Especially he would check on her skills in preparing food, how she received visitors, entertained them all. On her part, the girl would be checking on the manners of the boy. For example was he arrogant a glutton, did he express appreciation etc. Only when both parties were satisfied did they inform their parents to commence their engagement.

4th practice; engagement:

Engagement started by the boy inviting the girl to visit his home. This she did in order to know his home, since he already knew hers. Then parents were the ones to formalize the engagement.

The boys parents prepared gruel and put it in several gourds. Choosing a young girl, between 5-10 years of age, and several recently married women, they delegated them to deliver the gourds at the boys home. The young girl was the leader of this team for her innocence and purity were beyond question, therefore a good omen.

When the party reached the in-law to be home, the bride to be and her agemates welcomed them and together they drunk the gruel. This was a symbol of acceptance and public declaration that the girl had been engaged to one of their relatives. The girl was also given a necklace which she wore proudly as a symbol of her engagement.

When this first mission was accomplished the mother of the boy gathered all the women of her village to go and see where their son was marrying from. They

went carrying gifts like tobacco, millet, gourds of gruel etc. They sung songs of praise of their son as they moved or journeyed. The presents they carried were a sign of generosity from their side. It showed the girls parents that their daughter would be taken care of once she got married.

A similar visit was repeated by the girls mother to the boys house. This gave chance for the relatives from both sides to come to know each well. Marriage was not an individual affair for it established bonds of friendship between many people.

5th practice; payment of dowry

Dowry consisted of a heifer, a ram, he goat container of honey and bull. This items showed the young couple were virgins who would lead a "sweet life" as they propagated the community. Since there were no certificates of marriage, dowry marked the validity of marriage and also cemented the bond established between the two families.

The poor and the rich alike paid dowry. There was no exemption for the clan undertook to pay for those who could not afford this themselves.

6th practice; wedding procedure

When the dowry or bridewealth was paid, a day to get the bride was fixed by the elders. The duty of going to get the bride was left to the bridegroom together with his agemates. (young people cherished this occasion for when they arrived at the girls home their talents of persuasion were tested)

On the appointed day, the bridegroom set for the girls home to fetch her, back to his home. On reaching her home they first encountered her relatives especially the young ones. These would put up a last minute resistance for their relative to leave them. The agetates accompanying the bridegroom would persuade them to relent by giving them presents like earrings, necklaces etc. The whole point being made was the girl was loved and would be missed. It was their farewell to their friend. When this was settled, then the girls parents proceeded to give their blessings.

7th practice; wedding blessings:

Before their daughter left their homestead the parents beginning with the Father spit on their daughters palms calling upon the ancestors to protect her in her new role. She would also be under curse if she did anything unhonourable to bring shame to her parents or relatives. If she had violated her purity she would also be under curse.

The mother repeated the same blessing but she spit on the girls breast. To solemnise the whole blessing ceremony, the father's agetates joined him in pronouncing the following prayer addressed to God, in song form.

Murungu (God) our father bless our child
to travel in a road without any dangers.
Smooth road without stumps and ill
omens. When they get to their new
home, let them remain under your
protection.

The parents ended the blessing by offering gifts in form of hens, ducks etc. to their daughter. It was a sign she was free to accompany her bridegroom, to his home.

8th practice: welcome of couple:

When the bride, bridegroom and the party of agemates accompanying them arrived at the bridegrooms home, they found the following arrangements, at the entrance of the home. Women will be singing welcome songs, banana leaves would be spread on the ground for the girl to walk on as a symbol to emphasis purity and prosperity.

When the girl entered the home she went straight to a hut prepared for her. This was to become her house. It was also where she was to consummate her marriage with her husband, during their first night together.

This was highly significant because the following day curious relatives would be enquiring from their kin whether the girl was a virgin. If it was discovered she was not, then heavy fines followed. They could be in form of the return of dowry or Cancellation of the feast already organized. However, as it was often the case, the girl was found to be a virgin which brought joy to her relatives, husband and agemates. To mark this, there was a great feast which always ended a marriage occasion.³

Moral Teaching from the marriage Practice

First from the rules guiding the choice of partner, one was being trained not to go by what appears only. Liking alone was not enough to pick on a partner for life.

The lengthy courtship had its purpose. People or the young learnt to be patient while undertaking vital divisions. Seeking advice and accepting others views and opinions was also a moral goal chieved during this time.

The practice of paying dowry was highly significant. First the items had the

³ The above information was got from the interviews of the following people.

- Jacinta Mbiro, Mumbuni, interviewed, on July 1997.

- Nathan Micheu, Muthambi, interviewed, on August 1997..

symbolic meaning of purity and virginity. Second, the young got motivated to preserve their purity. So something similar would happen to them also. People learn more by example and witness.

Then there were the wedding procedures, blessing, welcome, etc.

Morally this taught the young that God has a role to play in their life.

Another lesson was that marriage was more than an individual affair. The whole family and community is the backbone to support a family in order to be successive.

It also taught the young not to engage in sexual intercourse, out of adventure before marriage. Consummation on the day of the wedding was the climax of the wedding ceremony, as I have already discussed.

To sum up this topic of the Meru traditional moral education I would like to look at some of the changes that have affected the cultural practices today under a sub-heading continuity and discontinuity.

Continuity and Discontinuity of the Cultural Practices Today

With the coming of Christianity and formal school education there was a great impact on the traditional way of life. The cultural practices as pillars of teaching morals underwent a lot of change and modifications as I will point out a few as examples.

1.1 Birth in Present time

Birth by pregnant mothers mainly takes place in hospitals. Depending on her economic status the mother can give a small party to her friends to welcome a new born child. More if she is a Christian she can have the child baptised and given a name. If she is not, she simply names the child so as to secure a birth certificate.

1.2 Early Education Today

Until the child attains the school going age nothing significant happens. The assumption is the child will acquire education in school in order to lead a good moral life.

However, Daniel Nyaga, in his book Customs and Traditions of the Meru, has noted the following failures in the school system to provide moral education.

The child's education in primary school lacks teaching on good manners and respect for the old. Also omitted is the teaching on how boys and girls ought to behave, and to consider every parent as his/her own parent.⁴

⁴ Daniel Nyaga, Customs and Traditions of the Meru, (Nairobi: East African Education Publishers, 1977) p.132

This contrasts sharply with what happened, especially between puberty and circumcision. This is the time boys were prepared to achieve this virtue through various secret graduation rites whose overall duty was to have a harmonious peaceful society.

Nyaga further notes that, teachers in school regards moral teaching in school to be none of their business. This makes the child to remain untaught in some basic facts of life.⁵

The implication of this is later parents blame teachers and teachers blame parents for this discrepancy especially when the young ruin their life.

Another problem arising from the formal school education is the creation of a permissive society. When the product of the first school generation became parents, they had nothing to pass to their children having received in-adequate education. In the words of Nyaga, he says:

Moral standards have kept on deteriorating. However we sympathize with the present generation which has grown up in a society of permissiveness and promiscuity, with no apparent sanctions for such laxity, and above all without knowing what to give to their children because they inherited nothing from their parents.⁶

⁵ Ibid., pp.58-60

⁶ Ibid., P.133.

1.3 Circumcision Today

Circumcision is done in hospitals when boys are still in primary school or at the beginning of the secondary education. Unlike the past, when boys healed in communal seclusion huts, today some heal in their personal huts or stay in one families apartment. They are taught no sexual education or respect for their parents. This affects their later life.⁷

So its clear that circumnsion as it is practised today lacks some vital elements especially the moral teaching. This teaching used to prepare one to be responsible, persevere in hardships etc.

1.4. Choice of Marriage partners today

Most of the young men and women do undertake this on their own without consulting their parents at all. The outcome of this is failure in marriage for most lack any experience at all. They are attracted by the exterior qualities which disappear when they start their married life.

By not seeking advice, some young people have also married partners having a blood relation with their parents. This has come to bring complications in their married life.⁸

⁷ David J. Murungi "The On-going Pastoral Moral Care of Christian Marriages Among the Ameru with Reference to Chuka andImenti Sub-tribes" M.A. Thesis at C.H.I.E.A., Nairobi: 1990 p.53

⁸ Ibid., pp.58-60

4-5. Courtship Today

Today courtship is practised under different circumstances from traditional ones.

There are many social meeting places where young people come to know one another. These places are cinema halls, discos, sports, bars, clubs (Y.C.S., C.A.) etc. here they dialogue and propose to one another. Since this is done almost in secret, the young proceed to get married when they are far away from home. They avoid a church marriage or any recognized form of marriage and enter into a trial marriage.⁹

This in my view is a total reversal of traditional courtship where many people were involved.

1.6. Dowry Today

Due to the money economy today dowry or traditional bridewealth has changed and become bride price.

Murungi notes several ideas relating to the payment of dowry.

First there is no uniformity or standardized amount of brideprice.

Second parents meet and agree on the amount of money to be paid.

Thirdly, the education status of the girl will determine the amount to be paid.

The more education she has, the higher the price.

Lastly those who cannot be able to pay may not get parental consent to marry their daughters.

Like this observations illustrate the traditional meaning of dowry has been lost. Its no longer a thing to strengthen relationships but a sort of commercial enterprise.

⁹ Ibid., pp. 64-65

CHAPTER THREE

PASTORAL AND MORAL IMPLICATION

In this chapter of my essay, I will show how some of the moral views about morality are favourable to the Meru understanding of moral development or education. This will be in view to maintaining and continuing the cultural practice which gives raise to this particular moral development. I will also look at the various values and practices relevant in pastoral field.

1. MORAL IMPLICATION

1.1. Socrates View on Moral Education

For Socrates the main objective of moral education was teaching virtue and producing in our children the kind of behaviour called virtuous. Virtuous means good behaviour which is not considered evil by the Society. Good behaviour among the "Ameru" included respect for the elders and age-mates, being a disciplined person, one who could keep secrets etc. To achieve this the Meru people had the cultural practices of making the young boys between the age of 7 - 16 undergo secret group training as I have already mentioned in my essay. This practice should continue for it helps to mould young people become respectable people. You cannot be respected if you respect nobody in return.

1.2 Aristotle on Morality

For Aristotle morality is concerned with equipping the child with knowledge and principles so that the child can apply that whenever the situation demanded. This kind of understanding was well taken care of in the Meru moral development. Take for example the rules and practices guiding the choice of a marriage partner. The rules ensured that young people knew how to make a good choice. People could not marry relatives for this was taboo. Nor could you marry someone suffering from incurable diseases like madness, blindness or people with dubious moral background like sorcery etc. This ensured that when people got married their families remained stable. This was as a result of having vital information to work with. On the other hand if this information lacked (the rules) it would mean people could just wake up and start up a family on instincts like any animal does.

1.3 Moral standards as distinguishing mark of man:

Under this view it is argued man uses his ability of reason to put together even the talents of others for the good of all. The result of this is happiness in life, many cultural practices aimed just exactly at this. That is putting the abilities of others in a joint effort, to attain a happy life.

Take for example the practice of circumcision. It required the candidate to involve the father, the medicineman, the spirits, relatives, the community etc. Only then could he undergo this rite. Everyone benefited for those coming over after circumcision were mature, responsible, humble and trustworthy etc. This ensured that

the person enjoyed a peaceful life which can be understood as one of happy life. When people can trust each other, take up duties and claim their rights it means contentment. This contrasts with a situation where there is conflict, mistrust etc. There is no harmony and this cannot be called a happy situation. Therefore, the practice of circumcision is worthy keeping.

Another practice involving joint effort is the occasion of the birth of a new life. In my essay I mentioned that there were the expectant mother, midwife and the village women etc All those who gathered served as witnesses and to give hospitality to the new born child. It is a symbol of accepting the child into the larger community and has a gesture of love which continued throughout infancy. Morally this is a good gesture and practice for the child learnt from the very beginning to trust others which is beneficial to the good life and happiness of all.

1.4. Education in traditional African society:

In this moral view the goal was to produce persons who upheld the values which helped the society to remain integrated. These were values like peace, harmony, respect for authority and fear of supernatural realities. This happened by producing individuals with integrated personality, moral values like honesty, reliability, generosity, courage, humility, justice etc.

In the Meru moral development of the person, this came about through the practice of circumcision. The choice of the "small father" ensured that the person was of high moral integrity. By this I mean he possessed the personality which made him a

model to his "small Son" This would enable him to give the same qualities of character to the candidate after circumcision. This happened when the candidate was undergoing healing in seclusion. At this time, I noted, he was instructed on matters about humbleness, responsibility, trustfulness etc. This enabled him to become an integrated person, mature and able to embark on the next state of life, marriage.

Another practice helping to integrate society and produce individuals enabling this to happen was marriage itself. I noted already the significance of the practice of paying dowry. For instance, it was to cement relationship or bond of friendship. The couple marrying had remained as virgins and were worthy to propagate the community

Also during the practice of engagement we note the parents of the girl and boy visited each other and presents were offered as a sign of generosity.

The fear of supernatural realities which means respect for this invisible realities came out clearly during the wedding blessings. The father of the girl would invoke the blessings of the ancestors to protect his daughter, in her new role. More he called upon God himself, to protect the couple either, when traveling or when they settled in their new home. This morally showed man was not an end in himself, but was also bound and directed by other realities superior than him and whose protection he owed his very existence. Therefore I would say these practices of arranging and contracting a marriage serve their moral purpose and should be maintained.

1.5. African Traditional Morality view

The most basic thing in this morality is good life is seen as fellowship with family and community. To exist is to be in presence of supreme being, the living, the dead and the community. Therefore one cannot exist or lead good life without others.

This kind of understanding is very central to the Meru moral development practices. Starting from the time of birth, we note others perform good will gestures like ululations and hold feast to mark the arrival of a new person into their community. Later they help to mould the "seed" of trust and love within the child before the child finished its infancy.

Then other practices follow to make the child a member of the society. Before circumcision the practice of undergoing secret group training ensures the child acquires moral values like respect for elders, age-mates, opposite sex, and everybody in the society. Also it is the time that one became devoted to the community and gained tribal wisdom and knowledge.

During the preparation for circumcision, we note the medicineman was consulted, so that he could be the link between the candidate for circumcision, his family and the ancestors. This was to ensure they remained part of the whole ceremony.

At the time of marriage, during the practice of blessing we note the father of the girl and his age-mates offering prayers to petition God's protection to the new couple. This ensured that the presence of God, though invisible, was there during the whole ceremony.

Looking at all the rest of the practices involved in marriage, courtship,

engagement, payment of dowry, wedding procedure, blessings and welcome of couple, I noted various moral teachings. Namely, people learnt to be patient and seek advice (courtship)

Payment of dowry encouraged the young to remain as virgins. The blessing taught the young to rely and recognize God had a role in their lives, and marriage in general involved the participation of the whole community, a lesson to the young that they cannot be successive in their family life without the support of the community. All this show and illustrate that the practices already mentioned above are worthwhile to maintain for they serve their moral purposes, in moral education or development.

2. PASTORAL IMPLICATION

Under this heading I will look at some of the moral values and the practices used to develop them. My argument is, in pastoral action they should be respected. They are relevant as they help to mould the morals of those concerned.

2.1 Good Manners

Good manners involve cultural values like respect for the elders, respect for the age-mates, respect for the opposite sex etc.

This kind of moral development came early in one's life. Through the practices of secret groups training the boys between the ages of 7 - 16, acquired good manners, together with other values. This helped them lead a good moral life for they knew how to behave in the company of elders, company of girls and among themselves. where this lacks, (as I have noted in the discontinuity and continuity heading) people end up ruining their life.

2.2 Trust as a Moral Value

Trust includes also honesty and sense of justice. This is so because we note those who cannot trust anybody means they cannot be honest with anybody or be just themselves. This was a great insight taken care of by the cultural practices of seclusion after circumcision, the boys undergoing secret group training before circumcision, the feast to welcome a new born child etc all served this purpose.

2.3 Sense of Belonging

Sense of belonging to the community is also a good value. People were trained to feel solidarity and the sense of brotherhood through the practice of circumcision and marriage. I noted that in the time of preparing to undergo the surgical operation the candidates sought permission from the maternal uncle. To visit him he went singing accompanied by his age-mates. Also they visited relatives as a group, were circumcised as a group etc. This cultivated the sense of togetherness or solidarity. In one's marriage the whole community participated in one way or the other. This was a gesture to expel any remote feelings of alienation. For example I noted where someone was poor and could not pay the bride wealth the community did it for him.

2.4 Sense of the Sacred

By the Sacred I mean being aware of the need and presence of the Supernatural Being.

This value was integrated in an individual through rites of prayers or

divination surrounding some cultural practices. For example during marriage there was the blessing ceremony. Before circumcision, the medicineman consulted with the ancestors. These were not superstitious things but practices which enabled the community to experience the supernatural in their lives and appreciate their role.

2.5 Rights and Duties

This was highly significant in one's life. To recognise that rights and duties go together, and you cannot enjoy your rights unless you performed your duties made somebody morally mature. I say this because the principle purpose of the cultural practice of circumcision and marriage was geared towards this. In circumcision you got prepared and in marriage you claimed your rights like owning property, procreating to propagate the community etc. However it also meant taking up the responsibility of fatherhood which is a vital duty to upbringing your children to become useful members of the society.

2.6 Love

The value of love especially for one's community was highly developed. To be courageous, brave in order to serve one's community cannot happen where love is not existing. Hatred in fact would be the case. This cultural value was cultivated within the community's members through the practice of circumcision. During seclusion I noted candidate were instructed on matters of discipline, humbleness etc. However, apart from the instructions, there were organized beatings which enhanced courage bravely, perseverance, courage etc. These elements were only secondary to serve the primary duty of love which can be viewed as patriotism. Because of one's

love for his community, one felt morally bound not to do anything which will bring ridicule to his community. This could be at the time of defending the community in battles or in the conduct of one's life.

Looking at this cultural values and practices I propose they can be used by a pastor to help the community see God right in their situation. This would make God to be a person within the community. Instead of rejecting this values and practices, a pastoral argment would be better of to show respect of them by fostering dialogue between this values and the Christian values. This would be inculturation for people would have a foundation and opportunity to move from the known to the unknown. This would make things easy where people don't feel resentful and alienated by the Christian message which is most often mixed with cultural norms and practices of the evangelizer.

Take as an example, or illustration if you want to preach about love of God. From Matthew 25, Jesus indicates that man's relationship to God is known and manifested in his relation with his fellow men. You cannot claim to love God and neglect neighbour who is hungry, thirsty, naked, alone or in prison. Here the preacher would be understood better if he uses one of the experiences where people show concern for one another. For instance this could be the occasion when the sense of belonging was cultivated. People helped those who were less well off. In payment of dowry I noted, those who could not pay had their dowry paid for them hence enabling them become like anybody else.

In inculturation you would notice that one would not be only limited to the few examples of cultural practices I cited to support my argument. One would be called

upon to utilize other cultural elements mentioned in my essay like names, songs, music expressions, symbols etc. These are some of the elements which best express innermost realities of peoples lives.

3. Liberation of some cultural practices:

To be fair and balanced in my argument I propose that not all the cultural practices do produce moral development to the person or moral values. Just like some moral views cannot be said to stand for morality (for example indoctrination) so are some practices. These need to be cleansed by some other values especially those coming from Christianity. It will help to mention that in pastoral action the gospel message is communicated in two-fold.

First is by affirmation. This involves inculturation where all good elements and values of moralities are retained and used. This I have already discussed and its not necessary to repeat again

Then the second aspect is by redemption. By redemption I mean all the oppressive ways of life which enslave people must be replaced with liberating practices. In this way people find something new and attractive to turn to.

Looking at the Meru cultural practices I find there are some which need replacement. I will mention a few to support my argument.

3.1. Gender inequality:

We notice from the practice of welcoming a new born child that for a boy, the women made five ululations and four for a girl. People were even more happy with a

boy child than a girl child This attitude is not appropriate for it would lead to discrimination later on in life. For example, discrimination on who can own property, or someone feeling of being a superior being or inferior being. The gospel message of people being created in the image of God (Gn 1:27-28) could be useful. Its the plan of God to create people in different genders so that the two can offer mutual companionship.

3.2. Female Circumcision:

Though not discussed but only mentioned in my essay, I think the practice is outdated and may be repugnant to morality. The reason is morality is supposed to enhance what is good, and even from the medical point of view, we know today the harm caused to the female body by female circumcision. In my opinion what should happen is to find an alternative means of offering the moral education attained during female circumcision practice. This could be by offering those concerned guidance and tutorage on good manners, facts about family life etc. This would exempt the girls from physical surgical operation. A good pastor would seek such an opportunity to include Christian principles to be taught together with the traditional moral values.

3.3. Other practices:

Other practices include things like a male not assisting a female during the time of delivery. Though traditionally it served its purpose of ensuring that female and male privacy were respected, modern life dictates otherwise. most births today take place in hospitals and it would be naive to insist only females should attend to females.

Also the many beatings occurring during the males seclusion period after circumcision are unnecessary. Proper explanation during the period is enough and the same results can occur. The cane is a wrong method to utilize to impact knowledge.

CONCLUSION

In my conclusion I would like to make a few observations.

From the few moral views I considered in chapter one, it is clear that one, peoples view on what is moral is almost universal. By universal I mean that, whenever people are, they have a way of shaping a desired behaviour.

Two, morality can be reflective or un-reflective. Where morality is un-reflective, people are just taught to do that is either wrong or right. In their life they live with do's and don'ts but they can never explain why something is wrong or right. They lack clear principles or concepts to support their moral do's and don'ts. The danger to this morality is, if the experience one is supposed to apply his rules of do's and don'ts changes, one will be at a loss on how to act in the new situation. On the other hand reflective morality gives the do's and don'ts, plus the knowledge to explain them. This empowers the person with the freedom to evaluate every experience and act accordingly. This makes morality a human act.

From the Meru cultural practices and moral development I would say they are good. They are also valid for they enable those concerned to have their rules and guidelines in moral life. Cultural practices are means to achieve the moral values of the community. Therefore since they are the major means in general, the Meru moral values are more un-reflective than reflective. The cultural practices help in training people to follow certain moral values in their lives.

From the third and last chapter of pastoral and moral implication I would say that in pastoral action moral values need to be respected. This would be in way of affirming those which are good by continuing them. For those values and practices

which oppress people they should be liberated by changing them with other values
which serve a moral purpose.

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1. Evasio Kaburu, Mitheru, Interviewed on July 1997.
2. Miriti Benjamin, Muthambi, Interviewed on July 1997.
3. Mbiro Jacinta, Mutindwa, Interviewed on July 1997.
4. Mbae Joseph, Muthambi, Interviewed on July 1997.
5. Mukwanjiru Mary, Munga, Interviewed on July 1997.
6. Michen Nathan, Muthambi, Interviewed on August 1997.
7. Njeru Desderio, Njina, Interviewed on July 1997.
8. Nderi Nbauu, Mitheru, Interviewed on August 1997