

**THE IMPACT OF CHRISTIANITY ON THE TRADITIONAL RELIGION OF THE  
LEYA OF MUKUNI VILLAGE IN LIVINGSTONE**

**BY**

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**APPROVAL**

This dissertation by Chuulu Rodgers has been approved as partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of the Master of Education Degree in Religious Studies by the University of Zambia.

Signed

Date

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## **DEDICATION**

This dissertation is dedicated to my dear wife, Leya Chuulu Nyirenda who accompanied me to the research site and assisted me to collect data.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONTENT	PAGE
Copyright .....	i
Declaration .....	ii
Approval .....	iii
Dedication .....	iv
Acknowledgment .....	v
Table of Contents.....	vi
Abstract .....	ix
<b>CHAPTER ONE</b> .....	1
1.0 Overview. ....	1
1.1 Background to the study.....	1
1.2 Statement of the problem.....	4
1.3 Purpose of Study .....	5
1.4 Objectives.....	5
1.5 Research Questions.....	5
1.6 Significance of study.....	6
1.7 Theoretical framework.....	6
1.8 Limitations and Delimitations .....	6
1.9 Operational Definitions.....	7
Summary .....	7

<b>CHAPTER TWO</b> .....	8
2.0 Literature Review.....	8
2.1 International Context.....	8
2.2 African Context.....	12
2.3 Zambian Context.....	17
Summary .....	27
<b>CHAPTER THREE</b> .....	28
<b>Methodology</b> .....	28
3.0 Introduction.....	28
3.1 Research Design.....	28
3.2 Target Population .....	28
3.3 Sample Size .....	29
3.4 Sampling Procedures.....	30
3.5 Data collecting instruments.....	30
3.6 Data collecting Techniques.....	31
3.7 Data analysis .....	31
3.8 Validity and reliability.....	31
3.9 Ethical Considerations.....	32
Summary .....	32
<b>CHAPTER FOUR</b> .....	33
<b>PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS</b> .....	33
4.0 Introduction.....	33



4.1 The Nature of Interaction between Leya and Christianity.....	33
4.2 How the Leya responded to Christianity.....	36
4.3 Aspects which seem to have changed.....	38
4.4 Factors that motivated Leya conversions.....	44
Summary .....	46
<b>CHAPTER FIVE</b> .....	47
<b>DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS</b> .....	47
5.0 Overview.....	47
5.1 Positive interaction between Christian missionaries and Leya.....	47
5.2 The Leya were receptive to the Christian Message.....	48
5.3 Social, economic and cultural aspects hugely changed.....	50
5.4 Economic and social benefits motivated the Leya to convert to Christianity.....	52
Summary .....	54
<b>CHAPTER SIX</b> .....	55
<b>CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b> .....	55
6.1 Conclusion.....	55
6.2 Recommendations.....	58
REFERENCE.....	61
Appendices.....	67

## **ABSTRACT**

African Traditional Religion is a world religion like any other religion such as Islam, Hinduism and Christianity. It appears in different forms according to context and content. It forms part of the life of people and their cosmology. Some early missionaries discredited the African traditional religion and labeled it as barbarian and primitive, but some African Scholars of religion such as Mbiti (1990) and Magesa (1997) have tried to defend the ART's status as a world religion.

The research is about *Zambian Traditional Religion* in Mukuni village, and the coming of Christianity in the chiefdom. The research looked at whether or not the religion of the Leya people in Mukuni village was influenced by the coming of Christianity. Before the coming of Christianity to Mukuni village the Leya people were followers of the traditional religion, and they were committed to the norms and requirements of their religion. Christianity brought different teachings, some of which may not have been in agreement with the traditional religion. The research examined the extent to which the coming of Christianity affected the traditional religion of the Leya people.

The study employed a qualitative approach in collecting data about people's views and attitudes towards the coming of Christianity. The methods of collecting data were mainly the face to face interviews, using the semi-structured and unstructured interview guides, focus group discussions, and observation. The sample consisted of 34 respondents, drawn from the Royal Residence, Namwianga Mission, the four selected churches and the households.

It was established in the study that the coming of Christianity in Mukuni Village had some impact or consequences on the traditional religion in Mukuni Villlage. The concept of Leza that the Leya had before the coming of Christianity was no longer the same. Some traditional practices such as ancestor veneration, offertory prayers, rites of passage and the like are no longer done the way they used to be before the coming of Christianity. Some sacred sites (shrines) around the Victoria Falls were disturbed due to the developmental work around the Victoria Falls.

The Christian missionaries interacted positively with the Leya people whose response towards Christianity was positive. There were however some incentives that led to the said response.

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.0 Overview

This chapter endeavors to put into context the background to the study. It illuminates the statement to the problem, purpose of study, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, operational definitions and delimitations/ limitations of the study. The chapter includes some comments from a few authors on the topic of study.

### 1.1 Background to the Study

According to Muntemba (1970) Mukuni village is located about 10 kilometres away from Livingstone, and about 7 kilometers south east of the Victoria Falls. It is inhabited by the Leya of chief Mukuni. The Leya were originally one group with the *Toka* people of Chief Sikute in Senkobo area, near Zimba district. Muntemba (1970) records that: “The Leya people of the southern Province are about 7,992. They spread upon the plateau as far as Zimba in the Kalomo district and also above the falls beyond Katombora where they meet the *Subiya*.” The Leya have been regarded as a splinter group of the Tonga. When they were one group with the *Toka* they were collectively known as *Toka-Leya*, but Chief Mukuni led the Leya South wards to Livingstone, and settled in a small Village known as Mukuni.

Muntemba (1970) reports that the Leya and Lenje trace their origins from Luba-Lunda in present day Democratic Republic of Congo. Mukuni is believed to have left Congo during the general expansion of the Luba-Lunda Empire in the 16th and 17th Centuries. The present chief Mukuni claims that his people were already settled in their present land by the end of the 16th Century. When chief Mukuni, the founder, reached Kabwe, he and his people drove out the Sala, who were known as the Lenje, and from whom the present day Lenjes took their name (Muntemba, 2010).

McGregor (2003) stated that Mukuni had left the Congo along with his brother and sister owing to a conflict with their father. After a dispute their father had got angry with them, and had chased them from home. He called them evil children and stated that he never wanted them near him. They therefore left and settled themselves into a new kingdom, Mukuni village, which was originally known as *Gundu*.

Mubitana (1977) did a study on Christian missions and the *Toka-Leya* of Southern Province. He looked at the foundation and structure of the Village, as well as the work of different Christian missionary groups in the village. Mubitana (1977) established in his thesis that the *Leya* were part of the *Lenje*, but following *Lozi* invasions they became known as *Leya* simply because the invaders were not able to pronounce the word *Lenje*. According to Munokalya (2013) Worship among the people in Mukuni Village is central. The *Leya* believe in and revere *Leza*, the God of their forefathers. A few scholars have written about the worship of *Leza* in Mukuni Village. Muntemba (1970) explains that the object of worship, *Leza*, is far from them and cannot be easily addressed directly through their prayers. Muntemba (1970:32) asserts that:- “All prayers are addressed to the Chiefs who in turn intercede to *Leza* for the people and ensure that the pleadings and wishes of their people are not ignored or unfulfilled.” The chiefs referred to in this case are those who died and are believed to have joined the ancestors.

Another form of worship among the *Leya* of Mukuni Village is offering prayers and sacrifices to *Leza*. Mbiti (1975:63) observes that:-“The practice of making sacrifices and offerings is found all over Africa. The manner of giving could involve throwing the offered items towards the sacred place where the spiritual being is believed to reside. At *Katola Buseka* shrine for instance the *Leya* people could throw a white goat down the river at the place where the shrine is believed to exist. (Munokalya 2013:87).

For this form of worship shrines and other sacred places are therefore very instrumental since these are the places where worshippers come to perform their acts of worship. Mbiti (1975:20) recorded that: - “At the shrines and sacred places, people make or bring sacrifices and offerings, such as animals, fowls, food, utensils, tools, and coins. They also make prayers there. They regard such places where people meet with God.” There are indeed a variety of physical objects that are offered to *Leza* and the ancestral spirits by the *Leya* people in Mukuni Village as part of their worship

In every African society there are prohibitions or rather things that people are not allowed to do. The term taboo is commonly used to refer to things that are prohibited. It is believed that going against the expected norms would annoy the spirits as well as *Leza*. Upholding the ethical standards in the African community is a way of respecting *Leza* and the ancestral spirits. Colson (2006:146) for instance states that:-“Sexual activity regarded as illicit can also cause trouble when engaged in by inheritors of *Mizimo*, for *Muzimo* is said to grow angry if its inheritors take a

lover". In every African society misconduct is surely punishable either by ancestral spirits or by *Leza*.

Worship and prayer in Mukuni Village just like in every African traditional community, have the aspects of praise, thanksgiving, supplication and confession. Mbiti(1975:61) states that; "African Traditional prayers generally include praise, thanksgiving, a declaration of the state of affairs in which the prayer is offered, and requested." The praises, thanksgiving and confession prayers may include rituals and ceremonies. The *Lwiindi* ceremony for instance is a prayer of supplication in which the Leya people ask for rains from the ancestral spirits (Munokalya, 2013).

McGregory (2003) explained that worship activities in Mukuni chiefdom among the Leya were carried out at designated places, most of which were around the Victoria Falls. There is a close connection between the traditional religion in Mukuni Chiefdom and the Victoria Falls. The Leya people have always considered the Victoria Falls area as a dwelling place of ancestral spirits, and they had for a long time been conducting prayers and rituals in this place. McGregor, J (2003:718) stated that:"The Leya regarded the water falls as a religious site and associated it with rain, fertility, cleansing and specifically female authority." To this very day some Leya people go to shrines for special ceremonies, prayers and offerings.

According to Carmody (2001) Chikuni area did not remain the same as it was before the Jesuits visited the place for Evangelism. Before 1905 Chikuni was a traditional community in which the Tonga were actively involved in traditional worship activities. The concept of God they had before the coming of the Jesuits fathers was that of a distant god who was not directly involved in running the universe, but who had withdrawn, having left the management of the universe to lesser gods. All this changed after the Jesuit Fathers had brought Roman Catholicism to the area, and this is the way in which traditional religions are impacted upon with the coming of Christianity.

According to Muntemba (1970) the Leya who had migrated south in Livingstone area after leaving Kabwe, were participants in various religious beliefs, customs and traditional practices. Munokalya outlined a number of sacred sites or shrines where most of these traditional practices and ceremonies were done from. The coming of Christians impacted on Mukuni village in the sense that some of these traditional practices were either stopped completely or moderated. The tradition religion in Mukuni village was thus impacted upon in the sense that some things

changed after the coming of Christianity. There were of course a few things that never changed at all.

When Christianity came to Mukuni village the evangelization process involved interaction between the Christian missionaries and the local people the Leya of Mukuni Village. This study investigated the impact or consequences that the interaction between Christian missionaries and the Leya had on the Leya traditional religious beliefs, customs, values and practices.

Side by side with Christianity, tourism also came to Mukuni village. Korstanje (2007) defines tourism as a composite of activities, services and industries that provide a travel experience to individuals and groups travelling to other countries for the purposes of pleasure. According to Phillipson (1975) tourism came to Livingstone around 1906, and later the industry extended to Mukuni village. McGregor (2003) talked of development of a tourist resort at the Victoria Falls due to the imperial economic interest in the regions north and south of the water falls. The Victoria Falls region has changed as a result of developmental works such as hotels, lodges and ZESCO power stations.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Brown (1972) explained how the New Guinea lost their Tangu language and culture, and took on English as a result of Christian evangelism of the region. They finally gave up paganism and embraced the Christian Faith. Colson (2006) discussed the impact of Christianity on the African traditional religion of the Tonga of Gwembe valley, by outlining what aspects changed and those that remained the same. Carmody (2001) gave an account of Father Moreau's work of Chikini mission, and how a good number of Tongas gave up their traditional religion and became Catholics. Mubitana (1977) described the evangelism work of Zambian missionaries from the Church of Christ.ame.

Since the beginning of the 20th Century Christian missionaries from different churches most of whom were European or American started coming to Mukuni village for the purpose of evangelism. Academic observers established that Christianity has brought in new religious teachings as well as economic and social development to the Leya. It appears, however that very few scholars have explored what impact the new Christian teaching and developmental changes have had on the Leya traditions, based on empirical evidence. This study is designed to explore that impact.

### **1.3 Purpose of Study**

The purpose of the study is to develop an understanding of whether the interaction of the Christian missionaries with the Leya people of Mukuni village has affected the village's cultural and traditional religious beliefs and practices.

### **1.4 Objectives**

The study has the following objectives

- To examine the nature of the interaction of the Christian missionaries with the Leya people of Mukuni village.
- To Assess how the Leya people have responded to the new teachings and developments brought about by Christianity.
- To establish what things have changed and what things have remained the same among the Leya people as a result of the interaction between the Christian missionaries and themselves .
- To investigate factors that encouraged the Leya people to convert to Christianity.

### **1.5 Research Questions**

#### **Main Research Question**

What is the impact of Christian evangelism on the Traditional Religion of the Leya people of Mukuni village?

#### **Sub Research Questions**

- What is the nature of the interaction of the Christian missionaries with the Leya of Mukuni Village?
- How have the Leya responded to the new things they have learned from the Christian Missionaries.
- What aspects have changed or not changed in Leya religious life as a result of their interaction with the Christian missionaries?
- What factors have motivated the Leya people to convert to Christianity?

## **1.6 Significance of the Study**

It is hoped that this study will add to the existing knowledge on the traditions of the *Leya* people of Mukuni village, as well as the Christian missionaries and tourists' activities going on in the village.

When Colson, E. (2006) studied the religious life of the Tonga people of Gwembe Valley she brought out what aspects had changed and those that had remained unchanged in the Tonga religious life after the Christian evangelization of the region. In a similar way this study is significant in that it could document the religious changes among the *Leya* since the advent of Christian missionaries.

## **1.7 Theoretical frame work**

This study was based on Horton's intellectual theory of conversion. According to Horton's intellectualist theory of African conversion, the African cosmology is made up of two systems, and these are the Macrocosm and Microcosm. Macrocosm is the Supreme being who is the controller of the whole universe, and Microcosm is the world of the lesser gods and spirits in charge of the immediate environment of the Africans. When change comes as a result of either Christianity or Islam, and modernity, the lesser gods or spirits are not able to explain these changes, and so the people begin to turn to the Supreme being (Macrocosm). They have seen that the microcosmic boundaries have become weak and breaking.

I have used this theory for this study because what is happening in Mukuni village fits well in Horton's idea of Microcosm and Macrocosm. The *leya* have seen all these changes that are brought by Christianity and modernity, and they begin to turn to God since the lesser gods and spirits of the ancestors are no longer able to adequately explain these changes.

## **1.8 Limitations and Delimitations of the Study**

### **Limitations**

There is hardly any scholarly work on the *Leya* traditional religious life and Christianity in Mukuni village. I could not therefore find adequate documentation on traditional practices of the *Leya* people. Data on subjects such as rites of passage and Christian activities was mainly obtained through oral discussions with the *Leya* people and church leaders from the selected churches.



## **Delimitations**

This study confined to Mukuni Village and the Victoria Falls area. This particular site was chosen for its popularity in terms of traditional practices being carried out side by side with tourist activities.

### **1.9 Operational definitions**

Lwiindi - A traditional ceremony in Mukuni Chiefdom, done at onset of rains.

Impact - To have an effect on something.

Chiefdom - A territory ruled by a Chief.

Ancestors - The dead, who were influential members of the community.

Ritual- A ceremonial activity done for a purpose, based on traditional beliefs.

Shrine - A sacred place believed to be inhabited by spirits.

Missionary - A person who spreads the message about a religion.

### **Summary**

This chapter has introduced the study, and has provided some background information on the Leya and how they got established in Mukuni chiefdom. The statement of the problem, purpose of study, objectives and significance of study were looked at in this chapter. The limitations and delimitations of this particular study were made mention of. The next chapter presents the literature review.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.0 Over view**

There seem to be limited literature for this particular topic since not much study has been conducted on the impact of Christianity on the Leya traditional religion. The researcher however read widely so as to come up with related studies on the general impact of Christianity on traditional religion. This chapter presents a review of pieces of literature that are of significance to the current study. A few studies were reviewed on the general impact of Christianity on indigenous religion of the world, of Africa, and finally of Zambia, with a focus on Mukuni Village in Livingstone

#### **2.1 International context**

Christian Missionaries have gone over the world in a bid to spread the Christian message to all parts of the earth in accordance with the instructions they were given by their Lord Jesus Christ. (Hopfe, 2012). According to HildeBrandt (1981) the disciples of Jesus followed the instructions of their master, and waited in Jerusalem until they received power from above. They then went to Judea and Samaria, and to other parts of the world to spread the Christian message. According to St Luke, the writer of the book of Acts thousands of people got converted to Christianity as a result of the evangelization activity done by the apostles.

When the early Christian missionaries were sent to all parts of the world one of the main regions they entered was the Roman Empire (Hopfe, 1991). According to Hopfe (1991) during the period between AD64 and 330 Christians went through several periods of persecutions and acceptance by the Roman Empire. Hopfe (1991:361) recorded that:“Even when the Roman Empire officially became tolerant to all religions, Christianity however found themselves in trouble because of the refusal to recognize the Roman gods and to worship.” This clearly shows that the interaction between Christian missionaries and the Romans was negative. The aim of Christian missionaries in the Roman Empire just like in any part of the world was to suppress the traditional religion of the area, and to promote Christianity in the area.

Pre-historic Europe was once occupied by indigenous people who spoke Indo-European languages such as Baltic, Celtic and Germanic. (Schmidt, 2005). According to Schmidt and

others (2005) the mentioned tribes were followers of the ancient traditional religion of that region. As time went by there was a transition period among those people from primitivity to some levels of civilization. Schmidt and others (2005:64) explained that: “The tribal people of Europe were dramatically changed by contact with the Roman Empire and the spread of Christianity.” There must have been positive interactions between the agents of Christianity and the tribal people of Europe.

According to Hopfe (2012) Christianity is the largest religion in the world, with an estimation of about thirty four thousand (34,000) Christian denominations. This religion is believed to be spread over a wider area than any other. This could suggest that the religion reaches out to other people on an extensive scale, and that a lot of good interaction may have been taking place between the Christian missionaries, evangelists and teachers with different people. Schmidt and others (2005:76) noted the following “Christianity is a thriving and vibrant religion at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It has not merely survived its passage through time; it has flourished. In the united states alone there are more than nine hundred (900) Christian churches, sections cults, societies or missions.” The above authors are suggesting that this growth on the part of Christians as a religion could be based on some good positive interactions that may have taken place between Christian teachers and potential converts.

Response to any given message may be positive or negative and may determine the growth of an institution to which one is called to join. According to St Luke the author of the book of Acts there is a record in Acts 2:41, that about three thousand (3000) people got converted to Christianity in a single day. This presents a high percentage of people converting to Christianity globally. According to Schmidt and others (2005) there was a transition among the early tribes of Europe, from Stone Age to metal tools as well as agriculture, and a lot of people changed from their tribal religions to Christianity. This conversion registers a positive response to the Christian religion as well as to the Roman civilization that these early tribes were converted to.

Schmidt (2005) made mention of some Celtic religions of the pre-historic Europe and explained that they responded positively to the call of Christianity. Schmidt (2005) further stated that these Celtic traditional religions vanished, and Christianity took over. The vanishing referred above simply shows that the people left their traditional religion completely and joined.

Cox (2006) discussed the reaction of some Jewish communities when Christians tried to spread its message in those areas. Cox (2006:18) records the following: - “During the new testament period of the church its members were subjected to various attacks by the enemies of Christians. At the first the source of persecution was the Jews.” This presents a very negative response to the Christian message on the part of the Jews.

Persin (1973) narrated about a Christian organization, named *Jews for Jesus* and led by Martin Rosen, that had set to evangelize among the Jews. According to Persin (2004) Martin Rosen had converted from Judaism to Christianity, and he aimed at converting all the Jews of his time and area to Christianity. The Jews however reacted negatively by forming organizations (Jews for Judaism and outreach Judaism) that would fight against missionaries and cults who were seeking to convert Jews. Persin (2004) further stated that Rosen tried to use a tactic in which he would convert the Jews to Christianity but allow them to maintain their religious title. Rosen however found that most Jews were unwilling to leave their Jewish traditions behind. This indeed portrays a negative response on the part of the Jews towards the Christian message that was spread among them. They rejected the Christian message and maintained their position as Jews.

When a new religion is introduced in a given area, and people respond by joining that new religion there are normally changes that occur in cultural practices of the people involved. Bowker (2003:11) records the following: “The people of the past were very different in cultures, but they built their cultures and societies in much the same way as we build ours” (2003:11). This suggests that since the people of the same region no longer have same culture as before a lot of things have changed. According to Parrinder (1983) the traditional religions of China and everywhere else in the world worship of the dead was quite common among these traditional religions because belief in life after death was universal. Parrinder (1983) did mention that such beliefs started vanishing away due to exposure to the western religions.

In most traditional religions globally there were caves containing decorations of art, and Stone Age art, magic for good hunting, sorcery and divination were part of traditional worship. A great change however came over a number of years as these areas became commercialized and illuminated by electricity( Parrinder, 1983). The above mentioned commercialization and illumination could have involved western religions too. Parrinder (1983) further stated that the caves of mystery though well decorated with art, could not be visited by any ordinary person at

any time, but this is no longer the case now. The ancient remains in the mentioned region have suggested the above developments (Parrinder 1983).

Dickson (1980) has explained that Judaism has for a long time been the traditional religion of the Jews. When the early Christians, shortly after the announcement of Jesus, spread Christianity in many areas those that left Judaism to embrace Christianity had to abandon a number of Jewish practices such as circumcision and observation of the Sabbath day. This presents a change, from what the former Jews used to practice, to new practices. The new practices were based on the new set of beliefs. Since religion, as Yinger (1970:7) stated:- “Is a set of beliefs and practices, and these are the beliefs and practices that a person embraces when joining a new religion.

According to Parrinder (1983) the traditional religion globally, which used to worship the dead are no longer doing so because they have learned something different concerning life after death, and concerning the object of worship. Parrinder (1983:33) recorded the following: “The starting point of religion must be sought in something more comprehensive, in a belief in a sacred power which transcends the universe, and is its ground and support.” As one joins a particular religion he/she was to recognize the Supreme Being of that religion, since every religion may have its own Supreme Beings different from those of other religions. Parrinda (1983:9) described such a difference in this way: - “Belief in a god or gods is found in most religions, but different super human powers are often referred.”

In the Roman Empire, however, the teaching about Christian did not change the practice of worshipping traditional gods. There were a lot of gods and goddesses, and the Romans confirmed serving such gods despite having allowed Christianity in the Empire (Hopfe, 1991). According to Hopfe (1991) Christians were expected to recognize and worship the Roman gods, and their refusal to do so landed them into trouble many times. There are many other incidences in the world, where by Christian missionaries spread it’s message to a given area in an effort to win converts and to establish Christian churches. The situation in terms of responses to the Christian message has been similar in the sense that it is common everywhere you go, that there would be those that would convert to the new religion. Others would convert, but not wholly, since they are unwilling to surrender the practices of the former religion.

## 2.2 African Context

Bowker (2003) explained that there have not been human communities in the past without religion because religion was actually an intrinsic part of human life. This is in conformity with Hopfe (1991), who stated that wherever people were found there too religion resided. Bowker (2003) further stated that there were many religions, ancient or modern. The African traditional religion is inclusive in the above assertions as it is among the ancient religions.

In defining religion Parrinder (1983:9) stated that: - “Religion has been present at every level of human society from the earliest times.” This simply shows that when Christian missionaries were establishing Christianity in Africa and Zambia in particular the Zambians were already found with a religion to which they belonged. According to Carmody (2001) when Christian missionaries introduced Christianity to Chikuni some people converted to Christianity, especially as they saw some opportunities for education, wage employment and other incentives. The people that converted to Christianity were originally members of the African Traditional Religion. This means that before Christianity came, these people were active participants of the traditional religion in which they believed. When Christianity came they responded positively and converted to the new religion.

Parrinder (1983) outlined a number of activities that made up traditional worship in the African Traditional Religion, and these include veneration of ancestral spirits, celebrating rites of passage at key points in the lives of people, conducting prayers and offering sacrifices. The coming of a new, western religion such as Christianity to an area would have an impact in the sense that some traditional practices that used to be part of traditional worship could be stopped. Other new practices that are in line with the new religion could be brought in , and thus affecting completely the nature and wellbeing of that traditional religion.

Hildebrandt (1981) recorded that God had wanted the Gospel to be brought to Africa and he sent the Apostle, Philip who first ministered to the Ethiopian Eunuch. Luke the writer of the book of Acts (Acts 8:26-40 ) showed that the interaction between the Christian Evangelist and the Ethiopian Eunuch was positive and fruitful. According to Brown (1972) the people of New Guinea were pagans, as paganism was their traditional religion. They however interacted with Christians, and the said interaction was positive as it led to a change from paganism to Christianity. Brown (1972) however did not show the level of this interaction, and the researcher

is trying to find out from other sources such as internet, whether it was all the people of New Guinea who interacted favorably with the Christian teaching and preaching.

Hildebrandt (1981) recorded the following:- “God blessed the witness of John Mark so that before long there were five Christian Churches in Egypt and Libya. Mark preached fearlessly against the evils of his day and the excesses of pagan religion, so that the religious and political leaders began to plot against him.” According to Gregorius (1968) on April 26, 68 AD Christians from Egypt and Libya gathered at the great Church of Bacicalia in Alexandria to celebrate Easter. During the service the Roman priests incited some pagans to riot. They entered the church and dragged Mark out into the streets. After pulling him through the streets with a rope, the people murdered him. This indeed shows that at the same time that some Africans responded positively to Christianity, there were others who strongly fought against the Christian religion. Two kinds of interactions are evident in the above account. There is a positive response between John Mark and the people that converted to Christianity, resulting into the growth of the Christian Church in Egypt and Libya. On the other hand there is animosity on the part of the others, and thus very poor interactions between John Mark and the religious leaders and politicians of the Roman Empire. As observed in the above account Mr Mark is even murdered because of the extent of negativity of the religious and political leaders of the Roman Empire.

According to Hildebrandt (1981) Christian missionaries from Wesleyan Methodist Church came to Gambia, a small country in West Africa, to spread the Christian message. There was a very low number of converts due to Islam influence, and this shows that the interaction between the people of Gambia and the Christian missionaries was not very positive. Hildebrandt (1981:149) wrote the following: “By 1914 the Methodist church in Gambia was not very large and still depended on missionary help in order to continue.” This could show that the interaction between the missionaries and would be converts was not sound at all, and no wonder the church remained a small one despite so many years of evangelization.

The writer of the book of Acts (2:38-41) did indicate that as a result of the Apostles of Jesus’ teaching and preaching the Christian message in Jerusalem, Judea and all Samaria, thousands of people accepted to become Christian through baptism. The Christian message was thus responded to positively as portrayed by the same author. Concerning the growth of the Christian church in North Africa Hildebrandt (1983) mentioned that the church in Africa continued to grow from AD 200 to 300. According to history, there were 70 bishops in the church in the

North African province around AD220. By about AD250 there were almost 150 Bishops and by the end of the century (around AD 300) there were more than 250 Bishops. It can be seen that the church must have tripled its size during the 3<sup>rd</sup> century. This portrays a high percentage of those that responded positively to Christianity. It is this positive response that led to a high growth of Christian Churches in some regions within North Africa.

According to Magesa (1997) The traditional beliefs and cultural values of most African traditional religions have been destroyed due to the coming of Christianity and Islam. Magesa stated that the African were having a terrible experience in which they saw a destruction of their communal values. This means that the Africans whose cultural values were being destroyed were turning to Christianity or Islam.

In New Guinea paganism was the local religion of the native tribes as pointed earlier (Brown, 1972). Christians however evangelized the religion, and as Brown (1972) pointed out paganism vanished and a good number of the local people embraced Christianity. This was a positive response to the new Christian religion, and it led to the growth of the Christian church.

Groves (1948) discussed the growth of the church in Africa, and stated that under the leadership of D.L Moody there was the great revival of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in Europe and America, through which a lot of Christians were encouraged to be more committed in their services to Christ. A good number of such committed believers agreed to go to Africa to spread the Gospel, and many Africans responded positively and became Christians.

According to Hildebrandt (1983) there were a number of German missionaries working in West Africa, but as time went by these were driven away by the British and French armies. There were several other problems that were encountered by West African countries such as no missionaries being able to come and help, shortages of supplies from Europe, and increasing cost for medical supplies, printing supplies etc. Hildebrandt (1983:201) recorded that:- “In spite of these problems, the church in West Africa did continue to grow. For example, consider only the Anglican Church working in Nigeria, the Christian community rose from 51,750 in 1914 to 78,189 in 1918.” All this is a positive response to Christianity.

According to Hildebrandt (1981) the Roman Catholic Church established a large mission station on Zanzibar Island in 1863. They were supported well financially by the French government so that they could put up infrastructure as well as a church. Hildebrandt (1981:127) recorded the



following: - “By 1873 a very large station had been established, there was even a training centre for preparing women to become nuns.” Hildebrandt (1981) also narrated of how the gospel was spread to the Baganda of king Mutesa through the work of Henry Stanley. The Christian Mission Society sent a number of missionaries to Baganda Kingdom, and King Mutesa converted to Christianity, and widely testified about his conversion. A good number of his people converted too (Hildebrandt 1981). This was a positive response to the Christian message.

According to Parrinder (1981) reverence for or worship of the dead is found in all traditional societies because beliefs in life after death are universal. The coming of Christianity however have influenced the above mentioned worship activities (Peterson, 1987). Christianity has taught against worship of any spirits or beings other than God. Hopfe (1991:33) recorded the following: - “Those who believe in the continued life of the ancestors greatly have great pains to prevent the dead from returning from the graves to harm the living.” Such fears are common among all African societies as mentioned earlier. According to Templeton, J (2002) the dead are inactive and remain in that state until the final day of God’s judgment. Such teachings from the Christian religion have resulted into earlier belief and practices about life after death changing. Templeton (2002) state that there is no longer ancestor veneration or worship of the dead among all those that have embraced Christianity.

Mbiti (1975) stated that the practice of making sacrifices and offerings was found all over Africa. These are the practices that were being disturbed as a result of Christian evangelism in Africa.

Brown (1972) stated that change from traditional religion required changing ones culture, or rather dropping ones culture and adopting the new culture of the religion to which one has converted. Brown (1972:289) stated the following: - “To abandon paganism was to change one’s culture: it was to forget the formula and liturgies of one’s ancient tongue and to express oneself to the uniformity of a written book.” According to brown (1972) Christianity aimed at changing people’s languages and replacing it with English, as this would be the only sure way to help them forget about their cultures, and adopted the cultures of the new religion that they were now affiliated to. Brown (1972) gave New Guinea as an example of a country in Africa which lost the Tangu local language and culture and took on English as their language of operation.

Hopfe (1991) said that in every society certain points in life were marked by the African community and religion with rituals. The said points in life being birth, puberty, marriage and

death. Concerning birth of a child Hopfe (1991:68) recorded the following: - “The birth of children is an event of great rejoicing among African people. Children are regarded as a blessing from the world of the spirit; conversely, childlessness is considered a curse.” Christian missionaries have however taught that children are a great blessing from God, and not spirits, and this is an aspect that has changed among some African societies that have embraced Christianity.

Stevens (1997) has mentioned that traditional rituals and usages of roots are no longer common especially among those who have become Christians in African societies. The child naming where they give an ancestral name to the baby are no longer practiced by those who have become Christians. They instead give Christian names to their babies, and they no longer associate their babies with the departed members of their families or societies. There was need for more research to be carried out, so as to learn to what extent the Christians have gone in rejecting the traditional rituals associated with child birth and naming.

Hopfe (1991) explained that not all child births were welcomed. He gave an example of twins; the birth of which he said was unusual and wicked. According to Hopfe (1991) birth of twins was seen to be a sign of infidelity on the part of the mother because each of the twins had a different father. In some African societies one or both of the twins could be killed, or alternatively the mother and her twins were forced to live apart from the rest of the community. (Hopfe, 1991). According to Stevens (1997) birth of the twins was a normal occurrence and was celebrated in the same manner as other births, and the twins were equally regarded as a blessing from God just like in a case of one baby. Hopfe (2012) says that some rituals such as child naming ceremony, killing of twins or considering childless marriage as a curse are no longer upheld among the African societies that have converted to Christianity.

There are different reasons or motives why people convert to different religions. Concerning motivation to different conversion in Zululand in the olden days Petersen (1987:94) recorded the following: - “But the change of religion could also give practical advantages; Christians were given priority with regard to paid labour and land rights at the stations. Those who were interested in trade and transport achieved greater freedom of movement. Those privileges were not shared by those Zulus who came to the stations without joining the stations.” The above shows the reason or motive for conversion in Zululand.

Hildebrandt (1981) attributed the rapid growth of the church in Africa to a number of things. Firstly, the great revival movement in Great Britain and America brought about great leaders such as D.L Moody who organized evangelists, and later went to various parts of America. The gospel crusades that took place there were so attractive and made a good number of Africans to turn to Jesus. The discovery of medicines that cure malaria, and which was extended to Africa was an attraction for many to want to associate themselves with Christianity where these medicines were coming from. Finally Christianity came along with a lot of developments in terms of infrastructure and social amenities. Hildebrandt recorded the following: - “The building of the Uganda Railways, for example, had a great influence on the inland push of missions in Kenya. Then too, river and lake steamers made transportation easier for missionaries and church workers in the interior” Such developments could have motivated Africans to convert to Christianity.

According to Hildebrandt (1981) just after the First World War churches and mission societies worked at upgrading schools and establishing more modern schools and giving higher education. Hildebrandt recorded the following:- “The most outstanding event in the education drive of the 1920’s in Ghana, however, was the foundation of Achimota, a model school for Ghana.” according to Hildebrandt (1981) a good number of west Africans were trained at theological centers, and some became African pastors and evangelists. Such education and training opportunities surely motivated the West Africans towards conversion to Christianity.

Hildebrandt (1981) stated that a large mission station was established at Zanzibar Island around 1863. The said mission station was extended to the main land, where an orphanage as well as work place for freed slaves were begun at Bagamoyo. There was a lot of help given to the freed slaves and all this was motivation for the Africans who benefited to join Christianity.

### **2.3. Zambian Context**

According to Pheko (1982) as Christianity came to various Zambian traditional communities there were a number of things that changed in those traditional communities. It meant dropping certain cultures, custom and traditional practices, and adopting new ones which were in line with the new religion which people were converting to. Colson (2006) did a study of the Tonga religious life of Gwembe valley in southern province, and she established that some things indeed changed while others perhaps remained the same after the Christian missionaries had

evangelized the region. This clearly shows that the coming of Christianity to Africa and Zambia may have had some impacts on the traditional religion either positively or negatively.

According to Carmody (1999) the Roman Catholic missionaries entered Zambia around 1891, and did a lot of Evangelization so as to win converts to Christianity. Carmody (1991:1) wrote the following: - "In 1891, the white father, a Catholic missionary congregation founded by cardinal Lavigerie, entered Zambia from the north. Mambwe became their first mission in Zambia." Several other missions were opened, such as Kayambi, by the same missionary group. There surely was positive interaction between the white fathers and the people that converted to Christianity. For Mambwe, Kayambi and several other mission stations to be opened it shows that the two groups interacted well with each other.

Carmody (2001) gave an account of how a French Jesuit, father Moreau opened Chikuni mission in 1905. According to Carmody (2001) Father Moreau worked well with four local young men who were introduced to him, to strengthen the mission station that was opened in Chikuni. There was good interaction between Father Moreau and the Tonga of Chikuni, who he preached to.

In each of the above mission stations there was good response on the part of the Tonga to the Christian message that was given to them. The mission stations discussed above had members who got converted to Christianity and their accepting and embracing Christianity was a positive response. Their positive response meant dropping their traditional religion, replacing it with Christianity. There is however a small gap in the above given Literature. There should have been some details showing how positive this response was, or rather the levels of response to the Christian message.

Snelson(1974:4) reports that between 1888 and the end of the Century, seven (7) missionary societies had entered Northern Rhodesia, and established Mission Stations and Churches . The three earliest churches to begin evangelistic activities in Mukuni Village were the Church of Christ (1910), the Roman Catholic Church(1939), and the New Apostolic Church (1964). Many other churches such as the Seventh Day Adventist Church, and Pentecostal churches later got planted in the village too, and did a lot of evangelism as a way of promoting growth of their churches. All the works of the churches contributed to the Christianisation of Mukuni Chiefdom.

During this evangelization that Snelson (1974) has talked about there was a lot of interaction between the mentioned Christian churches and the people of Mukuni Village. This interaction

could be described as positive and this is what has led to an establishment of the Christian churches and mission stations.

Mubitana(1977:10) states that Zambian missionaries worked with the missionaries who had come, to establish the first Church of Christ In Mukuni Village. Since that time the preaching of God's word has continued in the Chiefdom. Rotberg (1968:75) stated that in 1923 a group of Missionaries from the Church of Christ, with supporters in America, had come to Northern Rhodesia and settled north of the Victoria Falls among the *Leya* People. Snelson (1974:174) explains that some African Evangelists had crossed the Zambezi into Northern Rhodesia. This clearly shows that Christian missionaries had contributed a lot in spreading Christianity around Mukuni village.

Rotberg (1965) had made a step in trying to understand the coming of Christian missionaries in Mukuni village, and how they worked to establish the Christian religion among people who were active followers of the African traditional religion. Rotberg (1965) had carried interviews with missionaries, and besides, he had consulted primary sources such as the dairies and journals of missionaries. He studied a number of Christian activities that took place in Northern Rhodesia during the colonial era, with a view to establishing, how these activities helped in the formation of Northern Rhodesia. The missionaries both of Zambian origin as well as of American origin interacted well with the *leya* and this is how the Church of Christ and other Churches got well established in Mukuni Village. There was good response on the part of these *Leya* people who became part of the churches that got established in Mukuni Village.

Colson (2006) conducted an ethnographic study of the Tonga of Gwembe Valley. She focused on their religious life after Christianity had come to the area. Colson (2006:245) recorded the following concerning those who had embraced Christianity: "They were adopting what they called 'the ways of the Europeans' and the ways of the town, they had hoped to prosper through commercial agriculture or permanent employment." In other words as Colson (2006) established in her studies a number of aspects changed while some remained the same in Tonga religious life after Christianity had come to the area. There are some traditional practices that the Tonga of Gwembe valley discontinued due to Christian missionaries' influence.

Birth of a child is cerebrated in African society as one of the rites of passage. (Hopfe, 2012). According to Munokalya (2013) there are birth and naming ceremonies that take place in

Mukuni Village when a child is born. They perform some ritual to express their belief concerning newly born children. They for instance name their children after some departed members of society as a way of showing that the dead are still influential members of society. Munokalya (2013:65) had this to say:-“In this culture children are living representatives of the dead in that, at the naming ceremony the family elders select a name from among the departed family members to be given to the newly born baby.” Such naming rites suggest that the dead are not really dead but they have continued to live through the ones they are named after. Sometimes a child would be given two names, i.e. a Christian name, and another name belonging to a departed ancestor.

Munokalya (2013) demonstrated that this aspect of *Leya* religious life has not changed much. Names are still given to children even at present; except for those who have become Christians, they don't attach much association of their children with the departed members of society.

There is yet another ritual that the *Leya* people perform when a child is born. The ritual is done to indicate the kind of roles that this child will perform when it grows up into adulthood. Munokalya (2013:65) stated that: “All births in Mukuni Royal Village are reported to *Bedyango* through the Royal Village's Matriarchs. It is customary that a male child is taken out to see first light at daybreak while a girl child is taken out to see first light at sunset.” The difference in the performed rituals between male and female children suggests the difference in the roles that they are going to play when they become adults.

According to Munokalya (2013:65) the above ritual points out that: “In adulthood the male should go out to fetch food for the family at daybreak while it is incumbent upon the female to ensure that the family does not go to sleep on an empty stomach.” The *Leya* people believe that such a customary ritual has got some effective power upon the child, and when it grows up into adulthood he or she will be a responsible member of Mukuni village. It is believed that the *Leya* men who are good at providing food for their families, and the *Leya* women that ensure that their families don't go hungry, have developed this ability through the said ritual.

This kind of ritual has not changed much too in *Leya* religious life, but many families still practice it, including Christian families.

The practice of worship among the *Leya* is not as used to be the case. Muntemba (1970) had explained that the object of worship is *Leza*, and he is far from the *Leya*, and cannot be easily

approached or addressed through their prayers. Muntamba (1970:32) asserts that: -“All prayers are addressed to the chiefs who in turn intercede to *Leza* for the people and ensure that the pleadings and wishes of their people are not ignored or unfilled.” Munokalya (2013) confirmed that currently due to Christianity God is pronounced as subject of worship in the chiefdom, especially among the Leya who have embraced Christianity, including the senior chief Mukuni himself. Traditional worship practices are still carried out but not as was the case before the coming of Christianity. The Royal Establishment are supposed to be the custodian of the Leya traditional beliefs and practices, and now that the senior chief, Mukuni is a Christian, a Roman Catholic it is likely that not much attention is paid to the traditional requirements and expectations of the village.

For this form of worship shrines and other sacred places are therefore very instrumental since these are the places where worshippers come to perform their acts of worship. Mbiti (1975:20) recorded that: “At the shrines and sacred places, people make or bring sacrifices and offerings, such as animals, fowls, food, utensils, tools, and coins. They also make prayers there. They regard such places where people meet with God.” There are indeed a variety of physical objects that are offered to *Leza* and the ancestral spirits by the Leya people in Mukuni Village as part of their worship

This practice too has not completely stopped. It does take place, though not as it used to be before Christianity came into the village. Munokalya (2013)

There is a close connection between the traditional religion in Mukuni Chiefdom and the Victoria Falls. The Leya people have always considered the Victoria Falls area as a dwelling place of ancestral spirits, and they had for a long time been conducting prayers and rituals in this place. McGregor, J(2003:718) stated that:”The Leya regarded the water falls as a religious site and associated it with rain, fertility, cleansing and specifically female authority.” To this very day some Leya people go to shrines for special ceremonies, prayers and offerings.

Munokalya (2013) has indicated that not all shrines are still operational. Katola Buseka for instance is no longer in use (Munokalya, 2013) Mukuni chiefdom and the area around the Victoria Falls have several sacred sites or shrines. The main shrines or sacred sites around the Victoria Falls region that are recognized by the Leya include the following:-

**(a) *Nsambalwa***

According to Roberts (2012) there is an important shrine known as the *Nsambalwa*. This is a shrine located four hundred (400) meters south west of the Sun hotel. At present the place is occupied by Zambia Electricity Supply Co-operation, hydro-electric power plant. An ordinary person would not suspect that this is a shrine, but the Leya people know it is, and they revere that place since it is a dwelling place of the spirits of their ancestors. The shrine was mainly used for cleansing purposes. The healing process of certain sicknesses required cleansing, and this was the place where the sick were taken to so as to be cleansed of their sicknesses (Roberts, 2012). Munokalya (2013:87) referred to the *Nsambala* shrine as *Nsamba Dwazi*, and he explained that this was a disease cleansing site where *Be-Dyango* exercised her office's miraculous gift of healing. According to Munokalya (2013:89) *Nsamba Dwazi* was one of the three holy shrine sites for the Leya people. The use of this shrine is not as significant as it used to be sometime back as will be discussed later.

**(b) *Chisamu Chilikumbete***

Munokalya (2013) made mention of the above named shrine, located at the lip of the Victoria Falls, and used during the *Lwiindi* ceremony. This shrine was a place from where young men (*Basilombelombe*) came to get water for the ceremony. The other name given to *Chisamu Chilikumbete* is *Chipusyo*. Munokalya (2013:88) stated that; “*Achipusyo* is a place where today holy water is drawn for rain making prayer rituals.” *Chipusyo* refers to the actual point where the *basilombelombe* draw the required water for the ceremony. Being somewhat a dangerous point the *basilombelombe* and anyone else who was to take part in the *Lwiindi* ceremony had to smear themselves with white powder (*Mpemba*). The white powder was a symbol of purity on the part of all those that were to take part in the ceremony (Munokalya, 2013).

**(c) *Katola Buseka***

This was another shrine that the Leya people believed to be important as it was the dwelling place for ancestral spirits. As pointed out earlier the Leya people believe in the existence of ancestral spirits, which were to be appeased occasionally by way of offering sacrifices to them. According to Munokalya (2013) *Katola Buseka* was a shrine located at the Bungee Jump spot below the Zambia –Zimbabwe Bridge. Munokalya (2013) further stated that chief Mukuni was the first to Bungee Jump at that spot so as to appease the spirits and as a way of blessing the spot.



Munokalya (2013:87) described *Katola Buseka* as: “The place of cheerful givers or offertory”. This is indeed expressed in the Tonga meaning of the phrase *Katola buseka*, which is translated as taking something while laughing.

**(d) *Kaanda Ka Leza Shrine***

Munokalya (2013:80) states the following: -“*Kaanda ka Leza* literally means ‘God’s rain temple.’ Here the tribe practices the Leya tribal religion as it was before the coming of the colonial rule and Christianity.” At this rain temple there were rituals that were performed so that God would bring rains upon the Leya land.

**(e) *Namunakela Royal Burial Grave***

It is very common in most African Chiefdoms and Kingdoms to have a special burial site for the members of the Royal Family. Chief Mukuni has a special place where State functions of tribal importance are conducted, and the place is known as *Namunakela Royal Burial Grave*. Munokalya (2013:88) records the following: “*Namunakela* is Mukuni’s place for Royal Coronation, and Royal ceremonies like *Basilombelombe* ceremony, *Bwande* rites and *Ibbwe lyaanduka* (funeral) rites. Within *Namunakela* there are some structures and these are *Namunaki*, the sacred chamber in which the holy tomb (*Ntantala*) of founder of Mukuni Chiefdom is preserved. *Ntantala* is a seat of power, and at the same time the tomb of the founder Mukuni. There is also *Magamba*, the royal burial site for members of the royal family (Munokalya, 2013:86).

In Mukuni village there are a number of traditional beliefs and practices, and these form part of the traditional religion of the Leya people. They, for instance believe in God, who they call *Leza*, and who they think is distant and not in direct control of the universe (Muntemba, 1970). They therefore believe that they have no capacity to pray directly to God. . The *Leya* also believe in the existence of spirits, and according to Mubitana (1977) there are different kinds of spirits in Mukuni village such as ancestral spirits, birth spirit (*Muzimu wakuzyalwa*), guardian angel/spirit, and the personal *Muzimu*. Munokalya (2013) stated that the *Leya* have a special regard for the chief, who they consider to have some divinity in his personality.

Marriage is treated with a lot of significance in Mukuni village just like in every African society (Mubitana, 1977). Every male adult was expected to marry and raise a family. Mubitana (1977:59) recorded the following: - “In Toka-Leya thought a full man’s position in society is not

attained until he has married and established a household, and perhaps also has children of his own, who will perpetuate his line when he is gone. Until this has come out he is regarded by society at large as immature and therefore still a member of his father's household." This is a strong belief in Leya traditional religious life. According to Mubitana (1977) a male adult who is married and has established a household with children of his own is treated with respect and is awarded with some status of a local ancestral spirit. Polygamy, a practice in which one man could marry more than one wife, had a special place in Leya tradition. Mubitana (1977:51) indicated that marriages in the Leya tradition were potentially polygamous. The husbands were the overall heads of households. Where a man had married more than one wife the senior wife played a more significant role during family rituals. She was thus given a more dignified position than the rest of the wives in a household (Mubitana 1977).

Marriage in most Tonga traditional communities is accompanied by ritualistic ceremonies. When the White Missionaries came to Zambia they did not approve of some of the traditional practices that were performed during weddings. Tiberondwa (1978:16) records that; "Dancing at wedding ceremonies was regarded as sinful. Local drinks were replaced by imported ones and the people who continued drinking the local alcoholic drinks were called drunkards. The Christian teachings thus impacted on the traditional practices of marriage ceremonies by discouraging some methods in which such celebrations were done such as traditional dancing and beer drinking.

When the Christian missionaries came to Mukuni village they introduced a different teaching concerning marriage. The Leya people used to practice polygamy (Mubitana,1977). The Christian preachers and teachers introduced the bible to the Leya people, and this bible taught about marriage of one husband to one wife. The Christian message taught about a number of sacraments such as baptism and marriage. One of the teachings of the Christian Bible which the Leya people were introduced to stated that every man was to have his own wife and every woman her own husband (1 Corinthians 7:2). Such a teaching indeed impacted on the Leya people's practice of polygamy.

In almost all African traditional societies birth of children is expected of any new marriage. According to Colson (2006) a man could not look at or speak to his mother in law until he had given her grandchildren. Similarly a woman was to avoid her father in law until she had a son who could be named after him. In case a marriage was fruitless in the sense that no children

were born, there was panic in the family, and sometimes a witchdoctor was consulted (Colson, 2006). Concerning birth of a child, the Leya people have got some rituals that they perform to express their belief concerning newly born children. They, for instance, pay particular attention to child naming especially that they associate children with departed members of society. Munokalya (2013:65) had this to say: “In this culture children are living representatives of the dead in that, at the naming ceremony the family elders select a name from among the departed family members to be given to the newly born baby.” Such child naming rites suggest that the dead are not really dead but they have continued to live through the ones they are named after.

There is yet another ritual that the Leya people perform when a child is born. The ritual is done to indicate the kind of roles that this child will perform when it grows up into adulthood. Munokalya (2013:65) stated that: “All births in Mukuni Royal Village are reported to *Bedyango* through the Royal Village’s Matriarchs. It is customary that a male child is taken out to see first light at daybreak while a girl child is taken out to see first light at sunset.” The difference in the performed rituals between male and female children suggests the difference in the roles that they are going to play when they become adults. According to Munokalya (2013:65) the above ritual points out that: “In adulthood the male should go out to fetch food for the family at daybreak while it is incumbent upon the female to ensure that the family does not go to sleep on an empty stomach.” The Leya people believe that such a customary ritual has got some effective power upon the child, and when it grows up into adulthood he or she will be a responsible member of Mukuni village. It is believed that the Leya men who are good at providing food for their families, and the Leya women that ensure that their families don’t go hungry, have developed this ability through the said ritual.

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According to Colson (2006) in Zambian traditional life death was followed by rituals that expressed certain beliefs about death. Munokalya (2013) explained that there were a number of rituals that were conducted in Mukuni Village following the death of a Leya. Rituals vary depending on who had died. Munokalya (2013) stated that there were separate rules concerning celebrating the death of the senior chief Mukuni, Be-Dyango, officials in the chiefdom, children of chief Mukuni, and the ordinary Leya people. The chief, for instance, is buried in a sitting position, while Be-Dyango is buried in a lying position. Every death in Mukuni village is first announced to Munokalya Mukuni by Sikukwila the funeral official, before any one mourns. Mourning before this official announcement to the senior chief is a chargeable offence. (Munokalya, 2013).

In Zambian traditional life death was followed by rituals that expressed certain beliefs about death. According to Colson (2006:173) funeral rituals were performed so as to facilitate the transformation of the dead person’s spirit into *Muzimu*. Christianity however taught a number of contrary ideas about the dead, and the Leya people started changing their attitudes towards those

that had died. Colson (2006:198) states that; “Because the funeral ritual is phrased to emphasize the continuity of spirits and its acquisition of a new identity of spirits in the form of *Muzimu*, much of the funeral ritual is banned by Christian churches.”

Colson (2006) stated that before the coming of Christianity cleansing ritual following death of an African adult were done mainly through sexual relations. For instance a woman who lost a husband was made to have sexual intercourse with a relative of her late husband who the bereaved family chose. The Christian message however taught that this was immoral and therefore evil and the Christian Missionaries discouraged this practice. In many African traditional societies sexual cleansing has been replaced with other alternative methods. Colson (2006:193) states that; “cleansing is therefore done through an alternative form of purification called *Kuchuuta*. Owing to fear of HIV infection, only the *Kuchuuta* form of purification is used.

### **Summary**

The reviewed literature is useful to this study as it brings out important aspects that may be helpful in investigating the impact of Christianity on the traditional religion of the Leya people. The reviewed literature has shown clearly what the global situation has been in relation to Christianization of areas where traditional religions are already in existence. The situation in Africa on the same has also been examined, and has shown similar results; namely the interaction of the Christian missionaries with the local people of a given area has been positive, and so was the response towards the Christian message. It was not every individual; however who converted to Christianity, but at least considerable figures got converted.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Over view**

This chapter of the dissertation deals with the description of methods and strategies used in carrying out the research study on Mukuni village. The chapter is organized under the following headings: research design, target population, sample size, sampling procedures, data collection instruments and procedures, data analysis and ethical consideration.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

A research design is defined as: "The planning of any scientific research from the first to the last step. It is a specification of the most adequate operations to be performed in order to test a specific hypothesis under given conditions" (Bless & Achola, 1988:54). A descriptive survey study was used to conduct this research. A case study of Mukuni village was used to learn the views and opinions of the Leya towards the coming of Christianity.

This study on the influence of Christianity on the traditional religion of the Leya is a qualitative research. The research employed a qualitative approach in collecting information about the people's opinions and attitudes towards the coming of Christianity. As white (2005) explained, qualitative research is descriptive and thus focuses on meaning and understanding. The data that was collected was expressing the opinions, attitudes and feelings of the Leya towards the arrival of Christianity in their village.

The researcher has chosen to use a case study as he hoped that this would give him an in depth information concerning the interaction of Christianity and Zambian traditional religion. Mukuni is a typical traditional village, and that is why it was chosen as a site for this study.

#### **3.2 Target Population**

In the context of research the term 'Target Population' has been defined as all members of any well-defined class of people, events or objects which have been designated as being the focus of an investigation. It is also known as a universe. It is called special universe in order to distinguish it from the general universe or population to which the study's findings can be

generalized (Bless and Achola, 1988). Whereas, population is defined as all those people about whom a researcher wishes to make statements (Finch, 2008:37).

The target population for this study were the Royal Family, the Coordinators for Church Development from Namwianga Mission of the Church of Christ, the Church Leaders of the four selected churches, as well as ordinary church members. Elderly members of Mukuni village also made part of the target population.

### **3.3 Sample Size**

It has been noted earlier that a population is the entire group of individuals or items that shared one or more characteristics from which data could be gathered or analysed. A sample is a subject of the population. A researcher who wants to conduct a study among the teachers of the new Ngabwe district, whose population is about fifty six (56) teachers, would, for example, select only about seven (7) of them, and that would be his/her sample.

Sample size therefore refers to the total number of persons, units or objects selected to represent the population being studied. It is not practical to study or interview every member of a given group, institution or community and hence the need to select only a small fraction of that community or group of people.

In this particular research the sample Size was thirty four (34) people. These were: three (3) members of the royal family, two (2) preachers or coordinators of Church Development from Namwianga Mission, eight (8) church leaders and twelve (12) ordinary church members from the selected churches, and (9) adults and traditional village members. Individual churches were included as part of the population from which data was collected. Four (4) churches from which the church leaders came were selected, and these were the Roman Catholic church, the Church of Christ, the New Apostolic church and the Pentecostal Church.

The Chief and *Be-Dyango* were however committed elsewhere within the palace, and they provided representatives to be interviewed on their behalf. The Prime minister stood in for the Chief, while the Chief's retainer stood in for *Be-Dyango*.

### **3.4 Sampling Procedures**

The actual selection of the sample is referred to as sampling. Muzamm (2000:1) defined sampling as “The selection of some part of an aggregate or totality on which a judgment or inference about the aggregate or totality is made” In this way a researcher is able to obtain information about an entire population by examining and interacting only with part of that population. The selected sample would be representative of the entire population, and this makes sampling very significant in every research study.

Procedures are normally followed when selecting a particular sample and such procedures may be dependent on certain factors. Sampling methods fall under two categories, and these are:- Probability sampling methods, in which every member or unit of the population has an equal chance of selection or inclusion in the sample.

The other category is the non-probability sampling method, in which the researcher deliberately selects certain members of the population, and he/she ignores the others. There could be obvious reasons for selecting specific members of a given population, and ignoring others. A particular study may, for instance, require that the respondents should have stayed in a given place for not less than five years, and in such a case the researcher would automatically ignore new members of that community, and not put them as part of the population.

In this particular research purposive sampling of the three members of the royal establishment, the eight church leaders from the selected churches, and the twelve ordinary church members was used. The nine village members as well as the two church coordinators from Namwinga mission were also selected using the purposive sampling method. The researcher used this method because he believed that the selected respondents were in position to give key information that was required in this study. Purposive sampling is the selection of certain members of the population because their position in the research is such that they are key to providing certain desired information (Kombo & Tromp, 2006).

### **3.5 Data Collection Instruments**

In line with Kombo and Tromp (2006:88) research instruments included interview schedules and guides, observation guides and focus group discussion guides. In this particular study I used



semi structured interview guides and focus group discussion guides. I also used an unstructured interview guide.

### **3.6 Data Collection Techniques**

I got an introductory letter from the office of the Assistant Dean – Post Graduate and left for Livingstone towards the end of September, 2012. I made a courtesy call at the District Commissioner's Office as well as at the Tourist Board Office in Livingstone.

. The data was collected through semi-structured interviews for the members of the Royal Establishment, the Church Leaders, and the Coordinators of Church development at Namwianga mission for Church of Christ in Kalomo. I used unstructured interviews for the elderly Members of the traditional community, and a focus group discussion guide for the ordinary Church Members.

### **3.7 Data Analysis**

According to Keppel,G (1989) Data analysis is the process of breaking a complex topic or substance into smaller parts to gain a better understanding of it. Being a process, data analysis follows a series of stages, beginning from the time when the data is considered to be raw, up to the time when that data becomes information. It is the data that a researcher interprets so as to arrive at information, so as to come to conclusions and recommendations. Data analysis is therefore a significant aspect of every education research.

I analyzed the data that I collected during the research period, by way of examining the emerging themes, variables and patterns, using set objectives. In analyzing the data I took note that this was a qualitative study, and that the data was to be analyzed qualitatively. This qualitative analysis had to do with identifying specific information required in the set objectives about the *Leya* and Mukuni Village at large.

### **3.8 Validity and Reliability**

To help me ensure that the data was valid and reliable I was very clear in the way I framed the interview guides. I then had to confirm from other individuals who were not part of my respondents about some of the information that I was given by the respondents.

### **3.9 Ethical Consideration**

I assured all my respondents that the data collected from them would be used for academic purposes only. I was fully responsible for the ethical standards to which the study adheres. It was therefore clearly stated that all the information collected from churches and households would not be exposed, and thus confidentiality of their identity was guaranteed.

Finally there was informed consent by the respondents to participate willingly in the research and exercise their right to be part of this research.

### **Summary**

The chapter has described the road-map of the research that is being reported in this dissertation. The chapter aimed at creating a mental picture in the reader, of the design of this paper. Population, sampling, sampling procedure and data collection/analysis strategies were presented. Matters of ethical consideration were noted too. The next chapter will be a presentation of the findings of this study.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### FINDINGS

#### 4.0 Overview

This chapter is a presentation of the findings that this research has come up with. It is hoped that through the findings of the study answers will be provided for the research questions that were formulated in an effort to meet the set objectives. The findings were reached at after employing a number of research methods and techniques in getting answers to the research questions. A number of data collection techniques, most of which were qualitative were employed in tackling each of the research questions. Below were the findings:

#### 4.1 The nature of interaction between Christian missionaries and the Leya

The first research question of this study was: "What is the nature of interaction between the Christian missionaries and the Leya people of Mukuni village?" Interaction between or among human beings is significant and it determines how people would respond to each other or how they would complete a piece of work together. The interaction between the Christian Missionaries and the Leya people is important and worthy looking at as it is the basis Christianization of Mukuni Village.

The Christian Missionaries were bringing a totally different religious message to the Leya. The researcher firstly interviewed the Prime Minister who was representing the senior Chief Mukuni. The Prime Minister reported that the interactions between the Christian Missionaries and the Leya people was positive. He stated that there were no confusions of any kind between the Christian Missionaries and the Leya in the way they interacted with each other. He had described this interaction in the following words:

"The white Missionaries were very friendly people. My people in Mukuni Village were happy to see the visitors from America, and they enjoyed talking to them. The Leya people are always receptive to the white people, and when the whites are gone the Leya would always miss them and talk about them. They continue asking me when those whites would come to the village again. We have never heard anyone in the village

complain about these visitors.” The white missionaries from Namwianga Mission used to visit the area very frequently, and sometimes they brought some presents such as second hand clothes to the people.

The Prime Minister made an emphasis that when the missionaries were gone back to their country the whole village missed them and longed for their coming back to Mukuni village.

The Chief’s retainer who was part of the royal establishment agreed that the interaction between Christian Missionaries and Preachers was good. He explained that: “Me I have not seen anything bad from the message of the missionaries. The missionaries and us Leya people we talk well with each other.” When asked whether the Christian Missionaries sometimes spoke negative of the traditional practices, both the Prime Minister and the Chief’s retainer reported that there was a time when some missionaries had talked against the practice of killing suspected witches. They had however said this in friendly tones. They had also condemned the practice of sexual cleansing, but this was done not in a harsh manner.

The researcher had a chat with the Church leaders from four (4) selected churches. The church leaders from the Roman Catholic Church praised the Leya People and said they had a lot of respect when talking to the missionaries and evangelists. One of the Roman Catholic Church leaders stated that: - “Our Catholic Priests were happy with the Leya because they were attentive during catechism lessons.” The Church leaders were satisfied with the manner of interaction between the visiting priest and the local people of Mukuni Village.

The leader from the Church Of Christ indicated that the white missionaries from America always had good time in Mukuni Village because they always interacted well with the Leya. They found the Leya to be very friendly people. One Church of Christ leader affirmed that: “The missionaries who are at Namwianga Mission have liked their discussions with the Leya people during bible lessons, and each time they phoned they asked about the Leya.”

According to the Leaders from the Church of Christ both the Christian Missionaries and the Leya people were happy the way they interacted with each other. The church elder from Mukuni church of Christ had this to say:

“It was always a wonderful moment when the missionaries from America had come to visit our church here in Mukuni. The years when we are

lucky these missionaries do come together with the preachers at Namwianga secondary school. The preachers from Namwianga they tell us in advance that in such a month we will be expecting visitors from America. When these visitors are around with us they speak to us in a very friendly way, and this shows that they kind. They show a lot of kindness to us the way they speak to us, and every member in Mukuni village would feel good to have a chance to talk to the white missionaries or to greet them.”

The New Apostolic Church leaders when interviewed stated that the interactions of Christian Missionaries and the Leya people were positive. There weren't any major differences between the two groups, and they interacted on friendly terms. The Pentecostal church leaders too were happy with the interaction between Christian Missionaries and the Leya people. The Pentecostal Church leader, had said that:- “Friendship was made between Christian Missionaries and the Leya People.” He further explained that: “Some Leya People were very excited to become friends of the visiting Church leaders.”

The ordinary church member of the four selected churches were met and asked concerning the nature of interaction between the Christian Missionaries and the Leya People. All the eight respondents that turned up for the discussion agreed that the interaction between the two groups of people was positive. There was none who gave a contrary answer. A church member from the New Apostolic Church said that: “The Christian Missionaries and evangelists who visited the village were our friends and we communicate very well with them.”

Among the ordinary church members that were interviewed a few youths and pupils at Mukuni secondary school explained that the preachers that used to visit the village to teach about God's word were always friendly and they spoke to them with a lot of encouraging words. The head teacher of the said school mentioned that he and other people in Mukuni village had made friends with the preachers and evangelists that frequented the village for evangelism.

Among the elderly people that were interviewed there were three men and two women who witnessed frequent visits from the white missionaries who belonged to Church of Christ and Roman Catholic Church. According to these elderly members of the village the white

missionaries were usually well received by the royal family, and they interacted well with the local people during the time when they did their evangelistic activities.

The coordinators of church development at Namwinga mission in Kalomo district explained that they were among the few churches that frequented the village for evangelism. According to them all the preachers and evangelist from the Church of Christ, who were sent there were always well received by the royal family as well as the local people they preached to. Good friendship had developed between visiting preachers and Leya people of Mukuni village. One of the coordinators has said the following:

“The white missionaries from America always say good things about the people of Mukuni village. They have praised the Leya for being kind and peaceful people. The missionaries had said many times that they always feel very welcome at Mukuni village. When they are gone back home to the United States they always remember the people of Mukuni village, and they look forward to coming back to them. They have actually made friends with some of them.” This clearly shows the reality of the positive interaction between the Christian missionaries and the Leya people of Mukuni village.

#### **4.2 How the Leya people responded to Christianity**

The second research question in this study was: “How have the Leya responded to the new things they have learned from the Christian missionaries?” The world is dynamic in the sense that there are new things that human beings are exposed to every time and age. It matters how one responds to the new knowledge gained about a phenomena or environment. The Leya responded in a positive manner towards the new teaching they received from the Christian Missionaries.

According to the Prime Minister as well as the Chief Retainer, of the eight thousand (8000) people that lived in Mukuni Chiefdom about 2400 had converted to Christianity. In other words, Christianity was very much well pronounced in the village because about 60% of the village members had adopted Christian teachings and principles in their lives. About three thousand people do go to churches around Mukuni village, though some of them have not shown much commitment to the Christian faith.

The church leaders of the selected churches stated that almost all the Leya people do express belief in the existence of the God who was preached about by the missionaries. One example that was given was that each time that there was a Christian crusade or church rally within the village almost everyone was in attendance except for the old aged who could not manage going to the meeting place.

A small number of about eight hundred people, however, have not shown much interest in the Christian message. This includes a few old men and women who have remained attached to the traditional religion. The Prime Minister who represented the senior chief explained that: “As for the few old aged, they have not shown much interest in joining Christianity, but they have remained committed to the traditional religion of Mukuni village. These old people have not found much meaning in the new developments that have come to Mukuni village. Even when it comes to health matters they have continued valuing their traditional medicines rather than going to Mukuni clinic.” This perhaps explains why among the old aged there are very few who have embraced Christianity.

The representatives of the royal family as well as the church leaders stated that the Leya people who had converted to Christianity continued to participate in the traditional religious practices of the village. The ordinary church members that were interviewed stated that they were members of Mukuni village, and could not do away with most of the traditional beliefs, customs and practices of the village. According to the church members of most of the churches in Mukuni village the traditional practices of the village were for the good of the Leya people, and there wasn't anything wrong with them. They gave the example of the *Lwiindi* ceremony which was done as a way of asking the spirits to send rains. The church leaders of the four churches that were interviewed indicated that the *Lwiindi* ceremony and many other ceremonies in Mukuni Village were attended by almost everyone in the village, including those that were active in church activities.

The only incidences, according to the Chief's Retainer, when the Christian messages were opposed by the Leya people was when the Chief was denounced, or when any of the traditional beliefs, customs and practices of the Leya people were denounced. It was however, not common for the Christian Missionaries and preachers to talk against the traditional customs and practices of the village openly. The few elderly members of Mukuni Village who were interviewed stated

that of the many years they had lived in the village, they had not witnessed serious confrontation or opposition of the Christian message by the Leya people.

### **4.3 Aspects which seem to have changed, and those that did not**

The third research question in this particular study read as follows: "What aspects have changed or not changed in Leya religious life as a result of their interaction with the Christian missionaries?" Indeed there were some aspects that changed, and others that remained the same in Leya religious life after their interaction with the Christian Missionaries. In this section an outline will be made of these aspects that changed, and the aspects that remained the same. The extent of either change or modification will be reflected in some cases.

#### **4.3.1 Aspects that changed**

##### **(a)Death Penalty of Accused Witches**

In the past there used to be a ritual in which all those that were accused and convicted of witchcraft were killed as a way of purifying the village. The killing was carried out at a place known as *Kalundu kabalozzi*, which was translated as 'the small hill for witches'. This story was narrated to researcher by the Chief's Prime Minister as well as the Chief's Retainer. They stated that this practice was no longer viable because the Christian message taught love and forgiveness. According to Christianity those that were convicted of witchcraft were encouraged to repent and stop their practice of witchcraft.

##### **(b)Polygamy**

As reported earlier polygamy was encouraged in Mukuni village before the advent of Christianity. Mubitana (1977:51) stated that: "Marriages in Leya tradition were potentially polygamous." The elderly members of the village who were interviewed stated that polygamy was no longer common. According to the Prime minister, it was a requirement in the past for the chief to be a husband of more than one wife. The current chief Mukuni is married to one wife on the grounds that he is a Christian. Munokalya (2013:63) explained that: "In the past it was mandatory for Munokalya to have, at any given time, a minimum of three wives. Today owing to Christianity it has become traditionally acceptable for Munokalya Mukuni to have only one wife."



According to the village members and church leaders that were interviewed there are not so many men who are married to more than one wife as was the case before the coming of Christianity. The elderly members too confirmed that polygamy was common in the olden days around 1940's up 1970's, but has now drastically reduced. There are very few men who are married to more than one wife.

**(c) Sexual cleansing**

Sexual cleansing was a common ritual following the death of a spouse. The Church Leaders as well as the elderly members of the village confirmed that sexual cleansing has been stopped because the Christian Missionaries had taught that having sex with anyone who was not one's marriage partner was unacceptable. In trying to obey the Christian teaching on sexual behaviour the Royal Establishment decided to suspend sexual cleansing. Other methods that did not involve sexual contact, such as *kuchuuta* were adopted and used as alternatives.

The HIV/AIDS pandemic was another reason the royal family gave for stopping sexual cleansing in Mukuni village. Possibilities were there that the cause of death was HIV/AIDS, and having sexual intercourse with a widow or widower for cleansing would put the life of the person who was chosen to have sex with the surviving partner at risk of contracting the virus. One of the village members mentioned that sensitization programs on HIV/AIDS were carried in Mukuni village by different organizations, and the theme of Abstinence is always among the major topics.

The chief's Prime Minister explained that the chief had requested all the villages within the chiefdom to completely do away with all forms of sexual cleansing, but to apply only cleansing methods which did not involve sexual contact. The chief did this as a response to the HIV/AIDS messages from both secular and religious organizations.

**( d) Offertory prayers at *Katola buseka* shrine**

Before the coming of tourism and the setting up of the Zambia- Zimbabwe bridge there used to be offertory prayers at the *katola buseka* shrine. According to the historical account given to me by the elderly members of Mukuni village, the priestess used to lead the worshippers to the area, and a white sheep, goat or chicken could be dropped down towards the direction of

the shrine. The Leya people believed that this offering was received by the spirits who were believed to live in the shrine. The Prime Minister (Mwendambeli) confirmed that such offertory prayers were no longer in existence.

According to the Royal Family and the village members that were interviewed, tourism and the modernity that came along with Christianity contributed to stopping of such prayers, and the inactivity of the shrine. According to the explanation of the people I interviewed, the Christian missionaries and tourism brought about technological development which disturbed the areas where some shrines existed. The setting up of the bridge across the Zambezi River is believed to have disturbed the *Katola Buseka* shrine. I was informed that at the area where the shrine used to be located is the spot where tourists do bungee jumping.

#### **(e) Cleansing of diseases at *Nsambalwa* shrine**

The representatives of the royal family informed me that *Nsambalwa* or *Nsamba Dwazi* was one of the major shrines in Mukuni Chiefdom. Munokalya (2013:87) stated that; “This was a disease site, where *Be-Dyango* exercised her office’s miraculous gift of healing.” The cleansing of diseases such as small pox and other contagious illnesses used to take place at this shrine in the past (Mwendambeli, 2013). This practice does not take place any more. The members of different churches that were interviewed, as well as the ordinary village members all affirmed that the healing sessions at *Nsamba Dwazi* no longer take places. Munokalya (2013:87) also stated that; “*Nsamba Dwazi* is now in disuse.”

Side by side with Christianity and Tourism came developmental works at the Victoria Falls as well as modernity in Mukuni village. According to the Prime Minister as well as Chief’s Retainer, a ZESCO power station was set up at a place where the *Nsamba Dwazi* shrine used to be. In other words the technical works for ZESCO at the Victoria Falls led to the disturbance of the above mentioned shrine. As things are now the *Nsamba Dwazi* shrine is no longer active.

The modernity that has come to Mukuni village is in terms of social amenities and infrastructure. There is for instance a modern high school, a modern clinic, electricity, and piped water. The road that goes to the Mukuni Village is now tarred. As the researcher moved around the village during his research he observed an improved kind of life in terms of education and health facilities. Instead of going for cleansing at *Nsamba Dwazi* shrine the

Leya people have a modern clinic where they go to when they need medical attention. One church member from the Roman Catholic church stated the following:

“Our life now in Mukuni village has become easier. We live like in town because we have the opportunity to watch television and to listen to radio. We now have piped water just like the people who stay in Livingstone. We have a big high school, and a good clinic. We also have job opportunities in the lodges and restaurants at the Victoria Falls.”

Other Leya people that were interviewed stated that the development of modern structures as a result of Christianity, and the coming of the tourism industry at Victoria Falls has helped them find jobs in hotels, lodges and restaurants. Others have found business opportunities in the Curios production and marketing industry.

#### **(f) Concept of God/Worship**

The concept that the Leya people had about the Supreme Being before the coming of Christianity has somehow changed compared to the concept they have, now that Christianity have come to Mukuni Chiefdom. A discussion with the elderly members of the Chiefdom revealed that the god that the Leya people had known was one who was distant, and who was approached only through the mediation of ancestral spirits. The God that the Leya people had known was one who never demanded constant prayers from human beings, and as far as the Leya people were concerned he was too busy a god, and he did not want to be disturbed by human beings through their prayers.

The new concept that the Leya people have about God after the coming of Christianity is that the God of heaven is very near to all human beings, and that he is interested in every detail of their lives. The church leaders that were interviewed explained that they had learned through Christianity that they were to pray to their God anytime and anywhere, and that God was interested in their prayers. The worship of God in the past before the coming of Christianity is very different.

#### **(g) Attitudes towards the Chief**

The Leya people have high respect for their chief, Mukuni, and the discussion that was held with some respondents revealed that there are some activities that are done by the people

such as cleaning the royal residence and presenting gifts to the chief as a way of expressing the respect that they have for their chief. When a stranger comes to visit the palace there is ceremonial kneeling down and clapping of hands, as well as presenting some gift either in terms of money or foodstuffs, to the chief.

The attitude and respect that is shown to the chief is however not same as that of the past, before the coming of Christianity. Senior chief Mukuni used to be considered as God's representative here on earth. According to the chief's Prime Minister as well as the Retainer, in the past before the coming of Christianity chief Mukuni used to be worshipped as one would worship a god because he was some kind of a deity. Today, the chief is one of the Christians among the Leya people, and he is thus looked upon as a brother in the Lord Jesus Christ rather than a representative of God here on.

#### **4.3.2 Aspects that remained the same**

There are however some aspects that never changed in Leya traditional life despite the coming of both Christianity to Mukuni village. The respondents informed me that the Leya people continued with certain traditional beliefs, customs and practices despite the experience of Christianity.

##### **(a) The *Lwiindi* ceremony**

The *Lwiindi* ceremony is a very significant event in Mukuni village, and it is done every year just before the onset of rains. It is performed at a shrine known as *Chisamu Chilikumbele* (also known as *Chiposyo*) at the mouth of the Victoria Falls. There is actually a tree that was shaped like a man with folded hands in anticipation to receive something. The concept of *Kulikumbata* suggested a man with folded hands in anxiety of receiving something. The realm premier (*Mwendambeli*) explained that the shrine *Chisamu Chilukumbete* signified the anxiety that the *Leya* people had for receiving rains. They however, were hopeful that *Leza* through their ancestral spirits would give them the needed rains.

The *Lwiindi* ceremony is among the aspects that remained unchanged in Leya traditional religious life despite the coming of both Christianity. The shrine where the *Lwiindi* ceremony is performed has survived to this very day. This is the shrine from which the said ceremony takes place each year. The church members as well as their leaders confirmed that almost all the Leya

people gather to celebrate the *Lwiindi* ceremony each year. Besides, there are several visitors who come from other parts of the country, including those that come from other countries, to witness and take part in the ceremony.

The Chief's Retainer told me that there were actually three ceremonies that were performed in the name of *Lwiindi*. The main *Lwiindi* ceremony was the one where the people asked the ancestral spirits for rains. There was also another related ceremony when the Leya tasted the first crops, and gave thanks to God for the good yield. The third ceremony took place in case his royal highness the chief was travelling abroad.

### **(b) Coronation and installation rites**

When the chief ascends to the throne there are some rituals that have always been performed, that is according to the Prime Minister as well as the Chiefs Retainer. The literature review also showed that there were some rites following the chief's ascension to the throne. My respondents informed me that such rituals are still performed to this very day.

One ritual that I was told about concerning coronation and installation of a new chief in case of death of the incumbent was that, the chief who had died was made to lie in state. According to the Chief Retainer the lying in state of a dead chief signified the transfer of power from the late chief back to the throne. The incoming chief was made to sit on that throne as a way of receiving the power that the chief who had died was using. Both the Prime Minister and the Chief Retainer explained that this was like a handover ceremony, at which the late chief handed over power to the one who has just been installed.

### **Funeral Rites**

Some funeral rites are conducted in Mukuni Chiefdom presently just as they used to be conducted before the coming of Christianity and Tourism. According to the Chief's Retainer when one dies in Mukuni village there is no mourning until a specific messenger goes to inform the Chief and *Be-Dyango*. This procedure is still followed now as it used to be followed in the past days, before the coming of Christianity. No one can ever mourn the dead unless and until the Royal Family has been informed. The Chief's Retainer mentioned that failure to observe this rule was a chargeable offence, and the offender could be made to pay an animal.

The Prime Minister and the Chief Retainer narrated that there were special burial arrangements, such as: selection of the grave site, where the body is to face, whether to burry in a coffin or not, for each category of the person that died. The main categories were: death of a chief, death of Be-Dyango, death of *Mwendambeli* (the realm premier), death of Chief Mukuni's children and death of the ordinary *Leya* people. Such burial arrangements are still followed the way they used to be followed in the past. Nothing much has changed.

#### **(d) Rules concerning Traditional Marriages**

The researcher interviewed an elderly couple concerning traditional marriages and they stated that traditional customs and practices were upheld when it came to marriages. Traditional marriages, according to the couple that was interviewed still take place in Mukuni Village. A lady is proposed to first, and then she informs her people that someone is interested in her for marriage. A few representatives are sent to the girl's parents and they would use words as: '*twazooyokolola mulilo*' translated as 'we have come to fetch for some fire'. For a young couple that chooses to marry in a traditional way most of the traditional customs and practices are followed as they were in the past.

On the wedding day the girl is taken to the boy's house. She would walk a few steps and they would drop some gifts. It was a custom for the girl to do this until more gifts were given to her. From the time that money was introduced as medium of exchange, it was money that people dropped. This has not changed but it is still practiced in case of traditional marriages. There is, however, flexibility in the sense that a couple who wanted to marry through a Christian white wedding was free to do so.

In Mukuni village just like in several other villages in Southern Province there is a practice known as *Kubulika*. This is a practice in which a twenty (20) year old boy for example would choose a six (6) year old girl for a future wife. He would say *ndabulika* on this child, and he would request the parents to reserve her for him. When the girl is ready for marriage she would actually get married to that young man. The Chief Retainer mentioned that the practice of *Kubulika* still exists in Mukuni village.

#### **4.4 Factors that Motivated Leya Conversion**

The fourth research question was asking about what factors motivated the Leya towards conversion. As pointed out earlier the Leya people of Mukuni Village in Livingstone already had

a religion at the time that the Christian Missionaries introduced Christianity to them. According to the findings of this research there were several motivating factors that could have quickened the conversion process of the Leya people to Christianity. Such factors included the following:

**(a) Friendliness**

Firstly, the Christian missionaries were friendly and persuasive in their approach. Of the nine elderly people that I interacted with, six of them experienced some of the visits of the White Missionaries from the Church of Christ as well as from the Roman Catholic Church. They stated that these Missionaries were full of smiles and they spoke cheerfully to the Leya people.

**(b) Second hand clothes**

The White Missionaries used to organize containers of second hand clothes from their places of origins, and these used to be sent to Mukuni Village and other neighbouring villages, and were distributed, especially during Church Crusades. The Church Leaders of the Church of Christ explained that they used to witness reception of such gifts, in the early 1990s, and how these gifts of second hand clothing were distributed to the village members.

The Church of Christ through Namwianga Mission receives containers of second hand clothes once every year. This has been happening since the establishment of Namwianga Mission, around 1926, that is, according to the church development coordinators that were spoken to at Namwianga Mission. These clothes are taken to different Churches of Christ in Southern Province, and according to the leaders of Mukuni Church of Christ, the Leya people benefit from these clothes once in a while. The respondents who the researcher interacted with stated that such gifts were motivating, as a result a good number of the Leya people were persuaded to join the Christian churches.

**(c) Medical Missions**

The researcher interacted with the Coordinators of Church Development Projects at Namwianga Mission in Kalomo district. They indicated that once each year the Namwianga Mission conducted a Medical programme in which they would camp at any given village and offer free medical services to the villagers. Such a programme had a component of preaching and teaching of God's word. The coordinators indicated that Mukuni village has been benefiting quite often from this programme.

During such programmes medical doctors would come from the United States, and they would bring medicines for a lot of common illnesses. They would examine the people and give them free medication. At other times they would concentrate on eye problems, and even distribute reading glasses. According to the individuals who were interviewed concerning the free medication they received they confirmed that this motivated them to convert to Christianity, and in particular to the Church of Christ.

### **(b) Education**

In most African countries where Christian Missionaries went to open mission stations or to introduce Christianity they were interested in educating the African so that he or she would be able to read the bible. In Mukuni village, missionaries began two schools, and these are Mukuni primary School and Ng'andu Primary School. According to the elderly people that were interviewed, the building of schools in Mukuni village was motivating to most households.

The Church of Christ built a school in 1910 in the village, and according to Chief Mukuni, this attracted a lot of people to the new religion. The school that the Church of Christ built was called Mukuni Primary School. In 1940 the Roman Catholic also built a Primary School a few Kilometres away from Mukuni village. This school was called Ng'andu Primary School. These schools and several other schools that were built as time went by were indeed a motivating factor for the Leya people to convert to the Whiteman's religion.

### **Summary**

This chapter has presented the findings of the study that sought to investigate/ establish the impact of Christianity on the traditional religion of the Leya of Mukuni village in Livingstone. The Christian missionaries and the Leya people interacted positively with each other, and indeed this led to a considerable number of the Leya converting to Christianity. The Christian missionaries especially from Europe and America were so friendly, and this could have been a strategy to win the Africans over to themselves. The said conversion however seemed not to be complete as the converts still practiced the traditions of their former religions. A good number of things are seen changing in Mukuni village, now that Christianity has come to stay. Finally, the conversion that was taking place in Mukuni village seemed to have been based on some factors, especially material incentives. The next chapter discusses in detail the findings of the study.



## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

#### **5.0 Over view**

This study came up with a number of findings, through the interviews and discussions that were conducted with the respondents. An analysis of the data that was collected was carried out, and this chapter is a detailed discussion of the findings of this research.

#### **5.1 Positive interaction between Christian Missionaries and the Leya**

The interaction between missionaries and Leya people was positive just as mentioned in the findings. The study established that the missionaries whose origin was European or American were very much welcomed by the Africans, the Leya people. The missionaries were peaceful in their approach of the Leya people, and it is expected that their interactions with the Leya who they came to preach to would be conflict free. By nature white people are friendly towards Africans, and they are good at showing such an attitude especially when they want to win the Africans to their side, it was established in the study, that the leya people were very cooperative and attentive to the white missionaries.

Colson (2006) did an Ethnographic study of the religious life of the Tonga people of Gwembe valley, and it was established in her study that she interacted positively with the Tonga, who in turn gave her the information that she was looking for. Snelson(1974) reported that seven (7) missionary societies had entered Northern Rhodesia and established mission stations and churches, and for the progress of setting the said mission stations and churches it is an evidence of positive interactions between the white missionaries and the Zambians. Mubitana (1977) mentioned about the missionaries from the Church of Christ who came to Mukunie village to spread Christianity. They succeeded to establish the said Church because of the positive interaction between the Christian Missionaries and the Leya. According to Rotberg (1968) in 1923 a group of missionaries from the Church of Christ, with supporters in America, had come to Northern Rhodesia and settled north of the Victoria Falls among the Leya. There was surely positive interaction between the Christian Missionaries and the Leya people for them to stay in the same community for a considerable time.

This study is based on Horton's theory of conversion which states that there is a two tiered system or arrangement, in which the microcosm is a group of lesser gods or spirits, who are in charge of the local environment, and macrocosm consists of the Supreme God, who has gone far into heaven, and controls the universe through the spirits and lesser gods. Due to all these changes and technological development the microcosm boundaries are breaking, and are not able to explain the happenings around the universe. This seem to be true for Mukuni village because the lesser spirits are unable to adequately explain all the changes at Victoria Falls, and so, through this conversion people are leaving the microcosm and coming closer to the macrocosm, who can answer all their questions and issues of life.

The first research objective of this study was to examine the nature of interaction of the Christian Missionaries with Leya people of Mukuni Village. This objective was ably handled and achieved through the interviews and focus group discussions that the researcher conducted among the respondents. The researcher sought information from all the categories of his respondents, and they all gave overwhelming information, that there was positive interaction between the two groups of people. The objective has been well achieved since this study has conducted a thorough examination of the nature of interaction between the Christian Missionaries and the Leya people of Mukuni Village.

## **5.2 The Leya were receptive to the Christian message**

This study has established that the Leya people responded positively to the Christian Message. As pointed out earlier the Christian Missionaries and the Leya people interacted positively with each other, and it is not surprising that the Leya responded well and positively to the Christian message. They welcomed the Christian missionaries, and they showed that they had accepted their teachings. The difficulties that were there to understand the message that was in English language were expected, but as time went by such difficulties were overcome because Christianity was introduced side by side with Western education. English was the first subject that was taught, to enable the Leya read the bible.

Christianizing Mukuni village and getting the message understood to most Leya people was not going to be easy in the sense that the Leyas had their own traditional religion. This is true for all Africans who were reached with the Christian message everywhere in Africa. A good number of Missionaries used the strategy of acknowledging the Africans' traditional religion, and using it as

a stepping stone into teaching about Christianity. This happened in the case of Mukuni village. The Christian Missionaries, especially from Church of Christ who came from America in 1923 camped in Mukuni village for a considerable time, learning the language and culture of the Leya people, and appreciating their religion. In this way it was easy to convert the Leya to Christianity.

Carmody (1999) explained that a good number of Africans embraced the Christian teachings and converted to Christianity. Colson (2006) established in her study that a number of aspects changed in Tonga religious life, such as their concept of *Leza*, cleansing patterns following the death of a marriage partner, and the like. For such a change to be there it simply shows that the Africans had responded positively to the message brought in by Missionaries. Munokalya (2013) confirmed that some traditions that the Christian Missionaries had opposed such as polygamy had reduced so much among the Leya, and this clearly shows that a considerable number of the Leya people had embraced the Christian message. Mernt (1998) mentioned that the Church of Christ in villages around Kalomo, Zimba, Kazungula districts are progressing well, most of which have well qualifying elders and deacons. This includes Mukuni Church of Christ, whose members originally belonged to the traditional religion of Mukuni Village. This shows that there has been positive response to the Christian message in Mukuni Village.

According to Sarpong(1993) We cannot know the past of the African if we neglect his religion. Traditional religion is a part of African's ethos, and an understanding of it should go hand in hand with Christian evangelism. This shows that some Christian Missionaries were aware of the attachment that some Leya people had to their traditional religion, and that they appreciated that some elements of the traditional religion such as culture, ethics and belief system were vital in helping the Africans understand more about the new religion to which they were converting.

It should of course be noted that even when the Leya people responded to Christianity they were still attached to their traditional religious beliefs and practices. Culture and religion go together. An African's culture is part of him, and it is not easy to remove the *Africanness* from an African. It is therefore not easy to completely do away with the traditional religious practices on the part of an African. As discovered through this study the Leyas who had become Christians did not stop going to the *Lwiindi* ceremony. They did not completely stop doing some of the simple rituals that were required of them, being Africans.

This reflects truly that the conversion of the Leya people to Christianity is in line with theory of conversion. Horton's theory of conversion talks about the two tier system. The microcosmic boundaries indeed began breaking in Mukuni village as the lesser spirits were no longer dependent upon. The macrocosm had taken control, and the people now had access to approach the God of heaven and earth, and to present their requests directly to God through prayer. Even the senior Chief Mukuni does not just rely on microcosmic powers to rule the chiefdom but has equally embraced Christianity, and is a faithful member of the Roman Catholic Church.

The second objective reads as follows: "To assess how the Leya people have responded to the new teachings and developments brought about by Christianity. Through the interviews and discussions that the researcher conducted with his respondents it was clearly elaborated, and understood from this study, that even though the Leya people responded positively to Christianity they did not completely abandon all the traditional beliefs and practice of their former religion. There were however a few that had become very committed in their Christian relationship with the new religion. This objective has been well achieved since the study showed the degree of response to Christianity on the part of the Leya People of Mukuni village.

### **5.3 Social, Economic and Cultural Aspects changed hugely**

It was established in this study that a number of aspects changed while others remained the same in Leya Traditional religious life after Christianity had come to the village. As pointed out earlier there were a number of things that the Christian Missionaries did not favor in Leya traditional life, and through the teachings of the missionaries there was an influence that such things are either dropped or modified. There were other things, however which the Leya people could not abandon since such things were part of their traditional lives and cosmology.

It was established in the study, that some rites of passage are no longer celebrated in Mukuni Village the way they used to be celebrated before the coming of Christianity. Rites of passage are rituals that are celebrated at key points of lives of human beings. The key points referred here being: birth, puberty, marriage and death. It has also been established that other rites of passage have not changed in the manner in which they are celebrated. Child birth and naming is one rite that has not changed much in the manner in which it is being celebrated.

Child birth and naming is taken seriously in Mukuni village, and not much has changed in the manner of celebrating the birth of a child, as learnt earlier. This is an indication that although the

Leya people have been taught about the new way of worshipping God they still have stronger beliefs in *Leza* and they are not ready to do away with their traditional beliefs, customs and practices. Their continuing to name new born babies after the departed members of the chiefdom shows that the Leya still believe that the dead ancestors are still alive and active members of their society. There are however a few parents who may ignore celebrations following birth of a child, but the majority in the village do celebrate this rite of passage.

It was also established that marriage is no longer taken the way it used to be regarded in the past before the coming of Christian Missionaries to Mukuni Village. In the past polygamy was common in Mukuni Village. According to the arrangement of the royal establishment it was a requirement that the chief has a minimum of three (3) wives as noted earlier. All this has changed after the coming of Christianity. There is now no law that binds the chiefs to have more than one wife. Owing to Christianity the current chief Mukuni is a husband of one wife as pointed out earlier. Generally, cases of polygamy have reduced tremendously.

In the case of traditional marriages in which no big change has taken place, it suggests that the Africans (Leya people) do not want to completely lose their identity as Africans. The fact that similar rules and procedures are followed during traditional marriages clearly shows that the Africans have beneficial values in their culture and traditions. Marriages in the olden days were more stable than the present day marriages, and this shows that traditional way of marrying was preferred to the present day white weddings.

Concerning death and rituals that were done following a death incident in Mukuni Village it was established that nothing much has changed, apart from some cleansing ceremonies. Sexual cleansing for instance has been stopped after the Christian teaching against sexual immorality. Besides, there came the issue of HIV/AIDS infections. The chief himself gave a directive that the act of sexual cleansing be suspended and replaced with other methods that did not involve sex.

Concerning beliefs in God/*Leza* this study established that The God that the Leya people had known before the coming of Christianity is *Leza*, and He was believed to be distant from the people. This God used to be approached through the ancestral spirits. The Leya people now have a different belief towards God. This shift from microcosm to macrocosm suggests that the Leya people have seen that the Christian God is closer to them and is able to intervene in their daily affairs. They associate the new development in terms of infrastructure, schools, medical

facilities and new jobs/business opportunities in lodges/hotels and curious industry to the coming of Christianity.

The third objective read: To establish what things have changed, and what things have remained the same among the Leya as a result of the interaction between the Christian missionaries and themselves. This objective was well achieved because this study has clearly shown what things have changed, and what things have remained the same in Mukuni village since the coming of Christianity to the village.

#### **5.4 Economic and Social Benefits Motivated the Leya to convert to Christianity**

Human beings by nature want to live well and to have all things going on well with them. Motivation is very important in every human being, without which there would not be any positive response towards external calls. For the Leya people to convert to Christianity there were good reasons for that.

Firstly it was established that friendliness which is indeed a motivation factor, was one good reason for the Leya to listen to the Christian missionaries, and even convert to their religion. The smiles and cheer that the missionaries showed to the people they taught was understood by the Leya as a sign of love and care, and the Leya were thus very ready and willing to respond to the teachings of the new religion. The friendliness in question on the part of the Christian missionaries is however relative. We do not know what the reason was for showing this friendliness and cheer to the Leya people.

Secondly, there were second hand clothes that were presented to the Leya people as a gift. Zambians in the past had economic challenges just as may be the case at present. Money was not always enough to buy food and clothing. The Leya people were happy to receive clothing materials, and this may have made them more willing to convert to Christianity. Besides, they were seeing the new religion as having immediate solutions to economic challenges such as lack of clothes. One would wonder how deep this conversion, based on material incentives, was. It is very likely that the Leya could not grasp the real meaning of the new teaching since their focus was on the clothing materials that they received rather than on the bible lessons that they were taught. For some Leya their commitment to Christianity may not have been deep. This presents a similar situation in Chikuni among the *Tonga* who had converted to Christianity.

Around 1930s when the Namwianga Mission for Church of Christ started Medical Missions in Zambia there were no developed medical clinics in Mukuni village. It should have been a big attraction to the Leya people when free medication was brought right into the village. The Missionaries were seen as meeting a basic need of health for the Leya people, and this gesture attracted most Leya people to the new religion. The genuineness of this conversion based on medical assistance is equally questionable. A person who is unwell and who has nowhere to go for medical attention is such a desperate one. When free medication is provided to the sick, they would be willing to follow the providers and become their disciples. A good number of Leya converted to Christianity because of the said medical incentives. It was established that this medical incentive was very attractive to the Leya people who needed medical attention.

Finally, language was a challenge in the work of European/American Missionaries in Africa. Not many Africans understood and spoke the English language at the time that Christian Missionaries came into Africa. Missionaries introduced Western Education to the Africans, and the teaching of English language was primary, so that the Africans could read the bible. Education was appealing and attractive to the Leya people, and this motivated them to convert to the new religion. Education was also attached to job opportunities because certain areas at the Victoria Falls needed some educational qualifications. Therefore, those who had attained some level of education were given the first priority. In this case provision of western education by the Christian Missionaries was a motivating factor towards converting to Christianity. It was a common trend for missionaries to attract would be converts through education provision in most parts of Africa.

In Chikuni Mission of Southern Province, for instance, the Jesuit Fathers used education provision as a tool for conversion. When speaking about conversion to Catholicism among the *Tonga* of Chikuni mission Carmody (2001:85) mentioned the following: “A central hypothesis of this study is that the Chikuni converts chose to become Catholics initially principally because of the social-cultural inducements which the mission presented. Carmody (2001:95) mentioned that: “Since we have argued that many Tonga and other Zambians who went through Chikuni schooling became Roman Catholic largely because of material incentives which the missionaries offered, we might ask, to what were they converted?” Similarly some people in Mukuni village converted to Christianity because of material incentives such as clothing materials provided by the missionaries. Carmody (2001:95) noted that: “From the missionaries’ perspective, school

provided the key means of gaining converts. It did this by creating an atmosphere where baptism was chosen almost automatically.”

The fourth objective said: “To investigate the factors that encouraged the Leya people to convert to Christianity.” This objective has been well achieved through the interviews that were conducted with the royal establishment as well as with the ordinary citizens of Mukuni village. The main reasons for conversion were brought out by all the categories of the researcher’s respondents. The members of the village themselves gave a lot of testimonies on how this new religion (Christianity) has been of great help to them in terms of medical facilities, education provision and second hand clothes. General observations and document analysis have equally helped the researcher to learn of these factors that have encouraged the Leya to convert to Christianity.

### **Summary**

This chapter has discussed in detail the findings that this study came up with. It was established through the discussion that the good interaction between the Christian missionaries and the Leya could have been based on the material benefits that came from the missionaries. The positive response of the Leya to Christianity was based on these material incentives. In the next chapter a conclusion will be drawn, and some recommendations will be suggested.



## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

#### **6.0 Over view**

This chapter is a conclusion of my research study. I am hereby making a number of recommendations based on the findings of my study, and these recommendations are presented in this chapter.

#### **6.1 Conclusion**

As reflected by the statement of the problem the senior Chief Mukuni and his Royal Establishment were custodians of the traditional religious beliefs, customs and practices of the Leya people of Mukuni Village. One would want to understand what impact if any the intrusion of Christianity on one hand and tourism on the other, have had on the Leya traditional religious beliefs, customs, values and practices. The main aim of the study, therefore, was to develop an understanding of the effects of the interaction of the Christian Missionaries with the Leya people of Mukuni Village on their traditional religious beliefs, values and practices.

This study that was carried out was about the Leya people of Mukuni village and their traditional religion. The study went further by looking at the coming of Christianity to Mukuni village, and how these new developments may have influenced or affected the traditional religious beliefs and practices of the village. The study was therefore significant as it could add to the existing body of knowledge concerning religion among the Leya people of Mukuni village. Besides, the study pointed out what things changed and what things remained unchanged among the Leya people of Mukuni village after Christian Missionaries had evangelized the area.

It was therefore a case study of Mukuni village among the Leya people who, before the coming of Christianity and Tourism had a totally different understanding of the meaning of their lives. The objectives and research questions in this study were all centred on finding out about the nature of the interaction between the Christian Missionaries and the Leya people, and how they responded to the new teaching. The things that changed and the things that remained unchanged after the coming of Christianity and Tourism in Mukuni village were also looked at. The motivating factors towards conversion to Christianity on the part of the Leya were discussed.

A few scholars wrote about the Leya people of Mukuni village and their traditional religion, and how their religion was influenced by the coming of Christianity as well as tourism. Muntemba (1970) narrated the origin of the Leya people from Congo, and how they found themselves in Mukuni village. Mubitana (1977) discussed the various traditional religious beliefs and practices of the Leya people. Bonifacio (2003) wrote about the dual kind of rulership that existed in Mukuni village. Mc Gregor (2003) mentioned about the Leya's veneration of certain places around the Victoria Falls. Rotberg (1965) discussed the missionary activity of the Church of Christ in Mukuni village. The above are among the literature that was reviewed.

The study is a qualitative one. Thirty four respondents were involved, and the main data collection procedures were face to face interviews, focus group discussions, general observations and document analysis. A lot of data was indeed gathered, after which it was analysed through examining the themes and variables that emerged. The data was analysed in accordance with the set objectives.

The study revealed that the nature of interaction of the Christian Missionaries with the Leya people was cordial, and there were no conflicts between the two groups of people. The Missionaries were very friendly people, and they interacted well with the Leya people. The Tourists were also friendly and accommodating, and the Leya found it easy to associate and interact with them. Some tourists were able to reach Mukuni village so as to see the traditional village and to buy curios. It was however noted that such friendliness on the part of the Christian missionaries may have been a conversion strategy.

The Leya people responded fairly positively to the new religion. A good number of them became Christians and tried to live in accordance with the Christian teachings and standards. They were however unable to do away with some traditional practices of their indigenous religion. According to the statistics obtained from the representatives of the royal family about forty percent of the Leya people accepted Christianity, with some form of commitment. About ten percent remained loyal to their traditional religion, while the rest professed Christianity although they continued with the traditional beliefs and practices.

The study revealed that a good number of things changed in Leya traditional religious life. There were a number of traditional religious practices that were actively performed among the Leya people before the coming of Christian Missionaries, and that are no longer observed owing to the presence of Christianity in the village. Other practices have been modified, meaning that they are no longer observed in the manner that they used to be in the olden days before the coming of Christianity and tourism.

The Leya people had considered the senior Chief Mukuni to be a deity, but with the coming of Christianity people's attitudes towards the Chief changed. Christianity taught the Leya to view Chief Mukuni as an ordinary human being just like themselves. As for the Leya who belonged to the Roman Catholic church the Chief was actually their church mate, and this made them see him as their own brother in Christ.

Some sacrifices and offertory prayers that used to take place at designated places are no longer done. The shrine, *Katola buseka* that was located at the Bungee Jump spot, and where offertory prayers used to take place is no longer in use due to developmental projects by ZESCO. At the *Sambalwa* or *Samba dwazi* shrine healing sessions conducted by way of the patient either being sprinkled or dipped into the water that was found at the named shrine were common before the coming of Christianity and Tourism. With the coming of Christian Missionaries there has been a reduction in frequency of the said cleansing activity.

Death in Mukuni village was celebrated as a significant rite of passage into the next life. A number of traditional religious practices were performed, and these included rituals meant to ward off the spirits of the dead. There are a lot of changes concerning the manner in which funerals are conducted in the village as compared to the period before the coming of Christianity and Tourism. Sexual cleansing, for example is no longer common in Mukuni village because of the Christian teaching about morality and purity, as well as the advent of HIV/AIDS. The village members have come up with some methods of cleansing that do not involve sexual intercourse.

Polygamy was more emphasized before the coming of the Christian Missionaries, and most elderly men were married to more than one wife. Things are now different during the Christian era. The present chief Mukuni is monogamous and so was his predecessor. The present Chief

Mukuni is a member of the Roman Catholic Church. A good number of men among the Leya people of Mukuni village are in monogamous marriages because of being Christians.

As seen in this study there were some motivating factors that made the Leya people convert to Christianity. The approach that the Missionaries used was quite motivating to the Leya. The White missionaries were friendly and cheerful, and this helped in the conversion process. The second hand clothes that the missionaries brought from their country of origin to Mukuni village was a motivating factor. Clothes are among the basic needs of Africans, and the new religion seemed to meet this need. The new religion thus became quite attractive to a good number of the Leya people, and they converted and became Christians.

Medical missions were another motivation because these medical facilities were given to the Leya people free of charge. This helped to heal some of the diseases that were common in human life, and as such some Leya people were attracted to Christianity. A question was however raised as to how genuine this conversion, which was based on medical incentives, was.

Side by side with Christianity came Western education, and this made the *Leya* people value Christianity. The respondents explained that the Leya people were thankful to the White Missionaries for this kind of education which helped them to know how to read and write and to find jobs in the hotels and lodges around the Victoria Falls area.

A few Leya people have however seen some disturbances in the traditional life pattern of the *Leya*, resulting from the modernity that came along with Christianity to Mukuni Chiefdom. Some shrines have been disturbed as a consequence of lodges, leisure sites and other activities around the Victoria Falls area. It has been found out, for instance, that activities such as death penalty of accused witches at *kalundu kabalozi*, offertory prayers at *katola buseka* shrine, healing sessions at *samba dwazi* shrine have been stopped. For the other activities there has since been some modification, for example, cleansing rituals following death of a spouse.

## **6.2 Recommendations**

Human life is at times full of concerns, challenges, and issues. Research is often aimed at finding answers and solutions to human problems. When a research leads to possible solutions, recommendations are usually raised as an intervention so as to find solutions to the problem.

This section of the dissertation is an outline of some recommendations regarding the topic under study.

Religion is generally defined by most scholars as an expression of people's understanding of the meaning of life. Different groups of people have various understandings of the meaning of life and this is the reason why there are different world religions. The Zambian/African Traditional Religion is one of the main religions of the world and this entails that members of the Zambian Traditional Religion have a different understanding of the meaning of life from Christians and Muslims. It is therefore recommended that the Zambian Traditional Religion in Mukuni Village remains alive and active, and that those who belong to the traditional religion in Mukuni Village should be given all the support.

Since the coming of Christianity to Mukuni village there has been a disturbance to some of the traditional beliefs and practices in Mukuni village. Polygamy and offertory prayers are among the examples of such beliefs and practices. It can therefore be rightly stated that the traditional religion in Mukuni village is not as active as it used to be before the coming of Christianity and tourism. There is therefore need to revive the ATR by way of re-introducing the traditional activities that were forsaken for some time due to missionary influence. It is recommended that there should be a survey to identify all the traditional practices that used to unite people together and that used to bring them closer to *Leza*, but have now been disturbed since the coming of Christianity. After they are identified they should be re-introduced and supported so that they once more become part of ATR in Mukuni village..

If it were permissible the Chief and Chieftainess should at all times be those that fully belong to the traditional religion of Mukuni Village, especially that the said are supposed to be custodians of the Traditional beliefs, customs and values of the village, A policy can be put in place, to demand that anyone who becomes Chief in Mukuni Chieftaindom should be a full time member of the traditional religion.

A few religious sites and shrines were reported to have been disturbed because of developmental works of the ZESCO and other companies. The *Katola buseka* shrine at the bungee jump spot has been deactivated, and so is the '*samba dwazi*' shrine. The Royal Family is to be firm in ensuring that all the projects that are carried out in the Victoria Falls area do not lead in any way to destruction of any of the shrines.

They say ‘prevention is better than cure’ and such a saying is indeed true in all spheres of human experience. Some shrines in Mukuni Village have survived and were not disturbed during installation of the projects at the Victoria Falls. The Chisamu *Chilikumbete* (*Chipusyo*) where the *Lwiindi* ceremony is held from is active and in operation. It is recommended that measures be put in place so that further developmental works around the Victoria Falls area will not disturb the said shrine just like other shrines were disturbed. There is need therefore to request the government or developmental organisation to ensure that shrines are protected before carrying out major developmental projects.

Additionally Christian churches should be discouraged from the practice of giving free clothing materials and other materials to the Leya. Giving items freely is not always a good way of assisting someone, and some recipients have ended up being lazy because they are used to just been given goods and services on a silver plate. Such people normally suffer when the opportunity of receiving things freely ceases. If this recommendation is carried out the ATR would be preserved because not many people would leave the religion to join Christianity.

Finally, I recommend that other scholars research more on ATR in other parts of Zambia, and how Christianity has impacted on the traditional religion in these other parts of Zambia.

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## **APPENDICES**

### **INTERVIEW GUIDE (SENIOR CHIEF MUKUNI)**

1. When did you ascend to the throne of chieftainship, and what special ceremony accompanied the occasion where you were placed on the throne as Chief?
2. What is the relationship between you and the female Chief?
3. May I learn from you your royal highness concerning some of the traditional practices that are carried out in the village?
4. What do you see as being significance of these traditional practices done in your chiefdom?
5. What is your role as senior Chief during performance of the practices that you have told me about?
6. There has been a number of churches and religious groups coming to your village to spread the Gospel. How do you look at their message especially in relation to the traditional religious life and practices that you are already involved with as a traditional community?
7. What disturbances, if any has the Christian message brought on the traditional religious practices of the village?
8. I want to believe your royal highness that these missionaries and evangelists that have been coming to the village to preach have at one time spoken against some of the traditional practices of the village. What has been your reaction during such times of opposition?
9. How has the tourism industry helped you and your people in Mukuni village?
10. Has tourism in Mukuni village affected the traditional beliefs and practices in any way whether positively or negatively?
11. What do you see as being the future of Mukuni village in terms of traditional beliefs and practices especially with the presence of Christian churches and tourism?
12. Is there any other information that you would like to give me in relation to what we have discussed, that you feel would be very vital for me?

Thank you very much your Royal Highness for the very rare opportunity you had given me to have a chat with you. I sincerely assure you that our discussion is purely for educational purposes.

## **INTERVIEW GUIDE (CHIEFTAINESS BEDYANGO)**

1. When did you ascend to the throne of chieftainship, and what special ceremony accompanied the occasion where you were placed on the throne as chief?
2. May I learn from you your Royal Highness concerning some of the traditional practices done in your chiefdom?
3. What do you see as being significance of these traditional practices done in your chiefdom?
4. What is your role as Chieftainess and priestess during performance of the practices that you have told me about?
5. Do you think that the Lwiindi ceremony is still done in the same way it used to be done in the previous century?
6. There has been a number of churches and religious groups coming to your village to spread the Gospel. How do you look at their message especially in relation to the traditional religious life and practices that you are already involved with as a traditional community?
7. What disturbances, if any has the Christian message brought on the traditional religious practices of the village?
8. I want to believe your Royal Highness that these missionaries and evangelists that have been coming to the village to preach have at one time spoken against some of the traditional practices of the village. What has been your reaction during such times of opposition, especially that as a priest you also have religious activities that your people should be committed to?
9. What has been the state of the shrines that you have especially around the Victoria Falls area with so much tourist activity in the area?
10. What do you see as being the future of Mukuni village in terms of traditional beliefs and practices especially with the presence of Christian churches and tourism?
11. Do you have any other information you would like to share with me in relation to what we have been discussing?

Thank you very much your Royal Highness for the very rare opportunity you have given me to have a chat with you. I sincerely assure you that our discussion is purely for educational purposes.

## **INTERVIEW SCHEDULE (ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH LEADERS)**

1. What has been the reception from the royal family each time you made visitations or door to door evangelism within the village?
2. According to your Christian message what traditional practices have you seen as being contrary to what your message says?
3. What have you done about those practices which you understand to be against the teachings of the bible?
4. What has been the response from the royal establishment and from the ordinary village members when you ever preached against any of the traditional practices of the village?
5. What Christian practices in your church are in harmony with the Leya traditional religious practices?
6. Do you see it workable that those people who you convert to Christianity would completely abandon their traditional practices that they were already used to, or have you tolerated that your church members can still mix elements from both religions?
7. To what extent do you think your Christian teaching has contributed in affecting the traditional set up of the village?
8. I hear that there are one or two shrines that have ceased to exist as shrines in the Victoria Falls area. Could it be due to your Christian messages, or do you think that tourism in the area could also have contributed to this?
9. What programmes have you put in place as a way of protecting your members and ensuring that they do not go back to the former religion where you converted them from?
10. How do you look at tourism in Mukuni village and the area around the Victoria Falls. What effects does it have whether positive or negative on your evangelization of Mukuni village?
11. Do you have any other information that you would like to share with me in relation to what we have been discussing?

This is the end of our discussion, I really want to thank you Elder/Pastor for this rare opportunity you had accorded me to have a chat with you.

## **INTERVIEW SCHEDULE (CHURCH OF CHRIST LEADERS)**

12. What has been the reception from the royal family each time you made visitations or door to door evangelism within the village?
13. According to your Christian message what traditional practices have you seen as being contrary to what your message says?
14. What have you done about those practices which you understand to be against the teachings of the bible?
15. What has been the response from the royal establishment and from the ordinary village members when you ever preached against any of the traditional practices of the village?
16. What Christian practices in your church are in harmony with the Leya traditional religious practices?
17. Do you see it workable that those people who you convert to Christianity would completely abandon their traditional practices that they were already used to, or have you tolerated that your church members can still mix elements from both religions?
18. To what extent do you think your Christian teaching has contributed in affecting the traditional set up of the village?
19. I hear that there are one or two shrines that have ceased to exist as shrines in the Victoria Falls area. Could it be due to your Christian messages, or do you think that tourism in the area could also have contributed to this?
20. What programmes have you put in place as a way of protecting your members and ensuring that they do not go back to the former religion where you converted them from?
21. How do you look at tourism in Mukuni village and the area around the Victoria Falls. What effects does it have whether positive or negative on your evangelization of Mukuni village?
22. Do you have any other information that you would like to share with me in relation to what we have been discussing?

This is the end of our discussion, I really want to thank you Elder/Pastor for this rare opportunity you had accorded me to have a chat with you.



## **INTERVIEW SCHEDULE (NEW APOSTOLIC CHURCH LEADERS)**

23. What has been the reception from the royal family each time you made visitations or door to door evangelism within the village?
24. According to your Christian message what traditional practices have you seen as being contrary to what your message says?
25. What have you done about those practices which you understand to be against the teachings of the bible?
26. What has been the response from the royal establishment and from the ordinary village members when you ever preached against any of the traditional practices of the village?
27. What Christian practices in your church are in harmony with the Leya traditional religious practices?
28. Do you see it workable that those people who you convert to Christianity would completely abandon their traditional practices that they were already used to, or have you tolerated that your church members can still mix elements from both religions?
29. To what extent do you think your Christian teaching has contributed in affecting the traditional set up of the village?
30. I hear that there are one or two shrines that have ceased to exist as shrines in the Victoria Falls area. Could it be due to your Christian messages, or do you think that tourism in the area could also have contributed to this?
31. What programmes have you put in place as a way of protecting your members and ensuring that they do not go back to the former religion where you converted them from?
32. How do you look at tourism in Mukuni village and the area around the Victoria Falls. What effects does it have whether positive or negative on your evangelization of Mukuni village?
33. Do you have any other information that you would like to share with me in relation to what we have been discussing?

This is the end of our discussion, I really want to thank you Elder/Pastor for this rare opportunity you had accorded me to have a chat with you.

## **INTERVIEW SCHEDULE (PENTECOSTAL CHURCH LEADERS)**

34. What has been the reception from the royal family each time you made visitations or door to door evangelism within the village?
35. According to your Christian message what traditional practices have you seen as being contrary to what your message says?
36. What have you done about those practices which you understand to be against the teachings of the bible?
37. What has been the response from the royal establishment and from the ordinary village members when you ever preached against any of the traditional practices of the village?
38. What Christian practices in your church are in harmony with the Leya traditional religious practices?
39. Do you see it workable that those people who you convert to Christianity would completely abandon their traditional practices that they were already used to, or have you tolerated that your church members can still mix elements from both religions?
40. To what extent do you think your Christian teaching has contributed in affecting the traditional set up of the village?
41. I hear that there are one or two shrines that have ceased to exist as shrines in the Victoria Falls area. Could it be due to your Christian messages, or do you think that tourism in the area could also have contributed to this?
42. What programmes have you put in place as a way of protecting your members and ensuring that they do not go back to the former religion where you converted them from?
43. How do you look at tourism in Mukuni village and the area around the Victoria Falls. What effects does it have whether positive or negative on your evangelization of Mukuni village?
44. Do you have any other information that you would like to share with me in relation to what we have been discussing?

This is the end of our discussion, I really want to thank you Elder/Pastor for this rare opportunity you had accorded me to have a chat with you.

## **INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR COORDINATORS AT NAMWIANGA MISSION**

1. How did you find yourself in Namwianga Mission as a coordinator for church development?
2. How is your work of evangelism going on in Southern Province?
3. Do you sometimes go to Mukuni village for evangelism? If yes, how often?
4. How are you received by the royal family each time you go there?
5. How is the reception on the part of the Leya people that you go to preach to?
6. Are there times when you speak against some of the traditional practices of the Leya people? If yes, how do they usually react?
7. How often do you take material incentives to Mukuni village, and what materials do you take?
8. How do you see the response on the part of the Leya towards the word of God that you take there?
9. Do you sometimes receive White missionaries from other countries? And if so, how often, and how is their program like?
10. Is there any other information you would like to share with me, which may be of interest?

## **INTERVIEW SCHEDULE ( ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH MEMBERS)**

1. What is your name, and what do you do for a living?
2. When did you convert to Christianity and how did it all happen?
3. What were you before you converted to Christianity?
4. How are you finding the Christian practices as opposed to the practices that you were involved with before your conversion?
5. What is your view on some of the traditional practices of Mukuni village?
6. What benefits have you seen in joining Christianity?
7. Do you have any other information that you would like to share with me in relation to our discussion?

Thank you so much for the rare opportunity you have given me to have a chat with you. I promise you that this discussion is just between the two of us and it is purely for education purposes.

## **INTERVIEW SCHEDULE (CHURCH OF CHRIST MEMBERS)**

8. What is your name, and what do you do for a living?
9. When did you convert to Christianity and how did it all happen?
10. What were you before you converted to Christianity?
11. How are you finding the Christian practices as opposed to the practices that you were involved with before your conversion?
12. What is your view on some of the traditional practices of Mukuni village?
13. What benefits have you seen in joining Christianity?
14. Do you have any other information that you would like to share with me in relation to our discussion?

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## **INTERVIEW SCHEDULE (NEW APOSTOLIC CHURCH MEMBERS)**

15. What is your name, and what do you do for a living?
16. When did you convert to Christianity and how did it all happen?
17. What were you before you converted to Christianity?
18. How are you finding the Christian practices as opposed to the practices that you were involved with before your conversion?
19. What is your view on some of the traditional practices of Mukuni village?
20. What benefits have you seen in joining Christianity?
21. Do you have any other information that you would like to share with me in relation to our discussion?

Thank you so much for the rare opportunity you have given me to have a chat with you. I promise you that this discussion is just between the two of us and it is purely for education purposes.

## **INTERVIEW SCHEDULE (PENTECOSTAL CHURCH MEMBERS)**

22. What is your name, and what do you do for a living?
23. When did you convert to Christianity and how did it all happen?
24. What were you before you converted to Christianity?
25. How are you finding the Christian practices as opposed to the practices that you were involved with before your conversion?
26. What is your view on some of the traditional practices of Mukuni village?
27. What benefits have you seen in joining Christianity? .
28. Do you have any other information that you would like to share with me in relation to our discussion?

Thank you so much for the rare opportunity you have given me to have a chat with you. I promise you that this discussion is just between the two of us and it is purely for education purposes.

## **FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION WITH CHURCH MEMBERS FROM THE SELECTED CHURCHES**

This is an open discussion with the church members from the four selected churches. Main areas of focus include the following:

1. The churches they attend and the activities they are involved with in their respective churches.
2. The traditional beliefs and practices they know are part of Mukuni village, and have participated in.
3. Their view of Christian missionaries in the village.
4. What they think of the new developments such as schools and clinic in the village as a result of the presence of Christianity.
5. How they find the white missionaries and how they interact with them each time they visit the village.
6. Any other issues of interest that may come as the discussions go along.



## **UNSTRUCTURED DISCUSSION WITH THE ELDERLY MEMBERS OF MUKUNI VILLAGE**

This is an informal discussion with the elderly members of Mukuni village. The chat is aimed at learning from them the traditional life of the village, and Christianity could be impacting on the traditional practices of the village.