**Mission and Traditional Tugen Culture of Kenya: A Critical Theological Study in Biblical Christianity**

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**Abstract**

Doing effective mission within the Traditional Tugen Culture is critical because it is difficult to avoid it due to the issues of culture which have a dynamic dialogue with supra culture of biblical Christianity. The issue of reconciling the Christ mission with the traditional Tugen culture is a big challenge. This cultural challenge is as old as the history of mankind from the time of creation. Christ dialogue with the cultural setting of his day took several characteristics: affirmations, reconstructions, compromise and opposition. The same will also apply to the Traditional Tugen culture.

Since religion is at the centre of Tugen Culture, a traditionalist Tugen will always seek to have a good harmonious relationship with Supernatural Being and other spirit-beings whose intention is to attain certain powers for his survival. This relationship with supernatural being is illustrated by the hierarchy of Beings where there is a web of interrelationship of Beings: God, divinities, spirits, man and living and non living things. Because of the sensitivity of this interrelation it poses an extremely difficult situation to escape from the mission of Christ with the facts of Traditional Tugen Culture. In our evaluation of culture, several issues come to stake as regards to culture: Is culture Godless in regards to the mission of Jesus Christ? Is culture anti-God of our Lord Jesus Christ or is culture idolatrous? What is wrong in following the command to trust in God alone? How can we make Christ to be relevant in the lives of people in the Traditional Tugen culture?

Such a relationship of Christ mission among the traditional Tugen culture calls for a real caution. In view of biblical Christianity syncretism is a real challenge because some of our Christians operate close to a traditional Tugen culture and portray real fear to the world of spirits, but those Christians who have a solid foundation in sound biblical Christianity will have a very little influence from a traditional Tugen culture. In a Roman Catholic Church, elders still bless guests in a traditional way. This piece of work intends to provide a road map based on the omniscience of Christ for Christians living in the world occupied by man in regards to doing mission within traditional Tugen culture in light of biblical Christianity.

Key words: Rationalism, Contextualization, Syncretism, Synthesis, Contextualization, Monasticism, Animism, Humanism

**A GENERAL INTRODUCTION**

The background of the study introduces the topic of the research paper which is on *Mission and Traditional Tugen Culture of Kenya: A Critical Theological Study in Biblical Christianity.*

The Tugen people belong to the Nilo-Saharan language family of the Southern Nilotic branch. The community is part of the Kalenjin group which includes the Kipsigis, Nandi, Keiyo, Marakwet, Terik, Sabaot and Pokot. Of these the largest group is the Kipsigis, the second largest is Nandi which is followed by the Tugen. The word "Tugen" implies people who hide their identity and possessions, that is, they ‘keep secrets’ (*Tuchei Tugun*). This hiding of identity and possessions is found also in all other Kalenjin groups evidenced by the fact that no one would count the number of children in a household. Among the Tugen, probably draughts and raids contributed to the idea of keeping secrets.

The Tugen are semi-pastoralists and farmers who occupy a rectangle of the Rift Valley floor. They live within the Tugen hills, namely, Baringo and Koibatek Districts. The Tugen District Headquarters are Kabarnet and E1dama-Ravine respectively. Other growing centres in population are: Kabartonjo, Marigat, Mogotio and Tenges. The Tugen clans claim to have come from different places: Elgon region, Uasin Gishu plateau, Ichamus, and Mount Kenya.

The Tugen fertile uplands, where Mosop - Lembus and North Baringo – Aror dialects are spoken, finger millet, beans, sorghum is grown, and in recent times they have introduced crops like coffee, and pyrethrum. They also keep cross breed cattle. While those occupying the semi-arid lowlands, where the Soi-Somor dialect is spoken, grow cassava, groundnuts, onions, cotton, sisal, and keep livestock. The Tugen follow a patrilineal lineage and practice the rites of passage which involve the initiation of boys and sometimes girls secretly. Polygamy is also practiced. Respect for elders is still practiced as the norm to date.

According to a summary Report of Research by Daystar Communication on "Unreached peoples of Kenya” records Traditional Tugen cultural affiliation as the majority group who believe the spiritual world to be real in their day-to-day living and so live in fear (Dec, 1982:12).

The population of Baringo is t 666763 persons. The Central Bureau of Statistics maintains that on the average, one household has five people (Baringo District Socio-Cultura1 Profile, Census).  While the Tugen population is 197,556 according to 2019 census

The Tugen culture has been undergoing a dynamic change such that today when one speaks of the Tugen people two phenomena are readily observed: one, is the Tugen community which still follows the traditional cultural customs and values and two, are those who have been influenced by the culture of modernity and Christianity.

This study interests the present writers of this article due to the many findings and conclusion made by Western and Africans writers. There are two extreme approaches that many of these scholars seem to have taken: 1) looking at African World view in a very negative way and/or 2) embracing it wholesale respectively. The authors of this paper reject these two extremes and call for an intelligent and sound study based on the Word of God. This article will attempt to address traditional Tugen culture from a critical theological Christianity.

**Statement of the Problem**

Since religion is at the centre of Tugen Culture, a traditionalist Tugen will always seek to have a good and harmonious relationship with the Supernatural Being and other spirit-beings whose intention is to attain certain powers for his survival. The sensitivity of the interrelation found in the hierarchy of Beings in traditional Tugen culture possess a real difficulty and caution  as regards to infiltration of syncretism in carrying out effective mission of Christ. In this paper we seek to respond to some critical questions concerning Christ’s mission and Traditional Tugen culture. Such questions include: Is the traditional Tugen culture Godless in regards to the mission of Jesus Christ, that is, is Christ against the traditional Tugen culture? Is the traditional Tugen culture anti-God of our Lord Jesus Christ or is culture idolatrous? Is Christ the transformer of the traditional Tugen culture? What is wrong in following the command to trust in God alone? How can we make Christ to be relevant in the lives of people who are adherents of the traditional Tugen Culture without falling into the danger of syncretism? These questions will call for authentic Theological interpretation in biblical Christianity.

**Research Objectives**

The main objective of this research paper was to look at the *Mission and Traditional Tugen Culture of Kenya: A Critical Theological Study in Biblical Christianity.*

The following objectives will be undertaken in the study:

## Analyze various ways in which the Church can confront the destructive and supernatural evil forces found in the traditional Tugen Culture

## Discuss the traditional Tugen Culture in view of Theological biblical Christianity

## To examine various models of contextualization in seeking to interpret traditional Tugen Culture in light of biblical Christianity

**Literature Review**

**THE BIBLICAL CONCEPT OF MISSION**

Focusing on the Biblical concept of mission four perspectives will be looked at in this section, namely, the Evangelical, the Conciliar, the Pentecostal/Charismatic and Thirdwave perspectives.

**Evangelical view of  Missions**

This group emphasizes evangelism and social action. The priority is given to the evangelism. Evangelical mission   holds that evangelism is not only central,   but also essential   to the life of the Church, of which the Church must be constantly reminded.

Evangelical is committed to the mystery of the incarnation of the pre-existent Son of God. Evangelicals are Trinitarians through and through. Jesus of Nazareth is seen as both were Deus and were Homo (Ibid.11). Enns notes that “because of the fall man is totally depraved and corrupted requiring the grace of God to act in providing redemption” (Enns, 1989:612).

**Conciliar Missions**

From The ecumenical  perspective, in July 1982 the central committee of  the World Council  of Churches gave its approval   to Mission and Evangelism: An Ecumenical Affirmation, a statement carefully crafted to include concern  for conversion, taking  the gospel  to all realms of life, the Church and  its unity  in God's mission; mission  in Christ's way,  Good News  the poor, mission in and to six continents, and a witness among    people of other  living  faiths (Schere and  Bevans,  1992:36).

**Pentecostal and Charismatic views of missions**

Pentecostal Mission

This group put more emphasis on the power of the Holy Spirit, prayer for the sick, exorcism, and manifest spiritual gifts (Gary B. McGee, 1993:50)

Boer asserts that "The Pentecostal emphases are on simple preaching of the Gospel, prayer, the gift of the Spirit which is accompanied by speaking with tongues, faith healing and prophecy" (Boer, 1961:225).

**Charismatic Missions**

Charismatic interest in mission was strongly evident at the North America Congress on the Holy Spirit and World Evangelization in Indianapolis in August 1990. Participants    represented many denominations: Baptists, Churches of Christ, Episcopalians, Lutherans, Mennonites, Presbyterians, Roman Catholics, United Methodists, Independent Charismatics and Pentecostals..

The Charismatics seek to employ spiritual warfare in their evangelism - power encounter with the demonic force active in non-Christian mission is on "power evangelism" over satanic forces and divine healing through prayer and the laying on of hands (Pousson, 1992:155). Hodges notes that missionary endeavor succeeds with the Holy Spirit involvement since "the Holy Spirit is a missionary Spirits" (Hodges, 1977:132). Hence the Spirit is seen as "the originator and impetus for world mission" (Mclung, 1986:5). Synan observes that rapid growing Christian group in the present years (Synan, 1992:8-10).

**Third Wave Movement**

Scott A. Moreau observed that in the 1980s, within the conservative evangelical Christians started embracing the work of spiritual gifts, praying for the sick and and exorcism, hence embracing Pentecostal spirituality (Scott A. Moreau. Crown, MCGee, P.123)

**A  BIBLICAL THEOLOGY OF MISSION**

The biblical theology of mission in light of the Old and New Testaments is based on the Missio-Dei and the Church in mission. Mission, as it is believed and known worldwide, lies at the heart of the biblical message. Indeed God has a divine plan of salvation (Col. 1:15-20; Eph. 1:3-23). He is absolutely sovereign, the creator, the Lord of History (His Story), and the only source of salvation. Christ is the cornerstone of God's plan and in the work of salvation. He purchased man's redemption, hence Jesus Christ is the foundation of mission (Jn. 3:16; Rom. 8:31f; 1 Cor.12:3); 1 Jn. 2:22; Acts 8:37; Heb.9:12). Mission means "sending"   in order to expand the Kingdom of God.

Mission theology is an important discipline for it centers on the missionary dimension of salvation offered to the world through Jesus Christ.  Missiology is related to Missio Dei. And it also realizes its dependence on other theological disciplines, such as exegesis, church history, and systematic theology. The aspects of dialogue, contextuza1ization, and social responsibility are equally important in mission theology. The caution is that "we must define mission exactly, so that it does not mean everything and nothing" (Glasser and McGavran 1983:15).

Muller discusses the following basic elements of mission theology:

1. Mission is grounded in the mystery of the blessed Trinity, in God's processions and mission, in whose whole being is self-communication and self-giving.
2. Mission is concerned with salvation. God wishes to free men from their guilt and enable them to share in his life. Hence individuals are to turn away from sin and to God. Salvation is, therefore, both shalom and the invitation to participate in God's life.
3. Mission is concerned with community. Christianity is not purely a matter of individuals who go their own way independently of one another but it is the community of the faithful whose function is for the salvation of the wor1d.
4. Mission is always concerned with the "world." Mission is encounter between God and the world, between the divine and the human. It does not take place in a vacuum.
5. Mission is mainly concerned with those who do not know the gospel, thus the expression “reaching out."
6. Mission is the common responsibility of all Christians, it is the privilege and the common responsibility of the worldwide Church (Mu11er,1987: 46-47).

**African Culture**

What concerns the life of African people is the fear of mystical forces: bad magic, sorcery and witchcraft and evil spirits. These form some worst enemies facing African society. It is rooted in African Life and is quite difficult to do away with this belief system. In African world view, there are several factors that lead to fear and are considered as the enemies of man - the physical or natural phenomenon: drought, earthquakes, epidemics, calamities which in their worst bring death; or the supernatural causation.

Human or spirit agents and evil spirits are seen to be the major cause of suffering in African worldview, but there is no single human or spirit agent is being blamed as being the mystical cause of suffering. Suffering or evil is either associated with a human agent and sometimes a spirit agent Mbiti, 1991, 164). Here what brings evil or suffering in African community is related to human or spirit agent whereby someone uses evil magic, sorcery or witchcraft. Magic, sorcery or witchcraft is invisible, mystical forces and evil powers and that certain individuals have knowledge and ability of tapping, controlling and using these powers. The suspects always are close relatives within the family or neighborhood Ibid, p.165). Witchcraft and evil magic (evil forces) may be inherited or acquired by a witch or magician deliberately or involuntarily.

Sorcery is in form of spells, poisoning, or physical injury performed secretly by an individual to another person. People fear to associate with these people in African society Ibid. pp165-166). Sorcery is believed to be able, through his evil mystical power or magic, to send curses to others so that they fail or die miserably if he does not like them or if they have in some way being offended, especially in the form of objects and tricks or to harm others to cheat, exploit (Mugambi, p118). Religious specialists use their knowledge to manipulate the mystical powers for the welfare of the people or to cause harm or misfortune to the people. Some African people believe in protective Charms as a protective remedy against the evil mystical forces or powers. The belief in evil magic leads to fear, especially when things go wrong in a family or village. People fear that their clothes, hair, nails or other belongings, even they are taken by these witches or sorcerers, may be used for evil magic which may lead to their destruction Ibid. p.119.

Evil spirits of the people who have died a long time ago or of unknown persons cause evil and suffering in African communities. “People fear them mainly because they are spirits of the unknown, and therefore strangers to the living…Some may possess human beings, either voluntarily or without the wish of the people so possessed. Some diseases such as meningitis, lunacy, and the condition of being deaf and dumb, are associated with spirits of this kind in some societies (Mbiti, p.72). In traditional Tugen culture, mystical forces is a force to reckon. This will need a critical theological study so as to arrive at an authentic biblical Christianity in dealing with these forces that this paper intends to handle.

The breaking of taboos of the community may lead to suffering or even death. The taboos are meant to safeguard the welfare of the community, for example. choice of words, that is not using offensive words, taboos related to marriage like marrying a close relative. When people break these taboos, they are sometimes, ostracized, doing purifications acts to renew the person’s relationship with the other members of the community. In some cases, the breaking of taboos may lead to stoning one to death Ibid.177-180). African people see fear to revolve around anything that causes disharmony caused in relation to God and the entire creation. In In traditional Tugen culture is to be handle with a lot of care. The Christian mission addresses this issue and seeks to find the place of God’s grace in response to multiplicities of taboos found in traditional Tugen culture.

**Christ and Culture**

A number of scholars see Christ against culture, hence withdraw from the society as monastics like the quarkers. Scholars like Leo Tolstoy who was threatened by meaningless of life existence and societal value system leading to life of despair , hence supports monastic life so as to seek for Christ who offers to all humanity the humanity the highest welfare (Niebuhr, 57-58). While others view Jesus Christ as the Christ of Culture like the likes of Gnosticism, Schleiermacher,Albrechl, Abelard and Immanuel Kant. The hold the view that beliefs about Christ and its demands on man’s conduct is to conform to culture for the improvement of life, perfection and peace. Here Jesus is seen as, the principle of mediation between the finite[man] and infinite, hence Christianity has to be reconcile with culture [God]- (Niebuhr,PP 90-93).Yet still other scholars see Christ as above culture who exercises over all creation absolute authority, culture included. Thus the natural man should be obedient to the Lordship of Christ whereby humanity will have to exercise his free will and intelligence in carrying out cultural activities (Niebuhr,PP116-189).Others holds that Christ is the transformer of culture whereby Jesus Christ is the new lawgiver, who separates a new people from the old by giving them the constitution for a new kind of culture where eternity begin in this present life since Christ cleanses humanity by means of faith by his power, thus making Christians the children of God and living a life focusing on God’s love and the Lordship of Jesus Christ in their lives, love for neighbor in God and God as well as embraces the concept of unity or oneness(Niebuhr, PP 190-230). Such individuals include: Wesley, St. Paul, St. Augustine, Calvin F.D. Maurice, Jonathan Edwards

In our discussion on contextualization, Hesselgrave and Rommen presents three methods: the Orthodox Christianity based on apostolic contextualization using didactic method of teaching the truth of God’s Word based on God’s revelation and the Neo-orthodox Christianity applies prophetic contextualization using dialectic method of discovering the truth and the third category liberalism of the application of syncretism contextualization using dialogic method in pursuing the truth (Hesselgrave and Rommen, P157)

**Research Design and Methodology**

Qualitative research approach was used whereby purposive sampling was adopted in selecting respondents from Mogotio Sub-County: Mogotio division and Kipngorom division.  The choice of this Sub-County was informed by the existence of a large number of traditional specialists and religious leaders who still adhere to their traditional customs and values, and many others who, from observation, claim to be Christians yet revert back to traditional ways of solving problems whenever they face challenges and crises in life.

In addition to library research, the study was carried out in the field during the months of February to June 2020 in the two divisions of Mogotio Sub-County, Baringo.

**Instrumentation**

An interview schedule was used in which the respondents’ main concerns were to help ascertain in knowing the unifying factors of the people, religious commitment and their crucial need, and the authors’ personal observations and skills over a long period of time which provides insight in dealing with the Tugen community. Demographic information from the District Headquarters has also been used.  The information from this research was analyzed and integrated into this paper.

**Sampling Procedure**

A sample of 60 Tugen specialists and religious leaders aged between 60-80 years comprising of 40 men and 20 women as well workers and pastors from various Church traditions (Concillar, Pentecostals/Charismatics, Evangelicals and Thirdwave movement) were interviewed in-depth to provide knowledge and experiences of the traditional Tugen culture and Christian Mission.

**Limitation of the Study**

The study was carried out in Mogotio Sub-County: Mogotio Division and Kipngorom Division among the Tugen Traditional people (animists). Here we meet several traditional religious specialist, hence the appropriateness of the location of the study.

**Assumptions**

This research work assumes that Christ mission transforms the traditional Tugen Culture whereby Christ is above culture. The Mission of Christ has many points of contact with the traditional Tugen culture, but it has no common ground. Therefore, it is possible to take the relatively good things within this community and to develop a contextualized Christian theology of mission for the Tugen people. But where we have doubts or the line is unclear, priority will be given to the Holy Bible as our normative text to determine the Christian's expression of faith and practice as Christians. It is of no value to try to decorate the traditional Tugen culture  and in the end we are left empty in our hearts.

Another assumption is that we refuse to judge the traditional Tugen culture by any other culture's world view, especially Western missiological and philosophical thought forms. All cultures must be judged by the Word of God.

**Results**

**AN OVERVIEW FINDINGS OF THE TRADITIONAL TUGEN CULTURE**

By providing an overview of the traditional Tugen culture, we in this section make an analysis and an evaluation of the Traditional Tugen world view; and then discuss ways in which the Gospel can be contextua1ized within this community by examining the position of Christ in view of Culture: Christ of culture; Christ against culture; Christ above culture and Christ the transformer of culture. A contextualized approach involves the following methods: Didactic-teaching the truth of the Gospel based on God’s revelation; dialectic – discovering the truth, and dialogic – pursuing truth (David J. Hesselgrave and Edward Rommen, p.157)

**Definition of Culture**

Culture is defined as a way of life of a people in the society or the total process of human activity, the artificial, secondary environment which man superimposes on the natural which include: language, customs, social organizations, inherited artifacts, technical processes and values, social interactions, religion or social faiths/beliefs, technologies, arts, literature and sciences (Richard Niebuhr, p. 32).

The Tugen people are notoriously religious or ontological, in that, what one does and who one is has religious implications. Thus religion is a central or fundamental influence or a motivating force in all spheres of Tugen life be it politics, farming, commerce, education, ethics and/or family as illustrated in Figure 1 below.



Figure 1: The Spheres of Tugen Life

**Worship**

The traditional Tugen culture makes prayers central in their day today activities; in times of disasters and for their daily provisions. They give offerings and sacrifices to the gods for their well-being, (protection) and when they seek healing during sickness (Personal Interview March, 2020).

**Ministry of Spiritual Leaders**

To make religion function properly in the community, special religious leaders are employed who have knowledge and experience to help the community relate to the spirit world. Without them, the traditional Tugen belief system would be less meaningful to the people. Such religious people include; the sacred chiefs and kings who embody ancestors and certain divinities and are considered the priests of their people (Personal Interview, February 10, 2020). This agrees with Mbiti’s findings that both the “chiefs and the kings are the symbols of their people's health and welfare … unity and common tradition" (Mbiti 1975:162). The witchdoctors are doctors of those who have been bewitched as well as playing the role of a diviner (Personal Interview February 10, 2020).

Other religious specialists include the mediums, medicine men, soothsayers or seers. These are specialists who diagnose diseases and discover solutions to human problems by means of manipulating objects through various techniques such as deploying the spirits and using items like milk, bones and bits of food. (Personal Interview June, 2020).

**Basic Tugen Values**

**Morality**

This deals with what is right and wrong which is the fruit of religion and taboos and that the idea of morality derives from God (Personal Interview, March 23,   2020).

Tugen people see life as sacred because it is the property of the Supreme Being. No one can create life and therefore no one has the right to terminate it. Tugen's    religious pre-occupation is life affirmation, that is, they are occupied with religious matters like a good life, a full life, a fulfilled life. They believe that whatever affirms life is virtuous but anything that denies life is evil (Personal Interview, Feb. 20, 1995) because life is very precious and important.

Another important Tugen moral value is that people matter as they have dignity. This value promotes a loving concern and care for people and a meaningful life is a life lived in community with others, and not in isolation, as well as respect for elders (Personal Interview May 6, 2020).

Respect for old age is an important aspect in Tugen community. One is not allowed to participate in societal decisions unless one has been initiated meaning that one has become an adult (no longer a child). Old peoples' blessings are highly coveted during this ceremony. The Tugen people highly respect old age for it is generally believed that old age is a blessing. People who live long are believed to have lived upright and no curse has overtaken them. Old people are also thought to be wise, so younger people seek advice and counsel from them. Elders are not only respected in the Tugen community they are also revered and honoured.

**Rites of Passage:  Polygamy and circumcision are being practiced**

**Belief in the Soul and Ideas about Death**

The soul is seen as the spiritual force in man or as energy that permeates the universe or the psychic substance giving life to the body and that when one dies, such a person would want to be buried with his traditional items (spear, arrows) for protection and other belongings to accompany him on the way to the next world; and food to eat on the journey (Personal Interview, March 23, 2020). Behind this practice is the belief that there is life after death. Hence, there is need to go to the next world with these items.

**Mystical forces**

The Tugen people, like other African communities, believe in mystical powers, which include; witchcraft (supernatural power used for evil rendering one helpless), magic (power inherited or acquired through rigorous training which is accompanied by utterance of words) and sorcery (the specialization in evil and in poisonous magic calculated to harm, injure, or destroy people). These were practiced in two ways: when one wants to harm the life and/or property of a perceived enemy, or when one wants to bless another.

**The World of Spirits**

The traditional Tugen culture places emphasis on the world of spirits of which the ancestors constitute the closest link between man and the spiritual world and the divinities that are next to the Supreme Deity (Personal Interview, March 23, 2020). The Tugen people believed in these so as to get power for their own use or manipulation.

**ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION OF THE TRADITIONAL TUGEN CULTURE**

**Its Strengths**

The idea of the spiritual world view helps Tugen people in understanding reality. Therefore, they believe in mysterious happenings. The centrality of man in development, a holistic approach to life, and the importance of harmonious relationships between man and other beings are valuable concepts. The consideration of the community is also a very important aspect in human society. The battle with evil powers, the seriousness in worship (sacrifices and rituals) and the idea that religion is at the heart of everything are of value in the Traditional Tugen world view.

**Its Weaknesses:**

It includes; there is no power available to help in keeping the taboos. There is the fear of witches, sorcery, and other powers; There is no sense of guilt, that is, people think in terms of shame rather than guilt’; There is no assurance of salvation or acceptance by God. Tugen’s view of forgiveness and salvation includes only social acceptance. The traditional Tugen world view offers no solution for man’s redemptive need; There is no gift of immortality, resurrection and newness of life’; Love means loving only my tribe, which is a root cause for justifying tribalism and all its vices; There is no clear origin or destiny of man.

**Communicating Christ within the Traditional Tugen culture**

The importance of faith alone for man's salvation and justification is key to the culture of Christianity.

The Gospel has to be contextualized, “The Bible's life-giving message must be served in an African cup so that it will be understood and assimilated. If this fails to happen, Christianity remains shallow because of its foreign character. What is needed is a biblically balanced contextualized Theology” (Eitel,1986:31-32). Jurji adds that, ". . . the promotion of culture in itself does not lead to the knowledge of God . . . only a religious interpretation of the Gospel bids fair to unlock the hidden treasures of wisdom in the world and to set in proper perspective the several national cultures in the  light of an eternal  purpose” (1952: 296).

**The Place of Worship**

Animal sacrifice denies the efficacy of the "Great Sacrifice" of Jesus Christ which is a superior mode of sacrifice to all others because it was offered "once for all" (Heb.7: 27; 9: 12; 10: 10). Priest, describing the efficacy of Christ's sacrifice asserts that "Christ's offering put to an end to sacrifices both because of who was sacrificed ... the Son of God ... and because He was perfect, without sin" (Priest, 1990: 33).

**The Nature and the Role of Spirits**

Both the Old and New Testaments repeatedly condemn the practice of witchcraft, sorcery, divination, necromancy, etc. The Bible acknowledges the reality and power behind some forms of witchcraft and sorcery and magic (the principalities and powers of Eph. 6: 12). For example, the ability of James and Jambres to duplicate some of the plagues of Moses shows the reality of the power behind their sorcery. In the New Testament, Simon Magus, Elymas the magician, and the medium at Philippi are mentioned. However, the Scriptures frequently emphasize that the power behind sorcery and witchcraft is limited, unlike the power of God. Some of the biblical passages describing the reality and danger of the various forms of witchcraft are Ex.22:31; Lev.19:26, 31; 20:6, 27; Deut.12:31; 18:10-11, 14; 1 Sam. 15: 23; 28:3, 7: 2 Kings 17:17; 21:6;23: 24; 1 Chron. 10: 13; Isa. 8: 19; 19:3; 47:12-13; Jer. 27: 9-10; Dan. 5:2:2; Mai. 3:5; Acts 8:9, 11; 13:6,8; 16:16; Gal. 5:20-21; Rev. 21: 8; 22:15. Satan is temporarily "the ruler of this world" (Jn. 12: 31; 16: 11). He fell because of his pride and his desire to be equal with and independent of God. Boa points out that:

Communicating the Gospel to the Tugen people requires a power encounter. The Bible points out that the victory of Christ on the cross and resurrection triumphs over all the powers of Satan (Eph.1:21; Col. 2:14). Boa notes that “the New Testament makes it clear that demons can possess people. Unlike the servants of Christ, the servants of Satan are not free; they    are controlled by malicious forces" (Ibid: 117). He also adds that “a relationship with Christ provides a far better solution to human needs and problems, and his followers are on the side that will be victorious" (Ibid: 118). The book entitled African Theological Journal states that:

But the Christian need not fear the forces of evil because he is inhabited by the living God, who is above all forces of evil. "All power has been given me in heaven and on earth," said the Lord Jesus. The Christian who believes in that will never fall a prey to human forces including sorcery for Christ has vanquished them (African Theological Journal. 1990:52).

Thus when one is in Christ then he is free from the demonic powers and spirits of the ancestors, superstitions, and the ambiguities of mysticism. Steyne notes that the animist needs a power encounter because his motivation in life is to obtain power, so he involves himself with the gods of power. Consequently, his new found faith in Jesus should not only be objectively true, but also subjectively life-changing and empowering, in order to obtain victory over every evil principality and power (Steyne, 1989:246-247). Christ came to earth so that He might destroy the works of the devil (1 Jn. 3:8). In this great confrontation with the forces of Satan, Christians can overcome because Christ, who dwells in them, is greater than he who is in the world (1 Jn. 4:4). Indeed perfect love drives out fear (1 Jn. 4:18). Christ has triumphed over all the principalities and powers which undergird the Tugen world view system, and He has the power to put them to an open shame (Col. 2:15). Rheenen says that the issues of everyday life must be dealt with in relation to the reality of the sovereignty of God and our allegiance to Him. These issues require confrontations with the forces of Satan and visible demonstrations of the power of God in animistic contexts (1991:62).

The Tugen people's recognition of the reality of the existence of life after death in their belief in the "living dead" implies that the resurrection (1 Cor. 15ff) will be gladly embraced by the Tugen community.

Communicating the Gospel to the Tugen people requires a power encounter. The Bible points out that the victory of Christ on the cross and resurrection triumphs over all the powers of Satan (Eph.1:21; Col. 2:14). “a relationship with Christ provides a far better solution to human needs and problems, and his followers are on the side that will be victorious" (Boa: 118).

 Scholars holding the view that Christ is against culture have a negative attitude to culture. This was the position when Christianity was introduced to Africa during the colonial period, European missionaries understood their task as both Christianianizing and "civilizing" the pagans of the Dark Continent. The central message brought by the missionaries to Africa was salvation from, first an unchristian cultural life style, second, bondage by the devil, and, third, the darkness of not knowing God and Jesus Christ. In short, Africa needed to be redeemed from being the empire of Satan (Murorewa, 1985: 30). Christians from the Third Wave Church have withdrawn from some of the activities of the society, such Christians from Repentance and Holiness have negative attitude with traditional Tugen culture just like the Quakers while those Church tradition interviewed, that is the Catholic Church put more emphasis on social action

Real salvation of Christ is to redeem men from as noted by the proponents of Christ the transformer of culture as taken by evangelical Christians who were being interviewed.

**Community Aspect**

The Tugen sense of community, ("I am because you are, and because you are therefore I am") is found in the Biblical concept of love for neighbour (Mark 12:31) and need to care for one's own interests but also the interests of others (Phil. 2:4). The early Church practiced this communal aspect of living (Acts 2:40-46), which is the opposite of an individualistic style of life. The Church needs to use this positive value of Tugen community life and try to initiate programmes geared toward communal living. For example, the Church can organize times to help the needy families, as in farming and to have festivals in the Church whereby the sense of community can be strengthened. Also the Church should organize common meals during special occasions like Christmas, Good Friday and Easter Monday.This kind of social action agrees with the finding of Dayton who nooted that, Dayton asserts that, ". . .a Theology of the Gospel includes both forgiveness and freedom, both faith and food" (1980:61). Dayton adds that salvation covers the whole range of human needs and destroys every pocket of evil and grief affecting mankind. It embraces heaven as well as earth and world history. There is therefore the need that both the physical [social action] and the spiritual [evangelization] be practiced. The Gospel Jesus preached calls people to be more human, to become more what God wants them to be, not only in the hereafter, but in the here and now.

**The Use of Proverbs and Myths in Communicating the Gospel**

A common Tugen proverb, *Manamegei oikyuk ak Cheguk* (My ancestral spirits are not tied to yours), can be used in presenting the Gospel by relating it to Jesus' warning that "one cannot serve two masters" (Matt. 6:24). The application is that one cannot follow God and visit witch doctor at the same time in order to emphasize the need for the Christian’s total allegiance to God and to wait for God's answer in whatever situation one finds oneself. Another proverb is *Mautien Moset Katwalet* (A monkey does not forget how to jump) which can be interpreted to mean that after one is introduced to Christian principles one cannot forget to do those things that are in conformity to the Christian norm.  Keben's response to this author's questionnaire dated Feb. 20, 2020, mentions a common Tugen myth about a man who sold his best house, but declared that he could not sell one nail in the wall which was to be eternally his. So he claimed the right to enter the house from time to time.  One time he  left his coat, next a piece of raw meat which caused  a bad smell  to annoy  the new owner of the house and lastly he placed a long dead snake which compelled  the new owner  to move out, and soon the previous owner moved  back in. This myth can be used as a teaching illustration. The nail symbolizes the unrepentant sins of the former life that are used by Satan to repossess people who once belonged to him. Even though people accept Christ, they sometimes do not allow the Lord to possess all their lives. The Contextua1ized analogy calls for total surrender to Christ's cause.

**Rites of Passage: Polygamy and Circumcision**

**Polygamy:**

The Bible does not directly condemn polygamy, but there are many Scriptures in support of monogamy. Man's relationship to a woman, which is part of the biblical creation story (Gen. 2:24) is referred to by Christ (Matt. 19: 4-6; Mark 10:11-12). God established monogamy as the ideal for mankind, signifying the union of a man to one wife as his companion. Genesis 2:23 does not show the woman to be inferior to the man. The stratification of their status comes after the fall.

Indeed both spouses are equal partners and as such are responsible to one another, as they are bound in the marriage covenant of fidelity, unity and permanence. That it is the resposibi1ity of each church, being guided by the Word of God through the Holy Spirit and that  Polygamy is simply a sin, little different from adultery as well as an inferior form of marriage while circumcision in the Old Testament  is a sign of righteousness by faith (Rom. 4:10-11) and  has nothing to do with one's inheritance of the kingdom of God, hence circumcision of the heart was necessary (Deut.10:16; Jer. 14:4). Traditional Tugen cultural circumcision is a ritual with elements of ancestral spirit attached to them. Hence, the rites are actually demonic according to biblical standards. The Tugen people should abandon these ceremonies and obtain circumcision conducted by hospitals and medical experts without the traditional rituals and ceremonies. The Church should develop functional substitutes for traditional initiation rites and support the Kenya government's campaign to eradicate female circumcision.

**Summary, conclusion, and Recommendations**

**Summary**

Preserving the inherited values: The values achieved need constant replenishing for the preservation and conservation of man’s existence and for the good of man. This will call for serious human effort and struggle

These challenges has led to syncretism or withdrawal from the societal activities.

The culture of Jesus day was based on the material world with a dim view of the hereafter while Jesus emphasis was of eternal heavenly kingdom.

Jesus came and thrust aside all the requirements of the national life…and set up nothing but an ethico-religious system bound up with his conception of the Godhead” (PP.3). In this case Jesus did not reform the Jews culture, though Jesus was a product of that Culture. In this respect the mission of Christ is not to reform the traditional Tugen Culture as well.

Jesus Worldview on social order was quite different from the Judaistic worldview of militancy. He was an humble messiah whose emphasis was nonresistance. Even issues of family was quite distinct, especially on marriage and divorce and echoes those who made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the Kingdom of God (Matt.19:12) and even stressed the need to invest ones treasure in heaven not on material world as well as trusting God for daily provision

Traditional Tugen religion places heavy emphasis on the hierarchy of beings: God, divinities, spirits, ancestors, man and living and non-living things. To combine or provide a relationship of Christianity and the mores of the Traditional Tugen culture poses real struggle

Christianity tends to direct peoples’ hopes not on the present world or temporal existence, but towards life in another world, from the law to the grace of God, hence robs them of enthusiasm in hard struggle of insecure social endeavors.

Jesus taught on love for one’s neighbor, but love for humanity be placed on a lower scale as compared to the love for God since the love for God should be done with one’s heart, mind, soul and strength, hence be adored the bestowal of all gifts and holiness, a passionate love. The love of God should take a primacy place (Luke 10:27).

withdrawal from the worldly system, “come out from among them and be separate” apply selective approach to Jesus teaching that are compatible with cultural elements

Christians are to be conscious not to compromise their loyalty of the Lordship of Christ to that of the world: social, idolatry, beliefs, rites, ceremonies. Here Christians are required to live a unique kind of life in the world and do what is required in their day to day living, yet they are supposed to withdraw from what would corrupt their allegiance or the truth of their faith in Christ when relating to the worldly system: politics, military, commerce, religious rites, philosophical ideas, games, music. Some these activities could be brutal and tragic.

Christians are citizens of the two worlds: earthly and heavenly. The earthly world is tainted with sin and while the heavenly world delivered from sin, Christ role will be that of conversion.

The Ttradtional Tugen culture lacks understanding on the aspect of the grace of God revealed in Jesus Christ and the salvation of all humanity.

Sin is not outside the body, but inside, hence the solution is not to withdraw from culture

In biblical Christianity emphasis made on the primacy of the divine love in exercising the love of God and neighbor. It worth noting that Christ is the Lord over all the creation and governor of history where the Triune God is in total control of human history

In doing effective mission in biblical Christian demands that we should not to interpret Christ wholly in cultural terms

Jesus calls people to seek spiritual salvation rather than freedom from human oppression which is been approach by the concillar position.

Jesus is more than the Christ of Culture-penchant

Loyalty to Christ is key in authentic biblical Christianity rather than loyalty to the contemporary culture

Sin’s universality is a fundamental problem affecting all humanity, hence it is impossible for man to have an holiness of his own, including the offerings and sacrifices

All the good works done by man or culture should be line with divine love or God’s will

Jesus as the transformer of one’s life. It means eternity begins in this present life since Christ cleanses all by means of faith by his power, thus makes Christians children of God living a life focusing on God’s love.

 Christ is the regenerator of humanity in their cultural set up

**Conclusion**

  Christianity as culture  stresses  the need to invest ones treasure in heaven not on material world as well as trusting God for daily provision which negates anxiety of food and drink, unimportance of treasures on earth, and  not fearing those who take away life. This teaching will seemed to destroy the traditional Tugen culture as Christianity tends to direct peoples’ hopes not on the present world or temporal existence, but towards life in heavenly paradise. The Supra-cultural/divine elements of biblical revelation supersedes the traditional Tugen culture. This implies the ultimate object of devotion is God, the absolute faith in God, humility to him and his Kingdom as well as love for  humanity that is one’s neighbor created in the image of God,   but love for humanity be placed  on a lower scale as compared to the love for God since  the love for God should be done with one’s heart, mind, soul and strength, hence be adored the bestowal of all gifts and holiness, a passionate love. The love of God should take a primacy place (Luke 10:27). Christ leads men away from the temporal Tugen culture to eternal kingdom of God, from the law to the grace of God. Christ will always advance for obeying the higher authority of God, “give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God”. When issues of allegiance arise Christians living among the traditional culture will have to wrestle with this Challenge. They will have to choose Christ instead of the worldly culture. Sin’s universality  is a fundamental problem affecting all humanity, hence it is impossible for man to have an holiness of his own. Holiness can only be attain by the imputation act of God and its by the grace of God through faith alone. The conversion of mankind from self-centeredness to Christ-centeredness. In the Christian culture, God’s grace in believers life should be evident by respect we give to others as well the fruit of good works the necessary fruit emanating from the salvation earned by grace through faith in Christ where the believers attains an inner cleansing and regeneration  brought about by the Holy Spirit and become heirs of eternal life (Titus 1:1-8).

The Tugens should be obedient to the Lordship of Christ who is part and parcel of the triune God in all aspects of the cultural life: education, food, family, social, economic as well as in political sphere. In such kind of obedience, humanity will have to exercise his free will and intelligence in carrying out cultural activities as well as maintain certain cautions lest based the problem of syncretism in compromising the Lordship of Jesus with cultural activities.

Sin’s universality is a fundamental problem affecting all humanity, hence it is impossible for man to have an holiness of his own. Holiness can only be attain by the imputation act of God and its by the grace of God through faith alone in Jesus Christ rather the legalistic acts of the law or human works of righteousness

**Recommendations and Areas of Further Study**

An area of further study that need to be researched on will be, “Mission and Tugen culture of modernity”

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APPENDIX

 I
INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR ELDERLY TRADITIONAL TUGENS

We are lecturers at Kabarak University, school of Education. The purpose of this interview is to enable the researchers todiscuss the traditional Tugen Culture in view of Theological biblical Christianity

assess the traditional Tugen culture lived experiences in Mogotio Sub-County, Baringo County, Kenya.

You are encouraged to answer all the questions. Your responses are very important to the study, and they will be treated with confidentiality and used for this study only.

Thank you very much for accepting to take part in this interview

**Dr. Japheth Kigen and Dr. Esther Kibor**

**Kabarak University**

**Interview Questions**

1. What role does religion play in the Traditional Tugen cultural life
2. Do the Tugen people have any concept of life after death. If so, how? and if not why?
3. Explain the moral values practiced in the Traditional Tugen culture
4. Explain the role of spirits in the life of Traditional Tugen culture
5. How are the mystical forces manipulated by the Tugen traditional religious leaders
6. What is the role of mystical forces in Traditional Tugen culture
7. Explain the place of myths and proverbs in traditional Tugen culture

***Thank you very much***

APPENDIX

 II
*INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR CHRISTIAN WORKERS AND PASTORS FROM VARIOUS CHURCH TRADITIONS: CONCILLAR, PENTECOSTALS/CHARISMATICS, EVANGELICALS, THIRWAVE MOVEMENTS*

 *We are lecturers at Kabarak University, school of Education. The purpose of this interview is to enable the researchers to assess the traditional Tugen culture lived experiences in light of Theological biblical Christianity*

 *in Mogotio Sub-County, Baringo County, Kenya.*

*You are encouraged to answer all the questions. Your responses are very important to the study, and they will be treated with confidentiality and used for this study only.*

*Thank you very much for accepting to take part in this interview*

*Dr. Japheth Kigen and Dr. Esther Kibor*

**Kabarak University**

**Interview Questions**

1. How is the concept of mission depicted in your Church?
2. What is the place of culture in Christianity?
3. What is the extent and depth to which culture is said to enter into human nature
4. Is Jesus the savior of the society, the fulfiller of its hopes and aspirations, the perfector of truth who seeks to maintain community with the Christians?
5. Are beliefs about Christ and its demand on man’s conduct to conform to culture?
6. Do man have any responsibility in the social of the society. If Yes how? If no, why?