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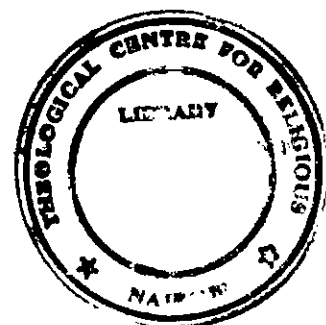
WITCHCRAFT A CASE STUDY OF KIBABII PARISH

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This is a long essay submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts, Religious Studies.

FEBRUARY 2000, NAIROBI KENYA

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STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the material used herein has not been submitted for academic credit to any other Institution/University. All sources have been cited in full.

Signed 

DOMINIC KOSE O.F.M CAP

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated with gratitude to my parents Mr. Matthew Were and Mrs. Salome Papa, my community and all my friends who assisted me to develop the art of Inquiry.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT.

I extend my sincere gratitude to Dr. Mary Getui who accepted to be my tutor. Thanks for her insights and suggestions. Special thanks also go to Mr. John Mboru who helped me in the beginning to put my ideas and thoughts together. These ideas helped me to develop this study up to the final stage.

I am grateful too to all the Christians of Kibabii parish and the non-Christians through whose cooperation we managed to enter into the mystery of **Ubulosi** (witchcraft). Great thanks to Rev. Fr. James Okiliba my parish priest who provided me with accommodation during this crucial period of research. Thanks to the entire staff of Tangaza College whose devotion and commitment made our theological formation possible. Thanks also to all my classmates for their kindness, moral, and material support to me during this period of studies, I am indeed grateful.

ABSTRACT

Witchcraft is a subject which has been discussed by many scholars. We have undertaken to investigate what it is, who practices it, and finally why bother about it?. This we have done by having a case study of Kibabii parish of Bungoma diocese. The people under study are Luhya tribe from western Kenya, both Christians and non Christians.

In pastoral psychology we came to realize that witchcraft is one of the problems or issues that confront the pastor in his pastoral ministry. This is true also of pastors working in Bungoma diocese. We hence thought it is an important subject which needs a careful and a critical analysis in order to address it properly. Throughout this long essay/project, we have come to realize that not every Luhya is a witch and witchcraft affects Christians and non Christians alike, and so a cause for our concern. We have also come to realize that witchcraft cannot be eradicated by a pastor preaching against it, more is required in terms of catechizes and open dialogue between the Catholic Church and the local culture.

It has become clear to us that riches or economy has its part to play in this phenomenon. This then reminds us that what we are dealing with here is more than we often read about witchcraft in books. Witchcraft is the power that counters the good in society, i.e, good life and prosperity, and as we have found out, it cannot be narrowed to a clear definition. The more we have tried to understand it, the more mysterious it has become. We have also found out that it is an eternal phenomenon always taking new forms as the society takes new forms of development.

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CHAPTER ONE.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION.

In this essay we will address the issue of witchcraft in Kibabii parish and the out stations. The whole problem about witchcraft is described using various names. These names include black magic, white magic and others call it devil worship. The Luhyas who practice traditional religion we will refer to them as "traditionalists." By Christian we mean the catholic Christians of Kibabii parish unless otherwise specified.

Our work is in four chapters. In chapter one we have the introduction of our topic and purpose of our study. This includes the [i] background of the problem [ii] the statement, [iii] aim of our study [iv] hypotheses [v] scope of our study [vi] justification [vii] limitations. In chapter two we have two sections, part one provides how we conducted our research in the field. Part two gives us the finds of our research. Chapter three provides us with the analysis and interpretation of the phenomenon of witchcraft as the result of our findings in the field. The conclusion of our paper is chapter four where we have conclusion with a summary of basic concepts, discussions and some suggestions for future research. Limitation to our research is that witchcraft is a secretive evil power with a few people in the society that is why it will continue to be there and no way it can be terminated in the society since it is business to some people.

DEFINITIONS.

Bewitching/witchcraft it is the ritual through with the witch brings magical or pre natural power to bear on his or her victims, to cause evil on the victim or victims.

Medicine persons are persons with supernatural powers of healing and of protecting one from the powers of the witches. These are the ones who have the powers of a diviner, they

also act as moral arbitrators and lead in rituals for the sake of bringing harmony between the people and their creator, God.

Majini -. They are associated with riches for those who possess them. However, this is on condition that those who possess them give them the required sacrifices. Failure to give the required sacrifices, results to the destruction of the family and its property, and can even result to the bad spirits terrorizing the whole village.

Priest/ess are persons with supernatural powers of healing as a diviner, they also have powers of diviners. They act as moral arbitrators and lead in rituals for the sake of bringing harmony between the people and their creator, God.

SORCERY. According to collins concise English Dictionary (1992) sorcery is the use of power gained from the assistance or control of evil spirits especially for divining.

WITCHCRAFT. According to Collins concise English Dictionary(1992), witchcraft is defined as [i] the influence of magic or sorcery [ii] Fascinating or bewitching influence or charm. [iii] The art of bringing magical or pre natural power to bear or the act or practice of attempting to do so. For our research we shall use the third definition.

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY.

Initially we thought that Witchcraft is not a problem, to Christians since they are followers of Christ and Christ did not advocate for witchcraft. But we came to note that despite of the teaching of the church still Christians were involved in witchcraft, our aim is to see how the issue can be addressed in order that Christians may live as true Christians. We undertook to do the research, because of an incident involving witchcraft, which happened in our parish as we shall see latter as we proceed. We also thought that witchcraft is not a problem for us, It is an issue for those who have not believed in Jesus Christ and his way of

life. We thought that it is an issue for non-Christians but that was not the case as we came to find out.

We have seen people being accused of being witches in our society, whenever anything happens which is extraordinary in the society. These are incidences like death due to road accidents, problems in families which leads to divorce, disease both of human beings and of animals and at times leading to death to one concerned. When also one stares at somebody and he/she dies this is taken to be the work of the witch. Any problem which would occur and no solution was found it was taken to be the work of the witches. It is because of such situations that people went to see Ndidi¹ at Ematungu as we will see later, to find out, who the witches are and also get their names cleared from those whom society accuses of being possible witches.

Ndidi is an old woman who lives at Ematungu and it is believed that she has powers to neutralize the powers of the witches. Those who went for assistance from Ndidi were Christians Catholics and non Christians. They had to undergo a ritual where one was shaved of every hair on his/her body. This is called "*Omusango kokhwikala*"² this ritual was to protect one from witchcraft. What we found out is that when the Christians are not in problems they are very good Christians but when there is a problem they turn to Ndidi to help them in their problems.

Our concern is why do Christians go to see Ndidi and it is against Christian teachings?. The church leaders like the Chairperson of the parish being also accused of being a witch and confessing that he was a witch and that he caused the death of several children, including of his neighbors child. He confessed also of having had a snake which he used in his activities as a

¹ Ndidi is a priestess who lives at Ematungu, she was once a christian.

² *Omusango Kokhwikala* it is a ritual for protection from being harmed by witchcraft.

way of scaring people. It was after the snake was killed by the villagers, that he saw that witchcraft was not to practiced by a Christians,he felt also he was not behaving as christian should behave, these made the christians to find out, truth from him, since he was asheming them. They also threatened him with death such that he had no other wise but to try and save his life. What was found at his home after a search was conducted supported the suspicion. There was a lot of human hair, nails, skins of snakes, dried flesh, believed to be from dead human bodies, shells of tortoise, pictures of dead children and some people who died long ago, pieces of clothes of the people from the village. The list is endless since there were yellow, black and blue liquid in bottles, and many other items. He was also involved in *Omusango*³ ritual which we will see as we go on what it is. Church leaders are supposed to help the Christians to understand their faith. Our parish priest has tried very much to fight the aspect of participating in the ritual of "*Omusango Kukhwikala*," without much success. We therefore thought that a careful study and analysis of witchcraft is needed.

THE STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Our aim of taking this study is to find out what witchcraft is all about and how it has affected the lives of the Christians of Kibabii parish. We chose witchcraft among the Luhya people and particularly Kibabii Parish for pastoral reasons. We have personal understanding since we are from parishes where this practice exists and because of witnessing a case of the parish Chairperson as we had seen earlier who confessed of being a witch, revealing that it was in the family .We have a number of Christians in Kibabii parish who have problem of being believers in witchcraft at the same time practicing Christianity. Efforts have been made at the highest position of the local church to condemn the practice but all these have been in vain.

³ *Omusango* is any kind of ritual but here we will deal with the one done by the preistess Ndidi.

This makes it the reason as to why we are investigating on the matter and find better ways of a dialogue between the Catholic Church and the local culture.

Also in an attempt to deal with witchcraft some Christians have tried to organize seminars on witchcraft and some seeking advice from well-known people like Kavwele from the coast. Kavwele comes from Malindi, coast province. His fame spread in Kibabii Parish, that he helps people, protecting them against witchcraft, or finding out who has bewitched them. Those who went to seek assistance from Kavwele did so without informing the parish priest who was very much against going to see such people as Kavwele. Some came back from seeing Kavwele and confessed that Kavwele could not help them. Others however said they believed Kavwele helped them in their problems of witchcraft.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.

In our research we targeted christians and traditionalist of age 30 and above. People in this age category in Kibabii parish are familiar with Luhya rituals since they are carried out in the community. They also know quite a lot about witchcraft and the operations of the priest/ess and what pertains to luhya customs. Out of the two hundred people we expected from the small Christian community, we only managed 64, that is 34 traditionalists and 30 christians the reason being that people were not ready to talk about witchcraft, since they may be termed as knowing much about witchcraft so they are witches. The turn-out was good but not to our expectation. We were Ten seminarians, three of us remained at the parish while others went to the out stations. we also had time limitation and as students, it was a problem to be out there from classes. we also had a problem of communication since we had to travel to western kenya, which is over 400 kilometers from Nairobi. Our research was not done in a day, so we had to find ways of being in Kibabii now and then to do it.

We had to visit the Christians in their small Christian communities when at Kibabii. This was one way of getting information and confidence from these group of people. After introducing ourselves and our purpose we always asked whether they were willing to help us, even though the issue was sensitive, that is they were ready to help. To those who were able to read and write we gave them questionnaires and explained to them as to what they were required to do. We would ask questions and fill in the questionnaire, some times we would seek assistance from close people like friends to the illiterate, who were literate to help us in this task these were people who knew how to fill the questionnaire. We used interview method. We some times used tape recording method but a times it could not work out well, as some old people were not audible enough so we had to allow them to speak slowly, since some were advanced in age, that is 80 years and above. We used interview method where one asked the question from the questionnaire and carefully filled in the gathered information.

We realized that what happens at the parish center is not different from what happens in the out stations. Our research was done at the parish as well as at the out stations. We distributed the questionnaires or interviewed the illiterate. We had a special interest in medicine men and women and also the diviners. Since it was not easy to go and find them when not busy with their ritual, we made appointment. Through the help of friends we some times made appointment and explained the purpose of our visits. Some questions as to how one inherits witchcraft were sensitive and it was difficult some times to get information about the issue. The language we used to communicate to this people was the local language that is Luhya. This made it possible to communicate to the people. The situation with the old people was like, we young people had gone to seek wisdom from them. Most of the times we could carry something like sugar or tea leaves to these old people, so that it may appear really an

informal meeting. This was something common where young people would visit the old in order to seek guidance in some issue in life.

AREA OF STUDY

Our area of study covered Kibabii parish of Bungoma Diocese. It has twenty out stations and these were our targets. Our research was geared towards getting information's from Luhya traditionalists and Christians who are quite familiar with what witchcraft is. However we targeted those who have already started having responsibility in the society as family people, political leaders and religious leaders. They are the people we thought that they are aware of different Luhya customs and as Christians in the village

SOME LITRATUE ON WITCHRAFT.

We are not the first nor the last to write on this issue. There are many authors who have written something on this issue. It is our hope that this research will be of great help to both luhya and non-luhya who have been unable to understand the mystery of witchcraft.. we will try and see what they have concerning the issue. We realize that witchcraft is a subject which has been dealt with practically by almost all the writers of African culture. We see that, this subject is not limited to the Africans but it is a human problem. as disturbing as it is some might view it as white or black magic. These are some of the findings of those who undertook the study before us. In one of his book, John. S. Mbiti {1969, 202} say that "In popular usage, the term witchcraft is employed to designate the harmful employment of mystical power in all its different manifestations. In another book {1966, 13} he says, belief in witchcraft and magic is very prevalent. Every thing that harms a person is attributed to some form of magic and another person is nearly always blamed for it. Witchcraft is a manifestation of these mystical forces which may be in born in a person, inherited or acquired in various ways."

Talking on the transfers or inheritance of witchcraft, D. N. Kimilu {1962, 130-133} says that harmful magic can be bought, learnt from another person, or handed from parent to child. He is very particular when he says, "it is mostly believed that men buy witchcraft while ladies inherit from their mothers". E. Bolaji Idowu {1973, 175} writes, "Africans concepts about witchcraft consist in the belief that the spirits of the living human beings can be out of the body on errands of doing havoc to the persons in body,. Also Erick O Ayisi {1979, 75} in his book writes, "both witchcraft and sorcery are regarded as reprehensible and antisocial," "Witchcraft is also a mystical power which is granted to some individuals by evil spirits. It enables these individuals to inflict harm to the other people, sorcerers and witches are therefore anti social element which threaten the very foundation of the African society." Judith Bahemuka Mbula {1983,105}. We will next look at the phenomenon of witchcraft

CONCLUSION.

It is real a fruitless task for Christians of Kibabii parish to think of ways of eradicating witchcraft among the Luhyas and the Christians of Kibabii parish. This is a phenomenon which has been there and seems to exist as long as humanity exists. This proves that Luhya people as all humanity, are constantly looking for the good that leads to fullness of life therefore "It is difficult to say exactly what witchcraft is, since it touches all the dimensions of man, it is spiritual and touches the human mind, the family, society and the physical well being of person.

What comes from our research is that, different people have come up with a number of conclusions concerning witchcraft some of these are. [a] Witchcraft is an inborn power to harm, kill and enjoyed for its own sake. [b] The spirits of living human beings can be employed for the purpose of harming and causing havoc to others. [c] Witchcraft is anti-social element and threatens the very foundation of the African society and thrives best in secrecy. [d] Witchcraft is possessed by few and not all the members of the society.[e] Witchcraft can be acquired in various ways.

CHAPTER TWO..

A CRITICAL ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE PHENOMENON OF WITCHCRAFT

INTRODUCTION:

In this Chapter we are going to critically analyze and evaluate the witchcraft phenomenon as it is known and practiced among the Luhyas of Kibabii Parish. We shall also analyze the different concepts used in this phenomenon.

In our field-work, we managed to meet a practicing priestess, "**Omundu Mulosi**"⁴, who gave us very valuable information concerning the beginning of witchcraft. She had this to say: "In the beginning, God created two types of people, one type of people were created with the power to bewitch, and the other without, those with the power continue passing it over to their children, while those without continue being without"⁵.

This little story is an attempt to explain the origin of this phenomenon, just as Genesis 11:1-9 is an attempt to explain why there are different languages if the people have origin in one place. This indeed is a story of faith and likewise is the story of the Luhyas given by Ndidi. The Luhyas were confronted with the situation whereby some people are witches and others are not. So, why the situation? The answer was to go back to the origin, since everything has its origin in God, "**Were Khakaba**"⁶. Then this too was attributed as having origin in Him. This story supports the claim that Witchcraft has been there since the beginning of creation.

⁴ **Omundu Omulosi** a priestess.

⁵ This information was given by Ndidi a former christian but now a priestess doctor. She is seventy years old and works at Ematungu.

⁶ **Were Khakaba** means God the Creator.

Ubuchesi and Ubulosi

That there is witchcraft?, a power that threatens life and property, then there is its opposite, **Ubuchesi**, which has same root with the Luhya word for wisdom. Then **Ubulosi** would be the wisdom of the Priest/ess doctor, **Omundu Muchesi**, who earlier on we called a medicine person. Also

Omundu Muchesi who is suitably defined, by A. Kiev, who although talking of the Shaman, the definition suits well on the Luhya **Omundu Muchesi**. He says:

*"The Shaman, like the Physician, tries to cure the patient by correcting the causes of his illness. In line with the culture's concept of disease, this cure may involve not only the administration of the therapeutic agents but provision of the means for confession, atonement, restoration into good graces of the family and tribe, and intercession with the world of the spirit. The Shaman's role may thus involve aspects of the roles of physician, magician, priest, moral arbiter, representative of the group's world view and agents, of social control".*⁷

We hence can say, *Omundu Muchesi*, is the representative of the good of the society and is the person who has a lot of wisdom which is used for the good of the Luhya Society **Ubuchesi** as opposed to **Ubulosi**, represents the good forces in the Luhya world. **Ubuchesi** used to find out the wickedness of the witch **Omulosi** and other causes misfortunes in the Luhya world. It's

⁷ A. Kiev Ed., *Magic, Faith and Healing: Studies in primitive psychiatry Today*. (London: Collier Macmillan Ltd. 1964), pg.120.

important to note that "**Omuluhya Siafwisanga Shikhaya Taa**"⁸. Literally translated, there is always a cause to the death of a person. We can say that **Ubuchesi** came in as answer to the people's quest for the "Why?" misfortunes and calamities befall people.

This question "Why?" misfortunes befall people is disturbing not only for the Luhya traditionalists, but also for every Omuluhya born in the world view. This is why then the question, does witchcraft affect Christians? Was asked the Christians, some said, it not only affects Christians, but even Europeans. For them, anybody as long as he or she is a human being, is liable to the effects of witchcraft. This can also explain why Christians go to consult the priest/ess doctor at night.

In this world view where everything that happens has a cause, then **Ubuchesi**, the wisdom of the priest/ess doctor will have a role to play, and since **Ubulosi** is very mysterious, the wisdom of the priest/ess doctor will be required to help the people establish what the cause of sickness and misfortunes is. From what has been said then, we have to distinguish **Ubuchesi**, the wisdom of the priest/ess doctor from witchcraft. We will then say that witchcraft is the art of bewitching. **Ubuchesi** then, will be the art of finding out the "Why" the misfortunes and calamities, and the remedies to be taken. Having made this clear, let us now see the Christian view of witchcraft, the traditionalist view and the Church's teaching concerning witchcraft.

As already noted it is a secret power possessed by some members of the Luhya society and in the world. However, what people know of it is through the confession of former witches. **Okhuloka** (bewitching) is the ritual through which the power of the witches comes to bear effects on their victims. The power of the witch is communicated through the spoken

⁸ **Omuluhya Siafwisanga shikhaya taa**, means there is a reason for whatever death which occurs.

words. The witches also use materials from the profane world and it is only through the ritual words and actions that it takes effect.

This is against the teaching of the church and the Bible. One to possess power in order that he/she can kill other human being is against the Christians teaching Deuteronomy 5:7. The Christians therefore see witchcraft as an evil aspect which should not be practiced by a Christian since also it is also involves obtaining money in a wrong way through cheating or scaring people. Whether it is the traditional or the new form of witchcraft, we can say witchcraft is a power enjoyed by a few people and it is ever taking new forms as the society takes new forms of development.

Witchcraft is an evil power inherited from mother to daughter or father to son for doing evil to others and their property. One can also be shown how to perform the ritual by specialists, he however has to pay for the training. This is basically the type practiced by men though women also do it, or are trained and then buy the services. This is done by the women who originally do not come from those members of Luhya society who have it by inheritance. The power of the witch is communicated through the spoken words, signs and gestures. Witchcraft is in the mouth, legs, hands and eyes of the witches. Why? It is because these are the parts of the body through which the gestures are performed. Witchcraft, or that power to bewitch is in the blood and inner disposition of the witches. In the Luhya belief system, there are witches and these are the ones society accuses of being the cause of all misfortunes that befall the society. **Ubulosi** (witchcraft) is the noun and the verb is *Loka*, (this word in Luhya apart from describing the action of the witch means, be rotten). So the work of the witch is to make rot, but since witchcraft brings about rotting in the society, that is, death of the people and destruction of property, we can then say that "**Ubulosi**" is the agency of evil that terrorizes the good of the society which is prosperity and good life.

Looking at the role played by the **Omundu Muchesi** and that played by **Omulosi**, we can conclude that Omulosi represents evil in the society, but the **Omundu Muchesi** represents the well being of the society. When discussing witchcraft, in our paper then, we exclude **Omundu Muchesi** whose role in society as we have seen is for the well-being of society. So our discussion will focus more on the *Mulosi* and *Bulosi*, although we still hope to say more of **Omundu Muchesi** priest/ess in the light of the Catholic teachings found in the New Catechism. The witch performs rituals for bringing evil upon society, while the priest/ess performs rituals to undo the evil done by the witch. As good and evil co-exist, so does the witch and the medicine man or priest/ess co-exist. Both the Christians and the traditionalists agree that, there is a difference between a witch and a medicine person or priest/ess doctor. They also agree that, witchcraft is a secretive phenomenon.

As concerns how to identify a witch, a careful observer will find out that Christians know of the means not because others have told them, but because they have been brought up in a culture in which this practice is prevalent. It is important to note that, neither the Christian nor the Luhya traditionalists, cherish witchcraft, but how to do away with it is a problem.

WITCHCRAFT EFFECTS ON THE CHRISTIANS AND THE CONSEQUENCES

Various questions were asked to the Christians and some to both Christians and Luhya traditionalists. Going through the questions, one would gather the following: Witchcraft surely affects the Christians that is, all the evils intended by the witch befall them, and only due to fear, they hide when going to consult medicine men or women whom we could better call the priest/ess.

Witchcraft then is not only disturbing to the Luhya traditionalists, but also to the Christians. As to whether the traditionalists know whether Christians go to consult the priest/ess doctor, the answer is yes, and this is because they some times meet at the priest/ess

doctor's place. As a matter of fact, it is said that some sickness cannot be treated by modern medicine, but when taken to the **Omundu Muchesi** he or she diagnoses and then finds the cure. It is true that the Christians know that going to consult a priest/ess doctor, **Omundu Muchesi**, is going against the teachings of the Church which according to the Catechism of the Catholic Church Number 2117, states:

“All practices of magic sorcery, by which one attempts to have occult powers, so as to place them at one’s service and have a supernatural power over others even if this was for the sake of restoring their health - are gravely contrary to the virtue of religion. These practices are even more to be condemned when accompanied by the intention of harming someone, or when they have recourse to the intervention of demons wearing charms is also reprehensible. Spirits often implies divination or magical practices; the Church on her part warns the faithful against it. Recourse to so-called traditional cures does not justify either the invocation of evil powers, or the exploitation of mother’s credulity.” And again, in Number 2138; of the same Catechism, we read the following: *Superstition is a departure from the worship that we give to the true God. It is manifested in idolatry, as well as in various forms of divination and magic.*

However, as there is no clear alternative to these problems, the Christian resorts to Secretism. From Monday to Saturday, they live all that the Luhya traditional approach to witchcraft involves, that is believing in witchcraft but on Sunday, they behave and act like Christians. Now, when one says all practices of magic and sorcery, by which one attempts to tame the occult powers,.....even if this was for restoring health it is gravely contrary to the teaching of Christian religion, and leaves a lot to be desired. Surely sorcery and witchcraft are bad and should be seriously addressed. But **Ubuchesi** and rituals like **Musango** which is done by the priestess, to identify witches and make them promise that they will not practice

witchcraft again and exorcists like Ndidi, are attempts to seriously address the problem of witchcraft in the Luhyas. So if they are gravely against the virtue of Christian religion, so what alternative do we propose? But examining the rituals quite well, we see that they use their materials for witchcraft and this becomes effective with the use of the enchanting words. So we could get some ideas from this and see how we can make our sacraments effective.

In the rituals used by the Luhya to eradicate witchcraft, there is a lot of threat of death. That is, witches are threatened with death if they ever bewitch after participating in the ritual. The point here is, although the witch has the power to kill, the same power can be used to kill her or her prematurely just as he or she kills others. We also have seen that the power to bewitch is inherited and is passed on from mother to daughter or son to father. It is like some power in the blood of the witch or in some charms used by the witches, this is what the owner of the ritual that is the priestess mixes, for example in the *Musango* ritual, and gives all the participants to eat or taste and swallow. They then promise that they will not be witch again. If they be witch, they will be going against the oath and something terrible like death can happen to them. By so doing, the power goes back to them, just like when the daughter refuses to co-operate with the mother, after the ritual of inheriting witchcraft, she looks back at the mother and calls the mother and the power goes back to the mother and kills her, so if the participants of the *Musango* ritual go back and practice witchcraft, the same power kills them.

The *Omusango* ritual is most feared by those who have participated in it, because they know it effects what it promises. It would appear that, as witchcraft is passed through the mixing of fresh wounds which are made on the buttocks of the mother, daughter and of the father, mixing of the blood as they rub the cut parts, the drinking or tasting of the blood from the vagina and the penis of the participants has some psychological effects. We can say, that you drink back the power to kill and so it kills you.

Ndidi's power is a bit mysterious and apart from some people (*our informers*⁹) guessing where she gets the power from, that is China or Korea, it seems it is a power that has no origin in Luhya and if it does, it is very mysterious. However, for our interest, that is eternity of *witchcraft*, we will say it is an attempt at reducing the practice or to counter this feared phenomenon.

⁹ **Our informers** are christians who used to believe in witchcraft or were witches but now they are christians.

The only problem with the rituals used is that, they only seem to be effective for a time, as we have seen earlier in Kimilu's attempted to see all the attempts used by the Luhya to counter witchcraft. Kimilu as I noted earlier says all the attempts are a useless venture and a wastage of money, but I would say that all these attempts show that as witchcraft evolves taking new forms as devil worshipping that is one believes in the devil, worships the devil and does all that the devil does, like killing people, stealing and many evil things which the devil does. This is what we call **Majini** and any other form it might take, the Luhya wisdom evolves new methods of dealing with it. The good thing to note, is that, when people have participated in these rituals and especially **Musango** ritual, they live in harmony, can trust one another, and can continue being authentic Christians. Indeed it is important to note that, burning tools of a witch, can easily be proposed that it might not help because they already know the skill and can look for new ones and again, we must remember witchcraft is a secretive phenomenon. However, when one participates in the **Musango** ritual as my informers told me, you cannot participate in witchcraft practices anymore.

THE OMUNDU MUCHESI (PRIEST/ESS)

We have already seen the definition of **Omundu Muchesi**, let us now say more about him/her. This person is one endowed with mystical powers and wisdom. He or she can find out the wicked plots of a witch. The role of traditional **Omundu Muchesi** was a vocation and their important role in society was two fold, that is "To cure illness and tell fortunes"¹⁰. As such then we do not see where they contradict Christianity. The problem becomes an expensive venture and some as, Mzee Nabwire informed us, "sell witchcraft to people"¹¹,

¹⁰ Ndeti Kivuto., *Elements of Akamba Life*, (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1972), pg.117.

¹¹ Mzee Nabwire is 95 years old and is not only informed of what happened in his youth days, but knows what is happening in Kibabii today.

consequently, abusing the trust of people have in them. **Omundu Muchesi** who abuses the wisdom for evil should be avoided. This action of selling witchcraft or abusing the wisdom is evil and any sensible person who looks for the common good of society should be careful of this. We suppose that is why the Church in the Catechism of the Catholic Church (No. 2117), warns her faithful against such practices as witchcraft and divination.

We will then say true **Omundu Muchesi** is highly respected in the Luhya traditional world view. Some before their call, might have been Christians or not. But what is interesting is the call of the Christians to be a **Omundu Muchesi**. They undergo a lot of troubles if they refuse to co-operate. When they co-operate, they recover from the troubles. Majority of these are simply healers and diviners and do not abuse the trust people have in them. Some in my village, like Mr.Makokha and Mr. Francisca Onyango and my sister Mrs. Philomena Mukamula. When they gave this story, one could only be struck with awe. Important to note is that when you tell them to pray, they do it with no problem. They pray as Catholics do, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. They inherit their powers from their parents or from their great grand parents. At this point it is important to note for example, with Ndeti that, "The Akamba concept of Mundu (human being) is not the mere physical bipedal being which we encounter daily. He is a physical representation of the dead, the living and the unborn"¹² Then we can say that a human being is a community incorporating the three principles. Life, spirit and immortality each of these principles must work in unison according to the Luhya, if one wishes to avoid chaos and meaningless in human life. This is the truth, the Luhya know and live. The course of action which the living take is always conditioned by the spirits of the ancestors (principal causality) and consequently affects posterity (teleological awareness). And this is how we can explain how a grand daughter can inherit from her great

¹² Ndeti.. Op.Cit.. p.114.

grand parents. Kenya's first President Mzee Jomo Kenyatta is more explicit of the principle. In dedicating his book to the youth of Africa, he states:

*To Moigoi and Wambui and all the disposed youth of Africa: for Perpetuation of communion with all ancestral spirits through the fight for African freedom, and in the firm of faith that the dead, the living and the unborn will unite to rebuild the destroyed shrines.*¹³

Here again the Trinitarian view of a person is reiterated, and whatever course of action the African youth is going to take (*At this time i.e. the time of Mzee's writing was during the fight for the African Freedom*), the force of unity of the living, the dead and the unborn must come together in order to achieve this goal. We can connect this conception with the Catholic conception as it were, of the Church on Earth and the Church in Purgatory and the Church in Heaven, such that one is an anticipation of the other and that the Church in Heaven is the principle causality, in the sense that it influences the other two.

Having seen who a witch and who a priest/ess doctor is, it will be important to say that witchcraft cannot encompass both **Ubuchesi** and **Ubulosi**. **Ubuchesi** as earlier seen is the wisdom of the priest/ess while **Ubulosi** (witchcraft) is the wisdom of the witch with purpose of destroying from the etymology of the term *Loka*, be rotten. **Buchesi** is to enable a priest/ess find out the causes of sickness and the right treatment. It is here that we shall beg to disagree with Fr. Aylward Shorter when he calls the priest/ess doctor, a witch doctor, in his book, "Christ and the Witchdoctor". This is because the priest/ess doctor does more in the Luhya world-view than correct the maladies brought about by the witches. He/she has to find out whether the causes of human sufferings are brought about by their neglect of ancestors, breach of taboos etc. He/she also performs rituals for cleansing the affected in case of breach of

¹³ Jomo Kenyatta. "Facing Mount Kenya" In: Element of Akamba life, by Kivuto Ndeu, (Nairobi: the East African Publishing House 1972), p.114.

taboos. In short the definition we have given of the Shaman fits well on what the priest/ess doctor is and so it is more representative of the person of a priest/ess than what Fr. Shorter represents by witchdoctor. Ndidi and the **Musango Kukwikala** ritual can best be called exorcist in the seance of finishing the witchcraft practices or addressing the witchcraft phenomenon than the **Omundu Muchesi** who is best translated as priest/ess. He/she addressing more issues affecting the Luhya so calling him/her a witchdoctor will be missing the point so a misrepresentation of who her/she is.

IS EVERY LUHYA A WITCH ?

From the research we can conclude that not every Luhya is a witch. As we haven seen, some are witches by inheritance, other buy it, and if they have to go by Ndidi's story of the origin of witchcraft, then we shall conclude that only some are. Though not every Luhya is a witch, this phenomenon is disturbing to many Luhyas. It is part of the Luhya traditional belief system and so every one born in the Luhya world view knows about it. That Luhyas believe in witchcraft so a lot of pastoral activity is needed and understanding of the Luhyas customs and culture so that Christianity may be accepted without having believes in witchcraft.

It is important to know that men, as well as women can buy witchcraft. Originally it was believed that women inherited from their mothers but today, though the women still inherit, from their mothers, also sons inherit from their fathers and more people have involved themselves in witchcraft because of the material gains it promises, for example the case of those who buy **Majini**, are promised riches. However, if you do not fulfill your part of the deal, instead of gains, loses and destruction's of property follow. This is proved more from our own research findings.

THE LOCAL CHURCH'S APPROACH.

The approach of the local Churches thus far, has been the Universal Church's approach of warning her faithful from participating in witchcraft practices or the rituals like **Musango** and associating with neutralizers of witchcraft like Ndidi, However, this approach which is effected by pastoral letter of the local Ordinary, and the teachings of the priest, does not seem to be very effective. As we found out in the research, that the Christians go to visit or consult the priest/ess doctor at night. By so doing, they hide from their pastors and fellow Christians. They have not fully understood what Christianity is therefore they are living a life which is against the teaching of Christ who tells us we should believe in God alone and not other gods.

The consequences of Christians who go to consult a medicine person or a priest/ess, is that, they do not go for confession for fear of being ex-communicated. Consequently, we have Christians who are Christians and Luhya traditionalists at the same time, practicing all that the Luhya practice, in traditional communities. It is important to strike a balance where what is good in the traditional way can be taken to Christianity. This is like the way of worship where everybody is encouraged to take part in the worship. This makes worshipping more lively and the people see that God is listening and answering their prayers. The rite of passage can also be important in Christianity, where one is baptized receives the sacrament and then goes on to receive other sacraments like confirmation, marriage sacrament of the sick and many others. From this field-work, we realize that warning or threatening people would not deter them from participating or going to consult a medicine-person. The difference of going to the hospital is that medicine person use herbs from the forest and can cure some diseases like feeling pain in the stomach but when you go to the hospital no disease is found which one is severing from. It is only a medicine person who can tell you that the pain is as result of someone looking at you with an evil eye and cursing you to server. The medicine person can know how to make the

pain to stop by giving some herbs to help you. What we suppose would help, is to give an alternative, and a proper evaluation of the whole matter by all those involved in the pastoral work in Luhya land.

It is important to note that despite the pastoral letters, the teaching of the local priests, Christians still go for the **Musango** ritual, which to many, is the only way out, of the countering witchcraft at the moment. People strongly believe that if they participate in the **Musango** ritual, they live in harmony and no one suspects the other of bewitching him or her.

THE "WORD" AND THE PHENOMENON OF WITCHCRAFT

It is important to note that "words" or the "word" is very important in this phenomenon. The witch effects his or her skill through the medium of the "word", the priest/ess doctor protects the families and property of those he or she treats through the medium of the "word". The owner of the magically protected home uses the medium of the "word" to release the witch found bewitching in his compound. It is important to note that one way of identifying a witch as our informers said is when you find one bewitching in a magically protected home "**Mungo Mukasie**". This means a home which is protected from witchcraft. It is also important to note that just as words in the celebration of the sacrament effects what they mean, so do they in all the Luhya rituals. That is why a witch and "*wefikhokho*"¹⁴ are people who are not out for the good of the society.

WILL WITCHCRAFT COME TO END IN LUHYA LAND?

We have found out witchcraft like humanity began in time and it is the manifestation of evil in the Luhya world. This is expressed from the creation account which we had addressed

¹⁴ **Wefikhokho** means a person with an evil eye and evil tongue, that his/her tongue effects his/her evil into his/her victims.

in page 11 earlier that God created witches and good people and they live together in the society. It would then be our argument that witchcraft will continue to be in existence as long as humanity. In that case then we shall say it is an eternal phenomenon. Some Christians also argued that if people believed in Christ strongly, they would certainly diminish the powers of witches, however, we have known the forms witchcraft has taken in the Western Countries of Europe and America and here in Africa. We cannot help holding our position that witchcraft is an eternal phenomenon and it is world wide. We can also say that if people believe in Christ more faithfully, they can counter witchcraft. But many are not. It consequently calls us to renew our faith, commitment to Christ, that is, to prayer, the Gospel and Holy lives of the children of God.

We will again say that, as long as we continue having the poor, the street-children and less fortunate in our society like orphans, and the promises of the material gains like those promised by the devil worship phenomenon, and as long as we continue having leaders who will never want to relinquish power, this phenomenon of witchcraft in all its various manifestation will continue. It is true that when the prevailing circumstances make you poor and some-one promises you the way out, you will most certainly go out in search for this greener pastures. Our informer Mr. Mulamula we had quoted him earlier had this to say "the devil has no free gift!, whatever he gives you is for exchange with your soul". This is well demonstrated in this research regarding the question of **Majini**. People must come to the realization that "**Shindu Shilai Sibatola Tawe**".¹⁵ People must work for it and stop seeking short cuts. Finally, we shall say that, witchcraft is eternal phenomenon and the manifestation of evil in the Luhya society.

¹⁵ **Shindu Shilai Sibatolanga Tawe** meaning a good thing is not found on the road. it is a Luhya proverb. which reminds the people that. they have to work if they are to have life.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, we have analyzed the concepts in the phenomenon and give interpretations of what is involved. We have found out that witchcraft is a power that stands opposed to the good of the society. It can be inborn, acquired in various ways but most important is that it is an eternal problem. It has been there since time immemorial. There are those in the society who do not have this evil power and there are those with this power, and these co-exists. In the society under study - the Luhya of Kababii parish - there are also those who counter the evils of the witches and these are the priest/ess whose knowledge is all encompassing.

In this Chapter we have realized that as evil continues to exist, so will manifestations continue in the form of witchcraft. We have seen that most Luhya of Kababii Parish, both Christians and non - Christians believe in witchcraft and also that witchcraft affects Christians, and that is why most Luhya Christians of this Parish live an amphibian type of life. They live as Christians when convenient and as Luhya traditionalists when convenient. It has also become clear to us that if one has to evaluate this phenomenon properly, he/she must understand the concepts of whatever is involved. In The next chapter we will look at the findings of our research

CHAPTER THREE.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS.

INTRODUCTION

The population of Kibabii parish is around 5000 people. Christians are about 2500, others are Muslims and traditionalist, the catholic being around 1400. These are the statistic we got from the parish priest Fr. Okiliba. We asked 34 traditionalist at Kibabii parish In this

chapter we will be dealing with of the findings and analysis of our research *QUESTION 10
TRADITIONALIST*

Q1?. WHAT IS WITCHCRAFT

We found that out of 34 who responded to our question 8[25.5%] said, that it is an evil power which is inherited from mother, father or any other close relative by daughter, son or even close relative. These people inherited power from parents to do evil to other persons or their property 4[11.8%] said "plants are powdered and boiled, as this goes on, the buyer and the seller are naked, the steam from the boiling plants accompanied by ritual words makes witchcraft. This then is what one buys and is shown how to use , the purpose is to kill and destroy." 5[14.7%] said witchcraft is an evil charm which is used by a witch to harm someone, his property, make him / her suffer or even kill him/her. Another 4[11.8%] said "witchcraft is a belief which people have believed in since time past. Then 7[20.6%] said these are "ways used by a witch to kill a person, destroy his/her property or make one poor. since they are known to have powers to kill, people pay any amount of money they are asked to pay. Most of the witches are very rich". And 6[17.6%] said they have been hearing of witchcraft but they do not know what it is.

We had also an opportunity to interview the Christians and those who responded were . 30. Out of them 10[52.6%] said that it is a belief that when any misfortune befalls someone, they connect it to witchcraft hence one is bewitched. 8[26.7%] said it is speaking with evil spirits or **Majini** which are normally bought from the coast. One can ask them to harm or kill your enemy and they do so and in return you offer them sacrifice. Then 5[26.3%] said "it is an evil power inherited from mother by daughter or by son for destroying, causing suffering and finally killing enjoyed for its own sake". While 3[15.8%] said, "it is plants that are powdered and boiled, as this goes on , the buyer and the seller are naked, the steam from the boiling

plants accompanied by the ritual words makes witchcraft. This then is what one buys and is shown how to use the purpose is to kill and destroy the "enemy" The way we saw it, it is poison which one buys and can poison the one she/he wants to kill. Thess is according to the explanation from our informers. These can be put in food or a drink Finally 4[13.3% said, they do not know what witchcraft is all about. They also said that it is against the teachings of Christ, since when one kills there is no love of brother and sister also the church is against witchcraft and it teaches against it As we read in the Bible witchcraft is evil and believing in it is adoring other gods,Exodus 34:14,Acts of the Apostoles 8: 9-25.

QUESTION TO CHRISTIANS

(Q2) *CAN CHRISTIANS BE BEWITCHED?*

From 30 Christians who responded to this question, 25[83.3%] responded yes, and 5[16.7%] responded No. We also asked the traditionalist,people who are not Christians but live within the area of Kibabii parish. They believe in traditional way of life. Following ancestral way of worship. Out of 34 who respondent 28[82.3%] responded yes and 3[88.2] responded No, then 2[58.8%] said , it not only affect Christians but even Europeans. And another 1[29.4% said "I do not know".

(3) *What do catholics do if bewitched?*

From 30 who responded 20[66.7%] said since they do not believe in witchcraft they go to the hospital or pray to God as their faith teaches and since God is the almighty they believe He will protect them from witchcraft. Then 10[33.3%] said that they go to consult a diviner. We can conclude from the responses to (Q3) that many Christians have strong faith in God and consequently when faced with sickness they go to the hospital or pray to God if the doctors in the hospital are unable to treat the sickness. We realist that there were some who lived an amphibian life that is, they live like Christians when convenient and as when Luhya

traditionalists when convenient. (4) *If you go to consult a diviner is that not going against god's commandments?*

Table 1

30 Christians Respondents		
	FQ	%
No	8	26.6
YES	22	73.3
TOTAL	30	100.00

This table indicates that most respondents know that going to consult a diviner is against the commandments of God. This is in accordance with the first commandment, "thou should not have any other gods" (Exodus 34:14), believing in witchcraft and diviners is having other gods. The reason why they still go to consult a diviner is that some still believe in the power of witchcraft.

(5) *Is believing in witchcraft going against God's law?*, Some said that they go for confession that is 19[63.3%] 11[36.6%] said they just pray to God since the priest cannot help them. From these response we can see that majority go for confession because they believe that the priest might not understand their situation and consequently cannot help them. In such a situation the priest must understand the culture of the Christians to help them in such problems as witchcraft. (6) *Is it easy to identify a witch?* The data below presents the respondents of both the Christians and the traditionalist who still believe in witchcraft Table 2

30 Respondents	Christians Age 35: years and above		34 Respondents	Traditionalist: age 40 -above	
	FQ	%	FQ	%	
NO	26	86.67	27	79.41	
YES	4	13.33	7	20.59	
TOTAL	30	100.00	34	100.00	

The table above reveals that it is not easy for the respondents to identify a witch. This also may suggest the fact that the practice and those involved are really secretive.

(7) *HOW DOES NDIDI NEUTRALIZE THE POWER OF THE WITCH?*

The Christians who responded out of 30, 23[76.7%] said, "she uses evil spirits Majini". Then 4[13.3%] said they do not know. And 3[0.1%] said " she calls the witches by name and tells them to bring all they use to bewitch. she utters some words and chews some herbs then she holds a mirror where the image of the witch appears and she starts communicating with the person telling him/her to bring all they use to bewitch. It is after one has been proved to be a witch that one is told to bring all one uses to bewitch. This is collected in a bucket then it is burned in the presence of the witch. Then follows shaving of the witch who is shaved all parts of the body. The idea is to remove every hair in the body to symbolize that one is to start a fresh. An oath is taken so that if one breaks it, death is the penalty. The oath as we were told by a respondent Mr. Omulamula¹⁶ it comprises of blood taken from a goat or sheep, which is slaughtered some herbs then it is mixed with blood from the victim which is taken from any part of the body. Then the meat from the slaughtered animal is mixed to symbolise the oath and given to the witch who swears that she/he will never bewitch again, and if she breaks the oath one is threatened with death. This as we will see is called **Omusabwa**¹⁷ From our respondent, Mr. Omulamula we see that there are some Christians who believe that Ndidi has the power to identify a witch and does not use the trial and error method. The result has proved to be fruitful according to our informers/sources.

(8) *We asked if the Christians also go to consult Ndidi*

¹⁶ Mr Omulamul our informer, was once practicing witchcraft but now he is a christian.

¹⁷ **Omusabwa** means an oath.

TABLE 3

30 Christians Respondents		
	FQ	%
NO	23	76.67
YES	7	23.33
TOTAL	30	100.00

We realize from the table that most of the Christians have not gone to see Ndidi. Therefore they have never participated in her ritual and they do not know how it is carried out. They only hear from what others people say or they few who have gone to see her know what takes place there.

(9) *Why did you go to see her?*

There was a mixed reaction to either why they went to see Ndidi and why others did not go. Some of the reasons were [i] out of curiosity [ii] because of what the local bishop and the priests say. Yet others said well, "*we had no good purpose or reason for seeing her*".

From our statistics out of 30 Christians 4[13.3%] said "*We went to find out what she does*". While 2[6.7%] said the bishop and the priests have been writing pastoral letters and preaching to Christians against seeing Ndidi, so they went to see what she does and what is all about her activities. 7[23.3] said they went to see her because to them her activities are questionable, like how can one communicate with someone's image appearing on the mirror while those near can not understand. It is such kind of deities which made others go to see her. There was another group of Christians 13[43.3] said, they believed in Jesus and only He has power to neutralize the powers of the witches. Another [13.3%] said, they could not leave their work to go and see her since that was wastage of time to them while they know that Ndidi is out to cheat people and get money from them.

(10) *Will Witchcraft come to an end at Kibabii parish and luhya land?*

TABLE 4

30 Christians Respondents.		
	FQ	%
NO	7	76.67
YES	23	23.33
TOTAL	30	100.00

We found out that many people are not sure witchcraft will come to an end in Kibabii.

(11) *Are the pastoral letters of the bishops and the priest counseling on witchcraft best ways of telling the Christians about witchcraft,. Since there is no way of eradicating it?*

TABLE 5

30 Christians Respondents		
	FQ	%
NO	5	16.67
YES	25	83.33
TOTAL	30	100.00

From the table we see that some Christians believe that the bishop and the priest should continue educating people about witchcraft. They also believe that witches like Ndidi are not the best ways of informing the people about witchcraft. However a good percentage (83.33) seem to suggest that Ndidi is the best solution to helping them when faced with witchcraft. This might explain the reason why some Christians live an amphibian way of life.

(12) *What can be done so that Christians at Kibabii may stop believing in witchcraft?*

The 25 Christians who responded to the question, 7(48.%) said that it is only in believing in Jesus and having God's grace that Christians will not practice witchcraft. 2(8.0%) could not give reason if witchcraft can be done a way with. If there is a way where by

Christians can not take part in witchcraft, 4(16.0%) said it only in believing in Christ that can only belief in Christ since Ndidu is a human being and she cannot help Christian to stop witchcraft it is only Christ who has the power because He is God. 4(16.0%) said that because for a Christian witchcraft is temptations and only God can help the christians to stop practicing it. 3 (12.0%) said it is impossible to eradicate witchcraft at Kibabii parish, since witchcraft is inherited and there are those people who are witches and these co-exist with the non-witches. Also the church needs to dialogue with the Christians in order that they may understand the reason why witchcraft has been a problem for so long in the parish.

QUESTIONS TO THE TRADITIONALISTS. (1) IS EVERY LUGHYA A PARISHIONER AT KIBABII A WITCH?

TABLE 6	34 Traditionalists Respondents	
	FQ	%
NO	28	82.35
YES	6	17.65
TOTAL	34	100.00

From the table we can see that most traditionalist know that not every Luhya is a witch and only a few are not. This is well shown by our finding that out of the 34 traditionalist, we interviewed 12(35.27%) said every Luhya believes in witchcraft because in Luhya land, there are families which have witchcraft by inheritance, or when they have problems and go to consult diviners, they are told that so and so is a witch. While 10(29.41%) said that, "every Luhya believe in witchcraft because they argue that before Christianity, witchcraft existed and Christianity has not conquered it. Also 6(17.65%) said, " some do not believe in witchcraft because they are strong in Christian faith and they do not believe in it. 4(11.76%) said, "people believe in witchcraft because its effects are every where seen." Another 2(58.82%)

said, "every Luhya believes in witchcraft because some sickness can not be treated in the hospital but when taken to the priest/ess, he or she can diagnose and say the cause and can hence treat it"

(2) *Is witchcraft a secretive phenomenon?*

We found that witchcraft is a secretive phenomenon from the 34 traditionalist who responded only 2 thought that witchcraft is not a secretive phenomenon. This shows why it is difficult to give an answer of Q1 In one ward as to what is witchcraft.

TABLE 7

34 Traditionalist Respondents,		
	FQ	%
NO	6	17.65
YES	28	82.35
TOTAL	34	100.00

(3) *Is witchcraft done in a secret place or in the open?*

We wanted to know also if somebody can watch as the witch performs his/her activities. There were 15 traditionalist who responded to this question. Out of the 15, 4(66.7%) said they do not know what witchcraft is all about. And 5(33.3%) said, "It is kept in a basket, in a secret place like the forest, in trees and in a cave". While 3(0.2%) said "it is kept in the body of the witch, the witch has it in her/his body. Also 3(0.2%) said "since they did not want anybody to know that they practice witchcraft, it is a secrecy phenomena and only those who believe in it know all about it .

(4) *Is it possible to be present when witchcraft is done?*

Out of the 15 who responded, 4(26.7%) said "yes, one can witness what takes place when witchcraft is carried out". There are those who said that "only the items used for

bewitching are seen when a priest/ass, removes the items from a bewitched home or person".
 2(13.3%) responded No that the items used for witchcraft can not be seen, you only see the
 witch bewitching at night but what exactly witchcraft is no one has ever seen." This is what
 3(0.2%) of the people we interviewed said.

(5) *How is witchcraft inherited or passed on?*

Out of the 34 traditionalist who respondent, 12(35.3%) said that "the one to give the
 power and the one to inherit incise their buttocks and then face opposite directions and make
 the blood from the cut parts of the buttocks mingle with each other by rubbing their buttocks
 together" This is not done in an open place but in a hidden place. This can be in the bush and
 done early in the morning it is believed it is the best time before people have worken up. The
 person being given witchcraft is called by name and then, he/she is told that "so and so I have
 given you the power to do evil". Another group that is 8(33.3%) said "men and women give to
 their daughters and sons using a flame of fire. A fire is made of dried wood and the one to be
 given the power is made to jump over the fire and at the same time is told "I give you the
 power to do evil "While there were those who said that the mother or the father makes a cut
 on the tongue and the buttocks of the daughter or son and applies some charm on the cut parts
 while uttering all the powers he/she is giving the daughter for destruction, this was 4(11.8%).
 And 4(11.2%) said, "one can buy from medicine men or women, first they treat you and then
 show you how you will be using it" there were those who did not know how it is passed on
 2(58.8%).(6) *Are the old women and men witches?*

TABLE 8

34 Traditionalist Respondents:		
	FQ	%
No	29	58.30
YES	5	14.70
TOTAL	34	100.00

From what we gathered we found that not many people believed that only old women are witches there some who said also men are witches. These are the people who know much about the tradition and customs since they have lived much of their life in the area where the traditions and customs are practiced and they have also seen them practiced.

(7) *Are young men and ladies witches?*

Out of 34 respondents to the question, 27(79.4%) respondent no. And 3(8.2%) responded yes. While 4(11.8%) said ladies are given by their mothers and gentlemen are given by their fathers. For the ladies one is given and begin being active witches after giving birth to a boy and a girl.

(8) *Is it necessary that one must bewitch when he/she has inherited witchcraft? We*

saw that most of the people believed that a witch regardless of how he/she acquires it must bewitch. The following table shows that the reason of possessing witchcraft is to practice it.

TABLE 9

34 Traditionalists Respondents.		
	FQ	%
NO	9	26.5
YES	25	73.5
TOTAL	34	100.00

(9) *After Christians realize that they have been bewitched do they consult a medicine man.?*

From the table below we found that most of Christians visit these medicine people. This shows that Christians at Kibabii parish still live an amphibian sort of live.

TABLE 10

34 Traditionalist Respondents:		
	FQ	%
YES SOME GO	28	82.35
DO NOT KNOW	6	17.65
TOTAL	34	100.00

(10) Why do Christians consult medicine people while in problems?. Since majority of the Christians at Kibabii are Luhyas, they said that among Luhyas there are some sickness that cannot be treated by modern medicine. e.g. feeling stomachache which is very strong, but the sickness can not be diagnosed which kind of diseases it is this like slewing of the body when one is at his/her home with alot of paine and feels sick. 9(26.5%) said some Christians go to consult medicine people because they have weak faith. 12(35.2%) said that Christians go to consult priest/ess people when they feel that they are bewitched. This is because the problem of witchcraft can only be solved by the medicine people and a traditional Luhya believes so. Some Christians go to consult medicine people for fear of death, 8(23.5%). 4(11.8%) said that some Christians go to consult medicine people to find out cause of problems in their life such as if they are sick always, if they have financial problem and think that they are bewitched and also if they have marital problems. 2(5.8%) said Christians do not go to consult medicine people because of their faith in Jesus Christ. There were also those who did not know whether Christians consult medicine people. While some said that Christians go to visit the medicine people at night.

Out of the 34 traditionalist who responded to this questions 33(97.1%) said yes while 1(2.9%) said some Christians go at night. From our findings we can conclude that Christians go to consult the priest/ess doctor at night.

(11) Why is it that Christians go at night to consult the priest/ess doctor?. They are afraid of being seen by others and despite of this they go to see him/her because they have a problem. They also fear that if the parish priest found out they can be excommunicated from the church. 9(26.5%) said "if a Christian is born in the traditional Families he/she will grow knowing and believing that some sickness can only be treated by medicine people priest/ess.

This can range from diseases which the causes are not known, psychological problems which result to domestic problems in a family and many other problems like calamity which might strike in a family resulting to death of members of the family. It is in such situation where one will feel that it is being bewitched hence seek assistance from the priest/ess.

(12) *Will the preaching of the priests and pastoral letters help eradicating witchcraft at Kibabii parish and among the traditionalist?*

Majority of the parishioners said No that is 27(79.4%). Those who responded Yes were only 7(20.6%). From our research we see that those who believe in tradition still hold that witchcraft will not come to an end among the Luhya of Kibabii parish. The traditionalist believe that **Omusango Kukhwikala** which is done by Ndidi is the solution for the time being. This were, out of 34 we interviewed, 10(29.4%) said the ritual is not the solution something else should be done. While 24(70.4%) said "the ritual **Omusango Kukhwikala** is the best solution". They also said that a dialogue is needed between the church and the traditionalist to discuss about witchcraft, to understand it better.

(13) *What is **Omusango Kukhwikala**?*

Out of those we interviewed that is out of 34, 6(17.6%) said that "it is an oath taken by people so that they may not bewitch or go to buy witchcraft to harm their neighbors". 28(82.4%) said it is an oath among the Luhya aimed at eradicating witchcraft. Some told us that it is an oath taken so that one may not be suspected of being a witch, when one takes it, one cannot be witch or else one would die of breaking the oath. (14) *Who gives the oath?*

Those who responded to the question were 34, 33(97.1%) said Ndidi and others give the oath. Another 1(29.4%) said they do not know who gives the oath. How the oath is administered is that one is shaved first every part of the body which has hairs. Then an animal is slaughtered and the stuff from the inside of the large intestine is taken and mixed with the

blood from the eyes of the animal plus the blood from the vagina or penis of those involved in the oath taking is mixed. This is mixed with pancreas juice from the animal. This is then taken from a small pot one swearing that he/she will not witch again. This remains secret since nobody should know what really is the mixture of the stuff. We were lucky since we talked to one who used to practice witch craft and shared with us about what takes place in oathing which is the same with what Ndidi does.

CONCLUSION

After having interviewed the Christians and non-Christians of Kibabii parish we found that witchcraft is still believed in. Despite the effort made by the parish priests, the Christians still embrace Christian faith though not very much. We saw that when the Christians are convenient that is they do not have problems, like diseases, financial, domestic and many others, they live as Christians and when not as Luhya traditionalist that is believing and practicing the customs of the society. They lead an amphibian sort of life, This gives a challenge to the parish priest in their pastoral activity. We also learned that the traditionalists are aware the double sort of life lived by the Christians.

A lot of catechizes is needed in this area but not condemnations which Christians receive from the pulpit. Witchcraft would not have been a big issue in the lives of the Christians at Kibabii parish, if more study that is the study would point the equal ground where the church can dialogue with the Christians more about witchcraft and come to an understanding how Christian can live as Christians and not believing God and witchcraft. This would also make them to use the customs, tradition of the people in order to inculturate their tradition way of living into Christianity Suppose Ndidi is not there then catechism is needed to

be taught to the people, in a more professional way. The next chapter we shall have the general conclusion of our topic phenomenon of witchcraft.

CHAPTER FOUR

GENERAL CONCLUSION.

.INTRODUCTION.

In this last chapter we have a summary of all we have discussed so far. We propose some suggestions on how to address this phenomenon of witchcraft and finally give the general conclusion of our Research Project. From our research, we have found out that witchcraft is a secretive evil power enjoyed by few members of the Luhya society. It is evil in the sense that those who possess it either by inheritance or buying it (*that is, paying for the training*) use it to harm their neighbors property or even killing their neighbors. Today we also have another form of witchcraft, that is the **Majini** form. These are spirits bought from the people of the Coast Province and they take different forms depending on your need. You can have a male one or a female one. They are associated with riches for those who possess them. They do all what the possessor wants but on condition that he or she fulfills his or her part of the deal, that is he does all the necessary sacrifices. The purpose of having the **Majini** is to get rich at the expense of your neighbors. Like the traditional **Bulosi** (witchcraft) the goal is to kill and destroy what you consider your enemy. Indeed this form of witchcraft is highly feared by the people. Generally, whether traditionalist or Christian, people detest witchcraft and witches.

***DIFFERENT ATTEMPTS USED SO FAR BY THE
LUHYA TO ADDRESS WITCHCRAFT (BULOSI)***

There have been a number of attempts to destroy, and as it is put in Luhya, *khunyastia bulosi*. Before 1905 - there was a ritual called **Omakio**. People who participated in it were protected from the powers of the witches. And it was also given to **Mulosi** (witches) to take away their powers of bewitching. In 1905 there was the first, second and third **OMSEMBE** ritual. The aims of this was just like those of **Omakio**. After **OMSEMBE**, there was the **Bakavishu** in 1945 the aim of this was to protect people from being bewitched. After **Bakavisu** there was **Kavwele** from the coast province whose ritual also aimed at eradication of witchcraft. During our research, we found out that many of our informers knew **Kavwele** very well, and many old people had participated in his ritual. After **Kavwele**, there was another person from the coast province called **Mwakatengu** (son of **Katengu**) with the same purpose of eradicating witchcraft. Today we have **Omusango** and an exorcist called **Ndidi**. All these are different attempts by the Luhya aimed at eradicating witchcraft, We think these will not be the last attempts for different generations of Luhya will have their own attempts. Judging from these many attempts, one will argue with us that witchcraft is an eternal phenomenon in Luhya, and as it takes new forms, the Luhya will evolve new methods of addressing or eradicating it.

***THE APPROACH OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND THE LUHYA ON
WITCHCRAFT***

So far there has not been a positive dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Luhya approach to eradicating witchcraft. The Church's approach so far has been that of condemning witchcraft and all other means of using occult powers either for harming or even healing. Consequently, the priest/ess doctor and his/her practices are condemned and so are the

witches and their practices. Rituals like the OMUSANGO ritual are also seriously condemned. People like Ndidi who neutralize the powers of the witches are also condemned. This is why in Bungoma area people are warned against participating in either OMUSANGO performed by NDIDI or any other exorcist.

Surely, in public, Christians confess and practice the Christian faith. In private they practice all that the Luhya practice including consulting the Priest/ess doctor at night. As a matter of fact, witchcraft is feared not only by the old, or the young, but even the literate in the Luhya society. There is also a saying among the Luhya **Omundu muluhya no muluhya na shiri khuba mkristo** that translated this would mean that before one becomes a Christian he or she has to undergo all that it means to become a Luhya. Critically understood this means one must undergo the magically protective rituals that he or she cannot be bewitched. This is so because once you become a Christian, you are not expected to participate in the Luhya rituals, but the experience of the people is that, as we found in the research, even Christians can be bewitched and be witches.

SINCE WITCHCRAFT (BULOSI) IS A SECRETIVE PHENOMENON, WHAT THEN?

As it is secretive, it means that condemning it will not help since people will continue practicing it in secret. We suggest that, the Church should invest more on finding out what this secretive evil power is, and see whether a ritual like **Omusango** or the custodians of this ritual can assist the Church find out why people still go for the ritual despite the condemnation it receives from the Christian pulpits.

The Dialogue

The dialogue we are proposing is an authentic dialogue. The Church to be open to the Culture and vice versa. The problem that might arise in a monologue is that one will condemn another and simply overlook what the other proposes leading to what we have today, that is a sincerity religion. People living as Christians when it is convenient and as Luhya traditionalist when it is convenient.

We think an open dialogue can help even the priest learn something from the Luhya priest/ess doctors. As we have seen the Luhya priest/ess doctors use not only prayer, but even herbs-medicine, psychology, biology and all human knowledge to heal their patients. People can also confess to a priest/ess doctor easily, but often are unable to confess to our Catholic Priests or seek Gods absolution through a Catholic Priest because they say he will not understand their problem. For example, for a long time in Luhya land, witches, as our informers told us used to confess saying that they have killed a dik dik, **Isolo**, and the priest taking the dik dik for the animal, could easily give an absolution not knowing the issue at hand was killing of a baby or a person.

We also believe that our pastors can learn a lot from the priest/ess doctors instead of condemning them. This is because as we have seen in our definition of a priest/ess he or she has accumulated a lot of wisdom, which can easily be shared with an open priest in a spirit of dialogue.

Can Christians be bewitched? This question was asked to the Christians, 47.37% responded YES and 52.63% responded NO. From this we can say that a certain percentage, that 47.37% see the possibility of Christians being capable of falling into the traps of the witches. The reason we gather for this possibility is that some Christians do not have faith in Jesus Christ. They still believe in the powers of **Ubulosi**.

It is important to note at this point that witchcraft is not only a belief, but that is an all-encompassing evil, it involves food poisoning. Consequently even for the educated Luhya, they will never trust if you serve the food in private and then bring it at table. Many will request you to taste it first. So we can say witchcraft Ubulosi leads to a lot of suspicion. Even when people are Christians, and some have not participated in the **Omusango** ritual, there is a lot of suspicion, but if they have, and many have, there is no suspicion.

Our suggestion therefore is, if really and truly **Omusango** brings about harmony and trust in the society, then why not have a careful study of its operations and see whether it is possible to Christianize it that is to put in to practice. This we say because the Christian Faith must seek dialogue with the local culture if it has to survive in Africa, if not, syncretism is the sort of religion we shall have.

THE WAY OUT OF THIS PROBLEM.

We think it will surely take long if it will ever be, a Luhya without witchcraft. This is because the witches will continue existing. However, we believe that if many of the witches became Christians, and understood the law of the Love of God and of neighbor properly, then they could leave their evil practices. Some leave the practice after Conversion, but majority do not. What we used to hear and have confirmed in this research is that after participating in the **Omusango** ritual and witchcraft, neutralizers like Ndidi people end up practicing authentic Christian lives and leave witchcraft.

From our research and especially on the question whether witchcraft practices will come to an end in Luhya land, we found out that most people do not believe it will come to an end. As Kivuto Ndeti puts it, witchcraft is the manifestation of evil in the Akamba world view, so we can say that, it will also exist in Luhya land as long as evil exists. It is a phenomenon found among certain people, then why not learn from them how they eradicate it

or have attempted to eradicate it and then see what we can learn from their wisdom. This is because God is the author of wisdom and that which is contrary of wisdom cannot be coming from God. So the wisdom to eradicate evil can only be coming from the good one and that is God. For if we say that the rituals like **Omusango** and neutralizers of **Ubulosi** like Ndididi are evil and are known that they are used to eradicating witchcraft, we shall imply that evil is fighting evil and that cannot be the case because if it does, it will not be able to continue existing as a form opposed to the good of the society, life and prosperity. As we have found out that witchcraft is also associated with riches, we think a true teaching of the true values of riches as found in the Christian faith can help to somehow address the problem or the issue of wanting to possess everything for ourselves. What about life and death? A serious teaching of who the author of life is, can change those people searching for wealth in unchristian ways. We propose then a new approach in Catechizes not that of condemning all that is from another culture, e.g. witchcraft but of evaluating it in the light of Christian revelation which has always been communication or dialoguing with the new cultures it encounters.

When candidates for baptism are to be baptized, we propose that they are taught all about witchcraft on top of what they have been taught in the catechism class these would help one to understand more about Christianity and about witchcraft.

We also propose that a topic on **Omusango** and other rituals used by the Luhya to counter the effects of witchcraft or even attempt to eradicate it, be introduced in the catechism and be taught in the light of the Eucharist. That is, as we have seen in the **Omusango** ritual, there is drinking of the blood of those participating in the ritual and eating of the body of the victim, the bull, also drinking its blood which is mixed with human blood, urine and saliva, we propose that the teaching in the period of Catechuminate on the Eucharist should stress that the bread we eat is the body of Christ and the cup we drink is the cup of his blood. We eat His

whole humanity and divinity through which the power of bewitching and of doing all other evils is taken away, and are united with one another. Just as **Omusango** ritual in the traditional setting brought unity, harmony and peace in the society, so does Christ bring all these and in addition love that harmonizes our lives. This we propose in the light of the Second Vatican Council which proposes that the cultures of people be studied and where they can be adopted into our liturgy be adopted. By so doing, we shall make the Catechism and the whole process of evangelization truly Catholic Christian and truly Luhya. That is we shall make Christianity abide in the hearts of the Luhya.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH.

This topic is quite interesting and a wider scope is required, a research in future could be carried out among the Mbere, the Akamba of Kitui, and the Tharaka of Eastern Province, and among the Mijikenda and the Digo people of the Coast Province and the Luo of Nyanza Province. This is because these people have common practices with the Luhya and especially the practice of witchcraft.

We think a team of researchers could be dispersed to these regions and then after their findings, try to see how witchcraft practices affects the christian faith and practice. this done will help the church and her pastors find new ways of addressing this pastoral issue.

CONCLUSION.

We have already seen what witchcraft is, we have also found out that it is not an illusion but a reality affecting the life of the Luhya of Kababii Parish where our research was carried out. We hence call upon all those concerned with the evangelization of these people not to stand aloof and imagine that by their condemnation of the phenomenon they shall eradicate

witchcraft. Preaching on Sunday is surely not enough, the priests must join their Christian in the small Christian communities and share with them their joys and sorrows.

Priests if possible should visit the sick and accompany them in their sickness and propose modern ways of treatments and pray for their Christians for it is when the new converts are left without pastoral care and especially in times of sickness, that they resort to consulting the priest/ess doctors. Why? Because only their former friends, that is those who practice the traditional healing methods visit them, which is not good for the converts. The reason being that some parishes like our targeted one, that is Kababii Parish are too large and have only three priests, we think Christian solidarity and especially that expressed in the small Christian communities we visited, can help where the priests are not available. We conclude by saying that witchcraft is a reality and the way out of it is not condemnation, but those addressing it must know what it is and all its dynamism's and secondly. They should also understand or seek to understand the workings of the priest/ess. When this is accomplished, their proposals for alternatives will be properly grounded on what they know and not on proposals from other similar situations but from this particular situation. In short, when this is done, the proposals will be contextualized.

However, it is important to note that witchcraft as the manifestation of evil in their society we have researched on, is there constantly countering the good of the society, that is, good health and life. It is really an eternal problem which will continue as long as the society continues. We take this position because as we found out in our research, many attempts have been made but no permanent solution. **Omusango** is still in use but not all witches will go to participate in it. And even if all the people were to participate in it which will surely be a miracle, witchcraft will always be taking new forms. We simply say, **Ubulosi** is an eternal phenomenon which will continue as long as humanity exists. All we suggest is understanding

what is involved in witchcraft, what it is, and many people being taught in the Catechism about it and the rituals associated in eradicating it, will help the Christians better fight it, reminding them Christ has conquered sin and death. And yet in their lives they must cooperate with His grace in order to overcome evil, in our case witchcraft.

It is important to note that as we have tried our best to uncover the mystery of what **Ubulosi** is, the more mysterious it has remained. All we can say is that, it is an evil power enjoyed by a few in the society for harming and destroying what is good in the human society: good life and prosperity. As we have found out it is very difficult to establish whether this mystery of evil Ubulosi can be eradicated, it is constantly taking new forms as the society takes new forms, and this renders it all the more a mystery.

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APPENDIX ONE .

QUESTIONNAIRE.

Ubulosi (witchcraft) is a phenomenon that is present in **KABABII** and in Luhya land in general. This project aims at studying this phenomenon. Your cooperation in answering the questions will be highly appreciated. Your cooperation and contribution is essential for the success of this project. All the information will be treated with confidentiality. I humbly ask you to answer the questions truthfully and objectively.

Personal information

Age:

Gender: Male Female.....

Marital Status: Single..... Married:.... Divorced:.....Widow:....Widower.....

Education: Primary..... Secondary:..... College:..... University.....

Urban Dweller..... Rural Dweller.....

The questionnaire has two parts, part one is addressed to Luhya Christians and part two to the traditional Luhya.

To answer, where you have ii or tawe only tick one option. Where you have please fill your answer.

SECTION ONE

Questionnaire to the Luhya Christians.

What is witchcraft?

(a) It is easy to identify a witch? Yes No.

(b) Give three ways of identifying a witch

(1)

(2)

(3)

Can Christians be bewitched? Yes No.

If you Catholic Christians are bewitched what do you do?

(a) We go to consult a Priest/ess doctor Yes No.

(b) Since we do not believe witchcraft,
We go to hospital if we are sick. Yes No.

(c) We pray to God because he is Almighty Yes No.

If you go to consult a priest/ess doctor

Is that not going against the law of God? Yes No.

If it is going against the law of God, what do you do?

(a) We go for confession Yes No.

(b) We just pray to God for the priest cannot help us. Yes No.

(a) What is **Omusango**?.....

(b) How is it carried out?.....

(c) Have you participated in it? Yes No.

(d) If one refuses to participate in the *Omusango* ritual, what happens to such a one?.....

(a) How does Ndidi neutralize the power of the witches?.....

(b) Have you gone to consult her? Yes No.

(c) Why?

Will there be an end to witchcraft practices in Luhya?

For the time being **Omusango** and Ndidi are they best solutions of eradicating witchcraft?

(a) Are **Omusango** and Ndidi are the best solutions

To addressing witchcraft Yes No.

(b) Give reasons.....

.....

SECTION TWO

Questionnaire to the Traditional Luhya

What is witchcraft?

Is every Luhya a witch? Yes No.

(a) Does every Luhya believe in witchcraft Yes No.

(b) Why?.....

(a) Is witchcraft a secretive phenomenon? Yes No.

(b) Where is it kept?.....

(c) Is it observable? Yes No.

(d) Have you ever seen it? Yes No.

(a) Is it easy to identify a witch? Yes No.

Give three ways of identifying a witch

(i)

(ii)

(iii)

How does one become a witch?.....

(a) Is it true that the old women are the witches? Yes No.

(b) Are men witches Yes No.

Are young men and ladies witches? Yes No.

(a) Is it the case that when one inherits witchcraft one must bewitch? Yes No.

Give reason(s).....

Can Christians be bewitched? Yes No.

(a) When one is bewitched do they consult Omundu Muchesi (priest/ess doctor)? Yes No.

Give reason(s).....

(a) A traditional Luhya goes to see a priest/ess doctor any time of the day but a Christian goes to consult the priest/ess doctor at night Yes No.

Give reason(s).....

Will there be an end to witchcraft in Luhya land? Yes No.

For the time being Omusango and Ndidi are the Best solutions of addressing witchcraft? Yes No.

(a) What is Omusango?.....

How is it carried out?.....

How does Ndidi exorcise witches?.....

Apart from Ndidi and Omusango have there been other attempts for addressing Witchcraft?.....

Appendix Two, Questionnaire

Witchcraft is the phenomenon that is present in Kababii Parish and in Luhya land in general, this project aims at studying this phenomenon. Your co-operation and contribution is essential for the success of this project. All the information will be treated with confidentiality. I humbly ask you to answer the questions truthfully and objectively.

Age.....

Gender: Male.....Female.....

Marital Status: Single... Married.....Divorced.....Widow.....Widower.....

Education: Primary.....Secondary.....College.....University.....

Urban Dweller.....Rural Dweller.....

(b) Abasasta nibobalosi?	ii	tawe
Abastiani nende abkhana nibobalosi?	ii	tawe
(a) Noriomlosi olaka?	ii	tawe
Kachira?.....		
Bakristu babalokanga?	ii	tawe
(a) Bakristu nibalochrwe bastistanga khumachesi?	ii	tawe
Kachira?.....		
(a) Bakristo bastisanga khulola abachesi mshiro bushi?	ii	tawe
(b) Kachira?.....		
Ubulosi bwakhawe Ubaluhya?	ii	tawe
Rero emisanga kinyala chamala ubulosi	ii	tawe
(a) Omusango nistiosi?.....		
Bakholanga shimsango?.....		
Ndidi amalonga ubulosi arie.....		
Abula Ndidi ario inyira yokhumala ubulosi?		
Khuborere.....		